



EGYPT IX. IRAN'S CULTURAL INFLUENCE IN THE ISLAMIC PERIOD

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Medieval and Ottoman periods. The influence of Persian traditions on Egypt during the medieval period was brought about by the same factors that affected the rest of the Arab world, namely, translations from Middle Persian as well as influential Muslims of Persian extraction in cultural, political, and administrative fields. In a passage of his *Moqaddema*, Ebn Ḳaldūn (q.v.) points to the way that the Sassanian culture of Persia influenced the Arab and Islamic world in general: "The sedentary culture of the Persians was transferred to the Arab Umayyads and 'Abbāsids... . That of the 'Abbāsids was transferred, successively, to the Daylam, to the Saljūk Turks, to the Turks in Egypt, and to the Tatars in the two 'Irāqs" (*The Muqaddimah*, tr. F. Rosenthal, I, p. 351). The rule of the Isma'īli Fatimids (297-567/969-1171), whose ideology had developed largely in Persia (see Madelung, pp. 93 ff.), provided an occasion for indirect penetration of some Persian religious ideas and cultural traditions; for instance, Persian festivals Nowrūz, Mehragān, and Sada were celebrated during this period in Egypt (Qalqašandī, II, p. 422). The more noticeable cultural influence of Persia on Egypt, however, occurred during the 16th-18th



centuries when Egypt became a province of the Ottoman empire.

As Persian literature was widely studied and avidly followed in the Ottoman empire (Gibb, I, pp. 10, 29; Hodgson, II, p. 486), and as the Persian language was used as one of the administrative languages of the empire carefully studied by its official scribes, Egypt came under the influence of Persian culture through the Ottoman impact (cf. Toynbee, V, pp. 514 f.). This impact encouraged a number of Egyptian notables and men of the pen to study Persian language and literature, and the Persian epistolary style was adopted by Egyptian scribes. Persian literary influence continued in some measure also in the 19th century when Egypt became independent under Moḥammad-'Alī Pasha (1220-64/1804-49) and his successors. Until World War I, classical Persian literary works, in particular those of Sa'dī, Ḥāfeẓ, Rūmī, Jāmī, and Sanā'ī, were used in teaching Persian language and literature. In this period, the Būlāq press published a series of major Persian literary works (see below).

Modern period. During the 19th and 20th centuries the cultural influence of Persia in Egypt was assisted by the expansion of Persian studies and the teaching of a wider range of Persian literary works in schools and universities, acquisition of Persian books, and publication of Persian newspapers by Persians living in Egypt.

From the outset of the opening of Egypt's modern universities in the first half of the 20th century, Persian was an important part of the curriculum at institutions such as Cairo and 'Ayn Šams universities in the capital, and Eskandarīya, Asyūṭ, Maṣṣūra, Ṭanṭā, Zaḡāzīq, and Ḥolwān universities in the provinces.

In 1944, when the School of Oriental Languages (Ma'had al-lōgāt al-šarqīya) was founded, Western methods of teaching Persian were introduced by 'Abd-al-Wahhāb 'Azzām (d. 1950), who had studied Persian literature at the University of London in the 1930s and had benefited from his association with Edward G. Browne, Moḥammad Qazvīnī, and Sayyed Ḥasan Taqīzāda. Closely cooperating with 'Azzām to promote teaching of Persian was Yaḥyā Kaššāb, who had graduated from the Sorbonne with a dissertation on Nāṣer-e Kōsrow and his *Safar-nāma*. He served as head of the department of Persian in both the School of Oriental Languages and Cairo University for several years from the 1940s through the 1970s. The department of Persian language and literature at this university has played a significant role in the promotion of Persian language and literature since the 1940s. A number of Egypt's scholars



and faculty members in the field of Persian studies are the graduates of the department's doctoral program (Table 1). Currently in each of Cairo, 'Ayn Šams, Eskandariya, Asyūt, Mansūra, Taṅtā, Zaqaḏīq, and Ḥolwān universities over a hundred students are enrolled in courses of either Persian language or literature. In 'Ayn Šams and Cairo universities, there is a division of Persian studies within their Center for Middle Eastern Studies.

