

2:1 The form of the *Musaddas*

Its formal organization must be a prime consideration in examining any poem produced within a tradition which takes form as seriously as did the highly sophisticated world of Persian and Urdu literary culture in India. Most discussions of that literary culture (e.g. Russell and Islam 1969; Pritchett 1994) tend naturally enough to focus upon the *ghazal*, the short monorhymed lyric whose central theme is love and which is generally considered to have been supremely treated in Urdu by Mir Taqi Mir (c.1722-1810) and Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib (1797-1869). The enduring popularity of the semi-private *ghazal*—which was indeed the most intensively cultivated of all the traditional poetic forms—has long cast something of a critical shadow over the recognized forms of poetry of less ambiguously public content.

These longer forms notably included the *qasida* (Shackle 1996a), a monorhymed genre which had been the sole vehicle for classical Arabic poetry but which had come to be particularly associated in Persian with panegyric, whether dedicated to the Prophet (*na't*) or to the Imams (*manqabat*), or else to a royal or aristocratic patron (*madh*), the recognized master of the genre in Urdu being Mirza Muhammad Rafi Sauda (1722-80). A more widely cultivated form was the technically less exacting *masnavi*, the preferred genre of some of the greatest masters of classical Persian poetry, whose formal structure of rhyming couplets imposed no innate restrictions upon length, and whose use was sanctioned by ample precedent for so wide a range of themes—the personal, the romance, secular history or religious instruction and hagiography—that it would be hard, at least outside the romance, to list masters of the form in Urdu.

Although itself conspicuously public in intent, Hali's poem also presents itself as a conscious break with Urdu poetic tradition. Neither a *qasida* nor a *masnavi*—although it certainly arrogates to itself territory traditionally covered by both genres—the *Musaddas-e Hali* is named for its form; the *musaddas* stanza of six half-verses. Discussed in further detail in 2:4 below, the *musaddas* is one of the established if not especially frequently cultivated stanzaic forms of Persian poetry. In Urdu, the *musaddas* had come to be particularly associated with the Shia *marsiya*, the distinctively Indian type of strophic elegy lamenting the epic suffering of Imam Husain and his companions at the battle of Kerbela (Sadiq 1984: 145-63). Composed primarily to excite feelings of pathos among the faithful through recitation at the Shia mourning ceremonies which reach their peak during the anniversary of Kerbela in Muharram, the Urdu *marsiya* was intensively cultivated in Lucknow, capital of the Shia kingdom of Avadh until 1856. The greatest masters of the genre, Mir Babar Ali Anis (1802-74) and Mirza Salamat Ali Dabir (1803-75), fully exploit all the elaborately developed resources of traditional Perso-Urdu rhetoric in their creation over many decades of public poems on the grandest scale, formally consisting of a long set of *musaddas* stanzas, typically initiated by a single quatrain (*rubā'i*) which sets the tone for what follows.

It is precisely this formal sequence of the *marsiya* which is followed in Hali's *Musaddas*, which is itself thereby clearly signalled to be a poem cast in a predominantly elegiac mode. This tone is also indicated in a less traditional way by its title *Madd-o jazr-e islām* 'The Flow and Ebb of Islam', an uncompromisingly modern heading whose plainness makes no concessions to formerly expected elegances of rhyme or chronogrammatic equivalence. Nor is this title the only plain thing about the initial format of Hali's *Musaddas*.

In terms of its content, the First Edition of 1879 (AH 1296) is indeed both a grand elegy and a stirring poetic call. In terms of its physical appearance, however, it is markedly dissimilar from the dense format that derives from traditional manuscript practices of making maximum use of paper, which is common in lithographed books of Urdu poetry of the period. In place of their central columns of text which then exuberantly radiates around the margins to fill all available space, the small pages of the First Edition—as illustrated here in the specimen reproduced overleaf on p. 10—lay out Hali's *musaddas* stanzas in neatly ruled boxes with uniform amounts of space around them, besides having subject headings carefully indicated vertically in the outer margins and numbered footnotes relegated to well-disciplined boxes below. The small size and sparseness of the layout—in whose design Hali would certainly have been closely involved—are less suggestive of those common in contemporary printed books of poetry than those typical of works of popular devotion. But it really resembles nothing so much as an Urdu textbook in the new Victorian style—unassuming, disciplined, and prosy.

This contrast between a poetic format powerfully suggesting a rather long established genre designed to move its audience to public tears and a physical format modestly suggesting the utilitarian functions of an educational text of a kind only recently introduced into the vernacular languages of India is but one of many tensions to be explored here, as revealed by careful reading of this only superficially self-assured poem.

Nor is Hali's *Musaddas* just a poem, or even just a poem with footnotes. No fewer than ten of the 84 pages of the First Edition are devoted to a lengthy prose introduction. This First Introduction is quite unlike the conventional introductions sometimes found in—though generally absent from—books of Urdu poetry of the period, which even at this date were as likely as not to be written in Persian. In contrast to their easily skipped grandiloquent eulogies—although not without mock-deference to their style in its sustained use of an elaborately patterned phraseology interspersed with choice verses—Hali's First Introduction is a powerfully composed mixture of autobiography with poetic manifesto. For an understanding of the genesis and overall purpose of the *Musaddas* as a whole, it is quite as necessary to read this Introduction as it is to use Hali's footnotes in order to understanding some of the references so painstakingly worked in to his verses from his wide reading both of traditional Islamic texts and of contemporary historical and scientific literature. Of course, both footnotes and Introduction are subsidiary to the poem, but their relative importance is some-

۲۳	اس طرح دل دکھا ایک ایک سے توڑا کہیں ماسوسے کا علاقہ چھوڑا	ہر ایک قبلہ کج سے سوزا اور کجا مورا خداوند سے رشتہ بند دیکھا چھوڑا
کبھی کے جو پھر تے ہتھے مالک سے بہا گئے	دیئے سر جھکا اونکے مالک کے اسکے	
بتا حاصل مقصود کا پاکیب جب	نشان گنج دولت کا ماتہ آگیا	سماں اونہ تو حیدر کا چھانیا
سکھائے سعادت کے آداب و کونو	پڑھائے تمدن کے سب باب و کونو	
جنانی اور زمین وقت کی قدر و قیمت	دلانی اور زمین کام کی حرص و قیمت	کہا ہر چہ ہو دیکھے سب آخر وقت
چھوڑ گیا پر سنا نہ ہرگز نہ ہتھارا	بہلائی میں جو وقت تھے گزارا	
غیبت ہے صحت عیالات سے پہلے	فرغت ہے مشاغل کی کڑھ سے پہلے	اقامت ہے مسافری عیالات سے پہلے
جو کرنا ہے کر لو کہ تہوڑی اجہلت		
(۱) حدیث میں آیا ہے کہ تیغ المیت تلمتہ فیرج انسان ویجیے سعوا احد . تیجا ہلہ وما د و عدا فیرج اہلہ وما د ویجیے عدا		
(۲) اس حدیث کے لفظ میں اضمح من قبل حسن . شبا یک قبل ہرک . صحیح قبل شک . وضاک قبل فقرک . وخرانک قبل شکانک . وجیونک قبل سونک		

The format of the First Edition. (p. 24: M39-M42)

thing quite new in Urdu literature, where all poems before its appearance and most of those written since have been entirely self-standing in a way that the *Musaddas* just is not, quite, and—from today's much later perspective—perhaps did not entirely seek to be.

