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## *Sauda Sulaf: Urdu in the Two Versions of Sayyid Ahmad Khan's Asaru's-Sanadid*

WHEN SAYYID AHMAD KHAN was thirty years old, he published an account of the Urdu language, embedded in a handsome illustrated volume about the buildings, old and new, and the contemporary personalities of Delhi. A munsif in the judicial service of the East India Company, he had just returned to his native city after an absence of some seven years. The first edition of *Āsāru'ş-Şanādīd* (Traces of the Notables) has much in common with earlier Persian prototypes, more an album (*muraqqa'*), guidebook, gazetteer and biographical dictionary (*tazkira*) than historical narrative. Over the following five years, however, Sayyid Ahmad came in contact with members of the newly founded Archaeological Society of Delhi, Arthur Austin Roberts, the British commissioner of Delhi, and Edward Thomas, who encouraged him to recast the book as a more strictly "archaeological history."<sup>1</sup> In that second version, he included a short *khātimah* (appendix) devoted to Urdu, but eliminated the extensive discussions of contemporary poets and extracts of their poetry.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Edward Thomas refers to "Syud Ahmad Khān's excellent Archaeological History of Delhi" in *The Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi* (1871, 20).

<sup>2</sup>Sayyid Āḥmad Khān, *Āsāru'ş-Şanādīd* (1847) and (1854). I have used copies in the British Library and, for the second edition, the New York Public Library. Christian W. Troll has written an exemplary account of the two versions (1972) which includes extensive bibliographical information. I am grateful to C.M. Naim for sharing with me his "Syed Ahmad and His Two Books Called '*Asar-al-Sanadid*,'" forthcoming in *Modern Asian Studies* 2011 (vol. 45, no. 3). My present essay derives from a longer work in progress and a paper originally written at the suggestion of Vasudha Dalmia for a panel at the 18th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, Lund University, Sweden, July 2004. Jennifer Dubrow shared with me her work and a photocopy of the first edition of *Āsāru'ş-Şanādīd*, and Professor Asghar Abbas of Aligarh Muslim University very kindly sent me copies of facsimiles of the two editions, recently published by the Sir Syed Academy, Aligarh Muslim

The two versions are substantially different in what they say about the language, especially when taken in the full context of the two works in which they appear. The first edition was above all a celebration of Delhi as a living culture, a *gulshan-e jannat*, (garden of paradise) (Āḥmad Khān 1847, 11); the second was an archaeological study concerned with the chronological layers in the city's history of superseding regimes of power and authority. The brief accounts of Urdu partake of this distinction, an epistemological reordering that sets the stage for thinking about language and languages in a new way. The change in Sayyid Ahmad's own prose in these two editions may also express this shift. Both discussions serve as documents of the times in which they were written, clues to the linguistic self-consciousness of the writer with respect to language, literature and language community.<sup>3</sup>

In the first version of *Āṣāru 'ṣ-Ṣanādīd*, Sayyid Ahmad starts with the here and now: Urdu is identified as the language current "here," the language that "everyone speaks."<sup>4</sup> Although Delhi is an ancient, imperial city, it had always been characterized by linguistic disunity. People spoke separate languages (*bhākbā*), first under Hindu rulers, then under the succession of Muslim dynasties. Under Muslim rule, bargaining (*saudā sulaf*), exchanging, buying and selling (*lēnē dēnē, bēčnē bačānē*) were all the more difficult because of the diversity of languages. Then under Akbar, Persian became so dominant that other languages could not develop. Only when Shāhjahān established his capital in Delhi and commanded people from all over the land to settle there did the languages begin to strike a bargain (again, *saudā sulaf*). Because it was the language of the court, associated with the royal bazaar, called the *urdū*, it was called Urdu and became virtually the language of all the Muslims of Hindustan. Then came the great Urdu poets Mīr and Saudā, who established the literary reputation of the language. Delhi was to Urdu what Shiraz was to Persian; it set the standard (*sanad*). Unfortunately people from other cities tend to make excessive use of Persian words and constructions. They undermine the *urdūpan*, the special character, of the language. No rules can be established to determine how much Persian one may use in Urdu. Such matters can only rely on the actual speech of the *abl-e zubān*, the native speakers of the language, that is the people of Delhi (1847, 428).<sup>5</sup>

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University, 2007. The Harvard University Library copy of the second edition is now available via Google Books.

