



**International Research Journal of Interdisciplinary & Multidisciplinary Studies (IRJIMS)**

A Peer-Reviewed Monthly Research Journal

ISSN: 2394-7969 (Online), ISSN: 2394-7950 (Print)

Volume-II, Issue-VII, August 2016, Page No. 86-92

Published by: Scholar Publications, Karimganj, Assam, India, 788711

Website: <http://www.irjims.com>

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## **The contributions of Islamic education to the Indian Literature and Language**

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### **Abstract**

*The contributions of Islamic education towards the Indian literature and language are seen in different aspects. The Arabic language by virtue of its huge words stock has made an access to Indian literature and thereby it has enriched the standard of Indian languages. This kind of literary as well as linguistic contribution of Arabic has brought forth a new era to the Indian literature. The last not the least, contribution of Arabic language and literature to the Indian society is the cultural progress which has caused a great change to the cultural aspect of Indian people. A deep study reveals that the contribution of the Islamic Institutions such as Moktabs, different types of Madrasas, Jamiyas, Khankas, and Religious Assemblies etc. since their origin in India, have produced learned people, intellectuals, artists and scientists over the time. An account of the development of Islamic education in Maktabas and Madrasas in India since the 13<sup>th</sup> century has influenced non-Muslims by different generations and still exists. Islamic education from Islamic Institutions is produced many scholars and learned men, not in theology but in other subjects as well. The products of Islamic education influenced the culture, language as well contributing in Islamic sciences, social sciences and literature, art and architecture, language and literature, culture and civilization, history and archaeology, music and musicology etc. The present paper is attempted to highlight the glorious contributions of Islamic education to the Indian Literature and language.*

**Key words: Islamic Education, India, Moktab, Madrasas, Indian Literature, Language**

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**Introduction:** It is very well known that the Islamic educations have been imparted through the Islamic institutions like Moktabas, different types of Madrasas, Jamiyas, Khankas, and Religious Assemblies etc. But it is the Madrasas, which have taken tremendous steps towards the Islamic educations. However, since centuries, Islamic Institutions have been producing literary people, intellectuals, artists and scientists throughout the world. Basically, Islamic Institutions imparted theological studies and classical languages like Arabic, Urdu and Persian. In India, during medieval period, Islamic Institutions produced and supplied candidates to the State for the posts of Sadr Qazis, Muftis and other Ecclesiastical Administrators. The products of Islamic Institutions influenced the culture,

language, thought and other historical aspects of social life. Islamic education still have rich heritage of its language and literature, art and architecture, culture and civilization, music and musicology, sciences, social sciences, history and archaeology, etc. But, here we only confined to the contributions of Islamic education to the Indian Literature and Language. In case of Indian Literature and Language also, the contribution of Islamic education is also remarkable.

**Contribution to Indian Literature:** Arabic, Persia and Urdu are used for literary and medium composition in Islamic Institutions. Arabic language is used for religious writings and become the major subject of Islamic Institutions. Muslims, have however, cherished Arabic all along as a language of literary expansion. Several Muslim empires were established on the soil of India which was continued for more than eight centuries. India became enriched with their treasures of various sciences of knowledge, arts, culture and literatures. It is to be remarked here that India has been known as one of the most well-known non-Arab states where Islamic language and literature grew, developed and flourished on a large scale. During the period of Arab rule in the Indian Territory, Arabic continued to be the official language of the government and administration and the unrivalled medium of sacred knowledge and literary achievement. Moreover, various Islamic Institutions and cultural institutions of higher learning under the personal guidance and scholarly interest of the Sultans were set up which produced a good number of poets, writers, Islamic thinkers, commentators of the holy Qur'an, scholars of the Hadith etc. Their noble works can be compared to any work of any great Arab scholar. Mention may be made here in this regard about the following scholars, who have written a much work in Indian Arabic and developed the Indian literature. For example, Gulam Ali Azad Bilgrami (1116-1200A.H.), who has penned many outstanding Arabic books on history and literature like "Subhatul-Marjani". Besides, he is regarded to be the greatest Indian Arabic poet and is well known as Hassanul-Hind. He composed about 11,000 verses, which are the living proof of his extraordinary poetic talent. Allamah Sighani Lahori (d. 1252), the author of the great book "al-Ubabuz-Zakhir wa al-Lubabul-Fakhir" on grammar and lexicography. Shah Waliullah Dihlawi (1114-1176A.H.), who has produced the great book "Hujjatullahil-Balighahi", on the science of Hadith. Abdul Hai al-Hasani (1286- 1341 A. H.), the author of the famous book "Nuzhatul-Khawatir" on the great Indian scholars in different fields. Zainuddin bin Abdul Aziz who written an authentic prose work entitled "Tuhfatul Mujahidin" on the struggle of the Zamorins of Calicut against the Portuguese. Siddiq Hasan Khan (1248-1307 A.H.) who in spite of being a poet was a great scholar of Hadith. He was also an author of a good number of valuable books on Arabic philology like "Abjadul-Uloom" etc. Muhammad -Ala al-Thanawi composed an outstanding dictionary called "Kash-shaf Istilahat al-Funun" on technical terms. Abul Faid Faidi (954- 1004A.H.), the writer of the undotted tafsir "Sawatiul-Ilham". Abdul Haqq Dihlawi (958-1052 A.H) was the pioneer of Hadith studies in the Indian subcontinent. He produced many pearls and gems in Hadith literature like "Lamatut-Tanqeeh". Fadl Haqq Khairabadi (1212-1278 A.H.), the greatest Indian philosophers also composed many valuable books. He was also

