HISTORICAL ESSAYS

[Rewritten and Enlarged]

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To

SIR JADUNATH SARKAR

and

LADY KADAMBINI SARKAR

for

the peace of their departed souls

Kalikaranjan

PREFACE

The first edition of the author's *Historical Essays* was published about a decade back without introduction. I make amends for it in this revised and enlarged edition of the book which has grown more than twice in bulk and changed its character owing to the inclusion of a lengthy paper on *The Evolution of Islamic Polity* in the seventh-century Arabia. The contents of its first edition have been revised and rewritten partly but otherwise kept intact without changing the title of any paper. In preparing this edition I have kept in view the needs of students of post-graduate classes of our Universities. I have added deliberately two new and stiff papers on *The Tarikh-i-Shahi* of Ahmad Yadgar and *The Makhzan-i-Afghani* of Niamatullah originally intended for Research Journals. These are meant for the neophytes in historical research preparing their Ph. D. or D. Phil. theses on Indo-Muslim history. Most of them come to grief because of their ignorance of the fundamentals of the technique of weighing and sifting historical evidence. *Method* is more important than *Matter* to serious students of history. It is *Method* reinforced by Inductive Logic and the Law of Evidence that comes to the rescue of the novice when *Matter* of his own digging threatens to crush him under its dead weight.

Though written mainly for academicians, some of the Essays, I hope, will be found entertaining and useful to the average citizen of India living under the nightmare of History repeating itself for him. Law and order in these decades of Free India remind us of the sad state of things in the closing years of the reign of Aurangzib. The notorious bandit, Man Singh Rathor of Agra, in recent times, created a problem for our Congress Government no less baffling than that of the Mughal Empire in dealing with a more successful archetype of Man Singh in the Chambal valley, Churaman Jat of Sinsini, a "Freedom-fighter" in the estimation of the current political thought.

Some hard thinking on the *Religious Policy of the Maratha Empire under the Peshwas* will convince the reader of the possible effects of the orthodox Hindu Reaction rapidly gaining in momentum in Indian politics. Those who are uneasy about the uncertain

future of Free India may grow more uneasy by contemplating on the causes of *The Fall of the Maratha Empire* (text, pp. 243 ff).

India of Today as well as the India of Tomorrow shall have to reckon with Islam and the Mussalman for her political stability. Nations have to be forewarned and forearmed not only against avowed enemies but also against friends on the diplomatic front. And History alone can do the needful and enable soldiers and diplomats to feel the pulse of a nation. There cannot be any national integration of India without a cultural integration serving as its foundation. So did Akbar think in the sixteenth century, Raja Ram Mohan in the nineteenth, and Pandit Jawahar Lal in the twentieth. Unfortunately, whatever little interest in the history of Islam and Muslim culture lingered among the Hindus as a legacy of Medieval India down to our school days is now on its vanishing point. This is not a healthy sign, nor it is a sound policy to concentrate Islamic studies in a few denominational institutions. In fact, Banaras stands in greater need of understanding Islam and the Muslim psychology than of discovering the soul of Ancient India for solving the problem of national integration. None will dispute the fact that a century of the study of Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism by Western scholars has been more fruitful than that by the Indians for the last three centuries ; similar has been the case with Islamic history and culture during the same period. It will not be of much practical use to learn all about Islam only from a Maulana or everything about Indian culture and history from a Shastri. But there is danger if the study of Islam or Brahmanism is vitiated by any sinister motive of hostile propaganda like that of the Serampore missionaries in the early decades of the nineteenth-century Bengal, or of the bigoted Aryasamaji, Pandit Ram Chandra of Delhi in the thirties of this century : Ram Chandraji being an erudite scholar of Arabic and Sanskrit and also a *hafiz* having the whole of the Quran with Commentaries committed to memory and the most prominent figure in open air religious debates in the city of Delhi, which, however, created no bitterness, won no converts and was yet thoroughly enjoyed by laymen like the present author while serving in a Delhi college.

I have added more than one hundred pages on the *Evolution of the Islamic Polity* in the seventh century to create a general interest in Muslim history among the younger generation of Hindu intellectuals particularly. This may also be found useful to the post-graduate students of my old University of Calcutta where the

tradition of our days still continues. In these pages on Islamic history, the Arab at his best as well as the Arab at his worst from a modern point of view, will not be missed by an average reader. I hope our younger generations should approach the study of Islam not in the spirit of H. G. Wells but in that of the great Al-Beruni in his study of the Indian civilization in the early decades of the eleventh century. Al-Beruni's Islam had not been affected by his appreciative studies in Brahmanism and his close intimacy with the pandits as that of Dara Shukoh in a similar venture. My ancestors managed to retain their office of *Qanungo* under the very nose of Aurangzib's uncle in spite of Aurangzib's stern edict: "*Qanungo ba sharte Islam*". And I hope to live and die as good a Hindu as Raja Todar Mal in spite of my loyalty and regard for Islam as a kindred faith, and for the Muslims as neighbours and fellow citizens. So there is no danger to one's soul in one's intellectual sympathy with Islam and love for the Muslim even of the type of Mulla Badayuni of Akbar's Court.

However, I claim no credit for any original research in Islamic history. For facts I am heavily indebted to eminent scholars, J. Wellhausen and Maulana Shibli among the contemporaries and to al-Suyuti of medieval times. J. Wellhausen's excellent work available in its English translation by Margaret Graham Weir under the title, *The Arab Kingdom and its Fall* forms the nucleus of my narrative of the Umayyad regime. I found Maulana Shibli's biography of Caliph Umar I (*al-Faruq in Urdu*) indispensable for the study of Umar I as a man and a builder of the Islamic Commonwealth. Al-Suyuti's Arabic work was translated into English more than one hundred years back by the famous scholar Jarrett under the title of *History of the Caliphs*. A reliable Urdu translation of the same is also now out of print. Al-Suyuti in his inimitable style carries life and light into an otherwise dreary catalogue of facts by making every important historical personage live and move on the screen as it were by introducing sayings and telling remarks without sacrificing historical accuracy.

I am happy to acknowledge my indebtedness to Messrs. Shiva Lal Agarwala & Co. of Agra for their interest and patience in getting this Second and Enlarged edition of the book published. But for the untiring labour of love of Mr. S. N. Mudgal, who had been entrusted with the work of seeing the book through the press, it would have been difficult to print the book from my unrevised manuscript. Though not personally known to me, Mr. Mudgal is in

the historian's estimate a martyr to the cause of good English of the old school with only a few to appreciate his merits and reward his services adequately for his honest devotion to duty.

My sons were eager to dispose of their cumbersome legacy of unpublished writings during my life-time. So they conspired to send this enlarged edition of *Historical Essays* to the press without my knowledge, leaving me no alternative but to move on and face the accomplished fact. May God bless them for their ingenuity to force me into limelight.

Lucknow,
September 1, 1968.

K. R. Qanungo

CONTENTS

	Preface		i—viii
CHAPTER			PAGES
	Part I		
1.	History on the Crossroads	...	1
2.	An Assessment of the Historical Value of the *Tarikh-i-Shahi*	...	7
3.	Niamatullah's *Makhzan-i-Afghani*	...	30
4.	The Rajputs, and the Historians of Rajputana	...	63
5.	The Jats and the Importance of their History	...	75
6.	Fragments of the Bhao-Ballad in Hindi	...	81
7.	A Ramble into Hindi Literature in Search of Orissa and the Jagannath	...	96
8.	*Amirnama* or Memoirs of Amir Khan by Basawan Lal	...	103
9.	Jadunath Sarkar as a Historian	...	114
	Part II		
1.	Islam Transformed in Bengal	...	135
2.	Impact of Islam on Orissa and Bengal Contrasted	...	148
3.	Some Side-Lights on the History of Banaras	...	154
4.	Dacca and its Medieval History	...	159
5.	Origin of the Bahamani Sultans of the Deccan	...	166
6.	Guru Nanak through the Perspective of History	...	173
7.	Some Side Lights on the Character and Court-Life of Shah Jahan	...	177
8.	Dara Shukoh and Mirza Raja Jai Singh Kachhwah	...	185
9.	Literary Achievements of Dara Shukoh	...	194
10.	The Causes of the War of Succession [Reign of Shah Jahan]	...	206
11.	Churaman Jat of Sinsini	...	217
12.	Religious Policy of the Maratha Empire under the Peshwas	...	230
13.	Some Reflections on the Fall of the Maratha Power	...	243
14.	A Study of the Prophet of Islam as a Statesman and an Ideal Citizen	...	250

CHAPTER PAGES

Part III

15. The Evolution of Islamic Polity ... 260
16. The Golden Age of Islam ... 271
17. The Theocracy in Transition ... 316
18. From the Meridian to Evening Twilight ... 349
19. Decline and Fall of the Umayyad Caliphate of Damascus ... 373
20. Arab Chauvinism and the non-Arabs ... 380

1

History on the Cross-roads

The cynical old Dr. Johnson caught history and historians between the horns of a dilemma by enunciating his dictum thus : the historian tells either what is false or what is true. In the former case he is no historian ; in the latter he has no opportunity for displaying his abilities ; for truth is one, and all who tell the truth must tell it alike. No two historians tell the same thing about the same event, though all of them claim to be scientific in their methods. This difference and diversity bewilder the man of abstract reasoning. No historian should ever pretend to have discovered the truth or given the whole truth.

Macaulay attempted to reply to this charge, and suggested a way out of the horns of this dilemma. Unfortunately, the race of Johnson is not yet extinct ; nor historians by their achievements have been able to remove the scepticism of the layman.

Macaulay made this frank confession, that the greatest truth a historian can discover for himself is to admit like pious Arab historians, "God knows truth best !" in everything and always. There is no answer, however, to those who rule out God from human affairs.

The Muse of History through the ages according to Time and Terrain has changed her garb and character though not her function. Out of the mist of myth she emerged into light and behind the smoke-screen of propaganda of Isms, creeds and militant nations she will hide herself perhaps in bewilderment on the cross-road. In the infancy of mankind History was three-fourths poetry and imagination, and a romance in the age of man's adolescence. Herodotus amuses and fires juvenile imagination. Thucydides explodes myths and leaves a lesson behind, and Tacitus warns civilization against under-estimating the vigour and virtues of barbarism. Aristotle

made History bear its first fruit, Political Philosophy, which was perhaps the proverbial *Aina-i-Iskandari* or the Magic Mirror given by God to Alexander who saw, therein, things of the world reflected, and coming events cast their shadows.

The Ancient Orient had its own conception of History and mode of presentation. It is said that though the Hindus have the word *Itihasa* in the Aryan vocabulary, they had no history. The Mahabharata and the Puranas pass for history caught in the cobweb of religion, ethics and sectarian propaganda. Hindus begin their History with the bursting of the Egg of Brahma, and Muslims with Baba Adam; and both in Islam and Hinduism, History is considered, a branch of study subsidiary to religion. But there was a practical secular purpose in the undercurrent of the history of the Orient.

The problem that faces India today, namely, the evolution of a secular State out of the conflicting communal elements, a synthetic culture out of a legacy of rooted fanaticism and mutually repellant moral factors, to instil a sense of oneness and kinship into India's heterogeneous peoples, to create a new nation by throwing everything old into the melting pot—perhaps received its first solution, however crude, in the Mahabharata as history.

The ancients practised either a pious fraud or gave currency to the innermost feeling of oneness that pervaded the masses of India. The great solvent of colour, racial prejudice, differences of religion, culture and moral standards was the genealogy of children of the legendary Yayati according to which all the then known races from the Hindukush to the Cape Comorin are made first cousins. The aboriginal races like Nishadas and Shabaras sprang according to the Mahabharata from the pores of hairs on the body of the 'Divine Cow' (Surabhi), in the hermitage of *Rishi* Vashishta to protect her and the innocent *Rishi* from the grasping clutches of the impious warrior-caste drunk mad with the monopoly of power. If so, how is it that the worshipper of the quadruped progeny of Surabhi today holds the black bipeds who sprang from her as defenders of *Dharma* as unclean and untouchable? Once again what our ancients believed in ignorance of Ethnology, Modern India shall have to accept the same without questioning under the clarion call of the oppressed humanity out for vengeance. The Semitic counterpart of Aryan Yayati is Abraham from whose children all the peoples of Africa and Asia, white, black and yellow are said to have sprung.

Unlike the Hindus, the Muslims have created the richest and most diversified historical literature in the world, ancient or medi-

eval, barring that of unexplored China. Besides, Islam and not Christianity was the heir of the legacy of the learning of heathen Greece during the Middle Ages. Islam was the bridge and plank between the Orient and the Occident. Islamic culture and civilization was verily modern in comparison with the other contemporary cultures and civilizations of the world. With Damascus as the first seat of the Arab Empire under the Umayyads, Islam looked for and received light from the West through the Hellenism of the prostrate Byzantine Empire. With the transfer of the seat of the Caliphate to Baghdad, Islam made as it were a right about turn towards the Middle and the Far East, and her civilization and culture drew sap from the buried civilizations of Assyria and Babylonia of yore and of decadent Iran, India, and even of distant China. However, the main spring of Islamic civilization continued to be Greek in the realm of medicine, philosophy, mathematics, music and astronomy. It is said that Emperor Constantine had imprisoned masters of Heathen learning in a monastery of Spain for the future safety of Christianity and the Church ; because he rightly suspected that a creed based on justification by faith and an ecclesiastical hierarchy founded on authority had much to fear from profane Logic and unchained reason. Aristotle is said to have had appeared to Caliph Mamun, son of Harun-al-Rashid, and in order to oblige Mamun that the locks of the imprisoned treasures of Greek learning were broken and camel-loads of manuscripts were sent to Baghdad ! To the Muslim goes the credit of conservation and propagation of Greek learning and of first antiquarian research into the history and ancient learning of Egypt, Iran and India from which the Arabs drew liberally to replenish their empty stores of many a branch of Science and Arts.

History was courtly and aristocratic in character in the East as well as the West during the Middle Ages till far into modern times. The Arabic saying goes : History for kings and warriors, poetry for woman and arithmetic for the shopkeeper. Historians degenerated into panegyrists and sycophants in the decadent days of the Abbasid Empire. Once an eminent historian was visited by a friend at his own house, and on being asked what he was busy at, replied : "I am piecing together all the falsehoods on earth to please the fancy of the Sultan." The Sultan was Azd-ud-daula of the Buwayyid dynasty ruling in Iraq, Iran and Mesopotamia as the Mayor of the Palace of the puppet Abbasid Caliph. However, history and historiography rose above the then known standard and

scientific level at the hands of Ibn Khaldun, who was the father of Political Philosophy in Islam and outside during the Middle Ages.

The career and character of History in the West in modern times is too swift, too wide and too complex to admit of treatment in a limited space. History, as Macaulay has told us, suffers from all the evils of a dyarchy of literature and science over her realm. Like everything in the world, History too has assumed a scientific character definitely. But the result at first was that what history gained in esteem and usefulness, it lost in popularity, charm and the power of appeal. It goes without saying that what is not science shall never stand, and that which is not literature shall not live. History was democratised and made to breathe a new spirit first in England. There she turned her back on the pageant of defunct royalty and scenes of blood revelry of the baronial hall, and came down to the countryside and the business thoroughfares. What was formely a dynastic *History of England* appeared in the role of *History of the English People.*

As regards the treatment of history, the Teuton prefers microscope and analysis ; whereas the Celt excels in handling the telescope and in brilliant synthesis, though often elusive and superficial. The great historian Gooch made a masterly survey of *History and Historians of the Nineteenth Century.* The Prussian School of History created the modern German nation out of peoples of Germany under the heels of Napoleonic occupation. It has left a lesson as well as warning to those who in India look for a so-called national school of history. This school served an immediate purpose no doubt, but these were no histories but well-written and powerful political pamphlets dying out like a seasonal crop. European nations flourished on the cult of hatred, and were taught through history to hate and envy others so that they might each love their country and people better. The Teuton was taught to hate and look down upon the Celt in the nineteenth century, and in the twentieth the Hitlerite School of History along with Philosophy injected a recipe of hatred in the blood of the prostrate German nation after the Great War (1914-1918). Hitler believed that an injection of artificial barbarism was the only cure of the disease of civilisation from which the German body politic was suffering then. Such history gave Europe an Attila thousand times more powerful and destructive than his archetype. History is no less potent of evil than of good, a double-edged sword that cuts both ways. The Soviet Russia is said to be developing a School of History harnessed to the services

of the State. Ideas penetrate and conquer where the mightiest army dares not tread. If the German School of History conjured up an Attila, the Soviet and the Mao Tse Tung Schools may call back to life the dreaded Janghiz Khan.

To come nearer home to Hindustan, History in our country is still in its chronicle stage of evolution lagging a century behind the West. Not to speak of Philosophy of History, the history of this sub-continent is only in the making. In the field of Indian history we have no doubt a fairly decent number of men engaged in digging the past. We have Indologists of the front rank, fairly good compilers of biography and brilliant essayists. But these are after all masons and brick-layers lacking the genius of an architect of History. A Lecky or a Fisher India cannot hope to produce in this generation. Those who are engaged in researches in medieval history belong to "the kettle-drum and trumpet school of history" as William Irvine humorously remarked. Within a smaller canvas Sir Jadunath has attempted with success the history of the decline and fall of the Mughal Empire, what Gibbon in grand style and on wider canvas achieved in his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. The forage ground of Mughal India is primarly confined within the bounds of the three battles of Panipat and their outer fringes extending over half a century at both ends. There is a lurking suspicion that some historians portend evil by giving currency to the forgotten feuds and unhappy episodes of an age that ought to be forgotten in the new secular set-up of Modern India. On the other hand, there are Muslims who regard Indo-Muslim history as their title-deed to the sovereignty of India with Pakistan as the jumping ground. If the historian is permitted to feel the pulse of his poeple, he has reasons for much misgiving. This rise of temperature is not a healthy sign. History also bears the lesson unheeded by the reactionaries that the path of hatred, national or communal, is easy, straight and short, like the sinner's road to hell. The Muse of History holds in one hand the cup of *Ab-i-Hayat*, and in another a cup of hemlock of Death slow in action.

There is another group of enlightened thinkers who suggest a compromise : namely, that the Indo-Muslim period of history should be rendered innocuous by a process of hard polishing, by practising an economy of truth if necessary for the sake of communal harmony. We feel that such a division of Indian history into Brahminical, Buddhist, pre-Mughal and Mughal India is unhistorical.

For us the question is, whether the historian should swim with the current of the contemporary politics, and humour the passions and the passing mood of a people ; or he should assume the role of the 'Superior Intelligence' of a nation in its infancy. Between the two horns of a dilemma we see no other path except the path of *Dharma* as chalked out by our ancients. By *Dharma* we do not mean any creed or *ism* ; because, a student of history cannot pretend to have any religion or nationality when he sits in judgment over the dead at the tribunal of Truth. But what was *Dharma* in the age of the Mahabharata (*varnasrama* and *rajadharma*) is not the *Dharma* of India of to-day, committed as she stands to a casteless, classless Democracy as her *Dharma.*

It lies in the hands of the younger generation of our historians to make the history of India either a wedge to tear asunder our national life, or make it a "bridge and plank" of social and cultural contact between India and the Islamic countries. Our Universities should now launch a campaign of "Grow more men". It is not *food* but men of character in its comprehensive sense that will save our country from political bankruptcy.

Today, History is in a dilemma on the cross-roads of Nationalism and Internationalism. There are other Isms also cutting a zigzag course of labyrinth across these highways. Some people have a day-dream of One World, One Government, and they would like to have only one history, the *History of Man* superseding the histories of Englishmen, Frenchmen or the Germans, or that of every other nation or creed. Free India is pledged to the cult of Love and Peace with all, which is the duty of the future historians of India to implant on the universal soul of humanity. If History does not rise equal to the occasion, Free India may in despair put a ban on History and the historians as Aurangzeb did when he found that the verdict of history was sure to go against him.

2

An Assessment of the Historical Value of the Tarikh-i-Shahi

Maulana Hidayat Hosain, the last of Bengal's learned orientalists of old school, has edited Ahmad Yadgar's work with admirable industry and learning adding copious notes and giving a wide range of variants in his Mss. His labours were worthy of bestowal on a more sound work than that of Ahmad Yadgar. Very little is known about Ahmad Yadgar himself except that Sultan Daud Karrani of Bengal (1572-1576) expressed his desire that a history of the Afghan Sultans should be written by somebody comparable with the works of Minhaj-i-Siraj and Ziauddin Barani. So Yadgar must have been born and brought up in Bengal in the time of Daud's father, Sulaiman Karrani. After the Mughal conquest of Bengal he probably migrated to Upper India, rising to no importance in life. Nowhere is given his father's name, about which, however, our elders, Blochmann, Elliot and Beveridge played a comedy of errors, solemnly affirming that *Yadgar's father* (?) was the *wazir* of Mirza Askari, brother of Humayun. Every one should be grateful to M. Hidyat Hosain for tracing the origin of this error to the unscrupulous plagiarism of Yadgar, "who has copied *verbatim* the entire history of Humayun from the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, and the sentence cited above occurs therein (Vol. II, p. 37). Blochmann, Elliot and Beveridge were all misled into thinking that the present writer (Ahmad Yadgar), was the son of the wazir to Mirza Askari on account of this sentence. It should be noted that the sentence is not his (Yadgar's), but only

a *verbatim* citation from the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* as shown above"[1] (vide Introduction, pp. vi, vii).

This is generally agreed that Yadgar probably wrote his history in the reign of Emperor Jahangir. Sir H. Elliot held it "to be posterior to *Tarikh-i-Da'udi* which it generally follows closely". This surmise is correct, but not Sir Henry's premise ; because all the Afghan writers in the reign of Jahangir, Niamatullah partly, Abdullah, the author of Da'udi and Yadgar extensively, drew upon a common source ; namely, Rizqullah's Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi written about 1580 A. D. But Yadgar nowhere mentions his book either Niamatullah's *Makhzani i Afghani* or Abdullah's *Da'udi*, as his source. Yadgar mentions two histories in the text ; namely, *Tarikh-i-Nizami* (Nizamuddin Ahmad's *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*), and another less known general history *Ma'danal-Akbar* (more correctly, *Ma'dan-i-Akbar-i-Ahmadi*)[2] or *the Mine of News* from the time of Adam down to the year 1023 A. H. (1614 A.D.) written in the reign of Jahangir

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[1] A parallel case of such plagiarism including the father's name of a previous well-known author by an intellectual loafer aspiring to the distinction of a historian a century after Yadgar, is that of Khafi Khan by Sadiq Khan, a man of doubtful bonafides. To Sadiq Khan, the author of a *Badshahnama* copied verbatim some portion of Khafi Khan's work in the same way appropriating even Khafi Khan's father to himself. But a few years back, Prof. Shri Ram Sharma claimed a startling discovery that it was Khafi Khan who stole Sadiq's father along with the contents of his history. But a perusal of the Ms. of Sadiq's *Badshahnama* strengthens the suspicion that Sadiq was the thief and plagiarist and not Khafi Khan (See *Bibliography of Mughal India by* Prof. Shri Ram Sharma).

Vide Yadgar ; text p. 130, and footnote 3.

It is to be noted that Yadgar mentions *Ma'dan al-Akhbar* as his authority *only* for the story of Madhi Khawajah and Mir Khalifa in which Muqim Haravi figures, without adding that Muqim was Nizamuddin's father. Nowhere else does he mention *Tarikh-i-Nizami* though he borrows his narrative *verbatim* in fortytwo pages of the printed text (pp. 130-172) regarding the first part of the reign of Humayun.

We learn only from the editor's footnote 8, p. 172 that his Mss A and B (of the Asiatic Society Library and the Buhar Library respectively) *add* in the first sentence of the *reign of Sher Shah*, the names, *"Tarikhi-i-Nizami wa Ma'dan al-Akhbar-i-Ahmadi"*. Such being the case, Blochmann's oversight in tracing Yadgar's misappropriation of Nizamuddin's father's name is only too natural, though the rectification of this mistake is highly creditable for the learned editor.

by Ahmad, son of Bahbal, son of Jamal *Kam-goe* (the Taciturn). It is very doubtful whether Yadgar copied directly from *Tarikh-i-Nizami*, or at second hand from *Ma'dan al-Akbar*,—an issue which can be decided if anybody cares to compare the text of Yadgar with that of *Ma'dan al-Akbar*.

However, the upward limit of the date of Yadgar's composition thus stands at 1614 A.D. It is to be noted that Niamatullah completed his *Makhzan i-Afghani* in 1623 A.D., and that Yadgar does not seem to have utilised *Makhzan-i-Afghani*. But any inference that Yadgar wrote his book sometime between 1614 and 1623 A.D. is not justified. It admits of little doubt that Yadgar's history is posterior to that of *Tarikh-i-Da'udi* also written in 1623 A.D. in the reign of Jahangir. Niamatullah[1] does not mention Abdullah's *Tarikh-i-Da'udi* ; and therefore *Da'udi* must have been written between 1623 and 1627 (the year of Jahangir's death). So the presumption is that Yadgar wrote not in the reign of Jahangir but of Shah Jahan.

Yadgar goes out of the way of medieval Muslim chroniclers in general by omitting any mention of his sources of giving a *name*

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[1] In the *Preface* by Niamatullah to his *Makhzan-i Afghani* we come across the following *histories* on which he based his work :—

(a) Dorn's Translation (Book I, p. 3) : *Tarikh i-Nizami, Waqiat-i-Ibrahim Shahi Mushtaqi Ma'dan al-Akhbar* and *Tarikh-i-Ibrahim Shahi*. Dorn adds a note in *Book II*, p. 60 that Dr. Lee's Ms. of *Makhzan* contains, besides these, also Abul Fazl's *Akbarnama* and Abbas Sarwani's *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*.

(b) Lucknow University copy of *Makhzan* (pp. 5-6) has :— *Tarikh-i-Nizami, History* written by Maulana Mushtaqi, Maulana Mahmud Kalwani's *Tarikh-i-Ibrahim Shahi* (Kalwani's father's name, given as Ibrahim Kalwani in Dorn, p. 3, is omitted in this Ms.) ; *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi* by Shaikh Abbas Sarwani ; *Ma'dan-i-Akhbar-i-Ahmadi*, which was compiled in 1020 A.H. by Ahmad, son of Bahbal *Kambo* (*t* correctly *Kam-goe* ; the Taciturn).

(c) My lamented friend, Prof. N. B. Roy of the Visva-Bharati University in the First part of a Translation of *Makhzan-i-Afghani* (Santiniketan Press, 1958) begins the translation of his amended Ms. of the Makhzan thus :—

"It is narrated by the author of the *Tarikh-i-Ibrahim Shahi* and the *Tarikh-i-Nizami* that Malik Bahlol....." (p. 26).

He takes the students of Indo-Muslim history by surprise by saying that Dr. Dorn *did not translate Niamatullah's Makhzan-i-Afghani* but Ibrahim Batani's "*Tawarikh-i-Majlis Arae* (which is) only an enlarged version of Abbas Sarwani's *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*" (p. 2).

to his work. Its more familiar name *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afaghana* has been coined by readers and transcribers on the basis of the major portion of the contents of the author's work. Some of the chronicles have come down to later times under names other than those given by the authors themselves ; e g., Nizamuddin's *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* became *Tarikh-i-Nizami* ; Abbas Sarwani's *Tufah-i-Akbar Shahi* is better known as *Tarikhi-i-Sher Shahi.* And the real name of Ferishta's History (popularly called *Tarikh i-Ferishta*) is known today only to the curious pedants. As regards the name of Yadgar's work the editor says, "From the colophon of the Lahore copy it appears that the name of this work is *Tarikh-i-Shahi* and not *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afaghina* or *Tarikh-i Salatin-i Ludi wa Suri* The previous cataloguers as well as Elliot had defective copies and consequently a name according to the subject matter of the book. The metrical colophon of the work appearing in the Lahore copy . . . . was, I think, written by the copyist, and not by the author. In my opinion, the book should end with the previous Arabic sentence. This manuscript was copied by a calligrapher who was a good Persian scholar and poet, and at the end he gives the date of transcription as A.H. 1054 (A.D. 1644)."[1]

It is too much to believe that Yadgar left his voluminous chronicle to be named by others as they pleased. With considerable diffidence we venture to say that the venerable Maulana has perhaps committed an error of judgment with regard to the concluding Persian verses, which gives the name *Tarikh-i-Shahi* and the date of its *completion* (*1054 H/1644*). If this was not from the pen of the author, who else could give a name to this work ? If the Lahore copy was a transcript, why does the transcriber forgo the reward of his labour by omitting to mention his own name and the name of the place where it was transcribed, a common practice with the writers of colophons both in Persian, Hindi and Bengali ? However, we leave the issue to more competent hands for a final verdict.

Yadgar deals with the career of Sultan Bahlul in 27 pages in print (Text, p. 28). The author begins thus ; "Narrators of events and reporters of olden times, who are divers (in the ocean) of resplendent and sublime realities (i.e., rhetoricians) have thus woven the narrative on the string of shining silk . . . ."

A close study of the *Tarikh-i-Shahi* reveals the fact that Yadgar believed what he read or heard without questioning the bonafides of

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[1] Vide *Tarikh-i-Shahi*, Editor's Preface in English, p. x.

his authorities. He appears to have been an extremely careless compiler on whom few can rely safely for approximately correct statements. In order to judge whether Yadgar has advanced or confused our knowledge of history we should take up for scrutiny some passages wherein he differs from standard chronicles like the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* and the *Makhzan-i-Afghani.*

1. Sultan Mahmud Sharqi's siege of Delhi in the first year of Bahlul's reign.

Though Yadgar nowhere mentions Abdullah's *Tarikh-i-Daudi,* his account is based on this history and suffers from the defects of his source, besides from those of his own. Yadgar says : "In the first year of his accession Sultan Bahlul started for Lahore, and left *Dariya Khan Lodi* and Iskandar Shah Sarwani at Delhi" (p. 10) . . . . . Sayyid Shamsuddin took the keys of the gates of the fort (of Delhi) to *Dariya Khan Lodi who had laid siege to Delhi* (on behalf of Sultan Mahmud Sharqi) . . . . . p. 11.

Why such a contradiction in the same breath ? As regards the fact that the Sayyid took the keys to Dariya Khan Lodi who had besieged the fort, there can be no doubt ; because more reliable authorities, such as the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* and the *Makhzan-i-Afghani* also say the same thing. As regards the nobles who were left behind at Delhi for its defence, Nizamuddin mentions Prince Bayazid and Qutb Khan Lodi ; to these the *Makhzan* of Niamatullah makes no addition. But Yadgar borrows presumably from the *Tarikh-i-Da'udi* the whole of its interesting details ; the story of Bahlul's mother-in-law, Bibi Mattu (wife of Sultan Shah Lodi) having dressed up Afghan women in male attire to man the wall of the fort ; and Shah Sikandar Sarwani having sent an arrow right through a full leathern bag and the bullock on which it was loaded. Thus it comes down to this that Dariya Khan Lodi was not inside the fort as Bahlul's partisan but outside in joint command with *Fath Khan Haravi* (mentioned by all the authorities) in the first siege of Delhi by the Sharqi army.[1]

The story of Dariya Khan Lodi's treachery is typically Pathan, but not ignoble from the view-point of political morality and racial patriotism. But the fact seems to be otherwise. Dariya Khan Sambhali (Lodi) was one of those who resented Bahlul's usurpation and invited the Sharqi Sultan to oust Bahlul from power. Even

[1] It is painful to criticise a friend, who can argue no more with his critics, and yet we are forced to remark that the late Prof. N. B.

after his alleged service to Bahlul, Dariya Khan did not join Bahlul. As a reward for his treachery to the Sharqi Sultan, Dariya Khan Lodi lost seven parganas to Bahlul along with his semi-independent status within a few months. So this is not history, but a plausible story handed down by gossipy Mushtaqi and unsuspectingly repeated by later writers.

2. The alleged conquest of Mewar by Sultan Bahlul.

This stands as the most original contribution of Yadgar to the history of Bahlul Lodi ; as no other history, even the *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi* and *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, tells the story. Yadgar gives no date of this alleged invasion of Mewar. His story runs as follows : "By a rapid march he (Bahlul) reached Ajmer and sent a powerful army. Chatarsal, the sister's son of the Rana was at *Udaipur* with ten thousand horsemen. Qutab Khan reached that place and a fight took place with the accursed *kafirs*. At the start the Sultan's army turned their faces before the wild charge of the kafirs and many brave Afghans became martyrs in that battle. Eventually Qutb Khan and Khan-i-Khanan Farmuli taking life in their hands engaged the kafirs with sword and dagger and turned back the blackfaced infidels, and Chatarsal was killed.....After that the Rana made

Roy has made a desperate attempt to explain away Yadgar's contradictory statements about Dariya Khan Lodi. He says, "The whole taken *verbation* (*verbatim*?) from T.A. is *obscure* and elucidated here with reference to the texts of *Tarikh-i-Da'udi* and *Tarikh-i-Shahi*. According to them.....Sayyid Shamsuddin with the keys of the fort (was deputed) for delivery into the hands of *Dariya Khan Lodi who had deserted to the Sharqi side*....." (Vishwabharati edition of Niamatullah's History of the *Afghans*, p. 35, footnote 1).

Who syas that Dariya Khan *had deserted* during the siege *to the Sharqi side* ? Not even Yadgar, who simply says, "nizd-i-Dariya Khan Lodi ke Qila-ra muhasara kardah-bud *burd*" (Lines 13 & 14 ; p. 11 ; text).

If this be an *elucidation*, it is high time that *texts* should be left undisturbed even if obscure.

Another friend (now an ascetic, in Pondicherry), Dr. A. B. Pandey, author of the *First Afghan Empire in India* more cautiously indulges in a guess about this Dariya Khan Lodi to explain divergence between Mushtaqi and all other chroniclers. *Mushtaqi* alone gives the name of the person to whom Sayyid Shamsuddin took the keys of the fort, as Mubarak Khan Sambhali, whereas all others call him Dariya Khan Lodi. Mushtaqi was not born before the siege of Delhi; besides the failing memory of Mushtaqi is sufficient excuse for this slip (p. 65, footnote 2).

peace with the army of the Sultan and ordered the *khutbah* to be read at *Udaipur* and issued coins in the name of the Sultan (text pp. 19-20).

M. M. Gaurishankar Ojha rejected this spurious tale on cogent grounds (vide *History of Udaypur Raj in Hindi*, p. 639, fn. 1). Yadgar has, however, found a champion in our late lamented friend, N. B. Roy, who made a desperate effort to prove that Bahlul's Udaipur expedition might be a fact.[1]

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[1] Visva-Bharati publication of the *History of the Afghans* ; *Note* pp. 61-62. Roy's contention is : "Tod based his account on bardic chronicle, which corroborated by the Persian *annal* (?), would perhaps refute Ojha's objection to the authenticity of this fact and establish the event of Lodi intervention on behalf of Rana Udai Singh as a historical fact."

As a student of Medieval History of India, Roy had enough matter, and logic too for exposing the hollowness of such a claim for authenticity of Yadgar's tale. The facts are as follows :

Uda murdered his father Maharana Kumbha in 1468 and was driven out by his younger brother Raimal in 1473. Uda fled to Sojat in Jodhpur territory then under the firm grasp of Sultan Ghyasuddin Khilji of Malwa. From Sojat Uda fled to Mandu (capital of Malwa), sought the help of the Sultan at the price of family honour. While returning from the Sultan's court after settling a marriage of his daughter with the Sultan, he was killed in his camp by lightning. (Ojah, p. 639). The Malwa Sultan with the two sons of Uda invaded Chitor, and in a fierce battle was badly defeated by the Rajputs. The Sultan crestfallen returned to Mandu.

The facts about Sultan Bahlul that can be gleaned from Persian chronicles are as follows :

1. Between 1473 and 1478, Bahlul had to fight four wars with the Sharqi Sultans (*Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, iii, p. 286) in self-defence.

2. "Afterwards the Sultan marched towards Delhi *via* Nimkhar, which he laid waste" (Roy's quotation from Yadgar ; p. 61). How an army from Ajmer could march *to Delhi via Nimkhar* ? Nimkhar (ancient *Naimisharanya*) is in Sitapur District, and its distance from Lucknow is 55 miles n.n.w.

Yadgar's text says, "After this (conclusion of peace with the Rana) the Sultan led his victorious army in the direction of Nimkhar.....".

3. The *khyat* quoted by Tod mentioning the intervention of a king of Delhi is not older than Yadgar's history from which gossips might have been picked up by some Charan at the Mughal Court.

Dr. A. B. Pandey keeps him on the safe side by remarking that Tod's details "are absolutely different" (from those of

3. Story of Bahlul's love with a goldsmith's daughter and birth of Nizam *alias* Sultan Sikandar Lodi.

Though it is a fact that Sultan Sikandar Lodi was born of a goldsmith's daughter, no previous writers Mushtaqi and Abdullah, Nizamuddin and Niamatullah array the love affair of Bahlul in such details as we read in Yadgar's *Tarikhi-i-Shahi*. But wherefrom Yadgar could possibly pick up the story ? Till it is traced to some earlier source, such as *the Ma'dan al-Akhbar* (which I have not read), for the details about the birth and early life of Prince Nizam, Yadgar is entitled to the credit of original contribution. Yadgar writes, "It is said (*naql ast*) that when Bahlul was the *hakim* of that city (of Sarhind), he built a paradise-like palace for himself outside the fort, where he used to live occasionally. In that neighbourhood there lived a goldsmith who had a very beautiful daughter. By accident the eyes of Bahlul Khan fell on her face and he became mad with love for her. That moon-faced girl also gave her heart to him. When he became firmly seated on the throne, he pleased her father and married her. One night that daughter (of the goldsmith) saw in dream that the Moon from heaven became separated from the firmament and fell on her lap. Next morning she related that dream to Bahlul Shah. . . . . (text, p. 17) . . . . . In the seventh year of Bahlul's accession, a son was born to him . . . . and named Nizam . . . . . (who) had a separate establishment with the grant of Sarkar Sambhal in his childhood, and (Bahlul) appointed Khan-i-Khanan Farmuli as Nizam's ataliq . . . ." (18-19).[1]

Yadgar). This expedition against the Rana is as false as Bahlul's alleged raids as far as Ujjain where Sultan Ghyasuddin Khilji, twice as powerful as Bahlul, was holding sway.

[1] The jump of the Moon from heaven on a fortunate mother's lap or impregnation by moon-god, is a stock story. Sujan Rai Bhandari, author of *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh* (written in 1695) quotes a similar story of Sher's mother on the authority of Hasan Khan Afghan's work, *Tarikh-i-Afaghina*. Khafi Khan repeats the same in his notice of Sher's career.

Yadgar adds also that Bahlul gave *Sarkar* Sarhind to Nizam when he came of age, and that when Nizam was only five, Bahlul, in order to take an omen for march against the Rana, once asked Nizam to shoot at the bud of a flower, which Nizam took off by his first shot.

Prof. N. B. Roy quotes from the Lucknow University Ms., of *Makhzan al-Afghani* some facts of the early life of Nizam, which are not found in Yadgar's book (See History of the Afghans, Part I, p. 106).

Yadgar begins the narrative of both the Sultans Sikandar and Ibrahim without mentioning his source except a vague reference to "narrators and writers (who) have thus described" .... There is hardly any contribution of his except giving some interesting details reproduced from the Afghan nursery tales coming down from the time of Mushtaqi to that of Abdullah (the author of Tarikh-i-Daudi). He gives a finishing touch to the character of Sultan Sikandar Lodi, who was according to Afghan legends a second Sultan Mahmud in his zeal for Islam, and a saint too (*waliullah*) endowed with supernatural powers. Yadgar's original research brought him to the conclusion : "In his name *khutbah* and *sikkah* (Friday prayer and the issue of coins) became current throughout the extent of territory from Jalalabad near Kabul to Mandu (the capital of Malwa Sultanate) ; from *Udaipur* (in Mewar) to Patna (in Bihar)" (text, p. 41) Yadgar deplores the meanness and oppression of his own times sighing for the happy regime of Sultan Sikandar, who would not touch even the treasure-trove of Alexander the Great discovered in his dominion by a subject of his : "In this age (*dar in ayyam*) if a man would come by a few copper coins (by accident from beneath the earth), *hakims* will plunder his house" (p. 36).

Yadgar omits all useful details regarding the government and society of the Lodi regime so graphically described by Mushtaqi and partly repeated by Abdullah in his *Tarikh-i-Daudi*. But he has much to tell us how the Musalmans fared in the grave in those days. Yadgar writes :

"It is said the dead were buried (in the days of Sikandar Lodi) on the bank of *Hauz-i-Shamsi*, which lies in the Old Delhi (*Delhi Kuhnah*). There once the grave-diggers dug up a stone, and found beneath a grave (*gaur*) and saw a *Pir* with moon-white shining beard and a white sheet (*chadar*) engaged in reading *the Quran* placed on a book-rest (*rahal*). (The *pir*) asked them whether the Day of Judgment (*Qiyamat*) had begun, and they replied, "No". "Why, then, have you opened my *sirr* (tomb, resting-place) ? They got frightened, filled up the grave and buried this dead body in another place."

Another story goes that during the reign of the Sultan (i.e., Sikandar Lodi) there was one year a flood of the waters of the Ganges (*ab-i-Gang* ; confusion with the Jamuna ? and submerged all the graveyards of the town of Delhi or Agra ?) ..... The Sayyids of that town assembled and opened up the ruined graves for removing the coffins of their ancestors to some other place. When

they opened one grave they found a dead body (*mait*)[1] in a coffin as if it was put into the grave on that very day, and that inside the grave a bush of *rae-bel* (sweet-scented flower of the jessamine variety) was in such profuse bloom that the whole coffin became filled with flowers, and two or three flowers had entered the hollows of its nose. They left the dead body in the same condition and filled up the grave. Next they (the Sayyids) opened another grave and found a dead body covered with a sheet of the colour of the *Jogis* (i.e., of yellowish colour worn by Hindu hermits and having two horns with branches like those of the deer (*shaq-i ahu*) coming out of the shoulders (of the body); its face was blackened, and the grave so full of scorpions that the coffin could hardly be seen.[1]

Yadgar begins his account of the reign of Sultan Ibrahim with the words, "All the writers of news (historians) . . . . have written thus . . . .", without naming any history or historian in the rest of the narrative. But it is evident that he has borrowed mainly from Nizamuddin. In the few instances where he seems to be original, he is, as usual, gossipy and unreliable.

1. Abdullah, the author of *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, gave currency to the story of a white elephant, *Syamsundar*, in the possession of Sher Shah's contemporary Rajah of Jharkhand. Besides this one, Yadgar mentions a second Syamsundar in the possession of the Rajah of Gwalior, who as a price of peace had agreed to surrender this elephant and a daughter to Ibrahim Lodi's general, Azam Humayun

Tarikh-i-Shahi, pp. 52-53.

Yadgar did not mean to befool his contemporaries, who were no more rational and sophisticated than the author himself. Yadgar is immortal as a type, still abounding among our countrymen, Hindu and Muslim, to whom such things are self-evident truths. We have heard in our childhood in Chittagong such tales, and the narrators were old and respectable *maulvis* of our neighbourhood. Hindus dread very much Muslim ghosts hunting the graveyard. These are classified as *Khonkar* (correctly *khondkar*), and *Mamdo* (correctly *Mahmudi*). Khonkars are seen, they say, in moon-lit nights wearing *lungi* and white sheet and cap engaged in prayer and lying in wait for Hindu passers-by. These are generally good spirits, but *Mamdo* (named after Sultan Mahmud Ghaznavi ?) is a terribly wicked spirit, mentioned in Bengali *pothis* as the wazir and general of the god of child disease, *panchanan* (the five-faced Mahadev), worshipped by mothers in *panchanan-tala s* (place of Panchanan under some tree). This god rides on the shoulders of *Mamdo*. (See, *Vishwa-bharati Puthi* Collection, Pt. III, pp. 103).

Sarwani (*vide* text, p. 84). A comparison between Abdullah's account of the capture of the Jharkhandi white elephant, Syamsundar, by Sher's general, Khawas Khan with the same narrated by Yadgar (*Tarikh-i-Shahi*, pp. 191 ff.) indicates Yadgar's free play of imagination, beating hollow his unacknowledged authorities.

2. The story of the war between Sultan Ibrahim and Maharana Sanga (Yadgar, text, pp. 78-83).

M.M. Gaurishankar Ojah (*Rajputaneka Itihas*, pp. 6333-35) has examined Yadgar's account and pointed out its weak points.

Yadgar, though less successful with sober history, excels his predecessors in story-telling. He has devoted 13 pages (text, pp. 99-112) in describing "the wonders of the days of Ibrahim Lodi". These "*wonders*" are narrated with a purpose ; namely, to run down Hindu society and glorify Islam and its saints. As specimens we briefly reproduce a few below :

1. The story goes that once a woman of ravishing beauty concealed in a cloud of veil (*niqab-i-sahab*) was going from her home to her father's house. By chance, she on account of heat happened to sit beneath the shade of a tree. A *darwish* in the halter of the other world had his *takiya* (of religious meditation) in that place. He cast a glance at the woman and lost himself in love. The beautiful woman also looked at him and gave her heart to him. After a while she put on her *burqa*, mounted her horse and went away. The darwish kept his eyes fixed on the (vanishing) countenance of that matchless beauty and breathed his last. After a time that woman, while returning from her father's house, alighted under the shade of that very tree. She found a fresh grave under that tree, and on enquiry from people she was told that it was the grave of the *darwish*, whose life was mysteriously taken away by a beautiful woman with her departure after having rested for a while under that tree. . . . The woman cast off the veil from her face, and took the grave into her embrace, and the grave opened, took in the body of the woman and closed again. . . . The men, who had come with her dug open the grave again, and found no trace of the woman's body there ; moreover, they found the very ornaments which the woman had on her neck and ears on the dead body of the darwish ; *surma* on the eye-lid, and red colour of *pan* (betel) on the lips of the lady even lay imprinted on the eyes and lips of the man. . . ." (text, pp. 102-3).

2. There was a pious and pure soul living at Delhi during Ibrahim's reign passing his days in reading the *Quran*. For sometime it happened that whenever the man would begin reading the

Quran the mysterious figure of a beardless and handsome youth (*amrad*) used to appear and sit on the leaf of the holy book hiding its letters, and when the man stretched his hands to catch that figure, it would disappear. . . . He told about it to a friend, who advised him to catch the head and ears of the mysterious disturber. Next time he made the experiment, caught hold of the head of the visiting beardless youth, and found to his astonishment that his two hands were tugging at his own ears. . . . (text, p. 104).

3. There lived a darwish in a *kasba* of Panipat on the banks of a stream (*jui* ; the Jamuna ?) flowing in an easterly course. A beautiful damsel with two or three others of the same age and complexion had come there for bathing with *lotas* (small brass ewers) in their hands. The *darwish* at a single glance at that woman of matchless beauty became enamoured of her, and begged water of her. The woman said, "Open thy hands," and the *fakhir* did so (i.e., joined two palms in a cup-like form as usual in Upper India). The rose-limbed lady began pouring water from her *lota*, but as the eyes of the darwish were fixed upon her face, water flowed down through the fingers. Having noticed the condition of the darwish, the woman laughed and went her way. The darwish followed her till she reached her house and went in, casting a love-inspiring glance at him. The condition of the darwish became critical and for a while he remained as if bereft of his senses outside her house. Next day that girl with two or three others came for bath, and she said to the darwish, "Would you not drink water ?". The darwish opened his palms, sprinkled the water poured by her handsome hand on his head and eyes and drank it as if it were the very "waters of life" (ab-i-hayat). As some days passed thus in exchange of glances, and rumour was afloat among the public regarding this love-affair, the father of the girl forbade her to go to the river bank. The poor darwish deprived of the sight of his beloved passed his days in weeping till one auspicious day of bathing for the Hindus arrived. On that day of bathing Hindu women bedecked with ornaments came out, and reached the place. The darwish was sitting at the head of the road looking for the girl. When his eyes caught a glimpse of the girl he ran towards her, fell at her feet and gave up his ghost. When the girl saw what had happened, she too fell at the feet of the dead darwish and the bird of her life flew away. . . .

The news reached Dariya Khan Jilwani (a fictitious name ?) who was the *hakim* of the place. He mounted his horse and having reached the place where the two dead bodies were lying, sent for the

ulema of the town. They gave their opinion that as this girl in sincere bondage of marriage had departed from the world, as such the burning of her body was totally opposed to the Law (*Shara'*). Dariya Khan said that this was a Musalman dead body, and as such by no means could be allowed to be burnt In the meanwhile thousands of Hindus assembled to burn the dead body of the girl, and the two parties were about to engage in a deadly clash.

At this time a darwish in tattered *khirqa* (outer garment worn by fakhirs) appeared and said to Dariya Khan, "Why are you creating enmity between the two parties ? Give this girl's dead body to the Hindus, and be a witness of the omnipotence of Allah (*qudrat-i-Ilahi*) ! . . . ." The Hindus made a huge pile to burn the dead body, but it would not catch fire. Then they brought cotton, and soaking it in oil tried to light fire ; even then no flame went up. They were at their wits' end, and at last leaving the dead body on the pile departed for home. Dariya Khan and others who were there, buried it with the body of the darwish. At night the Hindus sent some men to dig the grave, take out the body of the girl, and throw it into the river Jamuna. They opened the grave but found no trace of the body of the girl !

[SECTION 5] *Babur's career after the first battle of Panipat (April, 1526).*

Yadgar's account of Babur's career after the first Battle of Panipat covers 17 pages in print (text, pp. 113-130). But these pages are enough to prove his worth or otherwise as a historian. Some of the incidents described by Yadgar are as follows :

1. Rebellion of the Afghan *amirs* in Jaunpur.

"In the meanwhile (after the capture of Agra), news arrived that certain *amirs* of Sultan Ibrahim had assembled at Jaunpur and raised the tumult of rebellion. *Giti Sitani* (Emperor Babur) sent Amir Quli Beg and Shahzadah *Mirza Kamran*[1] (?) in that direction. They reached the place by forced marches, and the Afghans, having heard of the coming of the fortunate Prince fled away in the direction of Patna. The Shahzadah occupied Jaunpur, and having left

[1] Babur himself writes, "*Humayun* in accordance with my arrangements left *Shah Mir Hussain* and *Sultan Junaid Barlas* with a body of effectives in Jaunpur. . . . . ." Humayun waited on Babur, January 6, 1527 (See Babur's *Memoirs*, A. S. Beveridge's Translation, p. 544).

So Yadgar would make us swallow three mistakes in one sentence !

a large army there under the command of Amir Quli Beg, returned to his father's presence. After this (expedition), Mirza Kamran was appointed to the Subah of the Punjab, and Mirza Quli Beg to Multan for conducting the Thatta campaign. Muhammad Humayun Mirza, the eldest son and Heir Apparent, remained at Court" (p. 117).

2. Battle against Hasan Khan Mewati and Rana Sanga.

". . . . news reached that Rana Sanga and Husain Khan Mewati had become rebels, and gathered in *Mewat* (?) a large army . . . . Rana Sanga, who was at that time a great Rana, sent a message to this effect. . . . If you would unite with me, we shall not allow the Mughals to enter our territories. . . . Hasan Khan on account of his pride of possessing a large army, and of the seductive offers (*ighwa'-i-Rana-i-mazkur*) of the Rana, withheld the *peshcush*, which he had prepared for Giti Sitani (Babur Badshah). The imperial *vakil* (sent to Husain Khan Mewati), returned from that place and reported the matter to the Emperor at Agra. *Mirza Hindal* (?) and *Muhammad Mahdi Khwajah*, the son-in-law of Babur, were sent ahead with forces beyond numbering, and he (Babur) himself with the victorious army followed them. When the news of the advance of the victorious army (of Babur) reached Hasan Khan he sent a message to Rana Sanga. The Rana from his own place assembled his army, and started with the intention of giving fight, and joined Hasan Khan. . . . and prepared for battle in the spacious plain of Firuzpur (var. Firuzpur Jhirka). The Rana, who at heart was *uneasy about Hasan Khan, wanted to have him killed under any* pretence. He wrote secretly to *Mirza Hindal* and Khwajah Mahdi, and sent a *vakil* with the message :

I am an obedient slave of the Badshah, and agree to issue coin and read the *khutbah* in His Majesty's name. Hasan Khan has by force brought me to fight (*ba-zor-ba-jang awardah*). I shall not oppose the imperial army, and at a slight shock of your charge, I shall turn face for flight. You should make an effort either to capture Hasan Khan or to kill him. . . . .

In short, a great battle was fought. Mahdi Khwajah fell upon Hasan, and gave him no time to fight, and Hasan Khan took to flight. . (treachery of a slave of Hasan Khan). Hasan Khan alighted near a well and asked the slave to give him something to eat. The slave placed before him some bread and *kabab* of fowl. Hasan Khan ate some morsels when soldiers of Babur reached near. Hasan Khan in fright gave up eating and was about to mount his horse. That

ghulam dealt him some blows with his sword, and having wounded him, threw him into the well, and fled away riding his master's horse. On the other side (of the battle) Rana Sanga fled and Hindu Beg gave him a field chase. . . .[1] (pp. 118-119).

3. Babur's conquest of Chanderi.

According to Yadgar there was no battle of Khanwa, and also no siege of Chanderi and no *jauhar* (self-immolation of Rajput women and children) within the fort. His account runs parallel to that of Babur to meet only at the close of the affair.

Yadgar writes, (In the second regnal year) . . . . The Rajah of Chanderi *rebelled* (?), and refused to obey the imperial *farmans*. Arghun Khan, who was in that *subah*, sustained a defeat at his hands and wrote for reinforcements to Amir Khalifah. A brother of Arghun Khan was sent with troops, and by forced marches he reached there. . . . The Rajah of Chanderi came out of the fort of Chanderi, and encamped at *Padhra*, a village (in the neighbourhood ?). He gave battle to the brother of Arghun, won a victory and returned to Chanderi with rich spoils. When Amir Khalifah made a report of this defeat to His Majesty, he ordered the muster of a large army and made forced marches from Agra towards that direction (Chanderi). The Emperor sent forward a strong force of six thousand troopers under Amir Hindu Beg, and ordered Alawardi Khan Shamlu, already in Malwa to join hands with Amir Hindu Beg and teach a lesson to that infidel. The Rajah of Chanderi . . . . sent his nephew . . . . the infidel by a fierce charge defeated the troops of the two chiefs, and many soldiers of His Majesty fell martyrs on the field. When the two amirs found their troops demoralised under the shock of the charge of the infidels, they retreated to encamp in a garden pursued by the nephew of the Rajah. . . . (In the darkness of a night the Mughals made a surprise attack on the Rajput camp, killed the Rajah's nephew and secured a large booty. Having received the despatch of this victory . . . . His Majesty hurried forward. . . . (The Rajah in despair came out to give battle and was killed). . . . The victorious standard moved *to the neighbourhood of* Chanderi which was stormed by the braves of His Majesty, and made captives of the family of the Rajah. Two daughters of the

[1] Any comment is superfluous. This account of Yadgar would have been news to Babur himself.

Rajah were brought (to His Majesty) ; one was sent to Mirza Kamran and another was given to Humayun. . . . . [1] (pp. 121-24).

4. Rebellion in *Jaunpur*, defeat of *Mirza Hindal* and exploits of *Junaid Barlas* . . . .

Yadgar without mentioning any authority would have us believe against the testimony of Babur's *Memoirs* a piece of absurdity narrated as follows :

"*A year after Babur's accession*, Mirza *Kamran* came from Lahore. He made a *nazr* of the spoils in gold and horse captured by him from the Bhattis and Khokhars. In the meanwhile from Jaunpur news came that *Sultan Muhammad Afghan* (Lohani ?), who had assumed the prerogative of coining money and reading *khutbah* in his own name, had come against Mirza *Hindal*, and that having no power to resist he (Prince Hindal) had fled from Jaunpur, pursued by Sultan Muhammad ; a battle took place, and a large number of troops of Mirza Hindal were slain. His Majesty (Babur Badshah) appointed Sultan Junaid Barlas, Jahangir Quli Beg and other Mughals (to command a relieving army ?). Sultan Junaid Barlas, having covered two marches in one, reached that place. . . . A battle took place, the like of which eye had not seen . . . . The Afghans fled and Jaunpur was reoccupied and the booty of war sent to His Majesty at Agra. An order was issued to the effect that Sultan Junaid Barlas was to stay on there, and Mirza Hindal was to come to Court at Agra. Sultan Junaid Barlas taught the Afghans such a lesson that they never dared to turn their faces towards Jaunpur. . *Mirza Hindal* was sent to Qandahar to watch that frontier.[2]

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[1] Any comment is superflous. This was perhaps *popular* history made current by idle impostors, parading as custodians of *unwritten* history. This school survives till today in Lucknow, claiming the knowledge of the *real* history of Wazid Ali Shah, transmitted through the ancestors of *wasiqadars* (*State pensioners*)!

[2] We have read no Persian chronicle where such a mess has been made of Babur's history.

It is enough to say that Mirza Hindal was at this time a boy of nine, and that he was never sent to Jaunpur to fight the Afghans during the life-time of Babur. In this passage only the last sentence is correct history. Yadgar apparently confuses Babur's eastern campaign in the rainy season of the year 1528 (sometime between 2nd April and 18th September), of which Yadgar knew nothing. There is a *lacuna* in Babur's *Memoirs* from 2nd April to 18th September, 1528. None would have

Beveridge assessed the importance of Yadgar's *History* with regard to the account of the last two years of Babur's career rather too high in a learned article. He remarks, "Perhaps the most valuable part of his (Yadgar's) book is his account of the last two years of Babur's reign. It *supplements* the *Memoirs of Babur*, and also Ferishta and Abul Fazl, for, as Prof. Dowson remarks in a note to p. 42, there is *no mention* elsewhere of the expedition against the Mundahirs. If we had not Yadgar's work, we should not know that Babur marched to Lahore in the third year after his accession, i.e., in 935 A.H. or, that he met the Rajah of Kahlur at Sirhind, and sent a punitive expedition against the *Mundahars of Kaithal* (in the Karnal district)." (ASB ; New Series, Vol. XII, 1916, p. 289).

The great historian wrote this paper quoted above relying solely on the Extracts from Yadgar's *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afaghana* available in Elliot & Dowson's (vol. v.). Prof. Dowson is also absolutely correct in saying that Babur's alleged punitive action against the Mundahars is not mentioned in any other history. Beveridge had not the advantage of consulting any authoritative text of Yadgar's history, and getting an over-all picture of the narrative of Yadgar as his critics now have before them after the publication of the text of *Tarikh-i-Shahi* (official name of Yadgar's *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afaghana*, in the Bibliotheca Indica Series in 1930, full twenty-three years after Beveridge wrote. So it is quite understandable that he hazarded the opinion without feeling the pulse of Yadgar as a chronicler. In all fairness to the illustrious historian we give in translation what Yadgar says about the last two years of Babur's reign :

(1) During the *third regnal year*, the Emperor reached Sarhind (*var.* text, fn 3 ; *started for Lahore when at Sarhind*) and there the Rajah of Kahlur came to him and offered three *mans* of gold as *nazr*. (The Emperor) granted him the *Zamindari* of that place (Kahlur). When the imperial standard reached the vicinity of Lahore, Mirza Kamran came there to meet the Emperor, and also the *zamindars* of the neighbourhood presented themselves to make prostrations. The imperial camp was pitched in the garden of Mirza Kamran, where receptions were held for three days, after which the Emperor entered the fort of Lahore . . . . scattering coins to the fakirs and the needy all the way from the gate of the town to the

known of this first unrecorded campaign of Babur against the Afghans had not Babur himself casually referred to the incidents in his entries on the campaign of the previous year (See Mrs. Beveridge's Translation, *memoirs*, p. 603).

gate of the citadel. A grand *majlis* was arranged in the *palace of Sultan Sikandar Lodi* . . . . (The Emperor) stayed at Lahore *for one year* (spending his days in hunting and sight-seeing). Mirza Hindal came from Kabul to meet His Majesty, and *spent the winter* there after which he returned to Kabul (with rich presents from his father).

In the month of *Rajab* of the *fourth regnal year* the Emperor started from Lahore on his return journey to Agra. When he reached Sarhind, a *sharif* (i.e., a pious Sayyid) of *Samana* made a complaint that *Mohan Mundahar* had pillaged and burnt his village and estate, carried off whatever cattle were there and killed his son. His Majesty despatched Ali Quli Hamadani at the head of three thousand troopers to punish that Mundahar. It so happened that a large number of Mundahars had assembled (in the house of Mohan?) on account of an auspicious ceremony (*kar-i-khair*) of his son. They advanced to give fight. It was *winter season*. The imperial troops had marched all through the night before they could reach the place early in the morning (*sahargah*). On account of cold their hands had become so benumbed that they (the imperial troopers) could not pull their bows : whereas the Mundahars in their houses had sat in front of fires, and quite warm, (*garma garam*) they came out to fight. They shot such a volley of arrows that the imperial troops could not stand their ground and many a notable Mughal fell dead on the field . . . . (the imperial troops) retreated from that place, and having entered a jungle, they collected a large quantity of fire-wood and made fire. Again they made an attack on that village, but without success.

When the news reached His Majesty at *Panipat*, he sent Tarsum Bahadur and Naurang Beg with four thousand horsemen and many elephants against that place. They reached that place quickly when it was yet night. But it was a different night for the Mundahars, who were revelling in drink and debauchery . . . . Towards the last quarter of night, the Mughals in three divisions planned a surprise attack from three different directions. Tarsum (Tarsun?) Bahadur with a detachment took his position to the west, Ali Quli to the east, and Naurang Beg to the north (of the place). Tarsum Bahadur showed himself first from the west, and the Mundahars who were puffed up with vanity for their success against Ali Quli, rushed out (from their village) for fight. Tarsum Bahadur made a feint of flight before them and took the Mundahars one *kos* away in pursuit of him, when, like bolts from the blue, Naurang and Ali Quli

fell upon that *deh* (village), set fire to it and began a general massacre (*qatal-i-am*). Seeing the flames of fire, the Mundahars hurried toward the village and were surrounded and put to the sword. About 1000 men were slain, and about one thousand women and children of theirs taken captives. The letter of victory was sent to the Emperor . . . . That village was levelled to the ground . . . . in such a way that after *a lapse of one hundred and thirty years* (the site of) that village *remained deserted,* and *was not settled again* . . . . His Majesty saw the women captives, selected 30 out of them for his own service and distributed the rest among his amirs. That Mundahar who was captured alive (*var.* in Elliot and Dowson's vol. v, p. 41 : *Mohan was captured alive*), had half of his body buried in the earth, and made a target of arrows . . . . After that Emperor Babur having *passed two months* in hunting and touring *in the neighbourhood of Delhi* returned to Agra and appointed the crown prince, Muhammad Humayun Mirza at the head of a large army to the charge of the *subah* of *Sambhal,* with permission to depart after the *Id festival.* . . . . (*Tarikh-i-Shahi,* pp. 124-128 ; *italics* and *portions* within brackets our own).

This narrative of Yadgar is so graphic, so detailed and reinforced with dates as to make a *prima facie* case in its favour, and it is no wonder that even a historian like Beveridge was inclined to argue in favour of its essential truth. It is, however, regrettable that he took no notice of some important facts that would have made him reject the whole of it as false and spurious, if considered along with the general trend of Yadgar's treatment of Babur's reign. Let us take up first for scrutiny Yadgar's statement that *during the third* regnal year Babur went to Lahore, stayed there for *a year* and started for Agra *on the 4th of Rajab* (Year ? evidently of the 4th regnal year).

1. The month of Rajab of *936 H* falls in March, 1530 and its last day was 30th March, 1530. It is a commonly agreed fact supported by a rock inscription in Kalinjar fort that Humayun was then campaigning there, and that Humayun was hastily recalled to Agra when Babur's illness took a serious turn (S. K. Banerjee, *Humaynn Badshah,* i. p. 14).

So this date 4th Rajab is absolutely fictitious.

2. If we calculate backward 13 months (one month for journey and 12 months' halt at Lahore) from February 1530, we come to February, 1529. Babur's entries in his *Memoirs* definitely prove that Babur heard the news on January 13, 1529 ; "Iskandar's

son Mahmud Lodi had taken the Bihar town" : and next month Babur had gone against the Afghan rebels headed by Mahmud Lodi (Mrs. Beveridge's Translation of *Memoirs*, 651). Babur, according to his *Memoirs* did not return from his eastern campaign to Agra before the rainy season of 1529.

So we have to make a choice between Yadgar and Babur himself with regard to *Babur's stay at Lahore for a year.*

3. Some may yet be inclined to hold that even if Babur did not stay at Lahore passing the winter there, where might be the objection against Babur's visit to Lahore sometime between June 1529 (where the *Memoirs* breaks off), and February 1530, when Babur fell ill for ten months (according to Ferishta) ? This consideration actually weighed with Humayun's modern biographer, late Dr. S. K. Banerjee.[1] So let us probe into its plausibility. We have it on better authorities than Yadgar that :

(i) Humayun without leave came away from Badakshan to Agra in July 1529.

(ii) Sometime after July 1529, Humayun went under Babur's orders to Sambhal, fell ill after six months, brought to Agra in a hopeless condition in January 1530 and recovered after the performance of the mysterious going-around of his sick-bed by Babur.

Yadgar[2] gives another story and puts Humayun's appointment to Sambhal *after Babur's return from Lahore* (vide text, p. 128, lines

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[1] "It is possible that the march to Lahore in 1529-30 A.D. mentioned by Mrs. Beveridge *on the authority of Ahmad Yadgar* was a part of this scheme (of the reconquest of Central Asia)." (See *Humayun Badshah*, i. p. 12; *italics* and bracketed portion our own).

[2] Yadgar seems to take us to the land of dreams in the interval between Humayun's appointment and his departure for Sambhal after the *Id.* "It is said that *one winter night* (at Agra) Babur drank wine to his heart's content, and called for Prince Humayun. As he was *mast* with wine, he fell asleep on his pillow by the time prince presented himself. The prince with folded hands (*dast basta*) remained standing there At midnight the Emperor woke up and found the prince standing in the same posture .... The Badshah was highly pleased and said, 'If God vouchsafes the throne and good fortune to thee, dost not kill thy brothers.' The prince placing his head on the ground and promised..... In short, the prince was given leave to proceed with an army to *subah* (Sarkar ?) Sambhal, which had become full of *ma'wi* and *mawas* (place of refuge of thieves and rebels ; see text, p. 129)

7 to 9, given *ante* in translation). So how was it possible for Babur to be present both in Agra and Lahore simultaneously within *the thirty days of July* 1529 in an age when journey by air planes was unknown ?

To accommodate such irresponsible statements of Yadgar into the framework of sober history is an impossibility that cannot be attempted without throwing testimony of Abul Fazl and Nizamuddin, Gulbadan Begam and Jauhar to the four winds. As regards the city of Lahore, we may say that the famous Garden of Kamran Mirza was planted after Babur's death, and that Sultan Sikandar Lodi neither visited Lahore nor built any palace there, in which, as Yadgar would have us believe, Babur is said to have held *majlis*.

Now what about the story of Mohan Mundahir ?

Yadgar's story of Mohan Mundahar is pure fiction or a plausible fabrication, common in those days as well as in ours among the erudite idlers who have circles of their own to manufacture counter-versions of official news or history unscrupulously. Apart from this fact, a close scrutiny of the story will speak for itself to rational beings. The points that arise in this connection are as follows :

(1) Where did the *Mundahars* (head-lifters ?) live, if there was such a Hindu tribe ?

Yadgar's text warrants us to surmise that the *deh* or village of the *Mundahars* was near Samana in the Patiala region, whereas Elliot's Translation gives us *Kaithal* in Karnal district of the Panjab. But such an authoritative work as Rose's *Glossary*[1] mentions nowhere any tribe of Mundahars.

. . . . After *two or three months* (?) *takassur* (signs of debilitation) appeared in the body of the Emperor. . . . "

But the calendar shows that the *Id* of 1529 A D. was already gone, and the winter was yet to come six months after !

[1] *A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province*. . . . . complied by H. A. Rose.

(i) *Mandhar* is a *got* of the Jadubansi Ahirs, chiefly found in the "south of Delhi, Gurgaon, and Rohtak and the Phulkian States".

(Part II ; pp. 4-5)

(ii) A nearer approach to *Mundahar* is perhaps *Mundator*, a sect of Jats in the Rohtak district, who got unenviable nickname of *Mundator* for breaking the heads of some Brahmans (*ibid.*, Part III, p. 187).

So the Mundahars of Yadgar might be either Ahirs or Jats, equally notorious for breaking heads of others, be they Brahmins or the Sayyids of Samana.

(2) The site of Mohan Mundahar's village was, as Yadgar says, visited by the author *one hundred and thirty years* after it had been sacked by Babur's troops. If so, the Persian colophon at the end of Yadgar's *Tarikh-i-Shahi* (giving 1644 A.D. as its year of completion) cannot be accurate ; because 1529 A.D. *plus* one hundred and thirty years takes us down to 1659 A.D. If the colophon's date is correct, this absurd story cannot be Yadgar's own, because it is unlikely that Yadgar himself made out any *second edition* of his chronicle like that of modern books. Nor it is likely that some copyist of Aurangzib's reign interpolated this long story into Yadgar's narrative.

(3) It is the story of a Deserted Village of the Punjab countryside ringing with the exploits of its legendary Robin Hood, *Mohan Daku* (Mohan Decoit), figuring now in the modern Hindi film. Yadgar or somebody else perhaps took the cue from countryside, because no other medieval chronicler before or after Yadgar repeats the story of Mohan. The author imposed upon his medieval readers, who were more credulous and much less critical than Yadgar kimself, —by giving it a semi-historical character.

(4) An analysis of the story of Mohan Mundahar reveals its absurdity. Did Babur employ 7000 Mughals against a jungle-clad village of robbers ? Such a force would have won a second battle of Panipat. It is also strange that on the Indian plains the Central Asian archers, 3000 strong, could not draw their bows owing to the severity of cold, whereas the Mundahars, fresh from fire side, unnerved the Mughals and took a heavy toll of life. Yadgar says that the Mughals of Ali Quli fled from the battle-field into the jungle, collected fire-wood to warm themselves and made a fresh attack though without success !

Last comes the alleged visit of the Rajah of Kahlur to Babur's camp at Sarhind with a gift of three *mans* of gold.

Kahlur[1] is shown as the now defunct Bilaspur State in the modern Himachal Pradesh of the Union of India. It is situated north of Simla and south of Suket ; and its distance in a straight line is more than 150 miles northeast of Sarhind. It was only after the occupation of Kangra and the desecration of the Jwalamuki

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[1] For Kahlur see the Imperial Gazetteer, Vol. VIII, 1908.

Bilaspur State or *Kahlur*—one of Simla Hills lying between 31° 12″ and 31° 35″ N, and 76° 28″ and 76° 28″ E, with an area of 448 square miles. The State contains one town and 421 villages (*ibid.*, pp. 232-234).

temple by Jahangir that these Hill States were terrorised into allegiance to the Mughal Empire. The Lodis never made any attempt at the conquest of this difficult terrain. Under such circumstances the visit of the Rajah was uncalled for when Babur's authority under his nose in the Punjab was precarious.

An average student of history might yet ask, what might have been the source of such silly stories in the guise of history, abounding in Yadgar's work? Abdullah, the author of *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, gives us a glimpse of the trade secret of these Afghan historians.[1]

However, Yadgar beats all his predecessors in the field of history in making an original fiction out of an ill-set skeleton of history.

It is no wonder that Beveridge made an error of judgment in what he considered to be *the most valuable portion of Yadgar's work.* Those who have to deal with Afghan chronicles (including the present writer himself) cannot be too sure that they were at times not similarly imposed upon by relying on such chronicles.

Yadgar's account of the Sur dynasty is of indifferent value. We shall not further continue this criticism of Yadgar's history. To our younger generation our last word is, "Beware of Yadgar".

Cf., the death of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi.

"A *trustworthy narrator 120 years old* stated that he was in Sultan Ibrahim's company on the day of battle . . . . Mounting on a black Arabian charge and attired in royal robe he reached the bank of the river (Jamuna) in the company of a handful of his following, in order to ford the stream at the ferry of Birauna . . . . *The narrator of this anecdote* says that he was *seated on the river bank and saw the Sultan sinking* in his purple robe with his horse into the waters of the ford of Birauna" (See Extract from *Tarikh-i-Daudi* in Prof. N. B Roy's *Makhzan i-Afghani*, Part I, p. 186).

So all that Babur saw and wrote about Sultan Ibrahim is not history according to such trustworthy (?) witnesses ! Abdullah or Yadgar is not to be blamed for such an attitude of mind, which is almost contitutional with the common run of our people down to the twentieth century in seats of medieval culture like the city of Lucknow. There are still learned octogenarians of the old school of thought, who would tell us of a parallel history of King Wazid Ali Shah more charming than what contemporay records and published histories have given us !

3

Niamatullah's Makhzan-i-Afghani

(Relative merits of its English Translations discussed)

Dr. Dorn's English Translation of Niamatullah's *Makhzan-i-Afghani* (London, 1829) proved indispensable for nearly one hundred and thirty years to every student of the Afghan Sultanates of Delhi till the publication of an improved translation of the *Makhzan* (Part I, *Lodi Period*) by my late lamented friend, Nirodbhusan Roy of Visva-Bharati University in 1958. It is a relief to turn from Dorn's Translation to that of Roy, with standard spelling of proper names which are almost unintelligible except to specialists in Dorn's awkward rendering. Roy has added illuminating topographical notes on every obscure place mentioned in the text. His scholarship and industry were admirable. It is extremely unfortunate that he did not live to complete the work begun so ably. The English translation of the Part I of the *Makhzan* dealing with the reigns of the three Lodi Sultans, covers only 90 pages of Roy's bulky volume of 210 pages, besides a learned *Introduction* of fifty pages and also a *Preface* of 8 pages.

Roy in his *Preface* makes rather bold claims and runs down Dorn's Translation when he says :

(i) That by "laborious investigation" he has discoved what he believes to be "the real *Makhzan-i-Afghani*" of Niamatullah (Page, iv).

(ii) That Dorn has not translated Niamatullah's real *Makhzan-i-Afghani* but altogether a *different chronicle* by Ibrahim Batani. Under the name of *Tawarikh-i-Majlis Araee*, which was only *an enlarged version of Abbas Sarwani's Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi* (ibid., p. iii).

We have to honour a dead man's dying appeal, "Let scholars judge the result" as the late lamented Roy makes in the Preface (p. vii).

In view of the fact that the Persian text of the allegedly genuine *Makhzan-i-Afghani*, prepared but not published by Roy, it is difficult to get at the author's technique of textual criticism, which alone can decide his claim. The basis of Roy's edition of the Persian text, is the Asiatic Society's Ms. 100, transcribed in 1090 A.H. 1679 : whereas the Royal Asiatic Society's Ms. used by Dorn "is very carelessly written by one Fut'h Khan for his own use in the year 1131 of the Hejra (A.D. 1718) ; Dorn, *Preface*, p. ix. The other Mss. consulted by Roy were transcribed between 1850 and 1870. So the Asiatic Society Ms. used by Roy is undoubtedly the oldest, till now discovered.

In this Ms. (Asiatic Society's Ms. No 100), according to Roy, "*Niamaiullah calls it*" :

Tarikh-i-Khan Jahan, better known (al-mushtahar ; lit., *the famous) as Makhzan-i-Afghani*. Begun at the instance of the Afghan noble Khan Jahan Lodi in 1018 A. H. (1609-1610 A.D.), it was concluded in Zihijjah 1021-1613." (Roy's *Preface*, p.v ; *italics* and the bracketed portion our own). Now the question arises whether the words, *al-mushtahar Makhzan-i-Afghani* could actually come from the pen of the author, Niamatullah. If the name of his book was *Tarikh-i-Khan Jahan* in 1613 A.D., how could Niamatullah anticipate that his book would become more celebrated as *Makhzan-i Afghani* ? It is understandable that Niamatullah gave the name of *Tarikh-i-Khan Jahan* to his work written at the instance of his patron, not unusual with patronised scholars. Though this work was written under the patronage of Khan Jahan Lodi, it was not likely to contain any *history* of Khan Jahan Lodi in 1613 ; because Abdullah Khan, Khan Jahan Lodi, was then just on the start of his stormy career that ended eighteen years after in his death as a redoubtable rebel in the fourth regnal year of Emperor Shahjahan, as we learn from the *Padshahnama* of Abdul Hamid Lahori. Nevertheless, most of the known Mss. of the *Makhzan*, e.g., the Kapurthala Ms., have the title of the *Makhzan-i-Afghani wa Tarikh-i-Khan Jahan Lodi*.

Why, by whom and at what date was this change of the title of Niamatullah's book effected ? Roy does not throw any light on this point. Roy's paper, entitled *Makhzan-i-Afghani* and *Tarikh-i-Majlis Araee* (J.A.S.B. Calcutta, Vol. XIX. 1953) fails, in spite of his laborious efforts to carry conviction, and does not prove his thesis conclusively.

Unlike Roy, Dorn kept always an open mind with regard to the Mss. of Niamatullah's book knowing well the defects of the one

used by him; namely, the Royal Asiatic Society Ms., which had been the basis of Dorn's translation.

Dorn was too much of a conscientions scholar to impose upon the world by translating *Tarikh-i-Majlis Araee* and making it current as the Translation of the *Makzan-i-Afghani.* In the *Preface* he says, "The copy from which this Translation is made, belongs to the Royal Asiatic Society ; and is written very carelessly, by one Fut'h Khan, for his own use, in the year 1131 of the Hejra (A.D. 1718). *It bears the title of Makhzen Afghani* : and appears to be a different and in some parts, *abridged edition* of the original work of Neamet Ullah ; when *Ibrahim Batni, who mentions himself at the end of the Second Book,* supplied the deficiencies from the original of Neamet Ullah, and other Histories : and thus it is generally much more minute in the history it relates, than any other book that treats on the same subject . . . . "

"Another edition, or perhaps the original work itself is preserved in the East India House, and entitled '*Tareekh Khanjehan Lodi wa Makhzen Afghani*', and was also composed between 1018-1020 A. H. and *upwards. The coincidence of the first part of this work with ours is perfect* ; and they correspond almost word for word ; *but afterwards* it frequently *does not enter into such details* as our work does ; and mostly *leave out speeches,* which so frequently occur in the translated copy. But it gives *a history of the Khan Jahan Lodi, which is not to be found in the work* here translated ; which circumstance, undoubtedly is the reason that the latter is called only 'Makhzen Afghani'. . . . . ' (pp. ix,x ; *italics* our own).[1]

On an analysis of the above-quoted passage read along with Dorn's footnote it comes out :

1. that the India Office Ms and other one of Stewart's Catalogue (in which *Hybet Khan* appears as the name of its author is evidently a mistake of the copyist), might be either the original or a faithful copy of Niamatullah's work in its final edition as Dorn has admirably guessed with a true scholarly instinct.

2. that as regards the Book I (*Lodi period*) of the *Makhzan* all the three Mss. (i.e., of the Royal Asiatic Society, India Office and Stewart's Catalogue) it is clear that these are in complete agreement.

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[1] Dorn adds a footnote : In Stewart's Catalogue of Tippoo Sultan's Library, p. 18, LXIV, a book is mentioned under the same title, and of the same arrangement and content as this : its author is called Hybet Khan." (Part 2, *Preface,* ix).

3. that Dorn based his translation not on the so-called *Tawarikh-i-Majlis Arae*[1] is borne out by the following facts :

(i) Neither Ibrahim Batani nor the name *Tawarikh-i-Majlis Arae* figures in the India Office copy which comes down as the work of Niamatullah himself, and yet the first part of it is in complete agreement with Dorn's Translation of the same.

(ii) The Ms. in Stewart's catalogue though its authorship is wrongly attributed to Haibat Khan Kakar agrees with the other two Mss. so far as the Lodi period is concerned.

Roy says that Niamatullah "borrowed largely from Nizamuddin Ahmad the facts of the Lodi period, sometimes copying paragraphs *verbatim* (*Preface, v*). Therefore, a detailed comparison of the English translations of the Lodi period by Dorn and Roy is essential to establish Roy's claim that he has discovered "the real *Makhzan-i-Afghani*" in the Asiatic Society Ms. No. 100 of the same. Where the translations differ, nearer proximity to Nizamuddin's version should decide the correct reading, and the relative merits of these Translations.

According to Roy, the British Museum Ms. Add 21, 911 and the Patna Ms. of the *Makhzan* are not Niamatullah's *Makhzan* at all, but Mss. of a different work, *Tawarikh-i-Majlis Arae* or Ibrahim Batni. Rieu's remark that the B. M. Ms. of *Makhzan-i-afghani*, "is the recension represented by Dorn's translation but more condensed than the latter in many places"—failed to put Roy on his guard about the fact that his *"real Makhzan"* might be a myth, as it is a case of one against four ; *i.e.*, Asiatic Society Ms. No. 100 *versus* India Office Ms., Stewart Catalogue Ms., British Museum Ms. plus Patna Ms. of the *Makhzan*.

It is also to be noted that the Persian passage quoted on p. i. ; (Preface of Roy), nowhere mentions *Tawarikh-i-Majlis Arae*. "There remain some words to be added on the genealogy of most humble and most abject of slaves, *Hybet Khan, who is occupied in writing and verifying this work. . . . Malik Firoz* the fifth grandfather. . . . (came from *Roh*) and entered the service of Sultan Bahlol. . . . Locman is the fourth grandfather of this humble individual. . . .Mulhi is the third grandfather of Salim Khan, who in the time of the Sur Sultans. . . . was the *governor of Gaur*. . . . He (Salim Khan) lost his life by the treachery and knavery of *Taj Kerrani*, as is *recorded in the account of the Kerrannians*. . . . Shadi Khan (*who took to trading*). . . .had a son Salim Khan. . . . By Mian Salim Khan was begot. . . . Hybet Khan . . . . *The Afghan Book* is finished. . . (by Haibat Khan) by the assistance of God Almighty." (Quoted in translation by Dorn ; p. 2 ; Preface, iii-viii).

There had been a sort of second and enlarged edition of Niamatullah's *Tarikh i Khan Jahan Lodi* of 1613 A.D. full *fiftyfour years after* in the reign of Aurangzeib in 1667 A.D. Roy has overlooked this important fact in collating the Mss. of *Makhzan.* This enlarged edition was entitled the *Tarikh-i-Khanjehani wa Makhzan-i-Afghani.* The Lucknow University Ms., which in some places appears to be more accurate than Dorn's calls it *Makhzana al Afghani.* Dorn has quoted the colophon of this second edition (?) from Dr. Lee's Ms. (India House Ms.). It runs as follows :

"Praise be to God. . . . . *the Tarikh-i Khanjehani* and *Makhzan i-Afghani is finished and completed.* It is hoped that God. . . . will inscribe in the Book of Deeds the actions of *the humble compiler* of this work, Neamat Ullah *ben Habibullah Khan,* and of the patron of this work, Hybet Khan Kakar. . . . By the grace of Prophet. . . . of this a few verses on the completion of this *History* of *Khanjehan,* known by the *title of Makhzen Afghani* have been made (*giving the date, Friday, the tenth of Zulhija of 1021 A. H. In the reign of Jahangir. . . . The writing down of this composition,* and *the penning of the conclusion,* and *the final arrangement* of this History, has been finished *by the broken and silent pen of . . . . Neamat Ullah* ben Khuaja Habib Ullah. . . .in the excellent and populous *city of Burhanpoor. . . .*the *Makhzen Afghani* was finished, on Sunday, the 22nd of Zulhija in the year 78 (1078) of the Hejra.

Had not the above passage of the *Conclusion* of the final edition from the pens of the author of the *Makhzan* and his second patron and co-author, Haibat Khan Kakar, been preserved intact in Dr. Lee's Ms. of the *Makhzan,* discrepancies and the addenda in the extant Mss. could never be satisfactorily explained. But still there are considerable difficulties :

1. Haibat Khan Kakar refers to his father's death, *as recorded in the account of the Kerrannians.*

Who wrote this account, Niamatullah, Haibat Khan or some body else ? The account, which has come down through Dorn's translation was probably from the pen of Ibrahim Batani, who writes at the conclusion of Book the Second that it was he who added particulars about the Kerranians which the original book *did not contain.* As regards Salim Khan we read under the section of the history of "Taj and Emad Kerrani" :

" . . . . the Kerranians were again discomfited, and retreated to Gour and Bengal. The governor of the former place, Salim

Khan Kakar, *a grandfather of Ram*[1] (?) and Futuh Khan Batni .... came out to welcome them ; but Taj, considering this as an opportunity, assassinated both chiefs .... " (Dorn, Pt. 1, para 1, p. 179)

Haibat Khan could not by his reference possibly mean this passage.

2. This Salim Khan (called later on *Mian Salim Khan* in the genealogy ; line 35 ; Dorn, Pt. 2., *Preface*) was *not the father of Haibat Khan Kakar*, whose father was another Salim Khan, son of Shadi Khan, son of Malik Bustan, son of Locman, son of Malik Firoz. "Malik Firoz and *two sons*, Malik Locman and *Mian Mulhi*. Mian Mulhi had one son whom he called Abdal ; by Abdal was begot *Mian Salim Khan*, who obtained the dignity of Chiefship and ruled for several years in Bengal. He perished by the *treachery of Taj Kerrani*. Salim Khan's son was *Duriya Khan*. Dariya Khan had one son *Behader Khan*, whose descendants are in a prosperous state. The humble Hybet Khan had (has ?) four sons, Hossain Khan, Seid Khan, Haji Khan and Ghazi Khan .... (ibid, vii, viii)". If so, how are we to explain Haibat Khan's words. "(Two sons of Malik Firoz) .... Locman is the *fourth*, grandfather of this humble individual ; and Mulhi is *third*, grandfather ?" So Mulhi must have been the third [who was] *maternal* grandfather of Haibat Khan Kakar.

3. Haibat Khan Kakar says about *Bibi Suret*, daughter of Malik Bustan that "a *fuller account of her* being given in the conclusion of this work .... this brief notice may suffice here" (Dorn, Pt. 2 ; Preface vii)". Where is this "fuller account of Bibi Suret" in the *Conclusion* of the *Makhzan* ?

4. Who wrote the *Memoirs of the Afghan Saints* covering 40 pages in Dorn's Translation ? The writer cannot be Haibat Khan Kakar who after having referred to a *fuller account* of Bibi Suret, was not likely to give "*a concise Account* of Enlightened and Accomplished women". Even if the abridgment had been made by Haibat Khan himself or by any body known to his family, he cou'd not be so unfair to Bibi Suret as to mention her by a distorted name, *Bibi Sureh*, simply ; whereas the writer gives the parentage of two others, Bibi Duya and Bibi Sheikhzadi (Dorn, Pt. 2 ; pp. 39-40).

We are at a loss to account for, or rectify, "grand father of *Ram*". *The grandson of Mian Salim Khan*, was *Bahadur Khan*. How Bahadur could become *Ram* ? Haibat Khan or Niamatullah was least likely to confuse this Salim Khan with Haibat Khan Kakar's own father Salim Khan, son of Shadi Khan.

5. An account of the Afghan Saints comes under "*Concluding Chapter*" in Roy's arrangement of Chapters, whereas it forms the opening Chapter of *Book the Third* in Dorn's Translation. At any rate, there can be no doubt that the *Memoirs of the Afghan Saints* formed an integral part of the *Makhzan* as it has come down to us through extant Mss. But there is grave doubt about its authorship.[1]

(1) Introduction

The Asiatic Society Ms. No. 100, which is the basis of Roy's translations, differs from that of Dorn on the following points :—

[1] We come across some personal reference by "*the compiler*" in Memoirs of the Afghan Saints :—

(i) "Although the humble author of this work is not able to enumerate them all . . . ." (Dorn, Pt. 2, p. 1).

This accounts for "*the concise* account"

(ii) Sheikh Bustan Baraich (ibid., p. 14).

"The humble writer of this history, who on his *voyages* had arrived at *Gooda* (misreading for Goa ?), was his (Sheikh Bustan's) *constant companion*, and an *eye-witness* of his miracles. The *author being on intimate terms* with the Sheikh . . . . I then strictly executed his orders . . . . On his corpse being deposited in the grave (afternoon of Friday, Rabius Sani 11th of *1002* A.H. 1592-93 A. D.), I heard the voice of some one reading the Koran, and saw the lips of the dead body in motion . . . ."

No comment is necessary. It is for an average reader to judge whether Niamatullah, a layman and serious scholar of history, or Haibat Khan Kakar, a blooming soldier in the contingent of Khan Jahan Lodi in the reign of Jahangir,—could be one of the companions of the saint on his voyages, a *constant* companion of Sheikh Bustan, who in ripe old age died in the reign of Akbar.

(iii) The author evidently speaks from intimate personal knowledge about Mian *Shcikh Muthi Kasi*, from whose kitchen ". . . .nor any meat or drink (was) ever asked in vain, by Joghies, Sanyasies, and other Hindoos. He died in 1010 (1601 A. D.), and his descendants are well established on the carpet of guidance" (ibid., p. 15).

(iv) "The posterity of Shahab Bakhtiar, in the village of Kithel (*Kaithal* in the Karnal district) *are still the refuge* of high and low (ibid., p. 16).

(v) *Sheikh Mulhi Kaital Jhangir* in 1019 H. [*six years after* Niamatullah completed the Tarikh-i-Khan Jahan Lodi, known as Makzan-i-Afghani]. came to see the polo-sticks mysteriously sent to Mulhi Kattal by Allah for taking part in a game ". . . . entrusted them to the Shaikh's descendants". Whosoever wrote it must have been an old [ibid., p. 27.] wandering Sufi, who certainly did not live till 1667 or after to add it to the *Makhzhan.*

1. Roy's translation begins with chapter III of Dorn (History of Khalid bin al-Walid) omitting the *History of Yaqub Israel* (Chapter I) and *History of Talut* (Chapter II) which runs to eighteen pages in Dorn's Translation (Pt. 1, pp. 5-23).

Why this omission ? Roy's List of Chapters opens with Chapter I : On the description of the *affairs of king Talut.* That the *Accounts* of Yaqub Israel and of King Talut were written by Niamatullah admit of no doubt ; because Niamatullah himself expressly mentions it in the *Introduction* (Dorn, Pt. 1, p. 3). The history of Sulaiman in Dorn's Translation is most probably a later and superfluous interpolation (ibid , pp. 24-25).

2. The account of Khalid is scrappy in Roy's. It is fuller but partly inaccurate in Dorn's (ibid., Pt. 1, pp. 26-38).

3. Origin of the epithet, *Pathan* "The word *Pahtan* is derived from *Batan* which by frequent use has become Pathan" (Roy, *Makzan*, p. 9). Is it Niamatullah who wrote it to contradict himself (See Roy, p. 6, lines 31, 32 ; also Dorn, Pt. 1, p. 38, para 1) ?

4. In Roy's translation the *List of Chapters* (p. 3) comes immediately after the benedictory lines ending with "until the Day of Judgment" (vide *ante*). But in Dorn's Translation, a long paragraph of one and half page intervenes between the benedictory paragraph, and the list of chapters (Dorn, i, p. 4). In Roy's translation we do not come across any mention of the sources of the *Makhzan* except *Twarikh-i-Nizami* and *Twarikh-i-Ibrahim Shahi* in the opening lines of his Chapter II on Bahlul Lodi as in Dorn's Translation (Dorn, *Makzan*, First Book, p. 43).

Roy consulted the Lucknow University Ms. of the *Makhzan*, which along with the Asiatic Society Ms. "strengthened" his view that "Dr. Dorn has not translated the *Makhzan-i-Afghani* of Niamatullah, and which has "a *general identity* with Ms. No. 100 of the Asiatic Society. If so, why did he not explain such a serious discrepancy, and draw the reader's attention to the detailed mention of sources given in the Lucknow University Ms ? Dorn gives only the name of *Madan Akhbar Ahmedi* written in 1020 A.H. and no other medieval Indian chronicles. Dr. Lee's Ms. adds to this, *Akbar nama* and *Tarikh-i-Shershahi.* But the list of authorities is more complete in L. U. Ms. These are :—

(i) *Tarikh-i-Nizami* ; (ii) *Tarikh-i-Shershahi* of Abbas *Sarwani* ; (iii) Mushtaqi's *History* (*Waqiat*) ; (iv) *Tarikh-i-Ibrahim Shahi Ma'adan-i-Akhbar-i-Ahmadi*, which was compiled in 1020 A.H. by

Ahmad son of Bahbal *Kambo* (Rect. *Kam-go*, the Taciturn). (Lucknow University Ms., p. 5).

We miss an important passage in Roy's translation, which omits the following lines from the pen of Niamatulla given in Dorn's (supported by Elliot's Extracts from the *Makhzan*, but *omitted* in the Lucknow University Ms.).

"When, therefore, the humble writer of this [?] pages, *Khuaja Neemet Ullah [bin] HabeebUllah of Herat*,[1] in the year of 1018 of the Hejra under the reign of Noor Uddeen Mohammed Jehangheer Gazi and *at the command of* Nuwab Khanjehan Lodi, who, ... was honoured and invested with the title *Ferzend* (Son), and whose dignified company was courted by all distinguished persons *supported by the amiable kindness* and *consummate erudition of Hybet Khan* ben Selim Khan of Samana, one of Khanjehan's attendants *who collected and arranged* the scattered and confused genealogy of the Afghans ; undertook to write their history *in accordance with the labours* of the said Hybet Khan, from the beginning of their pedigree, *going as far back as Yacoob* †. . . during the reign of Talut upto the time of Abd Ulrasheed, distinguished by the title *Pat'han* . . . ." (Dorn, Pt. 1, p. 3).

The above-quoted portion of Niamatullah's *Introduction* is conspicuous by its absence in Roy's *Makhzan-i-Afghani*, and yet no Ms. of the *Makhzan* deserves to be relied upon without this passage setting forth so clearly everything that readers should know about the author and the scope of his work. The concluding verses giving the date of the completion of Niamatullah's work has not been translated like other verses by Dorn. Dorn quotes the *Preface* of Dr. Lee's Ms. in translation in which these verses are given when the *original edition of the Makhzan* under the name, *Tarikh-i-Khanjahan Lodi* in 1921 A. H. (Dorn, Pt. 2, Preface) was completed. So it is reasonable to surmise that the original *Preface* to Niamatullah's history has been tampered with by subsequent copyists. This is particularly noticeable in the swelling list of original sources as in the Lucknow University Ms. Both in this Ms., and in Dorn's translation, there is a mention of *Ma'dan-i-Akhbar-i-Ahmadi*" in 1020 A. H."

[1] This should be read as Khwajah Niamatullah-i- (i.e., *son of*) Habibullah of *Herat*.

The account of the author, Niamatullah, should be read along with what he says of himself and of Haibat Khan Kakar, quoted by Dorn in his *Preface* to part II from Dr. Lee's Ms.

Even in our days of academic alertness and advance advertisement *a year* is too short a time for a book to be usefully noticed by another author even for its inclusion in the bibliography. If it is argued that Niamatullah might have mentioned *M'dan-i Akhbar-i-Ahmadi* in 1667, there is no reason why he should have omitted a more popular book, Yadgar's *Tarikh-i-Shahi* (better known as *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afghana*) which was completed in 1054 A. H. ; i.e., full sixteen years before Niamatullah revised and rearranged his *Makhzan* ?

(2) Sultan Bahlul Lodi

As a test-case for the accuracy or otherwise of Roy's *real Makhzan* (Asiatic Society Ms. No. 100) it is fair to compare the new Translation by Roy with that of Dorn. We shall not notice minor and verbal differences between the two versions, and discuss only those points that affect the history of the period, and as such likely to create problems for future workers.

(i) Bahlul and Sayyid *Abban* (Roy, p. 27). Dorn, Pt. 1, p. 43 has *Seid Aven*, which is less correct than that of Roy.

In response to the Sayyid's offer of the empire of Delhi for two thousand *tankas*, Bahlul paid down the sum *in full* (Dorn, ibid), whereas, according to Roy's version, Bahlul had only 1300 tankas with him. Nizamuddin's *History* quoted in both Mss., has 1600 tankas (Newal Kishore ; litho, p. 149). So on this point Roy's Ms., should be considered more accurate, as Nizamuddin's 1600 tankas might be a copyist's error for 1300.

(ii) It is stated . . *. Malik Bahlol was a trader. This is neither verifiable nor authentic[1] (Roy, p. 28); Dorn makes a positive statement, "wrong",—which is an over-statement.

(iii) Dorn (Pt. 1, page 44, para 1) *omits* one important statement, which reads, "Briefly speaking, *after the death of Islam Khan*, Malik Bahlol *took possession of Sirhind* with *the assistance* of his

[1] Roy apropriately quotes a long passage from Rizqullah, an earlier authority, to show that Bahlul carried on horse trade, came to Multan and there he met Shaikh Abban. But Roy is not correct exactly when he says, "Rizqullah *refutes* the above statement (of the *Makhzen*)". Rizqullah died half a century before Niamatullah's book came into circulation. Roy's translation of the words, *ke an-jah Mewas bud*, is wrong. Rizqullah means, "there were *mewas* (rebel fastnesses) in that place"—not that the locality was "*inhabited by the Meos*", as Roy puts it. It is also historically incorrect, as Mewat, the land of the Meos ruled at this time by Ahmad Khan Mewati, did not obey the writ of the Sayyid rulers of Delhi.

uncle, *Malik Firuz* .... asserted his power and authority" (Roy, pp. 28-29).

That Malik Firuz was one of the uncles of Bahlul we learn from Mushtaqi, (Elliot, iv., pp. 547-48), who says that Bahlul's *first Khanjahan*, Husain Khan was son of Firuz, son of *Bahram* (the common grandfather of Bahlul, son of Kala, son of Bahram). Bahlul, a sister's son of Islam Khan, was an usurper of the right of Qutb Khan, son of Islam Khan and heir to Sirhind.

(iv) Dorn is vague and inaccurate ; "to conquer for himself Hissar Feroza and other districts". These were (as we find in the Lucknow University Ms. and Roy's *Makhzan*), Lahore, Dipalpur, Sunam, Hisar-Firuza and other *parganas* (Roy, p. 30, line 1).

(v) Bahlul's rebellious contemporaries.

Roy's translation (p. 30, para 1) is definitely more complete and accurate than the corresponding passages in Dorn (Pt. 1, p. 44, para 2).

(vi) Accession of Sultan Bahlul.

The date of accession (17th Rabi. I, 855 A. H.) in both the Translations are in agreement; but Roy's *Makhzan* adds some details about "moment deemed suitable by augurers, proficient in the reading of stars, and *brahmins* well-trained in the selection of appropriate time",—which are not supported by any other Ms. of *the Makhzan*, or by Nizamuddin or any other medieval chronicler, this was an usage of the Mughal Court which seems to have been interpolated by the copyist.

(vii) Sultan Mahmud Sharqi's siege of Delhi.

Except the date 855 A. H., Roy's *Makhzan* should be accepted as more accurate than Dorn's. Dorn gives the correct date 855 A. H., but his details are confused and inaccurate ; e.g., "Khuaja Baizeed, a son of Behlol, on receiving the news of this circumstance, returned from Debalpur ...." (Pt. 1 ; p. 47).

This is absolutely wrong. Roy gives the correct version, "At this news *sultan Bahlol* marched back from Dipalpur ...." (p. 35). About what followed about the treachery of Dariya Khan, Roy remarks in the footnote, "The whole passage taken *verbatim* from T. A. (*Tabaqat* of Nizamuddin) is *obscure* (?)." And in an attempt to elucidate which was no business of his—, he has become a target of criticism.[1]

As far as we are in a position to judge from Roy's translation, the Royal Asiatic Society Ms. No. 100 seems to be more accu-

(viii) Death of Khanjahan Lodi.

"At this time news of Khanjahan Lodi's death reached the Sultan who *appointed his son* to that post under the same title (Roy's *Makhzan*, p. 46 ; *the same* in Dorn, Pt. 1, p. 53, line 5).

This statement is based on the authority of Nizamuddin who says, " In the meantime the news of the death of *Khanjahan* who *was at Delhi* reached Sultan Bahlul. The Sultan conferred the title of Khanjahan on *his son* (*pisar-i u ra*) . . . . " (*Tabaqat* Newal Kishore, Lucknow, p. 157, line 19).

