

Sindhi Literature

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Dr. Annemarie Schimmel visiting the University of Sindh (November 1977)

From right first row; Prof. Lal Baksh Jaskani, Professor Khaskheli, Dr. Hamida Khuhro, Dr. Annemarie Schimmel, Allama Ghulam Mustafa Qasmi, Dr. Khan Mohammad Panhwar and Prof Zafar Hassan.

SINDHI LITERATURE¹

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The Hindus praise the expression of Hind,
The Sindhi praise the expression of Sindh.
(Galal ud-Din Rumi, Majnawi Vol. II 1757)

In July 1972, German newspapers informed their readers about a 'wild language struggle'² in Pakistan which took place in Karachi and some other places between some Sindhi and Urdu speaking groups of the population. Most Europeans probably heard for the first time something about the very existence of Sindhi, a language which, notwithstanding its highly interesting grammatical structure and its rich literature, has generally been neglected by both Islamicists and Indologists. Did not Richard Burton, in his classical book on Sindh (1851) make the poignant remark:

A few years ago, that distinguished Major General Vans Kennedy, when applied to for an examination in the Sindhi dialect, replied that he was not aware of the existence of any such language Since that time public opinion has taken two courses, the first and general one being that Sindhi is a rude and unwritten form of Hindustani. Secondly, that Sindhi is a grammatically copious and ancient dialect, derived from Sanscrit, but containing little or no literature, and, therefore, all but totally uncultivated. Even the

¹ General Information is found in E. TRUMP, *Grammar of the Sindhi Language*, 1872, rope. 1970; L. M. KHUBCHANDANI, *Sindhi* (in: *Current trends in Linguistics*, 5), 's - Gravenlunge; N. M. BILLIMORIA, *Bibliography of Sindhi and Balochistan*, Cambridge 1930 (a rather confused book which gives neither dates nor, with few exceptions, the place of printing: quoted here according to numbers); R. P. YEGO ROVA, *The Sindhi Language*, Moscow 1971 (Russian edition 1966); N. A. BALOCH, *Sindhi bbōli ǧi muhtasar tirihi*, Hyderabad 1962; B. M. ADWANI, *Sindhi bbōll gi tarih*, new ed. Hyderabad 1956; HANSA MUHAMMAD SIDDIQ MEMON, *Sindhi adabi tarih*, 1939; 1951; LUTTULLAH BADAWI, *Tadkira-i Lutfi*, 1946; FATE MUHAMMAD SEWANI, *Aftab-i adab*, 1969; L. H. AJWANI, *Sindhi Literature, in Contemporary Indian Literature*, Sahitya Academy, New Delhi 1959; J. F. BLUM HARDT, *Catalogues of the Hindi, Punjabi, Sindhi and Pushtu printed books in the library of the British Museum*, London 1893; A. BAUSANI, *Storia delle letterature dell Pakistan*, Milano 1958 (the chapter on Sindhi is largely adapted from SA, vd. below); A. SCHMEL, *The Activities of the Sindhi Adabi Board*, WI NS VI 3-4, 1961.

Abbreviations of frequently quoted sources:

- SA: SAYYID HUSSAMUDDIN RASHDI, *Sindhi Adab*, Karachi s.d. (Urdu)
SN: K. G. A. ALLANA, *Sindhi natr ǧi tarih*, Hyderabad 1966
MM: *Mehrān ǧūn mauǧūn*, Karachi ca. 1956
Moti *Mehran ga mött*, Karachi 1959
NZ: *Naien Zindagi*, monthly, Karachi.
MS: MIR 'ALI SIR QANI, *Magalāt aš-šu'ara*, ed. H. Rashdi, Karachi 1957
TK: MIR 'ALI Šta QANI, *Tuhfat al-kirām*, Sindhi transl., Karachi 1957
Takm.: MAHDUM IBRAHIM HALIL, *Takmila maqālāt aš-šu'ara*, ed. H. Rashdi, Karachi 1958.
WI: *Die Welt des Islams*. Leiden

² Generalanzeiger Bonn 10. 7. 1972.

author of the Guzerateo Dictionary, a work published in 1846, asserts that 'in the province of Cucch there is no written language except the Goojratoo'.³

Burton's remarks are echoed in the complaint of Ernst Trumpp, the first German scholar to study Sindhi, who wrote, about ten years after the British explorer, that

among the recent languages of India that are of Sanscritic origin, none has been more neglected by the public interest than Sindhi Sindhi has been, since ever, the most despised language among the Indian vernaculars; even the old grammaticians of Prakrit have scarcely thought that it deserves mention.⁴

Yet, the field of Sindhi literature is vaster than that of many other Indo Pakistani languages. To quote Richard Burton once more:

No vernacular in India possessed more, and few so much, original compositions.⁵

The Gazetteer in 1908, however, still dismissed Sindhi literature with the remark that it

consists mainly of translations from Arabic and Persian, chiefly theological works, and of a few rude national ballads.⁶

Nothing could be farther from the truth. First of all, Sindhi literature bears the stamp of the various groups of people who settled in the country during the thousands of years that the valley of the Indus constituted one of the great centres of civilisation. The Jats and the Summas, the Laks and the Pathans, the Baloch and their various tribes, the numerous descendants of Arab families, like the Quraishi, Riżawis, Anşārīs, headed by the Sayyids, who claim descent from the Prophet, together with families of Persian and Turkish stock - they all played a role in the development of the local culture and literature.⁷ The variety of dialects in Sindh should not be overlooked either:⁸ besides the Wicöli, the 'middle' dialect which is spoken around the ancient centres of culture, like the former Mansura, Thatta, and present-day Hyderabad, and forms the literary standard Sindhi, the Siraiki is used in the northern part of the country. This dialect bordering to Lahnda and Multani and thus to Panjabi, was used for poetical purposes by a considerable number of mystics in Northern Sindh, mainly by those of Baloch

³ R. BURTON, *Sindh and the races that inhabit the Valley of the Indus*, 1850, p. 385 note 15.

⁴ Das Sindhhi im Vergleich zum Prakrit und den anderen neueren Dialekten sanskritischen Ursprungs, ZDMG 15/1861, p. 602. - About this scholar cf. A. SCHIMMEL, Ernst Trumpp. *A Brief Account of his Life and Work*, Karachi 1961.

⁵ BURTON, l.c. p. 75.

⁶ *Gazetteer* 1908, Vol. 22, p. 406.

⁷ Cf. H. T. LAMBRICK, *Sindh. A General Introduction*, Hyderabad 1964, p. 211ff.

⁸ Cf. GRIERSON, *Linguistic Survey of India* VIII 1, *Sindhhi and Lahnda*, Calcutta 1919; E. TRUMPP, *Grammar of the Sindhhi Language*, and ZDMG 15/1861.

origin. The Thareli, spoken in the desert of Thar, possesses some interesting folk-poetry; Kačchi, though already close to Gujrati, is a legitimate offspring of Sindhi⁹ and is used in some comparatively early Ismaili works. Other dialects, like Lari in the very South, and Lāsi, spoken in the Las Bela district, barely claim literary merits.

The country itself, situated between 20'25 and 28'39 N. lat. and 66'40 and 71'10 E. long., has had a distinct history through the ages: Sindh and Hind are always contrasted in Islamic literature. Isolated from the neighbouring countries by the Baloch hills in the West, the Thar desert in the East, and the Arabian Sea in the South Sindh is kept alive by the Indus, which gave it its name (Sindhu). This river is the source of both fertility and destruction: small wonder that it has been worshipped since times immemorial, and that many legends and tales are connected with it. One of the oldest civilisations of the world was located in Mohenjo Daro. Commercial and cultural relations with Sumer, later with the Arabian peninsula were established in early times. Sindh became a Persian province under Darius Hystaspes about 500 B.C.; Alexander the Great reached it in 325 B.C. The Greek rule was followed by that of the Indian Mauryas, then by the Parthians; later Scythes and other invaders from Central Asia descended into the valley. In the mid-7th century, the Hindu ruler Čač usurped the rule over a predominantly Buddhist population. Shortly afterwards the Muslim Arabs conquered the country up to Multan in 711-12 and laid the foundations of Muslim supremacy. The city of Mansura, founded about 728, was to become the seat of many Islamic scholars; and in the later 8th century the cultural relations between the Indus valley and the court of Bagdad became quite close. From this period onward a number of Arabic loanwords were adopted by the indigenous language; in their sindhizised form they are barely recognizable.

According to the accounts of Arab travellers and geographers during the 9th and 10th centuries, Arabic was spoken in Sindh side by side with the regional language;¹⁰ one 'Sindhi' verse, recited by a visitor at the Abbasid court, has been preserved, although so distorted as to render its grammatical analysis and deciphering impossible.¹¹ The first more detailed information about some 'Sindhi' literature is Buzurg ibn Sahriyar's report that in 883/4 the prince of Alor asked the Muslim rulers to send some scholar who might translate the Quran for him into his mother tongue; yet, we know neither the true character of the prince's language nor the result of his request.¹²

At approximately the same time, a group of Qarmathians, coming from Bahrain, settled in Multan and extended their-heterodox-rule to Upper Sindh. They were removed by Mahmud Ghaznawi's conquest of Multan and the adjacent area in 1010. In Lower

⁹ Cf. N. A. BALOCH, *Sindhhi bböli ġün sarħadûn ain ingŕ Cačči muħāward*, MM 225 ff.

¹⁰ Thus ISTARI 951, and Inx HAUGAL, 977; cf. SCHIMMEL, *Islamic Literatures of India* in Vol. VII, p. 2.

¹¹ According to *Muġmal at-tawarib*, Toheran 1343, s in SA 16 and SN 2; this event happened in the days of the Barmakid vizier Yahya al-Barmaki, d. 808/9.

¹² 'Aġa'ib ul-Hind, *texte arabe* P. H. van der Lith, trad. franç. C. M. Devio, Leyden 1883-1886, p. 2.

Sindh, the Sumra built up a kingdom in ca. 1053; next to nothing is known about the racial and religious background of this dynasty; they were probably of Rajput origin. During their reign Sufi leaders such as La'l Sahbaz Qalandar (d. ca. 1272) settled in Sindh; Sehwan, an old Shiwa sanctuary, became one of the spiritual centres whence Islamic mysticism spread into the country.¹³ In later times mainly those groups of dervishes who did not care for the outward forms of Islamic ritual felt attracted by La'l Sahbaz, so that the 'fair' in Sehwan became notorious for its rather unreligious practices.

Upper Sindh remained connected with the Afghan rulers; the capable governor Qabača was ousted in 1228 by the Slave kings of Delhi. Around 1330, the Sumra were attacked by the Khilji rulers of Delhi, and in 1333 an indigenous dynasty, the Summas, took over the rule.¹⁴ They settled in Thatta. Again, the Delhi sultans tried to annex the country; Muhammad ibn Tughluq died fighting on the banks of the Indus near Thatta in March 1352, and the country remained for a while annexed to Delhi. The power of the Summas, whose rulers assumed the title *Jam* (Çām), waxed stronger in the course of time. The dynasty ended practically in 1509 when the most enlightened Jām Nizamuddin died after 46 years of peaceful reign; his mausoleum on Makli Hill is one of the master-pieces of Indo-Muslim architecture. Eleven years later Nizamuddin's weak successors had to hand over the rule to Shah Beg Arghūn, whom Babur had driven out from Qandahar. Only from the Arghun period onwards Sindhi literature can be seen in the full light of history.

It should be remembered, however, that during the 14th century a new activity of Ismaili missionaries set in. Thanks to their preaching large groups of Hindus were converted to Islam, and it is possible that their writings constitute the oldest extant literary expression of Sindhi. Although it is next to impossible to reconstruct the original texts of their religious, mystically tinged poetical sermons and prayers, parts of the later Ismaili literature in Kacchi, Gujrati, and a few pieces in Sindhi are of so archaic a character that we may accept some of them as genuinely ancient witnesses of the language of the Lower Indus Valley. The contents of this literature, especially in the genre of the so-called *Dasa Avatara*, show a most surprising mixture of Islamic and Hindu ideas, to such an extent as to declare 'Ali, Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law, to be the tenth *avatar* of Vishnu.¹⁵ Such syncretism in religious matters is not at all alien to Sindhi religious life; here, Hinduism was never as strict and rigid as in the countries east of the Indus, and the borderlines between the religions were sometimes blurred in the poetry of ecstatic Sufis or of Hindus who had become the disciples of Muslim

¹³ I. H. QUDDUST, *Tadkira-yi Şafiya-yi Sindh*, Karachi 1959, p. 199; SAYYID 'ABDUL QADIR, *Hadiqat al-auliya'*, ed. H. Rashdi, Hyderabad 1907, p. 39; cf. also H. SADARANGANI, *Persian Poets of Sindh*, Karachi 1956, p. 6ff.; further the description in BURTON, l.c. 208, 211, and the interesting and amusing account by PETER MAYNE, *Saints of Sindh*, London 1956.

¹⁴ RIAZUL ISLAM, *The Rise of the Sammas in Sindh*, IC 22/1948.

¹⁵ G. KHAKEE, *The Dasa Avatara of the Satpanthi Ismailis and the Imam Shahis of Indo-Pakistan*, Ph. D. Diss, Harvard 1972; K. G. A. ALLANA, *Sumrūn ġi daur ġi Sindhhi a'iri*, Mehran 9/148ff.

saints.¹⁶ Both the form and the imagery of some of the oldest Ismaili texts now available are closely connected with the expressions of Sindhi Sufis as they are preserved in writing from the 16th century onwards.

We may assume that most of the literary forms that are found in present-day Sindhi go back to the very beginning of literary life. In olden times the Sindhi used the complete inventory of popular Indian verses; the *dōha*, with four rhyming hemistiches, is rather common, and so is the *bait* 'couplet' in various lengths. However, the theories about the character of the *bait* differ: on the one hand it is considered to be derived from the Arabic *bait*, a rhyming unit of two hemistiches which was, in course of time, split in the middle to achieve additional rhymes; then the last rhyme would be put before the last caesura, whereas the very last half hemistich remains without rhyme.¹⁷ This development is not very logical from the view-point of Arabo-Persian rhetorics. The simple two-lined *bait* was then enlarged; three, four, and later tens of these units were used in narrative poetry; the longest variety of such poems was often recited to the accompaniment of the flute, *nar*¹⁸ - Another theory derives the form of *bait* from indigenous Indian models: M. Jotwani has traced the different rhythmical and rhyming structures of the *bait* back to combinations of types like *doha*, *baro doha soratha* and *tunveri duho*; the ease in using elements of different origin proves, according to the Indian scholar, 'the special Sindhi ability in interlinking the various forms into a harmonious whole.'¹⁹

Typical of Sindhi poetry is the form of the *kafi*, probably derived from the Arabic *qafiya* 'rhyme,' or *wo'y*; these are poems with one basic verse (*thal*, *rahan*) which announces the rhyme and tune and is, then, repeated after each verse. The *kāfi*, generally accompanied by instruments, is the typical vehicle for mystical songs and is used not only separately but also at the end of each chapter of the great poetical collections, like Shah 'Abdul Latif's *risalo*; in such cases it sums up the contents of the previous *bait*s.²⁰

¹⁶ Cf. G. PARSRAM, *Sindh and its Sufis*, Madras 1924, p. 75-76, 84: "Neither Hindus nor Muslims are orthodox in Sindh ... caste is virtually absent."... "In Sindh at the present moment, there are numerous Hindus and amongst them some of the best brains of Sindh, old and new, who are Sufi by religion." - Cf. Y. HUSAIN, *L'Inde Mystique au Moyen-Age*, Paris 1929, p. 15.-The biographical dictionaries enumerate a remarkable number of cases of syncretism, thus TK 389 the famous case of Saib Tahir, called by the Hindus Lal Udero, or the examples in MS 488, 867.