<sup>3</sup>For current scholarship cf. Shamsur Rahman Faruqi, *Early Urdu Literary Culture and History* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000).

<sup>4</sup>See Appendix 1 of this paper.

<sup>5</sup>See translation in Appendix 1.

Although this discussion dips into the past, what it is really about is the contemporary linguistic authority of Delhi. Urdu starts with the establishment of the most recent of Delhi's cities, Shāhjahānābād, but it is a result of a bargaining process, *saudā sulaf*, among speakers of different, unspecified languages. It is the literary achievement of two great poets in the late eighteenth century that has established the excellence of the language, comparable to what the great poets of Shiraz, such as Ḥāfiẓ and Sa'dī, did for Persian. This discussion of Urdu, it may be noted, stands out in the first edition for its easy, idiomatic expression, as if focusing on the language led Sayyid Ahmad to abandon the heavy Persian rhetoric that characterizes most of the first edition.<sup>6</sup> It was, in fact, not just the people of other cities who were capable of undermining *urdūpan* in order to display their learning and virtuosity in the tradition of Indian Persian.

In *A House Divided*, Amrit Rai seized on a quotation from this passage to show that Sayyid Ahmad considered Urdu to be the language of "the Muslims of India," a piece of evidence in his general argument that the differentiation of Urdu from Hindi emerged as a rearguard action on the part of the declining Mughal aristocracy. Read, however, in its full context, the passage as a whole suggests something quite different: the standard language, Sayyid Ahmad claims, should be set by the ordinary speech of the *abl-e zubān* of Delhi. People of other cities have undermined the special character of Urdu, its *urdūpan*, by weighing it down with Persian vocabulary and constructions. It is not Muslims that have created Urdu, but the processes of exchange among numerous groups in a particular place. The phrase that Amrit Rai quoted, from a quotation in a secondary source, is "*gōyā hindūstān kē musalmān kī yabī zubān thī*." He translated this as, "That is to say, this was the language of the Muslims of India" (1984, 260).<sup>7</sup> This is probably more emphatic than it needs to be. I would translate it as, "It was as if this was the particular language of the Muslims of Hindustan," that is, that the language of Shāhjahānābād became popular among the Muslims of the Gangetic region, Hindustan. It is clear from the passage as a whole that Sayyid Ahmad, like Mīr Amman Dihlavī and Inshā' before him, is asserting the linguistic authority of Delhi, not of Muslims in general.

Sayyid Ahmad clearly drew upon Mīr Amman's discussion of the

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<sup>6</sup>Alṭāf Ḥusain Ḥālī (1901, 73) criticizes the first edition for its old style, overly colorful, exaggerated and complex language. See also Troll's analysis of comparable passages in the two editions (1972, 137–39).

<sup>7</sup>Compare my articles, "Zuban-e Urdu-e Mu'alla and the Idol of Linguistic Origins" (1994) and "Eloquence and Authority in Urdu: Poetry, Oratory and Film" (1988).

origins of Urdu in the preface to *Bāgh-o-Bahār*, the text published in 1801 at Fort William College for the instruction of British officials. In addition to following a good deal of the general argument, he quotes it explicitly in recognition that different people have different ideas about what counts as good language: “Not that, in the words of Mīr Amman, anyone thinks ill of his (own) turban, gait or speech. If someone asks a peasant, and he calls it citified [*shahrivālā*] and thinks his is better—well, the wise know which is best.”<sup>8</sup> In contrast to the highly Persianized diction of most of the first edition of *Āsāru’š-Šanādīd*, Sayyid Ahmad’s account of Urdu partakes of the earthy, playful language that characterizes *Bāgh-o-Bahār*. The great difference is that Mīr Amman goes on to attribute the perfection of Urdu to his Scottish patron, John Gilchrist, whereas Sayyid Ahmad mentions only Mīr and Saudā.

