CHAPTER - VII

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After a thorough study of the previous chapters on the present work entitled "Influence of the Holy Qur'ân and the Hadith on the Arabic Prose Literature in Medieval India", we may draw the conclusion that the language and literature play the most important role for the progress and prosperity of the entire human society as illustrated in the following paragraphs.

The language exchanges ideas and expressions among a group of people or between two individuals with the help of sounds and gestures in view of communicating each other feelings. The human being is endowed with the skill of language in different mode of expressions. The latter gives a full picture of human society by means of literary elements like prose and poetry, drama and novel, fiction and essays covering all sorts of written documents, which imparts every type of informations in various mode of expressions. The socio-cultural scenario of a society or a nation is reflected in the contents of literature. Hence the role of literature can not be ruled out in any society or nation.

Similarly we find scholars of outstanding calibre produced remarkable works on Arabic language and literature in Medieval India. Arabic belongs to the Semitic family of languages and it is the youngest and living representative of this family of languages. Arabic occupies the best position among them all, because other Semitic branches are almost represented by the characteristics of Arabic language, and Arabic bears some distinctive features which give sufficient evidences of its Semitic origin in matters of phonetics, morphology, syntax and vocabulary. Arabic has been classified into two classes - Classical and Modern. Classical Arabic is shown as the language of the Qur'ân.
and the Hadith and other Classical literature. It is regarded as an ideal and standard language anywhere in the Arab world. Modern Arabic is presented as the Universal language of the Arabic speaking world which is understood by all Arabic speakers. It is the language of the vast majority of written material and of films, TV shows, lectures etc. It has got the familiarity far and wide due to its being the language of Islamic religion, trade and commerce and international communications. Thirty different varieties of colloquial Arabic are spoken throughout the Arab world. Writing system in Arabic starts from the 4th century AD, but its earliest document dates back from 512 AD. From 7th century AD, Arabic letters developed to a great extent and took a new form of alphabets adding dots with the existing letters in order to avoid ambiguities. Two types of Arabic (i.e. Kufic and Naskhi) scripts have been used in accordance with their gradual development and chronological history as it appears in the scenario of Arabic language and literature.

The great body of Arabic literature includes works produced by Arabic speaking Turks, Persians, Syrians, Egyptians, Indians, Jews, and other Africans and Asians, as well as the Arabs themselves. After the advent of Islam being influenced by the Qur'an and the Hadith, it reached to the climax of its development in the Golden Age and it holds a premier position in the domain of world literature. In fact, it has played a progressive role in the development of both the Islamic and the secular literary productions. Its gradual upliftments have been established over the periods of pre-Islamic, early Islamic, Umayyad, Abbasid and Modern periods.

The Holy Qur'an is the eternal word of Allah. It was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through the arch angel Gabriel within a period of twenty three years beginning from 610 A.D. and ending in 632 A.D. It is understood both as a spiritual touchstone and literary archetype. From the standpoint of Arabic language, the literary style of the Holy Qur'an has been
inimitable (sura, 2:23) and the content unapproachable for human being. It contains various subjects on juridical and canonical, rituals and precepts about prayer and fasting, pilgrimages and marriages, the divisions of inheritance and panel law. It also consists of numerous historical and legendary references and there are numerous exhortations to monotheism, to repentance, as well as threats of punishment on the day of judgement.

The literary history shows that the Arabic language and literature has been originated from the holy Qur'ān and developed by virtue of its linguistic and literary styles. It is not an exaggeration to say that the linguistic model of the Qur'ān has set the standard of the Classical Arabic which is followed everywhere in the Arab world. Moreover, it has ample sources to fillip the religious, philosophical and linguistic sciences, e.g. 'Ilm al-Fiqh (علم الفقه) and Fara'id (فرائض) and 'Ilm al-Balāghah (علم البلاغة) (i.e. ma'āni, bādii and bādi') along with other branches of Arabic literature. In brief, it has played a vital role in the overall evolution of the Arabic language and literature.

On the other hand, Hadith is meant by all that which the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) spoke, did and approved. It plays the important role after the Holy Qur'ān in all the spheres of Arabic language and literature as well as Islamic law. Because the Qur'ān is the fountain head of Muslim law and absolute final authority, while Hadith is the first and foremost interpretation of the Holy Qur'ān.