The death of Khanjahan Lodi happened in 884 A. H. (1480 A. D.), on which Roy and Dorn are in agreement. But who was Bahlul's *first* Khanjahan ?

It is unfortunate that though the Lodi period has been a subject of research for half a century, none cared to identify the *Khanjahans*

rate than that of Dorn as it corresponds with the *Tarikh-i-Nizami*, acknowledged as his source by Niamatullah. Niamatullah did the right thing in taking what is sober history from Nizamuddin, and enliven it with the anecdotes from Mushtaqi, from whom Nizamuddin also borrowed in compiling his account of Lodi Sultans. Roy without looking into Mushtaqi for elucidation went the other way and relied on the authors of *Tarikh-i-Daudi* and the *Tarikh-i-Shahi*, who themselves copied Mushtaqi. And hence the trouble for Roy, who in order to prove the accuracy of Ahmad Yadgar's wrong statement makes an unwarranted surmise, "Dariya Khan Lodi *who had deserted to the Sharqi side*" during the siege of Delhi.

Ahmad Yadgar says in one place ". . . . (Sultan Bahlul) .. *left* at Delhi *Dariya Khan Lodi* and Iskandar Shah Sarwani" (Bib. Indica , *Tarikh-i-Shahi*, p. 10) ; but in the next page he says that as a token of surrender the garrison of Delhi sent the keys of the Delhi Fort to "*Dariya Khan* Lodi, who had *laid siege of the fort*" (ibid., p. 11), without any mention of the *desertion* of Dariya Khan to the Sharqi side. There is no mention either of the presence or of the desertion of Dariya Khan Lodi in any other Persian chronicle.

The Afghan chronicles have made the hero of a traitor, Dariya Khan Lohani, who was one of the Afghan nobles opposed to Bahlul's usurpation and who had instigated Sultan Mahmud Sharqi to attack Delhi. All the words, e.g., "He is a Lodi ; I am a Lodi, etc.," put into the mouth of Dariya Khan are as false as Sher's vaunt in Babur's camp and Chanderi. Dariya Khan submitted to Bahlul for the first time only after the defeat of the Sharqi army due to his treachery. Bahlul as a reward for Dariya's services *deprived him of his seven parganas* as the *Makhzan* says (Dorn, Pt. 1, p. 47, last line).

of Sultan Bahlul and Sultan Sikandar Lodi. Roy does not throw any hint, and the latest researches of a promising scholar and author of *the First Afghan Empire in India*, Dr. A B. Pandey[1], leaves us only worse confounded on this issue. The holders of the title, *Khanjahan* are not mentioned *by name* in *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, *Makhzan-i-Afghani* and Ahmad Yadgar's *Tarikh-i-Shahi*. Nizamuddin gives a list of thirty-four amirs and adherents of Bahlul before his accession, and among these we find one name, *Jumman Khan*, son of *Khanjahan Balangi* (the lame ?). But this *Khanjahan* was of the Sayyid court of Delhi. He has, however, left a clue by referring to *Husain Khan, son of Khanjahan*, whom Sultan Bahlul sent to Meerut (Newal Kishore edition of the *Tabaqat*, p. 157, line 1). Mushtaqi gives a detailed notice of *Husain Khan* Khanjahan Lodi. But Mushtaqi says, "When he died, his son whose name was *Ahmad Khan* got neither the title of *Khanjahan* nor his father's rank" (Elliot, iv, p. 539). That Ahmad Khan, son of Khanjahan Husain Khan Lodi, was not raised to his father's rank is corroborated by the fact that Nizamuddin mentions among fiftythree nobles of Sultan Sikandar at his accession, *Khanjahan bin Khanjahan* Lodi and Ahmad Khan, *son of* Khanjahan *bin* (son of) Khanjahan. The above statements of Nizamuddin and Mushtaqi make it definite that Husain Khan, Khanjahan II, died not in the reign of Bahlul but of Sikandar Lodi. Mushtaqi throws further light on Husain Khan Khanjahan Lodi by adding that Husain Khan was the son of Malik Firuz, son of Bahram (Bahram having been the common paternal grandfather of both Husain Khan and Sultan Bahlul). This proves positively that Sultan Bahlul, who seized Sirhind with the help of his uncle, *Malik Firuz*, made the *father* of Husain Khan his *first* Khanjahan in reward of his services. (vide Elliot, iv., p. 547).

(ix) *Where did Bahlul die* ?[2]

Dr. A. B. Pandey : *The First Afghan Empire in India*. The author has made a mess of *Azam Humayun-s, Khanjahans* and *Khan-i-Khanans* of the Lodi regime by contradictory statements here and there. He has no *name* for any of the Khanjahans but only the tribal epithet of Lodi. In one passage we find "Azam Humayun, *son of* Khanjahan" (p. 130 ; Khanjahan *Lodi* of the Index). Now this Azam Humayun was Bahlul's grandson (son of the deceased eldest Prince Bayazid, who was *not a Khanjahan*).

Roy says that "Dr. *A. Halim* (? Dr. Abdul Halim, Professor of History, Dacca University) has made a very painstaking research to settle the controversial point in J. I. H. 1938 I concur with him in his view", and so Roy identifies *Malawali* with village of

Scholars and chronicles differ widely on this point. Roy accepts the reading of the Asiatic Society Mss. Nos. 100 and 102 ; namely *Malawali*, lying within the *area* of (? jurisdiction of ?) the town of Sakit, and adds a long footnote in its support. (*Makhzan*, Eng. Trans., p. 48, fn. 4). Dr. A. B. Pandey, after having discussed all the relevant authorities in a footnote, accepts with reason the *township of Jalali* as the place where Bahlul died (Pandey, *The First Afghan Empire*, p. 93, fn. 3). . . . Dorn's Translation has also "the vicinity of the township Jalali (Pt. 1, p. 54) and Dr. Lee's Ms. *Makhzan* has the same reading.

(3) Sultan Sikandar Lodi

We note below some differences between the Translations of the *Makhzan* by Roy and Dorn adding critical notes where necessary. These are :—

(i) Incidents of Sikandar's accession (Roy, p. 70 : Dorn, i. 55, Para 1).

In Roy's *Makhzan* we miss a material fact mentioned in brief in Dorn's Translation : "*Bibi kept Bahlul's death concealed*; but apprised Prince Nizam Khan through a courier, of it . . . . Barbak

that name on the highway from Etah to Sakit. We do not dispute with his identification of *Malawali*, but we do maintain that *Malawali* was *not the place* where Bahlul encamped. The encampment was at *Jalali*, about 20 miles from modern Aligarh, on the following grounds :

(a) The township of *Jalali* in the Doab has been from the time of Firuz Shah Tughlaq an important stage on the way to and from Delhi.

(b) The *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* names the place *Talawali* (Bib. Indica Series ; Text, Part I, p. 313), *Balwali* (Newal Kishore, Text, p. 159) : Ferishta has *Bhadauli*, *Bhadaoni*, etc. All these later misreadings are due to the freak of the *mukhta* in Persian script. *Tarikh i-Daudi* and the *Makhzan-i-Afghani* were written about the same time in the reign of Jahangir ; and barring the Asiatic Society Mss. of the *Makhzan*, we have the reading *Jalali* in *Tarikh -i-Daudi*, which is supported by the India Office Ms. and Royal Asiatic Society Ms. of the Makhzan. So the weight of evidence goes in favour *Jalali*.

(c) No historian mentions that Sultan Bahlul's camp moved to *Jalali* from any other place, and yet all are in agreement that Prince Nizam reached *Jalali*, sent Bahlul's coffin to Delhi, and was crowned in the hunting palace of Firuz Shah Tughlaq at *Jalali*. Where readings differ in Mss. we have to decide in the light of the context of the work as a whole, and of the historical probability.

Shah would take it (the throne), all the Omras being unanimously on his side, in consequence of his being born of an Afghan mother .... Nizam Khan repairing next day to Bahlol's Court ...." (Para 1, lines 3 to 9). Dr. Lee's Ms. also agrees with Dorn's. Why, then, such a discrepancy ?[1]

(ii) Sons of Sultan Sikandar Lodi (Roy, *Makhzan*, p. 70).

Dorn does not mention either the number or the names of the sons of Sikandar ; whereas Roy's Ms. closely follows the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* giving actually names of *five sons* that follows the statement that,—"He (Sikandar) *had six sons at this time* (Tab. Akbari : *dar an waqt*)". Next to Sultan Ibrahim, Jalal Khan played the most important part in history, and yet the name of Jalal Khan is omitted in Roy's Ms., which may be due to the copyist's oversight. Later historians, e. g , Abdullah copied the list from Nizamuddin's history without, however, committing himself to Nizamuddin's statement *dar an waqt*", i. e. ; *at his accession.* This difference of Abdullah with Nizamuddin is very significant. This puts the early career of Sikandar in a different light. If we are to accept Nizamuddin's positive statement, it comes to this that no son was born to Sultan Sikandar during the next eighteen years of his rule, though he is

[1] Roy's Ms. closely follows Nizamuddin, whereas the India Office and Royal Asiatic Society Mss. of the Makhzan have either summarised Ferishta's account or drawn upon some common Afghan hearsay, not embodied in any chronicle other than that of Ferishta. The passage in Dorn need not necessarily be held as an interpolation by the copyists of the *Makhzan*; because the original version of the *Makhzan* was revised and rearranged by Niamatullah in the final edition made by him fortysix years after (see *ante*). So we have to assume that the *Makhzan* has come down through transcripts of both the editions. This is the only rational explanation of the divergences in the extant Mss. of the *Makhzan.*

Dorn's passage quoted above is extremely important as it gives us not only correct history, but also explains Sikandar's policy and attitude to the old Lodi nobility, who were thrown into the shade by Sikandar's partiality to his supporters, the Lohanis, Farmulis and Sarwanis.

In spite of the deliberate propagandism of the Afghan chroniclers to depict Sultan Sikandar as a Second Alexander and a *Waliullah* (man of God), truth peers through history that Sikandar was as much an intriguing usurper of the right of Barbak Shah as his own father Bahlul had been of the rights of his cousin, Qutb Khan, son of his benefactor Islam Khan *alias* Sultan Shah Lodi.

mentioned to have married other wives. Facts indirectly support the statement of Yadgar that Sikandar was only eighteen at his accession (*Tarikh-i-Shahi*, p. 35). We have reasons to suspect that Sikandar was not even married before his accession.[1]

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[1] Roy's Ms. has the following names :

(1) Ibrahim Khan; (2) Ismail Khan ; (3) Hasan Khan (Husain?) ; (4) Mahmud Khan ; and (5) *Shaikh Azam Humayun* (sixth name missing). Dr. A. B. Pandey's list gives Ibrahim, Ismail, Husain, Mahmud and *Shaikh Azam Humayun* (*First Afghan Empire*, p. 111). But it did not strike Roy and Pandey why one of the princes should be a *Shaikh* with the *title* of Azam Humayun and without any *personal name* like other princes. Dr. Lee's Ms. *Makhzan* adds the name of *Jalal Khan* in between Ibrahim and Ismail, other names being identical with those in Roy's list. Of the variants, Hasan and Husain, Husain is probably more correct, as Nizamuddin, Abdullah and Nahawandi (*author of the Ma'sir i-Rahimi*) agree on this name. Roy's Translation (p. 155) runs, ". . . . his (Ibrahim's) imprisoned *brothers* such as *princes* Ismail Khan, *Husain Khan* and *Shaikh* (?) Daulat Khan to the fort of Hansi . . . . " The corresponding passage in Dorn is slightly different and presumably more correct : " . . . . He (Ibrahim) commanded his brothers, Ismael Khan, *Hossain Khan*, *Mahmood Khan* and *Doulet Khan*, whom he held in confinement . . . . " (Dorn, Pt. 1, p. 72, para 1).

Now the question arises, why this glaring inconsistency in the text of Roy's Ms., and wherefrom was this passage taken by the author of the *Makhzan* ? It is again Nizamuddin both for *mistakes* (?) and for rectification also. Nizamuddin in the corresponding passage under the reign of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi writes, " . . . . some among his (Ibrahim's) *brothers* such as Shahzada Ismail Khan, Husain Khan, Mahmud Khan, and Shahzada Daulat Khan who had been imprisoned, were ordered to be conveyed to the fort of Hansi . . . ." (Newal Kishore text, p. 185). So the myth about *Shaikh Azam Humayun* having been one of the *sons* of Sultan Sikandar explodes of itself, and truth comes out that this *Azam Humayun*, who was present at the time of Sultan Sikandar's accession was the *son* of Bahlul's predeceased eldest son Bayazid. It was to this Azam Humayun that Bahlul granted the fief of Kalpi (Roy, *Makhzan*, p. 47), which Sikandar took away from him and gave it to Mahmud Khan Lodi (ibid., p. 71 ; Dorn, Pt. 1, p. 56 ; *Tabaqat*, Newal Kishore, p. 160). This Azam Humayun must have a *personal name*, which unfortunately is not mentioned by any historian. We have to scrutinize the list of the names of Sultan Bahlul's sons for a clue to his identification.

There is an inexplicable discrepancy of *nine* sons of Bahlul with actually ten names given by Nizamuddin and Ferishta.

(iii) "He won his brother 'Alam Khan from the side of Azam Humayun to his own cause" (Roy, *Makhzan*, p. 70).

This is more clear and accurate than the corresponding passage in Dorn's (Pt. 1, p. 55), ". . . . calling his younger brother and thus separating him from Azem Humayun . . . . ".

(iv) "Rai *Ganesh*" in Roy's reading (p. 71) should supersede the inaccurate reading "*Rai Kishen*" in Dorn's (ibid.).

(v) "Thereupon the Sultan marched against Barbak Shah . . . defeated and fled to Badayun" (Roy, p. 71).

This is less explicit and logical than the corresponding passage in Dorn (Pt. 1, p. 56).

(vi) Roy's reading of *Baksar Jhatra*, (?) correctlty identified, should supersede Dorn's *Kotra* (ibid., line 17).

(vii) " . . . . in return for which Jalesar . . . . were pledged to him" (Roy, p. 7).

This translation should replace the corresponding passage in Dorn (ibid., p. 56, lines 24, 25).

(viii) " . . . . at the instigation of the Bachgotis . . . . . Muhammad Khan Farmuli, better known as Kalapahar" (Roy, p. 73).

This is definitely better than the corresponding passage in Dorn's (ibid., p. 57).

(In Roy's footnote 1, p. 73, "out of his base in the *Chanda* fort" is *wrong*. The name of the place should be *Chaund* in the Mirzapur District of U. P.).

(ix) "In *897* A. H./Nov. 1491—Dec. 1492, *Bayana was conquered*" (Roy, p. 72).

Dr. A. B. Pandey, *First Afghan Empire*, p. 99, has tried to explain it by suggesting the extra name, Mubarak Khan, as the original name of Barbak Shah. In fact the extra name is not that of Mubarak Khan but of *Jalal Khan, grandson* of Bahlul, which somehow found its way in the list of Bahlul's sons. The following references support this contention :

1. Sultan took away Kalpi, which Bahlul had given to his grandson with the title of Azam Humayun when he appointed Mahmud Khan Lodi (Roy, *Makhzan*, p. 71 ; Dorn, Pt. 1, p. 56).
2. "Qutb Khan Lodi's wife, Niamat Khatun came with Prince Jalal Khan. . . .he (the Sultan) assigned Kalpi as jagir to Jalal Khan . . . ." (Roy, ibid , p. 89 ; Dorn, ibid., p. 63).

So this Jalal Khan bore the title of Azam Humayun. Bahlul had married Qutb Khan's sister of whom was born Prince Bayazid, who was married apparently to Qutb's daughter. So Niamat Khatun was the maternal grandmother of Azam Humayun Jalal Khan.

This date, *897* A. H. cannot be correct. After the annexation of Bayana, Sultan Sikandar proceeded to Delhi where he halted for *twentyfour days.* About this time it was reported . . . . that Barbak Khan, terrified by the predominance of the Bachgotis had fled away from Jaunpur . . . . In *899*/1494-95 Sultan Sikandar marched towards Jaunpur . . . ." (Roy, ibid., pp. 72-73). Dorn in the corresponding passage also says, "Sultan marched, in *899*, upon that town (Jaunpur). Therefore, there can be no doubt that the date of Jaunpur expedition, *899* A. H. is correct. If so. what did Sultan Sikandar do during one whole year, *898* A. H. ? The text also does not warrant any surmise that there was an interval of 12 months between the conquest of Bayana and the Jaunpur expedition as in Roy's Ms., Dorn gives the date of the conquest of Bayana as *998* A. H., which, therefore should be accepted as a more correct date than Roy's 997 A. H. (Dorn, Pt. I, p. 56).

(x) " . . . . he (Barbak Shah) was handed over to Haibat Khan and Umar Khan Sarwani" (Roy, p. 75 ; top lines).

The corresponding passage in Dorn giving the names of the two nobles as "Omar Khan and Hybet Khan *Surwani*" should be rejected as inaccurate and faulty (Pt. 1, p. 57). Umar Khan Sarwani received the title of Azam Humayun, and is the same man as the ancestor of Abbas Serwani. This Haibat Khan is the same man as Haibat Khan *Gurgandaz.*

(xi) " . . . . (Sikandar) then proceeded towards *Shamsabad.* He remained there for six months and set out again for *Sambhal* from which place he again came back to *Shamsabad. During this march* he destroyed the villages *from Madmau to Koil* (?) which had been the lair and haunt of rebels . . . . " (Roy, p. 75).

Roy adds a footnote : "This word (*Maudamautal*) or Dorn's *Madeomakul* has perplexed many scholars. I presume I offer the *correct reading* (*Madmau ta Koil* ; Madmau to Koil in translation) by identifying *Madiu* or *Madmau* with Motimau and Koil near Aligarh. So the correct word is *Matimau ta Koil*" (p. 75 ; fn. 4).

This suggestion is ingenious but *incorrect.* Koil was an important and flourishing pargana town, and Sambhal, a more important chief town of a Sarkar, situated about 50 miles almost due west of modern Moradabad ; and Shamsabad is on the Ganges in the Farrukhabad district. The rebels fled to Wazirpur as Nizamuddin says, from whom the narrative is borrowed. A glance at the map shows that the place meant cannot be near Aligarh. Roy's identification therefore is at best tentative ; it should be sought some-

where very near to the southern bank of the Ganges between Sambhal and Shamsabad.

(xii) "When (900 A. H.) he reached *Kahal pass* . . . . . The sultan pursued him to *Bhata* upon which the Rajah fled to the village of *Sarguja*. The sultan renewed his march from *Phapund*, lying within *Bhata pargana* . . . . Sikandar who forded accross the Kuntit ferry to Chunar, and thence pressed on towards Benares." (Roy, p. 76).

The corresponding passage in Dorn (Pt. 1, p. 58, lines 3 ff.) has the same date ; but reads *Patna* in place of Bhata ; *Behavand* in place of *Phapund*. This expedition of Sultan Sikandar in 900 A.H. was directed against the Rajah of Bhata or Bandhogarh in the Rewa territory. Somwhere between Kalinjar and Rewa he defeated Bir Singh, son of the Rajah, who fled to *Sargujah* in the Bihar province. So Dorn's reading of "in the direction of *Patna*", supported by Nizamuddin, is more appropriate than Bhata-Rewa. *Behavand* is a misreading on miswriting of perhaps *Pahund*, which Roy has made Phapund.[1]

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[1] Roy has added a footnote on Phapund and criticized C. H. I.'s account of Sikandar's campaign in Bhata as very misleading. He says, "The account of the Sultan's march from Sargujah to Sundah seems very improbable", and he is right. The text in Nizamuddin's T. A. here seems to be faulty, and it is apparent that the *Makhzan* copied here a more correct text of T. A. ; because the *Makhzan* does not say that Sikandar *followed* the fugitive Bir Singh as far as *Sargujah*, and from Sargujah returned to *Phapund* (?). It simply says that the Sultan in the course of pursuit reached *Phapund*. But where is this Phapund, which a modern writer (*The First Afghan Empire*, p. 127) has rendered more incorrect by identifying it with *Phaphund*, a well known Railway Junction between Etawah and Kanpur, at a distance of 56 kilometres from Etawah. What business could Sikandar have there at Phaphund, then campaigning against Bhata-Rewa ? It is just in the opposite direction from Sargujah in Bihar, and too remote from Bihar, and too remote from Bhata. Writers have overlooked the fact that Sikandar had in the previous campaign snatched from Rajah Bhid of Arail (opposite Allahabad) all territories in the Gangetic plain. His second expedition must have started from the Kuntit ferry through the Mirzapur district, where he defeated the Rajah's son. So the place from which he retreated must be somewhere near about it. Nizamuddin is correct in giving the name of the place as *Sondha*, till now on the map within the jurisdiction of *Kalinjar*. In Dorn's Translation, Kalinjar has become *Kanauj* (*Behavund*, belonging to *Kanoj* ; Pt. 1, p. 58).

Roy's note itself is misleading.

(xiii) "All on a sudden sultan Husain was defeated and retreated .... to *Bhata* (?) .... proceeded to Kahalgaon .... situated within the kingdom of Lakhnauti leaving Malik Kandu in *Bihar* ... Malik Kandu fled .... Leaving *Mahabat Khan* at Bihar .... the sultan (Sikandar) marched back to Darweshpur." (Roy's *Makhzan*, p. 77).

The corresponding passage in Dorn is almost identical but definitely *more accurate* than that of Roy on the following points :

(a) Dorn reads *Patna* in place of *Bhata*. The context clearly shows that Sikandar gave chase to Husain Sharqi in the direction of Bihar and Patna through the modern Sahabad district of Bihar lying to the south of the Ganges. Dorn reads *Patna* in place of *Bhata wrongly* in the third line of the same place no doubt ; but *here in lines 6 and 23 Patna* in Dorn should be accepted as the correct reading, though in the next line in place of Sikandar, Dorn reads .... "he found *Behlol* at his heels" ; similarly *Sirhut* (line 30) is an error. Roy confirms the error in his Ms. with regard to *Bhata* by adding in the *footnote* that the reading of this passage is the same in *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* and *Tarikh-i-Ferishta*. But topography and commonsense should over-rule any array of authorities where misread, or are at fault.

(b) In Roy's Ms. the *date 901 A. H.* for Sikandar's final conquest of Bihar is wanting. Dorn definitely mentions it in line 28 of p. 58.

This is important because this gives us the downward limit of the time of the transfer of Sher's father, Hasan Sur, and his kinsman, *Mahabat Khan Sur* as jagirdars in South Bihar. "Mahabat Khan at Bihar" (read wrongly *Mohabbet Khan* in Dorn) was no other person than the old patron of Sher's father Hasan Sur, Mahabat Khan Sur, whose son Muhammad Khan Sur was the jagirdar of Chaund (Mirzapur district) with a command of 1500 horse, a notable personality in the closing years of Ibrahim's reign.

Unfortunately this fact escaped my notice while even rewriting my *Sher Shah* recently. This carries the lesson that History read piecemeal hardly yields the whole truth.

(xiv) "On the 16th Shawwal, 901/Tuesday, 28th June, 1496, Khan Jahan died. The sultan conferred the tittle of Azam Humayun upon his eldest son, Ahmad Khan" (Roy, p 77).

The corresponding passage in Dorn is the same having been taken *verbatim* from Nizamuddin (Lucknow text, p. 162). But this is in conflict with an older and better authority, Mushtaqi, whose

father was a dependent of the Khanjahan's family. This Khanjahan was Husain Khan Lodi, son of Khanjahan Firuz Khan Lodi, uncle of Sultan Bahlul. Mushtaqi writes, "When he died his son, whose name was Ahmad Khan neither got the title of Khan Jahan nor his father's rank" (Elliot, IV., 539). The title of Azam Humayun had been given by Bahlul to his grandson, Jalal Khan whom Sikandar deprived of it along with his fief of Kalpi. The only known holder of the title of Azam Humayun in the latter part of the reign of Sikandar and the reign of Ibrahim Khan Lodi, was Umar Khan Sarwani.

(xv) Treaty between Sultan Sikandar and the king of Bengal (Roy, p. 78).

The version given in Roy's Ms. should be accepted in preference to that of Dorn, which contains the strange stipulation that Sikandar should not *extend his dominion beyond the Punjab* (!)

(xvi) In 904 A. H. sultan marched to *Bhata*" (p. 78).

Dorn gives no date, and besides, reads *Panna* in place of *Bhata* (Rewa territory), and the L. U. Ms. of the *Makhzan* has *Patna*. So the version of Roy's Ms. is more accurate.

(xvii) Shams Khan given a *good kicking* (Roy, p. 78).

This is bad translation. Dorn says that Shams Khan was *bastinadoed* (p. 58), which is better ; because *bastinado* was a form of torture known in Iran as well as in Medieval India.

(xviii) Conquest of Dholpur, 1501.

A number of men were killed . . . . *Khwaja Babban died* a hero's death. . . . *Rai Manik Deo* (?) fled to Gawalior while his following fortified themselves in the citadel (Roy, p. 83).

The corresponding passage in Dorn (Pt. 1, p. 61) gives the same facts, though differently worded. The author of the *Makzan* as well as Ferishta borrowed this passage almost *verbatim* from the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* of Nizamuddin. If so, why Ferishta wrote *Vinayekdeo* in place of *Manik Deo* ? It is doubtful whether *Manik Deo* warrants a correct reading of the name in the *text* of the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*. The Newal Kishore Press edition of the *Tabaqat* remains indispensable for checking the Bibliotheca Indica edition of the same work, this name as written in N. K. Press edition will clearly read *Banayek* De (Vinayak Dev) with *two dots* below the undotted letter-head following *alif*. Dr. Lee's Ms. of the *Makhzan*, quoted by Dorn in his *Notes* reads *Benakdes*, and not Manik Deo (Vide, Dorn. Pt. 2, p. 96). Roy quotes a *Hindi authority* on this point (p. 82, Fn., 2), giving the name as *Vinayek Deo*. So the weight of evidence goes in favour of *Vinayek*

Deo (Lee's Benakdes), which should therefore be accepted as the correct reading of the same name in the original text of Nizamuddin misread and corrupted by copyists.

It is curious to read that both Nizamuddin and Niamatullah make the redoubtable *Biban* (correctly Babban ; mis-read as *Bein*) of Babur's *Memoirs*,—die *at Dholpur in 1501*, and yet both of these authorities mention the presence of *Babban* in the army of Mahmud, son of Sultan Sikandar, finally crushed *thirty years* after by Emperor Humayun at the battle of *Dauroh* (*Dorahe*), midway between Jaunpur and Lucknow. (See N. K. Press edition, p. 195, line 15 ; Dorn, p. 101, "Mian Bein ; Jauhar, Ms. 5-6). It is important to remember that Nizamuddin is a *compiler* except for the reign of Akbar. His method was to borrow from one set of authorities for the history of the Afghans, and from another set for the same events in the history of Babur and Humayun ; i.e., Court historians of Akbar.

Roy's translation dealing with the closing years of the reign from pp. 79 to 85, is, on the whole, more acceptable than that of Dorn. There has been some confusion in the sequence of events in Roy. Every point of difference between Roy and Dorn, should be checked by a reference to Nizamuddin, whose version after scrutiny should be accepted as final.

Reign of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi

Differences between the two translations of the Makhzan are less serious in the account of the reign of Ibrahim Lodi than that in the previous period. Main points are noted below :

(1) Accession of Ibrahim Lodi.

"Astrologers . . . . chose an auspicious moment" (Roy, p. 152) —, is omitted in Dorn.

(2) "His Majestry who deputed . . . . Shaikhzada *sultan* (?) Muhammad (Roy, p. 153). Dorn has Shaikhzada *Mahmood*, which is wrong ; so is *sultan* in Roy's Ms. So *Shaikhzada Muhammad* with the omission of *sultan*, should be the correct reading. The man meant is Shaikhzada Muhammad Farmuli.

(3) Imprisonment of the princes in the fort of Hansi.

These were Ismail Khan, Husain Khan, and *Shaikh* Daulat Khan according to Roy. Here is one significant omission, "Mahmud, son of Sultan Sikandar", which we read in Dorn (p. 72). Why should a prince, Daulat Khan be called *Shaikh* ? Dorn omits the epithet, and besides, adds that the imprisonment took place in the *first year* of Ibrahim's reign.

So *Dorn's version is fuller* and more accurate than the corresponding passage in Roy.

(4) Civil war between Sultan Ibrahim and Prince Jalal Khan (Roy, pp. 156-58 ; Dorn, Pt. 1, 72-73).

Roy's Translation is more acceptable than that of Dorn.

(5) Expedition against Gawalior.

(i) " . . . . the sultan deputed Azam Humayun with 30,000 warlike cavalry. . . . *350* (?) elephants . . . ." (Roy, p. 159). The corresponding passage in Dorn reads, *fifty* elephants, besides engines for storming a fort . . ." (p. 74).

Roy's version is nearer the truth as it agrees with Nizamuddin, who writes, however, 300 elephants and mentions no engines of war.

(ii) Reinforcements to Gawalior.

When were the reinforcements sent ? Roy's *Makhzan* says, "He detached a body of auxiliaries" at the same time and along with the main army under Azam Humayun Sarwani (p. 159). Dorn says that reinforcements were sent *after the capture* of *Badalgarh* (wrongly written as *Bedel Kadda*), and as such Dorn's version is more sensible. But truth lies with Nizamuddin, from whom the *Makhzan* appropriates the account unskilfully. According to Nizamuddin the reinforcements arrived after Azam Humayun's army had frightened away the fugitive Jalal Khan from Gawalior, and the situation became complicated by the reported flight of Jalal Khan to the Court of Malwa. This is understandable, and so Dorn's account may be a reshuffling of facts actually made by Niamatullah on some other authority.

(iii) Similarly the names of officers sent with reinforcements are not in complete agreement in the two Translations. So it is better to turn to their original ; *i.e.*, Nizamuddin, who says : "At this time arrived" Bhikan Khan, son of Alam Khan Lodi ; Jalal Khan Lodi, Sulaiman Farmuli, Bahadur Khan Nuhani, Bahadur Khan Sarwani, *Ismail*[1] (*son of Malik Firuz A'awan*). Khizr Khan Nuhani, Khizr Khan (*brother of Bhikan Khan Lodi*), and Khan Jahan . . . ." Lucknow edition of T. A., pp. 176-7.

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[1] Roy has made out, "Ismail Khan (*and*) Malik Firuz *Aghwan*" ; whereas Dorn has, "*Ismuel Firozad*". Both are equally absurd, particularly Dorn's. Generally *wa* is placed between every two personal names ; where son and father are meant ; it is written without *wa*, and as such sometimes mistaken as a single name. In the latter case the reader is expected to read an *izafat* (-i-equivalent to *bin* (son of). Dorn has left it as found in his Ms.

(6) Fate of the statue at Badalgarh (vide para 1, p. 160 of Roy ; para 1 of Dorn, p. 74).

This account has been summarised in the *Makhzan* from T. A. badly enough to create a wrong impression about the situation of Badalgarh. So the *Makhzan* does not add to history in any way. Nizamuddin's account throws more light : " . . . (the Sultan's army pressed the siege with vigour) . . . . *Below* the Fort (Gawalior which stood on a chain of hills) Rajah Man built magnificent palaces and having fortified the place gave it the name of Badalgarh. After a long time the soldiers of the Sultan ran mines (*naqb-ha kundah*), filled these with *gunpowder* (*daru-i- tofang*), and ignited them. The wall of the fort crumbled down, and they captured that place (*manzil*). Within that place there was *the statue of a quadruped* (*sutur-i-ro'yin*) made of bronze (brass ?) which the Hindus for years used to worship. Under orders of the Sultan that brazen (?) statue was brought to Delhi and set up in front of the Baghdad Gate of Delhi. Down to the time of His Majesty (Akbar Badshah) that *cow* (*gao* ; bull ?) stood in front of the gate of Delhi. The writer of this chronicle has seen it " (T. A., Lucknow Edition : p. 177).[1] Roy in footnote says that he has rendered *Top wa Tufang* of the Ms. into *fire-balls* because "the use of guns and muskets was unknown before 1526" (vide Fn. 2. *misplaced* under p. 159 ; proper place being below the text of p. 160). Dorn's account is briefer and slightly different. It does not contain the sentence, "In 999 A. H. it was melted and cast into a *mortar* by His Majesty's order and continues to exist in the government *lumber-room* (?). This humble writer (Nizamuddin or Niamatullah ?) had seen both of them." (p. 160). This appears to

Had not Nizamuddin clearly written *pisar-i-*, this name would have caused controversy. Roy has apparently read *Aghwan* in place of Nizamuddin's *A'awan*. *Aghwan* is meaningless ; whereas the *Awan* is an important tribe of the Indus basin, now Muslims, but with a legendary descent from Anu, one of the exiled sons of *Yayati* (vide Rose's Glossary . . . . , vol. 2). Dorn omits the name of Khizr Khan Lodi given in Roy's Ms. which again ignores the adjunct, *brother of Bhikan Khan*, given in T. A.

[1] The *Makhzan* in Roy's translation makes a fanciful adaptation of Nizamuddin's narrative quoted above : "Azam Humayun went and laid siege to the fort. On *the first day* . . . . led the assault as far as the *inner citadel* (?) known as Badalgarh. Most of them (the Afghans) were struck down *by fire-balls directed at them* . . . The Afghans took it away forcibly from them (the Hindus) by the *power of their archery* and sent it to the sultan. . . ." (p. 160). This is a sample of unscrupulousness of later chroniclers.

be an interpolation. However, a later writer Yadgar says, not known on what authority, that the *copper* statue of the animal gave out sound of itself (*az khud awaz me-kard*), and that it was placed before *the gate of the Agra Fort*, where it remained till the reign of Akbar, who made a *top* (cannon) out of it (*Tarikh-i-Shahi*, Bib. Indica, p. 45). The learned editor of the *Tarikh-i-Shahi* adds in the footnote "In *Makhzan-i-Afghani* Ms. No. 8 (A) under His Majesty's order that *cow* was melted, polished (? *ab saktah*) and *ghariyals* (gongs) were made out it. These are in the government stores". This Ms. of the *Makhzan* was evidently based not on the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, but on Badayuni's history, which tallies with the version quoted above. So may God take care of the cow of Gawalior and the history of Lodi Sultanate in Afghan chronicles.

(7) Murder of Prince Jalal Khan.

The last para of p. 160 in Roy's translation,—which corresponds to para 2, p. 74 of Dorn's translation, seems to be *defective* on the following points :

(i) "Prince Jalal Khan. . . .came out of Gawalior and went to Mahmud Khilji of Malwa".

This sentence should have gone *after* the first sentence of the *previous* para, as we read in Dorn ; because Jalal Khan fled before the fall of Badalgarh and not after, as the sequence in Roy's translation implies. Roy, however, corrects Dorn's *Gurrakota*, a misreading for *Garh Katanga*, i.e., Gondwana territory.

(ii) "The sultan ordered him to be confined with his *own* (?) brothers. . . . he forced the cup of martyrdom to his lips. . . ." (Roy, p. 160). Dorn rightly omits *own* before *brothers*. If Ibrahim had any *own* brother of his, he was Jalal Khan, born of an Afghan mother (vide *Tarikh-i-Shahi* of Yadgar, p. 65) ; others already imprisoned at Hansi having been step-brothers, born of non-Afghan mothers. Roy's translation gives the impression as if Sultan Ibrahim forced the cup of poison down Jalal's throat before sending him off to Hansi. Dorn's version is that under the secret orders from Ibrahim, Jalal's escort administered him poison on the way to Hansi.

(8) "As the sultan. . . .this rising" (Para 1, p. 161 ; Roy).

The corresponding passage in *Dorn* (pp. 74-75) *deserves preference to Roy's*, which reads, "*Jalal Khan* rose in rebellion. . . . . Ahmad Khan engaged him in a fight, but was defeated." This carries no sense ; there was no *second* Jalal Khan to rise in revolt. So *Jalal Khan* is evidently a mistake for *Islam Khan Sarwani* in Dorn's version, though brief, is more correct.

(9) Nobles sent against the rebels (Para 2, p. 161 of Roy's *Makhzan*).

This list of officers agrees with that of Dorn (para 1, p. 75). But the *Makhzan* on the whole is less reliable than T. A. of Nizamuddin. The *Makhzan* is incorrect in turning Ghazi Khan *Maloti* of Nizamuddin into Ghazi Khan *Biloti*. There is no such important place as *Bilot* ; but *Malot* and Ghazi Khan are mentioned in Babur's *Memoirs*.

(10) "When this news (*of the defeat of Ibrahim's army*) reached the sultan he became annoyed. . . .would depute another batch of amirs to reinforce them as *an additional safeguard* and precautionary measure" (Roy ; para 1, p. 162).

This sentence gives us something altogether different from what Ibrahim actually meant. This should be rejected, because Dorn gives us a correct version corroborated by Nizamuddin : ". . . . (Ibrahim). . . .issued a firman to the purpose that as long as the Omrahs had not exterminated the rebels. . . .*their appearance at Court would be interdicted* ; and at *the same time, sent them fresh reinforcements.*" (Dorn, Pt. 1, p. 75).

(11) "Meanwhile Azam Humayun. . . .died in prison."

This first sentence of Roy's (p. 164) reads like a garbled version of the murder of the two nobles. The corresponding lines in Dorn tell the whole truth : "The Sultan. . . . caused Mia *Boa* (Bhuya) and Azam Humayun . . . . to be assassinated ; nevertheless causing a report to circulate, that both died of illness (para 1, p. 76). The rest of this para in Dorn is *correct history except* the fact that Dariya Khan Lohani assumed the title of Sultan Muhammad Shah. This was done by *Bahadur* (Rect. Bihar Khan of Babur's *Memoirs*), son of Dariya Khan, after his father's death as we find in the next paragraph of Dorn's translation itself (p. 77). To reject Dorn's version on account of this contradiction would amount to throwing away an accurate history of the affairs in the eastern provinces during last years of Ibrahim's rule on the following points :

(i) Muhammad Khan Sur (*presumably a son of Mahabat Khan Sur*, who accompanied Sultan Sikandar in his last expedition to Bihar against Sultan Husain Sharqi), the future enemy of Farid alias Sher Shah, was one of the confederates of Dariya Khan in rebellion. This fact we miss even in Abbas Sarwani's history.

(ii) Roy's translation suffers from the fault of omission of the fact given by Dorn in the *last sentence* of the same passage ; namely that Khan Khanan *Lodi* (?) and others "repaired to their

respective estates in Joonpur, Ghazipur, and the contiguous parts". "*Lodi*" is a mistake for *Farmuli* ; because no Lodi was then a *Khan Khanan* but a *Khan Jahan.*

On p. 164 of Roy's translation the *second* sentence, "Dariya Khan . . . . turned recalcitrant. . . ." *should have come after* the third sentence, if the sequence of events is to indicate time and also the rule of cause and effect : e.g., in Roy's translation, Hasan Farmuli is found a rebel without cause, whereas Hasan Farmuli, a loyalist, rebelled when Ibrahim instigated the murder of Hasan's brother, Husain Farmuli at Chanderi, as Roy puts in the *third sentence* of this para (p. 164). There is no such confusion here in Dorn's translation.[1]

(12) Nasir Khan Lohani of Ghazipur.

"Meanwhile Nasir Khan Nuhani, *hakim* of Ghazipur *being defeated by sultan Ibrahim,* came to Sultan Muhammad . . . . Sultan Ibrahim deputed a large force to quell the rising of Bahadur Khan. . . . . a sanguinary battle took place, which continued for several days." (Roy, p. 164).

Roy's text seems to be *defective* here. These lines create several difficulties :

(i) Sultan Ibrahim did not at all stir out of Agra even when the eastern provinces were in the height of turmoil. So how could *Ibrahim* defeat Nasir Khan of Ghazipur, who is not mentioned among the rebel chiefs by the *Makhzan* or any other authority ?

(ii) Whom did Sultan Ibrahim *depute* to quell the rising ? A nameless imperial commander was not likely to fight a sanguinary battle against Sultan Muhammad Lohani, master of a lakh of cavalry according to the *Makhzan,* and later on confirmed in Babur's *Memoirs.*

So we have to accept Dorn's version, which offers no such difficulties. Dorn says, "He (Sultan Muhammad Lohani) equipped an army of one hundred thousand horse . . . . *beat* Nasir Khan Lohani, who commanded the imperial forces. After his defeat, he

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[1] In all fairness to Roy it must be said that his Ms. of *Makhzan* is copied here *verbatim* from Nizamuddin (Lucknow text, p 187). What, then, might be the authority for Dorn's version ? But it should be remembered that if the facts not copied *Verbatim* from Nizamuddin are to be rejected uniformly, the value of the *Makhzan* as an Afghan chronicle written by an Afghan, though a younger contemporary of Nizamuddin, becomes *nil.* Facts are to be judged on their own merits, and weighed in the scales of *probability.*

returned to the Sultan (Ibrahim) ; but *was ordered* to take the field afresh with a strong army and destroy the usurper." (Pt. 1, p. 77).[1]

(13) Unrest and opposition of the Afghan rebels. (Roy, pp. 161-162 ; Dorn, Pt. 1, 75-76).

Both the Translations are defective on one point or another. We note a few such instances below :

(i) ". . . . he summoned *Azam Humayun* . . . . threw him into prison *with fetters*" (Roy, p. 161, lines 1-4). But on the same page, eight lines below, we read, "About this time *Azam Hamayun* and Sa'id Khan Lodi, who had been the leading nobles of the sultan, *fled to Lucknow* . . . ." And again on p. 162 ". . . . if sultan Ibrahim *set Azam Humayun Sarwani* at *liberty*, they would retire from his dominions . . . . (ibid., lines 18 and 19).

How are we to make any sense out of these contradictory passages ? Dorn's translation clears up the confusion. Dorn adds *Sarwani* after Azam Humayun, who had been summoned from the siege of Gawalior and thrown into prison, not *with fetters* as it goes in Roy's. So the *Azam Humayun*, who fled to Lucknow cannot be Azam Humayun Sarwani, but another noble, whom Dorn calls a *Lodi* (p. 75, line 6 ;—a *brother of Ahmad Khan Lodi*, line 10).

But there still remains the difficulty of identifying Azam Humayun *Lodi* by name. If Ibrahim had transferred the title of *Azam Humayun* from a Sarwani to Lodi, Azam Humayun *Lodi* had no reason to flee and join the Sarwani rebels. However, the

T. A. says, " . . . . Bahadur Khan assumed the title of Sultan Muhammad, ... At this time Nasir Khan Nuhani, *hakim* of Ghazipur, having been defeated by the Sultan's armies (*which* Sultan ? Muhammad Nuhani or Sultan Ibrahim ?) went to *his* (whose ?) presence, stayed for some months in Bihar and read the *khutba* in his name." Here Nizamuddin himself is inaccurate, having himself been a borrower from some unknown authority. Bihar Khan, son of Dariya Khan Lohani, assumed kingly title immediately after the defeat and death of Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat. Nasir Khan did not join Sultan Muhammad, but remained loyal to Ibrahim and immediately after Panipat, Nasir Khan was restored by Babur to his jagir of Ghazipur. What we find in Dorn is perhaps Niamatullah's own version, clear and consistent. Nizamuddin bears out the fact that Nasir Khan commanded the imperial forces and suffered a defeat at the hands of Sultan Muhammad. What Nasir Khan did *after his defeat* is problematical. He might have temporised with Sultan Muhammad or gone to the succour of Ibrahim against the Mughals.

Makhzan has simply borrowed these passages from Nizamuddin, who *himself is not free from ambiguity on this point. Nizamuddin, however, does not say that Azam Humayun Lodi, was a brother of* Ahmad Khan ; among new officers sent against the Sarwani rebels were, "brother of Ahmad Khan *and* a brother of Azam Humayun *Lodi* (N. K. press, edition, p. 188).

(ii) *Iqbal Khan*, commander of Azam Humayun's *household cavalry* (Roy, p. 162, line 3 ; Dorn has ; *a grand officer* of Azam *Humayun Lodi*, p. 75).

"*Commander of household cavalry*" is here a mistranslation of the word, *Khas-khail*, borrowed from Nizamuddin. *Khas-khail* literally means, "of one's own *khail* (sept). During the Lodi regime it meant *Sahukhail*, i.e., the ruling *khail* of the Lodis, as opposed to the Yusufkhail Lodis of the Punjab.

(14) The First battle of Panipat.

To notice a few minor discrepancies :—

(i) "Doulet Khan Lodi, governor of Lahore, presented himself before the Sultan . . . he took to flight, and repaired to his *father* (Dorn, Pt. 1. p. 77).

Here it should read, "son of Daulat Khan Lodi" as Roy correctly puts it (p. 167). This sentence is taken almost verbatim from Nizamuddin Ahmad, who does not omit *son of* before Daulat Khan.

(ii) "About the same time *Dilaver Khan* marched from Lahore towards Samana and Sunam and detached Berdi Beg with four thousand horse, in advance . . . ." (Dorn, p. 78, para 2).

This is positively wrong. It was not Dilawar Khan but *Babur himself* who marched from Lahore towards Samana and Sunam, and *Berdi Beg* is a misreading for the reputed Mughal officer, Tardi Beg. The corresponding passage in Roy's *Makhzan* is free from errors except for *Sunnama*, which should be *Sunam* as in Dorn.

(iii) Armies of Babur and Ibrahim Lodi.

There is no mention of the strength of the Mughal army, and both the translations give the same number on the Afghan side ; namely, "one lakh of cavalry and five thousand elephants," whereas Babur puts one thousand elephants. The date and other details are in agreement in both the Translations.

(iv) Ibrahim's tomb.

". . . . his resting place is frequented by singers and minstrels.

Pilgrims make offering every Friday night . . . ." (Roy, p. 169). *The corresponding passage in Dorn's translation omits the first sentence* about *singers and minstrels*, and *adds* "pilgrims of *Narvar* (Narwar in Malwa), and *Kanoj*" (Dorn, p. 79).

This portion is the only original contribution of the *Makhzan*, if not borrowed from some authority other than Nizamuddin. But its historicity is doubtful. Sultan Ibrahim was no patron of music and mystics, and of all places the tomb of Ibrahim had no reason to attract pilgrims other than Afghans. Panipat contains the tomb of Bu Ali Qalandar, where the Qalandari sect of faqirs, sing and dance. (See Rose : *Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab*, vol. iii, p. 257).

Historical value of the *Makhzan-i-Afghani*

Among the medieval chroniclers, Mushtaqi was the only man who lived through the Lodi and the Suri regimes down to the greater half of the reign of Akbar. He was much older than any writer who wrote in the reigns of Akbar and Jahangir. Niamatullah "borrowed largely from Nizamuddin Ahmad the facts of the Lodi period, sometimes copying paragraphs *verbatim*" as Roy remarks. And it is a fact beyond challenge. Thus the merits of Niamatullah's work covering the Lodi period are rather the merits of Nizamuddin, whereas its defects are his own, which he shares with other Afghan chroniclers of his time.

Roy is perhaps a more widely-read scholar in the field of Afghan history than any other of our times. His industry and enthusiasm were really admirable ; but somehow he seems to have failed to understand correctly the propagandist mentality of the Afghan chroniclers. So in modern times he has been first to be misled by them. This is noticeable in his survey of the Lodi period in his *Introduction*. It were better if Roy had not ventured on a Quixotic mission to redress the imaginary wrongs done to the Lodi Sultans by the medieval and modern historians alike, particularly to Sultan Sikandar Lodi. He says, "Yet Sikandar figured in the eyes of the Muslim scholars as an iconoclast and a champion of the faith. The same view has been echoed by modern writers, *one of whom* expressed the view as late as 1947 that Sikandar was a "Champion of orthodoxy bordering on iconoclasm". Dr. A. Halim ; I. H. C., 1947 ; *now Professor of History, Dacca University, East*

Pakistan.[1] Roy asks himself in wonder, "Why ?". And he has found his answer elsewhere : "The study of the Lodi and Suri *periods in isolation from each other appears to have caused some confusion and misunderstanding in regard to the respective parts played by the various kings of the two dynasties. The role of such* a king as Sher Shah has been over-emphasised, whereas that of the Lodi kings obscured. My integrated study of the whole period to 1556 A. D. based on a mass of Persian chronicles in the original has led me to view in a new perspective the part played by the Lodi monarchs and set it forth in a way very different from that offered in a standard history like the Cambridge History of India. Let scholars judge the result."

As a biographer of Sher Shah, I could not afford to overlook this finding of a fellow worker and friend. I read the sources utilised by Roy, and after much hard thinking with an open mind I found no grounds to differ materially from the current view of modern writers on the Lodi and Suri regimes, against whom Roy has chosen to differ. This has been due to the fact that Roy has not been able to feel the pulse of the medieval writers and understand their ideology correctly.

It should be remembered that the Afghans in India were doubly prostrate in the reign of Akbar who put an end to the last vestige of their independent rule, and added an insult to injury by his religious innovations and liberalism, which the Afghans particularly felt as they were more ardent and sincere Muslims than other Muslim subjects of the Mughal Empire. They to a certain extent recovered from the shock with Jahangir's accession and the rise of the orthodox Muslim Reaction headed by Mujaddid-i Sani of Sarhind. So the Muslims looked back to the past for an Utopia of an ideal Islamic regime in India, and they lighted upon the reign of Sultan Sikandar Lodi. Sher Shah fell a little short of their ideal, and besides it was sedition to write with much warmth about one who was the author of ills to Humayun. So the Afghan writers made a sort of compromise about the Suri regime, which by various anecdotes they proved to be a stop-gap arrangement made by Allah to work for the betterment of the affairs of Hindustan till the Mughals should come back to Delhi at the preordained time. A greater distance of time lent added glamour to the Lodi regime, which the Afghan chro-

[1] Roy's *Makhzan*, p. 136 ; and Fn. 1. The portion in italics about Dr. A. Halim is my own. Roy's Dr. H. Halim is a slip.

niclers of the seventeenth century portrayed as the Golden Age of Islam in Hindustan with Sultan Sikandar Lodi as its hero.

Roy's main contentions are that Sikandar was *unorthodox in private life, and that Sikandar's wars were "secular in character". History tells us that of all rulers,* Sultan Firuz Tughlaq and Sultan Sikandar Lodi, both born of Hindu mothers, would not have ruled even for a day if their private lives had been *unorthodox.* They were brought up in strictly orthodox Muslim tradition, and instilled with an extra dose of hatred for everythine un-Islamic to counteract the taint of Hindu blood in their veins. Sikandar was early separated from his mother, and put under the guardianship of the Khan Khanan Farmuli, surnamed *Kala-pahar,* and renonwed for his orthodoxy and valour. Sultan Sikandar's *imam,* Shaikh Ladan, was ordered to make out a list of all the lapses of the Sultan from the *Shariyat* and un-Islamic acts, such as omission of *namaz* and the fast of Ramzan, shaving of beard, and cutting of noses and ears of culprits during his whole reign. When the list was presented, and the money commutation for the sins ascertained, the Sultan ordered the whole amount to be paid out not from *Bait-ul-Mal* (Public treasury) but from the private treasury in which tributes and presents from the neighbouring rulers were deposited (Yadgar, *Tarikh-i-Shahi,* text., pp. 63-64). This cannot be taken as unorthodoxy in private life. Had he been so he would not have been ranked as a man of God (*waliullah*) and an ideal king too by Mushtaqi, who was a youngman in the reign of Sikandar, and an admirer of the Sultan.

However, Roy should be judged not by the non-essential portion of his work, but by the excellence of his editing and translating the Lodi period of the *Makhzan.* Roy has done a piece of important work which was overdue. Dorn's pioneer work on account of his limited knowledge of Indo-Muslim history and the absence of detailed survey maps in his time has been almost as difficult as a badly written Ms. for the present generation. Roy's Translation rich with topographical and historical notes has sufficient merit to stand as a standard work, though on account of some shortcomings already pointed out, it has not replaced Dorn's work. In fact, no new edition or translation can render an earlier work obsolete, e.g., the Translation and the Text of *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* in the Bibliotheca Indica Series, may have rendered the Newal Kishore Press Litho edition of the same less useful but not useless. I found the latter here and there more accurate than the former. Though we differ from Roy almost fundamentally in our perspective with regard to the history

and historians of the Lodi period, his study will remain a landmark in the field of Indo-Muslim history.

I am painfully aware of the fact that I have perhaps ill repaid the deceased Nirodbhushan's love and loyalty to me almost as a younger brother all through his life. But duty is duty after all, however unpleasant, and this duty I owed to the future generation of scholars interested in Indo-Muslim history. Had our great master, Acharya Jadunath been alive today I might with some excuse have avoided this unpleasant public duty. However, we are friends enough to laugh off this affair when we might possibly meet in the next world, if it exists !

4

The Rajputs and the Historians of Rajputana

It is immaterial to peep into the origin of Rajputs who have the best of pedigrees, namely, the sword. Whatever might have been their origin, the Rajputs only have in historical times maintained the social and political tradition of the Kshatriyas of the Age of Epics. Divine warriors might not spring up from the sacrificial fire-pit on the Mount Abu or on the bank of the Pushkar Lake; Solar and Lunar origin might be a fiction, and yet the Rajput was a towering individuality and a vital force in moulding the Indian society, which has been in the melting-pot more than once since the time of the Epics down to our own times for periodical readjustment.

We do not know since when the ruling warrior community began to be called "Rajput" Kshatriyas, and why so? There is no epigraphical or literary evidence down to 1000 A. D. to indicate definitely the use of the word "Rajput" to denote a class or caste.[1]

[1] As I am more or less a lay man so far as Indian history before 1000 A. D is concerned I referred for information on this point to my pupil, Dr. Asoke Kumar Majumdar, D. Phil. (Calcutta) who has sent me a learned and critical note on this topic. I give the main points below, which appear to me very convincing:

"It has sometimes been assumed that the term 'Rajput' has been derived from the word '*rajputra*'. A few Sanskrit texts and inscriptions support this view. Though it is very difficult to say what the term actually meant, or how it originated, I may add a few more examples to show that the term 'Rajput' is derived from *rajaputra*; e. g., Hemchandra (A. D. 1088-1172) uses the word "*rajaputrakah*" in the sense of Rajputs (*Trisastisalaka-purusacarita*; Text I, i, v. 795). Mount Abu Inscription (no. 11, dated 1230) speaks of "all the *rajaputras* of the illustrious

M. M. Gaurishankar Ojha and others dismiss the whole question by a surmise that the word Rajput came into use since after the establishment of Muslim rule in India. If so, we are to suppose that like "Hindu" or "Hindi", the word "Rajput" originated with foreigners, and later on the warrior clans also began to call themselves Rajputs which name flattered their pride of princely status. But the explanation cannot be accepted complacently. The word "Rajput" undoubtedly was derived not from any Arabic or Persian root, but from San. *Rajputra.* It is not likely that the Muslims coined this word to designate the martial caste of Hindus with whom they came into the most direct contact either as foes or as mercenary soldiers. The word must have been in unofficial use among the Rajputs themselves from whom the same was taken up by Muslim invaders. Its use in the form of *rajaputra* or *rajaputraka* (Hemachandra, A. D. 1088-1172) clearly indicates that it is a sanskritization of some current word in Prakrit form ; e. g., *rauh*[2] in Oriya, *rahut* in Bengali used not in the sense of "a son of a king", but a valiant cavalier, as opposed to "*khandait*" in Oriya in the sense of a foot-soldier armed with a "khanda" or sword. Some such form of the word must have been similarly in use in other parts of India also. At any rate it is necessary to hunt for the word Rajput or its equivalent in Indian languages, and also in Arabic and Persian down to the fourteenth century after which it becomes too common in Persian chronicles as well as in Indian languages.

What is a Rajput ? It conveys a meaning in Rajputana other than princely descent as in Sanskrit, or *Rajputtur* in West Bengal

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Pratihara clan" : and Merutunga in his *Prabandhacintamani* (A.D. 1305) speaks of five hundred *rajaputras* of Paramara (clan)" .... From these examples, therefore it may be concluded that from the 12th century onward some Rajput clans were called "*Rajaputra*" or Rajputs. . . . It is interesting to observe that the two famous clans, namely, the Calukyas and the Rashtrakutas, first came into prominence and power in the Kannada country (the Deccan). . . . But when or how they came to be called *Rajputras* is not known, though it seems that the term first gained currency in Western India."

2 *Rauth* is the title of a subcaste of the Kshatriya in Orissa. In the days of Orissa's glory the *Rauths* were the indigenous warrior caste, which resents to be classed with Rajput. The word may also be Oriya form of Hindi "*Ravat*", a title of distinction bestowed on a powerful feudatory (lit. son of a Rao or Rai). "*Rauth*" (in *Dharma-mangal*) of Bengali bears the same sense.

dialect. A "Rajputtur" of Bengal need not have a princely lineage and valour, but only a calmly handsome appearance of fair complexion worthy of being sought for as a son-in-law! The nearest equivalent of Rajput in Turki is *Bahadur*, a valiant soldier ugly or handsome. The seventeenth century recension of *Prithiviraj-Raso* uses the word *rajputi* in the sense of a Kshatriya's pride and prestige.[3] Nainsi in the last quarter of the seventeenth century uses the word "Rajput" in more than one sense. When used in the sense of a warrior, the word is invariably qualified in his *Khyat* by some adjective such as *bada, bahut-accha, banka, balavand* or *bikat* (grim). A Rajput would introduce himself not as a *Rajput* but by his clan-title if his *jat* (caste) was questioned. In the Middle Ages "Rajput"[4] ordinarily meant a trooper in the service of a chief or a free-lance captain, and sometimes was applied in applause even to a brigand of desperate courage.

Next comes the title of "Simha" (Singh), which the Rajput Kshatriyas assumed in preference to the classical epithet of "Varman". Here too we tread on the quicksands of history. Numismatic evidence puts on record that the first examples of names ending with "Shri" and "Simha" are to be found with the names of the two sons of the great Kshatrapa ruler, Rudradaman in the second century A. D. In the same dynasty was born a ruler, Rudrasena, whose eldest son was Vishwa-simha. Of these adjuncts, 'shri" and "sena" are perhaps much older than the Kshatrapas; but "simha" cannot be traced to an earlier date. According to M. M. Ojha, the first Rajput ruler of Calukya (Solanki) clan who bore the title of "*simha*" ruled in the South in about 500 A. D. Thereafter the usage was continued by the Vengi branch of the Calukyas down to the eleventh century.

[3] Cf., *bud gai sari rajputi.*

Quoted in *Rajputane ka Itihas* (vol. I, p. 8) by Jagadish Singh Gahalot.

[4] Cf., the conversation between a Rathor and a Solanki:

Rathor—Whose *basti* is this?

Solanki—Ji! Solankionki (of the Solankis).

Rathor—Thakur, of which tribe are you?

Solanki—I am also a Solanki. . . . .

We are the *rajputs* of Malaji (*Malaji ke rajput*), cultivators (*kisan log*), and dwellers in the jungle (*jangal ke rahanevale*). Nainsi, *Khyat*, ii, pp. 72-73.

As far as Rajputana proper is concerned, we have it on the authority of M. M. Ojha that the use of "simha" came into vogue among the Paramaras of Malwa in the tenth century A.D. ; among the Guhilots and the Kachchawas of Narwar in the twelfth century A.D., and not before the seventeenth century among the Rathors of Marwar.[5] Bardic chronicles use the title of Simha very rarely before the First battle of Panipat.

We have reasons to suspect that "simha" or Singh in Rajputana multiplied artificially, because of the tendency of scholars and inscription-writers to make "Simha" of the Dingal suffix of "See" in proper names of popular currency. And this under a wrong impression that "See" was perhaps an abbreviation of "Singh" : whereas its proper Sanskrit equivalent ought to have been "Shri" of the older times. Bardic chronicles use the word "Singha" as a proper name by itself though very rarely, and about 11% of names have "simha" as an adjunct,[6] and the rest are classical and Prakrit proper names with such adjuncts as *mal, sen* and *see* in Dinga. Unlike the Sanskritists, the Persian chronicles make "sen" out of "see" in Dingal. It is important to notice that such suffixes as "see", "mal" and "singh" are found with the names of Kayeths and Vaises of Rajputana also. Official records of Delhi Court down to the reign of Shahjahan do not warrant the conclusion that "Singh" was in general use as a part of Rajput name. At any rate the practice of using "Singh" during the seventeenth century had not spread among the Rajputs of Eastern India.[7] In the eighteenth century "simha" lost its caste as the non-Rajput martial tribes, Brahmans, Kayeths and Baniyas of U P. and Bihar began to arrogate to themselves the title Singh in imitation of the Rajputs who set the tone of society.

Ojha, *Rajputane ka Itihas*, Pt. II, Appendix V, pp. 531-33.

Curiosity let me to prepare a test statistics of the use of "simha" or Singh from the genealogies given in Nainsi *Khyat*. Proportion stands as follows on a rough average :

Mewar—"Simha" 6 out of thirty names.

Chauhans of Bundi, Sirohi, Jalore and Sanchor—3 out of thirty.

Sankhalas Parmars of Roon (Runn of Cutch)—½ out of thirty. (Part I, pp. 34 to 236 ; scattered).

To quote only one Descriptive Roll (*chehra*) :

"Gangaram, son of Khanna, son of Mahesh ; *qaum* Rajput Chauhan ; resident Buxar . . ." (*Selected documents of Shahjahan's reign*, p. 161 ; published by Dafter-i-Diwani, Hyderabad-Deccan).

In the nineteenth century Bengal court peons of lower castes seized the title singh in the countryside ; and the British regime saw the rise of aristocratic families in Bengal and Bihar with the title of "Sinha" sanctified by English accent when pronouncing "Singh". This class, which claims late Lord Sinha to cap its glory, resents to be addressed as "Singh" and thereby confounded with the non-descript Singhs.

Such being the history of the word, it may be surmised that the use of "simha" as a title of power and dignity was a legacy of the Saka regime in India in the same way as the title of *Khan* clung to the names of Rajputs, and still clings to some Brahman families of Bengal as a legacy of Muslim rule. To infer the Saka origin of the Rajputs from their use of the title of "simha" would be, however, as preposterous as to conclude two hundred years hence that Hindu high caste *Sarkars*, *Majumdars*, *Potdars*, *Mustaufis* and *Qanungo*-s were originally Muslims who had been assimilated to Hindu society as a result of the Hindu Revival after 1948 !

However, "Rajput" became a generic denotation in medieval times as the word "Marwari" has become in modern times, particularly in Eastern India where any big merchant hailing from any part of Rajputana and the East Punjab is called a Marwari. This indicates the vitality of the martial and mercantile communities of barren Rajputana. Remnants of Rajput (as equivalent to Hindu) rule were found as far as Ghazni and Qandahar, inaccessible defiles of the Himalayas and the Vindhyas, and the unhealthy plains of Bengal. We have it on record that the Mughal Emperors settled contingents of Rajput soldiers to prop up their authority in the turbulent and outlying territories in the same way as the British in later times tempted their pensioned Gurkhas to settle in Assam and Burma to clench British imperialism in the East Under the Mughal regime the Rajputs, though in small numbers, filtrated into Bengal. Orissa, Chota Nagpur, and Baglana on the outer fring of Maharashtra. The descendants of Alha and Udan of the Banafar *got* of Baghelkhand, who fought with Privthiraj Chauhan—, have become Bengalis to all intents and purpose except in build and whiskers.

To turn to a short notice of the historians of Rajputana.

The Rajputs are not known to have ever written a history of their own till Thakur Narendra Singhji of Jobner in the present century cared to write some historical tracts. A second historian of Rajput blood in our times is Dr. Raghubir Singh, descended from the heroic stock of Rao Ratan Singh Rathor who died for

Dara on the field of Dharmat ; but a third is still in the womb of futurity. Nevertheless, the Rajputs were lovers and martyrs of History, which they had relegated to the keeping of Bhats and Charans. Recital of old sagas (*Varta, Yash Katha*) was as indispensable in palaces and manorial halls as *ammal* (opium) and wine for social entertainments and festive gatherings to cheer the Rajputs. Genealogies and ballads, panegyrics and bardic polemics passed for history among the people who cared little for the niceties of dates and the historicity of details. These have, however, preserved information not available from any other source. Unless definitely contradicted by more bona fide history, these have a value of their own to impart not only flesh and blood but also to breathe life and spirit into the skeleton of Rajput history pieced together by modern scientific research.

We do not propose to take a stock of researches into Rajput history, which time and space do not permit. We shall confine ourselves to brief biographical sketches and works of eminent historians born in the land of the Rajputs, supplemented by an estimate of illustrious outsiders. In medieval times only one bona-fide historian was born in Rajasthan, and he is Muhnot Nainsi of Jodhpur, whose life and work will be treated elsewhere.

The place of honour in the hierarchy of modern historians of Rajputana should be given to Tod ; because in him the Hellas of Hindustan found a Herodotus, and from him came the impetus to later historians, and his immortal work fired the imagination of our people. His *Annals* may have proved partly out of date ; but it will ever remain a source of pride and patriotic inspiration. He is too well-known to need introduction anew.

When Col Tod was engaged in writing his *Annals of Rajasthan,* Bundi was blessed with the birth of the last great epic genius in the field of bardic lore seven hundred years after the legendary Chand Bardai. He was Surajmal Mishan, a Charan by birth who rose to fame as the Poet Laureate of Bundi in the time of Maha Rao Ramsinghji of Bundi.

Surajmal Mishan was born in or about 1816 A. D. Under the patronage of Maha Rao Ramsinghji he composed in eight parts (*rashi*) his historical epic in verse, the *Vamsa-bhaskar*, covering in four volumes four thousands and fortythree pages in print. This work is, in our opinion, much more valuable as history than the far-famed *Prithviraj-Raso*, and as a literary product it deserves to be classed as the ninteenth century Mahabharat of India in multifold

metres and variations of Hindi. The author has skilfully woven into his work a resume of the whole history of India down to his own time. Its value lies in a grand collection of historical materials specially for a picture of medieval Rajput society. He was a man of extremely independent temperament caring little for the favour or frown of his patron. He chronicles facts and legends not always flattering to his patron's house. He was indefatigable in collecting materials from every corner of Rajputana. But he was not critical in treating his materials, as no poet can afford to be. He was proud of his learning, and once he rejected the much-coveted honour of the gift of *langar* (gold anklet) from his patron saying that he did not wish to yield to gold a recognition due to his *vidya* alone.

Surajmal Mishan met the common lot of historians; namely, disappointment, unsteady fortune and oblivion. Bundi forgot everything about the author of the *Vamsa-bhaskar* within 30 years of his death. All that we know of him is a reminiscence recorded by a great Charan scholar, Sri Krishna Singh Varma, the commentator on Surajmal's epic. One thing remembered about him is that he used to sip wine constantly except in sleep, and yet never betrayed the sign of intoxication. Wine was indeed an aid to his normalcy and poetry. He would not forgo his cup even when summoned to the Darbar.

It once happened that the news of the death of Maharajah Balawant Singh Rathor of Rutlam reached Surajmal in an assembly of friends and admirers in his house. He said to his friend that it was not proper that people should individually offer oblations of water (*jalanjali*) each in his own house for the peace of the soul of such a generous ruler. He went in company to the lake of Bundi; but the sight of water seemed to have had marred the effect of his cups. So he said, "It is not proper that without the recitation of a poem of praise oblations should be offered on such an occasion." So he sent a Charan named Haralya to fetch flagons from his house. He drank three cups to wake up slumbering Clio, and offered oblations of water reciting a forceful extempore panegyric in honour of the dead.[8]

Some disappointment perhaps came upon Surajmal before the

For a notice of the life of Surajmal: Introduction, p. 6ff. of the Vamsa-bhaskar published by the Pratap Press, Jodhpur, and also Jagadish Singh Gahalot's *Rajputane ka Itihas*, vol. i, p. 26 footnote.

completion of his work. He lived about eight or ten years in retirement *till his death at fiftythree in 1869 A. D. It was no princely initiative but a private enterprise of the Charan fraternity initiated by Kavirajah Muraridanji of Jodhpur that has rescued the poet-historian's memory from oblivion by publishing the Vamsa-bhaskar.*[9]

A generation after Surajmal Mishan was born Kavirajah Shyamaldasji of Mewar, known to fame as the author of *Virvinod* (Hindi) now available in print in five thick volumes. Though himself a Charan of medieval stock, modern method of research on a comprehensive scale dawned upon Rajputana with Shymaldasji.

His ancestors were the hereditary "Pol-pat" (Lit., "Lord of the Gate", i. e., the premier Charan who receives customary *neg* or gifts from the bridegroom at the gate),—of the Sankhla Parmars of Roon of Cutch. When evil days came upon the Sankhlas they migrated to Mewar with their princely clients and settled down in Mewar. One of his ancestors received from the Maharana the village of Dadhivara as *sasan* in religious charity, which became the home of the family. Some generations after, Shymaldas, one of the four sons of Qaim Singh, was born in Dadhivara on the seventh day of the dark fortnight of the month of Asadh V. S. 1895[10] (about 1839 A. D.). He received a good education and became a scholar in Sanskrit Poetics, which he taught in later life to his sister's son Charan Krishna Singhji of Shahpura, the commentator of Surajmal's *Vamsa-bhaskar.* Shymaldasji grew up more than a scholar,—a man of strong character and administrative abilities as he was. He rose in favour with Maharana Shambhusinghji, who entrusted to him the task of compiling a comprehensive and documented history of Mewar in collaboration with Purohit Padmanath in 1871. They began their work, which was interrupted by the death of Shambhu-

[9] Though M. M. Ojha has not done justice to Surajmal's history, Dr. Mathura Lal Sharma, a promising and critical scholar, makes a more correct appraisal of the value of the Vamsa-bhaskar. In his opinion the first two parts have no great value from the view-point of historical research ; but Parts III & IV are packed with valuable materials not only for the history of Kotah, Bundi and other Rajput states, but for the history of India as a whole as well. Portions dealing with the history of Kotah are reliable and authoritative in many places (*Kotah Rajya-ka Itihas,* vol. i, p. 8).

[10] We accept the dates of birth and death of Shymaldasji as given by Jagadish Singh Gahalot (*Rajputane ka Itihas,* i, pp. 27-28, fn. 2). Other details have mostly been taken from M. M. Ojha's work.

singhji and the minority of his successor, Maharana *Sajjan Singhji.* His abilities and scholarship raised him to greater eminence in the *reign of the new Maharana, who made him a confidential adviser and appointed him as Librarian of the Palace Library of Udaipur. He* was given the title of Kavirajah in 1879 by the Udaipur Darbar. In a biographical sketch of Shymaldasji, M. M. Ojah says :

"When Col. Impey, the Political Agent in Udaipur, made an earnest request to the Maharana for compiling a history of Mewar, the Maharana ordered Shymaldasji to compile a detailed history entitled *Vir-vinod.* One lakh of rupees was put at the disposal of Shymaldasji, who established the office of *Itihas-karyalaya,* appointed for his assistance competent scholars in Sanskrit, English, Arabic and Persian, etc., and set about making a magnificent collection of inscriptions, copper-plates, coins, historical works in Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic and English, etc., besides old *pattahs, parwanas, firmans, nishans* and official correspondence. He wrote a voluminous work the printing of which was completed only in the reign of Maharana Fathe Singhji who succeeded Sajjan Singhji in 1884.

Kavirajah Shymaldasji was also the chief adviser of Maharana Sajjan Singhji in all his beneficent activities and reforms such as the survey and assessment of revenue, establishment of courts and the Council of *Mahadrajasabha,* improvement of the city (of Udaipur) with new buildings and in improving the condition of the people. He was devoted to scholarship and appreciated the worth of scholars. He was a poet, a lover of history, an out-spoken man. He always gave right advice to his master and was thoroughly loyal. He had such a powerful memory that he never forgot what he had read once. He was instrumental in the Maharana's bestowal of gifts and honours to men of eminence and learning of his time."[11]

Even if Kavirajah Shymaldasji had not written his monumental history of Mewar, *Vir-vinod,* his memory will always be revered as a great organiser of historical research on modern lines in Rajputana. M. M. Gaurishankar Ojah was a worthy successor of Shymaldasji in this field, and he further enriched this collection for future scholars. There is still enough field there in the Udaipur Library collections for a full generation of scholars to glean and be benefited even from materials already used by these two stalwarts.

Kavirajah Shymaldasji was awarded the title of *Mahamopadhyaya* in January 1888. The historian seems not to have been quite

[11] *Ojah, Rajputane ka Itihas,* Vol. II ; Pt. 2, pp. 1343-1345.

happy in his later life. He died in 1893, and in 1913 the Udaipur Darbar sealed up the printed copies of his work and forbade its circulation even within the State for reasons not likely to be known in this generation as M. M. Ojha was discreetly silent over this affair.

Next in the chain of historians born in Rajputana was Munshi Devi Prasadji. He was born in 1848 A. D. at the city of Jaipur in a Kayeth family; but his field of work was Marwar. He was in Jodhpur service till his death in July 1923. Though he did not concentrate his efforts on producing any original history himself like his predecessors, his fragmentary contributions are extremely valuable. He was a veritable store-house of information particularly for Marwar. His love of history was diverted to the mission of popularising Medieval History through the medium of Hindi. He began translating the Persian court histories of Shahjahan and Aurangzib into Hindi. He has left a major part of his modest fortune as a legacy to the Nagari-pracharini Sabha of Banaras for publishing a series in Hindi, historical and literary texts and translation to facilitate research.

A promising contemporary of Shyamaldasji and Prasadji was Babu Ramnarayan Dugar born in a family of the Oswal merchant community of Udaipur in 1857. He had been associated with Kavirajah Shyamaldasji in his younger days, and with M. M. Ojha in his later life. He was perhaps the greatest authority on Dingal in which bardic chronicles were written. His most important contribution is the Hindi translation of Nainsi's Khyat in two parts from archaic Dingal. He died at Jodhpur in 1931.

The Charan enthusiasts of Rajput history like Kavirajah Muraridanji and others, whose silent work in this field in hunting out old bardic sources was of great value, deserve a separate treatment by some competent Dingal scholar. From the reign of Emperor Muhammad Shah down to the end of the nineteenth century Urdu dominated Hindi as a literary medium with the literates of Upper India, though Hindi was recovering ground with the Hindus in the last quarter of the nineteeth century. But Urdu produced no first-rate historian interested in Rajput history. However, Babu Jwala Sahai Mathur, son of Munshi Kriparam Qanungo did a great service by publishing *Waqa'i-Rajputana* in three volumes in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. He was born in 1830 at Tijara (Alwar State) in a Mathur Kayastha family of Gurgaon. His work was mainly based on Tod's *Annals* supplemented with official documents in English. He had been in the service of the Bharatpur

State which is historically outside Rajputana proper. Babu Jwala Sahai died in 1918 at the age of eightyone.

The last and undoubtedly the greatest historian born in Rajputana was Pandit Gaurishankar Ojha. He was born in a Gaurwal Brahman family of Sirohi. For twenty years he was in Udaipur service till his appointment as the Curator of the Ajmer Museum. This transfer to neutral soil under direct British rule made him a more critical historian away from the awe and authority of sensitive autocrats, the history of whose ancestors he was writing. His life and works are too well-known to need description here. M. M. Ojha was in fact a worthy successor of Kavirajah Shyamaldasji in the field of research in Rajput history. About a decade back M. M. Ojha died full of years and fame, excelling all his predecessors in the quality and quantity of researches in Rajput history, besides his supplementary literary contributions of considerable value.

Among the contemporaries of M. M. Ojha, Rao Bahadur Harvilas Sarda rose to eminence as the author of well-written biographies of Maharana Kumbha, Maharana Sanga, and a historical geography, *Ajmer Historical and Descriptive* in English. He leapt into fame by his articles in which he exposed the doubtful character of the current edition of *Prithvi Raj Raso*. He was unfortunately diverted from history by his zeal for politics and Hindu superiority. This was a definite loss to useful research and a doubtful gain for the Hindu community.

Another younger contemporary of Ojah was Babu Bishewar Nath Rieu. He has worthily filled a gap in Ojha's research by writing an authoritative History of Jodhpur in Hindi. In the present generation Dr. Mathura Lal Sharma is perhaps the most promising worker in the field of Rajput history, so far as we are able to judge him by the first fruits of his research, namely, *Kotah Rajya ka Itihas* in two volumes.

This much is "in memory" of historians who are forgotten sooner than their histories. However, historians born outside Rajputana have perhaps made an equally important contribution to Rajput history, if not more important; because they have been more widely read and intellectually better equipped by the modern standard. We may say that if there is no song of old without Kanhaya in Hindi, there has been also no research in Indian history that could bypass the Rajputs. Dr. V.A. Smith, Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar, Prof. R. C. Majumdar of Gurjara-Pratihara fame, Dr. H. Ray, author of the Dynastic History of Northern India and Dr. D. C.

Ganguly, author of the History of the Paramaras are the acknowledged authorities on the ancient and the early medieval periods of Rajput history.

Rao Bahadur G. S. Sardesai and Sir Jadunath Sarkar have rebuilt with toil and precision the Maratha and the Mughal bastions and salients of the citadel of Rajput history in the course of their long career of research. Sir Jadunath's unerring instinct as a historian suspected the existence of rich materials for Rajput and Mughal history in the till then sealed treasures of the Jaipur Darbar Archives, which later on proved to be too true. After years of earnest effort, he was the first to whom the Jaipur Archives were thrown open for research on the condition of his writing a *History of Jaipur* for the Darbar. Sir Jadunath's masterly survey of the history of Jaipur can now be read in manuscript in the Palace Library of Jaipur ; because, on account of some reasons the Darbar did not like to publish it.

Rajputana still affords a promising field for a search of historical documents relating to the Mughal and the Maratha periods of ascendancy. I had the occasion to come across a unique collection of Persian *Akhbarat* and Hindi letters of Durgadas and others in the course of my writing a History of the Baronial house of Diggi, Jaipur. Had I not been under an oath of secrecy, I would have taken copies of these documents ; and History perhaps would have gained much if I proved a promise-breaker. Similar collections, as I came to learn, are to be found in several other *Thikana-s* of Rajputana which cannot be named without a betrayal of trust and confidence. The Rajput pride is obdurate ; their collections would rather feed the moth, or find their way to the *jauhar* of "self-immolation" than be allowed to fall into the profane hands of scholars who do not respect Rajput sentiment. No amount of pressure from the government, no lure of lucre can make the older generation of Rajputs yield on this point of family honour !

Let us only pray for better sense and nobler courage prevailing with the future heirs of Rajput glory.

5

The Jats and the Importance of their History

The Jats are a tribe so wide-spread and numerous as to be almost a nation in itself, counting in the first year of this century 7,085,100 souls having community of blood, community of language, common tradition, and also a religion for not less than 1,500 years. At the Census of 1901, one-third of the population bearing this name is Muslim, one-fifth Sikh, and about one-half Brahmanical Hindu (Ency. of Indo-Aryan Research, Volume II, Part 5, page 43). They are found in large number in the Panjab, Sindh, Rajputana and in some parts of the Gangetic Doab. There is also a sprinkling of Jat population in Peshawar, Baluchistan and to the west of the Sulaiman range. Tall, fair, large-limbed, with regular features, prominent nose, and expanding eyes, the Jat belongs to the same ethnic group as the Rajput and the Turk. In character he resembles the old Anglo-Saxon, and has indeed more of the Teuton than of the Celt in him. He is tough, slow, unimaginative, lacking brilliance but possessed of great solidity, dogged perseverance, with an eminently practical turn of mind. He is hardly convinced by words without concrete facts. Self-interest is his only criterion of judgment. If he listens to the Arya-Samaj more favourably, it is not for its purer doctrines or higher philosophy, but for its promise of exemption from *sradh* ceremony, and other expensive Brahmanical rites. Old countryside proverb (in Karnal district) goes that book-learning is unpropitious to the Jat, that a "Jat loses half his worth by trying to become learned !" Sturdy independence, and strenuous labour are his strong characteristics as Ibbetson says. To this is added quarrelsomeness. The Jat always requires somebody to quarrel with : "a Jat is good only when he is bound." Another trait of Jat character which has

been marked by eminent authorities is his strong individualism. "The Jat is of all the Panjab races the most impatient of tribal or communal control, and the one which asserts the individual most strongly" (Ibbetson, quoted in Rose's *Punjab Glossary*, Volume II, page 366). Irvine remarks, "In the Government of their villages, they appear much more democratic than the Rajput ; they have less reverence for hereditary right and a preference for elected head-man" (*Later Mughals*, Volume I, page 83). The Jats may quarrel among themselves, but when it is a question of tribal honour, or a dispute with other castes, they readily combine. Clannish feeling like that of the men of the age of *Mahabharat* is still very strong. With his democratic ideas of government, strong tribal ties, and preserving in unbroken tradition the practice of marrying elder brother's widow, and of *Neyoga*, *i.e.*, raising issue by another man after husband's death, the Jat, though considered as a Sudra by the orthodox, seems to be the truer representative of the Vedic Arya than any Hindu of the higher castes.

The origin of this interesting people, is enveloped in the mist of obscurity which the light of scientific research has yet to dispel. Dr. Trumpp and Beams very strongly claim a pure Indo-Aryan descent for them on the consideration of physical type and language which is a pure dialect of Hindi without slightest trace of the Scythian origin (Elliot's *Memoirs of the Races*. . . Volume I, pp. 135-137). But both these authorities were out and out philologists who are not to be trusted implicitly in ethnological questions. Language is no test of race as has been pointed out by A. M. I. Jackson (*Ind. Ant.*, 1910, Volume 39, page 65), and also by V. Smith (*Ancient India*, page 12). We find no mention of the Jats in ancient Sanskrit literature unless we are prepared to accept the identification of the Jaratrikas—mentioned in the *Mahabharat* along with the Madrakas (Canto VIII, Slokas 2032, 2034)—with the Jats as suggested by no less eminent an authority than Grierson (*Ind. Ant.*, 1914, Volume 43, page 146), and also by James Campbell (*Bombay Gazetteer*, Volume IX, Part I, page 461). Grierson also expresses a doubt whether the Jatasuras—not a demon as in popular myth but name of a western tribe mentioned by the famous astronomer Baraha-mihira—were not the Jats (*Ind. Ant.*, Volume 43, page 462). Vishnu Puran (Wilson's ed., page 192) mentions Dahas as a western tribe, whom both Elliot and Ibbetson are inclined to identify with the Dahae of Alexander and the modern Dahiya Jats inhabiting Sonepet Tehesil of Rohtak.

However, competent authorities agree on the point that the Jats are of Indo-Scythian stock. But they differ in their opinion as to what particular horde they belong. V. Smith says, "When the numerous Bala, Indo-Scythian, Gujar and Huna tribes of 6th century horde settled, the leading military and princely houses were accepted as Rajput, while those who frankly took to agriculture became Jat" (Journal, Royal Asiatic Society, 1899, page 534). This cannot be true without modification. There is unassailable evidence of the existence of a Jat or Jit ruling dynasty as old as 400 A. D. (Tod's *Rajasthan*, App. I, pages 747-749). Moreover, the traditional enmity between the Rajput and the Jat makes it extremely probable that they belonged to different hordes, entering India at different times. We everywhere find the earlier Jat occupant of the soil ousted by the new Rajput emigrants. The Yadu Bhattis conquered Jaisalmer from the Jat and the Rathor wrested Bikanir from him. The Parmar displaced him in Malwa and the Tunwar snatched away Delhi. In this connection we may suggest a different origin of the name of this city of Delhi than that assigned by popular tradition, *viz.*, that the Brahmins of Anangapal once fixed a pillar which they declared to have stood on the hood of *Shesh Naga*, and that he, out of curiosity, ordered it to be dug out but when he tried to fix it again, it remained *dhulla* or loose. This is grotesque enough to capture uncultured imagination. Apart from this, we see the Delhi district still largely inhabited by a Jat tribe called *Dhillan* or *Dhillhon*. Folk etymology connects the name with *dhilla* or *lazy* (Rose's *Glossary*, Volume II, pages 237-238). Anangapal Tunwar might have conquered this territory from the Dhillons, and founded the city. Building of the city cannot be credited to the Jats because they have always been an essentially rural folk. This city takes its name from the tract of country around, *i. e.*, Dhilhi or the abode of lazy people.

As regards the origin of the Jats, earlier authorities namely Elliot (*Memoirs of the Races*, Volume I, page 135); A. M. T. Jackson (*Bombay Gazetteer*, Volume I, Part I, page 2); James M. Campbell (*Bombay Gazetteer*, Volume IX, Part I, page 461), who identify them with Kushan or Yuechi horde the greatest representative of which was Kanishka, seem to be right beyond dispute. The Rajputs represent perhaps the White Huns of sixth century A. D. or later Turkish horde who developed into a noble race by entering the fold of Hinduism, as in Europe Christianity and French civilisation transformed the descendants of fierce Danes and Norsemen into the great Norman race, the finest product of Medieval Europe.

In history, the Jat is quite familiar as an industrious husbandman, a notorious cattle-lifter, and a stout fighter. Where circumstances permitted, he equally distinguished himself as a bold pirate too. The Jat pirates of Dwarka and Porbander in the 7th century made their name a terror to the merchants of the Arabian Sea (*Bombay Gazetteer*, Volume IX, Appendix B, page 527). The rise of the Jats as a political power begins with the revolt of the Hindu Jats of Mathura (1669 A. D.) in the reign of Aurangzib. This was not an isolated phenomenon but only one flare of the general conflagration kindled by religious persecution from the Panjab to Maharashtra. Iswardas Nagar describes the serious nature of the revolt and the heroism of Gokla and Rajaram. The latter committed an unpardonable act of sacrilege by sacking Akbar's tomb at Sikandra. He remained unsubdued till his death (Iswardas, Professor Sarkar's Ms., page 53, folio 131 b). Bhajja Singh of Sansani, the founder of the present ruling house of Bharatpur next assumed the leadership of the Jats (Irvine's *Later Mughals*, Vol. I, page 322). He was succeeded by his son Churaman whose career was a long and eventful one. He was granted the rank of 1,500 Zat and 500 Sawar, by Bahadur Shah. Farrukhsiyar thought of subduing him and appointed Rajah Sawai Jai Singh to the command. Nothing came out of it and the Emperor had to be satisfied with a fine and lip-allegiance on the part of the rebel. Churaman made the Jat power a political factor to be reckoned with. We do not hear much about his younger brother and successor Badan Singh. Waqia-i-Shah-Alam Sani (Professor Sarkar's Ms.) gives Ramzan 9, 1169 A. H., as the date of his death. Surajmal seems to have assumed the direction of affairs during the life-time of his father. He was one of the greatest figures of his times—great both in war and diplomacy—whose memory deserves to be rescued from oblivion. Under him the Jats spread beyond the Jamuna, and fought as mercenaries of Safdar Jang, who granted the whole of Mewat to him as reward of his services. We light upon unexpected wealth of information about Surajmal and his successors in the *Waqia-i-Shah-Alam Sani*, *Ibratnama* of Khairuddin, and *Shah-Alam-Nama* (ed. A. S. B). The story of Ahmad Shah Abdali's bloody campaign against the Jats is told in great detail and with accuracy in a fragmentary Ms. translated by Irvine (*Ind. Ant.*, 1907, Vol 36, p. 46, ff). Surajmal and Malhar Rao were intimate associates, though for sometime Malhar Rao fought against Surajmal as an ally of Imad-ul-Mulk. Mr. Burway's life of first Malhar Rao which

was reported to be in preparation by Indore representatives in the Lahore session of this commission may throw new light on the Jat history of this 'period. Surajmal was killed near Shahdara on 21st Jamada, 1177 A. H., in a surprise attack made by Muhamad Khan Baloch, an officer of Najib-ud-daula (*Waqia, page 199).*

He left four sons—Jawahir Singh, Ratan Singh, Newal Singh by one wife, and Ranjit Singh by another. Jawahir amply avenged his father's death by plundering Delhi and ravaging the imperial dominions. He captured Aligarh and re-named it Ramgarh (*Ibratnama*). From the accession of Jawahir Singh, the Jat history acquires a new interest as showing the last expiring efforts of the French to expel the English from India by building up a confederacy of the Jats, Sikhs, and Ahmed Khan Bangash. M. Medoc took up service with the Raja of Bharatpur with the same motive which brought half a century after, Allan and Ventura to the Court of Ranjit Singh. Memoirs of M. Law and Rene Madec and the Calendar of Persian letters edited by Sir Denison Ross yield important information about this period. M. Madec's dream was not realised as Jawahir Singh was too much of a fanatic and knight errant to act consistently with statesman-like moderation. He marched defiantly beating his war-drum, through Jaipur territory to bathe in the Pushkar Lake. The Kacchwahs opposed his return, and a disastrous battle was fought which forms the subject-matter of a stirring ballad, the *secca* of Jawahir Singh, still sung by the bards. He was assassinated in the Agra Fort at the instigation of the Raja of Jaipur. Ratan Singh, younger brother of Jawahir, was a worthless man. He was murdered at Vrindaban by a Gossain, Sri Rupanand, on account of some love intrigue (*Waqia*, page 219). Newal Singh who succeeded him was a strenuous fighter ; but he played a losing game against the genius of Mirza Najaf Khan, the last of the great foreigners who graced the Court of the Timurides. Khairuddin describes the campaigns of Najaf Khan against the Jats at pretty length (*Ibratnama*, pages 212-270). Ranjit Singh succeeded Newal Singh and carried on the struggle for some time. Deeg fell after a siege of twelve months ; Ranjit Singh fled to Kumbhir and thence to Bharatpur. Rani Kishori, wife of Suraj Mal, went to the camp of Najaf Khan to intercede on behalf of her son. The chivalrous victor granted mother's prayer and peace was concluded (*Ibratnama*, pages 346-347).

In the latter part of his rule Ranjit Singh provoked hostilities with the English by allying himself with Jaswant Rao Holkar. Major W. Thorn in his *Memoirs of the Wars in India conducted by*

Lord Lake, gives us first rate information. "A chronicle of Jaswant Rao Holkar's times written by Bakshi Bhawani Shankar, a constant attendant on Holkar camp and the account of various battles in Bharatpur written by another camp-follower of Holkar" as reported in a note by the Indore representatives in the Lahore Session of this Commission—are likely to be of great value. Lord Lake appeared before Deeg on December 13th, 1804, and the X'mas morning of that year saw the British flag flying on the battlement of that strong fort which defied Najaf Khan for 12 months. Next he besieged Bharatpur with result not very creditable to British arms. Four successive assaults were delivered in the course of two months in which they lost 3,100 men, and 103 officers. But the Maratha and Pindari allies of the Raja of Bharatpur fell away and he saw the futility of holding out in a fort against the whole resources of India and the superior military science of the West. He sued for terms which were granted on terms of Subsidiary Alliance. Here ends the history of the Jats who ceased to be an independent power under that treaty.

The importance of the history of the Jats to the student of Medieval India lies in its carrying light in the darkest and most complicated period of Indian history. It will also considerably clear the path of the Gibbon of the future in finishing the story of the decline and fall of the Mughal Empire left half-told by the great historian William Irvine. The Jat deserves attention as he, without caste distinction, and female seclusion, and with his democratic tendencies, erect moral stature and unprejudiced mind, is more in sympathy with modern age than the aristocratic Rajput who has not yet discarded his medieval traits of character, still cherishing the notion of class privilege, and contempt for productive labour. If the Jat is sufficiently enlightened, he may carry back the Hindu society with him to its Vedic purity, infusing new vigour into it, and preparing it for a more glorious destiny.

6

Fragment of a Bhao-Ballad in Hindi

On December 16, 1937, Sir Jadunath Sarkar took with him two pupils of his, myself, and another young scholar of distinction travelling *incognito*, in a trip from Delhi to Panipat. Having reached Panipat at about 12-30 p.m., we went to Jain primary school, the headmaster of which happened to be a Maratha Brahmin, domiciled in that part of Upper India. The kind old *Panditji* gave us a guide, one of the teachers of his school, to accompany us to "*Kala Am*", as the site of the third battle of Panipat is known in the neighbourhood. We started on foot from the outskirts of the town, and walking right across cultivated fields for about four miles reached "*Kala Am*". But the Black Mango tree—under which Sadashiv Rao Bhao is said to have been slain—no longer exists. The Archaeological Department has raised a modest brick memorial on the spot where the historical mango tree once stood. Sir Jadunath had visited the place once before, and as such he came a second time to see something else than "*Kala Am*".

Sir Jadunath asked me,—a sort of interpreter between him and villagers—to inquire of some cultivato.s working at a Persian wheel whether they knew of any *baoli* (*bavdi*=a well) near which the Marathas had a successful skirmish with a detachment of Durranis on November 22, 1760. With these villagers I was quite in my own element, thanks to my long sojourn among the Jats. There was among these men an old peasant of about 70, a Brahmin by caste. He told me that he was acquainted with every inch of land for miles around, but he had never seen or heard of any *baoli* here with the exception of one now within the boundary of the village of Rajahkheri, about a mile and a half from that place. I now began pump-

ing out the old man. He incidentally mentioned that the place, where the memorial now stands was formely a village called Suwa-kheri, and that the *jogi* or begging minstrel still sang the ballad of Bhao. It was altogether an unexpected piece of information. I went to Sir Jadunath and asked him to return to Panipat and leave for Delhi, leaving me there with the villagers to explore the *baoli* and collect the Bhao-ballad.

I left "*Kala Am*" with the old peasant and two or three others who undertook to show me the *baoli* of Rajah-kheri, and promised me night's lodging and food and also the song of *jogi*. But as we sighted the village the old man seemed to have become suspicious of my object of visit. On the outskirts of the village he began talking about me to some villagers, and pointing to a certain direction, he told me that the *baoli* was near about, which I should see and that he would wait till I returned. I went to the spot indicated by him but could see no well but huts of villagers and urchins playing in front of them. I returned disappointed where I expected to find my host ; but I found that he had given me a slip.

Quite stranded in a strange place, I assumed the severe mien of a government official, and going confidently inside the village I wanted the *lambardar* and *chokidar* of the village. But being unable to find out their houses I went direct to the village *chopad* or common-hall. Fortunately for me I found the *lambardar*, a Jat of ninety summers, who was all courtesy to me. He asked one young man to take me to the *baoli* situated at the other end of the village. On enquiry I learnt that within the memory of the present generation the old *baoli* was transformed into its present state by building up staircases leading down to water.

In the meanwhile the report of the appearance of a mysterious figure had created a stir in the village. When I returned to the *chopad* (common-hall) about 70 or 80 persons had already gathered there, and more were coming in. I told the *lambardar* that he should send for the blind old *jogi* to sing the ballad of Bhao, and accordingly a man on bicycle was sent to fetch him. It was decided that I should pass the night there. About an hour I spent with the villagers from whom I elicited much information about a historical tradition coming down from generation to generation. After an hour's suspense the man alone returned from Risalu because the *jogi* had left the village in the morning abegging. Sorely disappointed I left the village for Panipat to catch train. About five miles I trudged on drawing my belt tight to the last hole.

However, my information proved correct. Sir Jadunath had kindly procured for me the following lines of the Bhao-ballad, which had been taken down by a local gentleman of Panipat exactly as *they were sung before him by the blind old jogi of Risalu. The text has been faithfully transcribed without any corrections and amendations of my own.* But I have given them in the *Glossary of Words and Historical Notes* appended to the English translation of this balad. I have not attempted a bare literal translation which is desirable in the case of a historicnl document. I have tried to be literal where it has been possible without affecting the spirit of the ballad as a whole. It may be a little difficult for a purely town-bred Hindi scholar to detect the rustic corruption of many words in this ballad. As a rule accents in the village side are *hard* where they ought to be soft ; this was peculiar to the medieval Marathi also. I hope to discover some day some more Hindi ballads about the third battle of Panipat. I suspect we have already got some popular traditions about the Maratha activities during this period smuggled as accurate history in *Bhao-sahubanchi-bakhar* :

1. धनका सेती आ मिला वो सुरजमल ।
2. कहाँ खजाने गई फोज कहाँ गजदल ।।
3. सुनकर झन्का कवरके आए नेत्रझल ।
4. दत्ताजी के मरे पर गई फोजा चल ।।
5. वही खजाने खपी फोज वही गजदल ।
6. २९ दिनमे सिन्धिया कीता स्नान
7. टसरी की धोती की मुख चावे पान
8. चीरा बाधा जरीका होता शुभ ध्यान ।
9. पडत बिप्र बुलाकर किया पुण्य दान
10. माला ली कपूर की मुख भजता राम
11. कागज कलम मगाकर लिखना परवान
12. नान सेती राम राम एक लिखना काम ।
13 तान तेरे भेजे हम आए चढ़ हिन्दुस्तान ।
14. अकल होश से करो राजमत सोच नियत
15. काबुल ओर कधार के बडे फील जवान ।
16 जिस दिन उतरै नर्वदा धालं धमसान
17. गिन गिन दहरे हिन्दु के धाम
18. साहव समरु आपना दनयाद कुमारी
19. खालिक मालिक मुल्क का है खेलखिलारी

20. एको चना चवावता एको पान सुपारी ।।
21. जगत चबीना कालका है लंक हजारी
22. हलकारा चला ब्रज से दक्खन की तय्यारी
23. झन्काजी के सांधियेने दर शुत्र विचारी ।।
24. पाखर झालर जरीके घुँगर घनकारी
25. रात दिनोकी करी दौड़ जा शुत्र विचारी
26. नानाजी तैं बिनतीजा अर्ज गुजारी ।।
27. नाना तैं करता राम राम जो करी जवाहरी ।
28. तिरे हिन्द में खय गए जोधे सूरमे अहंकारी
29. सुनकै नाना राव ने निम आँझू डारी
30. खबर हुई रणवासो में जानु कूँज झन्कारी
31. पिया पिया कर कुकती दक्खन की नारी ।।
32. साहव समरु आपना सच्चा करतार ।
33. पूने में नाना राव ने लाया दरवार ।
34. सारी दक्खन इकट्ठी की करता जवाब
35. हिन्दमें खप गए बड़े सूरमे फील जवान
36. वो जिस दिन उतरैं नर्वदा मार करै विरान
37. सुनकर नाना रावकी ना दिया जवाव
38. लाओ भाउ रावको जिसका एतवार
39. हुजरे तैं नाना राव के छुटे चोवदार ।
40. तुम याद करे हो पेशवा चलो राजकुमार
41. नाना सेती राम रुआ करी जवाहर
42. पास बिठा लिया पेशवा दिया वहुता प्यार ।
43. हिन्द में झन्का कवरने जंग दिया हार ।
44. करो तय्यारी हिन्द की ना लाओ बार ।
45. मारो अहमदशाहने लूटो कन्धार
46. अकल हौशसे करो जंग नर करो तय्यार
47. भाउ उठ दरवार तैं माता पैं आया
48. तिरी माता बोही प्यार से राव पास बिठाया
49. अरे वेटा, तनै करी तय्यारी हिन्द की भूला भकाया
50. अहमदशाह वादशाह पर तूने बीड़ा खाया ।
51. जो कोइ गया हिन्दुस्तान में नहीं बीड़ा आया
52. अरे ओ झन्काजी से मर्द का मार खेत डिगाया
53. दत्ता और साहवा ढूंढ़ा न पाया

54. मिरे घर वै ने तपै राज, मिरे वहुती माया
55. समर निगाही सुर स्वेत । गुन रब के गावै
56. कलन्दरावाद पानीपत ने सुख वहुता पावै ।।
57. हटरी अमर वावली क्या हमें डरावै ।
58. मेरा लो लख नोजा दक्खनी कौन मोहरा आवे
59. अहमदशाह ने लूटूंगा तरवारां दावा
60 अटक नदी में पागा घोड़ो जल प्यावैं
61. काबुल की पकड़ै वेगमा दक्खन को लावैं
62. आगे चक्कियां रखकर दाने दलवावैं
63. मुख से मास छुटाकर मूखपान खिलावें
64. इतने साके कर सरें जब बोड़ दक्खन आवें
65. जैसे सकि करग पर राजा मानसिंह पूतकमें लावें
66. भाउ की माता कह सुन भाउ मेरा
67. अरे मिरे इकलोती कै राक लाह नाक रै वखेड़ा
68. अरे तू जागा हिन्दुस्तान हिया लर जे मेरा
69. मिरी तोरां गिनतो करै रात एकसे सवेरा
70. महलो नहीं चांदा पड़जागा अंधेरा
71. जैसा चन्द छुपा घर आपने हो गया अंधेरा
72. मैं भेजूं गालिवसिंह ने करादे निम्वेडा
73. मिरे घर बैठो तपै राज मिरे मालव तेरा
74. हाथ जोड़ हाजिर खड़ी भाउ की रानी
75. माता का कहना मानले समझावे स्यानी
76. मैंने सुपना देखा रैनका यूंही रैन विहाइ
77. मैंने पूना देखा उतर दो फोज डूबी सारी
78. वो वुरके पैहरो लड़ैं नार मैंने सुली पठानी
79. हुक्म दो तो चलूं साथ सुख रहैं परानी
80. वो काबुली की वेगमा मैं दक्खन की रानी
81. मैं वांख, पटा, नेजा करुं ताजन थर्रानी
82. अहमदशाह के दलों में मिचा दूं धानी
83. हुक्म दिया भाउ राव को लाओ तो रनम
84. सुरखा सबजी मंगसी समन्द कुलंज कुमैत संजाफी
85. केहरी अवलक सोरंग—दुमचियां जेरवंद गुलवाजे जंग
86. ढलके पेशबंद—घोड़ो के गत घुंगर—रण चढ़ते जंग ।।
87. हुक्म दिया भाउराव को लाओ मन्ह ते
88. नाग जरी के नीर में मल दल के रते

89. जिनके दांदों चूड़े सोहने थे ऊँचे मत्थे
90. संदूर हिरभजी रंग में कुंजर रंग रखे ।
91. होदे जड़े जडाओं में जवाहर झंड़ते
92. एक नाम दोनों व कें नारी ओर कंथे
93. गोरी सट के सूरमे सावन्त ओर संते
94. भाउ धूर देवता मुझे तका कर सान
95. मेरा शमशीरो से मामला तेगो के तान
96. अहमदशाह की हिन्द में चढ़ रही कमान
97. और परान नदी पर पड़े खेत अब डानु घमसान
98. ऐसा कहिए कुतवजंग समंदखां धद्दीना एव अटका
99. तिरे सागरसे दरया ओंका मैंने खेलिया झटका
100. अब केदे छोड़ तुझे दिखादूँ लटका
101. ग्यारा पै सन चुहत्तर, पानीपत मे मया चलत्तर
102. चांद जमादुस् सानी, दिन जुमा, रात जुमेरात की
103. हार मरहठा, जीत दुर्रानी ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There came Surajmal of fame, and joined Dhanka ;
"Where are gone the treasure, troops and the elephants ?"
Hearing this tears came to Kunwar Jhanka's eyes :
"The army scattered when Dattaji died,
The same field did treasures engulf, and troops and elephants too."
On the twentyninth day his uncle's funeral bath did Sindhia perform ;
The *dhoti* of *tasar* he tied, and chewed the *pan,*
A *cheera* gold-embroidered he wore auspicious,
And *Pandits* and *Brahmins* did he invite, and made pious gifts.
A rosary of camphor he took, and his lips muttered *Ram.*
Pen and paper he calls for, and writes a *parwana*
With gretings of *Ram-Ram* to Nana, and of an affair calamitious :
"At thy behest did my uncle march on Hindustan
And with tact, alertness and devotion did he serve thy cause.
And the day warriors of Kabul and Qandahar, strong as elephants,
Did the *Narbuda* cross, and a battle terrific burst
The Hindus did sweat profuse with the sweat of death."