During the years that intervened between the two editions of *Āsāru’š-Šanādīd*, however, Sayyid Ahmad was increasingly drawn into European ideas, methods and social relations. When Arthur Austin Roberts, the Collector and Magistrate of Delhi, traveled to England, he took a copy of the first edition with him to present to the Royal Asiatic Society. He returned with the idea of enlisting Sayyid Ahmad to help him prepare an English translation. In the process of discussing the work, however, Sayyid Ahmad was persuaded that it needed substantial revision with respect to organization, chronology, and the accuracy of many of the details in the text. Although Sayyid Ahmad already had significant interactions with a number of British contemporaries, his association with the Archaeological Society of Delhi and some of its British members arose out of this project.<sup>9</sup>

The discussion of the language in the second edition (1854) of *Āsāru’š-Šanādīd* is offered as an appendix (*khātimah*) to the three chapters (*bāb*), published originally in separate fascicles, which make up the body of the text.<sup>10</sup> Throughout the work, due attention is paid to dates, provided according to Hindu, Muslim and Christian calendars. The appendix on Urdu serves as an introduction to the final section devoted to reproductions of inscriptions in Brahmi, Nagri, Kufic, Naskh, and Nastaliq scripts that Sayyid Ahmad and his collaborator, Maulānā Imām Baksh Šahbā’ī, carefully traced on the sites. According to Ḥālī, Sayyid Ahmad’s biographer, the task of copying the higher inscriptions of the Qutb Minar

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<sup>8</sup>This is a translation of a direct quote from *Bāgh-o-Bahār*. See Shackle and Snell (1990, 86); also, Mir Amman Dihlavi (1994, xvi). All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

<sup>9</sup>Āḥmad Khān (1854, English preface) and Troll (1972, 139–43). On Roberts, see Buckland (1906, 360).

<sup>10</sup>See my translation in Appendix 2.

required him to be hoisted in a *čhīnkā*, a sort of net made of rope, while his friend looked on in terror (1901, 72). The vigorous empiricism of this “enthusiastic antiquary,” as Edward Thomas (1871, 20) called him, had totally transformed *Āšāru’š-Sanādīd*.

The appendix on the Urdu language in the 1854 edition consists of eleven numbered paragraphs, followed by brief literary examples of the various poetic forms discussed in the text. The first five paragraphs are historical, starting with an undifferentiated condition of linguistic unity: under Hindu rule the language of reading, writing and speech was Hindi. With the establishment of Muslim rule, the language of government became Persian, but the language of the subjects remained the same. Here Sayyid Ahmad provides a definite date, with Muslim, Christian and Hindu (Vikramjit) equivalents. He then jumps forward three hundred years to the reign of Sikandar Lōdhī, again with a definite date according to Muslim and Christian calendars, when Hindu Kayasthas, educated in Persian, took up official posts throughout the realm. Other Hindus then followed, also learning Persian. Although Hindus continued to speak Hindi and Muslims, Persian, the poet Amīr Khusrau had used “*bhāshā*” in his Persian verse and written some minor works entirely in that language. Then came Shāhjahān—again there are dates—and the establishment of Shāhjahānābād, causing Persian-speaking Muslims and Hindi-speaking Hindus to create a new mixed language. Since this mixed language was associated with the army and the royal court, it came to be known as Urdu. Under the rule of Aurāngzēb—again with a specific date according to two calendars—people started writing poetry in this language, though it was not very good. He says that Valī was not the first, and only with Mīr and Saudā did poetry reach a high level. Mīr Amman, Sayyid Ahmad says, later achieved in Urdu prose what Mīr had done for poetry. ‘Abdu’l-Qādir and Rafī‘u’l-Dīn translated the Qur’ān and other religious texts into Urdu. This concludes the historical sequence.

Sayyid Ahmad then goes on to discuss some of the features of Urdu literature. Most poetry, for example, follows Persian conventions in identifying the beloved as male, but *rēkhtī* poetry is written as if by a woman. Finally, he defines three kinds of wordplay in verse: *nisbatēñ*, *pahēlī*, and *mukrī*. He closes the discussion with a few examples of these verse forms: some riddles traditionally associated with Amīr Khusrau, a couplet in *rēkhtī*, and three couplets by Mīr.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Aside from the conventional use of Mīr’s pen name in two of the couplets, Sayyid Ahmad does not identify the authors. See Rai’s discussion and selection of the riddles controversially attributed to Amīr Khusrau (1984, 140–45).

