It is not possible to discuss the evolution of Urdu as a language in this thesis, but by the time of Shahjahan a new language comprising elements from Persian, Hindi, Turkish and Arabic words was evolved and was generally known as Urdu-i-Shahi, being the language of the Royal Capital. It came to be known as Urdu. By the 18th century Urdu became much more popular as a vehicle of artistic and emotional expression. As it grew up in decadent society and under the patronage of the kings and nobles, it had limited field of subjects. In its early stages its 'theme, styles, imagaries and prosody' were based mainly on Persian forms, but by the end of 18th century it had attained a high degree of maturity. During this period it is rich in mystical and lyrical love poetry, in qasidas, hijay and such topics as had more popular appeal. 'Landscape poetry, pastoral poetry, heroic or epic poetry and folk songs were practically non-existent but beginning were already being made to wield the language with power and skill and individual modes of expression were developing. As time passed on, the scope was widened and by the 19th century the poets and prose writers gave Urdu a more solemn and dignified tone. A brief account of some of the poets of this period and their main characteristics has been attempted here.

Urdu poetry in northern India in the 18th century.

Wali Deccani (1668-1744 A.D.) is regarded as the Baba-i-rekhta (the father of Urdu poetry). The greatest contribution of Wali was that he raised Urdu poetry to the level of Persian poetry
which since long had dominated the literary field. Ram Babu Saxena remarks about Wali that he was 'the Chaucer with whom Urdu poetry takes a definite start'. Wali was born in Aurangabad. Upto the age of 20 he studied at home and then he went to Ahmadabad because that city at that time was a famous centre of learning.

The madrasah of Maulana Wajihuddin Alvi attracted students from far and wide. Wali joined that madrasah and after having studied there sometime he returned to Aurangabad and began to study the poetic compositions of great poets and himself began to compose poems. In 1700 A.D. he visited Dehli and met Shah Saadullah Gulshan, a Sufi saint and celebrated poet of the time, who initiated him into Sufi order. Shah Saadullah after hearing Wali's poems, advised him to convert the Persian poetic subjects into the Rekhta of the Deccan.

After this Wali returned to Aurangabad and following the advice of his spiritual guide, compiled a Diwan in Rekhta, and again went to Dehli in 1722 A.D. with his Diwan, which was highly appreciated by the gentry and commonality of Dehli. Enthusiasm for his verses spread like a wild fire. His ghazals were sung


2. For short biographical notices see: Mamulat-i-Maahari, p. 16; Naqmat-i-Maahari, p. 22

3. For details see: Tazkira Shura-i-Urdu (Mir Hasan), p. 204; Nikat-ush-Shuara (Mir), p. 10.

4. Ibid, pp. 89-90; Makhzan-i-Nikat (Qaim), p. 10.
in the courts, in bazars, in streets, in banquet halls and in
sufistic assemblies of saints. His contemporaries hailed them
with delight and his verses became the craze of the city."

All contemporary Tazkira writers speak of Wali as the first
poet who compiled a Diwan in Rekhta, but Saiyad Masood Husain
Rizvi is of the opinion that Nawab Sadruddin Khan, poetic surname
Faiz, had already compiled a Rekhta Diwan before Wali's Diwan
came to Dehli. It was soon felt that Rekhta could be used for
the expression of feelings and emotions in place of Persian with­
out losing its beauties. Consequently other poets entered the
Zahiruddin Hatim, Muhammad Shakir 'Naji', Sharafuddin 'Mazmun' and
Mirza Mazhar Jan Jana were the fore-runners in Rekhta poetry and
they are considered as the early fathers of the Rekhta, who nurse
and reared the newly born babe.

People of all classes of society composed poems irrespective
of their professions or status in life. Munir, a polisher;
Muhammad Aman Nasir, an architect, Husain Bakhsh Bakhshi, a
seller of cotton cloths; Shagufa, a black-smith; Khwaja Hingga

1. A History of Urdu Literature, p. 42. Mir Hasan remarks that
Wali's poetry gained popularity among all classes of people.
2. Tazkira Shuara-i-Urdu, Tazkira Rekhta (Gurdezi)
3. Tazkira Gulshan-i-Hind, p. 175; Diwan Zada (M), p. 3
4. Diwan-i-Faiz, p. 7
Shaida, a braider; Mir Sadiq Ali Sadiq, an elephant driver; Shambunath Aziz, a mahajari; Mir Latif Ali Latif, a broker; Mughal Ali Mughal, a braider and merchant; Badruddin Haftun, a draper; Yakrung, a goldsmith; Muhammad Hashim Shaiq; a tailor; Muhammad Arif Arif, a darning; Inayatullah Katto, a hairdresser; Jarrah, a surgeon; Muqadd, a water carrier; Qarim, a sweeper were some of the leading poets of the day. Joshush testifies to the above fact in the following couplet:

شاگر کافی فن یاد یک جوش شن دن بیوجد
هرکس و ناکس نظر آن که اس فن کا خریف

Mir Khan Smmtarin, used his poetic compositions as a means of livelihood. He used to sell his poems in the market. Students and young boys flocked to him and purchased his poems at high prices.

