courtesans embodying the whole range of literary and musical tastes that elites and aspiring elites needed to acquire. Also significant is the emergence of a popular urban culture—the culture of storytellers, street-singers and performers—that was to find expression in popular publishing and in the great success story of the nineteenth-century theatre. As the evidence from nineteenth-century Hindi and Urdu barahmasas suggests, this was an eclectic literary taste that, to a much higher degree than Ritter’s Hariaudh, mixed tropes and registers.

Also, while Ritter shows that Hariaudh became increasingly ill-at-ease about his own eclectic poetic tastes and subscribed to the Hindi cultural project, in the domain of popular print and popular theatre, cultural nationalism could go hand in hand with linguistic and poetic hybridity.29 It is indeed ironic that the nineteenth century that produced the exclusivist discourses of Hindi and Urdu should also have produced their most eclectic mixture.

If it is still true, as A.K. Ramanujan liked to argue, that every Indian is inescapably multilingual, the recognition of multilinguality as the defining feature of the pre-twentieth-century cultural landscape requires an imaginative effort on the part of us literary scholars, now sadly monolingual in our research. The good news is that the first step to becoming multilingual is easy—we just need to learn another script.

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2 Rekhta: Poetry in Mixed Language
The Emergence of Khari Boli Literature in North India

Imre Bangha

INTRODUCTION

In one of my classes a student was puzzled by a short poem inserted into an Urdu prose narrative. The poem had hardly any Perso-Arabic vocabulary but was written in the Urdu script as was the rest of the text. She complained that despite being a native speaker of Hindi who had learnt the Urdu script she could not tell the difference between Hindi and Urdu. This spontaneous eruption is in dramatic contrast with the political role the Hindi-Urdu divide played in twentieth-century India, manifesting itself in sentences such as Abdul Haq stating that ‘Pakistan was not created by Jinnah, nor was it created by Iqbal; it was Urdu that created Pakistan.’

Although since the eighteenth century Hindi and Urdu have

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developed two distinct literary traditions, the borderlines between the two are far from being as clear as the political boundaries.

The essays in this collection show that, apart from the script, the divide between Hindi and Urdu was blurred in certain intermediary literary genres even in the late nineteenth century. The perplexed student shows that the uncertainty persists to the present day. It seems one might recognise their common linguistic and literary heritage in a plethora of north Indian vernacular dialects that from an outsider's point of view were simply called Hindavi, ('language of India'), or Bhakha, ('language'), to distinguish it from Persian and Arabic on the one hand and from Sanskrit and Prakrit on the other. Instead, however, discourses on their early literature that evolved in the two languages from the eighteenth century onwards are marked by appropriation, neglect and exclusion.

While histories of early Hindi literature tend to be integrative, often including the borderlands of Apabhramsha, Maithili or Dakhani, those of early Urdu either try to restrict themselves to the Khari Boli dialect and to Muslim authors—making some allowance for Muslim authors writing in Hindi dialects other than Khari Boli, such as those of the Avadhi masnavi tradition or, more catholically, for Hindu authors who show some input from Khari Boli. The latter approach is the one adopted from Muhammad Husain Azad's Āb-e āyās (1880) to the most comprehensive recent history of early Urdu by Jafar and Jain (Ṭārīkh-e adab-e Urdu 1700 tak, 1998). Though this last work excludes the Avadhi masnavis, the authors are well aware of the vagueness of their approach. They give up the idea of restriction to Muslim authors on the basis that authorship is an element external to language and include poets central to the Hindi tradition such as Mirabai and Tulsidas because of the Khari Boli features of poems attributed to them. However, they also admit that calling this poetry Urdu would render the Hindi-Urdu distinction meaningless and therefore hail approaches, such as that of Sahil Bukhari, which examine the history of Khari Boli literature in the Perso-Arabic and in the Devanagari scripts together, showing the overlap of Urdu and Hindi traditions. It is indeed the most suitable approach to investigate the early development of this idiom, all the more because the use of Khari Boli is not closely linked to any writing system. Apart from the Perso-Arabic and in the Devanagari script Khari Boli was written in Gurmukhi in the seventeenth century and later in the Kaiti script.

The most influential recent study to deal with the origins of modern Hindi and Urdu is Shamsur Rahman Faruqi's Early Urdu Literary Culture and History (2001), which is a close English reworking of his Urdu kā iḥtiāt ki zamānā (1999). Faruqi's view of Urdu literary history is also exclusivist, and early Urdu literary culture appears limited to Khari Boli literature by Muslim authors. In opposition to this is the general (and official) Hindi stand emphasizing the composite aspect of Hindi, which encompasses a surfeit of dialects such as Avadhī, Bhojpuri, Braj Bhasha, Rajasthani, Khari Boli and others. This view is expressed in English in Amrit Rai's A House Divided: The Origin and Development of Hindi-Urdu (1984), which in turn was based on Sunil Kumar Chatterji's Indo-Aryan and Hindi (1942). Rai's examples are taken from both Hindu and Muslim authors.

The polemic is well-illustrated by the search for the earliest poet. While Chatterji and Rai trace the development of early Hindi from Apabhramsha and consider Gorakhnath (eleventh century c.) and the Nathpanthis, followed by Amir Khusrau (1253–1325), to be the first Hindi authors, Faruqi suggests that Urdu literature began with Ma'sud Sa'd Salman (1046–1121) of Lahore followed by Amir Khusrau. Both speculations are problematic, however. No Gorakhnath manuscript is available prior to the late seventeenth century.

6 A shorter version of this essay appeared in Pollock 2002.
7 This Hindi expansionist tendency is refuted by Faruqi, who examined the origins of Urdu as independent of the Hindi and indeed Hindi tradition and labelled Rai's work as 'full of tendentious speculation' and dismissed it in a footnote, Faruqi 2001: 1, n1.
century, and thus we are not able to say with certainty what form of language Gorakhnath used. Similarly, the earliest quote from Khusrau’s Hindavi is in the Sabras of Vajih of Golkonda written in 1636. Faruqi himself points to the fact that nothing of Ma’ṣūd’s and Khusrau’s Hindavi corpus is available today, and that ‘the first person whose Hindavi survives in substantial quantity, and with whom Urdu literature can seriously be said to begin’, is an author not from the north but from Gujarat, namely Shaikh Bahauddin Bajan (1388–1506) of Ahmadabad.

REKHTA AS MIXED POETRY

The Persian word rekhta (‘poured, interspersed, mixed’) had several technical meanings. Prior to the eighteenth century, it was part of musical terminology. It also referred to a mode of writing, namely to poetry written in a language that mixes lines, phrases and vocabulary from Hindi and Persian (the reference to Persian also includes the Arabic vocabulary imbibed by Persian), in which the Hindavi component is normally Khari Boli and sometimes Braj Bhasha or a mixture of the two. As a musical term, Rekhta appears in Alauddin Barnavi’s musicological treatise Cishtiya bihishtiyya (1655). Barnavi defines Rekhta as a kind of text in which one sets the words of both languages to a raga and a tala. Although Mahmud

Sherani’s suggestion that this definition of Rekhta originated with Amir Khusrau cannot be substantiated, this passage indicates an early link between Rekhta and Hindustani music. It is in the same year that another occurrence of Rekhta in the sense of ‘mixed language’ appeared in the colophon of a manuscript of Vajih I am to discuss below. So far no documentation has been found of the same technical use of the term prior to the mid-seventeenth century.

In the eighteenth century, Rekhta appears also as the name of Khari Boli mixed with Perso-Arabic vocabulary—the language which is today called Urdu. The greatest Urdu poet of the century, Mir, referred to his language not as Urdu, but either as Hindi or as Rekhta. The meaning of the word, however, varied even within Mir’s usage: he used rekhta interchangeably with shīr (verse). In his tazkira Nihāt ush-shu’ārā, for example, he called rekhta ‘poetry which is in the style and manner of Persian poetry, but in the language of the exalted court of Delhi’. In this work, he distinguished between six kinds of rekhta, two based on style and four based on the linguistic mixing of Hindi with Persian, i.e. (1) Persian and Hindi lines alternating; (2) the same line half in Persian and half in Hindi; (3) the use of Persian verbs, prepositions and conjunctions within a Hindi line, and (4) the use of appropriate Persian phrases in Hindi. (The list in fact is not exhaustive, and Ali Jawad Zaidi in his History of Urdu Literature presents yet another linguistic type: (5) Persian couples

Sarmadee 1996: xxxi–xxxii. Farsi at this stage was a musical composition sung in the ‘Khusrau’ style of qawwals in Delhi (i.e. that of qaś and tarana later known as ‘qawwals’: see Brown 2003: 239).

13Sherani 1926: 3.

14E.g. Guftagū rekhta mē hamse na bar, yah hamāri zabān hai, gyāre. [Kulliyāt-e Mīr II, 548]. ‘It is my own tongue, my dear, don’t contend to me in rekhta.’ (Tr. Faruqi 2001: 23).

15Sar sahe-e hind hi mē nahi kuch ye rekhta; hai ghum mere shi’r ki sare dākhān ke bīc [Kulliyāt-e Mīr II, 790]. ‘My poetry grows green not only in the northern plains. In all the Deccan too the praises of my verse resound.’ (Tr. Islam and Russell 1969: 215).

16Rekhta ki shi’r as bar-a’ur ish’i farsi ba-zaban-i urdu-i nu ‘allat-i shahjahāned-dī dehlār’; Khan, n.d: 1.

with Hindi refrains. In the eighteenth century Mir, as his poems illustrate, only approved of the fourth type and normally used the word Rekhta in a restricted sense to refer to the fourth type only. For the sake of convenience, I will refer to the other forms of rekhta as 'macaronic' poems, borrowing the term from Italian renaissance literature, where the word maccheronico referred to mixed Latin-Italian verse. The fact that in Gujarat or in the Deccan the mixed language was not called Rekhta, and Mir's consciousness that he wrote in Rekhta suggests that in the eighteenth century Urdu poetry was perceived as the inheritor not only of Dakhani but also of earlier Rekhta experiments in north India.

In this essay, if not indicated otherwise, I will call Rekhta any poetry in either the 'extended' Persian, Gurmukhi, Kaithi or Nagari script which consciously mixes the vernacular Hindavi (including Braj Bhasha) and the cosmopolitan Persian. This Rekhta is different from Sadhukkari, the spontaneously mixed literary language of the Sants, that blends elements from various north Indian dialects and languages. Although Sadhukkari may include Sanskrit and Arabic-Persian words, it is a spontaneous blend of several vernaculars. As we shall see, in north India, Rekhta was a literary idiom that was (a) first practised in certain Sufi circles from the early sixteenth or maybe late fifteenth centuries, (b) patronised in the Mughal court, (c) taken up occasionally by Nirgun sants, (d) by some Sikh authors of the Janamsakhis, (e) by Krishna bhaktas, (f) by syncretistic authors and (g) court poets in Rajasthan in the seventeenth and particularly in the eighteenth centuries.

Early Rekhta poetry in the Persian script figures to a greater or lesser extent in most histories of Urdu literature, but no study exists of its counterpart in the Nagari and occasionally in the Kaithi or Gurmukhi scripts. Nagari Rekhta (i.e. Rekhta in these three scripts) was composed by mainly Hindu Vaishnava, Sant or Sikh authors since the late sixteenth century. It is based on Khari Boli (the dialect associated with Delhi in its origins) and written down in the Nagari, Kaithi or Gurmukhi script either at the moment of composition or later. This Rekhta is a literary language with a (usually loose) Khari Boli template (that is a base language or grammatical structure) and a relatively high Perso-Arabic vocabulary compared to Braj works. In this way, although linguistically not different from Urdu, which was also called Rekhta in the eighteenth century, Gurmukhi Rekhta is part of the Panjabi Sikh tradition, while its Nagari and Kaithi counterparts are included in Braj Bhasha or the Sant devotional tradition. As such, Nagari Rekhta is entered in literary histories and manuscript catalogues along with Braj Bhasha texts since it tends to use the metres and themes of Braj and Nirgun Sant literature. Many of its authors wrote the majority of their works not in Rekhta but in Braj Bhasha or in Sadhukkari, the mixed language of the Sants.

In spite of using Khari Boli and the Nagari script, this genre was not hailed as the precursor of modern Hindi literature, even though Rekhta was produced well into the nineteenth century and was, directly or indirectly, influential in the development and acceptance of modern Hindi. If the history of Nagari Rekhta is taken into consideration, then modern Hindi should not be considered as a language originating only from the artificial experiments of Fort William College but also as the continuation of a now-forgotten literary idiom. Yet Rekhta became neglected from the 1850s onwards, the time of Bhartendu Harishchandra. Instead of alloying themselves with this literature, Bhartendu and his circle fought against 'Urdu Begam' and should probably be held responsible for denying the existence of literature in Nagari Rekhta as a possible meeting point between Hindi and Urdu.

Today it is only a small group of Braj Bhasha scholars who know about the trend of writing Krishna poetry in Nagari Rekhta, current mainly in the eighteenth century. Although Nagari Rekhta is incomparably smaller in its output than the mainstream Braj Bhasha or Sant literature, and its poetry has not exercised such influence as the Avadh narrations, there are beautiful pieces in it. Indeed, many of the best poets of the eighteenth century, such as Anandghan,
Nagaridas and Brajinidhi, tried their hands at Rekhta, along with many lesser-known authors like Manohardas and Rasrashi.

In this essay I will present a sketch of the history of Rekhta and Khari Boli poetry in north India. In the first part, I will talk about the unsubstantiated claims to early Rekhta and describe the development of Rekhta through its sixteenth-century extant versions manifest in the different varieties of macaronic poetry written chiefly in the Perso-Arabic script that were marginalised after the success of Vali's _Divān_ in Delhi. In the second part, I will show how in seventeenth century north India, Nagari-script Rekhta coexisted with sporadic Urdu-Rekhta, and I will follow up its record in sectarian and court literature until the mid-nineteenth century, when it became neglected due to the exigency of defining clear linguistic and literary boundaries.