At the time, however, the *Musaddas* was an immense success, as Hali indicated seven years later in the briefer Second Introduction prefixed to the revised version issued as the Second Edition of 1886. This act of revision itself differentiates the *Musaddas* from most Urdu poetry of its own or—indeed—all other periods, which, once transferred to the printed page from the carefully amended private copybook that serves as an aide memoire to recitation, tends to be left as it is by the poet, though it is all too liable to alteration as a consequence of the notorious carelessness of many South Asian publishers. The Second Introduction indicates the scale of the changes made to the text of the First Edition. Besides a reduction of the original 297 stanzas to 294, these included many revisions of the original wording, some of which are rather significant. Anxious as to whether his criticisms of the Indian Muslims had not been too negatively expressed, Hali's major revision to his original text was to add a Supplement (*zamīma*) over half as long again as the original poem. Consisting of 162 verses in the same format and metre as the original, this strives to maintain a more upbeat note. A final modification was to clear the poem's pages of all their footnotes. Much of their substance was transferred to an alphabetically arranged Glossary (*farhang*) at the end of the book, which also included newly provided definitions of words which had been found difficult by readers, besides additional elucidatory material and definitions needed for the new Supplement.

Some years later—as is certainly attested for an edition of 1902—Hali added another poem to the *Musaddas*, echoing many of its themes but formally quite distinct from it. This is a *qasīda* of 63 monorhymed verses headed 'Arz-e hāl' 'Petition', which calls upon the Prophet Muhammad to attend to the state of his community. Subsequent printings of the *Musaddas* normally include this Petition after the Supplement and immediately before the Glossary, which is itself now something of a canonical item apparently little susceptible to any subsequent editorial initiative.

It may be noted that the net effect of these changes to the First Edition, stemming from Hali's characteristic tendency towards having second thoughts, has been to diminish something of its challenging modernity by shifting the *Musaddas* back towards more comfortably familiar poetic territory. While modern editions often keep to the same sort of small format as those of Hali's time, this is now less suggestive of an up-to-date textbook than of a revered literary-cum-devotional text, which within the frame of the prose Introductions and the Glossary is now seen largely to consist of a very long poem—though its 456 stanzas are not normally numbered—plus a final invocation to the Prophet in the antique format of a *qasīda* which is nowadays largely reserved for conventional religious poetry.

Our text in this book is a compromise version, drawing upon both First and Second Editions. It begins with the First and Second Introductions, with Urdu prose text faced by English translation. For the poem itself, we give the standard Urdu text of the Second Edition, but omit the Supplement which has always been rightly regarded as a somewhat pale postscript to it, and the Petition which is a still less organic addition thereto. The facing English prose translation includes versions of Hali's marginal subject headings to the sections of the poem, which have been omitted for typographical reasons from the reproduction of the Urdu text. It is also accompanied by translations of Hali's footnotes to the First Edition, which are of greater utility in this form to readers approaching the poem through English than alphabetical end notes would be. The full text of the First Edition may be reconstructed through an appendix which provides a list with commentary of both original and revised versions of all changes made by Hali between the two Editions.

The summary following in 2:2 describes the contents of the First Introduction and the standard text of the poem itself (M1-M294). The next section 2:3 describes the contents of the Second Introduction, of the Supplement (S1-S162) and of the Petition (P). It should be noted that neither the Supplement—for the reasons already stated in our preface—nor the Petition thereafter receives further systematic attention in our introduction or elsewhere in this volume.

## 2:2 The contents of the First Edition

The First Introduction begins with a verse repudiating Hali's past as a poet in the traditional style:

I sing no longer with the nightingale,  
From poets and recitals now I quail...

This theme is developed at length, with a wealth of imagery to underline the false exaggerations of which he self-loathingly proclaims himself to have been guilty from youth to middle age. He awakens to the sight of reality stretching around him, but finds that his twenty years of mechanical poetic exercises have left him incapable of embarking upon its broad plain, until he sees an exhausted band of travellers stumbling towards a distant goal, whose leader is described as follows:

That man of noble resolution who was guide to them all still strode along, fresh and careless of the exhaustion of the journey or the loss of his companions, and untroubled by the distance of his goal. So powerful was the magic in his glance that whoever he looked at would close his eyes and

go along with him. One look of his was cast in my direction also, and this had its immediate effect.

Though nowhere named, this Wise Old Man is of course Hali's revered guide Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, who urges Hali to set his talents to work for the enlightenment of the community, overcoming his protestations of weakness and pointing to the proud public role poetry once enjoyed among the Arabs of early Islam. Hali is at last sufficiently inspired by these words to overcome all his personal difficulties and start work on the poem. There then follows a sketch of the contents of the *Musaddas*:

After a prologue of half a dozen stanzas at the beginning of this *Musaddas*, I have given a sketch of the miserable condition of Arabia before the appearance of Islam, in the period known in the language of Islam as the Jahiliyya. I have then described the rising of the star of Islam, how the desert was suddenly made green and fertile by the teaching of the Unlettered Prophet, how that cloud of mercy at his departure left the fields of the community luxuriantly flourishing, and how the Muslims excelled the whole world in their religious development and worldly progress. After this, I have written of the state of decay into which they have fallen, and how with inexpert hands they have fashioned a house of mirrors for the nation, which they may enter to study their features and realize who they were and what they have become.

Finally, he warns his readers that many of them will be put off by the poem's dry plainness, since it lacks poetic artifice and 'contains only historical material or translations of Quranic verses or of Hadith, or an absolutely exact picture of the present state of the community.' But he asks that they should at least listen to its message.

In the traditional style of a *marsiya*, the beginning of the *Musaddas* proper is now poetically signalled by a *rubā'i* which successively conveys the essence of its theme, central image, and mood:

*Pastū kā ko'ī had se guzarnā dekhe*  
*Islām kā gir-kar na ubharnā dekhe*  
*Māne na kabhī ki mad hai har jazr ke ba'd*  
*Daryā kā hamāre jo utarnā dekhe<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> If anyone sees the way our downfall passes all bounds, the way that Islam, once fallen, does not rise again, / He will never believe that the tide flows after every ebb, once he sees the way our sea has gone out.

The short prologue (M1-M7) then cites Hippocrates' pronouncement that a patient's denial of his illness is the only complete impediment to recovery and applies this judgement to the Muslims. They are described as a people asleep in a boat on the verge of shipwreck, whose obliviousness contrasts shamefully with their religion. This leads to a description of the transforming power of true Islam, through a contrasting account of the pre-Islamic period of the Jahiliyya (M8-20). Arabia was then a cut-off area which was blighted by its lack of resources and culture, with inhabitants worshipping different gods, engaged in ferocious tribal wars, and practising such barbarities as female infanticide.

