

AN ATTEMPT TO LOOK AT THE CONFLUENCE OF PERSIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN INDIA DURING THE MUGHAL PERIOD ON THE PICTORIAL NAMA TRADITIONS: *WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE HAMZANAMA THROUGH ORALITY*

Ankita Dutta
Phd Scholar

Centre for Comparative Literature and Translation Studies
Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, India

ABSTRACT:

Persian literature and language has had a huge influence on the pictorial traditions of India especially during the Mughal Era in Medieval India. This paper will not focus on the history of Persian literature per se but its influence on the paintings done during the Mughal Period in terms of literary transactions through orality. By keeping in mind, the illustrations and paintings, *HamzaNama* has been taken up as the selected text which is actually a different yet engaging manuscript within the Nama tradition. And since the entire project of the *HamzaNama* is a huge one, only the aspect of theorizing orality has been looked upon in this paper. How orality played a major role in this transaction and transformation from one genre to another.

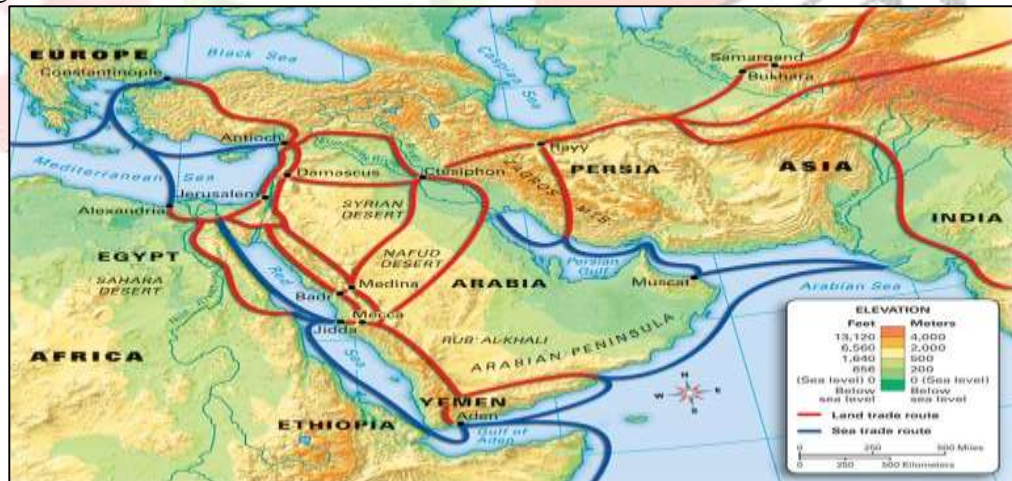
Keywords: (Persian Literature and Language, Mughal Era, Paintings and illustrations, and *HamzaNama*)

INTRODUCTION:

“Persian” as a language saw its evolution from the time of the Achaemenian Empire, when it was written in Cuneiform inscriptions and the tongue bore similarities with the Indo-European group of language with close affinities to Sanskrit, Prakrit and Avestan. After the fall of the Achaemenian Dynasty, the old tongue developed in parts of Pars into middle Persian or Pahlavi. Though again with the Arab conquest in Persia or modern day Iran, Arabic became the official language and although Pahlavi was still spoken by common people, Arabic as a language dominated Persia for almost a century and a half. Gradually with the weakening of the central power of the Arabs, the language Pahlavi, again formed a new shape by keeping the Indo-European grammatical structure intact but infusing a lot of Arabic words within it. And it was this Modern Persian language which had such an immense influence in India during the time of the Mughal Rule in the sixteenth century that Emperor Akbar made Persian the official language of his court. This Persian mixed with Hindi gave rise to Urdu as a new language in India. This paper will thus deal with the discussion on the development of Medieval Persian Language in and around Central Asia and the linguistic and geographical expanse it covered. A very brief introduction will be given on the history of the development of the new Persian language as an outer frame to trace the routes of orality and how it reached the Indian subcontinent. And then the Urdu Romance tradition of Qissa and Dastan will be discussed and how the selected text that is, the *HamzaNama* comes through this medium of orality and undergoes the transmutation from the oral to the print culture will be touched upon. Previously works have been done on the *HamzaNama* based on its significance, the cultural exchange between present day Iran and India in the 16th century and finally the Qissa as a genre and form in the

HamzaNama has also been discussed but this paper will try to look only at the theoretical aspect of how transmediality is taking place in the form of a literary transaction from one performative tradition to another by keeping the tradition of Qissas and the Hamza paintings as a larger framework. And since this entire content of the *HamzaNama* is a very elaborative one, the present paper will focus only on the aspects of orality with regards to the content.