A fundamental difficulty in writing the early history of Hindavi is the lack of philological background work to the texts studied. Even when we have critical editions based on manuscripts, we cannot be sure that the text in a later manuscript represents the same linguistic situation as at the time of its composition. One cannot state with certainty that the text of the critical edition of works such as the _Bikat kabānt_ based on manuscripts dating from at least a hundred years after the death of the author, corresponds to the language of its birth in the early seventeenth century. As we will see, traditional attributions to early authors found in relatively late handwritten books are far from reliable since it was common in early modern South Asia to link poems to the prestige of established names. But the unendependability of manuscript transmission is only one of the many problems. An immense part of early Hindavi literature still lies unpublished in manuscript collections, and the picture that we can get on the basis of published material is bound to be distorted. The published material is, more often than not, available in publications whose principles are far from that of a critical edition. The editors often standardise not only the orthography but also the language. Studies on early literature often give examples without specifying their sources and in this way the reliability of their quotes is uncertain. This paper aims to follow up the emergence of Khari Boli literature in north India by a search for works in early dated manuscripts. By using this material as a point of reference in language and style, poems with less reliable transmission can be examined comparatively. In this way I will present traditional attributions to sixteenth and seventeenth-century poets when the styles of the individual works are consistent with that of other works found in dated manuscripts.

A philological approach is by definition restrictive since it cannot take into consideration the rich oral tradition that is almost impossible to document today. Already Amir Khusrau mentioned that he had composed poems in Hindavi, and there must be other Indo-Persian poets who also did so. This Hindavi poetry, however, did not initially enjoy much prestige and was probably never committed to writing. We do not have many documents about the spread of the speech of Delhi, the 'Dehlavi', throughout the Delhi Sultanate as a lingua franca. It was from this lingua franca that the first documented literary languages based on Khari Boli, namely Dakkani and Gujri, emerged in areas south of the modern 'Hindi belt'. Although poetry with Khari Boli features or macaronic stanzas may have existed in north India prior to the sixteenth century, due to the lack of reliable sources observation on the nature of such material can be more than conjecture.

CLAIMS TO BEGINNINGS

Khari Boli literature, like that of all modern languages, emerged at a certain point in history. It can be argued that the spoken language that, in all probability, had links with the literary Shauraseni Apabhramsha of north-western India, developed into idioms of which Khari Boli was one of the literary versions. Some Hindu scholars argue for the continuity of linguistic forms in the literary languages Apabhramsha and Khari Boli. Their ideas are supported by lines such as the one from the _Apabhramṣaparākaraṇa_ of Hemachandra's _Śabdāṇusāsana_.

_Bhālā hū ā mārā māraḥ mahāraḥ kantu_  
(Śabdāṇusāsana 8, 4, 351)²¹

- It is good that my husband was killed, my sister.

This line indeed shows Khari Boli and Punjabi features indicating a period of development when the two idioms were not separated, a phenomenon attested also by the Punjabi elements of early Dakhani. Most of the Khari Boli features in this work and in other Abahramsha compositions, however, are isolated instances and do not suggest any use of systematic Khari Boli as can be seen from the second line of the same couplet:

Lajjejhamtu vayansiahu jai bhaggā gharu ēntu

I would have been put to shame among my friends, if he had run away (from battle) and come home.

It might therefore, be more fruitful to examine extant material that shows a systematic use of Khari Boli.

Probably the best known example of macaronic Rekhta is a popular poem attributed to Amir Khusrau Dehlavi (c. 1253–1325) in which the first half of each line is in Persian and the second in Braj Bhasha (Perso-Arabic words are in bold type):

Zī ḫal-i miskīn mulkīn taghāfūl, durāye nainā bāndāya batiyā; Kī tāb-i hijrān na darmām ai jān, na lehu kāhe lagāye chayā;... Ba-haqq-i ān rūz-i fašī-ī maḩshar; ki dād mā-rā farēh Khusrau - Sampa man ke davāri rakhā jo jān paśī parāt rakhya;...

Do not be negligent towards this poor one—You hide your eyes and invent excuses.

Since I do not have the strength to bear the separation, o my love, why don’t you embrace me at once?...

I swear by the Day of Gathering that she deceived me, Khusrau, I will keep a sentry near my heart if I find my beloved guarded by someone else.23

A similar composition is attributed to Khusrau’s contemporary Amir Hasan Sijzi Dehlavi (d. 1337)24:

Har laẖa ḥyād dar dilm ḥekhū āse ṭak jāy-kar; Gūyam ḥiḏayati ḥir-i kḥud bā ḏān sānām jī jāy hār....

Bus ḥīla kardam, ḏy Ḥasan, beḏā jhūdm āz ḏam bā-dām; Kaise rakhā tuẖ jī bīn tum Ĺe gae jhang ḫāy hār.25

Each moment I felt like going out to catch a glimpse of her, setting my heart on that beloved I myself tell the story of my separation... I tried many ways, O Hasan, at every instant I lost my life. How can I remain without you, my life? You have taken it and brought war.

There are similar claims for being the precursors of Khari Boli and of Rekhta literature by thirteenth- to fifteenth-century Sufi poets, such as Baba Farid, Farid’s son-in-law. Ali Ahmad Sabir Kaleri (Kalyari) (d. 1265), Shaikh Hamiduddin Nagauri (d. 1275), Ali Qalandar Panipati (d. 1363), Shaikh Sharaufuddin Maneri (d. 1381) and others.26 There are also candidates for early Rekhta and Khari Boli authorship with a Hindu background, such as the fourteenth-century poet-saint from Maharashtra, Namdev:

Sāvadha sāvadha bhajā le re ṭajā; nahī āvai āist ghaḏī jā. Uṭṭama naratanu pāy āi bhāt; gāphīla khyō ḡuḍā dwānā jā. Jinne jammā darā hai tuja kām bīsarā gavā ṭaḵẖā ḡavānā jā. Phira īstāyegā dāgā ṭayegā; nikāla jayegā dvāsānā jā.... Aiś bāta sunake nāmā sāvadha ḡuḍā; guru ke pāva māti ḏārtī. Mai āṁtha ībāle śarana sače tuja kā; āba jō mert āja ṭakhī jā. (Pad 192)27

24See Jafar and Jain 1998 vol. 1 419–22.
Worship the King with complete alertness; you will never have the opportunity again.

O my Brother, you received the highest estate, a human body; why have you become so lazy, so negligent, so deranged!

You abandoned the knowledge of the one who conferred life upon you.

You will repent, will be cheated, and you will go away in the end...

Hearing such words Nāndev became alert and took the dust of the gurū’s feet.

I took refuge with you as a frail orphan; now, please protect my honour.

In the absence of early evidence such as manuscripts or dated references, the attribution and the dating of all these poems are problematic and they may not reflect the linguistic situation of the times of their putative authors. To illustrate the pitfalls of traditional attributions...

28Baba Farid’s earliest documented poems as quoted by Bajan (1388–1506) and in the Guru Granth (1603–1604) do not show the systematic use of Khari Boli features with which some later authors credit him (see Jallib 1977: 27, 35).

As far as Maneri is concerned, two independent collections of his spiritual discourses agree that the mystic was inimical to Hindavi singing because of the frankness of its expression (see below). Although Nāndev’s songs are present in manuscripts from the second half of the sixteenth century, namely in the Goindwal pothls and in the Fatehpur manuscript, the padas with substantial Khari Boli elements and Perso-Arabic vocabulary are not there. The song quoted above, for example, was found only in an undated copy of a manuscript from Pandharpur. The poem found in the undated Pandharpur manuscript is taken into the critical edition by Bhagirath Mishra and Raj Narayan Maurya (eds): Sant Nāndev ki Hindi padavali, Pune 1964. Similar claims to Kabir’s Khari Boli poems (e.g., Rahand nahi dea, birand hat or Sumiran bina gata khado, see Rai 1991: 157–59) cannot be confirmed due to the lack of early written evidence, since none of these poems is present in the earliest available manuscripts dating from between 1570 and 1681 (see Callewaert 2000). In his History of Rajasthani Literature, Hiralal Maheshwari (1980: 9) claims that occasional Khari Boli usages (sometimes mixed with Punjabī) occur in Rajasthani bardic literature such as in Badar Dhadhi’s (fl. c. 1450) Vrī māyan written in the nisani metre and in Sandu Malà’s (1573–1679) nhlinas (Māhārājā Rāyāngī jā. Akhar Pāshā jā, Divān Pratāpsīngī jā etc.) as well as in the arillas (also called chandrayānas) of Kesadu Giftlev and Vajind and in the songs attributed to Āqīl Mahmūd (fifteenth century). Most of these works are still inaccessible. There are, however, indications that Maheshwari’s statement should be treated with caution. The Vrī māyan, for example, dates not...
verbal and pronominal forms such as kiə, gaia, mujha, tujha, mujhəi, tujha, tumhərə/tumhərə/tumhərə etc. figure in abundance.

The search for mixed Hindavi-Persian, Rekhta, and for Khari Boli features shows that most early claims link Rekhta with Muslims rather than with Hindus, raising the expectation that the use of Khari Boli and of Rekhta was more closely linked to Muslims. But can anything at all be known about the literary Hindavi that Muslims used during the Sultanate period? After all, the dialect of the Hindavi romances was Avadhi, ever since Maulana Daud's Candāyan (1379).

References to the use of Hindavi as well as Hindavi phrases and sometimes even poems are embedded into Persian works, such as letters or the discourses (malfuzat) of leading Sufis delivered to a select gathering of disciples and visitors. These discourses were embellished with didactic poetry, anecdotes and apophthegms. In the absence of early Hindavi manuscripts, it is in the works of the malfuzat genre that a systematic and critical search can reveal the earliest recorded occurrences of Hindavi poetry. Although works of this genre may date from centuries after the death of the pir, some of them are reliable sources of information about the times of the sultanate. Some malfuzat were discourses recorded soon after they were delivered by a spiritual master and some were collected by a descendant or disciple of a Sufi after his death. The most important source for early Hindavi, the Surūr aṣ-Ṣudār belongs to the second category. It contains the sayings of Shaikh Hamiduddin Nāgārī (d. 1273), the successor of Khwaja Muʿinuddin Ajmerī, as recorded by his grandson and successor Shaikh Fariduddin bin Abdul Azīz (d. 1334).

What is attested in works from the fourteenth century onwards is that Sufis and other musicians used Hindavi in their musical gatherings in the North, and this may have been a tradition going back to earlier times. A spiritual discourse of Nizamuddin Auliya, dated 1316, tells us how the weaver Shaikh Ahmad Nahravani (fl. 1235) became the disciple of Faqih Madhaw, the imam of the Jami Masjid at Ajmer, who had been entranced by Nahravani's Hindavi song and 'told him that it was unfortunate that he was just wasting his melodious voice in singing Hindavi songs, and advised him to memorise the Qur'an. The use of Hindavi is also associated with the person whom Nizamuddin Auliya credited with the introduction of sama' singing to Delhi, namely Shaikh Hamiduddin Nāgārī (d. 1273). The Surūr aṣ-Ṣudār quotes several Hindavi verses attributed to Hamiduddin:

Jo bistirai to sabai sikata (jo) samkhaya;
Sau sau eka purusa ke nāṁva birālā jānaī koya.

Everything that expands, basks and shrinks:
Hundreds of names for the one God—the outstanding man understands it.

The Hindavi of this poem (with the exception of the -ə ending in the word biralā, which suggest Khari Boli usage) and that of the other ones found in the same work is what later was called Braj

three hundred years after the time of the Shaikh with the aim of glorifying the spiritual achievements of Baba Farid and his descendants (Rizvi 1978: 13). Nizamuddin Auliya stated that Nahravani had been present at the sama' gathering in 1235 where a Persian verse produced such powerful ecstasy in Shaikh Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki that he died a few days later. Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariya (1182–1262) also talked with respect about him. See Faruqi 1996: 325–26.

The first line of this couplet seems to be corrupt. The metre is close to that of a dōha.

On p. 74; Birale cina jo rogina gai jaugina kart guna gai ko dosa, ayana rasdhana...
Bhasha. This instance alerts us to the fact that the Hindavi favoured by north Indian Sufis in their gatherings was probably closer to Braj Bhasha than to Khari Boli or Rekhta.42

**REKHTA AT THE MUGHAL COURT**

In the sixteenth century Rekhta seems to have been practiced both in Sufi circles and in the Mughal court. From Babur’s evidence below and the existence of Rekhta attributed to other sixteenth-century Persian poets such as Saqqa, Mu’ayyid and Mashhadi, one can argue that the earliest Rekhta writing may coincide with the beginning of Mughal times. One might even suspect that the poems attributed to Khusrau and to the other poets mentioned above date from this century. Prior to the early eighteenth-century success of Vali’s Divan, however, no serious effort was made to record Rekhta poetry in the north. The lack of manuscripts is indicative of the neglect of poetry that had not found its way into a larger composition and also suggests that the use of Rekhta must not have been very widespread, or that it may have been an oral genre considered too frivolous or undignified for committing to writing.43

An important pre-Mughal religious lineage that used Rekhta is that of Miran Sayyid Muhammad from Jaunpur (d. 1505),44 who after a pilgrimage to Mecca travelled widely in India including Gujarat and Bidar in the Deccan and eventually died in Baluchistan. In 1497, in Ahmadabad, probably prompted by the approaching millennium of Islam in 1591/2, he declared himself the Mahdi, the leader who is expected to rise before Judgement Day. He is credited with the use of mixed language.45 Among the nine couplets attributed to him in various sources, one is in the Rekhta form in a Perso-Arabic metre:

_Agar fazal huni yak jau jive jive;_  
_Agar ‘adal huni yak jau mube mube._46

If you have mercy the size of a grain, then you live, you live.  
If you administer (mere) justice the size of a grain you die, you die.

His other examples, however, use Indian metres and thus his poetry is in line with the earlier tradition of Hindavi poems used in sama’ gatherings, and also with his contemporary, Abdul Quddus Gangohi, whose similar poetry under the pen name Alakhdas survives in considerable quantity.47

Although Sayyid Muhammad was banished from Gujarat, a large number of ulama and sufis accepted him as the Mahdi48 and his followers are known as the Mahdavis. His often-persecuted successors in Gujarat and Rajasthan also used Hindavi. The most important of them were Sayyid Khwandmir Matufi,49 who fell fighting in Patan in 1524, and Mian Mustafa (d. 1577),50 who at times was persecuted by local authorities and at times summoned and rewarded by Akbar.