Eventually God is roused to send to the Arabs his Messenger Muhammad (M21-M26), who is praised in verses subsequently made very familiar through their adoption as a lyric for devotional singing (M23):

*Vo nabyon meñ rahmat laqab pāne vālā  
Murādeñ gharibon kī bar lāne vālā  
Musibat meñ ghairon ke kām āne vālā  
Vo apne parā'e kī gham khāne vālā  
Faqīron kī maljā za'ifon kī māva  
Yatīmōn kī vālī ghulāmōn kī maulā<sup>2</sup>*

This abstract tone is continued throughout the passage devoted to the Prophet's mission (M27-M54), which includes many verses indicated in Hali's notes as versifications of Hadith, naturally selected to reinforce Sir Sayyid's reformist interpretation of Islam. Thus the Hadith *Man talaba 'l-dunyā halālan isti'fāfan 'ani 'l-mas'alati wa-sa'yan 'alā ahlihi wa-ta'aṭṭufan 'alā jārihi laqiya 'llāha ta'ālā yauma 'l-qiyāmati wa wajhuhu miṭhla qamari lailati 'l-badri* 'He who seeks legitimate livelihood for himself and for the support of his family, to act properly towards his neighbour and to escape questioning, will come before Almighty God on the day of resurrection with a face shining like the moon on the night of its fullness' is paraphrased as (M48):

*Gharibon ko mihnat kī raghbat dilā'ī  
Kī bāzū se apne karo tum kamā'ī  
Khabar tā ki lo is se apnī parā'ī  
Na karnī paṭe tum ko dar dar gadā'ī  
Talab se hai dunyā kī gar yān ye niyyat  
To chamkoge vāñ māh-e kāmīl kī surā<sup>3</sup>*

<sup>2</sup> The one who has received the title of 'Mercy' among the prophets, the one who fulfils the desires of the wretched, / The one who comes to the help of others in trouble, the one who takes to his heart the sufferings of his own and other people, / The refuge of the poor, the asylum of the weak, the guardian of orphans and the protector of slaves.

<sup>3</sup> He gave the poor the urge to work hard, saying, 'Earn your living by your arm. / So long as you support your own and strangers, you will not have to beg from door to door. / If this is your purpose in seeking worldly goods on earth, you will shine like the full moon in heaven.'

The moral impetus provided by the Prophetic mission inspires the simple, just and egalitarian society of the early Caliphate (M55-M61). This is starkly contrasted with the darkness which had then befallen former civilizations (M61-M68), until the spread of Islam through the Arabs led not only to moral renewal but to cultural renaissance, with the Arabs' tireless explorations and physical transformations of all parts of the known world from Gibraltar to Malaya—as may be still seen from the monuments of that glorious period (M69-M81). The footnotes needed to explain the wealth of geographical and other references become still denser as Hali's memorial to the golden age of Islam flows to its high water mark, first with a passage on the Umayyad Caliphate of Muslim Spain (M82-M84), whose once flourishing Arab culture is movingly evoked for an Indian Muslim readership (M82):

*Huā Andalus un se gulzār yaksar  
Jahān un ke āṣār bāqī haiñ aksar  
Jo chāhe ko'ī dekh le āj jā-kar  
Ye hai Bait-e Hamrā kī goyā zabāñ par  
Kī the Āl-e 'Adnān se mere bāñī  
'Arab kī hūñ main is zamīñ par nishāñ<sup>4</sup>*

This is followed by a more detailed evocation of the achievements of the Abbasid Caliphate of Baghdad (M85-M104), which led the world in sciences and arts—including astronomy, geography, history, literature and medicine—and thereby gave mankind cause to be eternally indebted to the Arabs.

The Muslims' loss of power along with their falling away from the true practice of Islam is described in a transitional passage (M105-M114), which is closely comparable in function to the *gurez-gāh* which links the two main parts of a formal *qasīda*. The relative status of Muslim decadence in the world is first described through an extended simile comparing it to a ruined garden, before reverting to the sea imagery which runs through the poem (M113):

*Vo dīn-e Hijāzī kī be-bāk berā  
Nishāñ jis kī aqsā-e 'ālam meñ pahunchā  
Muzāhim huā ko'ī khatra na jis kī  
Na 'Ummān meñ thītkā na Qulzum meñ jhījkā  
Kī'e pai sipar jis ne sāton samandar  
Vo dūbā dahāne meñ Gangā ke ā-kar<sup>5</sup>*

<sup>4</sup> Through them Spain was entirely turned into a rose-garden, where many of their memorials remain. / Anyone who wishes may go and see them for himself today. It is as if these words were on the tongue of the Alhambra, / 'My founders were of the Umayyad clan. I am the token of the Arabs in this land.'

<sup>5</sup> That fearless fleet of the religion of the Hijaz, whose mark reached the extreme limits of the world, / Which no apprehension could obstruct, which did not hesitate in the Persian Gulf, or falter in the Red Sea, / Which traversed the seven seas—sank when it came to mouth of the Ganges.

With this abrupt bump, the poem moves from proud past to ignoble present. The poet addresses his community, the Muslims of the late nineteenth century (M115-M130), first reminding them of the imperial might they once exercised, then drawing attention to the state of dishonourably idle powerlessness into which they are now plunged. This state is contrasted first with that of the Europeans, whose efficiency has won them world domination (M131-M133), then with that of the Hindus, whose community spirit and readiness to adapt has won them deserved prosperity (M134-M137).

Unlike both these, the Muslims have been reduced to wretchedness by their general poverty (M138-M153), the proverbial 'mother of crimes' which has utterly subverted the values of the former elite and thus deprived the community of its natural leadership. The decline of the once mighty Muslim aristocracy is lamented (M147):

*Magar miṭ chukā jin kā nām-o nishān hai  
Purānī hu'ī jin kā ab dāstān hai  
Fasānoṅ meṅ qissoṅ meṅ jin kā bayān hai  
Bahut nast par tang un kā jahān hai  
Nahīn un kā qadr aur pūrsish kahīn ab  
Unheṅ bhik tak ko'ī detā nahīn ab<sup>6</sup>*

Observing that one escape from poverty is the ignoble path of becoming a hanger-on of the rich (M154-M155), Hali is led to express strong criticism of the rich for their arrogance, selfishness and complete disregard for the sufferings of the less fortunate (M156-M169). Paraphrases of Hadith point to the principles of philanthropy enjoined by true Islam, but now practised by the peoples of the West for the betterment of their fellows. This practical civic spirit is quite unlike the habit of even those wealthy Muslims who do have some conscience, which is to waste money on traditional religious ceremonies (M170-M178).

The state of contemporary religious institutions and their leaders is next characterized in highly sardonic terms (M179-M195). Just as the clerics are criticized for their lack of learning, so too are the members of Sufi families for their lack of true learning. In the twentieth century, Iqbal was to reiterate—notably in *Panjāb ke pīrādoṅ se* (Matthews 1993:124-5)—such unfavourable contrasts of the Pirs of the present with the saints of old as those expressed here by Hali (M185):

*Bahut log pīroṅ kā aulād ban-kar  
Nahīn zāt-e vālā meṅ kuchh jin ke jauhar  
Barā fakhr hai jin ko le de-ke is par  
Ki the un ke aslāf maqbūl-e dāvar  
Kirishme haiṅ jā-jā-ke jhūṭhe dikhāte*

<sup>6</sup> But those whose name and mark is now effaced, whose tale has grown old, / Who are told of in fables and stories, their descendants' resources in the world are very straitened. / They are nowhere valued or asked after now. None gives them so much as alms now.

*Murīdoṅ ko haiṅ lūṭte aur khāte<sup>7</sup>*

The theologians are then fiercely attacked for their narrow and intolerant interpretation of Islam, in flagrant contradiction of the Prophet's own statement that 'Religion is easy' (*al-dīnu yusrun*). The readiness of the theologians to label their opponents unbelievers inspires harsh words from Hali on the general prevalence of bigotry and intolerance which has inspired such bitter sectarian divisions amongst the Muslims of India, in complete contrast to the reconciliation of so many diverse peoples once effected by Islam (M196-M213).