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) did not encourage properly to compile Hadith due to the fear of its mixing with the Qur'ānic verses. So, only a few treatises were made during the life time of the Prophet (PBUH). Likewise, the Rightly Guided Caliphs were also not interested in this affair. But the Umayyad Caliph, 'Umar b. 'Abdu'l-‘Azīz (R.717 - 719 A.D.) firstly issued an order to compile Hadith for its preservation. Then his order was carried out by Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri (d. 124 / 741), a jurist and traditionist of that time. Again
the Abbasid Caliph, Abu Ja‘far al-Mansūr (R. 754 - 775 A.D.) passed an order to Malik b. Anas (d. 795 A.D.) for compilation of Hadith. Accordingly, he compiled “al-Muwatta”, the first great corpus of Muslim law. When a problem of fabricated false hadith arose, the distinguished scholars took the matter seriously, as a result of which al-Sīhah al-Sitta (الصحاب السَّتَة) were compiled. Apart from these, musnad, sunan and musannaf classes of traditions were compiled by some traditionists. Since the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was well-versed and eloquent in Arabic in communicating with all the tribes of the Arabs, so his language was the best example of Arabic prose. Subsequently the collection of Hadith and its compilation led to the development of prose style of Arabic literature. Therefore, the Hadith literature has played the vital role in the development of Arabic language and literature to a great extent just after the Holy Qur’ān.

The Holy Qur’ān is a unique literary guide and linguistic authority of the Arabic language and literature. On the other hand, the Hadith is considered as the second authority of the same. In fact, linguistic, lexical, philological and legal sciences as well as historical and geographical studies are indebted their origin and development to the Holy Qur’ān. On the other hand, Hadith has made a great impact on religious and literary sciences and due to which Qur’ānic exegesis, jurisprudence, historiography and literary works are developed to a great extent.

As a whole, the literary contributions related to religious, linguistic and intellectual sciences have been originated from both the Qur’ān and the Hadith and therefrom various branches of Arabic literature came forth especially dealing with the subjects of Adab, Tafsir, Farā’id, Kalām, Fiqh, Geography, History, Philosophy, Qirā’at and Tajwid, Astronomy, Mathematics, Medicine etc. It appears from the literary point of view that Arabic prose as a medium of artistic expression makes its first impressive appearance in the Qur’ān. The prose...
The style of Arabic language has been standardised by the literary elegance of the Holy Qur'ān which has influenced the growth, scope and character of the whole range of Arabic prose literature. Following the Holy Qur'ān, the Hadith has made an extension in prose works of Arabic literature. Since, the Holy Qur'ān is a fundamental text of Islam, its every verse was felt utmost necessary to understand and the necessity of its comprehensive elucidation led to the production of Tafsir literature.

As and when it was felt very much necessary to know the reading and recital of the Qur'ān correctly, a lot of works were produced. In such a way, Qirāʿāt and Tajwid literature have come in the realm of Arabic literature. As Islam spread out, some new problems arose for the new converts to acquaint with the injunctions of the Holy Qur'ān and the Hadith. Further, the commandments of the Holy Qur'ān related to ritual and worship, civil and legal obligations and punishment are conspicuous only in about two hundred verses which could not comprise all the aspects of social life of civil, criminal, political, financial etc. To solve all the religious problems, Islamic legists and jurists took the help of the consensus verdicts of Ulama' and applied analogy, where necessary, in carrying out works of Fiqh and a galaxy of works came to this field. Likewise, a problem arose in matters of wealth of inheritance that how to distribute among the heirs of the deceased. To solve this matter, a good number of works were composed, known as Fara'id literature. Kalam (Scholastic Science) is a religious science of Islam and it enables a man to procure the victory of the dogmas and actions laid down by the Legislator of the religion and to refute all opinions contradicting them. In this field, innumerable works were composed, which led to the development of Arabic literature.

When the philosophical works of Aristotle were translated into Arabic, their proper perusal gave a fillip to the birth of Islamic philosophy. In addition to this, Ilm al-Kalām (علم الكلام) and the doctrine of Sufism...
made this field more strong and accordingly Ulama' carried out many works of Islamic philosophy in Arabic. Furthermore, the Qur'ân and the Hadith have laid down the most important sources of historical landmarks. In the realm of Arabic literature, Geographical literature holds an important position and its development is referred to the source materials of the Holy Qur'ân and the Hadith, since both of them have consisted of innumerable references related to various places of historic lands of the world.

The astronomical knowledge is very much essential in the religious dimensions of Islam. The Holy Qur'ân and the noble Hadith bear the astronomical references in their contents, dealing with the affairs of religious performances. A good number of works were written in Arabic either originally or translating from other languages like Sanskrit, Greek, Syriac etc. As counting or computation is essential for day to day life of human being in every part of the world, the subject of mathematics has, also, been necessitated in the Islamic countries for carrying out law and order related to ritual performances (عَبَدَة). In this field, the contributions of Muslims were extremely praiseworthy, since they made a galaxy of works in Arabic language.