¹⁷ *Bait*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1971. The theories about the development of *bait* are taken from the introduction of the book. Cf. TRUMPP, *Sorathi, ein Sindhhi-Gedicht aus dem großen Divan des Sayyid Abd-ul-Latif*, ZDMG 17/1863, where, on page 255, he discerns *bait*, in which the number of syllables before each rhyme is equal, *doho* in various metres, where the last hemistich before the last caesura *must* rhyme with the last but one verso, and *wo'y*.

¹⁸ *Nar ġa baita*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1970.

¹⁹ M. JOTWANI, *Shah Abdul Karim*, New Delhi 1970, p. 32.

²⁰ About the development of this form cf. H. RASHDI, *Šah kafi gö mōġid na ahë* (Shah Abdul Latif is not the inventor of the *kāfi*), MM 215.

Strophic folksongs in various length and rhythm are usually called *git*. Sindhi is extremely rich in such folksongs.²¹ In olden times, war songs in epical form, so-called *gangnamö*, were popular, and have survived to the 19th century. The *fathnāmo* tells of heroic deeds in battle; besides, battlefield songs proper (*čalto*, *čali*) were composed, and the type of *kedārö*, later connected with the Shiite *martiya*, primarily means a dirge for those killed in battle.

Songs are connected with every moment of life: the numerous groups of *git* differ in their basic refrain and their singing style. The most popular group of *git* is that of *Ho Jamalo*, called after its exclamatory refrain. The *hammaračo* developed out of the songs of farm labourers, and the *manhiārö* is basically the song of women when they churn. Monsoon songs are chiefly used in the desert of Thar, whereas water-fetching songs are common all over the country. It is natural that love-songs are frequent; they range from lascivious sex catches to the message of longing, conveyed to the crow (*kung*) and hence called *kangalyö*. As in other folk literatures, the poetical dialogue, often between brother and sister, is found as much as lullabies and nursery rhymes (*lōli*, *phulano*). The numerous children's songs serve to familiarize the children with numbers and the names of objects. The charming and sweet *hindoli*, the 'swinging-song,' is not lacking either. Of special interest are the *ggič*, songs sung by women in connection with marriage ceremonies. The differences between men's and women's language can be clearly observed in these little poems, and the tender invocations of the saints (*gautil*, *piral!*) who are asked to bless the child or the marriage give these songs a peculiar charm.²² The genre of *kasabnāmo*, songs of the different artisans' guilds, have apparently died out in modern times,²³ and so has the traditional spinning-song (*kāpā'iti*).

It is surprising to see how fond the Sindhi are of riddles of every kind. Besides the comparatively simple *piroli* and the *dditho*, a puzzle in similes which can be composed in poetry or prose, we find the complicated poetical *mu'ammā*. In the *gürü-čélö* written in double-verses (*dōkā*) three propositions must be solved with one single word. This form developed out of the mystical instruction, hence the name 'master-disciple'. The *ggughāratun* have been styled 'literary-cum-cultural' riddles; they contain complicated puns and are based on the double entendre of certain words; they may originate in coded political messages as were used already during the middle-ages. The so-called *ddoar* comprises allegorical riddles presupposing a solid knowledge of the religious traditions, the names of prophets, saints, and the heroes of folktales. All these riddles abound in word-plays of a high order, and their solution requires a combination of intelligence and knowledge of the tradition.²⁴

²¹ *Lök git*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1965.

²² *Ggic*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1963; cf. A. SCHIMMEL, *Hochzeitslieder der Frauen im Indusl*, Zeitschrift für Volkskunde 61/1965.

²³ For this category cf. also BURTON, 1.c. p. 61.

²⁴ For the different types of riddles of the collections *Pirölyün ain dđithun*, *mu'ammün ain bbül*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1965; *Gguğhārtün*, id. 1969; - *ddore*, id. 1970.

Numerous literary genres developed in the course of time while using the inherited outward forms. Among them, the praise of the Prophet of Islam and the great saints is most conspicuous. The large number of *mu'giza*, 'miracles' of the Prophet, reach certainly back to early times, although the first literary examples are noted down only in the 18th century.²⁵ The same can probably be said about the *managibā*, songs about well-known miracles wrought by Muhammad and the Muslim saints.²⁶ Among the saints eulogized in these poems, 'Abdul Qadir Gilani (d. 1166) plays the most important role; his order, the Qadiriya, was introduced in Sindh in the late 15th century. - The Prophet's life is generally described in the *maulud*, a lyrical form which comprises not only, as the name seems to indicate, the story of the Prophet's miraculous birth, but tells also events of his later life, like his emigration to Medina, his ascension to heaven, etc. The recitation of *maulud* is not restricted to certain days as in other parts of the Muslim world; a *maulud*, recited in special style without musical accompaniment, can be read on almost every occasion. Even women may recite it.²⁷

There exist numerous laudatory hymns and poetical prayers directed to God and the Prophet, *madāh* and *munājāt*. These are originally simple effusions of the heart, but in later times a large number of poets have tried to display their scholarship in many learned allusions to the Quran and theological literature; that is also the case in the other genres of religious poetry.²⁸

The just mentioned contents of poetry are often expressed in a literary form which is very popular in many parts of India, i.e. the *baramasa*, 'twelve-months-poems'. Developed out of the classical *caumasa*, poems connected with the four main seasons of the year and their psychological aspects, the *baramasa* in Sindhi is generally used to express the feelings of the lover-mystical or profane - during the seasons. Imitating the songs as sung by Hindu village women, the Sindhi poets did not even hesitate to assume the role of a longing woman in these poems, addressing their-imaginary-female companions to tell them about their yearning for the Beloved Lord or the dear Prophet. The poets often used the months of the Islamic lunar year and connected Mubarram with the mourning for the Prophet's family; in Rabi'al-awwal the birthday of the beloved Prophet is remembered, in Rabi'at-tani that of 'Abdul Qadir Gilāni; in Ragab the poet is reminded of the Prophet's ascension to heaven, in Sa'bān of the *sab-i barat*, the night when the destinies are fixed anew; the verses about Ramadan praise the blessing of fasting, and in Dū'l-Hiġġa the poet hopes to be united with his Beloved by

²⁵ *Mauḡaza*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1960.

²⁶ *Munaqiba*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1960.

²⁷ *Mauled*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1961 - cf. A. SCHIMMEL, *The Veneration of the Prophet Muhammad as reflected in Sindhi Folk-poetry*, in: *The Saviour God*, ed. S. G. F. Brandon, Manchester 1963.

²⁸ *Madahūn ain Munāġatūn*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1959. The recitators of *madah* are often called *bhan*; some of them derive this word with an ingenious wrong etymology from the beginning of Ka'b ibn Zuhair's ode to the Prophet, *banat Su'ad* (Introduction p. 8).

performing, at least spiritually, the pilgrimage to Mecca and to visit Muhammad's tomb at Medina. Recent poets have introduced the Christian months for not very spiritual month-poems. The form was also applied to poems in which the poet expresses his feelings in the course of the days of a week or a month. The oldest known example is that in Shah Abdul Latif's *Sur Ramkali* (chapter 2, 1-10: ten days). Poems counting the hours of the night, or enumerating the nights of a week are often connected with the folktale of Marui, the homesick girl in Omarkot.²⁹

Another form common to many of the Western Indo-Pakistani folk literatures, and known from old Semitic poetry as well, is the Golden Alphabet, *tih akharyun*. Here, the poet follows the sequence of the Arabic alphabet to express thoughts connected with the meaning of the letters each of which represents some religious concept. Naturally enough the Arabic letters are often pronounced incorrectly; *s* and *ṣ*, *h* and *ḥ* are mixed up. Strict formal rules for the Golden Alphabet do not exist; it can consist of long or short verses, and its strophes may comprise from two to six or more lines each. The form lends itself easily to didactic purposes, but has also been used in connection with the traditional folktales.³⁰

Sindh has always been rich in ballads. The oldest traces of poetry proper are in fact some fragments of the ballad of Dodo Čanesar, the sons of the Summa ruler in the mid 14th century. These lines foreshadow the character of later Sindhi ballads in their short, dense wording. Some verses of ancient ballads have survived in folk poetry.³¹ But the activity of the earlier Sindhi bards, who for centuries acted as veritable journalists, can be judged from the large number of ballads that have been preserved from the 18th century onwards. These *wagi'ati baita* reflect every important event in Sindhi life: earthquakes and invasions of locusts, the foundation of a mosque or the building of the Sukkur Barrage in 1930 which changed the life of thousands of villagers so considerably form the topics of these poems. There are ballads about the activities of the Hurr, the militant Sufi group which was assembled first by the Pir Pagaro Šibgatullah (d. 1831) to help Ahmad Brelwi in his fight against the Sikh; these Hurr participated very actively in the struggle against the British between the two World Wars. The khilafat-movement is as lively described in poetry as the terror of the police and the unpleasant manifestations of 'control' and 'black-market' during World War II. These ballads,

²⁹ *Hafta dinha rātiūn ain mahīnā*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1961.

³⁰ *Tih akhariyan*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1960.

³¹ This kind of literature attracted the interest of the British rather early, of. D. TH. HART, *Sindh Ballads* translated from the Sindhhi, Bombay 1861; *Sasui Punnun - Saswi and Punhu*. A poem in original Sindhhi, with a metrical translation in English by F.J.G., i.e. Sm J.F. GOLDSMID, London 1863 (Billimoria 400). Later, C. A. KINCAIRD's *Tales of Old Sindh*, 1922, and his *Folk Tales of Sindh and Guzerat*, 1925, are worth mentioning - An Urdu collection of Sindhhi historical tales was published by I. H. QUDDUSI, *Sindhhi ki tārihi kahāniyan*, Karachi 1957.

composed in a matter-of-fact style which every villager could understand, form an important source of knowledge of social structures and changes in the Sindhi society.³²

Sindh abounds in fairy-tales and folktales which offer rich material to the folklorist.³³ The same holds true for Sindhi proverbs, a literary category which has attracted the interest of indigenous scholars since long,³⁴ but has never been studied properly in the West, although in this field interesting cross relations with proverbial sayings of both the Middle East and India could easily be established.

Some folktales (*qissō*) are particularly important for the development of higher literature in Sindhi, since they were to form the core of later mystical tales. As Trumpp says:

Many of these folk tales, especially those which deal with love stories ... are well known in the length and breadth of Sindh; the lonely camel driver in the sandy desert and the afflicted husbandman behind the crooked bough which represents a plough know whole rows of those pathetic versos by heart and sing them to pass the time, in their monotonous melancholy air.³⁵

Among them, the story of *Sassui Punhuñ* (also found in the Panjab) is probably the most famous one: the beauty of Sassui, a girl found in the Indus and brought up by a washerman's family in Bhambhore, attracts many lovers; lastly even Punhui, the prince of Keččh, falls in love with her, very much to the dismay of his family who eventually succeed in making the couple drunk and carrying the lover away. Sassui finds herself alone in the morning; she follows the traces of the Baloch caravan until she perishes in the desert. - There is also the tragic story of Sohni who, married to a man whom she dislikes, swims every night across the Indus to visit her beloved Mehanval who tends the cattle on an island; eventually her sister-in-law discovers her secret and substitutes a pot of unbaked clay for the pot which she used to carry as a kind of life-vest; Sohni is drowned in the waves. - Strange is the story of Lila Čanesar in which the heroine, a lady well-versed in magic, barter the right of sleeping one night with her husband to her unknown rival for a diamond necklace; when her husband divorces her she understands that she has frivolously given away all her happiness. After long trials, the couple meets again and dies together. This story, told in many different versions, seems

³² *Waqi'ati bait*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1961. - About this kind of old popular ballads and about Sindhi folktales cf. BURTON, l.c. p. 58ff., 124. An analysis of the just mentioned publications: A. SCHMEL, *Neue Veröffentlichungen zur Volkskunde von Sindh*, WI NS IX 1964.

³³ *Sindhhi Lök kahāṇiyan*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, vol. I-VII, Hyderabad 1900-1964; *Isqia dastan*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, II and VII, Hyderabad 1964; *Moriro ain Mangar mach*, ed. N. A. BALOCH (Little Mori and the Whale), Hyderabad 1907. Other publications are in preparation.

³⁴ DIWAN KEVALRAM SALAMATRAI ADWANI, *Gul šakar* = 570 (numerical value of the title) proverbs, 1905, 1968 (cf. Billimoria 830 I 2); MIRZA QALIC BEG, *Pahakun ji hikmat* (id. 830 I 3), B. M. ADVANI, *Pahūkūn ġi pirh*, about the origin of Sindhi proverbs (id. 830 I 3).

³⁵ TRUMPP, ZDMG 17/1863.

to reach back to the Summa period, e.g. the later 14th century.³⁶ The story of Nuri likewise tells of a historical event during that very period when the young Jam Tamači fell in love with a humble fishermaid, Nuri, who, by virtue of her humility and softness, became his favourite queen. In how far the old Indian tale of 'The Maid with the fish-smell'³⁷ has influenced the elaboration of this story, is difficult to decide. - The tale of 'Umar Marui is probably even older and may belong to the Sumra period: 'Umar, the ruler of Omarkot, captures young Marui; she pines and longs home, never listening to the blandishments of the ruler but remaining faithful to her family, the poor herdsmen in Malir; eventually 'Umar sees no way but to send her back. Later, the Panjabi tale of Hir Ranjha was adopted by Sindhi writers as well.³⁸

All these stories, and many more, have been enriched in the course of time and provide the stock-imagery for the whole history of Sindhi literature, especially for the Sufi poets who spiritualized their contents. It should be underlined that in all of them the woman is the active part: it is she who seeks the beloved, who suffers and who dies as a true heroine. The descriptions of these female characters often contain beautiful imagery and are full of psychological insight.