Hali's attack is now widened to cover the community's more general moral defects (M214-M225). Its formal profession of Islam is shown to be utterly belied by the practice of such vices as slander, envy, maliciousness, flattery, and the like. A particularly common target of Hali's moral and aesthetic disapproval, what he calls 'lies and exaggeration' (*kizb-o mubālagha*), is duly satirized here (M224):

*Rivāyāt par hāshiya ik charhānā  
Qasam jhūṭe va'doṅ pai sau bār khānā  
Agar madh karnā to had se barhānā  
Mazallat pai ānā to ūfān ūhānā  
Ye hai rozmarre kā yān un ke 'unvān  
Fasāhat meṅ be-miṣl haiṅ jo musalmān<sup>8</sup>*

Final point is given to this hostile picture of the community's general wickedness by a reminder of the universal justice which prevailed under the Caliphs (M226-M230).

The last spurt of Hali's torrent of criticisms is directed against the cultural bankruptcy associated with the community's moral turpitude. The Muslims' blind traditionalism which obstinately turns its back upon contemporary knowledge in favour of the ancient 'wisdom of the Greeks' is satirically compared to the efforts of some monkeys to warm themselves before a firefly which they had mistaken for fire (M231-M245). Traditional medicine is cited as a particularly glaring instance of this refusal to get up to date (M246-M248). Perhaps the most vitriolic passage in the entire *Musaddas* is then inspired by the perceived degeneracy of contemporary Urdu poetry (M249-M256)—that same world from which Hali charts his painful emergence at the start of the First Introduction. The consequences of the modern Muslim poets' betrayal of the proud moral heritage of Arabic poetry are savagely described (M249):

<sup>7</sup> Many people make themselves out to be the descendants of Pirs, without having any excellence in their noble selves. / They take great pride merely in the fact that their ancestors were the favourites of God. / As they go about, they work false wonders. They eat by robbing their disciples.

<sup>8</sup> Adding supplements to the Traditions, swearing a hundred oaths in support of false promises, / If one has to give praise, then to do so beyond due limit, while unleashing a very tempest if one has to give censure, / These things here make up the daily practice of those Muslims who are unsurpassed in eloquence.

*Vo shi'r-o qasā'id kā nā-pāk daftar  
 'Ufūnat meñ sandās se jo hai badtar  
 Zamīn jis se hai zalzale meñ barābar  
 Malak jis se sharmāte haiñ āsmān par  
 Huā 'ilm-o dīn jis se tārāj sārā  
 Vo 'ilmōñ meñ 'ilm-e adab hai hamārā<sup>9</sup>*

An extended picture of the degeneracy of the younger generation of the aristocracy follows (M257-M274), satirically characterizing its members as wastrels and scoundrels.

The start of the prologue is then recalled with a final evocation of the symbol of the boat on the point of sinking. This leads to the report of how a wise man once pronounced that a man without wisdom, knowledge or wealth is better dead. Like the opening anecdote about Hippocrates, this is told in two verses, and is followed by the poet's appeal to his community to reform itself (M275-M281). The blessings of British rule are then evoked in a passage very much of its time (M282-M289). The loyalist tone is well caught by its opening verse (M282):

*Hukūmat ne āzādīyāñ tum ko dī haiñ  
 Taraqqī kā rāheñ sarāsar khulī haiñ  
 Sadā'eñ ye har simt se ā rahī haiñ  
 Kī rājā se parjā talak sab sukhī haiñ  
 Tasalluḥ hai mulkoñ meñ amn-o amān kā  
 Nahīñ band rasta kisī kārvāñ kā<sup>10</sup>*

A brief but powerful epilogue (M290-M294) emphasizes the inevitable passing of all worldly greatness into failure and decline, for God alone is free from death.

### 2:3 The additional contents of the Second Edition

Written some seven years later, Hali's Second Introduction first describes how, in spite of its novelty and outspokenness, the *Musaddas* immediately provoked an extraordinarily enthusiastic reception. Hali takes this as an indication that the Muslim community is at last on the move. The last part of the original

<sup>9</sup> The filthy archive of poetry and odes, more foul than a cesspool in its putridity, / By which the earth is convulsed as if by an earthquake, and which makes the angels blush in heaven, / Such is the place among other branches of learning of our literature, by which learning and faith are quite devastated.

<sup>10</sup> The government has given you all kinds of freedom. It has completely opened up the roads to progress. / From every direction these cries are coming, 'From prince to peasant, all men prosper.' / Peace and security hold sway in all the lands. No caravan has its way blocked.

*Musaddas* consequently seems too gloomy to encourage the further positive developments in the community's change of attitude:

The community itself may be unchanged, but its attitude is changing. So even if the time for praise is not yet come, disapprobation ought certainly to be diminished. Such thoughts have been strengthened by the inspiration provided by some friends, and a Supplement suitable to the requirements of the present situation has been added to the end of the original *Musaddas*. It was not the author's intention to make the Supplement a lengthy one, but once having embarked upon the subject, it proved to be as difficult to avoid dwelling upon it at length as it is to refrain from flailing about with arms and legs after jumping into the sea.

Slight modifications have also been made to the old *Musaddas*. Having become familiar with the old phrasing, readers may dislike some of these changes, but it was the author's duty not to offer the friends he had invited anything disagreeable to his own taste.

As these introductory remarks indicate, the Supplement (S) is a lengthy exercise in giving a more positive gloss to the criticisms earlier voiced so fiercely. Predictably enough, perhaps, its effect is conspicuously weaker than that of the original *Musaddas*, and it was therefore decided to confine our presentation and discussion of the Supplement in this book to the summary which forms the subject of this section. Some idea of its relative artistic weaknesses may be gained from the representative verses quoted as illustrations below.

Hali begins with an invocation to Hope (S1-S10), which quickly introduces a list of the Prophets. This use of a very familiar topos of traditional Persian and Urdu poetry already provides an indication that the Supplement is going to be less uncomfortable reading than the deliberately challenging first *Musaddas* (S2):

*Safīna pā-e Nūh tūfāñ meñ tū thī  
 Sukūñ-bakhsh-e Ya'qūb Kin'āñ meñ tū thī  
 Zulaikhā kā ḡham-khwār hijrāñ meñ tū thī  
 Dīl-ārām Yūsuf kā zindāñ meñ tū thī  
 Maṣā'ib ne jab ān-kar un ko gherā  
 Sahārā vāñ sab ko thā ek terā<sup>11</sup>*

<sup>11</sup> You were the ark for Noah in the Flood, the one who gave ease to Jacob in Canaan, / Who gave sympathy to Zulaikha in her separation, who eased the heart of Joseph in prison. / When they were beset by troubles, you were the only support for all of them.

Many other achievements of Hope are then listed, with Hali's encyclopaedic enthusiasm for all things Western leading him to range as far as including its motivation of Columbus to discover the New World (S6):

*Navāzā bahut be-navā'oh ko tū ne  
Tavangar banāyā gadā'oh ko tū ne  
Diyā dast-ras nā-rasā'oh ko tū ne  
Kiyā bādshah nākhūdā'oh ko tū ne  
Sikandar ko shān-e Ka'ī tū ne bakhshī  
Kulambas ko dunyā na'ī tū ne bakhshī<sup>12</sup>*

Even amongst the Indian Muslims, who have lost almost everything, there are still some grounds for hope (S11-S37). Even in their ruin, they maintain a certain spirit and style (S11):

*Nahīn qaum meñ garchi kuchh jān bāqī  
Na us meñ vo islām kī shān bāqī  
Na vo jāh-o hashmat ke sāmān bāqī  
Par is hāl meñ bhī hai ik ān bāqī  
Bigarne kā go un ke vaqt ā gayā hai  
Magar is bigarne meñ bhī ik adā hai<sup>13</sup>*

The community is compared to a sick youth with some energy in spite of illness, or to a lamp that still burns, however flickeringly. Every society contains good as well as bad people, and even among the Muslims of India there are some who dimly glimpse that all is not well, and heed the message of those leaders who try to draw the community's attention to what needs to be done (S20):

*Ye sach hai kī haiñ beshtar ham meñ nādān  
Nahīn jin ke dard-e ta'assub kā darmān  
Jahān meñ haiñ jo un kī 'izzat ke khwāhān  
Unhīn se vo rahte haiñ dast-o girebān  
Pai aise bhī kuchh hote jāte haiñ paidā  
Kī jo khair-khwāhōn pai haiñ apne shaidā<sup>14</sup>*

It is their pride in the achievements of their ancestors which is one of the main factors helping to arouse some awareness of their present plight among the

<sup>12</sup> You have favoured many who were destitute, and made beggars wealthy. / You have given power to those who were incapable, and made ships' captains kings. / You granted the glory of the rulers of Iran to Alexander, and on Columbus you bestowed the New World.

