ABSTRACT

Hazin, whose proper name is Mahammad Ali, was the son of Sheikh Abu Talib Lahijani. He was born in Isfahan in 1103 A.H. He began his education when he was only four years old. The teachers from whom he received his education have at length been discussed in Tazkira'tul Ahwal. He has been trained in philosophy, logic, theology, poetics by the teachers like Maulana Shah Mahammad Shirazi, Maulana Malik Husain Qari, Maulana Mahammad Muhsin Kashani, Shaikh Khalil Ullah Taliqani, Mirza Kamal-ud-Din Hasan Fasayi, Mahammad Tahir Isfahani, Shaikh Inayat Ullah Gilani, Maulana Mahammad Sadiq Ardistani, Maulana Abd-ul-Karim Ardakani.

Due to uncertain political and social conditions, Hazin was forced to live a wandering life. He finally left his country for India in 1146 A.H. where he spending the last face of his life died in 1180 A.H. in Banaras. Hazin as it comesout from his Tazkirah was a prolific writer and was a poet of unique style in the tradition of Indian style of persian poetry.
Besides four, Diwans he has also left the following prose works to prosterity.


This speaks volume of his wide reading.

Tazkiraul Ahwal and Tazkiratul Muasereen are the main works which have been dealt here in this thesis entitled “CONTRIBUTION OF SHAIKH ALI HAZIN TO INDO-PERSIAN PROSE (WITH REFERENCE TO TAZKIRATUL MUASEREEN AND TAZKIRATUL AHWAL)”

The Tazkiratul Muasereen has been written as claimed by Hazin in Nine days in the year 1165 A.H. Tazkiratul Muasereen is about the
biographical information of 20 contemporary Ulamas (Scholars) and 80 contemporary poets. The Tazkirah is divided into two Firqah, the first is about the Ulama and the second is about the poets. In the present study the information provided by Hazin has been critically examined with other records and the improbabilities found in the memoire of Hazin have been indicated with comments. He has also not provided complete and necessary information about the major poets like – Mirza Muiz Fitrat, Shoukat Bukharai, Sa’yid Gilani, Mirza Tahir, Mahammad sayeed Ashraf, Syeed Ali Khan, Mirza Muhsin Tasir etc. These short comings have also been supplemented. The claim of Hazin that the Tazkirah was written in nine days is also brag without logic.

His Tazkiratul Ahwal is also one amongst his most important works. It is an eye witness account of the contemporary socio-cultural and political history. The Tazkirah was written in Delhi in 1154 when Hazin was at the age of fifty one. This Tazkirah contains complete biographical informations of the author from his birth (1103) to the year 1154 A.H. when it was written.
While studying this Tazkirah, comments on its historical value and also on its short comings have been provided.

Tazkiratul Ahwal is a primary source of Nadir Shah’s invention of India but also suffers from the want of many details. The following passage from Lockhart will provide a contrast.

“It will be recalled that the Persian court had on several occasions requested the Mughal Emperor to close his frontiers to Afghan fugitives, and that the Emperor had replied that he would do so. Nothing however had been done, as was found at an early stage in the campaign in Afghanistan. Nadir, in anger, thereupon dispatched Muhammad Khan Turkoman to Delhi to complain of the failure of the Mughal forces to close the frontier: he gave the envoy strict orders not to remain at the Mughal court for more than days. When, in due course, Muhammad Khan Turkoman delivered this letter, the Emperor and his ministers were much perplexed; if they replied, by what title should they address Nadir? Instead of deciding this question immediately, they resolved to return no answer until the result of siege of Qandahar became known. Moreover, despite the remonstrance of Muhammad Khan, they refused to give him leave to
depart. A whole year thus passed, and when, after the fall of Qandahar, there was still no reply from Delhi and no news of Muhammad Khan, Nadir sent him emphatic orders to return at once and to bring whatever reply the Emperor might wish to give.

Without waiting for an answer to this massage, Nadir set out from Nadirabad for Ghazna on the 21st May, 1738, and crossed the Indian frontier, apparently at or near Mukur, a few days later. Thus begun the invention of India”¹.

Similarly his information about Afghan war suffers from the want of necessary details. The following passages from A literary History of Persia by E.G. Brown will testify to this fact.