Kill worldliness in thee, and remember thy Lord,
The Creater as well as the *Malik* of this world that plays wanton,

And makes one munch he gram of misery, and another enjoy the pan

But alas ! this world the humble and the *hazari* alike,—
Is but a fare of parched-grain in the jaws of Time.
Apprehensive of foe at the door Jhankaji Sindhia did dispatch
From Braj a *harkara* for the Dakkhan bound ;
And day and night rode he, fearful of foe,
(A horse) with armour and clinking bells and trappings of gold.
Ram-Ram, said he to the Nana, and his woeful errand broke ;
"Thy warriors proud, before whom immortals would tremble,—
The land of Hind no more they tread ;
Gone are they and gone beyond the bourne of life."
At this did Nana Rao moaned, and many a tear shed he.
And the news spread to the lady's bower resonant with music sweet—
"My love ! My lord ! wailed the Dakkhan women for their mates disconsolate.

Mind thee of thy Lord, thy Master Great !
In Poona a *Darbar* did Nana Rao call ;
The whole Dakkhan he did assemble there for counsel proper.
And said he, "Down went in Hind our sinewy warriors brave ;
"The day they crossed the Narbuda and all around havoc spread."
They heard, but Nana did receive no response brave :
"Bring hither Bhao Rao on whom I chiefly count" he did shout
And from the court of Nana did the *chobdar* hie.
"Come, Noble prince," the *chobdar* cried "the Peshwa pleaseth to remember thee."
To Nana the Prince said "*Ram-Ram*", and made a reverence due ;
By his side did the Peshwa make him sit in affection deep ;
And said he—"Kunwar Jhanka could not plant his foot firm in Hind ;
"Get thee ready for Hind, and take no women cumbersome.
"Slay Ahmad Shah, and loot Qandahar,
"Equip thy forces, and with tact and steadiness turn the tide of war."
The Bhao left the Court and to his mother came ;
By her side she made him sit in affection deep ;

"Ah ! my son ! a dupe thou hast made thyself by hieing for Hind.
"How durst thou take the betel against Shah Ahmad, King of Kings ?
Ah ! those who had gone to Hind did never see their homes again.
Silly boy : bravely did he strike Jhankaji down on the field.
And no search could Datta and Sahba's bodies yield.
Bide here with me and rule the realm, for much is my fondness for thee.
The valiant doth bleed for victory on the field of battle.
But songs they would sing in praise of the Rao.
Much comfort indeed await thee at Panipat, the abode of Qalandars poor !

"Away ! Ah, fond mother ! wouldst thou thus frighten me ?
Who shall face the nine lakh Dakhini lances of mine ?
Sword in hand will I press on Ahmad Shah and strip him to the skin ;
And my Paga-cavaliers shall not stop till their horses drink the waters of the Attock.
"I will bring captive to the South the high-born dames of Kabul ;
I will put hand-mills before them, and they shall grind corn !
Their mouths shall smack of meat no longer, and they shall chew *pan*,
If such a fame (*saka*[1]) I live to achieve, the Deccan shall see me back again."
"Listen, Bhao, my darling," the mother rejoins,
"Be not wilful, grant this my sole request.
Goest thou to Hindustan ? Ah, my heart trembles !
Days shall I count as nights when thou art out of sight ;
Dark will my palace be my darling without,
Dark as the heavens when clouds hide the moon.
I shall send Galib Singh ; with him every detail thou must settle ;
And here in my palace shalt thou enjoy the *Raj*, and my Malwa will be thine.

Then before Bhao stood his consort with folded hands,
And full of wisdom did she urge him thus :

Saka—Lit., an era ; some heroic achievement of undying fame. In Rajputana, a *jauhar* rite was called *soka*. In its metaphorical sense, *sak* was used in medieval Bengali also.

"Pray thee, do not disobey what mother speaks.
Yester night I dreamt a dream from which I woke and slept no more;
Methought two armies halting near Poona for combat—
They fought, and both did wholly perish;
And then veiled women rushed to fight, and so too I!
And a Pathani did I pierce and on my lance I bore.
I will go with thee; if thou wouldst permit and joy and happiness shall be mine;
They are but *begams* of Kabul, and I the Deccan Queen!
Crooked dagger, straight sword and the long lance shall I weild
And before me their Arab chargers shall quake;
And death and destruction I shall carry to the ranks of Shah Ahmad."

And he (Nana) did order Bhao: "Take with thee to war,
My squads of war-horse (many-hued and of mettle true),
Brick-red and greenish grey, bay and black as *mung*, or blushing crimson like *karanja* ripe;
And those of saffron colour, or sun-beam bright,
Or, moon-white like water-lily at eve-tide dusk."
Harnessed with *dumchi* and *zer-band*, and their *pesa-band* hanging loose,
On their necks strings of jingling bells they wore,
And carrying crack riders did they gallop eager for fray.
And he ordered Bhao Rao; "Take thou from me my elephants royal
"Bathed with the water of medicinal roots and rubbed clean and glossy;
"Whose tusks are bound in stout rings, and who carry their shapely heads high."
With vermillion and red earth (*hirmiji*) the elephants did they paint:
The *howda* on their backs sparkled with many a gem—Whose name signifies alike a woman handsome (?) and a beggar's wallet (*kantha*)—
And in his train followed damsels fair and warriors bold, brave captains of war and men of counsels sage.

"Avaunt! Thou fool of a Bhao! what favour wilt thou show me?
"The sword alone doth concern me, and my sword replies a taunt.

"Against the land of Hind Shah Ahmad twangs his bow, and his army
On the bank of river lies encamped, and now a battle terrific we shall fight"—
Thus said Qutb Jang—(the Bhao) did seize him and Samand Khan, and none intervened.
"Of thine Ocean, Shah Ahmad," the Bhao rejoined,
"Unto whom dost thou bend thy course as rivers to the sea
"The feeder streams have I quaffed off at a pull (and the Sea remains)!
"How, then, can I release you now?——From gallows you must hang!

In the year of eleven hundred and seventy-four of the Era of Flight, and on the first day of Jamadi-us-sani,
On Thursday night and the day of Juma (Friday),
Panipat quaked under the heels of armies closing to combat
And defeat befell the Maratha—the Durrani came victorious.

Glossary of Words

Line 1—"Dhanka" appears to be a mistake for Jhanka. Surajmal is Rajah Surajmal Jat of Bharatpur, an ally of the Marathas. Dhanka does not seem to be the name of any *place* "Seti", a corruption of "sainti" has been used here, as well in line 12,—in the sense of English *to* and not *from*.

Line 6—Sindhias were Sudras and hence the bath of purification on the 29th day.

Line 13—"Tan has been used for "tat".

Line 16—"Narbuda" is a mistake for "the Jamuna".

Line 18—' ku" used for "ko".

Line 21—"Lank" used for "rank".

Line 22—"Halkara" is not the name of a person but a corruption of "Harkara" (messenger),

Line 28—"surmen" is a corruption of "sur-mar" (also in line 35).

Line 32—"somru" is a corruption of "somrau" (also in line 18).

Line 44—"bar" is a corruption of "bala" (women).

Line 55—"nigahi" and "rab" are mistakes for "niwahi" and "Rao" respectively.

Line 65—*not translated* as allusions are vague.

Line 72—"nimbeda" has been taken to be a corruption of "nibeda".

Line 84—"kulanj" means a wicked horse that cuts behind awalking but it does not suit the context. It is probably a corruption of either "karanja", a well-known sour fruit familiar in the country-side or of "kalaunji" (kala jeera.)

"kumait sanjaphi" offers a similar difficulty.

"kumait"[2] is a countryside corruption of "kumud".

—"sanjaphi" means no *colour* but 'border or fringe of garments, etc." So I propose the reading "Saujha pai".

Line 85—"gul-baz" should be read "ghor-baz" to yield any meaning at all that would agree with the context.

Line 86—the word "Jang" here and in the preceding line, has been used "in the sense of "jangi" (war-like), or "jangra" (brave),

Line 87—"manhate" is either a mistake for "mahalte" (from the *mahal*) or it is a word of Jat dialect, *mannah* (pronoun in the first person, singular number).

Line 88—"jari" should be read "jadi" (medicinal roots);

"rate" is used in the sense of "rata" (glossy).

Line 90—There is no such word as "hirabhji"; it is evidently a mistake for "hirmiji" (well-known red earth with which cloth is dyed).

Line 91—"jada" is used in the sense of "jada u" (studded with jewels).

—"jhadte" is derived not from the root 'jhadna" (to drop); because jewels cannot be believed to have been dropping from the *howda* of elephants. It seems to have been derived from the root "jhaharna" (to blind eyes with pain by too much light)—which suits the context better.

Line 93—"sur-me" is a mistake for "sur-mar" (very brave).

Line 94—No accepted meaning of the word "dhur" suits the text. Soft consonants when pronounced by villagers sound *hard* to townsmen; and villagers do actually sometimes pronounce them *hard*, if so, "dhur" may be "dur" (be off!.) In this line "Devta" has not been used in its proper sense, meaning god or lord. Near about Delhi, words "Devta" and "Mahatma" are used in quite opposite sense; *e.g.*, "Devta" used with reference to a Jat (Jat-deota)

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[2] "Kumait"—is dark red colour acc : to राज्यव्यवहारकोश *Cf* श्यामलस्तु कुमैत : स्यात् :—164 Sanjaphi Abalak (h) these also are shades of colours. *Editor's note.*

carries a sense of half contempt and half pity—meaning strange or uncouth.

In this line "taka" written as one word in the original transcript should be read "ta ka". *Ka* means here *what, ta* is used in the sense of *tu.*

Line 94—"San" is the abbreviation of the Arabic word *ihsan* (favour).

Line 95—"ketan" should be broken into "ke tan".

"tan" (musical notes) does not suit the context. The correct word is "tana" (taunt), which is derived from the Arabic word "ta'in" (slanderer).

Line 96—"kaman charhana" (to bend a bow) has not been translated literally.

Line 97—"paran" bears no meaning reconcilable with the context. The correct word must be "padao" (encampment, camp).

Line 98—"kahiye" should be "kahiya".

The last three words as they are written yield no meaning or sense ; these should be written as "dhari na ek atka". In the text "aw" is a mistake for "ek",

Line 99—"khe" should be "kha" ; there being no such idiom as "jhatka khelna", "jhatka khana" means *to receive a shock or pull.* But in this sense it does not apply to Bhao. If I remember aright "jhatka kha lena" is used by villagers *to eat up quickly or at a quaff.* It is also likely that the word "jhat" (quickly) has been expanded to "jhatka" for the sake of rhyming with "atka".

Line 100—"kede" is a typical Jat equivalent of "kaise" (how).

Line 101—"chalattar" is evidently some word coined from "chal" (movement, shaking).

Line 103—"san" or era used here is Hijri.

Historical Notes

Line 3—Jhanka is corruption of the name of Jankoji Sindhia, nephew of Dattaji Sindhia. Dattaji Sindhia fought with Ahmad Shah Durrani on January 9, 1760 and met with defeat and death. Jankoji Sindhia who renewed fight also received a bullet wound and was dragged out of the field by his followers. The Marathas could not recover the body of Dattaji. Mian Qutb Shah, referred to in line 98, cut off the head from the dead body and took it to the Abdali (Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire II, 222-23*). We learn from *Bhaosahibanchi bakhar* that Goswain Ummed Gir, the Naga general of Suja-ud-daula who joined the Abdali against the Marathas—recovered

from the Abdali by the threat of desertion and a cash payment of *two lakhs of rupees the severed head of Dattaji, and joining it with* the trunk performed the *cremation of his body with sandal and bel* wood. Such was the conception of duty and obligation of a Hindu to his brother-in-faith ! (pp. 58-86)

Line 16—The river Narbuda is too evident a confusion for the Jamuna. The Durranis and the Ruhelas under the lead of Najib Khan secretly crossed the river Jamuna at night preceding the day of the battle of Barari-ghat, refered to in lines 16, 28, 35, 43 and 52. (*Fall of the Mughal Empire, II*, 222).

Line 34—Peshwa Balaji received the official letter from the North on the 15th or 16th February, 1760. The *durbar* referred to was held not at Poona but at Patdur, 27 miles south-east of Jalna on 10th March, 1760, after he had crushed the Nizam's army at the battles of Ausa and Udgir. (*Ibid.*, p. 237).

Line 40—Sadashiv Rao Bhao was the son of Baji Rao I's younger brother, Chimnaji Appa. His mother Rukhma Bai, and his wife Parvati Bai are the ladies referred to in the ballad. The ballad has not done justice to the mother of Bhao.

Line 53—"Sahba" is Sabaji Sindhia who fought but did not die at the battle of Barari-ghat.

Line 56—Qalandarabad-Panipat :

Qalandar is a holy Mohammedan ascetic who abandons the world and wanders about with the shaven head and beard, independent of any brotherhood. Qalandars have many shrines in the Punjab. Shah Chokha Qalandar is the patron saint of Meos, who hold that the Shah has given away married women to abductors. "The most famous Qalandar shrine is that of Abu Ali or Bu Ali Qalandar who is burried at Panipat" (see Rose : *Glossary of Punjab Tribes, III*, p. 257). It is perhaps for this reason that Panipat became known as Qalandarabad.

Line 72—Ghalib Singh is perhaps a fictitious person.

Line 74—The *rani* of Bhao refrred to was Parvati Bai. She and Lakshmi Bai, wife of the Peshwa's son Vishwas Rao with a host of other women did in fact accompany their husbands. These two ladies managed to escape to the South through the exertions of Malhar Rao Holkar (Sardesai's Marathi *Riyasat*, part II, p. 204).

Lines 94-100—These lines describe a scene at Kunjpura, a place about 50 miles north of Panipat. Bhao arrived before Kunjpura

in the evening of 16th October, 1760. Next morning Mian Qutb Shah and Abdus Samad Khan—Qutb Jang and Samand Khan of this ballad—attacked the Marathas. Abdus Samad Khan was shot dead, but Qutb Shah fled wounded into the city of Kunjpura. He along with Nejabat Khan, governor of Kunjpura, fell prisoners into the hands of Marathas. Nejabat died of wounds but Qutb Shah met with a more cruel fate than gallows. When he was brought before Bhao, he is said to have reviled the Marathas (Sarkar's *Fall of the Mughal Empire II*, pp. 269-71).

Bhao-bakhar's narrative, though not historical, wonderfully agrees with the ballad in saying that Qutb Shah and Samand Khan Kattalbaz (Abus Samad Khan) were both captured by the troops of Gaikwad and brought prisoners to Bhao. We read in this *bakhar* the exchange of words between Bhao and Qutb Shah, who along with Samand Khan was afterwards ordered to death (p. 122). Qutb Shah asked for water when he was being led to the block ; but the Marathas, remembering what he had done with the dead body of Dattaji Sindhia, refused him water saying, "the scoundrel should be made to drink urine", and they cut off his head, leaving the carcase as food for crows and vultures ; Samand Khan was also similarly beheaded (*Ibid.*, p. 123).

Lines 101-103—The third battle of Panipat was fought on January 14, 1761. According to *Bhao-bakhar* the battle was fought on Wednesday, 8th day of the bright fornight of the month of *Paus*, 1282 Saka *sambat*, which is not correct (p. 143).

Unfortunately, this ballad breaks at a point where the main theme, the battle of Panipat, should begin. I heard from villagers of Rajah-kheri many more interesting things which their untutored memory still retains. It is said that the Gadaria (goat-herd) in Bhao's camp was in league with the Pathan. The Pathan told the Gadaria to help him in winning the battle this time, and thereby save his credit with the Durrani. The *wali* of Kunjpura whom Bhao had refused food during captivity uttered a curse upon the Marathas that they should similarly starve during this expedition, and hence the scarcity in the Maratha camp. During the critical stage of the battle of Panipat the Bhao was induced to come down from his elephant by that Gadaria. The traitor now began to wave a blue flag from the elephant signalling to the army that all was over as the blue flag indicated the death of the commander-in-chief, namely Bhao. Then a general rout began and the Gadaria fled with the

connivance of the Pathan. The Bhao then made his last stand under the historic *kala am* or black mango tree and died fighting there. Here is perhaps a faint echo of Malhar Rao Holkar's alleged treachery and his friendship with Najibuddaula, a *dharma-putra* of Holkar. The curious coincidence of the hints thrown out by this ballad with the narrative of events in the *Bhao-bhakar* regarding the Mian Qutb Shah affair at Kunjpura raises very strong suspicion that the *Bhao-bhakar* was compiled long after the battle of Panipat from popular traditions enshrined in ballads like one we have traced.

7

A Ramble into Hindi Literature in Search of Orissa *and the* Jagannath

To use a utilitarian's simile, History appears to be a spacious and convenient hold-all from which people are at liberty to take out things and return them after reshaping them by their imagination or ignorance. In this respect minstrels, creative novelists and poets are the great adepts. Nevertheless they indirectly serve a purpose of History ; namely, to preserve for us an echo of man and things of the past in their own age.

This paper aims at creating some interest in the non-Hindi speaking people of Orissa in the medieval Hindi poetry, where their country and its presiding deity, the Jagannath, are given respectful references. We thall deal at present with only three Hindi poems that contain such references, which are, however, fictitious and not historical. According to medieval tradition, India is divided into three political zones, each with a ruler bearing an appropriate title. These are the *Gajapati* or the Lord of elephants ; the *Narapati* or Lord of the host of infantry, and the *Asvapati*, the master of cavalry. Though the elephant is not a monopoly of Orissa, the king of Orissa was traditionally given the title of *Gajapati*, and with it a sort of vague suzerainty over Eastern India with the custody of Jagannath. This title was justified because of the formidable train of elephants that could be mustered by the ruler of Orissa for war and conquest. Similarly the ruler of the South was called *Narapati* as their main strength lay in their countless hordes of infantry; and such a ruler is generally identified with the emperors of Vijayanagar. People of the Panjab and Upper India excel in horsemanship, the armies of

the rulers of these regions consisted mainly of good cavalry. *Asvapati* is the title associated with the lords of Delhi, whether Hindu or Muslim. A great conqueror who could subdue the rulers of these three categories used to arrogate to himself the title of *Tri-dala-malla*, or the vanquisher of the three hordes. Maharana Kumbhakarna of Mewar assumed this title—distorted into the familiar Hindi proper name of Todarmal, and immortalised in the person of Akbar's great revenue minister.

The earliest reference of Orissa is found in the poet Narapati Nalha's *Bisaldev-Raso*, the first in the series of *Raso mahakavyas* in Hindi. The date of the composition of *Bisaldev-Raso* is a subject of controversy which need not be noticed here. The king, whose deeds of war and love are sung in this poem was probably the Vigraharaj IV, reputed to be the uncle of the last Prithviraja of the Chauhan dynasty of Sambhar and Ajmir. His date falls within the third quarter of the twelfth century A. D. Vigraharaja-Bisaldev was a powerful conqueror. On epigraphic evidence it is proved that he conquered Dhillika (modern Delhi) and other places. He was a great patron of learning also. The site now occupied by the great mosque of Ajmir, popularly known as *Adhai-din ka-Jhopra* once reared the great Sanskrit University of Bisaldev, who had at least two dramas, *Hara-keli-natakam* and *Lalita-Vigraharaja-natakam* inscribed on the slabs of stone here. Some of these slabs were recovered from the site of the mosque during the excavations of 1875-76. The date of *Hara-keli natakam* as given in inscriptions corresponds to Sunday, the 22nd November, 1153.

Much is not known about the author of Bisaldev-Raso. His name was Narapati (Rajasthani Nahapa) and Nalha his family title. He was perhaps a *charan or bhat* (minstrel) of the court of Bisaldev. His language is rather *Apabhramsa* than Hindi, and as such difficult to understand. Nalha gives the date of the beginning of his poem as :

Wednesday the ninth day of the dark fortnight of the month of Jeth of the year 1212.

Two parts or chapters of Nalha's poem deal with the story of Bisaldev's departure for Orissa and his sojourn there.

The story of Bisaldev's adventure in Orissa is as follows :

Bisaldev of Sambhar was a much-married king, whose latest acquisition to his harem was Rajmati, the beautiful daughter of Raja Bhoj of Dhar in Malwa. They spent many a happy year in love and sport. One day Bisaldev boasted of valour to his wife and said that there was no peer of him among kings. Rajmati in

half jest and half seriousness replied that vanity brings ruin, and that there were other Rajas like him ; *e. g*, the king of Orissa in whose kingdom were diamond mines. Bisaldev in anger vowed that he would go and conquer Orissa. He said to his wife, "You were born at Jaisalmir and at the age of twelve you came to Ajmir as my queen ; how could you know about Jagannath of Orissa?" Rajmati then narrates the story of her previous births. In a previous birth she was a hind in a forest and used to keep fast without tasting even a drop of water on the *ekadasi* (eleventh day) of the bright fortnight of the month of Jeth. One day she was struck down by the arrow of a hunter. In her next birth she had her re birth at Puri-Jagannath. There before her death God Vishnu appeared to her ready to grant her a boon. She prayed that she might not be in her next birth in *Purab desh* (Eastern India). Bisaldev at this stage interrupts, "How is it that you were so disgusted with *Purab-desh*, where sin has no approach owing to the presence of Banaras and Gaya, whose people are so clever, through which flow the sin-destroying waters of the Ganges ?" Rajmati says :

"पूरब देश को पुण्या लोक । पान फूलां तणउ तु लहइ भोग ॥
कण मचइ कुकस भखइ । अति चतुराई राजा गठ ब्वालेर ॥
गोरड़ी जेसलमेर को । भोगे लोक दक्षण को देस ॥" p. 35[1]

(*i.e.*, the *Purabiyas* of the eastern country take *pan*, bedeck their bodies with flowers and eat rice. They are very miserly, gathering even particles (of rice), and eat kukas (?) ; they are too clever. The people of Gawalior (Malwa) eat onions. The people of the Deccan are notorious for their sensuality and Jaisalmir for women of peerless beauty).

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[1] The Mss of this poem are reported to be very defective by the editor of Nagri Pracharini Sabha edition (For text, see pp. 35-36). Interpolations and inconsistencies have not been exhaustively pointed out in this edition. How could Rajmati, daughter of Rajah Bhoj of Dhar, be born at Jaisalmir ? The whole passage is an echo of local prejudices and popular satires against the *Purabiyas* and the Southerners.

In Rajasthan they say, "Jaisalmir produces women (of beauty) ; Marwar is noted for men (of valour) and Bikanir for its breed of camel. It is not clear why the Southerners come in for satire as *bhogi* (sensualists). The standard of life of the people of the South was higher than that of the North in the post-Harsha age, though its people were looked upon as effeminate and voluptuous by the rough Northerners.

Bisaldev refuses to give up his project of leaving home for Orissa and consoles his queen saying that he will bring for her shells (*Kawri*), *taka-ul* (?)[2] and necklace, and worship the Lord of Jadavas (Jagannath) in Orissa. Before he starts he performs the *Shraddha* and offers *pinda* for his deceased father on the new moon day of *pitri-paksha* (*Mahalaya*). Bisaldev reached Orissa and paid his respects to the king, who returned the courtesy fourfold. He passes eleven years there when a letter from Rajmati reaches him. This letter was brought by a *Pandit* who took seven months to complete his journey. Bisaldev seeks leave of the *Raja* to depart, and is called to the presence of the queen (*Patta-mahadevi*). The queen requests Bisaldev to stay on in Orissa as the *Pradhan* (Chief minister), and proposes to give him in marriage two nieces of the king, one of which is *Gauri* (fair-complexioned), the other *sanwali* (*syamali*; of darker hue). Bisaldev respectfully declines the offer, and starts for home. The Raja gave his honoured guest the royal umbrella and band of music at the time of his departure.

Such was the country of Orissa of the poetic imagination of Nalha in the twelfth century A. D.

Padmavat of Malik Muhammad Jaisi comes next for a notice of Orissa. Jaisi began his poem in the year of Sher Shah's accession. The poet takes his hero Ratansi of Mewar through Central India and by way of Jharkhand to the sea-coast. The Gajapati of Orissa tried to dissuade the hero from his perilous journey through seven seas to Simhala (not Ceylon—Lanka, but an imaginary island far off, farther than the Eastern Archipelago). The Gajapati seems to have been well acquainted with the dangers of the sea and commanded resources in expert seamen and strong ships to help Ratansi. The Gajapati provided him with a fleet of boats in which he with his seven disciples sailed for the island of Simhala. On his return journey with Padmini a storm diverted the course of his ship to the coast of Lanka. Owing to treachery of a seemingly boatman, who was really Bibhisan in disguise, Ratansi suffers ship-wreck and becomes a prisoner in the abode of the sea-god, whose daughter Lakshmi he marries. The God of the sea restores all the lost property and followers of Ratansi, who is then conducted by him to Jagannath. Life comes back to the forlorn party when they step on the shore of

[2] *Taka-ul* of the text yields no meaning. The correct word is *takaval*, e.g., *takaval* har (necklace of *taka*, i.e., gold or silver coins strung together).

Orissa. Ratansi with Padmini pays a visit to the temple of Jagannath, where cooked rice (*Rindha bhat*) is sold. From Jagannath they return to Chitor.

In imitation of Jaisi's *Padmavat*, Usman, a poet of Ghazipur, wrote his mystic love-poem Chitravali in the reign of Jahangir. The poet makes the emissary of his heroine search for the hero in places as far as Balandvip inhabited by the *Ingraj* (English merchants) and *Rum* (Constantinople) in the west. Eastward the emissary comes to Sonargaon (East Bengal), and by way of Manipur and Burma goes to China where the limit of the earth ends and that of *Swarga* (paradise) begins.

Orissa and Telingana are omitted from the geographical notice of Usman. He has, however, made amends by adding a chapter, *Jagannath-Khand* in his poem (p. 233).

The story of *Chitravali* is much less known than that of *Padmavat*. Sujan Rai, son of Rajah Dharanidhar of Nepal, once went out ahunting, lost his way in the jungles and fell asleep on a spot within the jurisdiction of a *Deo*. The *Deo* was a kindly spirit and at night he kept watch on the sleeping prince. That night a friend of the *Deo* came and requested him not to miss the festivities of the *sal-girah* (annual birth-day celebration) of Chitravali, the princess of Rupnagar. The *Deo* was in a fix. His friend came to the rescue saying that they would bodily carry off the prince to Rupnagar and keep him in the studio of the princess without disturbing his sleep, and next morning they might bring him back where he was sleeping. So they took the prince to Rupnagar and went out to witness gaieties leaving the prince in the *Chitra-sala*. The prince woke up at night and found himself in a dream-land as it were. He found the materials of painting in the room, and the fresco-portraiture of a beautiful damsel on the wall. He fell in love with the portrayed princess, and drew a portrait of his ownself by its side. Towards the close of the night sleep came upon him and he found himself mysteriously brought back to the forest. Dream became a reality to the love-sick prince, and he became a *Jogi* in quest of the original in flesh and blood of the inanimate picture. Next morning Chitravali was surprised to find the portrait of a prince of peerless beauty drawn by some unknown hand by the side of her own, She became disconsolate and sought union with the subject of painting.

The hermit prince in his search for the lady of his dream encountered various adventures. A wild elephant was about to kill him when a *Pakshiraj*, perhaps of the *Jatayu* family of the

Ramayan swooped down upon the elephant and carried it in its mighty talons high up into the sky and over the seas. The prince was left off by the elephant, and he fell down on the island of *Sagar-garh*. He married there *Kaunlavati*, daughter of Sagar Raja and spent some years there ill at ease for Chitravali. A *Siddha-Jogi* (an anchorite), who came there showed him the picture of Chitravali. Sujan Rai took leave of *Kaunlavati* promising to take her back when he would obtain Chitravali. His desire was fulfilled; but he forgot his promise to his second love. *Kaunlavati* at last manages to send Hans Misir as her messenger to Sujan Rai.

Sujan Rai came back to *Sagar-garh* and sought permission of the Rajah to take *Kaunlavati*, with him. The Rajah equipped two boats that resembled an elephant and a horse. The voyage from *Sagar-garh* was perilous, and the ships were about to sink in a whirlpool. Gods took pity on the lovers and ordered Agastya, who once drank up the ocean, to subdue the sea. The very name of Agastya terrified the sea-god who allowed him a safe passage to the coast of Jagannath.

The boats of Sujan Rai touched the beach of Puri-Jagannath towards the early dawn when it was yet half dark. The prince leapt on the shore and found a Brahman taking his bath there. He enquired of him what city it was. The peevish Brahman thundered, "Are you blind of sight? It is Jagannath, the light of the whole world, who is worshipped by the people of the earth, a touch of whose feet takes off the whole load of sins."

The prince had become penniless as under the stern command of the captain of the fleet everything had been thrown overboard to lighten the burden of the boats. But he wished to be first on that day to worship Jagannath. So he gathered some leaves and offered water and leaves to the idol with the prayer :

अब निरधन परदेशी जानी, मानि लेहु यह पाती पानी ॥ (p. 223)

(*i. e.*, knowing me to be a destitute stranger, may it please you to accept these leaves and water).

Meanwhile the Brahman, who was bathing in the sea, turned up for worship and began looking intently at Sujan Rai. His eyes became heavy with tears. The prince asked him why he was weeping. The Brahman replied that the only son of his king had gone away with a *Jogi*, and not been heard of since then. Soon the prince recognised the old Brahman as his own *purohit* Kesi Pande. Kesi Pande narrated to the prince the story of his sojourn at Jagannath, how the sea-god whom he worshipped took him to the temple and di-

appeared after giving him in alms five jewels. The prince receives these jewels from Kesi Pande, and enquires whether there was any merchant there, who could appraise the price of these jewels and give him gold and silver in return. Kesi Pande names one Lachchan Sahu to whom they went with the jewels. Lachchan Sahu said that he had visited Nepal, and provided the prince with large sums of money. Royal robes, crown and ornaments were purchased, and also horses and elephants. Sujan Rai took into his pay one thousand Khandwaha[3] (swordsmen, the *Khandayat* now bereft of their swords) as his escort, and marched away in state for Nepal.

It is worthy of note that two Muslim poets of modern Uttar Pradesh showed such spiritual sympathy with the far-famed Jagannath of Orissa ; and a fairly close acquaintance with the country and its importance as the much-frequented port of embarkation for the eastern seas. A thorough search may bring to light more references to Orissa in Hindi literature. At any rate we have sufficient evidence of the unity of Indian culture in spite of distances and divergence of creeds and races.

[3] लच्छन कहा दरब बहु आही, जो चाहिय से लेह बसाही ।
देस तोहार मोर है देखा, उहइं आइ मैं पारब लेखा ।
सोन रुप पाटमबर आना, साजे मेहरिलु लागि बिबाना ।
अभरन समे जराउ साजे, मूकुमाल ओर मरहं बिराजे ।
हाथि घोर पुनि जाए बेसाहे, सहस एक राखे खंड़बाहे ।
कटक साजि के कुंर पयाना, बाजा पुनि गहगहा निसाना ।
(*Chitravali*, text Nagri Pracharini Sabha, p. 233).

8

Amir-nama or memoirs of Amir Khan by Basawan Lal

Amir Khan, the founder of the Muslim state of Tonk in Rajputana, lives perhaps in the memory of the average man of our country as the accursed leader of the Pindari hordes who desolated Rajputana and Central India by their violence and rapine. History cannot be said to have as yet done justice to this last great Pathan military genius of India. Materials for an exhaustive and critical study of the biography of Amir Khan are abundant, though scattered in the Imperial Records of India and the State archives of Indore, Gwalior and the Rajput states of Jaipur, Kotah, Jodhpur and Mewar. We have a very valuable nucleus of a biography of Amir Khan in Basawan Lal's Persian Memoirs of Amir Khan known as *Amir-nama*.[1]

The author Basawan Lal, son of Nainsukh Rai, a Saksena Kayath of Bilgram tells us in the preface that he had been in the service of Amir Khan as the *naib-munshi* and *pesh-dast* (Head Assistant) of Amir's Dewan, Rai Dataram, son of Himmat Rai. He began writing this history at the suggestion of the Amir and also received encouragement from the Amir's son, Wazir-ud-daula Bahadur, Nawab of Tonk. It was begun in the year given by the chronogram, *yadgar-i-Amir-i-Salar ast, i.e.*, in 1240 A.H. (1824 A.D.). More than one hundred years back, a translation of *Amir-nama* was published by Henry T. Prinsep under the title of "Memoirs of the Pathan soldier Mohummud Ameer Khan" Calcutta 1832. Apart from its biographical importance, Amir-nama is an indispensable contemporary source of our knowledge of the history of every Indian

[1] Catalogue of Persian Mss. in the British Museum, Vol. III, p. 1019.

state of Malwa and Rajputana for the last two decades of the eighteenth and the first two decades of the nineteenth century.

This history, Amir-nama, is divided into four unequal *babs* or Parts ; Part I deals with Amir's ancestry and early life ; Part II gives a historical notice of the Deccan powers ; Part III of the alliance of Amir Khan and Maharajah Jaswant Rao Holkar and Part IV with the Pindari War waged by the English and their treaty with Amir Khan. Part III is the longest and most important part of the book, giving us a glimpse of Amir's political game of weakening the Maratha states and prevention of any joint action on the part of the Marathas against the English with the ulterior object of establishing Muslim ascendancy in Malwa and Rajputana under his own leadership. He was ambitious, as this book clearly indicates, of gaining the indirect but *de facto* control of the Maratha confederacy under the guise of upholding the interests of his weak ally, Jaswant Rao Holkar. This book is full of human interest too, which is rather rare in dry chronicles of official history. In Basawan Lal's book, the grim Pindari leader assumes no stiff official pose ; but allows himself to be depicted as a genial care-free soldier of fortune with own code of free-lance morality and chivalry. We shall give only as much of the life of Amir Khan as would perhaps suffice to interest our younger generation in a more detailed study of one of the dark spots of our history.

Tale Khan, grandfather of Amir Khan, belonged to the Salar-zai sept of the Bunerwal clan of the great Yusufzai tribe of Pathans. During the reign of Emperor Muhmmad Shah Tale Khan left his native village of Jauhar in the Buner valley and settled in Narana near Sambhal. He joined the predatory bands of Zaman Khan *jamadar* and other Afghans and lived by plunder. When the imperial army under Muhammad Shah marched against Ali Muhammad Khan and besieged Aonla, Tale Khan assisted by a single servant defended himself for 8 days in a house. When he at last came out, the Emperor offered to take him in service which Tale Khan bluntly refused.

Amir's father Muhammad Hayat Khan was a minor at the time of his father's death. Dunde Khan, who at this time had become the master of that tract, took him in service in consideration of Tale Khan's services to the national cause. After the death of Dunde Khan when Kutehr (Rohilkhand) was lost to the Afghans, Md. Hayat Khan returned to his birth-place Narana, and having no liking for service, settled down to a peaceful life in his jagir, and

attached himself to Shaikh Yahaya and Khan Sahib Ghulam Muhiuddin Khan. He was skilled in arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and other sciences. Amir was born in 1180 A. H. When he became 7 years of age, Amir used to play the king with boys of his own age. Whatever he got from home he would distribute among his comrades as pay ; if no money were available he would take away grain and distribute it heedless of the censure of his father. Morning indeed showed the day, and the restless spirit of military adventure of his grandfather was early noticable in Amir Khan. He twice fled from home in search of independent livelihood as a soldier. Finally he left home in 1202 A. H. accompanied by a band of young Ruhela adventurers who elected him as their chief (jamadar).

He made his way to Mathura where General De Boigne was then recruiting soldiers on behalf of Mahadji Sindhia. But Amir was not taken in, being too young for service. He then went to Sekhawati and entered the service of Najaf Quli Khan through the recommendation of Yusuf Khan, a Risaladar of Najaf Quli. After having served Najaf Quli for two months he entered the service of Bagh Singh, a *rais* of Khetari in Shekhawati. He served Bagh Singh of Khetari for four or five months, and afterwards for about the same period he was in the service of Maharajah Bijay Singh of Jodhpur.

During this time Bijay Singh was defeated by the Southerners (at the battle of Patan). From Jodhpur Amir went to Nagore where Ismail Beg Khan had arrived after sustaining a defeat at Ganaur (?). He now joined service of Ismail Beg with whose army he proceeded to Palanpur ; and when after the reduction of that place on behalf of the Rajah of Jodhpur, Ismail Beg Khan returned to Jodhpur, Amir parted company with him and entered the service of the Raja of Idar with three to four hundred men. There his services were not required for more than two or three months. From Idar he started for Surat, and during the journey half of his men left him owing to privation and hardships, and starvation that faced them. One day Amir had to sell his own charger for buying food for his men. During this time on the night of Shab-i-barat it seemed to be the lot of Amir and his followers to go without food. Amir went to the house of a pious Maulvi who was keeping an open table for Muslims on that night. When the Maulvi asked Amir to take his meal, Amir replied, "I have not the heart to fill my belly when two hundred followers of mine are feeling pangs of hunger there." The Maulvi taking compassion on the Amir taught him a name of God,

which he was told, if regularly repeated 100 times a day, would save him from every difficulty. Indeed relief came immediately. A Pandit in Gaekwad's service whom the English at Surat refused to pay their arrears of *chauth* on seeing the smallness of his forces, now offered to take Amir and his men into pay till the recovery of *chauth* from the English. The story of the recovery of *chauth* from the English by a bold bluff, which is given in detail in the Amir-nama was the first notable achievement of Amir Khan.

Amir, again without employment, took from Surat the road to Kokan. Amir like Babur was prodigal in his expenditure and would disdain to think of the morrow, playing alternately the amir and the faqir in his long and eventful career. One day when he was passing through Kokan, neither he nor any of his followers had a single *kauri* left with them. One of his companions, not to be outdone in the spirit of sacrifice by his chief, went to the bazar with his *setar* (three-stringed musical instrument), sold it for Rs. 1/4, bought four anna worth of opium, and one Rupee worth of gram. The gram was boiled and opium mingled in water, and this was distributed among them by Amir. Early in the next morning he reached Nasik, where he was entertained as a guest for one whole week by the hospitable chiefs of that country. There he served for four months under a pandit who was the subahdar of Nasik. After the rainy season was over, one Pandit Naro Shankar, whom the Peshwa had appointed subahdar of Ujjain with four districts (*ilaqa*) of Malwa—arrived at this place and took Amir's *risalah* into his pay. He served the Maratha chief for one year.

During this time civil war broke out in the Bhopal State, and Amir found therein an opportunity to push his fortune. At first Amir espoused the cause of the rebels who had sought refuge in his camp against Nawab Ghaus Muhammad Khan. Later on through the mediation of Rajah Himmat Rai of Bilgram, *mustaufi* of Bhopal, he accepted the service of the Nawab. Amir failed in an attempt to succour the garrison of Hoshangabad, which had been besieged by the Bhonsla Rajah of Nagpur. Soon after Amir left Bhopal, and having reached Sironj waited on Lakwa Pandit, an officer of Daulat Rao Sindhia. Having been refused service after attendance on him for one week, he realised nevertheless his pay for these days by a show of force. Next he went to Bala Rao Ingliya, another offier of Sindhia, in search of service. Bala Rao after detaining him for ten days in expectation at length wanted to dismiss him without paying him the expenses of his halt there. One day Amir

with a dagger concealed under his arm-pit went inside the fort, and when he met Bala Rao (perhaps alone), he compelled him to pay down his dues at the point of dagger held to his chest, and cut his way out of the fort by performing prodigies of valour.

Next comes the story of Amir's alliance with Rajah Jai Singh and Durjansal Khichi of Raghogarh against Bala Rao Ingliya, an officer of Sindhia. These Khichi chiefs having been expelled from their ancestral home of Raghogarh by Daulat Rao Sindhia had taken to predatory warfare plundering the Maratha territories of both Sindhia and Holkar in Malwa. Amir Khan then joined Rajah Jai Singh Khichi who promised him half of the conquests made by their joint effort. The Marathas found more than their match in Amir Khan as a master of elusive tactics in predatory warfare. Bala Rao Ingliya divided his troops into four brigades and drew a cordon around the Khichi chiefs and Amir Khan on all sides. They baffled every effort of the Marathas to bring them to an action and would not encamp for twentyfour hours in the same place. During this time it so happened that for 18 days Amir Khan went on raiding Maratha possessions in spite of such a close pursuit by the Marathas that Amir and his cavaliers did not alight from their horses except to answer calls of nature. They used to knead plundered flour of wheat on horse-back, gather fuel with lance-heads, light fire with *chakhmaq*, flint-stone, bake *chapathis* by holding them on fire with lances, and eat their food on their saddles. We hardly come across a more graphic picture of Pindara life than this. Another feat of Amir Khan was a bold attempt on Bala Rao's life in his own camp. However, when hostilities ceased between Jai Singh and Bala Rao, Amir with one thousand men entered the service of Bala Rao on a poor pay, Rs. 4 per mensem for every footman and Rs. 10/- for every trooper. When Amir's followers raised murmurs against such poor pay, he promised to give them something more. They asked, "Wherefrom wouldst thou give it ?" Amir gave the characteristic reply, "Wherefrom I have hitherto given." This he did by supplementing his pay by the plunder of helpless peasants of the country along his route.

Bala Rao stationed Amir Khan to hold the fort of Fatehgarh in the vicinity of Bhopal against the Nawab on behalf of Bala Rao's protege Murid Muhammad Khan. When provisions ran short in the fort, Amir ordered several shots to be fired into the city where his ally Murid Muhammad Khan was encamped. Murid Muhammad Khan sent him a message, saying that Amir's behaviour was far

from the Afghan code of honour. Amir wrote in reply, "What observance of the Afghan code of honour on your part is this that you eat to surfeit while I am left to starve here ?" Murid Muhammad sent cooked food inside the fort for Amir and his followers. Every day Amir would secure his ration by firing a few shots similarly as warning. Bala Rao could have forced the Nawab of Bhopal to become a tributary to the Maratha State if at this time urgent despatches from Daulat Rao Sindhia did not reach Bala Rao and Bapuji Sindhia for arresting a chief named Lakhwa. Amir left Bhopal on the conclusion of a treaty between the Nawab and the Marathas.

We do not propose to refer to Amir's alliance with Jaswant Rao Holkar, Amir's part in the Maratha civil war between Sindhia and Holkar, and his feats of generalship in the war between the English and Jaswant Rao Holkar as these are already well-known facts of history. We resume the thread of narrative from the opening of negotiations of peace between Jaswant Rao Holkar and Lord Lake at Jalandhar.

When peace parleys with Jaswant Rao and the English had almost reached completion, Jaswant Rao Holkar's Pathan chiefs withdrew from his camp. Amir refused to be a party to the treaty, and he severely rebuked Holkar for his unmanly submission. But the English envoy insisted on Amir's seal being fixed on to the treaty. Jaswant Rao Holkar persuaded Amir to return to his camp. Amir Khan had a soft corner for Jaswant Rao Holkar, whom he had generously forgiven for more than one act of treachery. There happened at this time an interesting episode. Jaswant Rao Holkar having despaired of any hope of his release from the grip of his inconvenient and overpowerful ally, Amir Khan, formed a plot to administer poison to him He gave a packet of cobra-poison (*halahal*) to a Maratha page of Amir Khan. But the boy revealed every detail of the plot to his master, who, however, hit upon a device to teach Jaswant a lesson. One day during a friendly and unofficial interview Amir told Jaswant Rao that one Maulvi had given him a miraculous medicine for strengthening sexual power (*Quwwat-i-bahah*). Jaswant entreated Amir to give a dose of it to him. Amir told him that this medicine could only be taken secretly under his own directions and requested Jaswant to come on another occasion if he would care to take it. Jaswant and Amir sat face to face in a retired place and the packet of *halahal* was handed over by Amir to his friend. Jaswant at once burst into profuse tears and

told Amir that this was the work of some wicked persons, who were interested in discrediting him in the eyes of the amir. However, Amir forgave him and their friendship remained intact.

When Maharajah Jaswant Rao Holkar and Amir Khan had fled towards Lahor pursued by the army of Lord Lake (1805 A.D.), Holkar's family was given shelter in Jodhpur by Rajah Man Singh Rathor. During this time the Jodhpur Rajah opened negotiations with Maharana Bhim Singh of Mewar for the hand of his daughter Krishnakumari who had been betrothed to his predecessor and cousin, Rajah Bhim. "During this time a serious quarrel broke out between Maharana Bhim Singh and Raja Man, as the latter had seized Khalirao, a fief of Mewar, which one of the ancestors of the Maharana had given away in dowry to Kumar Singh. Rajah Man without caring at all for the near kinship of the Rana with that chief (Kumar Singh) expelled him from Khalirao. The Rana in great resentment opened negotiations of a matrimonial alliance with Rajah Jagat Singh of Jaipur and declared that he would not give Krishna in marriage to Rajah Man Singh. He wrote to Jagat Singh that he should send his troops to occupy the *Ghat* (pass), so that the enemy might not secure its possession. Rajah Jagat Singh having heard of the great beauty of the Mewar princess sent a *darogha* of his named Khush-hal Singh with a detachment of troops to accomplish this business.

Khush-hal Singh reached Udaipur and occupied the pass. He sent to Raja Jagat Singh a portrait of the princess painted by the magic brush of an excellent painter. This made the Raja more restless for union with her (Ms., p. 85). Now Rajah Man Singh of Jodhpur wrote openly about this affair to Maharajah Daulat Rao Sindhia, Subadar of Jodhpur, who during this time was encamped in Udaipur territory. Accordingly, Sindhia marched towards Udaipur and drove away Khush-hal Singh from the Ghat. This added fuel to Jagat Singh's anger. After the departure of Sindhia Rajah Jagat Singh again sent to Udaipur Rai Ratan Lal, a trusty confidant of his with a force. Having heard this news Rajah Man Singh asked the advice of Sawai Singh of Pokaran, a near kinsman of his on this affair. Sawai Singh who had been at heart insincere to Rajah Man Singh . . . . said that it was a fight for prestige and honour, and instigated him to lead an army against Jaipur.

Rajah Man Singh by rapid marches covered fifty *kos* and reached the neighbourhood of Pushkar. He sent off his *Bakshi* named Indraraj with a detachment to bar the path of Jaipur forces,

which had already reached as far as Shahpura on their way to Udaipur. Indraraj told the Jaipur troops either to give up the idea of going to Udaipur or give battle. Rai Ratan Lal who was a cautious man, considering any conflict at that place inadvisable sent his troops back to Jaipur and himself went to Pushkar to pay a visit to Maharajah Holkar. At this time Holkar accompanied by Amir Khan had reached Malpura in Jaipur territory, and having dismissed Amir Khan from that place to manage the Jaipur affair (of realising tribute), marched to *Harmara* one stage from Malpura. There he left his army, and accompanied only by 2000 light horse reached Pushkar with the object of bringing back his family which had been left in Johhpur at the time of his march to Lahor. There he met Rajah Man Singh and had his family back from Jodhpur. Here Ratan Lal saw Holkar and in order to end the ruinous feud between the two royal houses, entered into an understanding with Rajah Man Singh, whereby both Man Singh and Jagat Singh were to give up the idea of Udaipur marriage, and a daughter of Man Singh was to be betrothed to Jagat Singh and the latter's sister to Man Singh.

In the meanwhile the Amir after having settled the affair of Jaipur reached Pushkar by a rapid march attended only by one thousand horse. Rajah Man Singh expressed a desire to meet the Amir, who in reply to Maharajah Holkar's communication of it to him said that if the Rajah would come out to receive him and accord him a welcome as an equal without deviating in the least from the most delicate rules of the *darbar* etiquette, he had no objection to the interview. "I am not going for an interview with the Rajah," said the Amir, "as you did when during the interview proper ceremony and rules of etiquette were not observed, and your turban went off your head in the crowd". Maharajah Holkar did not like that the Amir should be exhalted above him in the eyes of people by a more honourable reception than what he himself had from the Rajah. So, double-tongued as he was. he told the amir on one hand that the Rajah was not prepared to receive him as the amir would expect ; and on the other hand, he said to the Rajah that it would be difficult to get away if at the time of interview any thing unpleasant should happen from the conduct of Amir's troops who were unruly Afghans creating troubles for their arrears of pay ; the Rajah should better postpone it for some future occasion as he and Amir being one and the same, there was hardly any necessity for seeing the amir.

In short Maharajah Holkar settled the affair of Jaipur through

Rai Ratan Lal on ten lakhs of Rupees publicly, but in secret a *nazarana* (of the same amount) was promised to him on the condition that he should sever his alliance with Rajah Man Singh, and the sum was to be paid to him when he should reach Kotah after evacuating the Jaipur territory. Holkar dismissed Amir Khan with a *nishan* for collecting the Jaipur tribute. Amir marched to Jaipur and encamped near the city. Rajah Jagat Singh after some hesitation was at length persuaded by his advisers to meet the Amir on terms of equality insisted on by the latter. The Rajah came as far as the Ghat *darwaza* to receive him and showed him due honour and respect. After interview with the Rajah, the Amir stayed there for a few days to realise the war indemnity (*zar-i-jangi*). He further secured the lease of *pargana* Tonk in lieu of two lakhs of Rupees on the condition that the officials of the Raj should be left in charge of it for one year. He left there Rai Himmat Rai for the collection of its revenue. At Jaipur he happened to meet Muhammad Iyaz Khan who held an appointment there. Muhammad Iyaz Khan's daughter was betrothed to him, and a few months after the marriage was celebrated in Ajmer.

After the marriage the Amir came to Maharajah Holkar for obtaining leave of dismissal (*rukhsat*) as he intended to convey his family to Shergarh. He told Maharajah that after realising the tribute from Jaipur and releasing Khande Rao from the custody of army officers to whom he had been given as a security for their arrears of pay—he should ally himself with Rajah Man Singh of Jodhpur, who had braved the wrath of the victorious English by giving refuge to his family during his retreat to Lahor. Holkar, who on the consideration of a *nazarana* had come to an understanding with Rai Ratan Lal of Jaipur to separate himself from Rajah Man Singh and depart for Kotah,—turned a deaf ear to Amir's eloquent appeal to his honour. Having received from Ratan Lal a *nishan* of two lakhs of Rupees for settling the affair, *i.e.*, dispute over the Udaipur betrothal, and the secretly stipulated *nazarana* of ten lakhs of Rupees, he decided to march away from Pushkar. He gave one lakh of Rupees to the amir and turned his attention to the release of Khande Rao by paying off arrears to his troops. Having no other option, the amir issued *parwana* to his troops to reassemble at Muzzamabad in Jaipur territory. Having made assignments on Jaipur for one sixth (*chatahat*) of the pay of his troops, he marched away from that place and reached Sheogarha plundering on the way Lawa and inhabitants of Sawai Madhopur and other places.

In the meanwhile Rajah Man Singh had marched back from Pushkar to Jodhpur, leaving behind 500 Rathor horse with Holkar. This he did in compliance with Holkar's request for a contingent of auxiliaries upon whom he could rely for personal safety against his own discontented and turbulent mercenaries, mostly Pathan. Maharaja Holkar with the Rathor contingent of horse left Pushkar for his camp at Harmara in Jaipur. He had Khande Rao released from the custody of troops by clearing off their dues with a *hundi* (draft) on Jaipur, and sent him to Indore.

When the officials of the Rajah of Jaipur saw the cavalry of Rajah Man Singh in the retinue of Maharaja Holkar, a false suspicion arose in their mind. They thought :- now that Rajah Man Singh had sent his troops in the company of Maharaja Holkar for bringing away the daughter of the Rana, Maharaja Holkar would certainly go to Udaipur and secure her by force, and the cavalry of Man Singh be escorting her to Jodhpur. Having become suspicious of the attitude of Holkar, the Jaipur *darbar* took into its pay some of the ex-army officers of Holkar, such as Mir Makhdum Haidarabadi, Wahid Khan, Khuda Baksh, Mir Sadaruddin Sarangpurwala, Mir Mardan Ali, Nawab Sahib Khan and others,—who had in disappointment and disgust separated themselves from Holkar at the time of Holkar's conclusion of a treaty with the English and threatened the very life of Holkar for arrears of pay.

Sawai Singh, chief of Pokaran and Rajah Surat Singh of Bikanir, who secretly bore great enmity and hatred toward Rajah Man Singh Rathor, wanted to entangle him in a war with Jaipur. So when Man Singh returned from Pushkar giving up his contention for the hand of Krishnakumari, these chiefs rebuked him for his unmanly surrender of the claim to the hand of that princess, and incited him to make war upon Jaipur. These traitors at the same time sent the news of hostile preparations on the part of Jodhpur to Rajah Jagat Singh of Jaipur, whom they had instigated to take up the cause of Dhonkol Singh, nephew of Bhim Singh and place him on the *gadi* of Jodhpur by supplanting Man Singh.

Thus war broke out between Jodhpur and Jaipur, and both sides were eager to secure the services of Amir Khan's mercenary bands. And in this bid, Jaipur forestalled Jodhpur. Rajah Jagat Singh sent Mahatab Rai and Muhammad Ghafur Khan to the amir for negotiating a pact with him. About this time disturbance and rebellion broke out among the followers of the Amir whom they virtually made a prisoner. The Amir feigned dysentery, and for

two or three days went to the privy frequently. One night within the screen of the privy, he changed clothes with a servant of his, named Hayat, and made his escape to a place of safety by tearing open the *kanat* of *paikhana*. However, the amir accepted the offer of Jaipur, and the agreement was sworn between the parties. Shortly after this, an officer of Holkar named Jamna Bhao waited on the amir, and requested him to side with Rajah Man Singh. Jait Mal *munshi* of Rajah Man Singh came direct from Jodhpur and offered handsome cash, and grant of territory worth several lakhs if he should join Rajah Man Singh. The amir told them plainly that he could not break the solemn agreement with Jaipur at that moment. The amir mobilised his forces at Lakheri Ghat. At Lakheri Ghat, he joined the army of Jaipur and invaded Jodhpur. But during the progress of the campaign, amir went over to the side of Rajah Man, and made a hurried march for Jaipur. Jaipur lay defenceless and helpless against the Pindari chief. A sister of Jagat Singh sent several trays of *mohurs* and jewels along with her own scarf to Amir Khan. She sent a message to the amir that at Jaipur only women were now left from whom he could expect no martial reception. Amir chivalrously sent back her presents with the message that he was going where men to fight with him were to be found and assured her of his honourable pledge of protection. Amir secretly connived at the flight of Rajah Jagat Singh when he was all but captured by the troops of Marwar.

Amir now became the arbiter of affairs at Jodhpur. At the request of the Ranis and the Heir-Apparent, he murdered Sangi Indra Raj and raised Bhim Singh to the gadi of Marwar. Again the question of the hand of Krishnakumari was raised as a point of nationl honour by the Rathors, and Rajputana was to have no peace so long as Krishna remained alive. The tragedy that followed is a notorious fact of history, and the author of Amir-nama adds no word of apology for Amir's share of guilt in this inhuman affair.

9

Jadunath Sarkar as a Historian

It is approximately correct to say that the historiography of Medieval India begins with Al-Beruni and Kalhana. Al-Beruni stands even to this day as an archetype of what a student of Indo-Muslim history should be : sober, critical and yet sympathetic. Kalhana set an example of writing a regional and dynastic history on a comprehensive scale with an independence rare among court chroniclers of later times. But their examples were not followed up. History became a handmaid of courts and kings. Historians of the pre-Mughal period were exclusively Muslim who wrote with an eye on court-patronage and the applause of the orthodox. However, they did not wilfully falsify facts though religious bias was strong. Among the Hindus, historical tradition was kept alive in the twelfth century by the Raso literature of Rajasthan, Sanskrit panegyrics (*e.g.*, *Prithviraja-Vijayam*), dramas, and the unwritten bardic tales.

The age of Akbar was the golden age of historiography. Abul Fazl was its hero, unsurpassed for centuries later in scholarship, moral purity, catholicity of mind and a secular outlook on history, though an imperialist to the core. Abul Fazl's *Akbarnama* with its supplement *Ain-i-Akbari* was, in design and spirit, a literary reflex of the idealism of his unlettered patron and friend Akbar the Great. Though he lacked the critical acumen and freedom of his great predecessor, —Al-Beruni, Abul Fazl followed the path of Al-Beruni in his study of the early history and cultural heritage of India, a revival which was for the first time seriously attempted by Akbar. Akbar under the advice of Todarmal made Persian the official language of the Mughal Empire. This was a momentous step in

the sixteenth century like the introduction of English as the official language of British India in the nineteenth century. Persian remained no longer an alien language of the unclean *mlechhas*. Hindus soon mastered Persian, and within a century equalled if not excelled the Indian Muslims in their literary skill in Persian. What was most important, Hindus caught the contagion of love for history from the Muslims.

Bengal had been the land of poetry, jurisprudence and logic in ancient times, but not of history and historians ; and so did her cultural tradition remain in the Middle Ages. Hindus of Bengal could not boast of a history like *Rajatarangini* in their days of independence. Sandhyakar Nandi's *Ramacharitam*, a historical panegyric, and that too in subtle metaphor, is the only work to Bengal's credit. It seems, the soil of Bengal was usuited to history. Even the Muslims of the Bengal took the path of Hindus turning away from history which was flourishing so luxuriously in other parts of India. A phenomenal change came upon Bengal under the impact of British civilisation.

The historiography of Modern India dates from the establishment of British rule in Bengal. Muslims as well as Hindus turned to reconstructing the history of Bengal ; everyone within his own sphere under the guiding English genius. *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, *Tarikh-i-Bangala*, and Hamidullah Khan's *Tarikh-i Chatgam* were the first fruits of Muslim scholarship and enthusiasm. And Ram Ram Basu's Bengali biography written in the first decade of the nineteenth century was the first Hindu attempt at historical composition in prose. We need not follow the subsequent phases of progress in this direction, which did not perhaps determine the career of Sir Jadunath as a historian.

Sir Jadunath has not revealed the forces that weaned a student from English literature to Indo-Muslim history. We only learn this much from a radio talk of his (later on published in the Bengali Journal, *Prabasi*) that it was his father who implanted a love for history in his young mind ; and that it was through the gate of Western history that he had entered the field of historical researches in Indian History. This is understandable, as Jadunath once remarked that he had to read the works of Sismondi, to appreciate Dante better. European history, therefore, preoccupied him as an essential subsidiary of English literature, apart froms its being one of the subjects of his Honours course of the University of Calcutta. This is in our opinion the most potent influence in the make-up of Jadunath as a historian. If Jadunath stands out today as an

individualist, unique and unparalleled for insight and farsight into different ages and epochs of world history, of which history of India is but a chapter, he owes it to his early grounding in European history and to intellectual discipleship to the great historians of nineteenth century, Ranke and Mommsen, Acton and Maitland, Macaulay and Gibbon. Had Jadunath started with Indian history only, he like some other illustrious historians of our country, would not have been able to take a detached view of men and matters, or to cultivate the calm, disinterested judicial temper on which historical science depends. He always impressed on his pupils that any specialisation which is not broad-based on a decent amount of knowledge of the subject as a whole is bound to miscarry in the field of Humanities.

It is common knowledge that Sir Jadunath Sarkar did not take his M.A. degree in History, though he secured first class Honours in it at the B.A. stage. He started his career as a teacher of English literature and not of history, and his allegiance to literature was almost sentimental. This may appear rather embarrassing to the present generation. We know of some bright scholars of English literature who taught history exclusively and with eminent success up to the highest university standard, though they did not write history. The fact is that in Jadunath's days, students of English literature were required to read more of European history than students read today for their M.A. degree in History. Jadunath like his younger contemporary G. M. Trevelyan at Harrow, a truant from the classics to History, might as well say, "Shakespeare and Milton, Keats and Tennyson" meant to him "quite as much as Gibbon and Macaulay, Carlyle and Ruskin." Though aware of the shortcomings of Macaulay as a historian, Jadunath seems to have been under the spell of Macaulay as a stylist. As a master of vigorous historical prose, Macaulay and not Gibbon must have been his model, though both were inimitable. The other favourite author of Jadunath was Green, sections from whose *Short History of the English People* he would read aloud before starting any new chapter of his books. Sir Jadunath's *History of Aurangzib* and his *Fall of the Mughal Empire* reveal that Macaulay and Green, Irvine and Napier influenced Jadunath's style and method of writing in the early stages.

Jadunath required a terra firma of history, as distinguished from prosaic archaeology, epigraphy and numismatics to suit his literary genius. He preferred the Muslim period on account of its wealth of historical literature and a virgin field for digging in for

new materials. He chose Aurangzeb as the subject of his life's work. At the start it was a hazard and a speculation for the young scholar. He was a Hindu, and no other Hindu after Ishwardas Nagar and Bhimsen Burhanpuri in the reign of Aurangzeb had ventured to write anything original on Aurangzeb. Jadunath clearly realised the immensity of the task in view of the fact that almost all the sources were available in Persian and Marathi both of which he did not know. If the challenge was extremely formidable, Jadunath's preparation was equally strenuous and well-planned. He began Persian from the alphabet, gradually learnt enough to tackle the Persian chronicles in manuscript. Jadunath's *India of Aurangzib : Topography, Statistics and Roads* published in 1901, was a surprise to his contemporaries, and at once hailed as a model of neat and exact scholarship.

A few years after, a political storm burst over Bengal and rapidly spread all over India with the Bengal Partition of 1905 during the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon. A wave of anti-British feeling filled every genuine heart, and Jadunath could not but have a shaking. He was, however, the most moderate of his family. His more inflammable younger brother, Bijaynath, B.A., C.E., after a conflict with his British superiors in the Central Provinces, lost the post of the Executive Engineer, and took to *Swadeshi* with full ardour. Jadunath prepared a sober broadside which hit the British Indian Government at its weakest spot, namely its economic policy. His *Economics of British India* came out in 1909 and received a warm welcome throughout India from general readers and students of economics alike for its irrefutable logic and the charm and vigour of its style. Down to our college days (1918) our classmates used to commit passages from his book to memory and recite them to fan the patriotic fire of the sluggards amongst us. This book went through four editions, till the author himself withdrew it from the market, when History made it impossible to keep himself up-to-date with Indian Economics. Though Jadunath's book was a vigorous attack on British economic policy in India, Sir Theodore Morrison appreciated the courage and independence of the author of *Economics of British India* no less than his "conscientious investigation of detail".

Jadunath's first two volumes on Aurangzib came out in July 1912. These volumes were at once acknowledged as the "best authority" on the subject. The author was complimented for "his manner of treating the subject, which it might as well serve as a model to writers dealing with periods of Indo-Musalman history" (Sir E. D. Ross).

Maulana Shibli, an ocean of Islamic learning, in spite of his differences of opinion with Jadunath, was generous enough to acknowledge the value of his work and help him in tracing the manuscript of *Haft Anjuman* in Banaras. In order to understand a Muslim one must understand Islam, and the key to Islam lies with Islamic history. Jadunath spent a couple of years over Islamic history and culture outside India so that he might do justice to Anrangzeb who was much less an individual than an ideology that had inspired the Muslim community at every critical period. Chips from Jadunath's workshop came out in the form of *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*, *Historical Essays* (November 1912), the Persian text of Hamid-ud-din's *Ahkam-i-Alamgiri*, and as if a counterpoise in the direction of the author's inherited faith, a monograph on *Chaitanya : His Pilgrimages and Teachings*, in 1913 (afterwards *Chaitanya's Life and Teachings*, 3rd edition, 1932). Our saintly C. F. Andrews wrote of this book as "a work of surpassing value, full of human interest from beginning to end".

Four years' interval between the publication of the first two volumes and the third were years of strenuous preparation for Jadunath. The moral and religious regulations of Aurangzib, *Jihad* and *Jaziya*, temple destruction and the Hindu reaction were highly controversial and inflammable topics when the antinational Muslim communalism fanned by the sinister influence of British imperialism was dreaming of a Muslim India by garbling history. The historian's mission was to discover "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth about the past", which had unfortunately become a live issue at the time of writing the third volume and was heading for its first triumph in the fourth volume of the *History of Aurangzib*. The whirlwind of political passions could not disturb the juristic equanimity of the stern historian, equally indifferent to praise and blame of any but the illuminati of humanity.

The third volume was released from the press in 1916. It created a stir in the country. The Muslims as well as the Hindus felt aggrieved for opposite reasons. English education has done at least this much good to the intelligentsia of India that it has alerted our conscience and created for us a code of moral equity and fairness in literary criticism. Jadunath's method of putting his case in the spirit of a judge giving direction to the jury of humanity, born and unborn, came as a challenge to the Muslims, particularly so resentful of the interpretation of Islamic institutions by a Hindu. But facts spoke for themselves clearly enough, and the testimony

of Aurangzeb himself corroboroted by the historical evidence of equally good Muslims, created a desperate situation for the apologists of Aurangzeb.

The Hindus, on the other hand suffering as much from a fever of reactionary communalism, complained that Jadunath had branded the champions and martyrs of Hindu independence in the seventeenth century as rebels and robbers, to whom his pen was no more lenient than Aurangzeb's sword. Maharashtra was particularly perturbed because Jadunath was preparing to invade the realm of Maratha history in his next volume and fight the Maratha historians with their own weapons, and on their own ground. Jadunath brought out his *Shivaji and his Times* in July 1919, and the fourth volume of Aurangeb (dealing with the Deccan in Shivaji and Shambhaji's reigns) in the month of December of that year. Thus Shivaji and Aurangzeb confronted each other on the shelf of reviewers and scholars competent to pronounce judgment on them both. In the course of reviewing the *History of Aurangzib*, H. Beveridge remarked : "Jadunath Sarkar may be called Primus in India as the user of Persian authorities for the history of India. He might also be styled *Bengali Gibbon.*" The veteran historian V. A. Smith on the eve of retirement from the field of active research commended him for "learning, impartiality and critical ability" and wished him to continue his "good work of giving honest history." But honest history was becoming risky in India. Jadunath's treatment of the nature of *Jaziya* was resented by some of the Faithful as unfair and inaccurate, though he had simply summed up "the agreed judgments" of Muslim Jurists without any comment of his own. But facts were so inconvenient for them that both Islam and Aurangzeb could not be exonerated in the same breath.

Jadunath touched upon Aurangzeb's temple destruction rather lightly to satisfy historical justice. Yet there was a protest by a Muslim that Jadunath had not been fair to Aurangzeb by omitting the notice of Aurangzeb's Banaras Farman, whereby he granted certain lands to the Vishwanath Temple. Half informed critics usually did not get the compliment of a reply from Jadunath. But when the same charge was repeated at intervals, he published a reply that silenced his critics for good. The Farman had been issued during Aurangzeb's struggle with Shuja just by way of a political move to win for the time being the goodwill and cooperation of the Hindus for capturing Shuja and had nothing to do with his spirit of toleration.

Jadunath's patience with legitimate criticism is great. The Shivaji-Afzal Khan affair is an example. Professor A.F. Rahman questioned his authority and reasons for his view that the murder of Afzal Khan was a "preventive murder". As the authorities were almost evenly balanced, he pursued the affair for twenty years, and added an appendix to his fifth edition of *Shivaji* (pp. 72-3), replying to his friend's cirticism by producing the testimony of a good Muslim Mir Alam, the famous Wazir of Nizam-ul-Mulk and historian, who says, ". . . . the Khan intoxicated with the pride of being a hero . . . gripped Shivaji very hard in the act of embracing and struck him with his belt-dagger."

Maharashtra got a mixed shock with the publication of Jadunath's *Shivaji and his Times*. Public indignation against Grant Duff, verily the greatest pioneer in Maratha history was no doubt allayed to some extent and the Marathas rejoiced at Jadunath's irrefutable logic clenched with facts in clearing Shivaji of the charge of "the murder of an invited guest". But they were unhappy over a more heinous crime of Shivaji namely, the acquisition of Javli "by a deliberate murder and organised treachery on the part of Shivaji" (fifth edition, p. 43). Jadunath owes much to the labours of his predecessors and contemporaries like Khare, Purandare and Sardesai who had been most assiduous in making almost a house to house search in the Deccan for every bit of historical papers relating to Maratha history. They started with the laudable ambition of giving their country-men a history of Maharashtra written by Marathas and for Marathas. But there was a lack of constructive historical genius among them till Jadunath and Sardesai appeared in the field ; the former from outside but with a disinterested passion for truth, and the latter from within with a broad outlook tinged only with a laudable bias for his own nation. There were others who like Goldsmith's *Schoolmaster* though defeated, could argue still. A reviewer, himself an author of several histories and a reputed historian, attacked Jadunath on the Javli affair, pleading that the murder of the three Mores was prompted to found a Hindu Swaraj (*The Mahratta*, 31 August 1924). However, better sense gradually prevailed, and the Maratha people became accustomed to stomach authentic history.

This book was well received by reviewers and critics. H. Beveridge wrote : "All his books are good ; but perhaps the best of them is the *Life and Times of Shivaji*." Sir Richard Temple hailed this work as "indeed History treated to the right way and in the

right spirit". V. A. Smith said that it was "a bold and deliberately provocative book meriting the closest study."

Jadunath's *Shivaji* was undoubtedly a bold and provocative invasion of a special preserve of Maratha historians. He does not try to stir up patriotic passions to white heat. The book is cool, severe, and does not show regards for people's sentiments wrought by the memory of their past looming so magnificent beyond proportions through the magnifying coloured glass of a school of *national* history. Jadunath's thesis that before the rise of Shivaji there was no Maratha nation, that Shivaji failed to create an enduring state and weld together the Maratha people into a nation, and that the Marathas did not attain nationhood under the Peshwas, was the greatest provocation he gave to Maharashtra chauvinists. He was no pessimist. He rehabilitated Shivaji in all his real glory in the heart of every patriot thhroughout this sub-continent. In the midst of political gloom Shivaji came as a ray of hope for Hindu India. The real significance of Shivaji's life according to him is that he "has shown that the tree of Hinduism is not really dead, that it can rise beneath the seemingly crushing load of centuries of political bondage . . .; it can put forth new leaves and branches ; it can again lift its head up to the skies " (*Shivaji*, p. 390).

Five years intervened between the publication of volume IV and volume V of Jadunath's *History of Aurangzib*. These were years of strenuous activity. Besides the completion of the last volume of Aurangzib, he had to undertake the editing and publication of Irvine's *Later Mughals* at the request of his daughter. He was at sea with the mass of papers and notes bristling with dates and references, many of them beyond his immediate reach. And he was not accustomed to take anything on trust where history was concerned. So he had to get photos and transcripts of all the original authorities with a margin of fifty years ahead of the period covered by Irvine's labours. His knowledge of the Marathi, and other sources, indigenous and foreign, was brought to bear upon the period of Irvine's specialised study which had been based on Persian sources mainly. Such a Herculean task was completed in a manner that might have been a surprise to Irvine himself if he could have risen from the grave. Jadunath checked every date, emended authorities, and clipped off unwieldy though learned foot-notes. He himself added three chapters to bring the story to the invasion of Nadir Shah (1739). On this enlarged historical canvas appeared the Sikhs and Jats, Bundelas and Marathas, with a background of the early history

of each of these new factors. A man without the fine sense of literary proportions possessed by Jadunath would have been lost in the wood in the attempt to edit such a book. Once Sir Jadunath humorously remarked that if he had not used his discretion in omitting much of what Irvine had written against the Sikh community, he would have been by that time become a martyr. The History of the Later Mughals came out in 1922 in two thick royal octavo volumes covering only thirty-two years' history of the Mughal Empire after Aurangzeb's death. It was admitted that "no more competent an authority than Professor Jadunath Sarkar could have been found to edit it" (Irvine's life's work). The famous English historian P. E. Roberts said, "It drives a broad pathway through a very tangled jungle . . . . clears up many disputed points, throws a flood of light on the manners, customs and characters of the time and certainly will always remain one of the chief authorities of the period . . . ."

With the publication of his last volume on Aurangzeb, the historian at last comes out the wood, takes a panoramic view of it, and falls into a pensive mood of philosophic contemplation over this tragedy in five acts of the drama with Aurangzeb as its hero. He then begins to think over his country's past and future in the light of the colossal failure of Aurangzeb, "who was above the joys and sorrows, weakness and pity of mortals, one who seemed to have hardly any element of common humanity in him, who lived in the world but did not seem to be of it." In the last two chapters Jadunath assumes the stern tone of a monitor of his people, and delivers his message with the clear vision and emphasis of a seer. "If India is ever to be the home of a nation able to keep peace within and guard the frontiers, develop the economic resources of the country and promote art and science, then both Hinduism and Islam must die and be born again. Each of these creeds must pass through a vigorous vigil and penance, each must be purified and rejuvenated under the sway of reason and science." Under pressure of the public demand for a condensed account of Aurangzeb, Jadunath published a *Short History of Aurangzib*. It gave a general relief and satisfaction, and to meet the requirements of the general readers, its Hindi translation was also brought out.

Jadunath had already established fame as a brilliant essayist by publishing his *Studies in Mughal India* in 1919, and *Mughal Administration* (combined volume in 1924). His essays were pronounced "charming" and authoritative, miniature ivory caskets of fine literary

workmanship. His *Mughal Administration* is a model of condensation without the sacrifice of clarity. It remains the standard book on the subject, indispensable for every student of Indo-Muslim history. Jadunath's *Studies in Aurangzib's Reign* (third edition, first in 1933) consisting of a series of essays "of the most entertaining description" (*Asiatic Quarterly Review*) was another valuable publication. Essays on Jahanara, Zeb-un-nisa, and a Muslim heroine (Sahibji) give a glimpse of the noble woman-hood of Mughal India. Other essays : *Daily Life of Aurangzib, Education of a Mughal Prince, Industries of Aurangzib's Empire, Aurangzib's Letters*, are interesting and authoritative ; while *Firingi Pirates of Chatgaon* and the *Mughal Conquest of Chatgaon* break a new ground.

His small book of 99 pages, entitled *India through the Ages* shows his unrivalled skill in handling the telescope of history. The first three chapters dealing with the Aryans and their legacies, the work of Buddhism and its life story in India fall outside the scope of our author's special field of study. Though in the preface he explicitly disavows any claim to originality for this portion of his work, there is a freshness of outlook which we miss in the jungle of Indology explored by specialists. This small book has weight and charm beyond its stature, coming in as it does as an indispensable handbook to the intelligentsia of free India, so far as a bird's-eye view of India's progress through centuries, and an insight into "the composite development of the India of present day" are concerned. The last chapter, *How the British lost India*, strikes a balance of our loss and gain under British rule ; out of thirteen points eight being in favour and five against it. He concludes thus : " . . . . A class of professional politicians (*i.e.*, persons without ostensible means of livelihood, as defined by the Bihar Government to the Simon Commission) has risen to power, and are only held back from doing incalculable mischief by a few giants at the top . . . . political detention is proclaimed as a qualification for a ministership, a coat without a collar is the symbol of true patriotism . . . . patient constructive workers for the nation's uplift are taunted with having made no sacrifice compared with the white cap patriots. Patriotism of this type is sometimes cashed into bogus joint stock banks" (pp. 98-99). Nevertheless the aged historian was a staunch nationalist, but he foresaw that fifty years hence "England's marvellous achievement in India will be appraised in a just balance in calm of mind, all passion spent". Here speaks out the last of the Victorian stalwarts in the Indian sub-continent. His analysis and prediction will hold water

if England in her resentful mood of superiority complex does not do any greater mischief to India during the next fifty years.

If any person of scanty leisure cares to read one single book of Jadunath he should take up his *India through the Ages*. Similarly, if a specialist wants to have a peep into Jadunath's laboratory of tests and his method of processing raw materials of Maratha history, he should consult Jadunath's *House of Shivaji* (first edition 1940, third edition 1955). Its first six chapters provide a background of Maratha history and the biography of Shahji Bhonsla in the light of Bijapuri State papers. In Chapter VII, Jadunath compares the relative historical value of Persian *Akhbarat* discovered by him with that of "thousands of letters of Shivaji's time in the Marathi language printed by Rajwade and others . . . . purely private legal documents". . . .Important court letters have also been given in translation. The Dingal letters in the Jaipur Archives supply faithful reports of "the conversation held in Ram Singh's house daily at night after his return from the Emperor's court or during the visits of Shivaji to the Kachhwaha prince."

The lives and labours of four devoted scholars and enthusiasts in Maratha history, namely, Rajwade and Sane, Khare and Parasnis, have been sketched in four brilliant essays, worthy tributes to his great fellow-workers in the field. Jadunath's technique of textual criticism finds proper scope in the fragmentary Sanskrit text of Shivaji's poet laureate, Kavindra Paramananda and an epic on Shambhaji by Govinda. A startling fact is revealed that the fall of Shambhaji was due not so much to his own worthlessness and to his evil genius Kavi—Kalas, as to a religious issue between Vedic Brahmanism of Maharashtra and the newly imported Tantrik worship from Northern India since after Shivaji's second coronation. Religious jealousy blinded the patriotism of Maharashtra Brahmans whose collusion with the Mughals accounts for Shambhaji's surprise and tragic murder.

Jadunath took twenty-five years to complete his *History of Aurangzib*, in 1924, and the next twenty-five years to plan and execute a more difficult project, namely, the history of the fall of the Mughal Empire in four volumes. The first volume was published in 1932 and the last in 1950. As regards the relative popularity of the two works, the *Fall of the Mughal Empire* scores a higher mark even with those who are not history-minded such as doctors, journalists, lawyers and businessmen. The author does not deny the fact that the writing of the *Fall of the Mughal Empire* was a harder

task. First two volumes of it were comparatively less exacting than the third and the fourth. In his preface to the third volume we read : "In fact, this third volume has taken twice the time of its immediate predecessor to write, because of the immensity, variety and confused character of the historical sources on which it is based. The date of thousands of laconic Marathi despatches had to be ascertained, the textual reading and arrangement of the Persian manuscript sources had to be corrected, before a single page of my narrative could be composed."

Secondly, *Fall of the Mughal Empire* is history of a higher order than the *History of Aurangzib* which is but a biography writ large with an ample background. Jadunath gains more in ease, humour and eloquence, shows a greater mastery over historical narrative, and a higher literary workmanship, keeping a wonderful balance between synthesis and analysis by handling the telescope and microscope of history in his *Fall of the Mughal Empire*.

Thirdly, Jadunath's *Fall of the Mughal Empire* has a wider appeal to the people of India, and also of Europe than his *History of Aurangzib*, each volume of which imparts fine shades of colour to the picturesque carpet of the evening twilight of our medieval history. Here, in these volumes, the historian is on a more severe trial with regard to his impartiality and balance of judgment as the parties concerned are too many. He has to make his award between the Mughal and the Maratha, the Jat and the Ruhela, the Sikh and the Afghan, and between the English and the French, whose long-drawn rivalry throws a chequered light on the dark recesses of this unexplored jungle of history.

This work in four volumes tells the story of the fall of two empires and the rise of the third. The historian's verdict runs thus : "The Mughal Empire and with it the Maratha overlordship of Hindustan fell because of the rottenness at the core of Indian society. This rottenness showed itself in the form of military and political helplessness. The country could not defend itself ; royalty was hopelessly depraved or imbecile ; the nobles were selfish and shortsighted : corruption, inefficiency and treachery disgraced all branches of the public service. In the midst of this decay and confusion, our literature, art, and even true religion had perished". (Vol. IV, pp. 344-42).

Jadunath's own work as an author has not deprived the country of his active cooperation with other historical projects. He was a collaborator in the *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV

to which he contributed four chapters (1937). He undertook the duties of an honorary general editor of the second volume of the Dacca University *History af Bengal.* He himself had to write ten and a half out of its twenty-six chapters, besides the bibliography. The historian thus concludes; "When the sun dipped into the Ganges behind the blood-red field of Plassey, on that fateful evening of June, did it symbolise the curtain dropping on a tragic drama? Was that day followed by a night of eternal gloom for India. . . .?" Replying in the negative, Jadunath says: "In June 1757, we crossed the frontier and entered into a great new world to which a strange destiny had led Bengal. May our future be the fulfilment of our past history!" Bengal's past, "as narrated in these pages shows how the diverse limbs of the country and warring tribes and sects of the people were fused into one by the silent working of time and a common political life till at the end of the Muslim period a Bengali people become a reality. But not yet a Bengali nation, for the pre-requisite of a nation was then wanting." (*History of Bengal*, Vol. II, pp. 498-99).

A close perusal of the works of Sir Jadunath Sarkar mentioned in the preceding section reveals unity of conception, of theme, and of action, and an artistic literary presentation in a style that knows no immaturity of early age nor any decay at eighty. At eighty-two Jadunath began another supplementary work on the Military History of India beginning with Alexander's invasion down to the last battle fought by Wellington on the Indian sub continent (1803). So far as one can judge from articles on this subject published in the Sunday issues of the *Hindusthan Standard*, there was no slackening vigour and poignacy of style, or in his clarity of vision and judgment. He had all through his works revealed himself as a "sage counsellor and judge" treating history as an object lesson to his people for all ages to come.

Howorth in his *History of the Mongols* holds the view that the historian is an architect who need not also be a digger and stone-dresser descending into the mines of original sources. Such a view of the function of a historian may hold good in certain spheres of historical study and only in advanced countries like England, where an army of diggers into the original sources of history has been working for generations. It is particularly untenable in the case of Indian history. If a student of Indian history wants to build anything endurable, he must be a digger and an explorer of new materials within reach anywhere in the world as well as an architect. India

today in the field of historical research is almost in the beginning of the nineteeth century in comparison with the West. Hence our scholars have to carry on building and quarrying simultaneously, or *face the risk of rearing up a thousand-pillared Hall of Rocksalt.*

So far as we know of Sir Jadunath he is not content with what he has done. His ambition was to sit down in old age and edit and publish a corpus of original materials in different languages utilised by him in his constructive works. For sixty long years he has been an indefatigable digger of original materials available in the libraries and archives of India. Though he has not travelled abroad to visit famous libraries of Europe, he can legitimately claim that through the catalogues of these libraries aided by historian's instinct he has been able to spot all the essential materials and secure these by transcripts, rotary bromide prints and photostats, as well as micro-film copies for his own use.

One of the greatest though accidental diccoveries of Jadunath is Mirza Nathan's *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi* from Paris library where it had been entered as a novel. This book proved to be a history written by a Mughal military officer fighting in Bengal under Jahangir's Viceroys. This discovery created a sensation. A fairly good English translation of it was published by Dr. M. I. Borah of the University of Dacca. His next great discovery was the importance of the archives of Jaipur Darbar. He was permitted to report on the value of these papers and secure transcripts on the condition of his writing a History of Jaipur. This History of Jaipur is lying in manuscript with the Maharaja of Jaipur because of some differences of opinion between the Darbar and the historian, who declined to modify his views for making this history acceptable to the Darbar.

It may also be pointed out that Jadunath was in the habit of translating the whole or fairly large portion of every manuscript whether in Persian, Marathi, French or Portuguese that came into his hand. For example, he made full English translations of the histories of Ishwardas Nagar, Bhimsen Burhanpuri and *Maasir-i-Alamgiri,* only the last of which was published in the Bibliotheca Indica series in 1947 ; while bundles of slips written in ink or pencil bearing translations of other works are lying on the shelves of his library. He also edited a new up-to-date edition of Jarret's English translation of *Ain-i-Akbari* for the Bibliotheca Indica, of which two volumes have already come out.

Jadunath's project of a corpus will perhaps remain an unfulfilled ambition. Its huge expenditure was beyond his private resources,

beyond the capacity even of a provincial exchequer. The only man who can do this work may not be available when our Central Government would awake to the necessity of having a corpus of Indo-Muslim history replacing the pioneer work started by Elliot and Dowson. The Government of Bombay have been most sympathetic to the suggestions of Jadunath. It was at his instance that the publication of the *Selections from the Peshwa Daftar*, and later on of the *Poona Residency Correspondence* and *Historical Papers relating to Mahadji Sindhia* (Persian) were undertaken by the Bombay Goverment. The main part of the work fell to the share of Sardesai, the greatest historian of Maharashtra. Jadunath himself has edited Vol. I. of *Poona Residency Correspondence* (1936) Vol. VIII. (1945) and Vol. XIV ; others having been done by some of Jadunath's pupils under his guidance.

Jadunath's ambition was to found a Seminar of Historical Research on the lines of Seminar of the German historian Ranke. He used to invite students to live with him at his own expense, and pick up the technique of historical research ; but the response was poor. Then he organised a Seminar at Sardesai's residence at Kamshet near Poona in 1939, and invited students on whom he could rely for continuous devotion to Clio from all over India, and gave them good grounding in the study and research in history. He forged the raw iron ore into tolerably good steel in his workshop good enough in later times to fill the chair of History at several Universities. But Jadunath was less fortunate in his pupils than Ranke none of whom having grown up even to waist high the master's stature in fame and achievement.

One of the greatest services rendered by Sir Jadunath to the cause of historical research is to pick up a Dara Shukoh from among the common run of Murads of the decadent ruling houses of Hindustan. This prince is Maharaj Kumar Raghubir Singh of Sitamau. The Maharaj Kumar is the youngest of Jadunath's pupils, a D. Litt. of Agra University and an author of renown in English and Hindi. Dr. Raghubir Singh spent almost his whole fortune like Dara in building up a splendid research library at Sitamau. For researches in Indo-Muslim history, Dr. Raghubir Singh's library is admittedly a self-contained institution, better even than Jadunath's own library.

A survey of Jadunath's zeal for the discovery of original materials will remain incomplete without a notice of his work as the President of the Indian Historical Records Commission for many

years since its inception. Its annual session became an institution of pilgrimage for scholars of medieval and modern periods of Indian history. It was hailed as a sort of annual stock exchange of the progress of research and discovery of historical materials. Old veterans, young budding scholars, representatives of universities and research institutions gathered there every year ; papers were read and discussed under the presidentship of Jadunath, who was the main attraction of the session. Grain was separated from chaff at its meetings, and sometimes forgeries of Persian manuscripts and documents foisted on unwary scholars became exposed under the fire of Jadunath's criticism. Through these meetings a large number of young scholars from every part of India received great inspiration from Jadunath thus widening the circle of his distant pupils.

Outside Bengal it is not generally known that Jadunath has been a devoted student of Bengali literature. His oldest research pupil was a Merchant Office clerk who had not crossed the door of a college. It was a miracle wrought by Jadunath who turned this clerk into the best original researcher in Bengali and made him a prolific writer of historical books of approved worth on modern lines. This pupil of his was Brojendra Nath Banerjee, whose loss the old patriarch of many a scar mourned like the departure of a child of his own loins. Brojendra Nath's achievement in constructive historical research relating to Bengal is greater than that of Jadunath himself. A splendid monument of Brojendra Nath's critical skill and superhuman industry of many years, with the handicaps of monetary want and a desolate home, is his *Sambad-patre sekaler katha* (now in its 3rd edition, in 2 large vols.), an indispensable book of references for any research in the nineteenth century history of British rule in Bengal. Jadunath has always given to the people of Bengal the first fruits of research, though in a fragmentary way in the form of articles in Bengali monthlies, particularly the *Prabasi.*

Jadunath has no peer in his own field in India and abroad. He is pre-eminently a product of the Western School of History though his subject is Indian. His charm of style and vigorous portraiture of men and things suggest a comparison with Macaulay according to some admirers ; whereas others hold him to be the Gibbon of Hindustan for bridging the channel over the gulf between Medieval and Modern India. But he is neither a Macaulay nor a Gibbon. These two are inimitable in many respects. These three are masters of narration, each in his own way. As an essayist Macaulay wields a hatchet with the strength of a giant ; whereas Jadunath handles the

chisel and compasses of a contemplative stone cutter working at the Taj. In historical narrative both of them show a rare power of concentration. In producing 'effect', Jadunath could not approach Macaulay, because the Indian lacks the impetuosity, vehemence, bias and boldness of Macaulay in taking a rhetorical jump without calculating the risk of overstatement. Jadunath never wrote for sheer effect, but always for measured accuracy. Nobody can complain that like Macaulay, Jadunath "describes but does not explain", nor can it be said that the Indian as a hisiorian is "neither a thinker nor a prophet".

Old Beveridge hailed Jadunath as a "Bengali Gibbon". But a review compliment, however sincere and just, cannot make a Gibbon of him in the estimate of the world at large. Jadunath's vast learning, the excellence of his English, and his power of drawing a magnificent background for his tragic canvas of the *Fall of Mughal Empire* impressed the greatest modern British authority on Muslim India deeply enough to elicit this high compliment for our Indian author. But there is much in common between Jadunath and Gibbon as historians except in their skilful execution of a task of Cyclopean magnitude. If Jadunath like Gibbon had written his epics of history in his own language, if he could have the advantage of Gibbon in having the raw materials dug out by generations of scholars before him, if decaying Delhi had been smouldering Rome, and above all if the historical knowledge of the present generation about Indo-Muslim history had been on a par with that of Roman history of Gibbon's contemporary Europe, then only could Jadunath have had the scope to rise to the stature of a Gibbon. Jadunath could not afford to be picturesque without being suspected and challenged at every step. He was under the necessity of letting chronicles and news-letters speak convincingly to the audience, and of always hedging himself round by a mighty array of authorities. This means interference with the even flow of narrative.

Trevelyan in his brilliant essay on *Bias in History* remarks: "The problem of bias is fundamental and all pervading. No one can teach or write history for ten minutes without coming in contact with the question whether he is aware of it or not. Because history is not an exact science but an interpretation of human affairs, opinion and varieties of opinion intrude as inevitable factors. We cannot get rid of the element of opinion (or bias); we can, however, endevour to make it right kind of opinion,—broad,

all-embracing, philosophic, not a narrow kind that excludes half or more of reality" (*An Autobiography and other Essays*, p. 68).

This is a homely truth honestly confessed. So, bias there must be in Jadunath also whether he is aware of it or not. Now the question is whether his bias is of the right kind or not. That Jadunath's bias is not of "a narrow kind that excludes half or more of reality"will be admitted by any sensible person, who cares to glance over any piece of his writing. This bias has not affected an objective study on approved scientific basis. It may be said that a certain amount of bias and warmth for Shivaji and Rathor Durgadas is perhaps noticeable in Jadunath. But this bias is in the right direction, and an echo of the sentiment of contemporary India for the defenders of their religion and honour against Aurangzeb's aggressive bigotry and intolerance. Similarly, his bias has been all through for Aurangzeb till he chose to assume the role of a reactionary agent of Islam, and his ill-advised policy threatened the welfare of the State and everything that the majority of his subjects held dear. Aurangzeb has received more than his due by being painted as the awe-inspiring hero of a tragedy preordained by "an inexorable Fate". Between Mirza Rajah Sawai Jai Singh and Maharajah Jaswant, Jadunath's bias is for the former for his unquestioned ability. But here perhaps his bias is less justifiable; because Jaswant's failings deserve more sympathy. In his *Fall of the Mughal Empire* his bias turns against the Marathas, particularly the ruling Chitpavan Brahmans, whose view-point he could not understand; "hundred knots in one span" of a Brahman having borne down the patience of the historian. The Abdali and Najib-ud-daulah have received higher admiration and praise from the historian who admires tact, valour and efficiency wherever they are found. The historian does not share the grief of Maharashtra after the catastrophe of the Third battle of Panipat, because the historian has nothing to choose between the Peshwa and the Abdali, the Abdali having a better justification to come to the rescue of the Delhi monarchy and the Ruhelas, whose very existence was threatened by Maratha aggresssion from the south. Panipat was a purely political and military issue, and not a stake for the emancipation of the Hindus, most of whom in Northern India feared worse rapacity and unblushing bad faith in the event of a Maratha victory. The Sikhs and the Jats also while fighting in the cause of the country raceive the historian's approbation.

Jadunath's historical characters owe their brilliancy and

vivacity as well as their photographic realism to his skill in presenting them with charming make-up, an art which no master can teach his pupil, a gift endowed by nature. So we may say without exaggeration that Sir Jadunath possesses "all the sterner virtues" of a historian, which dominate his "humane virtues" not to the detriment of truth. He lives today, like Ranke in the nineteenth century, as the greatest historian of India beyond comparison. Unlike Ranke, Jadunath at the age of eighty-seven had a desolate home. But his face beamed when he told his grandchildren, "I have another and older family, my pupils and their pupils." This large family was the only solace of his years of lonesome life.

Vol. II

HISTORICAL ESSAYS

1

Islam Transformed in Bengal

Bengal Past was an Arcadia to her children and Bengal Present is an enigma. Medieval Bengal was "a hell full of good things" (*Dozak pur niamat*) to Aurangzib, who in the train of his rebellious father, Prince Khurram, had shared the hardships and perils of an uncertain future at Rajmahal, and where as a young child he had enjoyed the stolen pleasure of eating some tempting plantains kept by his father for Mirza Nathan, author of *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi.* During the time of his grandfather, Jahangir, a Muslim poet of Upper India in his Hindi poem *Chitravali* describes *Bangala* as land of eternal verdure, and of warm friendship ; but without good roads, good water and *dal-roti* (pulse and bread) and yet where the people are happy with their seven *amritas* (coveted niceties) : *e. g., kela* (plantain), *kanji* (fermented rice-water), *pan* (betel leaves), *ras* (juice of *khajur* date-palm), *sag* (vegetable), *machhli* (fish). It is curious enough that good Musalmans, who had gone to this "hell" from Arabia, Iran, Afghanistan and Turkey in medieval times, hardly cared to return from this land of plenty and pestilence. The Muslims of Bengal call it the holy land of twelve auliyas, and politically it was the troublesome territory of "Twelve Bhuinyas".

One French writer remarks : "To understand the Mussalman one must understand Islam. To understand Islam one must understand the Bedouin of Arabia ; and to understand the Bedouin one must know the Arabian desert." Seed, soil and environment determine the growth of an organism in the vegetable world ; so do they build up the psychology of a race. Islam normally forms the subconscious element of an average Bengali Muslim. But circumstances sometimes make Islam in him overconscious and creates momentarily

an abnormal psychology. Such abnormal psychology reveals itself also among Hindus and Christians ; but in such cases it is in defiance of the teachings of their religions. The "Seed" that determines the psychology of a people partakes of double nature, racial and cultural. "Soil" is the most mysterious and most pervading influence. It leaves an indelible stamp on soul, body and speech, easily detectable by an outsider. Though Islam knows no geographical barrier, yet, in spite of all denunciation by the orthodox, race has been a factor in forming political and cultural groups within the folds of Islam since after the expansion of Islam outside Arabia. However, there is unity in diversity in Islam, culturally if not politically.

As the Indian Musalmans are after all "Hindi" in Mecca, so within India there have developed provincial types of Muslims on account of a variety of reasons, which are outside the scope of our discussion. Nobody can possibly mistake a Punjabi Muslim for one of U.P., and to both, the Bengal Musalman presents a sharp contrast. Ziauddin Barani speaks of the Musalmans of Indian origin inhabiting the Gangetic Doab as "rice-eating spiritless Hindustanis". As early as the days of Sultan Firuz Tughlaq, foreigners and Hindustani Muslims designated the people of Bengal as "Bengali" irrespective of differences in their religion. "Sahadev Bangali" (*Tarikhi-i-Mubarakshahi*) fought against the armies of Firuz, and Babur had his brush with "Nusrat Bengali" (Sultan Nusrat Shah). Ibn Batuta has recorded interesting details regarding the manners, dress and food of the Musalmans of Upper India, Bengal and the Deccan. The provincialisation of Islam began within a century of its expansion to our province. The Musalmans and the Hindus of Bengal in their linguistic and cultural isolation had been more thoroughly welded into one people with one language, one culture and the same socio-economic life.

This study of the psychology of the Bengal Muslims does not pretend to be scientific ; because the writer has picked up his facts mostly from stray personal observations of the countryside of East Bengal.

To begin with my impressions about the hold of Islam on the people of Bengal : The Bengal Muslims take Islam with more seriousness, and Islam permeates their whole being more deeply than that of their coreligionists outside. They are sincere and earnest in the practice of their religion, and yet they keep an open mind. Moreover, even the villager thinks for himself though steeped in superstition. How pervasive was the teaching of Islam in medie-

val Bengal upon the life of the Muslims and Hindus alike can be guessed from a little anecdote of my own boyhood. While reading a lesson to us not to waste food at the time of eating, my mother used to say, "Fortune does not forsake a man who does not waste food, and picks up rice that falls from the plate" ; and she would tell us that her cousin, a rich man of our village, did the same very scrupulously. The lesson was of course lost on us ; but I often wondered wherefrom this un-Hindu injunction might originate. Only as a teacher of Islamic history I could trace the origin of this custom to the *Sunna, i. e.*, the practice of the Prophet who used to pick up and eat crumbs of bread from the *dastar-khan* (table-cloth). Hindus say, *anna* (food) is like *Brahma* (the Supreme Being that knows no defilement) ; yet in actual practice their Brahma is defiled even by the look of one outside his caste. But the Bengal Muslim, in fact Muslims everywhere—scrupulously avoid all wastage, and what is left over by one batch is served to the next one ; and at the time of eating they observe more restraint, cleanliness, decorum and good manners than the Hindus. The proverb, *shara:-ki-roti, i.e.*, scramble over food in share is applicable only to up-country Hindus of lower classes and not to Muslims. When guests sit together it is not only etiquette but also a religious merit to imitate the great exemplar, the Prophet, to push best pieces of meat and choice fruits to others sitting around on the same *dastar-khan.* It is surprising to notice as if the illiterate villagers of remote Chittagong were instructed by Imam Ghazzali himself in moulding their conduct. The Muslims are a disciplined lot in every walk of life except when passions run high. In our old and happier days those who could afford among the Hindus and Muslims used to invite both the communities as neighbours in a feast. One marriage festivity, so we have heard though I forget his name,—turned one prodigal Muslim Zamindar a bankrupt ; because he took into his head to entertain all the Hindus and Muslims of the town of Chittagong in a feast. We had occasions to witness Muslim tenants bringing *bhet* (presents) on festive occasions to Hindu landlords, and their reception.