Sindh has always been a country of mystics: so much so that Diwan Gidumal, the Kalhoru minister in 1748, offered two modest bags to the invading Ahmad Shah Abdali Durrani with the remark that these bags contained the most valuable of Sindh's gifts, i.e. the holy dust from the tombs of numerous saints and Pirs of Sindh...³⁹ Indeed, the development of Sindhi as a literary language is largely due to the activities of the Sufis, a fact which applies also to the other regional languages in Islamic countries. It is related that Saih Hammad Gamali on Makli Hill near Thatta, the centre of piety and culture in Lower Sindh, recited a verse in favour of Jam Tamächi when the Jam's mother was in his sanctuary, sweeping the floor in the hope for the saint's prayer. That would enable us to trace the first known Sindhi verse back to the year 1375.⁴⁰ Another verse is attributed to Saib Ishaq Ahangar the blacksmith (d. 1497/8).⁴¹ Thus tells Sayyid 'Abdul Qadir Tattawi in the *hadiqat al-awliya'*, an important source of Sindhi hagiography, composed in 1607. Scattered lines of mystical poetry are likely to be found in the still little known hagiographical works in Persian composed in Sindh.⁴² For the 16th century the sources offer more copious material: due to the confused political situation in Sindh after 1530, a group of Sindhi mystics migrated to Burhanpur in Central India; in their

³⁶ *Lilan Čančar*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1971. A Persian version was written in the early 17th century: IDRAKI BEGLARI, *Čanesarnane*, ed. H. Rashdi, Karachi 1956, with an important introduction into the problems.

³⁷ Cf. M. ELIADE, *Die Religionen und das Heilige*, Salzburg 1954, p. 242.

³⁸ H. HOSKTARPURI, *Matnawiyat-i Hir Rangha*, Karachi 1957.

³⁹ G. PARSRAM, *Sindh and its Sufis* p. 54; cf. the numerous biographies in I. H. QUDDUSI, *Tadkira-yi Šafiya-yi Sindh*, which still do not at all cover the whole number of saints.

⁴⁰ SA 19ff.; A'ZAM TATTAWI, *Tuhfat at-tāhirin*, ed. B. A. Durrani, Karachi 1956, p. 12 Nr. 1.

⁴¹ SA 20.

⁴² *Hadiqat ul-awliya* 49; cf. MM 222 about early Sufi poets.

new environment they used to recite Sindhi verses during the *sama'*-session, when music and the mystical whirling dance were in full swing.⁴³

The first poet to be mentioned with certainty is Qadi Qadan Sehwani (d. 1551), the son of Qidi Abu Sa'id ibn Zainuddin Bhakkari. Through his teacher, Qadi Qadan was connected with the chiliastic movement of the Mahdi of Jaunpur (d. 1505), a mystic some of whose ideas reached even the Emperor Akbar through Faidi and Abu Fadl, the sons of Muhammad Nāgōri, a prominent follower of the Mahdi.⁴⁴ In Qadi Qadan's lifetime the Arghun won a battle against the last Summas near Thatta in December 1520; four years after the Qadi's death, in 1555, the Portugese sacked Thatta, and the Turkish family of the Tarhan assumed power in the country; their factual rule continued even after the country had been formally annexed by the Mughals in 1591. Qadi Qadan was a master of all religious sciences, including Sufism; he also excelled in writing the official Persian style, *insa*.⁴⁵ Among the seven *bait* attributed to him is the famous line:

lōkin sarfu nahw mātñ muṭālī'u suprññ...

"Leave the people with their grammar - I contemplate the beloved."

Two other *bait* are also ascribed to this poet who claims that '*kanz qudari kāfiya*' are all unimportant compared to the vision of the beloved-verses which have been repeated and elaborated dozens of times in Sindhi mystical poetry. The *Quduri* is the traditional 11th century handbook of Hanafi law as taught in Indian *madrāsas*, the *kāfiya* the grammatical poem by Ibn Hāgib (d. 1249) which the Muslim student had to memorize; as to the *kanz* it is taken for granted that it applies to the *kanz al-'ummal*, the useful collection of Prophetic tradition. This book was, however, written only during the Qadi's lifetime, its author being the Indian scholar 'Ali al-Muttaqi who died in 1568. This fact makes the proper attribution of the famous verses slightly problematic.⁴⁶ Whatever the solution be, the few verses that bear Qadi Qadan's name show for the first time all the features which were to become so common in later Sindhi mystical poetry; they combine extreme density with the joy in puns, word-plays and alliterations. Since every word in Sindhi ends in a vowel, the sound is very musical. Sindhi grammar with its amazing wealth of grammatical forms and its rich verbal structures allows the poets to put the words together in a most intricate form, mainly by means of the pronominal suffixes of which even two at the same time can be added to a verb. This closely knit fabric of words, carrying different shades of meaning and ambiguous allusions makes a proper, and even more a poetical, translation of Sindhi poetry extremely difficult.

⁴³ R. Bunnisrūni, *Burhanpūr kō Sindhi Auliya*, Karachi 1957.

⁴⁴ A. S. BAZMER ANSARI, *Sayyid Muhammad Jawnpuri and his Movement*, Isl. Stud. II 1, Karachi March 1963; *Tuhfat at-tahirin* 177ff., note about the disciples of the Mahdi in Thatta; of. TK 533.

⁴⁵ SA 22ff.; *Hadiqat al-auliya* 83; MM 178ff. an article by Dr. U. M. DAUDPOTA; further TK 353.

⁴⁶ Cf. SCHIMMEL, *Islamic Literatures*, p. 5-6, Note 67.

The leading Sindhi mystics never ceased to write in Arabic and Persian, and filled pages and pages with commentaries on the classical works of Sufism. They mainly propagated the ideas of Ibn 'Arabi's *waḥdat al-wuḡūd* which seemed to bridge the gap between Islam and Hindu mysticism. But at the same time mystical poetry in Sindhi developed slowly and steadily. In the Persian *malfūzāt* (collections of sayings) of Mabdam Nah of Hala (d. 1590), the leading mystic of the Suhrawardlyya order, some Sindhi lines are found;⁴⁷ the same is true for the sayings of his contemporary in Thatta, Pir Muhammad Lakhawi (d. 1591).⁴⁸

By far the most important representative of Sindhi poetry in the late 16th and early 17th century was Sayyid Abdul Karim of Bulri (1536-1623).⁴⁹ He was an extremely pious man and is credited with some miracles; yet it is not absolutely certain to which mystical order he was affiliated. 'Abdul Karim gained his livelihood by agricultural work in his hometown, east of present Hyderabad. We may accept the tradition that he, like many of his co-mystics in Sindh, was fond of *sama*, and the 93 Sindhi *bait* contained in his Persian *malfuzat* may have been recited during the mystical music parties; later, they were collected in a *risalō* (as the collections of mystical poetry according to musical tunes were generally called). As far as one can see, it is in these verses that Sindhi folktales are used for the first time as basis of the imagery. These lines touch the stories of Sassui:

Nobody ever took with himself
two things at once from Bhambhore:
Yearning for the Beloved,
and attachment with one's world.

His footprint is everywhere, O sisters!
But difficult to discern,
For even those who saw it knew it not for what it was.
He alludes to Marui in Omarkot:

Umar! can a woman in bondage
put on good clothes?
My lover fools embarrassed before others,
who reproach him because of me.

⁴⁷ SA 27; QUDDUst, *Tadkira* 282; *Hadiqa* p. 131; TK 374; a booklet *Hadrat Mahdūm Nūh 'alaihi ar-rahma* was issued by the Sindh Muslim Adabi Society, 1940.

⁴⁸ SA 27.

⁴⁹ SA 28f.; QUDDUSI, *Tadkira* 127; TK 431f. A good study is M. JOTWANI, *Shah Abdul Karim*, New Delhi 1970; the translations are taken from this book: No. 17, 79, 35, 13, 19, and 49.

'Abdul Karim's images are taken from the daily life of the fishermen and villagers and thus foreshadow the expression of his great-grandson Shah 'Abdul Latif:

Like a jar poised on woman-water-carrier,
and a bird on the water,
Our Beloved in the same way
has been close to our soul.

And in tender, almost fragile lines the poet tries to express the secret of mystical union:

First lose yourself,
then only you find Him;
The Beloved is not separate from you,
just turn your face within.

A swan feeds on pearls,
he dives deep down,
Ho who plays in the shallows,
is only an ordinary bird.

Half a century later, a new development in poetry is visible: in the *waṭannāmo* of 'Utmān Ibsani (d. 1640) the short lines of the bait are brought into longer sequences, and the poet speaks in graceful verses of the soul's longing for its primordial home.⁵⁰ A similar mood permeates the verses by Lutfullah Qadiri (d. 1667).⁵¹ One step further in the development of truly great mystical poetry was made by Mian Shah 'Ināt ("Inayatullah Rizwi) who was born in Nasrpur and died in the beginning of the 18th century.⁵² 'Inat's poetry expresses the mystical ideals of the Qadiriya order and is for the first time (to our knowledge) arranged in 19 *sur* according to musical tunes. The poet uses the popular songs and tales in the same way as Shah Karim had done it; but he elaborates them by binding them into greater units; the poetical language is enriched by the adoption of new or local expressions (like words used in Malir in the 'Umar Marui-story). Shah 'Inat composed also religious poems in different styles outside his *risālō*. Although his verses are perhaps not as lofty as Shah 'Abdul Karim's sweet lyrical effusions, his poetry is impressive and forms a very important contribution to early Sindhi literature.

⁵⁰ SA 296.

⁵¹ SA 30.

⁵² SA 37.; TK 398: "His poems are the litany of the tongues of the true mystics and lift the veil from the realities of Absolute Certainty." - *Miyūn Sah 'Ināt gō Kalim*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1903.

The most powerful and influential figures in Sindhi, however, lived and wrote in a period when the country was suffering under the subsequent invasions of its western neighbours. The Kalhora rulers, descending from the saintly Adam Shah Kalhōrō (executed 1558) and tracing their pedigree back to the Abbasids, had come to power as a semi-independent dynasty under the suzerainty of the Mughals of Delhi in 1701. Nūr Muhammad Kalhōrō had to deliver Shikarpur and Sibi to Nadir Shah of Persia in 1739; after 1748 the Kalhoras were tributaries of Ahmad Shah Durrani until they resumed power and ruled for a short while before they were ousted by their former disciples, the Baloch clan of the Talpurs, in 1783.

The Kalhora period was the most fertile and truly decisive time for the development of Sindhi literature in all its branches. The over towering figure from among the dozens of known popular poets is Shah 'Abdul Latif, born in 1689 not far from present-day Hyderabad (which was founded only in 1768) in a family of mystics. He is reported to have wandered through the country with a group of Jogis with whom he may even have visited the sacred mount Hinglaj in Balochistan.⁵³ Then, he settled in Bhit near Hala; there he died in 1752, surrounded by a group of disciples. His beautiful mausoleum, covered with exquisite blue and white tiles of local origin, is one of the most spiritual sanctuaries in the Muslim world.⁵⁴

Shah 'Abdul Latif's *risalo*, the collection of his poetry, is still a sacred book for the Sindhis, admired and memorized by Muslims and Hindus equally. The thirty chapters of the *risalo* as it stands now are built around the traditional folktales without, however, telling the factual events. Shah Latif's technique consists of beginning each chapter in a most dramatic moment, since the contents of the stories were known to everyone. The complete transformation of the folktales into symbols of mystical experience started by his great-grandfather Shah Karim now reaches perfection. Thus, Sohni is introduced in the moment of drowning in the Indus: 'to break the boat of the body means to find union with God' in the 'ocean of the soul,' as the Islamic mystical poets, headed by

⁵³ Cf. The worship of Hinglaj, in: *The Indian Antiquary* X 24; Capt. S. V. W. HART, A pilgrimage to Hinglaj, Proc. and Transactions of the Bombay Geogr. Soc., III 77-105.

⁵⁴ SA 43-52; QUDDUSI, *Tadkira* 174; TK 387ff. - cf. BURTON, l.c. 228, 83; BAUSANI, *Storia* 286; H. VON GLASHNAPP, *Die Literaturen Indiens*, 1929, p. 228; A. SCHIMMEL, *Schah Abdul Latif von Bhit*, Kairos 1961, 3-4: The first great biography was LILARAM WATANMAL, *The Life of Shah Abdul Latif*, Hyderabad 1892; G. PARSRAM, *Sindh* 149ff.; The best study is now H. T. SORLEY, *Shah Abdul Latif*, London 1940, 1965, although the social and political background is more highlighted than the mystical contents of Shah's poetry; *Risalo of Abdul Latif*, Selections, transl. in verse by ELSA KAZI, Hyderabad 1965, attempts at preserving the original shape as far as possible; the translations are taken from this book, Recently, TIRITHDAS HOTCHLAND from Hyderabad has written a number of popular booklets on the poet, and translated several *surs*, like The Song of Kinjar Lake, 1963, the Song of the Necklace, 1967. In fact, there is barely a Sindhi writer who has not written at least an article or a poem on Shah 'Abdul Latif, or has made selections from his *Risalo*; the publications produced for the annual festivities in Bhit Shah contain also much - though little scholarly - material. Among the editions we must mention: E. TRUMPP, *Leipzig* 1866 (incomplete); Bombay, litho, 1867, not reliable; M. H. GURBARIANI, 1930-1934, (the fourth part did not appear), an excellent study with introduction; DEPLAT, Hyderabad 1900; K. B. ADWANI, Bombay 1957 is very reliable. Urdu verse translations are also available.

'Attar and Galaluddin Rumi, have always preached. Sassui, to whose fate five *surs* are devoted, appears when she discovers the empty bedstead: punished for the 'sleep of heedlessness' she sets out for her journey which, in turn, represents the journey into the interior of one's own heart where alone the Beloved can be found. All the simple Sindhi girls appear in Shah Latif's poetry as representatives of the human soul: that makes Sindhi Sufi poetry so completely different from the Persian and Turkish tradition where the love between the soul and God is generally expressed in terms of love between two male beings. In Sindhi, however, the searching and longing soul is always a woman who yearns for her Divine bridegroom, for her eternal husband. In order to find him, she takes upon herself incredible hardships - swimming through the waves of the ocean of this world, crossing the desert with bleeding feet, she has only one goal: to be reunited with God, the Beloved, who has elected her at the day of the Primordial Covenant.

Salar, Sohni and the son
inseparably One".
This ineffable mystery
no one can ever solve.

