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Ġizlān al-hind

Mīr ‘Alī Ḥān Ḥusaynī Wāsiṭī Bilgrāmī, known by his *taḥalluṣ* Āzād, was a prominent and influential Indian literary scholar and theologian. He was born into a famed Ḥusaynī Sayyid family connected with Bilgram (a town in modern-day Uttar Pradesh, India), which had produced generations of administrators and scholars. Āzād is unusual among South Asian men of letters in having been a prolific writer in Arabic poetry and prose as well as in Persian. He was also a practicing poet in *hindī* (here we refer to “*hindī*” rather than “Hindi” to underscore that the literary tradition being discussed cannot be identified unproblematically with either modern Hindi or Urdu). The chronology of his life is well-established from autobiographical references in his own works (Toorawa 2009; Storey 1972, pp. 855-866). He was born in 1116/1704 in the Maidanpura quarter of Bilgram and received his early education from his uncle, Mīr Muḥammad Bilgrāmī, and the noted scholar Mīr Ṭufayl Muḥammad Atrawlī. Later he studied with his grandfather, Mīr ‘Abd al-Jalīl Bilgrāmī, who had returned in 1720 from an extended period in imperial service. The next year he followed ‘Abd al-Jalīl to Delhi, returning to Bilgram in 1724. He became a devotee of the Čišṭiyya Sufi Mīr Sayyid Luṭf Allāh and was his disciple until Luṭf Allāh’s death in 1729. He accompanied his uncle to Sind, and worked in the administration there from 1730 to 1734. In October 1737, he set off on pilgrimage to the Hijaz, a decision which he concealed from his family fearing their disapproval. When he had made it as far as the Deccan that December, he met Niẓām al-Mulk Āṣaf Jāh (d. 1161/1748), the de facto ruler of the Deccan, and gained his favour. He arrived in Mecca the following May, missing that year’s Ḥajj period. He studied in Medina, performed the Ḥajj the following year, and boarded a ship to return to India in July 1739. In February 1740, Āṣaf Jāh invited him to Aurangabad. From 1745, he was in the service of the Governor of Awrangabad, Āṣaf Jāh’s son Naṣīr Jang, until the latter’s death in 1750. Besides a year spent in Hyderabad in 1754 at the request of Shāh Nawāz Ḥān, he lived the

remainder of his life in Awrangabad without a patron. He died in 1200/1786, and is buried in the Khuldabad complex northwest of Awrangabad.

The *Ġizlān al-hind* (Gazelles of India) is a partial translation into Persian of the author's Arabic *Subḥāt al-marjān fī ātār hindustān* (The Coral Rosary on the Antiquities of Hindustān). He states that the Persian adaptation of *Subḥāt al-marjān* was completed on the request of his friends Mīr 'Abd al-Qādir 'Mihrbān' Awrangābādī and Laḥmī Narāyan "Šafīq" Awrangābādī. The Arabic text was compiled in 1177/1763-1764 from pieces Āzād had previously written and consists of four chapters on (i) references in Islamic traditions to India, (ii) biographies of 45 Indian scholars of Arabic, (iii) a catalogue of Indic rhetorical figures (*ṣanā'ī*, sing. *ṣan'a*), and (iv) a catalogue of Indic lovers and beloveds (*nāyikā-bhed*). It is the only Arabic work of his that has been critically edited (Toorawa 2009; Āzād 1976-80). *Ġizlān al-hind* is a condensed version of chapters three and four. The work is widely available in manuscript, implying a large readership. Chapter one, which appears in highly abbreviated form in the preface of *Ġizlān al-hind*, has been partially translated into English (Ernst 1995).