Persian Literature has influenced the Indian literary form in many ways be it poetry, prose or paintings, and the Mughal era in India is widely known as the hub of this literary transaction. In fact in terms of plethora and variety of themes this literary output is incomparable. This paper does not aim to focus on Persian Literature or its history as per se but its influence on Indian Paintings done during the Mughal rule with special reference to the Nama Traditions, by keeping *HamzaNama* as the selected text. The first thing to be noted here is that long before the Mughal came to India, Persian in the modern form was already the language of the Elite Muslims in North India but it was during the time of Emperor Akbar that this language got its immense glorification in every way. And this period in Indian history see's the growth of the Nama traditions also pararely alongwith the other tradition of art and music. The methodology used in the paper is a comparative study of the Persian Miniature and the Mughal Miniature by mainly focusing on the *HamzaNama* which also be acts as the model of transmediality between the oral, written and per formative tradition. This has been discussed in details by Muhammad Abdulghani in his book *Pre-Mughal Persian in Hindustan: the growth of Persian language and literature in India from the earliest times to the advent of the Mughal rule*. The main argument of the book though being an attempt against the prejudice of the western scholars regarding Indian-Persian and Persian- Persian, it also analyzes in details as the title suggests, the growth and presence of Persian in the Indian sub-continent prior to the time of the Mughals (who patronized it the most) from the beginning of the rule of Mahmud of Ghazni. Islam had first come to India in 711 B.C.E when at the battle at the Talas River where the Muslim Arabs defeated the T'ang China emperor and had sealed the fate for the Muslim invasion and its triumph over Buddhism in Central Asia. They first came to India around 8th Century A.D and all of the routes taken by them had a similar pattern, coming through the North western pass of India, settling there, and slowly expanding to the East and South from there except for the British who took an entire different route to the Indian subcontinent. An illustration of the route taken by the Arabs to come to India is given below for a better understanding.

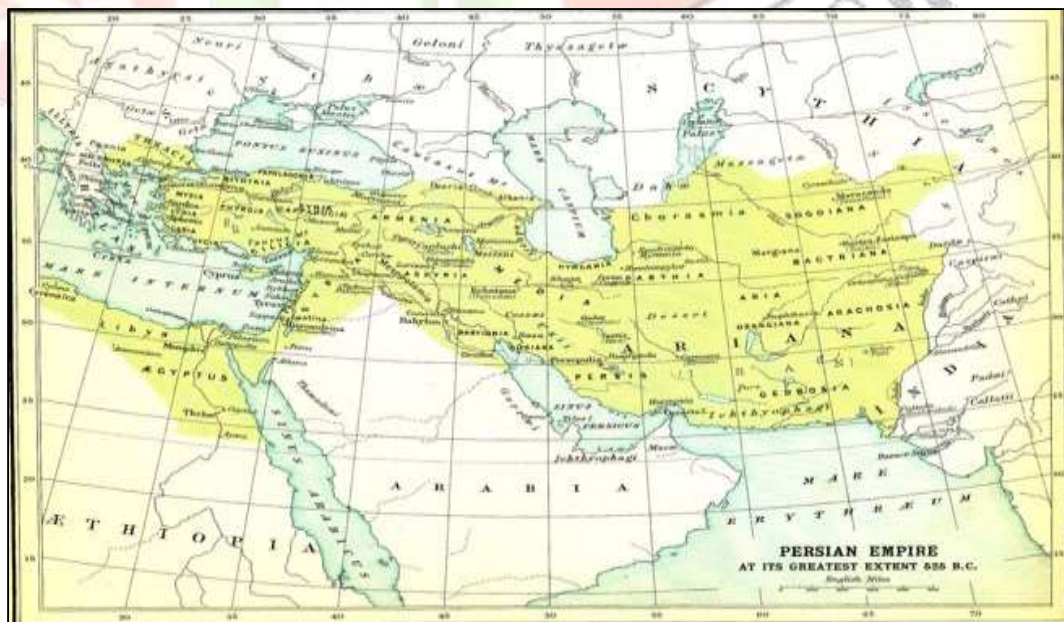


Source: [_Arabia_Map.jpg/243989627/951x609/Islam_-_Arabia_](#)
The route taken by Arabs to come to India