The poets reflected and catered to all tastes and temperaments. There were poets who only composed poems, satires, lampoons, and obscene poems and found ready listeners to their poetry which reflected the current moods of the society of the time. The surnames adopted by some reflect the general state of society:


1. See: Malmua-i-Meha.
2. Diwan-i-Joshush, p. 81.
The greatest contribution of the poets of this early period was that they consolidated the language. They replaced ungaily and involved idioms and cumbersome constructions with more elegant appealing and refined ones which they had borrowed from Persian of which they were past-masters. But the greatest defect of the poetry of this period is that it is predominated by Aham or Double meaning. Many of the early poets having been mystics, Urdu poetry was permeated with mystic thoughts and philosophy. Qasida or laudatory odes, the ghazals or love songs, the Masnawi or narrative poems; the marsiya or elegies; the rubai or quatrain, the hijiy, or satires were introduced into Urdu poetry.

**Sheikh Zahiruddin Hatim (1698-1691)**

Hatim is called the founder of the Dehli School of poetry. He was born in 2 1111 A.H. (1698-1700 A.D.). He was a soldier by profession. For sometimes he lived in the service of Nawab Amir Khan, the Subedar of Allahabad. When Wali came to Dehli in 1722 A.D. and his poetry captured the attention of the poets of Dehli, Hatim began to compose verses in Rekhta, as he himself tells us in the introduction to his Diwan Zada and strictly adhere to the example set by Wali.

Hatim's early poetic compositions were over burdened with Aham or double-meaning. He removed those verses from his Kulliyat and compiled a new Diwan, according to the tastes of the later

half of the 18th century and named it *Diwan Zada*. There were 45 students who studied the art of versification under his guidance. Sauda who later became the most important Urdu poet was one of them. Besides, Saude, Rangin, Taban and Firaq are worthy of notice. Hatim played a very prominent role in the purification of the language and removing many rough, inelegant and uncouth words from it. He himself writes: "I have been practising the art of writing for forty years from 1112 A.H. to 1169 A.H. (1715-1755). I recognise Saib (an Iranian poet) as my master in Persian poetry and Wali in Urdu poetry who was the first to compile a *diwan* in that language...My contemporaries are Abroo, Mazmun, Ahsan, Najj and Ikrang. I have given up the use of certain words as 'bar', and 'dar', which I abundantly employed in my former diwan. I only employed those Persian and Arabic words which are easy, elegant and fluent and used in common parlance among the polished. I have given up the use of Hindi words and vernacularized forms of Arabic and Persian words. I also insist on a mastery in the construction of verses and I attempt at polished eloquence." He died in 1791 or 1792 A.D. His *ghazals* were popular among the masses and were sung in assemblies by the musicians. Ram Babu Saxena remarks about the position of Hatim thus: "The position of Hatim is unique in Urdu Literature. He is the master of Sauda and other poets. He is the greatest of early writers who took an important part in the formation of and refinement of language and in moulding the course of Urdu poetry."

1. *Diwan Zada* (43), pp. 3
3. A History of Urdu Literature, p. 49.
Mirza Mazhar Jan Jananj

Mazhar was a Persian poet but he composed some verses in Urdu too. His great contribution was to refine the language and adopt a mode clear and plain style. He adopted the Persian form. His verses are full of mystic thoughts and philosophy. In poetry his pupils were Yaqin, Hazin, Biswan Lal Bedar, and Faqir Shah Dardmand.

The age of Mir and Sauda.

Mir Hasan Dehlvi wrote many masnavis, the most important among them being Sihr-ul-siyah and Sauda besides ghazals, wrote panegyrics and satires. Mir and Dard distinguished themselves as ghazal writers and their poetic composition which became a standard for posterity.

The language was purified and Hindi words were excluded and Mir and Sauda engrafted new Persian constructions and idioms wa-sokht, masullms and Murabba were for the first time introduced by Mir in Urdu poetry. Sauda, perfected the art of nasida (panegyrics) and hivy (satires) compositions.

It is in this period that the Tazkiras or biographical sketches of the lives of Urdu poets, with their selected verses began to be compiled.