The Islamic mystical theories about suffering as the most important ingredient in the Path of Love, thousands of times repeated in Sufi poetry in every Islamic language, are here applied to these brave girls who shun no difficulty in their attempt to reach God. Marui, longing for her folks in distant Malir, is the image of the pure soul who, despite the temptations of 'the world' as represented by 'Umar, remains faithful to God and her eternal destiny; she is comparable to the oyster which opens its mouth only for the raindrop that comes from God, and despises the salty water of the sea that surrounds her. In connection with Marui, Shah Latif and other folk-poets of Sindh have elaborated the motif of 'waiting for a letter': the imprisoned girl longs for a letter from home, i.e. a message of God's grace, or the act of inspiration. This very topic, also used in marriage-songs where the bride is portrayed as longing for news from her family, plays an important role in Sindhi literature notwithstanding the extremely low percentage of literacy among the women in the countryside.

Marui waits for the letter of Divine grace; Nuri, playful and sweet companion of Jam Tamači, is 'the soul at peace,' united with the Lord in perfect happiness thanks to her submission and humility. Here, the Persian Sufi theme of 'King and beggar' is inverted, just as the traditional Arabo-Persian tale of the love-sick Mağnün who roams about the desert is reverted and applied to the love-sick girl Sassui in the wilderness: both heroes discover the beloved, finally, in their own heart. There are still other themes in *Shah jo risilo*: we find the woman waiting for her husband, the merchant, to return with precious spices from his long journey to Ceylon, and the lonely wife sitting in her reed-thatched hut who expects her husband to cover her with his grace during the rainy season. The mystic's murmuring when he repeats his *dikr* is compared (as in Panjabi) to

the spinning of fine yarn in the heart, a yarn which God will buy one day. Here, Shah Latif uses the traditional spinning-tune *Kapa'iti*.⁵⁵ The poet has employed the whole vocabulary of classical Persian mystical poetry: he often quotes verses from or alludes to Galaluddin Rumi's (d. 1273) mystical *Matnawi*, a book that constituted a major source of inspiration for him as for most of his compatriots. (A typical example is *Yaman Kalyan* ch.V),⁵⁶ Shah Latif speaks of the threefold stage of mystical life, the *sari'a* 'Law', *tariqa* 'Path', and *ma'rifa* 'Gnosis' or *haqiqa* 'Truth';⁵⁷ he sees God as the eternal physician, the friend, who inflicts him with wounds and heals the wounds again, just as the great medieval mystics had described him:

Thou art the friend, the Healer thou,
for sufferings thou the remedy:
thou givest, curest disease, dost guide,
master thou art eternally:
yet I am wonderstruck to see
that you physicians still provide.

He also sings of the joy in suffering, of sacrificing one's head for the sake of the beloved (thus in *Sorathi* where he utilizes a cruel Hindu story);⁵⁸ the gallows on which 'Mansür' Hallig was put to death in 922 are for the passionate lover the true nuptial bed. Shah sees the loveless heart under the image of the dried up tree in the desert (Dahar), and he describes the long way the camel, symbol of the base faculties, has to wander until it reaches the city of the Beloved (*Khanbat*). The introductory chapters of the *risalo* deal with mystical love in all its aspects; *Sur Yaman Kalyan* even contains an allusion to the old Sufi idea that Satan is the lover par excellence, because he loved only God and refused to prostrate himself before Adam ('*Ashiq 'azizil*, V 24).⁵⁹ Or else the poet describes the blessed state of those who see God everywhere: the world is a castle with a thousand doors and innumerable windows each of which opens towards the beloved who is Beloved and Love, master and disciple, and whose perfect Beauty and Majesty radiate through everything created.

Where need one drive the camel? When
Glory all round is beaming?
Kik in my being doth radiate,
in me is Ludhan gleaming.
Of Rano sweet my soul is dreaming,
there is non else but 'He'.

⁵⁵ For the spinning-motif of. L. RAMAKRISHNA, *Punjabi Sufi Poets*, London - Calcutta 1938, p. XVII.

⁵⁶ Cf. A. SCHIMMEL, *Moulin Rumi's Influence on Muslim Literature*, in: Güldesto, Konya 1971; id., *Schah Abdul Latif's Beschreibung des wahren Sufi*, Festschrift für Fritz Meier (in preparation).

⁵⁷ *Thus Kara'il* I 24, Ramkali V 14, Sohni III 10.

⁵⁸ E. TRUMP, *Sorathi*, ZDMG 17/1863.

⁵⁹ For Satan cf. H. RITTER, *Das Moor der Seele*, Loiden 1955, p. 548, and SCI- MEL, Festschrift Moier.

One of the chapters in the *risälä*, *Ramkali*, is of special interest for the historian of religion. Here, the poet has described the Jogis in terms taken from the Quran, thus transforming them into perfect Muslim saints of the highest ranks.⁶⁰ In fact, the Sindhi mystical poets often equate the Jogis and their sub-groups with Sufi saints, a fact which has induced some Hindu writers to explain the Sindhi Sufism as almost identical with Hinduism. But on the other hand, *Sur Kēdāro* complains of the sad fate of Hasan and Husain, the Prophet's grandchildren, and of the tragedy of Kerbela, and thus marks the beginning of *martiya* writing proper (which developed mainly under the Talpurs). One of the most attractive chapters of the *risalo* is *Sarang*, in which Shah Latif describes how everything awaits eagerly the rainy season, and depicts the whole scenery of a Sindhi village in lively verses:

Man, deer and buffaloes do pant
for rain, ducks hope for clouds,
afar as though in supplication
sounds the rain-quail's chant,
at sea, each morn the oysters beg
that skies the rain may grant,
Give lots of rain! with joy rampant
the herdmen then become.

And after the great black cloud has brought the rain, this sign of Divine mercy (*rahmat*) the poet turns to the Prophet who was also sent as 'mercy for the worlds' (Sūra 21/107) and asks for his intercession at Doomsday. This is a most touching expression of Shah Latif's faithful trust in the Prophet of Islam.⁶¹

Shah Abdul Latif's imagery is very rich; in his style he takes up complicated forms inherited from his predecessors, and the involved sentences and extremely dense constructions often defy translation. Besides, he often uses repetitions caused by the musical recitation, and later, more sophisticated critics have minded his use of ambiguous wordplays and of too many alliterations. But his poetry was meant to be sung with musical accompaniment, and not to be read with the fault-gleaning eye of the philologist.⁶² Shah Latif himself invented a new variety of the *tambūra*, the drone instrument used for accompaniment, and he was able to blend classical and folk melodies into a unity. The fact that he calls the larger units of his poetry *sur* 'tune' and

⁶⁰ A partial translation by A. SCHIMMEL, *Islam und Hinduismus*, in: *Das große Gespräch der Religionen*, ed. E. von Dungen, München 1964.

⁶¹ A. SCHIMMEL, *Der Regen als Symbol in der Religionsgeschichte*, in: *Festschrift für G. Mensching*. Bonn 1967. Other beautiful versos expressing 'Abdul Latif's trust in the prophet are found in *Sur Dahar*.

⁶² That the rhymes, esp. in the Arabic words, are not always pure and correct, and that words are changed for the sake of sound, is a characteristic common to most Sindhi folk poets. Cf. Kalyāṇ III 6 the transformation of *gawab* into *gabab* to make it rhyme with *rabab*, *kabab*.

not *raga* 'melody' shows that his music contains new forms and is not completely dependent upon classical Indian *ragas*, however much he may have used their technique.⁶³

Shah Abdul Latif has been the subject of almost innumerable studies and hymnical praises in Sindh; there are only few critical appreciations of his poetry. More than a century ago, Richard Burton wrote in a strange mixture of criticism, misunderstanding and admiration:

Shah Bhitai ... had the disadvantage of contending against a barbarous dialect, and composing for an unimaginative people. His ornaments of verse are chiefly alliteration, puns, and jingling of words. He displays his learning by allusions to the literature of Arabia and Persia, and not infrequently indulge in quotation. His compositions are all upon subjects familiar to the people, strained to convey a strange idea. As might be expected, he is more homely and common-place than Ibn Fariz or Hafiz; at the same time, he is more practical, and some portions of his writings display an appreciation of domestic happiness scarcely to be expected from one of his order. Hence his poetry is the delight of all that can understand it. The learned praise it for its beauty, and are fond of hearing it recited to the sound of the guitar. Even the unlearned generally know select portions by heart, and take the trouble to become acquainted with their meaning.⁶⁴

And we may well agree with the latter half of this statement.

However, not only outstanding works of mystical poetry were produced in Sindh during the Kalhora period. At the same time the so-called Naqsbandi reaction set in, as it had been the case in other parts of Mughal India somewhat earlier. The mystics of the sober and lawbound Naqsbandi order, which had been introduced in the Subcontinent shortly before 1600 and was promoted in Thatta mainly by members of the Sukrullah family, concentrated upon instructing people in the basic duties of the Islamic religion and were opposed to emotional and enthusiastic piety.⁶⁵ The year 1700 may be called a decisive date for Sindhi literature: it is the year in which Mian Abū'l-Hasan (d. 1711) for the first time dealt with problems of ritual practice in simple Sindhi verses. He used the device of filling the last word of each line with a long *a* (*alif al-isba'*) and thus achieved a rhyming effect similar to that of the Arabic *qasida*. Abū'l-Hasan's rhymed treatise, called *muqaddimat as-salat*, ushered in a new style in didactic poetry which soon became

⁶³ N. A. BALOCH, *Shah Abdul Latif, the Founder of a new Music tradition*, Pak. Quarterly IX 3.

⁶⁴ BURTON, l.c. 203.

⁶⁵ For the Naqsbandi reaction cf. Y. FRIEDMAN, *Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi*, Montreal 1971, and A. SCHIMMEL, *Islamic Literatures*, 38f. *The Takanila* 23 and 178ff. gives many details about the Sindhi Nagšbandiya to which the author's family was affiliated.

popular among the mystical theologians of Thatta.⁶⁶ Abu'l-Hasan's younger contemporary and religious adversary, the stern Naqibandi leader Maḥdūm Muhammad Hašim (1692-1761), a disciple of Maḥdum Diya'ud-Din Tattawi (d. 1757/8)⁶⁷ who also composed some religious verses in Sindhi, took up the thread and wrote educational books about the essentials of Islam in unassuming verses with rhymes either in long *a* or in *-n*, the latter being very handy since all plurals in Sindhi end in *-n*. The learned Maḥdum held the office of *qadi* in Thatta and enjoyed the favour of all the rulers of his times likewise, be they the Kalhora or the invaders Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Durrani. He was a prolific writer in both Arabic and Sindhi; the list of his books comprises ca. 300 items. His main work in Sindhi is the *fara'id al-Islam* which deals with 1292 problems of Islamic law and behaviour; his rhymed commentary of the last part of the Quran (*tafsir Hašimi*) was finished in 1749; it was invariably given to Sindhi children during the following century, and belongs to the first Sindhi books printed after 1854. Even more popular became Muhammad Hašim's *qut al-'āshiqin* 'The nourishment of the Lovers' which deals with the virtues and miracles of the Prophet (written 1715); it is a source book for all later poets who praised the wondrous deeds of the Prophet of Islam.⁶⁸

Other scholars from Thatta who worked in the same field and enriched Sindhi religious literature outside the pale of popular emotional Sufism were Maulwi 'Ali Akbar, Maulana Ahmad, the translator of the *raudat as-suhada* (d. 1758/9); Maḥdum 'Abdallah to whom Sindhi owes a version of the *qışaş al-anbiya* 'The stories of the Prophets'; Maulwi 'Abdus Salam, the author of the *samā'il-i nabawi* (1777), a work which deals with the praiseworthy qualities of Muhammad the Prophet.⁶⁹

Maḥdūm Muhammad Hašim's annotated translation of the last part of the Quran inspired other writers to render the Holy Writ into their mother tongue. A few translations of single *suras* were made in the 18th century; then, Qāḍī 'Azizullah Muta'alawi (1747-1824) produced the first prose translation of the Quran in Sindhi, inspired by the work done by Shah Waliullah of Delhi in his Persian translation.⁷⁰ In the 19th and even more in the 20th century there appeared an amazing number of partial and full translations of the Quran into Sindhi reflecting the different trends in Muslim theology. Among those who commented upon the Quran in a purely mystical sense the name of 'Abdur Rahim Girhōri (1739-1778) deserves special mention. Girhōri, who

⁶⁶ SA 55.

⁶⁷ SA 56. His 'Sindhhi' is composed in imitation of Milin Abū'l-Hasan's *Muqaddi-mat as-salat*. He was a descendant of Sihabuddin Suhrawardi. Cf. TK 149 and Takmila 59.

⁶⁸ SA 56f.; *Takmila* 707; G. M. QASIMI, *Hišimlya Library*, in Moti 304ff.; H. A. UNAR, *Madam Muhammad Hašim*, in MM 177; MS 841f.: "In his time the renewal of Islam happened so much that every month some Hindus were saved from the disgrace of infidelity thanks to his praiseworthy striving." - *The Qut al-asiqin* was re-edited by MIAN HAGGI ADALAH LAGARI, Hyderabad 1950. For the use of his books cf. also SORLEY, *Shah Abdul Latif*, 216.

⁶⁹ For all those scholars vd. SA 57.

⁷⁰ SA 70, printed in the Karimi Pros Bombay 1877; cf. for the whole problem A. SCHIMMEL, *Translations and Commentaries of the Qur'an in the Sindhhi Language*, in: Oriens XVI, 1963, p. 224.

criticized the 'dry tree' of Muhammad Hašim's theological approach, was the disciple of the Naqšbandi leader Maḥdūm Muḥammad Zaman Lanwari whose Sindhi verses. he collected to be commented upon. This Muhammad Zaman (d. 1774) expressed, in the 84 Sindhi verses that have been preserved, a deep feeling of loving unity, quite different from the scholarly writings of his colleagues in Thatta:

Who has soon the Beloved,
for him it is sin to look at others,
and who has known the Path,
for him it is poison to sit.⁷¹

Muhammad Zaman's mysticism culminates in a comparison of the Prophet Muhammad with the dawn which announces the morning of Divine Glory in the night of humanity, combining in itself darkness and light; these ideas are echoed in the partial commentary of the Quran written by Girhōri. His poetical interpretation is typical of the attitude of many mystics in the 18th century, and so are his hymns in praise of Muhammad. Like Shah Abdul Latif, Girhōrt, too, makes use of the Sindhi folktales, and the heroines of the old stories become for him manifestations of Eternal Beauty as revealed in the Prophet. Veneration of the Prophet of Islam was the centre of his life and induced him to fight against the idol worshippers who denied his glory; he sought and found martyrdom by destroying a Shiva sanctuary in a near-by village.⁷²

The veneration of the Prophet had been popular since long,⁷³ but it found its first great poetical expressions during the Kalhora period: 'Abdur Ra'if Bhatti (d. 1753) tried even to compose some *maulud* in 'arud, the traditional Arabo-Persian metric system.⁷⁴ The first truly impressive *madah* is ascribed to Gaman Čaran, a poor poet who according to legend was miraculously rewarded for his hymn;⁷⁵ the most famous *na't* was sung by the last Kalhōrō prince, Sarfaraz Khan (d. 1775): his *bhalā ġūm* 'O good prince ... with its simple, heartfelt verses is one of the finest eulogies in honour of Muhammad.⁷⁶ Later, even Hindus wrote some *na't*-poetry.⁷⁷

⁷¹ SA 52-55; QUDDUSI, *Tadkira* 256; TK 415; *Takmila* 203, 31; The *Šarī-i abyat-i Sindhi* was edited by Dr. DAUDPOTA.

