

II

THE BEGINNINGS OF URDU  
LITERATURE

THIS chapter deals with the first 380 years of Urdu literature. We may divide the time into two parts: first, the Religious period, 1350-1590, during which poems and tracts were written simply to teach the elements of religion; and second, the Literary period, 1590-1730, during which the writing of Urdu was practically confined to the Deccan, while Muslim writers in the north wrote Persian.

It is an astonishing fact that literary composition in Urdu was going on in the Deccan for hundreds of years before it really began in north India. In order to understand this, we must remind ourselves of the history of the country. An early form of Urdu was introduced into the Deccan by the soldiers of 'Alā ud Dīn Khiljī who became Sultan in 1296. Between 1294 and 1311 there were many raids upon the Deccan conducted chiefly by his favourite, Malik Kāfir, but the country was only partially subdued. In 1326, however, the Emperor Muḥammad Tuglaq forsook Delhi and founded Daulatābād in the Deccan, close to where Aurangābād now stands; 21 years later, while he was occupied elsewhere, his officer, Zafar Khān, declared his independence, took the name of 'Alā ud Dīn and became the first ruler of the Bahmanī dynasty of the Deccan, which remained in power till 1500, and lasted without power for 18 years longer. The capital was Gulbarga.

At this stage there are two points to be kept in mind. First, the new king had just revolted against the Emperor of Delhi. Consequently he and his people wished to be as separate as possible from the capital; they developed a local patriotism with a desire to emphasise their own life

and modes of thought; and lastly they began to suspect and dislike outsiders. This resulted in a cultivation of Urdu, as opposed to Persian which was the language of the Emperor's court. Their Urdu was influenced of course by local vernaculars, especially Gujrātī and Marhaṭī (Marāṭhī), and was called not Urdu, but Dakhnī or Daknī. Most of the writers mentioned in this chapter used that dialect, and the word 'Urdu,' when referring to them, is used in that sense. The invading Musalmans and their descendants spoke it; the Muslim converts and their descendants did the same; soon it became the language of the court itself, though Persian remained the language of the Delhi court for centuries after this. It must be remembered that down to about 1375 there was little difference between Dakhnī Urdu and Delhi Urdu.

The second point is that the desire to spread the doctrines of Islam necessitated the use of the vernacular for the purposes of propaganda; and so many religious terms were introduced into the language, for the holy men who have always played an important part in the life of the Deccan, began to write tracts and even larger works in Dakhnī. We have already seen that the earliest writings were religious, and that some of them were written nearly 400 years before there was any regular Urdu composition in Delhi.

The linguistic importance of the Religious period is very great, for here we see the language in its earliest known form. There was no attempt at literary finish; men wrote as they felt led with a view to imparting spiritual instruction. Most of the writers were well-known teachers. Much of their work has been lost, but what survive includes both poetry and prose; most of it is in Dakhnī. The following is a summary:

Thirteenth century—*Shekh Shakar Ganj* (see No. 11).

Fourteenth century—*Shāh Banda Navāz*; the unknown author of *Haft Asrār*; *Abdullāh Husainī*.

Fifteenth century—*Mīrān Jī* and *Shekh Bājan*.

Sixteenth century—*Shāh Burhān*; *Shāh 'Alī Jyū*; *Khūb Muḥammad*; and the author of *Nūr Nāma*.

During the reign of the last Bahmanī king, Maḥmūd

Shāh (1482-1518), the provincial viceroys broke away and established five separate kingdoms, the dynasty coming to an end in 1518. Of these states by far the most important from the literary point of view were Golkunḍa and Bijāpūr.

The Literary period began near the end of the sixteenth century. At that time the Deccan was still divided into five kingdoms. In two of them the kings were themselves eager patrons of literature, both Persian and Urdu. There were therefore two centres of poetry, Golkunḍa (or after 1589, Haidarābād), the seat of the Qutb Shāhī dynasty, 1518-1687, and Bijāpūr, the seat of the 'Ādil Shāhī dynasty, 1490-1686, which was generally Shī'a in belief. This condition of affairs lasted for about a hundred years, till 1687 in Haidarābād and 1686 in Bijāpūr, when the local rulers were deposed by the Emperor Aurangzeb. Anarchy prevailed till his death in 1707, but did not entirely put a stop to the pursuit of letters.

#### A. THE RELIGIOUS PERIOD, A.D. 1350-1590

It has been asserted that prose was written as early as 1100, but nothing is known about it and the statement is almost certainly incorrect.

1. SHEKH 'AIN UD DĪN, GANJ UL 'ILM (1306-93), born in Delhi, came to Daulatābād in the time of Muḥammad Ṭuglaq (1325-51) and died in Bijāpūr. He wrote chiefly in Persian but is believed to have been the author of some Dakhnī tracts on the duties of religion.

2. KHĀJA BANDA NAVĀZ, GĪSŪ DARĀZ (said to have been born in 1321, d. 1422) wrote two short prose works, *Mī'rāj ul 'Ashiqīn*, which has recently been printed, and *Hidāyat Nāma*, both religious. The former is of great importance as being the earliest printed example of Urdu prose. It is a Sūfī tract, nineteen pages long.

3. A pupil of Banda Navāz wrote a large commentary on his master's sayings, and called it *Haft Asrār*.

4. 'ABDULLĀH ḤUSAINĪ, a grandson of Banda Navāz, translated 'Abdul Qādir Jilānī's Arabic tract, *Nishāt ul 'Ishq*, and wrote a commentary on it. This work and *Haft Asrār* may be dated near the end of the fourteenth century.

5. SHĀH MĪRĀN JĪ, SHAMS UL 'USHSHĀQ (d. 1496), one of the Bijāpūr saints, preached and wrote in Urdu. He is the author of two interesting poems which have for their heroine a very religious, but perhaps imaginary, girl of seventeen, called *Khush* or *Khushnūdi*, who renounces the world and devotes herself to obtaining spiritual teaching from Mīrān Jī. The first, 350 lines long, is called *Khush Nāma*, and the second, which continues the story, the girl asking questions and Mīrān Jī replying, is named *Khush Nagz*. It is 146 lines in length. The author's name occurs four times in *Khush Nāma*.