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43The poem is found on the margin of Miyan Valiji’s ‘Insaf-nama’ (p. 217), quoted in Jafar and Jain 1998 vol. I: 429. The metre is _mutass, musamman mahdaviyat akhiri_ (u – u jau – –/u – u –).
47Rizvi 1965: 114–18.
The Mahdavi poems suggest that Rekhta was initially cultivated in religious circles and appeared in north India as the result of the wanderings of religious personalities probably connected to the Deccan or to Gujarat. It is, however, the Mughals to whom the earliest firmly datable Rekhta can be attributed, and its author is none other than Emperor Babur. His Turkish Divān, preserved in a manuscript dated from 1529, includes a couplet partly in Khari Boli Hindi, partly in Persian and partly in Turkī.\(^{51}\)

\textit{Muj-hā na ha'd kuf havas-i mānak-o moti;}
\textit{Faqr ehlīgā bas bulgusidur pānī-o rotī.}

I had no desire for gems and pearls.
For poor people, sufficient are water and bread.

After Babur, there is not much dated early manuscript evidence for Rekhta in the north for more than a century. The most important manuscript is the album written by Jaimal Thal in 1652–56, which contained Jāfār’s Rekhta that was later attributed to Khusrav. Apart from Persian compositions, this album contains poetry in the mixed language by several poets, as can be seen from the pen names: Jamali, Faizi, Bairam, Jani, Sedan, Fatah Muhammad, Jāfār and an unknown author.\(^2\) With the exception of Fatah Muhammad, all these authors produced macaronic poetry with Persian template. One poem later attributed to Khusrav is in Persian but two words can be read as a pun and be interpreted as Rekhta.

\(^{51}\)Yücel 1995: 500 and f. 88b. This is a critical edition based on ms Nr. 3743 at the University of Istanbul Library and dated 1265/1848/9 cs. The poem is missing from the earliest manuscript of Babur’s Divān preserved in Paris and dated from 1515 cs. The edition mentions that this copiuit is on folio 17b in the 1529 Rampur manuscript.

\(^{52}\)The identification of the poets with known personalities is not without problems. The names of Sedan and Jāfār do not figure anywhere else in literary histories. (There is however, a Braj Bhasha work on conjuring called \textit{Adhbūt vidā} written in 1638 and attributed to a certain Mīr Sedan Guhar who may be identical with our author. A manuscript of this work is mentioned in Menariya 1942, vol. III: 228–29.) Three other names present a different challenge since there were several poets with the names Faizi, Bairam and Jani.

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\textit{Guftān gahi dar khāna-yi ma’mūn-i tū bāsham;}
\textit{Guftā ki darīn khāna balā’ist mamānī.}\(^{53}\)

I said that I would be for a while in your safe house;
She said that calamity resides in this house—don’t stay!

And reading it with the Hindavi meaning of the words \textit{māmūn} and \textit{mamānī},

I said that I would be for a while in the house of your uncle.
She said that her aunt was a calamity in that house.

There is a poem in the same album written by someone under the pen-name ‘Jamali.’ ‘Jamali’ must be identical with Maulana Hamid bin Fazlullah known as Shaikh Jamali Kanboh (d. 1536). He travelled to Mecca and to other Muslim lands and in his later life lived in Delhi as a member of the Subhwardi order. He maintained good contacts with Babur and Humayun whom he accompanied on his expedition to Gujarat. He was a Persian poet and author of \textit{Siyyār ul-‘ārifīn} (\textit{Biographies of Holy Men}, c. 1530–36), a tazkira on the lives of Chishti and Subhwardi holy men dedicated to Humayun.\(^{54}\) Jamali’s poem in the album is in Persian with an abundance of Hindavi words: \(^{55}\)

\begin{align*}
Ān pari ruhāsār cān shāna ba coti mikunad, jān daráz-i ‘ashtāq-rā ‘umr-e coti mikunad. \\
Cashm-ī qassāb sāzad khānjar az ghanza znad; ‘isqatāz-rā jādā boti zi boti mikunad. \\
Cān znad khānjar ba jānām hūn zi jānām mīrakad; hameča murg-i nīm basnāl lat-ōtī mikunad. \\
Bar darat āyam raqāb-at gūyadam dar khāna nīst; in cūnī kambkhh bā mā bāt khotī mikunad.
\end{align*}

\(^{53}\)Sherani 1931: 76.

\(^{54}\)On Jamali and his \textit{Siyyār ul-‘ārifīn} see Siddiqui 1979: 82–98.

\(^{55}\)Jalalī 1977: 52 says that the poem is found in a manuscript album (nr. 3/633) at the Anjuman-e Taraqqi-e Urdu, Karachi. This might well be the same album since it does not figure in the catalogue of Sherani’s manuscripts donated to Punjab University. See Husain 1968.
Dar rah-i 'ishqat Jamali gashta (cûn) zár-o-nazár; 'aqblat az muftisti dar tah lâgoti mihunad.

When that fairy-faced woman combs her hair, she makes the long life of the lovers short. She makes her eye into a butcher and turns her glances into a dagger. She cuts into pieces the enamoured ones. She thrusts her dagger into my heart, blood drips from it and it rolls about like a half-sacrificed fowl.

I come to your door but your doorkeeper /my rival/ tells me that you are not at home; that wretched one speaks to me so falsely.

On the path of your love, Jamali has become miserable. Out of poverty, in the end, he ties a loincloth in several layers on his waist.56

Another, incomplete Rekhta of Jamali which, according to Sherani, is present in several tazkiras and albums, uses similar phrases:

Khvâr shudam zár shudam lu' gasd; dar rah-i 'ışeq-tâ hâmâr tâtâ hai.
Garci badam guft raqib-i k-find; uska kâhâ màt karo yah jhûtâ hai.
Gâh naguf ûa ki Jamâlî tâ bahth; tham karo, bya apnd karam phûtâ hai.57

I became wretched and weak; I am plundered. On the path of your love one breaks his back. Though my mischievous rival spoke ill of me, don't do what he says, he's false!

Didn't he say many times, 'Jamali, sit down here, pull yourself together, is your fate broken?'

Though Ja'far's Rekhta in the album mentioned above used Persian half-lines mixed with Braj Bhasha, the blend of Persian and Khari Boli of this last poem proved to be more popular among sixteenth-century authors.

56There is a work play here. If a loincloth can be tied in several layers, it means that its wearer is extremely emancipated. The idiom 'to tie a loincloth' also means to renounce the world.


There are even more occasional Rekhta poems by Persian poets from Humayun's and Akbar's time, as the examples of Bahram Saqqa Bukhari and his contemporaries Mu'aiyid Beg Kus, 'the Blind', and Mashhadi show. The identical rhythm and the rhymes of their Rekhtas suggest that all may have been written for the same poetic gathering, and they are a one-off experiment.58 The first quotation is by Saqqa, the second by Mu'aiyid and the third by Mashhadi,

[1]
Bâz hindî baccâ-I qaş-e dilam dhârti hái; kïch náhâ jánc az in khâsta (ki) kyrâ59 karti hái.
Cin bar abâr zada barbasta háttârâ60 ba-miyân; ca cal ay dîl manîgar tâj hânâ61 û lárti hái.62
Hât mahândt làyâ63 dast farû burda ba bhîn; khî base kushta zî dastân-i gham-ash màrti hái....
Cup kar ay dîl shuda Saqqa zî gham-e yâr munâl; gar jâfâ raft ba jîn tâ miyân karti hái.

An Indian girl wants to take my heart again.
— You do not know what she is doing to this poor one!
With brows knit and the dagger tucked at her waist,
Go, get away, o my heart, do not watch, she is fighting with you.

58The poems appear in an album which was possibly written between 1556 and 1572 and was found by Nazir Ahmad at the Library of Habibganj. See Nazir Ahmad: 'Sâlânî-nî muğaliya kà nayâ kâlânî', Fûq-o nezâr-e alîgârî, Jan 1963, quoted in Jafar and Jain 1998, vol. I: 444. Sherani (1931: 78–79) quotes f. 183 of the manuscript of Saqqa's Dîwân as the source of the poem but does not give the details of the manuscript. Jafar and Jain (1998, vol. I: 444) mention that copies of this Dîwân are found in the Khuda Bakhsh Library, Patna and at the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona.

59Emendation from ki.
60Emendation from kûtâra.
61Emendation from tu ci kinti.
62Zaidi (1993: 29) gives a metrically correct variant reading of the first two couplets, but his source is not indicated.
63This word is problematic. The metre would require two short syllables and a long one.
The henna on her hand is as if she had plunged it into blood,
That many die at the hands of grief for her!...
Be silent, o lost-in-love Saqa, don't lament the sorrow caused by the beloved.
If torment penetrates your soul, you act as its sheath.

[2]
Hargah ān sāqi-γi-hindī ki ṭarāb kartī hai; hāsa-γi mai zi sharāb-i-lab-γi
khood bharī. 64 hai.
Khawam ahvāl-i di-l-i khujīsh bigayam bā tū; lek az nāzukī-γi āb(γi)
tū-γam darti hai.
Gashū càn qiša-o-afzana ba har pīr-o-javān; ki Mu'āyiyd zi ghan-γi ‘ishq-
i bate marto hai. 65

Whenever the Hindi Saqi is making merriment she fills my cup with the wine of her lips.
I want to tell you the condition of my heart but I fear because your disposition is so fragile.
The news, like stories and fairy tales, reached all, young and old, that Mu'āyiyd dies out of his love for an idol.

[3]
Hindā-y cāshm-i tū goštām ki ba-man lartī hai; raft dar khanda o goštā
ki mughal dartī hai. 66
I complained that her black eyes were ever at war with me.
She burst into laughter, 'Oh! the Mughal is afraid.'

Common to the authors of these Rekhta poems is that they are Persian poets and their Rekhta is scant. While they use the Persian ghazal form, their rhymes and end-rhymes are in Hindavi and the rest of the lines are to a varying extent in Persian conforming to Mir's third category, namely the use of Persian verbs, prepositions and conjunctions within a Hindi line. The feminine is not a fortunate solution in the rhymes. We might understand this use of the feminine in several ways. It could be due to Dakhani influence, where the protagonist can be feminine. Or perhaps it was used for the masculine in this form. Or else, the i verb ending (as in darti) could have been pronounced as -e for the masculine plural. Some critics have argued that this confusion is due to the authors' limited acquaintance with Hindavi. 67

Jaimal’s album also contains a poem with the takhallis ‘Bairam’. Bairam is a Turkish name meaning ‘the Festival of Id’. The only literary figure known to us with this pen-name is Abdurrahman’s father, Bairam Khan (1525–1561), author of Persian and Turki Divāns. 68 Even though the poem is not found in these Divans, and the attribution to Bairam Khan may be doubtful, we cannot exclude the possibility that the poem was composed by another person of this name. The Turkish pen-name suggests Mughal authorship.

Dīlā kun yād-i ān sā’at darān-i gor jāb sove; ‘aṣāb-i sakht-taṟīn 69 bāshad
ki lohī ansūrān rove.
Na ānjā khujīsh naq qurbat na sāthī bāp aur bhai; na zan farzand ko bālī
dar-ān tārtik tanhāt.
Bāyād jānsītān nūgah cū 70 malak ul-maut darbārat; jo haigā jīv kar
sanā hamad dar yāk zamān ġarāt.
Tīn raftānān ān mardum jīnīh ke lākī the pāl; na bā-ḥud burd yak jītal
ki rete hāth uth cāle....
Gumān dārām dar in dunyā dō gaz ghar bās ārā māṭī; pasārā dār kar
 candīn cū laqmān bānāh rih tātī.
(hi) Bairām naaḍ jo hove (to) shāf-i rāh-i ū kīje; are jo chaḍākar jānān
harān ‘in khāe le jīte. 71

O heart, remember the hour when you'll sleep inside a tomb. There
will be such terrible torment that you will weep tears of blood.
There is no family, no kinsman, no companion, no father or brother.
No woman will protect her child in that dark desolation.

64The original reads bārt; the emendation is by Jafar and Jain.
66Ibid.
67Mas’ud Hasan Rizvi, ‘Miraṣṭ-γi rekhta’, in Tāhir-i Dillī. April-June 1971:
68Ross 1910.
69Emendation from the sakht-taɾ.
70This word is hypermetrical here.
71Sherani 1931: 84.
Suddenly the Angel of Death, Taker of Souls, arrives at your court. Whatever happens, concentrate in your heart, because it plunders you at once.

Millions who were nourished were not even to take one jital when they left with empty hands... I am proud in this world to have two yards for home and soil. Running around, I have stretched as much as Luqman who fenced the road. Bairam, spend the money you have in God’s path; oh, if you abandon the Beloved, consider it defeat.

There is another poem in the same album, with the pen-name Faizi. At least two known poets are candidates for its authorship. One is Sheikh Allah-dad Sirhindhi, the author of the dictionary Madar ul-Afzil (Pivot of the Most Learned Ones, 1592) and of a contemporary history called Akbar-nama (1601), the other one is Abu’l-Fazl’s brother and Akbar’s poet laureate Abu’l-Faiz Faizi (1547/8–1595). The poem in this album follows a Persian template with a strong input of Hindavi words:

Ay ān-ki hast la’lat cūn āb-i zindagānī; tā tishna lab namīram inak pulao pānī.
Gufit fasāna griyam jānān ba jān va lekin; tā sust man pareshān hy kar bane kāhānī.
Ay dī zī la’l-i jānān kāmām nagaṣṭ hāṣil; zirā-ki zar nādāram vo bastu hai birānī.
Man dardmand-i ‘ishqān bār man kanān vafā kun; ‘umrām guzasht dar āmr nis fāgta bahānī.
Ba-shīna tō faizī az man ba-gzār rā-ṛi jānān; tā ‘āshiq-i va sāda vo zāt hai sayānī.76

The above attributions to Bairam and to Faizi (whichever one he may be) remain somewhat uncertain. Nor can we exclude later appropriations of a famous author’s name as was the case with Khusrav. Nevertheless, the identification of Faizi and Bairam with Mughal noblemen would fit well with the syncretistic picture of the Mughal court. Other sources, too, seem to corroborate this attribution.77

As Babur’s example showed, it was not only Persian that was cast against Hindavi in Rekhta poems. The experimenting spirit at Akbar’s court is attested by the macaronic poems attributed to Abdurrahim Khankhanan ‘Rahim’ (1556–1627). He mixed Khari Boli with Sanskrit and used not the ghazal but the quatrain form in Sanskrit metres. His Madanāstaka is in the malini metre, while the following poem in shardulavikridita:

Ekasmin divasāsasamaye māi thā gayā bāga mē; Kācit tatra kurangabālanayān gula torāt thi khurā.
Tām āṣṭu navayawānām śaśīmbhiṁ māi mohā mē jā parā; No jāvāi vīnā trīvāya śṛṇu priye tā yāra kaise mīlā.78

One day at dusk I went to a garden Where a woman with eyes like a young gazelle stood plucking flowers.