Fig:1

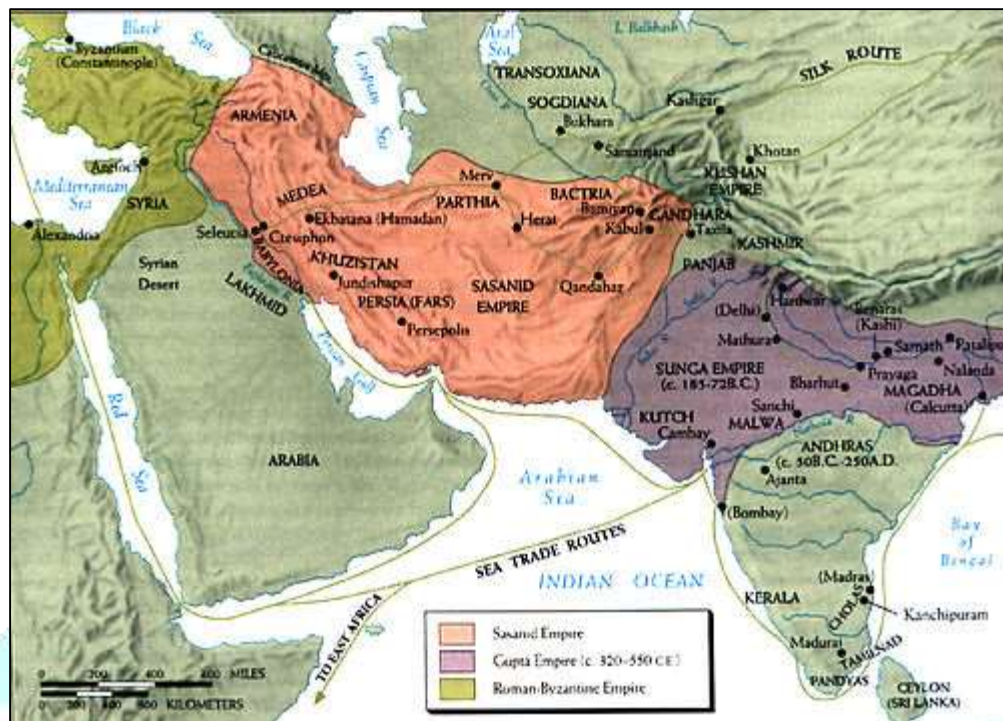
By 1000 C.E the Abbasid Caliphate, the third of the Islamic Caliphates to come after the Caliphate dynasty built by Prophet Mohammad (Peace Be upon Him) had started to weaken and their grip loosened due to large expansion of the Caliphate, politically weak Caliphs and most importantly because of the religious division between the Shia and the Sunni Muslims. This in turn led to the overtaking of the Caliphate by the local Turkish community. They worked as bodyguards and were enslaved by the Caliphs of Baghdad,

Afghanistan and other neighboring kingdoms. Thus they asserted their independence and freedom and took over the new empire among which Mahmud of Ghazni was the first one to invade India seventeen times and so ruthless were his attacks that he came to be known as the *Idol Smasher*. He ransacked and slayed all the temples and deities in India and carried the loot back to form a more powerful and larger army as his aim was to conquer the whole world. But again the Mongol raids in Central Asia in the 12th and 13th Century had left the Muslim invasion seriously disrupted as they had to put up a tight fight with the Mongol ruler, Ghenghiz Khan who was not only brave and ambitious but also ferocious. As a result of this the Muslims who came and settled in India under the rule of Mahmud of Ghazni were left on their own and among them the rich and the powerful ones set up the Delhi Sultanate in 1206 which lasted till c.1500. They also gave refuge to all the Muslim scholars fleeing from the onslaught of the Mongols. This is how the first Muslim empire set up in India which later paved the way for the huge Mughal Empire spanning from 1526 to c.1700. The geographical territory of the Mughal Empire extended in the same fashion from Delhi to Ghazni including Lahore, Punjab, Bengal, Multan and Persia within it, and the most striking feature of this whole stretch of vast territory was that it was united by one single culture and language, **Persian**. And not only limited to Mahmud of Ghazni, the later Muslim rulers starting from the first Ghori king to the last Mughal who sat on the throne, all patronized the language so much that it saw a tremendous rise in both its form and content in the Indian subcontinent. The first direct historical connection between Persia and the Indian subcontinent took place when the residents of Khurasan were banished from their homeland in suspicion of their alleged fidelity to the Empire AfraSiyab during the Achaemenian rule, and they settled in large numbers in Punjab and districts of Lahore, Delhi and Multan. They had their relatives in other parts of Persia who used to visit them and thus a continuous influx of mutual cultural exchange was in flow. Along with this, a number of Persian poets and writers immigrated to India in the hope of getting better recognition and appreciation for their works in the new cultural atmosphere. Also a close union of both Persia and India had taken place in the Pre-Islamic era at the birth of the Prophet of Islam (peace be upon Him) and at the Arabs landing in Sind. Based on all these facts, Abdulghani has said that Persian language had its roots in India even before the “*Arab conquest of Persia*”. Thus it can be concluded that, long before Islam had been started to be propagated by the Arabs, India and Persia had close connections with each other until the Sassanian Empire had wielded authority over provinces in Western Punjab and parts of Sind and Baluchistan. And with these the end of the first phase of transfer of Persian language in the Indian subcontinent was marked.