<sup>13</sup> Although there is no life left in the community, nor that glory of Islam, / Nor that equipage of majesty and pomp, but even in this state there is left a certain spirit. / Although the time of their ruin has come, yet even in this ruin there is a certain style.

<sup>14</sup> It is true that most among us are ignorant, suffering from a bigotry for which there is no cure. / Those who desire their honour in the world are continually the subject of their attacks. / But there are also some being produced who are devoted to their well-wishers.

Indian Muslims. It is indeed this sense of self-awareness which offers the best guarantee that they may be rescued from their ruined state. The nautical image which underpins the *Musaddas* is here reintroduced to somewhat strained effect (S37):

*Agar bā-khabar haiñ haqīqat se apnī  
Talaḥ kī hu'ī aglī 'azmat se apnī  
Bulandī-o pastī kī nisbat se apnī  
Guzashta aur ā'inda hālat se apnī  
To samjho kī hai pār khavā hamārā  
Nahīn dūr manjdhār se kuchh kinārā<sup>15</sup>*

The point is then expanded in one of Hali's constructed dialogues (S38-S46), in which the Seljuk emperor Tughril Beg (d. 1063) asks his nephew and successor Alp Arslan which peoples are the best and most successful, and is told that it is those who are most self-aware.

A considerable part of the Supplement is next devoted to the expansion of a theme which has already been given some prominence in the *Musaddas*—the need for the community to exert itself through effort and hard work (*kōshish-o mīhnat*). The virtues of toil are first extolled in a general fashion (S47-S55), in a passage which points out how all human achievements are due to hard work. The theme of the playgrounds of the rich being constructed by the toil of the poor—which was to be much exploited half a century later in the Urdu Progressive poetry of the 1930s—is here foreshadowed by Hali (S52):

*Gulistān meñ joban gul-o yāsman kā  
Samān zulf-e sumbul kī tāb-o shikan kā  
Qad-e dīl-rubā sarv aur nārvan kā  
Rukh-e jān-fazā lāla-o nīstaran kā  
Gharībōn kī mīhnat kī hai rang-o bū sab  
Kamerōn ke khūn se haiñ ye tāza-rū sab<sup>16</sup>*

There follows an extended attack in familiar vein upon the vices of the lazy (S56-S72), how they beg instead of working, how they disparage the efforts of the industrious, and how their idleness destroys the community. The positive aims of the Supplement demand that this attack be answered by praise of the industrious, which is expressed at somewhat greater length (S73-S95). Much

<sup>15</sup> If we are aware of our reality, of the former greatness we have lost, / Of our relationship to exaltation and degradation, of our past and future condition, / Then consider that our boat is across, that the bank is not at all far from midstream.

<sup>16</sup> The blooming of rose and jasmine in the garden, the charming twist of the hyacinth's tendril, / The heart-stealing tallness of cypress and pomegranate, the life-enhancing cheek of tulip and eglantine— / All this colour and scent is due to the labour of the poor, all get their fresh appearance from the blood of labourers.

emphasis is laid upon the unceasing demands the industrious make of themselves in all circumstances (S77):

*Mashaqqat meñ 'umr un kī kaṭṭ hai sāri  
Nahīn āṭī ārām kī un ke bāri  
Sadā bhāg daur un kī rahī hai jāri  
Na āndhī meñ 'ājiz na meñh meñ hain 'ārī  
Na lū jeth kī dam turāṭī hai un kā  
Na thir māgh kī jī chhurāṭī hai un kā<sup>17</sup>*

Their toil is devoted to the support of all, as they use their God-given strengths for the common good. So it is through industry that honour accrues to any community, and through industry that political power and security, besides scientific and intellectual skills are gained (S96-S98).

Amongst the Muslims, however, there is a sad dearth of skills (S99-S104). This is conspicuously true of the young men from good families (*sharīf nau-javān*), who are too fond of amusements to apply themselves to their studies. This hedonism prevents the proper development of their natural talents, which might otherwise guarantee the development from this class of intellects to rival such great Muslim thinkers of the past as Nasir ud Din Tusi (d. 1274) or Fakhr ud Din Razi (d. 1210) (S103):

*Yihī jo kī phirte hain be-'ilm-o jāhil  
Bahut in meñ hain jin ke jauhar hain qābil  
Razā'īl meñ pinhān hain in ke fazā'īl  
Inhīn nāqison meñ hain poshida kāmīl  
Na hote agar mā'īl-e lahv-o bāzī  
Hazāron inhīn meñ the Tūst-o Rāzī<sup>18</sup>*

This leads to a series of verses on the necessity of knowledge to nations who are to make anything of themselves in the world (S105-S117). The Muslims of India are exhorted to exert themselves and remember the achievements of their forbears in this area (S118-122), how the Muslims of the golden age used to travel widely in search of knowledge, and how they set up colleges of higher learning all over the Islamic world. Here, as so frequently in the Supplement, a characteristic theme of the *Musaddas*—the association between travel and knowledge (cf. 3:5 below)—is not so much developed as simply reiterated (S121, cf. M78-M79):

<sup>17</sup> Their whole life is spent in hard labour, and they get no time to rest. / Their racing onwards remains ever in progress. They are not helpless in a dust-storm, nor incapable in the rain. / The burning wind of June does not make them catch their breath, nor does the frost of February make them lose heart.

<sup>18</sup> Among these ones who wander about unlearned and ignorant are many with natural ability. / Their vices conceal their virtues. Hidden among these worthless cases are real masters. / If they were not given to sport and play, thousands among them would be like Tusi and Razi.

*'Irāqain-o Shāmāt-o Khwāriṣm-o Tūrān  
Jahān jins-e ta'lim sunte the arzān  
Vahīn pai sipar kar-ke koh-o biyābān  
Pahunchte the tullāb uftān-o khezān  
Jahān tak 'amal dīn-e islām kā thā  
Har ik rāh meñ un kā tāntā bandhā thā<sup>19</sup>*

This reiteration is extended in the next verse to include a sonorous catalogue of names which comes perilously close—again, like rather too many verses of the Supplement—to parodying a favourite device of the original *Musaddas* (S122):

*Nizāmiyya Nūriyya Mustansiriyya  
Nafsiyya Sittiyya aur Sāhibiyya  
Ravāhiyya 'Izziyya aur Qāhiriyya  
'Azīziyya Zainiyya aur Nāsiriyya  
Ye kālij the markaz sab āfāqiyon ke  
Hijāzī-o Kurdī-o Qibchāqiyon ke<sup>20</sup>*

The following verses deal with self help (S123-124, headed *Apnī madad āp*), thus reintroducing yet another key theme of the *Musaddas* (cf. section 3:7 below). Particular reference is here made to the absolute priority of education (S125-S135). Nothing could be worse than becoming a burden upon the state, however benevolent a regime the British Empire may be (S126):

*Sarāsar ho go saltanat faiz-gustar  
Ra'īyyat kī khud tarbiyat meñ ho yāvar  
Magar ko'ī hālat nahīn is se badtar  
Kī har bojh ho qaum kā saltanat par  
Ho is tarh hāthon meñ us ke ra'īyyat  
Kī qabze meñ ghassāl ke jaise māyyat<sup>21</sup>*

The state provides security and justice, and has guaranteed equal access to education, eliminating previous inequalities of the kind which once distinguished Brahmin and Shudra, or aristocrat and commoner. It is education that fosters a true community spirit, education that guarantees the political ideals of

<sup>19</sup> In the lands of Iraq and Syria, in Khwarezm and Turan, wherever they heard that the wares of education were cheap, / They would boldly face mountain and desert, and surmount all obstacles to arrive in eager search. / Wherever the religion of Islam was in operation, there would be queues of them on every road.