72 An alternative meaning is: ‘People who protected millions are left empty-handed.’
73 I was not able to interpret this word.
74 This must be a reference to the legendary, pre-Islamic sage, Luqman. Luqman’s name is linked to many proverbs and fables. I was not able to find a reference to this story of Luqman’s fencing of the road.
75 Hadi 1995: 146.
76 Sherani 1931: 83.
77 Sherani, for example, mentioned that he had seen other Rektas attributed to Abu’l Faiz and to Faizi (1931: 83).
Glimpsing that woman in her prime, whose face shone like the moon.
I fell in love.
I do not live without you, listen my beloved, how can I meet you?

It should be mentioned that multilingual compositions are not exceptional in Indian literature, or indeed in any literary culture which is either multilingual or is marked by diglossia between a classical language and vernacular(s). Sanskrit dramas already used different Prakrits according to the characters' role and social status. Dialogue across linguistic boundaries in early modern times was also alive in south India both in historical writings and dramatic literature.

Mixing idioms did not stop at drawing on two languages. The Maharastrian Jayarama Pindye's Radhamadhavavilasacampū used twelve, while in north India a quatrains written in Sanskrit, Braj, Gujarati, Marathi, Rajasthani, Khar Boli, Punjabi, Persian/Arabic and Telugu, a real virtuoso performance, is attributed to the above-mentioned Rahim:

Bhartar prācin gato me (Sanskrit) bahuri na bagade (Braj) shū karā re have ḥū (Gujarati)
Mañjī karmāci goṣṭhi (Marathi) aba puna ḫanasi (?) gāṇṭha dholo nai the (Rajasthani)
Maṅrī tārā sunderā (Rajasthani) kharacabahut hai (Khar Boli) thārdā tāmbā rē (?)
Diṅṭhi taṁṇḷi dilō ḥi (Punjabi) iṣaqa ila fīḍā (Persian/Arabic) odīpo baccandā (Telugu)

81The Telugu play Annamahadindutahamu, for example, uses colloquial Tamil. Rao 1992: 334.
82The Telugu part seems to be a corruption of dāṭe-po vuccināḍu. (Oḍīpo vuccināḍu means 'he came to be defeated.')

My husband went east and is not coming back—what shall I do now? This is my fate. Please listen, I do not have a coin in my purse.

All the Rekhtas surveyed in this section, apart from Babur's couplet and possibly of Saqqa, Muaiyid and Mashhadi, are preserved in later manuscripts. Yet the relative abundance of macaronic Rekht from the sixteenth century makes it difficult to question their authenticity on the same grounds as for Baba Farid, Amir Khusrau, Hasan Dehlavi or Namdev. In the following section I will consider the possible motives that induced poets to compose such macaronic poems.

MOTIVES FOR LINGUISTIC HYBRIDITY

Much research has been done in recent years on language choice in India's multilingual society. Some scholars explain language choice through motives external to the language and its literary culture, while others search for internal forces. Some influential modern theories explain it in terms of its teleological contribution to some project such as proselytising or integration. According to an early idea of Richard Eaton, based on Annemarie Schimmel,66 Sufis in Bijapur adopted Dakhani Hindi as an instrument of proselytisation.77 In a similar vein, Muzaffar Alam has explained the Mughal choice of Persian on the basis of its non-sectarian aspect, which made Persian an effective tool for negotiating difference within Indian society and

83Literally 'This is the accumulation of my karma'.
84Translated on the basis of the Khar Boli transliteraton in Mishra and Rajnish 1985: 174.
87The same idea occurs in Zaidi 1993: 20.
thus contributing to the consolidation of the empire. In his later research, however, Alam seems to have abandoned these ideas.

Another theory based on external motives has been put forward by Sumit Guha, who has examined language choice in the early-modern Maratha region in connection with the power of patronage. According to Guha, languages were marked by a tension between hybridisation and identity. In the case of administration the use of a vernacular invoked shared ethnic and territorial rootedness, while the higher Persianate register signalled cultural superiority as well as a wider subcontinental identity. He has argued that the same phenomenon can be seen in poetry and was sometimes used to display poetic virtuosity as in the case of the above-mentioned Rādhāmādhavavālāsacampā.

Moving away from political and religious explanatory paradigms, Allison Busch and Christina Oesterheld in this volume examine lexical hybridity within the field of literature as a genre- and context-sensitive issue. They both find that a more tadbhava register was used for a female voice in opposition to highly Sanskritised or highly Persianised registers. Making a similar point, Shantanu Phukan argued on the basis of works such as the Bīkāṭ kahānī and a marsiya by Sauda that Hindi was perceived by Mughal elite male authors as 'especially effective in moving emotions' and was embedded in Persian or Persianate Urdu to invoke a domestic female tone as opposed to the male and the non-domestic female world of the ghazals.

The use of a vernacular for female voice can be observed in a narrative poem from the sixteenth century by Ištqī Khan (d. 1582), which describes how the Turkish, Tajik and Indian wives of a wealthy

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91 See Allison Busch and Christina Oesterheld in this volume.
93 Ištqī Khan, a descendant of the Turkish spiritual guide Isma‘īl Tash, was a mir manshī during Akbār’s reign and authored a Persian Ḍīwān. In his Persian qasida, Sārī-gārm-i zamāna, he used some Hindi and Turki stanzas. Haq 1931: 101.

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jagirdar talk in Turkish, Persian and Hindi respectively. This is, for example, how he is received by his Hindustani wife on his return home.

Zan-i hindi zi yak taraf gāyād; hāi tīrī launī tī mirā khvandgār;
Tum jo mujh kā pīyār karte ho; hāi bhi karti hā tihrā pīyār.
Apne kothe pai mā bichānī palang; ās āpar let jī pā pāvār;
Bt täm let łondiā cau-gūr; harumān ās päts täm bākhār.94

On one side the Indian wife said, I am your woman and you are my kind lord;
The way you love me, I love you in the same way.
Let me make up a bed in my room, come and lie down on it stretching your legs.
Lie down surrounded by girls; there are women round here—be careful.

And this is how an Indian wife receives a poor husband:

Zan-e hindi zi yak taraf gāyād; tērī mā golī terā bāp camār;
Jīngh tēhī theh bahut sunā mat boi; sac tīrā hāī kahānī mirā mat már.
Tujhī theh mujh ko na rotī o pānī; tujhī theh mujh kō nāhīn sa‘īd;95 o sīgār;
Ab na rāhān tīre khudā ki sa‘ī; nikalāngī tīhāre ghar theh bahār.96

On one side the Indian wife said, your mother was a cowherd, your father a camār;
Don't say a word, I have heard enough lies from you, if I tell you the truth, don't beat me.
I get neither bread nor water from you, nor carriage, delicious food nor ornament.
I won't stay with you, I swear, I will leave your house.

Phukan briefly considered the possibility that the motive behind mixed-language could be irony, as was the case for Latin-Italian

94 Haq 1931: 101. An alternative interpretation of the last expression is, ba-ctī kār ‘what are you doing?’
95 Emendation from savār.
96 Haq 1931: 102.
macaronic parodies of the Renaissance. Although he quickly dismissed the idea in favour of a more homely or pathetic effect, the humorous effect of the 'Persian' couplet attributed to Khusrav, Rahim’s macaronic poem or 'Ishqi Khan’s mimetic lines seems inequivocal.

Sometimes we have an indication from the users of the languages themselves on how they perceived the ‘ecology of Hindavi’ in their literary world. I have mentioned above Nizamuddin Auliya quoting—and apparently seconding—Faqih Madhaw’s opinion that Shaikh Ahmad Nanhwani was wasting his time on Hindavi songs. We can see a more straightforward condemnation of Hindavi in the discourses of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri (d. 1381), who once forbade the singing of a Hindavi chakri saying that

Chakri is found on the lips of women. It is a very free sort of thing. There were also some young men in the assembly. Can you tell me where one and all acquire the power to bear such things? Confusion would result, for ‘melodious songs are as enchanting as adultery’. For that reason it was forbidden. If, however, it takes place in privacy, and all present are ascetics, men of struggle with self and having much knowledge, as well as being capable of making lawful exceptions, then they can do so.

At another musical gathering where after some Persian songs the minstrels had switched to Hindavi, Maneri said:

Hindavi compositions are very forthright and frank in expression. In purely Persian verses, there is a judicious blend of allusion and what can be fittingly expressed, whereas Hindavi employs very frank expressions. There is no limit to what it explicitly reveals. It is very disturbing. It is extremely difficult for young men to bear such things.

97Phukan 2001: 33–58. Giovanardi 1994, however, distinguishes between ‘pedantic’ texts of a serious nature, which combined the morphology of the vernacular with vocabulary from classical Latin, medieval Latin and the vernacular, and macaronic poems whose phonology and morphology looked like Latin for parody. I owe the latter reference to Francesca Orsini.

98Bahr ul-ma‘āni (Ocean of Meanings, unnumbered manuscript in the Fatuha (sic!) collection in the Khuda Bakhsh Library, Patna, 759 AH/1558), translated in Jackson 1987: 111.

Without any delay they would be upset. This is why there are difficulties involved in allowing young men to listen to such things. The members of this group, however, experience only grief and pain.99

It is not difficult to imagine the growing fashion of Hindavi singing hinted at by these lines, and the perplexity of the older generation. We can also assume that since songs in Persian (and Arabic) and other languages alternated at Muslim musical gatherings, multilingual compositions must not have been out of place. In fact, Maner’s condemnation seems to have been of no avail since Hindavi words and verses begin to appear in the Persian writings of his followers, especially in those of Muzaffar Shams Balkhi (d. 1400/01).100

Other authors similarly conversant with Persian and Hindavi such as Gesudaraz and, four hundred years later, Anandram ‘Mukhlis’ underlined the emotional capacities of Hindavi.101 In the earliest phase of Hindavi literature, Gesudaraz is credited to have emphasised the tenderness, clarity and musicality in this language,102 while Anandram ‘Mukhlis’ spoke about the Hindavi romance Padmāvat as having ‘an eastern melody brimming over with pain’,103 evidence that Hindavi retained a similar emotional appeal in the eighteenth century. Sumit Guha suggests that embedding eastern Hindi dialects in Persian or Persianate Urdu texts was a choice that aristocratic men of letters made to evoke intimate domains of affection and

100Jackson 1987: 135.
101While discussing the early use of Hindavi in sama’ gatherings, Ashar Abbas Rizvi, the author of the monumental A History of Sufism in India, voices a similar opinion claiming that Hindavi songs ‘were not composed for propaganda purposes but were a natural evolution from the deep and personal involvement of … mystics with their environment. Hindavi was a more convenient language in which to utter the feelings of a heart filled with divine love’. Rizvi 1978, vol. 1: 327.
103Ibid. Also Phukan 2001: 34–35.
loss especially connected to childhood, when they were surrounded by the rustic speech of the unlettered wet-nurses and attendants in the women’s quarters.\textsuperscript{104}

Another possibility is that writing poetry in a mixed language meant imitating spoken usage. In pre-modern India, as today, informal speech very often mixed phrases and words of an Indian cosmopolitan language with those of a vernacular, as the example of the malfuzat showed. Mixing, however, also had its rules. Normally a vernacular was mixed with a cosmopolitan language, and it is rare that elements of two vernaculars were mixed consciously.

The list of external and internal forces mentioned so far is far from exhaustive and further possible motives could have been at work behind linguistic choice and hybridity. For example, in the case of Sant poets such as Dadu Dayal, literary polyglossia was a powerful means of reaching out and impressing the audience.

Noblemen of Turkish descent such as Bairam Khan, Rahim and 'Ishqi may have felt encouraged by the innovative and hybridising spirit of the Mughal court to experiment with the several languages at their disposal, including those of the Mughals’ ancestors and of the people of the country. It was, however, not only Turki noblemen who tried Rekhta. The unprecedented nature of cross-cultural interaction at the Mughal court between intellectuals whose work belonged to Sanskrit and Persian traditions has already been noted by Sheldon Pollock.\textsuperscript{105} In Persian poetry a call for the new, and a dislike of imitation appeared as the preference for the tāṣa-gāţ (freshness in composition)\textsuperscript{106}, while in the imperial painting studios this spirit manifested itself as the ‘delight in originality’ of artists like Daswantra\textsuperscript{107} and produced the unique Mughal style of miniatures uniting elements of Irani, Dakkani, Rajasthan and European painting.

Motivation behind the use of mixed language composition cannot be explained with one factor or another but should rather be perceived as the working of multifarious rationale with different intensity at different places and at different stages.

REKHTA IN THE NAGARI SCRIPT: EARLY STRAY POEMS (MUHTAKAS)

We have seen so far that Rekhta poetry in the Persion script was cultivated in the Deccan, in Sufi circles in north India and was patronised by the Mughal court already in the sixteenth century. In this section we will see that the same genre was taken up by Hindu religious poets in the second half of the sixteenth century. Since we have scarce material at our disposal, it is difficult to tell exactly under what circumstances Rekhta in the Nagari script emerge.

The oldest corpus of Rekhta poems in the Nagari script can be found among Nirgun Sants, whose teachings often contested and blurred the Hindu-Muslim division and whose mixed language could sometimes be very close to Khari Boli. Indeed it is the linguistically most adventurous Sant poet, Dadu Dayal (1544–1603), who not only used elements from different languages or dialects with confidence but composed poems in Rajasthani, Gujarati, Braj, Punjabi, Persian and Sindhi. His use of Khari Boli may have been prompted by the similar practice of the Sufis and the increasing popularity of Rekhta in the Mughal court. His literature is attested in early manuscript material and his Khari Boli muhtakas can be considered to be the earliest extant examples of Nagari Rekhta. The following song, rather Sufistic in content, is already present in a manuscript from 1636 and no substantial variant readings exist to it.\textsuperscript{108}

\begin{verbatim}
Ala tera jihsar phikar karte hai;
Asaka mustakha tere; tarasi tarasi marate hai.
Salaka qesa digard nesa; baithai dina bharate hai.
Dima darabari tere; gairha mahala darate hai.
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{104}Guha 2004: 20.
\textsuperscript{105}Pollock 2001: 20.
\textsuperscript{106}Alam 2002: 172–74.
\textsuperscript{107}Beach 1992: 41.
\textsuperscript{108}Dadu Mahavishayalay No. 12. It is also present in mss from VS 1715, 1733, 1765 and 1770. On the solid manuscript tradition of Dadu see Callewaert and Beeck 1991, vol. I: 14.
I was too negligent and remained asleep on the bed.
My beautiful beloved is always awake.—In what way can we meet?