The most important characteristic of the poetry of this period is, that it is more critical and brings into light a clear picture of political and economic breakdown, general poverty of the masses, the problem of unemployment, unrest, social and religious and moral degeneration. Shahr Ashob written during this period are very important sources of information for the student of social history of the period.
Khawaja Mir Dard (1133-1199 A.H.;

Dard was a great poet of Urdu and Persian. He has left two Diwans, one in Persian and the other in Urdu. Ram Babu Saxena ranks his Urdu Diwan as the crown of Urdu poetry. "His ghazals are polished and poignant full of fire and pathos, and lofty emotions. He shows great skill in developing the themes of spiritualism." He was a man of high ideals and never associated with the court. He neither wrote nasida nor lampoons or satires.

His love themes were not confined to ishq-i-majazi but it was spiritual love or ishq-i-haqaiq. He was one of the six stalwarts of Urdu poetry, who refined, polished and freed it from Aham or double-meaning. He exercised a great influence on his contemporaries and posterity. His chief pupils were Gaim, Hidayat, Firaq, Asaf, Lala Narain Das Beikud, and Lala Balmukand Hazur.

Mirza Muhammad Rafi Sauda (1713-1731)

Sauda occupies a very important position amongst Urdu poets. He was a soldier by profession. His father came from Kabul as a merchant, and settled in Dehli. Sauda was born there in 1715 A.H.

Sauda first became a pupil of Sujaian Kuli Khan poetically called 'widad', and later on of Shah Hatim. He gained much experience in art of versification in the society of Shah Arzu and on his advice he began to compose poems in Rekhta. In a very

1. For biographical account see, Chapter VIII
2. A History of Urdu Literature, p. 5/.
3. ibid, p. 5/.
short period, Sauda's Rekhta poems gained popularity and were sung in streets and assemblies. This drew the attention of the emperor Shah Alam Jani, who was a Persian, Hindi and Rekhta poet, and became Sauda's pupil.

Owing to some quarrel, he left the court but remained at Dehli. It was during this period, that he was invited by the Nawab Shuja-ud-daula of Oudh, but Sauda loved Dehli so much that he politely refused this invitation. When Dehli was subjected to Marhatta inroads and life, honour and property became unsafe in Dehli, his patrons fell on bad days and Sauda left for Farrukhabad and joined the court of Nawab Bungash Khan and later went to Lucknow and entered the service of Shuja-ud-daula. He left the court later and afterwards led a retired life.

On the request of the Nawab, he again joined the court and Nawab Asaf-ud-daula bestowed upon him the title of 'Muluk-ush-Shaar' and fixed a stipend of six thousand rupees and conferred on him a robe of honour. Sauda died in Lucknow in 1781 A.D.

Sauda was an accomplished poet and was a prolific writer. He has left an Urdu Diwan of Ghazals which includes 'Fars' or detached districtes, 'Rubai', 'Gitas', 'Aukhmasat' (or stanzas of five lines each) 'Tarji-band', 'Wa-sokht' and 'Mastnaz'. Besides these he wrote twenty four 'Manawah' and versified stories, mostly satires, lampoons, riddles, 'Qasidas' which mainly consists of panegyrics written in praise of Nawab Asaf-ud-daula and other men of high rank in Delhi and Lucknow. 'Jalams' and 'Marzias' relating to the death of Imam Hasan and other great personalities from amongst the martyrs.

and mangabat or invocatory verses to God. Six poems in praise of holy men, prose translation of the mashawi Shola-i-Ishaq i.e. Flames of Love of Mir. A pamphlet in prose entitled Ibrat-al-Ghafilteen. A Tazkira or a biography of Urdu poets. The latter is not extant.

He was the first poet to introduce gasida in Rekhta and his gasidas rank with those of Khanqani.

The satires of Sauda give us a clear picture of the poverty of the nobles and commonality and even the emperors, the corruption prevailing amongst great officers and want of peace and tranquility inside the city.

The marsias contain much material for the student of social history. There we find customs and rituals pertaining to marriages etc. practised by the Muslims of the 18th century.

Mir Taqi Mir (1713-1810)

Mir Muhammad Taqi, better known by his nom de guerre of Mir was the son of Mir Abdullah, a noble of Agra. In Zikr-i-Mir, Mir has given a detailed account of his ancestors who had settled in Agra.

On the death of Mir Abdullah, Mir came to Delhi during the reign of Shah Alam and began to live with his uncle, Khan Arzu, the celebrated Persian poet. Under his guidance he composed verse and within a short time Mir created a position for himself and his poems were welcomed and recited by everyone. His ghazals were taken from city to city as valuable presents. By temperament Mir was proud and it became a handicap for his success and he did not enjoy any patronage from the King or the nobles. It was an age of

1. A History of Urdu Literature, p. 70.
poverty, anarchy and confusion and Mir had to suffer untold misfortunes due to poverty. Mir went to Lucknow during the time of Nawab Asaf-ud-daula in 1783.