Sayyid Ahmad's first edition had recognized a multiplicity of languages and language communities, the migrations over time of various groups both from within India and outside, and the absence of standardization. Political domination only played a role when Shāhjahān established a new capital city, setting the conditions for increased mobility and exchange. In this account, Urdu emerged in the first instance out of commercial transactions and everyday conversation, *ṣuḥbat*, and it was the work of the great poets of the language that established the standard language and made it a model for a wider linguistic community beyond the city. Sayyid Ahmad's own prose in this first version exemplified the literary and linguistic virtuosity and conversational elegance of this milieu. Above all, Urdu was celebrated as the spoken language of "everyone here" in Delhi, the contemporary language of a living culture.

The second version of Sayyid Ahmad's account of Urdu is characterized by its methodical arrangement, unadorned prose style, concern with the chronology of historical stages, and the presentation of samples; it is also notable for the absence of enthusiasm, idiomatic language, and, most of all, an open sense of variation and flexibility that marked the earlier text. Presented in numbered paragraphs like an official document, each item in the series is enclosed in a separate compartment, first according to a notion of historical sequence, then according to particular literary features. This second discussion presumes an undifferentiated Hindi "*bhāṣā*" of the Hindus, on the one hand, and Persian "*zabān*" as the language of a foreign Muslim ruling class, on the other. Urdu is presented as a mixture of the two, but no claims are made for its linguistic dominance, let alone for its association with Delhi or, for that matter, Muslims. It is, instead, set apart as a residue of minor literary curiosities.

The difference between Sayyid Ahmad's two brief accounts of Urdu is probably more interesting than the substance of each taken separately. What he has to say about language should probably be read alongside the major sections of the book devoted to descriptions of the forts, temples, mosques, palaces and tombs of Delhi's past. One could imagine, and perhaps locate, for example, accounts of the site of the Qutb Minar and its adjoining mosque that are analogous to later debates about Hindi/Urdu/Hindustani: bits and pieces of "Hindu" culture, broken down and reassembled into a whole, new "Muslim" structure. Stones with their sculptured images become mosques; words with their "Indic" origins, sounds and syntax stitched into ghazals and *maṣnavīs*. This is the sort of thing that scholars of a previous generation like Louis Dumont, building on a long tradition of British colonial social anthropology, argued with respect to Hindu-like "caste" and ritual among Muslims in India; the elements

might be similar, but they were differently arranged into separate ideological structures. "Hindus and Muslims form two distinct societies from the point of view of ultimate values," he concluded (1972, 257). But Sayyid Ahmad did not believe that. At least at this point in his life, the issue had not been drawn in these terms. He was not trying to make grand statements about all of India, India as a nation, or what it would mean to be a Muslim or to speak Urdu in a world constituted by such categories. His ideas of language and history were more modest than that, a matter of bargaining, *saudā sulaf*, among multiple groups in what was still a fluid society. But by rearranging his study of Delhi's monuments into a chronological account and demarcating Urdu as an object of study, with a history and an identifiable community of speakers, Sayyid Ahmad was one of those who raised the question how culture could be made to serve the purposes of inclusion and exclusion in a colonial society. □

#### Appendix 1

### زبان کا بیان

یہاں جو اب زبان مروج ہے اور جس میں سب لوگ بولتے جانتے ہیں اس کا نام اردو ہے اور تحقیق اس کی یون ہے کہ اردو و فارسی لفظ ہے اور اسکے معنی بازار کے ہیں اور اردو سے مراد اردو و میشاہان ہے۔ اگرچہ ولی بہت قدیم شہر ہے اور ہندوؤں کے نام راجا پر جاؤں کا ہمیشہ سے وارالسلطت رہا ہے لیکن سب اپنی اپنی بھائی بولتے تھے ایک کی دوسرے سے زبان نہیں ملتی تھی۔ جب کہ ہندوستان میں مسلمانوں کی