Source: <http://lukferi.webs.com/1%20ARYANA.jpg>
 An image of the Persian Empire and its extent in 6th Century
 Fig: 2

The second phase started from the Arab conquest of Persia. Persian and Sanskrit both belonged to the same linguistic roots and possessed similar form and style which is a commonplace thing of languages bearing the same philology as their origin is identical to each other. As it is believed by historians that the Aryan race had originated from some place in Central Asia, the people of the Indian subcontinent when heard Sanskrit for the first time, were actually listening to a different form of Persian only, “the music of Persian speech” according to Abdulghani. And then apart from the Arabs all other invaders came to India through the passes at the North western side of the country. Only the Arabs had come to India through Persia and through this they brought in the second layer of Persian language which was more Arabicised in nature and form. In *The Literary History of Persia*, Browne has observed that, “*the Indians and Persians were united in a common Indo-Iranian race located somewhere in the Punjab.*” (Browne: 33, vol: 1). In 521 B.C when the Persian kingdom was at its zenith, The Achaemenian ruler, King Darius, the Great had asked one of his Greek officers Scylax to discover the sea route to India. This discovery led to the conquest of the Sind, parts of Punjab and Afghanistan which was all included within the Persian regime but still they regarded mutual respect for each other’s culture and language which gave rise to a natural connection and exchange of languages and culture. The sixth century A.D had witnessed a large number of revolutions and epoch making changes both in the Oriental and Occidental world, Europe had begun to take a deep slumber into the realms of darkness from which Renaissance woke it up, India saw the gradual replacement of Sanskrit by a new common tongue Prakrit which was not so “classical” like the Sanskrit and Persia also saw the rise and fall of different dynasties thus leading to the disappearance of old Persian and giving rise to Pahlavi, a new form of Middle Persian spoken mainly in parts of Pars. Within these chaotic state of affairs, the Arabs ventured out of their homelands carrying the banner of Islam in their hands and sweeping the territories of Syria, Mesopotamia, Palestine, Egypt, Tripoli, Morocco, Sudan and Zanzibar culturally, religiously and politically. Wherever they went they firmly reinforced their religious and cultural zeal by making them do away with their native language and taking up Arabic as the new one. But with Persia this was not the case, in fact it courageously resisted to the “*cataclysmic onslaughts*” (Abdulghani: 47) of the Arabic and sat back on the virtues and virility of their language and culture as a result of which the Arabs were compelled to take up the new language and slowly many Persian words, idioms and phrases were merged with Arabic though they belonged to an entirely different school of linguistics, Persian being a descent of the Aryan school and Arabic, from the Semitic school. Apart from the nouns, a very little interchange or modification is possible between the two languages in matters of syntax and verb but surprisingly this interchange and modification did take place and a new version of Arabicised Persian took place. This Arabicised Persian entered India through the Arab Muslims who first anchored at the ports of Tana (Bombay), Campay, Baraoch and Dibul.



Source: <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/0d/Indo-Sassanid.jpg/500px-Indo-Sassanid.jpg>

The Indo- Sassanid trade route

Fig: 3

There is a long history of this Arabicised Persian in India but since the topic of concern is not the history of Persian language in India, the concluding remarks will be that, both before and after the advent of the Arabs in Persia and the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughals in India, Persian language was present in all its glory in the Indian subcontinent but it reached to its full accomplishment during the rule of the Mughals, especially Emperor Akbar.

