

WALĪ DAKHANĪ AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF DAKHANĪ-URDU ŞŪFĪ POETRY

BY

JOHN A. HAYWOOD

(School of Oriental Studies, University of Durham)

I

Walī Dakhanī.

Walī Dakhanī, (1668–1743 A.D.: 1079–1155 A.H.), has been called the “Chaucer of Urdu poetry”.¹ His importance is attested in Pakistan by the fact that his *Dīwān* stands at the head of the lists of the prescribed texts for honours Urdu courses in the various universities of that country. Yet his name is not so well known to the average educated Pakistani as that of Chaucer is to his British counterpart. This may reflect the undue modesty of Pakistanis in their assessment of Urdu literature—which is older and more distinguished than they normally care to admit. In Europe, even in Orientalist circles, little interest has been shown in Walī since Garcin de Tassy drew attention to him,² over a century ago. There would seem to be an *idée fixe* that Urdu poetry was, until fairly recently, nothing but a pale imitation of Persian. A superficial glance at Walī’s *Dīwān* might, indeed, suggest that he was essentially an Urdu *Ḥāfiẓ*. But such a conclusion would be much too facile, especially if its corollary were that therefore Walī is not worth reading. For one thing, it pays no regard to the nature of the impact of poetry on its readers

¹ By R. B. Saksena on page 12 of his “History of Urdu Literature”, Allahabad, 1927.

² The Urdu text, “*Dīwān-i-Walī*”, was published in Paris in 1833, the French translation, with a useful introduction, appeared in 1834 as “*les Oeuvres de Walī*”.

or hearers. Poetry appeals by both its sound or music, and its expression of thought and emotion—the two being, of course, closely intertwined. This is a truism which ordinarily would require no repetition. The music of Urdu is vastly different from that of Persian; so that even if Wali were a mere translator or adapter of Ḥāfiz—which he was not—his poetry would still sound basically different; and that, despite the use of many identical words, especially in the poetical terminology of Ṣufism. As to the thought and emotion, Wali was the first Urdu poet to concentrate on, and reach complete mastery in, the Ṣūfi *ghazal*. The 16th to 18th centuries saw the development of indigenous Muslim literatures—largely poetical—in many of the major languages of the Indo-Pakistan Sub-continent; for example, in Bengali, Panjabi, Pashto and Sindhi, as well as Urdu. In each case, religious themes, frequently Ṣufistic predominated. The Arabo-Persian *ghazal* was taken over: no wonder it became popular, since it had affinities with the *padavali* of Hindu poetry.³ In addition, religious poetry was composed of the didactic, the hagiological and the narrative-allegorical types; though, with Wali, we are hardly concerned with these. Among the contemporaries of Wali were the great Pashto poet Maʿzullah (1674–1748), to whom further reference will be made; the ‘Sindhi Shakespeare’, Shāh ‘Abdul Laṭif (1689–1753);⁴ and the most famous Panjābi Ṣūfi poet, Bullhe Shāh (1680–1758).⁵ These and other poets in the various Indian languages, expressed thoughts and emotions which appealed to their hearers; so we have the paradox of independent literary cultures using the very forms and themes of the conquering Persian culture which they were to supplant. Yet, the literary works which resulted differed in content from Persian models because they could not ignore the local Hindu

³ See M. Enamul Haq, “Muslim Bengali Literature”, Karachi, 1957, p. 49.

⁴ See M. M. Gidvani, “Shah Abdul Latif”, London, 1922, for a short account. This poet’s *Diwān* has been published (“Risalo Shāh ‘Abdul Latif Jo”) ed. I. I. Kazi, by the Sindhi Adabi Board in Karachi, in 1961. I am indebted to Dr. Kazi, and also to Dr. N. B. Baloch, Head of the Departments of Sindhi and Education, Sindh University, Hyderabad, Pakistan, for drawing my attention to this poet.

⁵ See L. R. Krishna, “Panjabi Ṣūfi Poets”, Oxford, 1938, pp. 40 ff.

environment; just as they differed in sound because they were in different languages, and could not ignore Sanscritic, and other indigenous vocabulary and imagery.

It is important, then, to see the rise of Urdu literature in perspective, as only one facet of a tremendous literary revival in Muslim India, using the various vernaculars, of which Urdu was merely one. However, the old glib account of Urdu literature beginning in the Deccan under the poet-patron rulers of Bijāpūr and Golkunda at the turn of the 16th/17th centuries, popularised by Walī at the beginning of the 18th century, and transplanted by him to North India, would probably not bear examination if we had all the facts. Certainly I hope to show the Pashto poet Maʿzullāh as the author of a short Urdu dīwān similar in language to Walī's; and it is reasonable to suppose that he was not an isolated exception. Indeed, I would expect to find a fairly substantial number of Urdu poets, contemporary with, or just prior to, Walī, over an area covering most of what is now West Pakistan, and, in India, much of the Deccan and the North-west portions of the country.

Walī was not so much an initiator as a perfecter; but his contemporaries and predecessors were forgotten, only to be brought to light from time to time by accident, or by the efforts of those scholars who are not content with well-worn tracks.