The Muslims are never without a *sardar* or a leader, whose word is final whether in a feast or a fray. The Muslims are given a *sidah, i.e.*, uncooked provisions from goat to brinjal, estimated by their chief man. A Muslim generally underestimates, whereas it is habit of the Brahman to over-estimate the requisites on such occasions. The Muslims cook their food on the appointed place, serve themselves, and after finishing the meal they wash the metal

utensils and hand them back to the representative of their host. *It was easier to entertain one hundred Muslims than to deal with ten Brahmans. It is all uproar and hubbub where Brahmans cook* their food in a feast. Shouting, fault-finding, overeating, wastage and yet murmuring, are all that you can hear. The Brahman is niggardly in the praise of his host, and in answer to an inquiry about the quality of food, the invariable reply is "*Ekrakam*", *i e.*, tolerable. It sometimes happens that food cooked for themselves by the Muslim guests falls below margin ; and yet not a whisper, no betrayal of any sign of not getting the normal quantity for his hunger. However modest be the entertainment, they praise it highly not out of etiquette, but from a feeling of genuine contentment : and a Musalman never speaks on such occasions one thing to the host and something else among themselves. When they return home they are all praise for the host ; wheareas Brahmans are always critical and say that they were invited by so and so to perform only the *shradh* of *khesari* (worst kind of pulse) forgetful of fish still creating trouble in their over-loaded stomachs.

The Muslims are generally very conservative. Though living side by side with Hindus for twelve hundred years, they still eat from plantain leaves turned backside up, and rub oil not before but after bathing ; these are points of contrast with Hindus as noticed by Al-Beruni in his Tahaqqiq-i-Hind in the eleventh century. An average Muslim villager, though absolutely illiterate, knows much more of his religion than an average Hindu of the same category. When a mere boy, the writer heard the story of Munkir and Nakir, the angels who sit on the shoulders of the Muslim, recording his good and bad actions in a book.

We were watching some Muslim labourers removing weeds from a big tank of ours. Something hard struck a man below the surface of water, and he was asked to make a dive and bring it out. But the man refused saying that it was the month of Ramzan and diving not allowed because water might spoil the book of the angels ! This is something that may be expected of a Maulvi only. Many years after, the writer,—then a teacher of Islamic history in the University of Dacca—heard an interesting talk of his fellow passengers in a boat on the river Karnafuli. A renowned preacher had come from upcountry to deliver a sermon in a neighbouring village. The Muslim villagers were discussing whether they should go there to hear him. Our boat-man flatly refused saying that the Maulana cared only for the rich, and that he was staying in the house

of a *Mahajan* or usurer, and therefore eating his food of *haram* there; so it was sinful to listen to the words of such a Maulana, *however learned he might be ! Such is the logic of the countryside.* Then the conversation turned on the maulvis, who had formed themselves into a sort of un-Islamic priestly class in imitation of the Brahmans. Just as Brahmans come to a Hindu household to perform *Puja* before which children of the house could not eat sweets reserved for gods, so would the Maulvi visit houses of his clients and utter *bismillah* on cakes prepared on the occasion of the Id. "Children tired of waiting for the Maulvi would make life a hell," said the boatman, "so now we ourselves perform Bismillah, as we have as much authority to do so as the Maulvi Sahib". Thus Islam has taught every Muslim his own relations with Allah, and helped the growth of a sturdy moral stature.

Islam teaches action and active virtues ; whereas Hinduism in general enjoins self-introspection and passive virtues. And this difference is noticeable in the psychology of the Muslim and the Hindu. A Hindu is content if he himself does not do any injustice to others ; whereas a Muslim thinks "*Insaf*" is the best of virtues, and it is his duty to intervene for the sake of justice even in matters that do not concern him. This laudable virtue degenerates into quarrelsomeness among the illiterate masses. This propensity has become somehow a feature of the psychology of Bengal Muslims. A quarrel attracts a countryside Muslim as a festering wound attracts flies. When a riot breaks out, Hindus, except those that are involved, take to their heels or enjoy the fun from a safe distance when both the quarrelling parties are Muslims only. In a quarrel between two groups of Muslims, a Musalman would always discover a nephew or a cousin or pretend to believe so for justifying his taking a part in it. When in early teens, we had on many an occasion witnessed such frays among Musalmans on market-days in our village *hat* (market). One day towards evening a *golmal* began, and we youngsters and aged Muslims ran to a safe distance and were waiting there to see *tamasha.* A few minutes after, one aged Muslim with a basket full of his purchases said, "Uncle, keep an eye on my basket till I come back to tell you what the matter is." So the uncle went and returned bleeding to tell us that he was trying to do *insaf* when somebody struck him on the head ! We cannot vouchsafe whether such a risky notion of justice is an Islamic virtue ; because the writer himself, then an under-graduate, came home from a *salis* (arbitration) with a torn

shirt, because when one party proved not amenable to reason he applied force to enforce his just decree !

If the Arab was famous for impartiality in doing justice, the average Muslim of Bengal also enjoyed that reputation. We have heard from our elders that noted bad characters of Chittagong and Dacca are most fairminded in a *panchayat* arbitration : Like the Qazi of old they would keenly skin a hair (*bal-ka-khal urana*) in cross-examining both the parties to get at the truth. Islam enjoins truthfulness, though it has not made liars rarer among the Muslims. However, such is the hold of religion on him that he rises equal to the occasion and tells the truth fearlessly. Our Nawab Sahib of Dacca, a good Muslim though with lapses, encountered fierce resentment of the whole Muslim community in the white heat of communal passions by decreeing in favour of the Hindus that it was a time-honoured custom not to stop music before any mosque during the *Janmashtami* procession. It was held in medieval Islam that "No faith need be kept with an infidel" ; though the Prophet is not known to have had ever broken faith with infidels. However, bad faith and treachery are not the weaknesses of a Bengal Muslim except on occasions when any unscrupulous appeal in the name of Islam overpowers him.

Islam is capable of producing the best type of man, as well as the worst type if wrongly understood. We have known and heard of two Muslims of Chittagong who were typical products of Islam. These were Mian Qazim Ali (*Shaikh-i-Chatgam*), and Mian Aman Ali (popularly known as Aman Ali Master for his having been a teacher). Mian Qazim though of affluent circumstances, lived a life of almost apostolic poverty. He spent his fortune in founding a H.E. School at Chittagong for the benefit of the Muslims, very backward in education at that time. He tried hard to wean bad characters to honest ways of life, but without much success. He used to work hard with spade in his fields and seemed to have modelled his life on that of an Abu Bakr or Umar. He wore a *lungi* (loin-cloth) and a kurta, only a little better than Umar's garment of twentysix patches. He was absolutely sincere in word and action, and bore no ill-will to any man, Hindu or Muslim. His sharp tongue prolific of abuses would burst forth on any offender against morality or a shirker of duty like Umar's whip on the back of even high officials for ungodly acts. An anecdote about him is still remembered at Chittagong. One newly-appointed Headmaster of his High School on his first arrival went on some business to

Mian Qazim Ali's house situated in the midst of cultivated fields where he himself was at work. The Headmaster took the Mian to be an ordinary labourer, and asked him the way to Qazim Ali's house. The old patriach replied, "I am Qazim Ali : your business?" The poor teacher could hardly believe him till Mian told him that he was expecting so and so to join his school. The Mian washed his hands, sat on the *al* (embankment), took papers from him, finished his business there and resumed his manual labour calmly. Only a Muslim fired with the true ideal of Islam could be so sturdily indifferent to wordly "*shan*" (sheer ostentation). The other sturdy Muslim, Mian Aman Ali was the son of a sawyer. He was at first a teacher and later on a sawyer and public man. He was hardly better than Mian Qazim in his mode of life and regard for decency in dress and speech. He had a kindly heart and wished well of all men and accessible to all high and low. He was once appointed Chairman of the Chittagong Municipality and set about making reforms. There was a by-law that nobody should wash clothes in the Municipal tank, Lal Dighi. This was respected more in the breach than in the observance by the people at large. Under Aman Ali's regime it was made impossible to wash clothes there during daytime ; so the people did their business at night. Aman Ali would sometimes come to blows with the recalcitrants during his surprise visit to the tank at night. Once he abused a Hindu clerk so violently that he resigned his job. The Chairman of the Municipality went next morning to the house of the clerk, and said, "My boy, what will your children eat now that you have resigned your service ? If I have abused you, you better abuse me in the same language and rejoin your job for the sake of your children." A true Musalman of old type like Mian Aman Ali could only have such a moral courage of repenting for what he had done, and such paternal care for his subordinates.

Islam has taken off some imaginary fears and superstitions from the minds of Bengal Muslims and created in them a bolder attitude to life. The foremost among these is the spell of astrology. The most salutary reform attempted by the Prophet among his followers was to ban the belief in and the study of astrology. But astrology proved mightier than the Prophet when the seat of the Caliphate was shifted to Baghdad that had arisen out of the astrology-laden dust of Assyria and Babylon. The Iranians were as obstinate believers in astrology as the Hindus. Caliph Mansur, born of a Persian slave-girl, was the first Muslim ruler, who in spite

of his undoubted orthodoxy otherwise, countenanced astrology, and entertained astrologers at court. It is said that the Caliph never started on a journey without consulting his astrologers. The Muslims brought to India with them the Yunani or Greek system of astrology, and about a century after the conquest fell under the yoke of Hindu astrology. Our great master, Abul Fazl, a very learned, rational and enlightened soul, does not conceal his own weakness or that of Akbar for astrology. Jahangir tells us in his *Tuzak* that once in life he started on a march without consulting his astrologers, and this was in pursuit of his rebel son, Khusrau. Shahjahan would never aceept a moment as auspicious till there was unanimity according to Hindu and the Yunani schools of astrology. Aurangzib even could not completely free himself from astrology, and his uncle Shaista Khan had in his provincial court of Dacca a Hindu astrologer whom the servants of the East India company bribed to put in a word in their favour. In U.P., the Muslims are still in the grip of the Yunani astrology, according to which a *Patra* or almanac is published every year.

The Muslim villager and the Maulvi are absolutely free from the influence of astrology in Bengal, though they consider Fridays and Saturdays as auspicious days. But astrology is making its inroads into the minds of the educated modern Muslims, who consult the traffickers in the *Bhrigu Samhita* as the whisper went at Dacca. "Bismillah" (in the name of Allah) suffices for the unsophisticated Bengal Muslim to ward off all evils of bad stars that terrify his Hindu neighbour. He has, however, his own superstitions partly inherited from his remote Hindu ancestor at the time of change-over to Islam. Belief in witchcraft, evil spirits, evil eye and efficacy of amulets have a grip on the psychology of Bengal Muslims. Our University students were seen with amulets as a cure for fever or protection against evils. The Maulvis play a lucrative trade in these cures and incantations. If a *Vaid* (Ayurvedic physician) or allopath goes to a village in Chittagong, Noakhali or Tipperah,—of which I have first-hand knowledge and information—such practitioners must come to an understanding with the village Maulvi. The physician recommends his patient to seek divine aid through the Maulvi's incantations which are not to be had *gratis*: whereas the Maulvi recommends his visitors to the physician for earthly medicine. These Maulvis are invariably honest people, who sincerely believe in what they practise, because belief in witchcraft and the efficacy of the particular words of the Holy Book in effecting cure had become

almost a part of Islam from the beginning though on a very small scale. When cholera or small-pox breaks out in an epidemic form, the Maulvi writes incantations on small earthen covers (Bengali : *shara*), and these are tied to poles at strategic approaches to a village or *mahalla* to keep off the epidemic. On the main door of the *deori* (parlour) of Muslim houses, such an anti-epidemic *shara* is to be seen invariably.

The writer had the occasion to observe visitors to the houses of two saintly persons of high reputation distributing amulets, incantation-charged oil and water, etc. When a school-boy, he once went to realise land-rent from the venerable Maulvi Ansarullah Sahib of a neighbouring village. He sat there for two or three hours out of curiosity to observe the business of the people coming there : if a child urinates in clothes, this must be the work of a *shaitan* (lesser devil) and the Maulvi writes something on a piece of paper, rolls it up and ties it with a black thread ; this is to be put inside a copper amulet-hold (*tabiz*) and tied to the child's neck. Another man complained of chronic indigestion ; a wrestler of a pain in his arm ; a husband of the prolonged travail of his wife. The first and third brought water with them in *badna* (water-vessel) over which the Maulvi Sahib puffed several blows of air from his mouth (*phunk*), and this water was to be drunk by affected persons. One man approached him for the cure of his bullocks suffering from some swelling in their hoofs, and was dismissed with an amulet. A group of persons thronged around him and told him that the fighting bull of so-and-so was engaged for fighting with a bull of another village, and that the rival party had gone to the Maulvi Sahib of a distant village who gave them a *tabiz* for their bull. The Maulvi Sahib became a little perturbed, and gave them some oil to be rubbed on the horns and body of their bull on the day of fighting.

Such belief in the powers of the Maulvis and *Pirs* is shared by both Hindus and Muslims. One grand-uncle of mine won a law-suit in appeal by procuring an amulet from some renowned *fakir*. He had managed to make it touch the hand of the Sessions Judge through his *peshkar* before the judgment was delivered. These secrets are believed to have come down through heritage. Everything is faith, and intense faith that work miracle among the Muslims and Hindus. The Muslims eat together out of the same tray, drink water with the same mug from water jars kept in the mosque or during summer under shady trees in pots in the countryside. They do so without hesitation, because not to do so is a sin of violating the

Sunna of the Prophet, who himself set the example. And yet contagious diseases except that are congenital are less numerous among the Muslims than among the Hindus who observe more hygienic rules.

In the city of Dacca and its neighbourhood the Pir Sahib of Paribagh,—a Sayyid from the Pathan border in his eighties, tall, white-complexioned with a prominent aquiline nose and well shaped features, a kindly heart and smiling face—is held in the highest esteem and yet sought and dreaded for his miracles and incantations.

The Bengal Muslims are as credulous as the Hindus so far as Sadhus and *Fakirs* are concerned. One Maulvi of Satkania in Chittagong practised hard mystical practices and gained, they say, supernatural powers. His fame for miraculous cures spread like wild fire—and he became known as *Chunga Fakir* (*i e.*, the fakir of bamboo-tube). He sat in his place in contemplation, and breathed daily on a thousand bamboo tube-fuls of water brought by ailing persons or their agents. In general, the Muslims showed neither respect nor disrespect to Hindu idols, though they visited them on the occasion of Pujah and partook of the general mirth, but no cooked food in Hindu houses. The Hindus were ardent believers in Auliyas and the sanctity of the mosques. In our boyhood we never omitted bowing to the mosque of our market reputed to be one of special sanctity. Whenever we went to the town of Chittagong, the first place to be visited and candles and sweets offered at was the tomb of Badar Sahib, the guardian-saint of the city dead about seven hundred years back.

The Bengal Muslims, like Muslims everywhere and at all times, are very much agitated over *halal* (lawful). and *haram* (unlawful). This injunction of Islam has affected deeply the psychology of Bengal Muslims. Half a century back no Musalman of Bengal practised usury. There were rich Muslims who would not deposit money in banks for fear of earning interest. The much-maligned old school Maulvis exerted a healthy influence on society and morals by teaching the illiterate masses that not only certain things specified are either *haram* or *halal*, but also the bread of idleness and deceit. Wages do not become *halal* to any man who does not do his duty honestly and sincerely. There was a time when the Hindus would prefer unskilled Muslim labour to Hindu labour. A Muslim labourer required less supervision than a Hindu, because his inward fear that his pay would not become *halal* made him work to his normal capacity honestly. However, modern civilisation has taught him to "go slow" in factories and workshops without any qualm of conscience.

Wine and music came out triumphant over Islam under the Umayyads within half a century after the Prophet's death. Alauddin and Aurangzib lost their battle with "wine", and the Turks and Mongols in general even made a ceremony of solemnity with the forbidden cup at court. The Afghans were the only decent people with respect to abstinence from wine, though their race has produced best musicians outside the family of Tansen. The Bengal Muslims except in cities avoid wine, toddy, *bhang* and *ganja* almost totally. Opium is taken by a few old invalids. They, however, smoke tobacco which has become *halal* to all. Islam could neither kill music nor keep out the faithful in general except an eccentric few, from its "insidious" influences. The village Muslims are passionately fond of music in all its forms. They pour in numbers wherever any dance or theatre is staged. Nowadays they would stage a play in even remote villages. In a benighted Chittagong village a rich headman was induced to bear all the expenses of a theatrical show provided that he should act Mir Qasim. He appeared on the stage in a showy darbar dress, sat on the throne and remained mute ; because he could speak Chittagong dialect only,—in which dialect the play Mir Qasim was not certainly written. At last repeatedly teased by the *naqib*, the Nawab burst forth in his dialect in the midst of deafening cheers and laughter.

Pious and orthodox maulvi generally keeps out of any music or theatrical show. The Bengali Muslims are on the whole a merry people without any simulated puritanism. But even the ignorant would argue whether a gramophone or a harmonium is *haram* or *halal* to a Muslim ! The learned would, however, debate on professions and modern household furniture like tables and chairs over their 'lawfulness'.

Fatalism in the psychology of the Orient is a common heritage. Islam riveted firmly *'sabr'* (patience under misfortune), *nasib* (fate), and *kismat* on the psychology of the Bengal Muslims. There is, however, a difference between the attitude of a Bengali Muslim and a Bengali Hindu to the inevitability of fate and the import on luck and patience. The patience of the Hindu is born of despair, and he broods more and acts less looking forward only to the next world for relief.

Islam has rescued the Muslim from other-worldliness. Islam originated with a householder and bears a practical outlook on life. Celibacy and monasticism in Islam were later accretions, though there was an eviternal oriental mysticism about it from the start. A

Muslim thinks more of the present world than of the next ; because he has a fervent faith that the Prophet would intercede for him *before Allah on the Day of Judgment. The good things of the world are meant to be enjoyed by him and not to be shunned ;—so* he is taught to believe.

Multiple marriage is a common weakness of Muslims everywhere and in all ranks. Hinduism and Islam both sanction polygamy. Hinduism puts no limit ; but Islam limits it to four wives at a time. But the ingenuity of man has made a limited number unlimited. This class of people are morally callous. They do not turn out a wife by divorce for fear of public opinion, but keep her only as a maidservant to serve and suffer mental agony. Some pious souls are dupes of their own learning.

About twenty years back one morning my Maulvi Sahib, a man below forty and with one wife only, sought my advice on a matter. He said that a man, who had heard of his piety and goodness, had approached him with a request to accept his sister in marriage. It was, he said, against the *Sunna* to refuse such an offer. The date of the marriage was fixed and I accompanied him in the bride-groom's procession. I was given a seat of honour on his right side on the dining sheet. The locality and condition of things betrayed clearly that my good-natured Maulvi had been a victim of fraud in the name of religion. A few courses were served, and when I was about to touch one, Maulvi Sahib suddenly caught hold of my right hand and angrily asked the server to remove it at once. The Bengal Muslims, though fanatical, have no petty meanness such as making a Hindu eat forbidden things by hook or crook and gain religious merit thereby. The poorer classes generally have not more than one wife at a time.

The Muslim marriage is a contract and not a sacrament. Freedom of divorce and fresh addition to harem engender a feeling of callousness between husband and wife. In spite of it, female morals within the bounds of the *Shariyat* stand much higher than those of males in all the grades of Muslim society. The harems of those who enjoy a fat unearned income are compared to poultry-yards of which hardly any stock is taken. The unabashed town rake of Bengal has the same psychology as that of the same class in Upper India ; namely, *ghar-ki murgi dal barabar* (a she-hen of one's own yard tastes as insipid as pulse). However, the ignorant village Muslim folk have on the whole commendable morals, though a wife is often looked upon as no better than a she-fowl.

Hindu bad characters and rakes are easily tempted to become Muslims and begin their career anew. We had a class-fellow from a rich Sudra family in our Primary School. His name was Shyama, a meek and docile boy with downcast looks. Afterwards he grew up a notorious rake and spent away two fortunes, one of his own father and the other inherited through his wife. Many years after I learnt that Shyama had become *Maulvi* Shamsuddin, married four widows, and been appointed *imam* of a mosque, half a mile from our home. He became very popular as a pious *alim* with the ignorant Muslims, but a veritable pest to the Hindus ; because Shyama would have nothing to do with anything Hindu. It so happened once that the boat carrying Shyama was a little ahead of our boat. At noon a solitary figure was seen on the *chhai* (bamboo roof) performing *namaz*, and our boatman cried out, "May mother Karnafuli (Chittagong river) swallow him !" So the conversation turned on Maulvi Shamsuddin, my old class-fellow Shyama. As there is a floating population of surplus derelicts among the Muslims, Shyama married four old hags for economic reasons, though his poor wives had the nobler religious impulse of pinning the new convert firmly to the Faith. Shyama had no ostensible profession except conducting prayers. Every morning he would send away all his wives for daily begging to the Hindu villages ; because, Muslim women beggars avoid Muslim householders, partly out of self-respect born of the democracy of Islam, and partly because daily alms of rice is not given by Muslims. Hindus of several villages around who used to market in the *hat* (market) twice a week had been using the tank in front of mosque along with the Muslims since its digging. Now Shyama became the champion of Islam, and forbade Hindus to wash their feet in the same tank, where Muslims performed *wazu* before *namaz*. As communal passions were then rising high due to outside machinations, some Muslims took the side of Shyama, and the Hindus made a complaint to the Muslim land-lord of the mosque and the market. The Mian scolded Shyama and threatened to drive him out from the mosque if he would tease the Hindus. But Shyama had his revenge. Formerly the Hindus were allowed to enter the mosque, and burn candles there in fulfilment of their *manat* (vow) ; but the renegade would not allow the Hindus to enter the mosque or burn lights there if they would not pay half-anna per head. His peculiar delight was to slaughter cows of his clients on the day of Bakr Id for a piece of flesh.

Shyama is not an individual, but a type since the beginning of the conversion of Hindus to Islam in Bengal.

2

Impact of Islam on Orissa and Bengal Contrasted

As the panorama of the land of Utkal through the ages shoots across the screen of history, we hear the distant tramp of Utkal's vaunted strength of the *nava-koti* (nine crores) infantry marching against the *nava-laksha dal* (Nine-Lakh) of Bengal's boast, mobilised on the plains of Katak, or in its full form *Vijaya-Katakam* (Cantonment town) of the days of the Lords of the three Kalingas. Kalinga or Orissa in defence of her liberty gave Asoka the satiety of blood and war, and indirectly turned the grim imperialist to the path of *Dharma.* Orissa too had later on her dream of imperialism having her one eye fixed on the holy Triveni of South Bengal if not on Gaur, and the other peering through the wilderness of Telingana to the Adam's Bridge. *Sakshi-Gopal* (Gopal the Witness) in his captive home near Puri hardly remembers now the far distant city of Kanchi from which he was torn off as a trophy of Utkal's valour in the days of yore. In the beginning of this millenium of ours the white waves of the Ganges turned black, as the panegyrist's vaunt puts it, with the collyrium of the eyes of the widowed Radha and Varendri. When *Radha* and *Varendri* (West and North Bengal) lay prostrate before the invincible lance of the Turk, it was Orissa that wiped off the disgrace of Bengal by chasing the panic-struck Turkish hosts of Tughan Khan from the neighbourhood of Vishnupur-Bankura down to the ferries on the Ganges opposite Gaur. However, here in Orissa on this side of the heavenly stream of the Vaitarani, we are not culturally in the Muslim or the Mughal India, but on the fringe of it ; though politically Orissa was a *Subah* of the Mughal Empire.

The impact of Islam on Orissa and Bengal presents a significant contrast. At the initial stage of the Muslim invasion of Eastern India, Bengal lost half of its territory and kept the Muslims at bay for about three quarters of a century. During the pre-Mughal

period Gaur was called a *bulghak-pur* (land of strife), and internal dissensions kept the Sultans too busy to think of Orissa except at long intervals, and that too with some bitterness. Their contemporary rulers of Orissa were at this time on the aggressive; and the feudatories of the King of Orissa were strongly entrenched in the Birbhum and Medinipur districts which bear to this day the traces of colonisation by the Utkals. This extension of Orissa northward accounts partly for the Hindu majority in West Bengal. On the sea the rulers of Orissa were equally powerful, having no rivals to contend with till the advent of the Portuguese. As late as 1540 A. D. when Malik Muhammad Jaisi wrote his *Padmavat*, the poet takes his hero right through the wilderness of Central India to Orissa, and makes Ratan Sen and his followers sail for Simhala in boats lent by the pious and powerful Gajapati.

It was not till after the conquest of Bengal by Sher Shah that Orissa for the first time felt the shock of conquest and colonisation by the dreaded Pathans. These were the turbulent Lohani Afghans, who fled from the hated domination of the Surs to Bengal and Orissa successively. Roughly from 1535 to 1585 the Lohanis held Cuttack and settled on the border districts to the north of the Mahanadi river. But the fight for independence was kept up by the Utkal Rajah from his improvised capital at Khurda. Long before Akbar contemplated the conquest of Bengal, he sent envoys to Rajah Mukund Dev of Orissa with the ostensible object of cementing an alliance against a common enemy, Sulaiman Karrani of Bengal, who had been a scourge of Orissa and in league with the redoubtable rebel, Ali Quli Khan Khan-i-Zaman against Akbar. After the Mughal occupation of Bengal the first imperial army consisting mostly of Rajputs and the Hindu zamindars of Bengal, led by Rajah Man Singh, entered Orissa as an army of emancipation from the tyranny of the Pathans under Qatlu Khan. Rajah Man Singh removed this Pathan pest permanently from Orissa and forced them to quit the country bag and baggage after the death of Qatlu Khan. The Rajput chief, however, showed impolitic zeal by an attempt to dispossess the Rajah of Khurda and Ganjam for which Man Singh received a censure from Akbar. Since then Orissa remained an annexe of the *Subah* of Bengal, though later on Orissa was itself constituted into a *Subah* of the Mughal empire. Orissa was rescued from the bigotry and misrule of Nawab Alivardi's nephew Saulat Jang by the avenging army of Raghuji Bhonsla under the command of his valiant general Bhaskar Pandit. The English too came nearly

half a century later to Orissa, and Orissa with her orthodoxy and ancient culture invigorated by the Maratha occupation remained almost as impervious to Western influence as to Islam, though she had to sheathe her sword under *Pax Britannica*. This is not an inglorious chapter for the much-maligned people of Orissa who far excelled the Bengalis in powers of passive resistance to Islam.

The medieval history of Orissa has received scanty attention from scholars. Sir Jadunath has perhaps paid the first instalment of his debt for the salt of Orissa eaten by him and his pupils, in the form of a survey of Orissa under the Mughal Empire in his Patna University Readership Lecture, and by piecing together scattered facts relating to the medieval history of Orissa in the Second Volume of the History of Bengal edited by him on behalf of the University of Dacca.

Somehow I am not satisfied with the angle of vision and the process of historical studies we have acquired, namely the process of building from the top and not from below, and treating the history of Medieval India as Pre-Mughal and Mughal, and even looking at it only as an appendix of the history of Islam in the world outside India. In fact, our efforts do not penetrate the sub-soil of history and therefore any structure of history built on such a foundation is bound to be shaky.

We had a servant hailing from the Garjat or the Hill Tracts of Orissa in the house of Sir Jadunath at Chauliagunj. My experiment began with him for an inquiry into the amount of history still preserved among the masses in the form of ballads, proverbs and country-side tales orally handed down. My informant, whose name was Apratia, remembered only Kala-Pahar rendered a hundred times odious : Kala-Pahar wore, he said, a dress made from his murdered mother's skin, and a sacred thread made of her entrails ! It points unmistakably to Jadu or the renegade Jalaluddin, a historical myth unjustly foisted by later Muslim bigotry on the son of Raja Ganesh and echoed senselessly by the Hindus. The historical Jadu or Jalaluddin, a patron of Hindu learning and of renowned Pandits like Rai Mukut Brihaspati, cannot be the legendary Kala-Pahar ; because the very name Kala-Pahar is found only among the Pathans of the sixteenth century : and Indian *Kala* is equivalent to Turkish *Qara*, that means *black*, and by implication "brave" also. The actual barbarities were perpetrated in Orissa perhaps by some Pathan general of the bigoted Sulaiman Karrani of Bengal, bearing the name or epithet Kala-Pahar, though he could not be

the same person as Kala-Pahar Farmuli mentioned by *Tarikh-i Khan-Jahan Lodi* as one of the rebel Afghan *amirs* of the Eastern Provinces in the time of Babur and Humayun. However, Apratiya did not remember to have ever heard the very word *Mughal*; nor does any average inhabitant of Orissa, who calls all Muslims *Pathans*. I could however gather this much from my informant that in their part of the country there are two classes of brave people the Khandayits and Rauts. The Khandayits were those who fought on foot with *khanda* (broad sword), *i.e.*, a sort of militia swordsmen, the *Raut* (Hindi, *Rawat*) was a cavalier or a gentleman-at-arms attached to some petty chieftain.

Why was a longer and more successful resistance offered to Islam by the people of Orissa than by the people of Bengal? The people of Orissa, like the Marathas and other peoples of the South, were defeated but not conquered in the same sense that Bengal and the rest of Northern India were conquered. In Bengal and the Punjab particularly, Muslim conquest penetrated to the very core of society and culture; whereas in Orissa the Muslim conquest scratched only the political surface of its history. Bengal was not conquered by seventeen Turkish cavaliers; but by the *barah-auliya* or twelve legendary Muslim militant saints, and *pirs* who cropped up after the seed of Islam had been sown broadcast in the plains of Bengal. Here in Orissa, Muslim armies no doubt overran the land; but Islam was totally helpless against Orissa's presiding deity Jagannath; because Jagannath was not like the Somnath and Vishwanath idols housed in temples but a living god enshrined in the hearts of the children of the soil. The Muslims now and then disturbed the visible Jagannath; but they were totally powerless against the invisible One, because Islam could not reach the real heart of Orissa, which is not on the sea coast but in the impenetrable jungles and hills watered by the upper course of the Mahanadi and her feeder streams. Future researches into the medieval history of Orissa should centre round this Jagannath, who can only reveal to us the hidden forces that not only baffled Islam in Orissa, but also partly saved Bengal by feeding there the feeble stream of Hinduism before and after Shri Chaitanya, with whom Bengal has found salvation in the blue waters of the sea that wash the feet of Jagannath.

This is not an outburst of simulated Vaishnavite *bhakti*. Some concrete facts are there to throw light on this phase of the history of medieval Orissa. Islam failed in Orissa as a religion and culture because Orissa had a backbone, physical, social and religious, which

Bengal had not at the time of the first onslaught of Islam. Its physical backbone was its ill-favoured terrain that gave a tougher mould to the inhabitants than that of the soft people of the fertile plains of Bengal. The hills and jungles of Orissa, inaccessible either from the flanks or the rear, afforded a safe refuge to their defeated armies and the afflicted people at the time of a foreign invasion; whereas in the heart of Bengal there was no way of escape for the people except *Gangapravesh, i.e.*, suicide by drowning, or what was more than suicide, namely, parting with their ancestral religion along with their culture and nationality. The social backbone of Bengal was also much softer than that of Orissa during its first encounter with Islam. Bengal was struck by Islam at a period of transition from a debased but popular form of Hinduised Buddhism to a strong Brahmanical revival under the Sena Kings. No sense of political or communal patriotism could grow up in Bengal as a resultant of this clash with a hostile religion and an alien race of conquerors on account of the accentuation of caste differences by the institution of Kulinism and reactionary forces first let loose by the Sena kings, and later on reinforced by the Smriti legislation of the Pandits of Navadwip. Shri Chaitanya came rather too late for the rescue of Bengali Hindus. If anybody seeks further explanation for the helplessness of Hindu resistance in Bengal, he will find it in that curious book, *Sunnyapuran* in which the oppressed Buddhists rejoiced in the incarnation of *Dharma* in the guise of *Paigambar* and of gods as his Khalifas; this Yavana role was assumed by Dharma only to punish the ungodly Brahmans and destroy their idol temples,—an echo of Buddhism in the lower strata of the people of Bengal protesting against the high class Brahmanical oppressors.

Nobody hears of such a *Puran* in Orissa where this religious and social transformation of the people was complete. There the Trinity of Jagannath had emerged out of the Buddhistic *Triratna*, a happy compromise by which Buddhism retained the shadow and the Brahmans appropriated its substance. It was in the premises of the temple of Puri that a solution of the present and future religious and social problems of India *minus* Islam was attained. There the Hindus of every sect and caste, touchable and untouchable from the remote corners of this subcontinent, are made to discard their born prejudices for a moment and breathe an atmosphere of equality and universal love within the otherwise water-tight compartments of exclusive Hinduism. Jagannath himself has formulated the future policy of Hindu society by cutting the gordian knot of castes by

giving the Sabaras, still a wild jungle tribe, the charge of the temple kitchen, and promising Paradise to those who would unhesitatingly partake of food cooked by these people outside the pale of the Aryandom. Bengal fell an easier victim, because there was no such *Dham or centre of All-India national worship and pilgrimage in* Bengal. In short, the cultural and spiritual isolation of Bengal placed her at a greater disadvantage in her struggle with Islam than Orissa. A constant flow of pilgrimage from every corner of India to Orissa was not only an economic but also a political asset, when she reeled under the blows of Islam. This contact with the outside Hindu India from which saintly scholars and fervent religious enthusiasts came to reside sometimes permanently at Puri—served as a restorative and stimulus to the sinking heart of Orissa in adversity.

As in Maharashtra, so, too, in Orissa there was a social solidarity on account of an unenviable economic equality among the masses, all except Jagannath and his custodians being equally poor ;—whereas in Bengal the contrary was the case. Orissa too had her tough irregulars, half soldiers, half robbers, recruited from the hardy semi-wild tribes of the interior. These genuine children of Orissa, the Adibasis supplied a regular flow of fresh blood to the worn-out body politic of Orissa. The aboriginal tribes have since the dawn of history formed the substance of Hinduism and Indian polity, particularly so in Orissa. Again Jagannath was the dynamic force at work, a link between civilisation and barbarism. These animistic tribes had, and still have, their imagination stirred by the presence of the mysterious Lord of the Creation living in a regal state on the shores of boundless blue waters. Bengal had no such reserve of man power to draw upon; and Islam cut the sheet-anchor of Hindu ascendancy there by converting the sturdy lower classes, and fanning the neophytes' fanaticism against the higher classes. What Orissa needed for attaining to her full political stature was a band of modern monks to carry on the work of the ancient *Rishis* among these people of the hinterland.

In explaining this contrast of the impact of Islam on Orissa and Bengal during the middle ages, the historian cannot afford to forget Orissa's native breed of horses, the *Baharampuri tattu*, a sturdy dwarfish devil with a deep chest, thick mane and a wild restless look—the archetype of the riderless stone horses in war-trappings that face the great temple of Konarak. These can be ridden only by a short-legged people of unusual agility as the Utkal cavaliers were of old. This breed of horses served the cause of Orissa's struggle for independence admirably well.

3

Some side-lights on the History of Banaras

It is hardly necessary to emphasise the importance of the *Selections from the Peshwas' Daftar* as an indispensable contribution to the historical sources of India in the second half of the eighteenth century. We propose to consider here some of the extracts from the Selections throwing light on the history of Banaras.

Balwant-nama of Khair-ud-din Allahabadi is the earliest contemporary chronicle of the present Banaras Raj. We learn from it that down to the eighteenth century remnants of the great Gahadaval race were still ruling small principalities and the ruler of one of these had retained the unofficial title of King of Banaras. Mansa Ram, the founder of the Banaras Raj, though a Bhumihar Brahmin, traced his descent through the female line to one of these so-called kings of Banaras. He started his career as a servant of Rustam Ali Khan, the *Nazim* of Banaras under the Nawab-Wazir of Oudh. He secured a *nazimship* of sarkars Banaras, Jaunpur, and Chunargarh in the name of his son Balwant Singh by betraying his own master. Mansa Ram died in 1739, and was succeeded by his more ambitious son Balwant Singh. But Mansa Ram's brothers resented it and demanded a share in the family possessions. One of them, Dasa Ram, fled from Banaras and began to intrigue with the Muslim zamindars of the Shahabad district for overthrowing the power of Balwant Singh. But Khiar-ud-din is silent on the relations of Balwant Singh with the Marathas and the Delhi Court. Kashi Bai, the mother of Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao, who was on a pilgrimage to the sacred places of Northern India under an imperial safe-conduct, came to Banaras in April 1747 with a strong Maratha escort. Dasa Ram took this opportunity to seek the protection of the Marathas

which the kindhearted lady could not refuse. But the affair took a political turn, and the Marathas perhaps thought of using Dasa Ram's claim for some less pious object. Balwant Singh wrote to the imperial court complaining that Dasa Ram with his family had been taken along in the train of Kashi Bai, and that she had threatened to send a Maratha force against Balwant Singh if he did not give Dasa Ram half of his territory. The representation was backed by Nawab Safdar Jang's agent at Delhi. The Maratha agent, however, who like an ambassador of the Elizabethan age "lay abroad to lie for his country's benefit," disavowed it and said that they had nothing to do with Dasa Ram, except that he was released from the prison of the Governor of Patna (*Patankar*) (Vol. 2, pp. 4-5).

The Maratha power was at this time being consolidated in Bundelkhand by Govind Pant Bundele, and so it is not unlikely that the Marathas would cast looks of pious greed on Banaras. Though nothing came out of Dasa Ram's affairs, there is ample evidence in the *Selections* that the Marathas began since then to covet the possession of Banaras. We get a glimpse of it in the following letter of the Peshwa's agent Vasudev Dikshit from Banaras, who writes to Raghunath Rao (Dec. 1757 ?): ". . . . None before him (Balwant Singh) ruled Benares so well as Bariwand Singh (Balwant Singh) has been doing for the last fifteen years . . . . the Wazir (Imad-ul-Mulk ?) issued a parwana granting this place to you, and the Rajah was also written to, to this effect. The Rajah . . . . showed twenty-five letters (from the Wazir) not to give possession of it . . . . So you should renounce it. Till now the Rajah has saved this place . . . . people are panic-stricken and to them the Ganges is the last resort . . . . if you come personally it is all right ; otherwise please send ten or fifteen thousand horses under a Sardar as soon as this letter reaches you. When they will reach the neighbourhood the Rajah will also join them with five or seven thousand troops . . . . the Rajah should be saved . . . . Here people have no place to retire for safety ; when any calamity appears they with their families drown themselves in the Ganges . . . . An interview has taken place with me ; if he is helped he will be of much use in future . . . . the Rajah has sent also his petition" (Vol. 27, No. 209). Perhaps it was in 1756 that the Wazir Imad-ul-Mulk played this game of duplicity with the Marathas. The invasion of Benares that was rumoured was evidently that of Imad-ul-Mulk himself who had been sent by the Abdali with Jang Baz Khan and two Mughal princes to re-occupy the Doab and over-

throw the power of Shuja-ud-Daula (Sarkar ; Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, pp. 131-136).

Shuja-ud-Daula had invaded Banaras in the beginning of 1757, put Balwant to flight, captured Latifpur, and granted peace to the Rajah by extorting an indemnity of twenty-five lakhs of rupees (Vol. 2, No. 170, 22nd March 1757). The Marathas had not given up their designs on Banaras along with two other sacred places, Gaya and Allahabad. They reopened negotiations for securing a *sanad* for these places from the Wazir, Imad-ul-Mulk in 1759. But Imad-ul-Mulk, being friendly to Shuja-ud-Daula to whom Allahabad and Banaras belonged, refused compliance with this demand. Besides, at this time the Marathas were anxious to make the Ganges all along its course down to Banaras, if not further down, their boundary, as the letter of Rajah Keshab Rao to the Peshwa suggests (Vol. 27, No. 240, dated 30th July 1759). This weakness which to a certain extent shaped the policy of the Peshwa cost the Marathas very dear in the long run, because both the Ruhelas and Nawab of Oudh, though natural and hereditary foes, could agree on one point, namely, to keep the Marathas to the south of the Ganges which was strategically essential for the defence of their respective possessions. Shuja-ud-Daula perhaps would not have joined the Abdali if the Marathas had not entertained any such design against this part of his territory.

Now something about the social and economic life of the city of Banaras as reflected in the Selections from the Peshwa's Daftar :

Banaras was in the eighteenth century, as in the twentieth, a city of Brahmins without any ostensible means of livelihood. Its people were timid and cowardly, preferring suicide with their whole families to manly risks in self-defence in times of danger. The temples and ghats were in a deplorable condition. The Maratha pilgrims and sojourners gradually formed a colony of their own in the city. It was perhaps from the time of the first Peshwa Balaji Vishvanath that the Maratha government undertook the restoration of temples and ghats in Banaras. Letters of Sadashiv Naik to Baji Rao and Chimaji Appa written from Banaras bear an account of the sad conditions of ghats and temples, and also schemes of repair with estimate of expenses (Vol. 18, Nos. 36 and 37). Pancha-Ganga, Manikarnika and Dasashvamedh were the three important quarters of the city, but without any good bathing ghat (Vol. 30, No. 131). This Sadashiv Naik was also a secret

political agent who kept the Peshwa informed about public opinion and the attitude of some influential Muslim nobles regarding the projected invasion of Delhi by Baji Rao I. Radha Bai visited Banaras in 1736, and spent large sums in charity. One Narayan Dikshit writes that she made an unfair discrimination in distributing *dakshina*. . . . No Maharashtra, or Deshastha Brahman got a farthing; whereas every Chitpavan got Rs. 5, 7 and even 10 . . . . (Vol. 30, No. 147). The Peshwas built *Dharma-salas* and endowed free eating houses for Brahmins and other works of public utility in Banaras. The price of land went high because Nagar Brahmins began to compete with the Marathas in buying it for religious purposes. The Government *haveli* or house of the Peshwa stood near Mangal-Gauri, where under orders from the Peshwa one blind saint Atmananda Saraswati was to be lodged (Vol. 43; No. 119). The Brahmins of Banaras had their quarrels and mutual jealousies at that time as now. One Brahmin officiated at a sacrificial ceremony in the house of an Ambashta, and for this offence he was declared an outcaste by the Brahmins. Balkrishna Dikshit decided to re admit that Brahmin to society after *prayashchit*, and this was opposed by one Lakhshman, another Maratha Brahmin (Vol. 43, No. 122). The Patankar Dikshits of Banaras belonged to the family of Baji Rao I's *guru*.

Maratha pilgrims were not so safe in their journey through Bihar as in other parts of India. Yesu Bai complains to Raghunath Rao of the ill-treatment that her party suffered in travelling from Gaya to Banaras. " . . . . Kamdar Khan charged Rs. 9-4-0 per head from us; Rao Vishwanath Vaidya was taken away as security for Rs. 3,500 due by us. Men were killed and the Karkun received many wounds. . . . at Daudnagar and other *chokis* one rupee per head was levied : Nandaram, Foujdar of Banaras, also . . . . took *zakat* . . . . we handed over to him the letter of Srimant Peshwa of which he took no notice." This ill-treatment of Maratha pilgrims roused a sort of crusading spirit among the Maratha chiefs and this sentiment was shared by their women also. A letter to Raghunath Rao, written probably by Kashi Bai, breathes this spirit; she blesses Raghoba for his assurances that he would take her to Prayag after having freed that place from the enemy's control. Saguna Bai's party suffered even more during their journey through Bihar and the expenses of the pilgrimage of her party mounted to Rs. 65,000, of which she alone was to pay Rs. 10,000 (Vol. 18, No. 146). A letter of Mahipat Rao written to Peshwa

Madhav Rao dated 20th July 1772 describes Banaras thus: ". . . . the place is small; Brahmins innumerable and number of the needy large . . . . Gangaputras are giving great trouble; . . . Brahmins are obdurate (in their demands)" . . . . Elsewhere the same writer gives us an idea of the harassment of pilgrims by the Gavalis; and Gangaputras of Banaras and the Pandas of Prayag, who are still notorious for their exactions and unscrupulousness. Only a few years back during one of our historical tours, one Panda of Banaras offered to take my Muslim students around Hindu sacred places provided that they dressed as Hindus! Vices and hypocrisy were perhaps as rampant in Banaras at this time as they were in the days of Kabirji who exposes them so vehemently in his *dohas*.

Banaras in 1810 witnessed some natural calamities and portents of nature. One night in the month of Bhadra of that year "shooting stars fell, fire broke out in the bazar and earth began to shake: one old temple fell down and several houses cracked . . . . one day terrible roaring sound was heard . . . . " (Vol. 43, No. 66). This letter also gives us a list of prices of food-stuffs in different seasons in Banaras; rice of average quality sold at 16 to 22 seers per rupee, wheat 16 to 30 seers, gram 20 to 32 seers, molasses 14 to 16 seers, milk and curd 20 to 27 seers.

4

Dacca and its Medieval History

The history of Dacca is generally supposed to have had its beginnings with the transfer of the capital of the Mughal *subah* of Bengal from Akmahal or Rajmahal, officially known as Akbarnagar to this little-known pargana town of mahal Dacca-Baju of the *Ain*. Nobody can definitely say why the place was known by its present name. Some say that it was so called because of perhaps an extensive *Dhak* jungle that abounded in the neighbourhood ; if so, the name was certainly of non-Bengali origin as the people of the province hardly call the fiery-red *palash* tree by its Upper Indian name of *dhak*. It is, however, an admitted fact that whatever might be the name, there was a modest town in its present site in pre-Mughal times, as early at least as the Sena rule. Dr. N. K. Bhattasali is of opinion that the temple of the presiding Hindu deity of Dhakeswari indicates a style older than any in the known history of Dacca. At any rate it admits of no doubt that Dacca was a fairly important town before it was re-named as Jahangirnagar by Islam Khan Chishti who made it the capital city of Bengal. Apart from some pre-Mughal Muslim inscriptions found in some old mosques, in the north-western outskirts of the present city in the direction of Tejgaon, half-ruined architecural memorials swallowed up by the advancing rural vegetation, still await the curious eye for future study. Any one, who cared to ramble through the ruins and pause to examine the debris that lay scattered between the Dhakeswari temple and Azimpura till their clearance during World War II, could pick up bits of coloured tiles used for decoration in pre-Mughal times. Nothing has perhaps persisted so tenaciously through the ages as the old architectural tradition in the subsequent evolu-

tion of Muslim architecture. The curvilinear style of roofing supported on thick and comparatively dwarfish pillars prevailed in the days of the Independent Sultanate of Bengal. Some cenotaphs scattered over the site of the pre-Mughal town with curvilinear roofing may still be found. In Mughal times buildings in the so-called *Shaistakhani* style in some cases indicate an attempt at compromise by adding a broad curvilinear *sajjah* for giving a curvilinear appearance to flat roofing ; *e. g.*, in the Begum-bazar mosque of Dacca.

Dacca had its beginning perhaps as a small and straggling pargana-town during the period of the Independent Sultanate of Bengal. It occupied an important strategic position for a short-cut between the Meghna and the middle course of the Brahamputra by water as well as by land for a journey from Sonargaon northward to Gaur through the modern Dacca and Mymensingh districts. Some old sites and place-names with a suffix of *Sara* (Sarai), though perverted in some cases indicate the trail of the famous Shershahi Grand Trunk Road from Sonargaon along the neighbourhood of Narayanganj and Dacca through Ghoraghat winding its way as far as the far-off Nilab. About four miles northwest of the old town Dacca lies Carwan or Caravan-sarai, perhaps older than Dacca itself as the junction of a road-system of the old Pathan regime. At any rate Dacca held a key position in East Bengal both from the points of view of military and commercial facilities. The warlike Isa Khan seems to have had built the citadel of the pre-Mughal Dacca which Mirza Nathan counts among the few old forts of Bengal of his time (Baharistan I, p. 57). Isa kept his uncertain allies, the Ghazis of Bhawal in awe and definitely checked the northward expansion of the power of his formidable neighbour Kedar Rai of Sripur, by holding in strength the town of Dacca. Later on the Mughal *Urdu* or Encampment was pitched outside this fort, and eastern gate of this fort is said to have been shut by Nawab Shaista Khan before his departure with an injunction not to open it till rice would sell in the city eight maunds a rupee as in his time. Old people remember this eastern gate as the Shaistakhani Gate, now occupied by the Guards' Quarters of the Dacca Central Jail. However, it is sufficient to indicate the wide arc within which the town shifted its site from the days of the Independent Sultanate till the present time,—by the facts that the oldest mosque of Dacca, known as *Binat Bibi's* Mosque stands near Dolai Khal in the present Municipal Ward No. III, and that another mosque nearly as old with the recorded date of 885 A. H. (reign of

Sultan Yusuf Shah) has been found at Mirpur, about 7 miles n.w. of Dacca.[1] This Binat Bibi's mosque, built in 861 A. H. lies in Ward No. 3 of the Dacca municipality (P.S. Sutrapur), which was perhaps the busiest part of Dacca in the second half of the 9th century A. H. The ruling Muslim aristocracy of pre-Mughal Dacca came and went out for centuries ; but the industrial and mercantile communities, *Tanti*, *Sankhari* and *Basak* among the Hindus remained and still remain permanent fixtures in the midst of the shifting population and changing fortunes of the City of Dacca.

The history of Dacca under the Mughal Empire is writ large on the landscape rather than in the pages of written chronicles, with the exception of the reign of Jahangir which is covered by the *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi* of Mirza Nathan. To begin with, Rajah Man Singh, who made it chief military headquarters of the Mughal army for waging war with Isa Khan and his confederates, and against Rajah Kedar Ray of Sripur. His name is associated with *Raja Bagh*, and a consecrated tank of yearly Hindu piligrimage, lying about a mile n. n. e. of the Old Government House. Nawab Islam Khan Chishti, who made it the official capital of Bengal, is remembered chiefly as the builder of the Islampura quarter of the city. During his time the old subdued baronage of Bengal also began to live in the city. Musa Khan, son of Isa Khan, had his abode in Bagh-i-Musa Khan, the extent of which is indicated by the extant triple-domed mosque within the compound of present Dacca Hall and by his tomb at Nimtali on the east of the Railway Line. Musa's son, Munawwar Khan, is remembered by a *bazar* of his name in the city. There grew up in the time of Islam Khan[2] a new quarter outside the old

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1 No archaeologist has hitherto published an account of this interesting mosque in any learned journal. The late Shifa-ul-mulk Hakim Habibur Rahman Khan was the first to discover it during his pious ramble in search of graves of old *pirs* and notables. He has given the full text of the Persian inscription on the mosque of Mirpur, within which sleeps the venerable saint, Shah Ali Baghdadi. It tells us that the original mosque was built in the year 885 A. H., and renovated by Shah Ali of Baghdad in the year 985 A. H. (*Asudgan-i-Dacca* in Urdu, pp. 124-25 : published in 1946).

2 Nawab Islam Khan Chishti built a *pura* in his own name known till now as *Islampura*, the busiest thoroughfare of Dacca. He laid the foundation of a mosque which is situated in Ashiq Jamadar Lane.

town known as *Mahalla Chishtian*, marked today by a solitary grave, known as the tomb of Chisti-Bihishti and situated within the compound of the High Court of East Pakistan. The site is identical perhaps with that of Bagh-i-Badshahi where Islam Khan's remains were buried before their removal to the present tomb in the courtyard of the mosque of Fatehpur Sikri. Shujat Khan, the conqueror of Usman, also built a *pura* which continued to be remembered as Shujat-pura[3] till it was swallowed up by the present Ramna during the old Partition regime. The city continued to have a floating population of upcountry people with every change of viceroy, and the residue left behind at every transfer deepened the Mughal character of the city. The long viceroyalty of Shah Shuja extending over a period of seventeen years marks a distinct epoch of prosperity for Dacca.

Prince Shah Shuja, second son of Shahjahan, brought with him a large number of Iranians of the Shia sect to his provincial capital of Dacca, where they were settled in a quarter later on known as Rahamatgunj, a name that continues till today. Once these Shias and their descendants constituted the life and light of the city. A very few Shia families in miserable condition still survive in Dacca as a memorial to the days of Shuja. However, the greatest memento of the unfortunate prince is the Bara Katra, which is a miniature Buland Darwaza of Dacca situated close to the river bank. Today it presents a sorry spectacle and the very sight of miserable humanity that has made it their abode reminds one of "Owls nestling in Afrasyab's tower." The interior economy of this self contained gate-palace makes the visitor doubt very much whether it was originally designed for purpose to which it was dedicated according to the Persian inscription set on it. The Persian inscription in bold Tughra characters tells us :

"Sultan Shah Shuja was employed in the performance of charitable acts. Therefore Abdul Qasim Tabatabai Husaini al-Samani, in the hope of mercy of God made a canonical waqf of

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[3] Shujatpura lay south of present Shah Bagh, perhaps reminiscent of Bagh-i-Badshai of Nathan. Shujatpura comprised within its limits the Sikh temple and a part of the maidan of Ramna. Shujatpura and Mahalla Chishtian were demolished at the time of construction of New Dacca or Ramna as the capital of East Bengal and Assam (Habibur Rahman, *Asudgan-i-Dacca* in Urdu, p. 74).

this building of stupendous structure, together with twenty-two shops adjoining, subject to the condition that the administrators of the *waqf of this building should spend the income arising out of their rent, in repairs and in relief of the poor. If a poor man alights* here, no rent should be charged from him for his lodging . . . . This inscription was written be Sa'duddin Muhamad al-Shirazi, A.H. 1055 (A.D. 1645). A large quadrangle encloses the Bara Katra separating it from the inhabited quarters. The lofty gate-palace with apartments and accommodation enough for the temporary residence of a prince, could hardly have been meant as only an entrance to a *Sarai* for merchants and travellers. Shuja perhaps built it originally as his own residence or a pleasure resort during the rainy season. As the climate of Lower Bengal did not suit his health he used to reside generally at Rajmahal. So afterwards the quadrangle was perhaps rebuilt with rooms and an open courtyard on the model of a sarai, and dedicated along with the gate-palace to a charitable use in the year 1055 A. H., which is not perhaps the date of its original construction. The half-dome style of gate-way, which Fergusson calls as the best solution of the problem of giving a proportionate and graceful opening to a lofty structure in his account of the Buland Darwazah of Fathepur Sikri—makes its first appearance in the Bara Katra, and it ever after became an essential feature of the Mughal Architecture in Dacca. This "stupendous pile of grand and beautiful architecture"[4] looking quite majestic with its lofty turrets of octagonal form commands an excellent view of the city and the landscape for miles that is typically Bengal of the artist's imagination.

Shaista Khan built another *Katra* (about 1664), now known as *Chotah Katra*, because of its smaller dimensions than those of Shuja's *Bara Katra*. Shaista Khan's Katra was built on the same plan as that of Shuja between the Bara Katra and the present mahalla Imamgunj. There is, however, within its quadrangle a small beautiful mosque having a single fluted dome, displaying unique oriental luxuriance of foliage and fruit on the capitals of its elegant octangular shafts. It is a thing of beauty indeed, and has received due praise from the author of the *Antiquities of Dacca*. The *Chotah Katra* itself is of the same architectural style and interior economy as the Bara Katra. Further down the river S.E. of the Chota Katra, a mosque of Shaista Khan, rising abruptly from the river as it were,

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4 Sir Charles D'Oyly : *The Antiquities of Dacca.*

was described by the author of the *Antiquities* as "the Mosque on the Buriganga ; its octagonal, circular and rectangular forms are constructed with considerable taste ; and its breadth of plain wall kept in a composed distinct mass by rows of small pointed arches, fillets and other enrichments. In the general proportions and character of its architecture, the principles of elegance and simplicity appear to be combined ; and the *tout ensemble* can scarcely fail to impress the beholder with respect for the taste and talent of its architect. This mosque rises immediately from the margin of the river, with an effect at once stately and picturesque."

History tells us that Mir Jumla died on his way to Dacca at Khizirpur on the 2nd Ramzan of the year 1073. A.H., and a later tradition[5] has it that the coffin of Mir Jumla was buried inside the mosque, and later on carried to Mashed for final burial in the mausoleum of Hazrat Imam Raza. The original tomb is worshipped now under the name of the Rauza of Khanpur though the people hardly suspect that it was the original grave of Mir Jumla. By the time of Mir Jumla the city of Dacca had extended in a westerly direction. Mir Jumla's lieutenant, Rashid Khan[6], who commanded the first Mughal expedition to Assam, had his garden villa west of the city now swallowed up by the Phil-khana Cantonment. He too, it seems, died during the Assam wars, and his tomb near a mosque within the *Philkhana* receives worship as the resting place of not only a great Amir but also of a spiritually illumined soul. All that remains of Bagh-i-Rashid Khan is a tank noted for its blood-red earth.

Nawab Shaista Khan, who succeeded Mir Jumla as Viceroy, and ruled Bengal from 1664 to 1677 A. D. in the first term, and again 1680 to 1688 for a second term—is verily the idol of the popular imagination of Dacca. Though he himself lived mostly

'Tazkira-i-Nasarabadi (Ms), quoted by Late Hakim Habibur Rahman Khan in his book *Asudgan-i-Dacca* (Urdu, p. 136). It is written in the alleged 'Wasiyatnama' of Shaista Khan that the tomb in the said mosque is of Bibi Marium, a daughter of Shaista Khan. But this document has been proved to be a forgery by late Hakim Habibur Rahaman Khan in a paper contributed to the Proceedings of Indian Historical Record Commission (Nagpur Session, 1928). We have no reason to disbelieve the version of Nasarabadi, which accords well with the Shia tradition and also with the known facts of History.

For Rashid Khan, *History of Aurangzib*, iii, 157 ; his tomb and tank, *Asudgan-i-Dacca*, p. 154.

under canvas or in a wooden palace, he emulated his pious nephew on the throne of Delhi in building more mosques than were perhaps needed by worshippers in his time. These are strewn all over Dacca and its neighbourhood characterised by a stereotyped style, known as *Shaistakhani*. Besides the *Bara Katra*, the *Idgah* of Dacca and the Churihatta mosque within the city are also pious memorials of the luckless Shuja.

Muazzam Khan Khan-i-Khanan *alias* Mir Jumla, the subduer and successor of Shah Shuja, as Aurangzib's first Viceory of Bengal, did not leave any memorial of his within the city of Dacca. He is remembered as the builder of military roads, and of forts on the Lakhiya and the Isamati rivers to keep off the Magh incursions into Dacca. He constructed the bridges to span small streams crossed by his military roads to and from Dacca. Outside the city lie the remains of his two bridges, better known now as the Tangi Bridge and the Pagla-pul (Mad man's bridge). The Tangi Bridge was built over the river of that name on the Dacca-Mymensingh Road ; and the Pagla-pul stands astride the Qadamtala river leading to Mir Jumla's ruined fort of Hajigunj on the Lakhia River. Tavernier describes it as a "most elegant structure" and the author of *The Antiquities of Dacca* found it, "still exceedingly picturesque" in the first decade of the nineteenth century. The Tangi Bridge is almost as magnificent in its ruined condition[7]. Mir Jumla had made the water-girt Khizir-pur, situated north-east of modern Narayangunj and on the river Lakhiya (about 9 miles south of Dacca and three miles north of Sonar-gaon), his military and naval headquarters during his Assam expeditions. There he built a fortified residence for himself of which except a grand mosque, all are in ruins marked here and there by an outer wall with a height of twelve feet. The mosque has three domes under one of which lies a tomb. Mir Jumla's architecture reflects the character of the man—a forceful personality of solid virtues and high ambitions.

[7] Vide, *The Antiquities of Dacca.*

5

Origin of the Bahmani Sultans of the Deccan

Since the publication of Sir W. Haig's paper, "*Some Notes on the Bahamani* Dynasty"[1], some fresh attempts have been made to explain the origin of the Bahmani Sultans of the Deccan. But Sir W. Haig did not arrive at any definite conclusions in that paper regarding the ancestry of the so-called Bahmani dynasty. He only succeeded in proving satisfactorily that the cognomen Kanku, Kangu, or Gangu has nothing to do with any person of that name, nor Bahmani is derived from *Brahmana*. Ferishta's story of the origin and early life of Hasan Gangu has been refuted by that eminent historian. To hold that the title Bahman Shah did not originate in Hasan's grateful memory of his Brahmin master but in Hasan's claim to descend from ancient kings of Iran is hardly better than substituting one myth with another equally fictitious. Unfortunately, this seems to be the tendency not only among text-book writers but also of some specialists, though Sir W. Haig himself maintains : "Both historians (Ferishta and the author of *Burhan-i-Maasir*) express some doubts as to the authority of the pedigrees which they give, and there can be little doubt that both pedigrees are fictitious. We are not concerned, however, with the genuineness of Hassan's claim, for this is a question which cannot be decided now."

Four years after the publication of the above mentioned paper of Sir W. Haig, Maulvi Abdul Wali contributed a paper on the Bahmani Dynasty (JASB, 1909). The learned Maulvi tried to throw more light on Haig's illuminating *Notes on the Bahmani Dynasty* by quoting a passage from Amin Ahmad Razi's *Half Iqlim*, written be-

fore Ferishta's history. The English rendering of that passage runs thus :

"Thus first Dynasty was that of the Kings of Gulbarga. The founder of it was Alaud-din-Hasan. As the author of the *Uyunut-Tarikh* traces his pedigree to Bahman bin Isfandiyar, so as a matter of course, the Dynasty became famous under the cognomen Bahmani". Maulvi Abdul Wali further remarks : "The MS. of *the Half-Iqlim*, which belongs to the A. S. B. (D/347) has *Hasan Kakuya* instead of Kanku or Gangu. The word is a puzzle. Is it the Deccani corruption for *Kaikaus*, the name of the King's father ? If this knotty problem can be cleared up, the full name and title of the founder of the Bahmani Dynasty will run somewhat thus :—*Ala-ud-din Hassan bin Kaikaus Bahmani.*"

Sir W. Haig gives us his considered opinion in his chapter on the Bahmanis in the *Cambridge History of India*. He says : "Ala-ud-din Hasan claimed descent from the hero Bahman, son of Isfandiyar, and his assumption of the title Bahman Shah was an assertion of his claim. Ferishta relates an absurd legend connecting the title with the name of the priestly caste of the Hindus, but this story is disproved by the evidence of inscriptions and legends on the coins, and the name Kanku, which frequently occurs, in conjunction with that of Bahman and is said by Ferishta to represent Gangu, the name of the king's former Brahman master, is more credibly explained by Maulvi Abdul Wali as a scribe's corruption of Kaikaus, which was the name of Bahman's father as given in two extant genealogies." (Vol. III, 372-373).

Let us analyse the historical inaccuracies in the passage quoted above :

1. Ala-ud-din was not a part of the original name of the founder of the Bahmani dynasty. Hasan Gangu, as Ferishta says, was a man from Northern India, and as such Ziauddin Barani, the court-historian of Sultan Firuz Shah Tughlaq and a contemporary of Hasan was likely to know the full name of Hasan Gangu more correctly than the Deccani historians who flourished about 200 years after the foundation of the Bahmani Sultanate. Ziauddin always calls him Hasan Gangu ; and so does Ahmad Yahaya Sarhindi, author of *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi*, written in 1434, *i.e.*, within less than 100 years of Hasan's accession. Sir W. Haig rejects Kangu or Gangu—which is as inseparable from Hasan's name as skin from the body—because he has failed to explain it satisfactorily. Hasan's name is always found conjoined with Gangu in Barani and Sarhindi's

histories. Alauddin is not a part of Hasan's *name* (*ism*), but a part of the *title* (*laqab*), Alauddin Bahman Shah under which he ruled, as Prince Salim did under the title Nuruddin Muhammad Jahangir Padshah Ghazi.

2. Sir W. Haig, banishes the epithet Gangu from Hasan's name altogether, and makes us believe that Gangu *is a scribe's corruption* of Kaikaus, which was the name of Bahman's father as given in two extant genealogies. From the time of Ziauddin Barani down to our own time, Gangu or Kangu has thus been found corrupted once and that too in a single manuscript. Even in this case Sir W. Haig's authority, namely Maulvi Abdul Wali is not certain about the reading of the word *Kakuya*. The Maulvi only suggests whether this is Dakani corruption for Kaikaus or the name of the King's father. We say it is not. Deccan was the home of Iranian emigrants, and no Persian history of the Deccan from *Burhan-i-Maasir* to *Basatin-i-Salatin* ever commits such a mistake, or uses *Kakuya* for Kaikaus, a name which a Muslim, particularly an Irani, picks up from nursery tales. Moreover, the Maulvi does not commit himself definitely to this reading. In a *footnote* Maulvi Abdul Wali adds, "If the letter *s* of Kaikaus be left out, the word may give rise to the following *variants*, in Persian character—Kaikau, Kankau, Kanku, Gangu, Kaku, etc." (JASB. 1909, p. 462, footnote 2). There is no reason why we should not prefer the reading Gangu, on which all the Indo-Persian historics are unanimous to a doubtful reading in a single manuscript of one history only.

3. It appears Hasan Gangu himself never knew that Kaikaus was his father's name or that he ever *claimed descent* from the Persian king Bahman. In that case, if we are allowed to infer from a historical parallel, his title on his coins and inscriptions would have run something like this : *Ala-ud-duniya wa din Abul Muzaffar Hasan Shah bin Kaikaus-i-Bahmani* ; as we find on the coins of Husain Shah of Bengal—*Alauddin Husain Shah bin Sayyid Ashraf al-Husaini*. Hasan an upstart though, was too discreet to claim such a lineage, because it was sure to be ridiculed both by his Persian and Hindustani *amirs* some of whom must have remembered what his origin was.

Let us now turn to the constructive phase of the discussion. If we are allowed to exercise a little of historical imagination we may picture to overselves the state of the historical knowledge regarding the origin of Hasan Gangu in the beginning of the seventeenth century. Evidently, there were two traditions current in the Deccan, when Ferishta and the author of *Burhan-i-Maasir* (Azizullah Tabatai)

wrote their histories. Both traditions originated from the two epithets of Hasan, namely Gangu and Bahman, which suggested to popular imagination that he was a slave of a Brahmin named Gangu, and to scholarly ingenuity that he was a descendant of the famous. Persian king Bahman. The former version was apparently the older one, originating perhaps with the Brahmani officials of Hasan, upon whose descendants the priestly class thus hoped to establish a claim for special consideration. As people of the Deccan could not otherwise explain the cognomen Gangu, they naturally turned it to the name of a person. The second story, *i. e.*, Hasan's descent from Bahman was invented, either with or without any countenance of the later Bahmanis, by some Muslim historians whose pride revolted against the idea that the founder of the most glorious dynasty in the South could have been the slave of a Brahman. So one school of the Muslim historians rejected the alleged connection between the word Bahman and Brahman and embodied the Persian genealogy of Hasan, though they themselves pronounced this genealogy to be not quite accurate.

Ferishta also gives both the Brahman story as well as the genealogy of Persion descent regarding the origin of Hasan. Sir W. Haig has been unnecessarily severe on Ferishta who committed no other fault than that of lending the weight of his authority to the story of the Brahman Gangu. It would have been extremely unfair and unhistorical, if Ferishta had not noticed this legend at all. To quote a parallel case the generally accepted opinion about the parentage of Ali Muhammad Khan, founder of the family of Nawabs of Rampur is that he was a Jat, belonging to the village of Aonla in U. P. But from the time of Ghulam Ali, the author of *Imad us-Saadat*, another story that Ali Muhammad's father was a Sayyid became current. If a historian passes over altogether the story of the Jat parentage of Ali Muhammad, he would be accused of suppressing facts nearer truth.

Ths cognomen *Bahmani* having failed altogether to give us a clue to Hasan's origin, we have the only other alternative, namely Kangu, Kanku, Gangu or Gangu to guide us in the search of Hason's pedigree. The correct designation by which Hasan, the founder of the so-called Bahmani dynasty, was distinguished before his accession to the throne was perhaps neither Kanku nor Kangu but *Gangu* ; because Ferishta who first chronicled the popular legend current in the Deccan can be credited at least with giving us the correct cognomen which sounded like a Hindu name. We also

owe to Ferishta another important fact regarding the origin of Hassan ; namely, that he was not a native of the South, but was born in Northen India in the neighbourhood of Delhi. We should now examine accounts of North Indian historians on the origin and activities of Hasan.

Badayuni in his account of the reign of Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq writes : "In the year 744 A. H. during his maroh through Samana and Sunam, the Sultan ordered a general massacre of the Sayyids of Kaithal and all the Muslims on account of his spite against Hasan Gangu[2] (*bar ragham-i-Hasan Gangu*). What might possibly be the connection between the Sayyids of Kaithal and Hasan Gangu ? Was Hasan Gangu a Sayyid ? It was not so ; because Barani (text p. 480), and Nizamuddin (Newal Kishore, text, p. 103), do not mention any massacre of the Sayyids of Kaithal and of the Muslims on the ground of their complicity with Gangu's revolt. Badayuni's original authority for the statement is evidently *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi* which notices the massacre of Sayyids of Kaithal, but does not connect it in any way with the rebellion of Hasan Gangu.[3] As a matter of fact, Hasan Gangu rose in rebellion about *three years after the massacre of the Sayyids of Kaithal.* The rebel for whose crime the Sayyids were punished was not Hassan Gangu, as Badayuni wrongly says, but Sayyid Hasan Kithili (Kaithali), father of Malik Ibrahim, *kharitadar* of Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq. This Sayyid Hasan revolted in Ma'bar in 742 A. H., *i.e., two years before the massacre of the Sayyids of Kaithal.* Barani mentions the rebellion of Sayyid Ahsan (Hasan ?) in Ma'bar but is silent over the punishment of the Sayyids of Kaithal while passing through Sunam (Pers. text, pp. 480-81) ; Nizamuddin Ahmad says that the Sultan heard near Qanauj the news of the rebellion of Hasan, father of Ibrahim *kharitadar,* in the country of Ma'bar, and that after his arrival at Delhi, the Sultan imprisoned Ibrahim and the relations of Hasan (text, p. 103). So it is proved that Sayyid Hasan, father of Ibrahim, and Hasan Gangu were not one and the same person as Badayuni (or perhaps the careless copyist of his work) holds.

Besides the above-mentioned Sayyid Hasan Kaithali, *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi* mentions half a dozen *Hasans,* each distinguished from the other by an epithet indicative either of domicile or of birth ; *e. g.,* Hasan *Barwabacha* (son of a Barwa or Parwari, slave),

[2] Pers. text, p. 231-2.

[3] Prof. K. K. Basu's translation of *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi* (Gaekwad Oriental Series), p. 109.

Hasan *Basri*, Hasan *Kanku* (Gangu), Hasan *Multani* and others. From this it appears, Kanku or Gangu was a well known cognomen current among the people of Upper India. Yahaya Sarhindi, the author of *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi*, in his account of the conspiracy for the murder of Sayyid Mubarak Shah—his patron and contemporary—says: "Some villainous infidels, such as, the sons of Kangu and Kajo Khatri, whose families since the days of their fore-fathers had been patronised and protected by the royal house, and each of whom had been possessors of large attendants, vast territory and great power, some treacherous Muslims also . . . . made deliberations together . . . ."[4] (p. 239). In a subsequent passage describing the actual murder, the same author says, "Sadharan Kangu stood with his party outside the door to prevent any outside relief" (ibid., p. 241). The second passage makes it clear that Kanku, Kangu or Gangu was not the name of the person, but of a Hindu caste or tribe known by this title.

It is a common fact that many of the Hindu tribes of the Punjab tenaciously cling to their tribal surnames even centuries after their conversion to Islam; *e.g.*, Gakhhars, Awans, Kambhos, Jats and Gujars of the Punjab, Chaks and Batts of Kashmir and Tagas of U. P. A few illustrations of the retention of tribal epithets by distinguished Hindu converts in Medieval India: Shahbaz Khan Kambo, Muhammad Salih Kambo, Kamal Khan Ghakkar, Qiya Khan Kang (a Jat) and Hasan Khan Bachchgoti (a Rajput of Oudh); Chaks of Kashmir, mostly Muslims and a few Brahmans. It was not uncommon that half the tribe accepted Islam while the other half remained Hindu. So it is not unreasonable to infer that the Kangu or Gangu was a Hindu tribe or caste of the Punjab, a portion of which had accepted Islam. Hasan, the founder of the so-called Bahmani dynasty, and Sadharan the murderer of Sayyid Muborak Shah belonged originally to the same stock. If so, it is not difficult to identify the Kangu or Gangu with some Hindu tribe or caste still bearing this title.

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[4] *Pisaran-i-Kankuu Kaju Khatri ke az aba wa ijdad parawardah wa barawardah-i-in-khandan* . . . . (text, p. 232).

Pisaran (sons) may lead us to infer *Kanku* (Gangu) to be the name of a person. But occurrence of such names as Sadharan Kangu, Hasan Kanku, unmistakably shows that Kanku is a tribal epithet common to a tribe, partly Hindu, partly converted to Islam. It is not unlikely that the real *name* (*ism*) before Kanku has been dropped either in the original Ms. or subsequent transcripts.

Rose's *Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North-Western Frontier Province* does not mention any tribe or caste, Kanku, or Ganku, which therefore, we may safely reject as possible variants of Hasan's cognomen. There is a Jat clan, *Gangah*, in the Multan district and also an Arain clan, *Gango* in the Montgomery district (vol. ii, p. 278). Hasan perhaps belonged to one of these clans, more probably to *Gango* clan of the Arains, who are now almost to a man Muhammedans and strongly inclined to orthodoxy" (vol. ii, p. 13). It is also important to note that Khizr Khan, the founder of the Sayyid dynasty originally belonged to Multan and that the Arains of the Punjab in general have a tradition that their original home was Uch, which is near Multan.

It is perhaps clear that Kanku cannot be a copyist's error, or a specimen of the Deccani Musalman's corruption of the famous name Kaikaus as the veteran historian Sir W. Haig is inclined to hold, because the word Kanku or Gangu evidently baffled his own attempt as well as that of Maulvi Abdul Wali. If Sir W. Haig cared to reconsider his opinion in any recent contribution in the light of new facts supplied by the Persian text of *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshai* (published in the Bib. Ind. series in 1932, *i. e.*, four years after the publication of the Cambridge History of India, Vol. III, 1928), he himself would have rejected the unhistorical legend about Hasan Gangu's claim to descend from the Persian king Bahman.

We hold that Hasan Gangu, founder of the so-called Bahmani dynasty, was either a Hindu convert or the descendant of a Hindu convert belonging to the *Gango sub-division of the Arain* commonly known as *Rain* tribe of the Punjab. Though we are not in favour of a revolutionary change of the name of Bahmani dynasty into *Gango-shahi* dynasty, we hope our minds should be disabused of the idea of the Persian descent of Hasan Gangu. Like Ferishta's story of Hasan's legendary Brahman master Gangu, the suggestion of Kaikaus being the name of Hasan's father and his descent from Bahman should now disappear. Dr. Ishwari Prasad in his *History of the Qaraunah Turks* is inclined to hold the correctness of the view that Hasan was of Iranian blood on the alleged claim of the latter who 'considered himself to be of the line (*nasal*) of Bahman bin Isfandiyar.' There would be an end of research if historians accepted without demur every claim of an individual regarding his origin. The origin of the Bahmanis suffered much from untutored popular imagination and false pride of effete descendants of an able upstart.

6

Guru Nanak through the Perspective of History

Statesmen and soldiers make History horizontally by cutting up the globe and humanity by longitude ; *i. e.*, countrywise and nation-wise. But saints and reformers in the sphere of society, morals and political history aim at making history without any dividing line except that of Time that divides the world and humanity with vertical lines of age ; *i. e.*, latitudinally, knowing neither the East or the West ; nor the North and the South : nor yet any colour bar of white and black, yellow and brown among the children of Adam. Time brings the men of god, and of emancipated intellect not for the benefit of a particular community, but for the good of humanity as a whole. The saints and reformers may die ; but like withering *mulsuri* flowers they continue to emit fragrance through ages, as a poet has sung,

phul mare par mare na vasu.

The saintly and philosophical class of the makers of world's history just show the way and give a start ; but they never finish their work which they leave to others to take up.

The orthodox view of treating History horizontally has now changed ; because they say it brings no good to man. Such a view of History is considered to be productive of the evils of intense nationalism and regionalism that divide the world today into warring camps of nations. So the more scientific and beneficial mode of the treatment is to study History and Humanity in their entirety, stratum by stratum, age by age. In such a study, saints, philanthropes and philosophers, *i. e.*, men of thought naturally overshadow the

men of action ; because action proceeds from thought and not *vice versa*. So through the new perspective of history Guru Nanak appears hundredfold more important than the much-dreaded one-eyed Lion of the Punjab, Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Guru Nanak sowed the seed ; the same Nanak, if we believe like the Sikhs lived in every successive Guru to water the crop, till Guru Govind declared, "after me no Guru, but only his creation, the Khalsa that shall guide itself and triumph." The spirit of the Sikh history demonstrates that the Guru is One in ten : the Community or the Khalsa is One in many ; the Panth is Akhand ; and the Grantha Shib is the mirror in which the Guru and his God,—without Name, without a partner, without form but *Sat, Shri, Akal* are to be found in their true reflection. Maharaja Ranjit Singh came and reaped the first crop of the Guru's field. Hundred Ranjits are there within the potent fold of the Guru biding their time, though the field appears to be barren and empty. As long as the spirit of the Khalsa would brave calamities in the same way as the warriors, who went on fighting undaunted against Mir Mannu singing merrily,

"Mir Mannu is the sickle,
We are the grass under it,
The more it cuts, the more we grow".

God, Guru and Victory shall never desert the Khalsa. It is high time for a true Sikh to rouse us to carry forward the second stage of the Guru's mission by preaching the gospel of peace, concord and love. It is the *Nam* only, sung by the first Guru to the accompaniment of the *rabab* of faithful Mardana that can untwine the secret cord of eternal music of human soul crushed by materialism.

Guru Nanak was one of the blessed few born in our land, self-taught and self-initiated, who reclaimed the Land of the Five Rivers from beneath the debris of alien creed and culture. The Punjab had been given up as irrevocably lost to Indian civilisation as early as the Gupta Age, if not earlier. It became as extra-Indian as the greater half of the Punjab today. The story need not be repeated here. The Guru was something greater than the Ganges ; but his disciples mistook him to be only an irrigation well for the Punjab and the Punjabis. It will be only selfishness to confine the Guru's message within the Punjab ; let the river of the Guru's love overflow its narrow embankments and take its course to the Cape Comorin flooding the whole of India with waters of manly spiritualism. The very Granth Sahib is an image of the spiritual unity of India from the Maharashtra to the Punjab. The

Guru was like the wild bee gathering the honey of divine love from every saintly flower that bloomed in Medieval India down to his own time. He created a bee-hive no doubt for the Punjabis; but the honey was gathered from Maharashtra and U. P., from Eknath and Namdev, from Kabir and his followers. For two generations Sikhs of the Guru were like harmless bees without sting. But the bigotry of Aurangzib broke the even tenor of their lives and forced the bees to grow sting and Guru Govind's *amrit* made these Guru's bees immortals, and their sting too mortal for their foe.

Indians believe that their misery is the punishment of some sin committed either in this or the previous life. Many suffer for the sins of a few, as the Guru told Mardana in reply to his enquiry of the Sayyidpur massacre by Babur. India, they say expiates the sins of the Brahmanas, though the Brahmanas were the creators and custodians of ancient greatness of India. What was meritorious and moral in one age may become pernicious and unmoral in a subsequent age; and hence the need of saints and reformers to open our eyes and make us think afresh for ourselves. Through a historical perspective, Lord Buddha, Kabir and Guru Nanak appear like gems pierced and held together by the same thread. Curiously enough the accepted version of Guru Nanak's life and teachings reveal a continuity of Indian thought through the ages. The arguments by which the Guru proved the hollowness of the Hindu ceremonies of *Shradh* and offering of balls of rice and oblations of waters to the manes are exactly those of the Charbak school of philosophy, though the Guru's teaching was exactly the reverse of hedonism. Those who do not believe in miracles have reasons to suspect that the *Jataka* story of Devadutta's hurling of the rock to kill Buddha in meditation is reproduced in the story of the *Panja Sahib*. At Rajgir, the Lord Budhha has been turned into Makhdum Sahib, whose little finger, the Muslims say, held the rolling rock near one of the hot springs. The halo of divine light round the head of Lord Budhha came down to the Guru by a spiritual heritage as it were.

Kabir and Guru Nanak were the shadows of the same Substance, call it Ram, Hari, Niranjan or Allah; and the shadows of both fell upon great Akbar as a reformer. Guru Nanak had no Guru except the True One; had he any other, we would have suspected it was Kabir and no other. Guru Nanak was, however, more tolerant, more eclectic and more practical; and therefore he was more successful, and goes down to history as the father of the Sikh Nation. It is rather a curious fact that the saints of India lived as

what they call Socialists, though they never openly preached Socialism *in the modern sense. The Guru gave a definitely socialistic bias* to the community of his disciples. To Lahana the Guru says :

"The wealth given by God which man useth himself or burieth in the earth is like carrion ; but the wealth which man shareth with others is as sacred food .....". If we could join chorus with the prayer of Kabir, there would have remained no problem of inequitable distribution of wealth in the world. Let us wind up with Kabir's prayer to God—

"Sain, itna dijiye jamai kutumb samahe ;
Main bhi bhukha na rahun, sadu bhi bhuka na jaye."

7

Some Side-Lights on the Character and Court-Life of Shah Jahan

The very name of the Emperor Shah Jahan conjures up a vision of the Taj, the Peacock-throne, and a lonely tower of the Agra Fort where he died a prisoner of his son. His life-history is a long tale of romance and tragedy in which love, adventure and pathos abound. It is said that the glamour of the Tajmahal hides many an ugly trait of his character and many unhappy features of his reign which are revealed in the accounts of the contemporary foreign travellers. We propose to keep clear of controversy and limit our survey to a few aspects of his character and rule in the light of original Persian authorities, occasionally supplemented by Hindi literary traditions. We shall depict Shah Jahan as he loved to see himself portrayed in his Court-history, *Padshah-nama*, which the great minister Sadullah Khan used to read out to the Emperor and make necessary corrections at his suggestion.

In character, the contrast between Akbar and Shah Jahan is more striking than resemblance—the latter was essentially a reactionary with a missionary zeal to exalt Islam by repressing other religions. After his accession to the throne, Shah Jahan abolished many un-Islamic innovations of Akbar (*e.g.*, prostration before the throne), restored Hijri Era in the State Calendar, and revived the influence of the orthodox party which hailed him as the real *Mahdi* (Guide). During his reign the empire lost to a great extent its national character, and became pre-eminently an Islamic state, governed according to the Institutes of Muhammad (*Shariyat-i-Muhammadi*). But the character of Shah Jahan partook of a double

nature—an actual combination of Muslim orthodoxy and a profane tradition of age of Akbar. He was Dara and Aurangzib in one; the latter representing the 'other side of the medal'.

Shah Jahan believed in the merit of even forcible conversion, as the Tradition says: 'God marvels at men that are dragged to Paradise with chains.' He spared the rebels on their conversion to Islam; and those who refused his clemency were treated with genuine Turkish brutality. Rank, office and rewards were bestowed on Hindu renegades; even *Jihad*[1] was approved when it was not likely to cause a general commotion among the Hindus. In Kashmir he changed the Hindu names of places into Islamic ones and destroyed some Hindu shrines. He prohibited the construction of new temples on the Crown lands of the Empire; and within a few years of his accession, 76 Hindu temples in the process of building were destroyed within the jurisdiction of Benares alone. Some of the *Feringi* prisoners of Hoogly were pardoned on their conversion to Islam, while others were allowed to perish in the prison; all their icons were broken except two which were thrown into the Jumna. Shah Jahan destroyed happy beginnings of Hindu-Muslim unity which even the most optimistic patriot of to-day can hardly imagine. 'In the month of Rabi-us-sani, A. H. 1044, when the Imperial standard reached the neighbourhood of Bhimbar Pass at the foot of the Kashmir hills, His Majesty learnt that the Mussalmans of this place, owing to their primitive ignorance, *gave their own daughters in marriage to the Hindus* [*ba-Kufar dokhtar medehend*] and also took wives from them. There was an understanding that Hindu women married by Mussalmans were to be buried and Muslim girls were to be cremated according to Hindu custom, after death. The Emperor, who is the Shelter of the Faith, ordered that the Hindus who had married Muslim women must be compelled either to renounce

Reference: A local officer who had undertaken a '*Jihad*' to convert a remnant of Hindu population of *Darubeki*, 40 miles south of Jalalabad is praised (Waris Ms. 107 b). Anchal and Incha were given the names Sahibabad and Islamabad respectively (*Pad*, ii, pp. 49, 51); the Waqia-navis (News-writer), reports the destruction of temples in Benares, (*ibid.*, i, pp. 451-2); Christian icons thrown into the Jamuna (*ibid.*, i, p. 535), Rajah Bakhtawar Kachhwah who had accepted Islam gets Rs. 2,000 in reward (*ibid.*, i. p. 540). at the recommendation of Aurangzib, Premji, the son of the Hindu Rajah of Baglana, named Sadat-mand after conversion, receives a mansab of 1,500 zat, 1,000 sawars (*ibid.*, iii, p. 142).

infidelity or to part with their Muslim wives. Jogu, a Zamindar of these parts—from whom these despicable customs had originated—through the grace of God, and *out of fear, and at the desire of His Majesty* (*bim o ummed-i-Hazrat Sahib-qiran Sani*), with all his kinsmen accepted Islam, and was honoured with the title of Rajah Daulatmand'.[2]

Shah Jahan discontinued religious debate, and all coquetting with heathen philosophy ; nor did he take any personal interest in the Hindu festivals of *Dewali* and *Rakshabandhan*. He instituted the *Shab-i-barat* as a national festival which was celebrated with much pomp wherever the Emperor happened to stay. In the year 1639 when Shah Jahan was at Lahore, Ali Mardan Khan once solicited permission to arrange a display of illumination in the Persian style in the night of *Shab-i-barat*. On the night of 11th Shaban A.H. 1049 the spacious court-yard of the Public Audience Hall of Lahore was wonderfully illuminated under the skilful management of Ali Mardan, who as it were, made every inch of ground emit light. The Emperor sat on the throne and ordered a display of fire-works in the court-yard of the Hall, and also outside, on the plain below the *Jharoka-i-darshan* for the enjoyment of the people at large. 'On this night Rs. 10,000 was distributed in alms to the poor ; and Mullah Fazil, and Mullah Abdul Hakim Sialkoti received two hundred ashrafis each as gifts out of the gold of Weighing (*az zar-i-wazn*)'.[3] 'The *Milad* on the anniversary of the Prophet was an occasion of great solemnity at Court, and only on this day the Emperor of Hindustan, the shadow of the Almighty (*Zill-i-Sobhani*), would debase himself by descending from the throne, and taking his seat on carpet spread upon the ground. On the night of 12th Rabi-ul-awwal, A H. 1043, the Emperor ordered a majlis to be held in the Palace (of Agra). A group of scholars, pious men, and Quran-reciters read the Quran and narrated the virtues and noble actions of the Prophet : rose-water was profusely scattered and perfumes distributed ; and trays of food, sweet-meats and *haluwa* were given to the people. As a token of reverence to this night of solemnity, His Majesty took his seat on a carpet spread on the ground, and made gifts of *Farji* (tout-cloth ?), wrappers and (shawls) to the Faqirs. . . . Rs. 20,000 in all was distributed in charity to the poor on this occasion.'[4]

2 *Pad*, ii, 57.
3 *Shab-i-barat* celebrated at Lahore, *Pad*, iii, pp. 167-8.
4 *Pad*, i, pp. 539-40.

Shah Jahan used to send lavish presents, and gifts of money every year to Mecca and Medina; once a candlestick (*Qandil*), studded with jewels was presented to the Prophet's tomb; among the jewels, there was one uncut diamond which alone weighed *180 ratis*.[5]

In spite of his orthodoxy, Shah Jahan could not completely free himself from some of the popular superstitions of the age. Foremost among these was his regard for astrology. In fixing the auspicious moments of marriage. etc., calculation was made according to Greek and Hindu systems independently, and the Emperor was not satisfied till they reached unanimity. We are told that the *lagna* of Dara's marriage was thus fixed by the astrologers of Greece and Hindustan (*ke mukhtar-i-anjum shanasian-i-Yunnan-u-Hindustan bud*).[6] Astrologers once predicted that the Emperor was likely to fall ill, and that this could be averted by a special weighing (*Wazn*)! Accordingly the Emperor was weighed against gold on the eighth Rabi-us-sani, 1043.[7] Shah Jahan continued the custom of weighing himself twice every year against gold and silver on his Lunar and Solar birth-days, a Hindu religious practice, *Tula purush*, adopted by Akbar. As this was an incongruity, and a violation of *Shariyat* (religious Ordinances of Islam), Abdul Hamid offers an explanation for its retention, and says that it was calculated to take off evil and benefit the poor, and particularly the Ulema class among whom the gifts were distributed. On his Solar Birth-day the Emperor was weighed twelve times against the following articles successively; gold, silver, silk, perfumes, copper, *ruh-i-tutya* (quick silver ?), drugs, *ghee*, rice-milk, seven kinds of grain and salt; and on Lunar Birth-day eight times against the following; gold, silver, tin, cloth, lead, fruits and vegetables. The third great festivity of the year was the Nauroz which, in spite of its un-Islamic character, had become sanctified by usage. The Court-life of Shah Jahan was indeed an unbroken round of pomp and festivity which served to alleviate the gloom of reaction. Outwardly his regime was a continuation of the Age of Akbar, though beneath the surface, the strong under-current of reaction was sapping the foundation of the Empire.

A child of the Orient, Shah Jahan could not but have in him an element of mysticism which was inherited by Dara. His heredi-

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[5] February 1648; Waris Ms., 10 b.
[6] *Pad*, i, p. 458.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 543.

tary devotion to Shaikh Muin-ud-din Chisti can be inferred from the fact that in the Court-history a biographical sketch of that saint is introduced as an auspicious preface to the narrative of his reign. He often received and returned the visits of eminent Sufi teachers of his age. We are told that on December 18, 1634, the Emperor paid a visit to the famous saint Mian Mir in his abode in the neighbourhood of Lahore, and spent sometime in discoursing on the mysteries of Truth and Gnosis.[8] 'On one occasion when singers and jugglers were entertaining the royal assembly, Shaikh Nazir who had been invited to Court on account of his fame in working miracles—suddenly fell into ecstacy and called for a glass of water. The Shaikh drank a little and passed it on to others ; everyone who tasted of it declared it to be pure honey . . . . Prince Dara Shukoh and Qazi Muhammad Islam submitted to His Majesty that in Agra the Shaikh had in their presence once transformed a handkerchief into a pigeon (kabutar) ; further they added that once the Shaikh gave into their hands a blade of grass but out of the fold came out a worm into which the blade of grass had transformed itself.'[9]

The reign of Shah Jahan was a period of transition from the enlightened Nationalism of Akbar to the gloomy orthodox reaction of the days of Aurangzib. However, his Court remained a happy meeting-ground of Hindu and Muslim cultures, and literary merit and genius were liberally rewarded without any discrimination of creed. Though it is in vain that one looks for any Hindu names in Abdul Hamid's notice of poets and learned men of the age, he has preserved for us in scattered passages of *Padshah-nama* an interesting picture of Shah Jahan's patronage to Hindu poets, musicians, and intellectual prodigies. 'On September 14, 1629, Yamin-ud-daula Asaf Khan brought to the Court two Tirhut (in North Bihar) Brahmans. Ten newly composed Hindi (*Sanskrit*) stanzas recited before them only once by ten different poets in succession—could be exactly repeated by each of these two Brahmans in the same order ; besides they could compose extempore ten stanzas more on those very topics and in the self-same metres. . . His Majesty bestowed khilats on them with Rs. 1,000 in reward to each.[10] At his Court Jagannath Pandit, the famous author of *Ras Gangadhar*, wrote a poem in praise of Asaf Khan (Asaf-lahari), and a *Kavya* 'Jagadabharanam', the hero of which is Prince Dara Shukoh. This Jagannath is referred to in the

[8] *Pad*, ii, p. 65.
[9] *Ibid*, p 337.
[10] *Ibid.*, i, pp. 268-69.

Padshah-nama, as Jagannath Kalawant (Musician). The following passage of Abdul Hamid shows that Jagannath also composed a panegyric in Sanskrit on the Emperor Shah Jahan—which may some day come to light : 'On the 22nd Rabi-us-sani, A. H. 1044 . . . . Jagannath Kalawant presented at Bhimbar twelve literary pieces (*tasnifat*) which in Hindustani they call Dharand (?). These songs (poems ?) were composed in the name of His Majesty who became so pleased that Jagannath was weighed against silver and the whole amount Rs. 4,500 was given to him in reward.[11] This poet-musician was originally given the title of *Kaviray* which was afterwards changed into *Maha-kavi-ray*. In the above passage Abdul Hamid apparently uses the word Hindustani in the sense of Sanskrit ; because Jagannath who was a Tailanga Brahman (as we learn from a Sanskrit source), composed songs only in the Karnataka language. Elsewhere he says, 'in this delightful age Jagannath Maha-kavi-ray heads the list of authors.[12] But his charming songs are written *in Karnatak language*, and the people of these tracts owing to their ignorance of this language, cannot understand the meaning and have to be content only with melody and tune of these songs.' This places the identity of Jagannath Pandit beyond challege and also incidentally proves that the above-mentioned twelve pieces of composition were neither songs nor were they written in Hindustani (*i.e.*, Urdu or Hindi as we understand it) but in Sanskrit. Another great Sanskrit scholar, Kavindracharya Sarasvati also enjoyed the patronage of Shah Jahan and Prince Dara. A list of his collection of Sanskrit works has been published in the Baroda Oriental Series and we learn from this source that Kavindra enjoyed the friendship of the enlightened Crown Prince. According to the authors of *Misra-bandhu-Vinod*, he was a Brahman of Benares, and besides some Sanskrit works of merit, he wrote a Hindi poem of 160 stanzas, entitled *Kavindra-kalpalata* in which he praises the Emperor and his sons, and describes the splendour of Shahjahanabad (the New Mughal Delhi), and the happiness of its inhabitants.[13] Kavindra is also the author of a philosophical work *Yoga-vasishta sar*[14] and he was a familiar figure at Court as early as

[11] *Pad*, ii. p. 56.
[12] *Sar-dafta-i-musannifan dar in zaman. . . . Jagannath Maha-Kavi-ray ast. . . . Lekin az an ru-i-ke in mughmat. . . . ba zaban-i-Karnatak shuyu dasht*, etc., *Pad*, iii, p. 5.
[13] *M. B.*, ii, p. 453.
[14] *M. B.*, ii, p. 454.

1652. 'Kavindra interviewed His Majesty (at Lahor), and received Rs. 1,500 in reward on the 2nd Zilqada, A.H. 1062.'[15]

Shah Jahan was himself a thorough master of the Hindi vernacular and appreciated Hindi poetry like his illustrious grandfather. Some poets seemed to have been in the enjoyment of hereditary patronage of the Royal House. One of these was Harinath (or Harnath), son of Akbar's court-poet Narhari Mahapatra ; on January 29, 1640, he received in reward from Shah Jahan, one horse, one elephant and one lakh of *Dams* (40 *d*—1 *sicca* rupee).[16] According to a literary tradition, while Harinath was returning from the darbar with these gifts, a Brahman beggar recited an extempore couplet in his praise, and asked for reward. The poet gave him a lakh of dams.[17] Khafi Khan says that once the Emperor gave a female elephant and Rs. 2,000 in cash to a Hindi poet who recited a poem in praise of him (*Kabit ba-nam-i Padshah guftah guzarad*).[18] However, the most serviceable among the Hindu literary satellites of the Court was the poet-diplomat Sundar Kaviray who is several times mentioned in *Padshah-nama* in connection with his missions to Hindu rebels, Jujhar Singh Bundela and Rajah Jagat Singh of Jammu.[19] He was a Brahman of Gwalior, and is the author of an erotic poem *Sundar-shringar* in which we are told that he resided at the Court of Shah Jahan, and that he at first enjoyed the title of Kavi-ray which was afterwards exalted into Maha-kavi-ray.[20] Siromani Misra and Vedanga-Ray, Hindi authors of *Urbashi* and *Parsiprakas* respectively, are also said to have enjoyed the patronage of Shah Jahan. Among the Court musicians, Lal Khan was most popular for his unrivalled superiority in singing *Dhrupad.* He was the son-in-law of Bilas, son of Tansen of Akbar's Court. Lal Khan's sons Khush-hal and Visram were equally proficient in this art ; the former used to compose songs in the name of the Emperor (*ba-nam-i-nami khediw-iqbal tasnifat me-bandad*)[21]. Lal Khan was given the title of *Gunasamudra,* and an elephant in reward on October 8. 1642.[22] Another musician Darang Khan was weighed against silver and the whole

[15] Waris MS., p. 191.
[16] *Pad,* iii, p. 177.
[17] *M. B.*, ii, p. 470.
[18] *Muntakhab,* ii, p. 707.
[19] *Pad,* ii, 94 : iii. p. 238.
[20] *M.B.*, ii, pp. 454-5.
[21] *Pad,* iii, p. 5.
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 311.

amount Rs. 4,500 given to him in reward on March 14, 1636.[23] What strikes us most is the Emperor's patronage to an Armenian, Zulqarnin Feringi. He had written a book in the name of the Emperor and this having met with approval, he was given a robe of honour and Rs. 5,000 in cash. This man seems to have been an expert in Greek astrology and the 'book' referred to is perhaps a horoscope, though the text does not warrant such interpretation (*tasnifi ke ba-nam-i-nami sakhtah bud*).[24] This Armenian secured a mansab of 500 zat, 300 sawars.[25]

The reign of Shah Jahan suffers by comparison with that of Akbar in every way, except in its achievements in architecture and painting. In administration it produced no first-rate genius except Sadullah Khan, and in arms only commanders of mediocre ability like Nusrat Jang and Zafar Jang. Rajah Raghunath and other capable Hindu Diwans were kept down to their subordinate positions, because the Shaikhs and Sayyids did not like the rise of a second Todar Mal. The author of *Amal-i-Salih* says, 'When the suppliants of His Majesty represented that it ought to be a custom to appoint a sufficient number of pious Muslims in the Revenue Department, and that so far as possible the Hindus should not be allowed to have a preponderance in offices, so that Sayyids, Shaikhs and men of virtue and piety might not be turned back by them—Rai Manidas was transferred, out of this consideration, from the *Tan* section of the Treasury and Mullah Abdul Latif Lashkar Khani who was wise in affairs and pure in faith was appointed in his place.[26] Similarly, no Hindu general rose to the rank of 7,000 zat during his long reign of thirty years. In the field of letters Abdul Hamid and Kambo were poor successors of Abul Fazl and Nizamuddin; while as poets Haji Muhammad Qudsi and Saida Gilani were but sorry figures by the side of Faizi and Urfi Shirazi. According to expert art-critics, painters of Shah Jahan's court such as Manohar, Nadir Samarqandi, and others were even superior in skill to their masters of the Age of Akbar. The Album of Dara Shukoh occupies the same position and has the same importance in the history of the Indo-Persian Painting as the incomparable Taj in the history of Indo-Muslim Architecture. The taper of the Mughal glory indeed burnt brightest before final extinction.

[23] *Pad.*, ii. p. 142. [24] *Ibid.*, iii, p. 138. [25] *Ibid.*, p. 748.
[26] Kambu's *Amal-i-Salih*, pp. 513, 518; *Padshah-nama* says that Abdul Latif Gujrati was appointed on the demise of Rai Mani Das on 2nd Rabi-ul-awal, 1042.

