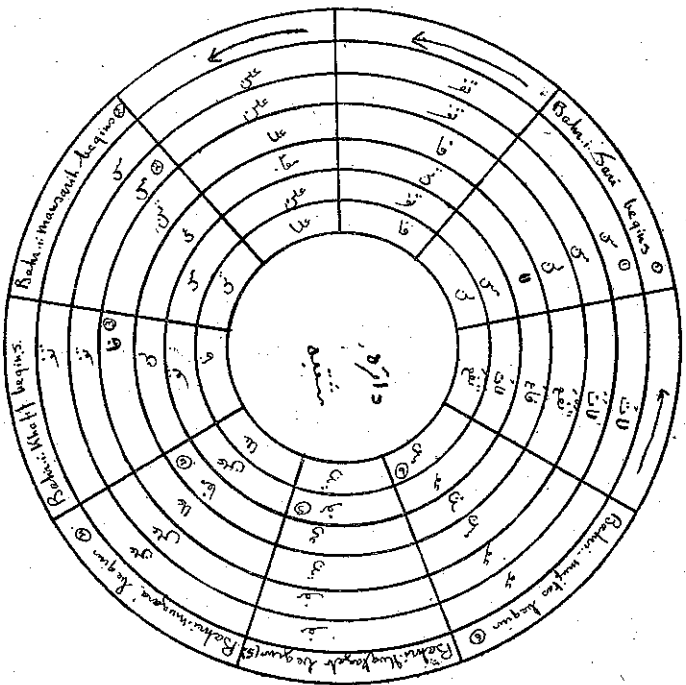


No. 5 Circle.



## CHAPTER 7.

## THE FORMS OF POETRY. (اقسام شعر.)

There is no broad division in Urdu as there is in English into epic and lyric verse, but the minor divisions of ode, sonnet, ballad, triolet, etc. all have, more or less, their counterparts in Urdu Poetry.

The recognized types of Urdu verse are as follows:—

1. **محصرتین** (plur **ایات**) a couplet containing two hemistiches.
2. **محصرتیچ** = a hemistich. Literally the word means the half of a folding door and since the door cannot be said to be shut till both its leaves are closed so the Urdu prosodians deem a line complete when it possesses two **محصرتین**. The first **misra** is called **اول محصرتیچ** and the second **ثانی محصرتیچ**. Each hemistich must rhyme with the other. If it does not do so then it is termed **فرد** (fard.)
3. **فرد** (fard) (lit: single) means an odd and unconnected line.
4. **غزل** (plur. **غزلیات**), in length approximates to the English sonnet as it is limited to a maximum of seven lines (according to some, twenty-five) and a minimum of five. At any rate the total number of lines must be odd, not even.

The **misra'ain** of the first **baith** rhyme and this rhyme is subsequently found in the second hemistich only of the succeeding lines. Its rhyming scheme is therefore.

a ——— a ———  
 a ——— x ———  
 a ——— y ——— etc.

The climax in the ghazal is known as the *shakhs*.

The theme of the ghazal is properly erotic, and, in imitation of the Persians, pederastic also. The older style of ghazal does show some continuity of idea, but most of the ghazaliat of to-day consist of entirely disjointed couplets.

Further remarks on this subject will be found in the Introductory Chapter to Part II.

The first line of the ghazal is called *malc* (lit: rising place), and the second *malc* حسن *malc*; and the last *malc* ختم. In this will be found the *nom de plume* of the poet.

The ghazal may be composed in any of the nineteen metres.

5. رباعي (plural رباعيات), the quatrain, which consists of four misra'ain of which the 1st, 2nd, and 4th rhyme.

Fitzgerald has adopted the same system of rhyme in his translation of the quatrains of Omar Khayyam. The fourth line is the climax of the quatrain.

Rubaiyat are also called *ترباعی - دو بیتی* and *چو مصرعی*.

The only permissible metre for the quatrain is Hazaj. The metre is so catalectic that scansion, or even recognition that the metre ever had anything to do with *مفاعیل*, is extremely difficult. The following is a comparatively simple example.

گر لاکه | برس | جیت | تو پھر مرنا | ہے  
 مفعول مفاعیل مفاعیل مفاعیل نا

The name of this metre is:—"Bahr-i-Hazaj; musamman; akhrab, maqruz, makruf, majrub, mukhannak."

Quatrains usually contain some saw or proverb in the 4th line. Their effective rendering into English verse is for this reason a task calling for the greatest ingenuity.

They say that Abulhasan Rudaki the celebrated Persian poet (A.D. 900-1000) was the inventor of this kind of verse.

6. *qasida* (plur *qasidas*) may (in many cases) be rendered by the English word "ode." Its length is limited to a minimum of twenty and maximum of one hundred and seventy lines. Its rhyming system is the same as that of the ghazal.