When Asaf-ud-daula heard of Mir's arrival in Lucknow, the latter fixed a monthly allowance of 200 rupees. Though his relations with the Nawab became estranged, yet it did not effect his allowance. During the reign of Asaf-ud-daula's successors this allowance was continued. Mir left court disgusted with his surrounding and passed his last days in great poverty. He died in 1810.

Mir was a copious writer. He has left a large volume of literature in the form of Urdu poetry and Persian prose and poetry. His works consist of Six large Diwans of Rekhter Ghazals a Diwan in Persian, numerous Masnavis, a pamphlet entitled Faiz-i-Mir, a Tazkira of Rekhta poets, known as Nikat-us-Shuara Zikr-i-Mir, an autobiography, which contains historical material.

By nature and temperament, Mir was unfit to write qasidas. The Qasidas which he wrote in praise of Nawab Asaf-ud-Daula are inferior to those of Sauda. Mir was a pessimist, whereas Sauda was an optimist by nature. Mir was a pastmaster of ghazal and masnawi writing. No contemporary poet excelled him in this field. His position in Urdu poetry is unique. He is popularly called Kuda-i-Sakhum or lord of poetry. All the contemporary Tazkira writers have praised him highly. Even the Ghalib did not fail to recognise the merit of Mir. He says:

2. Ibid, p. 204.
3. A History of Urdu Literature, p. 76
The Age of Mushafi and Insha.

After the disastrous invasion of Nadir Shah the great poets of Dehli said good bye to it and went to live in Farrukhabad or in Lucknow during the reigns of Jhuja-ud-daula and Asaf-ud-daula, who were great patrons of literature. The centre of gravity now shifted from Dehli to Lucknow. The following poets of Dehli reached Lucknow.


With the arrival of Khan Arzu the stage for Urdu poetry was set in Lucknow. Ram Babu Saxena writes, "The poets from Dehli kindled the light at Lucknow and created a wide spread taste for poetry. Before their arrival there were no poets of note. The establishment of the capital at Lucknow by the opulent Nawabs of Oudh, and exodus of poets from Dehli contributed immense to the growth of Poetry at Lucknow...Poetical assemblies sprung up in the city. Nobles and people went crazy over them. They were in raptures over their verses. Such meetings were convened in various places, monthly, fortnightly, weekly and even daily. Poets were spurred to put forth their best efforts. Contest amongst them led on to better compositions. Frequent meetings resulted in the increase of the volume of their output. The competition made the poets shine with greater brilliance. Applause was the breath of their

1. Lucknow Ka Dabistan-i-Shairy, p. 81.
nostrils. This wide spread taste for poetry gave rise to a new
school, indigenous in its growth.

Insha Allah Khan Insha (d. 1817 A.D.)

Jaiyad Insha Allah Khan, poetic surname Insha, was the son
of Jaiyad Hakim Mir Mashia Allah Khan, who came from Najaf and
settled in Dehli. Mashia Allah Khan was a physician in the Mughal
court. He was a poet too, and his nom-de-guerre was Masdar. Mashia
Allah Khan, later on migrated to Murshidabad and Insha was born
there. During the reign of Shah Alam II, Insha came to Dehli, and
was invited to the court. But being tired of recurring troubles
in Dehli, and court poet's rivalries, Insha left for Lucknow.
Here he joined the court of Mirza Sulaiman Shikoh. Afterwards
he joined the court of Saadat Khan Rangin. In the company of
Rangin, Insha reduced himself to the position, of a jester and
tried to keep his master all the time pleased by his poetry. Once
a quarrel rose up between the Nawab and Insha, and the latter
retired from the court and died in 1617 in a state of utter poverty.

Insha was a prolific writer. He has left voluminous works.
His Kulliyat comprise, a diwan of ghazals, rekhta ghazals and
rekht riddles, Qasidas in Urdu and Persian, Masnavas in Persian
and Urdu and many distichs, enigmas, rubais, qitas, riddles etc.

He also wrote a prose work entitled Kahani Thayu Hindi men
or a story in pure Hindi idioms. The most important work of Insha
is Deriya-i-Latafat, a book on Urdu grammar in Persian language.

Sheikh Ghulam Hamadani poetically surnamed Mushaffi, son of Wali Muhammad, was born at Akbarpur in between 1141-1156 A.H. He left Amroha which was his native place for Dehli in 1190 A.H. (1776). He soon started writing verses and by the year 1781, he attained a prominent place as an accomplished poet. In Dehli Mushaffi used to convene **Majlis-i-Moshaire** (poetical assembly) in which important poets participated.