the author of the famous book called “Al-Hadiyyatus-s sayeediyyah” on wisdom literature, etc.

Arabic as well as the religious sciences had lost their position of pride because of the disgusting aggressive educational policy of the British government. Even then, Arabic language and literature, today, has been one of the important subjects of learning. It is to be mentioned here that the Nadwis (scholars produced by Nadwa) took utmost care in order to bringing out the Arabic language from the corner of obscurity and stagnation and proved with potency and lively activity that Arabic is a living language having bright prospects. They are still on their noble efforts in enriching and developing Arabic language and Islamic culture in India.

In the twentieth century, Indian Islamic institutions have produced a good number of literary figures and writers who got worldwide fame. Their literary products are similar to that of the great Arab litterateurs. For example, Abdul Aziz Maimoni (1888-1978 A.D.), who formerly was the chair person of Arabic in the universities of Aligarh and Karachi. Since long he has been recognized as one of the greatest living authorities on Arabic language and literature. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (1914- 1999 A.D), who was the author of the world famous book "Islam and the World". Hamidud-din al- Farahi (1280-1349A.H), who has composed the famous tafsir "al-Imaan Fi Aqsamil- Quran” and many others. These writers were greatly influenced by modern Arabic literature and its various art forms. Apart from that, they were impressed by western literatures. Some modern styles and themes like criticism, politics, etc., therefore, are visible in their popular writings. They are also followed by some later modern writers in these aspects to some extent.

The writers and scholars, who have been taking part in the field of teaching in the modern colleges and universities, have taken part mainly in translation. We note that a number of valuable works have been translated from Sanskrit, English, Urdu, etc. into Arabic by them. Likewise, they have also translated hundreds of short stories, plays, novels as well as social, cultural, political and religious scholarly essays from English, Hindi and many other Indian languages into Arabic. In this way, the modern university teachers have played a great role in enriching Arabic literature and Islamic culture which can never be ignored.

Some of the writers, who have earned high popularity in contemporary universities through their erudite treatises, are Dr. Abdul Halim Nadwi, Dr. Zubair Ahmad Faruqi, Dr. Masud Rahman Khan, Dr. Md. Rashid Nadwi. Dr. Shafiq Ahmad Khan Nadwi and Dr. Aslam al-Islahi. On the other hand, the scholars of the religious institutions have occupied leading position in compiling and producing books purely in Arabic on Islamic as well as various literary topics. Mention may be made herewith the names of Anowar Shah Kashmiri (1292-1352A.H), the author of the most authentic book on Hadith literature “Faidul Bari”, Rabi Hasan Nadwi (b. 1929 A.D), the present Rector of Nadwa and the author of the outstanding book "al-Adabul Arabi Baina -Ardin wa Naqdin", Wahiduzzaman Kairanwi (1929-1996 A.D), the writer of the book "al-Qira-atul-Wadihah” and so on. In reality, they

have dedicated themselves exclusively to the study of religious sciences and to the cultivation of high standard Arabic.

It is significant to mention here that like all other non-Arab states, in India also; the holy Qur'an also participated in developing the Arabic language, widening its scopes and strengthening its basic elements. The Muslims in India studied the Arabic with great importance in order to appreciating the teachings of the divinely messages of the Qur'an. Now-a-days, there are many job opportunities in non Arab countries for the learners of the Arabic language, in addition to the Arab land. For example, in India too, an increasing number of scopes for the Arabic learners have been created in various private and government educational institutions, internet, radio, television, tourism, translation, journalism, different multinational companies and in the offices of the intelligence bureaus in addition to the Arab embassies situated in New Delhi.