<sup>20</sup> The Nizamiyya, Nuriyya, Mustansiriyya, Nafsiyya, Sittiyya and Sahibiyya, / The Ravahiyya, Izziyya and Qahiriyya, the Aziziyya, Zainiyya and Nasiriyya, — / These colleges were centres for people from all over the world, for Arabs from the Hijaz, for Kurds and for Qipchaq Turks.

<sup>21</sup> Even though the Empire is entirely benevolent, itself aiding the training of its subjects, / Yet there is no condition worse than the community becoming a complete burden upon the Empire, / And its subjects being in its hands like a corpse in the grasp of a body-washer.



Western liberalism (cf. 3:7 below) here denoted in characteristic style by Hali through use of the English loan words 'republic' and 'public' (S133):

*Sunī hai gharīboñ kī faryād usī ne  
Kiyā hai ghulāmī ko barbād usī ne  
Ripablik kī dāli hai bunyād usī ne  
Banāyā hai pablik ko āzād usī ne  
Muqayyad bhī kartī hai ye aur rihā bhī  
Banātī hai āzād bhī bā-vafā bhī<sup>22</sup>*

The sorry state of the Muslims is due to a lack of education (S136-S143), resulting in a general lack of skills. The consequent dearth of indigenous industry necessitates a reliance upon the imported goods and skills generated by British 'mechanics' (S140):

*Agar ik pahinne ko topi banā'en  
To kaprā vo ik aur dunyā se lā'en  
Jo sine ko vo ek sū'ī mangā'en  
To mashriq se maghrib meñ lene ko jā'en  
Har ik shai meñ ghairoñ ke muhtāj haiñ vo  
Makainiks kī rau meñ tārāj haiñ vo<sup>23</sup>*

Since everything is imported, commerce too is adversely affected. Hence there is an urgent need to foster education in the community and to put the same proper value upon the acquisition of skills as the ancient Greeks did (S144-S151). These changes should usher in the hoped for revival in community spirit (S152-S158), for which the last of Hali's similes from everyday life provides an ideal example in the industriously selfless life of the anthill (S156):

*Zakhīra hai jab chīyuhā ko'ī pātā  
To bhāgā jamā'at meñ hai apnī ātā  
Unheñ sāth le le-ke hai yāñ se jātā  
Futūh apnī ek ek ko hai dikhātā  
Sadā un ke haiñ is tarah kām chalte  
Kamā'ī se ek ik kī lākhoñ haiñ palte<sup>24</sup>*

<sup>22</sup> It is education which has heard the cry of the poor, which has destroyed slavery, / Which has laid the foundation of 'republic', which has set free the 'public', / Which both confines and sets more free, which brings both freedom and faithfulness.

<sup>23</sup> If they make a hat to wear, they bring the cloth for it from another world. / If they need a needle to sew with, they go from East to West to get it. / In everything they are dependent upon others, and are destroyed by the onslaught of 'mechanics'.

<sup>24</sup> When any ant finds a store, he comes running to his community, / And, taking them with him, goes from there to show each of them his supplies. / This is how things ever proceed amongst them: from the earnings of each individual hundreds of thousands are nourished.

The Supplement ends with a prayer to God to look after the Prophet's community before it is too late (S159-S162):

The same mode of supplication is taken up in the final addition to the *Musaddas*, the Petition (P) whose appeal to the Prophet to attend to his community begins (P1):

*Ai khāsa-e khāsan-e rusul vaqt-e du'ā hai  
Ummat pai tirī ā-ke 'ajab vaqt parā hai<sup>25</sup>*

Many of the themes of the *Musaddas* are again reiterated more briefly in the Petition, which bewails the community's loss of all but its religion. As another gloomy picture is drawn of the ruin into which the once mighty Muslims have fallen, familiar images make their appearance (P40):

*Faryād hai ai kishū-e ummat kī nigahbāñ  
Berā ye tabāhī ke qarīb āñ lagā hai<sup>26</sup>*

In keeping with this poem's devotional nature, however, the Petition suggests that the ultimate solutions to the community's problems lie not so much in education and industrious self-help as in a renewal of that Islamic faith which is still so particularly expressed in passionate devotion to the Prophet (P50):

*Īmāñ jise kahte haiñ 'aqīde meñ hamāre  
Vo terī muhabbat tirī 'itrat kī vilā hai<sup>27</sup>*

While the community still loves the Prophet, there is still hope for it. Having enjoyed its turn of glory, it may now endure its disgrace, provided that its faith remains intact.

## 2:4 The style of the *Musaddas*

A critical reading of almost any poem will demand at least some cursory analysis of the inextricable link between its semantics and its form, of the relationship between its message and its medium. The overt message of the *Musaddas*, its poetic articulation of Sir Sayyid's aggressively formulated reformism, will have been sufficiently introduced through the preceding summaries. The verses already quoted in transliteration may also have conveyed some idea of the nature of its medium. But since it is by definition dependent upon both the

<sup>25</sup> O most noble of the noble messengers, it is the time for entreaty. Upon your community a strange time has come.

<sup>26</sup> The cry goes up, O guardian of the ship of the community, 'This fleet has begun its approach to destruction.'

<sup>27</sup> The faith which is said to reside in our belief is our love for you, our devotion to your family.

Urdu language and the poetic conventions associated therewith, more now needs to be said about the style of the *Musaddas*.

As is shown by his remarks at the end of the First Introduction, Hali was fully aware of the criticisms that his consciously new style was likely to attract from connoisseurs of the classical school of Urdu poetry:

Our country's gentlemen of taste will obviously have no liking for this dry, insipid, plain and simple poem... Flights of fancy or elegance of style are nowhere to be found in it, and it lacks both the seasoning of exaggeration and the flavouring of artifice. In other words, it contains none of the things with which the ears of my fellow countrymen are familiar and to which their taste is accustomed... This poem has not, however, been composed in order to be enjoyed or with aim of eliciting applause, but in order to make my friends and fellows feel a sense of outrage and shame. It will be a sufficient kindness on their part if they will look at it, read it, and understand it.

An extreme sensibility to language and its stylistic implications seems always to have been a strongly marked characteristic of the Urdu literary world, as the perhaps inevitable consequence of its situation in both the Persianate and Indic worlds. So it was hardly surprising that contemporary critics were indeed to be united in the view that the medium of the *Musaddas* was quite as revolutionary as its message. For supporters, the new style which Hali called 'natural poetry' (*necharal shā'irī*) was an essential and exciting concomitant of the new ideology. For opponents, the 'natural poetry' of the *Musaddas* was tarred with the same brush of infidelity to tradition as Sir Sayyid's rationalist attempt to bring Islam into conformity with 'natural law'—the heretical position for which he was widely execrated as a 'nature-ist' (*necharī*).