More important, but less charming, is *Shahādat ul Haqīqat*, a poem of 1,126 lines, notable for a striking passage in which the author tells why he preached and wrote in Urdu, the language which all would understand. A short prose work, *Sharḥ i Margūb ul Qulūb*, is with good reason attributed to him. Its importance is linguistic. It is the earliest Urdu prose we have except Banda Navāz's *Mī'rāj ul 'Ashiqīn*. He is said also to have written *Jal Tarāng* and *Gul Bās*, both in prose.

6. SHĀH BURHĀN (d. 1582) was the son of Mīrān Jī (No. 5). He wrote a considerable quantity of both verse and prose, in what he called Hindī or Gujārī, meaning by the latter term Dakhnī tinged with Gujratī words and phrases. Ten of his religious poems are extant; most of them are short, but one, *Hujjat ul Baqā*, extends to 1,610 lines, and one, called *Irshād Nāma*, is 5,000 lines long. In this poem he gives, as his father had done in *Shahādat ul Haqīqat*, his reasons for writing Urdu instead of Persian. Most of his metres are Hindī, and his language is full of Hindī expressions; but it is Urdu, not Hindī. The writers we have considered were religious men, expressing Sūfī ideas, and writing to instruct their followers; yet in Shāh Burhān's poems there is not a little true poetry. He produced also several prose works, one of which, *Kalimat ul Haqāiq*, is of considerable length.

In this section we may include the following:

7. SHĀH MĪRĀN JĪ KHUDĀNUMĀ (d. 1659), at one time servant of King 'Abdullāh Qutb Shāh, was consecrated successor to Amīn ud Dīn A'lā (No. 8), but died before his

master. He wrote in 1600 a prose work called *Sharḥ i Sharḥ i Tamhīd*, a translation of, or commentary on, a Persian religious work. It is important as one of the earliest examples of Urdu prose. The style is plain, simple and straightforward. One extant MS. of it was written in 1603.

8. AMĪN UD DĪN A'LĀ (1582-1675), the son of Shāh Burhān (No. 6), was a religious teacher, who, in addition to an ode on his father, wrote *Muḥibb Nāma*, or *Muḥabbat Nāma*, an ode on spiritual love, and *Rumūz us Sālikīn*, a poem on the unity of God and other subjects. He wrote also a religious poem without a name, some verses in Hindi *dohrā* metre, and some mixed Persian and Hindi lines. Of his prose tracts the most important are *Guttār i Hazrat Shāh Amīn* and *Ganj i Makḥfi*. His writings have a religious rather than a literary value. He is sometimes credited with a large number of short poetical romances, collected in MS. called *Javāhir ul Asrār*, and with two poems, *Risāla e Qurbiya* and *Risāla e Vuḥūdiya* which have 640 lines between them.

9. *Mittāh ul Khairāt*, an anonymous prose work (probably about 1630), is an exposition of religious duties.

10. In 1662, 'ABDULLĀH wrote *Aḥkām us Salawāt*, a prose translation from Persian. It gives rules for prayer and contains a compendium of Hanafī tenets. This work has been printed as part of Shāh Malik's *Sharī'at Nāma* (No. 51).

During this period there were a few Urdu religious writers in other parts of India, especially the Panjab and Gujrat. (Such are Nos. 11-19 below.)

11. SHEKH FARĪD UD DĪN, SHAKAR GANJ (d. 1266), was born near Multān and died in Pāk Paṭān. A few lines of doubtful authenticity are extant which show a mixture of Urdu, Panjabi and Persian.

12. SHEKH BAHĀ UD DĪN BĀJAN (d. 1506) was a religious teacher, a little of whose writing has come down to us. It is in mixed Hindi and Urdu.

13. SHĀH 'ALĪ JYŪ of Ahmadābād, Gujrat (d. 1565), whose full name was Shāh 'Alī Muḥammad Jyū Gām Dhanī, wrote a religious poem called *Javāhir ul Asrār Allāh*, generally known as his *Divān*. The poem, about

4,800 lines in length, tells of the poet's love for God. The style is simple and attractive, and the language shows strong Gujrati influence.

14. SHEKH KHŪB MUḤAMMAD, also of Ahmadābād, was a disciple of Shekh Kamāl Muḥammad whose teachings he set forth in *Khūb Tarang* (1578), a poem of much linguistic importance. The India Office copy is only 29 years later.

15. NŪR NĀMA is an anonymous religious poem of about the same time as *Khūb Tarang*. It shows Panjabi influence.

16. SHEKH 'UṢMĀN (1625). 17. SHEKH JUNAD (c. 1650). 18. VALĪ RĀM. All from the Panjab; wrote Persian verse with a few lines of Urdu scattered through it.

19. 'ABDĪ, 1663, is the author of *Fiḡh i Hindī*, wrongly attributed by Sprenger to Shekh Jivan. It is in Urdu but with many Panjabi expressions.

#### B. THE FIRST LITERARY PERIOD OF URDU IN THE DECCAN, 1590-1730

It is convenient to divide this period into three parts, the first two running parallel: (1) Literature in Golkunḍa or Haidarābād, connected with the Quṭb Shāhī court (1590-1687); (2) Literature in Bijāpūr, connected with the 'Ādil Shāhī Court (1590-1686); (3) Literature in the Deccan during the time of Aurangzeb and his successors (1687-1730).

The greatest poets of this period were the following:

GOLKUNḌA: Muhammad Qulī Quṭb Shāh, King of Golkunḍa (1580-1611); Vajhī (flor. 1600-40); Gavnāsi (1639); Ibn i Nishāṭī (1655); Ṭab 'ī (1670).

BIJĀPŪR: Rustamī (1649); Nusratī (1650-70); Mirzā (1660).

1687-1730: Valī and Sirāj, both of Aurangābād.

The greatest of these was Valī.