He followed the example set by Mir and Sauda and migrated to Lucknow during the reign of Nawab Asaf-ud-daula, and joined the court of Mirza Suleiman Shikoh, and had to suffer due to the rivalries of Insha. He died in 1240 A.H.

He was a copious writer, both in Persian and Urdu. He wrote two **Taakiras** (biographical anthologies of Urdu poet) and one of Persian poets. The **Tazkiras** of Urdu poets are known - **Tazkira-i-Hindi** and **Riyaz-al-Fusha** and that of Persian poets - **Aqf-i-Suriyya**.

He has left behind many Persian Diwans and six Diwans of Rekhta. Except those portions of poetry which he wrote against Insha, all his poetry is of high merits. He followed the example of Mir and Sauda.

These poets did much to refine the Rekhta language. Qasim extols the Urdu language and poetry in his poetic style:

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1. **Tazkira-i-Hindi**, p. 16
The main characteristic of the poetry of this period is that it is more critical. The poets freely express their feeling. They freely expose the weaknesses and the luxurious lives of the rulers and nobles which ultimately led to the break up of the Mughal empire. They freely and critically examine the causes of social and religious degeneration, economic bankruptcy, the tyranny of the nobles, the reckless expenditure of the rulers and nobles, the problem of unemployment and the ruinous state of the cities like Dehli and Agra.

The chief characteristics of the poetry of this period may be summed up as follows:

1. In this period the poets lost their old independent character in their poetic compositions and they became mouthpieces of the courts. Previously poetry was an art and a means to exhibit their skill and scholarship but now it was written to please the ears of their masters. The opulence and wealth of Lucknow had made the Lucknow society sensual and pleasure loving. The poets were reduced to the position of buffoons.

The poetry of this period is over-burdened with effeminate elements. The poetry of Insha and Jurat are of very inferior type and are of a two types. It is in this period that Saadat Yar Khan Rangin introduced Rekhti (the language of women) and compiled a Diwan in Rekhti.

2. The poets aspired to gain favours, and this created jealousy among the poets. The quarrels of Insha, Jurat and Mushaffi developed into an open conflict. They openly abused each other in their poetic compositions. "Oftentimes pens were exchanged for bludgeons and even swords. The satires of Insha and Mushaffi are a slur on Urdu literature and are simply ribald vituperation strung in verse."

Making allowance for rhetoric poets, the poetry of this period helps us in reconstructing the political, social, economic and religious history of the 18th century.

THE PART PLAYED BY THE KINGS AND NOBLES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF URDU POETRY

Though the atmosphere of the 18th century was not favourable for literary activities, yet the kings and nobles continued to take keen interest in literary activities. They patronized poets and themselves composed poems.

Among the later Mughal rulers, Shah Alam Jani was a good poet of Persian, Urdu and Hindi languages. His poetic surname was 'Aftab'. He has left a Diwan which has been published under the title of Nadrat-i-Shahi

1. A History of Urdu Literature, p. 82.
He was so much interested in poetry that whether in the capital or in travel, his poetic activities continued. He had gathered a band of eminent poets in his court. The poet laureate of his court was Saiyad-ush-Shuara Mir Munshi Ghalib Ali Khan Saiyad. Among other poets, he extended his patronage towards Mr, Sauda, Ahsan. Shah Alam Sani had honoured a poet with the title of Maskhirat-ud-daula Qarmasaq-Khan Bahadur Fakhar Jang.

Ahawaja Mir Dard praises Shah Alam II, for his patronage of poets and his poetry thus:

Qadar honge zat e sa kosi * Tufqal se behtar e baha e sa kosi

Sauda writes:

HE JAHANDAR MUBARAK PAFRAN

Nahum kheema jawa hs a tuman koi chori

Mirza Javan Bakht, whose pen name was 'Jahandar' was himself a poet and a patron of poets. He used to convene a Moshaira twice a month and invited eminent poets to participate in it. Mirza Sulaiman Shikoh, poetic surname 'Sulaiman', a Mughal

1. For details see: Nagava-i-Alam Shahi, pp. 60-69.
7. Majmua-i-Nezhz, I, p. 72; Tazkira-i-Tabagat-ush-Shuara-i-Hindi, p. 84.
prince had migrated to Lucknow. He was a good poet and patronized a number of poets like Insha, Mushafi and Jurat etc. He convened poetical assemblies and invited the distinguished poets of the city and handsomely rewarded them.