Mughal historiography is said to have strong and undeniable links with the Islamic tradition of history writing which includes both Persian and Arabic language. The period of the Mughal rule roughly from 1526-1856 with the fall of Bahadur Shah Zafar is seen as one of the most important period in Medieval History of India, not only because of its political and economic measures but also due to its immense contribution in the literary field. Before the coming of the Mughals this area was largely dominated by the Sultanate period historians who actually laid the ground for this Indo-Persian historiography, for example, Ziauddin Burney and Amir Khusrau. But the Mughal Period saw the rise of a new tradition which can be said to resemble the famous epic poem *ShahNama* written by Firdausi in the 10th century B.C in Persian. *ShahNama* means a “Book of Kings” which actually serves as the standard text of Iranian pride and memory. It was ordered by the then ruler Shah Tahmasp in Persia, about thirty years before Akbar initiated work on the *HamzaNama*. This epic can also be called to be an artifact of Iranian togetherness and their national greatness.



Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/82/Map_Safavid_persia.png

The contemporary Persian Safavid and Indian Mughal Empire

Fig: 4

In the Mughal period also, these kinds of memoirs which go beyond the political history of the Emperors and often into their personal domain, is found. The list ranges from the *BaburNama*, *HumayunNama*, *AkbarNama* to *JahangirNama*. And from the historical point of view, Akbar is considered as the most significant ruler of the Mughal Dynasty, because it was during his reign that history writing reached a new height all in terms of methodology, form and content. It is said that except for the *HumayunNama* and *AkbarNama*, the other two has been written by Babur and Jahangir themselves. Though a bit of controversy lies about Babur writing or dictating himself, these two Namas are in the form of an autobiography whereas the *AkbarNama* is a straight way political discourse arranged in a very chronological order which states the political and administrative history during Akbar's reign. Written by Abul Fazl, one of the nine jewels in Akbar's court, the *AkbarNama* has broken away with the idealized hagiographic mould of memoir writing and has actually followed two different modes of historiography. On one hand he traces the journey from Adam to the coming of Akbar and his rule and on the other hand he takes one year of Akbar's rule as one unit and thus mentions the events taking place within that year.

It is necessary to give an introduction on the other forms of "Nama" because the *HamzaNama* moves away completely from the known pattern of the Nama tradition as being either an autobiography or a memoir. It also tells the stories of heroes but the most important factor that makes it unique is that the stories illustrated in the *HamzaNama* were already a part of Persian oral tales and narrative tradition and there is no concrete evidence that the Hamza was really existent or is a fictional character. It was under the commission of Akbar that it found its way to both the print and the painting culture. Although the stories are taken from the Persian background they are presented as a blend of Persian form of miniature paintings and also the indigenized developing form of Mughal miniatures and thus the *HamzaNama* can aptly be said to be the key to Mughal Miniatures.

In the foreword given by John Seyller in his book *The Adventures of Hamza – Painting and storytelling in Mughal India* the legends of *Hamza* and the fact that till date it was one of the grandest manuscripts commissions produced in the mid-sixteenth century during the reign of Emperor Akbar comes to be known. This grand manuscript has a total of fourteen hundred folios which describe tales replete with monsters,

demons, heroes and villains. Legend goes that Akbar had a great liking to listen to the tales of *Hamza* as a kid and that is why with special interest he granted this monumental expression while he was still in his teenage years. The folios were arranged in fourteen volumes each of them kept in a large box. On one side of a folio, within a large, gold flecked and color toned paper frame there used to be a typically colorful painting about 69 centimeters long and 54 centimeters wide. The painting was done on cotton fabric that formed the main support for the heavy, multi layered folio. The other side of the folio was bordered with a rectangle framing 19 lines of Arabic script on gold flecked paper. Today only 170 of these folios are available but that too spread out among art collections throughout the world. The *HamzaNama* follows a very straight forward action filled narrative mode on stories of legendary heroes which is very unlike the standard notion of Persian poetry replete with metaphors and rhyming pattern or even the Mughal prosaic tradition of high flown propaganda. The tales of Hamza form one of the oldest and most popular romances in the Persian tradition and is thought of to be older than even Firdausi's most celebrated tenth century epic *Shahnamah* but the problem with *HamzaNama* is that it remained confined to the oral tradition only and never was an attempt made to canonize it before Akbar's initiatives to do so. The Hamza legend has the paternal uncle of the last Prophet, "Abd alMuṭṭalib" as the historical hero who died gloriously at the battle of Uhud in 625, fighting for Islam and also a second hero named, "Hamza ibn Abdullah" who led the Persian army against the Caliph Harun-ul-Rashid (c.786-809) and mounted military campaigns to India and China. The second Hamza is believed to have lived in Persia about two hundred years later than the first Hamza. With time these two Hamza have been conflated to form the idealized combination of bravery, piety and chivalrous Persian heroes. But the list of virtues of the Persian heroes fade out there because they do not stop for any philosophical reflections and that is why other characters like the Wazir and the resourceful spy, "Ayyar" is introduced to guide him and do all the down trodden work that is necessary. The fight was always against the infidels whose fate was ultimately to convert into Islam by force or by embrace. General motifs included allies with some fantastic creatures in distant unknown lands, or fighting giant creatures, sudden infatuations, cross dressing and various forms of trickery.