8

Dara Shukoh and Mirza Raja Jai Singh Kachhwah

The life history of Prince Muhammad Dara Shukoh is a veritable tragedy—a tale of sharp reverses of fortune, pathetic and melancholy. His is a painful story of virtue ensnared by craft, of benefits forgotten and trust betrayed, of perverse Destiny cruelly turning his own arms against himself. This good-natured and enlightened prince strived hard all through his life to revive the traditions of the days of his great-grand-father Akbar in the face of the growing Islamic bigotry at the Mughal Court. We recognise in him the princely hero of Jagannath Pandit's charming epic *Jagadabharanam* (The Ornament of the World), the earnest student of the *Upanishads*, the munificent patron of Kavindracharya and a host of other Sanskrit scholars, the catholic-hearted donor to Hindu temples, and the only refuge of the Hindu suppliants at Shah Jahan's Court. He had, indeed, established a fair and legitimate claim upon the loyal support of the Hindus. He thought he could safely rely, like his great-grand-father, upon the valour and fidelity of the Rajput race. The Rajputs however, with the noble exception of the Hada, proved broken reeds to him. The Sisodia belied his proud tradition, the Rathor wavered and broke his pledge, and the Kachhwah, did not stake much for a sentiment. We shall attempt at throwing some light upon the conduct of Mirza Rajah Jai Singh Kachhwah during the War of Succession among Shah Jahan's sons by tracing the early relations between him and Prince Dara.

Among the minor characters in the tragedy of this philosopher-prince of the House of Timur, Mirza Rajah Jai Singh figures most prominent in an intricate role. He enters the stage, along with Maharajah Jaswant Singh Rathor, as one of the twin pillars of Dara's

strength and hope, trusted at a critical moment of the Prince's fortune with a high and responsible command. At first he acts with apparent zeal in the entire interests of Dara, and brings the campaign against Shuja to a successful, though tardy, close. He slackens his efforts after Jaswant's defeat at Dharmat ; makes delays in replying to the despatches of Dara and the Emperor ; receives friendly letters from Aurangzib ; and the moment he hears of Dara's overthrow at Samugarh he makes a clean somersault, showing little compunction either for the unfortunate prince or for the helpless Emperor. If we can believe Manucci who served both under Dara and Jai Singh and knew the latter well, the Mirza Rajah played for sometime the game of hunting with the hound and running with the hare. He advises Sulaiman to fly from his camp and sends at his heels a detachment in pursuit ! Then the Rajah joins Aurangzib with almost the whole of the eastern army of Dara, seduced from their allegiance through his efforts, accepts with alacrity the odious commission of killing, capturing or driving Dara beyond the limits of Hindustan. He dissuades, as Manucci alleges, Maharajah Jaswant Singh from joining the forlorn band of Dara assembled at Ajmir, spreads a net of diplomacy to capture Dara, and keeps up a vigorous and keen pursuit, hounding the tracks of the fugitive prince as far as the sands of Siwistan ; yet he was suspected, though without proof, of wilfully letting Dara escape beyond Aurangzib's reach. Such is the Mirza Rajah depicted by the friendly pen of Manucci.

The despatches from Jai Singh to Aurangzib during the pursuit of Dara after the battle of Ajmir (preserved in *Half Anjuman* ii f. 26-37 a), reveal the Kachhwah chief as a determined enemy of Dara, bearing, as it were, some ancient grudge against that prince. Another collection of private letters and official despatches which passed between Dara and Jai Singh (dating roughly 1642-1658), have been recently discovered by Professor Jadunath Sarkar, C. I. E., among the Archives of the Jaipur Darbar. These letters, however, tell another tale, showing the existence of the most cordial and intimate relation between the two, till the Mirza chose to forsake the sinking wreck of Dara's fortune after the battle of Samugarh. We find therein a studious effort on the part of Dara to draw the Mirza Rajah closer to his person and interests by evincing (close) friendship and readiness to oblige by doing him good services at Court. Before Sulaiman could prattle, Dara writes in one of these letters to Jai Singh : "My little son Sulaiman sends you *salam* !" We give below a few more extracts from them.

Letter No. 31—Dara to Jai Singh ; received at the camp of Aurangabad, 24th Safar, 1054 H. (1st April, 1646)

". . . . Received your letter to the Emperor. You have begged about the marriage of Rao Amar Singh's daughter[1] . . . . As she is reported to be born of your own sister, I wish that if this marriage takes place it is well and good ; otherwise if she is of any other mother you may marry her anywhere you like. My desire is that you and your kinsfolk should be connected with my son Sulaiman Shukoh . . . . (Ms., p. 73).

No. 34—Dara to Jai Singh ; received on the 26th April, 1646, at Aurangabad.

". . . . Kunwar Ram Singh (eldest son of the Mirza Raja) came and saw me on the 30th March and on Ist April waited on the Emperor through me. His Majesty graciously put questions and praised him for his proper answers. I spoke for you. Ram Singh is created a *hazari*, (zat and sawar) . . . ."

No. 41—Dara to Jai Singh . . . . received March, 1648.

". . . . I have reached Kabul by forced marches by order of the Emperor and seen His Majesty . . . . Kunwar Ram Singh was with the Emperor . . . . We greatly favour him. This is the first journey of the Kunwar . . . . I reported to His Majesty, and having secured His Majesty's permission for the Kunwar to go home, sent him home from Peshawar. . . ."

No. 39—Dara to Jai Singh, dated 29th Zilqada 1064-H. (22nd October, 1654), *i.e.*, a year after the siege of Qandahar.

". . . . Your letter, full of sincere love and regard carrying the news of the birth of a grandson to you, has reached me. May the coming of the child prove happy and auspicious to you and the father ! . . . . Another news is that the Emperor is going towards Ajmir and will passs by your home. I shall be a guest of yours. The imperial army has attacked the country of the Maharana (Raj Singh of Mewar).[2] I have been always a well-wisher of the Rana.

[1] This marriage was celebrated, according to Waris *Padshah nama*. Ms. ii, 53) on the 30th March, 1654.

[2] 'Emperor Jahangir had imposed a condition upon Rana Amar Singh that the Rana and his successors should never repair the fortifications of Chitor. Maharana Raj Singh restored the walls of this fort in violation of this injunction. Shah Jahan sent an army to punish him ; the Rana, in fear, solicited the intercession of Prince Dara for securing the Emperor's pardon. His envoys,

I intend to make the loyalty and purity of the motive of the Rana known to His Majesty, so that the Rana's country may be saved from damages by the imperial army. . . ."

No. 43—Dara to Jai Singh, written probably in November, 1654.

". . . . A great calamity had befallen the Rana. . . . His affair has been settled through great efforts on my part ; his territory and honour remain unaffected. Let it be known to the Rajputs to what extent do I wish well of their race, and show them special favour ! My perfect good will goes with you !"

No. 47—Dara to Jai Singh, dated Rabius-sani, 1065-H-February, 1655.

". . . . I was very much alarmed at the news that some wretch inflicted on you a wound with a spear. It gives me great joy to learn that your wound is slight and that the wicked fellow has been killed by you. You must keep me informed about the progress of your recovery, as my innermost heart is deeply concerned about your health. I have several times warned you that your enemies are many and that you shouid be watchful about your person. It is strange you have been so careless that such an accident could occur twice After this you ought to be very cautions. . . ."

There are some letters written by Dara complaining about the oppression of the Raja's *gumashtas*, in his *jagir*, but there is hardly any thing offending in them. Several letters show that Dara was rather over-anxious to remove the slightest tinge of suspicion and misunderstanding from the mind of the Rajah about his own motive and action. What strikes us most is the cold and inadequate response on the part of the Mirza Rajah to Dara's advances of warm friendship. The following letter of Dara to Jai Singh (written on 9th Zilhijja, year illegible) makes us infer that some suspicion and dislike lingered in the mind of the Rajah. . . ."Your letter addressed to Fakhir Khan was shown by the Khan to his Majesty. I am very much surprised to learn the contents of this letter written by one who always received special attention from me and whom I count among one of my sincerest well-wishers. I wonder how you could believe in this sort of unreal things on the words of selfish and designing persons who, under the pretence of zeal and friendship,

Rao Ram Chand Chauhan, Raghudas Hada, Sanudas Rathor, and Ganpat Das Purohit, waited upon the Prince Dara on 2nd Zilhijja, 1064-H (4th October, 1654 ; Waris Ms., ii, 73—80).

work mischief. . . . . .You have chastised the Badgujar (a Rajput tribe) at the Emperor's command. When did I employ this rebel tribe in my service ? I trust you fully—don't believe the false report of enemies. Your son is at Court ; write to any one whom you trust to inform what the Badgujar's name is and when I did engage him. In truth the matter is entirely false. . . . . ".

Now let us turn to the closing act of the drama. Dara sends the Mirza Rajah as the guardian and Chief of the Staff of Sulaiman Shukoh, who was nominally invested with the supreme command. The Rajah is found making slow marches, more intent on manoeuvring out Shuja than inflicting any sudden and decisive blow at the enemy. Sulaiman in a letter (dated 5th December, 1657) writes to the Rajah—". . . . I am making short marches only to enable you to join me. . . . . come quick. . . . . ." Several letters of Dara to the Mirza Rajah also urge rapid marches and fewer halts of the army. The only great and decisive victory (*i.e.*, the battle of Bahadurpur near Benares, 14th February, 1658) in this campaign was gained at the bold initiative of Sulaiman Shukoh, though the Mirza Rajah and his followers acquitted themselves well when an action was forced upon them. Dara, however, judiciously lavishes praise and presents upon the Mirza Raja :

Dara to Jai Singh ; dated 20th February, 1658.

"Fakhir Khan arrived on 18 February. 1658, and gave the news of your victory. May God make this victory auspicious to Ala Hazrat Shah Baba (Sulaiman), to Dada Bhai (term of endearment used by Dara to the Mirza Rajah, perhaps on account of his being Sulaiman's uncle-in-law), to me and all the nobles of this daily increasing state ! You have delighted the departed spirit of Man Singh. . . ."

Dara sends a special sword and shield as *Yadgar* (Memento) to the Rajah, and a reward of Rs. 50,000, and procures a promotion of the Rajah by a thousand zat and 900 troops and of other officers recommended by him (letter to Jai Singh, received on 25th February, 1658). The following letter shows Dara's anxiety not to give the Rajah any offence or cause of suspicion by the action of Sulaiman. Sulaiman probably wrote something to the court not favourable to the Rajah. Dara writes to the Rajah. . . . . "The news about the other side (Shuja's) included in my son's letters to the Emperor is suspected by His Majesty to be fabricated through malice. It has therefore been written to my son that the news about Shuja should be written by you, so that the Emperor may credit it. . . . ." Perhaps

Young Sulaiman, eager for action, complained to the Emperor about too many halts made by the Rajah at Jitpur (?), a place somewhere between Mungir and Patna. The Mirza Rajah who was asked to offer an explanation (letter, dated 15th April, 1658), explains the situation in a long letter, alleging strange character of the country, strength of the enemy's position, etc. Meanwhile, the battle of Dharmat is lost by Jaswant Singh. Dara and the Emperor now cling to Mirza Rajah as their only support and hope.

Letter No. 28.—Dara to Jai Singh : "In these days the Emperor frequently remembers you, and says 'To-day the Rajah is my chief general and in battle the greatest hope of mine. . . .Work is in him'."

Letter No. 48—Dara to Jai Singh : received on the 16th May, 1958.

". . . . . .Come with Sulaiman Shukoh quickly, as I have a large army but no experienced general . . . . . ." Dara wrote despatches in succession to the Mirza Rajah ordering him to come only with select troops and light kit. He procured the promotion of the Rajah to the rank of the commander of 7,000. The Rajah reached only as far as Korah where the disastrous news of Samugarh broke upon him. The cautious and calculating Kachhwah was easily convinced of the folly of unselfish devotion to the cause of Dara.

With characteristic mercenary logic he now considered himself absolved from all ties of allegiance to Shah Jahan, and of alliance, political and matrimonial, with the unfortunate Dara.

Dara wrote perhaps his last letter to the Rajah from Mathura. It breathes the same noble and kind sentiments of the prince who yet fondly hoped that the Rajah would join him at Delhi and fight his battles. This letter (quoted in full in the appendix) conveys to the Rajah the news of the safety of the Rajah's son, and of the death of Rustam Khan Firuz Jang and several other nobles.

Was there all love and cordiality between Dara and Jai Singh as the above mentioned extracts seem to indicate ?

In truth, had Dara known the art of employing language to conceal his thoughts, Aurangzib might not have so easily snatched away the crown of Hindustan from him. Admitting, however, that the Prince was gracious and sincere in his professions of goodwill and friendship, how did the Rajah take them ? Cold, calculating and shrewd, the Kachhwah chief certainly regarded these little services at Court, congratulations and flattering encomiums as too low a bid for his sword which could possibly hew a way for the Prince to the throne of Delhi. If the all-powerful Heir Apparent who ruled

the doting heart of the old Emperor were so generous and true to him, how was it that in spite of his seniority in years and faithful services, the Mirza Rajah was kept in the rank of 5,000, while his Rathor rival Jaswant rose to that of 6,000 ?

Even after the Mirza Rajah's victory over Shuja near Benares, his increased rank was kept lower to that of Jaswant by 100 *sawar*. No personal tie, no solemn pledge of support bound him to Dara. He owed allegiance to Shah Jahan only, and when that emperor ceased to be the *de facto* ruler, could any code af honour or dictates of policy urge him to transfer that allegiance to his twice-beaten son ?

The conduct of the Mirza Raja is after all not so inconsistent and inexplicable. He went to fight Shuja as a servant of the Emperor Shah Jahan, sharing almost the feelings of his imperial master toward all the princes *minus* Shah Jahan's partiality for Dara. The long halts and short marches were certainly meant to give time and opportunity to Shuja to retire unmolested, as Shah Jahan heartily desired, while Dara in his anger and impatience would have the Raja take a flight on the wings of Fury for bringing him the head of his rebellious brother ! Jai Singh allowed Sulaiman to escape—perhaps Dara, too—as a grateful return for favours he received from them. He dissuaded Jaswant Singh from joining Dara because he was convinced of the folly of self-less devotion to such an incapable, though high-souled prince.

Dara was not always so kind, courteous and friendly to the Mirza Rajah as the letters quoted above would make us believe. There was actually a serious quarrel and estrangement between the two during the siege of Qandahar by Dara. The author of the *Lataif-ul-akhbar* who was present at the siege narrates the following incidents :

(1) During the interview on the 18th Jamada II, 1063 A. H. (6th May, 1653), an unseemly altercation took place between Dara and Jai Singh. The Prince made a taunting remark to the Rajah : "This is the third time that you have come against Qandahar. If you fail this time also what answer will you give to His Majesty, and how would you show your face to the women of Hindustan ? In truth, women are better than men who have returned again and again unsuccessful from this place." The Rajah gave a sharp reply, hinting at the incompetence of the prince and returned to his camp in great disgust.

(2) On the 6th Shaaban Jai Singh was sent for and Dara

made a very earnest request to him to make an assault upon the fort holding out many bright promises. But the Raja kept a sullen attitude without speaking a word in reply for a considerable time. At last he came away from the Prince's presence, giving him a cold and evasive reply. This attitude he maintained also on subsequent occasions of his interview with the prince.

(3) Dara again summoned the Rajah to a council of war on the 5th Shawwal, 1063 A. H. He said to the Raja "Raja Jiu, your exertions in the Emperor's business have fallen short of expectation from the beginning. No plea will be heard now. Gird up your loins tightly for storming the fort." Jai Singh, as usual, evaded the issue, protesting loyalty with hollow phrases. Dara in anger said to him, "Your heart and tongue do not seem to agree. What is in your heart, the tongue does not give out, and whatever the tongue utters finds no echo in your heart !" Jai Singh's fearless replies on equal terms displeased the prince who said : "Whether you agree to the proposal of assault or not, I do give order for it, no matter whether you die or conquer the fort."

(4) On the 11th of Shaaban, Dara sent to the Rajah the following message : "If you do not preserve unanimity in the siege-camp and create confusion and disturbance in the work of the Emperor, you should better go to the front, *i e.*, to Bust in the place of Rustam Khan Firuz Jang who will not grudge the sacrifice of his life and fortune for the Emperor's work."

(5) Jai Singh, having refused to carry out Dara's command to advance his trenches, Dara sent him a sharp order : "As you seem to have no desire to capture this fort . . . . you shall hand over the charge of your battery to Iftikhar Khan, and march to the *Shutar-garden* pass through which the enemy contemplates an attack upon the imperial army." The Rajah started for his new post on that very day.

(6) News reached Dara that Jai Singh's men were cutting trees from the gardens of the peasants for fuel, and oppressing them. On the 25th Shawwal Dara sent Shaham Quli to the Rajah with the following message : "I hear you are oppressing the people and cutting trees from their gardens. *Had you displayed such energy* while you were posted beneath the walls of Qandahar, you could have by this time captured this fort by destroying all its walls !" The Mirza Raja replied. ". . . . Fortunately within two or three *kos* of my encampment there are no gardens from which my men were likely to gather fuel by cutting trees !" The messenger also

reported that in the neighbourhood of the Rajah's camp no garden could be seen, and that the person who gave such an information must have told a lie. . . .

(7) On the Ist Zilqada, Dara wrote a letter to the Raja "I intend to make another assault upon the fort on the 4th of this month. So you should with your troops be present here on that day." Jai Singh sent a curt reply, "The assault cannot be made by me. Your Royal Highness may inflict any punishment for this fault of mine. *I have no more business with Qandahar.* On the day of return march I shall go to the presence."

The conduct of the Raja during the War of Succession does not appear altogether strange and unjustifiable. The proud and sensitive Rajput rather exercised moderation in revenge than otherwise. The Raja cannot be blamed for refusing to risk the lives and fortunes of his followers in the desperate cause of a prince who proved himself unworthy of his birth-right.

9

Literary Achievements of Dara Shukoh

Dara Shukoh was admittedly the greatest scholar of his age and country and the most learned prince of the House of Timur. He was no amateur in the field of scholarship, but an earnest student of theosophy with a passion for discovering the principle of unity-in-plurality in revealed religions. The history of his literary activity is also the history of the evolution of his spiritualism. Philosophic inquiry was with him a part of religious worship, and his writings were his best prayers to his God,—to "the Divinity objectified in humanity." He became convinced that the doctrine of *tawhid* or divine unity has assumed, like pure water different colours in different vessels (*i.e.*, in various religions, which differ only in appearance but completely agree in essence). He wielded his brilliant and facile pen with the sincerity and courage of a martyr to popularize this great truth, which he believed to be the healing balm of the sore of religious discord that was eating into the vitals of mankind. This he did, not by repudiating the religion of Muhammad, but by reading an original meaning into it, by removing the stigma of narrowness from the noble brow of Islam. He showed that the bosom of Islam is not less capacious than the heart of the Musalman, which alone—in God's own words—can accommodate Him whom heaven and earth cannot contain.

There are two distinct periods in the history of the literary activity of Dara Shukoh. Down to 1647 A. D., *i.e.*, up to the completion of his *Risala-i-Haqnuma*, Dara was mainly occupied with the Sufi theosophy of the Pantheistic School. From 1647 to 1657 he devoted himself to the study of the Jewish, Christian and Hindu religions, with the object of discovering the underlying principles of

these religions, and harmonizing them with the tenets of Islam. It was probably during this period that he approached the great saint Sarmad the Jew as a pupil to study the Jewish religion. Sarmad with his beloved disciple Abhai Chand was at this time living in the newly-built Delhi of Shah Jahan. Abhai Chand had translated a part of the Book of Moses into Persian, which was revised[1] by his master Sarmad. This work was apparently the common source of information about the Pentateuch to Dara Shukoh as well as to the author of *Dabistan*, who was his friend and admirer. There was less difficulty as regards the Gospels and the Psalms which had already been familiarized in India, particularly at that important centre of Jesuit activity, Agra. Manucci says that Dara delighted to hear the Christian fathers overcoming the champions of other religions with their arguments. Four Jesuit fathers, Father Estanilas Malpica (a Neapolitan), Pedro Juzarte (a Portuguese), Father Henri Buzeo (a Flamand), and Heinrich Roth (a German), enjoyed the intimacy of the Prince who, as Manucci says, loved to drink occasionally with them.

As regards Hindu philosophy, it had been filtrating imperceptibly into the esoteric Islam even before its advent into India. Alberuni in the 11th century, and Abul Fazl in the sixteenth, made the elements of the six systems of Hindu philosophy accessible to the Musalmans. Since the literary Renaissance of the age of Akbar, the Musalmans began to take greater interest in Sanskrit literature and the Hindu religion. Akbar presented popular Hinduism to the Musalmans by having the *Mahabharat*, the *Ramayan* and the *Atharva Veda* translated into Persian. But these translations benefited rather the succeeding generations of the Persian-knowing, Islamicized Hindu Court-nobility than their Muslim compatriots who could not form any high opinion of Hinduism from these books. The Muslim missed the high philosophic truths and morals hidden under romance and allegory in these Sanskrit works. Badayuni, who was the type of Mulla revered as an oracle and model of piety by the mass of the Muslim population, considered it a sin to be engaged in translating the religious books of the infidels. He learnt three things about the Hindus, namely that they used to eat beef and bury their dead in ancient times, and that they had a formula in the Atharva Veda which was similar in meaning and sound to the Muslim *Kalima*, having many 'L's' in it.

[1] See O'Shea's *Dabistan*, ii, 299-300.

Dara Shukoh tapped the very spring head of Hindu philosophy, and presented the highest and best tenets of Hinduism to the Musalmans in an attractive garb by the translation of its standard philosophical works into Persian. He translated (evidently with the help of Pandits)—the *Bhagavad Gita*[2] under the misleading title of "Battle between Arjun and Durjodhan", divided into 18 chapters, as we learn from a marginal note in the India Office Library MS. of this work. The famous philosophical drama "*Prabodh chandrodaya*" was rendered into Persian under the title of *Gulzar-i hal*[3] for the use of Dara Shukoh by his *munshi* Banwalidas, who, with the assistance of the Prince's favourite astrologer Bhawanidas, translated it from the Hindi version of this work by Swami Nand Das. There is in the Bodleian Library a Persian work "*Tarjama-i-Joga-Vashishta*"[4] (translation of the Joga-Vashishta), made for Dara.

Leaving out the above-mentioned books written under his patronage, Dara was himself the author of the following works in Persian :

1. *Safinat-ul-awliya*—or Lives of Muslim Saints, was written when he was 'full of the pain of search' in the path of Sufism. It was completed in 1639 A. D., *i.e.*, when the Prince was about 24 years old. The work throughout breathes noble sentiments, bearing testimony to his wide reading, particulary in Sufi literature. It is interesting to study the first stage in the growth of Dara's spiritual life in his first literary production.

2. His second book, "*Sakinat-ul-awliya*", completed in 1642 A. D., marks a more mature stage of his religious life. He says, "When I became more intimate with the rules of discipline and the various stages of the Path . . . . I composed a book on the various

[2] Ethe's Catalogue of the India Office Library, (p. 1111) MS. No. 1949. "In the British Museum copy of it, it is wrongly ascribed to Abul Fazl ; the real translator was, as a note on fol. 13 in the present copy proves—Dara Shukoh".

[3] Catalogue of the India Office Library, p. 1111, MS No. 1995. Bhawanidas is mentioned by Manucci as the most favourite astrologer of Dara (*Storia*, i, 223).

[4] Ethe and Sachau's Bodleian Library Catalogue Vol. iii., p. 818. The author of *Dabistan* mentions one Mulla Muhammad, a Sufi, as having translated some parts of the *Joga-Vashishta*. We learn from the *Misra-bandhu-binode* (History of Hindi Literature in Hindi) that Kavindracharya Saraswati wrote a compendium of this work in Hindi with the title *Joga-Vashishta-sara* (M. B. ii, 453). This was perhaps meant for his patron, Dara Shukoh.

signs, conduct, stages and miracles of *my own Shaikhs* (meaning apparently the saints of the Qadiriya order), and called it *Sakinat-ul-awliya.*" It deals mainly with the life of the renowned saint Mian Mir of Lahore.

3. His third literary production, *Risala-i-Haqnuma* or the Compass of Truth, was written for the instruction of novices in the path of Sufi-ism. Here Dara speaks as a Pir to a Murid, though he deprecates the use of these terms ; the *murid* is addressed as "friend", and he describes himself in the third person, not in Julian pride but with the genuine humility of a faqir. This tract is said to have been written under divine inspiration between August 1645 and January 1647. As Dara had been with the Emperor in Kashmir from April to September 15, 1645, the revelation must have come to him in Kashmir on Friday, 17th Rajab,[5] (August 19, 1645). The year 1646 during which this *Risala* was written, was a year of great anxiety and misfortune for Dara, because his loving wife Nadira Banu had been suffering from a prolonged illness for eleven months, and recovered only in February 1647.[6] In the Introduction, Dara says, "Know that this pamphlet consists of *four chapters* (*Chahar fasl*), and each chapter gives the description of an *Alam, i. e.*, plane of existence." (Pers. text, p 8). But the *Risala-i-Haqnuma* which is extant in MS. as well as in print has *six chapters.* It is reasonable to infer that the *Risala* originally had four chapters and ended with the description of the fourth and highest plane, *viz.*, the *Alam i-lahut.* The last two chapters, on the nature of Truth, are undoubtedly from the pen of Dara, but they appear to have been added to it as a *supplement* at a later date.

Dara, like every learned Muslim theosophist, was deeply influenced by Neo-Platonism.[7] He professes to communicate only that which he heard from his spiritual teachers or read in standard works on Sufi-ism. It is unfair to expect a critical and scientific spirit in an author who is also a devotee and is dealing with occultism. With

[5] Nawal Kishore press Litho text has "8th Rajab," which is not a Friday, but Wednesday. "8th" is evidently a slip, possibly for 17th Rajab. See text, p. 4.

[6] Dara accompanies the Emperor to Kashmir, *Pad*, ii, 413 ; returns to Lahore, *ibid.*, pp. 467-9 ; Shah Jahan visits Nadira Banu after recovery, *ibid.*, p. 634.

[7] ". . . . When Plato heard this, he believed in Moses, and acknowledged that he was a messenger of God". *Risala*, text, p. 18 : *The Compass of Truth*, p. 18.

all its faults and merits *Risala-i-Haqnuma* is a faithful mirror of Dara's personality and character. In all fairness to him it must be admitted that only those who have spiritual insight can, indeed, do justice to the author. The elements of Sufi-ism were never put in a more attractive and intelligible form by any other writer within such a small compass.

4. *Majmua-ul-Baharain* (Mingling of two Oceans). This tract was the first fruit of the comparative study of Islam and Hinduism by Dara Shukoh. The date of its composition is uncertain*; but there is very little doubt that it was written cir. 1650-1656. The Prince introduces his treatise in right orthodox style with a praise of God in whom Islam and Hinduism meet, followed by an invocation of peace and blessings upon Mustapha (the Prophet), his family and his chief Companions. This is enough to prove that Dara had not renounced allegiance to God and his Prophet. The Prince says that by constant association and frequent discourse with the Hindus he discovered that as regards the ways and means of knowing God, the difference between the Hindus and the Musalmans was only verbal, the conflict being one of language and expression (*ikhtalaf-i-lafzi*). In this work he has culled together the elementary principles of the theory of Creation, common to Brahmanism and Islam. In his pride of authorship the Prince says that he writes for "the elect' of the two communities, who only can be benefited by his industry and researches. He has nothing but contempt for the commonalty of the two creeds, "the blockheads without insight" (*kund-fahaman-i ghair-bin*).

Undoubtedly the Prince struck an original line of investigation which, if honestly pursued for the benefit of this neglected commonalty, may achieve great things in the present century, when the fate of India depends on a fresh attempt at the mutual comprehension of her two spiritual elements and an appreciative study of her two apparently discordant cultures.

This work of Dara Shukoh is the first serious and scholarly attempt in this direction, and as such has a unique interest for every student of Indian history. Dara was not a great Sanskritist like Al-Beruni : nor did he possess the calm judgment and critical acumen of that renowned scholar. He had to rely mostly upon the Pandits who hardly agree among themselves in the interpretation of their literature and philosophy. Owing to these limitations the conclusions of the princely author may not be quite acceptable to specialists of the present age. The main thesis of the Prince in this

work was to prove that the ideas of Hindu cosmogony were similar to those embodied in the Quran. The task of the Prince was one of exceptional difficulty, and therefore it is no wonder if his analogies and parallelisms are sometimes far-fetched and superficial.[8]

The last and the greatest of Dara's literary achievements was the translation of 52 *Upanishads* from their Sanskrit original into graceful and masterly Persian prose, under the title of Sirr-i-Akbar (the Great Secret), or as it is found named in some MSS., *Sirr-ul-asrar* (the Secret of Secrets). A more suitable title for the *Upanishads* in their Persian garb can hardly be imagined than "the Great Secret or Secret of secrets", both being very suggestive of the nature of their contents, which the Aryan sages always held गुह्याद्गुह्यतमं (The greatest of all secrets). Dara opens his *Introduction* with an equally appropriate praise of God whose Essence is compared to a point or dot, having an existence without length, breadth, or depth, indivisible and all-pervading. This was indeed the *summum bonum* of the spiritual experience of Dara, as well as of every seeker after God who, they say, exists, but whose existence though always self-evident can only be described in terms of negation (*neti-neti*). It was the insatiable thirst for the fullest exposition of the doctrine of *Tauhid* or Oneness of God that brought him at last to its very fountain-head, the *Upanishads*. The Prince took a hint from the Quran which says ; "Indeed it is an honoured *Quran in a book that is hidden*. None shall touch it, but the purified ones. It is a revelation by the Lord of the worlds" (Sura LVI). And commenting on this passage Dara says that this (Hidden Book) can be neither *Jabur* (the Psalms), nor *Taurit* (the Books of Moses), nor *Injil* (the Gospels) ; nor does it refer to the *Lauh-i-Mahfuz*, the Protected Tablet under the throne of God, because the word "tanzil" means something revealed which the Protected Tablet is not. According to him the *Upanishad* could be none other than the "hidden Book" of the Quran ; because the etymological significance of the Upanishad suggests "that which is taught in secret". Dara is undoubtedly correct from the historical point of view, the date of the *Upanishads* being earlier than that of all the three Scriptures mentioned above. But few would agree either with Dara's interpretation of the Quranic verse or with his assumption that the Prophet through whom the Quran was revealed

[8] As the publication of the complete text of the *majmua-al-Baharain* with translation has of late been announced by the Secretary, A. S. B. it is unnecessary to translate any part of this work here for elucidation.

ever knew of the existence of the *Upanishads*. At any rate, it suited the purpose of this great missionary of peace and reconciliation, whose ultimate object in his literary and spiritual pursuits was to establish harmony between the two apparently conflicting cultures and creeds of India.[9]

Dara says in the *Introduction* that he got together a number of Sannyasis and Pandits residing in Benares, the abode of Hindu learning, and well-versed in the Vedas and Upanishads, and with their help completed the translation of the Upanishads in six months, on Monday, the 26th Ramzan, 1067 A. H. (28th June, 1657) at his palace, *Manzil-i-Nigambodh* in the city of Delhi. Only once in life did Dara's passion for literary work get the better of his filial affection; because though heat and pestilence were depopulating the imperial capital in the summer of 1657, and the ailing Shah Jahan had to leave the city for a change to Mukhlispur, Dara chose to stay back for completing this work.

As regards the nature of the Persian rendering, Dara says that

Mr. Nevill, on the authority of a local tradition perhaps writes that Dara Shukoh spent several years of his life in Benares, where his name is preserved in the muhalla Daranagar It was here, he says, that Dara wrote the Persian translation of *Upanishads* with the help of 150 *pandits* (Benares District Gaz., p. 196). Accordingly, the author elsewhere (*Dara Shukoh*, p. 22) wrote: "Dara visited it (Allahabad) once only (1656-1657), and completed *at Benares* his monumental work .... translation of 50 *Upanishads* on 1st July, 1657." The whole statement should be rejected in view of the discovery of a MS. (by Mr. Mahesh Prasad of Allahabad) in which there is a very definite mention of the date and place of the completion of the work. So I have, in order to test the accuracy of the passage in the MS. of Mr. Mahesh Das,—traced the movements of Dara as given in the *Padshahnama*. It is proved beyond doubt that Dara could not have been in Allahabad or Benares in the year 1657 A.D. Dara, who always accompanied Shah Jahan in his tours, did not accompany his ailing father who left Delhi in February, 1657 for Mukhlispur. This absence of Dara can only be accounted for by some very urgent work, and this was perhaps his pre-occupation with the *Upanishads*. 26th Ramzan, 1067 according to the Calendar was a Sunday; but this is immaterial, as we invariably find one day's difference. I have extensively utilised Mr. Mahesh Das's article "Unpublished Translation of the *Upanishads* by Prince Dara Shukoh" (published in Dr. Modi Memorial Volume, Bombay, 1930, pp. 622-638). By a closer study of the text of the Translation I have been able to rectify some inaccuracies on the part of Mr. Mahesh Das.

he "himself rendered into Persian (the *Upanikhats* which is the storehouse of the doctrine of Unity, *ganj i-tauhid*) without any increase or decrease, without any selfish motive, sentence for sentence and word for word"[10]

A comparison of any Persian passage at random with the published Sanskrit text will at once convince the reader of the truth of what Dara says about the nature of his work. Dara may be accused of this much transgression that in a very few cases, instead of translating directly the cryptic sentences of the original text of the Upanishads, he has rendered into Persian the commentary of Sankara[11] on those passages for the sake of accuracy free from ambiguity. It is also interesting to notice his slight adaptation of some passages to make things intelligible to Muhammadans, for whom particularly this translation was meant. He took great pains to make his work easily intelligible to men of average intellect who had no grounding in Hindu mythology and philosophy. We must say he has eminently succeeded in this attempt. The *Sirr-i-Akbar* of Dara Shukoh has not only all the merits of a good translation, but also the compactness and charm of an original work.

Dara was the first serious student not only of Comparative Religion, but also of Comparative Mythology in Mediaeval India. The most enduring portion of his work is his Islamic nomenclature for clothing in Muslim garb Hindu ideas, Hindu gods, and the bewildering variety of beings that figure in Hindu mythology. Not to speak of Persians, Muslims of every nationality except perhaps the Chinese Muslim, will more readily welcome the *Sirr-i-Akbar* of Dara either in its Persian original, or in the translation of this Persian version into their particular languages, than any translation

[10] Pers. text, p. 14↓.

[11] As for example in the *Brihadaranyak Upanishat* four species of horses are mentioned : Haya (हय), Vaji (वाजि) Arba (अर्व), and Ashwa (अश्व) assigned for mount respectively to *Devas*, *Ghandharvas*, *Asuras*, and men. Dara translates the passage thus : "And the Arabi horse (*asp-i-Arabi*) which on account of its swift speed, is called *Haya*, takes the angels (*Feristahah*) to their destination ; *Baji*, which is a horse of the *Iraqi* breed, is mounted by the *Gandharvas : Arba*, which is of the Kachchi breed is ridden by *Asuras :* and *Ashwa*, or Turki horse carries men to their destination." Without affecting the sense Dara has aptly introduced the Arabi, Iraqi, Kachchi and Turki breeds of horses, though unwarranted either by the original text or its commentary by Sankara.

from the most authoritative English version of the Upanishads. No amount of explanation will give a clearer idea of Mahadev[12] to the Musalman than Dara's identification of this deity with the angel Israfil, who, according to Muslim belief, stands below the throne (*Arsh*) of God, with a horn in his hand ; Israfil will blow his horn as a signal for *Qiyamat-i-Kubra* (*mahapralaya*) when the seven higher and seven nether worlds would fold up and be resolved into the *Primæval Mist.*

Dara Shukoh was an indefatigable propagandist, and impelled by a sort of missionary enthusiasm, he turned out a number of books and tracts on various aspects of Sufism during his literary career of a little more than 15 years. But nowhere do we come across a complete list of Dara Shukoh's works, though Dara himself in scattered passages mentions "several tracts" written by him ; but he has not given us even the titles of these books. It is quite possible that some more books of Dara may come to light in future.

Among the minor works of Dara Shukoh, *Hasanat-ul-Arifin* (completed in A. H. 1062 (1652 A. D.), marks a very important stage in the evolution of Dara's religious views and spiritual progress. Though the Prince had not yet actually stepped outside the bourn of Islam in search of the origin of the doctrine of *Tauhid* (Oneness of God), his views and his attitude towards the Shariyat were about this time veering towards those of Mansur bin Hallaj. *Hasanat-ul-Arifin* was written by Dara to meet the public criticism of his pantheistic views which, in the opinion of the orthodox school, were altogether un-Islamic.

In the *Introduction* to this book Dara says : "Sometimes, in a state of ecstasy and enthusiasm, I pronounce words which only highest truth and knowledge permit : certain sordid and vile individuals as well as insipid devotees because of their narrowness blame me and accuse me of heresy and *inkar* (denial of God). It is because of it that there came to me the idea of reconciling [lit., reuniting] the words of great believers in the unity, of saints and of those who have acquired the knowledge of the Reality ; . . . . so that this may serve as a convincing argument for [silencing] those who are *Dajjals* under the aspect of Christ, Pharaon with apparent qualities of Moses, Abu Jahal calling himself a disciple of Muhammad.'"[13]

[12] Pers. text, p. 147.

[13] *Hasanat ul-Arifin* (Mujtabai Press, Delhi) ; quoted in Dr. Yusuf Husain's book, L'Inde Mystique au Moyen Age (pp. 179-180).

At the very start of his spiritual life Dara imbibed through association with the great saint Mian Mir and his fraternity—belief in the essential superiority of the esoteric to the exoteric interpretation of Islam, and of the doctrine of *Hama-u-st* (everything is He) to that of *Hama-az-u-st* (everything is from Him). Unlike other Sufis he began broadcasting his views in several books and tracts on Sufism written by himself. At first he wrote and spoke with a certain amount of caution and reserve; *e g.*, in his first book, *Safinat-ul-awliya*, Dara says, "On the night of 27th Ramzan, 1049 A H., at the age of twenty-five of the author, this book was completed . . . . *I have not dwelt on great and subtle truths* uttered by the sages of old, which common people do not comprehend. When Shaikh Abu Said Kharraj reached Egypt, some people said to him : 'Why do you not speak from the pulpit ?' The Shaikh replied, ... A discourse on truth to the uninitiated amounts to slander."[14] But during 13 years (1639-1652 A.D.) that elapsed since the publication of this first work of his, Dara met several reonwned Sufis of a more advanced school ; *e g.*, Mulla Shah, Sulaiman Misri, and Shah Dilruba,[15] and imbibed their extreme views. The conviction that now filled his heart was so great that it forced its way out breaking through every barrier of caution and fear of consequence. This has perhaps led a Muslim critic of the orthodox school to remark that Dara Shukoh by writing this book only betrayed himself, and in attempting to defend himself with his pen the Prince acted in a manner less heroic and honourable than that of Mansur bin Hallaj, Shahabuddin Suhrawardy or Sarmad, who died for their conviction without opening their lips in self-defence ! Elsewhere the same critic sums up his criticism of Dara's *Hasanat-ul-Arifin* by saying that he would very strongly recommend this book to those who want to study the perversion [lit., ruin] of Sufism ![16]

The pantheism of Dara finds a more eloquent expression in his *Tariqat-ul-Haqiqat*.[17] This had been the favourite theme of Persian Sufi poets for several centuries before the birth of Dara. In a similar vein Dara writes :

[14] See *Khatima* of Safinat-ul-awliya, p. 216 ; (Newalkishore Press).
[15] *Hasanat-ul-Arifin*, pp. 26-36 (Mujtabai Press, Delhi).
[16] Sayyid Najib Ashraf Nadvi's Urdu Introduction to *Ruqqat-i-Alamgir*, pp. 361-363 ; footnote, p. 362 (Published by *Dar-ul-Musannafin*, Azamgarh, U. P.).
[17] See L'Inde Mystique au Moyen Age, p. 178.

"Thou art in the Kaaba as well as
in the Somnath temple ;
In the convent as well as in the tavern.
Thou art at the same time the light and the moth ;
The wine and the cup, the sage and the fool, the friend
and the stranger."
"Thou art thyself the rose and the amorous nightingale.
Thou art thyself the moth around the light of thine
own beauty."

Besides the above-mentioned works, Dara wrote an interesting Introduction to the Persian Translation of a compendium of the *Joga-Vashishta* Ramayana made under his superintendence with the title *Tarjuma Joga-Vashishta* in 1656 A. D. It runs thus : "When I had gone through the Persian translation of this book (the Joga-Vashishta), which is attributed to Shaikh Sufi, I saw in a dream two dignified figures of calm appearance, one of them standing on a higher level than the other. I was drawn involuntarily to their presence . . . . and Vashishta with great affection and graciousness placed his hand on my back. and said : 'Rama, here is an earnest seeker of knowledge, and a comrade (lit., brother) of yours in true search of the Reality ; embrance him.' Ramchandra held me in his embrace with great warmth and love. Then Vashishta gave to Ramachandra some sweets which I ate out of his hand. After having seen this in dream my desire to have this book translated became greater than ever ; and one man from among my servants was appointed to translate this work. This translation was completed under the supervision of the Pandits of Hindustan." An Urdu adaptation of *Tarjuma i-Joga*-Vashisht made by Maulvi Abul Hasan under the title of *Minhaj-us-Salikin* enjoys great popularity in Upper India.

That the philosophical views of Dara were rapidly veering towards the Advaita Vedantism becomes quite apparent from his selection of Sanskrit works for translation ; e.g., *Bhagavad Gita*, *Joga-Vashishta*, and *Prabodha Chandrodaya* The last one is a drama of unique interest written by a Sannyasi named Krishna Misra about the year 1065 A D. This is considered as the first attempt in Sanskrit literature to demonstrate the inner harmony of diverse systems of Hindu philiosophy. "The play (The Moonrise of Wisdom) is an allegory of deliverance of the human spirit from the temptations and delusions of the world. Vishu-bhakti stirs up Discrimination and using the Upanishads, Faith, Good Sense, and their numerous

allies, inflicts a signal defeat on Delusion, Love, and Greed, and their many attendants. The rise (*udaya*) of Wisdom naturally follows (*prabodha*), and the human spirit realises its own absolute identity with God, renounces Action and adopts dispassionate asceticism as the only right rule of life."[18] *The Khud parasti* (worship of Self) of Dara was the result of this realization of the absolute identity of the human spirit with God ; and the final stage of the evolution of his religion and religious life was something like that dispassionate asceticism which rejects dogmas and rituals of religion as superfluous.

[18] Farquhar's *Outline of the Religious Literature of India*, p. 277.

10

The Causes of the War of Succession

Islam never contemplated the rise of a hereditary monarchy within its polity, and therefore provided no definite law of succession to a kingdom of the faithful. On the other hand by refusing any religious sanction to the universal law of primogeniture it weakened the only safeguard, however frail, against the arbitration of the sword. Besides, rebellion had lost its odium and disgrace in the house of Timur, every member of which considered himself a Mirza, —a prince with the title to rule and to seize the heritage of every other. There was no check on the personal ambition of princes and usurpers in the Mughal empire as in every other Muslim State.

Some people are inclined to think that the civil war might have been avoided if Shah Jahan had not followed the policy of drift as regards the education of his sons, each of whom developed a character and tendencies diametrically opposite to those of the others. Thus, Dara strayed into the bourn of infidelity, Shuja showed a leaning toward Aurangzib hardened into a bigoted Sunni, while Murad scoffed at every form of religion and delighted only in wine and slaughter. But the private character and religious views of the princes were not at all responsible for the civil war among them. It is absurd to hold that if all the four sons of Shah Jahan had grown up into equally devout Musalmans, the general body of the faithful would have stood by the claim of the eldest prince against the pretensions of his brothets. Even if Dara had been as noble and pious as Ali himself, his brothers were sure to get from amongst Indian Musalmans more numerous followers than those led by Muawwiya against the son-in-law of the Prophet. The struggle between Dara and Aurangzib was not really a trial of strength bet-

ween Hinduism and Islam, though more Hindus fought on the side of the former, and more Musalmans on the side of the latter. If the triumph of Hinduism or of Islam had been the issue of the contest, the Sayyids of Barha would not have been the most faithful supporters of Dara, nor would Maharana Raj Singh have favoured the cause of Aurangzib. We shall elsewhere discuss whether Dara was an apostate, a heretic as alleged by his enemies. It is enough to say here that however he, like many more illustrious sons of Islam, might differ from the Mullas in the interpretation of the true spirit of the prophet's creed, he lived and died a Musalman.[1] It was not Dara's heresy but his lack of worldly wisdom and tact that drove most of the self-seeking courtiers, both Muslim and Hindu, into the ranks of his rival's supporters.

Shah Jahan's partiality for Dara, a common theme with writers, native and foreign, friendly and hostile to him—is often alleged as one of the contributory causes of the rebellion of the younger princes against their father. The Crown Prince was looked upon by his younger brothers as the drone of the family, spoonfed, swaddled in robes of honour and led about in state in the Emperor's suite. During the thirty years' reign of Shah Jahan, Dara had not been allowed to stay away from Court even for fifteen months. Though he had scarcely any achievement in arms to his credit, his military command finally rose to 60,000 *zat*, being greater than even the combined commands of all the younger princes—and the same partiality was shown towards the sons of Dara : Sulaiman Shukoh was the absentee viceroy of Kabul with a rank of 12-*hazari* : even Sipihr Shukoh's rank (absentee governor of Thatta with the rank[2] of 8-*hazari*), was higher than that of the eldest sons of Shuja and Aurangzib. Shah Jahan gave away state jewels, horses, and elephants to Dara. He created more peers out of Dara's servants, and bestowed liberal patronage on Dara's spiritual guides, literary satellitics. and musicians.[3]

[1] Bernier, a hostile critic of Dara as he was, says "Born a Mahometan *he continued to join in the exercise of that religion* : but *although thus publicly professing his adherence to its faith*, Dara was in private a *Gentile* with *Gentiles*, and a Christian with Christians". (Constable's *Bernier and his Travels*, p. 6).

[2] Shuja and Aurangzib were both 20-hazaris ; their eldest sons Sultans Zainuddin and Muhammad being both 7-hazaris. For *mansab* of Princes see Waris, 123 B.

[3] Kavindracharya Saraswati gets Rs. 1,500 at Lahore (7th Oct.,1651; Waris) ; Mulla Shah Badakhshi, Pir of Dara and Jahanara, given

Much, in this way, has been said of Shah Jahan's partiality to Dara. But could the impartiality of Shah Jahan avert bloodshed? Was it likely that equal share in the paternal affection as well as the patrimony would have kept back the princes from a contest for the throne? Shah Jahan followed the path which Providence seemed to have chalked out for him, namely, to give the eldest born his due, and by a happy accident the Heir-Apparent happened to be the most lovable of his children also. Hence, the Emperor acted throughout as the most loving and zealous friend and tutor of Dara, for whom he seemed to hold the empire of Hindustan as a sacred and inviolable trust. Once this position of Shah Jahan is frankly realized, the charge of his having shown partiality to Dara at once falls to the ground. He did everything in an honest attempt to do justice to his destined heir, and impressing his younger sons and the rest of the world with the idea that it was as futile to envy and emulate Dara as to contend against fate. But the trouble arose because the younger princes, unable to reconcile themselves to their lot, plotted to feed fat the grudge they bore to their father and eldest brother. Also, Dara's incompetence encouraged every attempt to wrest the sceptre from his week grasp.

Rs. 5,000 on the completion of the fast of Ramzan (12th July, 1656; Waris 114 a); Chandrabhan Brahman honoured with the title of Rai (9th April, 1656, 108 b); Dara's poet, brother of his diwan Mulla Salih, gets Rs. 1,000, "for having strung together with diligence *a collection of the names of God in Hindawi*" (2nd May, 1655; Waris 98 b); musicians of Dara get Rs. 2,000 (31st March, 1655, Waris 98 a). As regards the ennobling of Dara's servants, Waris says "Among the servants of Shah Buland Iqbal Muhammad Dara Shukoh, five persons had alreedy been created Khans; these were Bahadur Khan, deputy-nazim of the Subah of Kabul (this person was Izzat Khan who on the 11th March, 1655, was given the higher title (?) Bahadur Khan), Sayyid Salabat Khan (son of Sayyid Hashim Barha) the deputy-nazim of the subah of Allahabad. Mutamaid Khan, Diwan of the Prince, Muhammad Ali Khan, the deputy-nazim of Thatta (Sindh), and Barqandaz Khan (the notorious Jafar), the Chief of the Prince's Artillery. Besides the above mentioned persons, five more were on this day (14th July, 1656) ennobled; Abdullah Beg Najumsani was given the title of Askar Khan, Khwajah Muin, the city Magistrate of Lahor, given the title of Muin Khan, Sayyid Abdul Razzaq, the deputy-nazim of Multan, made Izzat Khan, Shaikh Daud, faujdar (on behalf of Dara Shukoh) of the country between Agra and Delhi—made Daud Khan, and another official Nahar Tamburi made Nahar Khan" (Waris, 166 a).

The enmity between Dara and Aurangzib since the very beginning of their careers was no doubt one of the causes of the War of Succession. Aurangzib is represented by his bigoted advocates as an apostle of forbearance, a miserable victim of the malicious intrigues of Dara, whose jealousy and hatred of his younger brothers were, it is alleged, only proportionate to their abilities. But it appears clear from recorded history that it was Aurangzib who first revealed the blackness of his heart by the open display of spite and venom against Dara. We shall briefly review the main incidents throwing light on the relations between the brothers before the out-break of the War of Succession.

1. On 28th May, 1633, two elephants Sudhakar and Suratsundar were set to fight on the sandy plain of the Jamuna below the Agra fort. Mounted on horses, Dara, Shuja, and Aurangzib pushed closer to the elephant Sudhakar ; the enraged animal after having put his opponent to flight, turned upon the horse of Aurangzib and flung it down. Young Aurangzib, a lad of fifteen, showed wonderful bravery and resourcefulness, and succoured by Shuja and Mirza Rajah Jai Singh, came out safe and victorious from the encounter. On this occasion, Aurangzib not only gave a "foretaste of his lofty spirit and royal contempt for death", but also of his unbrotherly feelings by a malicious fling at Dara ; "If the fight had ended fatally for me", he said to his father, "it would not have been a matter of shame. . . . . *The shame lay in what my brothers did*". These are the very words which a devoted partisan of Aurangzib, Hamiduddin Khan puts appropriately in his master's mouth One cannot but admire the courtesy and cleverness in this insinuation, using a plural number while he clearly meant a single person, namely, Dara. Dara was at some distance on the other side of the elephant, and "could not even if he had wished it' have come to Aurangzib's aid, as the affair was over in a few minutes".[4]

2. As he was the first to strike the note of suspicion and envy against Dara, so he was the first to offend his father and merit public censure, because ' misled by the wicked counsels of his foolish companions, he wanted to take to the retired life of an ascetic, and had also done some acts which the Emperor disapproved of"[5] (1644 A.D.). Hamiduddin clears up this obscure statement by an anecdote, suggesting that the prince's disgrace was the outcome of his open

[4] History of Aurangzib, i and ii, p. 10.
[5] *Pad.*, ii, 373.

jealousy of Dara Shukoh. "It is narrated that Dara invited his father and three younger brothers to see his newly-built mansion at Agra. It was summer, and the party was taken to a cool underground room bordering on the river, with only one door leading into it. The others entered, but Aurangzib sat down in the door-way. To all inquiries of Shah Jahan about the reason of his strange conduct he gave no reply. For this act of disobedience he was forbidden the Court. After spending seven months in disgrace, he told Jahanara that as the room had only one entrance he had feared lest Dara should close it and murder his father and brothers to clear his own way to the throne. To prevent any such attempt Aurangzib had (he said) occupied the door as a sentinel."[6] Whatever might be the element of truth in this anecdote, none can doubt that it reveals Aurangzib as the future murderer of his brothers and gaoler of his father, and had Aurangzib got his father and brothers in such a trap, he would perhaps have done what did not strike Dara's mind at all.

3. During Aurangzib's governership of Multan and Sindh (1648-1652) some unpleasant things took place over the affair of Ismail Hut, a predatory Baloch chieftain whose territories were situated on the border land between Multan and Upper Punjab. Ismail Hut was a protege of Dara and claimed to be a subject of the governor of Lahor. He refused to wait upon Aurangzib, the newly appointed governor of Multan, producing a letter of Dara as a plea (*navishtah-i-Dada-bhai-ra dastawiz sakhta*). It was only a dispute of jurisdiction between two viceroys of contiguous provinces —a dispute which the Emperor justly decided in favour of Aurangzib. In 1652 the province of Multan was added to the viceroyalty of Dara, who after taking charge of that province wrote to the Emperor that the servants of Aurangzib had destroyed many buildings in the city of Multan and burnt and sold away the timber and doors. However, Aurangzib effectively replied to this charge, referring in support of his defence to a report of the newswriter of Multan, from which it was apparent that *after the departure* of Aurangzib's servants, the people of the city, took courage to commit such depredations. Whatever might have been the faults of Aurangzib, he was certainly above such petty acts of vandalism, and too severe a master to tolerate such things in his officials. A more regrettable incident happened when Aurangzib, on his way to the Deccan, alighted in the neighbourhood of Lahore. Dara's official-

[6] History of Aurangzib, i and ii, p. 69.

in-charge of Lahor came out of the city as if to welcome Aurangzib ; but strangely enough he rode past the encampment of the prince and re-entered the city without visiting him. This was a gratuitous insult tending to lower the prince in the public eye. But Aurangzib certainly did injustice to Dara in suspecting that Dara's servant had insulted him at his master's bidding ; because Dara was at this time staying with the Emperor at Kabul. This awkward behaviour of Dara's servant was apparently due to indecision whether he could go to welcome the prince as required by official etiquette without rousing the suspicion of his own master. Nevertheless, the mischief was done ; and the bad manners of the servant certainly brought odium upon the master.

4. No two men perhaps differed more widely in personal character, tastes, and religious outlook than did Dara Shukoh and Aurangzib. They somewhat resembled in their character and in the vehemence of their hatred towards one another, their English contemporaries, the cavaliers and the roundheads. Dara's religious motto was that of Akbar, namely, "Peace with all" (*Sulh-i-kul*) and as such, we may say, his religion was "the parent of arts and letters, of wholesome knowledge, of innocent pleasures",—in short, a religion of the cultured salon ; whereas the creed of Aurangzib partook of the austere gloom of the guardroom of God's soldiers, tolerating nothing useless from a rough soldier's point of view, discarding every pleasure soft and alluring, sparing neither themselves nor others in a fight for God's sake. Dara, though much given to study and spiritual contemplation, seemed to the outer world equally devoted to pleasure, a prince profuse, gay and brilliant, and above all with a soft heart ready to do any gracious service for a little flattery. Aurangzib was essentially "a man without music", always cold, sedate, grave, and demure, with religious gloom upon a pale and sickly countenance ; and like Macaulay's Italian type of the tyrant, he was "of sober diet, as constant at prayers as a priest, and as heedless of oaths as an atheist".

Dara called in derision his younger brother, a prayer-loving Mulla (*namazi*) ; and taunted him as a hypocrite, while the latter returned the compliment by calling him a *Kafir*, a *Mulhid*, (polytheist). Some orthodox apologists of Aurangzib assert that by using these epithets for Dara, Aurangzib only echoed the sentiment of the age, the sentiment of the majority of the 17th century Musalmans of Hindustan. In their public lives, Dara was looked upon as the patron of the Hindus, and Aurangzib as the champion of Islam.

Dara's first great public act seems to have been the use of his influence in securing the remission of the pilgrim-tax in Allahabad and Benares. We are told that a Hindu deputation headed by the famous Maharashtrian scholar Kavindracharya[7] Saraswati, waited on the Emperor and pleaded their case so eloquently as to draw tears from the eyes of Dara and Shah Jahan. With the progress of his studies in Hindu philosophy and his association with Hindu *sannyasis* and *yogis*, his intellectual sympathy for Hindus developed into active interest for their welfare.

Aurangzib showed himself a militant missionary of Islam with genuine contempt for other faiths, which grew in intensity with his growing years. During his governorship of Gujarat, he destroyed the ancient temple of Chintaman and vented his fanatical fury by killing cows there. He also forbade the export of saltpetre from Gujarat to Europe, because the young and imaginative Pan-Islamist was afraid lest the Christians should use it as ammunition of war for killing devout Sunnis like the Ottoman Turks. However, these actions of Aurangzib were not approved by Shah Jahan; the temple, it is reported, was afterwards restored to the Hindus. During his second viceroyalty of the Deccan he destroyed the temple of Khande Rai on the Satara Hill (near Aurangabad).

In his anxiety to back his friends, Aurangzib did not hesitate to use his influence at court to shut the road of justice to Hindus seeking redress of their grievances. The following is a typical example of his early anti-Hindu bias; as revealed in a letter written to his ally Sadullah Khan: "A Brahmin named Chhabila, the quanango of property-tax of the city of Bihar had uttered improper words with reference to the holy Prophet. After investigation and verification of the charge by order of the Emperor, Zulfiqar Khan and other officers of the place had sent him to hell by beheading him, as was required by justice, and purified the place defiled for a long time by his impure existence. I hope you are aware of these facts."

Now Mulla Mohan,[8] whose relations with me are not unknown

On this occasion the Emperor conferred upon the eloquent and versatile scholar the title of *Sarvavidya-nidhan*. Gaekwad's Oriental Series No. XVII, pp. iv-v.

"His real name is Muhiuddin; born in Bihar, he committed the Quran to memory at the age of nine .... entered the service of the Emperor Shah Jahan and was appointed tutor to Prince Aurangzib ...; became a disciple of Shah Haidar, grandson of

to you—has written to me that the brothers of that accursed misbeliever out of obstinacy and bigotry (*taasub*) have complained at the imperial court against Shaikh Muhammad Maula (*Maali ?*), Mir Adil, a brother's son of the above mentioned, *i.e.*, Mulla Mohan, and Abdul Maani, the *Mufti* of the province of Bihar. So I write this to remind you of this affair. As it is proper for and obligatory upon all Muslims to do their utmost to assert the religion of the Prophet, and it is the duty of Kings and nobles to protect the theologians (*Ulema*) of Islam in enforcing the injunctions of the holy Law, you should exert yourself more than your peers to close the door of complaint of this wretched tribe to the Emperor's feet and to take care of the letters (*i.e.*, explanations) of the guardians of the Faith" (*Adab*, 101 a). The whole affair looks suspicious; because had there been no irregularities, no genuine grievance, the Hindus would not have courted danger by carrying their appeal to an orthodox Muslim Emperor against the powerful local Muslim functionaries who were not known for their qualities of mercy and forbearance. Aurangzib interfered not for seeing justice done unto Muslims but to close the very door of justice to the Hindus. Why did the Ulemas shrink from standing a scrutiny of their judgment even by Shah Jahan who had the destruction of several big temples and the forcible conversion of some Hindus to his credit? Nevertheless, Aurangzib made less enemies among the Hindus than Dara did among the bigoted Muslims, because Aurangzib's heart unlike Dara's, was never on his lips nor very often on the point of his pen.

The three younger princes, drawn together by common enmity to Dara, had formed an informal defensive alliance that grew stronger with the growing partiality of Shah Jahan for his eldest son. Aurangzib was the soul of this confederacy and the connecting link between Shuja and Murad. In December 1652, Shuja and Aurangzib, contrary to their father's wish, had met at Agra and each of them had entertained the other for three days, and the alliance was further cemented by the betrothal of Gulrukh Banu, a daughter of Shuja to Aurangzib's eldest son Sultan Muhammad. Murad Bakhsh saw Aurangzib at Do-rahah during the latter's progress through the province of Malwa (23rd December, 1652). Since then a brisk correspondence passed among the confederates through Aurangzib's province and with Aurangzib as a sort of secretary to the coalition.

Shaikh Wajuddin Gujrati . . . . resigned his service and returned to Bihar. He died in 1068 A. H. (1658 A.D.) at the age of 84 years (Ghulam Ali Azad's *Maasir-ul-Kiram*, p. 43).

Shah Jahan never took his youngest son Murad Bakhsh[9] very seriously ; but he greatly suspected the matrimonial alliance between Shuja and Aurangzib. The bitter correspondence between Shah Jahan and Aurangzib over Sultan Muhammad's betrothal, leaves no doubt in our mind that Shah Jahan gave to Aurangzib as clear and emphatic a hint as decency would permit that he would be glad to see the betrothal set aside. Shah Jahan also tried to win over Shuja by taking him into his favour and confidence against Aurangzib. He complained to Shuja of Auranzib's administration as a failure in the South, and offered him the viceroyalty of the five Deccan *subahs* if the prince would like to have them in exchange of Bengal and Orissa.

Towards the middle of December 1657, Murad wrote to Aurangzib a letter which was supplemented by an oral message of a more secret nature delivered by his trusty agent. By a strange coincidence. Aurangzib also about the same time had written to Murad a letter of similar purport supplemented by a similar oral message sent through a confidential messenger. About a month before (19th October, 1657), Murad had despatched another letter to Shuja through Aurangzib's province. The object of this secret correspondence was to concert measures for meeting the critical situation created by the illness of their father and the alleged usurpation of Dara. Thus, through the initiative of the impatient Murad their defensive alliance was turned into an offensive one ostensibly against their usurping eldest brother. The first act of the confederates was to establish a chain of postal relays linking Ahmadabad, Aurangabad, and Rajmahal for the rapid transmission of news. As soon as the news of Shah Jahan's illness reached Aurangzib, he took most vigorous measures to cut off communications between Dara and his allies and partisans south of the river Narmada. While Aurangzib successfully kept the imperial court quite in the dark about his designs and movements, he received reports of the state secrets at the capital and the measures of Dara from his sister Raushanara

[9] Shah Jahan is once said to have remarked that Murad Bakhsh cared only for "the nourishment of his body" (*tanpawari*). This was however not the whole truth about Murad Bakhsh. He was in character a typical central Asian Turk somewhat deficient in judgment and address, but endowed with great animal courage and bodily strength, always bragging, *az man kase Bahadur nist* ; i.e., there is none braver than I. Murad Bakhsh is regarded as "the black sheep" of the royal family. He proved a failure in every work entrusted to him.

Begam. Even Gauharara, the youngest child of Shah Jahan had her ambitions, and she kept Murad regularly informed of the activities at Court. Besides, Aurangzib had posted in every part of Northern India numerous secret agents who smuggled urgent news across the Narmada to him.

Apart from a general agreement among the three younger princes, there was a closer pact between Aurangzib and Murad who looked upon Shuja as their prospective enemy. As early as 23rd October, 1557, Aurangzib supplied to Murad the key to a cypher to be used in their future correspondence. While Aurangzib openly condemned Dara as a heretic and an idol-worshipper, he secretly denounced Shuja as a *rafizi* or heretical Shia to his foolish colleague Murad, whom he flattered as most worthy of rule and for whose sake he professed to be exerting himself. But in order to deserve the throne Murad, notorious for his irreligion, was advised to pose in public as an orthodox Sunni and a champion of Islam. "Indeed so wholly did Murad enter into Aurangzib's policy of throwing a religious cloak on their war of personal ambitions, that his letters assume a sanctimonious tone calculated to raise a smile . . . . Taking a hint from Aurangzib, the gay reveller of Ahmadabad poses as the champion of Islam ; he threatens Dara with extirpation as the enemy of the holy faith ; he refers to his eldest brother as the *Mulhid*—the very term used by Aurangzib and his court-historians" (*History of Aurangzib*, i, p. 302).

However, Murad had some suspicion whether his *Pir* (guide) in politics was not acting towards him on the very same formula of "dissimulation" against God and man. He pressed Aurangzib to send him a solemn deed of agreement stating explicity the terms of the partnership between them. Just before their march to Northern India Aurangzib, in order to lull the rising suspicion of Murad, sent him an *ahad-nama* to the effect that after the overthrow of the infidel Dara, Murad should get the provinces of the Punjab, Sindh, Kashmir, and Afghanistan. This document concluded with the words ". . . . I shall without the least delay give you leave to go to this territory. As to the truth of this desire, I take *God, and the Prophet* as my witnesses."

Shah Jahan, whose health had shown signs of a decline during the summer of 1657, fell seriously ill on 6th September, and for seven days nobody except Dara and a few high officials in his confidence had access to the ailing Emperor. He was given up for dead by all but a few well-wishers of Dara ; many persons refused to

believe that he was still alive even when on 14th September he showed his face through the window of his bed-chamber to the expectant crowd below. To reassure the people, a *darbar* was held and Dara who "had nursed his father to the utmost limit of possibility (which was the best form of the worship of God)," was rewarded with an increase of *mansab* by 10,000 zat, 10,000 horse *do aspah seh-aspah*, in all 50,000 zat, and an *inam* of two and a half lakhs of rupees. Calling to his presence confidential courtiers and the chief officers of the State, he made his last will before them, and ordered them to obey Dara henceforth as their sovereign in every thing, at all times, and in every place" (Kambuh, 8 b). On 18th October the Emperor left for Agra to recoup his health. Meanwhile, mischief had done its work. The younger princes, who were at heart disappointed at the news of their father's recovery, refused in public to believe the inconvenient truth that Shah Jahan was really alive. They suspected every despatch from Court to be either a forgery or one written under the pressure of Dara. They pretended to give credence to the malicious rumour that the lean figure that now appeared daily at the palace window to receive the salute of the people was only an old eunuch dressed in the imperial robes whom the usurper Dara was passing for the deceased Shah Jahan. They began a false and most pernicious propaganda against Dara,[10] who, they alleged, had usurped supreme power and made their father a helpless prisoner. They would not even be dissuaded by the letters of Jahanara, who tried to bring about peace among her brothers. As they were prepared for war and Dara was not, they were unwilling to let slip this opportunity of crushing their hated rival once for all. The unhappy Emperor saw with consternation the dreaded deluge coming not after him but even before his eyes were closed.

[10] The worst and most absurd allegations against Dara may be read in the pages of Bernier (Constable's Bernier and his travels, pp. 25-26). His source of information being his *Agha*, Danishmand Khan, a notorious partisan of Aurangzib, the account given by him is only a bundle of falsehoods and malicious libels which does not deserve even a refutation.

11

Churaman Jat of Sinsini

The Jat needs no introduction to the student of history. This virile Indian tribe has a chequered history of political and social evolution within India and outside. The Jats claim descent from the ancient Aryan tribe of Yadu in common with some of the Rajput tribes like the Bhattis. Some historians are sceptic about it and hold them to be the Gaete of Scythian stock. As early as the seventh century, the Jats are mentioned as pirates in Dwarka, roving vendors of *jatti* cloth in Arabia ; and, in their original home in the delta of the Indus, they are described as good agriculturists, doughty cattle-lifters and desperate robbers. In Sindh they were a source of trouble to the Arab government of Muhammad bin Qasim who transplanted some of them either to die or flourish in the water-logged and malarious fens of the Shat-ul-Arab in the delta of the Euphrates and the Tigris. But a Jat is proverbially hard to die or be killed. As a sage warning against the revengeful Jat, there goes the countryside proverb, "Be not sure about a Jat's death until the thirteenth day after funeral is over!" The Indian Jat and his buffalo multiplied rapidly between the sands of Arabia and the waters of the Euphrates and the Tigris, where they soon proved an inconvenient problem to their Muslim neighbours. From the lower reaches of the Euphrates-Tigris delta, a portion of the Jat tribes was transplanted to the 'No Man's Land' between Islam and Christianity to plague the Byzantines. From this region it is said some of the Jats were taken away captive to Constantinople, and according to one theory, they became the ancestors of the Gypsies of Europe.

However, within India, authentic history credits the Jats with relieving Mahmud Ghaznavi, Amir Timur, Nadir and Abdali of a portion of their Indian plunder in Sindh and the Punjab. Aurang-

zib and the Later Mughals had a very unpleasant memory of Churaman Jat's strongholds of Sinsini and Thun in the modern Bharatpur division of Rajasthan ; the Marathas knew them well as friends and enemies ; and the British could not easily forget Bharatpur and Hathras. Rajah Surajmal Jat in the eighteenth and Maharajah Ranjit Singh in the nineteenth century held up high the prestige of the Jat in war and diplomacy. In their long career of revolt and fight against the Mughal empire and Amad Shah Abdali, the Jats headed a Hindu reaction against Muslim rule in Upper India and the Punjab.

The career of Churaman Jat is a stirring episode of the Jat struggle for independence that had begun with the revolt of Gokla Jat of Sadabad, now a tehsil of Mathura district in the then Mughal subah of Agra (1665 A. D.). The predatory and political career of Churaman Jat has been pretty exhaustively treated by Sir Jadunath Sarkar and William Irvine. During my investigations into the history of the baronial house of Diggi of Jaipur State, I came across a number of *Akhabarat* written to and by the Jaipur Vakil, Meghraj. These documents throw a flood of light on the activities of Churaman, and on the Jat activities in general, during the years from about 1688 to 1700 A. D.

Churaman has not, and could not, receive justice from historians who look at the history of this period from the stand-point of imperialism and the Mughal Empire. Churaman was admittedly a rebel, and a successful rebel too, who died in virtual independence though without regal honours and titles. The cause he fought for was the aspiration of his people to free themselves from the intolerable oppression, religious and political, during the reign of Aurangzib.

It is not known from any contemporary source when and where Churaman was born. Iswardas, the earliest and the only contemporary chronicler, says that Churaman was a son of the brother of Rajaram Jat. Next in importance are the Persian chronicles *Masir-i-Alamigri* of Mustaid Khan, and Khafi Khan's *Muntakhab-ul Lubab*. These two authorities give Churaman's father's name as Bhajja, whose relationship with Rajaram they do not mention. It is not unlikely that Bhajja, whose full name was perhaps Bhajuram, was a brother of Rajaram. As regards the original home of Churaman's family, *Imad us-Sadat*,[1] rather a later

[1] Imad., text, 55.

authority, says on hearsay evidently that Churuman was the son of a Jat *Zamindar* of Barsana situated between the land of Braj and Rajputana. Barsana is the reputed home of Sri Radha's father in the district of Mathura. Wendel, who visited Bharatpur in the second half of the eighteenth century, mentions a second Jat leader named Ram-chehra. He says, "Ram-chehra fell into the prince's hands, and Rajaram fled dangerously wounded."[2] It is not unlikely. Rajaram, Bhajja and his son Churaman, Churaman's nephew Badan Singh, the founder of the ruling family of Bharatpur—all came of the sturdy stock of the Mathura Jats, probably from Barsana, 22 miles n.w. of Mathura and 12 miles south of the Jat stronghold of Deeg. Barsana was the home of the Brahman diplomat Rupram Katare, who was the *purohit* and political adviser to Surajmal Jat and his successors.

Masir-i-Alamgiri is a contemporary authority which says that, after the death of Rajaram, Bhajja, father of Churaman, assumed the leadership of the Jats. But this is not corroborated by any *akhbarat* of these years. The leadership of the Jats after the capture of Sinsini went to Fatehram Jat, son of Rajaram. He continued resistance to imperial army under Rajah Bishan Singhji from his stronghold of Pinghora, about 25 miles south of Bharatpur. Bhajja is not mentioned in any news-sheet of Aurangzeb's reign.

No activities of Churaman Jat during the life-time of Rajaram, or during the siege of Sinsini, are on record. When the spot-light of contemporary history is turned upon him from 1690 till his suicide by sucking poison in 1721, Churaman reveals himself as a man of stout heart and resourceful brain, a master of guerilla tactics

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[2] Wendel's Ram-chehra cannot be identified. At any rate his statement about Rajaram is wrong. The prince referred to by Wendel is prince Bidar Bakht. Rajaram died about two years before the capture of Sinsini by the Prince "Ram-chehra," who according to Wendel fell into the prince's hand, might be a confusion with some other Jat leader. The only notable Jat prisoner captured by the prince was Zorawar Jat, son of Rajaram. Zorawar was taken to the South and executed in Aurangzeb's camp in the same barbarous manner as Sambhaji, son of Shivaji, (vide : Diggi Collection News-sheet No. 134, dated 19th Rabi, II., 34th Reg ; middle of January 1691). Ram-chehra is mentioned by Wendel as the leader of the Jats of Soger. We have several news sheets regarding the siege and capture of Soger (about 12 miles S. W. Kumher), captured in June 1691. No leader was taken prisoner there. So Ram-chehra remains a riddle.

and tactful leader, capable of holding together mutually repellant elements and making them fight under most adverse circumstances for independence against the Mughal Empire. Churaman and Aniram, who managed to escape from Sinsini before its fall in January 1690, were put on the proscription-list of rebel leaders to be captured dead or alive. But Churaman was equally determined not to desist from fighting the Mughals, and yet not to fall alive into their hands. A dose of poison he always carried with him to deny his enemies the credit of capturing him alive. Churaman had begun his career as the *rahzan* (highway robber) on the imperial highway between Delhi and Agra, and his first success was to be appointed *rahdar* (Protector of the highway) of the same in 1713 by Emperor Farrukhsiyar.

After the fall of Sinsini in January 1690, Rajah Bishansingh Kachhwa was appointed in place of Prince Bidar Bakht to supreme command in the Mathura district for crushing the Jat revolt. The Rajah had secured his transfer from Kohat to Mathura in 1688 by executing an agreement that he would suppress the Jat revolt in six months with a mental reservation. It was a task which was beyond the power of Amber and the Mughal empire to be accomplished even in sixty years. Churaman's strategy had forced the imperial army to look for its safety of supplies and fight the rebels on both the flanks and the rear from the headquarters of the Rajah at Mathura. Amar Singh Jat of Kher and Rait in the neighbourbood of modern Aligarh and Nanda Jat of Jawar, two miles north-west of the Jat fort of Mursan, were in alliance with the Jat rebels of Agra and Mathura on the western bank of Jamuna. Amar Singh Jat had roused to arms the Jats of Nuh, Chandausi, Khurja, Mahaban, Sadabad and Jaleswar and proved so great a menace in the area that under Aurangzeb's express order the Amber Army under the Rajah *ataliq* and general Harisingh Khangarwat had to be diverted to the Doab at a critical stage of the siege of Sinsini. Harisinghji defeated Amar Singh and captured his fortresses of Rait and Kher in 1689 and, before he could finish his work, he had to return to Mathura to organise a fresh campaign against the Jats of Sogor, Abair, and Pingora in modern Bharatpur territory. It was Churaman's policy not to confine himself in any stronghold, but to roam at large with a select body of horsemen, organise resistance and open a second theatre of war, before the imperialists would disengage themselves from the one on hand. His bands almost closed, except under strong armed escorts, the imperial highway between Delhi and

Mathura. The Ajmir-Agra road via Hindaun and Bayana was similarly rendered unsafe by Churaman's Rajput ally Ransingh Panwar and the Jadhons of Karauli and Tahan-garh on the Chambal. Another ally of Churaman was the Maujjiya Jat of Chinkara, 8 miles south of Fatehpur-Sikri. He directed similar predatory operations in the tract between Dholpur and Agra.

Churaman himself had gone into hiding in the inaccessible jungles and swamps between Sinsini and Alwar. There he recruited a large army of outlaws from Jats, Minas and the Sekhawat Rajputs. He had a notorious ally in Kanha Naruka whose chief stronghold was the fort of Barodah, nine miles north of Lachhmangarh in the former Alwar state. Muhamid Khan, the pious and faithless Mughal *faujdar* of Alwar, was in secret collusion with Kanha and Churaman and had his share of the booty. They established their lawless sway in this region, leaving the people the alternative of either sharing their risks and spoils or of paying the government revenue with an additional blackmail as the condition of safety to their lives and lands. It was a general practice to carry off the loyal peasants to their *garhis* and hold them up to a ransom.

The Amber general took the field against the Jat rebels in December 1691 and within a year captured a chain of formidable jungle forts that formed the backbone of the Jat resistance directed by Fatehram from Pingora, and by Churaman, not known to the imperialists from where, because he was reported to be present everywhere in the neighbourhood of the beleagured *garhis* and yet elusive like wind. Eight miles east of Sinsini lay the *garhi* of Kasot; six miles south east of Kasot was situated Abair; four miles further south from Abair stood the *garhi* of Sogor, and 18 miles s. w. of Abair lay the castle of Pingora from which Fatehram, son of Rajaram, harassed the Amber army during the sieges of Sogor and Abair.

While Rajah Bishansinghji and his general were preoccupied with the operations against his chain of *garhis*, Churaman was reported to be building other forts under the very nose of Rudrasingh Kachhwah, the Mughal commandant of Sinsini. One of these was the *garhi* of Sonkh eight miles s.s.w. of Sinsini and the other, which was completed some years after to be the capital fortress of Churaman, lay eight miles due west of Sinsini at Thun (Jatolee-Thun of the modern atlas). To the west of Abair Churaman was building up a triangular line of resistance with the newly-built fort of Sonkh as its apex: a line from Pingora to Bhatauli (8 miles southwest of the Nadbai Rly. station in the Bharatpur state), forming its

base, a line from Sonkh via Raisis (four miles east of Nadbai) to Pingora indicating its eastern side. The western flank of this triangle extended from the Banganga river to the hills of Mewat via Bhusawar ; 8 miles due west of Bhusawar stood the strongholds of Churaman's powerful ally Ransigh Panwar, and Garhi-Kesra of Harkishan Chauhan.

From 1690 to 1695 Churaman and his allies were, however, fighting a losing battle against the grim determination and superior generalship of Harisingh Khangarwat who carried on a cruel and devastating war against the Jats. Aurangzeb had given strict orders to kill and pursue the Jats to their remotest retreat, giving no quarters to them on any account. Every *garhi* worth defence fell one by one in Mathura district and Mewat by the end of the year 1693. Fatehram, son of Rajaram, died perhaps in the defence of his *garhi* of Pingora ; so the leadership of the war of Jat independence now passed on formally to Churaman. Beaten in the Mathura district, Churaman slipped into hiding at Chinkara held by Maujjiya Jat. There the condition of things had become desperate. The *waqf* villages of the Taj and Etmad-ud-daula had not paid revenue for four years : jagirdars fared worse, and worst was the plight of the Mughal officials in the *Khalsa* parganas, particularly in Dholpur-Bari, where the land-revenue was found in arrears for eleven years.

In 1694 Rajah Bishansinghji and his redoubtable general Harisinghji were ordered to clear the Agra district of the rebels and restore law and order. Situation became alarming on account of the report that all the notorious Jat ring-leaders ousted from their *garhies* in Mathura district had moved into Agra district to fan the flame of revolt. Most of them including Churaman were actually in hiding at Chinkara. Before the lines of investment were complete, Churaman with his lieutenants escaped from the fort. Harisinghji went in pursuit of them relentlessly destroying suspect villages within a radius of thirty miles. But Churaman could be found nowhere. Meanwhile, Chinkara was captured ; but Churaman's ally Maujjiya Jat had managed to escape. The fugitive Jat leaders were hanging about in the neighbourhood and their presence flared up troubles in parganas Khanwa and Rupbas. Harisinghji after a hard fight captured one thousand Jats, men, women and children, of whom five hundred were publicly executed on the imperial highway, and the rest with a son of Alia Jat of Abair were reserved for execution on the police *chabutra* of Agra. But reverses and examples of barbarous ferocity did not break the spirit of the Jat resistance.

Four miles west of Khanwa lay the Jat forts of Korasa and Sismandi in pargana Khanwa. There the imperialists were held up for sometime, enough to give Churaman and his companions to fly and rouse the Jats in the neighbourhood of Bharatpur and Agra to a fresh fight. Bichhaundi, one mile east of the modern town of Bharatpur, Undhara (seven miles due east of Bichhaundi), Chaksana (one mile south of Undarh), and Maikanda (six Miles s.w. of Agra Cantt.) formed a wide loop of revolt. Harisinghji with the co-operation of the *thanadars* of the neighbourhood mercilessly combed out the affected area meeting desperate resistance even from the Jat women in arms, who were not spared by the Rajputs. But the main objective failed. Churaman with his party gave the imperialists a clever slip and was reported to be hiding in the broken jungle-clad ravines of the Chambal, somewhere between Ratanagarh and Bargaon (26 miles south of Bayana and 16 miles west of Karauli). The proscription-list of names of persons who were wanted dead or alive by Aurangzeb stood as follows :

1. Lodha, Bukna and others expelled from Soghor.
2. Churaman, Aniram ,, ,, Sinsini
3. Nanda, etc., sons of Alia Jat ,, Abair
4. Jagman and Banarasi Jat ,, *garhi* Saunkh (14 miles s.w. of Mathura) captured by prince Bidar Bakht.
5. Maujjiya and others, fugitives from Chinkara (7 miles south of Fatehpur-Sikri).

Churaman's tactics in fighting a delaying action against the Amber army led by Harisinghji during the dry season of the year 1694 would have done credit to any first-rate soldier of his age. He calculated on the coming monsoon to give him some respite from the relentless pursuit of the imperialists. The Rajput army was still in the neighbourhood of Rupbas and Fatephur-Sikri, planning a south-west drive in the direction of Ratangarh. A report of Harisinghji's spies gives us a clear indication of Churaman's strategy. It was learnt that the Jats had again assembled in strength at Burgawan, 3 miles west of Jagnair, and that the rebels of Jagnair and Ratanpur were devising a concerted action against the Rajah's army. "When the Mughaliya Raja (Bishan Singhji) would be marching upon Ratangarh"so the report went, "you (from Burgawan) should give the Raja a resolute fight in front ; while we from behind will be cutting off his communications via Agra-Ranthambhor

Road, and plundering the villages of the pargana Rupbas lying near the highway."

This did not exhaust all the ingenuity of the Jats. The western flank of Churaman's new position at Ratangarh was protected by the Jadhon principality of Karauli, whose old chief Rajah Ratanpal had neither power nor intention to drive away his own kinsmen, the Jadhon bandits and the notorious Ransingh Panwar, who had all taken shelter in his territory. They were ready to fall upon the Amber army from the rear, should they get entangled in the siege of Ratangarh. But the superior resources of the imperialists bore down all obstacles. Harisinghji deprived Churaman of any prospect of assistance from his bandit allies in Karauli by sending a strong detachment to drive away Ransingh Panwar. The approaches to Ratangarh were cleared of thick jungles, and the Jat outside the jungle is a Samson shorn of his locks. Ratangarh was captured in the first week of June 1694; but Churaman and his followers again had made good their escape probably to the south of the Chambal.

This was a very critical period for Churaman who had lost everything except his unconquerable will and the dose of poison he carried with him. Churaman was saved by a mis calculation of Aurangzib who thought that the Jat menace on the west bank of the Jamuna could now be fought by a less capable man than Harisinghji. So after the fall of Ratangarh, he appointed Rajah Kalyan Singh Bhudauriya *vice* Rajah Bishan Singhji to deal with the Jats of the Agra district and diverted the Amber army to the subjugation of Nanda Jat of Jawar, who had put an end to Mughal administration in the parganas of Mahaban, Sadabad and Jaleswar. Harisinghji died in an assault on Jawar (31st March 1695) to the great relief of Churaman and his allies. Meanwhile, Churaman had issued out from his hiding and restored the situation almost to what it had been after the fall of Sinsini. Rajah Bishansinghji captured Jawar, but Nanda's sons escaped and lived to found the principalities of Hathras and Mursan.

In 1696 after seven years of imprisonment, Prince Muazzam had been released and sent to Agra as viceroy to deal with the Jats, who under the leadership of Churaman had virtually established their own predatory Raj in the country-side of Agra and Mathura districts, and under Nanda's sons in some parts of the Doab. The shadow of an impending war of succession had fallen on the Mughal empire and Muazzam was more intent on securing partisans than fighting the Jats. About a year after (July 1696), the prince with Rajah

Bishan Singhji left Agra for Afghanistan under orders of transfer. This set free Churaman to consolidate his power further. Sinsini had become a point of honour with Churaman, a sort of Somnath to be avenged on Aurangzeb, a second Mahmud of Ghazni who spared no means to destroy his people and their religion. Between 1696 and 1707 A. D. Churaman rebuilt Sinsini in defiance of the Mughal government when Aurangzeb breathed his last (March, 1707). During the war of succession Churaman emerged fully into the lime-light of history. He gathered a large army and sat on the fence promising allegiance to both the rival princes and yet actively joining neither party. On the day of the battle of Jajau, Churaman plundered the camps of both Azam and Muazzam impartially and made himself more solvent than any Rajah or Mughal grandee of his time.

Churaman had built Thun, a stronger and larger fort than Sinsini and rebuilt the fort of Sinsini itself (8 miles east of Thun), after it had been destroyed by Mukhtar Khan, the Subahdar of Agra in October 1705. To punish the audacity of Churaman the new emperor sent a strong army under Riza Bahadur, who marched upon Sinsini and captured it after several months' siege in December 1707 ; Churaman now thought it politic to make overtures of peace, which Bahadur Shah was no less eager to accept. Churaman came to Agra, repented of his conduct and returned with a *mansab* of 1500 jats, 500 *sawar*.

A new chapter in Churaman's career began with his acceptance of *mansab* in Mughal service. A year after Churaman joined Riza Bahadur, the imperial faujdar and the last conqueror of Sinsini ; in an attack on Ajit Singh Kachhwah, the zamindar of Kama in the Mathura district, Churaman shed his first drop of blood in Mughal service, but Riza Bahadur lost his life in an attack on Kama. Ajit Singh, however, was ultimately overthrown perhaps through the exertions of Churaman who had a direct interest in removing this Kachhwah dagger in his rib.

Churaman with a very strong contingent of Jats accompanied Bahadur Shah in his expedition against the Sikhs in 1710. Though of the same stock, sectarianism had affected the tie of blood between the Sikh Jats of the Punjab, and the Hindu Jats outside. Hindus fought for their independence piecemeal, having no consciousness of an all-India nationalism. Guru Gobind Singh served against the Ahoms of Assam, and the Rajputs with their proverbial zeal and valour against the Marathas and the Jats. Churaman took

the side of Jahandar Shah in the war of succession that followed the death of Bahadur Shah in 1712. He was present with the army of Jahandar Shah in the battle of Agra (January 1713), not to fight but bide his time to fall upon the baggages and camps of both the parties in the confusion of battle : because he knew that it was wiser to provide himself amply with the sinews of war against whosoever would come off victorious. He looted to his heart's content and vanished into his jungle fastness, though his headstrong son Muhakam Singh perhaps exerted himself somewhat for the losing side. After the accession of Farrukhsiyar, Chabela Ram, the Subahdar of Agra, was ordered to punish Churaman. Churaman had his finger on the pulse of the imperial court, torn as it was with factions, and the secret intrigues of high dignitaries against one another. He purchased the patronage of the Sayyid Wazir Abdullah with a rich present of supplies he had gathered. Chabela Ram failed, and was replaced by the easy-going Khan Dauran Samsamuddaula who soon found it beyond his power to subdue Churaman by force of arms. So he offered peace to Churaman who was always ready to bargain on favourable terms.

Churaman with a strong following and the airs of a *hafi-hazari* reached Barapula about 10 miles south of Delhi, where he was received by Rajah Bahadur Rathor, a son of the maternal uncle of Farrukhsiyar's father. Churaman's faults were pardoned and he was appointed to very lucrative post of *Rahdar* of the imperial highway from Delhi to Dholpur ferry, where none else except the Jats could guarantee any security. But the wolf did not change his nature. Churaman stretched his lawful authority to lawlessness and jagirdars and merchants soon cried for relief from the high-handedness of the Jat octroi-collectors. Rajah Sawai Singh offered to lead a campaign against Churaman, who was a thorn by the side of Amber and an ally of Ajit Singh Rathor of Marwar. In 1716 Rajah Sawai Jai Singh marched at the head of a well-appointed army, swelled by the contingents of Hadas and Gaurs, in the direction of Churaman's fortress of Thun. As regards Churaman's preparation, it was reported that he had stored grain, ghee, salt and tobacco for his garrison to last for twenty years. Churaman was quite modern in his plan of defence. He forced all non-combatants and merchants to leave Thun, leaving their property behind. The story of about sixteen months' unsuccessful siege of Thun so graphically described by Irvin need not be repeated here. The field army of the Jats under

his dare-devil son Muhakam Singh and nephew Rupa[3] severely engaged the imperialists outside the walls of Thun. The imperialists only gained success enough to continue the siege.

The army of Sawai Jai Singh before Thun was in the same plight as that of prince Bidar Bakht had been twenty-eight years before. The Jats cut off trade and communications between Agra and Delhi and plundered right and left, sparing only the jagirs of the Wazir. Churaman's diplomatic agents at Court completely won over the Wazir who delayed the despatch of reinforcements to the Rajah and at last procured Farrukhsiyar's reluctant consent for a negotiated peace and the recall of the army of Sawai Jai Singh, who, however, received poor consolation at Court by being given the high-sounding title of *Maharajadhiraj*.

Soon after the conclusion of peace, Churaman was summoned by the Wazir (Sayyid Abdullah) to Delhi, where an intrigue was on foot to oust the Sayyid brothers from power. He remained faithful to the Sayyids and joined Hussain Ali with his contingent, when he was on march to the Deccan with the Emperor Muhammad Shah in 1720 by way of Rajputana. After the treacherous murder of

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[3] The name of Rupa, *nephew* of Churaman, gives a clue to establish the relationship between Churaman and Badan Singh, the founder of the present ruling house of Bharatpur. *Sujan-charit*, a Hindi poem written by Sudan under the patronage of Surajmal Jat of Bharatpur, contains a couplet in which Nawab Safdarjang of Oudh says to Surajmal, *i.e.*, "Rup Singh, your uncle, and Sadat Khan (Burhan-ul-mulk, maternal uncle and father-in-law) had been friends. You have made this hereditary alliance two-fold stronger !"

If Rup Singh was an uncle of Surajmal he and his brother (younger) must have been the sons of a brother of Churaman. The genealogical table of the descent of Surajmal omits all reference to Churaman for reasons too evident. Badan Singh's father according to poet Sudan, the author of *Sujan-charit*, was one Bhao Singh who was the son of Khan Chand. This Khan Chand is praised highly for his valour. He is said to have established his Raj in Braj by defeating the armies of Delhi. But Khan Chand's name is not mentioned in any history. Khema Jat "one of Churaman's chief officers" joined the army of Muhammad Shah during its march in the direction of the Jamuna from Rajputana. This Jat, according to Irvin, was placed in charge of the Imperial rear-guard (Later Mughals, ii, p 71). It is not unlikely that *Khanchand* of poet Sudan was the same as this Khema Jat, whose relationship with Churaman remains undecided.

Husain Ali, the anti-Sayyid party made a high bid for the allegiance of Churaman who under inevitable circumstances wisely swore loyalty in the name of God but with a mental reservation for the Sayyid's cause. The very first service he was called upon to render was to act as guide from pargana Toda Bhim 45 miles in straight line s. w. of Fatehpur-Sikri to some place on the Jamuna between Agra and Delhi avoiding all important towns which were under the officers of the Sayyids. The easiest and shortest route lay through Churaman's own territory, but Churaman was careful to keep it a *terra incognita* to the Mughals. So he cleverly persuaded the Emperor to take another route. Churaman led the Emperor's party through the jagir villages of his enemy. Sawai Jai Singh, and a waterless Jungle by way of Kama and Pahari to Barsana in the Mathura district. Churaman paid silently his debt of gratitude to Sayyid Abdullah on the day of the battle of Hasanpur.

After the fall of the Sayyids the disintegration of the Mughal empire set in. The Marathas had already made Malwa and Gujarat their sphere of loot; the young Peshwa Bajirao was dreaming of planting the Maratha flag on the Indus, and Bundelkhand was virtually independent under Maharajah Chhatrasal Bundela. In Rajputana the diplomacy and statesmanship of Sawai Jai Singh had expanded the principality of Amber into a fairly large compact kingdom, and Maharajah Ajit Singh of Marwar made scarcely veiled attempt at independence. So Churaman also gave up his policy of humouring the Great Mughal. He set about organising his scattered territorial acquisitions and creating a sort of federal Jat State under the very shadow of the second capital of the Mughal Empire. With the growing Jat power, the Jat political vision also widened. There could be no peace between the Jats and the Kachhwahs, because a river of blood was flowing between them since the time of Sawai Jaisinghji's father, Bishansinghji. It was the ambition of Sawai Jaisinghji to crush the Jats of Agra and Mathura district with the backing of the emperors and round off his expanding possessions by securing the Jat country in jagir. Against this contingency Churaman had already armed himself by a defensive alliance with Maharajah Ajit Singh Rathor. Ajit was the first Rajput chief to recognise Churaman as a *Thakur*, by discarding the Rajput's aristocratic pride. Churaman is said to have had visited Jodhpur and been seated on the same carpet with Maharajah Ajit Singh. This was perhaps at the time of Sayyid Hussain Ali's campaign in Rajputana at the beginning of Farrukhsiyar's reign.

However, the Rathor was an ally to be relied upon against the Kachhwah.

Churaman had crossed the Rubicon by his double treachery to Muhammad Shah. The Nizam and Sawai Singh controlled the Court politics and they could never forgive Churaman. So Churaman was again at open war with the Mughal Empire. His Rathor ally had given the worst offence to the family of Timur and to Islam by taking away his widowed daughter from the imperial harem to Jodhpur, where her *shuddhi* was performed ceremoniously. Ajit Singh was called upon to surrender Ajmer, which he refused. Sadat Khan, the newly appointed subahdar of Agra, was ordered to advance against him, but Churaman barred the way. Churaman sent a strong force under the command of his son, Muhkam Singh to reinforce Ajit at Ajmer. Sadat Khan turned his army against the Jats but with the same bitter experience as that of every Mughal general who had ever ventured into the interior of the Jat country. This attempt of the imperialists only fanned the Jat conflagration. Surajmal Mishan, the author of Hindi epic, *Vamsabhaskar*, says that the Jats raised such a tumult as to create great consternation at Delhi. The last victory won by the Jats was to defeat and kill Nil kantha Nagar, the deputy-subahdar of Agra, who had taken a position near Fatehpur Sikri with an army of ten thousand horse and numerous infantry (26th September, 1721). But at this hour of triumph, family dissensions ruined the future of the nascent Jat power. Sadat Khan won over Rupa Jat and his nephew, Badan Singh to his side. About the same time his eldest son, Muhkam Singh, a youngman of valour without brain, had become swollen-headed by his success and reputation as a soldier. Churaman's younger son, Zulkaran, was a typical grabbing Jat, ready to defy everybody crossing his path. The two brothers quarrelled over the property of one of their wealthy relations. Churaman at the request of the *Panch* (council of elders) asked Muhkam to make a compromise, but received only abusive language and defiance from his son. So old Churaman looked for his dose of poison which no enemy but a disobedient son made him swallow and die un-noticed and unregretted in a distant and lonesome orchard. Churaman's disadvantage was that unlike other leaders of Hindu independence of this age, e.g., Shivaji, Chhatrasal Bundela and Durgadas Rathor, he was a man of obscure birth, of plebeian origin. Time has perhaps come to give these 'village Hampdens' their meed of fame and honour, and to reassess the moral values of their success.

12

Religious Policy of the Maratha Empire under the Peshwas

The religious policy of the Maratha state had been outlined by the genius of Shivaji who based it on the principle of Akbar's dictum—*Sulah-i-kul* (Peace with all).[1] The Maratha state was, however, a Hindu state having for its fundamental principle the protection of the cow and the Brahman (*Go-Brahmana-Pratipalaka*), preservation of the Vedas and the social structure of the Hindus. Though it was the king's duty to respect all forms of faith among his subjects, and provide for the maintenance of their religious establishments, he nevertheless owed special duties to his Hindu subjects and to Hinduism. With regard to Hinduism, the policy of the Maratha state was not one of missionary zeal and expansion, but one of consolidation and preservation. It did not put any indirect economic pressure on non-Hindus, nor offered any political temptations to them to change their faith which were the essential features of the religious policy of a typical Muslim state of the Middle Ages.

The Peshwas after Balaji Viswanath constituted themselves as the Jang Bahadurs, the *de facto* rulers of the nineteenth century Nepal. But there was this difference that the pensioned sovereign of

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[1] We learn from a document of suspicious origin (33, S. P. D., vol. 31) prepared for Shivaji that the lands yielding a revenue of 40 lakhs of rupees yearly were allowed rent-free by the Mughal Government for the maintenance of *Devasthan* (temples), *Masjids* (mosques), *Qazis* and Fakhirs. Shivaji did not interfere with religious grants and *inams* of the Muslims. One Mulla Ali, son of Mulla Abdulla, khidmatgar of the mosque of *mauja* Bhabde, is confirmed by Shivaji to his rent-free lands which had been conferred upon his father by Malik Ambar.

the Maratha state was denied the honour of being regarded as an incarnation of Vishnu and as the head and stabiliser of the society and religion, whose command alone could bring within or push outside any individual or tribe within the pale of *hukkah and water* with the Nepalese. In Maharashtra the reverse was the case. Here the Peshwa was regarded as the incarnation of Vishnu and exercised most complete sway over the Hindu society and religion for about three quarters of a century. Having been Chitpawan Brahmans with strict orthodox traditions, the religious policy of the Brahman Peshwas judged by modern and even by contemporary standards was reactionary to the extreme. Though they continued their liberal policy with regard to Islam, they enforced the code of Manu with all its religious and social injustice upon their Hindu subjects. Shivaji had made his religious policy subservient to the interests of the state ; but the Peshwas reversed this fundamental principle with the result that their reactionary policy adversely affected the political destiny of the nation. Their insistence on rules of caste purity and caste differences undid the work of the earlier saints of Maharashtra like Namdev, Tukaram, Gora the pot-maker and Choka the scavenger, whose enlightened teaching of *Bhakti* had welded the heterogeneous castes and tribes of Maharashtra into a homogeneous people and thus prepared the way of their national consciousness and unity.

We propose to study the religious policy of the Peshwas under two broad sections : namely the policy of the Peshwas as the defenders and the reformers of the Hindu society and religion, and secondly, their policy as rulers of a considerable non-Hindu population scattered over their wide dominion. At the outset it is necessary to remember that the Peshwa regime was a government of the Brahmans, by the Brahmans, and for the Brahmans. Let us now descend from generalities to the particulars so carefully preserved in the *Peshwa Daftar* released for the public under the editorship of Rao Bahadur G. S. Sardesai.

One deplorable departure of the Peshwas from the courageous though unorthodox tradition of the days of Shivaji and his mother Jija Bai was their refusal to readmit Hindus converted to Islam however pathetic their case might be. Jija Bai outwitted the Sultan of Bijapur by winning over to the national cause and to Hinduism the powerful family of Nimbalkars whose head, Balaji Nimbalkar, had been converted to Islam by the Sultan of Bijapur and given an Adilshahi princess in marriage to anchor the renegade fast to Islam. Moreover, she threw a challenge to the whole Maratha society by

marrying Shivaji's daughter Sakhu Bai to Balaji's son Mahadji Nimbalkar. So is said to have been the reconversion in later years of Netaji Palkar, the redoubtable lieutenant of Shivaji, whom Aurangzib had enticed away from his loyalty and religion. But the period of the *Brahman raj*[2] has other stories to tell. To cite a few instances :

(i) Two Brahmans, Nandram and Hariram, who (whose ancestors ?) had become disciples of Pirzada and followed Muhammadan customs for one hundred years, solicited readmission to their caste. About fifty families of their nearer kinsmen admitted them to caste after necessary purification. But the Peshwa writes to Malhar Rao Holkar "to deal necessary punishment to Nandram and other Brahmans for their irreligious behaviour" (SPD., Vol. 43 ; No. 8, 12-5-1764).

(ii) One unfortunate man Narhari Ranalekar had fallen a prisoner after the disaster of Panipat and been forcibly converted to Islam. When he returned home the Brahmans of Paithan "purified" him and admitted him back to caste. A complaint having been made by other Brahmans to the Peshwa, the issue was referred to a meeting of the Vaidiks and Pandits, who declared that one who remained a Muslim for ten or twelve years was not fit to undergo purification. Under the Peshwa's order the Paithan Brahmans who refused to accept the verdict of the Shastras—were excommunicated and debarred from interdining with Ahmadnagar Brahmans [*Ibid.*, No. 25 ; 28-8-1772(?)].

