



Theme Note

International Seminar to be organized by

Comparative Literature Association of India

in collaboration with the

College of Commerce, Arts & Science, Patna

on

**“Persian-Arabic Poetics and South Asian Literatures:
Readings, Recoveries and Re-orientations”**

March 20-23, 2020

The comparative approach acknowledges the co-existence of diverse entities in our world and takes for its province the understanding of multiple relations between these entities, and the cultures of which they are constituents. Comparative practice demands that difference be respected paving the way for mutuality and understanding. This approach is particularly fruitful in the study of the arts and their nesting cultures in the Asian subcontinent. The inter-relationships between languages, forms of expression and artistic traditions which converge in this geographical area have been studied using categories such as ‘region’ (South Asia, the ‘global South’, the ‘third world’), history (the post-colonial, industrial modernity) or identity (based on caste, race, nation and also various theories of marginalization such as ‘subaltern’, ‘dalit’ etc). In this seminar the focus would be on the contact and relations between languages, traditions and expressive forms, the poetics of making and the aesthetics of dialogue, as principal factors shaping the plural cultures of the sub-continent and beyond: the Ganga-Jamnatehzeeb, the culture of intertextuality resulting from interactions between the Sanskrit, Prakrit and Dravidian cosmologies, the cross-fertilizations of these cultural domains by Persian-Arabic forms of expression, poetics and aesthetics. The hybridized cultural idioms of Dakkhini Urdu, Arabi Malayalam, Miyah poetry of Assam, not to mention the complex interwoven language varieties of the North-East, also demand close examination in the context of the larger role played by Persian-Arabic aesthetics and poetics in South Asia.

Persian-Arabic poetics has greatly facilitated multiple forms of dialogues between philosophy and religion, music and poetry, narrative and performance, and theatre and story-telling. Every part of India has a different story to tell while documenting the receptions of these forms of conversations that have been conducted over centuries. The conference will enable us to examine the nature of interactions between various discursive regimes rooted in the Persian-Arabic knowledge system. It is pertinent to remember that Raja Ram Mohan Roy's first book was a treatise, *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahiddin*(1805) written in Persian, with an introduction in Arabic. It will be rewarding to probe the manner in which the poetic and novelistic discourses in Indian languages have been shaped by translations from Persian-Arabic traditions. The conference offers us an opportunity to explore the transactions between diverse literary and artistic traditions that emerged out of the contacts of the Sanskrit-Prakrit, Dravidian and North-East language cultures with Persian-Arabic language cultures. These interactions are an ongoing process as the popular cultures of India ranging from Parsi Theatre to the Bollywood films would testify. The massive work of translations between Persian and Sanskrit marks a great moment of dialogic understanding in the cultures of the sub-continent. Our major writers such as Tagore and Premchand have greatly contributed towards the same shared culture of plurality. Writers like A.K.Ramanujan, ArunKolatkar and Amitav Ghosh have also been deeply aware of this subliminal realm of shared metaphors and images in their works.

We look forward to a fruitful exchange of ideas that will unpack the relations between the mainstream and margins, great and little traditions, major and minor languages within South Asia. The very idea of the 'literary' here is open to question as the subject proposed covers both the written and the oral, the philosophical and religious, the narrative and the performative. It is hoped that a new generation of scholars will welcome this opportunity to critically examine categories of reception and genres, nodal points of literary historiography in the evolution of literary movements, and the critical relations between ideology and articulation in art and literature. We particularly welcome well-researched papers which boldly raise questions about the relations between art, literature and society in the context of an emergent South Asia. Needless to say, papers can be presented in Hindi, Urdu and English.

Sub-themes:

- ❖ Reception of Persian-Arabic literary forms in South Asia
- ❖ Ganga-Jamni Culture as a conversation between cultures
- ❖ Tarjama/Anuvad/Vivartha/Paribhasha: Indian concepts of translation
- ❖ Ghazal in the sub-continent: A critical history
- ❖ Popular culture and Persian-Arabic traditions of story-telling/poetry/theatre.
- ❖ Historiography of Minor literary forms in the context of Persian-Arabic Literature
- ❖ Literary Movements in Indian Languages and Persian-Arabic traditions
- ❖ Sufism and Bhakti Poetry: Grounds of Comparison

Other Relevant Details: -

- Abstracts of about 300 words along with short bio-note of about 100 words may be sent to Prof. Safdar Imam Quadri, Convener, College of Commerce, Arts & Science, Patna, Opposite Rajendra Nagar Terminal, Kankarbagh Road, P. O. Lohianagr, Patna: 800020(Bihar) at his Email ID: <mailto:safdarimamquadri@gmail.com>
- Papers may be presented in Urdu, Hindi and English which must be mentioned at the time of submission of the abstract.
- All presentations must be completed within 20 minutes.
- There will be a few plenary sessions.
- Registration fee shall be applicable as follows: -

Outstation participants	:	Rs. 3000/-
Local participants	:	Rs 1500/-
Research Scholars	:	Rs 1500/-
Students	:	Rs 1000/-
Foreign Participants	:	US\$ 150

- Important Dates:
Last date for submission of abstracts : 10 Jan 2020
Communication of acceptance : 05 Feb 2020
Completion of registration : 25 Feb 2020

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