Vajid (fl. 1600), today a relatively unknown author, was, according to the Bhaaktamal of Raghavdas, a Pathan Muslim. When he killed a pregnant gazelle, compassion arose in his heart. He broke his bow and arrows and without returning home set off in search of a guru, which he later found in the person of Dadu. From the mention of Khadgasen as his office-keeper and Khadgasen’s reference to him as ṭhakeur we can surmise that he was a landlord. Raghavdas counts Vajid among the hundred disciples of Dadu Dayal and several of his padas and sākhis are also collected in the Dadupanthi Sarvāṅgī of Rajjab (1620?) and Gopaldas (1627) and in Jagannath’s Guṇ Gaṅjanāmo. His most celebrated works are his stray arillas that have been published four times in four different books, and which inspired the modern guru Osho to deliver discourses on Vajid.

Over hundred different works of his are mentioned in manuscript catalogues. Most of them fall into the Nirgun Sant tradition and many are about morals (niti). He was, however, a prolific author.

[13] Apart from two padas and some 180 sākhis (dohas and arillas) in the Sarvāṅgī of Gopaldas the only published poems of Vajid are his arillas in modern collections such as the Pañcāmrt (Mangaldas 1948). Indeed it is his arillas that, even today, are current as popular sayings in Rajasthan. (Maheshvari 1980: 126).
[17] More than sixty of his compositions can be found in the City Palace collection in Jaipur. We have considerable manuscript material from his lifetime or from right after his death. His earliest manuscript, containing his eight works is dated from 1600 and we have a manuscript of his Guṇ Gaṅjanāmo from 1613, of his padas and Guṇ ajāb-nāmo from 1636. A critical edition of his works is being prepared by Daiksha Mistry and myself.

Tana sahīda mana sahīda; rāti divasa larate hāi.
Gyāna terā dihyāna terā; isaha āgi jārate hāi.
Jāna terā jyāda terā; pān sira dharate hāi.
Dādā divāna terā; jara sārtā dhara ke hāi.

(Dadu Pad 398)

O God, I remember and reflect upon you.
I am your passionate lover dying of intense longing.
I have no other place [?] in the world; I spend my days sitting here.
I am your permanent courtier—frightened outside your palace.
My body is martyr'd, my soul is martyr'd; I fight day and night.
My knowledge is yours, my meditation is yours; I burn in the fire of love.
My soul is yours, my life is yours, I bow my head to your feet.
Dadu is your steward; I am of your house bought with your money.

Dadu also experimented with the consciously mixed language of the Mughals by interspersing his Hindavi with long Persian phrases as in Pad 81.

By the early seventeenth century the Sants developed their own vehicle of expression in a language that mixes various vernacular languages and dialects and what is by modern Hindi scholars called Sadhukkari (sadhukkhati bhaṣa). This must be the reason why, though many of Dadu's disciples had a rich literary output in sadhukkari, most of them did not continue their guru's experiments with Hindavi–Persian hybridity or with Khari Boli, with the exceptions of Sundadas and Vajid. Here is an example by Sundadas where the first line of the poem is almost entirely in Khari Boli (with one Persian word) and the second is in Braj Bhasa:

Mā hī āti gāphila hāi rāhi seja para soi.
Sundara piya jāgai sadā kyaākari melā hāi.

4 (Bandagi kau anga) 27

whose literary output include entertaining religious works such as Andhā kāhārā sahag ‘Omens of the blind and the hunchback’, Gun rājart (or ‘The acts of the king’; The story of the previous birth of a king, a carpenter a merchant and a leper) or Gun mārīkh-nāma ‘The book of the stupid’.

His published works do not show any significant use of Khari Boli or Perso-Arabic vocabulary and the editor of his arillas in the Pañcāmrt is astonished by the fact that ‘he used a very pure form of Hindi’. Nevertheless some titles suggest a greater influence of Persianate culture such as the Gun Sekh Samvād or the Gun Sāphī-nāma while his works on separation such as Gun Virah-nāmau ‘The book of separation’, Virahvīdās or Virah sumuṁak hit upākhyan suggest a Krishna-ite context. Vajid’s Rekhta includes some technical musical terms such as Mālkar and Akhā (names of ragas) or mandra (lower pitch), evidence that the author was at home in the world of music, and that it would be fruitful to examine further the earliest links between the use of Rekhta and music.

Vajid is the author of a work called by its scribes Rekhta or Śrī rekhta thākur kā, ‘The Rekhta of the Lord’. This is a collection of 14 kavittas in Rekhta, of which I have found four manuscript copied in 1651, 1655, 1752 and one sometime after 1667. The grammar of this work is Khari Bolt with very strong traces of Brāj. One of the most salient features of the text is the high number of Perso-Arabic words: 104 different words of Perso-Arabic origin are used 155 times, which means a proportion of 19 per cent.

In a few poems the Sufi idea of linking worldly love to transcendental love is dominant while the majority of the quatrains are concerned with the Vaishnavas (and courtly) theme of the cowherd-women’s separation from Krishna. The beloved is sometimes God described as a woman (kavittas 1, 4, 10) but more often it is Krishna. Sometimes the lovers speak directly to one another and sometimes we hear the words of a messenger as favoured by the Indian tradition. A popular context is the cowherd women’s complaint to Krishna’s messenger, Uddhava.

118 Mangaldas 1948: p. ka.
119 Pothiśhāna 2422, 3404, Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute, Jodhpur no. 10902(1) and Hindi Śahitya Sammelan, Allahabad no. 2145(3): 1354.

Copī gāi gvalani tau bhāla hai bhārti bīna
Hoṭā na malumma mukasāda kyā tumhārā hāi;
Indāyita rāhī mahāmāma kīne hai kamala nainā
Māimnamatih māra mādham caa kyā hamārā hāi;
Jau tai takāstra kachu bhāi hai hamārī Hari
Kījye ā māpha tuma jīte hama hāryī hāi;
Tuma tai sakā hau saṁkhī sāṁcī kīnī kahau bali
Udham brajanātha braja kāhe tai bisārā hāi. (7)

Without Krishna the cowherd-women, the cows and the cowherds are despondent.

‘Nobody knows what you are up to.

The lotus eyed one favoured us, taking up residence in us—We have been smitten by the ‘Soul-Churner’ Love, O Krishna, what is our way out?

If ever we offended, Hari, please forgive us, you have won, we are defeated.

You are his friend,—whom else can we call a true witness?—Uddhava, why has the Lord of Brāj abandoned us?

In the following poem the masculine verbal form in the expression khalak hi yāra huvā ‘the world has been made her lover’ suggests a male lover,

Dila kī dīlasā sāri duni kā tanasa kuli
Gama kā khandra duni dēkhāi jīsa uba hai;
Vātī mubabāt dēkhāi khatāri mai yau kyau āvai
Ālama kī sāhibī tau aist jaist dābā hāi;
Rāga khāba ranga khāba dēkhāi khāba bhauṁhāi khāba
Hausa khāba hānśī khāba, sabāh kaisī khāba hai;
Umara kī khābī para khalaka hi yāra huvā
Kauṁṇa kauṁṇa khābī kahuṁ khāba mahabā hāi (1)

All consolation of the heart, the whole spectacle of the world and the permanence of sorrow—witnessing this one loses spirit.

120 Some phrases are addressed to Krishna and the last line is directed to Uddhava. It is possible that the cowherd-women unconsciously address Uddhava as Krishna. Such double vocatives are also found in Surdas.
Seeing her love why should I show regard for this? The dominion of the world is only like a blade of grass.
Her passion is splendid, her colour is splendid, her eyes are splendid, her eyebrows are splendid, her desire is splendid, her smile is splendid and how splendid is her purity.
With the splendour of her prime youth all creation has been made her lover. Why pronounce on her splendour? The beloved is splendid.

Other Saints outside Dadu’s lineage continued this tradition. For example, Malukdas (1574–1682?) from Kara (Allahabad) frequently used a Khari Boli template with Perso-Arabic words in his padas and especially in his kavittas,

Ehla kada hari thi bhala jiyā āpa jāna
Phila kada huā thi murida kahu kisahā.
Gulha kada jhāna ki kitāba kā hindārā chūā
Byāda aura badhiaka nischāphā kahu tisahā.
Nāga kada mālā lai ke bandagi hari thi baihāth
Mujhako hī lāgā thi ajāmila kā hisahā.
Ete badar dhū kā bādi hari thi māphā jāna
Malākha ajāṭā para eti hari risa kā.121

Has a tribal ever done any good intentionally?
Has an elephant ever become a disciple of anyone?
Has a vulture ever touched the edge of a book of knowledge?
Has a fowler or a hunter done any justice to it?
Has a snake ever welcomed anyone sitting with a garland?
— I also had a rivalry with Ajamil.
You have pardoned the sins of many wicked people.
Why are you so angry with your worshipper, the casteless Maluk?

Ten words out of 60 in this poem are of Perso-Arabic origin. Malukdas used an even more Persianised language (24 out of 83 words) abounding in Islamic technical terms, where a stronger Sufistic message was intended,

Terā māi dīdir divānā,
Ghari ghari tujhe delkhā cāhā, suna sāheba rahamānā.
Huā alamasta khabara nahi nāhi tāna ki piyā prema piyālā,
Thārā hōi to giri giri paratā tere rāga matavālā.
Khārī rahā darabāra tumhāre jyō ghara kā bandājādā,
Nekh kī kulāha sīra diye gale parihrana sajā.
Taujī aura nīmāja na jānū nā jānū dharī rojā.
Bāngga jikira tabahī se bisart, jaba se yaha dīla khojā.
Kaha malēkha abha kajā na karihati dīla hī sī dīla lāyā,
Makka hajja hyē mē delkhā pūrdā murāsida pāyā.122

I am crazy about seeing you.
I want to see you every moment, hear me, o gracious lord!
I became intoxicated, I do not know my body; I drank the cup of love.
If I stand up, then I fall again and again—drunk with the colour of your love.
Let me stand in your royal assembly as a slave born in your house.
I dommed the hat of virtue and wore its cloak on my shoulders.
I know no arguments, no prayer, I do not know how to fast.
Since I searched my heart I have abandoned the muezzin’s call and the remembrance of God.
Maluk says, now I won’t make up for my missed prayers, I willingly fell in love.
I have seen Mekka and the Pilgrimage in my heart, and received my perfect spiritual guide.

Apart from the Perso-Arabic and in the Devanagari scripts Khari Boli was also written in Gurmukhi in early Sikh literature. Janamsakhis, such as Miharvan Sodhi’s Janama sākhī Šīr guru Nānakdevī or Hariji Sodhi’s Gosati guru Mihirindru,123 written in Sadhukari, mixed Braj features with Khari Boli and Punjabi. Some

121Malukdāśī kī rāmī 1912: 30. The transmission history of Malukdas’s poems has not yet been studied critically. There is a possibility that some of his songs belong to later poets of the same name.
works, such as the Ādi Rāmān by Miharvanu Solhi ‘Manohardas’ (1580–1640), the grandson of Guru Ramdas, are occasionally dominated by Khari Boli. In contrast with the Nirgun Sant works mentioned above, in the Sikh compositions Khari Boli is very strongly mixed with other dialects and the high input of Perso-Arabic vocabulary is missing.

Tab brahmādik ki bāt āt; Tab brahmādik ehi kahā āt he srī dev ji mujh kāut ehi lamākā dehi. Tab srī Mahādev kahā āt mai āinī. Tab itne kahān sāth pārbatt karo dhū āt. Ji ke adharmi tujhī daū ātu bāt kiu kari kahīn āt hai? Mai aje iskhi dekhī bhi nahi nibādī. Paru jāhī je sati paramaisur hai. Taka jī ko is lamākā ke bāte bādega so tahāl hi bindās hoi jāega. Tab lamākā kā pārbatt āt saraup bhala. 124

Then it was the turn of Brahma’s son, Brahmadik. Brahmadik said ‘O great god, give me this very Lanka.’ Shiva said: ‘(It’s yours.) I have given it to you.’ When this much was said Parvati became angry: ‘O you unlawful one, how could you say this? I haven’t even seen it fully yet. But I swear by the highest God, if anyone enters this Lanka, he will die immediately. So Lanka was cursed by Parvati.

Although the early practice of Nagari Rekhta can be found chiefly among Nirgun Sants, an early Krishna-poet also experimented with it. Here is an example of the use of Khari Boli with Perso-Arabic vocabulary which comes from the heartland of Braj, from Vrindaban. It is a song by Svami Haridas, the founder of a school of Krishna devotion who is also celebrated as the initiator of the dhrupad style of singing. 125 In this case we lack manuscript evidence prior to the mid-eighteenth century, and there is a shade of uncertainty regarding its authorship and date, yet it is difficult to imagine that this odd poem would make its way to the limited sectarian Haridas corpus from outside and would withstand the ‘Brajifying’ tendencies of the scribes.

Bande akhatiyāra bhala;
Cita na dulava ava samādhī bhitar na hohu agala;
Na phiī dāra dāra pidara dāra na hohu adhala;
Kahi harīdāsa karāī kiyyū su huiī sumera acalī calī.

(6 Aṣṭādasha Siddhānta) 126

O, worshipper, this choice is good.
Waver not in mind, enter into profound meditation, be not an adversary;
Do not wander from door to door [or seek] your father’s door, do not be blind.
Haridās says: what the creator causes, comes to pass—even immovable
Meru moved.