After the dismemberment of the Mughal empire, the independent states came into existence. Farrukhabad, Lucknow, Rampur, Azimabad and Mushidabad were the important provincial capitals. The poets of Delhi received warm welcome when they reached there. The court of Farrukhabad patronized Insha, Mushafi, Azim Beg Azim, Fazhar Makki and Mohib Ali Mohib. The court of Lucknow, patronized Arzu, Sauda, Mir, Insha etc.

Nawab of Tanda was a great patron of art and literature. Mushafi and Qaim Chandpuri lived in the court for sometimes. The court of Rampur during the reign of the Nawab Faizullah Khan was the centre of literary activities. During his reign, Qaim Chandpuri joined his court.

In short, the patronage of the rulers and nobles to the poets gave a great impetus for the development of Urdu language in the 18th century. Many nobles like Qazalbash Khan Ummid, Ashraf Ali Khan Fughan, Nawab Amir Khan Anjam were distinguished hakha poets.

1. Tazkira-i-Hindi, p. 121.
2. Haimuna-i-Nezamat, I, pp. 82, 86.
3. For details and other great patrons of Urdu poets see: Kulliyat-i-Hidayat (Ms), p. 284.
5. Ibid, p. 3.
Poetical Assemblies:

It is a strange phenomenon that while the fortunes of the Mughal kings had fallen to the lowest ebb, Urdu poetry flourished. Poetry was the craze of the city. Qaim writes: "Wherever I turn my eyes, I see poets, and wherever I turn my ears, I hear the sound of the recitation of poems. But the most interesting thing is this that everyone of them considers himself as the Mulk-ush-Shuara and more than the eminent ones."

Mir Taqi Mir has used the word Marakhtan for 'Moshaira' (the poetical assemblies).

The Moshairas were important literary assemblies of the period. Special arrangements were made for their organization. Elaborate etiquette was observed. Old and young participated in these assemblies. The poets of high skill were applauded open heartedly. The Moshairas were convened monthly, fortnightly or weekly. Mir has referred to the names of six persons who organised poetical assemblies at their residences. Mir Sa'jjad, Mian Salamuddin, Mir Ali Naqi, and Mafiz Salim. Mir himself convened Majlis-i-Mehtta on the 15th of every month. Khawaja Mir Dard used to convene the Moshaira on the 23rd of every month.

3. Nikat-ush-Shuara, p. 147. For poetical assemblies, the word "Majlis-i-Mehtta" has also been used. Nikat-ush-Shuara, p. 62.
4. The author Majmua-i-Meghz describes the atmosphere of the Moshaira, convened by Mirza Muhammad Taqi Khan Taruqui:

"بيبسي زي در سلسل ... الغقاد بانث يسيار از بلاد خود رشد (جرات) غزلها بزهواين

بيهديه مورد تحسن وآثر من خام وطم فدکه في دنبه من نهر مهند ن خرد هچر بسد.

Majmua-i-Meghz, I, pp. 155-156.
6. ibid., p. 158; Also see Majalat-ush-Shuara (M), p. 144.
The author of Majmua-i-Negahz, who completed his Taskira in 1806-7 has made references to many persons who regularly organised poetical assemblies. For example, Nawab Muhammad Yar Khan son of Ali Muhammad Khan, Nawab Amin-ud-daula Moin-ul-Mulk Nasir Jang alias Mirza Mendu of Farrukhabad. He entertained the poets with delicious meals. In the month of Ramzan, the Muslim poets were provided with sumptuous meals and the Hindu poets were entertained with fine sweet-meats.

When a poet joined the court of a noble or a Nawab, he could not tolerate the presence of another poet. This engendered rivalry and jealousies. Consequently these poetical assemblies degenerated into battle field. Qudratullah Qasim has given a vivid description of the quarrels of the poets in the court of Farrukhabad and Lucknow.

"Ram Babu Saxena remarks: "The quarrels of Insha, Mushaffi and Juraat which developed into squuffles are a blot on the pages of the history of this period." 2. About the quarrels of Mushaffi and Insha in the court of Mirza Sulaiman Shikoh, Qasim writes: "In the Moshaira of the Prince Sulaiman Shikoh in Lucknow...the quarrel between Mushaffi and Insha reached to such an extent that they used the funny and abusive language for each other which was degrading for the men of arts. Even the common men of the street shared those quarrels." 3

Ram Babu Saxena further writes:

"The quarrels of Insha and Mushaffi are notorious and numerous lampoons, burlesques, satires, oftentimes licentious and full of malice commemorate the various events. The satires are sometimes scurrilous language versified. The humour is mordant and the wit caustic. Mushaffi was at first the poetical master of Prince Sulaiman Shikoh but was later on supplanted by Insha which grievously mortified Mushaffi, who took it as a personal affront. A reduction in his pay, a burlesque of

his poems, and the parade of self-laudatory verses by Insha opened the flood-gates of malice, sarcasm and filthy abuse on both sides. The fire was fanned by the pupils of both adversaries and the quarrels enlisted the support of not only poets but the general public of Lucknow who enjoyed the fun and loved the excitement. The quarrel raged furiously and long and often pens were exchanged for sticks and swords. Processions were organised to ridicule the opponents and lampoons were sung publicly. Insha naturally had the upper hand owing to his gifts of humour and wit and the support of Prince Suleiman Sheikoh and the Nawab. The patrons took keen interest in these quarrels and enjoyed the processions and counter-processions and applauded the lampoons recited to ridicule each other. The literary value of these satires and lampoons is little but they provide interesting readings.

Quadratullah Qasim gives the same picture. The following verses of Shah Waliullah Muhib refer to the quarrels of the poets:

 محلس مین جگے جاہیں جب تک شاور کا .. اس کو کہو ماحوب تودھر کے کے
ہی بھی کوئی دوسرہ شہر کہو ہی پھر مہیا .. اکبرتمہ بادشاہ حسینکر کے کے

These bickerings gave a set back to the development of Urdu poetry and brought vulgar elements in it. The common men did not appreciate literary merit but preferred poetry that amused them.

Persian Literature.

With the establishment of the Turkish rule in India, Persian became the official court language, and the language of the educated people. Works in prose and poetry on History, Fish, medicine, astronomy, letters were produced during that period.

2. Majma-i-Nazir, I, p. 36. For similar quarrels between Pusv Lanorli and Jauda, see: Tazkira Jauara-i-Urdu (Sir Hasan), p. 147.
With the establishment of the Mughal rule in India and especially from the time of Akbar, scholars from Iran and Turan began to assemble at Delhi and Agra. Of the immigrant poets Ghazali Meshedi, Urfi Shirazi, Sanai Meshedi, Nazir Nishapuri, Nau'i Khabushani, Mushfiqi Bukhari, Hakim Rakna Kashi, Talib Asmli, Abu Talib Kalim Hamadani, Qudsii Karbalai and Mirza Asfahani and Shaikh Abul Faiz Faizi were the most eminent. Among the great historians of Akbar, the names of Shaikh Abul Fazl and Mulla Abdul Qadir Badauni may be mentioned. During the reigns of Jahangir and Shah-jahan a number of historians and poets and scholars flourished in India.

The age of Aurangzeb in spite of the withdrawal of royal patronage and support, produced great Persian poets. Azad Bilgrami remarks: "During the reign of Aurangzeb, in spite of the indifference of the monarch, from every nook and corner poets raised their heads." During this period Nasir Ali and Mirza Abdul Qadir Bedil were eminent Persian poets. Upto the accession of Muhammad Shah, Persian poetry dominated the field of literary activities. Many of the nobles were great poets themselves and great patrons of Persian literature. Nawab Nizam-ud-daula Nasir Jang, the second son of Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah/ left a voluminous Persian Diwan. He was a pupil of Azad Bilgrami. Among the court poets, Mosawi Khan Jurat Aurangabadi, Rizvi Khan, son-in-law of Mosawi Khan Jurat, Mirza Jan Rasa, and Naqd Ali Khan Ijad are noteworthy. Every morning a poetic assembly was organised in the court of Nasir Jang.

1. Khazana-i- Amira, p. 117.
2. ibid, p. 55.
3. ibid, p. 56.
During the reign of Muhammad Shah Wali Deccani came to Dehli and introduced Rekhta. Before this, the poets of northern India wrote in Persian and disliked Rekhta. But with the arrival of Wali's Diwan, the Rekhta poetry became the craze of the city and with the changed taste, Persian was replaced by such poetic compositions. But so far the Persian language was concerned it was still the language of the cultured classed for all practical purposes. It continued to be taught in the Maktabs and Madrasahs. It was not only studied for its literary value but as the language of culture. During the governorship of Khan Jahan Bahadur the foster brother of Aurangzeb, the poetical assemblies of Persian poets were convened in the courtyard of the mosque constructed by Wazir Khan at Lahore. Eminent Persian poets participated in the same. Mushaffi deplors the condition of the age and remarks: "In spite of all mastery over the Persian language, due to the practice of the age, have put myself in the chain of the Rekhta poets. Whenever two or four persons who had mastery over Persian language, assemble, the Persian verses have been recited, otherwise the Persian Diwan was shut in the box."