۱۲ عہداری ہوئی اور مسلمان لوگ ان شہروں میں آئے اور یہی مشکل بڑھی اور اس  
 نئی زبان کے لوگوں کے آئے سے سو داسلف لینے دینے بیچنے بچانے میں وقت  
 پرینے لگی اول اول تو مسلمانوں کی عہداری میں اختلاف رہا کبھی کسی کی بادشاہت رہی  
 اور کبھی کسی کی غوری آئے اور کبھی لودھی اور کبھی پٹان اور کبھی منغل اس سب سے  
 زبان کا پرستور اختلاف چلا گیا اور کوئی شخص اسکی اصلاح پیچھے نہ بڑھا جب کہ  
 کی بادشاہ ہو ایک گورنر سلطنت کو قیام ہوا اور سب لوگ لینے اپنے ٹھکانے  
 بیٹھے اور علم کا بھی چرچا ہوا لیکن اس زمانہ میں فارسی زبان کی ایسی قدر تھی کہ  
 لوگ اور سیطرے متوجہ بھی نہیں ہوتے تھے جب کہ شہاب الدین شاہ جہان  
 بادشاہ ہوا اور اسنے انتظام سلطنت کا کیا اور سب ملکوں کے دکن کے خاص  
 رہنے کا حکم دیا اور دلی شہر کو نئے سرے سے آباد کیا اور قلعہ بنایا اور شاہ جہاں  
 اسکا نام رکھا اور سوقت اس شہر میں تمام ملکوں کے لوگوں کا مجمع ہوا ہر ایک  
 کی گفتار و رفتار جدا جدا تھی ہر ایک کا رنگ و ہنگ نہ لالتا تھا جب اسپین معاش  
 کہتے لاجا ایک لفظ اپنی زبان کا دو لفظ اسکی زبان کے تین لفظ دوسرے  
 کی زبان کے ملا کر بولتے اور سو داسلف لیتے نہ رفت اس زبان میں ایسی  
 ترکیب پائی کہ یہ خود ایک نئی زبان ہو گئی اور جو کہ یہ زبان خاص بادشاہی زبان  
 میں مروج تھی اسولیسٹے اسکو زبان ردو کھا کرتے تھے اور بادشاہی میرا  
 اسکو بولا کرتے تھے گویا کہ ہندوستان کے مسلمانوں کی یہی زبان تھی جو



### Translation

The language that is current here and that everyone now speaks is called Urdu. Urdu, in fact, is a Persian word that means bazaar, and Urdu comes from the *urdū* of Shāhjahān. Although Delhi is a very ancient city and was always the capital of all the kingdoms [*rājā prājā*] of the Hindus, people spoke separate languages [*bhākhā*] and these languages did not merge. When Muslims took over the administration of Hindustan, and Muslim people came into these cities, things got more difficult. With the coming of people speaking new languages, bargaining [*saudā sulaf*], buying and selling, became difficult. At first, there was discord in the government of the Muslims, sometimes the rule of one group, sometimes another: the Ghōris came, then the Lōdhīs, then the Pathans, then the Mughals. And for this reason there was regular discord in language, and nobody could undertake to make reforms. When Akbar became king, a diverse kingdom was established and everyone stayed in a fixed abode. There was intellectual inquiry, but at this time the Persian language had such standing that people did not look elsewhere. When Shahābu'd-Dīn Shāhjahān became king, he reorganized the realm, ordering that representatives of every country [*mulk*] attend and settle in Delhi. He built the fort and named it Shāhjahānābād. Then people from every country gathered. Their speech and ways of life were different. When matters came up among them, one word in one language, two words in another and three in another all combined and reached a bargain [*saudā sulaf*]. Gradually this language achieved some order and became a new language, and since it was current in the royal bazaars in particular, it was called Urdu. The royal aristocracy used it; and as it was becoming, so to speak, the particular language of the Muslims of Hindustan, it gradually came to be known as Urdu [*gōyā hindūstān kē musalmān kī yabī zubān thī, hōtē hōtē khud is zubān hī kā urdū nām hō gayā*].<sup>12</sup> From that time the language began to shine and was fashioned till the time that the eloquence of Mīr and Saudā raised high its renown and everyone heard of it. Then the language became regular and brought forth a wondrous display [*rañg dhanṅ*]. After them there were changes and transformations, and such a confluence [*māñj*] that nothing could be better till Judgment Day [*qiyāmat*]. Shāhjahānābād was to this language what Shiraz was to Persian, that is, the language of the people here set the standard [*sanad*] for all Urdu