These conflicting contemporary reactions are vividly illustrated in the various imitations of the *Musaddas* discussed in section 2:5 below. To understand how its style was able to arouse such passions, it is first useful to take note of the established poetic standards against which its divergences were judged. For present purposes it is hardly necessary to go into detail about the historical evolution of these norms, whose function in the Urdu art-poetry of the mid-nineteenth century has been described elsewhere (e.g. Pritchett 1994:77-122; Shackle 1996a). From the critical perspective Hali later elaborated in his *Muqaddama*, which advocated the subordination of poetic structures to higher moral purposes, the trouble with contemporary Urdu poetry was that any message had become quite overlaid by layers of medium, as true art had come almost entirely to be replaced by mere artifice.

Although the contemporary taste for elaboration may be seen in the wider context of Islamic literary history as but one phase of a cycle regularly alternating over the centuries in Arabic, then Persian too, latterly also in Urdu poetry, to Hali it represented an absolute nadir, reached after a long process of

steady decline from the glorious simplicities articulated in the Persian classics, or still more effectively in earlier Arabic poetry. The artificiality Hali regarded as so degenerate was associated particularly with the so-called 'Lucknow school' centred upon the pupils of Shaikh Imam Bakhsh Nasikh (d. 1838), a remarkable figure who was extraordinarily influential in his day for his success in imparting to Urdu poetry all the glitter of the sixteenth century 'Indian style' of Persian poetry (Heinz 1973).

Like most artistic styles, this is less effectively captured through description than through brief example. A passage in a long *qasida* by Hali's near contemporary Muhsin Kakoravi (1827-1905), a third-generation pupil of the Nasikh school, uses a characteristically elaborate rhetoric to play with contrasts between the clouds and the lightning of an Indian monsoon. In one verse, for instance, lightning and cloud appear neatly contrasted types of non-Muslims (Sperl and Shackle 1996b: no. 35, verses 6-7):

*Dhur kā tarsā-bacha hai barq liye jal meñ āg  
Abr choḡī kā birahman hai liye āg meñ jal*<sup>28</sup>

In the next, cloud and lightning are even more neatly contrasted as senior officials of the British Empire:

*Abr Panjāb talātum meñ hai a'lā nāzim  
Barq Bangāla-e zulmat meñ gavarnar janral*<sup>29</sup>

These are verses which demand a sophisticated audience, able without commentary to appreciate the subtle aptness of *choḡī kā*, both 'supreme' and 'with a Brahmin's lock', or of *talātum*, whose 'turbulence' fits the cloud, and whose five letters in the Urdu script fit the Punjab, the Land of the Five Rivers. They also address an audience appreciating the devotion of such highly wrought art to serious purpose. Muhsin's *qasida* of 1876 is an extended eulogy of the Prophet Muhammad, for any Muslim poet a theme of no less profound gravity than Hali's *Musaddas* of 1879.

Hali carefully denied himself such extended transmutations of reality in his own mature poetic practice, whose later codification in the *Muqaddama* condemned them as morally indefensible distortions and aesthetically unacceptable rhetorical tricks. While distinguished by its continual restraint from stylistic exuberance of this kind, much of Hali's poetry does, however, closely follow the same underlying rules. The Petition added to the *Musaddas*, for instance, is a quite traditional type of poem. Like Muhsin's, it is a *qasida* addressed to the Prophet, albeit in supplication rather than in praise. The 'ground' (*zamīn*) of Muhsin's poem—the formal scheme of its rhyme and

<sup>28</sup> So outstanding a fire-worshipper is the lightning that in water it carries fire, so supreme a Brahmin is the cloud that in fire it carries water.

<sup>29</sup> The cloud is Governor in the Punjab of turbulence, the lightning is Governor-General in the Bengal of darkness.





Persianized Ottoman associated with the discredited regime nor with the simple Turkish of the uncultured Anatolian peasantry. The search undertaken by Young Turks like Namık Kemal (1840-1888)—another almost exact contemporary of Hali's—for an idiom which would one day match French (or English) as a language of modern culture accordingly led them to exploit the third strand of their complex linguistic heritage. This was Arabic, whose enormous resources of abstract vocabulary were drawn upon to fill the gap left by the now discredited rose and bulbul. The opening verse of the well known 'Freedom qasida' by Namık Kemal illustrates the typical consequences of this change to a poetic environment in which subtleties of the kind presented in Muhsin's poetry had previously dominated (Sperl and Shackle 1996b: no.26,1):

Görüp *ahkâm-ı 'asrı münharif şidk u selâmetden*  
Çekildik 'izzet ü ikbâl ile bâb-ı hükûmetden<sup>34</sup>

The effect of the verse is entirely dependent upon its plethora of Arabic words, which would be spelt for Urdu as *ahkâm-e 'asr* 'laws of the age', *münharif* 'turned', *şidq-o salâmat* 'honesty and decency', 'izzat-o ikbâl 'glory and fortune', *bâb-e hükûmat* 'gate of government'.

Hali does exactly the same sort of thing in the *Musaddas*. Many of its verses rely for their structure on sequences of Arabic abstract nouns ending in *-at*. A large inventory of these may be found in our glossary, which also shows that only some of them belong to the technical vocabulary of Islam whose use is necessitated by the poem's theme. Typically consisting of three syllables, these nouns tend to coincide all too closely with the *mutaqârib* rhythm, just as—with the addition of Turkish suffixes—they do with the equally regular *hazaj* of Namık Kemal's poem. As an illustration, the rhythmic accents which fall on the first long syllable of each foot are marked in the following example (M42):

*Gha'nîmat hai 'sihhat 'a'lâlat se 'pahle*  
*Fa'râghat ma'shâghil kî 'kaşrat se 'pahle*  
*Ja'vânî bu'râhpe kî 'zahmat se 'pahle*  
*İqâmat mu'sâfir kî 'rahlat se 'pahle*  
*Fa'qîrî se 'pahle gha'nîmat hai 'daulat*  
*Jo 'karnâ hai 'kar lo kî 'thorî hai 'muhtar<sup>35</sup>*

Neither Namık Kemal nor Hali can have derived this sort of Arabicized diction from classical Arabic poetry itself, which is famously so much more concrete in its vocabulary. Actually, the Islamicate patina which this consciously

<sup>34</sup> The laws of the age swerved before our eyes from honesty and decency; and so turned we, and glory turned and fortune from governance's gate.

<sup>35</sup> You have your opportunity in health before sickness, in leisure before abundant occupations, / In youth before the affliction of old age, in halting before the traveller goes on. / You have your opportunity in wealth before poverty. Do what you ought, for there is little time to spare!

elevated diction so convincingly imparted to political or moralizing themes seems more likely to have been derived from contemporary prose. Especially in any official connection, modern trends were naturally more to the fore in prose than in poetry. Nineteenth century conditions in both Turkey and India encouraged the production of vast amounts of prose translation for legislative, administrative and educational purposes, necessitating the use of great numbers of neologisms, with Arabic as a prime source of loans and calques. It is hardly accidental that Namık Kemal did a youthful stint in the imperial Translation Bureau in Istanbul, a few years before Hali worked with Muhammad Husain Azad (1830-1910) under Colonel Holroyd in Lahore (Pritchett 1994:34-45). Nor, indeed, is it coincidental that Ismail Merathi (1844-1917), the other Urdu poet of the time most frequently mentioned in connection with the new 'natural' style (Husain 1935:109), should also have been a schoolteacher actively involved in the production of Urdu language-readers for classroom use.