In the middle of nineteenth Century, in Assam, Hazrat Shah Milan or Azan Faqir, the most renowned Muslim saint, poet of Assam, who came from Bhagdad and said to have entered Ahom kingdom with his brother Nabi pir. In the field of Zikir and Zari, he made an outstanding contribution towards the popular literature of Assam. He possibly composed about hundred and sixty Zikirs. Besides him, Sheikh Farid, Chan kha, Bandar Faqir and many other had also composed Zikirs. Dr. Atwar Rahman, Reader in the department of physics, Gauhati University, has contributed to Assamese literature by writing books such as "Mrityur Somay aru Pisat", Quran, Gyan aru Musalman" and "Muslim Bibhah". In his works he has given scientific explanation of the Quranic verses besides their Assamese translation which would certainly mark ahead in the development of Assamese literature. Maulana Abdul Jalil Ragibi who was an ex principal of Jamia Jalalia Islamia, Hojai and an ex M.L.A. of Jamunamukh L.A.C. is a great portion of Arabic as well as Urdu language and literature. His outstanding works like "Islamor Dristit Manav Santan", "Islamor Dristith Bibhah Bandhan", "Charitra Chitrakanot Islam" etc. are very important for Muslim people in modern age. Another prominent Muslim scholar Mufti Khairul Islam, Pir-e Kamil, Ameer- Shariyat, North Eastern India, Saikhul Hadith in Darul Hadith parmaibheti Islamia Madrasaa, has contributed a lot mainly Muslim Jivon Alongkar, Jakator Bristarito Masael, Muslimor Namaz, Hajj korar pronali, etc. Another important organization of Assamese Muslims in Jama'at-e Islami (North Eastern Branch), this organization took the initiative to publish the weekly newspaper Mujahid for the first time among the common Muslim. Nadwatut Ta'mir is also a socio- religious organization founded by late Maulana Abdul Jalil Choudhury and grown up under his able leadership and careful guidance. This organization has been developing under the skillful observation of the prominent scholar, Moulana Tayeebur Rahman Barbhuya, Ameer-e Shariyat and Ameer Nadwatut Ta'mir, North East India and the member of the working committee, All India Muslim Personal law Board. In present, all the senior and Title Madrassas are running by the government are influenced by the religious and philosophical concept of Nadwatut Ta'mir and become the role model and pioneer establishment of the govt. Madrassas in hundred speed all over the north east India

especially in Assam. All these writings and compositions have developed the Indian Literature in other aspects.

Persian language came to India along with Ghaznavida and established itself as a language of Muslim elite. Firdausi composed the Shah Nama and Ghazal. Amir Khasrau's historical epic started a translation. Besides these, the Mahabharatha, Ramayana, Atharva Veda, Haribansa were translated into Persian language by different intellectuals. In 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the style of Persian poetry merged with that of other Indian language, especially with Urdu and was known as Sabk-i-Hindi.

Again, Amir Khusrau, composed some of his poems in Urdu. The developments which combined to make Urdu, the medium of Instruction, include, Hindus and Muslims studying together in some Moktaps and Madrasa without any restrictions of race, rank or religion. Later, Urdu becomes the important language of India.

**Contribution to Indian Languages:** The influence of Arabic language on modern Indian languages is clearly seen not only in the literary form but in phonology and vocabulary form as well. The subject of Arabic language in India has a long history to study, which was started with the arrival of Muslims in India. As stated above, India and Arabia were commercially, politically and culturally connected from ancient times, even as early Achaemmerian period. The development of Hindi and Assamese language in the Indo-Islamic environment; with thousands of Arabic, Urdu and Persian words, phrases and thought from naturalized in them, needs to be noticed in all the local languages of northern, southern, western and eastern part of India such as Punjabi, Bengali, Kashmiri, Marathi and Assamese etc. There are a large number of Arabic words and expressions are found not only in the spheres of poetry and literature but in popular proverbs and daily speech as well. The adjustment has been so perfect and natural that cannot be imagined without speakers, specialists and the scholars. This large scale linguistic absorption points out that there was a considerable flow of cultural and linguistic elements from outside, one side to another; for when a language received words and expressions into its own system from another language. It takes not only a number of sounds syllables but areas and conception networks which they are contained.

The classical languages like Arabic, Persia and Urdu taught at Islamic institutions exercised great influences on Indian regional languages. Thus, the Islamic institutions made notable contribution to the enrichment of the regional languages like Hindi, Assamese, Punjabi, Bengali, Kashmiri, Marathi and their regional languages. Gujrati and Punjab have changed the Persian and Arabic sound to suit their alphabet. For instance; q has been changed to k or kh; Warq changed to warakh; Qamis changed to kami. Sometimes Q changed to G: like, Taqawi changes to tagawi; and Taqada changes to tagado. F usually becomes ph, but sometimes it changes to p, as kalaf, tafsil and sanjaf have become kalap, tafsil and sanjip. Many Persian and Arabic words have borrowed by Gujratis, either the second letter is doubled or a vowel has been inserted in the middle of the word. For example: Aql has been changed to akhal; and Umr to ummar. At time a vowel or a

consonant is added at the end of the word, such as Urf changes to urfe; and Kharid changes to kharidi.