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<sup>12</sup>Translated in Rai (1984, 260) as: "That is to say, this was the language of the Muslims of India." Note that elsewhere (*ibid.*, 241-42) Rai quotes the passage from the 1854 ed.

speakers. Not that, in the words of Mir Amman, anyone thinks ill of his turban, gait or speech. If someone asks a peasant, and he calls it citified [*shabrvālā*] and thinks his is better—well, the wise know which is best.<sup>13</sup> Although Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit words are often used in this language, and among them there have been changes and transformations, at that time the people of other cities began writing in a way that mixed in many Persian words and Persian constructions. These things were not good for maintaining the particular style of Urdu [*urdūpan*]. It was apparent from these things that no rule could be established to limit Persian constructions and (decide) which words and languages ought not to be used. These matters would have to rely on the conversation [*ṣūḥbat*] of native-speakers [*abl-e zubān*].

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<sup>13</sup>As noted above, this is a direct, though unacknowledged quote from *Bāgh-o-Babār*: See Shackle and Snell (1990, 86) and Mir Amman Dihlavi (1994, xvī).

## Appendix 2

خامشہ  
 اردو زبان کی بیان میں  
 اہندوؤں کی راج میں تو بہان ہندی بہاشا بولنی چالنی لکنی پرینی  
 اتی تھی ششہ بھری مطالی اللہ عیسو موافق ۱۲۴۲ بکر حاجت کے جب  
 مسلمانوں کی سلطنت نی بیان مکر تو بادشاہی فقر فارسی تو  
 مکر زبان عایا کی وہی بہاشا رسی ششہ بھری مطالی ۱۲۴۲ عیسو کے مکت  
 بادشاہی فقر کی رعایا میں فارسی رواج نہیں ہوا ہے کہ حیدر پور  
 سلطان بکھر لو دہی کی عہد میں سب سے پہلی ہندوؤں میں سی کامیوں نے  
 جو ہمیشہ سے امورات ملکی اور تریب دفتر میں داخلت کرتی ہی  
 لکھنا پرنا شروع کیا پھر ترقی اور قون نی ہی شروع کر لیا  
 فارسی لکنی پرینی کا ہندوؤں میں ہی رواج ہو گیا  
 ۲ اگرچہ بابر اور جہانگیر کے عہد تک ہندو بہاشا میں کچھ تغیر  
 نہیں

نہیں ہوئی تھی مسلمان اپنی گفتگو فارسی زبان میں اور ہندو اپنی گفتگو بہارتی  
 کیا کرتی تھی رجب ہی امیر خسرو نے غلطی باقیا ہونے کے زمانہ سے  
 یعنی حضرت مسیح سے تیرہویں صدی میں فارسی زبان میں بہارتی لفظ  
 ملائی شروع کی تھی اور کچھ پہلیاں اور کریان اور تبین اور  
 زبان میں کہیں تین جہین اکثر الفاظ بہارتی تھی غالب سے کہ تیرہویں  
 ہاسا میں جب ہی سی ملاپ شروع ہوا ہو مگر اب نہا جسکو حد  
 زبان کہا جاویں جبکہ شاہان بادشاہ فی شاہ بھری بنی متطابق ہوئے  
 شہر شاہان آباد آباد کیا اور ہر ملک کی لوگوں کا مجمع ہوا اس  
 زمانہ میں فارسی زبان اور سندھ بہارت ملکی اور نصیبی  
 لفظوں اور اکثر بہارتی لفظوں میں سبب کثرت استعمال کی تھی  
 و تبدیل ہو گئی عرصہ شکر بادشاہی اور اردو سبلی میں ان دنوں  
 ترکیب سے نئی زبان پیدا ہو گئی اور اسی سبب سے زبان کا ارتقا  
 پر کثرت استعمال سے لفظ زبان کا محذوف ہو کر اس زبان کو اردو  
 کہنے لگی رفتہ رفتہ اس زبان کی تہذیب اور ارتقا کے سبب  
 بیان مکت کہ مختار تہذیب بھری متطابق ہوئے یعنی اور تہذیب  
 مالکیر کی عہد میں شعر کہنا شروع ہوا اگرچہ مشہور ہے کہ سب سے  
 پہلی اس زبان میں ملی فی شعر کہا مگر خود ملی کی اشعار ہی معلوم ہوتے