⁷² SA 58; Dr. M. U. DAUDPOTA, *Kalam-i Girhōrt*, Hyderabad 1956; the quotations from the introduction p. 7, p. 43; a short survey about Girhōrī's life and work by the same author in MM 182ff.; a posthumous article by him about the Pisangūl, attributed to Girhōrt, in *Mehran* 1971/4. Girhōrt has also written a number of Persian letters, and condensed the letters of Ahmad Sirhindi which were so influential in late 17th century Indian politics.

⁷³ Cf. A. SCHIMMEL, *The veneration of the Prophet Muhammad* (cf. note 26).

⁷⁴ SA 58.

⁷⁵ SA 74. His *madah* is addressed to 'Abdul Qadir Gilāni. His prayer, which has become proverbial, asks that he, blind, poor, and without children, might "see with his own eyes that his daughter-in-law, golden bangles on her arm and her baby boy in her lap, churns milk." Cf. Madihūn p. 1ff.

⁷⁶ SA 59; *Madaḥan* p. 11ff.

⁷⁷ Thus Safi Bhai Asuram (d. 1941), *Madaḥan* p. 313. The same is the case in Urdu, cf. FANI MURĀDĀBĀDĪ, *Hindū šu'arā kā na'tiya kalam*, Lyallpur 1962.

At the same time, the religious literature in Arabic, Persian and Sindhi was enriched by Pir Muḥammad Baqa (d. 1784), the father of Pir Muhammad Rašid (d. 1818), known as Pir Pagūro; the house of the *Pir Pagaro* and the Rashdi family have deeply influenced the cultural life in Sindh during the whole 19th and 20th centuries.⁷⁸ An interesting figure among the more popular mystical poets of the later 18th century is Rāhal Faqir (d. 1784), a disciple of Shah Inayat of Jhok who was executed for alleged rebellion in 1718; Rūhal's four sons gained likewise some fame among the Sindhi mystical bards.⁷⁹

The most influential mystical poet of this period, however, was born in the same year as Girhōri, whom he outlived for decades. It is 'Abdul Wahhab Sačal Sarmast (1739-1826), the grandson of the mystical poet Sābibdinno Faqir.⁸⁰ Sačal, born in Daraz near Ranipur in the Khairpur district where he was brought up by his uncle, led a solitary life, but he expressed the all-embracing Unity of Being in verses so open and outspoken that his poetry in Sindhi, Siraiki, Urdu and Persian can easily compare with the most enthusiastic verses of earlier Turkish and Persian mystics.⁸¹ Therefore, his compatriots compared him to one of the greatest mystical poets of Islam, whose work was interpreted as a message of suffering and unification, and called him the 'Attar of Sindh'. Whereas Shah Abdul Latif tried to conceal the secret of mystical union under complicated symbols and difficult sentence constructions, always afraid of 'divulging the secret', Sačal not in vain adopted the pen-name *Asikār* 'Open' for his Persian poetry and *Sarmast* 'Intoxicated' for his writings in general. His verses are fundamentally nothing but a poetical commentary of the central statement of later Persian Sufism, i.e. *hama ust* 'Everything is He.' The poet's name Sačal, derived from *sač*, 'truth' is likely to contain an allusion to the word *ana'l-Haqq*, 'I am the Absolute Truth', uttered by Husain ibn Manšur Hallaḡ; the figure of this Bagdadian martyr-mystic (executed in 922), who had visited Sindh in 905, has inspired almost all the mystics in that part of the Subcontinent who saw in him the model of the suffering lover,⁸² Hallaḡ's name looms large in Sindhi folk poetry and is known even in the remotest corners of the Indus valley.

Sačal, contrary to Girhōri, saw apparently no difference between the confessors of different religions so that a modern editor of his poetry could write:

⁷⁸ SA 79; about Pir Muhammad Rashidi of. *Quddusi*, *Tadkira* 263; *Takmila* 444. The sequence of the Pirs: Muḥammad Rasid d. 1818, Pir Sibgatullah d. 1831, 'All Gohar Sah d. 1847, Hizbullah Sah d. 1890.

⁷⁹ SA 60f.; *Kundri waran gō kalam: Rūhal Faqir*, Murid Faqir, ed. LUTTULLAH BADAWI, Hyderabad 1964.

⁸⁰ About Sahibdinno SA 61.

⁸¹ SA 71ff.; BAUSANI, *Storia* 293; PARSRAM, *Sindh* 183ff.; his *Risalo* was compiled for the first time by 'Ali Quli (Billimoria 828 1 | 3); his Sindhi poetry: *Sačal gō risilo*, ed. O. A. ANARI, Karachi 1958; *Sačal go siraiki kalam*, ed. MAULWI MUHAMMAD SADIQ RANIPURI, Karachi 1950; about his Persian poetry Cf. SADARANGANI, *Persian poets of Sindh*, 170ff.; his Persian *matnawis*. *The Story of Love and The Story of Molting*, transl. by TIRATHDAS HOTCHAND, Hyderabad 1964, 1967; about his Urdu poetry of. Rašid AHMAD LASARI, *Sačal Sarmast ġi Urdu ša'iri*, NZ January 1960.

⁸² A. SCHIMMEL, *The martyr-mystic Hallaḡ in Sindhi Folk Poetry*, in *Numen* 9 (1963), p. 161.

Sindhi nature has accepted the influence of Sufism so much that today in the Oriental world no other country can be compared with her... Those who possessed the wisdom of seeing the creatures of the Lord of the worlds with the view of unity have with one turn of the pen given up the difference between believer and unbeliever, between Muslim and Hindu, because their beings were too high to accept those unnatural differentiations ... Sarmast was not only the hero of the Muslims; the Hindus of Sindh have accepted him with great pride as their spiritual leader.⁸³

Sačal Sarmast has poured out his heart's intense love in breathless dithyrambs, in long chains of anaphora. He complains that God makes suffer those whom he loves most, and enumerates the cruel acts of the Divine Beloved whose coming he awaits:

Welcome, welcome you are!-To which place will you bring me?
You will again cut a head!
Giving a kick to Sarmad, you have killed him; you have brought
Mangur to the gallows; you have cut off Saib 'Attār's head now, you are taking
the way here!

You have split Zakariya with a saw, have thrown Joseph into a well; you have
made kill Sams by the hands of the mallas; you use to afflict the lover...⁸⁴

And after enumerating a number of more 'martyrs of love' he prepares for death in love ... Or else Sačal sees that Beauty and Majesty, kindness and cruelty are only two aspects of the ineffable Divine Unity: He is Mansur and He the judge, He makes the mystic suffer and He unites him with Himself, and He is neither this nor that. Questions after questions are repeated to find out man's real being, and the poet ponders upon his own existence in colourful images: I do not know, O sisters, what I really am...

Perhaps I am a doll, perhaps the thread on which it hangs,
perhaps a ball in the hand of the beloved, perhaps a yoke with heavy burden,
perhaps a castle where the king sits and thinks
and talks about many things for getting now information.
Perhaps I am a horse which some rider guides,
perhaps a wave of the ocean which drowns the outward being.
perhaps a henna-flower with red colouring.
perhaps a rose, the head full of scent,
perhaps I am a fountain, filled by a cloud,
in which the sun is reflected and the moon as well.
Perhaps I am God's mirror from pre-eternity

⁸³ *Risalo*, Introduction p. 9.

⁸⁴ *Risalo* p. 377, kafi 9.

which is beyond all words-
perhaps I am not at all...⁸⁵

Sačal's poetry in Sindhi and Siraiki is full of fire; in his Urdu and Persian verses he follows a more traditional pattern. The poet died after a life of renunciation and enrapture at a great age in 1826.

He was far from being the last mystical poet of Sindh. His tradition, and that of Shah Latif, were continued through the years, even in our century. Among the great number of mystical writers of which the country boasts we may mention Qüdir Bahs Bedil of Rohri (1814-1872).⁸⁶ He belonged to the Qadiriya order and had close relations with the Pir Pagaro family; like Sačal he, too, was a defender of the Unity of Being:

Whose adoration you perform, you are the adored one!

A great lover of beauty, Bedil was also a good writer in five languages. His verses are, like those of his predecessors, filled with allusions to the traditional folktales on one hand, to Hallağ on the other. Again like his mystical confrères Bedil strongly depended upon Galaluddin Rumi's poetry, and in his *Pang Gang* he put side by side a verse of the Quran, a Prophetic tradition, a verse from Rumi's *Matnawi*, one from Shah 'Abdul Latif's *risālō*, and a Sufi saying. His successor in the order, Bekas (d. 1889), continued this poetical tradition.⁸⁷ Besides Bedil, Hammal Lagāri (1809-1875) is considered 'one of the greatest poets of Sindh'.⁸⁸ This prolific writer from Dera Ghazi Khan belonged to the Naqšbandi order. Of special interest among his numerous religious poems is one of his *na't*, in which he describes in thirty-eight verses, mainly in alliterating word-groups, all the places and countries where the Prophet's name is honoured.⁸⁹ The first example of such 'geographical' poetry is found in Shah Latif's *Sur Sarang* in the description of the rain-cloud of mercy (*Sarang* IV 12); it is also present in Gaman Čaran's praise of Abdul Qadir Gilāni in the 18th century.⁹⁰ Hammal belonged to the Baloch tribe of the Lagari whose members have contributed to the development of Sindhi mystical poetry; suffice it to mention Halifa Nabi Bahs (ca. 1776-ca. 1863) who was attached to Pir Muhammad Rašid and composed a *risalō* and miscellaneous poems;⁹¹ further Faqir Nawwab Gulam Muhammad Khan Lagāri (1790-1862), Faqir Nawwāb Wali Khan Lagūri (1836-1914)⁹² with his verses in which the Hallağian *ana'l-haqq* occupies a central place,⁹³ and Hasan

⁸⁵ Id. *mutafarriqa*, *Kāft* I, p. 371 (dōhā).

⁸⁶ SA 90; BAUSANI, *Storia* 296; *Diwan-i Bōdil*, ed. 'ABDUL HUSSEIN SHAH MUSAVI, Karachi 1954.

⁸⁷ SA 90; *Diwan-i Bekas*, ed. 'ABDUL HUSSEIN SHAH MUSAVI, Hyderabad 1965.

⁸⁸ SA 77-81; BAUSANI, *Storia* 295; *Kulliyat-i Hammal*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Karachi 1953, 1957.

⁸⁹ *Madaḥūn* 121.

⁹⁰ Id. p. 1ff.

⁹¹ SA 81. *Halfo Sahib go risalo*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1966.

⁹² *Diwan-i Gulam* (Persian), ed. N. A. BALOCH, Karachi 1959.

⁹³ *Kalim Nawab Wali Muhammad Lagari*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1968.

Babs Gilāni (1846-1900).⁹⁴ In his introduction to Wali Khan's poetry, Dr. N. A. Baloch has given a good account of the political and literary role of this Baloch clan.

Most of the Lagari writers used Siraiki besides Sindhi; that is also the case in Mahmud Faqir Khatian's work (1852-1907). He was, like so many other poets, 'a worshipper of beauty as revealed in created forms' and his 'religion was love'.⁹⁵

It should not be forgotten that the Sindhi Hindus participated in mystical poetry as well. An outstanding example is Diwan Dalpatram Süfi (d. 1841) from Sehwan who composed a heroic Persian *gangnāmo* about Shah 'Inayat of Jhok besides Sindhi and Persian lyrics. That several Hindus, even in the 20th century, composed ballads about Shah 'Inayat's tragic fate, may be mentioned at random.⁹⁶

The Talpur period in Sindh (1783-1843) to which most of the just mentioned poets belong is a time of transition. As during the preceding centuries many poets concentrated upon Persian; the work of Mir 'Ali Sir Qani' and his family has been mentioned elsewhere.⁹⁷ Some poets like Diya Tattawi (d. 1814) and 'Azim (d. 1813) composed Persian *matnawis* on subjects of Sindhi folklore, i.e. the tale of Hir Ranjha, thus following the example set by some early 17th century poets.⁹⁸ A few rhymed *qissā* like Hafiz's Momal Rano and Halifa Ḥaḡḡi 'Abdallah's *Magnün Laila* can be found in the late 18th century.⁹⁹ The trend toward 'higher' forms of literature is chiefly visible in the first attempts to adopt the form of *gazal* into Sindhi and to replace the indigenous forms of poetry by monorhymed love-lyrics in Arabo-Persian metres. Sačal, the polyglot, was among the first to try this new art. Some poets from Tikhur on the Lower Indus, a place renowned for its wealth in poets during the 19th and 20th centuries, tried their pens in this new fashion, and slowly, the personalizing style became more and more prominent in Sindhi. The poets' relations with the traditional themes grew weaker; the roses and nightingales of Shiraz replaced the lotus flowers and the crow at least among the more sophisticated poets in the cities where literary life now concentrated.¹⁰⁰ New forms were introduced: Sayyid Tabit 'Ali Shah (1740-1810) not only composed Sindhi *gazals* but also developed the genre of *martiya*, the threnody dealing with the tragedy of Kerbela.¹⁰¹

⁹⁴ *Kalūm Hasan Babā*, Karachi 1957.

⁹⁵ *Kalām Maḥmūd Faqir Khatian*, ed. MASTER MUHAMMAD SALEH, Hyderabad 1959; cf. further for folk poetry *Kulliyat-e-Kamil*, ed. AZHAR GILANI, Hyderabad 1967; ABDUL KARIM SANDELO, *Sindh go Singir*, Karachi 1956.

⁹⁶ Dalpatram, or Dalpatrai, SA 75; cf. *Sufi Dalpatram ḡa Sindhhi slök*, ed. M. JHANGLEDAS, Shikarpur 1938; for later poems about this event cf. *Waqi'ati Bait* app. 409ff.; for the whole problem cf. SAYYID H. RASHDI, *Šah 'Iniyat šahid gi sawānih ga ma'had*. Moti 220, and A. SCHDMEL, *Shih 'Iniyat Shahid of Jhok, a Sindhhi Mystic of the early 18th century*, in: *Libor Amicorum, Studios in honour of Prof. C. J. Bleeker*, Leiden 1969.