The purpose of the present short study is not merely to draw attention to Walī's genius, but to refer also to two other Urdu poets of his time, one from further South in the Deccan, and another from the Afghan border: Qāzī Maḥmūd Baḥrī (d. 1718)⁶ and Maʿzullāh.

Very few reliable biographical details are known about Walī, although there has been much guesswork.⁷ Even his name is disputed—perhaps the name Shāh Muḥammad Walī-ullah will

⁶ See "Qāḍī Maḥmūd Baḥrī: a Mystic Poet of the Twelfth Century A.H. and his poetical works", by Muḥammad Ḥafiz Syed, Allahabad University Studies, Vol. V, 1928, pp. 445 ff.

⁷ See Garcin de Tassy, "Histoire de la Littérature Hindoue et Hindoustani", 2nd edition, Paris, 1871. Vol. III, pp. 281 ff.: Garcin de Tassy, "Les Oeuvres de Walī", (translated) Paris, 1834, Preface: Ghulām Muḥiy ad-Dīn, "Urdū Shāhpārē", Hyderabad, Deccan, 1929, pp. 149 ff.: "Kulliyāt Walī", Aurangābād, 1927, Introduction.

suffice. His attachment to Gujarāt led to the assumption that he was born there. Garcin de Tassy at first thought that he was born in Surat,⁸ but later accepted the more probable view that he was born in Aurangabad.⁹ Certainly he developed a love of Gujarāt, which he expressed in his Maṣnawī on that city. But the editor of the Aurangabad edition of his Kulliyāt warned against drawing false conclusions from the fact that a poet expressed interest in any given locality. Most authorities agree that Walī visited Delhi, and there met the Persian poet Miyān Gulshan Ṣāhib, who advised him to rejuvenate the thoughts of the Persian poets in Urdu. Here we have a paradox. If Urdu literature really first developed in the Deccan, why should the initiative for its cultivation have had to come from Delhi? The story has the ring of legend rather than fact. At any rate, Walī compiled a Dīwān in Urdu—and, as far as we know, in Urdu only. His poetry refers to Bengal, but this does not prove that he ever visited that province. He was very proud of his poetical prowess, and claimed that he was “known in Irān and Tūrān, although he wrote in the Deccan”. It is, however, difficult to appreciate how his Urdu verses were understood in these regions. He died and was buried in Ahmadabad.

Walī's dīwān is substantial, though not prolific. In the Aurangabad edition of 1927, it comprises 422 *ghazliyyāt*, and a small number of other poems, including 6 *qasidas*, and two *maṣnawīs*, one of which is the well-known account of the city of Surat. Still, Walī's reputation undoubtedly stands or falls by his *ghazliyyāt*.

Walī was a Ṣūfī, though not, it seems, an extremist in following a particular *madhhab*. His *ghazliyyāt* give expression to his ṣufism in the manner of Ḥāfiẓ, using the language of earthly love. In some of his poems, however, there is the possibility that he is really speaking of earthly love; while in a considerable number of instances he makes it quite clear that his theme is the love of God. So far the comparison with Ḥāfiẓ is close. But in Walī there is a rugged strength and simplicity, born of sincerity, which contrasts with the subtlety of his Persian model. Professor Ar-

⁸ “Les Oeuvres de Walī”, x.

⁹ “Histoire de la Littérature Hindouie et Hindoustanie”, Paris, 1871 (2nd ed.), III p. 282.

berry has referred to a "contrapuntal" element in Ḥāfiz's *ghazals*.¹⁰ It must be stated straightaway that there is no such complexity in the direct utterances of Walī. It remained for his successors to complicate, and make more artificial, Urdu poetical expression: and one is tempted to say that, had they followed his example more closely, Urdu poetry might have progressed more soundly. Walī uses the familiar poetical language of Sufism. The seeker after divine truth is the lover (*āshiq*) who strives to become a knower (*ārif*). He seeks enlightenment (*roshan*), which involves his separation from mundane entanglements. His enemy is the *raqīb* who spies on his intimate association with the loved one, God. The beauty and purity of the true initiate are likened to the nightingale (*bulbul*). The seeker's love of God is compared usually with human love, and sometimes to intoxication through wine. The following *ghazal*,¹¹ one of Walī's most direct, expresses his attitude clearly.

عارفان پر ہمیشہ روشن ہے
دشمن دین کا دین دشمن ہے
کیون نہ ہو مظہر تجلی یار
عشق بازان ہیں تجھہ گلی میں
کہ فن عاشقی عجب فن ہے
12 راہزن کا چراغ راہزن ہے
کہ دل صاف مثل درین ہے
مقیم
بلبلان کا مقام گلشن ہے
غزہ چشم یار رہزن ہے
دوستان کا رقیب دشمن ہے
گر چہ مقدار چشم سوزن ہے
سفر عشق کیون نہ ہو مشکل
یار مت دے رقیب کون اے یار
تبیگ چشمی ہے راہ بے بصری
مجکون روشن دلان نے دی ہے
کہ سخن کا چراغ روشن ہے
گھیر رکھتا ہے دل کون جامہ تنگ
جگ منین دور دور دامن ہے
عشق بین شمع رو کے جلتا ہوں
خال میرا سبھوں پہ روشن ہے
اے "وہی" تیغ غم سوں خوف نہیں
خاکداری بدن پہ جوشن ہے

¹⁰ See A. J. Arberry, "Fifty Poems of Ḥāfiz, Cambridge, 1953, p. 30.