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[2] During the time of Bajirao I reconversion was allowed :

(a) A relation of Sankarji Kadam who had gone over to Islam permitted to be taken back after *Prayachit* (SPD., Vol. 22, No. 79, 19-7-1773).

(b) Ramji Pawar who had fallen a captive and forced to apostatize ordered to be readmitted to caste after penance (*Ibid*, No. 103, 26-4-1735).

(c) A state order is issued to the Brahmans to readmit to caste one Babji Yesaji Prabhu excommunicated for eating food in every place (*Ibid*, No 137, 5-6-1739).

Here it must be noted that all the three persons readmitted to caste were of warrior and writer (Prabhu) castes. There seems to be a little relaxation of the policy of exclusion with regard to non-Brahmans whereas Brahmans as examples cited in the text shows that Brahmans as a rule were not allowed back to caste perhaps to preserve the purity of that caste.

Hard was the punishment under the plea of religious purity on those who would rise above the senseless prejudice against reconversion. But the Peshwas themselves would not hesitate to throw Shastric injunctions to the four winds when anything concerned their own sentiments. They were careful to preserve the illegitimate harvest of the Brahmanical seed for their own caste. It is notorious how Bajirao I attempted to invest Ali Bahadur, born of Mastani, with sacred thread. We also read of several intances of the anxiety of the later Peshwas to procure Brahmanical brides and bride-grooms for their own children by dancing girls (*nataka-shala mule*) of their Hall of music and drama. They, however, expiated for their sins by giving greater attention to the cow and the Brahman than it had been the case under the secular government of Shivaji and his sons They prohibited cow-slaughter within their territory, abolished death sentence on the Brahmans except perhaps for high treason ; and severely punished *Brahmahatya* by non-Brahmans. To take up the case of the cow first :

(i) One *Fakhir* named Daud Shah fined Rs. 60/- for killing a cow (SPD., Vol. 22 ; No. 227, 23-1-1773).

(ii) Two butchers of Poona and their ringleader Jamal Kassab who killed a cow secretly were dragged to the police custody with hand-cuffs and leg-bars to await further proceedings against them (*Ibid.*, Vol. 43, No. 144, 13-5-1776).

(iii) Keshvrao Jagannath reports to the Peshwa that three persons of Mang tribe stole a cow and killed it at nightfall. The Patil (village headman) and a Berad (tracker belonging to a wild tribe) with sepoys were sent to investigate. One sweeper of Kalyan discovered flesh in a house. The house was confiscated and the three Mangs were brought into the fort. The *havildar* of the fort showed remissness in dealing with the case. He is not fit to be in charge of the fort of Singhgadh. The offenders should be meted out examplary punishment (SPD., Vol. 43, No. 147, 27-10-1793).

(iv) Officials of Konkan are directed to help Antaji Naik Ajurkar especially appointed to take steps for cows being exported from the *Desh* country by the butchers of Salsette and Bombay (*Ibid.*, No. 148).

(v) Kesho Bhikaji Havildar reports the acknowledgment of reprimand of the Pehswa to the effect that he had not been

vigilant in stopping cow-slaughter by the Musalmans of Tugad and Karkada : submits that he will in future carry out the order vigorously (*Ibid.*; No. 150).

Next come the Brahmans with whom the department of Nyayadhish (Justice, Censorship of morals and religion combined into one) had been particularly busy throughout. The policy of the Peshwas was to concentrate all powers in matters social and religious into their own hands. They would not suffer any social and religious innovations which were according to them as impious as *bidat* or innovations in the eye of the orthodox Mulla. Their policy was not only reactionary, but also vexatious on account of its over-interfering character. Between the age of Bhababhuti (who makes his hero Ramchandra cut off the head of a Sudra ascetic)—and that of Ram Shastri there was this much relaxation that the latter recommended the commutation of death sentence to its milder equivalent *Sarvaswa-haran* or confiscation of property in the case of Sudra who would behave like a Brahman (*Dwija-lingi*). The following cases will illustrate the range and scope of this phase of their religious policy :

(i) One Lakshman Bhat was charged with the offence of teaching *Rudra* to a *Jangam* of the Sudra caste. A decision is given to this effect : Lakshman Bhat must hand over whatever he got as *dakshina* (remuneration), live on barley (*yavanna*) for a year observing *brahmacharya* (abstinence ; and make gift of 90 cows besides other penances. The Sudra according to Manu deserves death at the hands of the ruler for behaving as a Brahman (*i e.*, wearing the sacred thread and reading the Vedas, etc.). But the death sentence may be commuted to the confiscation of his whole property (SPD., Vol. 43, No. 110).

(ii) Letter of Bagaji Yadav Goswain : Brahmans of Paithan performed some Vedic sacrifices involving the killing of an animal in place of *pishta pashu* (substitute made of wheat or barley) with the sanction of the Nawab in the Muslim territory. Why should the Nawab give an opinion regarding our Shastras ? The Government should intervene in this matter and punish the offenders (*Ibid*, Vol. 23, No. 11).

(iii) One Jangam was caught in the act of performing *Rudra-bhishek* for a Baniya who was not allowed to do so by the *Shastras*. The *Baniya* held only the vessel of *abhishek*,

who fled when detected but caught after three days. Both were to be tried for such an offence (*Ibid.*, Vol 43 : No. 108).

(iv) Ramchandra Babaji Shenvi and others were summoned to the Darbar on the charge of having performed *prayachit* without the government sanction (*sarkar ajna sivaya*). They are fined Rs. 3000/-, half of which is to be paid immediately ; and half in the month of *Vaisak* (*Ibid.*, No. 78).

Down to the death of Peshwa Bajirao I the religious policy of the Maratha state had been less bigoted than what it became after his death. Bajirao I was in temperament and conduct more of a Rajput grandee of the Mughal Court than what became a Chitpawan Brahman. Wine, woman and war were the ruling passions in him, and he was the first Brahman who is known to have scandalised his community by taking wine and fowl curry in the company of his Muslim concubine Mastani. There was a state brewery at Poona in the time of Bajirao I and it is on record that bursting of the *bhati* caused the death of twelve servants and spoiled about two maunds of wine—as Bajirao enters it in his Diary (SPD., Vol. 22 ; No. 375 ; 27-4-1738). His successors, however, lived a more orthodox life and at the instance of Sadashiv Rao Bhao an edict was issued restricting the manufacture and sale of liquor. The edict was enforced perhaps on the Brahman community only so far as the use and sale of wine was concerned. We quote a few instances below :

(i) Peshwa Balaji to Trimbakrao Vishwanath : If the *kalals* (brewers) of Poona and other places do not obey regulations they are to be imprisoned (*Ibid*, Vol 23 ; No. 59, 27-2-1754).

(ii) One undated letter : "Received orders prohibiting the manufacture of wine by *kalals*. Beg to inform you that today *bhati* has been forbidden strictly" (*Ibid.*, Vol. 43 ; No. 36).

(iii) ' One Dravid Brahman woman was caught with about twenty-five bottles of wine and goat's meat in her house at Narayan-peth in Poona. She was brought to the *thana*. . . .Sin is rampant in the villages. Strict punishment should be meted out . . . ." (*Ibid.*, Vol. 43 ; No. 144, 13-5-1776).

This shows that wine and meat were surreptitiously sold to Brahman customers in Poona as late as 1774 A.D.

(iv) One Balaji Dondo Kulkarni is accused of having lived with a dancing girl (*kalabantin*), and eating meat and drinking wine in her company. He might be readmitted to caste if he performs penances according to the *Shastras* and bathes in the Ganges. . . . . (*Ibid.*, undated).

The solicitude of the Peshwas to bring about a moral uplift of the Brahmans perhaps hardly succeeded better than that of Aurangzib for the Muslims among whom throughout Hindustan there was not a third man who did not drink wine except himself and his *Shaikh-ul-Islam* as that Puritan monarch once cried out in despair. Manucci further adds that Shaikh-ul Islam had no objection to European wines. Gopika Bai, wife of Peshwa Balaji Bajirao, suggested another reform ; namely, the abolition of the evil custom of selling brides by the Desh Brahmans. This does not seem to have been abolished by law at any time. The long prevalent custom of remarriage of widows among the lower classes was tolerated ; but the government levied a tax on widow remarriage for which a permit by local official was necessary (SPD , Vol. 43, No. 64). Intercaste and irregular marriages were dissolved by the state authority, and permission for remarriage of such brides given. Forced marriages were heavily punished. Not only marriages but every form of caste dispute was a cognisable offence. A few examples are quoted below :

(i) The Peshwa issues authority to Sadashiv Nagnath to celebrate his daughter's marriage with another bridegroom, as her first marriage was performed forcibly with one without the performance of such ceremonies as *Devakapratista, Nandi-shraddha* and *Kanyadan* (SPD., Vol. 43 ; No. 53, 19-11-1780).

(ii) The marriages of the daughters of one Bawaji Malhar Tatu were prohibited by the Government as his brother happened to be married to a girl of the same *gotra*, (*Ibid.*, No. 55).

(iii) One Jano Manakeshwar writes to the Peshwa that his five-year old daughter was taken by one Madhaji Shivnath to his own house for taking food. She was then taken to the temple of Rameswar and there married in the *pishacha* form without *mantra*. He solicits permission to give her

in marriage a second time according to proper rites ; and the permission is granted (*Ibid*, No. 72 ; 9-3-1759).

(iv) Joshi who abducted the daughter of Trimbyak Dharan and married her is ordered to be taken in procession along with his accomplice, a cousin of his—through the town with the beat of drum crying out their crime and then imprisoned in the *top-khana* : the culprits are to beg their food in the villages (*Ibid.*, No. 145 ; 20-6-1778).

The contemporary documents hitherto brought to light support the allegation of the non-Brahman school of Maratha historians that the government of the Peshwas was a religio-military rule of the Brahmans for the Brahmans. There might be no objection to granting special privileges to the Brahmans in society as the custodians of religion, or practising liberal charities towards them, as the *ulema* class in a Muslim state and the clergy under Christian government during the Middle ages also enjoyed such honours and emoluments. It was also a fact that the criminal law during the Middles Ages was a respecter of persons and classes both in Europe and Asia. Islam theoretically made the Law no respecter of person, and under strong and pious rulers the *ulemas* were subjected to the same treatment as any other Muslim ; extreme penalty of law was very severely meted out to them. The Peshwas following the injunctions of Manu made the Brahmans a privileged class with regard to criminal law. There was a great discrimination between a Brahman and a non-Brahman offender accused of murder, adultery, etc , and offences against Brahmans by non-Brahmans were more heavily punished. To quote a few examples :

(i) Two families of Despande Brahmans of Phaltan had a free fight in which Apaji Chimaji Despande struck Shyamrao with a sword which caused his death ; a brother of Chimaji also died at the hands of Shyamrao. . . .For this offence Apaji was excommunicated ; but he sought the protection of the *Sabha* of Brahmans who prescribed for him certain penances and a pilgrimage to Benares, Rameswar and other sacred places. An official makes a report that Chimaji had carried out the injunctions of the Brahmans of Phaltan who were therefore persuaded to dine in his house and readmit him to the social communion.

But we hear of no capital punishment inflicted on the Brahmans by the State for man-slaughter (SPD., Vol. 43 ; No. 131, 14-8-1761).

(ii) Ramshastri issues an order to the Brahmans of Sevagaon for the excommunication of the family of one Mahadev Bhat (whose wife had caused the death of a Brahman) till the couple should perform certain penances. Afterwards the Shastri relents to the extent that as the culprit was a woman the *parikrama* around the temple of Shri Triyamkeshwaram ought to suffice. (*Ibid.*, No. 151).

(iii) One Govind Bhat of Sakri outraged a Brahman girl of ten years which caused her death. For such a heinous crime the offender, a Brahman was sent to Benares for penance, and ordered to feed 125 Brahmans after return ! (*Ibid.*, No. 153).

(iv) Balaram Maniram had cast a lustful eye (*bad-nazar*) on a Brahman woman for which he was fined Rs. 1000/- (one thousand).

For the realisation of this fine his house and property are sold and goods confiscated (SPD., Vol. 22 ; No. 224, 26-9-1772).

(v) One Babaji Vishnu Prabhu (a Kayeth) committed the murder of a Brahman. He was put under arrest, his house and property confiscated in the first instance ; and the case reported recommending capital punishment on the offender.' (*Ibid*, Vol. 43, No. 165).

(vi) The Peshwa asks his brother Narayanrao to confiscate all grants and rights of the Brahmans and Patils of Pravarasangam, who had on the day of the burning of Holi killed the son of Dhorbhat Khare (*Ibid.*, No. 136, 15-4-1769).

The last is the only instance of severe action against the Brahmans. It also appears that a discrimination was made between a Maharashtra Brahman and a non-Maharashtra (*e g.*, Kanaujiya) accused of the same kind of offence against a Maharashtra Brahman woman. One Kanaujiya Brahman of Ahmadnagar abducted a Brahman woman who died in his house. For this offence he was imprisoned and offered release only on the payment of a fine of two thousand rupees (SPD., Vol. 43, No. 138). But against this case another is on record showing that the son of Bapu Patak having defiled the daughter-in-law of one Rajoba Dange made a compromise with the latter's son paying secretly a compensation of Rs. 800/- for marrying a fresh wife after discarding the first one. (*Ibid*, Vol. 43, No. 61). The terror of excommunication and intervention of government on the side of the orthodoxy made a race of moral cowards of the whole people. The religious policy of the

Peshwas and the terror of social ostracism could not in any way retard the pace of decay of public and private morals of the people of Mahrashtra. On an average about two lakhs of Rupees were spent on *Shravana-masi-dakshina* at Poona every year, and almost the same amount in gifts on other auspicious days. And these vast charities which benefitted a pampered priestly class were provided by every Peshwa from Bajirao I downwards, though the state was financially bankrupt. The Peshwas had to borrow money even at the rate of 18% and more to defray expenses of the army, and the cry that went forth from Poona to generals operating in Northern India was '*Paika*', money and more money! The Peshwas and their vassals bled the Jat and Rajput states white to run their government impoverished by senseless charities at home. No state undertook to do so much for the ruling community; and none was so ill-served by the same community as the Brahmanical kingdom of the Peshwas by the Brahman community itself. Their religious policy did neither foster a strong regional patriotism nor Indian nationalism. We quote below an interesting petition of one Bapuji Bhikaji, a Brahman traitor, demanding two lakhs of Rupees as *dakshina* from the English Company for whose success over Bajirao II he performed certain mysterious rites :

> ". . . . I foretold that evil days were coming for Gangadhar Shastri . . . . But Bapu Mairal did not pay my *bakhshish* . . . . and (Bapu Mhiral) died miserably at the hands of the Sahibs. Then ill-luck came upon the Sahibs, on account of which the Sahibs ordered that for their sake some religious rites of two lakhs worth should be performed . . . . . When on the 11th of *Aswin* at nightfall the troops (of the British Residency) were besieged, Shriniwas Rao came and said that whatever necessary must be done so that the Bara Sahib might defeat the enemy. So I offered prayers to *Sri Ganpati* and *Sri Mahalakshmi* . . . . Brahmans and hermits sat to perform *jog-jag* (meditation and oblations to sacrificial fire); five lakhs of Brahmans were fed . . . . So the Sahib may kindly order the payment of my *bakhshish* of two lakhs of Rupees for these services . . . . (SPD., Vol. 41, No. 167).

The Peshwas assumed the role of the Defender of the Faith both in the South and the North within their sphere of influence. It was one of the steadfast objects of their foreign policy to secure the control of Hindu religious places in *Braj* (Mathura District,

Prayag, Benares and Gaya, and make them safe and comfortable for pilgrims. Numerous documents are extant showing the efforts of the Peshwas in this direction. It must be said to the credit of the Peshwas that their religious policy in spite of its reactionary character rendered one great service: namely, to put prostrate Brahmanical faith reeling under centuries of fanatical persecution of the militant Islam again on its legs, and infuse a new life into it. As regards their policy to non-Brahmanical Hindu sects it was generally one of toleration and non-interference. But those who would encroach on idol-worship were severely punished. It is on record that Rajah Madho Singh of Jaipur, a subordinate ally of the Maratha State, took heavy vengeance on the *Shravakas* (Jains) of Jaipur who in a fit of religious frenzy had defiled the Hindu idol of *Sadashiv*—and exacted from the offenders a fine of fifteen lakhs of Rupees. This was evidently done at the instance of the Peshwas (SPD., Vol 43, No. 46). With regard to the religious policy of the Peshwas to Christianity and Islam, it may be said in general that they wisely restrained the forces of Hindu reaction from retaliatory spite against these religions, though the Hindus had many old scores to settle with them. The Portuguese of Goa had in their days of power made forcible converts and inflicted humiliation on the Hindus. But when the Marathas became supreme on the western coast they did not attempt any reconversion or persecute the Christian clergy. The Diary of Peshwa Bajirao I has an entry as follows: "*Khairat-kharch* (charity expenses) to be paid yearly to Padre Feringee of Bessein is sent with Sankaraji Keshav" (SPD., Vol. 22, No. 134, 1-7-1739). This might not be a solitary example. The policy of the Brahmanical Peshwas towards the Muslims deserves a more detailed notice.

It may be of some interest to enquire whether the Marathas stooped so low as to give the average Muslim ruler the compliment of imitation on the point of destruction of places of worship Facts that can be gleaned from the Marathi and Persian sources point to the conclusion that though there were perhaps a few cases of demolition of mosques, these had no sanction of the Peshwas. To cite the examples:

(i) During the military operations on the Western coast it is reported that the mosque at Cheul was dismantled by one Ramaji Mahadeve Biwalkar (SPD., Vol. 24, No. 265).

(ii) Ranoji Sindhia built a Shiv temple at Ujjain on the site, it is said, where a mosque had been built by Iltutmish by destroying the temple of *Mahakal*.

(iii) Malharrao Holkar after the occupation of Benares began destroying Aurangzib's mosque built on the ruins of the temple of Vishwanath. But the Brahmans of Benares appealed to the Peshwa to restrain Holkar from such an act ; and consequently Holkar gave up the project. (*Bhao Sahibchi Bakhar*).

(iv) The author of *Imad-us-sadat* says that Sadashiv Rao Bhao during his interview with Rajah Surajmal flared up at the sight of the Mathura mosque and thundered at the Jat ; "You profess to be a Hindu ; but how is it that you have kept this mosque standing so long ?" However, this was a momentary reaction of fanaticism ingrained almost in every man, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian or the Musalman as history proves. But the better sense of Bhao Sahib soon prevailed. When he reached Delhi he distributed his charities to the Hindu hermits on the bank of the Jamuna as well as to the *fakirs* at the Jama' Mosque. (*Imad.*, 78, *Waqaat-i-Alamgir Sani*,178).

It is proved beyond doubt that the Peshwas continued old grants to mosques and tombs, and there was provision in the budget for expenses of *urs* (anniversary) of some Muslim saints, *Id-ul-Fitr* (*Chand-ratri*) festivity, and the up-keep of Muslim places of worship even in places like *Singhgad* and Purandar forts. They were believers in the efficacy of worship paid at the shrines of Muslim Pirs and vowed offerings to them in times of difficulty. We quote a few entries below to illustrate the above statements :

(i) Peshwa Bajirao I's Diary : "Rs. 24/- (twentyfour) given to Fatu Mahut for redeeming a vow to distribute *shirini* (sweets at the mosque) made at the time of cutting the tusk of the elephant *Fathe-lashkar* (SPD., Vol. 22, No. 64, 16-4-1731).

(ii) Peshwa Madhavrao : "Paid Rs. 1400/- assigned for the repair of shrines of Sayyid Sadat and Shaikh Salla in Poona (*Ibid.*, Vol. 22, No. 200, 8-4-1768).

(iii) "As in previous year this year also some money was given as *khairat-kharch* on the (Vijaya) Dasami day to the shrine of Shaikh Salla at Poona (*Ibid.*, No. 171).

(iv) The head of a Kabirpanthi establishment at Poona died without any heir leaving only a widow. The *chelas* of the fakhir one a Hindu, Santa Gosavi, and the other Shah Musalman claimed to succeed their Guru. The local

official after investigation adjudicates in favour of Shah Musalman who was to receive the yearly state grant enjoyed by the deceased ; and further he recommends the widow for a subsistence grant (SPD., Vol. 23, Nos: 3 and 4, 1741 ?).

(v) Budget of expenditure at Singhgad :

"To be paid in cash

Rs. 6/- for the procession taken out by the Musalmans of the Fort.

Rs. (?) for expenses of *Chandratri*

(night of Id), *e.g.*, distribution of betels to people and for firing *tops* and *jajails* on that night (*Ibid.*, Vol. 45, pp. 39 and 40).

It is interesting to note that *Chandratri-kharch* is entered as an item along with *Shiv-ratri kharch*.

(vi) Oil for lighting the *masjid* within the fort of Purandar. (*Ibid.*, p. 49).

(vii) Among certain persons exempted from payment of house-tax of Rabiwar-peth of Poona, were Imam Mulana and Fakhir Chand (*Ibid*, 43, No. 21, 1800).

(viii) Dispute over the routes of the Muharram *taziyas* of two rival shrines of Said Sadat and Shaikh Salla invariably ending in a free fight is referred to the Peshwa for decision (*Ibid*, No. 33, 1741 ?).

Thus the tolerant and enlightened religious policy of the Peshwas presents a happy contrast to that of Aurangzib towards the non-Muslims. The Muslim subjects of the Peshwas served the state even more loyally than many Maratha chiefs. The conduct of Ibrahim Khan Gardi as contrasted with that of Malhar Rao Holkar in the third battle of Panipat shall ever remain an eloquent testimony to the success of the policy of the Peshwas towards Islam. There was no sign of a general Muslim reaction against the Maratha rule on the eve of that fateful day. Shuja-ud-daula and the Ruhelas joined the opposite camp not on religious grounds, but on pure political calculations that they had in common with the Jats and the Rajputs against the rapacity and faithfulness of the Marathas. The policy of *Peace with All* adopted by the Peshwas was an echo of the enlightened policy of Akbar ; but they did not preserve the attitude of neutrality which characterised the policy of the Mughal Emperor. Their policy of indulgence towards the Brahmans resulted in the inevitable orthodox reaction that invariably arrests the growth of a nation in its mid-career.

13

Some Reflections on the Fall of the Maratha Power

The Marathas and the Rajputs were spear-heads of Hindu national movement for the recovery of India's independence and ancient glory; but they eventually proved broken reeds. The glitter of Maratha lances and lightning flashes of the grim Rajput swords illumined the political horizon of India in the eighteenth century, but for a while only to leave the country in utter gloom and despair till the beacon light of the West alerted her to a new destiny under the lead of Britain. The historian sighs with regret in pondering over the unfulfilled destiny of the Maratha nation created by the genius of great Shivaji when the Mughal Empire was at its height of power if not of glory in the reign of bigoted Aurangzib. What might be the cause of the ultimate failure and downfall of the Maratha power? Pages of history reveal that no single cause can explain this sad phenomenon. Causes were complex and varied.

Providence punishes original sins of man no less than the sins of a nation, and such sins the great Shivaji also committed though for a noble object; namely, the defence of *Dharma* and independence of his country. He had to practise deceit and duplicity, political assassination (*e.g.*, of Chandra Rao More) and indiscriminate plunder of the weak and helpless in the Mughal territory to build up a kingdom and a nation in the teeth of determined resistance of Aurangzib as well as of a powerful section of the petty Deshmukhs and chieftains, whose vested interest he attacked. Marathas in the Peshwa regime had not even the saving grace of Shivaji who had shaken off his old robber mentality after he set up as an independent ruler. But loot was the breath of a Maratha's nostrils,

and his insatiable avarice was for *paika* (*paisa*, pice), the cry for which runs through every despatch from the extant Peshwa Daftar to their officials in Northern India. Untamed predatory instinct of the Maratha had been as much responsible for the downfall of the Maratha power, as the *Baniya* mentality of the British cost them their first maritime empire in the reign of George III when U.S.A., came into being.

Constitutional weakness of the Maratha Empire has not been sufficiently stressed by historians. The strong centralised monarchy administered by an efficient bureaucracy under a Council of Eight Ministers of the days of Shivaji had perished with the execution of Shambhaji and the flight of Rajaram to Jinji. During the War of Independence that followed, the central government and the personal rule of the constitutional head of the State ceased to exist altogether. A new office of the *Pratinidhi* was created by Rajaram. It brought in further complications as to the status of the Pratinidhi with regard to other ministers. The Marathas recovered their power ; but the power of the monarch was reduced to a shadow by the rise of a war-like feudal aristocracy, which yielded only a lip allegiance to the representative of the House of Shivaji.

Release of the captive Shahu, son of Shambhaji, after the death of Aurangzib produced the desired fruit of Mughal diplomacy. It divided the Marathas into two hostile parties. One party headed by Rajaram's widow, Tara Bai, declared Rajaram's minor son as the true heir and sovereign of the Maratha State with its capital at Kolhapur. Shahu set up his rule at Satara, and a civil war with Kolhapur followed. The Mughal government fished in troubled waters pretending not to know who was the lawful head of the Maratha State. Maratha chiefs began a selfish bargain both in Kolhapur and Satara, and rapidly changed sides for a higher bid. It was Balaji Vishwanath who saved the country and consolidated the position of Shahu as the acknowledged head of the nation. Thus began the ministerial rule of the Peshwas, which was vigorously opposed by the Bhonslas of Nagpur, Dabhades of Gujarat outside the court, and the Sachiva and the Amatya, who had made themselves virtually absolute jagirdars of large tracts—in the Council of Satara. The result was that the Peshwas were never strong on the home front. So the Nizam got an opportunity to create a strong Muslim State in the Deccan, which remained to the last a dagger in the rib of Maharashtra.

The rise and fall of the first Maratha Empire created by the

first three Peshwas covers virtually the reign of King Shahu, who had relegated the adminstration absolutely to his Peshwas. Shahu was childless, and this was an opportunity to unite Kolahpur and Satara under one king who was to be a minor prince of the line of Rajaram. This was opposed by Peshwa Balaji Bajirao, who saw through this move of Tara Bai, to instal herself as a dictator over his head. At last a compromise was reached by which Ram Rajah was recognised as the adopted heir of Shahu, while Shahu recognised Peshwaship as hereditary and almost absolute in the house of Balaji Vishwanath. The Maratha Empire had already been transformed into a loosely-knit confederation ; Peshwa Madhav Rao I, the succesor of Balaji, was the last of the ruling Peshwas. After him internal trouble came to a head during the minority of Narayan Rao, when Nana Fadnavis, aspired to become "the Peshwa's Peshwa" by "freezing" the acknowledged head of the administration into a nonentity. Nana's only formidable rival was the great soldier and statesman Mahadji Sindhia, who had revived the imperial traditions of Maharashtra in the North, and who himself was acknowledged as Vakil-i-Mutlaq of the Delhi and Poona Courts. If there was any single cause of the fall of the Maratha Empire, it was the selfish policy of Nana to retain himself at the helm of affairs at Poona keeping out Mahadji. It was Nana who was mainly responsible for driving the only able and legitimate claimant Raghunath Rao from Maharashtra, and into the arms of the English. After Nana and Mahadji, Yashwant Rao Holkar and Daulat Rao Sindhia appeared to contest for supreme position in the Maratha Empire as "the Peshwa's Peshwa". Defeat of Daulat Rao and the excesses of Holkar drove the titular head of Maharashtra, Peshwa Bajirao II, into the trap of Wellesley's Subsidiary Alliance. Wellesley aptly described the Peshwa as ' the frozen nose", and pointed out to his successor that by tugging at "this frozen nose", the whole body politic of the Maratha Empire might be laid prostrate at the feet of the English.

Shivaji had the foresight to realise the importance of a strong navy for the protection of trade and the coastal area. Even he did not succeed in crushing the Siddis of Jingira. His successors and also the Peshwas neglected the Navy alogether, and the only Maratha naval power, the Angres, were in virtual rebellion against the authority of the Peshwa. After the fall of the Mughal power, the European Merchant Companies, which had entrenched themselves in strong territorial possessions on the western and eastern coasts

had become the greatest menace to Maratha Imperialism. They intrigued and helped the native Muslim chiefs against the Marathas. The only solution was to meet and crush the naval power of the West on the sea. But this was a task beyond the dream of the Marathas who had neither resources nor aptitude for sea fighting. Hence it was inevitable that the future lay with the strongest naval power in any contest for ascendancy in India.

Khare in his Introduction to N. C. Kelkar's "The Marathas and the English" scathingly criticised all the weaknesses inherent in the Maratha system of warfare and *morale* of the Maratha army in comparison with that of the British. The success of small bodies of European-trained Indian infantry of Dupleix and later on, of the British against huge rabble of Indian light cavalry had brought about a complete revolution in the eighteenth century warfare in India. The Marathas had too little of science and discipline, and too much of conservatism to transform their out-of-date light cavalry tactics. In imitation of Europeans, the Peshwa, and the Sindhia particularly, raised trained infantry battalions. But the rank and file of these brigades were *Hindustanis,* and their officers, with the exception of a few like De Boigne and Perron were deserters from the English and French armies. Under Mahadji Sindhia, these battalions gave victory over the Rajputs and Muslims to the Marathas. But when pitted against the British, the New Model Maratha army of Daulat Rao Sindhia and Yashwant Rao Holkar miserably failed, because imitation can never stand against the original. The Sikhs succeeded better than the Marathas, because the infantry battalions of the Sikhs were officered except at the top by Sikhs ; whereas the Marathas failed to produce leaders of men and they left the command of their armies "to French and Portuguese mestizoes, and Eurosian lads . . . . . and illiterate European sailors". Superiority of the Maratha armies lay in their swift mobility, and not in striking power. "The galloper-gun" or horse artillery of the British, attached to infantry battalions doomed the Maratha tactics of "hit and run away", and to loss and failure. Of the three branches of an army, the Artillery, the infantry and the cavalry, the Marathas were inferior in the first two, and their cavalry could win no decisive success in the long run against the British. The Maratha armies of the post-Panipat period ceased to be national armies. The Maratha chiefs engaged foreigners and Muslims, who were not always trustworthy. A Maratha national empire could not endure when its army ceased to be national army. The Marathas always depended on Europeans

for the supply of artillery and ammunition in the same way as India does today for the supply of modern types of arms and fighting planes. So the fate of the Marathas was a foregone conclusion, as the future of India will be if we fail to be self-sufficient in technical skill and armament. In fact, the Marathas as a nation lacked higher gifts of soldiership and insight into the eighteenth century warfare. Before this all their other defects pale into insignificance. It was British artillery and the disciplined valour of the infantry that broke the power of the Marathas and later on, of the Sikhs.

The Marathas, particularly the Chitpawan Brahmans, prided in their skill of diplomacy. But it was a ludicrous claim. They called diplomacy, "Rajkaran". But as history reveals, it was not diplomacy even of the third grade European statesmen of contemporary Europe. Their diplomacy did not take a long term view of political situation. They simply played "politics at cabbages." The Maratha diplomacy, hardly backed by respectable military strength, was like a spear with the butt of a broken reed. The failure of Maratha diplomacy at the height of Maratha glory before the Third Battle of Panipat was too conspicuous. The Marathas failed to win the support of the Rajputs, drove Surajmal Jat to neutrality, and forced their own ally Shujauddaula into the arms of the Abdali. Peshwa Balaji Bajirao allowed the English to win the Battle of Plassey that sounded in fact the knell of the Maratha Empire. Nana Fadnavis drove the Nizam into the arms of the British, and connived at the ruin of Tipu Sultan. Had not Maharashtra been bankrupt in statesmanship, she would have spotted the British as the most potent enemy, and by concessions and compromise built up a strong coalition of Poona, Hyderabad and Mysore to crush the British.

"Lack of organisation", as Sardesai puts it, in all spheres of activity, civil and military, in comparison with the Mughal Administration, not to speak of the British, foredoomed the imperialistic ambitions of Maharashtra to inevitable failure. The Maratha system of government and their division of the conquered country outside Maharashtra into zones of military and civil administration among the lieutenants of the Peshwa, such as the Holkars and Sindhias, Pawars in Mandu and the Gaekwads in Gujarat under the wasteful *saranjam* system created a centrifugal tendency, and their mutual rivalry and dissensions ultimately broke up their power. Every one of the Maratha chiefs saw the necessity for common purpose and common action, but every one tried to save his own skin at the cost of every other at critical times. The Maratha system

of administration created a set of petty feudal tyrants and farmers of revenue, whose rapacity and violence alienated their subjects. The peasantry counted the days of the fall of the Marathas and their deliverance from misery. Trade and commerce dwindled when peace and stable government disappeared, and a shameless policy of loot and blackmail came in the wake of Maratha rule. , Maratha governments became bankrupt after the death of Shivaji. Even Bajirao I borrowed money at 24% from his *guru* Brahmendra Swami, and none except Indore under Ahalya Bai, and the Sindhias had any credit in the money market. Huge *dakshinas* to Brahmans in the month of Shravan and luxuries of the Poona court were no signs of prosperity, but of the last gasps of economic endurance of an impoverished country. Occasional raids satisfied temporary needs of the Marathas, but no arrangements were made for providing the state with permanent sources of revenue by fostering trade and industry, and by increasing agriculture by an intelligent system of revenue administration. Maladminstration was, however, only a contributory cause of the financial bankruptcy of the Maratha power. This financial bankruptcy was inevitable, because the short span of Maratha ascendancy involved continuous warfare and its resources were eaten up by a vast army of occupation, almost always on the move.

During the Peshwa regime the Maharashtra Brahmans, who had the reputation of a brainy people, astute, practical and steady, were at the helm of affairs in Maharashtra, and yet they failed to give the Maratha people a proper lead. It was because their moral stature was dwarfed by some inborn defects, casteism, communalism and regionalism. No nation did ever rise without a moral standard to uphold and a mission to preach and fulfil. Shivaji's success sent the pulsation of a new life to the then prostrate Hindu India. The Peshwas seized this legacy of good will of the Rajputs, Jats and Bundelas to pull down the crumbling structure of the Mughal Empire But once on the saddle, the countrymen of Shivaji gave a lie to the mission of Shivaji in their intoxication of power and avarice. These allies eventually were meted out a worse treatment than what they suffered at the hands of Aurangzib. Maharaja Chhatrasal Bundela gave one-third of his kindom to Baji Rao I ; but Baji Rao's son and successor seized threefourths, leaving the remainder to the Bundela chiefs to be held in vassalage. Raghunath Rao after his North Indian expedition wrote home that he had made the country of the Jats, *be-cheragh* (lampless). Mewar, utterly humbled by Holkar, suffered

the infamous Jamshed *gardi* (sack by Jamshed Pathan, a servant of Jaswant Rao Holkar), and the notorious Amir Khan brought about the Krishna Kumari tragedy. The ideal which the Brahmin Peshwas had before them as social reformers was the revival of orthodoxy in accordance with the dictates of the Manu Smriti. This was putting the hand of clock back to a point of out-of-date antiquity. Their social policy did incalculable harm to the Maratha society. It undid the work of liberal religious movement of saints from Namdev to Tukaram whom Ranade justly called the forerunners of moral and political revival of Maharashtra that prepared the ground for the rise of Shivaji.

A glance at the volumes of the Peshwa Daftar, brings home the character of the reactionary religious and social policy of the Peshwas, particularly of Balaji Baji Rao. We find the Peshwa, issuing orders for the punishment of a family in which a woman in her menses served food to Brahmans, and another, who in that state sat in a ferry boat with others. Religious orthdoxy affected even the administration of justice. If a non-Brahman was awarded capital sentence for murder, the punishment of a Brahman for murdering a non-Brahman was either *jap* for several months, or a pilgrimage to Banaras, the expenses of which were borne by the State.

Shivaji aimed at the political and social regeneration of the Hindu society of India. But he was cut off before he could weld a Maratha nation even. "The cohesion of peoples in the Maratha state was not *organic*," says Sir Jadunath, 'but artificial. It was solely dependent on rulers of extraordinary personality and disappeared when the country ceased to produce superman." The legacy of the Brahman rule at its best in Maharashtra is a legacy of hatred and moral callousness. The very memory of their rule has given rise to two rival schools of historians, Brahman and non-Brahman, each condemning the other party for the guilt of betrayal of national interests.The Maratha Raj was not a Hindu revival as that of the imperial Guptas. Nor was it the cause of the South against the North as in the case of Pulakeshin II and Emperor Harsha.

The downfall of the Maratha power has a lesson for Modern India. History may repeat itself if all these maladies from the body politic of India are not ruthlessly purged out and if better sense does not prevail; which, however seems to be a far cry.

14

A Study of the Prophet of Islam as a Statesman and an Ideal Citizen

A historical treatment of the details of the Prophet's life in Medina down to the Truce of Hudabiya brings to prominence the ability of the Prophet as a statesman, diplomat, and a politician of the highest rank. God put the impartiality and sincerity of the Prophet to a very delicate test by giving him the chief magistracy of Medina. He had to handle two equally powerful tribes of Banu Aus and Banu Khazraz, suspicious of one another and as ready to fall out as the Montagues and Capulets of Shakespeare. As the Prophet's camel was approaching the city of shelter, he could not decide for himself where he should alight, and it was not easy to do so. If he had decided to stay with the Khazjraz, the Banu Aus would have taken it ill, and *vice versa*. So he left the decision to God's dumb animal to whom no one would impute a motive. He chose to take up his abode where his camel, left to itself, at last stopped, and the first mosque of Islam was built on a piece of neutral ground that belonged to an orphan. A single wrong step, and it would have undone Islam. The Prophet had to walk over the *pul-i-sirat* of the tribal politics of Medina in his physical body. Next he had to provide for the safety and livelihood of the companions of his exile. The Ansars in spite of their enthusiasm for Islam would have grown restive if the *Muhajirins* were to prove an economic liability to the city. He opened at Medina the first communal co-operative store known in the East. The Companions set up as shop-keepers in their new home, where trade had been, formerly a monopoly of the Jews. He established the brotherhood of Islam

under which each of the Exiles was to be adopted as a brother by an Ansar. This could not but be regarded in the long run as a grievance by natural-born brothers of such families. The Prophet kept his hand on the pulse of Medina, and when he felt that bad blood of reaction was rising he at once abolished it. He never assumed autocratic powers in the name of God, though he was not likely to be resisted if he had done so. He was very scrupulous regarding the vested interests of every individual, and none had a keener insight into the weaknesses of his people. When the case of the Jews, guilty of treason, came up for trial, he left the whole affair to the chief of the patron tribe to whom these Jews were clients. The Arab was very touchy regarding his point of honour. If the Prophet himself had passed death-sentence, and left it to be carried out by any other person than the tribe whose clients these guilty Jews were, it would have mortally wounded the pride and sense of honour of the patron tribe and they might go to the length of drawing swords in defence of the clients, because a client's body was inviolable except by his own master for chastisement. During this period the sheet-anchor of the Prophet's imaginative statesmanship struck deep into the loyalty of the Arab clans when he changed the *qibla* from the direction of Bait-ul-Muqaddas towards the Kaba sharif. This was no compromise with the sacred stone, but a compromise with the very symbol of unity of the Pagan Arabia with Islam, and Islam increased its magnetic power million-fold. A statesman is he who does not cling to the unattainable best but makes a compromise to secure permanently the possible good. His early ideal to unite all the peoples of the Book, the Jews, Christians and Muslims proved an impossibility under the test of hard facts; and hence he wisely gave it up in time and concentrated his resources in building up an Arab nation.

A harder trial of the Prophet's statesmanship came in after the Muslims had achieved a bloodless victory over the hostile Quraish and entered Medina in triumph. Nothing is sweeter to the Arab than retaliation in kind. But the Prophet stood between the returning exiles and their hereditary foes at Mecca, the Ansar from Medina eager for avenging the blood of Ohud on one hand, and the vanquished Banu Umayya trembling for their fate. No man ever used victory with greater moderation than the Prophet, and History bears no instance where a far-sighted policy was better rewarded with success. The Prophet was busy in "conciliating the hearts" of his bitterest enemies, Abu Sufiyan and his sons. It was

for the sake of the future of Islam that the Prophet was content with the outward conformity of the *munafiqs*, the hypocrites with Islam, without holding an Inquisition into their state of belief. He succeeded in the difficult task of convincing the Quraish that Islam would serve much better their material and spiritual welfare than the guardianship of idols in the national sanctuary of Arabia. But for the loyalty and valour of these hypocrites, who proved the best of believers in Islam's hour of trial after the death of the Prophet,—Islam could not have won so easily the War of Apostasy, and subdue the whole of the Arabian peninsula within so short a time.

None of his successors excelled the Prophet of God in strong and practical common sense. The instructions of the Prophet to the preachers of Islam deputed to different tribes would illustrate this phase of the Prophet's character : "Say unto them that God is One and without a partner, and that Muhammad is His prophet ; if they listen to you willingly, say that it is pleasing to God to see the Faithful offer their prayers five times a day, and observe the Fast of Ramzan; if they act according to the injunctions of the Holy Quran, say to them that payment of *zakat* absolves them from sin." But the grabbing tithe collectors of Medina immediately after the death of the Prophet became more particular about *zakat* than for the spiritual illumination of the people entrusted to their care, and hence the reaction against Islam, and the War of Apostasy. The Prophet was not the founder of a strong centralised military despotism. Arabia before Muhammad was a geographical expression indicating the home of an ethnic group speaking the same language, having a traditon of common origin and of a polytheistic pagan cult. The Prophet at first formed a fraternity of believers consisting of man and woman, free man and the slave united in heart and action, and owing allegiance to God and his Prophet alone. Islam came as a solvent to the pagan society and tribal organisation. At Medina the exiled fraternity expanded into a community (*Ummat*), over-riding the barriers of blood and belief in matters spiritual, and uniting all in temporal matters nevertheless. It was no artificial creation but a full-grown federal institution. The *Umma* included Jews, Arabs and Christians who as citizens of Allah's Kingdom on earth obeyed God's peace of their own accord. Within the *Umma* or Community, the political unit was not the individual, but the family and the tribe in its three-fold category of members ; namely ; the free man, the client and the slave. It consisted not of individuals but of alliances of clan and sect. The chief aim of

the *Umma* was to unite the constituent elements for defence against external foes. Under the circumstances the *Umma* became the repository of powers of external sovereignty exclusively, and some power of internal sovereignty so far as these rights were likely to disturb general peace or encroach upon the rights of any constituent of the *Jamma*. The Muslims formed the *Jama'* or Assembly of the Faithful where Non-Muslims had no business. But when the Jews were expelled from the *Umma*, and degraded from the status of citizenship to that of tribute-paying subjects of the *Umma*, the Jama' and Umma became one and identical. Later on, when Islam spread among the tribes outside Medina, the same system of federal alliances was put in force. In proportion as the Faith spread, as Wellhausen says, the Umma increased in strength. Medina was the capital of this Federal State ; and in the Central government resided exclusively the powers of external sovereignty; whereas the autonomous tribal units were to retain their internal sovereignty almost intact, barring the right of secession from the *Umma*; because, such defection meant rejection of Islam and rebellion against God's State. In the Islamic State everything belonged to God in contradistinction to every thing to the monarch in *Mulk*. The Prophet himself was only the highest official of this state owing no private property, but enjoying only the *usufruct* of Fadak in Khyber for his maintenance and public expenditure as the head of the *Umma*. The Muslims were no mercenaries but God's volunteers; the Treasury *Bait-ul-Mal* was the treasury of Allah ; the Muslims were no tax-paying subjects, but God's People taxing themselves for the sake of God and paying *zakat* for the maintenance of the poor and public safety. God's Kingdom called into glorious existence by the Prophet of God was essentially a Socialistic State.

Mecca was the most progressive City State in the Arabian Peninsula even before the birth of the Prophet. It was a close oligarchy ruled by the two clans, Banu Hashim and Banu Umayya of the Quraish tribe. The unit of a tribal republic was family, and not the individual as in the City States of Greece. In such a state even grey-beards might remain political minors under the tutelage of a grand-father or uncle. Neverthless, the pre-eminence of Mecca depended on the civic capacities of her citizens. In the days of Ignorance even the fame of Abu Bakr and Umar had spread among the Arab tribes outside Hijaj for their clean justice and impartiality. The Prophet in his character as a citizen of the infidel State of Mecca became known as al-Amin or the Trustworthy one

among friends and foes alike. Arabia was then in the tribal stage of social evolution, and hereditary feud between family and family, clan and clan, tribe and tribe, faction and faction was the rule rather than exception in such a society. The prestige and nobility of a family or clan was measured by the number of swords and their sharpness which a family could muster on the field against its rivals. Today, it is exactly the case in the country-side of the Punjab and among the Border Pathan tribes. The family of Hashim was being gradually eclipsed in power by the superior birth-rate among the Banu Umayya and their grasping ambition. It is well-known what vow the grandfather of the Prophet did make to have a good number of male children. The unsophisticated Arab understood no less than Hitler the importance of birth-rate for a State. The Prophet fell certainly short of the expectation of his infidel kinsmen by his comparatively weak health and smallness of the number of his children. Though he kept himself aloof from the petty family and tribal politics, his patriotism of a higher standard to the City State of Mecca was unquestioned.

It is a matter of common knowledge that three things are the demerits of a good citizen in a modern State as in those of ancient and medieval times. These are (*i*) Indolence (*ii*) Private self-interest, and (*iii*) Party Spirit. Let us now examine in the light of the Prophet's early career whether any of these charges stood good against him as a citizen of Mecca. In his boyhood he tended the flock of his family and sweated in the sun to make his bread *halal* to him. Later on, he entered the service of Bibi Khadiza as her steward and many journeys he undertook outside for commerce. Indolence was the worst vice in a citizen, because it gave rise to a spirit of indulgence and indifference. Such a spirit never characterised the life of the Prophet at any stage. He rather over-strained his poor physique and powerful mind for the common welfare and for doing maximum service both at Mecca and later on at Medina. Here we may take a lesson of unmeasured activity, physical and mental, from the life of the Prophet. The ideal citizen does not behave like villagers of our fable, each of whom poured a jar of pure water in the tank under orders of the king to be filled up with milk, each having been under the happy illusion that everybody else would pour milk enough to dilute his own deceitful jar of water.

Political Science brands "private self-interest" as another vice of a bad citizen. This one vice is the off-spring of groupism

born to kill democracy itself. And therefore it is the most intractable problem with raw democracies. "Private self-interest" was not unknown in the City State of Mecca or Medina, though the Prophet was far above such a vice. He, as an ideal citizen, had no self-interest, and even no Self which he had submerged into his *Ummat* or Community. He started to combat this evil in the city of Mecca by changing the political and moral outlook of his fellow-citizens helpless as they were in the grip of Ignorance. The ruling oligarchs of Mecca looked upon their own kith and kin in a narrow sense as equals proper ; the subordinate Arab and the emancipated slave as *quasi-man* ; the slave openly and the woman at heart were put down as non-man. How far did the Prophet succeed in changing this atrocious outlook on humanity is a matter of common knowledge.

The third characteristic of a bad citizen is a tendency to form cliques and factions to serve his private self-interest either for leadership or for material gains ; and that too under a super-saintly cloak of common good Party system is, however, considered essential for a modern democracy. But Islamic democracy had no party except the party of Allah against the devil in man. The theocracy of Islam perished as soon as parties and factions came into being during the time of the third Caliph. In the pre-Islamic Mecca the Prophet had no axe of his own to grind ; and not the slightest political tinge coloured his action or influenced his thought. He was known to be wise beyond his years ; and his advice was occasionally sought by his fellow-citizens on important matters. Even before the Descent of the Message, he admonished his fellow-citizens to be just and generous and to cultivate a higher moral sense as did the Hanifs of his time. After he had started his career as Prophet a small group of sincere and devoted believers in his great mission gathered round him. No stretch of political thought can designate the following of the Prophet as a clique or faction, or even a party ; because it had no political aim, no party cry except the eternal cry of the human soul for Truth. It may be, however, argued that the preaching of God's Message and the formations of this dissenting group threatened the very foundations of religion, society and the body-politic of the city-State of Mecca; and as such the Prophet's activity was far removed from that of an ideal citizen. But modern science of Civics would say that the Prophet would not have been considered a tolerably good citizen even, if he had not raised his voice of protest against what was eternally-damned untruth.

According to our current political thought. good citizenship has two aspects, one ethical and the other intellectual. A true citizen must be ethically inspired, though not to the extent of establishing a religion for himself or his fellow-men. Bryce says that the pre-eminent virtues of a good citizen are intelligence, self-control and conscience. Can authentic history deny any of these to the Prophet of God? The nearest parallel of position of the Prophet as a citizen of Mecca is only that of Socrates in ancient Athens. We brand Alcibiades as a bad citizen, because he had a first rate political and military genius bereft of self-control and conscience. He did not hesitate to turn a traitor for avenging his personal wrongs on the city of his birth. Socrates, on the other hand, goes down as an ideal citizen because of his virtues of self-control and conscience; and for his superhuman moral courage to die calmly for his conviction. Wrongs done unto the Prophet by the majority of his pagan fellow-citizens are quite well-known. But how did he avenge himself? When the clans were about to come to an open fight over the claim of putting the sacred Black Stone back on the altar of the rebuilt Kaba Sharif, al-Amin proved to be the last resort and saved them from a calamity. The Prophet never thought of opposing violence with violence even in self-defence at this stage. To save the city from trouble, the Muslims went on a self-chosen exile to Abyssinia, and the Banu Hashim patiently suffered economic blockade and social ex-communication for their refusal to declare the Prophet an out-law. Though the Muslims were few in number there were several fire-brands who might create trouble for the infidel Quraish. Had he been less able to control the fiery Omar, blood feud would have eclipsed Islam. As regards conscience, it is a matter of common knowledge, how he refused the earnest prayer of the infidel Quraish to give a semi-divine status to the idols Lat and Manat and even to pronounce their names except in depreciation. Had he allowed this compromise with his conscience he would have been hailed perhaps as the first citizen of Mecca. But his loyalty and love for Mecca were far more genuine than those of the self-seeking Quraish. It is again his delicate conscience as a citizen of Mecca that shrank from the eventuality of any blood-shed in the city of Abraham. He departed in silence with his followers for Medina so that his misguided fellow citizens might live in peace at Mecca.

The city of Yathrib was also a City-State ruled by a military aristocracy with a subject population of the Jews. For a long time

before the advent of the Muhajirs, the two tribes of Banu Aus and Banu Khazraj constituting the ruling aristocracy were at daggers drawn over their family feuds. The tribes suspected each other to such an extent that they could not come to an agreement to confer the Chief Magistracy of their city-state on anybody form amongst themselves. Like the later Italian city-states of medieval Europe, Yathrib would rather invite a foreigner to rule over them as the constitutional head of the State. It was in response to such an invitation that the Prophet went to Medina. At Medina the Prophet was not only the Messenger of God but also the elected Chief Magistrate of a City State. There his work as a preacher of Islam was rather an easy sail, because the ruling aristocracy rallied round him as Ansars or Helpers though he could not win over the Jews to his faith. But every little movement of his as a temporal ruler was jealously watched, and every word of his was weighed by the two rival tribes. To steer the ship of State between the narrow strait of tribal jealousy was a trial for the Prophet as delicate and risky as walking over the *Pul-i-Sirat.* Apart from the internal tribal politics of the Ansars, the Prophet was faced with the problem of providing for the safety and livelihood of the Muhajirs in the new city of their adoption. He could have easily solved this problem by confiscating the lands of the Jews who refused to accept Islam. But such an act in the beginning would have meant an attack on the vested interests of Banu Aus and Banu Khazraj whose clients these Jews had been. The Muhajirs started business in the city as small shop keepers, because the Ansars had no trade of their own.

The position of the Prophet as the Chief Magistrate of Medina was no ornamental office like that of our provincial Governors. Many did offer their own houses to the Prophet : but the Prophet could not accept the hospitality of one tribe without the risk of displeasing the other. In Medina he left himself to the guidance of his camel for his future abode; and the camel did not land him to any debatable ground. The Prophet experimented his scheme of restoring Allah's state on the earth at Medina. It was, in short, an ideal Democracy in which the elected chief ruled in accordance with advice of the majority represented by family patriarchs. In such a State the ruler was expected to be the foremost in everything except in the race for material gains and enjoyment of life. The Prophet and his two immediate successors owned no private property. The State set apart such portions of land, *e.g., Fadak,* in the life-time of the Prophet, the income of which went to meet

the expenses of the head of the State in entertaining State guests and foreign envoys. No portion of this money was to be spent for entertaining his private friends. When a friend one day became the guest of the prophet, he had no money to buy flour. So he asked one of his dependents to go to a Jewish moneylender and borrow some money on the promise of paying back the amount on the first day of the next Rajab. But the Jew demanded a security, and so the Prophet mortgaged his armour to have money from the Jew. The Prophet himself, the first and the best citizen of Allah's Kingdom founded on Islam, prayed to God to live and die as a poor man, and to be raised along with the poor on the Judgment Day. Hazrat Ali was once asked to define an ideal Muslim and the ideal citizen of Allah's Kingdom. His reply was, 'One pinched with famine, dry with thirst, and blear-eyed with tears"; and herein Ali certainly had in mind his uncle and father-in-law.

An ideal citizen should be foremost to fight for the defence of the State and his fellow citizens. The Prophet was not allowed peace in Medina by the Quraish who repeatedly led their confederates against the city of the Prophet. As a true child of Mecca, his heart yearned for Mecca, and God at last turned the Qibla for him from the direction of Jerusalem to that of Mecca. The Prophet accepted the Truce of Hudaibiya only to avoid bloodshed of his fellow-citizens in Mecca, and at last he obtained a bloodless and glorious victory over the infidels. He sought no satisfaction of wrongs he had suffered at the hands of the family of Ummayya. His treatment of the city of Mecca bears many a lesson of ideal citizenship. He conciliated the hearts of those who deserved capital punishment, because, it would have been unwise for an ideal citizen to close the road of friendship and amity with neighbours and fellow citizens. He left the City State of Mecca an autonomous unit of the Commonwealth of Islam; and the importance of Mecca was not allowed to suffer in any way in comparison with Medina.

Let us now turn to lessons of Civics embedded in the Sayings of the Prophet. The Prophet's parting words to the Muhajirs of the first *Hijrat* were meant to make the Musalmans ideal citizens wherever they might go, or live even under a non-muslim government. These Muhajirs gained by their conduct the first moral in silence Islam in a foreign land, and it is such a code of social and fellow citi rality that in later times enabled the Muslims to win the

The on-muslims, and gradually gather a considerable number aristocracy

of foreigners under their flag in Indonesia, China and Africa By his own example he taught the Muslims the great political maxim, "Live and let others also live". Once two citizens of Medina came to the Prophet over a dispute for holding water in his own field. The Prophet satisfied both the parties by saying that a man was allowed to retain in his field only ankle-deep water by raising embankment. There is need for ideal citizens in creating and ruling an ideal State, namely, God's Kingdom on earth. Those who believe in His Existence cannot look forward for a higher ideal other than what the Prophet of God did teach the mankind by his example.

15

The Evolution of Islamic Polity

It has been rightly observed by a modern European writer that any study of Islam "must begin with some account of Muhammad, the man and the prophet. He is as important for the understanding of Islam as Jesus is for the understanding of Christianity.[1] Our unlettered Emperor Akbar, confused and irritated by the contradictory interpretation of the Quran in the *ibadat-khana* of Fathepur Sikri, regretted that no Commentary of the Quran was left by the Prophet. Had he known more of Islam he would have perhaps admitted that the whole life of the Prophet, his Sayings (Hadis) and conduct (Sunna) was the best Commentary of the Quran.

The spot-light of authentic history was not focussed so powerfully on the personality of founder of any religion as that on the Prophet of Arabia, because the Arabs were lovers of history and honest chroniclers too. Founders of religions fare ill at the tribunal of History not so much for their own words and acts as from the pious fraud of their enthusiastic votaries devoid of reason and sense of proportion. So is the case with the Prophet of Islam in spite of the fact that most minute details of his life, and of his alleged Sayings have come down to us from more than one source.

The Semites believe that God gave every one of His prophets a supernatural gift to work miracles with ; *e. g.*, music to David and healing powers to Lord Jesus. Sectarian fancy and falsified history have credited Muhammad also with having wrought miracles like the splitting of the moon and making trees *bow* before him in prostration, and many more, which the present writer also believed to be true in the company of the Faithful in a *milad sharif* only, where

[1] C. R. North, *An Outline of Islam*, p. 13.

devotion and credulity dominate over common sense. The Prophet was in this respect as helpless against his admirers as an average man. His successes were those that a pious and practical man could achieve by his sagacity and magnetic personality. He did not burn his tormentors by an angry look like the enraged *rishis* of Hindu imagination ; nor could he subdue wild beasts by playing a tune, nor turn stone into bread. To a non-believing mind the prophet had nothing but the Word of God revealed through him as the sole power of working miracles upon man's heart. However, a Hindu reading of the life of the prophet is that he was given to hard meditation and Yoga practices in the cave of Hira though outwardly living the life of a householder : that Brahman as Sound (*dhvani*) was realised by him, and that the Word of God became revealed through him in the same way as the ancient Aryan *rishis* heard the Sound of the Void in the wilderness and conveyed its meaning in intelligible language to our ancestors.

One night towards the end of the month of Ramzan of the year 610 A. D. Muhammad was in a state of deep meditation in the solitary cave of Hira outside the city of Mecca when he is said to have had heard the first *Surah* of the holy Quran. He came home and broke the secret to his old wife, lady Khadijah. She was the first to believe without doubt, without calling for any proof in his divine mission to preach the Word of God. The Prophet was by nature somewhat shy, retiring and uncommunicative except to a few kindred souls, who gradually gathered around him to worship and discourse on the Word of God in the house of Akram which became the radiating centre of Islam. Muhammad had not the distinction of being one out of the eighteen persons in the tribe of Quraish (numbering probably not less than ten thousand at this time) who were known as literates. He had no learning, but he had an unchallenged reputation for character and nobility of soul that disarmed the hostility of all but the reprobate and the selfish among his people. No great religion, Buddhism or Christianity, ever came like a wild fire, and so was Islam at the start. Islam was on the defensive and its tone persuasive but firm during the first eleven years of the prophet's mission at Mecca. Islam started as a Reformation but ended in a Revolution of the greatest magnitude in history. It aimed at rescuing Pagan Arabia from idolatry and unbelief, from social injustice and the law of the jungle in government. Islam in the name of God stood for liberty, equality and fraternity among those who would obey God and His prophet.

This dismayed his own tribe of Quraish, who made a fat living out of their guardianship of the idols of the temple of Kaba. Islam blew the horn of challenge, as it were, to the seventh-century politics of Europe and Asia, based on the negation of these fundamental rights of men. Burke in his "Reflections on the French Revolution" compared the eighteenth century Revolution to the birth of Islam as a potential danger to the peace of the world. In truth, Islam was a seventh centrury Asiatic Revolution out to destroy the old order everywhere in its victorious course.

However, prophets and reformers never had a pleasant walk-over in their missions ; sufferings, persecution and at times despair have been their lot in spite of their resignation to the protection of God. The prophet of Islam also had his due share of suffering. The powerful house of Banu Umayya, hereditary rivals of the prophet's sept of Banu Hashim, became infuriated when Usman bin Affan, a pious Umayyad, joined the prophet's congregation. The prophet went to the neighbouring town of Taif to preach Islam. But Taif also repudiated his mission and its urchins hooted and pelted him with stones.[2] Vested interests in idolatry rather than loyalty to the idols raised an outcry in Mecca for outlawing the prophet and his followers. The prophet's heathen uncle Abu Talib and other influential members of the Banu Hashim, though unconvinced of the truth of Islam, extended their protection out of a sense of family obligation and suffered a blockade and a sort of excommunication. In 615 the prophet sent away some of his followers to distant Abyssinia for seeking asylum with its Christian king Negus till situation would improve at home. This is known as the first *hijrat* of the Muslims On the eve of their departure the prophet enjoined on them a code of conduct abroad that would make the Muslims, away from the influence of the Mulla, ideal citizens of any non-Muslim State. They returned after about a year though the situation became acute after Abu Talib's death. There came, however, a rift in the cloud, and Islam saved itself by flight to the city of Yathrib (later on known as Madinatun-Nabi or Medina) in the year 622 A. D.

The city of Yathrib was like Mecca a city republic ruled by an Arab oligarchy. It had a thriving subject population of the

[2] It must, however, be said that the people of Taif behaved more decently than the people of Radha (West Bengal) one thousand years before, who had beaten and set dogs to bite Saint Mahavira, the founder of Jainism ! (vide Dacca University, *History of Bengal*, vol. i, p. 36)

Jews within the city and outside, and its economy was mainly agricultural. For a long time the two ruling tribes of Banu Aus and Banu Khazraj (who belonged to the Kais branch of the Arabs as opposed to the Kalb, of which the Quraish was a component tribe), had been at daggers drawn over petty family and clannish feuds that robbed the city of its peace and lowered its prestige. During the annual pilgrimages some representatives of these two tribes had contacted the prophet, a nephew of theirs by blood through his mother, and pledged him their support if he and his followers would go to their city. The Umayyads got scent of it, but in spite of their vigilance, the Muslims in batches left the city in secrecy and reached Medina amidst alarms and hardships. Medina, however, did not prove a haven of repose and security to the Emigrants.

Some modern European historians are of opinion that the prophet in Mecca and the prophet in Medina appear almost in opposite roles. It is no doubt true that the role of the prophet as a preacher was much less in the forefront at Medina than as a soldier, statesman and nation-builder. But history bears testimony to the fact that such a change was dictated by circumstances, and that it was a change for the better for Islam, for his own people, and for the Orient as well. Had not the prophet appeared in his secular role of a soldier and statesman in Medina, Islam would have evaporated in the desert air of Arabia much sooner than Christianity in the land of its birth.

Tradition would have us believe that Allah decided everything, victory or defeat, privations or the fat of life, for the lot of pious early Muslims. But common sense read into history reveals the fact that man was the maker of his own destiny, and that Allah at best saw only the *tamasha* (game) unaffected and unmoved by man's ingenuity or folly. In the second year of the Flight the prophet led out a party of 313 men (of whom 83 were *muhajirin* from Mecca and the rest *ansars* of Medina) in the month of Ramzan on hearing the news that a strongly escorted convoy of the infidel Quraish was to pass through Medina territory and that an army was on the march from Mecca to effect a junction with the convoy. The Muslims thought that the prophet was pushing them into the jaws of death (as a *surah* of the Quran bears it out); because they did not know what the prophet had in his mind; namely, to destroy the enemy piecemeal before they would unite. At a distance of six stages from Medina, the heathen convoy guarded by 150 horsemen was intercepted. The Muslims won their first victory at Badar, losing 14

men in killed, but killing 70 of the enemy and carrying off 80 as prisoners of war[3] Some frenzied warriors averred that they had seen the angel Gabriel fighting in the ranks of Muslims and later on entering covered with dust the house of the prophet ! But where was Gabriel next year (A. H. 3) when in the battle of Uhad the teeth of the prophet suffered martyrdom at the hands of Khalid bin al-Walid, and Hinda (mother of Muawiyyah and the wife of Abu Sufian), was chewing on the battle field the liver of the prophet's uncle Hamza, in fulfilment of a grim vow ?[4] This defeat of the prophet at Uhad baffled explanation and agitated the minds of the Muslims. When pressed hard, the prophet is said to have had explained away the calamity as "a lesson in patience" (*sabar*). In fact it was noble of the prophet not to wound the feelings of his companions by revealing the truth that this defeat was due to a serious military blunder. The infidel Quraish under the command of Abu Sufiyan assembled a well-equipped army of 3,000 horse ; whereas the prophet could hardly muster 700 men for the defence of Medina. So his plan was to stand on the defensive having the city of Medina in his rear. But his close friends and companions over-confident of the help of Allah forced the prophet to change the plan of the campaign. They marched three miles off from Medina and took positions on the ridge of Uhad. They thus played into the hands of the enemy four times stronger in number with whom now lay the initiative. However, the untutored military genius of the prophet made amends to some extent. He posted seventy archers on the height overlooking the battle field as a precaution against surprise attack from the rear. Khalid bin al-Walid proved cleverer than the cleverest among the Muslims barring the prophet. He broke and fled at the first onset by Zubair, and drew the whole Muslim army from their strong position on the slope to an attack on the main army of the Quraish arrayed on the plain below. The enemy fell back and the Muslims fancied that victory was theirs, and became busy in gathering booty. During the tumult the archers on the height deserted their post to join the loot below leaving the prophet with Ali and a handful of men. Khalid bin al-Walid seized this

[3] Maulana Shibli, *al-Faruq*, p. 39.

[4] Muwayyiah became known since after as "the son of the liver-eater". Hamza was felled by an Abyssinian slave, Washi, with a javelin. His chest was ripped open and his liver eaten by Hinda, because before her marriage, Hamza had made a fling at her chastity.

opportunity to assail the prophet's party from the rear. The Quraish pelted them with stones and emptied their quivers on them. The prophet retained enough presence of mind to take to cover in a cave. But when the prophet went out of view, a cry arose that the prophet was dead. The Muslims gave themselves up to despair, and even Umar was about to turn back throwing down his arms. A few warriors with the determination not to survive the prophet sold their lives dear. Anis bin Nazr spurred his horse into the thickest array of the infidels saying to Umar, "What if the prophet be dead ? Allah must be after all alive !".[5] He died covered with 70 wounds. At last with a forlorn hope gathered they discovered the bleeding prophet and others hiding in the cave. Abu Sufiyan from below in the valley shouted whether Muhammad, Umar or Abu Bakr was alive among them : but the prophet ordered that none should reply, which made Abu Sufiyan retire believing that these were all dead. If Allah comes into the picture in this episode, it was perhaps to confuse the counsel of the infidels, who did not care to press their victory and enter Medina on the heels of the panicky fugitives !

After this reverse the prophet consolidated his position in Medina in view of an impending attack of the Quraish. The invariable cry of "Treachery !" by the vanquished arose in Medina against the Jews. After the battle of Badar in the previous year some Jews had been found guilty of intriguing with the Quraish of Mecca. To save perhaps the Muslims the disgrace of digging graves for the Jews, the condemned were made to dig their own graves before they were beheaded and their bodies thrown into the pits. Next came the turn of the wealthy Banu Nazir, who were expelled from the city in A. H. 4. They retired to the oasis of Khyber and built up a strong and prosperous Jewish colony there subject to suzerainty of Medina. Three years after, the prophet led an expedition against the Jews of Khyber after having been convinced of their intrigue with Mecca. The Jews gave a heroic fight under their leader Marhab, the bravest of the brave in Arabia and the last of the Samsons of the Israelites.

The infidel Quraish were ill at ease even after their victory at Uhad. They sent a general call to arms to the tribes for a final effort to crush Islam in its stronghold of Medina. Ten thousand well-appointed horse under the banner of Abu Sufiyan again took the road to Medina to the dismay of the Muslims who could hardly

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[5] *Ibid.*, p. 45.

muster even two thousand able-bodied men. At this critical hour the prophet chose to take his own line of action advised by the famous Salman Farsi, one of "the free sons of Persia", who had accepted Islam. The tumultuous infidel cavalry found no field army of Muslims to overthrow, but only a long, dry and deep trench protecting the only vulnerable side of the city of Medina. This was being guarded day and night by vigilant pickets under Umar and others. The Quraish were at their wits' end by this novel strategy of the prophet, because the irregular Arab levies had never seen siege warfare of the Byzantines and the Persians. Dismounted horsemen scrambling up a steep bank of loose sand without any cover and without the accessories of siege warfare presented a sorry spectacle. They tried prayer times for assault, but the prophet knew even much more of man than of God. He made prayers non-obligatory on the battle field to give no room for surprise. The infidels held on tenaciously nevertheless for a month before they withdrew. This Battle of the Ditch was won by the prophet by adapting his tactics to the exigency of the situation, which many professional soldiers realise too late.

The prophet, like every visionary in the long run, had become disillusioned with his dream of getting himself accepted by the Jews and Christians as one of the holy Messengers of Allah commissioned to reform the religion of Abraham by a New Dispensation, namely, Islam. Wellhausen says ". . . . he was bitterly disappointed in them . . . . Since they did not consider Judaism identical with Islam, but rather opposed to it, he, on his part, pitted Islam against Judaism and even against Christianity . . . . Instead of Sabbath or Sunday he fixed Friday as the chief day of public worship; he substituted the call of *Adhan* for trumpets and bells; he abolished the Fast of *Ashura*, the great day of atonement; for Lent he fixed the month of Ramadhan. Whilst he more firmly established Islam by carefully abolishing the Jewish and the Christian forms, he brought it, at the same time, nearer to Arabism. . . . . Apparently he had never had a natural sympathy for the Ka'ba at Mecca and renounced the God of the Ka'ba, but now circumstances impelled him to take a more decisive step. He changed the Qibla and commanded that at prayer the face should be turned not towards Jerusalem, but towards Mecca. Mecca was declared to be the Holy Place instead of Jerusalem,—the true seat

of Allah upon earth. The pilgrimage to Mecca, and even the kissing of the Holy Stone were sanctioned . . . . "[6]

In short, Islam as a *religion* made a right-about turn towards Mecca in the same way, as a century after, Islam as a *Culture* was to make a similar movement towards Baghdad under the Abbasid Caliphate. Islam would have remained at best a local creed for the denationalised and philanthropic few among the Arabs if Allah had not made better sense to prevail on His prophet just in time, and directed a rapprochement with Pagan Arabia purged of idolatry.

Since after the migration of the Muslims from Mecca, the infidel Quraish had put a ban against their entry in the month of truce for pilgrimage. In the year 6 A.H, the prophet decided to challenge this ban without causing blood-shed. He started with fourteen hundred pilgrims absolutely unarmed,—a strange idea of winning over the hardened infidels by his moral force ! When the caravan had travelled thus for six miles, the level-headed Umar intervened and made the prophet alive to the dangers of such a super-saintly venture into a hostile terrain where idols overshadow Allah. Even in his fits of *ohi* (trance of Revealation) the prophet kept an open mind and listened to his friends in matters temporal. Accordingly the arms were sent for as precaution, and when the caravan of the Muslims reached two stages from Mecca, Bishar bin Sufiyan, the envoy of the infidels, stopped them saying that the whole city of Mecca had sworn a vow that they would on no account allow the Muslims to perform pilgrimage. The prophet wanted to have a parley through an envoy of his own ; but both Abu Bakr and Umar refused. At last the gentlest of the Companions, Usman, an Umayyad, took the risk on himself. The infidels acted on the principle that no faith need be kept with the enemies of the national gods. They detained the prophet's envoy, whom they wanted to use as a pawn for diplomacy ; but rumours spread outside that Usman had been murdered. There was now only one road open to the prophet ; namely, either to release Usman or follow him in martyrdom. The hasty Umar began preparations for an assault, whereas the prophet was for probing beforehand the loyalty of his followers by administering to each an oath for *jihad*. Even all the host of angels could not have saved the pious numbering 1400 men, a mere drop in the ocean in comparison with the assembled host of idol-worshippers around Mecca. But this bold

[6] Wellhausen, *The Arab Kingdom and its Fall*, 18-19.

move of the prophet made Abu Sufiyan nervous, and the hope of an honourable settlement became brighter. After protracted negotiations the prophet had to accept the disagreeable terms of the Truce of Hudabiya in the teeth of opposition by headstrong Umar,[7] who also at last put his signature on the document. The main points agreed to by both parties were :

(i) The Muslims were to march back this time ; they might come next year for pilgrimage, but not to stay in Mecca for more than three days.

(ii) All fighting was to cease for ten years between the infidel Quraish including the tribes in alliance with them, and the Muslims including their allies.

(iii) During this period of Truce, those who would desert the side of the Quraish and seek refuge with the prophet, the prophet was to send them back to the Quraish ; but if any Muslims fall into the hands of the Quraish, the Quraish should have the option to keep them back.

Is it victory or defeat ? On the journey back to Medina after this truce in a perturbed state of mind, the famous *Surah Fathia*, the dearest one to the prophet and to every Muslim till today as the infallible omen of victory—was revealed to the prophet. No incident brings out more clearly the abilities of the prophet as the temporal head of a struggling democracy than the Truce of Hudabiya. This was the greatest of the prophet's diplomatic victories as the events of the two following years bear it out. Maulana Sibli on good authority affirms that within the *two years* after the Truce of Hudabiya the number of converts to Islam exceeded even the sum total of converts during the preceding *eighteen years* since the birth of Islam. This reads like a miracle, but reasons are obvious :

(i) The state of war and isolation from which Islam had hitherto suffered as a state was followed by an era of peace and free intercourse with all the tribes of Arabia.

[7] See *al-Faruq* (Urdu), pp. 49-51.

Umar on this occasion cornered the prophet of God by his just resentment and hard logic. "Why, then, are you degrading our creed (*to submit on terms of less than equality*) *with the polytheists*?" asked Umar. The prophet could not as a diplomat lay open his mind till he would extricate his followers from the unhappy situation of his own making. The prophet silenced Umar saying, "Because I am the Messenger of God, and I cannot but obey Him" (ibid).

(ii) The Bedouin tribes outside the province of *Hijaz* flocked to Medina and accepted Islam, which apart *from its* spiritual superiority, impressed them as a well-ordered, prosperous and powerful State which demanded allegiance not to any temporal authority, but only to God and His Messenger. The Bedouin tribes no doubt murmured that God had sent the Quran only in the language of the Quraish. But *Surah-s* now come in all the dialects of Arabia, and the Quran thus became a standard literary language for the whole of Arabia ten years before the Quran and the sword of Islam brought about Arab national unity.

(iii) Those who weighed worldly prospects of Islam more carefully than its spiritual values, particularly the Banu Hashim of Mecca,—at once discovered that the future lay with Islam and not with the losing issue of infidelity. The indigent fugitives from Mecca had become affluent citizens in Medina by appropriating the lands and property of the Jews. This defection of Banu Hashim left Banu Umayya as the forlorn hope of tottering idols in Mecca.

However, the humiliation of Hudabiya was soon forgotten in the midst of the jubilation over the conquest of Khybar and the destruction of the Jews (6 A. H.). Meanwhile, as Islam was waxing in strength, the Muslims were less anxious for truce than the Quraish. Complaints were lodged with the prophet by the tribe of Khuza' against the Quraish that they were backing the Bakar tribe in violation of the truce. Abu Sufiyan himself went to Medina to explain the matter ; but the prophet and Abu Bakr gave him no hearing, and Umar[8] spoke so harshly and contemptuously as to make any honourable compromise impossible.

In the month of Ramzan of the year 8. A. H., the prophet marched upon Mecca with an army ten thousand strong. The Quraish were divided in their counsels and their Bedouin allies fell off having no heart to stake much for idols. If the warlike Hawazins of Taif made at this juncture a common cause with the Quraish for their liberty and religion of idolatry, situation would have been as critical for the prophet as at Hudabiya. Abu Sufiyan made the best of a bad job, accepted Islam. and surrendered the city. The

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[8] Vide *al-Faruq*, 54-55.

prophet prayed at the Kaba and kissed the black stone, and himself joined hands in breaking the idols. Umar also did the same, saying to the holy relic, "Had I not seen the prophet of God kiss thee, I would have broken thee to pieces". The prophet at the moment of his greatest triumph showed himself the most humane of victors, and more generous in gifts to the powerful among the new converts than he had ever been to Abu Bakar, Umar, or Ali, though he knew full well that Abu Sufiyan, his sons and other Umayyads were at heart hypocrites (*munafiq*) in their profession of Islam. These "hypocrites *whose hearts were conciliated*" were destined to become saviours of Islam in later history not for the sake of Truth but for the dynastic interests of the Banu Umayya who made capital out of Islam in founding an Empire over the ruins of the prophet's Theocracy. These hypocrites were instrumental in crushing the Hawazins of Taif who offered a brave fight. The people of Taif claimed the clemency of retaining their faith like the Jews and the Christians on the payment of poll-tax (*jizyah*). But this concession was refused, and it became the future policy of the State of Medina to give no quarters to the Arabs, who were idol-worshippers or those who were clinging to the false prophets.

The prophet fell ill after his return from his last pilgrimage in 10 A. H. He remained confined to bed in the room of Lady Aisha for about ten days. He made no bequest and nominated no successor of his as the temporal head of the Islamic State. He breathed his last at noon on Monday, 12th Rabi. II, June 11 A.H. (632 A. D)

It is a common fallacy to hold the prophet responsible for all wars of succession, because he did not settle the question of succession nor even threw any hint to guide the Muslims. The political situation at his death in spite of all quiet and sunshine on the surface, was such that a civil war would have broken out before he would have had time to close his eyes, if he had committed this indiscretion. Nations having the law of primogeniture sanctified by religion had committed more frequent violations of it and fought more frequent civil wars over succession to kingship than the Muslims have had during the last fourteen centuries. We have no reason to believe that any such decision of the prophet would have received greater attention than his own mortal remains that remained unburied and without public mourning for twentyfour hours. For two long years after this event nobody could be sure whether the demise of the prophet was the eternal sunset or an eclipse of Islam in its mid-career.

16

The Golden Age of Islam

Oriental peoples with a glorious past, a depressing present, and an uncertain future,—sustain themselves with nothing but the hope of a return of better days promised to them by their gods and philosophers. As a general rule progressive nations look ahead for their golden age ; whereas the old and decaying ones look back upon on their past glory as a consolation and a plea for having a high place in the comity of nations today. Modern England no longer sighs for days of Alfred the Great, though she might dream of another era of Empire of the age of Pitt the Elder ; nor America would wish to relapse into the days of George Washington, or Abraham Lincoln. But the reverse is the case with the Orthodox Islam and the Brahmanical India. The pious Muslim longs for the Golden Age of Islam in the days of the first four caliphs ; whereas the reactionary Hindu bestirs himself for establishing a *Ram Rajya* (Kingdom of Rama), which is something less historical and less concrete than the Muslim conception of "Golden Age". Though both in essence indicate a desire for God's Kingdom on earth, they differ fundamentally ; Hindu notion of it is an ideal monarchy ; whereas the Muslim idea of it is an ideal democracy as it prevailed under the first four caliphs.

There has not been a historical parallel to the Golden Age of Islam in history ; it is unique and inimitable. Though democratic, it is pronounced by historians as unsuited to the needs of progress and civilization ; because it was the age of religious sovereignty of the Semitic type of state ruled by Prophets, Judges and Kings of the Old Testament. Moreover, the Age of the Pious Caliphs was a rare accident, which does not usually recur in the history of nations. This age witnessed a series of miracles, e.g., spread of Islam like a

wild fire and the conquest of half of the civilized world by the starving and half-naked Arab Bedouins. The preconditions of reviving such a glorious epoch had been the Islamic union, religious fervour, Bedouin pride and their virgin vigour, and Arab chivalry happily harmonizied to prepare the field for it. A great historian observes : ". . . . the methods of the Pious Caliphs would only suit such unusual conditions, and that the change from a religious to a political sovereignty was a matter of necessity".

Why, then, the average Muslim till now refuses to be satisfied with anything less than "the Golden Age of Islam" in politics, society and religion ? It is no perversity but the sign of vitality of a virile nation. This age is no legend, but a concrete historical phenemenon ; and every fact of it has come down to us in the form of narratives guaranteed by the testimony of pious contemporaries. It is also a common fact that not only the *ulema* class but also ignorant Muslims live in their imagination in the days of the Pious Caliphs. We see around in the old type teaching institutions run by saintly teachers in their household a replica of the government and society of that bygone age. It was an age when poverty and hardships bore no stigma of humiliation, when the humblest of Muslims could look full into the face of the Khalifah, address him by his *kuniyah* (surname) and demand as of right his share of the wealth of the Bait-ul-Mal, when he was free to criticise his ruler, and when it was the lot of the supreme head of the State to consume less, work harder, deprive his family of the decent comforts of life and live in a house that did not mock the hut of his poor neighbour. There was then no racial discrimation, no pomp and pride of a pampered aristocracy, and no claim to superiority except on grounds of priority of conversion to Islam and of conspicuous services to the State ; the Abyssinian slave Hazrat Bilal holding a higher position than Abu Sufiyan, the noblest of the nobles of the house of Banu Umayya.

This golden age of Islam appears somewhat primitive and barbarous, because it only created an ideal condition for the future growth of Islamic civilization which was the result of the contact of peoples of different grades of civilization thrown together under the impact of Islam. In this respect this era was superseded by the Umayyad and Abbasid regimes. Of the first four Caliphs, Abu Bakr and Umar I, have been declared the heroes of this age by a consensus of opinion of the traditional Islam (*Sunnism*). They were really pure gold among men ; alloy debased the golden polity of Islam during

the last six years of the caliphate of Usman. Hazrat Ali in an attempt to restore puritanism in politics courted defeat and betrayal to the forces of evil.

2. The Caliphate of Abu Bakr (632-634 A. D.)

The people of Medina suffered for their genuine piety and political folly. They had invited an outsider to be their religious guide and supreme magistrate. All the privations of a wealthy ruling oligarchy in the process of transformation of their city into a socialistic state with the obligation of providing for their brethren in faith and the indigent *have-nots* from Mecca,—had fallen to their lot during the first five years of the prophet's rule. They had underrated the clan-feeling of the Quraish and allowed themselves to be politically weakend and isolated by the destruction of the Jews, their former subjects and subordinate allies. They became aware of their blunders too late, and a natural reaction followed. As soon as the death of the prophet became known, the disintegrating forces were out for political mischief. The two tribes of Medina assembled in the *sakhifah* (reception-hall) of Banu Saadah for electing one of them to the office of Caliphate. Abbas, the uncle of the prophet and an intriguing opportunist, greeted the unsuspecting and unambitious Ali with the remark, "Slavery is thy lot after three days", and took him to the house of Bibi Fathima, where every member of the house of Hashim was summoned to a secret conclave. Umar went off his head and thundered that he would kill every man who would dare say that the Prophet of God was dead ! But there was method in his madness. Other members of the tribe of Quraish gathered round Abu Bakr when news reached them that the Ansars of Medina were about to elect a caliph in the *sakhinah* of Bani Saada. They hurried uninvited to the spot, and the Ansars proposed that the caliphate should go alternately to the Ansars and the Muhajirins. To this Abu Bakr objected saying that the Arabs would never accept anybody except a Quraish as ruler, and forthwith proposed the name of Umar. Umar cut the gordian knot by suddenly taking the hand of Abu Bakr and swearing the oath of allegiance to him as caliph giving others no time to pause and deliberate. There followed a

[1] *al-Faruq*, p. 63.

The prophet died at noon on Monday, 12 Rabius-Sani, 11 A. H. and was buried *next day* in the afternoon.

rush as to who should be the next to swear allegiance, and thus mass psychology settled the issue. The Ansars also hurried forward to make amends for their separatist move. After this event Umar went to the house of Ali where the Banu Hashim were still in conclave behind closed doors. He threatened to set fire to the house[2] if those who were inside did not come out, and Umar's threat was known to be no empty vaunt. The Banu Hashim were the last to take the oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr, a fortunate choice which the prophet himself would have approved, but which he could not declare ; because such an election belonged of right not to him, but "to the people of Allah". The later history of the Caliphate was only a commentary on this episode.

Abdullah, commonly know among the Muslims as Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (the Sincere), was older than the prophet by about two years. The affections of the prophet were equally divided between Abu Bakr and Umar, who by their bearing and character constituted respectively the grace (*jamal*) and majesty (*jalal*) of Islam. The official title of the first ruler of the theocracy was the *Khalifah* of the Prophet of Allah. By the covention of delegation all the temporal powers and functions of the prophet descended on him. He was the leader of the congregation (*Imam*) as well as the commander-in-chief (*Amir*) of the Faithful, and also the head of the executive but not the supreme judge to whom even the Caliph was answerable for offences against the Law (*Shariyat*), though the caliph had the power to appoint and dismiss the chief qazi and his subordinates. The Islamic State was not a direct or indirect democracy of the Western type, but "a controlled democracy" ruled by a dictator with limited powers within the framework of the Theocracy. There arose parties of opposition after the death of the prophet. A difference of opinion came up among them over the selection of site for the burial of the prophet's body ; one party was for burying in the mosque of the prophet at Medina, another for Mecca, the home of the Quraish, and a third for Jerusalem (Baitul-Muqaddds) where earlier prophets lay buried. The caliph gave a ruling on the words of the prophet he had heard ; namely that the prophets are buried where they die, and that prophets have no legal heirs, their property reverting to the State as *sadqah*. So the prophet was buried in his bedroom in the house of Aisha ; but the trouble was not over. It is said that the lands of Fadak in Khybar, which had been assigned

[2] For authentic details, *al-Faruq*, pp. 64-72.

to the prophet, were desired by his daughter Fatima, the wife of Ali. But Abu Bakr rejected this claim, because Fadak was *not personal property* of the family, the prophet having had only the *usufruct* of it. Abu Bakr, usually soft and forgiving, would become adamant where decisions involved a fundamental principle. It is for this firmness of Abu Bakr in a delicate matter that the Shias, much less reasonable than Ali himself, curse the memory of the universally-praised caliph Abu Bakr !

The greatest event of the caliphate of Abu Bakr and also of the whole history of Islam after the death of the prophet was the War of Apostasy (*al-ridda*). Situation at home and abroad was desperate for Islam. There was disunion among the Muslims; the Ansars held aloof; the military prestige had sunk low by the defeat of the Muslim army and the death of its general Zaid on the Syrian border, the treasury was empty and the main sources of revenue were affected by a general defection of the Arabs outside the chief cities of the province of Hijaz. The causes of the War of Apostasy, remote and immediate, are not far to seek. It is a common error with the pious Muslim chroniclers to imagine that the whole of Arabia had been united under the banner of Islam during the life-time of the prophet. The prophet's career was too short and his difficulties were too many for the consolidation of the political and spiritual ascendancy of Islam outside the province of Hijaz. Like the progress of any other beneficent social and religious reform in a backward community, Islam poured "new wine into an old bottle" too fast, and hence there was this inevitable outburst. Besides, appearances deceived the early Muslims; a Bedouin *shaikh* comes from Baharein or Oman with some gifts to Medina, accepts Islam and the Muslims infer that the whole tribe or province comes within Dar-ul-Islam. Islam made its way from below upward in Mecca and Medina : whereas elsewhere it had just begun to infiltrate from the upper strata to the lower. Baladhuri records enough facts to warrant the conclusion that the prophet's delegates from Medina entrusted with the duty of preaching Islam and collecting tithes from individual tribes were responsible for precipitating the crisis of Apostasy.

The Apostasy of the tribes was in reality not a revolt against Islam as a *religion.* It was a political revolt against Islam as a State identified by the outsiders with the ascendancy of the Quraish and the tithe-gathering city of Medina. Islam stood against parochial patriotism, the inborn clan-feeling and unbridled independence of

the Bedouins. The Theocracy galled them as an all-pervading and centralised despotism. It demanded a sacrifice of internal and external sovereignty of the constituent tribes integrated into the Islamic State. The missionaries from Medina gave themselves offending airs of superiority in their dealings with the tribes. The prophet's instructions to "the Residents" sent out to teach rituals of Islam and collect tithes enjoined mild and tactful handling of the converts ; if they respond to the call of prayer and offer prayers five times a day, they are to be told that it is meritorious to observe the fast of Ramzan ; if they observe fast they are to be told that for a Muslim it is obligatory to pay *zakat* (one-fortieth of the value of property) to make his property lawful. These agents seemed to have had begun at the wrong end and created an impression not as religious teachers, but tax-collectors from outside. They were not content with the leanest sheep for the Church ; their eyes were on the pick of the herd of the Bedouin. Baladhuri (*Futuh-al-Buldan*) tells us how a revolt was precipated in South Arabia on account of the forcible seizure of a pet animal of an old woman as *zakat* by an agent of Medina. Apostasy spread like a wild fire ; Muslims were driven out : the pious Pagan, as a sort of purification ceremony, shaved off his head and beard, ate pork and drank wine, and rushed to arms against Islam but not for the restoration of idols. South Arabia had a false prophet, al-Aswad, a contemporary of the prophet of Medina. He too did not countenance idolatry, but preached some form of Egyptian mysticism and misled people by black magic. He was murdered during the life-time of the prophet. The two other prophets, declared "false" by the Muslims, but whose claims yet awaited the arbitration of sword now held the field. These were Musailama of the powerful tribe of Banu Hanifa in al-Yamamah, and Tailha of the tribe of Banu Ghatafan in Central Arabia. They too denounced idolatry and their doctrines were considered as travesty of Islam. But Musailama lived a more ascetic life, enjoined more than five prayers a day, enforced strict and rigorous discipline on his followers. He was nearing the age of one hundred and fifty (*vide al-Suyuti*) at the accession of Caliph Abu Bakr. There had appeared a female false prophetess named Sajah among the numerous and turbulent tribe of Banu Tamim. Muslaimah married Sajah, and thus consolidated his position further. He was a clever diplomat too. He sent a deputation to Muhammad pressing the need for a joint attestation of the truth of their mission. Muhammad had decreed that at least

two witnesses are required to establish right in a suit, and this was sought to be turned against him by the false prophet. If two witnesses are required by his own confession to decide a petty suit, Musailama added, was it not logical that two witnesses must be required to establish the truth of their Revelation ? It was a hint for mutual recognition of prophethood and a division of Arabia in two spheres of spiritual dominion. The Arab like the Anglo-Saxon has the uncanny instinct of coming out of a tight corner by throwing plausible logic to the four winds ; Muhammad simply refused to entertain such a proposal

However, these false prophets added fuel to the fire of revolt among the tribes. This gave the apostates a bargaining power ; because, "a living prophet is always better than a dead one" was the logic of the *jahil* (ignorant). The death of the prophet was undoubtedly the immediate cause of the War of Apostasy.

Meanwhile, Abu Bakr had sent away the army under the command of Osama bin Zaid to avenge his father's defeat and death in Syria, because the prophet before his death had given Osama his commission. The caliph planted the standard of *jihad* outside the city and called the faithful to arms. The host of the apostates marched in overwhelming strength upon Medina before it was ready to strike. The apostates thought of bargaining for a peace on their own terms, and offered to become Muslims again in the name of God and His Prophet only if they were exempted from the payment of property tax (*zakat*). Umar had his misgivings about the issue of a fight, and so he urged the Caliph to show some leniency, savage Arabs as the apostates were. "Have we not the words of the prophet that he had been commanded by Allah to fight the infidels till they recite 'There is no God but God and Muhammad is His Prophet'? How can you, then, fight with these people?," said Umar. There came a sharp retort from Abu Bakr.

"By Allah, I will certainly fight with those that make a difference between *namaz* and *zakat*. After all, *zakat* is the *haq* (rightful demand) of *Bait-ul-Mal* (Treasury) ; and has not the prophet of God said that in the act of enforcing our *haq*, the blood and property of our enemies are lawful to us ?". Abu Bakr as a man stood always for forgiveness and compromise ; but the Caliphate found him a man of impulse, more self-willed and less calculating than the fiery Umar. At any rate, Abu Bakr's policy committed the theocracy of Islam to a war of conquest and unification of Arabia leaving the future to Allah alone. He himself took the

command of the *jihad*, struck the first successful blow on a small party of the apostates and was about to start in pursuit when Ali seized the reins of his horse to turn him back. Medina now awoke to its sense of duty ; the Ansars came forward and the erstwhile enemies of the prophet and hypocrites in their faith, namely the Banu Umayya rushed to the forefront to fight the apostates. The Syrian army of Osama returned victorious, and five armies took the field to carry out the Caliph's grim command to force back the apostates to the fold of Islam at the point of sword, give no quarters till they perform prayers, observe the fast of Ramzan and pay *zakat*, and exterminate those who resist. Within less than six months southern and the eastern districts of Arabia were subdued after several bloody actions.

The hero of the War of Apostasy was Khalid bin al-Walid. This godless soldier, who had broken two teeth of the prophet at the battle of Uhad, proved himself verily "the Sword of Allah" in fighting the enemies of Islam. Abu Bakr gave him loose reins and connived at his lapses, and unlike other commanders was required to submit any account of the spoils of war (*ghanim*), one-fifth of which was due to the public treasury (*bait-ul-mal*). He was accused of attacking a tribe, not reluctant but a little late in tendering their allegiance ; because he coveted the beautiful wife of its chieftain. Khalid bin al-Walid unlawfully married his widow, and spread his nuptial feast over the carpet of the dead and the dying on the very field of battle. If he did not drink wine, it was alleged that he used to bathe in wine to keep up his health. Complaints poured in against him and angry Umar demanded his dismissal. "I shall not willingly sheath the sword", said Abu Bakr, "which Allah has unsheathed". On the other hand, the caliph availed himself of the war psychosis of the triumphant theocracy and the military genius of Khalid bin al-Walid in crushing the formidable false prophet Musailama, who had already defeated "two Muslim armies before Khalid arrived with a third."[3] Banu Hanifa and Banu Tamim were no apostates, but sincere believers in the mission of their old prophet and prophetess Sajah for many years. Forty thousand horse, the very pick of the Arabian cavalry, led by Musailama gave fight to the Muslims under Khalid on the field of al-Yamamah. Superior discipline and the Napoleonic genius of the first soldier of Islam could win only a very costly, though the

[3] Vide Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, p. 141.

most decisive victory for the unification of Arabia by the theocracy of Islam. The popular hero of this victory, next to Khalid, was Washi, the Abyssian slave, who killed Musailama and thus compensated Islam for having killed the prophet's uncle at Uhad (*Suyuti*, 39).

The War of Apostasy led to a war against false prophets, which now turned into a war of aggression and military conquest beyond the bounds of Arabia. Khalid bin al-Walid overran Mesopotamia, conquered Iraq and the Lakhmite Arab kingdom of Hira and advanced towards the Yuphrates river by allying himself with the local Christian Arab tribes under Muthanna. Suddenly he received orders to join the Muslim army in Syria by the quickest possible time. Khalid bin al-Walid took his army over a vast distance across the terrible desert of Nefud, and got into contact with Syrian army within 14 days. This dramatic feat of generalship was not unworthy of an Alexander, and but for the caliphate of Umar, Khalid bin al-Walid would have emerged in history as the Arab Napoleon of the seventh century.

Abu Bakr lived and died in the midst of the din of war and victory having little time to organise the theocracy for the rule of a growing empire. His only work was the collection of the text of the Quran.[1]

Before the news of Khalid's great victory over the Byzantines at Ajnaydin (July 30, 634) reached Madina, Caliph Abu Bakr died at the age of 63, after having nominated Umar as his successor with the consent of Ali, Usman and other great Companions of the prophet, —Jamadiul-Akhir 22 of the 13th A H. The period of his rule was two years and four months ; some say it was two years and two months (632-34 A. D). He left an empty treasury, an old she-camel and a big cup (out of which he drank milk), and a worn out *chadar* (cotton sheet),—the heirloom from the prophet. Since after his conversion to Islam, his life had been one of progressive poverty, and he died the poorest man in Arabia. For six months after his accession he lived on his private resources, and later on a modest

[1] The Quran was hitherto being preserved in the memory of the pious, known as Hafiz. So many of them died in the battle of Yamama that it was feared that the Quran might be lost if the scattered texts were not gathered in time. So the Caliph ordered Zaid bin Sabit to do the needful. Sabit hunted for the texts preserved in writing on bones, leaves of trees, scraps of paper and in the memory of the people. The official version was published only in the time of the third caliph Usman.

yearly allowance of 6000 dirhems was settled on him. He had no servant for his household, no office except a room in the mosque and no paid secretariat to assist him in administration, and yet nothing went amiss. His government resembled the rule of a *fakhir* in a monastic establishment that required for smooth running very little other than the absolute moral authority of the Shaikh. Abu Bakr was the saviour of Islam from a sad fate. One modern historian[5] justly remarks that but for Abu Bakr Islam would have melted away in a compromise. Whether it was obstinacy or statesmanship, Abu Bakr was right in refusing concessions to the apostates. If Abu Bakr had agreed to excuse the payment of *zakat*, the Arab would have next demanded the abolition of the fast of Ramzan, and in this way nothing but the formula of the confession would have been left of Islam ; because, such is human nature at play in religion and politics. It is perhaps unfair to compare Abu Bakr with Umar, and speculate whether "Abu Bakr would not have been inferior to him (*Umar*), had it not been for the short duration of his rule". Abu Bakr could not have done in twenty years what Umar did in twelve, nor *vice versa* ; because the character and talents of these two great caliphs differed fundamentally. Had Umar been in Abu Bakr's place he would have avoided a war with the apostate tribes to tide over a crisis. But at what cost, with what results ? If *zakat* was to be excused on the rebels, how could it continue to be obligatory on the people of Hijaz only ? The infant theocracy of Islam eked out its existence only from this source of revenue. So Umar would have been faced with a more formidable economic and religious crisis to avoid a political one. If on the other hand Abu Bakr had ruled for another ten years without "sheathing the sword of Allah" and given a free hand to Khalid bin al-Walid, the Persian and the Byzantine empires would have no doubt been conquered within a shorter time, but the theocracy would have ended with Abu Bakr, as the lessons of the French Revolution warrant us to conclude. So it is better to subscribe to the contemporary Muslim view that one was "mother" and the other was "father" to the Muslims,—a very apposite summing up of the character and achievements of the first two caliphs.

3. The Caliphate of Umar I (634-644 A.D.)

Umar was born in 40 A. H., *i.e.*, about 582 A. D. in Mecca in a mercantile family of the tribe of Adi. He grew up a wrestler,

[5] Margoliouth, *Umayyads and Abbasids*, p. 36.

taller by a head than the tallest among his contemporaries, Achilles in physique and fire, and an implacable enemy of Islam before his conversion. He was straightforward, outsopken, of clean heart and clear judgment,—a lion among man much dreaded for his imflammable temperament and unforgiving character. In later life Islam decided everything for him ;—his likes and dislikes, friendship and enmity. His heart was steeled against every human weakness except his love for the prophet and for those who shared the prophet's affections with him. None but Umar would dare interfere with the prophet's private affairs and speak out his heart so bluntly. But he kept an open mind and submitted to better counsel without resentment. When the question of dealing with the Quraishite prisoners of war at Badar was referred by the prophet to his Companions, Abu Bakr said that these prisoners were after all their own kith and kin, and so they ought to be set free on the payment of ransom. Umar, flared up and thundered, "In the affair of Islam, relationship of blood and natural affection have no consideration ; every one of us should cut off the heads of prisoners standing nearest to us in relationship ; e.g., Ali is to slay his own brother, Aqil ; Hamza to kill his cousin Abbas ; and I myself my friend so and so !"[6] So the Muslims had reasons to tremble when Abu Bakr nominated him as his successor.

Caliph Umar had his misgivings about Khalid bin al-Walid, the commander-in-chief of the Muslim armies operating in Syria. But he continued him in his chief command in Syria not without a hope that Khalid might mend his ways under the new regime. He wrote him to send an account of the spoils of war in Syria and of its distribution. Meanwhile he turned his attention to Iraq where after Khalid's departure al-Muthanna of the tribe of Banu Shayban had been carrying on a losing war against the Persians. Muthanna came to Medina asking for reinforcements. For three days in succession the Caliph made fervent appeals for a *jihad*, but none came forward to go against the Persians. The people of Medina gave no response, because they thought that Iraq was the pillar of the Persian empire and that none but Khalid bin al-Walid could win success there. On the fourth day Umar's appeal moved the congregation, and Abu 'Obeida of the tribe of Thaqif (of the city of Taif), volunteered to take the command to the shame of the Companions

Shibli, *al-Faruq*, i, 40. Umar had killed in action at Badar his maternal uncle Mughirah's grandson. This is considered as one of the great deeds of Umar.

of the Prophet. But when Umar gave him the command, the Companions protested on the plea that a Companion (*sahaba*) should be appointed supreme commander. He snubbed them for their wavering that had cost them their privilege and title for command. This indicated which way the wind was blowing for the future of the theocracy that considered an overbearing and godless soldier, al-Walid indispensable for the success of Islam.