The Holy Qur'ân and the Hadith contain a good number of references and valuable instructions for restoring health and soundness of human body and mind. Under such circumstances, a good number of Muslim scholars and non-Muslim savants devoted to medical science with their valuable writings in Arabic language, which made an extension to the store house of Arabic literature.

It is indicated earlier that the language of the Holy Qur'ân is the clear Arabic speech which has contained the highest form of rhetorical elements. It bears a fascinating style in matters of its distinct expressions, definite meaning of words, excellent figure of speech and metaphor. The language of the Holy Qur'ân is unapproachable to imitate it and this character of inimitability has
been known as al-Ijaz (الإعجاز). None was able to touch the merits of the Holy Qur'an and this case is considered as mu'jjah (miracle), while the best of the Arab writers has never succeeded in producing anything equal in merit to the Holy Qur'an. The hypothesis of 'sara'fah' (turning away) deserves mention in regard to the unique characteristics of this Heavenly Book. In support of the above mentioned argument, Allah says: “If the mankind and the jinn were together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another.” (Qur'an 17:88) Besides that, the development of the Arabic Grammar (Morphology and Syntax) and Rhetorical science (Ma'āni, Bayān and Badi'), Orthography and Orthoepy have been evolved by the influence of the Holy Qur'an.

After the Holy Qur'an, language of the Hadith bears the best prose style in the realm of Arabic literature, which is a miracle to other individuals. Since the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was endowed with the art of Jawāmi' al-Kalām (جوامع الكلام), his speech was free from any kind of artificiality, ambiguity and exaggeration. He claimed himself as the best eloquent Arab and in this connection, he says: “My Lord taught me, so I learnt language nicely”. So, his art of speech has been marked as the best prose style, which has, inevitably, surpassed all other individuals. Furthermore, it has been observed that the language of Hadith comprises of similes, proverbs, speeches, admonitions, stories and other prosaic models which have enriched the Arabic language and literature to a great extent.

We know the fact that after the advent of Islam, Muslim settlement in India began right from the first part of Islamic era through trade and commerce or invasions. Accordingly, Muslim society grew here with four phases
conquest, conversion, colonization and migration. The Sufi-saints took the matter of propagation of Islam seriously with understanding and love. Though the Sultan of Delhi did not devise any agency for conversion, Muhammad bin Tughlaq (R.1325-51 A.D.) firstly exhorted the Sufi-saints and Ulama’ to propagate Islam in different parts of the country. Under such environment, Islam spread in India conducive.

To meet the religio-theological needs, Islamic clergymen and so-called Ulama’ took an initiative for the study of the Qur’ân and the Hadith and they tried utmost to impart the proper knowledge of both the corpora, for which they composed commentaries of the Qur’ân and Hadith and other theological works. For wide circulation of their works, they wrote in Arabic on the Qur’ânic Tafâsir and commentary of the Hadith, and other theological works e.g. Figh, Farâ’id, Kalâm, Tajwid, Islamic philosophy and other Sufistic literature. Moreover, some of the scholars were very much interested in Arabic language and literature, who also carried out literary works dealing with Șarf, Nahm, Lexicography, and Balâghah and Adab i.e. Prose literature. Indian scholars produced outstanding Arabic works. As such, Azad Bilgrami’s Subhatul Marjân is highly appreciated for its outstanding quality of literary works. Moreover in Maqâma literature, Indian scholars achieved a great name and fame. Furthermore, it has been observed that Indian scholars did not leave to produce original works on Qur’ânic commentaries like Sawâti’ al-Ihâm in which dotted letters have been avoided throughout, and the other is Jubb Shaghab in which only dotted letters have been used.

In fine, it has been observed from the foregoing discussion that the Qur’ân and the Hadith literature have exerted immense influences on the
literary works done by the Indian scholars as well. In fact, these were necessitated from all the angles to carry out religio-literary works for which a lot of Arabic books came to the store house of Arabic language and literature in Medieval India. It would not be an exaggeration to state that the valuable books like Subhatul Marjān, Hujjatu'llah al-Baligha, Al-Fatāwâ al- İslâmiyya, Musallam, al-Thubût, Al-Tafsir al-Rahmâni etc. are of the best testimony to comprehend the influence of the Holy Qur'ān and the Hadith and such more Arabic works were also produced by Indian scholars in Medieval India. The outstanding Arabic works of Indian scholars have been highly appreciated broadly by the critics and scholars of Arabic language and literature everywhere in the Arab world beyond Indian sub-continent for its merits and excellence.

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