¹¹ Aurangabad edition, no. 392, p. 286: In Garcin de Tassy's edition, (*Diwān-i-Walī*), this poem is on page 105: he does not, however, include it in his translations. I cannot think why, as it is a good example of Walī's strength through simplicity.

¹² In most editions, including the Aurangabad and Garcin's, the second *maṣraʿ* of this verse reads

راہزن کا چراغ روشن ہے

Translation:—

On those who know there is always light,
for the art of love is a wondrous art.

Religion (itself) is the enemy of the enemy of religion,
(just as) a thief's lamp is a thief to him (as it reveals his presence
to his intended victim).

Why should you not be image of the glory of the beloved,
for a pure heart is like a mirror?

To you, the wantons live confined in a narrow street,
(while) the nightingale's home is a rose-garden.

Why should the journey of love not be difficult,
(for) the amorous glance of the loved one is (itself like) a thief.

Oh beloved, do not admit the watcher;
the watcher is the enemy of lovers.

Covetousness of eye is an unenlightened way,
though the eye be opened no wider than the eye of a needle.

The enlightened ones have told me
that the torch of language brings enlightenment.

A tight robe hems in the heart;
property in the world is (like) a skirt.

Resplendent of face, I am aflame for love (of God),
my ecstasy is light to everyone.

Oh Walī, fear not the sword of care,
for humility is a coat-of-mail on the body.

The mention of "religion" in the second verse (which is the opening verse in some MSS), and the several references to "roshān", leave no danger of the reader's taking this ghazal for a poem about earthly love.

I am indebted to Prof. W. H. A. Shadani, Head of the Department of Urdu and Persian at Dacca University, East Pakistan for the reading given above, taken from the "Tazkira-i-Mīr", and I have adopted his translation of this verse, communicated to me privately.

The following ghazal¹³ on the vanity of worldly wealth is even clearer in meaning:—

بیابان عاشقان کو ملک اسکندر برابر ہے
 ہر اک گوہر انچھو کا بخت کے اختر برابر ہے
 جنوں کے ملک کے سلطان کون کیا حاجت ہے افسر کی
 بگولا سر اپر مجنوں کے سو افسر برابر ہے
 جو کئی حاصل کیا ہے دولت عالی کون سوزش میں
 پھپھولا اس دل دریا بہتر گوہر برابر ہے
 فنا کر کر جو کوی دنیا کی سمجھا زندگانی کون
 اسے گزراں کرنے کون جنگل ہور گھر برابر ہے
 "ولی" دیوان میں میرے تودہ^{۱۳} دفتر حاجت نہیں
 کہ مجھہ دیوان میں ہر اک شعر سو دفتر برابر ہے

Translation:—

To the lover, the desert is equal to Alexander's kingdom,
 Each pearl of a tear is equal to a star of fortune.

What need has the sultan of the kingdom of madness for a diadem?
 A heron on a madman's head is equal to a hundred diadems.

Whoever has achieved sublime happiness through zeal,
 A bubble in the ocean of his heart is equal to a pearl.

He who, effacing the mortal world, has understood life,
 To him it is equal whether he spends his life in forest or city.

Oh "Walī", in my poetical diwan, there is no need for a heap
 of books;

For in my diwan, every poem is equal to a hundred books.

Walī shows, in the final verse, yet another illustration of his
 proneness to the abiding sin of the Oriental poet—boastfulness.

¹³ Aurangabad ed., p. 263, Garcin de Tassy, p. 95. This poem, also, is not included in Garcin's translations.

We have already seen that he described his own poetry as being known in "Persia and Tūrān". Elsewhere, he calls himself the "sovereign of the empire of discourse", and claims to have excelled the nightingale in his singing.

The above two ghazals show Walī at his simplest, and, I would venture to suggest, at his best. But he has also many poems in which he uses the Ṣūfī allegory of love in much more sensuous language.

At times, we may wonder whether he is being allegorical at all—whether he is not, in fact, referring to earthly love. An example is the *mustazād*¹⁴ which begins:—

"I do not know who has taken my heart
Of these dear coquettes;
Which wanton tyrant has entangled it
Of these slim-waisted creatures".

and ends:—

Walī is not alone in being intoxicated by your love,
Oh lewd cup-bearer;
In this banquet, all who have drunk your cup of love
Are among the senseless.

But, even when at his most sensuous, the poet frequently chooses to reveal his real purpose in the final *takhalluṣ* verse. This can be illustrated by the ghazal¹⁵ which begins with a cloying tribute to the beloved's sweet lips:—

"Oh you with the sweet lips, your lips' speech
is sweeter than sugar,
Their warm words are as sweet as toffee."

The final verse reads:—

"Oh Walī, giving up (worldly) attachments brings
pleasure to the heart;
Just as the thought of goods and chattels
brings pleasure to the worldly".

¹⁴ Text Aurangabad, 313; Garcin, 113. Translation, Garcin, 49.

¹⁵ Text, Aurangabad, 91; Garcin, 33. Garcin does not include this poem in his translations.