Similarly the first bait is known as the *malc*; the second as the *malc* حسن *malc*; and the last as the *malc* ختم, in which, too, will be found the *malc* of the poet.

The *Qasida* is of two kinds:—

- (i) *qasida* without an introduction.
- (ii) *qasida* with an introduction.

The tanzid consists of a few lines only. If it is not a prayer or supplication for support to a benefactor, but is on some other subject, it is termed *qasida*; if it extols the beauties of nature it is called *qasida*; if of the poet's mistress, *qasida*. If it is a complaint against the hardness of the times it is termed *qasida*; if it consists of self-laudatory sentiments, *qasida*; if it tells of the pangs of separation, *qasida*; if of the joys of reunion, *qasida*. Its tone is irreverent, and it speaks ill of a saint, it is called *qasida*; but if, by a "double entendre," no slander is intended, then it is called *qasida* (root *shat*. lit., ravings of a religious maniac). If it relates

the woes of the citizens it is called *ghazal* (شعر غزل); if of a country, *ghazal* (شعر وطن).

Occasionally a *gasida* is named after the last letter of it, e.g., a word ending with *gh*, in which case the *gasida* might be called *gh* (شعر ح).

After the *tanbid*, or *tashbih*, come the lines called *ghazal*, or *ghazal*, in which the poet, in the first person, turns towards the person to whom the ode is dedicated, and whose name will be found at the head of the ode, e.g., "*Gasida-i-darkh-wast-i-parwarish ba hazur nawab Asaf ud dowlah.*"

If there are no *ghazal* the *gasida* is termed *ghazal*, i.e., curtailed (lit. docketed).

After the *ghazal* comes the prayer for the prosperity of the person addressed (in the 2nd person), followed by a general eulogy on his ability, wisdom, generosity and fairness, etc. (in the 3rd person), i.e., from the view point of his subjects. A *gasida* addressed to a potentate is called *ghazal*.

It will be seen from the foregoing remarks that there is a definite sequence to be followed in the writing of a *gasida*.

Briefly (to sum up) it is as follows:—

1. Title.
2. Introductory lines.
3. Request.
4. Valedictory remarks concerning the Person.
5. Laudatory remarks concerning the Person.
6. The *nom de plume* of the author.

The *gasida* may be composed in any of the nineteen metres.

7. *ghazal* (lit: a fragment), is limited in length to a minimum of two, and a maximum of one hundred and seventy, lines.

Its rhyming system is the same as that of the *ghazal* and the *gasida* to which latter it bears a close resemblance.

It has no special theme and both epic and lyric forms of it exist. It, too, may be in any of the nineteen metres.

8. *ghazal* (plur *ghazal*) (lit: paired and wedded), is a type of poetry in which each pair of hemistiches rhyme independently, thus:—

a \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_  
 b \_\_\_\_\_ b \_\_\_\_\_  
 c \_\_\_\_\_ c \_\_\_\_\_ etc. etc.

There is no restriction as to the minimum or maximum number of lines.

The Persians write *masnawiat* in four metres viz. *Mutagarib* (mussaman); *Ramal* (musaddas) *Hazaj* (musaddas) and *Saria* (musaddas) but in Urdu they compose in other metres as well.

9. *ghazal* (farjia' band), consists of several lines (usually from seven to fifteen) after the style of a *ghazal* followed by a couplet of the same metre but of a different rhyme. This is repeated with the necessary condition that the odd couplet following the second series shall be the same couplet which followed the first series. The system of rhyme is, therefore, as follows:—

a \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_  
 a \_\_\_\_\_ b \_\_\_\_\_  
 a \_\_\_\_\_ c \_\_\_\_\_

d \_\_\_\_\_  
 d \_\_\_\_\_  
 e \_\_\_\_\_ e \_\_\_\_\_  
 e \_\_\_\_\_ f \_\_\_\_\_  
 e \_\_\_\_\_ g \_\_\_\_\_  
 d \_\_\_\_\_  
 d \_\_\_\_\_

10. *tarjia'* (*tarkib band*), is very similar to the *tarjia'* band, the only difference being that the odd couplets following the "band" are not the same. They may or may not rhyme with each other. There are then two kinds of "tarkib band" viz., those whose odd couplets would if collected form a "masnawi" and those which would form a "ghazl" or "qasida."

11. *mustazad* (*mustazadi*), is a peculiar kind of poem consisting of a long line followed by an epigrammatic summary of the meaning of that line IN PROSE. The last word of the prose sentence must rhyme with the last word of the line of poetry, or be *radif* to it.