The *HamzaNama* was constructed as a compliment of the oral story telling tradition and that is why the paintings are very large in size in comparison to the general size of manuscripts which visually appeal to the audience from a distance. Unlike the Persian manuscript style, where the text is integrated into the paintings, almost every folio of the *HamzaNama* has a painting on the front side and a corresponding illustration of the episode painted on the back page. Now I shall proceed to show two paintings which show the style in which they differed from the Persian style of manuscript style, because the *HamzaNama* is considered to be the key to all early Mughal paintings. But before moving on to that another thing which is important to say is the nature of Persian epics in oral tradition for which I directly quote from Hanaway's study on this tradition:

Persian epic literature is a literature of action. The emphasis is not on human character development or accidents of fate, but on human action. The characters are generally preparing to fight, actually fighting, or celebrating after a fight. Whatever they are doing, action is the focus of the story.

And Seyller had also observed, "*This narrative elasticity does much to keep oral performances fresh and vibrant, but it greatly complicates the reconstruction of the HamzaNama manuscript.*"

1 Orality: A Brief Overview:

Orality in Medieval Literature has always been an "*academic backwater*" (expression borrowed by Rubanovich from Mukerji 1991:1) since the choice for the subject of research is tended to have often been guided by the evaluation of its aesthetic criteria and secondly there has always been a reluctance to make use of tools and approaches which are used in Western literature to discuss or research on Orality. The biggest gap still existing today is the dichotomy between the Orient and the Occident as orality and literacy seem very curiously to be inter connected with each other and it has been quite recent since Orality in the Medieval Period in the East has been started to be talked about. The first limitation that comes in the way if Orality as a genre is considered is that all the sources that tell us about the oral characteristics of a certain text, for example the English *Beowulf*

is not oral. It is written and also printed, which means Orality can only be reconstructed from the written record that also necessitates the requirement of Philology. In Medieval society, many factors were predominantly oral in nature, like transferring of skills and knowledge, music, preaching, legal system and last but not the least the overall communication system. The focus of this research topic is orality in terms of transmediality, how an oral performance is being transmuted into an audio visual printing mode, in the form of an illustrated manuscript. So the limitations and forms of Orality will now be dealt with in the rest of the chapter. Oral Literature if seen in a literal sense is a very contradictory term because “literature” means something that is “*written down in letters.*” (Reichl: 3) If something is already being written down then how can it be oral? If something is already being written down then how can it be oral? Some scholars have actually put forward a strong objection to the use of the phrase Oral Literature (Ong: 10-16). In Latin, the word “*littera*” means “letters” and English alongwith other European languages uses the word “*literature*” to denote something which is written down. In many other languages like the Croatian and the Serbian the phrase Oral Literature is not problematic but the Turks, Arabs and Germans use different word to denote Oral Literature. The Turkish use the word, “*Halk Edebiyati*” which means Folk Literature, the word *Edebiyati* is borrowed from the Arabic word, *Adabiyat*, derived from the word *Adab* which means a formal and polite way of greeting, it also sets a standardized level of civilized behavior of which literature is also considered to be a part. The Germans preferred using the word *Dichtung* instead of *Littérateur*. *Dichtung* comprised all kinds of “*belles letters*” be it in verse or prose form or even their presentations, so the term *Mundliche Dichtung* did not raise any kind of objection. Though many attempts have been made to justify the term Oral Literature, it still remains self contradictory. All these is said simply as an effort to justify the term Oral Literature which might appear somewhat contradictory but no other term can be more apt than this other than “*cumbrous circumlocutions*”.(Chadwick: 40: I, 5, n.1).