Another way to assimilate Arabic or Persian words is to drop a letter initially, medially or finally.

The use Arabic words are found in the Assamese language mainly through diplomatic correspondence made by the Ahom Kings with their Muslim counterparts. In a large number of Historical works and Land revenue documents of the later Ahom period have also revealed so many Arabic words. Besides the modern secular writings of different authors either by Muslims or by non Muslims, the Vaishnava literature is also enriched with such words of Arabic origin. During the time of Srimanta Sankar Deva, the use of Arabic elements had much penetrated into the Assamese society. It is interesting to mention that Srimanta Sankar Deva, the Vaishnava propagator and a celebrated Assamese poet has employed a pretty number of Arabic and Persian words in his famous work, the Kirtan Ghosha, a valuable religious book of Vaishnava faith, where as much as 10 words of Arabic origin has been seen, such as f: Fool=stupid; Balance= remaining, Khabor =Information; Khali = Empty etc.

In the two famous books - "Zikir Aru Zari and Azan Fakir Aru Suriya Zikir" edited by a famous Assamese literary person, Syed Abdul Malik, frequently used some Arabic words related to Islamic thought and theme. The use of Arabic elements in the Assamese language had been very common during the Twentieth Century as even today. Assamese writers, both Muslim and non Muslim, used Arabic terms and words in Assamese writings with a view to making their expression more suitable and appropriate. Some other use of Arabic in Assamese writing are as follows: Adab = Culture; Ahmaq = Stupid; Aqel = Sensible; Araj = Request; Asar = Call for an obligatory prayer of the Muslims; Baba = Papa; Banyan = construction, Bismillah = with the name of Allah; Dastur Duniya =The Earth; Fazal Hajam = Digestion; Haramjada = to obtain; Jabbar =Almighty, force; Kamina =Dishonest, conspirator; Keramatali =Miracle; Khabar = information; Koifiyat = Statement of circumstances; Jama't = Party, group (of people); Jiyarat = Visit; Kamiz = Shirt; Masjid = Mosque; Maskil = Difficult; Mohar = Dower. From this illustrated example of the books of different tastes and types, referred to above it is presumed that Arabic words and terms are found more or less in every book of Assamese literature on any subject. The Assamese writers of the Valley are so influenced by Arabic elements that they do not hesitate to apply these Arabic words in their respective writing, knowing or unknowing their originality. It is found that even some high caste Hindu youths also used to learn the Arabic or Persian language and applied them for making their expression more suitable and ornamented.

Punjabi, like most of other regional languages, also has a rich Arabic, Persian and Urdu vocabulary, which is used in the daily lives of the people. Moreover, Islamic culture and literature and language are greatly influenced the Punjabi, Bengali languages also. The word Rubb or Rabb in Punjabi word is borrowed from Arabic language. Mehar, Karm and Bakhshis are expressed of divine grace. Nazar or Nadar expresses the same concept in the spiritual writing in Sikh faith. Dargah is both the divine portal and memorial erected to the

Muslim saints. Halal and Haram, Fakir, Darbesh are both Arabic words used in Indian language frequently. Dar, which cognates with the Sanskrit Duvar, comes from Persian. Certain Arabic word, such as Fateh used in the terminology of Sikh faith, are the inalienable part of Sikh salutation. The other words which have been replaced by Perso-Arabic expression are Rah, Dawa, Arah, Madan, Jungle, Rasid, Karja, Seah etc. The language, literature and the subject taught at Madrassas had a wider social dimension and enriched the Indian Culture in different levels, in different parts of the subcontinent.

**Conclusion:** Thus, from the discussion, made above, it is clear that although the India is a Non Arabic country, but due to the advent of Arabian in India, changed the Indian literature and language in different ways. Due to the advent of Arabian, many Muslims are emerged in India and consequently the Islamic education grew and developed in India. Not only that the Islamic education able to develop the Indian literature in a notable way. Many thinkers, writers, intellectuals were born and brought up in India and influenced the Islamic thought upon the Indian languages and literatures. The sweet languages of Islam i.e. Arabic, Persia and Urdu influenced a lot upon the Indian languages such as Hindi, Punjabi, Gujrati, Marati, Bengali, Assamese etc. and developed the Indian languages.

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