(Translated by L. Rosenstein) 127

Although the poem is far from being pure Khari Boli and has Braj Bhasha forms (like the repeated imperative hohu, ‘be’) it is rather isolated in the Haridas corpus. It is possible that a poem with Khari Boli features and some Perso-Arabic vocabulary was smuggled into the Haridas corpus in order to justify the Rekhta attempts of eighteenth-century Haridasi poets such as Sahacharisharan and Sitaldas. If this quatrain is genuine then the reason behind the use of Khari Boli forms and Perso-Arabic vocabulary may be an early attempt to evoke the atmosphere of music patronised enthusiastically in Islamic courts. It is also interesting to observe that there is nothing specific about Krishna bhakti here and the poem is rather similar to one by Nirgun Sants.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY—REKHTA IN THE PERSIAN SCRIPT

The seventeenth century saw an increased production of Rekhta in the Persian, the Gurmukhi and the Nagari scripts. According to Faruqi the earliest literary text in Hindi/Hindavi extant in north India is

125For Svami Haridas, see Rosenstein 1997.
127Rosenstein 1997: 189.
the Bikaṭ Kahanī (Dīre Tale, 1625), a poem of 325 shi'rs in the masnavi form describing a woman's pangs of separation during the twelve months of the year, whose author, Muhammad Aflal, is also known by the half-Hindu half-Muslim name of Aflal Gopal. The problem with this poem is similar to that of the poems of Kabir and others. It was transmitted orally for a long period, and its text is preserved only in eighteenth-century or later manuscripts. It is possible that the language of the published text does not represent seventeenth-century features.

This poem, Faruqi notes, was neglected by early Urdu tazkira writers and has only been reclaimed as part of Urdu literary history in the twentieth century (Sherani, Zaidi, Faruqi, Jafar and Jain). What could be the reason behind this neglect? Faruqi argues that macaronic poetry has been rejected by eighteenth-century Urdu poets. It can be claimed that probably before the nineteenth century 'Hindi' and 'Urdu' represented a literary division within Hindavi manifest in metrical forms and genres (rather than in language or script). Padas, dohas or kabittas were not accepted as part of the high Urdu tradition no matter how Persianate their vocabulary. In much the same way no ghazal or rubai could be produced within the Hindi tradition even if it lacked Persianate vocabulary. However Bikaṭ Kahanī belongs at least as much to the popular Indian barahmasas, 'twelve months' poems rejected by Urdu high tradition, as to the Persian masnavi genre.

Out of its 325 couplets 41 are directly in Persian, 20 have one line in Hindavi and one in Persian and another 20 lines are half in Persian and half in Hindavi. Since its Hindavi template is not pure Khari Boli but also shows Braj Bhasha features, Bikaṭ Kahanī is very close to the Nagari Rekha poems. In the following lines, for example, jare and bādana are Braj Bhasha forms.

Sakhī bhādī āpāt taptā pāre ri; tamām-e tan-badān mera jare ri.
Siyāh bādar cahārō or chāye; iīā mujh gher piu ajāhū na āye.132

My friend, the rainy season burns me severely; my entire body is aflame. Dark clouds have spread everywhere and surrounded me—my beloved has not come yet.

Bikaṭ kahanī is thus truly in an 'intermediary' position—linked to Indian tradition through its genre and to Persian through its metre, which all Urdu Barahmasa writers adopted after Aflal. With works such as Vajji's rekhta, the Bikaṭ Kahanī and the Prem Prakhāś by Shah Barkatuddin Marhavi/Bilgrami (1660–1729), a Sufi and Persian poet, who used the pen-name 'Ishqī in his Persian compositions and Pemi in his Hindavi, we see the emergence of a hybrid linguistic and literary koine that combines and chooses between Persian language, poetic imagery and metres and Hindi (Khari Boli or Braj Bhasha) phrases, metres and poetic topos and genres.

Prem Prakhāś uses not Perso-Arabic but Braj Bhasha metres and shows an even more sustained engagement with Hindi poetic forms: it contains 202 dohas, 50 rekhtas in kabitt (quatrain) and pad (song) metres, 20 rekhtas in question-answer-form, 113 kabitts and pads, 1000 lines of rekhta besides irshad (guidance), ariza (humble petition), barahmasa and sadru varnān. Pemi in his Rekha mixes Persian phrases with Khari Boli inflected by Braj forms.

Camhe tere pāt ēta mē nukhī rāp ujayārā—jīvan sē135 badī mē
Bagzēr le dar rā-i tū binnīm khudā-rā—ab sūnī galt mē.137

Under your veil your bright face shines like water in a cloud. Allow me to see God's manifestation on your face—in an empty lane.138

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133See Orsini's essay in this volume.
134Probably the Urdu form of the Braj vinaya.
136Khan 1966: 130.
137The interpretation of the tags at the end of both lines is problematic.
Before the Divide: Hindi and Urdu Literary Culture

Other seventeenth-century authors who composed poems with one line in idiomatic Hindi and one in Persian include Mullah Nuri Azampuri. Though this kind of macaronic poetry, Mir's third category, continued in the eighteenth century, it was Persianised Hindi, Mir's fourth category, which became mainstream Rekhta.

Several seventeenth-century Persian poets continued to use Khari Boli and the mixed language as in the previous century. The best documented example is that of Baba Fatah Muhammad (d. 1669), who was the son of Shaikh 'Isa Jand Ullah, a friend of Abdurrahim Khankhanan. The following poem is in an Indian moral metre (16-13 morae) and its language is Braj with some Khari Boli features.

Isa kula bhattara mita na ko, apā sudratha saba delehe;
Tumhā sāga jana na akārata bita, jī bitā to kita lehe....
Jhālīhī daga ghāzāt batamārī, ghāta bisat madhu-pītī;
Aba kāhe pachādārī vāri, taba kāhe seca na mana kiti.
Fatahā muhammadā khyā samajhāve, nakhā-sikhā tā yō alādā;
Apanā āpa savāra divāne, aurana sō khyā maqāsādā.

No one is your friend in this family—everyone is after his own self-interest.

E.g. Har kas ki bhiyānāt kunād albatra biarsad; Bicara-yī Nīrī na karo hai, na dare hai. (Everyone who does treachery is certainly afraid; this poor Nuri does not do it, and he is not afraid.) Jalibi 1977: 59, on the basis of Qa'im Chandpuri's takhsīs Makhzan-i-nībat (Storehouse of subtle points), Anjum-e-Taraqqi-e-Urdū, Aurangabad 1929: 3. Also quoted in Sherani 1931: 87. This poet is not identified with Shaikh Muhammad Nur, the author of a prayer in Hindi published in Sherani 1930: 244-46.


Fatah Muhammad was the author of a book on religious and Sufi beliefs, the Fatū al-saqqād (The Triumph of Religious Tenets) and a tract on prayers, the Misbaḥ as-Salāt (Key to Blessing). See Hadi 1995: 117.

Sherani 1931: 86-87. The poem was found by Sherani in Jaimal's album dated 1652-56.

Your life has passed in vain. You lived, but for what reason?...
Falsity, deception, robbery, murder, treachery, debauchery—Why did you start to repent it only now? Why did you not think of it then?
How much should Fatah Muhammad explain, you are defiled from head to toe.
See to it yourself, madman, why do you expect it from others?

The importance of this poem lies in the fact that it was included into a Persian and Rekhta album and that, despite its linguistic features, was considered to be part of the Persian/Rekhta tradition. The poem was called Rekhta by Sherani although it rather shows Braj Bhasha features with a minimum input of Khari Boli. The distance between the Rekhta of Bikaṭ kahānī and that of Fatah Muhammad shows two alternatives of mixed language. Unlike Afzal and Shah Barkatuddin, Fatah Muhammad used Indian metre and a Braj Bhasha template rather than Khari Boli.

A poem attributed to Chandrabhan Brahman (1574-1662), who was Dara Shikoh's mir munshi and later vazir, shows the blend of Hindi and Persian that became common in the eighteenth century with Vali Aurangabadi. Although Jalibi claims to have found it in an old album, the first dated occurrence of the poem is in a tazkira called Khumkhāna-yī Jāved (1908), and some scholars question its authorship. Its imagery and language, however, suggest an early date of composition. Post-seventeenth century Rekhta is less likely to use archaic forms such as haman ko (us), lāte dālā (thrown) or the nasalised postpositions sē and kō.

Khudā ne kī shahār andar hamān ko lāte dālā hai;
Na dīlbar hai, na sāfti hai, na shīsa hai na pyātā hai.
Pīyā ke nāvā kī sumraan kīyā cāḥī karā kīssē;
Na tashī hai na sumraan hai na kānṣhī hai na mālā hai.
Khyanāī kī bāg mē raunāq hō to kī taraḥ yārān;
Na daunā hai na marvā hai na sosan hai na lālā hai.


early examples of Urdu Rekhta in north India, though they have not viewed it in the context of a continued engagement with Hindavi but as prehistory of Urdu poetry.

There is also evidence of a widening of the domain of Rekhta in seventeenth-century north India. Some longer works produced in loose Khari Boli include Shaikh Maulana 'Abdullah Ansari's treatise on the religious jurisprudence of India entitled 

\textit{Fiqh-e hindi} (1663).\footnote{See Shaikh Mahbub 'Alam's three long poems, the \textit{Mahshar-nama} (The Book of the Day of Judgement), the \textit{Masal'li-e Hindi} (The Precepts of the Prophet in Hindi) and the voluminous \textit{Dard-nama} on the life of Prophet Muhammad. The language of these works is influenced by Braj and Punjabi and comes thus very close to the mixed language of the Sants, as the following \textit{dohas} from the \textit{Mahshar-nama} show,

\begin{quote}
\begin{center}
\textit{Rabbba merā eka tā nāhī koi lagiā; tujhā sā sa'ī chāra kara kisa laññ pūjā.}
\textit{Sārī qudrat tā rakhbā cāhā so kini; ekā kāyā chhāna li ekā māyyādīnā.}
\textit{Eka rakhe nīsā rotave rov bahu bhātā; eka rakhe nīsā sovate sovā dīna rūdā.}
\end{center}
\end{quote}

Only you are my lord, no one else. Abandoning a lord like you whom else should I worship?... You protect the whole creation and do whatever you want; You took away the body of one or put another in illusion; You keep one continuously weeping—weeping in many ways; You keep another continuously sleeping—sleeping day and night.

In all probability Ansari's and Mahbub 'Alam's works attempted to communicate the most important teachings of Islam to circles that were less familiar with Persian. The language sometimes relies more on Khari Boli, as in the opening lines of the \textit{Masal'li-e Hindi},

\footnote{See also Jafar and Jain 1977; 79 and Sherani 1930: 236–39. Sprenger (1854: 617), in his description of an undated manuscript in the Royal Collection of Avadh (nr. 644) mistakenly identifies the \textit{Fiqh-e hindi} with 'Alam's \textit{Mahshar-nama}. See also Jafar and Jain 1998, vol. V: 48.}

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Qayamāta ke ahyāla mā hindi kahi kitāba; mahšara-nāma nāva hai jāna aye aṣẖāba.
Mahšara-nāma bīca hai suna va’da aisa diya; ina ‘ajīz darvesha ne bājho khola hiya.
Amra-nahi kē bātā mō hindi boli bola; shar’ tarādī dīna kī jūdī jo dā gā tola.
Bāra cauda barasa laga va’da lāṅgī dhīla; muḥammad jīvanā yāra ne kahā āy beqīla.
Va’da kō aẖẖīr kār ko amra-nahi kī bātā; likha diyo hindi bolo kara bāleh maī dīna rāna.
Talāba bāhuta isa yāra kē dekhī saẖī saẖīa; likhī kitāba us vāsīg hindi boli bājha.
Masa’il-i hindi nāva aba isakā kahā de yāra; paro fātīha mujha upara jē bakhshī karanāra.\(^{152}\)

I have composed a book in Hindi on the final judgement; you know, it is called Mahshar-nama, o companions. In the middle of Mahshar-nama I, this lowly poor man, you know, openly made a vain promise that 'I will tell the commands and prohibitions in Hindi. The Law is the scale of Religion even though I give different measurements.' For some thirteen years I was lax with the promise, when my friend, Muhammad Jīvan said: 'O you speechless one, fulfill your promise of telling the commands and the prohibitions, write them in Hindi and I will read them day and night.' I saw that his eager solicitation was earnest; know it therefore, that I wrote this book in Hindi for his sake. Call it now by the name of Masa’il-e Hindi, my friend, and read the prayer for the soul above me so that God may forgive me.

The number of the Rekhta works quoted so far testifies that by the seventeenth century a specific northern Rekhta koine had developed which was distinct from that used in the south. Northern Rekhta poets had a predilection for macaronic poetry and their Hindavi, though based on a Khari Boli template, showed strong Braj Bhasha influence and was free from Dakkani features. That this was not a fixed language in the seventeenth century is shown for example by Mahbub 'Alam's use of different registers. Indeed, writing on Muslim themes in the vernacular in the north was not restricted to Khari Boli or the mixed language. The tradition of writing popular works in Avadhi was kept alive by works such as Shaik Faizullah's translation of the Persian, Qīšā-ye Jamjām.\(^{153}\)

Moreover, Rekhta texts belonging to the Urdu-Persian masnavi tradition also began to be written in north India towards the final years of the century, after the genre had long become popular in Gujarati and the Deccan. Raushan Ali wrote his Jang nāma (War chronicle), also called Tashür nāma (Tenth-day chronicle) in 1688/9, and in 1693/4 Isma'il Amrohvi wrote his ʿIvālūd-nāma-ye bībhī fāṭima\(^{154}\) (Birth Chronicle of the Lady Fatima), a biography of Fatima. His other masnavi, Qīšā-ye mījza-ye anār (The story of the miracle with the pomegranate) was written in 1709. Significantly, the language of these two masnavis shows strong Dakkani features, though their author proudly announces at the end of each that they were written near Delhi:

Vātan amroha merā hai shahar nām; ist jā par merā hai jā-ye qiyām.\(^{155}\)

My homeland is the town called Amroha; in that place is my permanent home.

There is some indication that Rekhta activities in the North were strengthened also through an early interaction with Gujri.\(^{156}\) Faruqi


\(^{153}\)Ibid: 52–57.

\(^{154}\)Faruqi 2001: 113; Jafar and Jain 1998, vol. V: 79–86. This masnavi was published by Abdul Haqq under the title Vafāt nāma-ye bībhī fāṭima (Death Chronicle of the Lady Fatima) in Ṭisālā-ye ʿUrdū Karachi, April 1951.