⁹⁷ Cf. SSHAMMEL, *Islamic Literatures* p. 51 note 231.

⁹⁸ Cf. H. HOSHYARPURI, *Matnawiyat-i Hir Ranghi*, Karachi 1957, of. SCHIMMEL, *Islamic Literatures* p. 35.

⁹⁹ Cf. SA 67.

¹⁰⁰ A good survey SA 89f.; an anthology was published by the Institute of Sindhology, Hyderabad 1905: *Gazalün gö gungo*; for Tikhur cf. ASADULLAH SHAH HUSSEINI, *Tadkira-i šu'arā-i Tikhur*, Hyderabad 1959.

¹⁰¹ SA 67; of. G. M. GIRAMI, *Tabit 'Ali šah ain martiya go fan*, Mehran 1972/1.

Since the Talpur rulers belonged to the Shia persuasion, they regarded the celebration of 'Ashura Day and the recitation of *martiyas* on this occasion as particularly important, and the genre became - at least for a while - almost as popular in Sindhi as it was in Urdu in the early 19th century. Tabit 'Ali wrote also satires and exchanged satirical verses with Hairših Pardesi,¹⁰² his counterpart in poetical matches (*munāzarā*), a genre that had been popular among folk-bards for a long times.¹⁰³ These early 19th century poets tried even to compose long *qaṣidas* in classical style.

Among the *gazel*-writers, we may mention Halifa Gul Muhammad from Hälä (1811-1856), a disciple of Pir Muhammad Rašid.¹⁰⁴ An important role was assigned, later, to Sayyid Hägi Muhammad Shah Gada¹⁰⁵ (d. 1909), who was the instructor and friend of the last Talpur prince 'Abdu'l-Husain Sängi (born 1851 from a British mother in Calcutta, the exile of the last Talpur rulers, Id. 1924). Sängi's many-sided poetry in both Sindhi and Persian and his love for Shah Abdul Latif has always attracted the interest of Sindhi scholars.¹⁰⁶ Sängi, who returned to Sindh as a boy, was not the only literary active member of the former ruling house; his uncle, Mir Hasan 'Alikhan Talpur (d. 1909), composed among other poems even a Sindhi Sāhnämö in the heroic metre *mutagarib* of his great model, Firdūsī's *Sāhnäme*....¹⁰⁷ In the early 20th century some Sindhi *matnawis* in Persian metres on Sindhi subjects saw the light.¹⁰⁸

During the whole 19th century the language was refined and made more pliable according to the exigencies of the difficult Persian prosody. A first introduction into Sindhi prosody appeared in 1883; its author was the *gaḍi* of Hyderabad, Fadilšah ibn Haidaršah (1813-1900), who was a gifted poet himself; the *musa'iras* which he arranged were attended by all the leading writers of the area, including the two Talpur princes, and contributed to the development of Sindhi poetry.¹⁰⁹ Later, the indefatigable Mirza Qalič Beg produced, besides. an introduction to rhetoric's, a whole collection of verses of ethical content in which each and every metre, each and every possible rhetorical device of Persian was applied to Sindhi.¹¹⁰ An introduction into elegant personalizing Sindhi prose style was compiled by Maulwi Hidayatullah in 1894; this *hidayat ul-inda'*

¹⁰² SA 69.

¹⁰³ *Munazara*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1961.

¹⁰⁴ SA 70f.; cf. MEMON 'ABDUL MAGID SINDHHI, *Diwan-i Gul ain halifö* Gul Muḥammad Hala, Mehran 1972/2.

¹⁰⁵ *Kulliyat-i Gadā*, ed. RASHID AHMED LÄŠÄRI, Karachi 1957.

¹⁰⁶ SA 95f.; *Takmila* 383; *Kulliyat-i Sängi*, ed. N. A. BALOCH, Hyderabad 1989; his *diwan* in Sindhi, Persian and Urdu was printed in three vols. Lahore 1903, 1904 and 1908; his *Qissa-yi Gulrang u Gulandim* in Sindhi printed in 1904. His *Lataif-i Latifi* are a fine study of Shah 'Abdul Latif's poetry. Some of his works are still unpublished.

¹⁰⁷ SA 92.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Mehran 1972/1 where, among others, a *matnawi* in *hazag*-metre about Marui, by MAULANA MUHAMMAD MAKANI, 1912, is mentioned.

¹⁰⁹ For his *Mizin-i si'r* cf. BILLIMORIA 358; id. 357 mentions his collection of *kāfis*, *Kafien gū kitab*", Karachi 1883; id. 303 his *Hir Rangho*, Karachi 1885. About his activities cf. SA 93f.

¹¹⁰ Amulh Manik, new ed. Hyderabad 1968.

is, like all instruction in epistolography, highly interesting from the cultural viewpoint.¹¹¹

However, this whole modernization of Sindhi language and literature would have been impossible without two renovations introduced by the British. Their conquest of the country in 1843 brought about a complete change in the literary outlook. By abolishing Persian as the official language in the Subcontinent (1837) they encouraged the development of regional languages and therefore took the necessary step of providing Sindhi with a proper alphabet. That was desperately needed, for the language had been written in different characters according to the various religious groups: the Muslims used the Arabic alphabet without additional dots; that meant that the great number of Sindhi sounds of Indian origin, particularly the dentals, could not be discerned properly in writing. The Hindus wrote in Devanagari, the Sikhs in Gurmukhi, the Ismailis in Khojki; several other variations of letters of Sanskrit origin were also in use. Thanks to Sir Bartle Frere a modified Arabic alphabet with many additional dots and signs was introduced in 1852. Contrary to Urdu which uses the *nastaliq* form of the Arabic alphabet as developed in the countries under Iranian cultural influence, Sindhi adopted the traditional Arabic type of *nash*. Ernst Trumpp, the great authority on Sindhi, did not at all approve of this new alphabet which did not fulfill all conditions of linguistic logics; he had rather preferred the slightly different Arabic alphabet in which he continued to print his own studies on Sindhi.¹¹² Yet the new standard alphabet was officially accepted. The Hindus, however, still continued using Devanagari and even Gurmukhi till the end of the century for some newspapers and women's magazines.¹¹³ Interestingly enough, in our day even the Sindhi writers in India underline the importance of maintaining the Arabic alphabet for Sindhi in a Devanagari-writing environment.¹¹⁴

The official unification of the alphabet gave the Sindhis the opportunity of establishing presses in Bombay, the then capital of the presidency to which Sindh belonged, in Karachi, Sukkur and Hyderabad.¹¹⁵ The first book in litho was printed in Karachi in 1853. In the following decades, the Čaphāna-yi Muhammadi in Bombay produced many religious and ethical works, Maḥdūm Muhammad Hasim's *tafsir* being one of its first products.¹¹⁶ The first Sindhi types were used in London for E. Trumpp's *Sindhi Reading*

¹¹¹ *Hidayatul-inša*, new ed. Karachi 1956.

¹¹² In ZDMG 15/1861, p. 697 note 1 he writes: "Shortly before my arrival, a British civil servant had composed a new Arabic alphabet and obtruded it upon the country, an alphabet which must be called the silliest of all..." Two years later, ZDMG 17/1863, p. 257, he voiced the opinion that the Arabic letters were 'absolutely unfitting for the transcription of Prakritic languages.'

¹¹³ That is mainly true for the *Sudhar sabhar*, edited by Sadhu HIRANAND S. ADWANI in Hyderabad, 1890, cf. Moti 207.

¹¹⁴ *National Herald*, Delhi, November 6, 1970, and Yeonova, *Sindhhi Grammar*, p. 21.

¹¹⁵ AL-HAGG ALLAH BAHS 'UQAILI, *Sindhhi chapa'ias ġi muktašar tarih*, a survey of the development of Sindhhi printing, Moti 214ff.

¹¹⁶ Id. p. 217 a list of publications is given; only the story of Laila Maġnūn is of non-religious content.

Book in 1858; this useful anthology was followed by a version of the story of *Sassui Punhu* in 1863. Trumpp's edition of Shah Abdul Latif's *risalo* was printed in Leipzig in 1866; besides being incomplete, the sequence of the chapters and verses is rather confused. This fact induced the learned editor to pronounce some sarcastic remarks about the 'crooked' mind of the Orientals in general and of Sindhi mystical poets in particular....¹¹⁷ Three years later, 1869, the first letter-press in Karachi was set up, where the first newspapers in Sindhi were printed which arose besides some already existing Persian magazines.¹¹⁸

The British rule manifested itself in the foundation of Christian schools so that translations of parts of the Bible (first the Gospel according to St. Matthew, then St. John) belong to the first works in Sindhi prose.¹¹⁹ Captain G. Stack, author of a Sindhi grammar (1853),¹²⁰ though personally advocating Devanagari letters for Sindhi, was instrumental in bringing out these prints in the early 1850ies. They constitute the first attempts to write Sindhi prose, for the few lines contained in some legal decisions pertaining to divorce as found in a book by the 16th century author Mahdum Ga'far Būbkāni (d. 1589)¹²¹ cannot properly be called the beginning of Sindhi prose. The genius of Sindhi is certainly more visible in poetry than in prose, but it is interesting to see how under the changed conditions both Hindu and Muslim writers responded to the challenge.¹²² As in Urdu, the first prose works consisted of translations from English ethical and educational works. The assistant commissioner Mr. Ellies inspired a translation of Aesop's fables in 1854; a second, much more successful translation of this book had to be made in 1883. The main collaborator of the British in these early years was Diwan Nandiram who translated educational treatises,¹²³ but also the history of Ma'sūmi (1861), into his mother tongue.¹²⁴ His *Bābnāmo* (1857) is a book for children - Sindhi prose is amazingly rich in children's books. The famous Indian tale known as

¹¹⁷ Thus in ZDMG 17/1863 and in his introduction to the edition of *Sah gö risalo* p. IX, cf. SCHIMMEL, ERNST TRUMPP (above, n. 3) p. 31.

¹¹⁸ For the development of journalism and magazines in Sindhi cf. the useful article by MIR SAFI AHMAD 'ALAWI, *Pahrin Sindhi mahzan*, Moti 204ff.

¹¹⁹ For the whole development cf. NS; about the Bible translations id. 8.

¹²⁰ In Capt. STACK's Sindhi Grammar, the story of Rai Diyaḡ and Queen Sorathi was retold in prose by Munši Udharam Thanwardas; this may be considered the first piece of non-religious Sindhi prose, cf. NS 7.

¹²¹ SN 5; an Arabic work on Islamic jurisprudence by this author has been edited by G. M. QASMI, *al-matāna fi marimat al-bizāna*, Hyderabad 1962. - Short introductions into Sindhi prose are Prof. M. MALKANI, *Sindhi kahani ḡa awa'ill daur*, in: *Mehran* 1967/4, and SAMSUDDIN 'ANSANI, *Sindhi natr go uslūb go irtiḡā'i hākō*, in: *Mehran* 1968/3.

¹²² A grammar published in Karachi 1860 on order of the Government of India was: Mian Muhammad Hyderabadī and P. Anandram, *Sindhi Sarf ū nahw*, Abstract of grammar compiled in the Sindhi language by Meen Muḡammad and Moonshee Pritidass (thus Billimoria 381).

¹²³ About Nandiram cf. SN 58f.; his translation of *Isop gūn akhaniyan* was reprinted 1957, Hyderabad; among his other works, the *Sokhaitu nirmarū*, a treatise on education, Karachi 1860, must be mentioned.

¹²⁴ Cf. Billimoria 387; the Persian text was edited by M. U. DAUDPOTA, Bombay 1938, a new Sindhi translation by Mahdūm Amir Ahmad was issued Hyderabad 1959, and an Urdu translation 1959 by Akhtar Rizwi.

Tūtīnāma was translated into Sindhi as *Tōtēnāmo* in 1862.¹²⁵ Among the Muslims, a writer from Tikhur, Sayyid Miran Muhammad Shah I (1829-1892), translated, among other educational writings, a Hindi story about a good, intelligent and diligent boy as contrasted to a bad, lazy and stupid boy (*Sadha törü ain Kadhā törü*, 1800);¹²⁶ similar topics were also used in the stories written later for girls (cf. in Urdu Nadir Ahmad's *Mir'āt al-'arūs* which was at a comparatively late date translated into Sindhi).¹²⁷ Typical of the attitude of the then Sindhi writers is the fact that one of the first English books to be translated was Dr. S. Johnson's *Rasselas*, introduced in a simple Sindhi style by U. Th. Mirčandāni.¹²⁸

A Hindu writer, Diwan Korumal Čandānī (1844-1916), has earned the honorific title 'Father of Sindhi prose'; however, his style is strongly influenced by his cultural background. Thus his translation of the Sanskrit drama *Ratnavali* is so heavily burdened with Sanskrit words that it is difficult to understand for a normal Muslim reader. The same writer responded to the growing interest in information about the outside world in his 'Life of Columbus' (1862), and wrote in 1869 about 'The Advantages of female Education'¹²⁹ - Slightly junior to him was Faqir Imam Bahs Hadim (1860-1918), a civil servant who in his early youth undertook to compose a Sindhi drama on *Hir Rangha* (1879); here, as in similar Urdu dramas, poetry and prose are mixed. Hadim was known as a good poet in his own right who wrote both traditional Sindhi forms like *tih akharyan* and persianizing *gazals*. He adapted the story of *Dodo Canesar* to dramatical performance and described Hallag's tragic story in his *Mansurnamo*, which is influenced by an earlier Urdu book of the same character. His compatriots owe to him also a first Sindhi adaptation of the Arabian Nights (1898).¹³⁰ The story of *Saiful-Mulk*, which belongs to the favorites of Indian Muslims, had been retold in Sindhi verso in the early days of the British rule and was later reworked.¹³¹

An important event for the development of Sindhi culture was the foundation of the Sindh Madrasatu'l-Islam in 1885. Its initiator, Khan Bahadur Hasan 'Ali Afandi was deeply influenced by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's ideas and exerted himself intensely for the improvement of education in his country.¹³² He was supported in this task by many

¹²⁵ Billimoria 384. It was translated from the Hindustani translation by Haidar Babs of Muhammad Qadri's abridged version of Nablabl's tales. Another translation appeared 1890 in Lahore.

¹²⁶ SN 68; he translated also the educational book *Mufid aš-šibyan* in 1861. Another Muslim writer of this generation was Akhund Lutfullah, 1842-1902, cf. SN 71.

¹²⁷ *Kanwar ġō āino*, transl. by 'Abdul Karim Turab, Karachi 1958.

