KASIF'S MUGHALE-AZAM

("The Great Mughal," 1960)
The Immortal Dialogue
of
K. Asif's
MUGHAL-E-AZAM
Sterling Investment Corp. Pvt. Ltd.
OXFORD
Produced & Directed by

K. Asif
History & Legend link the Story of our past. When both are fused in the Crucible of art & Imagination, the spirit of this great Land is revealed in all its Splendour & Beauty.
Historical background:

Mughal Empire (a.k.a. “Moghul”)

c.a. 1526 - 1707

Principal emperors:

Babur
Humayun
Akbar
Jahangir
Shah Jahan
Aurangzeb
Jalal ud-din Muhammad
“Akbar,”
“Akbar the Great”
1542-1605
Fatehpur Sikri ("City of Victory at Sikri")
1571 - 1585
Tomb of Salim Chishti, Sufi saint
Nur ud-din Salim
“Jahangir” (“World-Seizer)
1605 - 1627
Emperor Jahangir (Salim)

- married in 1585 to Rajput princess, cousin
- then 19 additional wives
- last wife: Nur Jahan
- no mention of Anarkali in his autobiography, or in court chronicles of Akbar’s reign
Dramatis personae:
“Main Hindustan hoon....”
Akbar (Prithviraj Kapoor)
(Akbar’s pilgrimage to Salim Chishti at Sikri, ca. 1569)
Akbar-Nama, folio 77, Akbar's pilgrimage, c. 1590-1595, Mughal
Prince Salim (Dilip Kumar)
Dilip Kumar (Yusuf Khan, 1922- )
“King of Tragedy”
(cf. *Devdas*, Bimal Roy, 1955)
Anarkali ("pomegranate bud") / a.k.a. Nadira
Madhubala (1933-1969)
Mumtaz Begum Jehan Dehlavi
“In the veiling and unveiling of beauty...

...lies every purpose of creation.”

- Sufi saying
Other characters:

Queen Jodhabai (Durga Khote)
Bahaar ("spring," Nigar Sultana)
“Ae mohabbat zindaabaad!”

“Long live love!”
pardaa = veil, curtain, screen

• concealment, privacy, protection (of laaj, izzat)

• eroticism, seduction, attraction of the forbidden

• mysticism, secrecy, what is hidden, what may be revealed
Islamicate culture in South Asia / Indo-Islamic Culture

Poetic and performance forms:  *ghazal, qawwali*

(both can be sacred/secular)
Ghazal  “Mughal-e-azam is structured like a ghazal.”
-Ziauddin Sardar

“sonnet,” “ode,” genre of lyric poetry
From Arabic: “intimate conversation”
Theme: the infinite geometries of love....

Masters of the ghazal:

(Persian) Hafiz of Shiraz (ca. 1320-1389)
Divan: 500 ghazals

(Urdu) Asadullah Khan, “Ghalib”
(1797-1869)
Divan: 234 ghazals
Rhyme-scheme of *ghazal* (couplet = *sher*):

A
A
B
A
C
A
D
A  (etc.)

(last *sher* contains poet’s “signature”)

*Note: The diagram visualizes the rhyme scheme of a ghazal, where each line corresponds to a letter in the scheme.*
Some stock ghazal images and conventions:

- moth and flame (lover and beloved)
- nightingale and rose
- desert and garden (lover’s world / beloved’s world)
- tavern and winecup, drunkenness (lover’s defiance of society)
- worshiper and idol (lover’s defiance of religion)
- intoxication, social disgrace, ruin, madness, death…

= true Love!
Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan
1948 - 1997

qawwali
NUSRAT FATEH ALI KHAN IN CONCERT
Secular Qawwali: “Parda hai parda,” (“There is a veil”), *Amar Akbar Anthony*, 1977
Na To Carvaan Ki Talaash Hai - Barsat Ki Raat - with SUBTITLES.mp4
Qawwali

Example: *Na To Carvaan Ki Talaash Hai* --

*Yeh ishq hai* ("This is love") :
Film: *Barsaat ki raat* ("One rainy night," 1960)
“If the night is so intoxicating, what will the world of morning be?”
the Sculptor (Kumar)
Religious imagery:

Krishna’s birthday (Janam-ashthami)
Durjan Singh’s self-sacrifice to goddess Kali (and Rajput and Mughal *dosti*)
Anarkali’s namaaz
Akbar (Prithviraj Kapoor)
Religious imagery:

Krishna’s birthday (Janam-ashthami)