\(^{155}\)Jafar and Jain 1998, vol. V: 83. They suggest that in spite of this statement Isma'il Amrohvi must have lived in the south, where his literary language imbibed its Dakkani characteristics.

\(^{156}\)The dictionary of the Capuchin Friar François Marie prepared in Surat in 1703, the Thesaurus Linguæ Indianae, is a dictionary of Gujri with a significant component of Perso-Arabic vocabulary but the Hindavi words are represented in the Nagari script thus hinting at further Nagari-Rekhta connections in Gujarati. McGregor 2003: 947–48. A manuscript copy of the dictionary is at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.
observed that Raushan ‘Ali’s masnavi is modelled on Miskin’s (fl. 1681) Gujri Jang nāma-ye muhammad ānif (Battle chronicle of Muhammad Hanif) written in all probability in 1681.157 But while Miskin describes his language as Gujri,158 Raushan ‘Ali refers to his as Hindi/Hindustāni/Hindavi on different occasions.159

Another example of traffic between Gujarati and north India and of linguistic and literary syncretism—in this case connected to religious syncretism—is Prannath (1618–94).160 a Gujarati kshatriya and a religious reformer with a wide outlook who even knew about Christianity. After travelling in Arabia in his youth, he eventually settled in Panna in Bundelkhand in 1683, where he became the spiritual mentor of King Chhatrasal (d. 1732). Prannath proclaimed himself both the Mahdi of Islam and Kalki of the Hindus and founded a sect that integrated Islamic and Hindu elements. His fourteen treatises in Hindi and Gujarati verse are collected under the name Kuljam-sharīf (also called Kuljam-svarīf or Tārām Vānī).161 In these treatises he made extensive use of Khari Boli and in some works, such as the Kiyāmat-nāma (Book of the Day of Judgement), he shows a strong preference for Perso-Arabic vocabulary.162 His acquaintance with Gujri through his Gujarati background might account for this inclination.

The Hindavi that Vali brought to Delhi did not ‘create’ Rekhta poetry in north India but rather displaced the pre-existing fashion for mixed language poetry. It can be argued that it was this existing fashion which contributed to the quick acceptance of the new style introduced by Vali. Rekhta using Khari Boli or Braj Bhasha templates did continue, but was now associated with what were considered lesser genres like marsiyas or barahmasas, as the neglect of tazkira writers suggests.

NAGARI REKHTA IN THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

Rekhta poetry was also composed in the Nagari script in the seventeenth century although we know much less about it than about its versions in the Persian script. Nagari Rekhta is documented from the princely court of Jaipur as well as from the syncretistic movement of Prannath. One of the earliest courtly composers, Prannath Shrotir in Jaipur who wrote his Bejānāmah for Maharaja Ram Singh (r. 1667–89).163 Prannath’s disciple, Laldas composed his guru’s biography, the Bitak, in 1694 in Khari Boli,165 which at times is very close to modern usage166 and at times is influenced by Braj or Punjabi.167

The eighteenth century saw a particularly rich production of mixed poetry in the Nagari script, possibly influenced by the rising tide of Rekhta in the Persian script, and can be considered the heyday of Nagari Rekhta. Despite the overwhelming popularity of Braj Bhasha riti poetry, in the eighteenth century we find Nagari Rekhta all over the Hindi region, from Bihar to Rajasthan.168 We can identify

161A manuscript in the Persian script is found at the Asafuddaula Public Library, Lucknow and a portion of it at the headquarters of his sect in Panna.

163A Rekhta in a manuscript of 21 folios is attributed to Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur in the catalogue of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Allahabad (ms no. 3–193/2145–3).
164He also wrote stray Rekhta as well as works with titles that suggest a high Khari Boli input such as Vīsanat ki khabar hai and Vaid Phaṭhīh.
165McGregor 1984: 205.
166E.g., Tābā gujarātā se āye dīva mē bhāt sāthī jāyarāma ko gharā utha mile ānanda so bāro sutha pāyo dekhkar. (Then he arrived from Gujaratt in Div to the house of his brotherly companion, Jayram. He came to receive him with joy and was overwhelmed with delight to see him.) Bitak 20,3 quoted in Ram 1996: 180.
167E.g., Bhimasūra bhata suṣa karane āye didāra Caracā ita baṛi bhata uno kīpā bārd pāṛa. (Having heard this Bhimshyam Bhatt came to see him. They had a long discussion and he showed him great affection.) Bitak 21,25 quoted in Ram 1996: 181.
168Most of this discussion is still unpublished and the following survey is based on the various manuscript catalogues printed by the Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute, Nagari Pracharini Sabha (Varanasi), Hindi Sahitya Sammelan (Allahabad), Bihar Rashtrabhasha Parishad (Patna) and other smaller centres.
three contexts for Nagari Rekhta activities: the circles of Nirgun Sants, a few Krishna Bhakti poets and courtly riti poets who mainly wrote in Braj Bhasha but also, significantly, experimented with Rekhta. While Nirgun Sant poets wrote in Khari Boli with a large admixture of Perso-Arabic, Panjabi and Avadhi words, riti and Krishna Bhakti poets evolved a new hybrid poetic form which 'assimilated' Perso-Arabic vocabulary, bending it to Braj Bhasha phonology and using a Khari Boli linguistic template. Titles like Ishk-caman, Ishk-lata, Ishk-phandā etc. suggest that what is at work now is rather a poetic curiosity towards the new, and sensational, success of Urdu/Rekhta verse than Sufi influences, which had already been present for long. High Braj Bhasha literature was more open towards literary influences than towards religious ones. Hindu poets like Nagaridas were cautious not to identify the beloved overtly with God.169 In his Ishk-caman, where he speaks about love with Islamic imagery and vocabulary, Nagaridas’s interpretation is different from that of the Sufis since he considers the lover, God and the beloved to be three different entities while in Sufism, Khudā, God, and mahbhūb, the beloved, are the same.

Āśika pīra hamesa dīla lagaī casma ke tīra,
Kīyā khudā mahabūba kā satā sadhī ṭeptīra. (15)170

The lover’s heart is always tormented struck by the arrow of the glance;
(But) God made the beloved to be continuously hard and unfailing.

When philosophical Sufi influences were accepted, this approach was rejected by strong circles within the Braj Bhasha literary community as the case of Anandghan (or Ghan Anand, as he is also known) shows. The larger part of Anandghan’s quatrains can be read as relating to both his own secular and transcendental love, as was done by the scribe who tried to change the word for the beloved, sujān into expressions like ju syāma to make sure that it was not read as mundane. However, when the quatrain was too overtly mundane,

then sujān was changed into su pyārī and the like to make sure that this ‘secular’ poem would not have any religious reference. It never happened in Hindi literature before Anandghan that the human beloved was identified with the Absolute as Anandghan’s double usage of the word sujān suggests. This twofold reading of the poems was peculiar to Persian and then to Urdu and was vehemently rejected by Anandghan’s contemporaries.171

Let us now examine the various kinds of Nagari Rekhta separately. In the case of Nirgun Sants, quite often the choice for it is simply due to the fact that the spontaneously mixed language of the Sants tilted more towards Khari Boli. Dariya Sahab (c.1680–1723)172 of Bihar, who established a tradition indebted to the Kabir Panth, used a tinge of Khari Boli in his atmahātha173 and also wrote some Rekhta in the mixed Sant language.174 Another poet of the same name from Mewar (1676–1758),175 a Muslim weaver, often composed poems with a strong Khari Boli input,

Dariyā guru pīrā mīlā nāma dikhāyī nūra;
Nīsā vēkha āpajā kīyā nīsānā dūrā.176

Dariya found his definite guru—God’s name showed the light;
I received the bliss of fulfilment and removed the sigh.

As we have seen in the case of court poets and Krishna-bhaktas, Rekhta poetry flourished due to literary rather than religious influences. Nirgun Sants and syncretists, however, were more open towards Sufi ideas, imagery and terminology. One example is Charandas (c.1703–82), who was born in Kotwa in Rajasthan. He was brought up in Delhi and later he returned to his native place where he lived as a yogi and became the leader of a sect

169On Nagaridas and the literary atmosphere at Kishangarh-Rupnagar see Bangha 2007.

171Bangha 2001: 175–90.
174Dariyā Sāheb 1913: 9–19.
175McGregor 1984: 145.
176Dariyā Sāheb 1909: 3. The first half of the second line is hypometrical.
that combines the worship of the Bhāgavata's Krishna with Sufism creating poetry that is close to that of the Nigun Sants.177 His engagement with Sufism is reflected in some technical vocabulary (khudī, mursīd) and the use of composite expressions (suḥbat sadhō kī).

Do dīna kā jāga mē jīna hai, kartā hai kyō gumān; ai besahīr giḍī tuk rām
ke pichān.

Dāvā khaḍī kā dār kar apane tu dīl sett; caṭat hai akar akarke jwānt kā jō
jos ān.

Mursīd kā jīn samajh ke husiyār ho stāb; gaśat ko chōt suḥbat sadhō kī
khūb jān.

Daαulat kā sauq aise jyō dūbāb; jātā rahegā china mē pachatāyagā
nīdān.

Din rāt khowāt hai duniyā ke hārbār; ik pal bhi yad sī kī kartā nahīl ājan;
Suķhdev guru jīn carandas ko kahal; bhāj rām nām sākā pad muhti kā
nīdhān.178

We live only for two days in this world. Why are you so self-important? O you drowsy dim-witted one, recognise God just a little!
Remove the claim of egotism from your heart;
the moment of vigour of youth goes away crookedly.
Understand the guru's knowledge and become aware at once!
Give up negligence and recognise the speech of the true ones.
Desire for wealth is like a bubble of water,
it will go away in a moment and you will repent at the end.
You waste your days and nights in wordly chores,
and do not remember your lord even for a moment, you ignorant.
Suķhdev gives this teaching to Charandas,
worship God's name, a true object, the treasury of liberation.


Several other Nigun Sants are listed in the catalogues as authors of Rekhta compositions,179 in particular a very high number of Niranjanis figure amongst them,180 as well as several followers of Bavri Sahab in Delhi and Avadh.181 Their Rekhta poetry shows that for them it was not just poetry in mixed language but also in mixed metre. Some poems in Braj Bhasha without any considerable Perso-Arabic input, though sometimes with a tinge of Khari Boli are classified as Rekhta in manuscripts. More research is needed to investigate the basis of this attribution. Poems by Bulla Sahab (1693–1768) mix Braj Bhasha forms with Khari Boli ones so much that even the past tense of the verb 'to be' can appear in Khari Boli (huā) and in Braj Bhasha (bhāi) within the same poem.182 The Aliphnāmā, a poem by Bhikha Sahab (or Bhikhanand, d. 1791), a disciple of Gulal Sahab (who had been a disciple of Bulla Sahab) and followed him as the leader to the Bavri community,183 is an interesting composition in

179E.g. there are several poems attributed to Ramdas of Marwar (1726–1798), who after trying to follow the teachings of eleven various gurus found his spiritual guide in Hari Ramdas of the Ramsnehi school. Rustik Govind was the author of Kailījug rāsa (1807) a longer composition classified as nīdhān, poetry on morals. He is not identical with the Sikh Guru Ramdas (b. 1534, see McGregor 1984: 55). See Bhagirath Mishra 1972: 499.
180Such as e.g. (Jan) Haridas (d. c. 1645), Tursidas, Mohandas, Hariram (maybe identical with Hari Ramdas and/or with Kesna), Gangadas, Kesnandas (maybe identical with Kesna) and Sevadas (1640?–1741?), the successor of Tursidas. For (Jan) Haridas see Menariya 1978: 307, for Sevadas see Chaturvedi 1957: 221–23.
181Some Rama worshippers also composed Rekhta, e.g. Tulsi Sahab (1763–1843) of Hathras, who considered himself a reincarnation of Tulsidas, and (Svami) Ramcharan or Ramcharandas (b.c.1760), who produced many works such as a commentary on the Rāmcaritmānas. See Gupta 1942, p. 74 and McGregor 1984: 170. The manuscript catalogues mention Rekhta by various authors about whom nothing can be known, such as Ratanlal, Kalramji Maharaj, Vallab Gosvami, Daulesh and Jan Dhiram.
182Rekhta 2 in Bulla saheb 1910: 23.
183McGregor 1984: 144. His autobiography is claimed to be Rekhta by a catalogue of the Nagar Pracharini Sabha, Sampradāẏa vīrāṇ II: 352. The selection as published in the Hindi sāhīya kā ītyād iṁtās, however, does not show any input of Perso-Arabic vocabulary but rather a mixture of Braj Bhasha. Khari
which each line starts with a consecutive letter of the Arabic alphabet (modelled on his Kakaharad, a composition on the Sanskrit alphabet). Though Bhikha is not bothered by the subtleties of the Arabic alphabet and does not distinguish between characters like jīm, zāl, ze, zāl and zo'ē, the Aliphnamā abounds in Perso-Arabic vocabulary. As in the case of Bulla Sahab, the use of Khari Boli varies in Bhikha's poetry as well. The following poem in the jhālin metre (similarly to many other quatrains) is classified as Rekhta but is actually in Braj Bhasha,

Pāpa au punna nara jsulata ḫalolān, līce aru nica sabha deha dhāri. 
Pāca aru tīnī paceṣa ke baṣa paro, rāma ko nāma sahaiai bīsāri.
Maḥā hauvalesa dukha vorc aru para naḥī, marjā jama dāta de āṭasa bhāri.
Mana tohi ḫhirakā ḫhirakā hari tohi, ḫirga binā hari bhajana jīvana bhikhāri. 184

Man swings on the swing of sin and virtue and takes high and low bodies.
Controlled by the five substances the three qualities and the twenty-five elements he easily forgot God's name.
He suffers much anguish and grief and does not find the other shore.
When he dies Death's messengers heavily torture him.
Shame on you, o soul, shame on you, shame, you wasted your life
without worshipping God.