As has been said, the *ghazliyyāt* form the great majority of Wali's works, and most of the rest of his poetry requires little comment. A longer poem on the martyrdom of Karbalā ("Dah Majlis") ascribed to him by some, was probably not his work.¹⁶ This is a pity, as it would be gratifying to be able to consider him a pioneer in the *marṣīya*, later perfected by Anīs,¹⁷ as well as the *ghazal*. But, of his two *maṣnawīs* the one entitled "Dar ta'rif-i-shāhr-i-Sūrat"¹⁸ ("In description on the city of Sūrat") has justly achieved fame. It is characterised by a naïveté (which is also to be found, at times, in the *ghazliyyat*), combined with deft yet succinct touches of vivid description. The poet obviously loved this city, and his poetry is always at its best when inspired by simple sincerity. The scope of the present short appreciation precludes a full account of this poem, but a few extracts will illustrate the general style.

عجب شہران میں ہے پر نور یک شہر
 بلا شک وہ ہے جگ میں مقصد دہر
 رہے مشہور اس کا نام "سورت"
 کہ جاوے جس کے دیکھے سب کدورت

 شہر جیوں منتخب دیوان ہے سب
 ملاحظہ کی وہ گوہا کہان ہے سب

 کنارے اس کے اک دریلے تپتی
 کہ دنیا دیکھنے کون اس کے تپتی

¹⁶ Saksena (op. cit. p. 43) ascribes it to him. But Ghulām Muḥyi al-Dīn Qādirī, in "Urdū Shāhpāre", publ. Hyderabad, Deccan, 1929, p. 149 states categorically that it is not by Wali.

¹⁷ 1802-1874.

¹⁸ Text, Aurangabad, pp. 379 ff., Garcin, 139 ff. Garcin gives an incomplete translation in pp. xv-xvii of the Preface to his "Oeuvres de Wali".

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شہر سون ہے وہ ہم بازو ہمیشہ
 دنیا سون ہے وہ ہم پہلو ہمیشہ
 کہ آبِ خضر کی ہے اس میں تاثیر
 ہوا دیتا ہے اس کی یاد کسیر

عجب قلعہ ہے وہاں اک ہا قرینہ
 انگوٹھی میں دنیا کے جیون نگیںہ

اگر دیکھے ہیں لوگان شام اور تہیز
 نہ دیکھا کوئی ایسا ملک زرخیز

ختم ہے ابرداں پر رو صفائی
 ولے ہے بیشتر حسن نسائی
 سبھا اندر کی ہے ہر اک قدم میں
 چھپا اندر سبھا کو لے قدم میں
 کفن کی گویان کی نہیں ہے یہ نسل
 رہیں سب گویان وہ نکل یہ اصل

شہر بھیتر جو آئے نہاں کا دن
 ہندو کی قوم کے آستان کا دن
 ہر اک جانب دکھوں میں فوج در فوج
 تجلی کے سمندر کی اٹھے موج

عہٹ باتان ہیں بس کر اے "ولی" تو
 نہ کر مقصد سون اپنے کاہلی تو

Translation:—

Among wonderful cities is an illustrious one,
Without doubt the centre of the world.

Its name, Surat, has become famous;
It dispels the depression of those who see it.

.....

The whole city is like a choice collection of verse,
It is all like a mine of elegance.

.....

As its boundary is a river, the Tapti,
The whole world is eager to see it.

.....

The river is always arm-in-arm with the town,
The town is always side-by-side with the river.

In it is the effect of Khizr's water,
Its air reminds one of Kashmir.

.....

There is a remarkable fort there of symmetrical design,
Like precious stones in the ring of the world.

.....

If people have seen Damascus and Tabriz,
They have yet seen no country as rich as this.

.....

Its youths have the most comely faces,
But its feminine beauty is (even) more comely.

In every step there is (as it were) the court of Indra;
(In fact, having seen it), Indra would hide his court,
he would annihilate it.

This breed is not that of Krishna's cowherdesses,
All those cowherdesses are imitation—these are the originals.

.....

In the month in which bathing day comes,
The Hindu's day of purification,

I see on all sides host upon host,
Like waves rising in the ocean.

.....

It is idle talk—cease, oh Wali;
Be not slothful in your (true) purpose.

Some consideration must now be given to Wali's technique and language. I do not propose here to enter into the complicated problem of Urdu poetical metre,¹⁹ which is based, however, unsatisfactorily, on that of Arabic. Wali's attitude to, and treatment of, metre, seems to contain no features radically different from those of later Urdu poets. According to Garcin de Tassy's figures,²⁰ more than a third of Wali's poems are in Hazaj metre. Hazaj, Muzāri' and Ramal account for three-quarters of his output; while, with the addition of Khafif, seven-eighths are disposed of. In rhyme, he tends towards the rich, but his varied practice in this respect can be seen in the few verses quoted above from the "Sūrat" maṣnawī. In his poetical diction, Wali shows a strong musical sense. As Saksena says,²¹ "simplicity and melody are his keynotes". His effect is achieved frequently by the repetition of one or two key words in the course of a ghazal. For example, in the first poem translated in the present study ("Ārifān par hamesha roshan hai"), the word "roshan" occurs several times, and this and a few other words—"Chirāgh", "dushman", "rāhzan", etc.,—dominate the poem, in the same way as notes or progressions may dominate a musical melody. But Wali does not neglect that alliterative device of Arabic and Persian poetry, Jinās, whereby words derived from the same or similar roots are juxtaposed. Thus in the same poem quoted above, we have the repetition of "dīn" in the second verse, and of "raqīb" in the sixth. In verse seven we have "chashmī" and "chasham". In the second poem quoted, we find in verse two

¹⁹ Urdu metres were analysed by T. Grahame Bailey in the "Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies", University of London, IX, 3, pp. 1-17. But those interested would be advised to refer to R. Russell, "Some problems of the treatment of Urdu metre", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1960, pp. 48 ff.