## THE QUTB SHĀHĪ POETS

20. **Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah.**<sup>1</sup> MUHAMMAD QULĪ QUTB SHĀH, the fourth king of the Qutb Shāhī dynasty, reigned in Golkunḍa from 1580 to 1611. Nine years after he came to the throne he founded the city of Haidarābād and made it his capital. Scholars and religious leaders flocked to his court. The king led the way in learning and poetry; he was a prolific writer in both Persian and Dakhni. His works were collected shortly after his death by his nephew and successor, Muḥammad Qutb Shāh. A beautiful copy, consisting of nearly 1,800 pages with about 100,000 lines, was made in 1616, only five years after the author's death, and still exists.

This royal poet is possibly, even probably, the first literary writer of Urdu. Previous writers had written for the purpose of instruction; but his works are purely literary. He deals with a great variety of subjects; indeed breadth of mind and width of interest are his most notable characteristics. He was the first Urdu author to write odes, lyrics, romances and real elegies. His religious poems are numerous and good, though conventional. His love poems are truly Indian in style, not Persian. In addition to the usual subjects beloved of Persian poets and their Urdu followers, he entered into matters of everyday life, describing Hindu and Muhammadan feasts and festivals, celebrations of birthdays and marriages, the customs prevailing in the country, life in his own royal palace, even fruits and vegetables, birds and flowers—in short, he might have said with Terence, *humani nihil a me alienum puto*. The only later Urdu poets who compare with him in this respect are Saudā and Naḡīr; they are inferior to him in description of nature, while he is superior to Naḡīr in his sympathetic account of Hindu life, which Saudā did not touch. It is astonishing that the first poet should have been so well-equipped.

<sup>1</sup>The names of the more important writers in the pages which follow are printed in heavier type than the others; e.g. Nos. 20, 24, etc.

*Poems by Muḥammad Qulī Qutb Shāh*

## I. THE LITTLE DARK GIRL

1. Mine eyes have seen a little girl's dark face  
and have become forgetful of all else.
2. Thy cypress form comes out coquettishly  
and lights appear to me like moon-rays fair.
3. Swift as the wind her hands surround her waist,  
that golden waist then shines like sun and moon.
4. No wonder that her radiance conquers me,  
the light of earth and heaven: who knows it not?
5. Thy absence drear affrights me from afar;  
how can she know her home is in my heart?

## II. MY BIRTHDAY

1. Through the prayer of the Prophet I've now reached my birthday  
And beaten the drums sounding forth the good news.
2. I have drunk at the hand of Muḥammad sweet nectar;  
God therefore has made me the crown over kings.
3. The Pole Star, my name star, is nobler than all,  
My canopy coloured expands in the sky.
4. The sun and the moon both are clashing like cymbals  
With sky for arena and tambourines' sound.
5. There Jupiter dances to honour my birthday,  
While Venus is chanting a victory song.
6. My garden is thus overflowing with freshness,  
And furnishes fruit every hour of the day.
7. My enemies all in one place God has gathered  
And wishes to burn them like incense in fire.
8. Fulfil, O my God, all my hope's expectation,  
As Thou gladdenest the earth with the soft rain of peace.
9. The favour of God has brought me my birthday,  
Give true thanks to Him for thy birthday now reached.
10. Through prayers of the priests my kingdom stands firmly,  
God gives me to drink of the water of life.

## III. LIFE IN A LOVE

1. Without the loved one wine cannot be drunk,  
Nor without her one moment life be lived.
2. They said: 'Show patience absent from your love';  
This can be said, but surely not be done.
3. The man who knows not love is merciless,  
Never with such a one hold speech or sit.
4. I am distracted, give me no advice,  
Never to such as I is counsel given.

21. FĪROZ, a poet whose works are not extant. Vajhī in the prologue to *Quṭb Mushtarī* says he was a great poet and an authority on Urdu poetry. Ibn i Nishāṭī called him a 'master.'

22. SAYYID MAHMŪD, too, is known to us only through his being mentioned by Vajhī and Ibn i Nishāṭī, the latter of whom refers to his good poetical taste.

23. AḤMĀD DAKNĪ, a poet at the court of Qulī Quṭb Shāh, is said to have written in 1600 a romance called *Lailā-Majnūn* of which 2,000 lines are extant. Nothing is known about him, but he is favourably mentioned by Ibn i Nishāṭī.

24. **Vajhī.** VAJHĪ is the author of *Quṭb Mushtarī* (1609), a poem referred to as anonymous and nameless on p. 64 of the India Office Catalogue. It is a romantic fairy story relating the adventures of the prince who afterwards became King of Golkunḍa. (See No. 20 above.) He dreamt of an unknown princess, fell in love with her and set out in search of her. Finally he found her and married her. This remarkable poem is thoroughly Indian. The Urdu is good, the description bright, varied and natural. His thoughts and language are original, and he must rank as one of the truest and greatest poets in Urdu. It contains a number of simple lyrics.

In 1634 he wrote an important prose religious story called *Sab Ras*, modelled as regards style upon Zuhūrī's Persian preface to *Nauras Nāma* (No. 43); the prose is both rhythmical and rhymed; yet it is simple and flowing. It is probably a translation of a Persian work by Vajhī ud Dīn Gujrātī. Sūfī teachings are presented in narrative form. It is the first literary prose in the language. The story runs right through, but is spoilt by constant sermonising. All the characters have allegorical names such as Beauty, Heart, Love and Faithfulness. Vajhī was Poet Laureate during the reign of Qulī Quṭb Shāh, and in the prologue to his poem he satirised his contemporaries, especially Gavvāṣī; but 30 years later when he wrote *Sab Ras* times had changed. 'Abdullāh Quṭb Shāh was then king and Gavvāṣī was the favourite poet.