Hali's life as a supervisor of translations would certainly have given him considerable awareness of the new bureaucratic norms, like the rigid numbering by sections of the Indian Penal Code of 1860. This was made widely familiar through the Code's Urdu translation by Nazir Ahmad (1830-1912), later famous as the author of improving prose tales whose style had their own distinctive relationship to Arabic (Naim 1984; Shackle and Snell 1990:133-6). His equal awareness of the simplified stylistic norms encouraged for utilitarian prose in Victorian India is reflected with considerable success in the lucid organization of his own prose style (Shackle and Snell 1990:105-8). It might also be very plausibly argued that the organization of the *Musaddas* itself—not just the way that its contents demand footnotes, as was indicated in 2:1 above—owes quite as much to those of British textbooks as it does to the structures developed for the old poetic genres. While the syntactic structure of each stanza is to a considerable extent determined by and within the 4 + 2 *musaddas* rhyme-pattern, the intrinsically freer relationship of the stanzas to one another is carefully disciplined by Hali's marginal subject headings. Although these too are of course unnumbered, their arrangement not infrequently suggests careful planning by section and subsection, e.g.:

- The first preaching of the Apostleship (M27-M30)
- The preaching of the Law (M31)
- How the Muslims were in error (M32-M33)
- The teaching of monotheism (M34-M39)
- Instructions on how to live (M40)
- Time (M41-M43)
- Compassion (M44-M45)
- Fanaticism (M46, etc.)
- The effect of his teaching (M53)

The neatness of such structures is entirely compatible with the extensive use of abstract Arabic vocabulary, besides suggesting profounder analogies with the rationalistic emphases characteristic of Sir Sayyid's strategy for reform.

The profundity of these influences from Western example upon the language and structure of the *Musaddas* are far more important than the few English loanwords Hali chooses to flaunt, which are confined to 'nation' (M62), 'liberal' and 'liberty' (M97), 'office' (M135), and 'chemistry' (M247). Together with a few more indicated in the foregoing summary of the Supplement, e.g. 'republic' and 'public' (S133) or 'mechanics' (S140), these are interesting for the semantic fields they indicate. They do not add up to a very long list, although a more detailed investigation would certainly add a larger number of calques to it, including Arabic abstract nouns of the type already mentioned, e.g. *falāḥat* 'agriculture' and *siyāhat* 'travel' (both M75), besides those formed on other patterns like *tamaddun* 'civilization' and *taraqqī* 'progress' (both M8), and such compound phrases as *āzādī-e rā'e* 'freedom of opinion' (M273).

At the superficial level of vocabulary, therefore, English influences on the language and structures of the *Musaddas* are thus rather slight, however great their role in helping mould the new poetic rhetoric of the 'natural' style. So, in a highly typical reflection of local linguistic concerns (cf. Shackle and Snell 1990:6-11, 73), local critics have instead generally chosen to fasten on a phenomenon which might be regarded as exhibiting the reverse characteristics from those to be associated with English, namely Hali's use of 'Hindi' vocabulary. That wag in the *Avadh Punch* of 1904 described 'natural propaganda' as containing 'torrents of pure Hindi (*theth hindī*) and heaps of unfamiliar words' (Sandilavi 1960:289).

In order to understand the feelings aroused by this issue, it is helpful once more to recall parallels with Turkey, where the linguistic shifts introduced in the nineteenth century by the Young Turks were abruptly succeeded in the 1920s—after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire—by Atatürk's policies of linguistic nationalism. These resulted in a wholesale replacement of the Persian and Arabic components of Ottoman by 'pure' (*öz*) vocabulary of actual or fabricated Turkish or Turkic origin.

In India, where the beginnings of the later communal polarization of Urdu and Hindi were already well under way in the nineteenth century, a comparable strategy was never really feasible for those seeking to modernize Urdu by increasing the proportion of its indigenous vocabulary—here termed 'Hindi' in quotation marks to distinguish it from the Sanskritized modern standard Hindi in Devanagari script which is the national language of India. Urdu's indigenous Khari Boli base without its Perso-Arabic overlay looks less like modern Urdu than simple modern Hindi. It was, therefore, not just Hindu linguistic chauvinism which made it plausible to include a poem of Hali's in Devanagari script in an early anthology of Khari Boli Hindi verse (*Beva kī munājāt* in Ayodhya Prasad 1889:39-44, cf. McGregor, 1975:104-111) which was produced at a time when the emerging modern Hindi was fighting its own battles for recognition as a poetic language, only in its case against the established position of Braj Bhasha.

The controversy over the proper language for Urdu poetry was being fought in a different arena. Hali's linguistic experiments with 'Hindi' vocabulary were

undertaken partly in reaction to the linguistic purism of the Nasikh school, where much effort had been devoted to expunging the sorts of native words once freely employed by Sauda and his eighteenth century contemporaries, in favour of what were seen as chaster Persianisms. Since he was here venturing on long-abandoned stylistic territory, Hali's use of 'Hindi' is often rather unassured, as is indicated by the elimination of such words in many of the detailed textual revisions illustrated in the appendix to our translation. Some of those words which do remain might well be unfamiliar to many Hindi readers, let alone the Urdu public, e.g. *khet* 'moonrise' (M22), *khalbalī* 'confusion' (M71), *kanauṇḍā* 'indebted' (M104), *gaun* 'opportunity' (M125). Nor is such recondite vocabulary, with its strongly rustic overtones, always very happily integrated into the poem's predominantly Arabicizing diction. In the following verse, for instance, the obtrusively 'Hindi' item *dareṛā* 'hard rain' blends very awkwardly with the blandly Persianate *abr-e sūtam* 'cloud of tyranny' (M65):

*Havā har taraf mauj-zan thī balā kī  
Galoṅ par chhurī chal rahī thī jafā kī  
'Uqūbat kī had thī na pursish khatā kī  
Parī lut rahī thī vadī'at kḥudā kī  
Zamīn par thā abr-e sūtam kā dareṛā  
Tabāhī meṅ thā nau'-e insān kā berā<sup>36</sup>*

In fairness, though, it should of course be said such peculiar words constitute only a quite small proportion of Hali's 'Hindi' vocabulary. On the whole, Hali makes very successful use of this register of the language as an important tool in his strategy of reaching beyond the narrow circles of the literati in order to secure as wide an audience as possible for the 'natural poetry' addressed to the Muslim community as a whole. Everyday words are used to express many of the poem's core themes, e.g. *barḥnā* 'to progress' and *barḥānā* 'to advance', and to underpin many of the poem's core images—those deliberately simple similes, parables and metaphors whose fuller implications are explored in the third part of our introduction below. Often largely excluded in favour of their Persian equivalents from the Urdu poetic vocabulary of the day, these words include the recurring *nā'o* 'ship' and *berā* 'fleet', besides *dūbnā* 'sink' and *dubonā* 'drown', or *ghatā* 'raincloud', *khetī* 'field', and *gadaryā* 'shepherd'. There is certainly—as has been shown—much more to the poetic language of the *Musaddas* than such simple items, but there is no denying that its 'Hindi' component did form an important part of the poem's impact on Hali's contemporaries.

<sup>36</sup> Everywhere there raged the wind of calamity. Throats were being cut by the knife of cruelty. / There was no limit to torture, nor investigation into wrongdoing. God's trust lay being plundered. / The 'hard rain' of the cloud of tyranny pelted upon the earth. The fleet of mankind lay wrecked.