²⁰ "Les Oeuvres de Wali", pp. 65/7.

²¹ *op. cit.*, p. 44.

“junūn” and “Majnūn”. There is no need to labour this point. The device was the stock in trade of Arabic and Persian poets. In Walī we generally find it used, but not abused, with that good taste which is often one of the hall-marks of genius. Rarely indeed do we find it rather forced, as in the following lines:—²²

نہ وہ ہلا نہ وہ ہالی بلا ہے بلاے عاشقان ناز و ادا ہے

Translation:—

Neither that boy nor that girl is the calamity;
For lovers' calamity is blandishment and coquetry.

But few of the greatest poets in Arabic, Persian and Urdu could resist displaying such artificial virtuosity from time to time. This sort of thing is also found in earlier Indian literatures—in its most extreme form, it can be seen in Sanscrit homophonic poems.

A much more difficult problem is that of the actual language used by Walī. It is generally recognised that he wrote in the Dakhanī dialect of Urdu. Saksena says:²³ “It is remarkable that Urdu poetry first blossomed in the Musulman courts of Deccan princes in a dialect called Dakhini Dakhini is a form of Hindustani used by Musulmans in the Deccan. Like Urdu, it is written in Persian character, but is much more free from Persianisation. It has certain peculiarities The contact with the surrounding dialects, Marathi, Tamil and Telegu, affected the idiom and construction to a certain extent. It does not use the agent case with ‘ne’ before transitive verbs in the past tense It employs the oblique genitive, as a base for declension in phrases like ‘mere ko’, where the standard would be ‘mujh ko’”. This explanation requires comment. First, the Agent case, used in Urdu with transitive verbs in those tenses based on the past participle, is lacking in many Hindi dialects,²⁴ and the agent

²² Aurangabad, 247, Garcin, text, 89.

²³ Op. cit., 32.

²⁴ E.g. in Mārwarī, Mewarī, Māghadī, Maithilī, etc., according to Kellog, in the table opp. page 120, “Grammar of the Hindi Language”, 3rd edition, London, 1938.

postposition seems to have been largely confined to Northern dialects. Yet the fact is that Walī uses this 'ne', though not invariably.²⁵ Again, 'mujhkoñ' (for 'mujhko') is regularly used by Walī, not 'mere ko'. On the other hand, there are peculiarities in Walī's language not mentioned by Saksena. For example, he regularly forms the plural of nouns by adding 'āñ'. This reminds one of the Persian plural; but Walī uses it for inanimate objects also, where Persian would normally have "-hā". In the oblique case this, of course, takes the place of 'oñ'; but it is also used as the nominative indiscriminately: e.g. "bātāñ", modern Urdu "bāteñ", pl. of "bāt", "speech"; see the last verse of the "Sūrat" maṣnavī. Among postpositions, Walī used the nasalised "koñ" for "ko" (to), and "soñ" for "se" (from). Several examples of these dialectical variants are shown by Kellogg and Grierson.²⁶ Significantly, however, the latter shows the normal modern Urdu forms, "ko" and "se", for Dakhanī ("Dak'ini"). Walī usually shortens the first vowel of "ūpar" (above) to "upar", while, in common with many later poets, he uses the High Hindi variant, "pah"²⁷ for "par" (on), for reasons of metre.

Yet in its grammatical forms, the language of Walī really offers few problems to those familiar with modern Urdu, once a few peculiarities like those mentioned above are grasped. In fact, Walī is much easier to read than a great number of later poets. Indeed, Urdu poetry had to wait for Ḥālī (1837-1914), to demonstrate once more how great poetry could be composed in simple language. The biggest difference between Walī and later poets lies in his vocabulary. While Persian words and phrases abound, we find set among them words of Sanscritic²⁸ origin. Saksena, as we have seen, mentions Tamil and Telegu; but I doubt whether more than a handful of Dravidian words could be found in the whole diwān. Many of the words used by Walī, which are not found in modern Urdu, are still current in Hindi,

²⁵ See, for example, the first hemistich of verse eight of the first ghazal quoted ("Ārifāñ par, etc.").

²⁶ Kellogg, *op. cit.*, table *opp.* p. 120; Grierson, "Linguistic Survey of India", Vol. I, pt. II, *Comparative Vocabulary*, Calcutta, 1928, pp. 127 and 129.

²⁷ *Op. cit.*, Table *opp.* p. 120.