*Poems from Vajhī's "Quṭb Mushtarī"*

I. THE DAWN OF LOVE

1. Not on earth she appeared nor in heaven.  
The prince recked of naught but the maid;
2. He was restless in numberless ways.  
Nor in words could the matter be told,
3. Nor yet could all understand,  
Only he upon whom it had passed.
4. In this state he remained night and day,  
With himself alone had he speech.
5. The charmer absorbed all his thought,  
Like amber attracting the grass.
6. He arose, but anon went and slept,  
For the maid was seen only in dreams.
7. If the friend comes thus in a dream,  
Then the lover wants nothing but sleep.
8. Bewildered, distressed and perturbed—  
No peace all the day, save in sleep.
9. Not openly can it be told,  
To whom can I trust this my woe?
10. On my couch I'm a tossing sea surge,  
For my dream friend my thirst has aroused.

II. A WINE FEAST

1. One night the Emperor an assembly made;  
The sons of ministers sat with him there,
2. And every youth was handsome, fair to see,  
And winsome every one with youthful charm;
3. In war as unafraid as great King Jam,  
In bravery not Rustam's self more brave.
4. Courtiers and singers, elegant and wise,  
Sat in one place together with the King.
5. Goblet and pitcher taking in their hand  
The courtiers one and all engaged in talk;
6. And when the singers rhythmically sang,  
The earth was trembling with the jovial sound.
7. Upon them, as they sang in that wild waste,  
A frenzy passed through overmuch desire;
8. And they that served the King in minstrelsy  
Were adding melody to melody.
9. The singers entering into merriment  
Would presently make even mourners gay.
10. With wine and pitcher, salted fruits and cup,  
Intoxicated all the guests became.
11. When half the night was come and midnight lowered  
Bereft of sense were friends with sense before.
12. Courtiers remembered not how to converse  
And singers their surroundings heeded not.

25. **Gavvasi.** GAVVĀSĪ was in later life attached to the court. He is the author of two works. The first is a romance called *Qissa e Saif ul Mulūk o Badi' ul Jamāl*, 14,000 lines long, which tells of the love of the Egyptian prince, Saif ul Mulūk, for a Chinese princess; it is a Dakhnī version of a story in the Persian *Arabian Nights*. Different MS. copies give the date as 1616, 1618 and 1624. This is a great favourite and has been translated into several Indian languages. From the preface we learn that the author was very poor; he was also very conceited and thought little of the merits of other poets. When he wrote his second work, nearly 20 years later, he was evidently popular and well off. He was a good poet, but not equal to his contemporaries, Vajhī and Ibn i Nishāṭī. He wrote much better in the days of his poverty than he did afterwards when fortune smiled upon him. His other poem is a romance, *Tuṭī Nāma*, the tales of a parrot, a poetical translation of Ziyā ud Dīn's Persian work of the same name, which is itself based upon a Sanskrit original. It was written in 1639. Before beginning the poem proper the poet writes a long ode in praise of his master 'Abdullāh Quṭb Shāh.

26. MUḤAMMAD QUṬB SHĀH, ZILL ULLĀH, reigned in Haidarābād (1611-24). He collected his predecessor's poetry and wrote a poetical preface. In an extant MS. of his works there are many notes in his own handwriting giving useful information about other poets and their writings. He was more learned than his uncle, but his poetry, though not without charm, is a good deal inferior.

27. 'ABDULLĀH QUṬB SHĀH was King of Haidarābād (1624-72). His poems, along with those of the poet just mentioned (No. 26), were collected in 1667. The MS. is in Haidarābād, but has not been printed. During his long reign, Urdu poetry flourished in Haidarābād. We are well informed about it because we have the contemporary history, *Hadiqat us Salāṭīn*, by his own historian Niẓām ud Dīn Ahmad.

28. QUṬBĪ was the author of *Tuḥfat un Naṣāih* (1637), an unimportant poem containing over 1,500 lines; it is a translation of a Persian religious work by Shekh Yūsuf of Delhi. The metre and rhyme are the same as in the

Persian, and the translation follows the original line by line. Quṭbī lived in Haidarābād, and must be distinguished from the Quṭbī who wrote *Terah Māsā* over a hundred years later. The second Quṭbī was a disciple of Jān Jānān Maḥzar.

29. MUQĪMĪ is a poet of whom next to nothing is known. In a mediocre original poem which has come down to us he mentions his being a friend of Gavvāṣī (No. 25) which suggests that he too belonged to Haidarābād. He wrote a romance called *Qissa e Candarbadan o Mahyār*. Candarbadan is a Hindu princess who refuses an offer of marriage from a Muḥammadān named Mahyār, but on his death from a broken heart renounces her religion and dies. They are buried together. The story resembles that of Mīr's *Shu'la e Ishq* (No. 104).

30. 'ALĪ AKBAR AHMAD JUNAIDĪ of the Quṭb Shāhī court lived in the time of 'Abdullāh Quṭb Shāh (1624-72), and composed in 1654 a romance entitled *Māh Paikar*.

31. **Ibn i Nishati.** IBN I NISHĀṬĪ wrote in 1655 *Phulban*, a romance, 3,500 lines in length. From both the literary and the historical standpoint it is of great value. Although in the main it is a translation of a Persian work, *Basātin*, written during the reign of Muḥammad Tuḡlaq in the early part of the fourteenth century by Ahmad Zubairī, it is a living picture of the life of the beginning of the seventeenth century. Like other romances of the time it begins with praise to God and the saints; after exalting the virtues of the king it goes on to tell of social festivities. When the story is completed the author laments the death of some of his poet predecessors. In the epilogue, written years later and historically valuable, he tells us that he had written prose (none of it is extant now), but says that this is his first attempt at poetry. We learn that his poem brought him much popularity. The illustrated MS. in the India Office was prepared at the order of a well-to-do lady in Sidhot. There appears to be no ground for saying that he wrote a *Tuṭī Nāma* or that he ever used the name, 'Avarī.' He had quite a modest estimate of his own ability. *Phulban* is superior to Nuṣratī's work (see No. 49) in the simplicity and fluency of its language, but inferior in thought and narrative,

It is one of the best romances of the Qutb Shāhī age. Some say that the author was a Shī'a.

32. MİRĀN YA'QŪB in 1668, or a little later, translated *Shamāil ul Atqiā*, a long work by Khāja Burhān ud Dīn of Aurangābād. The style is simple and attractive.