“In A.D. 1707 Qandahar, a constant bone of contention between the Safawi kings of Persia and the “Great Moghuls” of India, was in the possession of the former, and was governed in a very autocratic manner by a Georgian noble named Gurgin Khan. Mir Ways, an Afghan chief whose influence with his fellow countryman made him an object of

suspicion, was by his orders banished to Isfahan as a state prisoner. There, however, he seems to enjoy a considerable amount of liberty and to have been freely admitted to the court of Shah Husayn. Endowed with considerable perspicacity and a great talent for intrigue, he soon formed a pretty clear idea of the fictions whose rivalries were preparing the ruin of the country, and with equal caution and cunning set himself to fan the suspicions to which every great Persian general or provincial governor was exposed. This was the easier in the case of one who, being by birth a Christian and a Georgian of noble family, might without gross improbability, be suspected of thinking more of the restoration of his own and his country's fortunes than of the maintenance of the Persian Empire, though there seems in fact no reason to suspect of any disloyalty.

Having sown this seed of suspicion and completely ingratiated himself with the Persian court, Mir Ways sought and obtained permission to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca. While there he took another important step for the furtherance of his designs. He sought from the leading ecclesiastical authorities a fatwa, or legal opinion, as to whether the orthodox Sunni subjects of a heretical (i.e Shi'a) Muslim ruler were
bound to obey him, or were justified, if occasion arose, in resting him, if necessary by force of arms. The decision, which supported the latter alternative and so accorded with his designs, he carried back with him to Isfahan and subsequently to Qandahar, whether he was permitted to return, with strong recommendations to Gurgin Khan, in 1709. There he soon organized a conspiracy against the latter, and, taking advantage of the temporary absence of a large part of the Persian garrison on some expedition in the neighbourhood, he and his followers fall on the remainder when they were off their guard, killed the greater number of them, including Gurgin Khan, and took possession of the city. It was at this juncture that the Fatwa obtained at Mecca proved so useful to Mir Ways, for by it he was able to overcome the scruples of the more faint-hearted of his followers, who were at first inclined to shrink from a definite repudiation of Persian suzerainty, but who now united with the more hot-heated of their countrymen in electing Mir Ways Prince of Qandahar and General of the national troops.

Several half-hearted attempts to subdue the rebellious city having failed, the Persian government despatched Khusraw Khan, nephew of the
late Gurgin Khan, with an army of 30,000 men to effect its subjugation, but in spite of an initial success, which led the Afghans to offer to surrender on terms, his uncompromising attitude impelled them to make a fresh desperate effort, resulting in the complete defeat of the Persian army (of whom only some 700 escaped) and the death of their general. Two years later, in A.D. 1713, another Persian army commanded by Rustam Khan was also defeated by the rebels, who thus secured possession of the whole province of Qandahar.

Mir Ways, having thus in five or six years laid the foundations of the Afghan power, died in A.D. 1715, and was succeeded by his brother Mir Abdullah, whose disposition to accept, under certain conditions, Persian suzerainty led to his murder by his nephew Mir Mahmud, son of Mir Ways, who was forthwith proclaimed king. The weakness of the Persian government thus become apparent, other were led to follow the example of the Afghans of Qandahar.

In A.D. 1720 Mir Mahmud assumed to aggressive, crossed the deserts of Sistan, and attacked and occupied Kirman, whence, however, he was expelled four months later by the Persian general Lutf-Ali Khan,
who, after this victory, proceeded to Shiraz and began to organize “the best-appointed army that had been seen in Persia for many years” with a view to crushing the Afghans and retaking Qandahar.”1

In the introduction of the thesis a brief biography of Hazin has been presented with care, and chaff from the grain has been removed. The introduction also provides critical notes on Hazin as a prose writer. Hazin in his prose works has employed both ornate and lucid style.

Hazin had some reservation about the quality of non-natives in poetry. His views about the non-natives ability of language generated a reaction and consequently a literary war between Hazin and Khan Arzu broke out. Khan Arzu’s sharp reaction was welcomed by other contemporaries but Hazin also had several supporters on his back. Hazin’s view about poetry and poets particularly about non-native poets has also been taken into accounts.