۱۰۶  
 کہ اوس سی پہلی ہی کسینی اس زبان میں شعر کما ہی کو نکلا اوس کے شعر  
 اور شاعروں کی زبان پر طرز نکلتی ہی مگر اوس زمانہ کی شعر کے  
 اور نہایت ست بندش کی تھی ہر دن بدن اسکو ترقی ہوتی ہے  
 بیان تک کہ میر اور سودا کی اوسکو کمال پر پونجا ڈا  
 ۳ میر کی زبان ایسی صاف اور شستہ ہے اور اوس کے شعروں میں  
 ایسی ہی محاورات بی تکلف بند ہی ہیں کہ آج تک سب اوس کے  
 تعریف کرتی ہیں سودا کی زبان ہی اگرچہ بہت خوب ہے مضافاً  
 تیزی میر پر غالب ہے مگر میر کی زبان کو اوس کے زبان نہیں سمجھتے  
 ۴ اردو شعر لکھنی والوں میں ہر امن حسنی باغ بہار لکھا سب  
 فوق لیکیا حقیقت میں نظم لکھنی میں جیسا کمال میر کو ہی شعر لکھنی میں  
 ویسا ہی کمال میر امن کو ہی  
 ۵ عربی زبان کا اردو میں ترجمہ سب سے پہلی مولوی عبدالقادر  
 اور مولوی رفیع الدین صاحب نے کیا مولوی عبدالقادر صاحب  
 اردو ترجمہ کلام اللہ کا اردو لغات کی لئی ایک بڑی سند  
 اور مولوی رفیع الدین صاحب کا ترجمہ تراکیب نحوی کی لئی  
 ایک بہت عمدہ دستاویز ہے  
 ۶ اردو زبان کی شعروں کا ہی طریقہ فارسی شعروں کے قاعدہ

۱۰۴  
 پون ہی آن بڑی کہ گویا جوان مرد خوبصورت لڑکی کی تعریف میں  
 کہتے ہیں، ہندی بہاشا میں دستور تھا کہ عورت کے زبانی مرد کی گفت  
 شوقیہ شعر ہوتی ہے بعضی بعضی دفعہ اردو زبان میں سطح رسمی شعر کہا جاتا  
 ہے اور اسکو سخی بولتی ہیں غالب کے کچھ نثریہ شعریں مطاوعہ شائع  
 نی اسکو رواج دیا، فارسی شعرون کی جو بحرین اقسام ہیں عربی  
 شعرون میں مروج ہیں انگریزی اور ہندی کا وزن ہی اور ہی ان ہی کی  
 جہاں اکثر بہاشا ملی ہوئی ہو، شبنم جو مشہورین فخرہ ہوتی ہیں انہوں  
 یاتین پارہ خیزین جہاں کچھ باعتبار ظاہر کی مناسبت نہیں معلوم ہوتی  
 بیان کی جاتی ہیں اور مخاطب سے پوچھا جاتا کہ ایسی ایک بات جامع بنا  
 کری جو میں ہانی جاوے، اپنی میں کسی چیز کی اوصاف اور خصائص  
 اور ہی بیان کئی جاتی ہیں اور مخاطب سے پوچھا جاتا کہ وہ کسے  
 بڑی خوبی پہلی کی ہے کہ اس میں اس چیز کا نام ہی آجاوے جسکے اوصاف  
 اور خصائص بیان کئی کئی ہیں پھر اس پر ہی مخاطب بھی انگریزی  
 زبانی معنی بات بیان کئی جاتی ہے کہ نہیں ایک سے معشوق مراد  
 ہوتی اور دوسرے اور کچھ قابل اسکا جب ہی معشوق کی تائید کر جائے

### Translation

(1) Under the rule of the Hindus, speaking, writing and reading here were in the Hindi language [*bhāshā*]. In 587 AH, equivalent to 1191 CE and 1249 Vikramjit, when the sultanate of the Muslims seized control here, the royal administration [*daftar*] became Persian, but the language of the subjects remained the same. Until 892 AH, equivalent to 1488 CE, Persian did not spread among the subjects beyond the royal administration. A little after that, in the era of Sulṭān Sikandar Lōdhī, Kayasthas, who were always occupied with domestic matters [*umūrāt-e mulkī*] and administrative arrangements, were the first among the Hindus to start to write and read Persian, and gradually other communities [*qaum*] began, and Persian writing and reading spread among the Hindus too.