33. **Tab'i.** TAB'Ī of Golkunḍa, who lived during the reigns of the last two kings of Haidarābād, wrote a fine romance called *Qiṣṣa e Bahrām o Gul Andām*. It was written in 1670; the preface was dedicated to Shāh Rājū, a contemporary saint. The romance is based upon Nizāmi's *Haft Paikar*; it was written in forty days. Tab'ī had a great reverence for Vajhī who appeared to him in a dream and praised his work. He regarded Vajhī as his poetical master and followed him. His poem shows much originality and is of higher merit than the two versions of the theme produced by Amīn and Daulat, known as *Bahrām o Bānū Husn*. (Nos. 45, 46.) Tab'ī's poem, which is nearly 2,700 lines long, is divided into sections of equal length. It contains an excellent ode on Khāja Banda Navāz (No. 2).

34. ABU'L ḤASAN TĀNĀ SHĀH was King of Haidarābād from 1672 down to 1687 when Aurangzeb dethroned and imprisoned him. It is certain that he was a poet like the three kings before him, but his work is not extant. It was probably destroyed during his imprisonment; only a few lines are now known.

35, 36. NŪRĪ. Two men of this name are sometimes confused. One, a friend of Faizī in the time of Akbar, occasionally wrote half couplets in Urdu; the other, No. 36, who was a courtier of the king just mentioned, was probably the Nūrī known to have been a famous elegy-writer. Some say that the earlier Nūrī also wrote elegies and that in later life he made Bijāpūr his home.

37. MUḤAMMAD AMĪN wrote an unfinished poem, 1,200 lines long, called *Qiṣṣa e Abu Shāhma*, a story about the son of the Khalifa 'Umr bin Khattāb. The author was a mere boy at the time. He lived apparently in or near Haidarābād under 'Abdullāh Qutb Shāh. (No. 27.)

38. ABU'L QĀSIM MIRZĀ was a servant of Tānā Shāh. After his patron was taken captive and dethroned by

Aurangzeb in 1687 Mirzā retired to 'Abdullāh Ganj near the capital, lived there as a *darvesh*, and there died. His poems are not extant. He is the author of a romance, *Jang Nāma* (doubtful), translated from Persian, and of an elegy, in which he relates the story of the fighting of Ḥanīf, the son of 'Alī, with Yazīd and his followers.

39. SHĀH QULĪ KHĀN SHĀHĪ, a native of Bhavnagar, was a good elegy writer who lived in Haidarābād in the time of Tānā Shāh. One short elegy is particularly good. He wrote also odes and lyrics. We may put his date at 1680. He was a court poet and everyone was fond of him.

40. FĀIZ belonged to Golkunḍa. In 1683 he wrote a romance, 1,700 lines long, called *Rizvān Shāh o Rāḥ Afzā*, in which he told the story of the love of Rizvān Shāh, prince of China, for Rūh Afzā, a Jinn princess. Like many other works of the time it is a translation from Persian. He was a very modest man and wrote not for gain or reward, but because he felt compelled to do so. The British Museum MS. has a pathetic interest. It belonged to Major M. W. Carr, Madras Staff Corps, who was about to edit it when he was drowned (January 13, 1871). Fāiz used many Arabic and Persian words and constructions. In this he resembled Valī (No. 75) rather than earlier Dakhnī writers. We are thus enabled to put a date to the beginning of the Persianising tendency.

41. SHU'ŪR (c. 1680) was another poet of the time of Tānā Shāh.

42. LAṬĪF in 1684 wrote a long poem of little merit, called *Zafar Nāma*, about as long as *Paradise Lost*. It describes the wars of Ḥanīf. Its interest is religious.

#### THE 'ĀDIL SHĀHĪ POETS

43. Another royal poet was IBRĀHIM 'ĀDIL SHĀH II, King of Bijāpūr (1580-1626), who in 1599 founded near his capital a garden city, giving it the name of Nauraspūr. This was intended to be a great religious and literary centre. Shortly afterwards the king wrote a poem on music called *Nauras Nāma*, to which the Persian writer, Zuhūrī, wrote a preface. The poem was in Dakhnī, and Hīndī metres

were employed throughout. In this king's reign many poets and scholars came from Gujrat.

44. **ĀTISHĪ**, a Persian poet (flor. 1620) wrote some Urdu poetry, not now extant, but popular in its day.

45. **AMĪN** was the author of an incomplete romance, *Bahrām o Bānū Husn* (about 1620), which was finished in 1639 by Daulat Shāh (No. 46). It tells in smooth and easy language the exploits of Bahrām Gor, the Persian king, while in the land of the Jinns, and of his marrying Bānū Husn, the daughter of the king of the country. The story is much liked and has been told several times.

46. **DAULAT SHĀH**, a Persian poet who latterly wrote in Urdu. As has just been mentioned he completed Amīn's poem in 1639.

47. **MALIK KHUSHNŪD** lived in the time of Muḥammad 'Ādil Shāh, whose Poet Laureate he was. He wrote two romances in a crabbed and awkward style. One, named *Bahrām*, containing 6,500 lines, is in the style of *Khusrau's Hasht Bihisht*. The British Museum Catalogue wrongly calls the author Muḥammad Shāh. The other, *Yūsuf-Zulekhā*, is also adapted from *Khusrau*. In 1635 he was sent as an ambassador to Golkunḍa.

48. **Rustumī**. **KAMĀL KHĀN RUSTUMĪ** was the son of *Khattāt Khān*, secretary to the royal court of Bijāpūr. In 1649 he completed a long romance called *Khāvar Nāma*, more than twice as long as *The Ring and the Book*. It relates the story of 'Alī, and was written at the request of the princess *Khadija*, a person of great importance in the literary world of the time. She was the sister of 'Abdullāh Quṭb Shāh (No. 27) and wife of Muḥammad 'Ādil Shāh, who was King of Bijāpūr (1626-56). This poet is called *Rustumī* by *Ethé* and *Blumhardt*, and *Rasmī* by *Garcin de Tassy*. On metrical grounds the latter name must be wrong. His work has considerable value, for it is the first epic in Urdu, and north India has no Urdu epic poetry, apart from elegies. The poem, which is a version of a Persian work is in simple and flowing language. He was also a good prose-writer.