²⁸ I use this term in the broadest and loosest sense.

especially literary Hindi. Examples of Hindi words are "bagolā" and "phapholā", in the second ghazal quoted earlier. Frequently Hindi words are used because the poet is describing the Hindu scene—as for instance, in the reference to Indra's court and Krishna's cowherdresses in the "Sūrat" maṣnawī. The unaffected reference to Hindus and their institutions is, perhaps, not surprising in a poet of the Deccan; for we are told that intercourse between Muslims and Hindus was much more cordial there than in other parts of the sub-continent.²⁹

II

Two contemporaries of Walī.

Consideration of Walī's language leads naturally to the second part of this short account. In studying the dīwān, and what has been said about it, I was struck by the seeming inconsistency in the references to the Dakhanī dialect, particularly as Walī is considered the Dakhanī poet par excellence. Had language been confused with geography? What evidence could be gleaned from other poets contemporary with Walī? Light on the subject was shed by the poetry of two contemporaries—one from further south in the Deccan, and the other, strangely enough, a Pashto poet who also wrote a very small Urdu dīwān. The results of my investigations certainly lead to no definite revolutionary conclusions; but they at least give considerable food for thought.

The first poet referred to is Qāzi Maḥmūd Baḥrī,³⁰ who died in 1130/1718 aged over 90. Few reliable biographical details are known about him, but he was a resident of the town of Gogī, near the Eastern borders of the old kingdom of Bijāpūr, approximately 200 miles south of Walī's birthplace, Aurangabad. His poetry is entirely religious, and includes besides his ghazliyat, a few marṣiyas and qaṣīdas, his "Bangābnāma, referring to intoxication through 'bang' (Indian hemp) in place of the usual wine of ṣūfī poets; and also his masterpiece, the long poem "Man Lagan" (Heart attachment), which illustrates the Ṣūfī view of life with various anecdotes (Ḥikāyāt). His ghazliyat seem to

²⁹ Saksena, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

³⁰ See the article referred to in footnote (6) above.

anticipate those of Walī. His language and style show marked similarity with Walī, but there are certain differences. Muḥammad Ḥafīz Syed says:—³¹ “He has used Sanskritic words more profusely than Walī. It appears that in his time in Bijāpūr and its neighbourhood Sanskritic words were more in use than Arabic and Persian words, and naturally the language spoken in Aurangabad was different from that in vogue in the Bijāpūr district”. It is worthy of note, however, that of the 36 ‘sanskritic’ words listed by Syed, at least half are to be found in Walī. Further investigation might show a higher proportion; and it seems rather strange that more Sanscritic vocabulary should be current in Dravidian than in Marathi country. However, there is in Baḥrī’s works at least one linguistic feature usually associated with Dakhanī; he does not normally use the instrumental “ne” with transitive verb tenses based on the past participle. But this conclusion is based only on rather under 200 verses quoted by Syed.

In comparing Baḥrī with Walī, we find the same directness and simplicity of expression. The artificialities of Persian poetry are less apparent with Baḥrī. Though he frequently balances the two hemistichs of a verse in a somewhat rhetorical manner, he is very sparing in his use of *jinās* and other artificial devices. Thus, while it is probably an overstatement that he “did not learn the art of poetic composition from any poet of his time,³² it is clear that he did not set out to impress by poetic virtuosity, but used verse merely as a convenient medium in which to express his religious thought. The reader has the feeling that what he has to say would hardly suffer were it in prose instead of poetry. Certainly it appears to lack that essentially poetical sensibility which characterises Walī’s work.

Although Baḥrī was writing poetry at the same time as Walī, he was very much his senior, and we have no reason to believe that Walī even knew of his existence. It would seem that Urdu Ṣūfī poetry developed spontaneously in several areas, as part of the general growth of Indian vernacular literature already mentioned at the beginning of this study. This is further suggested by the existence of a short Urdu *diwān* by a second contemporary of

³¹ Op. cit., p. 446.

³² Ibid.

Walī, the Pashto poet Maʿzullāh (1674–1748),³³ six years Walī's junior. Maʿzullāh Khān Mihmand came of a distinguished family of Koḡala Muḥsin Khān in the Peshawar area, and received a broad education which included Persian and Urdu, besides his native Pashto; the usual Islamic religious sciences of tafsīr, ḥadīth and fiqh; and the necessary equipment of a writer, rhetoric and allied subjects. He left a fairly modest diwān in three languages, Pashto, Persian and Urdu; 1530 verses in Pashto, 610 in Persian and 69 in Urdu. Despite the disparity in proportion, he seemed equally expert and at ease in all three languages, and both the matter and the manner are consistent throughout. The greater part of his output consists of ghazliyyāt in the allegorical Ṣūfī style. This type of composition was adopted in Pashto from Persian considerably earlier, and can be seen at a high level in the poetry of Khush-hāl (1613–1689), part of whose voluminous diwān of over 400,000 verses has been published by the Pashto Academy in Peshawar, together with Urdu translations.³⁴ We do not know what induced Maʿzullāh to compile his few poems in Urdu—I have no evidence that he visited Delhi, for instance. That the Urdu poems were his, there can be no doubt, as his whole diwān is extant in his own handwriting, with the colophon:— “Completed with the aid of God the King, the Giver, under the title of “The Meaningful Mirror”, a copy of the diwān by me, the base and unworthy Maʿzullāh, son of the late Malik ʿAbdullāh Khān, in the handwriting of the slave Maʿzullāh himself, on the date 29th. Dhū al-Qaʿda, Tuesday, 1159 A.H.” (1746 A.D.).³⁵ I mention this because the poet uses the *takhalluṣ* “Maʿzullāh” for his Pashto poetry only. In his Persian and Urdu verse, he calls himself “Afghān”.