The influence of Persian poets, religious scholars, and men of letters had much to do with encouraging the influx of Persian books to Egypt. A number of scholars and merchants, as well as royal families such as those of Moḥammad-'Alī Pasha, Ṭal'at Pasha, Moṣṭafā Kāmel Pasha, and Aḥmad Teymūr Pasha, were drawn to collecting Persian manuscripts and printed works; these collections are now kept in the National Library of Egypt. In 1966-67 the National Library prepared a bibliography of 2,542 Persian manuscripts. The precious manuscripts preserved at this library include two important copies of Ferdowsī's *Šāh-nāma*, both used by J. Khaleghi-Motlagh (Kāleqī Moṭlaq) in his critical edition of that work; one, dated 741/1341, is in *nask* style by Moḥammad b. Moḥammad Kīšī and the other, copied in Shiraz and dated 796/1394, is in *nasta'liq* by Loṭf-Allāh b. Moḥyī b. Moḥammad and has 67 illustrations (Khaleghi-Motlagh, pp. 385-86, 388). Other valuable manuscripts in this collection include the Persian translation of *Kalīla wa demna* by Abu'l-Ma'ālī Naṣr-Allāh Monšī and the manuscript of the *Būstān* of Sa'dī, calligraphed by Solṭān 'Alī Kāteb in 893/1488 and illustrated by the famous Behzād (see P. Soucek in *EIr.* IV, p. 115, and Bahari, pp. 100-112). The University of Cairo also possesses several hundred Persian manuscripts. There are also a large number of printed texts in both private and public libraries across Egypt, many of which have been published by the Būlāq press, including the *Golestān* of Sa'dī (1845); *Pand-nāma* of Farīd-al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār (1845); *Talīm-e fārsī* of Moḥammad Rāšed (1849); *Tarjomān* of 'Alī-Rezā (1857); *Dīvān-e Ḥāfeḏ* (1864); Rūmī's *Maṭnawī* (1835, a noteworthy edition, and 1872); *Tārīk* of 'Abd-al-Karīm Bokārī (1873); *Zobdat al-ḥaqā'eq* of 'Azīz-al-Dīn Nasafī (1874); *Nān o ḥalwā* of Bahā'-al-Dīn 'Āmelī (1927; see Mobaššer Ṭarāzī, 1963, 1966, 1968; Naš'at, p. 48).

Four Persian-language newspapers were founded in Egypt in the period 1892-1904: *Ḥekmat*, *Torayyā*, *Parvareš*, and *Čehranemā* (qq.v.). *Ḥekmat* was founded on 26 Šafar 1310/19 September 1892 by Mīrzā Moḥammad-Mehdī Tabrīzī, a Persian physician, to disseminate Western progressive ideas among Persian readers. It was published every ten days and featured articles on



politics, science, medicine, literature, industry, and business (Şadr Hāšemī, *Jarā'ed o majallāt* II, pp. 228-30). The weekly *Torayyā* was founded on 14 Jomādā II 1316/30 October 1898 by 'Alī-Moḥammad Khan Kāšānī, an intellectual, who was also a member of the editorial board of the liberal newspaper *Aktar* (q.v.), published in Istanbul. In May 1900, Kāšānī handed over the editorship of the paper to Faraj-Allāh Khan Kāšānī, who later transferred the paper from Cairo to Tehran (Şadr Hāšemī, *Jarā'ed o majallāt* II, pp. 151-55). Meanwhile, the weekly newspaper *Parvareš*, which 'Alī-Moḥammad Kāšānī inaugurated in June 1900, continued the editorial policy of *Torayyā*. As editor of *Torayyā* and *Parvareš*, Kāšānī promoted the ideas of democracy and constitutionalism during the course of the Constitutional Revolution (q.v) of 1323-27/1905-09 (Kasrawī, *Mašrūṭa* I, pp. 39-42; Şadr Hāšemī, *Jarā'ed o majallāt* II, pp. 57-64). *Čehranemā* was established in Moḥarram 1322/April 1904 by Mīrzā 'Abd-al-Moḥammad Īrānī Mo'addeb-al-Solṭān Eşfāhānī, an author of several books on the history of Egypt, Persia, and Afghanistan and a resident of Egypt. A newspaper of cultural and sociopolitical orientation, it voiced the obstacles that the moderization of Persia faced. Mīrzā 'Abd-al-Moḥammad passed away in 1935, but his paper was continued by his son, Manūčehr Mo'addebzāda, who taught mathematics at the American University of Cairo until the cessation of relations between Persia and Egypt in 1967 when the publication and circulation of this paper came to a halt (Şadr Hāšemī, *Jarā'ed o majallāt* II, pp. 190-99 ; for further details on these periodicals, see under each title).