49. **Nusratī**. **NUŠRATĪ** was a poet who flourished in the court of 'Alī 'Ādil Shāh (1656-73). He wrote three romances. *Gulshan i 'Ishq* (1657), 8,000 lines long, resembles *Khush-*

nūd's *Bahrām* fifteen or twenty years earlier. It does not rank high as poetry. He was urged to write it because of the paucity of Dakhnī romances on the Persian model. It describes the mutual love of Prince Manohar and *Madhumālātī*. '*Alī Nāma*', composed some years later, is a long account of the glorious deeds of his royal master. It is superior to every other poem produced in Bijāpūr. It tells the history of 'Alī 'Ādil Shāh's reign for ten years, (1656-66) and is the first biography in the language. Scattered through it are fine odes, mostly on military subjects, which place the author's name high among Urdu ode writers. He writes powerfully with more description and less panegyric than the poets of north India. An earlier work, *Mi'rāj Nāma*, written during the reign of Muḥammad 'Ādil Shāh, contains many more Dakhnī expressions than the others and is more difficult to understand. Some of his critics objected to the local words employed in it; but he replied, 'A customer is concerned with getting a good bargain, not with the ceiling and roof of the shop.' It is said that his '*Alī Nāma* was composed to show that he could, when he liked, write in another style. He left also a collection of odes, and one of lyrics known as *Guldasta e 'Ishq*. *Nușratī* excelled in power of imagination, freshness of subjects, and in the fitness of his words to express his thoughts; he was good at impromptu composition and in humorous verses. He died at an advanced age in the year 1683. His '*Alī Nāma* is his best work and it is very important. Upon it he expended his full strength and through it he conferred immortality upon his hero, the king.

50. **Mirza**. **MIRZĀ** (1660) lived in the time of 'Alī 'Ādil Shāh (1656-73) and wrote some good elegies. He never wrote encomiums on kings or nobles, but he is the author of verses in honour of Muḥammadan saint.

51. **SHĀH MALIK** wrote in 1666 *Sharī 'at Nāma*, a religious poem, 508 lines long, containing details of observances incumbent upon pious Muslims. It includes *Ahkām uş Salāt* also found as a separate MS. The style is simple.

52. **SEVĀ** of Gulbarga, who lived in Bijāpūr, wrote or translated in 1680 a collection of elegies with the title



*Rauzat ush Shuhadā.* He set an example to other Dakhnī poets, and translations of this work became fashionable. He wrote also *Qānūn i Islām* in which rules for prayer are given.

53. 'ABD UL MŪMIN MŪMIN lived in Mysore but was connected with Bijāpūr. In 1681 he wrote a large book, *Asrār i 'Ishq*, a copy of which still exists. In this he related the life and miracles of Sayyid Muhammad Jaunpūrī.

54. MĪRĀN HĀSHIMĪ (d. 1697) was the spiritual disciple of Shāh Hāshim from whom he derived his second name. In 1687 he composed a long romance of 12,000 lines called *Yūsuf-Zulekhā*. On the strength of the speeches attributed to Zulekhā he has been called the first writer of *rekhtī* (pp. 42, 54), but this is not correct, for when a woman is represented as speaking in a way natural to her sex her words are not considered to be *rekhtī*. Pompilia in *The Ring and the Book* does not speak English *rekhtī*. He left also a collection of odes, elegies and lyrics, which is not extant, and a translation of *Ihsān ul Qiṣas*.

55. SHĀH MUHAMMAD QĀDRĪ, known also as Nūr i Daryā, became in 1673 successor to Amīn ud Dīn A'lā (No. 8). He was the author of some prose tracts containing Sūfī doctrines.

#### URDU LITERATURE IN THE DECCAN UNDER THE MUGALS (1637-1730)

Two men bearing the name, 'Ājiz, viz. Muhammad 'Alī 'Ājiz (No. 56) and 'Arif ud Dīn 'Ājiz (No. 67) have sometimes been confused.

56. MUHAMMAD 'ALĪ 'ĀJIZ was the earlier writer; his style is simple, direct and forceful. He is author of a romance called *Qiṣsa e Fīroz Shāh* or *Qiṣsa e Malika i Miṣr* (1688 or earlier), 800 lines long, which deals with the story of the wife of Fīroz Shāh, King of Egypt. It is not known to what part of the country 'Ājiz belonged, but he was alive when Aurangzeb conquered the country in 1686 or 1687. (See p. 16.)

57. VALĪ ULLĀH QADRĪ, at the suggestion of his father,

translated *Ma'ritat i Sulūk* from the Persian original. The date is 1688.

58. SHEKH DĀŪD ZA'IFĪ was a learned Sūfī who left two poems; one, a romance in the India Office Library, is without date or title (720 lines long); it tells the story of a woman who burnt herself alive because of her love for Muhammad. Hindi words abound in it. The other is *Hidāyat i Hindī* (1689), a long work on the beliefs of the Hanafī sect.

59. BECĀRA flourished during Aurangzeb's time. We know only that he was a servant of the emperor and visited Delhi.

60. SHĀH HUSAIN ZAUQĪ, 'Bahr ul 'Irfān,' wrote in 1697 a poetical version of Vajhī's *Sab Ras* (see No. 24), which he called *Viṣāl ul 'Ashiqīn* or *Husn o Dil*, but it is much inferior to the prose original. He left also a number of other poems which have been lost, but MSS. of three works, a eulogy of 'Abd ul Qādir Jilānī, *Mabāp Nama*, and an account of the well-known Sūfī, Mansūr, have been preserved.

61. AMĪN in 1697 composed a long poem which was a retelling of the ever popular *Yūsuf-Zulekhā*, mistakenly dated 1600-1 by Garcin de Tassy. He is not the same as Muhammad Amīn (37) or Amīn (45).