Most manuscripts give the title *Ġizlān al-hind* and this is the consensus among scholars, but the editor of the critical edition has used *Ġazālān al-hind* (with an extra *alif*) instead (Āzād 2003). As the text itself tells us, the title serves as a chronogram of the work's completion, which would be 1178 in the case of the former and 1179 in the case of the latter. The date 1178 is unambiguously spelled out in Arabic as the date writing commenced (Āzād 2003, p. 24). Although it is not impossible that Āzād began working on the text in 1178, finished it the following year and changed the title so that the chronogram would reflect the new year, the extra *alif* is more likely a copyist's mistake. The modern editor seems unaware that *Ġazālān al-hind* does not add up to 1178, which he accepts as the date of completion, and does not address the stylistic oddity of using the Persian animate plural suffix (*-ān*) together with the Arabic *izāfa* (*al-*).

The first half of *Ġizlān al-hind* is a catalogue of rhetorical figures, the classification of which is the task of the sub-discipline of rhetoric known as *'ilm-i badī'*. Some examples of important figures shared between Arabic and *hindī*, he notes in the preface, are *ihām*, *ḥusn al-ta'līl*, *tajāhul al-ārīf*, *marāja't*, *isti'ārah*, *tašbīh*, *jinās*, and *saj'* (Āzād 2003, p. 32). The total analysis comes to 67 specific rhetorical

figures: he offers 27 known in *hindī* and Arabic. He then describes 35 that he has invented (*muḥtaraʿ*) himself, which is to say that no previous theorist had ever named them as unique rhetorical figures. He concludes the section with a description of four miscellaneous *hindī* figures, one of which is a kind of multilingual *thām* (roughly: punning) attributed to Amīr Ḳhusraw, and three which are “ancient” (*qadīm*) figures. These four are specific to Persian (and *hindī*), and thus did not appear in the Arabic *Subḥat al-marjān*. One remaining figure, *istiḥdām*, is mentioned in the preface as one of the 67 but Āzād states that it warrants no further discussion because it is not used in Persian (Āzād 2003, p. 33).

The second half is the *nāyikā-bhed* proper. He glosses this term as *asrār al-niswān* (secrets of women). As in the rhetorical figures section, it contains both traditional categories, for which he supplies the Indic names, and some of Āzād’s own invention: for the beloveds, he provides six traditional classifications on the basis of virtue, age, style of complaining, whether excited during the day or at night, cleverness in speech or deed, and type of arrogance. There is also a miscellaneous category with three further descriptions. He then presents nine types of his own invention. For lovers, he provides a traditional Indian division between monogamous and polyamorous lovers (that is, between *anukūla* and *dakṣiṇa* in traditional terminology, see Rakesagupta 1967, pp. 85-87). He offers his own fourteen descriptions of lovers (for useful charts of these, which provides a concordance between the present work and *Subḥat al-marjān*, see Ernst 2013, pp. 49-51).

Taken together the categories in Āzād’s classification system do not match up to any other author’s system (a number of which are described in Rakesgupta 1967). He probably therefore depended on an oral recension of *nāyikā-bhed* and not a particular text in Sanskrit or Braj such as Keshavdās’s *Rasikapriyā* or Sundardās’s *Sundarśringār* (Sharma 2009). The latter in fact has a dedication to Šāh Jahān (r. 1628-1658), suggesting an interest in the technical aspects of *hindī* poetry at the Mughal imperial court. The *nāyikā-bhed* section of *Ġizlān al-hind* should be seen in the context of two other major works on the poetics of the Indic beloved, namely the *Risāla-yi Rāg-darpan* of Faqīr Allāh Sayf Ḥān (d. 1095/1684) and the fourth chapter of Mīrzā Ḥān’s *Tuḥfat al-hind*. The *nāyikā-bhed* section of *Subḥat al-marjān* is the longest engagement with these poetics in the Arabo-Persian tradition (Ernst 2013, pp. 38-39).