(2) There were no alterations or changes in Hindi up to the era of Bābar and Jahāngīr, but Muslims continued to use Persian in their conversation and Hindus continued to use *bhāshā*. Still in the time of the Khiljī rulers, that is, in the thirteenth century CE, Amīr Khusrau began to use words in *bhāshā* in his Persian language and recited some riddles and conundrums [*paheliyān, mukriyān, nisbastēn*] in a language that included mostly words in *bhāshā*. Most likely the joining [*milāp*] of the language [*bhāshā*] started from that time, but it could not be said that there was a separate language [*zubān*]. At the time that Shāhjahān Bādshāh settled in the city of Shāhjahānābād in 1058 AH, equivalent to 1648 CE, and people gathered from every land [*mulk*], the Persian language [*zubān*] and the Hindi language [*bhāshā*] got very mixed and because of the abundant usage of some Persian words and mostly words in *bhāshā*, there were alterations and changes. As a result of the combination of these two languages in the royal army and imperial court [*urdū-e mu'allā*], a new language was created, and for this reason called the language of *urdū*, then from much usage the word language was omitted, and people started to call the language Urdu. Gradually the language achieved culture [*tahzīb*] and regularity [*ārāstagī*] to the point that in approximately 1100 AH, equivalent to 1688 CE, that is, in the era of Aurāngzēb 'Alāmgīr, poetic composition started up. Although it is widely believed that Valī was the first to compose poetry in this language, it is clear from Valī's own verses that even before him there were those who composed poems in this language because he makes fun of the language of other poets in his verses; but the poetry of that time was dull and utterly sloppy (*nihāyat sust bandish*). Then day by day it improved to the point that Mīr and Saudā brought it to perfection.

(3) The language of Mīr was so clear and cultured and the fine expres-

sions in his verses were so effortless that everyone till this day praises him. Saudā's language is also very fine and the sharpness of his subjects surpasses Mīr, but his language does not reach Mīr's language.

(4) Among the writers of Urdu prose, Mīr Amman, who wrote *Bāgh-o-Bahār*, has achieved superiority; in fact, Mīr Amman's perfection in prose writing is like Mīr's in poetry.

(5) Maulvī 'Abdu'l-Qādir Ṣāhib and Maulvī Rafī'u'd-Dīn Ṣāhib did the first Urdu translations from Arabic. Maulvī 'Abdu'l-Qādir Ṣāhib's translation of the Qur'ān [*kalām Allāh*] was a great authorization of the Urdu lexicon, and Maulvī Rafī'u'd-Dīn Ṣāhib's was a great certification [*umda dastāvēz*] of its grammar [*tarkīb nahvī*].

(6) Poetry in the Urdu language follows the manner of Persian poetry in which a young man writes verse as if in praise of a beautiful boy.

(7) In the Hindi language the system is for poetry to be in the language of a woman in loving relationship to a man, and occasionally poetry in the Urdu language is written in the same way and people call it *rekhtī*. Probably about 1220 AH, equivalent to 1805 CE, Inshā'a'l-Lāh Khān popularized [spread (*rivāj*)] this [form].

(8) All Urdu verse is written according to Persian forms and genres, except the prosody [*vazn*] of riddles and conundrums [*mukrī* and *pahēlī*] is otherwise and the language is what one usually encounters in *bhāshā*.

(9) *Nisbatēn*, as is well known, are utterances in which two, three or more things are described in which something does not seem to fit, and the other person is asked to find the one thing that can be put together with the rest.

(10) In a *pahēlī*, the qualities, features of something are described and someone is asked to identify that thing. The great value of a riddle is that the name of the thing itself comes out in the description of the qualities and features and still the other person does not get it.

(11) In a *mukrī*, a woman says something that means one thing to her beloved and something else to another person, so that a lover's words can be disguised.

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