62. QĀZĪ MAHMŪD BAHRĪ was a prolific writer of Sūfī views, who flourished c. 1680-1700. He belonged to a village, Gogī, near Nuṣratābād, but went to Bijāpūr in 1684 and to Haidarābād two years later. On one of his journeys he was attacked by robbers who destroyed all his writings. In 1700 however he wrote a romance called *Man Lagan* which has been printed. It contained so many difficult words that a glossary was prepared shortly after the work itself. It is now out of print. He left also fourteen love poems, four elegies, two odes, and a mystical ode called *Bangāb Nama*.

63. MUHAMMAD FAYYĀZ VALĪ of Velūr (Vellore) is to be distinguished from his more famous contemporary and namesake of Aurangābād (No. 75). His time of activity is 1690-1707. He was the author of a romance, *Qiṣsa e Ratn o Padm*, 8,000 lines long, based on Muhammad Jāisi's *Padmāvat*,

which has been attributed to the other Valī, and of a collection of elegies, about 10,000 lines in all, called *Rauzat ush Shuhadā*, 1707. His authorship of a short poem of 100 lines known as *Munājāt* is doubtful.

64 and 65. MAḤMŪD BEG of Bijāpūr, and FAKHRĪ, a pupil of the Valī just mentioned, were friends who wrote in the end of the seventeenth century.

66. AḤMAD GUJRĀTĪ was a learned elegy writer in Aurangzeb's time. He knew Hindi, Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit.

67. 'ARIF UD DĪN 'ĀJIZ, a much more artificial writer than his namesake (No. 56); was the author of a romance named *Qissa e Lāl Gauhar* and of other extant poems. The poem written by the other 'Ājiz has been attributed to him, but the straightforward style in which it is written is a strong argument for believing that the earlier author wrote it. 'Arif ud Dīn was born in north India. His father came from Balkh in the time of Aurangzeb, 1659-1707. He soon died, and the future poet was brought up by the second son of Aṣaf Jāh, the first Nizām of Haidarābād, whose dynasty is still on the throne. He went with his benefactor to Aurangābād and was given a salary sufficient for his simple wants.

68. ABU TĀLIB TĀLIB was a Haidarābād poet who visited Delhi and lived there for some time. His date is the last decade of the seventeenth century.

69. ŠABĀĪ of Aḥmadābād (flor. c. 1695) has been compared in style with Naḡīr of Agra.

70. SHĀH BĪR ULLĀH MUJRIMĪ in 1702 told poetically the story of Vajhī's *Sab Ras*, entitling it *Gulshan i Husn i Dil*; as a poem it is mediocre, but it has the merit of brevity and simplicity.

71. 'IRĀQĪ was another poet of that time.

72. FAQĪR ULLĀH ĀZĀD, a contemporary of Valī Aurangābādī (No. 75), wrote with much pathos. This was the result of a disappointment in love which led to his wandering restlessly till he reached Delhi. Little is known of his writings.

73. MAḤBŪB 'ĀLAM, known as Shekh Jivan (flor. circ. 1720) wrote several poems, the chief of which are *Dard*

*Nāma*, 5,500 lines in length, and an elegy on the death of Muḥammad. In the latter the speakers are 'Aisha and Faṭīma. Others doubtfully attributed to him are *Mahshar Nāma*, *Khvāb Nāma* and *Dahez Nāma*. He was a religious writer, probably a Dakhnī.

74. VAJDĪ (about 1710) wrote a long romance, *Tukta e 'Ashiqin*, based on, or adapted from, Farid ud Din 'Attār's Persian work *Khusrāu Nāma*. The romance is extant, but owing to some confusion between this Vajdī and another who lived a century earlier, the authorship is not beyond doubt.

75. Valī. SHAMS UD DĪN VALĪ ULLĀH (1667-1741) is one of the greatest names in Urdu literature. He was born and brought up in the Deccan. His actual birthplace was Aurangābād and he is often referred to as Valī Aurangābādī, a name which distinguishes him from Valī Velūrī or Dakhnī (No. 63). Little or nothing is known of his family, but he is supposed by some to have been descended from Gujrat ancestors, and possibly connected with the famous saint Vajhī ud Dīn. When he was about 20 he went to Gujrat to complete his education, and he always retained a warm affection for the country, particularly for Sūrāt, as his poem in praise of that town shows. While he was studying in Gujrat he became very much attached to a Sayyid called Abu'l Ma'ālī, with whom he travelled to Delhi, perhaps in 1700. There he placed himself under the spiritual direction of Sa'd Ullāh Gulshan to whom he showed his verses. He must already have written a considerable amount of Dakhnī verse, for he lived among Dakhnī poets with a long line of nearly a hundred Dakhnī poets behind him, whose works must have been familiar to him, but now probably his teacher, seeing how excellent his Dakhnī verses were, advised him to give up Persian altogether.

We are not quite sure of the sequence of events or of individual dates. He no doubt recited his Urdu poems before the poets of Delhi. These men whose vernacular was Urdu were writing poetry solely in Persian, unaware of the fact that for nearly 400 years prose and verse had been written in Urdu; but they were immensely impressed by the facility with which Valī expressed his thoughts in that

language. His verses became so popular that people began to sing them in the bazaar and he was everywhere received with honour. Vali's visit to Delhi created a revolution in the poetry of north India. After a time he revisited his native land, but returned again in 1722 to Delhi, a city of which he was very fond. This time he took with him all his poems and his triumph was complete. He died in Ahmadābād in 1741. Vali's writings may be divided linguistically into three sections, viz. pure Dakhnī, about a third of the whole; ordinary Urdu but with many Dakhnī words; pure Urdu. His lyrics number 422 and take up about three quarters of his collection; he wrote six odes dealing with religious subjects or eulogising saints; two maṣnavīs, one being in praise of Sūrāt; and a number of poems in other styles. He wrote no long poems, and he never wrote encomiums on earthly rank or greatness. One poem traditionally attributed to him, *Dah Majlis* or *Rauzat ush-Shuhadā*, is by the other Vali (No. 63).