Āzād's rhetoric on the purpose of his addressing Indic poetry is striking: he implies that he means for it to be literarily productive rather than an exercise in cataloguing. In the preface, he says of *nāyikā-bhed* (in the context of his project in *Subḥāt al-marjān*) that "this rare offering, which is a speciality of the Indians, must be given in service of the true Arabs" (*īn armaġān-i šigarf rā kih maḥṣūṣ-i hindiyān ast bah ḥidmat-i 'arab-i 'arbā bāyad sipurd*). Whether he literally means that he wants an Arabic-knowing readership to have some sense of *nāyikā-bhed* is unclear but he makes a similarly sweeping claim for *Ġizlān al-hind*, namely that it will bring the "delightfulness of the parrots of India" to "the people of ability of Persia" (*ṣāḥib-i ṭab 'i-yi furs*) (Āzād 2004, p. 24). In both cases, at least rhetorically, he meant for his ideas to circulate. Indeed, in the preface to another work, the *taḍkirah Ḥizānah-i 'Āmirah* (1176/1762-3), Āzād implies that Persian has already been influenced by *hindī*. This has been a boon to the tradition because, he posits, "the rule is that art gets perfected when ideas blend with each other (*ba-talāḥuq-i afkār*)" (Alam 2004, p. 179). He uses the symbol common in both early-modern Europe and the Persianate world of translation as changing clothes, namely putting *hindī* poetry into Persian garb (Āzād 2004, p. 24). It is noteworthy that Āzād uses the term *tafrīs* to mean describing Indic rhetorical devices in Persian (Āzād 2004, p. 36). This is the word used by contemporary lexicographers to refer to what we would call lexical borrowing from other languages into Persian.

Āzād presents the Arabic, Persian, and *hindī* literary traditions as being fundamentally compatible albeit with notable differences in specific aspects. Though the Persian metaphorical system was ultimately derived from Arabic, the Indic system is not derived from either (Āzād 2003, pp. 31-32). Nonetheless, since ancient Indians were apparently familiar with the concept of rhetorical devices as being *ma'nawī* (based on the sense) or *lafẓī* (based on the word), Āzād implies that the systems work on commensurate principles. A similar implication is clear in the context of his discussion of poetic metres, some of which are shared among the three literary traditions (Āzād 2003, p. 28). Thus although they sprang from different sources, Āzād recognises a universality in poetic systems. In this regard, Mīrzā Ḥān's sense of the relationship of *hindī* and Persian poetics likely influenced Āzād though no direct evidence connecting the two works has come to light. The philologist Sirāj al-Dīn 'Alī Ḥān Ārzū (d. 1169/1756), with whom Āzād corresponded, has a similar view on the universality of poetics (Keshavmurthy 2013b). However, while the Persian *Ġizlān al-hind* version

gives Indic names for categories in the text, the Arabic *Subḥāt al-marjān* does not (except in the margins of some copies), and this implies more fluid movement of concepts between *hindī* and Persian than between *hindī* and Arabic (Ernst 2013, p. 39). A key difference between the traditions is to be found in their treatment of gender since Arabic and *hindī* poetry tend to portray an explicitly heterosexual situation (to use anachronistic terminology) with Turkish and Persian poetry tend to be homoerotic. Āzād discusses this at length in the introduction to the *nāyikā-bhed*, even invoking the concept of *satī* to explain Indian women's devotion to their husbands (Āzād 2013, p. 116; on gender in Arabic poetics, see Bauer 1998, pp. 150-184)

The most pertinent general observation on the mechanics of translation for Āzād is that in this account of *hindī* poetic practices, he does not actually quote a single line of Indic poetry in the original language. Instead, he offers quotations of Persian poets that illustrate the argument he is making about *hindī*. On several occasions he introduces Qur'anic quotations or *ḥadīth* in discussing the characteristics of Indic poetry. The Persian poets he quotes range from Ḥāfīz and Amīr Khusraw on the classical side of the tradition to recent greats like Ġanī Kašmīrī, Šā'ib, and Bedil as well as to contemporary Indian and Iranian poets (including, unsurprisingly, copious quotations from his own poetry, some of which is translated from *hindī*). By contrast, Mīrzā Ḥān does provide examples in *hindī*. Āzād came from a family of practicing *hindī* poets (as his own *Sarw-i Āzād* demonstrates), and in fact he mentions translating his own *hindī* poetry into Arabic to serve as examples in *Subḥāt al-marjān* (Ernst 2013, p. 42). Oddly, the only vernacular work attributed to him to come to light is *Billī-nāma*, the story of a greedy cat who atones for his misdeeds by going on a pilgrimage, and it is probably spurious (Husain 1936, pp. 129-130).