However, the courage and devotion of the Thaqifite commander failed to recover Iraq, and his wrong tactics of fighting with a river behind him brought the disaster of the Battle of the Bridge (Nov. 26, 634 A. D). The famous general Rustam (not the legendary Rustam) with an army 50,000 strong undid all the previous success of the Muslim army in Iraq, and drove them to the confines of Arabia. Umar sent out poets as envoys and recruiting agents to all the Arab tribes of Central Arabia and Mesopotamia, whether Muslim or Christian, to come forward for defending the honour of the Arabs against the hated Ajam (non-Arabs). It became a national war cry all over Arabia and no honourable Arab could but forget at this crisis old scores between Mudar and Himyar, Kais and Kalb, Muslim or Christian. Umar himself started from Medina to lead the *jihad* leaving Ali in charge of the government. As the situation was equally alarming on the Syrian front, the caliph was induced to turn back leaving the army to the chief command of Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas. But Umar would not have another al-Walid on the eastern front. By virtue of his office as "the Commander of the Faithful", he retained the supreme direction of war in his own hands. He looked to the minutest detail of the equipment of the army, determined its stages of halt, and directed its movements by calling for maps of the field of operation. Nothing went amiss as the caliph left enough discretionary powers to his generals on the spot. Though Sad bin Abi Waqqas was no military genius like Khalid bin al-Walid, he was a brave, resourceful and cautious soldier extremely popular with the soldiery for his high morals. He defeated the Persian army in a three days' battle at Qadisiyah on the first of June 637 A.D., captured Ctesiphon (Madain), and destroyed another Persian army at Jalula towards the end of the same year. The caliph now ordered the close of the campaign, having no wish to carry a war of conquest into Persia proper.

On the Syrian front Khalid bin al-Walid followed up his great victory of Ajnadayan by the reduction of the Syrian capital of Damascus (September 635 A. D.), Hims and other places. But the

Byzantine Emperor made one last and supreme effort to save Syria, and threw back the Muslim armies on the defensive. The Byzantine army numbering 50,000 was led by the Emperor Heracleus, and the Eastern Church in imitation of Islam for the first time declared a crusade against the Muslims. Khalid bin al-Walid showed consummate generalship by evacuating Damascus, Hims and other strongholds and thus by a stroke deprived the Byzantines of their advantage of heavy equipment for a regular siege warfare. The Arab army led by Khalid was now elusive as the wind, and yet a nightmare to the enemy in camp and a lightning stroke at unguarded moments. The Byzantine army alarmed at the harassing tactics of the Muslims chose as their camping ground a zigzag bend of the river Yarmuk taking there the shape of a bottle. The Byzantine camp was pitched within this bottle and the Muslims encamped beyond, watching the neck of the bottle and cutting off supplies of the enemy. The Byzantines made a desperate attempt to break through the neck of the bottle of a zigzag field. This cost them their advantages of the superiority of strength and initiative on the day of the battle of Yarmuk (August 20, 636 A.H.). Khalid bin al-Walid put brave Abu Ubayada in the centre, Amr bin al-As in the right wing and Yazid bin Abu Sufiyan in command of the left wing. He himself remained with a very strong reserve in the rear of the main array,—a departure from the traditional warfare of the Arabs. He commanded those in front to wait for an attack with spears at rest and eyes down till the Byzantine cavalry would gallop right upon the spear-heads of the Muslims, who were to spring to the charge then only. Superior archery of the Byzantine troops galled the Muslims and their right wing under Amr bin al-As broke and fled in panic far from the field till they reached tents of women. The women came out with tent-poles and threatened the fugitives to break their heads if they would fly further. It was perhaps at this juncture that Muwayiah's mother Hinda (who had chewn the liver of the prophet's uncle, Hamza), and her equally brave daughter Jubariyah rode out with their war cry to take part in fighting.[7] Khalid bin al-Walid allowed the Byzantine attack to spend its fury, and swayed the tide of battle with such consumate skill and cool judgment as to put a seal to his glory as the greatest

[7] *Vide Al-Faruq*, p. 145.
I have followed Maulana Shibli whose treatment of the life of Umar I appears to me more authentic than anything in English. Facts have been taken from him, though I have reasons to differ from his interpretation of facts *in toto*.

soldier of Islam. Next to Khalid's generalship the valour of Banu Umayya shone bright on the field. This battle decided finally the fate of Syria and rang the beginning of the end of the Byzantine rule in Egypt and Palestine as well.

Caliph Umar had paid a visit to Syria just before the fall of Jerusalem, a year before the battle of the Yarmuk (August 636). The Caliph and his entourage of Ansars and Muhajirs, resembled more a party of austere fakhirs than that of those who decided the destiny of the Kisra and the Qaisar. Their own commanders of armies, clad in the luxuriant and multi-coloured silk like imperial grandees, were half ashamed of the caliph's upper garment of 26 patches dating from the time of the prophet. The patriarch of Jerusalem trembling for the fate of the Christians was "so impressed by the uncouth mien and shabby raiment of his Arabian visitor that he is said to have turned to an attendant and remarked in Greek, "Truly this is the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the Prophet as standing in the holy place" (Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, p. 154). Herein lie the differences between the West and East in their notions of desolation and holiness ; our holy places become holier with the presence only of such men, whatever creed they might profess.

However, it was perhaps during this visit that Umar tried to prevail upon Khalid bin al-Walid to mend his way of life. A year after the victory of the Yarmuk the caliph paid another visit to Syria, and during the intervening period Khalid bin al-Walid had been dismissed from the Syrian command. This was a dramatic episode around which legends grew thick. Khalid bin al-Walid in reply to Umar's reminders wrote that he had not rendered any account to caliph Abu Bakr, nor would he give any to the present government. In A. H. 17, the Caliph's special emissary came probably to Hims and summoned the commanders to a meeting in the mosque. The emissary asked Khalid wherefrom he had given a princely reward to a poet of his. Khalid disdained to give an explanation, and the emissary read out the order of Khalid's dismissal and appointment of Abu Ubayda in his place. As a token of the execution of his commission the emissary removed the cap from Khalid's head and tied his neck with the cloth of his own turban (*imammah*). It is said that at Hims Khalid spoke openly of the undeserved reward for all his services, his demotion and dismissal ; whereupon a common soldier took exception and warned his general saying that such words might lead to trouble. Khalid retorted, "Where is the room for trouble as long as Umar lives ?"

To save the reputation of Khalid, Umar made a public proclamation that he had been recalled for no grave offence ; but only to remove the impression that the success of Islam was due to him only.

The dismissal of Khalid bin al-Walid was the greatest service rendered by Umar to the theocracy of Islam. Had he followed the indulgent policy of Abu Bakr to Khalid bin al-Walid during his ten years' rule, the theocracy would have passed under a military dictatorship or at best something like Cromwell's rule in England. However, Khalid commanded no pack of bloodhounds but regiments of God's soldiers owing allegiance to the Khalifa of the Prophet of God alone; and hence there was no reaction against Umar's bold decision.

However, the tide of conquest rolled on even without a Khalid to lead the Muslim armies. Amr bin al-As completed the subjugation of Palestine and marched into Egypt. After some hard fighting the whole of Byzantine province of Egypt passed under Muslim rule. Abu Ubayda, the successor of Khalid in chief command over Syria died of an epidemic of cholera in 18 A. H. Umar appointed Muwawiyah to the governorship of Syria, and but for the injunction of the conservative caliph against naval fighting he would have annexed the coast-towns and the islands of the Mediterranean Sea during the life-time of Umar I. War broke out afresh on the eastern frontier owing to the alleged violation of truce by Yazdagird III, the last of the Sassanids. The last great battle, called "Victory of victories" by the Arabs, that decided the fate of Sassanian empire was fought at Nihawand, near the ancient Persian capital of Ecbatana in 641 A. H. The Muslim army was victorious but their brave general al-Numan was killed. The Persian army was almost totally destroyed ; 30,000 warriors lay dead on the field and the crest-fallen Yazdagird III fled towards Khorasan.

Two serious problems put the statesmanship of the second Caliph to a severe test. When Mesopotamia was conquered by the Muslims, the soldiers demanded an actual division of the land and the enslaved population among themselves excluding the usual one-fifth as the state's share. As this was in accordance with precedents of the time of the Prophet and of the first Caliph, the pious and upright Abu Horayra, whom even Umar could not ignore,—took up the side of the soldiery. The proposal was, however, a horrible one entailing the division of the inhabitants of a whole country as slaves and the appropriation of its lands by a few thousand soldiers. Umar I ordered a survey of the conquered country and an assessment of its revenue. The four-fifths of the revenue was to be

distributed among the victors from the state treasury as yearly stipends. Had he yielded to the original proposal it would have meant a calamity to subject races, and ultimately to the Arabs, who after a generation or two would have fallen upon the original conquerors when there would be no more lands to conquer. The Islamic Law conceded the right to live on the payment of *jaziyah* poll-tax only to the Jews and Christians. When half of the country of Iran was conquered by the Muslims, the fate of the Fire-worshipping Iranians became a fiercely debated point of controversy. There was no precedent, no Saying of the Prophet known to any of the Companions of the Prophet that might save the conquered people of Iran from either wholesale conversion or total destruction as infidels. The wise and noble Ali came to the rescue of Umar, and of the fire and idol-worshippers for all times to come. He affirmed that he had heard the Prophet of God saying that fire-worshippers should be treated as a tolerated sect of *zimmis*. Had not the question been thus settled, Hinuds would not have been suffered to retain their religion and live as *zimmis* under the Sultanate of Delhi.

Umar I has rightly been designated by modern historians as the real founder of the Islamic *Empire* in as much as "all the institutions that gave permanence to that empire owe their origin directly or indirectly to Caliph Umar I". "Empire" smacks of impiety and a departure from the ideal of Islam as a State, and none was more afraid than Umar himself given as he was to constant self-introspection, lest he should stand guilty before Allah for acting like a *Badshah*[8] of the Byzantine, or of the Sassanian dynasty. So it is proper to say that Umar I was the real builder of *Islam as State*, and that all the institutions that might give permanency to the Theocracy owe their origin to him. A great Muslim historian[9] of modern times says, "During the time of the Pious Caliphs, Islam had no political sovereignty, the Caliphate being a religious office, with rules based on piety, mercy, justice, etc., in a style to which no age can show a parallel. The hero of this age, indeed, we may say

[8] One day Umar asked a man wherein lay the difference between a *Badshah* and a *Khalifah*. He replied, "a Khalifah is he who does not illegally take a pie more from anyone, nor gives a pie in extravagance. This is as you do. A *Badshah* extorts by violence and gives away for nothing". (*Suyuti*, p. 75).

[9] Jurji Zaydan, vide Margoliouth, *Umayyads and Abbasids*, p. 36.

the hero of Islam, was Omar Ibn al-khattab, whose acts and judgments were of a sort rarely united in an individual".

The machinery of government built up by Umar for consolidating the theocracy was an adaptation of the administrative institutions of the Byzantine and the Sassanian empires to the spirit and tradition of the Arab nation. Its substructure was non-Arab on which sat a superstructure designed by Umar,—not unlike the first Muslim mosques built by the Greeks and the Persians out of the half-demolished churches or palaces under the direction of their ignorant and half-savage conquerors. It is convenient to study the administrative system under its two constituent parts, namely, Central and Provincial :

A. The Central Government

At the head of the government was the Khalifah, whose powers were absolute within the limit of the Law (*Shariyat*). He had no minister, no constitutional check on his authority short of rebellion. The Caliphate was not, according to Muslim writers, one man's rule but a constitutional government, though without a written constitution. Maulana Shibli would have us believe that by the convention of the time of the Prophet, government had always been by consultation, and that there was a cabinet or inner council which decided on policy, and in addition a General Assembly to discuss and approve every ordinance and all appointments. There are no doubt instances of such preliminary consultations made by the Caliph, and his instructions also to his governors and generals were that they should consult their subordinates in command or office, particularly the old Companions if any of them were present on the spot. Even admitting that such was the case it does not make the government of Umar a constitutional government in the modern sense, e.g., the President's rule in U.S.A. It is, however, a common weakness of nations to claim their governments to be what these do not appear to other nations, e.g., military dictatorships of this age where even a dictator cannot afford to rule without consultation with an inner group enjoying the confidence of his people. However, even if we class Umar's rule with autocracy and despotism, there is no doubt about the fact that it was such a despotism for which the world might sigh in vain to come to its rescue from the ills of modern democracies. Umar's government was neither military dictatorship nor *popular despotism* of the Tudors in England, who ruled by evading or at best *managing* the Parliament by subterfuges. In spirit and

working it was nothing but the genuine Arab patriarchal government writ large over an *Empire* conceived of as the home territory of the *Tribe* of Islam.

Central government in the time of Caliph Abu Bakr centred around the only institution of *Bait-ul-Mal*, and that too without a building, without a clerical staff, and without guards. One-fifth of booty of every category, cash, movables and prisoners of war sent to Medina from every theatre of war were distributed by the Caliph among the Muslims almost immediately, and only a little of cash was left in the prophet's mosque for emergency. So was the case with tithe money and poll-tax, as the Caliph was only a storekeeper for the Muslims. The distribution was made with the advice and approval of the most noted among the Companions. Umar's first act was to build a large public building for depositing revenue and booty of every kind and appoint writers and watchmen. The head of the *Bait-ul-Mal* was a *Darogah* or superintendent, accountable to the Caliph. Far-flung conquests made a decentralization of the treasury an immediate necessity. Similarly, separate buildings for *Bait-ul-Mal* were built in the provincial capitals and cantonment cities like Kufa, Basra and Fustat (in Egypt). Umar appointed the Darogahs of the Treasury who were, however, subordinate to the authority of the governors and military administrators.

The old practice of distribution of the income of the state at discretion by the Caliph and his advisors could no longer work. So the Caliph ordered the compilation of a Register of the recipients of stipends and a census of the Arab tribes. At first the draft of the Register was made with the name of the Khalifah at the top ; but Umar said that his name should come last, and among his own clan of Adi. Nearness to the person of the Prophet, priority of the acceptance of Islam and of migration, special distinction such as services at Badr and other battles were the generally agreed principles of settling the priority and the amount of stipend to be entered into the Register. Islam was "a militaristic socialism" as Hitti remarks ; but socialism of Islam was not a classless society. Umar I *did not create class* but only recognised a sort of class conception already rooted in the minds of his contemporaries. He recognised an aristocracy based not on birth, not on the number of spears at one's command, nor yet on the long purse. Classes in Islam went only by the degree of reputation for piety, and by the quality of service to the State, spiritual or military. First came the name of Hazrat Aisha with a yearly stipend of 12,000 dirhems and other

widows of the prophets who received less. Most minute things were taken into consideration by Umar in fixing the amount due to each. It is said that one man pointed out that Umar's son Abdullah deserved more than another on the list. Umar replied, "No. Abdullah's father was not so steady on the field of Uhud as the father of this man"[10] (alluding to his own panic at Uhud) The Caliph was asigned six thousand dirhems per annum, which was equal to the pay of the chief Qazi.

The Register had no place for non-Arabs or clients and slaves. Only the names of the *Muqatilah, i.e.*, those members of tribes who had left their Desert home, gone to distant lands as soldiers of Islam and settled down in cantonment towns as reserves and garrisons were entered in the Register, and also the names of their wives and children for whom also they were entitled to draw an allowance, Such pensions to their wives and children were to continue also after the death of the head of the family. Poets and vagabonds were given doles only out of the *zakat* money, which was considered unclean by the pious and kept in separate bags for charity. The stipendiaries were generally paid from the Jaziya fund ; and only the warriors had a right to share in the *Ghanim* (booty). Umar created a Central Secretariat with regular Departments on the model of the Byzantine and Iranian Secretariats. It was generally known as the *Diwan*. The business with the provincial secretariats was carried on through the Central Secretariat manned by a liberally paid staff.

(b) Organization of the Provincial government

Caliph Umar had seen during his visit to Jerusalem, the Byzantine provincial administration left in working order by his lieutenants. He made up his mind to systematize the Arab administrative system on old models in the conquered provinces with as little modification as possible. According to Muslim chroniclers, Umar divided the territory of Islam into eight provinces. These were Mecca, Medina, Syria (Sham), Mesopotamia (Jazirat-ul-Arab), Palestine, Egypt, Kufa and Basra. Later on more provinces were probably created such as Fars (Persia proper), Khuzistan, Kirman, etc. Palestine was divided into two commands, Aila and Ramla ; Egypt with its 28 districts was divided into two provinces, Upper and the Lower Egypt. Under these provinces were grouped old administrative units down to *parganah*.

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[10] *al-Faruq*, p. 46.

The Wali (equivalent to Subahdar) was the official head of the administration, civil and military. Under him were the Chief Secretary (*Katib-i-Subah*), Military Secretary (*Katib-i-Diwan, i.e.*, head of military secretariat), chief Accountant of revenues (*Sahib-ul-Khiraj*), the Chief Treasurer (*Sahib-i-Baitul Mal*), Inspector General of Police (*Sahib-ul-Ahdas*), and the provincial Qazi. The district administrative machinery was a replica of the provincial one, and the revenue subdivisions had only *amils* and *tahsildars*. Though the Wali was given the powers of appointment of his subordinates, the Caliph himself at the beginning made all appointments at the provincial level.

The Caliph kept a suspiciously vigilant eye on the provincial administration. News-writers were posted in every province, and occasionally special emissaries were sent from Medina to study the state of affairs and report. He was swift and terrible in bringing big offenders to justice. Every year the provincial governors had to come on pilgrimage and render on account of themselves before the Caliph. He wanted his lieutenants to be so many Umars as the oath of appointment indicates : none was to ride a stately Turki horse, wear fine clothes, eat *maida* (flour of wheat) or keep any porter before his gate which should remain always open to everybody. Before taking up an appointment every high official had to submit an inventory of his property for reasons best known to modern democracies. It was better to be a pedlar in Medina than a provincial governor under Umar's regime.[11]

[11] One day while walking through the bazar of Medina a man cried out, 'Umar ! do you think you will escape the wrath of Allah by making a few Regulations only ? Do you know that your Wali of Egypt, 'Ayyaz bin Ghanam, wears fine clothes and keeps porters at his gate ?" The poor Wali was brought to Medina without being allowed to change his clothes ; the Caliph took off his fine *kurta* and made him wear one of blanket, and ordered him to graze a herd of goats. 'Ayyaz only murmured that it was better if he were killed. "What ?" thundered Umar," Dost thou forget that your father was called *Ghanam*, because this was his profession ?" (*al-Faruq*, ii, p. 36) Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas was one of the maternal uncles of the prophet. After he had won the great victory of Qadisyya over the Persians, he was appointed governor of Kufa. It was complained of him that he had built a *deorhi* or reception hall with porters before it. Umar's special messengers came, set fire to the *deorhi* and brought Sa'd with him to Medina (*ibid.*, p. 36).

The revenue system of Umar I was a just and ideal one within the limits of the Shariyat. It was only changed for the worse when the Theocracy degenerated into a dynastic empire under the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphs. Main sources of revenue were the *Khams* (one-fifth of the booty, the remaining being due to the soldiery as prize-money); *Khiraj* (one-fifth to one-third of the produce of the soil cultivated by non-Muslim subjects); *Ushar* (one-tenth of the produce of the land held by the Arabs); and the *Jaziya* (poll-tax on the non-Muslims assessed according to their means of livelihood). Umar I introduced the tariff on the horse, known as the *Ushar* or one-tenth of the sale money levied on horse merchants only. Foreigners had to pay a tariff on trade in any commodity at 10%, non-Muslim subjects of the Caliphate at the rate of 5%, whereas the Muslims were to pay only $2\frac{1}{2}\%$.

Zakat (poor tax), over which Abu Bakr fought the Apostates, was rendered less objectionable by a reform of Umar I. Formerly the agents from Medina collected *zakat* for the Central Treasury. Umar I directed that the Bedouin tribes should collect the tithe from their people and spend it for the relief of the needy among them. From other Muslims *zakat* was directly levied by the State for the *Bait-ul-Mal*.

In 16 A.H., Umar I ordered a census of the subject population of the Arabian Iraq and an assessment of its land revenue on the basis of a cadastral survey. The unit of measurement was *jarib*,—one *jarib* being equal to three fourths of an Indian *bigha*. The Crown lands of the old dynasty—hills, deserts and fallow lands were taken over by the Central Government as *Khalisa*. The assessment on the arable land was made yearly according to the quality of soil and average produce. The revenue was probably collected in three instalments (as in the days of the Sassanians) in cash and a contribution in kind, generally grains and oils for the military. On every *jarib* of wheat, 2 dirhems, barley, one dirhem, sugar-cane, 6 dirhems, vegetables, 3 dirhems, cotton, 5 dirhems, grapes, 10 dirhems was the demand of the state.[12]

It is a striking phenomenon in history that of all administrative institutions, Revenue System passes on with the least modification except under extraordinary circumstances from one government to another in the Orient. Such was the case in the conquered countries under Muslim government. In Egypt the

[12] For *Revenue, al-Faruq*, ii, 40ff.

Roman government had kept almost unchanged the revenue system which by tradition had originated with the Pharaohs and come down through the Ptolemy. But the Romans had added a levy in grain besides the land tax in cash. After the Arab conquest the burden became still heavier, because the non-Muslim Copts had to pay in addition a heavy capitation tax (Jaziya). In Roman times the revenue was settled for four years, whereas Umar ordered yearly settlement in consultation with the representatives of the peasantry and the district revenue staff of the Byzantine regime. The usual demand was one *dinar* per *jarib* (about 144 square yards) and three measures (*irdabb*) of corn The chronicler, Maqrizi writes that in Umar's time the capitation tax brought to the Treasury one crore and twenty lakhs of *dinars*, exclusive of the *khiraj* (land tax). The land revenue of Egypt in cash in the time of Caliph Umar perhaps varied between twenty to thirty lakhs of *dinars* ; because conditions were in a fluid state and Umar exhorted leniency in assessment and strict justice to the tillers of the soil. The lot of the people of Egypt became worse with the growing greed of Caliph Umar's successors. Caliph Usman is said to have had written to Amr bin al-As (who had been the governor of Egypt since the time of Umar) : "Milk the cow till blood oozes out of the udder". As Amr bin al-As refused to be so cruel, Usman sent a *Sahib ul-Khiraj* who was made independent of Amr's authority. Amr resigned his office telling the Caliph, "I am not the man to hold the cow by the horn and allow another to milk her". His successor, Abdullah bin Sa'd realised a revenue of one crore and forty lakhs of *dinars*. The overjoyed Caliph made a taunt at the dismissed governor, "Now the she-camel seems to give more milk !"[13] Amr retorted, "Yes, Commander of the Faithful ; but the calf is starving !"

Syria under the governorship of Muwawiyah, son of Abu Sufiyan, yielded a revenue of one crore and forty lakhs of dinars. Under the Byzantine rule, land was classified according to the nature of the soil and the value of its crops. It is said that a Revenue Manual on this basis had been compiled in Greek, which was translated into the Syrian dialect in the beginning of the sixth century A.D , and the same code became legal under Umar.

The Revenue system of Umar was an achievement of statesmanship of the highest order in history. Its cardinal principle was the improvement of agriculture and the welfare of the peasantry.

al-Faruq, ii, p. 50.

He interfered as little as possible with the vested interests of the subject peoples. By modern standards it may be regretted that he created no peasant proprietorship and recognised no absolute ownership of the tiller of the soil in his land. He confirmed the rights of the old landed aristocracy in Iraq and Persia, if they were not rebels against the Muslim government or die-hards in the cause of their defunct national regime. What is most praiseworthy is the fact that Umar did not allow the Arab soldiery to own even by purchase or gift any lands cultivated by the *zimmis*, whose lot under a class of soldier-proprietors would have been worse than that of serfs. In Iran and particulary in former Byzantine territories where feudalism prevailed, the tillers of the soil acquired the rights of a *rayyat* with the disappearance of the old aristocracy as a result of wars with or flight from the Muslims. Waste lands of the *Khalisa* were given to those who undertook to bring them under cultivation within three years : if they failed, their holdings were to be confiscated.[14]

Caliph Umar's untutored genius built up the Judiciary of Islam and created for it a noble tradition by his decrees and example, which our modern civilization has not excelled. In the early years of the Arab expansion under the banner of Islam, the executive and the judicial powers had of necessity to be combined with the command of armies and military governorships. The office of the Qazi was at the beginning honorary ; but when a regular and uniform judiciary was organised, 500 dirhems was fixed as the monthly pay of all the provincial Qazis. Selections were made after a sort of test, and confirmation by the general assembly at Medina. Provincial governors were empowered to select subordinate Qazis of districts probably in consultation with the provincial Qazi. There was no specified building for the court of justice. The Qazi sat in the mosque or in any other public place to try suits. The Qazi was chiefly a Judge of the Civil Law of Islam (*Shara'*). The Law was no respector of persons and the Qazi was expected not to discriminate between high and low, between the Caliph[15] and the meanest Muslim. The jurisdiction of the Qazi was

[14] *Al-Faruq*, ii. 52 ff.

[15] Abi bin Kaa'b filed a suit against Caliph Umar in the court of Zaid bin Sabit, the Qazi of Medina. The Qazi summoned the Caliph before him, and when he came, the Qazi stood up to show him respect. "This is your first offence", said Umar, and seated himself by the side of the complainant. The Qazi had no evidence to go upon against the Caliph's denial of the claim.

actually confined to suits between Muslims and to those in which one party was a Muslim. Subject communities were organised into *millats*, and suits arising among them were decided by their own councils or by their high priests, whose powers over their following were recognised by the Muslim Government. The highly intricate Muhammadan Law was a later growth systematized on the model of Roman Law. The sources of Muslim Law were the *Quran*, the *Hadis*, the *Sunna*, *Qiyas* (analogy) and Ijma' (agreed opinion of the majority among the pious). If all these, and the evidence available failed to cover any case, the Qazi was allowed to judge then only on his own discretion. The Mosaic law of retaliation in kind and some of the old customary laws of Arabia had legal sanction. The Qazi had the power to revise his own judgment, but no appeal on a point of Law lay to the Caliph, who had only the right to grant pardon or disallow a proceeding in the best interests of the State though no such case came before Umar.

Criminal justice was of a summary character. It was meted out by the Caliphs and his local executive officers, the *kotwals* and *muhtasibs* (Censors of morals, who enforced Municipal by-laws also). Umar was the fiirst to promulgate the punishment of eighty stripes for drunkards, and also the first to build jails. Abu Muhajjin Thaqafi, repeatedly accused of and punished for drinking wine, was ultimately sent to prison.[16]

There goes a Saying of the prophet that if Umar is seen on the road, Satan hurries to another path ! Owing to the vigour of Umar's rule, crime and oppression had become so rare that contemporary tradition credits Umar with having imprisoned Satan himself (al-*Suyuti*). However, mere *inertia* of the rule of Umar kept the judiciary of Islam free from the charge of corruption and debasement of justice till Bilal bin Abi Burd[17] of the Umayyad regime, made himself notorious as the first Qazi who accepted bribe and perverted justice.

Though Caliph Umar I had not commanded any armies in person, he stands out nevertheless as one of the greatest organisers

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Ka'ab insisted on the Caliph's swearing by oath, which appeared too much to the Qazi. The Qazi requested Kaab to spare the Caliph from oath taking. Enraged at this partiality, the Caliph said to the Qazi, "Till you do not learn to treat Umar and a common man as absolutely equal, you will not be considered worthy of your position" (al-Faruq, ii, p. 68).

16 *al-Faruq*. ii, p. 74.

17 *Ibid*, p. 68.

of victory known to history. History[18] has not sufficiently emphasised Umar's achievements in its reading of the cause of the miraculous success of Arab armies and the rise of a Greater Arabia during the first decade of the Caliphate.

The army was transformed by Umar into a truely national institution under the direct control of the Caliph. The military organization of Umar became the pattern of the military system of the Abbasid Empire and from the Abbasids it came down as a legacy to every Muslim kingdom founded on the ruins of the Abbasid Caliphate or outside ; e.g., the Mughal Empire. Umar divided the whole territory of the Caliphate into about ten big areas (A. H. 20), not always identical with the administrative divisions. Though the tribal units were not abolished, these were integrated into regular brigades called *Jund*. The Caliph separated the Army Register in 21 A. H. from the original Grand Register in which the names of the military, civil and political pensioners had been entered together. At the beginning Bedouin recruits as well as the citizen soldiers (e. g., the Banu Umayya) carried their families with them. The womenfolk served as army cooks and nurses, and after battle they used to go out with jars of water and bread for badly wounded Muslim soldiers. They also went armed with cudgels to smash the heads of infidels in their last agony of death[19] on the same field. Umar founded new military cantonments in every province where the soldiers could leave their families while going out on distant excursions. Every military cantonment town had a wide pasture ground and stable of horses. These stables supplied army remounts, and four thousand horses duly branded (*dagh*) by the State were kept ready for recruits. The Caliph could thus easily reinforce any of the army divisions with 32,000 well-equipped horse at short notice. With every division the Caliph appointed physicians, surgeons, interpreter, treasurer, an *Arif* (Paymaster), equivalent to the *bakshi* of the Mughal army, and also a news-writer. Soldiers not only received regular pay but also rations from the *Baitul-Mal*. He even detailed the contents[20] of the kit bag of

[18] Shibli holds the view that Umar I was a greater conqueror than Alexander, Janghiz Khan or Timur on the ground that Umar's conquests were more humane and more enduring if not so extensive as those of others (vide *al-Faruq*, ii, pp. 2-10).

[19] Muir, The *Caliphate its Rise and Fall.*

[20] e. g., needles, small and big, scissors, strings and hemp cords, nose-bag (for feeding horses), etc. Troopers were forbidden to mount with the help of the stirrup, wear soft clothes, etc. (See, *al-Faruq*, pp. 113-15).

every trooper, and his commanders moved like pieces on a chess-board only, the master player having been Umar himself. His care and affection for his troops were those of a typical Arab *paterfamilias*. He forbade naval expeditions saying, "I shall not send the Arabs where I cannot reach them on my camel!" Umar's military espionage was highly efficient, and Jews and foreigners also were employed as spies.

In spite of his preoccupations with wars, Caliph Umar left the impress of his personality on the Muslim society and culture. In the third year of his rule he promulgated the Hijri Era on the advice of Ali. He was the first to undertake road building and digging canals (e. g., *nahar-i-Amirul Mominin* in Iraq) for irrigation. He built *sarais* for travellers between Mecca and Medina. The first orphanage of Islam which received free rations from the State was built in Medina by Umar and run by the State. Guest houses for strangers, and free kitchens for the poor and the invalid were built by him in every important city. It is said that four thousand mosques were built and endowed in the time of Umar. It is he who made provision for lights and carpets in mosques and other expenses for their upkeep. These mosques were the first primary schools of Islam in the countryside, and centres of higher studies in cities. The forty Christian boys captured in a monastery of Tadmor in the time of Caliph Abu Bakr were being carefully educated in Islamic learning during his Caliphate, and they grew up to be the creators of Islamic Culture. The Quran was almost a mania with the Caliph, who aspired to make every Muslim read it for himself. He sent teachers from Medina to the newly-founded cantonment cities to fight illiteracy.

Umar I was the first to make a *waqf* in Islam. During his life-time he made a *waqf* in public charity of a piece of land in Khyber, which had fallen to his share. He demolished his own ancestral house in Mecca and assigned the land for the use of pilgrims. It is no wonder that he died a poor man with a heavy debt to the Bait-ul-Mal. A present of jewels which the Byzantine Empress sent to the Caliph's wife, Kulthum, was taken away from her saying that though acceptance of gifts from friends was *halal*, the expenses of the courier were borne by the public treasury. So the Caliph made only nominal payment to her and sent the jewels to the treasury.[21]

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[21] *al-Faruq*.

Administrative institutions, howsoever wise, cannot give permanence to an Empire without a willing *nation* to shoulder its burden. Umar's administrative policy shifted the emphasis from religion to blood ; because blood proved thicker than religion during the course of wars of expansion and conquest. The Arab tribes, which had settled in Syria, Mesopotamia and Iraq and accepted Christianity, had joined Muslim armies in response to Umar's appeal in the name of their Arab blood. When wars were over, Umar was confronted with the problem of integrating the Christian Arabs with the Theocracy of Islam. These Christian tribes were too warlike and too proud either to accept Islam or pay the poll-tax as enjoined by the Shariyat. So Umar had to make a compromise with the Christian Arab tribes Taghlib, Iyad and Namir, which were allowed to retain their religion on the payment of less objectionable *sadqa* or tithe-money, stipulating that they should not Christianize their children. Similar was perhaps the concession made to the tribes on the Syrian border. This accounts for the existence of Christian Arabs, e.g., the tribe of al-Kindi, the philosopher, down to the Abbasid regime. In spite of their Christianity, they enjoyed a privileged position equal to that of Muslim Arabs, shared the spoils of war and rendered every service to the Caliphate. Umar diverted the clan feelings to a constructive national channel, and the identification of Islam with Arabism became complete during his time. Umar also initiated the policy of arabicising non-Arab Muslim subjects, who created a culture and a civilization for the Arabs. If a fire-worshipper accepted Islam it was said in Persia, "He has become an *Arab*", as centuries after Hindus would say, "He has become a Turk." The Arabs imposed their own social organisation wherever they settled, affiliating the conquered people as clients and slaves of the ruling tribe.

Umar I had fanned the clan feeling of the Arabs to the white heat of Arab patriotism and given them an Empire which became a joint stock Arab concern to be run by the Arabs and for the benefit of the Arabs. No Arabs were allowed to remain outside the rule of Islam. When the Iyad tribe, who were Christians, fled to the Byzantine territory, the Byzantine Emperor had to repatriate them under Umar's threat. The Jews of Khyber and the Christians of Najran were expelled from Arabia proper and banished to Iraq for making Arabia a homeland of Arabs only.[22]

[22] Very adjacent to the temple of Kaba stood *the house of Abraham*. Caliph Umar allowed the Jews to build another

A modern historian remarks : "The policy of Umar then aimed at restricting the Arabs to the Arabian peninsula, Syria and Iraq, while the Quraish were to remain in Medina, as the centre of Islam, of which they were the source and the foundation. He was, however, unable to arrest the wave of conquest, and had finally to countenance the expansion."[23]

Expansion abroad and the ascendancy of the Quraish at home both proved sources of danger to the Theocracy under the weaker Caliphs who succeeded Umar. Islam had snatched the leadership of the Quraish from Banu Umayya and given precedence to Banu Hashim. Umar, who had no pettiness about him, made no discrimination against Banu Umayya and raised the prominent members of this sept, even those whom the Holy Book denounced—to high commands. After the death of the prophet it was the loyalty of the "hypocrites" to the cause of the Quraish that saved the caliphate from falling into the hands of outsiders. Muawiyah with his brothers, Amr bin al-As and the rank and file of Banu Umayya bore the brunt of fighting in Syria and Palestine. Umar had appointed Muawiyah as governor of Syria in which office he continued for 20 years, and Damascus became the second home of Banu Umayya. Muawiyah received a preferential treatment from Umar, who allowed him to maintain the display of majesty and splendour of the Byzantine court, because Syria was monarchical by temperament and tradition. Thus Banu Umayya stole a march over Banu Hashim and at last seized the Caliphate.

Prof. Becker compares the fierce onslaught of the Arab tribes on the Byzantine and Iranian empires with "the Wandering of the Teutonic tribes" into the Roman Empire. He stresses hunger and predatory instinct rather than zeal for Islam as the driving forces of this movement (Cambridge Medieval History). But the facts have perhaps been otherwise :

1. The pre conditions of a large-scale "Wandering" of the nomads such as external pressure caused by similar "Wandering" in the neighbourhood ; e.g., of the Scythian tribes of Central Asia, or famine, overpopulation or displacement of tribes *did not exist* in Arabia either in the life-time of the Prophet or after his death.

2. The War of Apostasy and destruction of the false prophets

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house for Abraham in Kufa so that no Jew or Christian need enter Mecca on a pilgrimage to this *Old House* which was demolished for the extension of the mosque.

[23] Margoliouth, *Umayyads and Abbasids*, p. 33.

did not cause any "Wandering" of the vanquished tribes from Arabia, looking for new homes in Persia, Syria or Egypt. And yet these were the very tribes who conquered all these places under the banner of Islam, and who were settled in these provinces by Caliph Umar I. This makes all the difference between a "Wandering of barbarian nations" of earlier centuries and the methodical colonization of the Arab tribes by Umar I to clench the growing imperialism of Islam in the seventh century A.D.

3. It was the patriotic and far-sighted statesmanship of Umar I that had initiated this movement. Abu Bakr's wars had left ghastly scars on the Pagan polity of Arabia ; because in these wars the Muslims had made prisoners of the wives and children along with the male survivors of the sword. Though the defeated tribes saved themselves by accepting Islam, their mood was sullen and ominous ; because one single province of Hijaj could not be expected to hold down the rest of restive Arabia for long.

4. Caliph Umar set free all the slaves of Arab blood and decreed that in future no Arab was to be held in slavery as they had made enough slaves of non-Arab races. It was Umar who realised that without a united Arabia, irrespective of religion, Islam would not be able to make any progress against the Persian and the Byzantine empires, which threatened to recover their lost ground in the very year of his accession. It was Umar who raised the tempest that is mistaken as "the Wandering of the Arabs". This he did, not in the name of Islam, but in the name of the blood of their common ancestors and the honour of their homeland. He exhorted the Arabs to learn their pedigrees and remember that against non-Arabs there was no room for feuds and differences between the Mudar and the Himiyar, Kaib and Qais. He sent out poets to stir up the feelings of the tribes and assured to the tribes absolute equality with the Quraish in the share of the booty. So the non-Muslim Arab's love of poetry and of booty together with their inborn loyalty to pedigrees, brought them on the scene of war.

Great generals like Khalid bin al-Walid and Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas could not win victories if Umar I did not keep a steady flow of reinforcements to their skeleton armies. Umar's share of credit for the victory of his lieutenants by a modest estimate equals that of Pitt the Elder as the builder of the first British Empire.

What after all was Umar I ? He had been as a man not in the enjoyment of good things of the world with the wealth of half the world rolling at his feet. He wielded the destiny of

millions without being a despot ; he was the dictator of the Muslims and yet he was more patient with the most unreasonable as well as with the humblest of his people, Muslim or Zimmi ; he was a dutiful householder, though more severe to his own family than to others ; he was an ascetic in his habits of life, and yet a genial good-humoured man in society, the most helpful neighbour, and the most terrible with the evil-doer. Umar was the model of a man and a ruler, which the half ascetic and half-mystical East holds near and dear.

Caliph Umar's mind, like that of a pious Muslim, was always agitated over *haram* and *halal* in a mood of humility of the sinner, and not of the ingenuity of the modern intellectual knaves. Once Ibn Sa'd asked the Caliph, "If the luxury of having a maidservant out of the funds of the Bait-ul-Mal is not *halal*, what then, is *halal* to the Caliph ?" The Caliph replied, "For Umar two pairs of clothes of average quality for winter and summer, and average quality of food for me and my family ; otherwise my position (*haisiyat*) is that of an ordinary Muslim," (*Al-Suyuti*). It is a common fact that Caliph Umar gave up in sympathy for his suffering people the eating of meat and taking *ghee* when a famine broke out in Arabia. A friend fetched for him some fresh fish from a great distance. Umar saw sweat beneath the ears of the camel and refused to eat fish, because the poor animal had suffered to satisfy his lower nature. Other anecdotes also show that a man who would cut the throat of an Arab infidel as readily as he would solemnly slaughter a sheep on the day of *Bakr-Id*, could not bear the sight of suffering of a helpless man or beast. He issued a decree that cruelty to animals was punishable by law about twelve centuries before man's conscience was awakened to the need of such a humanitarian legislation. He was almost cruel on his children in enforcing a puritan discipline. One of his sons, who once happened to come before him wearing good clothes and combing his hair,[24] was so mercilessly flogged by Umar as to force a protest from a friend present with him. "For what offence have you punished the boy ?" asked the man. Umar said, "I see that carnal desire (*nafs*) prompts vanity in him, and this is the cure (*al-Suyuti*)." When the Caliph with his entourage on his yearly Pilgrimage halted on the way, he used to spread a piece of cloth over a bush instead of pitching a tent. During one Pilgrimage, Umar spent 16 dirhems and

[24] We wonder what might happen to our young men who go out to their classes with *kanga* (comb) in their pockets, if we had an Umar as our ruler !

afterwards repented that he had been too extravagant ! Whenever he ran short of funds, he would borrow from the *Bait-ul-Mal* as other Muslims did. The Darogah of the Treasury could not but be as hard on him in pressing for repayment as if he were debtor to a Jew. However, the Caliph had some credit ; so his personal debt went on mounting, and he died a debtor to the tune of eightysix thousand dirhems. Before his death he called his son Abdullah and instructed him to repay this debt by selling his belonings : if that would not suffice, his *sept* of Adi might be approched ; if they too would fail, then the *tribe* of Quraish was to relieve him of this debt.

But what might be the cause of the indebtedness of severely frugal Umar ? Perhaps his right hand did not know what his *left* hand gave.[25] He evidently incurred debt for his personal charity without making it a charge on the *sadqa* fund of the Treasury. It was his habit to go on rounds on foot with his formidable whip (*darra*) and chewing dry dates (*samarah*) and talking with people. If anything went amiss, his whip would ply on the backs of offenders, and his purse emptied on the distressed. At night he was the watchman of watchmen like an old paterfamilias with scanty sleep. One night he happened to hear the complaint of a young woman and her grief of separation from her husband conscripted for military service. The day after he issued an ordinance that no soldier should be kept on active duty at a stretch for more than four months and sent orders to the army officers to send back home all such persons whose leave was due (*al-Suyuti*).

Though there was nothing of mysticism and conventional asceticism about Caliph Umar, he kept as vigilant a watch on his own heart as a pious Sufi. Once the Commander of the Faithful was seen outside his house holding his own ear with one hand and the ear of a horse with the other ! When a friend asked him the reason of it, he said that vanity had entered his heart owing to his high position and that he was saying to himself that there was no difference between him and this dumb animal. Had Umar been born in this century somewhere in the East from which God has not yet been dethroned, he would have received as much sincere response from his people as the venerable "Naked Faqir of India". Such is the Orient, an embarrassment to the sceptic and an enigma to the West.

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[25] Umar was nicknamed "Left-handed", as he did everything (except eating perhaps) with his left hand.

An Iranian named Firuz had been brought to Medina as a prisoner of war at the battle of Nahawand. He earned his living and ransom with the permission of his master by hiring himself out as a mechanic. He constantly brooded over the miseries of his enslaved people and used to say and sigh, "Verily this man (Umar) has eaten my entrails !"[26] One day when Umar asked Firuz, better known as Abu Lulu, to build a wind-mill for him ; he agreed but muttered something that made the Caliph uneasy. On the 26 Zilhijja of the year 23 A.H., Abu Lulu, who had not yet been converted to Islam[27] got himself mixed with the congregation of the morning prayer and wounded the Caliph mortally while leading the prayer. He defied all attempts at capturing him, wounded several others with the double-edged dagger he carried, and at last killed himself. Umar ordered Abdur Rahman bin Auf to conduct the morning prayer as if nothing had happened. The wounded Caliph survived for three days and sought a favour of Hazrat Aisha to permit his body to be buried by the grave of the Prophet in her house. The Caliph appointed a council of six electors, Abdur Rahman bin Auf, Ali, Talha, Usman, Zubair and Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas with Abdur Rahman bin Auf as the president. The great Caliph, one of the greatest that ever ruled the destiny of a nation, expired on the night of the last day of the last month of A. H. 23, and his body was laid to rest on the first day of Muharram of A. H. 24. His period of rule was ten years six months and four days. Umar's whip and Umar's justice enshrine his memory in the heart of every Muslim till today.

(4) Caliph Usman (644-656)

Caliph Usman held office for about twelve years (644-656) which may be divided into two equal periods of sad contrast. During the first six years everything went on seemingly well. Sheer momentum kept on unabated the progress of Muslim armies on all fronts. Islam's territory extended to the banks of the Oxus on the east, to the shores of the Atlantic on the west, from the Taurus Mountain north of Syria to the Hindu Koh (later Hindukush) and the Sulaiman range on the Indian frontier. The ban on naval expedition was removed, and Muawiyah built the first navy of Islam that disputed with the Byzantine fleet the naval ascendancy even in the waters of the Bosphorus. Abdullah, son of the accursed

[26] Vide Muir, *The Caliphate.*

[27] Umar was murdered by "an infidel (*Kafir*)" says Muawiyah, (vide *Al-Suyuti*, p. 109).

Umayyad Abi Sara' and governor of Egypt overran Ifrica (Tunis, Algeria and Morocco), and seized so much booty that every soldier got 3000 *dinars* as his share ; and at least 500 dinars (one fifth of a soldier's share) must have been received by every free citizen of Mecca and Medina as *ghanim*. (A. H. 26). A still greater surprise awaited the *Baitul-Mal*, when the Caliph with his own hand distributed a purse to every citizen containing 40,000 dirhems (al-*Suyuti*). Nevertheless a tempest was brewing under the deceptive calm.

After Usman's accession the old enmity between the Banu Hashim and Banu Umayya began to affect the politics of Islam, which threw up a strong opposition party headed by Ali, Talha and Jubair, each of whom considered his own claim superior to that of every other should the caliphate of Usman come to grief. Ayesha, the Mother of the Faithful, was the head of a group within the Opposition. She nursed a grievance against Ali[28] and entertained the ambition to play the Caliph-maker if opportunity would arise. Politics of Medina began to affect the politics of the Arab cantonment towns such as Kufa, Basra and Fustat.

Kufa had grievances against Caliph Usman, though the unruly people of Kufa were not ideal citizens. In the very year of his accession he removed Umar's governor, Al-Mughirah, from office and appointed Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas, a Companion and the victor of Qadisiya. Next year he dismissed Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas and gave his office to Walid bin Uqbah (an Umayyad and maternal cousin of Usman). This was the first act of Usman that came in for vehement public criticism ; because, Walid was his relative and a drunkard too. In a state of inebriety he came once to conduct the morning prayer, and after four *rakats* he said "*Salam*", adding "If you want I may go on with the namaz !" (al-*Suyuti*). Two years after his accession Usman removed Amr bin al-As, the conqueror and governor of Egypt in Umar's regime, and appointed another kinsman of his, Abdullah a grandson of the accursed Abi Sara', an enemy of

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[28] During one of the expeditions of the Prophet, the camel of Aisha strayed into the desert, and she was found missing for one whole night and a part of the next day till her camel was conducted into the camp by a young and comely Arab. Many advised an immediate divorce and the Prophet himself was disconterted. The Prophet heard at last a voice from the Void that Aisha was innocent. One of the foremost among these accusers was the straightforward and outspoken Ali, son-in-law of the Prophet.

One of the prophet's Saying goes : "Do not divorce a beautiful wife on the spur of the moment."

the Prophet in his days of infidelity. Less scrupulous among the Caliph's opponents raised the cry that the Caliph had consigned to fire the Holy Word of God![29]

Deputations came from Kufa and Fustat and appealed to Ali, Talha and Jubair for the removal of their tyranical governors. Usman told the deputation from Egypt to select any one from among the Companions, and their choice fell on Abdullah, son of Abu Bakr. Abdullah started with a good number of Companions to assume the governorship of Egypt. But on the way he found a slave hurrying past his party. A letter with the seal of the Caliph and addressed to the Umayyad governor, Walid bin Uqsbah was found concealed in a small water-bottle (*mashkizah*) on the person of the slave. He refused to disclose the name of the person who had sent him on this errand. Abdullah returned to Medina with his whole party, and the city was in uproar. The Caliph frankly admitted that the slave, the camel and the seal on the letter were his, and declared on most solemn oath that he knew nothing about the contents of the letter or its writer. Marwan, personal secretary and the evil genius of the caliph, told a lie to save himself, and Ali and others demanded the surrender of Marwan. As an Arab and a kinsman, Usman could not surrender his protege, and the Companions in wrath left the Caliph's presence. The leadership of direct action was now assumed by Abdullah, son of Abu Bakr. The house of the Caliph was besieged and its water supply cut off; but the Caliph ordered his guards not to shed blood even in self-defence. A year before Muawiyah had come to Medina and offered to station a regiment of Syrian troops in the city; but Usman had refused the offer saying that he would rather be torn to pieces than agree to the presence of troops in the prophet's City of Peace. At this crisis Al-Mughirah gave the caliph honest advice: either to go out boldly and fight, or fly either to the sanctuary of the Kaba or to his kinsmen Muawiyah in Syria. But the Caliph refused to act on

Since after the collection of the Quran in the time of Abu Bakr, other texts were brought forward by the *Hafiz* and the Quran reciters. Every party was clamorous and open fight over the controversy became imminent. Caliph Usman appointed a commission to collate and compile an official text of the Quran. After the commission finished its work the Caliph burnt the rejected and spurious texts to avoid a similar contingency in future. It is the official version of the Quran of Usman that passes current till now-everywhere.

his advice that did not become a Khalifah of the Prophet of God. Ali had during the siege sent a supply of water under a strong guard to Usman's house with a warning that it had come to his ears that he might be killed if he did not surrender Marwan. Ali sent his two sons, Hasan and Husain yet in their teens, to stand guard at the door of the Caliph's house ; Talha, Jubair and other Companions of the Prophet also sent their sons to stand on duty. Abdullah, son of Abu Bakr and his party became desperate, and three of them entered an adjoining house stealthily, jumped into the courtyard of Usman's house, forced their way into the room of Usman who was calmly awaiting death and reading the Quran. They finished the ghastly deed, wounding in the scuffle Usman's wife also, and escaped by the same way. Ali was distracted with grief and rage, rushed to the spot and gave Hasan a blow on the chest and a punch to Husain, who, however, had not seen anybody entering the house. He summoned Abdullah, son of Abu Bakr, who admitted that he had entered the room of the Caliph with the intention of murdering the Caliph, and that when his courage failed, one of his other two accomplices actually murdered the Caliph. Marwan, who deserved to be lynched, escaped unhurt and lived to become a Kalifah three decades later.

The Regicides in high excitement hurried to Ali's presence to take the oath of allegiance to him. He gave them a rebuff : "Who are you to elect a Caliph ? Is it not the privilege of the Badriyas (heroes of the battle of Badr) alone ?". They turned back but returned again to Ali, who now saw the trouble ahead if the city was left without a government. So he agreed to be sworn as the Caliph to save Medina from a greater misfortune than the murder of Usman. But the Caliphate proved for Ali, hitherto a general favourite of Muslims, "a fall upstairs" that cost him his reputation and life five years after. The day after the murder of Usman, Talha and Zubair also swore allegiance to Ali, but almost immediately they left Medina for Mecca. They repudiated their oath of allegiance on the plea that they had taken it under pressure and with mental reservation. Everywhere the question, "What say you to the murder of Usman ?" agitated the mind of the pious, who believed that Usman died a saint for the sake of saving a devil from justice. After the martyrdom of Usman, "Allah unsheathed His sword" as the Arab chronicler puts it, "and it will remain naked till the Day of Judgment (for the Muslims)".

A great modern historian says, "The murder of Uthman was more epoch-making than almost any other event of Islamic history.

From that time the question to whom the leader-ship of theocracy belonged was fought out with the sword. The Janus-gate of civil war was opened and never again closed .... The immediate consequence, therefore, of the murder of Uthman was that the old Khalifate in the town of the Prophet ceased to exist, the new one established itself outside Medina. The sanctity of the Khalifate was gone ; the struggle for it depended upon strength, and the strength lay in the provinces .... Medina ceased to be centre of the kingdom[30] .... In fact, Medina became the Benaras of Islam for scholarship and piety and "a town of pleasure, music and song, frivolity and dissoluteness" for the care-free.

5. The Caliphate of Ali (656-661 A. D.)

Ali, son of Abu Talib, son of Abdul Muttalib, was the first cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet. A boy of eight or nine, he was the first of the Hashimites to accept Islam in the first week of the Prophet's mission. He seemed to have been united in wedlock with the Prophet's daughter, Bibi Fatimah quite early in life. It is said that he once quarrelled with his wife and slept on the ground outside till the Prophet shouted, "Arise, Abu Turab" (Father of Dust), which pleased Ali so much that throughout life he felt himself flattered if anybody would call him by this *kuniyat* (surname). When the Prophet fled secretly from the infidels of Mecca, he had left Ali in charge of the women and children of the fugitives with instructions to bring them safely to Medina. Ali followed the Prophet like a shadow which in time was to become the substance of Islam. The Prophet used to say, "I am the City of knowledge (of Allah), and Ali is its gate" (*al-Suyuti*). Ali had grown up a scholar, a mystic and a valiant warrior. He was of medium height and of sturdy build, wheat-coloured and handsome. Ali acted as the Khalifah of Prophet in Medina during the Prophet's absence, and on one occasion he said half jestingly, "Am I to be the Khalifah of women and children only ?" Whenever Abu Bakr and Umar I left Medina on journeys, Ali only was called upon to act as Deputy Khalifah. Umar had the highest regard for Ali as an ideal Muslim, a repository of *Hadis* (Sayings of the Prophet) and the wisest of his contemporaries in solving most intricate points of the Law.[31] Why

[30] Wellhausen, pp. 50-55.

[31] It is said that two travellers halted on the way and spread their meal when a third joined them on invitation as courtesy required. The first two men had five and three loaves respectively and the

did he not then straightway nominate Ali as Abu Bakr had nominated him ? Had he made such a nomination, there would not have been the slightest opposition from any quarters, and Ali after Umar I would have been in the right place, and not an anachronism as it was Ali's misfortune to be after the slackness of Usman's rule. Again, Abdur Rahman bin Auf was not the man to be swayed by any unjust or unworthy consideration. Why did he cast his decisive vote in favour of Usman ? Arab chronicles do not yield any satisfactory answer. There was not a better judge of man's character than Umar ; in his eyes Ali must have appeared like Usman, Talha and Zubair to lack in something that makes for a successful ruler in stormy times. The fact is that Ali's known traits of character made him the best *second* in command in any field but disqualified him for vigorous rule and leadership as the principal. Ali would have made a successful *khalifah* of a *living* Khalifah of sterner mould than Usman; but not of a weak one. It is said that during Ali's halt at Basra after the Battle of the Camel, two Arab chiefs enquired of him whether there was any truth in the popular report that the Prophet had promised the Caliphate to him. Ali replied, "How can I impute a piece of falsehood to the Prophet? Were it a fact I would not have allowed Abu Bakr and Umar ascend the pulpit (*mimbar*)" (vide *al-Suyuti*). This is enough to explain Ali's failure as a party leader against Muawiyah ; because, Ali was incapable of even practising an economy of truth, or of compromising his conscience without which no political party could ever be held together by a popular leader.

Ali and Usman were not in their own element so far as practical politics was concerned. They were the least ambitious and least fitted to rule among the old Companions of the Prophet. Perhaps they were not free agents too in their policy and action. It was the voice of Marwan in the tone of Usman that we hear in Usman's Caliphate. Usman was the first Umayyad to brave the persecution of his own family for the sake of Islam. How could he be translated into a typical Umayyad after his accession ? It is because his gentle and weak nature bent before the forceful will

guest left 8 dirhems as thanksgiving. There was a quarrel over share, and they came to Ali. Ali told the second man to be satisfied with 3 dirhems, which he refused. The facts were that each loaf was torn into 3 pieces and presumably every one had taken 8 morsels. So Ali awarded only one dirhem to the second man ! (al-*Suyuti*)

of his intriguing secretary, Marwan. Similarly, Ali as a leader was almost equally soft and yielding. His uncle Abbas was his political mentor after the death of the Prophet. Afterwards his son Abdullah, a youngman of forceful character and considerable soldierly and diplomatic abilities, became the executive head of the affairs of Banu Hashim in the name of his elderly and unworldly cousin, Ali. He exploited the high reputation of Ali to further his own interests caring little at heart for Ali and his children. The double role, which Ali had played in siding with the rebels and yet in having been sincerely anxious to save Usman, and Ali's first refusal and subsequent acceptance of the Caliphate clearly reveals an inner conflict between Ali's idealistic piety and his worldly ambition in the interests of Banu Hashim prompted by his evil genius ; namely, Abdullah Ibn Abbas.

Muslim chronicles rank Ali with Umar I as a judge (*Qazi*) and put him above all his contemporaries in *ilm* or learning. Ali was a wise man of a sort whose wisdom was only for the benefit of others. His "Hundred Sayings" (*Sad kalam-i-Ali*) is read by Shias and Sunnis even in the present century as a guide to morals. But Ali was far below in *hilm* (political prudence) in comparison with Muawiyah, Amr bin al-As, Zaid bin Sumaiya and Al-Mughirah in the estimation of his contemporaries and of the posterity.[32] Time has left Ali more of a legendary figure than a historical personage for reasons best known to the followers of Ali. Pious Muslims still believe that during the siege of Khyber, Ali supported on the palm of his hand a torn gate of the fort over which the whole Muslim army crossed the ditch, and which could not be moved by forty men when Ali flung it off :

Ali's rule of five years was wholly occupied with wars to make his title good against others. He followed the noble tradition of

[32] Sha'bi says :
"*Aqils* (sagacious men) are four among the Arabs ; Muawiyah, Amr bin al-As, Al-Mughirah, and Zaid (bin Sumaiya)". Of these, Muawiyah excelled in *hilm* (practicai wisdom), and in furthering self-interest ; Amr bin al-As in presence of mind and quick grasp of difficult problems ; Mughirah in the trick of escaping punishment for an offence ; Zaid in dealing with every matter, great or small (quoted by *al-Suyuti*).
Jabir says : None so gentle (*halim*) and so wise as Muawiyah ; not a more devoted friend than Amr bin al-As, and as regards Mughirah it is enough to say that if a city has eight gates through which nobody could pass without a ruse, Mughirah will manage to cross all the eight ! (*Ibid*)

the days of Umar in administration, and this proved to be his own undoing. Hazrat Ayesha joined by Talha and Jubair at Mecca demanded the punishment of the murderers of Usman and reached Basra to rouse that city against Ali. As a counter-blast, Kufa invited Ali and pledged its support against all his enemies. Ali marched upon Basra and the Battle of the Camel was won against the army of Ayesha on December 9, 656 A. D. Thirteen thousand men fell on the field ; Talha and Jubair were killed and Ayesha on her camel around which the heaviest carnage took place, suffered honourable captivity. Ali gave a mournful burial to brave Talha and Jubair, forbade plunder and imprisonment of the vanquished, and sent Ayesha back to Mecca with all dignity and respect due to her rank. This raised a mummur among his troops, who clamoured for making a booty of the persons and property of the defeated enemy as in the days of the Prophet and Caliph Abu Bakr. But Ali silenced them saying, "On whose share, then, the Mother of the Faithful should fall ?". In order to avoid mischief, Ali led away his army after fifteen days' halt outside Basra, and set up his head-quarters at Kufa. This was a political blunder, as Ali's cause ultimately became identified with the cause of Iraq which fanned provincial jealousies in Syria and elsewhere. However, Ali's prospects brightened ; and the provinces except Syria under Muawiyah acknowledged Ali's title.

Muawiyah, an astute diplomat and politician, demanded of Ali a satisfaction for the blood of his murdered kinsman and suzarain, Usman, and a fresh election, as the election by the regicides was null and void. He was at the head of a veteran army, and Syria was solidly behind him. His cause was better and more understandable to an average Arab, as the Arab's inescapable duty was to avenge the blood of a kinsman, whereas Ali was "in the predicament of a good man who chooses a bad cause. Ali had till now two first-rate men by his side, who would have been match for Muawiyah in war and diplomacy ; and they were Amr bin al-As and Al-Mughirah. Amr's loyalty could have been secured by appointing him governor of Egypt, and Al-Mughirah would have been content with the governorship of Basra which Ali gave to Ibn Abbas. But in the selection of officers for key posts, Ali's policy was not without the vice of nepotism. As Uman had been partial to Banu Umayya, Ali was apparently partial to Banu Hashim[33] to the

[33] We have it from Caliph Ma'mun, the best friend of the descen-

extent of the nepotism of Usman. Amr bin al-As, disappointed in Ali, joined Muawiyah and dealt the first blow by tricking out Ali's governor from Egypt. Al-Mughirah, though a wicked libertine, wished well of Ali, and gave him sound advice. He advised Ali not to depose Muawiyah from the governorship of Syria. Neither Ali nor any of his councillors had political acumen enough to understand Mughirah's advice of diplomatic expediency ; and so the poor man got only a rebuff from Ali as a partisan of Muawiyah. Next day, Al-Mughirah came to Ali and said that he had thought over the matter and revised his opinion. He advised Ali to depose Muawiyah immediately, which he did accordingly. But Mughirah in no time reached Damascus and laughed over the matter with Muawiyah. Ali sank deeper in the mire. He appeared to the world as unreasonable, vindictive and aggressive ; because, he had refused justice, rejected a proposal for fresh election that might end the rupture without blood-shed, and dismissed Muawiyah from a post, which he had held for 15 years apparently for no other fault than postponing his oath of allegiance pending a final decision of the question of the Caliphate.

Ali and Muawiyah now stood opposed as partisan leaders to decide the issue of Usman's murder, and of the Caliphate by sword alone. This civil war presented a strange phenomenon. Din-Muhammadi was split up as it were into Din-i-Ali and Din-i-Muawiyah upheld by rival parties, namely, Shiat-i-Ali and Shiat-i-Muawiyah. Ali made enemies many times more than friends after his accession to the Caliphate. His followers were too critical of him, and when they could not find any fault, they deserted him and went to Muawiyah. Ali was not a realist but a visionary in politics aiming at taking back the Muslims to the days of Abu Bakr and Umar. A modern writer says :

"He (Ali) held severe scrutinies over his officials out of his zeal for justice and truth . . . . Ali was alienating his own followers by his scrutiny of the conduct of his governors and generals, and by his exactitude in religious matters and all that could appertain to

dants of Ali, that no Caliph nominated any member of Banu Hashim as his successor, and that it was Ali who made Ibn Abbas the governor of Basra, appointed Ma'bad to Mecca, and Qasim to Baharein; he nominated every one of them his successor in something or other (*Sauli quoted by al-Suyuti*). The fact is that as an Arab, Ali and Usman were under obligation to give their *haq* (due share) to their kinsmen. This is no nepotism condemnable by Islam, but as Caliphs this was not praiseworthy.

piety. Most of the Companions of the Prophet therefore abandoned his cause, including even his cousin Abdullah Ibn Abbas, his governor of Basra .... Ali's treatment of his lieutenants was precisely similar to what Omar's had been, only the times changed. So Muawiyah proceeded to win partisans by gifts, and to gain over the Caliph's generals by ruses." [vide *Umayyads and Abbasids*]

While Ali was dusting the floor of the Baitul-Mal of Kufa with his own hand, and turning back from its door his own brother Aqil, Mua'wiyah, more of a merchant and miser, became a *lakh-bakhsh* (giver of lakhs) in Damacus knowing well that "Every man has his price". Aqil, brother of Ali, went before Muawiyah, who gave him without asking one lakh of dirhems, and at Muawiyah's request proclamied from the pulpit his personal experiences with Ali and Muawiyah. Muawiyah did not hesitate to break any law, religious or moral, for recruiting to his party any capable man, e.g., Zaid, son of Sumaiya. Zaid was generally known by his mother's name as the name of his father was not exactly known to anybody. He first rose to prominence in the time of Umar I as the First Secretary of Abu Musa al-Ashari, governor of Kufa. On hearing a complaint that Al-Ashari had made Zaid his *naib* with absolute powers, Umar had sent for Zaid yet in his teens and was thoroughly satisfied that Al-Ashari was correct in his choice. Amr-bin-al-As was so impressed by the personality of so young a boy as Zaid that he remarked that if that boy were noble-born the whole tribe of Quraish would have accepted him as leader. Now Muawiyah claimed Zaid to be "his father's son". He instituted an enquiry about the parentage of Zaid, and his wilful presumption proved plausible though it cost him his own father's reputation.[31] However, Muawiyyah like other great rulers in History was verily a jeweller in picking up jewels among men that adorn an imperial diadem.

The Arab like the rest of mankind was more avaracious than

[31] He (Muawiyah) therefore obtained an affidavit from a wine dealer named Abu Maryam al-Sululi to the effect that Abu Sufiyan had come to his tavern and demanded a prostitute : that Sumaayyah had been brought by him to Abu Sufiyan, and that Sumayyah in consequence gave birth to Ziyad. The best historians disbelieve this story, which they suppose to have been a fabrication of Muawiyah, ... Ziyad's family continued to count as members of the tribe of Kuraish till they were expelled from it by Caliph Mahdi in 160 A. H, when they were again affiliated to the above-mentioned 'Ubaid and counted among the clients of the Tribe of Thakif." (*Umayyads and Abbasids*, pp. 10-11)

religious, and so the elite as well as the rank and file, who preferred the *dinar* to honour sold themselves to Muawiyah.[35] Muawiyyah had been a born politician, a *munafiq* (hypocrite) in religon and a *munafiq* in politics and even in virtues of his. "He was easygoing in the scrutiny of his lieutenants, and winked at malversation, while bestowing on them lavish honours. Had Ali displayed any similar qualities, the Moslems would have been on his side, but Ali was a sharp scrutinizer, obstinate in carrying out his own ideas, and unable to swerve from what his conscience dictated."[36]

Muawiyya had displayed the gory shirt of Usman's widow, Bibi Naila for full twelve months in the mosque of Damascus before he went out to seek a decision with Ali on the field of Siffin situated on the Euphrates not far from Raqqa. The Syrians were stirred to fight not merely for Usman's blood or Muawiyyah's gold but also to escape the miseries of a couquest at the hands of their hated enemies, the people of Iraq ; because Ali was now on the Syrian border with an army forty thousand strong. Under Ali's banner was a grand rally of old-type soldiers of Islam whose sires had reconquered Arabia for the Caliphate and shattered the Iranian Empire. Its core was formed of the death-loving Ansars and the levy of Kufa sworn to Ali's cause. The spear-head of the army of the Theocracy was made up of rugged fanatics in whom combined the two extremes of piety and valour. They despised all rules of war and were given to brooding and seeking light not from their officers but directly from Allah. Their leaders were rather "untried braves" in comparison with those of the Syrian army. They considered Hazrat Ali, the Lion of Allah, as himself a host, which might have been true if fight meant only lance-breaking and sword-weilding as in the Battle of the Camel against equally inexperienced foes Talha and Jubair. There too Ali owed his victory to Ibn Abbas, and Malik al-Ashath, "the battering ram of Iraq". But even they were mere novices in military craft in comparison with Amr-bin al-As, or Muawiyyah in leading armies to victory.

The Syrian army was smaller in number, but better-disciplined, better-equipped and better officered—tried veterans of many a victorious field. Aqil, brother of Ali, sons of Abu Bakr and Umar

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[35] *Ibid.*, 61-62.

[36] Muawiyyah used to say : "Were there but a hair between me and my followers it would not snap . . . . if they drew it tighter, he would let it loose, whereas if they loosened he would tighten" (*Ibid.*, p. 61).

besides 4000 Quran-readers were present with Muawiyyah's army. This was enough to convince the Syrians that right and justice were as much on their side as claimed by the other side. In the army of Ali all were not "firmly convinced of the right of Ali, but kept asking each other for proofs, and held discussions amongst themselves and with their opponents."[37]

The battle (Wednesday 26th July, 757) lasted through a day and night till next morning. At first Ali's army had the worse of it when his right wing gave way before the disciplined valour of the Syrians. The real hero of the day on Ali's side was Malik Ashtar, "the battering ram of Iraq". Earlier in the day he saved the army from disaster only by overruling the order of Ali. He re-formed the line of battle and himself led the charge at the head of his own and the allied Bedouin tribes. If the fanatics had less tact they had more stamina and staying power than enemies accustomed to decent living. The Syrians were now being steadily pushed back upon their encampment, and Muawiyyah, whose personal courage was not equal to his cunning, contemplated flight. At this crisis Amr-bin al-As came to the rescue. Next morning when the battle began, the advance units of the Syrian cavalry with the leaves of the Quran tied on their lance-heads raised the cry, "Appeal to the Holy Book". Ali and Malik al-Ashath saw through the ruse of the enemy to deprive their party of a complete victory. But the troops dropped their arms, and "the men of Iraq let themselves be tricked and forced Ali, with threats of personal violence, to stop the battle and treat with Muawia."[38]

On the return march of Ali's army from Siffin to Kufa, "it began to dawn upon the whole of Ali's army that they had been done out of the victory by a miserable artifice." Their leaders blamed themselves for having their conscience to be confused, and also reproached Ali for consenting to the decision by arbitration. They demanded that he should immediately cancel the act of Arbitration to which they themselves had forced him against his will. With Ali a pledge was inviolable, and so he refused to listen to the fanatics. . . , they renounced him and occupied a separate camp at Harura near Kufa. They therefore got the name of Haurites, but more commonly Khawarij (seceders or rebels).[39]

[37] Wellhausen, *Arab kingdom and its fall*, pp. 82-83.
[38] Wellhausen, *Arab kingdom and its fall*, p. 78.
[39] *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

During the interval of about a year between the battle of Siffin and the farce of Arbitration, Ali's power suffered absolute decay on account of the hostile propaganda and aggression of Muawiyyah as well as the dissensions among his too orthodox and critical followers at home. The Arbitration ended in farce on account of a ruse of Muaviyyah's representative. Abu Musa al-Ashari, the representative of Ali was a man of high morals but undoubtedly a religious fool pitted against a brainy knave like bin al-As. Abu Musa fell into the diplomatic trap of crafty Amr's supersaintly professions regarding the interests of Islam. Amr persuaded Abu Musa to believe that there could be no lasting peace till both Ali and Muaviyyah were deposed and fresh regular election by the whole body of Muslims held. They agreed behind the back of their masters on this course of action. On the appointed day both the parties went out in armed strength to hear the verdict. Amr prevailed upon old Abu Musa to speak first which became him as the representative of Ali. Abu Musa unsuspectingly went up the dais and announced the deposition of Ali. Next moment Amr came up and declared Muawiyyah elected to the caliphate ! Thus the Theocracy of Islam, already half-dead received its death blow. Ali cried treachery, denounced the verdict and resumed the war.

Meanwhile the fanatical Kharijis in the neighbourhood of Kufa, though only a handful, became a menace to peace. They were in modern terms neither Shias nor Sunnis ; in their eyes the followers of Ali and Muawiyyah were "idolaters and not Muslims" ; because they made idols of their Imams by placing obedience to the Imam "before obedience to God". They were no doubt, as Wellhausen says, "the most thorough-going representatives of the theocratic opposition, the most pious of the pious.[40] The word *jihad* or holy war acquired a new meaning with the Kharijis. The first duty of a true Muslim was, according to them, to carry on a *jihad* against ungodly Muslims who make an idol of their rulers by yielding implicit obedience to them in temporal affairs at the risk of their souls. They began to make a lawful booty of the persons and property of all Muslims outside their camp of an anarchical fraternity. Thus the sword of Islam in the hands of a Khariji recoiled on Islam itself.

There was a plot to murder Ali, Muawiyyah and Amr bin al-As on an appointed day as all the three proved stumbling blocks to

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[40] See *Ibid.*, pp. 63-64.

peace in Islam. Three murderers[41] acclaimed as self-chosen armed themselves each with a poisoned dagger to do the needful ; one stayed in Kufa and the other two started respectively for Damascus and Fustat. It so happened that a wrong man was stabbed in Fustat ; Muawiyyah escaped with a scratch ; but Ali fell a victim to the assassin on his way to the public mosque of Kufa (January 24, 661 A.D.). With Ali[42] fell the last pillar of the republican theocracy of Islam. Ali's son Hasan, deserted even by the Hashimite kinsmen of his, sought peace and resigned his claim to the caliphate on the consideration of a handsome pension from Muawiyyah.

[41] These were Abdur Rahman ibn Maljum of the tribe of Murad, Barak bin Abdullah of the Tamim tribe and Amr bin Baikar, also a Tamimite. It is very doubtful whether they were Kharijis, with whom other Muslims associate all misdeeds and immorality. It is said that Ibn Majum was in love with a woman, named Qutam, who demanded as her *mahar* (bridal gift) three thousand dirhems, one slave, one dancing girl and the head of Ali. This is sheer poetic fancy. This suicidal squad of the Theocracy could have no base motives. Is it the revenge of the Tamim on the Quraish for Muslaima's blood on the field of Yamamah ?

[42] Nobody knew where Ali was buried. The people of Iraq believe that Ali is among the clouds ! When the coffin of Ali was being taken on a camel to Medina for burial by the side of the Prophet, the camel disappeared on the way. Later on when it was caught, the coffin was found missing (Al Suyuti). Ibn Maljum's hands and legs were cut off and his body burnt in fire at Kufa.

17

The Theocracy in Transition

1. Muawiyyah

Muslim chronicles have branded Muawiyah as an usurper, and the same view still prevails with the orthodox. But this is an *exparte* decree : because, the Umayyads got no hearing in the Abbasid regime during which justice was denied to their opponents at the tribunal of history. But the question has been reopened by modern historians outside the pale of Islam. If Muawiyyah destroyed the theocracy, he saved Islam and enhanced its glory as the dominating creed disputing with Christanity its ascendancy in the East. If Muawiyyah killed the spirit of the Theocracy, he preserved its structure and republican tradition so far as these were compatible with an Empire secular in conception. What may be said at best is that Muawiyyah was the Julius Caesar of the Arab Republic. The historian cannot help asking himself, "Wherein Muawiyyah had been an *usurper* ? Muawiyyah wore no crown, assumed no regal tit'e other than *Khalifah*, kept no kingly court, and did not repudiate any claim of the Muslims on the Baitul-Mal, or openly flaunt Islam. His title to the Caliphate after the Arbitration of Duma was *technically* more valid than that of Ali upon whom Muawiyyah had cleverly shifted the blame of ignoring a pledge to the nation. The only constitutional way out of the *impasse* created by the Arbitration of Duma would have been a *referendum* to the free citizens of the Theocracy and a decision by *Ijma* or the agreed opinion of the majority. Ali did not demand it, but reopened the war. Still Muawiyyah was patient with Ali and his successor Imam Hasan. If it is argued like the dissenters that Muawiyyah subverted the Theocracy by nominating during his life time his son Yazid as the next Khalifah, and thereby establish-

ing a dynastic despotism, the same may apply technically to Ali also, who at the very beginning made the members of Banu Hashim his future heirs. Where was the validity of Hasan's title to the Caliphate except nomination, or a legal succession confirmed by the oath of the citizens of Iraq and Hijaj ? After Hasan's surrender of his title and claim to Muawiyyah for a fair price in cash, what taint of usurpation could vitiate Muawiyyah's position as the lawful Caliph of Islam ? If Ali was right in shifting the capital of the Caliphate from Medina to Kufa, it was equally valid to shift the same to Damascus where lived the majority of the Quraish. After the death of the Prophet, the demand of the Ansars to elect an Ansar to the caliphate had been set aside on the plea that Arabia would not accept any ruler except one chosen from among the Quraish, and the Quraish precipitated the election of Abu Bakr. If the majority of the Quraish acting on the same principle elected Muawiyyah as Caliph in Damascus there was nothing in conflict with the *custom* of the unwritten constitution of the Islamic Theocracy.

There goes an Arab saying recorded in chronicles that "if a Prophet is killed, seventy thousand men, and if a Khalifah is killed, thirty five thousand men must die before the nation guilty of such crimes becomes united again." Caliph Muawiyyah had the unhappy legacy of avenging the murder of two caliphs by the Arab nation which should have paid penalty of seventy thousand lives before he could hope to reunite them. It was his policy to avoid blood-shed if money and lavish gifts could buy peace ; if not he would rather take on himself the odium of removing powerful political opponents by secret poisoning than have a rebellion on hand by his severity. A great historian of modern times assesses the character and policy of Muawiyyah as a ruler very correctly :

" . . . . no one rose among the Umayyads comparable with Muawiyyah for political ability, as understood by our age ; for Muawiyyah, if compared with the most famous statesman evolved by Muhammedan or any other civilization will be found to surpass most of them in sagacity, wisdom, astuteness, especially if we think of him side by side with the other claimants for the Caliphate among the Prophet's uncles, cousins, and grandsons, whose claims were generally recognised by the Muslims; whereas they supposed Muawiyyah as an outcast who had no right to be Caliph, and who had only adopted Islam of necessity. Nevertheless he gained the upper hand over them all, seized the reins of empire, made the Caliphate hereditary in his house, and to accomplish all this shed

very little blood, his chief instruments being tolerance, craft and liberality".[1]

The worst that can be said against Muawiyyah is that he created the *Mulk* or earthly kingdom, which was a negation of theocracy ; and that he ruled as *Malik* (king) within the shell of Islam. This was resented by the theocrats, who viewed with alarm the revival of Paganism of pre-Islamic Arabia before which Islam was helpless under the Umayyad regime. The key-note of politics was no longer religion, but secular interests and earthly gain. The Quran-readers and memorizers of the Quran (the Hafiz), pious characters, the Emigrants and Ansars of the theocratic regime no longer wielded any political power, and were side-tracked as state pensioners. Tribes alone counted in politics, and he who should rule the tribes must learn Bedouin ways of life and behave like a Shaikh and not a *Shahinshah*. Old tribal spirit broke through the barrier of Islam and ruled triumphant in politics and society. As a ruler of the Arabs, Caliph Muawiyyah was called upon to ride simultaneously two unruly horses, Kalb and Qais, and he and his son Yazid rode them successfully.

Jihad or war against non-Muslim states had been a consolidating factor of the Theocracy. Similarly, foreign wars became the safety-valve of the Umayyad Empire. Muawiyyah kept the tribes engaged abroad in wars, and following the policy of arabicizing the conquered territories by encouraging the settlement of the Arabs in Africa and Khorasan. An immediate necessity was to establish peace and order which in the troubled state of affairs could be secured by a strong government at the centre as well as in the provinces. Government by consultation, of the days of the Pious Caliphs was abolished, and the institution of a ministry (*wazirat*) in imitation of the defunct court of Persia would have been an offensive and un-Islamic innovation. So the Umayyad Caliphs appointed no *wazir* to share the responsibility and burden of administration. Caliph Muawiyyah retained the old administrative units but invested his governors with almost absolute powers. He appointed Marwan as governor of Medina, Zaid, his adopted brother, of Kufa; Al-Mughira of Basra, and Amr bin al-Alas, of Egypt. They were instructed to follow an administrative policy neither too severe nor too mild. The Caliph, as before, heard complaints against his governors and granted redress to suppliants in a way that did not bring reflection

[1] *Umayyads and Abbasids*, pp. 81-82.

on his governors. It is said that one *amil* of Kufa who failed in his duty fled from the wrath of Zaid to Muawiyyah, who consoled him and granted him a pardon. Zaid regretted that the incident was a reflection on him. Muawiyyah wrote back, "Not at all. If you are hard on a man, it becomes of me to be soft and compassionate."[2]

Caliph Umar I had instititued only military espionage, there having been no necessity to set spies on Muslims of that age. But Muawiyyah instituted a wide-spread and efficient civil espionage so essential for a strong government in an age of growing wickedness. He was also the first to introduce official seal for every department, because the Muslims had learnt forgery.[3] He appointed Abdullah, son of Aus of the tribe of Ghassan as his Keeper of the Seal. He was the first to build *hujra* or cells in mosques, a feature that continues till now as very useful for poor students who reside free of cost in these cells. Formerly Christian icons seized by the Muslims were either destroyed on the spot or thrown into water. Muawiyyah forbade this wastage and ordered that these should be sent intact as booty to the treasury. He shipped off these icons to idolatrous India where these icons found a ready market and fetched high price for workmanship : because, Hindus were foolish enough to worship any beautiful idol knowing not what it was.

The Bait-ul-Mal became a more effective weapon than sword in the hands of Caliph Muawiyyah in curbing opposition to his rule. Most of the theocrats of the old regime had been pensioners of the State since after the introduction of the Register by Caliph Umar. It is after all belly and not brain that determines a man's action ; and pensioners and servants therefore cannot go against him who holds the key to their livelihood. Muawiyyah continued payment from the State treasury, and sometimes withheld it for a time to bring home to the stipendiaries how helpless they were against Muawiyyah's government.[4] Tithe money (*sadka*) was considered

[2] *Umayyads and Abbasids.*

[3] Muawiyyah gave a man one lakh of dirhems by a bill on the public treasury, and as was hitherto the custom the order was handed over to him. That man changed one lakh into two lakhs and drew the amount. When the Caliph was examining the treasury papers, he discovered the fraud and introduced seal (Al-Suyuti ; Urdu translation, p. 108).

[4] Imam Hasan, son of Ali, used to get one lakh dirhems yearly ; but it so happened that he did not get anything for a whole year. The Prophet appeared to him in dream, told him not to beg of any man, but read a *dua* communicated to him. After Hasan had begun reading this prayer (*dua*), Muawiyah quite

impure in the days of the Theocracy when a Muslim would refuse to receive anything out of it; now that the stipends were like doles they could not be nice about it. Muawiyyah had in him too much of a modern man to care for heaven or hell, or believe in any account-giving before Allah, like Umar and Ali. He did not squander anything out of it on himself except for the maintenance of a modest court. But he gave out of the Baitul-Mal political bribes and stipends to faithful clients and poets attached to his party, which was sinful in the eyes of the theocrats. But the opposition itself was responsible for his unauthorised expenditure from the Baitul-Mal, because Muawiyyah had to keep his party together and bring in fresh recruits to it constantly. His liberality was not philanthropy but a part of his administrative policy. He judged the claim of a man on the public treasury not by his piety and learning but by his potentialities to create troubles for him or by his propaganda value. Subtle and statesman-like, though sinister, were the motives behind Muawiyyah's apparent generosity and extravagance. The stipends of the members of the Banu Hashim and the Companions of the Prophet were multiplied by 200% to conciliate them and distract them by luxury from contesting the sovereignty. Moreover, this was a sort of bribe to the whole population of Medina; because the high stipendiaries spent their income there on various luxuries and on poets and singing girls. He was specially liberal to those who were most extravagant in Medina; e.g., Abdullah Ibn Jaffar, cousin of Hasan and Husain. Muawiyyah knew the power of poetry on Arab mind, and the capacity of poets for enhancing as well as harming his reputation; so he did not grudge a high price for "cutting off their tongues". Sometimes he would allow himself to be befooled knowingly for the sake of policy.[5]

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unexpectedly sent him five lakhs within one week! (al-Suyuti, 104). Actually Hasan's stipend was one million (vide *Umayyads and Abbasids*, p. 88) typical of Muawiyyah's experiment with pensioners that made them more godly and less prone to political mischief.

[5] A story goes that before Abdullah ibn Zubair became a candidate for the Caliphate, he fled to Muawiyyah from Abd-al-Rahman Ibn Umm al-Hakam (an officer of Muawiyyah), who had burnt his house. Ibn Zubair claimed one lakh of dirhems for damages and produced a friend as witness. Muawiyyah gave him the amount and after their departure said to a courtier, "I know the house, which was a structure of reeds; however, it is my principle, when I hear a falsehood of the sort, to pretend to believe it". Dealings of this sort served to prevent Ibn Zubair and others from making pretensions to the Caliphate in Muawiyyah's time.

Self-interest and safety of the State were the objects which Muawiyyah furthered by his liberality and policy towards the Bedouin tribes :" . . . . if a tribe fought on his side, he would bestow money on it, though it might be far removed from him genealogically. So he would bestow largesses on the people of Yemen, whose power he feared ; whereas he made no distribution to Kais, though more closely related to him, because he was not afraid of their power . . . Now the tribes of Yemen powerful and warlike, were formidable to the empire, whereas Kais and all Adnan were depressed. Muawiyyah heard that a Yemenite one day threatened to leave no Mudarite in Syria—indeed to drive every Nizarite thence before he loosened his garment. This alarmed the Caliph, who thought he must make the Mudarites a counterpoise to them. He immediately ordered stipends to be assigned to 400 members of the latter community and of other Adnanite tribes . . . . Muawiyyah also employed the Yemenites on the sea and Kais on land expeditions. Without such astuteness and tact he could never have kept the two parties at peace."[6]

Caliph Muawiyyah's policy was to be at peace with all the Arabs, and with the people of the tolerated sects without relaxing any of the burdens imposed on them by the Theocracy. He became a better Muslim with his growing years, but not a heart-searching ascetic or a sour puritan. He considered himself as the ruler of the Arabs as well as of other races living within the empire. Wellhausen says :

"Muawiyyah had proclaimed himself Khalifa in Jerusalem ; afterwards he prayed at Golgotha and at the grave of St. Mary . . . . as a politician he was tolerant towards his Christian subjects, and earned their grateful sympathies . . . . under his rule they felt at least as well off as under the sway of the Romans as we can see from the traditions originating from them. Theophanes speaks of his (*catholic spirit* ?), which he showed by rebuildidg for the Edessaites their church which had been destroyed by an earthquake. One of his most influential counsellors Sarjun B. Mansur, whom he also passed on to his successors was a Christian."[7]

Caliph Muawiyyah retained the manners of an old Arab Shaikh, courteous and affable, slow to take offence with his people, swift to redress their grievances, and always on the side of compromise and peace. As he did not wish to be a martyr, he took the

[6] *Umayyads and Abbasids*, pp. 89-90.
[7] *Arab Kingdom*, p. 134.

precaution of keeping a body-guard about him and yet avoid any display of power and wealth held in contempt by the tradition of theocracy. He was blamed by his more autocratic successors as a slow-going Caliph for his extraordinary forbearance. Stories about his patience and condescension in dealing with the Arabs give us the picture of a lion with the skin of a rhinoceros and the simulated mildness of a cat.

It is said that once a half-mad fanatic said to him, "Muawiyyah, either you mend yourself or we shall straighten you with bricks". "Alright", replied Muawiyyah" I become straight just now !" (al-*Suyuti*, Urdu, p. 105). On another occasion a Quraishite youth went to Muawiyah and began to abuse him. Muawiyyah said, "My nephew, no more of it. Anger of kings is like the anger of a child ; but their chastisement is like the spring of a tiger." An old Companion Abu Qatadah once met Caliph Muawiyyah in the mosque of Medina or Mecca and said to him, "I have got no mount". "Where are your camels ?" asked Muawiyyah. Abu Qatadah flared up and retorted "All the camels died of fatigue in pursuit of you and your father after the Battle of Badr" ; and added that the Prophet foretold such days of injustice and oppression. "What was the Prophet's advice under these circumstances ? said Muawiyyah who in reply got the answer, "To be patient". "Be patient then", retorted Muawiyyah. The Companion was in all likelihood a pensioner, and he wanted something more. Caliph Muawiyyah received the worst insult from Amr Ibn Abbas and Abdur Rahman Ibn Abu Bakr, who were stipendiaries of the Bait-ul-Mal. He went to meet them but they turned their faces away. But he was not at all nonplussed; on the contrary he talked to them and argued in good humour about the superiority of his own claim to the Caliphate than that of Ali, which both angrily disputed (al-*Suyuti*). Al-Anhaf Ibn Qais, who had fought on the side of Ali at Siffin, happened to visit Muawiyyah at Damascus after his accession to the Caliphate. Their conversation became unpleasant and the bold Tamimite thundered, "Muawiyyah, the hearts wherewith we hated thee are still in our breasts ; the swords wherewith we fought thee are still in our sheaths ; advance an inch towards war and we shall advance a foot ; walk towards it and we shall rush towards it". Muawiyyah had his own inimitable way of appeasing the wrath of such dangerous persons whose execution could not prevent a war ; and so the Tamimite was sent away a better friend than before. Muawiyyah's sister was listening from behind the curtain, and asked the Caliph

who it was that was threatening him ; he replied, "One whose anger stirs the anger of 100,000 Tamimites, without their knowing what he was angry about."[8]

Caliph Muawiyyah during his life-time nominated his son Yazid as his successor, and had the oath of allegiance sworn to him by the notable citizens of Mecca, Medina, Kufa and other big cities. There was a vehement opposition to it from the die-hard theocrats not without their future ambition. It proved a tough job in Medina particularly. When Marwan cited precedents of Abu Bakr and Umar in support of such a nomination, Abdur Rahman Ibn Abu Bakr rose up in the assembly and retorted, "Say, according to the precendents of the Kisra and Qaisar !" It required all the tact of Muawiyyah and logic and threat of force to induce the people to confirm his nomination of Yazid. This made Muawiyyah unpopular outside Syria ; but there was no other alternative that might avoid another civil war over succession after his death. The same Al-Ahnaf Ibn Qais, who had become outwardly a better courtier since after his first stormy interview,—came to Damascus, and remained silent while others were congratulating the Caliph on his nomination of Yazid. When asked about the reason of his silence, Al-Ahnaf said, "I fear God in case I lie, and I fear you in case I speak the truth." Muawiyyah commended him to God's mercy and dismissed him with the grant of a fat reward in cash. A man who had flattered Muawiyyah in the same meeting said to Ahnaf that "he regarded Muawiyyah and his son as the worst villains in existence, only they had got the whole wealth of Islam under lock and key, and only such phrases as he had used could extract any of it."[9] A decade after the death of Muawiyyah, the theocrats groaning in the grip of the tyranny of Caliph Abdul Malik sighed for the days of Muawiyyah when they could defy and deceive him with impunity.

The Caliphate of Muawiyyah was exceptionally brilliant in foreign conquests. Zaid, the governor of Iraq, was made by Muawiyyah the ruler of East virtually. He expanded and consolidated Islam in Khorasan by settling there 25,000 Basrians and 25,000 Kufans, and pressed on the Hindu kingdom of Kabul and the Turkish tribes beyond the Oxus. Similarly, Amr bin Al-As, governor of Egypt, became

[8] *Umayyads and Abbasids*, p. 84.
Al-*Suyuti* quotes a similar incident between Muawiyyah and Jawiyah bin Qudama (Urdu translation, p. 198).

[9] vide *Umayyads and Abbasids*, p. 93.

the virtual ruler of the West with the whole of North Africa under his jurisdiction. Mesopotamia, another big province, became the base of a war of expansion to the north and east as far as the Caspian Sea. Muawiyyah made Islam the greatest sea power in the Mediterranean and the African waters beyond the modern Gibraltar. Sicily and all other islands of the Mediterranean passed under Muslim rule, and even Constantinople was twice besieged though unsuccessfully.

Muawiyyah ruled Syria and Palestine for twenty years as *Wali*; for 19 years and three months as Caliph. He died in 680 A. D. (Rajab, 60 A. H.) at the ripe age of seventy-seven (*al-Suyuti*). The success of Muawiyyah over Ali was neither an accident nor a regrettable event. His success illustrates the truth of the Arab adage, current even in our countryside, that *ilm* (learning) is of no avail against *hilm* (*finesse politique*).[10] He used to say, "Experience, nothing but experience", and he left his people to judge him by their subsequent experience of the coming regimes. The poisoning of Abd al-Rahman Ibn Khalid Ibn al-Walid[11] (only because he feared his popularity), and the custom of cursing the saintly Ali from the pulpit of Umayyad mosques are the two indelible blots on his character. It did not beceme a Caliph to take a partisan view of his exalted office. He instituted this evil for testing the temper of the people in every weekly congregation, which weighed on the conscience of every right-thinking Muslim.

(2) Caliph Yazid and the Tragedy of Karbala

Caliph Muawiyyah had been sitting secure on the crater of a volcano of repressed wrath of the humbled Theocracy of Islam for twenty years, which sent forth its last lava after his death. Besides, there was an undercurrent of discontent among the Banu Umayya, and a state of enmity existed between the Kalb and Qais factions at court and in the provinces to make the situation critical for his son, Yazid who was proclaimed Caliph in Damascus. Yazid's character

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[10] For a brilliant estimate of Muawiyyah, see Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, p. 196.

[11] Muawiyyah being afraid of him (Abd al-Rahman), ordered Ibn al-Uthal the physician to dispose him of, promising, if he succeeded, to release him from tribute for the rest of his life, and also to reward him with the tribute of Emessa ; Ibn-al-Uthal got one of the man's slaves to convey to him some poisoned honey, whereof the man partook and died" (*Umayyads and Abbasids*, p. 84).

made him unacceptable to all but his powerful maternal uncles, the tribe of Kalb headed by his maternal grandfather Ibn Bahdal. He was innocent of court politics and religion, having been brought up at Badia in the Syrian desert among the wild Bedouins. He was a stalwart and handsome youngman on the wrong side of thirty, and in habits and manners a knightly Bedouin delighting in wine and women, chase and poetry, extravagantly generous and warm-hearted. He was the first fruit of the revolt of the spirit of Pagan Arabia against the totalitarian sway of Islam in every detail of life so galling to the materialistic Arab.

There was a violent reaction in Hijaj and Iraq against Caliph Yazid. Abdullah Ibn Zubair, the fox of the Quraish, induced Imam Husain to accompany him in his flight from Medina to Mecca on the very night of the day news of Muawiyah's death reached Medina. Ibn Abbas and the sons of Abu Bakr and Umar who had no appetite for trouble, swore allegiance to Caliph Yazid. Meanwhile Iman Husain had been invited by the people of Kufa to their city and to accept their allegiance as Caliph. Ibn Zubair took sanctuary in the Kaba apparently disavowing any political ambition. But he neither swore allegiance to Caliph Yazid, nor he would allow anybody to swear allegiance to him. He became the evil genius of the good-natured and inexperienced Husain with a view to clear his own path. Ibn Abbas, Ibn Umar and all top-ranking old theocrats and real good-wishers of Ali's family, became perturbed when they learnt of Ibn Zubair's instigation to Husain to revolt against Yazid. They sent him strong warning and reminded him of the treachery of the fickle-minded people of Kufa to his father and brother. But Abdullah Ibn Zubair goaded him on to his destiny. Husain had sent his cousin Muslim bin Aqil to Kufa about the middle of Ramzan of the year 60 A. H. (June 680 A. D.) "to prepare the way for him". But Musallim bin Aqil spoiled the game by a premature attack on the Umayyad governor who crushed the rising ruthlessly. He was left in the lurch by the people of Kufa and killed on the 8th or 9th Dhulhijja. "At the same time, on the 8th Dhulhijja, Husain with his followers left Mecca, encouraged by Muslim's favourable report. He learned, it is true, on the way about the latter's sad death ; but neither he could, nor he would turn back. He fell in battle against the troops of the Umayyad Obaidullah, son of Zaid, at Karbala on the Euphrates on the 10th of Muharram, 61 (10th October, 680). The attempt at revolution flickered out

miserably but the martyrdom of Husain had great deal of significance and a deep after-effect upon the Shia."[12]

The epilogue of this tregedy is lamentable. Caliph Yazid discovered too late that Ibn Zubair was the real author of mischief, and that he was actually using the sanctuary of Kaba as "a cover for sedition". Yazid sent a commission of ten persons with a silver-chain to bring Ibn Zubair a prisoner without blood-shed. Ibn Zubair saved himself by delaying tactics, and in the meanwhile the attention of Yazid was diverted to a revolt of the people of Medina, —also instigated perhaps by the agents of Ibn Zubair. It is said that the Umayyad governor of Medina sent a deputation of most influential citizens of Medina to the court of Damascus expecting them to return more loyal. "Yazid did give them rich presents, but that did not deter them, on their return, from relating the most terrible things of him,—that he amused himself with hunting-hounds, sought out the worst company, drank wine to the accompaniment of music and song ; in short, he had no religion."[13]

Before this rising there was a dramatic scene in the mosque of Medina. Seized of a wild frenzy of religiosity men flung off their turbans and shoes as a token of revolt against Yazid. They chose as their leader Ibn Hanzala, a renowned Ansar warrior and a member of the deputation to Damascus. They were not favourable to Ibn Zubair and postponed the election of a caliph till after the overthrow of Yazid. Fearing the consequence of blood-shed in the city of the Prophet, the Umayyad residents of Medina numbering 1000 retired to the house of Marwan to stand a siege there till succour would come from Damascus. Caliph Yazid was distracted, and the command against Medina went abegging at Court. At last the ailing old knightly chief of Banu Ghatafan, Muslim bin Uqba, came to the rescue of his sovereign saying to kinsmen, "What has Ghatafan to do with the question as to who is the rightful Khalifa ?" He was spiritually armed not with any omen (*fal*) from the Quran,

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[12] vide *Arab Kingdom*, pp. 145-47.

Karbala is an inflammable topic even to this day. Wellhausen very discreetly avoids any scrutiny. My teacher of Islamic History Prof. K. Khudabakhsh wrote one article on the tragedy of Karbala in the *Statesman* (Calcutta). It was a learned paper based on the latest researches in Germany. Two Shias from the Punjab or Kashmir came down to Calcutta with daggers. The shock and the fear of murder killed him within six months. I remember his pale face vividly.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 152.

but with a message in dream from the heathen Arab oracle of Gharqad-bushes. An army of 12,000 strong marched upon Medina under the banner of Muslim bin Uqba, who had nothing of Islam about him except his name. Meanwhile, Marwan's diplomacy secured a release from the rebels who allowed the Syrians to evacuate the city. The only son of the martyred Imam Husain who had survived the massacre at Karbala befriended Marwan and escorted Marwan's wife safely to Taif. Marwan's party on its way to Damascus contacted the Syrian army at Wadi-al-qura ; but Muslim's commission was to suppress the rebels of Medina. After his arrival before the city, Muslim granted three days' time to the rebels to make up their minds. After the expiry of the period the siege was pressed home. Banu Haritha betrayed the city and allowed a Syrian division to enter through his quarters and take the defenders in the rear. The Prophet's City of Peace suffered terribly, and among other things the Syrians violated one thousand maidens, who later gave birth to as many illegitimate children. Muslim bin Uqba left Medina in a peace of desolation and led his army away to Mecca.

Muslim bin Uqba gave liberal terms to Ibn Zubair but to no effect. He died during the siege struck down by the wrath of Allah, as the Muslims believed ; but they were disillusioned when a more terrible man, Hajjaj bin Yusuf, the general of Caliph Abdul Malik, appeared before their city a little more than a decade after. Almost about the same time Caliph Yazid also died (11th November, 683 A. D.).

Caliph Yazid's memory lives in the heart of the orthodox as a stony-hearted tyrant. A Muslim estimate of his character runs as follows : "(Yazid Ibn Muawiyah) . . . . was devoted to hunting, and spent his energy on acquiring falcons, dogs, apes, and lynxes ; he was also fond of drinking bouts, and was imitated by his viceroys, who drank wine openly. In his time the singing art came to the forefront in Mecca and Medinah, and musical instruments were used, having been previously unknown to the Moslems". Nevertheless Yazid has his place in the history of Arab civilization and Arabic poetry. He has left one of the finest elegies in Arabic written in memory of his pet monkey, Abu Qais (father of the Qais). Abu Qais was so named to spite and hold up to ridicule his father's tribe, affiliated to the Qais, whereas it was amusing to his devoted maternal uncles, the tribe of Kalb. Abu Qais enjoyed a princely status; having an entourage of his own he appeared mounted on donkey in the train of the Caliph ; he was the Caliph's inseparable

companion even at his table, they say ! However, Yazid stands as the harbinger of a new era of Pagan Revival in Arab society after the Theocracy of Islam became all but a ghost except to the Banu Hashim.

With all our reverence for the great savant, Hasan al-Basri, we are unable to agree with his analysis of the cause of the downfall of the constitutional government in Islam as a state : "two men were responsible for creating trouble for the Muslims; one was Amr bin al-As (who resorted to tricks at Siffin and the Arbitration of Duma); the other was Al-Mughirah (who advised Muawiyyah to nominate Yazid as his successor) ; but for these two men the Theocracy would have lasted among the Muslims till the Day of Judgment."

It is Time that throws up Muawiyyahs and Yazids in the course of evolution of the history of every nation : men, good or bad, are after all instruments of Allah's Will.

3. The Rival Caliphates (683-cir. 691 A.D)

The death of Yazid came as a relief to the provinces of Hijaj and Iraq, the original home and the colony respectively of the old Theocracy of Islam. It was in these provinces that the rule of Muawiyyah and Yazid had left most bitter memories, and therefore after their death an anti-Umayyad reaction paralysed the government and set free the forces of disorder and personal ambitions in this area. Abdullah Ibn Zubair, hitherto "a dove of the sanctuary" biding his time to play the falcon of the Quraish,—came out openly as a candidate for the Caliphate. He made Mecca the seat of his Caliphate, and was at once recognised in the cities of Medina, Kufa and Basra. There at Damascus, the Banu Umayya was divided over succession to the Caliphate, and herein was the opportunity of old Marwan, well-versed in the statecraft of Muawiyyah. The 'Kalbite faction raised Yazid's son Muawiyyah II, to the Caliphate. He died after a few months, and the Kalbite faction upheld the claim of Yazid's son Khalid. The Qaisites, who had old scores to settle with their hereditary foe of Kalb, sprang forward to oust them from power. The astute Marwan posed as the peace-maker. At last it was decided that Marwan should be elected Caliph on the condition that he would marry the widow of Yazid and nominate Yazid's infant son, Khalid as his successor to the exclusion of all his sons by former marriages. So the unity of Islam as a State was broken and the Caliphate was again put to the arbitration of sword.