His style was simple and dignified, sometimes rising to real eloquence; he was essentially a religious man of a mystical cast of thought, and his writings present a vivid picture of the life of the time. He ranks probably in the first half-dozen Urdu poets, and his importance as being the man who induced the Delhi poets to write in their native language can hardly be over-rated. In the days when the wealth of early Dakhnī poetry was not known, he received the title of *Bābā e Rekhta*, Father of Urdu; and so far as his relationship to Delhi is concerned he almost deserves it.

#### VALI'S YOUNGER CONTEMPORARIES IN THE DECCAN

The early Deccan period of Urdu ends approximately when the Delhi period begins (between 1735 and 1740) but in speaking of Dakhnī poets we must for the sake of convenience include some who were still writing when Urdu poetry began in Delhi.

**Elegies** on the death of Hasan, Husain and their families are an important feature of Urdu poetry; they began in the Deccan, and Qulī Quṭb Shāh (No. 20) was the first elegy

writer. His example was followed by others, especially in Bijāpūr, where most of the kings were Shī'ahs and therefore encouraged *marsiya* writing.

A valuable MS. in Edinburgh University Library contains 238 elegies by Hāshim 'Alī and 289 by sixty-three other Dakhnī authors, some of whom are not mentioned in any extant book or MS. elsewhere. It shows the existence of a school of elegy writers of no little merit. They are, it is true, limited in their outlook, as they confine themselves to one or two incidents in the Karbalā story and avoid all embellishment of the narrative. Their date is the first half of the eighteenth century. The best are given below.

76. HĀSHIM 'ALĪ (c. 1680–1760) probably of Gujrat, is the author of a large collection of elegies entitled *Divān i Husainī*. He lived in Burhānpūr during the years 1721–46. Internal evidence shows that the date given in the MS. just referred to is wrong. He was a writer of considerable power. Some have confused him with Mīrān Hāshimī of Bijāpūr, who died in 1697 (No. 54).

Other writers whose elegies are found in the MS. are:

77. IMAMĪ; eight elegies, under 200 lines in all, showing picturesque, dramatic effects.

78. RAZĀ of Gujrat, a good poet and famous teacher, who writes with great force; fifteen elegies, 720 lines.

79. SAYYID of Gujrat, also a vigorous writer; eight Dakhnī and two Persian elegies.

80. GULĀMĪ of Gujrat; seventeen elegies, 760 lines; a strongly imaginative and powerful writer who introduced interesting dialogues into his elegies—perhaps the only old author to do so; he had a good use of language.

81. QĀDIR (about 1736); seventeen elegies, 610 lines; he belonged to the Deccan, probably Haidarābād, and seems to have died before 1740. He wrote with pathos and feeling.

82. YATĪM AHMAD of Burhānpūr, sometimes wrongly called Gulām Ahmad, left seven short elegies of an average length of under 50 lines. The best is the fifth in which Husain's wife describes the death of their one year old child Aṣḡar 'Alī.

83. SAYYID AŞHRAF AŞHRAF (1713) is a very fair poet. A MS. has been discovered which contains a romance

translated by him in 1713, entitled *Jang Nāma e Haidarī*, an account of the victories of 'Alī. It is 1,612 lines long. Thirteen of his elegies are found in the Edinburgh MS.

84. MU'TABIR KHĀN 'UMR (c. 1730), a pupil of Valī Dakhnī (No. 63), was an elegy writer some of whose elegies are in the MS. just mentioned.

85. SAYYID MUḤAMMAD VĀLIḤ is the author of a tragic romance called *Qiṣṣa e Tālib o Moharī*, a poetical version of a story said to have been related by an old Brahman from the Konkan. The date is probably about 1720.

86. **Sirāj.** SIRĀJ UD DĪN (1714-63) was the greatest of the poets who clustered round Valī Aurangābādī (No. 75). He belonged to Aurangābād where he was educated. At that time the town was full of life and gaiety. Aurangzeb had spent his last days there and it was the home of many writers and scholars. Sirāj was acknowledged as a fitting successor to Valī, and the people who gathered week by week for the poetical meetings held in his house said that they were enjoying the fruit of Valī's plants which had been tended and watered by Sirāj. He belonged to the Cishtī sect and was even more of a mystic than Valī. First he wrote in Persian, but he gave it up for Urdu. His *Divān* contains about 10,000 lines, made up chiefly of lyrics and romances. His second volume was called his *Kulliyāt*, and in addition to these he wrote a romance entitled *Bostān i Khayāl*. His poetry is characterised by freshness of subject and loftiness of thought, while his language is a source of astonishment on account of its resemblance to the Urdu of to-day. Sūfīs in particular found spiritual food in his writings. One of his romances under the guise of a story about a rose and a nightingale discusses the attainment of divine knowledge. He became famous during his lifetime and attracted many pupils.

87. GULĀM QĀDIR ŠĀMĪ (1695-1782) was a popular poet with a considerable reputation. He was much esteemed as a teacher of poetics and used to go on tour to meet his pupils. His chief work is a long romance, *Qiṣṣa e Sarv Shimshād*, which is about 10,000 lines in length. His writings, though full of similes and allusions, are simple, elegant and clear. He was brought up in Aurangābād and died there.

88. SAYYID MUḤAMMAD is the author of a romance called *Faiẓ i 'Ām* written in 1727.

89. MIRZĀ DĀŪD DĀŪD (d. 1754), like most Dakhnī poets of his time, was born and brought up in Aurangābād; he was a pupil of Valī Aurangābādī and was much influenced by him. His *divān* is short, containing only 1,000 lines.

90. ŠĀBIR in 1743 wrote a short romance of 250 lines on the duties of husband and wife. It is not known in what part of the Deccan he lived.

91. 'ABD UL HAĪ KHĀN ŠĀRIM (1729-58) was the first Vazīr of Āṣaf Jāh, Nizam of Haidarābād. We know only that he was a poet and died young.

92. SAYYID 'ABDULLĀH QIYĀSĪ was the author of an unnamed romance, telling the story of a merchant and his wife.