

Introduction to the Manuscripts of the Divan of Zindeh-Ram Mobad Kashmiri and its Stylistic Analysis

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Article Info (273-303)	ABSTRACT
Article type: Research Article	The Divan of Zinderam Mobad Kashmiri, an 11th and 12th-century Persian-language poet from India, constitutes a valuable treasury of poetic compositions in diverse forms such as qasida, ghazal, masnavi, ruba'i, and mukhammas, with mystical, historical, and cultural themes. Beyond its formal and thematic variety, this work, through its ornate preface and epilogue—influenced by the styles of Sa'di and Jami and adorned with various forms of saj', janās, and muvazana—attests to the author's literary mastery. Stylistically, Zinderam's Divan falls within the framework of the Indian Style (Sabk-i Hindi) with mystical themes. By employing literary devices such as tashbih, isti'arah, ihām, and talmīh, and under the influence of poets like Hafez, Sa'eb, and Khaghani, it articulates sublime concepts of wisdom and love in an elevated manner. This research, aiming to introduce the manuscript copies of this Divan and analyze its stylistic features, has been conducted using a descriptive-analytical method, relying on two manuscripts held at the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (as the base manuscript) and the British Museum Library. The findings indicate that the study of this work not only represents a fundamental step towards reviving a segment of the forgotten heritage of Persian literature in the Indian subcontinent but also serves as a dynamic document testifying to the cultural exchanges between Iran and India.
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Introduction

Persian literature as a transnational heritage flourished far beyond the geographical borders of contemporary Iran, with the Indian subcontinent serving as a pivotal center for its expansion, particularly during the Safavid and Mughal (Gurkani) eras. Among the figures contributing to this rich literary tradition was Zindeh-Ram Mobad Kashmiri, a poet of the 11th and 12th centuries AH whose works remain largely obscure despite their historical and aesthetic significance. This study addresses the absence of prior scientific research on Zindeh-Ram by introducing his two known manuscripts and conducting a systematic stylistic analysis. The research aims to recover a forgotten link in the history of Persian literature in India, positioning the poet's work as a dynamic document of cultural exchange between Iran and the Indian subcontinent.

Method

This study employs a descriptive-analytical methodology rooted in library research and textual criticism. The primary corpus consists of two existing manuscripts: the first, a complete and precious copy held at the Bandarkar Oriental Research Institute in Puna, and the second, located in the British Museum. The theoretical framework integrates established models of Persian stylistic analysis, specifically drawing upon the works of scholars like Shamisa (in rhetoric and poetics) and Fotouhi (in stylistic methodology). The analysis is structured across three primary levels—intellectual, literary, and linguistic—to map the poet's unique position within the “Indian Style” (*Sabk-e Hendi*) of Persian poetry.

Results

The research yields significant findings regarding the manuscripts and the stylistic characteristics of the *Divan*:

- **Manuscript Identification:** Both identified manuscripts were transcribed by the poet's son, Lal Tikaram Zafar, in Allahabad during the 12th century AH (circa 1178–1179 AH). The manuscripts contain the poet's complete works, including Qasidas,

Ghazals, Mukhammas, Qit'as, Mathnavis, and Rubaiyat. Notably, the son designed a unique method for bibliomancy (*Tafa'ol*) on the *Divan*, paralleling the tradition associated with Hafiz.

- **Ornate Prose in Preface and Epilogue:** The *Divan* is framed by a preface and epilogue authored by the poet's son, written in highly sophisticated, ornate prose (*Nasr-e Masnu*). This prose is characterized by heavy use of *Saj'* (rhymed prose), *Jinas* (pun), and *Muwazaneh* (balance), reflecting the influence of masters like Sa'di and Jami. The content is deeply permeated with Islamic mysticism, Shia theological themes, and philosophical reflections on existence.
- **Stylistic Features of the Poetry:** Zindeh-Ram demonstrates a synthesis of diverse Persian literary traditions. His work reflects:
- **External Influences:** Distinct echoes of Hafiz's delicacy and *Rendi*, Sa'ib's complex imagery and thematic innovation, Molavi's mystical fervor, and Khaqani's structural grandeur.
- **Indian Style (*Sabk-e Hendi*):** The poetry features the hallmark complexities of the Indian style, including intricate imagery, *Iham* (ambiguity), *Talmih* (allusion), and innovative metaphorical constructions.
- **Multicultural Integration:** A defining characteristic of his work is the integration of local Indian cultural elements—such as references to the festivals of Diwali, the Rakhi ceremony, and specific Indian vocabulary (e.g., *Pan*, *Palaki*)—within the traditional framework of Persian poetry.
- **Technical Versatility:** The poet exhibits mastery in structural techniques, including the consistent use of long *Radifs* (refrains), strict letter-based thematic organization in the final ghazals, and the application of specialized terminology from music, chess, and backgammon.

Conclusion

The study concludes that the *Divan* of Zindeh-Ram Mobad Kashmiri is a significant, albeit neglected, treasure of Persian literature in the Indian subcontinent. It serves not only as a testament to the poet's literary versatility and intellectual depth but also as a vital historical document reflecting the deep integration of Persian literary traditions into the local Indian cultural landscape. By reviving this work, this research contributes



to a broader understanding of the evolution of Persian poetry in the 12th century AH and highlights the role of multilingual/multicultural poets in sustaining the Persian literary canon abroad.