1.2 Confines of Chronos and Topos within Orality:

The time span covered by medieval literature is characterized by the Late Antiquity in Europe and the beginning of the Delhi Sultanate from c.1526 – c. 1540 C.E and again from c.1556- c.1707 C.E in India, contemporary to this the Safavid dynasty was ruling in Persia from c. 1501- c. 1736 C.E. But to gauge its exact time period and temporal geographical limit has always remained a bit fuzzy as it expanded from Latin West in Europe to Greek and Turkey in the East. The next problem that arises with this geographical expansion is how to set the limits? Actually orality encompasses every area of the above mentioned places, so how to confine it within a certain time and space is a huge limitation as the concept of Europe being the “Occident” and the East being the “Orient” makes this inclusion a questionable one. On the other hand, the fact that a massive cultural exchange of popular literature in oral form took place between the Latin West, Muslims and Jewish Spain along with the Western and Central Asian counter parts can also not be ignored. The popular narratives in and around the southern and eastern Mediterranean region also shared the Turkish, Arabic, Persian stories in the occidental mode of oral narration. Thus as already afore mentioned the direct investigation to the study of Orality in Medieval Period is not possible due to its preliminary limitations of both time and space. The topic of this present paper also faces the same problem of what can be considered as “the text”, and if there is one it is the collected and written version of the oral stories which will again lead to the dichotomy between the written and the spoken word.

1.3 Orality, Literacy and Textualization:

The Medieval Period has always shown a confusing connection between orality and literacy. Literacy here as the general definition means, is linked to the ability to write and it is a skill that was limited in a hierarchical order of the professional class of educated clerics and teachers and the degree of literacy also varies in different periods. Reading and writing are not congruent to each other; a person capable of reading might not be able to write. Thus the demarcation of orality poses a huge problem in a society where literacy

and illiteracy co-existed with each other. In case of Medieval Period, the problem gets more complicated because to justify the testimony of evidence it is not possible to do an ethnographic research also. Orality and Literacy are not only different mediums of production but also different ways of conceptualizing and expression; they form two entirely different mentalities in the transmission of texts. Walter J. Ong has distinguished between the thought and expression based on oral narratives and the restructuring of consciousness in the written texts.

1.4 Aurality:

Oral performance other than using of set formulas and clichéd oral styles is also a different yet important aspect of orality. The story when heard creates an entirely different reaction among the listeners rather than when it is read. The audience is in fact so much taken in with the narration that they actually follow the instructions of the story teller when asked to be quiet or pay attention and many others. Though it depends on the expertise of the story teller but hearing something and reading something definitely produce two different ways of contextualizing reality, producing, transmitting and structuring knowledge, and hence entirely different receptivity. The Persian Qissas and Dastans also came to life when they were spoken or recited and through this oral transmission only they spread from one region to another. Reading aloud was a very common practice in the Middle Ages irrespective of the spread of literacy prior to the invention of radio or television which replaced that mode of entertainment.

Thus these four aspects of orality apart from memorizing and variability formed the crux of the transaction from one performative tradition that is the act of storytelling to an audio-visual mode of storytelling through pictures and narrations both at the same time, in the *HamzaNama*.

An Introduction to The Qissas and Dastans:

There is no definite definition of either a Qissa or a Dastan. In Urdu, both Qissa and Dastan mean “a story” though Qissa is derived from the Arabic and Dastan from the Persian. The narrative genre to which they refer, go back to the medieval period in Persia as long as the 9th century as a popular form of storytelling during that period. Both the Qissa and the Dastan can be located within the larger generic category of “Romance” in a typology of world literature. Both the forms of Qissa and Dastan has been used in Medieval Persian literature as names for traditional narrative genre which has been studied by Hanaway who described it as,

a form of orally recited prose romance “created, elaborated, and transmitted” by professional narrators. The qissa, or dastan, genre had a universal appeal: it was cultivated in royal courts, and was also the chief form of medieval Persian folk narrative. (Hanaway: 139, 142-43)

Wherever Persian speakers went during the medieval period, their Qissas went with them. As Persian-speaking rulers gained an increasing foothold first in northern India, then in central and southwestern India, qissa-narrators were among their entourage. These professionals practiced their art of narration, called qissakhvani (*qis.s. ah k.hvānī*) or dastan-goī (*Dāstān gofī*) before small private parties, or at a single patron’s command. They were welcomed at the Mughal court: Jahāngīr, for example, had a qissa-narrator from Shiraz whose art he greatly enjoyed.