¹²⁸ New edition Hyderabad 1964.

¹²⁹ SN 75ff. He wrote also a book about 'Eminent women of India,' (Billimoria 832 III 1), not to forget his Sindhi translations of the elements of Euclid 1-4, Karachi 1881-1886, cf. Billimoria 356.

¹³⁰ NS 80; *The Manšurnamō* is contained in *his Kulliyat-i Hadim*, ed. LUTFULLAH BADAWI, Karachi 1958, p. 207-214. Hadim has also translated MIR AMMAN'S *Čahar Derviš*, new ed. Hyderabad 1960.

¹³¹ Cf. Billimoria 828 IV 10 who gives only the third edition, Karachi 1884. A new translation was made by Maulwi Muḥammad Sadiq Rānīpūri, Hyderabad 1960.

¹³² Cf. MAULANA QANI 'ABDUR RAZZAQ, Marḥūm Hasan 'Ali Afandi, NZ Karachi, June 1960; SA 96.

of his compatriots; Samsuddin Bulbul (1857-1919) was even called 'the Hali of Sindh', for he acted for Hasan 'Ali Afandi, 'the Sir Sayyid of Sindh' in the same way as Hali did in Urdu literature for Sayyid Ahmad Khan. Bulbul wrote numerous books, among them an interesting description in rhymed prose of the fair at Sehwan during Lal Sahbaz Qalandar's anniversary; in his poetry, we find not only educational topics but also satirical and humorous verses.¹³³ Connected with the newspaper *Mu'awin*, he actively contributed to the revival of the Sindhi Muslims. The same can be said about Maulana Ilahbabš Abbügho (d. 1901) who imitated Hall's *musaddas* in Sindhi to call his co-religionists to new life; Abbügho was also an ardent advocate of female education.¹³⁴

The numerous attempts of Muslim and Hindu writers to provide their beloved mother tongue with modern literature culminate in the work of one outstanding personality, e.g. Mirza Qalič Beg (1853-1929). Born in Hyderabad from a Turco-Caucasian family, Qalič studied in Bombay and then joined the British service; he retired as Deputy Collector.¹³⁵ He devoted his life to enriching the Sindhi language and literature, and

to fill the deep gap of Sindhi poetry and prose, he has deeply investigated the different books of both Eastern and Western poets and scholars, literati and excellent men, philosophers and mystics, Gnostics and rationalists, has translated their prosaic and poetical jewels into fluent Sindhi, and has put them before us - and there is no subject or title upon which he has not turned his pen.¹³⁶

There was indeed no book available to him that was not immediately converted into Sindhi. Shakespeare's most famous dramas were first retold in prose and then skillfully adapted to the national scene by shifting their seat of action to India: Hamlet now recites some quatrains of Omar Khayyam, and Shylock is transformed into a Hindu money lenders.¹³⁷ We find Christoph von Schmid's *Blumenkörbchen* besides a book on The Art of Gardening, Sherlock Holmes' novels besides R. Bacon's *Essays*: 'The German War,' 'China and its people' or 'Eminent Men of Europe' were as easily translated as books on 'Animal Magnetism', 'The Wonders of Science' or 'Political Economy'. Faithful to the general trend of Muslim writers in the early 20th century. Qalič Beg liked to translate useful books like Smile's 'Self Help' or James Allan's 'Every Man is the Architect of his own Fate', i.e. books which teach man to make the best of his life by inspiring him to successful activity. The great novels of Europe can be found in the Mirza's list, be it Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables* (which was translated once more by M. M.

¹³³ *Diwan-i Bulbul*, ed. GHULAM MUHAMMAD GIRAMI, Hyderabad 1969, and *Kalam Bulbul*, ed. Gh. M. GIRAMI, Hyderabad 1969. Cf. NS 85.

¹³⁴ SA 96.

¹³⁵ SN 95ff.; Billimoria enumerates more than 300 titles; cf. BAUSANI, Storia 296.

¹³⁶ Thus his son Mirza Ağmal in his introduction of the anthology *Candan Hār*, Karachi 1959, p. 1.

¹³⁷ King Lear = *Šah Eliya* (re-ed. 1959); The Merchant of Venice = *Husnā Dildar* (re-ed. 1960), Hamlet = *Sahzadō Bahram* (re-ed. 1961). Qalič had translated Omar Hayyam's quatrains himself: *Mōtian ġi dabbli*, re-ed. 1966.

Gidwani in the 1920s) or Gulliver's Travels and even J. Morrier's *Hajji Baba of Isfahan*.¹³⁸ Qalič Beg's religious tendency is reflected in his translations of sacred writings from different religions, but also in his choice of Emerson's Essays. Yet, his interest remained by no means restricted to Western authors; he turned his attention to the same extent to the classics of Persian and Arabic literature: Gazzali and Sa'di, Gāmi's *matnawis* and Sabistari's *gulshan-i raz* are enumerated among his publications (many of these books have been retranslated lately by G. H. Galbini¹³⁹). Besides, the author found time to write a *History of Sindh* and to translate the classical source of this history, the *Cačname*, from Persian into English (it has later been scholarly edited by Dr. Daudpota and retranslated several times).¹⁴⁰ Various books on Shah Abdul Latif are not lacking either,¹⁴¹ and remarkable is the number of the Mirza's poems. Qalič Beg was certainly not a great inspired poet, but a good craftsman, capable to apply every rhetorical device to his verses, and sincere in his attempt to enrich his beloved Sindhi with as many forms as possible.¹⁴² Nor did he neglect the fields of drama and novel.¹⁴³ We must especially underscore his zeal for the improvement of female education. His novel *Zinat*, written in 1890, contains some points which are far more modern than most of the modernist approaches made half a century later, and although the plot of this novel in its second half is not very convincing, *Zinat* deserves a place of honour in the history of Muslim educational literature.¹⁴⁴ Qalič Beg had also put the example of the great women of Islam before his female readers, and composed other, less successful, novels about female characters.¹⁴⁵

The fact that our author produced more than three hundred books caused one of his friends, Diwan Korumal, to call him 'a book making machine';¹⁴⁶ but we must admit that nearly all of his writings make a pleasant reading. He had a fluent, straightforward prose style which he applied to every other writer's work without paying too much attention to that author's particular style. That makes his books slightly monotonous and dry; still, they constitute a most practical introduction into clear and simple Sindhi prose.¹⁴⁷

¹³⁸ The list of his books re-edited by the Sindhhi Adabi Board during the last years comprises more than forty items, among them many children's stories. *Los Misérables*, *musibat māriyā sā'in sanwariya* re-ed. 1961; it was translated by M. M. Gidwani as *Dukht insān*, ocf. Billimoria 838 III a 9.

¹³⁹ Among G. H. Galbin's translations issued during the last years we mention: AL-GAZZALI, *Chotkaró* (= *al-munqid min ad-dalil*) 1950, *Kimiya-yi sa'dat*, 1960; IBN TUFAIL, *Kāmyābi*, 1969; GAMI, *Salāmān wa Absal*, 1969.

¹⁴⁰ For the *Cačname* see SCHIMMEL, *Islamic Literatures*, p. 12, note 50.

¹⁴¹ About Shah Abdul Latif cf. his *Lataif-lawitif*, re-ed. Hyderabad 1967, and *Lugat-i latif*, id. 1967.

¹⁴² *Diwan-i Qalič*, ed. MIRZA AGMAL BEG, Hyderabad 1960, cf. *Candan Har*, re-ed. 1969.

¹⁴³ Thus *Enquiry Officer*, re-ed. Hyderabad 1966.

¹⁴⁴ A. SCHIMMEL, *Ein Frauenbildungsroman auf Sindhhi*: Mirza Qalich Beg's *ZINĀT*, in: *Der Islam* 39/1965.

¹⁴⁵ Thus *Tuhfat an-niswān*, re-ed. 1960; *Dilārām*, re-ed. 1958, and *Zenobia*.

¹⁴⁶ *Diwan*, Introduction p. 32.

¹⁴⁷ His autobiography was published Hyderabad 1965: *Sāo pann, kūrō panno*, and his Speeches and Writings, *taqirūn ain tahrūrūn*, in 1970.

Qalič Beg's activities cover a period in which the Indians, mainly the Muslims, became more and more aware of their role in world politics. After the partition of Bengal in 1905, the Sindhis, too, began to take more enthusiastically part in cultural activities on a larger scale. Muslims and Hindus did their best to elevate Sindhi cultural life; from among the many authors who flourished from 1905 to the beginning of World War II only a few can be singled out. Thus Hakim Fath Muhammad Schwäni (1882-1942) was a leading educationalist whose books are still widely read.¹⁴⁸ His *Life of the Prophet*, published in 1914, is of special importance. He writes in the introduction:

What a pity that the learned writers of Sindh have not turned to this side, as if for this neither their pens were ready, nor their hands; by writing novels and plays they have made ashamed the Sindhi language and spoiled the taste of men; they have written exaggerated and strange stories about the honoured saints, but have, alas! not thought of writing about the benign state of the Lord of Prophets!¹⁴⁹

Among his numerous writings parts of Ibn Haldūn's philosophy of history were presented for the first time to the Sindhi reading public.¹⁵⁰ Hakim Sehwanī's last book, *Aftab-i adab*, 'The Sun of Literature' deals with problems of Sindhi language and literature. Well aware of the growing communal tensions in the country, he sighs:

It is a pity that the Muslims have put the *rope* around the *neck* of Sindhi and pull it to themselves, and the Hindus have put a *strick* around its *hals* and draw it to their side, and the poor Sindhi is half-dead between them!¹⁵¹

Among those who contributed to the development of Sindhi prose, Maulānā Din Muhammad Wafa'i (1893-1950), editor of several Muslim magazines, among which *al-Haqq*, *al-Wahid*, and chiefly *Tauhid*, is praised for his activities; he propagated to a certain extent the religio-social ideas of 'Ubaidullah Sindhi in his historical and religious writings.¹⁵² 'Ali Khan Abrō (1888-1954) wrote patriotic poetry and prose, inspired by Iqbal's dynamic interpretation of Islam.¹⁵³

In 1913 the Amateur Dramatic Society was founded; it encouraged the production of plays. (In later years, even Ibsen's *Ghosts* was translated as *Bhuta* by the playwright

¹⁴⁸ SN 113.

¹⁴⁹ *Hayat un-Nabi*, Hyderabad 1966. The quotation p. 2, cf. also p. 109.

¹⁵⁰ A new introduction into Ibn Haldūn's philosophy of history was given by ASADULLAH SHAH HUSSEINI, *Tarih go falsafa*, Hyderabad 1966.

¹⁵¹ *Aftab-i adab*, re-ed. 1956, 1969, p. 14 and often. About the whole problem of. also B. M. ADWANI, *Sindhhi bböll*, introduction. Even R. BURTON has stressed the difference between spoken Muslim and Hindu Sindhi, l.c. 315, note 20, and it is still conspicuous in modern times, as I experienced myself in the Shikarpur district.

¹⁵² SN 136; of. Moti 168. His books on Shah Abdul Latif: *Sāh go risilō ge mutāla ō*, Karachi 1962, *Lutf-al-Latif*, Karachi 1951.

¹⁵³ SN 186.

Ahmad Gulam Ali Čaglā (1902–1953).¹⁵⁴ One year later, 1914, two Hindus, Jethmal G. Parsram (d. 1948) and L. A. Jagtiani (d. 1954), founded the *Sindhi Sahit Society*. Both writers belong to the most active personalities in the field of Sindhi literature. L. A. Jagtāāni had written a book on the life of the Prophet of Islam (1911), since he regretted that Muslim children were mainly faced with legendary tales about the founder of their religion; besides, novels, dramas, historical works and poetry were among the products of this fine scholar.¹⁵⁵ As to Jethmal Parsram, his books on Sufism, including the lovable English book *Sindh and its Sufis*, are still widely read, notwithstanding their outspoken theosophical bias. As a translator, Parsram has introduced into Sindhi such difficult works as Maeterlinck's *Monna Vanna* and Goethe's *Faust*; a new translation of *Hamlet* as well as a *Life of the Buddha* may be mentioned from the long list of his publications.¹⁵⁶ In the same group of writers another Hindu author must be remembered with pride. It is Dr. M. H. Gurbahšāni (1884-1948), whose edition of Shah 'Abdul Latif's *risalo* contained, for a long time, the best available text and an excellent introduction; besides, the author has also published novels, among them *Nur Čihan* (1915).¹⁵⁷ The literary activities of both Hindus and Muslims in Sindh waxed even stronger after World War I. The number of Sindhi newspapers and magazines grew steadily; among them the *Sindh Zamindar*, founded in 1923 in Sukkur and edited for a long time by Pir 'Ali Muhammad Rashdi, played an important political role; other influential papers were the *Sitara-yi Sindh*, later the *Sindhu*, founded in 1932 in Shikarpur.¹⁵⁸

As much as the traditional bards in the countryside continued writing and singing their verses, as much was Sindhi prose enriched by the numerous writers who contributed to these newspapers and thus developed a matter-of-fact- style. Even greater was the role of scholars who devoted themselves to the study of Sindhi history and classical literature. A key-figure among them is Sir Bhiromal M. Adwāni (1876-1953) whose useful *History of the Sindhi Language* (1941) is the result of his teaching at Bombay University. His interest in his country caused him to write a history of pre-Islamic Sindh, *Qadim Sindh*, and a study about the history of Sindhi Hindus. Adwani's studies in literary criticism are most valuables.¹⁵⁹ He composed also a few plays and translated among other books *Uncle Tom's Cabin* into Sindhi; in his translation of W. Scott's

¹⁵⁴ SN 154.

¹⁵⁵ SN 175 with a list of his publications.

¹⁵⁶ SN 128; many of his works are enumerated in Billimoria; lovely is the small volume *Šufi saggūrā*, 1921. Together with him and some other Hindu and Muslim authors, M. M. Waswani (SN 217) fought through his books and articles for 'home rule' after World War I.

¹⁵⁷ SN 122. His *Lañwāri ga lil* deals with the Sufi saints of the Lanwari family, Karachi 1934. Cf. Billimoria 834 Va 1 about *Nūr Gihan*. - Another Hindu writer of 'dervish qualities' was Diwan Gidumal (1857-1929, SN 90) who translated and composed mystical works.

¹⁵⁸ LUTTULLAH BADAWI, *Sindhhi adab ġ gudril 25 warhin* (1929-1954), an article first published in Urdu in *Saqi*, Jubilee Number, then in *Moti*, 150-188.