2. *Aqd-i-Suriyya*, p. 4; *Riyaz al-Rusul*, "All the sweetness which is to be found in my Rekhta verses are due to my knowledge of Persian. Though at present I am ashamed to compose poems in Persian. As the Persian language, due to the ignorance of the people, is losing its charm, people are keenly interested in Rekhta.", p. 228.

Mirza Grami was a distinguished Persian poet but when he saw that people were not interested in Persian verses, he gave up composing poems in Persian and adopted Rekhta. *Nikat-ush-Shuara*, p. 8
The 18th century in spite of this, may be regarded as the golden period of Persian literature. Numerous Persian prose works were written during this period covering subjects like history, mysticism, religion, biographies, tazkiras, dictionaries, tib (medicine). The most important Persian prose work of this period was the Persian translation of the Holy Quran by Shah Wali Ullah Dehlvi. A number of Tazkiras dealing with the Persian and Rakhta poets, their biographies and critical evaluation of their poetic compositions were composed during this period.

Tib (Medicine)

1. Risala-dar-Tib by Mirza Ali Bakht Bahadur Azfari, date of compilation is unknown.

2. Risala Malikholia or Natassaya by Faiz Dehlvi. In this risala the author has given a detailed account of this disease, its causes and symptoms. Besides this the same author wrote many other books dealing with various subjects. The other book Fawaid-al-Sehat was also on medicine; the date of compilation is not known.

Religion.

Shah Wali Ullah, Faiz Dehlvi and Shaikh Ali Hazin wrote a number of books dealing with religion and various subjects relating to it. The books of Shah Wali Ullah have been mentioned elsewhere, need not be mentioned here.

1. For important Persian works on different branches written during this period see: Bibliography at the end of the thesis.

2. For important Tazkiras written during this period see: Bibliography at the end of the thesis.
The volume of Persian works produced during this period shows that it is not correct to say that with the rise of Urdu language, Persian was eclipsed, but there is no denying the fact that for poetic compositions Urdu was more popular than Persian and many of the Persian poets had given up composing poems in Persian but Persian was still the literary court language.

Chief characteristics of the historical works.

During the Sultanate and Mughal period, broadly speaking, the historians were attracted by the Kings who gave them rich rewards and liberal salaries. Consequently, they had to surrender their independent views and opinions, and they wrote what their masters desired them to write, not what they felt or experienced. They always tried to suppress the facts and present their masters as benevolent rulers. They described in detail the military achievements of the rulers. They never wrote anything relating to the people in general. But in the 18th century the conditions had changed. The historians did not receive patronage from ruler even the historians patronised by the rulers were more outspoken and critical of the government. Consequently many of the historical works were compiled on individual initiative. They freely record what the writers saw and felt. Their attitude was very much critical towards the administration. They openly criticised the rulers for their weaknesses and luxurious lives and the nobility for their cowardice and shortcomings and held them responsible for all the miseries which the people had to suffer.

The author of Risala-i-Muhammad Shah Khan Dauran Khan, comparing the times of Muhammad Shah with that of Aurangzeb writes:
"In that period Shariat was observed in its minutest details. But now the mosques are in ruinous state and temples full of men. The ulema and literate like a lifeless men. The days of Shariat had gone and the innovations are the order of the day." ¹

Again he writes:

"The religious institutions had fallen to decay. Religious duties were forgotten. The religious classes were disregarded." ² Alamgir Aurangzeb gave high allowances to the ulema, washaikha and paid special attention towards the Saiyads and gave thousands of rupees as rewards, or Jagirs. But all such things were stopped during the reign of Muhammad Shah. This sacked the foundation of Islam and strengthened the structure of innovations." ³

Regarding the disastrous consequences of the generosity of Bahadur Shah, the author of Tazkirat-ul-Muluk writes:

"The soldiers did not get their salaries and lived on charity. It was due to this reason that whenever the news arrived that the treasure was coming, he would give to some of the favourites on request and to others without their request, twenty thousands, forty and fifty thousands and even one lac or two lacs...Now in this reign, the administrative machinery has fallen out of gear and there is all round disorder and mismanagement. The peoples have been deprived of the benefits which they drew from the state." ⁴

Regarding the state of affairs of Dehli, Yahya Khan writes:

"In these days, such cases of theft, houses breaking and dacoity happen that their prevention has become impossible. Although the inhabitants of the city complained to the kings and the nobles, but no redress came forth and consequently months passed in this way, and thousands of houses were deserted and thousands of men were killed." ⁵

1. Risala Muhammad Shah wa Khan Dauran Khan (MS), f. 17b.
2. ibid, ff. 25a, 25b.
3. ibid, f. 23a. For further reference see the preceding chapters.
4. Tazkirat-ul-Muluk (MS), ff 117a-b.
5. ibid, f. 134a.