The following is an example taken from the "Taqwim ul aruz":—

جو کچھ ترک ہاتھوں سے ہوا محبت پہ ستم ہے — سب میں نے سہا ہے  
 میں مذہب سے نہیں کہنے کا جب تک مراد ہے — بس صدر کیسا ہے  
 جتنا کہ ستانا ہے ستانا کے در عزیز — کچھ اس سے نہ بڑیو

There is another sort of "mustazad," in which the epigram sums up not a hemistich but a couplet of verse.

With regard to the rhyming prose mentioned above it seems expedient at this juncture to explain this more fully.

There are three kinds of prose, viz.:—

(i) *مستح* or *مستح*, in which the last words of a pair of sentences rhyme. This is used with tremendous effect by Nazir Ahmed but, as employed by Pandit Ratan Nath in the *Fasana-i-Azad* "it flaunts its tawdry lure" with a frequency which is nauseating.

Azad seems to have sacrificed brevity, polish, balance and even sense to this ludicrous mania of rhyming words. Even English can produce a parallel.

Sometimes, on week end visits to maiden aunts of great antiquity, on Sunday afternoons when conversation flags, there are produced, reverently, worn and thumbed albums containing love letters of early Victorian gallants written in the self-same style or even worse when every other word ends in "ation" as: "Madam, versification or literary elaboration not being my vocation, it is with trepidation I dare the violation of your meditation" and so on.

The following from the "Taubt un Nasuh" of Nazir Ahmed is an example of the correct and effective use of this rhymed prose:—

" ایک بازار موت تو البتہ گرم تھا رزقہ جدھر جا رہا تھا اور

دیوانی جس طرف نکلا کرو وحشت و پریشانی \*"

(ii) *مراجزاز* (*murajjaz*), in which all the words of both of a pair of sentences are of the same measure, but do not rhyme.

نامت موزوں کے زور سے روان ناچیز ہے : کل بیچان کے  
 سامنے مشکل ختن ہے قدر ہے \*

(iii) *'ari* (*'ari*) (lit. : naked, i.e. unadorned), is ordinary prose without any restrictions of quantity or rhyme.

12. *musammnat*, consists of taking a couplet or two couplets of a poet's works and adding lines of one's own composition to them. These supplementary lines must be on the same theme, of the same metre as, and must rhyme with, the original couplet or couplets. The *musammnat* is of several kinds according to the number of lines added, *viz.* :—

(i) if one hemistich is added to a couplet it is called *مردس* *i.e.*, three-fold, *e.g.* :—

یوسف کا حسن قصہ پارینہ ہو گیا دل اس کے عکس نور سے آئینہ ہو گیا  
قامت نے اس کے تینے معشر جاگایا

(ii) if two hemistiches are added to one couplet to make a total of four, it is called *مردس*

(iii) if one hemistich is added to two couplets, *مردس*

(iv) if two hemistiches are added to two couplets, *مردس*

(v) if one hemistich is added to three couplets, *مردس*

(vi) if two hemistiches are added to three couplets, *مردس*

(vii) if one hemistich is added to four couplets, *مردس*

(viii) if two hemistiches are added to four couplets, *مردس*

This is the limit either of original or supplementary lines.

*N.B.*—If the original lines are the work of some well-known poet there is of course no need to acknowledge their authorship; but if they are those of some mediocre contemporary it is customary to indicate the authorship to save the poet supplementing them from the accusation of plagiarism.

13. *taszkira*, are short biographical notes on some personage; sometimes in verse, sometimes in prose.

They are usually four lines in length and may be in any metre. The rhyming system is that of the *ghazl*.

14. *diwan*, a collection of *ghazliat*; the final letters of whose "radifs" are in alphabetical order from *ا* to *ی*.

15. *kulliyat*, the complete works of a poet.

16. *muqaddimat* or *muqaddimat*, an epic poem on the martyrdom of Hussein at Kerbela.

17. *tarikh*, a couplet or less, in which by the process called *Abjad* (see Part II, Ch. 3) the date of some famous man's death or of some public occurrence is arrived at.

There remains only to enumerate the themes of poetry as classified by Urdu prosodians. They are as follows :—

(i) *الحمد* or *ترجید* = Praise of God.

(ii) *مناجات* = Prayers to God.

(iii) *نعت* = Praise of the Prophet.

(iv) *مناجیت* = Praise of the saints of the muslim hierarchy.

(v) *مدح* = Praise of a King, nobleman or great benefactor.

(vi) *هجو* = Satire.

(vii) *واسوخت* = Complaint against the tyranny or coldness of a mistress, and announcing of the intention to transfer one's affections to a more responsive deity.

(viii) *شہر آشوب* = Complaint against the times by the citizens *e.g.*, *c.f.* (say) a Lyric in "Punch" on the food shortage during the war.

(ix) *جہاں آسویں*, Similar to the above, but extended to include the woes of the inhabitants of a whole country (directed against their ruler).

PART II.  
RHETORIC.