In the late 1970s two Persian newspapers, *Rastākīz* and *al-Montadā*, were published in Cairo with the support of the Persian government to promote cultural relations between Persia and Egypt. *Rastākīz*, a cultural and sociopolitical paper, was published by Manūčehr Mo'addebzāda. It borrowed its name from the Rastākīz (Resurrection) Party in Persia. *Al-Montadā* was published by the Persian government's Cultural Center of Cairo under the editorship Nūr-al-Dīn Āl-e 'Alī from Persia and Yaḥyā Kaššāb from Egypt. The first issue appeared in the summer of 1978 and was followed by only one other. Both papers were designed to publish articles in both Persian and Arabic on Irano-Arab cultural relations by both Egyptian and Persian scholars; both papers, however, ceased publication after the 1979 Revolution and the second cessation of relations between the two states.

Numerous Persian loan-words have entered popular Egyptian language. They often found their way into the language through business, cultural, and



religious ties, and also as a result of the long rule of the Ottomans, whose Turkish was replete with Persian words. Examples include: Drinks and edibles: *bālūza* (*pālūda*), *betenjān* (*bādemjān*), *košāf* (*kūšāb*), *zalābīa* (*zūlbīā*), *sayrej* (*šīrag*), *toršī* (*torš*), *felfel* (*pelpel*), *kabāb*, *kešk* (*kašk*), *kofta* (*kūfta*); Clothes: *bafta*, *boja* (*boğča*), *bījāma* (*pājāma*), *dekka* (*tekka*), *bīša* (*pīča*), *šāder* (*čādor*), *ṭarbūš* (*sarpūš*), *ofṭān* (*kaftān*), *yāqa* (*yaqa*); Household goods: *abrī* (*ābrīz*), *estowāna* (*ostovāna*), *barjal* (*pargār*), *taḳta*, *jārūf* (*jārūb*), *janzīr* (*zanjīr*), *zonba* (*sonba*), *sabat* (*sapad*), *senja*, *šam'edān* (*šam'dān*), *šankal* (*čangāl*), *tāsa*, *tešt* (*tašt*), *ḳūz* (*kūza*), *mezrāb* (*mīzāb*); Military and administrative terms: *pīāda*, *savārī*, *askar* (*laškar*), *bandar*, *adabḳāna*, *ketābḳāna*, *ḳānka* (*ḳānagāh*); Adjectives: *balīd* (*palīd*), *ṭāza*, *tanbal*, *ḳām*, *ḳorda*, *sāda*, *kohna*; Work: *ūšta* (*ostād*), *šahbandar*, *handaza* (*handesa*), *yāvar*, *dāya*, *dadabān* (*dīdabān*); Transactions: *bāšīš* (*baḳšeš*), *šawebaš* (*šādbāš*), *māhīya* (*māhīāna*), *mandal*, *dasta*, *zūr*, *yaḡmā*, *nešān*; People's names: *Ḳvoršīd*, *Šāhīn*, *Šāpūr*, *Jehān*, *Nāzek*, *Šīrīn*, *Bāḳīnām*; Numbers, include *yak*, *do*, *seh*, *čahār*, *panj*, *šeš*, *doyak*, *dabaš* (*do panj*), *doš* (*do šeš*), *šeš beš* (*šeš o panj*).

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