¹⁵⁹ SN 164; Contemporary Indian Literature 264; *Uncle Tom's Cabin*: Billimoria 838 III a 7, cf. id. also a 24, d 16; *Sindhhi bboli ġi tarih* re-ed. Karachi 1956; his *Qadim Sindh* Karachi 1957, Hyderabad 1966. Scott's *Talisman 'urf Gizi Šalāhuddin* re-ed. Hyderabad 1959.

Talisman, one of the favorites of Indian Muslims, he completed the work of Sadhu Hiranand S. Adwāni. This writer had been active in the literary field during his short life (1863-1893); the magazine *Saraswati* which he edited in Hyderabad published, in 1890, translations from Grimm's tales, e.g. *Aschenbrödel* and *Schneewittchen*. (The whole collection of Grimm's Märchen was translated into Sindhi much later).¹⁶⁰

Another writer of Hindu origin, but early converted to Christianity, is P. Mewaram (1856-1938); besides being the author of a dictionary and of a fine collection of articles (*Gul Phul*, 1925) which first appeared in the monthly *Goth*, he added to the Christian literature in Sindhi by his translation of the *Imitatio Christi* in 1923.¹⁶¹

On the Muslim side, the *Sindh Muslim Adabi Society*, founded in 1929, encouraged historical research and writing. Among the authors connected in some way or other with this group we may mention Maulwi Nur Muhammad Nizāmāni, active as writer of political poetry inspired by Iqbal and author of a *History of Sindh*.¹⁶² Among the numerous educational, literary and historical works of Khan Bahadur Siddiq Memon (1890-1958), his *Sindh ji adabī tārīh* ranks among the foremost studies of Sindhi literature.¹⁶³ The activities of the fertile Lutfullah Badawi (d. 1968) range from poetical translations of Iqbal's main works to novels, from books on Shah 'Abdul Latif to detective stories.¹⁶⁴ One of the few Sindhi writers of this generation who have gained fame outside the Subcontinent is Shamsul Ulama U. M. Daudpota (1896-1958). His English thesis on the Arabic influence on Persian poetry (1934) is still regarded as a standard work. Daudpota's studies devoted to 'Abdur Rahim Gīrhōri are fine specimens of scholarly research produced in elegant prose. The memorial volume edited by his friends after his death shows the veneration this mystically inclined scholar has inspired to his compatriots.¹⁶⁵

Another name connected with religious life in Sindh is that of 'Ubaidullah Sindhi (d. 1944), a convert from Sikhism to Islam, trained under Pir Rušdullah, the Pir Chandewārō (a branch which had separated from the house of the Pir Pagarō in the 19th century¹⁶⁶). This 'firebrand agitator'¹⁶⁷ and modern interpreter of Shah Waliullah

¹⁶⁰ *Grimm ḡün ūkhāniyūn*, transl. by KHAN ṢAHIB MURID 'ALI, Hyderabad 1964. Stories from the Hitopadesa which were certainly closer to the Sindhi mind were first translated in 1894; a new edition: *Sabbhā go singar*, by NARAIN BHATT, Hyderabad 1968.

¹⁶¹ SN 109. His *Gul Phul* (Billimoria 831 II 17) repr. Hyderabad 1961; *Kraist ḡi parwi*: Billimoria 840 e 6.

¹⁶² Cf. Moti 175.

¹⁶³ SN 201.

¹⁶⁴ Moti 178; Mehran Sa'ir Number p. 309; an obituary by Pir 'Ali Muhammad Rashdi in *Mehran* 1968/4; his Sindhi *sa'iri ḡi tariḥ* was published first 1946.

¹⁶⁵ SN 193; the memorial volume is called *'Alimūn ḡō āftāb*, Karachi s.d. (1959); his autobiography, edited by his widow, *Muñḡi muhtasar ātam kahānī*, Karachi.

¹⁶⁶ About him and his work cf. SCHIMMEL, *Oriens* 16 p. 232; about his influence on the newspaper *Tauhid* cf. Moti 168.

¹⁶⁷ W. C. SMITH, *Modern Islam in India*, Lahore 1947, 252.

never wrote in Sindhi; nevertheless his teachings have considerably influenced some Sindhi theologians. Their best known representative, besides Maulānā Din Wafa'i, is Maulānā Tāḡ Muḥammad Imrūti (d. 1929) whose translation of the Quran ranks among the best Sindhi versions of the Holy Writ but shows, of necessity, the impact of the Waliullah - 'Ubaidullah tradition. (That is also the case with other modern translations of the Quran).¹⁶⁸ Imruti was not only a good scholar but also a noted poet in Sindhi who composed traditional *kifis* and dealt also with the story of Yusuf and Zulaihā in his *Pritnāmi*.¹⁶⁹ Mabdūm Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Bhatti (1887-1953) from Old Hala wrote in addition to treatises on religious education also a study of the martyr-mystic al-Hallaḡ.¹⁷⁰

Partition in 1947 confronted the Sindhis with new problems. A considerable number of Hindus migrated to India where their main seats are now Bombay and the adjacent areas. They have produced a remarkable amount of scholarly studies in their research centres in Poona and Delhi.¹⁷¹ Besides linguistic work mention should be made of the excellent edition of Shah 'Abdul Latif's *risālo* by K. Adwani in 1957. The Sindhis take actively part in the modern forms of Indian literature. In 1957 they demanded that Sindhi should be regarded as basic Indian language; it was, in fact, recognized as one of India's national languages in April 1967. As early as in 1949 the *Sindhi Sahitya Mahal* was founded. This organisation sponsored the first two conferences on literature and initiated the founding of the *Sindhi Bboli ain Sindhi Sahit Sabha* which directs the movement for greater rights for the Sindhis. The Sindhis in India publish a number of newspapers and magazines which are mainly printed in Bombay in Arabic letters; among them are *Nain Dunya* and the monthly *Kahani*.

As to the Sindhis in Pakistan (now ca. 5 millions) they belong to the literary most active parts of the population. Regardless of the high percentage of illiteracy in the province, the number of Sindhi newspapers in the 1950ies and 1960ies was greater than that in any other regional language, except Bengali (but the Bengali population outnumbered the Sindhis more than fifteen times). The foundation of a central institution for Sindhi publications on semi-govern. mental level, e.g. the *Sindhi Adabi Board*, in 1951, proved most useful. The Board, formerly in Karachi, now in Hyderabad, has encouraged literary activity considerably;¹⁷² it publishes a quarterly *Mehran* with contributions of poetry, and scholarly and narrative prose; besides, a children's magazine *Gul Phul* is issued. The Board has published more than 400 works, chiefly in Sindhi, but also in Persian, Urdu, English, and Arabic. The Sindhi magazine *Naien Zindagi*, published by

¹⁶⁸ Cf. SCHIMMEL, l.c. .233f.

¹⁶⁹ *Pritnāmō Sindhi*, Sukkur s.d.

¹⁷⁰ SN 170; the booklet on Hallig was printed Hyderabad 1952.

¹⁷¹ Cf. U. T. THAKUR, *Sindhhi Culture*, University of Bombay, Sociology Series Nr. 9, 1959, a book which is strictly anti-Muslim and advocates the acceptance of Devanagari letters; for the modern development cf. JEGOROVA, *Sindhhi Grammar*, p. 20f.

¹⁷² Cf. SCHIMMEL, *The Activities of the Sindhi Adabi Board*.

the Pakistani government, has also encouraged Sindhi writing. The annual meetings convened in honour of Shah 'Abdul Latif in Bhit Shah generally result in a considerable output of poetry and prose.

A gamiyat-i su'ara-yi Sindh, headed for a long time by Dr. M. Ibrahim Halil (b. 1900) was founded in Larkana in 1942,¹⁷³ and the recent development of Sindhi poetry is very interesting. I remember a *musa'ira* of Sindhi writers in Tando Jam in 1961 in which numerous young poets participated who tried to persuade the audience that for them the terms 'progressive' was by no means identical with 'leftist' or 'communist.' The *Sa'ir Number of Mehrāh*, published in late 1969, contains on nearly 800 pages life sketches and short selections from more than 130 living poets. They are headed by Talib al-Maula (b. 1919) from the Mahdūm Nūh-family in Hala, whose poetry comprises almost every possible style, blending traditional and modern imagery.¹⁷⁴ The physician Tanwir 'Abbasi (b. 1934)¹⁷⁵ has published in his *Phagun thiūn rabab* sensitive poetry in free verse. Rashid A. Lāsāri (b. 1922) has not only translated *Nal and Damayanti* and *Shakuntala* into Sindhi poetry, but also worked as script writer for films - a new literary genre.¹⁷⁶ A successful Urdu verse translation of Shah Latif's *risalō* was produced by Sayh Ayaz (b. 1923), the powerful left-wing poet whose political activities resulted more than once in his imprisonment.¹⁷⁷ The orientalist Dr. Asadullah Bāhūd Husaini (b. 1931) has devoted some of his work to literary history,¹⁷⁸ and Maulānā Muhammad Adib in Hyderabad (1897-1973) has succeeded in translating metrically the whole *Matnawī* of Galaluddin Rumi into Sindhi.¹⁷⁹ A poetess, Nūrghān Sāhin (b. 1936), is introduced as author of a *matnawī fath-i Istanbul*, 'The conquest of Istanbul'.¹⁸⁰

Remarkable is the breadth of variation in the inherited poetical techniques. Praise poems of the Prophet in traditional wording stand besides political poems which call in free verse for *inqilab*, 'revolution'; the numerous verses which praise the beauty and greatness of Sindh and its history make more than a mere poetical appeal to many listeners and readers. Nationalist poetry has been written from the beginning of this century and was once more *en vogue* in the late 1950ies.¹⁸¹ Other poets still use the full vocabulary of traditional Sufism with copious allusions to the Quran and the Prophetic tradition or to Sohni's and Sassui's sad tales. In addition to this, new forms are tried: the imitation of the Japanese *haiku* seems to be the latest fashion; it sounds not bad, since the form is reminiscent of the oldest short verses of Sindhi popular mystics. The

¹⁷³ *Mehrūn Sa'ir Number*, p. 49; cf. Moti 174.

¹⁷⁴ *Mehrān Sa'ir Number*, p. 1ff. Almost every issue of Mehrān begins with some of his poems in different styles.

¹⁷⁵ Id. p. 495.

¹⁷⁶ Id. p. 64; *Shakuntala*, and *Nal Damayanti*, published Hyderabad 1958 and 1959 resp.

¹⁷⁷ *Mehrūn Sa'ir Number* p. 467; his Urdu translation of *Shah's Risālō* Hyderabad, 1963.

¹⁷⁸ *Mehrān Sa'ir Number*, p. 34; cf. Note 99, 149; ed. *Kulliyat-i Dilgir*, Hyderabad 1968.

¹⁷⁹ *Mehrān Sa'ir Number* p. 247, his *Matnawī*-translation *Airaf al'ulum* printed Hyderabad 1960-1965.

¹⁸⁰ *Mehrān Sa'ir Number* p. 216f.

¹⁸¹ The best examples of national poetry are collected in *Mehrān gā Māṇik*, Karachi s.d. (ca. 1962).

pliability of the musical language enables even mediocre poets to achieve rather pleasant results.

As to prose, the authors have developed a clear, comparatively simple style of scholarly writing which has not too many relicts of that rhyming prose to which Oriental languages tend so often. The growing interest in the history of the country led many authors to compose descriptions of Sindh and its different parts, or to investigate the history of the dynasties, towns, or single personalities.¹⁸² The works of the leading historians and scholars of Sindh, headed by Sayyid Hussamuddin Rashdi (b. 1911), the outstanding and indefatigable editor of historical and literary Persian books connected with the history of Sindh, are fine examples of this modern style.¹⁸³ Dr. N. A. Baloch's editions of Sindhi mystical and folk literature have provided scholars with almost inexhaustible treasures; his introductions to these editions contain valuable material for the history of Sindhi literature, particularly folk literature.

The historical interest of modern Sindhis manifests itself in translations of British or Persian sources pertaining to Sindh,¹⁸⁴ and the translators whose interests range from Frazer's *The Golden Bough* to Thomas Jefferson, have certainly enriched the languages.¹⁸⁵ In the field of artistic prose, too, numerous translations have been added to those produced between 1854 and 1939.¹⁸⁶ They comprise almost every literature available and have inspired numerous young writers to try their pens in the art of short story, TV-play, and drama. Their output is remarkable, and some of the short stories can certainly compete with those from better known Oriental languages. As in most countries of the third world, the writers often voice their social criticism, and may sometimes end in crude and gruesome realism. Gamal Abro's very poignant story *Munhun kārō*, 'With blackened face,' is worth selecting as an excellent model of powerful prose; it criticizes the deep-rooted exaggerated saint-worship and is thus typical of the new approach to inherited values and outlived traditions. The names of Karōr Patti, who tends sometimes to humorous and satirical writing, and Gulam Rabbani Agrō, slightly romantic in spite of his social engagement, may stand for other promising authors.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸² Thus ALLAH BAČAYO SAMMO, *Sair-i Kōhistan*, Karachi 1953; MAULA'I SAIDA'I (b. 1894) *Gannat as-Sindh* (about him cf. Mehran 1971/4): il. *Lār sair*, Hyderabad 1971, and others.

¹⁸³ For H. Rashdi's numerous editions cf. the notes in SCHIMMEL, *Islamic Literatures*.

¹⁸⁴ JAMES BURNS, *A visit to the Court of Scinde* 1841 was translated by Hanif Muḥammad Siddiqi, *Sindh ḡi darbār*, Hyderabad 1964; R. BURTON's *Sindh and the Races that inhabit the Valley of the Indus* has been translated by the same scholar, Hyderabad 1971.

¹⁸⁵ TH. JEFFERSON. *Riyasat ain Azādī*, transl. Rashid Bhatti, 1968, FRAZER, *Gādu ain science*, transl. by 'Ali Sūmro Samar, 1959.

¹⁸⁶ HENRY AND OTHERS, *Čund Ameriki Afsānā*, 1958; RACHEL FIELD, *Ameriki lōk kahaniyun*, 1958, *Dunyā ḡā 'azim afsānā*, 2 vols, 1966, etc.

¹⁸⁷ A collection of good short stories is *Mehrūn gūn Chōliyūn*, Karachi 1962. Three of them are translated by A. SCHIMMEL, in: *Aus der Palmweinschenke, Pakistanische Erzählungen*, Herrenalb 1966. A good survey is the collection: *Sindhhi Short Stories*, Translator: Hashoo Kewal Ramani, The Liberation Publications, Karachi s. d. (ca. 1972), with a short article on modern Sindhi literature by Ghulam Rabbani.

Their writings show that the language is capable of adapting itself to the exigencies of modern life without losing its beauty; the best poems and prosepieces in contemporary Sindhi still possess some of the charm which was created, long ago, by the mystical poets of the country who blended folk tradition with lofty spirituality.