³³ I am indebted to Prof. Maulānā ʿAbdul Qādir, Director of the Pashto Academy of Peshawar University for introducing me to this poet. The Academy published the poet's works as “Diwān-i-Maʿzullāh Khān Mihmand” in 1958. Prof. ʿAbdul Qādir also furnished me with an Urdu translation of part of the *Pesh-lafz* (Introduction).

³⁴ “Muntakhabāt-i-Khush-hāl Khān Khaṭṭak”, with Urdu translation by H. S. Anwarul Haq, Peshawar, 1956.

³⁵ This colophon, in Persian, can be seen on p. 176 of the printed diwān, and also in facsimile opposite p. 45 of the Introduction.

Here is one of his Urdu ghazliyat,³⁸ together with a sketch of a translation.

نکل پیاری گھر اپنے سون جو بن تجھہ سون خرابی ہے
 بتا مکھہ اپنا مجکون جو مجکون اضطرابی ہے
 اگر مرنے کا کس کون شوق ہے آکر ملے اس سون
 جو وہ نازک بدن پھیر آج مخمور و شرابی ہے
 در و دیوار سون طشق مبارک باد سنتا ہے
 نشانی قتل کی ساجن تیرا چہرا گلابی ہے
 تیرے رخسار زلفون کے خمون مون زیب کرتے ہیں
 عجب سنبل کی شاخون مون یہ ہر گل آگاہی ہے
 کہی دانا محبت کی نے بات آہستہ "افغان" کون
 جو دیوان حسن کے مون مصرع قد انتخابی ہے

Translation:—

Beloved, come forth from your house, which without you
 is a ruin;
 Show me your face which drives me to distraction.
 If anyone desires death, then let him come and meet her,
 The slim-bodied beauty who is today, once more, drunk and
 intoxicated.
 From door and wall the lower hears felicitations;
 Beloved, your roseate face is a sign of slaughter.
 Your cheeks make adornment in the curls of the tresses,
 Just as each rose appears brilliant among the spikenard branches.
 One wise in love has whispered to "Afghān"
 That the half-verse is, in length, most appropriate to the
 beauty of his diwan.

³⁸ Diwān, pp. 171-2.

In his seven Urdu *ghazliyat*, as in his Persian and Pashto ones, Ma'zullah is nearer, in spirit and general treatment, to the Persian *ghazal* than to Wali; one might say, over-simplifying, that there is more beauty than strength—the ruggedness is lacking. But the curious fact is that the language used bears very close resemblance to Wali's—yet it is hard to imagine a Pashto poet writing the "Dakhanī" of Southern India. For example, Sanscritic or Hindi words are used by Ma'zullah which can also be found in Wali; two may be instanced—"pre^m", love (synonym of Arabic "maḥabbat" or "i^{sh}q", or Persian "dostī"); and "gagan", sky, heavens, (instead of Arabic "samā" or Persian "āsmān"). Both

Meaning	Modern Urdu	Walī	Ma'zullah	Qazī Mahmūd Bahri
from	se	soñ occ. sati, setī	soñ	soñ, occ. setī, satīñ
in	meñ	meñ	moñ ³⁷	meñ
to	ko	koñ (occasionally ko)	koñ	koñ, ko
on	par	pa(h), par	pa(h) par	par
(agent case with verb ten- ses based on Past Participle)	ne	ne (though not invariably)	ne	(not used)
this	yih	yih (yo in some MSS)	yih	yo, yoh
(oblique plural ending)	-oñ	-āñ (also for nominative sometimes)	-oñ	-āñ
one	ek	ik, yak	ek	il, yak

³⁷ In Shakespeare's "Hindustani and English Dictionary", this form is shown as Dakhanī. It is worth mentioning that Shakespeare makes a point of indicating Dakhanī words, whereas Platts ("Hindustani Dictionary") merely adds "dialect".

authors seemingly felt free to choose from Sanscritic, Arabic or Persian synonyms for any given meaning, and this applied even to key words in the Şūfī subject-matter. Unfortunately the small total of Ma'zullah's Urdu verse makes statistical analysis of limited value—yet it would appear that the percentage of Sanscritic words is greater in Walī than in Ma'zullah, and greater in Qāzī Maḥmūd Baḥrī than in Walī. Thus the proportion seems to increase as we move South.

However, the similarity of language does not lie only in vocabulary. There is close corollation in grammar and syntax, and in the general shape of the language. The only significant difference is that Ma'zullah uses the oblique plural ending in “-oi”, as against Walī's “-ān”. Another (and comparatively minor) point is that Ma'zullah uses the Persian *izāfat* more. Both poets, in common with later Urdu poets, alternated this with the Urdu genitive suffix “-kā”.