It was not only the Nirgun Sants and related poets that wrote in Rekhta, but there were also Krishna-bhakats who continued the tradition of Svami Haridas, and we even find some mixed language compositions, this time with Punjabi elements, current under the signature of Surdas. 185 One of the earliest documented authors is the Gaudiya Vaishnava Manohardas (fl. 1700) whose following quatrains resembles those of Vajid,

Khosavakta dekhīyā maī pharaīnārḍa bābā naṇḍa ji ḫā
Phairūtī ḫhot jarda bamsī chari ḥathī iṭāヤ hai.
Sāvala nāma kīnd jara jauhīra mahaṃbūla
Jauvana kī maulī phalta jevaīsa dīya hai.
Jīva garaiha khaṭhīsātās dāriyāsa bīca
Saboroja mahājāja mastaḥdālā kīya hai.
Abe sahi jindagāni mahābhīma dilajāni
Su hiṭ dādāvānī dāsamano harhaṃ iṭāya hai.
(Gaurangagunavatī) 186

In a happy moment I caught sight of Nanda's son
wearing a small turban and a yellow dhoti and holding a flute
and a stick in his hands.
The 'Black One' makes the names of 'gold' and 'jewel' shine.
The surges and delights of prime youth spread...

My soul drowned in the middle of the beautiful river.
He made my days and nights happily intoxicated.
Now my life is true, my love of the heart,
I have a glimpse of you, and your servant, Manohar, lives.

The Krishna devotees normally wrote Rekhta with a Khari Boli template, though it could also be Punjabi as in the case of Anandghan's Ishk-latā,

Ānāda ke ghana tuma binā mujānā nahi bhāvai.
Nayana asūže lāganaī tajaṭ nī ḫāvai.
Huna ḫājāi lāḍṭāle vekhana nahi pāvai.
Julama karāī ye ḫavaī mujānā tarasāvai.

Taḍe mukha para tila aṭī kūna karādē.
Alakāi tainītī yāi chezū dūrīngī lasādā... (Ishk-latā 35–36) 188

Cloud of bliss, without you I get no pleasure.
My searching eyes run to you.

184Bhikha Sahab 1909: 61.
185Rāmji kā bārahmāsā ms no. 4241/1 at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Allahabad.
186Bansal 1988: 20–21—quoted from an undated manuscript (no. 4487-GI at the Vrindaban Research Institute).
187The text is unclear at this point.
188Mishra 1952: 180.
What shall I do now? I cannot glimpse my beloved.
These naïve ones oppress and torture me.
Alas, the black spot on your face slays me.
Your loose locks of hair shine as two snakes...

We can conclude our survey of Nagari Rekhta devotional verse with two Haridasi ascetics belonging to the community of Tatiya Sthan in Vrindaban writing Rekha in the early nineteenth century. In his Saras manjāvali Sahacharisharan, the abbot of the Tatiya Sthan between 1821 and 1837, continued the tradition of the mānjī (or mānī) metre with slight admixture of Punjabi. Sitidas, a disciple of Thakurdas (1799–1811) who was allegedly infatuated with a boy called Lal Bihari (the name Lal Bihari occurs in his poems as a name for Krishna) used Khari Boli and a wide range of cultural referents in his Guzārcaman, Anand-caman and Bihārcaman,

Majānā Pharahāda Mādhavānala ye the maharama isa basti ke;
Lalai Shirdī mē līna hue ura hāmakandālā kisāt ke;
Yaha ishtha candriki chāya rāhē abe toha bāyasa isa masti ke;
Jāni dhūdhe hē milate hai gāhaka ishusanapasi ke.

(Anand-caman 20)189

Majmūn, Farhad and Mādhvānāl were the relatives of this settlement, Their heart was absorbed in Lalla and Shīrin and in the boat of Kāmkandālā.

This moon of love is still shining over the tree of this passion.
My friend, costumers of this worship of beauty can only be found with difficulty.

Finally, we find Nagari Rekhta literary activity at princely courts in Rajasthan already in the seventeenth century in all probability prompted by similar experiments at the Mughal court and by the popularity of the Nirgūn Sants’ poetry, while Jaipur (Amber) regularly patronised Rekhta writing, as the manuscript collection of the City Palace attests. A few decades after Prannath Shrotriya (fl. 1680).

Kavikalanidhi Shrikrisna Bhatt composed Ishk-mahtāb, which used a wide range of vocabulary including Avadhī, Braj Bhasha, Apabhrāṃsha, Persian depending on the sentiments evoked in the poem.190 In fact, by the eighteenth century the leading Braj Bhasha poets of the time wrote Nagari Rekha, not just as occasional poems but even as longer works such as Nagaridas’s Ishk-caman, Anandghan’s Ishk-lata, Brajnidhi’s Rekhta sangrah and Ras Kā rekhtā and Rasrashi Ramnarayan’s Ishk-phunda,191 Ishk-lata,192 Ishk-pacciti and Māhāi mālīk mukinī ki or Ishk-daryāv.193 The high number of manuscripts of his Ishk-daryāv, written in the ‘Rekha’ and ‘Gazāl’ metres during the reign of Maharaja Pratap Singh (r. 1778–1803), testifies to the popularity of this work.194 One of the latest Rekhta authors in Rajasthan was (Gangadas) Bakhtvar (1823–96) who served at the Udaipur court.195 Brajnidhi’s interest in Rekhta is also shown by the fact that he asked his court poet Rasrashi to compose similar verses. One such work composed for Brajnidhi is the Rasik- (or Rasrāshī-) Pacciti.196

A somewhat intermediary position between Rekhta and Braj was occupied by poems which had a Braj template with a high input of Perso-Arabic vocabulary, such as in this passage from the

189Published in Albelisharan and Sharma 1999: 113.
190In battle descriptions for example he imitated Prithviraj Rāsa both in dialect and verse form. Chaturvedi 1968: 5 and 389. His other known work, the Durga-bhakti-tarangini (1712) is based on the Sanskrit Durga Saptasati.
191Ms no. 27787 (9) at Jodhpur RORI ff. 106–08 (copied in VS1857).
192Ms no. 9720 (5) at Jodhpur RORI ff. 14–16.
193Ms no. 30075 (1) at Jodhpur RORI ff. 1–5 (copied in VS1916).
194Four manuscripts are found in the Khasmohar Collection in the City Palace of Jaipur (Nr. 2357, 2573, 7799(2), 1546(1) and one in the Wellcome Library, London (Ms. Hindi 365.03)–erroneously given under the name of Chananand in the catalogue). His Kavita ratnamālīk sangrah comprising 801 poems by earlier authors and 108 by Rasrashi was compiled for Singh Jivraj, Pratap Singh’s divan. The Mishrānbandhu Vinod (p. 839, no. 950) puts his floruit around 1770 (VS1827).
195RORI, Jodhpur Ms. no. 10842(7) 33–4.
196This work on the Bhrampargth theme is preserved in manuscripts at some branches of the Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute: Jodhpur 9720(1) ff 1–5, Udaipur 31, ff 1–9, 465 ff 1–12 and 3029 ff 1–3. His other preserved works are his Prem Patrika and Chandāstak. Jodhpur RORI 9720 (3–4).
Ishk-nāmā of Bodha (1748?–1803?), a court poet from Panna in Bundelkhand.

Pahicāne prema rakāne je beparadā darada dariyāva hilai;
Magarāra dikhāle ākhirā yā dilasāra prema ko paṁthā pilai;
Tahi tabiyeḍarā uḍāra vāhi aru ganai na dhaka dai nainā hili;
Taba khūba iska bodha asika jaba mahirabana mahabūba milai.

(Ishk-nāmā 33)\(^{198}\)

The one who openly drowns in the river of pain knows the ways of love.
Even if the beloved appears proud, the lover after all trods the path of love.
Deeming the beloved a generous companion, he does not count betrayals but his eyes are absorbed.
The love of the lover, Bodha, is great when he meets the compassionate beloved.

This tradition continued well until the emergence of modern Khari Boli literature, and miscellaneous Rekhta under the name of several poets can be found in Nagari manuscripts dating from the nineteenth century. All these poets were primarily Brajbhasha poets who experimented with Rekhta. In their case this normally meant a Khari Boli template, though it could also be Punjabi as in the case of Anandghan’s Ishk-latā.

CONCLUSION

Hindavi was a literary language in India along with Persian since the fourteenth century, though there are strong indications that it has been used already some decades after the Muslim conquest of north India. Hindavi songs were sung along with Persian ones in Sufi sama’ and maybe in other gatherings despite the initial opposition of leading masters such as Sharauffudin Maneri. However, Hindavi did not reach the same status as Persian, and the scarcity of Hindavi material also suggests that Hindavi works were considered inferior to Persian ones in prestige and remained limited in quantity. The few extant examples of Hindavi used at these gatherings are very close to Braj Bhasha both in language and poetic form, not to Khari Boli, which only later became more closely associated with Muslims.

Indeed, the earliest use of Khari Boli and of the mixed language in north India can only be documented from the sixteenth-century Mughal court, although there are indications that it had been promoted somewhat earlier in Sufi circles. This suggests that, contrary to perceived notions, Khari Boli literature was cultivated in north India almost parallel to its counterparts in the South, namely Dakhani and Gujri. In north India under Mughal patronage it took the form of macaronic poetry written in Persian metres mixing phrases and half-lines of Hindavi and Persian. Although the normal templates of Rekhta were that of Persian or Khari Boli and the languages used are Hindavi and Persian, there was in fact a wide range of possibilities within Rekhta, including Braj or Punjabi templates and the mixing of more than two languages or dialects.

It was in the experimental and syncretistic environment of the Mughal court, which as Allison Bush also shows in this volume was receptive to Braj Bhasha riti poetry as well, that we find Mughal noblemen writing light-hearted poems with words and phrases from Hindavi. Often these words, phrases and images have to do with the feminine. ‘Ishqi Khan’s poem suggests a mimetic use mirroring the multilingual Mughal court. The example of Abdurrahim Khankhana demonstrates, that composing in Hindi is a show of virtuosity for the multilingual poet. These are the compositions that can be most pertinently called ‘macaronic’, since they seem to have a mimetic/ironic bend.

While the earliest documented Rekhta poetry developed within Muslim circles, later in the sixteenth century the Nirgun Sant tradition that blended Muslim and Hindu ideas also developed its own Rekhta, written down not in the Persian script but in Nagari and using Indian metres rather than Persian ones. Their Rekhta, just like in the South and probably prompted by similar poems of wandering Sufis, mixed Persian words and phrases into a Hindavi grammar. The Persian-script version of this variety developed into the literary language today called Urdu. The earliest extant Nagari Rekhta texts originated in Rajasthan, namely with Dadu Dayal and his disciples. This use of Rekhta spread mostly among Nirgun Sants but we also find a stray
example among the songs of a leading Vaishnava of Vrindaban in the sixteenth century, Svami Haridas. Due to the burgeoning world of Sadhukkari poetry Dadu’s disciples, with a few exceptions, did not continue with Nagari Rekhta and its occurrence remained scarce until the eighteenth century.

The earliest extended composition in north India that can be considered Khari Boli is a work by Vajid, the ‘Rekhta of the Lord’, which survives in several early manuscripts and whose composition in all probability predates that of the Bhikat kahani. The fairly complex structure of Vajid’s Rekhta suggests that by the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries Rekhta had become an independent genre and Nagari Khari Boli literature existed not simply as occasional rambles into the field but in highly developed compositions. In Vajid’s case we see a move just opposite to Svami Haridas, a Krishna devotee who wrote a poem like the Nirgun Sants. Vajid was a Nirgun Sant who wrote Krishna poetry. Both authors seem to have been at home in the world of music, and it can be fruitful to examine further the earliest links between the use of Rekhta and music.

Material from the seventeenth century suggests that Mughal macaronic poetry integrated the achievements of the Nirgun Sants’ experiments with a Khari Boli template. The best example of this integration is the Bhikat kahani. By the end of the century mixed poetry in Rekhta, and the domain of Hindavi, had spread quite widely in north India in popular Muslim and syncretic religious groups like Prannath’s sect. Even in Mughal aristocratic circles Persian poets dabbled with Rekhta. The existence of this kind of poetry in north India before 1700 suggests that the fashion for Persianised Hindavi that Vali brought to Delhi did not create Rekhta poetry in north India but rather displaced the pre-existing fashion for mixed language poetry.

In the next century more and more examples of Nagari Rekhta are attested, both from courts and by Krishna devotees, showing that Rekhta pervaded all fields of Hindi literature. It was the court of Amber and Jaipur, perhaps the Hindu court most open to Mughal culture, that provided patronage to Rekhta activities in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, while among Krishna devotees the leaders of the Haridasi school produced some memorable Rekhtas. In the case of Vaishnavas Pero-Arabic vocabulary was normally assimilated into a familiar Braj Bhasha template.

Rekhta production was less in quantity than that of poetry in Braj Bhasha or in Sadhukkari. Yet a careful sifting through manuscript catalogues reveals a significant number of Rekhta works, probably comparable to the heritage of other literary dialects such as Avadhi. We know, however, little about its readership, although several theories can be found attempting to explain the motives for its use. The motives lying behind the use of Nagari Rekhta vis-a-vis Braj or Sadhukkari Bhasha and other Hindi dialects are not entirely clear. Probably the growing success of its use by Muslims prompted some Hindu authors to experiment with it—perhaps to evoke a courtly atmosphere since the court par excellence was a Muslim one, that of the Mughals. The use of Hindavi within the world of Persian is relatively better researched—Hindavi was used to reach out to people who may have been little acquainted with Persian and more importantly it was considered more effective than Persian in evoking emotions and was also perceived as closer to the world of women. Raja Rao said in his Foreword to Kanthapura that English is the language of our intellectual make-up—like Sanskrit or Persian were before—but not of our emotional make-up.

Similarly, in early modern India, Persian may not have provided the same emotive strength as did Hindi and hence their was a continuous need of a mother-tongue for expressing emotions.

Since the modern meaning of Urdu implies separation from and contrast to Hindi, it is unfortunate to refer to the language with this word before the late eighteenth or nineteenth century, when this contrast was not felt so markedly by its speakers and when the language was not even called Urdu. Instead of referring to the separate early histories of Hindi and Urdu, I propose to make a different distinction. The word Hindavi (or even Hindustani) can be used to refer generally to the varieties of Hindi and Urdu prior to the articulation of their separate identity and the linguistically neutral phase Khari Boli can refer to the idiom using the template of modern Hindi and Urdu. In all its various forms, Rekhta literature, though neglected by modern scholarship, is more than one of the most important meeting points between Hindi and Urdu; it is the shared early life of the two gradually separated languages.