CONCLUSION:

The role of Transmediality is very important here because as Henry Jenkins had put in,

Trans media story telling represents a process where integral elements of a fiction get dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels for the purpose of creating a unified and entertainment experience.

He also tells that Trans media stories need not to be based on individual characters or specific plots but can rather build complex fictional worlds which would include multiple inter related characters and their stories. In the legends of Hamza also we see a same thing happening and thus I would like to conclude by saying that the *HamzaNama* never acquired a canonical narrative expression. Different telling and re-telling of

Hamza's adventures include different characters, different episodes, and different thematic emphasis but universally on a more personal level than the other Namas afore mentioned. And if we relate it to the notion of Trans media we will be able to see that every episode is unique and individual in its own way, it has its own story to tell which also serves as the ideal aesthetic form for an era of collective intelligence. The illustrations of the *HamzaNama* embody the very spirit of oral narrative tradition, characterised by tales within tales. Apart from the 'narrative elasticity' that Seyller had rightly observed, the works also represent the multiple realms of real, unreal and surreal elements. These diverse elements inhabit a remarkable range of environments, both natural and man-made. And in the process of doing so, the visual images subordinate history, heroic deeds and personalities, first to their purported illustration of the story and secondly to their visual interpretative leaps. Why painted? The answer is in the nature of the form of Persian Epics. Description of action is a traditional epic story telling form in Persian. This paper has tried to show and analyze in details about how both the Persian language and along with it the Qissa and Dastan tradition of Medieval Romance is entering the Indian subcontinent. It began with a brief discussion about what the paper will focus upon, and slowly moved on to a step by step analysis of how Persian as a language is entering the mainland of India. Since a language is bound to carry the baggage of its cultural, linguistic and geographical expanse it covers the later part of the chapter entirely focuses on how geographically through the medium of different empires and trade a culture, its people and a new language gets assimilated with another place and how through this assimilation a new form of literary tradition and even a new language, in this case Urdu in India is formed. It has paved the way for the larger framework of assimilation within which the proposed work is assumed to fit in.

WORKS CITED:

1. Abdulghani, Muhammad, *Pre-Mughal Persian in Hindustan: the growth of Persian language and literature in India from the earliest times to the advent of the Mughal rule*. The Allahabad Law Journal Press, Allahabad, 1941. Print.
2. Browne, Edward g. *A Literary History of Persia*, by Edward g Browne Vol 1 and 2. T. Fisher Unwin, 1902. Print.
3. De, Gruyter. Ed. Reichl, Karl, *Medieval Oral Literature*. Germany, 2012. Print.
4. Egger, Gerhart, *Hamza-Nama, Vollständige Wiedergabe der bekannten Blätter der Handschrift aus der Zeit Akbar des Grossen*. Wien. 1969. Print.
5. Foley, Miles, John, *Comparative Oral Traditions*, paper, Center for Studies in Oral Tradition, University of Missouri-Columbia, USA.
6. Hanaway, William L, *Persian Popular Romances Before the Safavid Era*. Columbia University, Dept. of Philosophy: unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 1970.
7. http://henryjenkins.org/2007/03/transmedia_storytelling_101.html (last accessed on 7th January, 2018).

8. Ong, Walter J., and John Hartley. *Orality and Literacy: the Technologizing of the Word*. Routledge, 2012. Print.
9. Rubanovich, Julia. Ed. *Orality and Textuality in the Iranian World: Patterns of Interactions across the Centuries*. Brill Publications. Leiden, Boston, 2015. Print.
10. Seyller, John, *The Adventures Of Hamza- Painting And Storytelling In Mughal India*. Ausstellungskatalog, Arthur Sackler Gallery, Washington, DC. 2002. Print.

This is an original piece of unpublished work and has not been sent anywhere before for publication.

Total Word Count: 5,787

Author Identity: Ankita Dutta, I am currently pursuing my Phd in Comparative Literature from Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar and have completed my Mphil in the same stream in 2017. I have done both my graduation and post graduation in Comparative Literature from Jadavpur University, Kolkata. My areas of interest are: Medieval History, the Nama Tradition, Diaspora Literature and Partition Literature with special reference to the Partition of Bengal and Folk Performative Traditions of Bengal.