The table on page 171 illustrates the usage of the three poets under discussion, compared with modern Urdu:—

It must, of course, be borne in mind that some anomalies in the above table may be due to lack of stabilisation in orthography, due to the uncertainty in adapting the Arabic script to Urdu. This probably explains the form “ik” for “one”; while the form “yak” is probably pure Persian. On the other hand, the plural, both nominative and oblique in “-ān”, which might appear Persian, is a well attested Dakhanī form.³⁸

It may be asked what the three poets under discussion called the language in which they wrote. The various names for Urdu, and the origin of the latter term, have led to considerable speculation.³⁹ Maṣḥafī, in his “Tazkira-i-shu'arā'-i-hind”,⁴⁰ says that Shāh Gulshan suggested that Walī write poetry in the Persian manner in “Rekhta”, a term current in North India. As far as I am aware, Walī does not name his language. The term “Dakhanī” was used in the Deccan, but “Hindī”

³⁸ See Grierson, *op. cit.*, 137, 139, 173.

³⁹ See articles by T. Grahame Bailey, reproduced in his “Studies in North Indian Languages”, London, 1938, pp. 1–15.

⁴⁰ Quoted in Garcin de Tassy, “Histoire de la Littérature Hindoue et Hindoustanie”, III, 283.

was at least equally common. Baḥrī uses it in the following hemistick:—⁴¹

“Hindī to zabānchah hai hamārī”. (Hindī, then is my dialect.) Maʿzullah calls the language “Hindustānī”, long before Gilchrist used this name⁴²—though the term “Zabān-i-Hindostān” is found as early as 1634.⁴³ The distinguished Italian Urdu scholar, Prof. A. Bausani, says of Walī:— “La lingua del dīwān di Walī è dakhnī misto di vocaboli anche gugerati”.⁴⁴ Yet I very much doubt whether any significant number of words can be found in the dīwān which can unequivocally be said to be Gujarātī—though there are doubtless many Hindi words which are found also in Gujarātī.⁴⁵ In any case, his birthplace, Aurangabad, is in Marāṭhī-speaking country.

III

Conclusion.

Walī Dakhanī, then, lived in an age when vernacular literatures were already establishing themselves throughout the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. These literatures were dominated by religious Ṣūfī poetry, whose impulse was partly Persian, and partly Indian. The *ghazal* was only one form of this poetry. Walī, though by no means an isolated figure, showed that Urdu could be a first-class vehicle for such poetry; in particular, he showed that Urdu *ghazliyāt* could bear comparison not only with those of other Indian languages, but also with the Persian *ghazal* perfected by Ḥāfiẓ. Many of his *ghazliyāt* show simple strength only a stage removed from Baḥrī’s manner; others are permeated by ṣūfī poetical allegory. May it not be that the latter date from his later years, after his visit to Delhi? Unfortunately,

⁴¹ Syed, *op. cit.*, 448.

⁴² See the Pashto Academy’s editions of the *Diwān*, already mentioned, Introduction (in Pashto), p. 39.

⁴³ T. Grahame Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

⁴⁴ “Letteraturi del Pakistan”, Milan, 1958, p. 126.

⁴⁵ Those interested may check Walī’s vocabulary with the old Gujarati recorded in T. N. Dave, “A Study of the Gujarati Language”, James Forlong Fund, 1935. Admittedly, however, a much more detailed comparison would be required before the matter could be decisively settled.

I am unable to fix a chronological order for his poems. Ma'zullah shows greater polish, and greater artificiality; his few Urdu *ghazliyat* resemble Wali's later efforts—if the above surmise on chronology has any validity—or at any rate, his less direct ones.

The language used by Wali was probably one current in the North as well as in parts of the Deccan, as we have seen in comparing it with the Urdu of Ma'zullah, which is distinguished from it chiefly by the absence of the Dakhanī plural in *-ān*. Wali's language differs from the Dakhanī of further South (Bijāpūr), used by Bahri, by its use of the instrumental suffix *'-ne'* with transitive verbs. Clearly the Urdu of those days drew freely on 'Sanskritic' vocabulary, much of which is now obsolete in Urdu. Wali's successors of the Delhi School eliminated these words, and used more Persian expressions. Saksena⁴⁶ speaks of the abandonment of "many archaic and uncouth words which had been a legacy from the Deccan". He goes on to say of the Delhi poets that they "displayed great discrimination in discarding obsolete words and they replaced ungainly idioms and cumbersome constructions with more elegant and refined ones which they invariably borrowed from the Persian of which they were masters". I would be the last to belittle the beautiful poetry of these later poets. Working at the hub of the moribund Mughal Empire, where Persian was the esteemed language of culture, they felt bound to imitate the Persian *ghazal* more closely, and to use more artifice than Wali, much as they might admire him. But to talk of "ungainly idioms and cumbersome constructions" does not do justice to Wali. As Saksena says elsewhere⁴⁷ "His works are interesting both for themselves and for the language. His style is easy and elegant . . . His verses are eloquent, flowing and spontaneous . . ." Moreover, his high purpose, even where not expressed openly, is seldom far beneath the surface. It can be summed up in the simple opening of one of his *ghazliyat*:—⁴⁸

"Why should not the whole of Hindustan be full of love?"

⁴⁶ Op. cit., 45.

⁴⁷ Op. cit., pp. 43/44.

⁴⁸ Aurangabad, p. 148: Garcin de Tassy, text, p. 50—no translation.