Manuscripts: **Dhaka**, Madrasa-yi 'Āliyah, no ms. number, **i)** Hyderabad, Deccan, **ii)** *sih-šanba-yi jumādī al-āḥirī* 1293/June-July 1876, **iii)** Sayyid Pīr Qālhī, **iv)** Mawlawī Najm al-Dīn Ḥasan Qālhī, **v)** it was copied in the quarter called Yāqūtpūra, **vii)** this Ms. forms the basis for the published edition of the text, Āzād 2003. **Tehran**, Tehran University, 7444, **ii)** *yakšanba 22 jumādī al-āḥirī* 1319/ Sunday 6 October 1901, **iii)** Sayyid Muḥammad Jalāl al-Dīn, **vii)** this Ms. was consulted by the editor of the published edition, Āzād 2003. **London**, British Library, IO Islamic 1814, ff. 23b-68b, **vii)** appears in same Ms. as Āzād's *Rawzat al-awliyā* (ff. 1-23), **viii)** Éthé 1903, pp. 1172-1173. **Berlin**, Staatsbibliothek, Petermann II 219, ff. 72, **vii)** incomplete, **viii)**

Pertsch 1888, pp 1001-1002. **Rampur**, Razā Library, 5122m, 68 ff., **vii**) Accession number 2674, **viii**) *Fihrist-i nuṣṣahā-yi ḥaṭṭī-i fārsī-i kitābhāna-yi Razā Rāmpūr*, 1997, vol. 2 p. 97. **Delhi**, Anjuman-i Taraqqī-i Urdū, Ms. 8916523/4, 178 ff., **ii**) 29 *ramazān* 1197/ 28 August 1783, **iii**) Ġulām Muḥī al-Dīn, **viii**) *Fihrist-i nuṣṣahā-yi ḥaṭṭī-i fārsī-i kitābhāna-yi anjuman-i taraqqī-i urdū*, 1999, p. 38. **Lucknow**, Nadwat al-‘ulamā, 35. **Hyderabad**, Mawlawī Sayyid ‘Alī Ḥusayn Bilgrāmī Library, Kūča-yi Madrasa-yi A‘izza, **ii**) 1220/1805, **vii**) This information comes from a publication a century ago, and the present writer has not been able to trace the collection mentioned. The collection is described as follows: “This library, containing 1,082 MSS., is in a very good condition and possesses a valuable collection of MSS. It also contains autographs and fine specimens of calligraphy seldom found in other libraries. The owner is very fond of acquiring more MSS. The library has an excellent MS. Catalogue in Persian” (Suhrawardy 1917-1918, pp. lxxxiii, cccliii). **Aligarh**, Mawlānā Āzād Library, Aligarh Muslim University, Habib Ganj 50/119, 40 ff., **ii**) 1204/1789-1790, **iii**) Jān-i ‘Alī, **viii**) Razvi - Amrohvi 1985, p. 178. **Chennai**, Government Oriental Manuscripts Library, 792, **v**) colophon (as cited in the catalogue) gives the title as *Ġazālān al-Hind*, **vii**) according to the cataloguer, “This is also a restored copy of the manuscript which was borrowed from Dr. M. Abdul Haq, M.A., D. Phil.”, **viii**) Chandrasekharan 1950, pp. 929-931.

Legend: i) Place of copying; ii) Period of copying; iii) Copyist; iv) Commissioner; v) Information on colophon; vi) Description of miniatures/illustrations; vii) Other remarks; viii) Information on catalogue(s)

Edition: *Ġhazālān al-hind*, Sīrūs Šamīsa, ed., Tehran, Šadā-yi Mu‘asir, 2003.

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