Abdullah Ibn Zubair had played the fox with Muawiyyah, and the proverbial jackal with Imam Husain and the theocrats of

Medina in luring them on to their destruction. He lacked the qualities of a soldier, but his brother Musaib, a brave and resourceful warrior, served him faithfully and won many victories for him. Ibn Zubair was very near in getting himself recognised also in Syria to the exclusion of the Umayyads when the genius of Marwan's son and successor Abdul Malik turned the scales against him.[14]

Internal dissensions at Damascus came to a head after the premature death of Muawiyyah II, and Dahhak of the tribe of Qais, who was the Umayyad governor of Damascus secretly opened negotiations with Abdullah Ibn Zubair to bring over Syria to his side. Ibn Bahadal, the leader of the Kalb faction, sent a letter to be read in the Jama Mosque of Damascus in which "he recalled the merits of the Umayyads, and gave a warning against the hypocritical Ibn Zubair." Dahhak tried to suppress the letter and "the Qais and Kalb rose against each other in the mosque". Dahhak openly declared for Ibn Zubair and the Kalb for Marwan bin Hakam, who was sworn as Caliph in the last week of June, 684. The Qais under Dahhak assembled their forces at Marj Rahit, fought a twenty-day battle with the partisans of Marwan, and were worsted with heavy losses. Dahhak fell in battle and Marwan celebrated his victory by a second ceremony of the oath of allegiance. One historian observes that the Battle of Marj Rahit "brought victory to the Umayyads, and at the same time shattered the foundations of their power", because the Qais and Kalb could no longer be held together and united for a common cause. It was the beginning of many such fatal "Days" of blood feud between the Qais and Kalb ; it ended in the loss of empire and ascendancy of the whole of the Arab nation and the rise of the Abbasid Empire and Persian ascendancy when "Arab" and "Muslim" ceased to be synonymous. Marwan felt himself now secure enough to break his pledge by ill-treating Yazid's son and by setting him aside from succession in favour of his own son Abdul Malik,—who had been living a life of exile and scholarly seclusion in the city of Medina. "Fakhita avenged false treatment of her son upon her (*second*) husband, and smothered him in bed".

Marwan died a half-Caliph (May 685 A. D.) leaving an unredeemed claim of the whole to his son, Abdul Malik. "Other people beget sons, but Marwan begot his *father*", so goes the Arab Compliment to both.

Abdul Malik, son of Marwan, was born in 23 A. H. during the

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[14] Muawiyyah said to Ibn Zubair, "Thou art the deceitful fox which slips out from one hole to the other and sits silently."

unrest of the closing years of Usman's Caliphate. He was brought up in Medina as a scholar, and a scholar he grew up unequalled in every branch of learning among the younger generation of his time. He was eighteen when his fugitive father came back as Caliph Muawiyyah's governor of Medina in 41 A.H. But he shunned politics and epicurean fashion of Umayyad youths, made no personal enemies, and by his pious and abstemious life wedded to scholarship, he won the affection and esteem of the surviving Companions of the Prophet, though they had nothing but contempt for the Umayyads in general, He did not leave Medina till the age of forty two, when he was called to Dascus to assume Caliphate after his father's death.

Young Abdul Malik's companions were his elders and the mosque was his second home. His teachers in *Hadis* and Jurisprudence looked upon him as their promising successor. When any one of his age narrated a *Hadis* to Abdul Malik, he used to correct the narrator on some point or other : if a person recited any poem on any topic, he would quote without effort several parallel passages on the same topic. Among his contemporaries, there was not a more effective speaker nor a more patient and attentive listener than Abdul Malik. Sha'bi says, "my learning and accomplishments are praised in every company ; but I feel like praising Abdul Malik for his learning and accomplishments". It is said that a man went to Ibn Umar and asked him, "Who would advise us on matters of Faith after you ?" ; Ibn Umar replied, "The son of Marwan". Yahaya Ghassani was one of the soldiers of Muslim bin Uqba who sacked Medina in the time of Yazid bin Muawiyyah. He narrates his meeting with Abdul Malik by whose side he sat in the mosque of the Prophet : "Abdul Malik asked me if I was one of the army and I replied in the affirmative. He angrily said, "you scoundrel ! Do you not understand this much that you have raised your sword against one who was the first-born after the Revelation, and is related to the family of the Prophet . . . . ? (*referring to Abdullah Ibn Zubair*) . . . . He who fights against such a man will be thrown into the hell-fire by Allah." Besides regular prayers Abdul Malik used to offer extra prayer *juhar* and *asar* prayers ; and his ways of life were those of abstemious recluse. Abdur Rahman, son of Caliph Abu Bakr, who was present with Abdul Malik, says that Abdul Malik was reading the Quran when the news of his succession to the Caliphate reached him : Abdul Malik shut his Quran, saying, "It is now all over with thee, Holy Book" ! And it was the same Abdul Malik who

took to ungodly ways, never opened the Quran again in life, hunted down Abdullah Ibn Zubair to death, and had, it is said, employed an assassin to wound the most innocent and saintly Ibn Umar with a poisoned dagger !

However, two-thirds of a man's life cannot be a fiction or a prolonged purposeless drama of dissimulation and hypocricy ; it is an extraordinary switching off from one extreme to the other.

(4) Reunification of the Caliphate

If Muawiyyah had been the Julius Caesar of the Arabs, Caliph Abdul Malik, son of Marwan, was their Augustus in politics ; the former had kept his royal purple concealed under the sack-cloth of theocracy : the latter tore theocracy into shreds. With Abdul Malik started the theory that the Caliph was the caliph of Allah whereas the Prophet was the *Rasul* or messenger of Allah. "Who is more important in a household ?", Hajjaj bin Yusuf would insinuate, "the master's *naib* (khalifah) or his messenger ?"[15] Though no ne but the ungodly Court of Damascus perhaps took it seriously at first, the orthodox Muslim jurists a century after stressed this divine character of kingship and bestowed such epithets as *Zill-i-Sobhani* or Shadow of God metaphorically, though the God of Islam being not of a substance and form can possibly throw no shadow ! A parallel theory of the immortality of the Imam by a process of metempsychosis was also propagated in secrecy by the Sabaite Jews of Taif who had accepted Islam and become warm partisans of Caliph Ali during the first Civil War. They developed the esoteric doctrine that after the martyrdom of Imam Husain, the spirit of Ali had entered the body of Ali's son Hanafiyah, which made him only the true Imam, and to him only the temporal and spiritual allegiance was due. The comet-like career of Mukhtar[16] the Thafikite in Iraq, the leader of the plebeian party sworn to avenge the death of Imam Husain illustrates

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[15] Hajjaj bin Yusuf was the expounder of this sinful theory of the Caliphate and Abdul Malik gave it an official sanction. His logic was bad as it ignored the very origin of the institution. "God", he said, created Adam with His hands, made the angels bow before him . . . . then sent him to earth, where He made him Caliph (governor) whereas He made the angels his messengers". This amounts to a second rebellion of man against Allah (vide *Umayyads and Abbasids*, 103-104).

[16] For a very detailed and accurate account of Mukhtar see *Arab Kingdom*, 196-197, 504-506.

the danger to which Arab imperialism and Islam were exposed during the reign of Caliph Abdul Malik.

Abdul Malik had inherited only a dubious title to the Caliphate, and that too by the perfidy of his father, who had broken solemn pledge given to the ruling Kalb faction regarding the succession of Yazid's son. He natually turned to the Qaisite faction which had nursed grievances against the family of Muawiyyah united by matrimonial alliance with their hated enemies, the Kalbites. This let loose a veritable pandemonium in the Arab world. Everywhere the Qais and the Kalb were out to fight one another to the finis. Islam sat lightly on them, and after their conversion they even forgot the pagan tradition of chivalry that spared women and children of the vanquished. Thus Abdul Malik got a breathing time in Syria to mature his plans, and fish in the troubled waters of political chaos with a callousness that suited him only. At his accession the situation "was just as it had been after the murder of Uthman ; Syria alone stood opposed to the whole of the Islamic world; only the ruler of Syria was not quite sure of this province as Muawiyyah was then."[17] Abdul Malik's rival was Abdullah Ibn Zubair, who had been acclaimed as the lawful Caliph of Islam in the cities of Mecca and Medina. His title received a general recognition in all the provinces except Syria and Iraq. Abdullah's brother Musaib was a great soldier and his sword was fast consolidating Abdullah's authority. Iraq wanted to break away from the galling yoke of Syria, and no less of Hijaz. The people of Kufa were fanatical but unsteady partisans of the House of Ali. The Arab nobility of Kufa, divided among themselves, lost the initiative as they did not heed the popular cry for avenging the tragedy of Karbala. The Arab ruling nobility in Iraq were only a handful in the midst of the non-Arab subject population and freed slaves mostly of Iranian blood. At this juncture Mukhtar the Thafikite emerged as their leader, raised the war cry against the Umayyads stationed in Iraq. He organised his followers as infantry regiments, armed them with the Iranian national weapon of wooden mace and led them against the accursed Shimar who had cut off the head of Imam Husain. Mukhtar triumphantly brought the head of Shimar to Kufa and was acclaimed as a popular hero. A series of uninterrupted victories of these "cudgel-bearers" caused alarm to the nobility of Kufa. They summoned Musaib, brother of Abdullah, to their rescue from the

[17] Wellhaussen, *The Arab Kingdom and its fall*, p. 184.

threatened anti-Arab revolution of Mukhtar. Abdul Malik came out of Syria to fight against Mus'ab then engaged in war with Mukhtar and the Kharijis. Mus'ab put down the rebellion of the non-Arab plebes and killed Mukhtar. Still the issue between the two rival Caliphs was uncertain. Abdul Malik caused dissensions in the ranks of his enemies by making one leader suspicious against another, his weapons having been forgery, bribery and intrigue of a mean character.[18] At last in a severe battle Mus'ab was defeated and killed, and with Mus'ab vanished the last glimmer of hope from the partisans of the rival caliphate of Mecca. Abdul Malik sent an army against Mecca under the command of Hajjaj bin Yusuf, the schoolmaster of Taif, a man of great learning, of effective eloquence and mean appearance, without mercy and religious scruples but possessed of great abilities. Thunder roared when Hajjaj appeared before Mecca ; the Muslim soldiery wavered, taking it as the omen of God's anger. Hajjaj explained away their fear and scruple by saying that the omen was one of Allah's pleasure for their imminent success ! He bombarded with catapaults the temple of Kaba where Abdullah had taken refuge. After a siege of seven and half months, the rival Caliph died in defence of the ruins of Kaba that had caught fire, and the ungodly Syrians indulged in the licence of war in the city of Abraham.

With Abdullah bin Zubair and his noble mother Asma, daughter of Abu Bakr, disappeared the lingering rays of the Golden Age of Islam.[19] When at the last extremity Abdullah consulted his mother,

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[18] When Abdul Malik marched against Ibn Zubair's brother and general, Musa'b his chances of success were meagre. So he opened secret correspondence with Mus'ab's lieutenants likely to cut both ways ; namely either to trap them by his liberal offers or create suspicions about them in the mind of Musa'b. He promised the governorship of Ispahan to forty of them, and after victory deceived them all ! The only man whom he could not corrupt was Ibrahim bin Ashtar, son of the conqueror of Siffin for Ali (vide *Arab Kingdom*, pp. 196-97). In this game of political trickery he was the first in Islam, and the archetype of Sher Shah and Aurangzib in India.

[19] After Abdullah Ibn Zubair became Caliph, he became as scrupulous and stingy a steward of the Bait-ul-Mal as Ali. This caused his downfall. His brother Mus'ab had brought together the powerful chiefs of Iraq, who had sided with him against Mukhtar with the hope that he would conciliate them with gifts from the Treasury. Ibn Zubair said, "You have brought the slaves of the people of Iraq, and want me to give them the wealth of God ? By

she said, "If you believe in your right and the justice of your cause, go out of the sanctuary and fight like a man". Abdullah did so and expiated for his many political sins by dying, sword in hand, a martyr's death for the defence of Kaba. His was the last bid of the old Theocracy to rise against a despotic and dynastic Empire in defiance of Islam as it was understood in the days of the Pious Caliphs. Nevertheless, the spirit of the Theocracy sheltered in the hearts of the pious and the persecuted few remained always a potential danger to autocracy everywhere in Muslim countries.

The year after the reunification of the Caliphate, Abdul Malik made his first state pilgrimage to Meeca. He visited Medina and from the pulpit of the Prophet he gave his first sermon that took the liver out of his audience. He said to the adherents of the Prophet's family : "Please to remember that I am not the weak Caliph (Uthman), nor the flattering Caliph (Muawiyyah), nor the stupid Caliph (Yazid), and that I shall not cajole this nation except with the sword, until you come into line. You know by heart the acts of the original Refugees, but you do no such acts yourselves ; you enjoin piety on others, but neglect if yourselves. No person after today shall enjoin piety on me but I strike off his head". Caliph Abdul Malik is remembered as the *first* to forbid public access to the person of the Caliph, *first* to forbid "enjoinging on right, *first* to play the miser, *first* to open mint in Islam and the *first* to make Arabic, the only official language of administration. But he was also the *first*, says al-Mawardi, "to devote a special day for direct hearing by himself of appeals and complaints made by his subjects." His despotism was terribly efficient and no less beneficent on the whole. His motto was, "There is no room for two stallions in the same bush". Henceforth the Muslims were to have no "*rights*", but *duties* only to the State like other subjects. They sighed for the days of Muawiyyah as Ibn Zubair had sighed on hearing the news of Muawiyyah's death : "God have mercy on him ! We used to deceive him, and he let himself he deceived."

Allah, I shall do nothing of the kind". It is remarked : "When they heard of this reply, they were very angry, and wrote to his rival Abdul Malik Ibn Marwan, and betrayed Musa'b" (vide *Umayyads and Abbasids*, p. 94).

Abdullah was the last of the first generation of Muslims. We have it on the testimony of Abdul Malik himself : ". . . . Whenever I happened to meet him in the day time, I found him observing fast (*roza-dar*) ; and at night I found him engaged in prayer" (al-*Suyuti*, 118).

The main object of Abdul Malik's policy was to perpetuate sovereignty in his own family to the exclusion of the family of Abu Sufiyan and all other Umayyads. His maxim was, "Blood relationship is one thing, sovereignty is something else". He was not swayed by any sentiment or by personal likes and dislikes in his administrative policy. He ruthlessly struck down only those who were suspected as potential enemies of his power and family, leaving smaller fries in cold neglect. Like Muawiyyah he would halt at no crime to effect his purpose. He killed his cousin Amr bin Said who was suspected of having a claim to the caliphate. He would have killed his own brother Abdul Aziz, the governor of Egypt, for opposing the succession of his sons, had not Abdul Aziz died to his relief a natural death. But he spared Khalid, son of Caliph Yazid, made him his son-in-law, and himself married Atika, Yazid's daughter as a matter of policy to secure the allegiance of the Kalb faction predominant in Syria.

Abdul Malik's attitude to Islam had been from the beginning very different from that of Muawiyyah and Yazid. After his accession he discarded religion as a guide to his future career no doubt, but he knew the Muslim much better, and understood the importance of the moral and spiritual values of Islam in consolidating his dynastic empire. Like Yazid he did not openly flout Islam or injure the religious feelings of the Muslims except under extreme military and political exigencies. He attempted at minimising the importance of Medina as the spiritual capital of Islam and raising Jerusalem (*Bait-ul-Muqaddas*) to an equality with Medina. During the years of Ibn Zubair's rule in Mecca, the subjects of Abdul Malik were forbidden to make the annual pilgrimage on the precedent of the Prophet's ban on *hajj* as long as Mecca had been enemy territory. He built for the Muslims a sort of second Kaba in Jerusalem where his famous mosque (the Dome of the Rock) enshrines the foot-steps of the Prophet on a rock at the time of his physical ascent (*mihraj-i-jismani*). It is said that he even thought of removing the Prophet's pulpit from Medina to Jerusalem, but wisely gave up the attempt after a second thought. The Caliph was by virtue of his position also the Shaikh-ul-Islam in the days of the Theocracy ; but in a dynastic empire that office was too high and sacred to be held by the sovereign, among whom some one might be a replica of Caliph Yazid. So Caliph Abdul Malik consolidated his religious front by summoning to his Court the pious Raja bin Haiwa

al-Kindi. He became quite influential with Abdul Malik as a sort of Shaikh-ul-Islam. Abu Raja, however, had his own motive ; namely to make better Muslims of the Umayyad dynasty. He became more influential in the reign of Walid I, and most powerful under Sulaiman whom he made to divert succession to the Caliphate in favour of Umar bin Abdul Aziz and thereby secure for a libertine like Caliph Sulaiman the homage of Muslims as *mifta-ul-barkat* Key of blessings. However, Abdul Malik retained his outlook as a secular ruler, and showed due deference to the feelings of Christians.[20]

Islam as a commonwealth State had become an Arab State since the time of Caliph Umar I ; Muawiyyah transformed it into something more Arab and less Islamic. Abdul Malik carried this pro-Arab policy to its logical conclusion ; namely a *National Empire* of the Arabs, ruled by the Arabs and for the Arabs, an empire in which non-Arab Muslims were not to pretend to an equality with the ruling race of Arabs. With Abdul Malik began Arab chauvinism, so flattering to the Arabs and so humiliating to the non-Arabs. A communal empire lasts only as long as the purity of the ruling race in blood continues, and the racial pride born of enmity and contempt towards other races maintains its tempo. It is for this reason that Abdul Malik was very much against Arabs marrying non-Arab women and female slaves. Abdul Malik reproached Ali Ibn al-Husain for marrying a slave girl. Ali Ibn al-Husain defended his action by citing precedents from the Prophet's life. When Abdul Malik read his reply, he observed that "Ali Ibn al-Husain found honour where most men find disgrace". He ordered a scrutiny of genealogies and the parentage of the Arabs on the State Register. Many non-Arabs after their conversion smuggled themselves as Arabs to earn stipends. Hajjaj bin Yusuf cornered one such suspect saying, "Who told thee that thine father was an Arab ?" "My mother" replied the man !

Abdul Malik continued the administrative system of Muawiyyah; big governorships became bigger, but provincial governors were better kept in the grip by the Caliph. He made important improvements in detail and in the working of the administrative machinery. "It evidently became more technical and hierarchical, though not to anything like the same extent as the Abbasid government did later on. Certain high offices are first mentioned under him, though of course it does not necessarily follow that they were not in existence before . . . . With his officials he assumed a strict and almost rough

[20] vide *Arab Kingdom*, p. 214-216.

manner, even with the highly-deserving Hajjaj, whom he treated very differently from the way in which Mu'awia treated his Ziad."

If Caliph Abdul Malik is a surprise in Islamic history, his great lieutenant, Hajjaj bin Yusuf was no less so to his contemporaries, who dreaded him as the *jinn* (infernal spirit) of Abdul Malik's black magic of statecraft. In fact, the history of Hajjaj bin Yusuf is half of the history of Abdul Malik's reign, and one-third of the reign of his son and successor Walid I. Muslim chronicles set them both as bold and impious tyrants upon whose heads lay the sin of slaying one and a half-lakh of Muslims and of the miseries of the surviving. The utmost that a fair-minded narrator, Islami, could say about them is : "Four persons never showed any remissness in doing good as well as bad acts ; these were *Sha'bi*, Abdul Malik, Hajjaj bin Yusuf and Ibn Qiriya. Unfortunately the bad things about Abdul Malik and Hajjaj bin Yusuf loom much larger through the magnifying glass of the hostile Iraq and Medina schools of tradition; These were relied upon uncritically by the later Muslim chroniclers writing under the awe and patronage of the Abbasid Caliphs. Modern European researches have given Hajjaj bin Yusuf his due, which is somewhat embarrassing to the Muslims in general even in this century.

One early morning in the beginning of the year 75 A.H. an unimpressive figure with an extraordinarily big white turban almost concealing the face appeared in the Jama Mosque of the city of Kufa. He ascended the pulpit but found no words to begin with for a pretty long time. One of the audience picked up a handful of gravel from the unpaved floor of the mosque, and felt like pelting him "whenever the apparently helpless speaker opened his mouth" ; because in the meanwhile whisper spread terror that the speaker was Hajjaj bin Yusuf of the tribe of Thaqif, the school-master of Taif, the slayer of Abdullah Ibn Zubair, the destroyer of Kaba, and the newly appointed viceroy of Iraq ! After some effort Hajjaj began his "speech without introduction" with the ominous words : "I see many heads falling from shoulders among you !"

The city of Kufa, since after its foundation, had been the graveyard of the reputation of good men, whereas for bad men among its governors a jumping ground to fame and power. Iraq had been suffering from an incurable malady of sedition and treachery, and Abdul Malik at last discovered the right remedy by the appointment of Hajjaj as his second viceroy of this province with a contingent of Syrian troops under his command. The imme-

diate tasks of Hajjaj bin Yusuf were twofold ; namely to restore order in the disorderly cities of Kufa and Basra, and to reinforce the army of Muhallab then engaged in fighting the Kharijites on the Euphrates. He issued a decree that those among the deserters from the army of Muhallab enjoying holiday at home must leave these cities within three days or their lives and property would be forfeit. This had the desired effect when a few big examples were made by the ruthless governor leaving them the choice of either dying on active duty or court ruin at home. If Kufa and Basra had combined for concerted resistance to Hajjaj bin Yusuf, they might have rendered the position of Hajjaj intolerable. For a few years Basra and Kufa kept him engaged in a sort of perpetual running fight between the two cities ; if he left Kufa to suppress a rising in Basra, Kufa would rise in his rear and *vice versa*.[20]

The cities of Kufa and Basra had not changed their character of military cantonments ; and the inhabitants knew very little of well-ordered civic life except a parochial patriotism that kept them in chronic feud like two neighbouring hostile states within the State. Again within each city there raged unrestrained clannish feuds. Each clan lived in one particular self-contained ward with its own mosque, own bazar and own graveyard. All the inhabitants hardly met in peace except on Fridays in the Jama Mosque situated in the centre of the city, around which were built government offices and the Bait-ul-Mal. They retained in these cities all the wild habits of their Bedouin life in the Desert. Law and order sat very lightly on them, and their clan-wise and ward-wise petty feuds ended not infrequently in bloodshed. Hajjaj bin Yusuf followed the tradition of strong rule of Mauawiyah's viceroy Zaid ; but he relied less on the good sense of the citizens. He recruited a civil police which was stiffened by a contingent of the military and enforced strict patrolling of the streets. People no longer could take the law into their own hands, and any disturbance of peace was made a cognisable offence. He improved the water-supply and sanitation of the two cities only leaving the roads unpaved, a precaution to deprive the lawless of a ready ammunition of bricks and pebbles.

Hajjaj bin Yusuf put an end to the Kharijite troubles in Iraq. Conservative Socialism of the days of the Theocracy was discarded by the Kharijis in favour of a militaristic Communism of a strange character. They acknowledged neither Ali nor Muawiyah nor even

[20] *Al-Suyuti*, p. 117.

the pious Abdullah Ibn Zubair as lawful caliph. They had their own Caliph, who might even be a woman ; they recognised no *Hakim* (ruler) except Allah ; they had their own definition of a *Kafir* and *jihad,* and they lived on the plunder of the law-abiding Muslim citizens within their reach. These Kharijites had been advancing upon Basra, and Musa'b had to send away his best general, Muhallab of the tribe of Azd against them ; Basra was saved but the caliphate of Abdullah Ibn Zubair was gone. Muhallab was deserted by his auxiliaries, but Abdul Malik granted him a commission, which he readily accepted. With reinforcements from Hajjaj bin Yusuf he crushed the Kharijites in the eastern part of Iraq. But almost simultaneously, another sect of the Kharijites, the Azariqa consisting of the tribal levy of Banu Shaiban of the Bakr tribe began ravaging Iraq. Against their leader, Shabib bin Yazid, "who with his swift cavalry was everywhere and nowhere", Hajjaj bin Yusuf became almost helpless, and suffered a defeat outside Kufa. Abdul Malik sent him heavy reinforcements from Syria, and the Azariqa were repulsed and forced to hide themselves in the western parts of Persia.[21]

Caliph Abdul Malik added in the year 78 A.H. the provinces of Khurasan and Sajistan (modern Seistan in Persia) to the viceroyalty of Iraq. Hajjaj very wisely put Muhallab in charge of Khurasan and appointed one of his kinsmen, Ubaidullah bin Abibakra governor of Sajistan. Muhallab proved a pretty good success in the turbulent province of Khurasan and ruled it till his death in 82 A.H.

Then came in 80 A.H. (700 A.D.) the most serious crisis to the fortunes of Hajjaj bin Yusuf and no less to the caliphate of Abdul Malik. A Buddhist dynasty ruled over Kabul and Zabul (Ghazni) and its ruler Zunbil had become a tributary to the caliphate. He withheld tribute and an expedition was sent against him under Ubaidullah bin Abibakra, governor of Sajistan. It came to grief in the same way as the British Indian armies in the Afghan wars of the nineteenth century. The Muslim army was enticed far into the interior, attacked in the rear and all but destroyed. Hajjaj next appointed a high aristocrat of Kufa, Abdur Rahman al-Asha'th of the warlike tribe of Kinda at the head of a large and splendidly equipped army recruited from the tribes of Kufa and Basra. This became known as "the army of the peacocks" for their magnificent bearing and equipment. Abdur Rahman was a brave and cautious

[21] *Arab Kingdom,* pp., 230-231.

soldier; he began a methodical occupation of the country establishing strong outposts and "a postal service to ensure his line of communication". He then decided to rest his troops and accustom them to the difficult terrain around him. This enraged Hajjaj who sent repeated and peremptory orders for a speedy conclusion of the campaign.

The policy of driving large bodies of discontented men of Kufa to fight on distant frontiers, where they were likely to prove useful now recoiled terribly on Hajjaj. There arose the cry among the army of Kabul : "We will not obey the enemy of God, who like a Pharaoh coerces us to the furthest campaigns and keeps us here so that we can never see our wives and children ; the gain is always his ; if we are victorious the conquered land is his ; if we perish, then he is rid of us."[22] This is a very correct reading of the policy of Hajjaj. They swore allegiance to Abdur Rahman in a War of Independence of Iraq and of vengeance against Hajjaj. Abdur Rahman made peace with Zunbil, made arrangements for the government of territories, and marched upon Iraq by way of Khurasan. Muhallab did not join the rebels ; but he advised Hajjaj not to oppose them till they should reach home; because "once they were back home with their wives and children, it would be all over with their invincibility". Hajjaj did not listen only to suffer near Tushtar in Persia a severe defeat at the hands of the rebels in the last week of January, 701 A.D. Iraq was all but lost and Hajjaj retired to Zabia facing a rebel army numbering one hundred thousand. Abdul Malik recalled troops from the Byzantine front and sent another army of relief under his brother Muhammad bin Marwan. He offered even humiliating terms ; namely the dismissal of Hajjaj and the hereditary governorship of any province Abdur Rahman would like to choose. Elated by this success the Iraq army now threw off their allegiance to Abdul Malik. Hajjaj was a man of steel and his patience and courage at last triumphed. He held out for 100 days, and the army of Iraq fled from their own shadow without joining fight towards the end of July, 701. Abdur Rahman failed to reassure and reassemble the men of Iraq who suspected treachery against one another. Hajjaj declared a general amnesty to the rebels, and reoccupied Kufa and Basra. It was now the turn of Abdur Rahman to fly headlong towards Kabul, pursued by the Syrian army under Umara bin Tamim. Abdur Rahman was taken prisoner by his own officers stationed at

Arab Kingdom, 233-34.

Bust near Qandahar. But Zunbil freed his noble foe and refused to give him up under all threats and allurements of Hajjaj.

Hajjaj bin Yusuf won his victory over the rebels with comparatively little bloodshed and made a moderate use of it. He did not violate the general amnesty. But the rebels had to swear the oath of allegiance anew and also undergo the humiliation of fresh conversion to Islam. "They had to acknowledge that they had renounced Islam by their rebellion, but there were very few who were unwilling to purchase their lives even at the cost of such self-abasement". However, Kufa and Basra had got tired of Hajjaj as much as Hajjaj became tired of them. He hit upon a very statesmanlike way out of it ; namely, to reduce these two cities to the position of Mecca and Medina under Muawiyyah. Four years after the suppression of the rebellion, Hajjaj built the city of Wasit, situated midway between Madain and Ahwz, between Kufa and Basra, in 83 A. H. (cir. 704 A. D.) He removed to the new city the viceregal headquaters of Iraq, which took off the political importance of the older cities. These two cities are scarcely heard afterwards as centres of political trouble during the Umayyad regime. Assured of their liberal stipends and panting for peace, the people of Iraq turned from arms to letters. Kufa and Basra became homes of every branch of Islamic learning, and retained the individuality of their culture for centuries. Pious Muslims, particularly the Alids, tired of the gay epicurean atmosphere of the holy cities made Kufa their new home.

For the sake of continuity we follow here the later career of Hajjaj bin Yusuf in the reign of Caliph al-Walid, successor of Abdul Malik : Abdul Malik on his death-bed said to al-Walid : "Pay regard to Hajjaj bin Yusuf. He has helped me to the seat of Caliphate. Regard him as your right hand and your sword ; he will shield you from your enemies. Listen to none against him, and always remember that you have more need of him than he has of you".[23] Hajjaj and al-Walid both justified by their conduct the value of the parting words of Abdul Malik. "For 20 years he remained at his post, and died as he had wished before Walid . . . .[24] at the age of about 54 (June or July 714 A. D).

To resume the narrative, Hajjaj bin Yusuf prepared the way for a two-pronged invasion of the Indian sub-continent by forcing

[23] Al-*Suyuti*, p. 119.
[24] *Arab Kingdom*, 253 ; also for Sindh.

Zunbil of Kabul and Zabul to surrender the rebels and pay tribute to the Caliphate. He also sent a force under his nephew Muhammad bin Qasim against King Dahir of Sindh, which was conquered and annexed to the Caliphate. Under the pretext of *jihad* it was an economic venture of Hajjaj who had heard of the wealth of India. The expedition cost him, according to Baladhuri, 60 million *dirhems*, and brought him a profit of 60 million *dinars*. After some reluctance Caliph Abdul Malik was forced to yield to Hajjaj's demand for the recall of Yazid, son of Muhallab, from Khurasan where things were turning worse under him.

The province of Khurasan wtth an indefinite frontier had been conquered piece-meal by a medley of warlike Arab tribes, divided into camps of the Qais and Kalb, Azd and Tamim. When there were no more battles to be fought they used to fall fighting among themselves. The contagion of feud between these two groups in Syria at the accesion of Abdul Malik had spread to Khurasan as in other provinces. Khurasan had become a second Pagan Arabia with its proud clannish patriotism, old tribal feuds and the old songs and sagas adding fuel to the fire of discord. Islam sat very lightly upon them except as a war cry : "Rabia always rages against God, since he has raised up the Prophet from Mudar.[25] Feuds had been blazing there between two rival camps ; Tamim and Qais in one, and Azd and Rabia in another. Personal ambitions further complicated tribal dualism. Yazid bin Muhallab failed to hold the balance even, and himself being of the Azd he had taken a defiant attitude towards Hajjaj as if he was holding his post by hereditary right. After his dismissal Hajjaj imprisoned him at Wasit and sent in his place an exceptionally able soldier Qutaiba al-Bahili. He had no family backing and his tribe was small and neutral. And these were the very considerations that weighed with Hajjaj ; because without his patronage and support Qutaiba would be nowhere in Khurasan.

Qutaiba[26] took charge of Khurasan in 85 or 86 A. H. Districts all around Khurasan had only been imperfectly subdued before, and even Arab occupation was not effective. Year after year he led expeditions, made a methodical conquest and annexation and set up regular Arab government in these districts. Qutaiba was the spearhead of conquest, whereas the long arm of Hajjaj was the stout butt of this conquering spear. In 89 or 90 A. H. Hajjaj pressed Qutaiba hard to undertake the conquest of the towns in the oasis of Bukhara.

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[25] *Ibid.*, 417.
[26] *Ibid.*, 253.

He himself made out the plan, furnished his general with a map of the region, looked to the minutest details of the needs and equipment of the expedition. The campaign ably conducted by Qutaiba was a complete success. But the safety of Bukhara was endangered by a rising of the Tarkhan Tartars of Tokharistan. Qutaiba beguiled the rebels to a surrender on terms, but he treacherously killed their leader and the Dihqans who had joined him. It is the first example of acting on the medieval maxim, "No faith need be kept with *Kafirs*".

In 93 A. H. Qutaiba suddenly invaded Khwarizm having been instigated secretly by the Shah of Khwarizm against his brothers. He annexed the whole of the country of Khiva (Khwarizm), and established Arab regime there by driving away the Shah and all his brothers ! From Khiva he led his army to Samarqand, and entered the town on a truce that he would withdraw after having offered *namaz* in the Jama Mosque. After prayer he changed his mind, put an Arab garrison there, and made it a point of vantage for further conquests in Transoxiana. During the last three years of his rule (94-96 A. H.) he penetrated as far as Shash and Farghana, and is said to have had reached as far as Kashgar and come into contact with the Chinese.

Qutaiba's administrative policy is thus summarised by Wellhausen :

"As a rule Qutaiba also left the native dynasties in power on payment of tribute, only manifold Arab inspectors or bailiffs were set over them. But a few very important places were still,—if we may express it in a Roman fashion—colonised, i.e., selected as seats of Arabism and Islam, even though the former inhabitants were not driven out, and here even retained a certain self-government under o'd authorities, who in particular had the allotment and collection of the taxes. Samarqand in particular was intended to become an Arab headquarters. . . .the fire-houses and idol temples were destroyed; it is alleged that no heathen dared remain overnight in the town. Similar, but apparently not quite so drastic, measures were taken in Khwarizm and Bukhara . . . . The permanent result of it was that Bukhara, Samarqand and even Khwarizm became important nurseries of Islam and Arab learning. . . . . In war he certainly behaved cruelly and treacherously; for the sake of God, *i.e.*, for the benefit of Islam he did not shrink from treachery . . . . but in this he was not very different from the general run of Arab commanders." (*The Arab Kingdom*, pp. 437-439.)

Qutaiba was soaring high and safe like a kite controlled by

the reel in the hands of Hajjaj bin Yusuf. Immediately after the death of Hajjaj, he fell headlong from his pinnacle of fame and power. Apprehending his dismissal by Caliph Sulaiman he attempted at a rebellion ; but his army rose against him and killed him in retaliation of his hostility to the tribe of Azd.

Hajjaj bin Yusuf turned to conquests of peace during the closing years of his life. Opposition against him was rising at court through the intrigues of the wily Raja, and the ungodly Yazid bin Muhallab, whom Hajjaj had released at the importune wish of the Caliph. Raja had the pious Umar bin Abdul Aziz appointed to the governorship of Mecca. People began to flee from the harsh but salutary rule of Hajjaj to the milder rule of Mecca. But Hajjaj alive was still a force which even the Caliph could not ignore. Under his strong remonstrance Walid had to remove his cousin from Mecca in favour of a man acceptable to Hajjaj.

Even if Hajjaj had remained a school-master he would have made himself an unforgettable character in Islamic history by his learning in which he was excelled perhaps only by Abdul Malik. Even today every student of Arabic feels grateful to him for his having invented diacritical marks (*airab*), without which Arabic could neither be read nor understood by non-Arabs outside Arabia. Iraq had been an economically backward province desolated by wars when Hajjaj was appointed governor. He left it at his death a second "garden of the Quraish", rich and properous in agriculture. Agriculture was suffering by the migration of countryside subject population to the towns of Kufa and Basra, and swelling there the number of dole-receivers and disturbers of peace by ranging themselves as irregulars of the private armies of wealthy chiefs. Hajjaj rounded these vagabonds, stamped the brand of *zimmi* on their shoulders though they had become Muslims and sent them away to their village homes to take to agriculture and pay *jaziya*. He had to choose between the spread of Islam, and the impending bankruptcy of the State, and he chose the right one for *an Arab Empire*. He dug canals, drained marshes and forbade the slaughter of the horned cattle in the countryside. It was he who had the Indian Jat and his buffalo from Sind transplanted to the water-logged and jungle area of Shat-ul-Arab at the mouths of the Euphrates and the Tigris, where they might die either of malaria or live to reclaim the land for agriculture. "In his achievements Hajjaj bin Yusuf was in no wise inferior to his predecessor (Zaid); even after his death he determined the politics (of the Caliphate),—it was a question of having been either

for or against *him*. His government regulations in matters of coinage, measures and taxes, and in the importance assigned to argiculture were epoch-making . . . . He never let his courage fail under any circumstances ; it took misfortune to bring out his greatness . . . . His iron hand was covered with no velvet glove, nor had he any winning ways of conversation. He was harsh and at times hard ; but not cruel ; neither was he petty and bigoted . . . . He was bold enough to admire openly the pseudoprophet and anti-Christ Mukhtar, whose greatness he recognised. . . . He was not so prejudiced by superstition and tradition as his contemporaries, but neither was he godless, and certainly not a hypocrite. Living and dying he had a clear conscience. Other shameful misdeeds laid to his charge are inventions and fabrications of the hatred of his enemies, which even after his death did not abate. For example, he is said to have slaughtered in Basra, after the battle of Zawia 11000 or even 120,000-130000 men. Kremer and Vloten apparently believe this nonsense, and to suit their theory they make the victims of his blood-thirstiness the Mawali."[26]

In modern times Jurji Zaydan, a great authority in many respects, has been as severe as the old chroniclers on Hajjaj bin Yusuf. In the face of the well-documented verdict of Wellhausen his views no longer deserve credence. The only charge of his against Hajjaj that may stand is perhaps that he made use of torture,—without which no autocracy in the West or East in this century even has been known to stand on its legs. The un-Islamic theory of the Caliphate, an original product of the subtle brain of Hajjaj, only brought the theory of government in Islam in line with the theory of divine character of kingship of medieval Europe and of the defunct dynasties of Iran,—which with the Iranians as well as the Indians had become an article of faith. Even the majority of the orthodox Muslims in later centuries gave a qualified sufferance to this theory of Hajjaj.

Hajjaj bin Yusuf was the archetype of the rising generation of Arab intellectuals, so free, frank and bold, in matters secular and moral. Like his master, Abdul Malik, he gathered about him poets and learned men in his provincial court of Wasit. He was a model of graceful living, which offended austere puritans as impiety. He drank once a month, but so heavily as to require the use of emetics.

His soul was not so dead as not to appreciate music and

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[26] *The Arab Kingdom*, pp. 254-56.

poetry. Jarir, the greatest satirist of his age, was his fighting cock against Abdul Malik's poet laureate, al-Farazdaq and his good second, the Cristian al-Akhtal in battles royal of wit, scurrility and repartees, which were heartily enjoyed by the Caliph and his viceroy. Like the tolerant Muawiyyah, Abdul Malik also had something like Akbar's *Ibadat Khana* for holding religious debates[27] among members of different creeds. Such discourses were not meant for spiritual enlightenment but only to provide pleasant intellectual diversions that caused no heat, taught no lesson, and offended none but fanatics lacking in humour.

Caliph Abdul Malik left a larger, better-governed and more prosperous and enduring Empire to his son Walid than did Muawiyyah for his son Yazid. On the Byzantine front Justinian II had been defeated near Sebastipolis in Cilicia in 73 A. H. (May 692-April 693), and since after his brother, Muhammad bin Marwan, began a systematic reduction of Asia Minor and Armenia with Mesopotamia as his base of operations. *Ifrica* (from modern Cairo to the shores of the Atlantic and the desert of Sahara), had to be conquered anew from the Berber rebels under their prophetess Kahina and from the Byzantines. Abdul Malik sent against them Hasan al-Numan of the Syrian tribe of Ghassan as governor of Ifrica. Hasan not only crushed the Berber rising but also captured Carthage (698 A. D.), and other coastal towns from the Byzantines. Abdul Malik made the Caliphate also the dominant sea power on the Mediterranean and the African waters of the Atlantic on the west, and the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea (known down to the fourteenth century as Bahar-i-Hind) ; in short, Islam poised for a descent on the mainland of Europe. Hasan ruled for seven years

[27] See, *Umayyads and Abbasids*, pp. 109, 112.
It is too much to believe that Hajjaj Yusuf *ruined* Iraq (pp, 106-7). Even admitting that at the death of Hajjaj "there were 50,000 men and 30,000 women in his prison", it is *not* "astonishing" in view of the fact that he ruled over Iraq and Khorasan for twenty years" (Ibid., p. 109). It is at best an uncritical and positively hostile echo of old chronicles.

Prof. Hitti's treatment of the character of Hajjaj bin Yusuf is one of non-committal which is rather embarrassing. He, however, throws enough hint : "(Hajjaj) is represented by the Arab historians, most of whom, it should be noted, were Shiites or Sunnis during the Abbasid regime, as a blood-thirsty tyrant, a veritable Nero. In addition to his blood-thirstiness, his gluttony and impiety are favourite themes with the historians." (*History of Arabs*, p. 208).

from 693 to 700 A. D. Abdul Malik made a separate province of Ifrica with its capital at modern Cairo. Hasan was succeeded by a more famous conquerer, Musa bin Nusair, as the first viceroy of the new province.

Abdul Malik's wide empire was not a bundle of provinces loosely knit and ruled at discretion by provincial viceroys. It was an enduring political structure reinforced by a steel-frame of bureaucracy—the joint handiwork of Abdul Malik and Hajjaj bin Yusuf. This gave a sustaining power to the government in weaker hands, and also scope for improvement to bear the strain of the future expansion of the empire. Abdul Malik took up the administrative institutions of Caliph Umar I with inevitable modifications to suit a dynastic empire. To the Muslim world Abdul Malik bequeathed three things that survived the fall of Muslim empires : these are :

1. A third place of religious pilgrimage next to Mecca and Medina by building the shrine of *Qubbat-us-Sakra* (the Dome of the Rock with its sanctuary, the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem around which hang the pious memories of three great religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Even today *hajj* is scarcely complete without a journey to the Dome of the Rock.
2. Muslim coinage.

Even till a few years after the accession of Abdul Malik, Islam had no mint of its own ; money was coined for circulation within the Caliphate in Byzantine mints. Owing to strained relations with the Byzantine Empire, apart from national humility and financial loss, Abdul Malik established the first mint of Islam and forbade the currency of Byzantine coins, at the advice, it is said, of Khalid bin Yazid bin Muawiyyah. Its coin-legend and the custom of entering the name of the mint-town originated with Abdul Malik.

3. Introduction of Arabic as the official language.

It was a momentous and epoch-making act of Abdul Malik's far-sighted statesmanship. Baladhuri would have us believe like his contemporaries that there was no forethought, no sound ideas behind this change-over from Greek and Persian to Arabic. It is said that a revenue clerk was seen urinating in his inkpot when it ran dry, and boasted that his pen was mightier than the Arab sword ; angered at this report the Caliph made Arabic the language of the Chancery, the last Persian clerk having been Mardanshah ! However, the first experiment in Arabic seems to have been made by Hajjaj bin Yusuf in Kufa with the help of Mardanshah's assistant, Salih

bin Abdurrahman, a Persian national himself. At the centre Sulaiman bin Said got a similar commission from Caliph Abdul Malik, "completed it in a year's time .... The Greek and Persian system was, of course, retained and only the language changed, and doubtless the existing Greek and Persian officials who were acquainted with Arabic, also remained."[28]

Whatever might have been the motives behind this change-over, it had far-reaching effects. It imparted unity and uniformity to the administration at all levels, and it proved an indirect blessing to non-Arab peoples throughout the Caliphate. It expedited the arabicisation of the conquered peoples, and in the course of time narrowed down the gulf of racial and cultural antagonisms within the Caliphate. Arabic became the medium of moral conquest of non-Arab peoples, and proved a stronger cement than sword in holding together the Commonwealth of Islam, when caliphs and Sultans vanished. Within three generations Persians became the teachers of Arabic to the Arabs, and smuggled themselves into Arab society, and Arab civilization itself became a misnomer ; because, all those who built up Arabic culture were non-Arabs, well versed in Arabic. This single achievement of Abdul Malik entitles him to the eternal gratitude of Islam as a State.

Caliph Abdul Malik's other important reforms were the creation of the Department of Post and Intelligence (*Diwan-ul-barid*) building of roads, and the institution of a postal system run by relays of couriers and horses connecting provincial cities with Damascus. He patronised poets, learned men, and musicians and, made provisions for the relief of the destitute. With him originated a distinct school of Muslim architecture, which grew to its full stature in the reign of Walid I. Al Farazdaq was the poet laureate of his court whom he pitted against his other favourite, Al-Akhtal, a Christian without any Christianity about him. Profane poetry, music and wine had run riot in the court of Yazid I ; Abdul Malik checked excesses and tolerated them only as adjuncts of graceful living then in fashion. He himself drank, they say, only once a week on Thursday evenings, and atoned for it by an eloquent and well-prepared pious sermon on Fridays. One day he said to al-Akhtal to provoke him : "Why do you drink wine ? Its beginning is bitter and the end miserable". "But what about *middle* ?" retorted the poet, "In comparison with it your Caliphate is hardly worth a drop of water of the Tigris !" Abdul Malik's chief musician was

[28] *Arab Kingdom*, 219-220.

Ibn-Misjah of the Hijaj (Mecca) school of music. In the midst of all the distractions of gay society and of dirty politics, Abdul Malik used to teach Arabic to his heir, Walid, who was so bad at grammar that Abdul Malik despaired of his future.

Age was, however, creepting too fast on Abdul Malik for his years. Once asked the reason of it by a friend, Abdul Malik replied, "How can I afford to shun aging when every Friday I have to exhaust my brain for the people?" Abdul Malik is accused of having a love for flattery and the flatterer. But he liked flattery as great men and gods since Creation have always loved it as the wine of life. Abdul Malik was sad at heart with the wickedness of the world and his own inhuman role of life. A saying of his goes, "The happiest of men is he who has money sufficient for his wants and an agreeable wife, and who has no acquaintance with our nasty Court".

Abdul Malik had proved *father* to his father Marwan in crooked policy, and he died "father of the kings". Four of his seventeen sons succeeded him to the Caliphate. He sowed the field and his successor Walid was destined to reap a harvest of glory that was to throw that of his father into shade. Neverthelees Abdul Malik's place as the *greatest* and "the most celebrated Khalifa of the Ummayyad dynasty" stands beyond challenge. He died at about the age of sixty after a reign of twenty years on 9th October, 705 ; and he died as he lived saying to his weeping children, "Show ardour in fight, and be not excelled in good deeds. Why do you weep like girls ? Go out with swords on your shoulders, strike down those who even slightly raise their heads, and spare the submissive malcontents, because their own disease would consume them."

18

From the Meridian to Evening Twilight

1. The Caliphate of Walid I (705-15 A. D.)

There has not been a more glorious decade of crowded conquests as well as of beneficent activities in the history of Islam than the decade covered by the reign of Walid I, son and successor of Caliph Abdul Malik. Caliph Walid I 's reign compares favourably with the Caliphate of Umar I (except in piety and regard for justice); it excels any decade of the reign of the best of Abbasids, Mansur, Harun or Ma'mun. History feels out of breath in narrating the warlike achievements, and the all-round progress in the field of humanitarian activities, Islamic learning and Fine Art in the midst of the dazzling brilliancy of the court of Walid I. During his reign the horns of the expanding Crescent threatened to close in upon the Cross of Christendom from the Black Sea to the Bay of Biscay across the Mediterranean and Asia Minor ; at Walid's death one horn of the Crescent rested on the Pyrences while the other was pitted against the battlements of Constantinople. The heroes of this frenzy of conquest were Hajjaj bin Yusuf and his lieutenants, Qutaiba and Muhammad bin Qasim in the East, and Musa ibn Nusair and his lieutenant, Tariq, the conqueror of Spain. After the conquest of Sind in Hindustan and of Farghana and Kashgar in Transoxiana and the Chinese Turkistan, Hajjaj bin Yusuf offered the command against the Chinese Empire to Qutaiba and Muhammad bin Qasim. But the plan fell through after the death of Hajjaj bin Yusuf when evil days came upon the conquerors of Hindustan and Transoxiana. The court of al-Walid in its splendour and brilliance, in its assets of distinguished men in letters and fine arts, in music and poetry outshone the regime of his father into

the back-ground. Famous founders of schools in Arab Music such as ibn Suraij and Ma'bad graced Walid's court and received high honours from him. The earliest evidence of pictorial art, banned by Islam, is traced to the reign of Walid I.

Al-Walid is once said to have had replied thus to a flattering hint whether he was not the David of his age : "God had united in Hazrat Daud both Prophetship and the Caliphate. In his time he fought many *jihads* ; many great victories have been won in my reign also ; besides, I provide expenses for the circumcision of orphans and for their education ; for lepers I have appointed attendants ; I have enlarged the Mosque of the Prophet ; for the learned in Jurisprudence, for the old and the infirm and for the beggars I have settled maintenance in a way, which it is a sin (*haram*) to mention ; for everying I have made Regulatious." Caliph al-Walid's promising reign was cut short by premature death at forty only in the last week of February, 715 A. D.

Some historians such as Muir are inclined to designate Walid I as the greatest of the Umayyad Caliphs, greater than Abdul Malik. This view is not accepted by Wellhausen and Prof. Hitti on good grounds. Walid I had undoubtedly great qualities of head and heart. The wisest thing he did was to continue the policy of his father, and give unqualified support to the band of first-rate generals and administrators of his father's regime. Walid I was a pilot on the calm sea ; whereas Abdul Malik was a stormy patrel. He was nevertheless a good second to his father.

Hajjaj bin Yusuf and Musa bin Nusayr (governor of *Ifrica*) shared between themselves the glory of military conquests during the reigns of Caliph Abdul Malik and Walid. Hajjaj bin Yusuf was happy to die in the middle of Walid's reign having his last prayer granted by his grateful master. "Walid granted him the successors proposed by himself and corfirmed the appointments of all his officials. But Musa bin Nusayr, the destroyer of Carthage and the conqueror of Spain, was less fortunate. When Musa was making his triumphal progress to the court of Walid I like a Scipio Africanus of the Arabs in the beginning of the year 715 A.D., he was ordered to halt on the way by Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik, the heir-designate after Walid I, on the plea that the Caliph was ill. Meanwhile Caliph al-Walid died towards the end of February, 715 and Caliph Sulaiman thus contrived to deprive his predecessor of his due, and appropriate to himself the distinction of receiving the victor of Spain. The curse of Carthage seemed to have pursued Musa, who as

a reward for his services, was dismissed from office to drag on a miserable existence for years begging his bread in the land which his sword had conquered. Similar was the treatment meted out by Caliph Sulaiman to Muhammad bin Qasim, who along with all other officers of Hajjaj was thrown into the prison of Kufa and had him executed in order to wreak vengeance on Hajjaj against whom he was powerless during the life-time of Walid I.

The story of the Arab conquest of Spain is a fact stranger than fiction in the pages of Dozy and Lanepoole. Tariq, a Berber freed man of Musa, with 7000 cavalry landed on the Spanish tongue of the Straits, since after known as "the Mountain of Tariq" (modern Gibraltar), and reinforced later on by 5000 more he defeated the Visigothic king Roderick in July 711 aided by the treachery of the Church and the Nobility. Having by-passed strongly fortified cities, Tariq spread his extremely mobile column of cavalry over open country and made himself master of half of Spain within less than a year. None was more surprised and more envious at Tariq's success than his own master Musa. Musa hurried to Spain in the summer of 712 A. D. with 12000 troops, captured Seville and other places avoided by Tariq. It is said, Tariq and Musa met near the Spanish capital of Toledo, which had already been betrayed to the Muslims; and there Tariq was whipped by his master for disobeying his orders to stop at an early stage of the campaign. The Muslim army overran unimpeded as far as Aragon, Leon and Galicia. Spoils of Spain were too rich to part with, and it is probably for Musa's delay in forwarding the royal fifth to Damascus that Walid I recalled Musa a few months before his death. However, the Arabs were now on the heights of the Pyrenees overlooking the tempting plains of France.

The great armada for the siege of Constantinople was in full swing of preparation during the closing years of Caliph al-Walid. Maslamah, a great strategist and stubborn fighter, had been slowly fighting his way from Armenia by way of the eastern coast of the Black Sea to take the Byzantine capital in the rear. It is said that 1000 Arab ships of war were concentrated in the waters of the Bosphorus and the Ardriatic though these could not force the Straits, the fleet effectively aided the land army. Within less than a century Islam had built up an empire greater and more powerful than the empires of Darius and Augustus ; this empire reached its zenith of power and glory in the reign of Walid I. The Umayyad Caliphate was never excelled in the extent of territory and in invincibility even

in the days of Mansur and Harun of the Abbasid dynasty. After Walid I the physical expansion of the Caliphate was arrested and its arms had their first reverses.

Politically the reign of Walid I was a continuation of the reign of Abḍul Malik in so far as the administrative policy and government were concerned. Islam as a philosophy of life had a chequered fortune at the Damacus court then in the grip of gay Paganism of pre-Islamic Arabia. Abdul Malik had been a better Muslim than Muawiyyah, Walid I a better one than his father till the progress culminated in an orthodox reaction seven years after Walid's death when Umar bin Abdul Aziz was raised to the caliphate by the intrigue of the bigoted Raja who practised a pious fraud in the interests of Islam. It was Raja al-kindi the virtual Shaikh-ul-Islam, who incited the otherwise tolerant Caliph Waild to break an old and solemn covenant with the Christians and destroy the Christian half of the Church of St. John in Damascus for building his famous Umayyad Mosque. In the time of Abdul Malik the general topics of conversation in the court circles were politics and government ; in the time of Walid I buildings and the culture of country estates, whereas in the time of his immediate successor, Sulaiman, the themes of conversation were gluttony and women. Building was a passion with Walid I ; buildings of all kinds, religious and secular. In architecture his ambition was to excel everything before him and to leave no room for being surpassed by the posterity. He spared no pains and grudged no expenditure on his buildings. He summoned best architects, masons, carvers and inlayers from the Byzantine Empire, Iran and Hindustan. He utilised the relay system of posts for the collection of materials from distant countries. The result was that the Prophet's mosque of Medina and the Jama Mosque of Damascus built by him became the masterpieces of Muslim architecture, so dazzling to the eye and so fascinating to mind that the pious would rather curse then bless him for all his pains. Umar II covered the whole inside of the Mosque of Damascus with canvas so that the mind of man might not be distracted at the time of prayer by the captivating lustre of workmanship inside the mosque. Walid I built everywhere mosques, monasteries, rest-houses and alms-houses. He was the first to build hospitals for the sick, to segregate the lepers and build for them a hospital and shelter in Damascus. In short, Walid I raised the level of the ornamental and humanitarian aspect of the Caliphate to such a height as to make it worthy of its position among the civilized nations, ancient and medieval.

Abdul Malik and Walid I were generous patrons of learning and fine arts. They provided above all the most important requisites for the growth of culture ; namely peace and a strong government. The first fruit of Islamic culture was the great Hasan al-Basri, who was then giving his best to Islam at his city of Basra in the reign of Walid I. It was in the same mosque of Basra that the first intellectual rebel against the unquestioned sway of authority over man's mind, Wasit bin 'Ata, a young pupil of Hasan al-Basri, preached the Mutazila doctrine (Rationalism) in the same mosque with his teacher without unpleasantness. It was the supreme test of the vigour and originality of Arab intellect awakened by contact with Greek mind and Greek philosophy brought in the train of the conquering armies.

Abdul Malik's misgivings about Walid's grammar proved too true when Walid opened his tongue in a public address in Medina. The whole congregation fell alaughter over his Arabic when he began "Oh people of Medina" ! Nevertheless his personality was majestic and awe-inspiring, and his manners mild and elegant.

2. The Caliphate of Sulaiman (715-717 A.D.)

Sulaiman, son of Abdul Malik, succeeded his brother Walid to undo the labours of his predecessor. He had his own set of worthless favourites to oblige, and his first act was to wreak vengeance on the partisans of Hajjaj bin Yusuf by their dismissal, imprisonment and execution. He sent the notorious Azdite Yazid bin Muhallab to Khurasan, who reopened the slumbering volcano of tribal hatred and feud throughout the East. No new conquests were made on that frontier, and the subdued Turkish tribes raised their heads. His shameful treatment of Musa, the conqueror of Spain, and the arrogance and selfishness of his viceroys in *Ifrica* and Spain, provoked the racial hostility of the fiery Berbers against the Arabs everywhere.

Sulaiman had nothing to recommend himself to man, though women idolised him as a second Yusuf in beauty. He lived to eat and indulge in sexual pleasures, to play alternately the rake and the pietist under the influence of Raja, the theologian. He was perhaps the greatest of eater on record in history. Besides bread and other things, he used to take 70 pomegranates (*anar*), one entire six-month old lamb, six (large-sized) fowls, called Yahaya Ghassani of Syrian breed, and a large quantity of *kishmish* (dry rasins). Sulaiman was caught in the cross-currents of the then prevailing aristocratic fashion of gluttony and profligacy and those of the frugal orthodoxy of

powerful personalities like the politician-reformer Raja and sincerely religious Umar bin Abdul Aziz, who tried to make a better Musalman of Sulaiman than his father and brother had been. He banned from his court music and poetry, without which sensuality cannot hide its ugliness in society.

Caliph Sulaiman considered himself the Solomon of his age destined to conquer Constantinople. He interpreted a Saying of the Prophet that Rum would be conquered by a caliph bearing the name of a prophet as a hint to his own achievement. Though the Umayyad inference proved disastrous, the Saying nevertheless proved true ; because, the caliph referred to in the Saying was the great conqueror Sulaiman the Magnificent, who captured Constantinople in 1453 and became the first Caliph of the Ottoman dynasty. However, the second siege of Constantinople (August 716-September 717), was an event of epical splendour that does credit both to the besiegers and the besieged. Eighteen hundred Arab war-vessels lay anchored in the waters of the Bosphorus, and every foot of ground on the land-side of the main land and the southern coast of the Golden Horn was white with camps of Arab warriors as more valiant and united under the single command of Maslamah, son of Abdul Malik, than the legendary Greek hosts on the plains of Troy. Emperor Leo the Isurian was too clever to fall into Maslamah's trap of the Trojan Horse. Before the invention of gun powder and heavy artillery, the weapons of defence were stronger than the weapons of attack, and so the siege lingered on for thirteen months. The heavy chain across the mouth of the Golden Horn held up the Arab navy and inextinguishable Greek fire of naphtha set ablaze water and land. Meanwhile fierce Bulgars were arming for the defence of Christiandom. Like a mountain torrent in the rains they descended on the rear of the besieging Muslim army, which was hemmed in between an unconquered fort in front and the pressure of the brave Bulgars from behind. Death, famine and pestilence thinned the ranks of the Muslims ; still Maslamah was determined to conquer or perish. Meanwhile, Caliph Sulaiman was dead ; an order of recall came from his sucessor, Caliph Umar II ; Muslims turned their backs not on mortals but on the hell-fire of naphtha and its guardian, Leo the Isurian. The Arab Armada met the fate of the latter day Spanish Armada in the English Channel. It was, however, fortunate for the Muslim civilization that Constantinople, the mother of civilization and Hellenism escaped an untimely eclipse. Latin Europe was still

too backward and the Western Church too hostile to tolerate the heritage of Greece.

When Caliph Sulaiman fell ill at Jabia whither he had gone on an expedition, he wished to nominate his son as his successor. Raja dissuaded him and proposed the name of the pious Umar bin Abdul Aziz. Sulaiman objected to it saying that it would rouse the whole house of his father against him though he would prefer Umar to his own son. The resourceful Raja hit upon a clever ruse; namely, that a bequest to this effect in the Caliph's handwriting should be put in an envelope and sealed, and that the people should be called upon to swear oath of allegiance to the sealed envelope, which was to be opened only after the Caliph's death. Caliph Sulaiman approved the device and acted accordingly. But when the congregation was called upon to swear allegiance to the sealed envelope, they objected and demanded that the seal should be broken first. When Raja carried this news to the Caliph, he in anger said, "Call the kotwal and his guards : strike off the heads of those who refuse to take the oath of allegiance." The terrified people swore allegiance to the envelope making the ghost of old Theocracy a farce. Every one was in doubt and expectation ; when Hisham bin Abdul Malik and Umar bin Abdul Aziz with different motives approached Raja, the wily champion of theocracy, hoodwinked both by telling a positive lie that the Caliph had kept the matter to himself only, confiding it not even to him.

When the seal was opened no one was more morose and dejected than Umar bin Abdul Aziz, and Raja had to run the whole show. He conducted Umar to the pulpit, but Umar would not open his mouth. Divining the cause of his embarrassment, Raja shouted at the top of his voice, "You sirs, why do you not stand up and come in for taking the hand of the Caliph (*baait*) ?" The people did so and the Caliph led the prayer. When it was concluded, the state horse was brought for mount, but Umar demurred and ordered for his own mule. Umar bin Abdul Aziz, the Ummayyad *prince*, was now dead to all intents and purposes, and the spirit of Umar I had a resurrection in him the moment he was sworn in as Caliph. For this unintentional act of Sulaiman, he has been canonised by Muslim chroniclers as *Miftah ul-Barkat*, (the Key of Blessings), though he himself had not otherwise been a blessing to his people.

Islam as a State was now on the cross-roads, and from the meridian, the sun of the Umayyad glory slipped into evening twilight.

3. The Caliphate of Umar bin Abdul Aziz (Umar II, 717-720 A. D.)

The verdict of History on the two and half-years' rule of this saintly Caliph swings from one extreme to the other. It was a rift in the cloud for the theocrats, the beginning of the end of the Umayyad Empire for the house of Umayya. Nevertheless the character and policy of Umar II has been as great a source of inspiration for all ages as that of a greater man, Umar I. One cannot but admire what change faith, firm and sincere, wrought in man in the history of Islam.

It is rather the man than the ruler that captivates a historian of the reign of Umar II. It is this phase that has found greater emphasis in Muslim chronicles who have made it a tale and a moral too, as the Fifth of the Pious Caliphs, who disarmed the hostilities even of the Kharijites, who by his mildness brought more heathens to the fold of Islam than by the Umayyad sword, who pointed to the true path to save an Empire and bring glory to Islam without blood-shed. His lesson was not heeded by his ungodly people with the result that the Umayyads lost the Caliphate, the Arabs *their* Empire, and the Muslims paid the penalty of many thousand lives at the altar of the terrible Abbasid Revolution.

Umar bin Abdul Aziz was born at Halwan in 31 or 34 A. H. and had in his veins the blood of Umar I through his mother. He had his early education in Medina. There he studied the Quran with Ubaidullah bin Abdullah, and heard *Hadis* from his own father and Abdullah bin Jafar bin Abu Talib and other renowned elders. After his father's death in Egypt, he was brought to Damascus by Caliph Abdul Malik, and married to his daughter Fatima. In the midst of the whirlpool of profane gaiety of the capital, he lived the retired life of a teacher of the Quran and Hadis to a band of scholars that had gathered around him. Under Walid I he had served for some years as the governor of Hijaj till Hajjaj bin Yusuf had him recalled by Walid I. He was the only member of the ruling family to oppose Walid in his plan to set aside Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik in favour of his own son. For this offence he was thrown into prison and released only after three years. Suiaiman after his accession made him his chief adviser, but the ways of Sulaiman's life were incorrigible. He remained aloof from practical politics having had by nature a contemplative and mystical turn of mind. The caliphate came upon him rather as a calamity than a boon sought for.

There came an abrupt change in the life of Umar II after his accession. There was little rejoicing in his household, because of the sacrifices demanded of the members of his family by the austere Caliph, who took as his model the great Umar I. He offered to his virtuous wife the alternative of either sending all her jewels to the Bait-ul-Mal, or living separate from him with her father's rich dowry. There arose an outcry when the Caliph told his numerous maidservants that he no longer needed their services, and offered to free them all ; those who would like to stay must be prepared to share his hardships. He ordered all the three hundred guards and porters of the palace either to go back to their families or be content with an yearly pay of ten *dinars*. He settled on himself a pay of two *dirhems* a day, and told his children that he had no longer the means of keeping them in comfort ; and as regards the Public Treasury they could have only the same rights as every other Muslim. When the nobles of Banu Umayya came to him in high expectation of having their due as close relations, Umar II gave them a rebuff : "To me in such a matter you are no nearer to me than a poor Muslim." The Superintendent of the Royal Stable came to the Caliph for sanctioning the usual grant for its maintenance and went away with an order to take all the horses to the towns of Syria, sell them at any price, and deposit the sale-money in the Baitul-Mal. What befell the musicians, poets and other hangers-on about the Court can easily be imagined.

He tried to make a radical reform both of the government and the contemporary society. Arab women had become as lax in morals as men. Female leaders of society were not the ladies of Damascus ; but "free beauties" like Sayyidah Sukaynah, daughter of Imam Husain at Medinah and Aishah, daughter of the famous Companion Talha, in Kufa. Sukhayna had made current a fashion of dressing hair, known as *turrah-i-Sukhaynah* for ladies ; but fashionable dandies began imitating women in this mode of hair-dressing. It had become such a moral nuisance that Umar II forbade it by a decree. However, the saint was swimming against current, and hence his tragic failure and death. Disgusted with impiety and gross materialism of his people, he once remarked, "Even if I live fifty years among you, you will not become better".

Umar II proceeded to push back the future of Islam to the days of Umar I. He reversed the traditional Umayyad policy from the days of the founder of their dynasty. This policy had not for its aim the spread of Islam as a religion. There was no escape from

poll-tax for the subject races even if they accepted Islam. The Umayyad governors used compulsory circumcision as a deterrent to frighten away would-be converts. Umar II issued a decree that the Muslim of any nationality should not be subjected to the payment of *jaziyah*, whereas the *khiraj* or land-tax was to be paid by everybody, Arab or non-Arab. He reprimanded the provincial governors saying that Allah did not send his *Rasul* either to collect taxes or circumcise people ! The Umayyads would levy *jaziyah* even on the dead, because the dead man's liability was passed on to his community, which must pay the original stipulated amount even if the community (*millat*) had been thinned by death or conversion. This did not bring about a serious fall in revenue, which mainly came from land-tax.[1]

Umar II's idea of spreading Islam was original and statesmanlike, i e., offering Islam "without strings" as in the early days of the Prophet, and not "Islam with halter" of the slave-hunting Umayyads in the name of *jihad*. He suspended hostilities with all the neighbouring non-Muslim nations, and initiated the policy of persuasion. Like every pious-minded enthusiast he was optimistic beyond limit in his mission. He undertook to convert the Empeor Leo the Isurian, wrote letters to him and received hopeful response from that heterodox and hypocritical Emperor. To the Turkish tribes and the Berbers of Africa and Hindu Rajas of Sindh he had the similar offer communicated with amazing success. Many of them accepted Islam with alacrity, because it was apparently to their advantage to do so. Umar II promised to them immunity from raids by other Muslims and the support of the whole Caliphate against their enemies in defensive wars, besides full autonomy in their internal and external affairs. In short, he offered Islam in the spirit of a preacher and not of a conqueror. Baladhuri tells us that many princes in Sindh became Muslims in his time, but they abjured Islam when Umar II's successors reversed his policy. Had his plan succeeded, a bigger and more powerful Commonwealth of Islamic nations wedded to peace would have superseded in a century the dynastic empires in Islam. In his internal policy he was disinclined to use force and severity against even refractory subjects and political offenders. "You speak

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[1] According to Baladhuri, Berbers of Africa were invited to accept Islam, which they did in large numbers. Umar II relieved them of child tribute in lieu of *jaziya*. "As regards the girls who had already been delivered up, he decreed that their masters should either take them in marriage in lawful form or give them back to their parents."

a lie", Umar II wrote to Jarra bin Abdullah, his governor of Khurasan, "in saying that the refractory tribes of Khurasan cannot be kept straight without the use of sword. Justice and giving everybody his rights are such things as would make them straight of their own accord. Think on my words and act accordingly."[2]

Umar II made a noble gesture to end the enmity between Banu Hashim and Banu Umayya only short of handing over the Caliphate to them. He forbade the practice of cursing Ali in the *khutba* and returned the garden of Fadak, seized unlawfully by his ancestor Marwan. Unfortunately in his attempt to make more friends, he created more enemies. Umar II used to hear complaints of people on a fixed day every week. He spent money liberally on works of public utility. The Khurasan road connecting the capital with that province was built by him with *serais*, hospitals and wells for comfort of travellers. Study of medicine received his patronage, and the beginnings of the Arab medical science are traced to the reign of Umar II, who removed from Egypt the schools of Medicine of Greek origin to Antioch and Harran. He was a patron of the pious and the learned. He invited the venerable Hasan al-Basri to deliver sermons in Damascus. It is said that before his accession Umar bin Abdul Aziz in consultation with Caliph al-Walid introduced *mihrab* (niche pointing the direction to Kaba) as an essential feature of mosques.[3]

Umar II's orthodox revivalism landed him into a policy of intolerence and humiliation to his non-Muslim subjects. This is a blot on his administration from the modern stand-point, but a meritorious act considered worthy of imitation by bigoted Muslim rulers for centuries. This policy was formulated in a so-called *Covenant of Umar*. Later Muslim chronicles fathered it on Umar I evidently to carry greater weight, and Jurji Zaydan in modern times holds the same view. But the latest researches of Western scholars more convincingly trace it to Umar II. This Covenant of Umar along with a so-called Charter of the Prophet have come down to us in different recensions. Prof. Hitti remarks :

". . . . Umar was the first caliph and the only Umayyad to impose humiliating restrictions on Christian subjects—measures wrongly ascribed to his earlier namesake and maternal grandfather, Umar I. The most striking regulations issued by this Umayyad Caliph were the excluding of Christians from public offices, prohibit-

[2] Al-*Suyuti*, 131.
[3] *History of the Arabs*, 261.

ing their wearing turbans, requiring them to cut their forelocks, to don distinctive clothes with girdles of leather, to ride without saddles or only on pack saddles, to erect no places of worship and not to lift their voices at the time of prayer. According to this decree if a Muslim killed a Christian, his penalty was only a fine and no Christian's testimony against a Muslim in courts could be accepted. The Jews were evidently also included under some of these restrictions and excluded from governmental positions."

This document is neither a "Covenant" nor a "Charter", but a death-warrant for non-Muslim communities short of physical annihilation. Fortunately, political wisdom and expediency prevailed with many later rulers of Islam not to enforce such a decree on non-Muslims, though it remained on the Islamic code of law like a sword overhanging their heads. It is reasonable to take a charitable view of Umar's act; in ancient and medieval times such penal and discriminating legislation was not unknown. The Brahman had one measure of justice for the Brahman, and another for the Sudra ; the Christian had discriminatory laws and imposed disabilities not only on the heathens but between one sect and another, e.g., the treatment meted out to the Catholic Church of Ireland in the eighteenth century.

Wellhausen refutes the charges of persecution and forcible conversion levelled against Umar II by Theophanes : viz., that he "compelled the Christians to go over to Islam (and that) . . . . those who did so he freed from the tax, but slew the rest and made many martyrs". His verdict goes in favour of Umar II : "With regard to the Christians he kept absolutely within the bounds of justice even though it might seem otherwise to them . . . . The law which he here exercised was certainly the formal law of the jurists, but he could not do otherwise without renouncing Islam". Where there was room for redressing the wrongs of his Christian subjects he did so even against the Regulations of Umar I. When it was proved completely that the Christian colony of Najraniya that dwindled to one-tenth of its population and yet the original tribute of 2000 pieces of cloth was being levied on them, Umar II reduced the amount of tribute also to one-tenth, i.e., 200 pieces, or 8000 dirhems instead of 80000. One great benefit which Umar II conferred was the abolition of illegal local cesses or *abwabs* multiplying since the time of the Iranian kings. These were : "presents at the Nauroz festival and the Mihirgan-festival, fees for subordinate

officials, wedding fees, stamps for documents, and the *a'in* (toll) . . . These dues, misused and difficult to control, did not as a rule reach the state exchequer at any rate, and they were all the more difficult to abolish. The stattholders were quite willing that people should wait upon them at the New Year and on other occasions, and not with empty hands either."[4]

Fiscal reforms of Umar were undertaken as a part of his scheme to initiate a just and equitable government of the provinces, and to remove ill-feeling over the expenditure of provincial revenues. But "it is not easy", says Wellhausen, "to get a clear account of the measures he undertook. The conceptions of it advanced by Alfred von Kremer and accepted by August Muller are marred by actual errors." The Umaiyyad principles of taxation were offending to the Islamic idea of justice. Caliph Umar II agreed in principle that no Muslim, Arab or non-Arab, freeborn or client need pay any tribute, either poll-tax or land-tax. But a considerable portion of the *kharaj*-paying land had passed into the hands of the tax-free Arabs, who had become big owners of estates and agricultural farms, with the result that revenue had fallen off considerably. But the Umayyads, who themselves were great offenders in this respect, did not dare attack the vested Arab interests in land. They made up for the deficiency by taxing more heavily the remaining portion of *khiraj* lands. But this could not go on for a long time without bringing bankruptcy to the State. So he issued a decree to the effect that the *khiraj*-land in possession of the Muslims till 100 A. H. should pay *tithe*; but those purchased after 100 A. H. should be taxed as *khiraj*.

The Mawali or Clients, mostly freed men had a long standing grievance against their Arab masters, who looked down upon them as hardly better than slaves and denied to them as Muslims, the birth-

Revenue may fall in arrears but *abwabs* in one form or another nevertheless fill without failure the pockets of revenue underlings in every regime in the East. In India *abwabs* were abolished on paper only by the governments, Mughal, British or Indian. It is easier to detect fish drinking water than to detect revenue underlings in taking bribes and abwabs. High officials white or brown had their birth-days or Christmas or New Year's Day in British regime There is documentary proof that almost all the items mentioned under the Umayyad Caliphate and many others were levied in the Mughal as well as British regime by the Zamindars of Bengal down to the days of my own boyhood in distant Chittagong.

right of a Muslim, i.e., social and poiitical equality irrespective of race, colour or origin. The rising of the Mawalis under Mukhtar after the martyrdom of Imam Husain was a great warning to the unjust ruling castes of Arabs. At the accession of Umar II, the Mawali of Khurasan, prayed for the wrongs done to them though they had fought as bravely as the Arabs against infidels. The Caliph granted them not merely "freedom from taxation but also maintenance and pay ; he declared he was ready to contribute from the chief treasury of the state if the *Kharaj* of Khurasan were not sufficient."

Feverish activities and poor diet were telling heavily on the health of the Caliph before forty. Perhaps he wore the one single *kurta* during his period of caliphate, and ate his bread with the *dal* (boiled pulse) of our *masur*, with which even his castrated slave Abu Umayya became disgusted.[5] He used to say, "How can I have rest and peace now that the burden of all those who are without clothes, without food, and of the sick, the oppressed, travellers and prisoners, children and the aged, of those who are of scanty means, has fallen on my shoulders ? One day he felt like eating grapes, and asked his wife whether she got any money to buy grapes. At last he said that it was better not to eat grapes by taking money from the Bait-ul-Mal than stand guilty before the Lord. About little presents also he had strong objection, and would say, "The Prophet might accept presents (*hadiya*) ; to me it is bribe." Yet under him "the state money vanished as if by magic". What the reason might be ? Before his accession Umar bin Abdul Aziz possessed on his own account 40,000 dinars and at his death he left only 400 dinars out of it. What became of the rest, and why with 400 dinars left he could not spend a dirhem out of it to buy grapes ?

The ascetic Umar II made his life a hell only to get an acquittal from God on the Day of Judgment. There is no truth in the story of the Banu Umayya having poisoned him. It may be said, as Wellhausen remarks that his ability did not correspond to his good

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[5] One day the famous general Maslamah bin Abdul Malik went to see Umar II and found him wearing a soiled *kurta*. He then went to the Caliph's wife and said how it was that she did not wash clean the Caliph's *kurta*. She replied, "He has not got two kurtas, so that he could change the one on for wash."

Caliph's wife consoled Abu Umayya saying that the same *dal* of *masur* was the only luxury of his master !

will, and that "the most we can reproach him with is that he exacted rather much from the public exchequer by the subsidies and contributions which he made broadcast from it, or was prepared to make" for promoting the happiness of everybody except of himself and his family. The life of the Umayyad Empire became half by the death of this well-meaning reformer of his age.

4. Later Umayyads

Umar II was succeeded by Yazid II (720-24 A.D.), son of Caliph Abdul Malik. He reigned for four years, out of which the first forty days he lived and ruled on the model of Umar II. The period of abstinence proved too hard for a born libertine, who took to his own way of life of chase, wine and women. At last he balanced himself in love, and made two beautiful slave-girls, Salama and Hababa the virtual guardians of him and his caliphate. Suitors had to wait not on the Caliph but on these slave-girls to have their prayers granted. Ibn Hubaira secured a governorship only by courting the favour of these two women. The only remarkable incidents of his reign were the suppression of the revolt of Yazid bin Muhallab in Khurasan by Maslamah bin Abdul Malik and his own martyrdom to love for Hababa.[6]

Hisham bin Abdul Malik secured the caliphate through the powerful support of the Qais against the Kalb, who had hitherto been the pillars of the dynasty of Marwan. He ruled for nineteen years (724-743) with tolerably good success, but with him began the ebb-tide of Umayyad fortune. His comparatively less remarkable success for such a long reign was not due to any moral defects of character, but to his second-rate statesman-ship. Hisham was "a thorough business man" having no idealism or eccentricity about him. Muslim chronicles praise him as the third great statesman

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[6] One day Yazid II became so lost in ecstasy when Hababa sung a song that he said to her that he was going to fly. "To whom will you leave your people ?" she asked. He answered "To you", kissing her hand . . . . while drinking with Hababa, he threw (*in jest when the girl opened her mouth for a grape from her lover*) a grape-stone at her, which got stuck into her throat and would not come out. This caused her to fall ill and die. For three days he would not let her be buried, but continued to kiss and caress her, gaze at her, weeping till the body could no longer remain unburied . . . . After her death he survived seven days, during which he showed himself to no one in accordance with the advice of his brother Maslamah . . . ."

after Muawiyah and Abdul Malik. Caliph Mansur the Abbasid had a great admiration for Hisham as a statesman though Hisham's dead body was exhumed, flogged, hanged and burnt by Mansur's uncle. Hisham was a little miserly like Mansur, and like Mansur he was a great reformer of finances of the state ; and like Mansur he furnished a model for intrigue and unscrupulousness in removing by poison the potential enemies of his dynasty. Hisham, afraid of the abilities of Abu Hisham, the head of the Kaisani branch of the Alids, poisoned him with milk on his return journey to Medina. Feeling poison on him Abu Hashim halted on the way at Humaimah with Mohammad bin Ali, bin Abdullah Ibn Abbas, and bequeathed his rights to the Caliphate to Muhammad. Muhammad became keen to acquire the Caliphate and began sending emissaries secretly to plot for the overthrow of the Umayyad dynasty.

Hisham himself unknowingly was adding fuel to Abbasid Propaganda in Khurasan by making the Qais predominant there against the Kalb, and towards the close of the dynasty when the ascendancy of Qais was overthrown by that of the Kalb, these Qaisites became ready helpers of the Abbasids.

Caliph Hisham was on the whole a better Muslim than his father Abdul Malik though he shared his father's weaknesses for wine, horse-racing and music[7]. But he wisely shut his eyes against the impious excesses of others, though he was the first to burn a heretic;[8] he was also the first to connive at the erection of a church in Iraq by a Muslim governor of his, Khalid al-Kasri. Hisham was as keen on *jihad* as Walid I ; but everywhere misfortune befell the arms of Islam and the Crescent shrank before the Cross on the European soil. To enumerate important revolts against Hisham and reverses to his armies :

(a) The Battle of Poitiers (October 732)

Hisham appointed a renowned soldier Abdurrahaman to carry on *jihad* against the Franks, but Hisham's reversal of Umar II's

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7 Hisham drank once every Friday after the divine service (*History of the Arabs*, 227). Hisham and his daughter kept race-horses. In the time of Hisham "the number of racers from the royal and other stables reached 4000, which finds no parallel in pre-Islamic or Islamic annals".

8 Ghilan, who preached the doctrine of *qadr* (Free Will) had been brought before Umar II, who released him only with a curse if his doctrine was false. Hisham caught hold of him and impaled him at Damascus for his heresy.

decree of exempting Muslims of every category from the payment of *jaziya* had already paralysed the arms of Islam. The brave Berbers of Africa, who had borne the brunt of the Arab conquest of Spain refused to be reduced to the status of tribute-paying servile heathens. Their leader Munuza defected with his Berbers from the army of Abdurrahaman, and became an ally and son-in-law of Count Eudo of Tolouse. Nevertheless, the Arabs attacked Eudo and drove him in the direction of the Loire. Meanwhile, Eudo had alerted the Franks in their home country of the Arab menace, and Charles Martel hurried to the rescue of Eudo. The ranks of the Austrasian Franks exhausted all the tactics and wild fury of the Arabs in a day-long battle. When the sun arose on the field next morning not a soul stirred in the Arab camp, and their army after the death of Abdurrahaman had vanished like mist in the darkness of night.

European writers invest this victory with an epic grandeur, but the Arabs took the defeat as a mere accident of war. Had not the Franks checked at Poitiers the momentum of Islamic expansion, "the Qoran would now be expounded at Oxford and before a circumcised people". However, the defeat of the Arabs at Poitiers equals in importance only the repulse of the Ottoman armies from the ramparts of Vienna in the sixteenth century. These are events that presaged the future ascendancy of the West over the Orient that continues till now giving the orientals the rudiments of a civilization higher than that of Greece and Rome, which was saved for them on the field of Poitiers.

Khalid al-Qasri occupies almost the same place in the reign of Caliph Hisham as that of Zaid and Hajjaj bin Yusuf as the successful viceroys of the turbulent province of Kufa. Except in steadfast loyalty to his master, he was in character an attractive contrast to the much-dreaded Hajjaj bin Yusuf, whose political disciple he had been in the reign of Walid I. Hajjaj bin Yusuf had Khalid al-Qasri appointed to Mecca in place of Umar bin Abdul Aziz to deal with the fugitive seditionists and political suspects from Kufa. Khalid tackled with them by making the owners of houses responsible for the conduct of their inhabitants, and built for the water supply of the city a water aqueduct. After the death of Hajjaj he shared the common persecution of all the adherents of Hajjaj in the reign of Yazid II. The first important appointment made by Hisham was to send Khalid to Iraq as governor, and leave him undisturbed there for a long time. Khalid was not a soldier, and abhorred extreme

measures and bloodshed.[9] It is said that he called for a glass of water when the report of a rising of seven desperadoes reached him while delivering the Friday sermon. His mother was an unconverted Christian lady, and he himself was an indifferent Muslim. He built for his mother a church behind the great mosque of Kufa, and Christians and Jews had a happy time of it during his viceroyalty. Discretion and toleration reinforced with extreme liberality constituted the better part of his valour. He was liberal and consider ate to the Alids, and at the same time appointed Christians and Magians over the heads of Muslims. He had the usual cavalier-like disposition of the Umayyad aristocracy of those times and was not ashamed of his ignorance of the Quran.[10] He once expounded from the pulpit the ingenious and blasphemous theory of the superiority of the Caliph to Prophets in the household of Allah, though Hisham reprimanded him for it.

Iraq was never so peaceful and prosperous for so many years at a stretch as under Khalid. He also dug canals, improved agriculture and trade, and brought vast tracts of unreclaimed land under cultivation as his own corn-producing private estates. He remained nearly for 15 years in office. His wealth and lavish expenditure were attributed to embezzlement by his enemies at court, and Hisham's heartless cupidity impelled him to make a fat game of his friend and faithful servant, Khalid. Khalid's end was tragic, but he never became disloyal. Though he had means to defend himself or to make his escape, he suffered himself to be imprisoned by his bitter enemy, Yusuf bin Omar, the newly appointed viceroy in his place. He was put into the prison of Kufa, and subjected there for 18 months to torture to admit the amount of his wealth and disgorge it. Hisham, however, had the goodness to threaten Khalid's "torturer himself with death if his victim should succumb to his torture and sent a body-guard to be present at the application of torture".

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[9] The story that Khalid al-Qasri sacrificed on the day of Id, the famous freethinker, Al-Ja'd bin Dirham at the command of Hisham, though believed by Jurji Zaydan, is not corroborated by Al-Suyuti, who attributes the heretic's impaling to Hisham (vide *Umayyads and Abbasids.*)

[10] "Once when he (Khalid) was to preach in the mosque he made a mistake of this sort, and lost countenance. A Taghlibite friend rose and said to him, 'Do not take this to heart, prince : I never knew a wise man who knew the Koran by heart ; they are all fools who do.' Khalid told him that he was right.

Khalid went to Rusafa after his release, but Hisham did not even give him a personal interview. His whole family was pursued with vengeance with the Caliph's connivance, and at last when the whole lot of his followers were imprisoned under the Caliph's order, Khalid burst into open and violent abuse of the Caliph. Hisham let the culprit to himself saying that Khalid was not in his senses. "It was only against his will that he was constantly compelled to take distasteful measures against the old servant of whose fidelity he himself had no doubt, and afterwards he had constant occasion to repent of them."

Khalid was allowed to live in peace and popularity at Damascus for the rest of Hisham's reign. Now a piece of good service which he in his day of power had rendered to Hisham's successor, Walid II, ruined him. Hisham had intended to nominate his own son in exclusion of Yazid II's son, Walid. He was dissuaded to do so by Khalid who pointed out the danger to his caliphate from the Qaisites, who were all maternal uncles of Walid through his mother. Walid II' sold him (*old Khalid*) to his deadly foes for many millions. Yusuf (bin Umar) transported him with the utmost cruelty to Kufa and there tortured him to death, but could not break his pride or even contrive to make him cry out or distort his feautures. He died on the rack in Muharram, 126 (Nov. 743) and was buried at Hira." It is only too true to say that the fall of Khalid al-Qasri. . . .ushered in the last fatal period of Umayyad rule.

To return to the close of the career of Caliph Hisham. The last four years of Hisham's reign after the dismissal of Khalid al-Qasri were unhappy and inglorious. He died in Rusafa on February 6, 743. Caliph Hisham is rather a repulsive character in history in spite of his undoubted abilities as a ruler. His exterior was ungainly, squint-eyed, shy and retiring, and almost born with wrinkles and maturity of old age though hardly fifty at his death. "He was rather narrow-minded but prudent and circumspect. Personally he gave no offence to the pious ; he was a correct Muslim of the old type—a friend of the traditionalists, az-Zuhri and Abu Zinad, and a foe to the new fangled Qadariya . . . ." He was tolerant to his non-Muslim subjects in religious matters though his cupidity made him bleed white the non-Muslims and neo-Muslims. He was the first caliph to communicate with his courtiers through an intermediary, the Quraisite al-Abrash, an archetype not of a *wazir*, but of Louis XIV's barbar, Oliver.

Within a little more than twelve months (743-744), three Caliphs reigned and died inglorious deaths. Of these only Walid II calls for a notice for his wickedness. Young and handsome, Walid II was an Arab Ajax in physique and bodily strength, a Bacchus incarnate in lewdness and revelry, and an Yazid in cruelty and impiety. Pressed for want of money, which he showered like rains on his soldiers, courtiers and the companions of his sin, he sold away Khalid al-Qasri to his enemies. When the news of Hisham's death reached him he wept only for the grief of Hisham's daughters ! He lived a life too fast running a race as it were towards hell.

(b) The Revolt of the Berbers in West Africa.

The Berbers had sent deputations to Hisham to lay down their grievances, namely reimposition of *jaziyah* on those who had accepted Islam in the time of Umar II, and inequitable treatment meted out by the governors ; but the Caliph did not even admit them to his presence. This insult infuriated the fiery Berbers who now turned to the Kharijites as the guardians of true Islam. The primitive socialistic society of the Berber tribes was receptive to the Kharijite Communism, and under Kharijite leadership they rose in revolt and put an end to the Caliph's authority from Morocco to Cairo. The Caliph sent an urgent summons to his governor Uqba bin Hajjaj in 741 A.D. to cross over to Africa to fight the rebels. Even the discipline and valour of the Syrian regulars quailed before the wild charges of the half-naked Berber cavalry. In the name of Islam they fell out with the caliphate, which barely managed to hold Cairo.

Loss of military prestige thus began to sap the foundation of the Umayyad Empire.

(c) In the East the Soghdians rose in revolt against Caliph Hisham who had withdrawn the rights given to them by Umar II. The rebels sought the help of the heathen Turkish tribes, and when situation became serious, Hisham sent the old veteran Nasr bin Saiyar al-Kinani. But it proved a task too tough even for him.

(d) When Hisham dismissed his gifted viceroy of Iraq, Khalid al-Kasri, and affairs fell into confusion there under his successor, Kufa became restive. They invited Zaid bin Ali bin Husain bin Ali from Medina to their city, and swore allegiance to him as Caliph in secrecy. He issued a comprehensive propaganda manifesto and sent emissaries abroad to prepare for a concerted rising. The Umayyad governor got a scent of it, and by a bold coup dispersed the Alid rebels who could not be timely succoured by the

people of Kufa. Ziad was slain, but his son Yahaya fled to Khurasan. Yahaya was killed in the reign of Hisham's successor, Walid II. There appeared now on the scene Abu Muslim, the author of the Abbasid Revolution, who came into limelight as the avenger of the murder of the Alid Yahaya.

The Hindu rajahs of Sindh who had accepted Islam at the invitation of Umar II, now repudiated it and entered Hindu society after due purification.

Caliph Hisham's fame as a statesman rests mainly on his centralization and reorganization of the Imperial Exchequer. Even Muawiyah and Abdul Malik did not systematize the Revenue Administration as their attentions were mainly preoccupied with fighting the internal and external enemies of the empire, and owing to the influx of untold wealth in the form of booty down to the reign of Walid I the Caliphs could afford not to be frugal and economical with the state moneys. But Umar II had left almost an empty treasury, and his successor Yazid II had squandered away the income on his frivolity and debauchery. So Hisham had to devote his whole energy in devising ways and means for a steady and regular flow of provincial revenues to the Central Treasury. Hitherto the Caliphs had no exact knowledge of land revenue of the provinces, which was at the discretionary disposal of powerful provincial governors. Hisham completed the revenue survey of the province of Egypt more thoroughly than Umar I had done with Iraq and Mesopotamia. Similar surveys though not so exact were done with a part of Khurasan, and the smaller provinces. Hisham's method was to change his governors, and he discovered the potential revenue capacity of a province by demanding a larger revenue with every change of governorship. It appears that Hisham had a sort of Doomsday Book compiled for the empire, and probably the later Abbasid Revenue system of Caliph Mansur, who had great admiration for Hisham, was based on the model of Hisham's organisation of revenues of the Exchequer, the administration of which was exact, methodical and frugal under Hisham.

Hisham was actuated in his fiscal reforms by motives which were mainly the reverse of those of Umar II,—motives rather sordid and selfish having little concern with justice or the principles of Islam. He replenished his private income with estate farming on a very large scale as a food producer. His rival in this respect was his governor of Iraq, Khalid al-Kasri. In order to keep the price of food grains high, he forbade Khalid to release his stock to the market before

that of the Caliph was sold out at high price. Thus he traded on the misery of his subjects who cursed him for his greed. At any rate, Hisham restored the financial solvency of the state and left a full treasury to the next Caliph, al-Walid II.[11] It is said that Walid II intended to make a *hajj* which should be celebrated by a drinking bout in the temple of Kaba ! The Umayyads raised a revolt againt him sweering allegiance to the pious Yezid III, and when the messenger brought Walid II this news, he was given 200 lashes for his pains. He stood a siege in the fort of Bakhra, and when defence was despaired of, the bold sinner retired to a room with his Quran so as to meet death like Caliph Uthman. But when he opened it for a *fal* (a *sors*) his eyes lighted on the *surah* ". . . . every rebellious *tyrant*, behind whom is Hell, where he shall be given to drink of pus." Enraged at the bad omen he ordered the Quran to be hung up, and began to shoot arrows at it with an extempore epigram :

> When thou meetest thy Lord on the last Judgment morn,
> Then cry unto God 'By Walid I was torn' !

The last caliph of the house of Umayya was Marwan II, descended from Muhammad, brother of Abdul Malik. He ruled for about six years (744-750 A.D.) over a caliphate that was tottering for a final collapse owing to a variety of causes. He had been a doughty soldier ruling the provinces of Mesopotamia and Armenia for 12 years before he seized the caliphate. He was known among his contemporaries by a surname, "The Ass", (*al-Ja'di* and *al-Himar*) either in mockery or in admiration of his extraordinary capacity for hard toil, and for his patience united with obstinate courage. At any rate, Marwan II was an Arab and not an Indian or Persian ass (*Khar*), and as a caliph an improvement on the caliphs after Hisham. At home he was too much preoccupied with the descendants of Abdul Malik, who looked upon him as an usurper. He favoured Mudarites in Khurasan with the result that Arabs in the East stood divided into two rival camps of Kalb and Qais, Mudar and Himiyar. The Abbasid Propaganda had already honeycombed the Umayyad caliphate, and it now entered like a wedge into the cleft of the Arab body politic.

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[11] His (*Hisham's*) stattholders had to hand over to him the highest possible sums, and he did not trouble himself about the means they adopted to extort them. He raised the tribute Cyprus and doubled that of Alexandria and his greed drove the subjects in Transoxiana, Africa and Spain to despair."

"The final ruin of the Umayya dynasty was brought about by a rising of the Shiite Iranians" under the astute leadership of Abu Muslim. Provinces fell like houses of cards before the onset of the armies of Abu Muslim. Marwan II fought with the Khurasan army a nine days' hotly contested battle which ended in his defeat at the battle of the Greater Zab (25th January, 750 A.D.). During the battle Marwan II opened bags of money and told his soldiers that they would get it as reward if they fought bravely. The Arabs at once fell upon the money and decamped leaving Marwan in the lurch. Marwan fled to Upper Egypt closely pursued by the Khurasanis. There he gave his last fight bravely and was slain in battle (August 750 A.D). With Marwan II fell the Umayyad Caliphate of Damascus.

19

Decline and Fall of the Ummayyad Caliphate of Damascus

The decline and fall of the Umayyad Empire illustrates the soundness of Ibn Khaldun's Political Philosophy. His was no theoretical scholasticism of later days, but a science in the modern sense, in which conclusions were arrived at by inductive method based on careful observations and a critical study of history of Muslim States down to the thirteenth century. The type of government in all these states was dynastic monarchy of different degrees of centralised despotism. Among the causes of the fall of such dynastic empires the following are most important :

1. Personal incapacity of rulers
2. The decay of Communal sense.

These two causes sufficiently explain the decline and fall of the Umayyad Empire ; other historical facts are accidents or logical corollaries of these two major premises. The history of the Umayyad Empire after Walid I is a sickening tale of personal incapacity of the later Umayyad rulers and of the decay of Arab nationalism.

Walid I was succeeded by Sulaiman, the *Magnificent* and *Key to Blessings* (*mifta-ul-barkat*) of Arab historians. We discover nothing Magnificent in this caliph except the *menu* of his table. It is said that one whole lamb and seventyfive pomegranates, besides other items, sufficed for one meal of Sulaiman. His best recommendation was his handsome appearance, which he himself admired most before a mirror. The contrast between Walid I and Sulaiman the Magnificent as rulers is correctly brought out by Wellhausen :

"Whilst under Walid the themes of conversation in the circle of prominent society were buildings and culture of country estates,

under Sulaiman the subjects of conversation were gluttony and women."

By his indiscreet policy and personal bias he let loose the enchained clannish fury again all over the Empire; the Qais and Kalb were again at one another's throat. Himself impious he coquetted with the piety of the Alids and Ansars, thus sowing the seeds of trouble for his dynasty. He wreaked unworthy vengeance on the relations and officials of Hajjaj bin Yusuf. Muhammad bin Qasim, the conqueror of Sindh, did neither rebel nor try to save himself by flight. He was imprisoned and cruelly executed at Wasit[1], in the first year of the reign of Sulaiman. The champions of Islam and its theocracy scored their first triumph over the ungodly secularism of the Umayyads through the efforts of the court theologian, Raja. The influence of this time-serving Umayyad court theologian since the time of Abdul Malik reached its climax under Sulaiman. On his death-bed Sulaiman was induced to break the covenant of his father, which had settled succesion on his brother Yazid II—, and "to make a will pleasing to God" by nominating a pious outsider, Umar bin Abdul Aziz. This came as a shock and surprise to the sons of Abdul Malik and numerous princes of the direct line. But Raja's promptness and threat of the Caliph's sword cowed them down and secured peaceful accession of Caliph Umar II. For this last act of his, Sulaiman, though not a blessing himself, became known as "the Key of blessings" among the so called avengers of Islam against the usurping house of Umayya. He reigned a little less than three years and died in September, 717 A.D.

Caliph Umar II (Septr. 717-Feb. 720 A.D.) is known to history as "the Fifth of the Pious Caliphs", who by his piety and character disarmed even the hostilities of the Kharijis and the Shias toward the house of Umayya. He discarded the Umayyad ways of life and reversed the traditional administrative policy of his predecessors. Since the time of Muawiyah it had been the practice to curse the name of Ali from every pulpit of the Umayyad Empire in Friday prayers. Umar II abolished this silly political pettiness unbecoming of a Muslim in the *house of God* (i.e., mosque). His predecessors denied full rights of Muslims to the non-Arab converts cared more for

[1] The tale of tragedy woven round the captive daughters of King Dahir of Sindh and the execution of Muhammad bin Qasim by Walid I is totally a myth invented by the Hindus to spite the Muslim conqueror by bringing in two fictitious female characters.

filling the treasury than for the spread of Islam. Their provincial governors did not exempt new non-Arab converts from poll-tax, and put other obstacles to dicourage subject peoples from coming over to Islam. "God sent His Prophet", so goes a saying of Umar II "neither to circumcise people nor to gather taxes". The caliph denounced the so-called *jihads* against non-Muslims without first summoning them to the faith as only impious wars for gathering spoils and enslaving the neighbouring peoples. He initiated a conciliatory policy and proclaimed peace, protection and exemption from tribute to those outside the caliphate who would voluntarily accept Islam. This had a ready response and brought to the fold of the Faith those who had hitherto fought obstinately for their heathenism ; namely, the Hindus of Sindh, the Sogdians of Trans-Oxiana, and the wild Berber tribes in the inaccessible regions of Africa. On the whole Umar II began well for all but ill for the house of Umayya and the Arab imperialism.

Umar II took up as his model the great caliph Umar I and became a changed man altogether. He followed his ideal with puritan seriousness. He did not take anything from the public treasury and made the office of Caliph a strictly honorary service to the State ; he would not even use government stationary for private use. It is said that he used to put out the office candle, and light his own while writing non-official letters. He put down nepotism, bribery and other evils of administration. The only reactionary bigotism that can be alleged against him is a Charter , which he issued to the Christians and Jews. In later times this passed for a Charter of Umar I, whereas modern researches attribute this Charter to Umar II.[2] This decree, however revolting to modern sentiment, seems to embody only the then existing disabilities of non-Muslim subjects of the caliphate. To mention a few points :

1. Christians and Jews were not to sound the gong or play other musical instrument loudly at the time of their religious services.
2. They were not to dress themselves in Muslim costume or imitate their social etiquette.
3. They were to stitch a patch of different colour, i.e., other than that of the rest of their dress.

[2] This charter became a scourge for humiliating and oppressing non-Muslims in general in the hands of reactionary bigots in Muslim countries for centuries.

4. They were to entertain Muslim travellers free of cost for three days in their convent.

However, Umar II must be considered a just ruler of his non-Muslim subjects within the bounds of the *Shariyat*. We have it on the authority of the great historian, Tabari, that in a letter "Umar II directs the stattholder of Kufa to treat non-Muslim subjects also justly and fairly, not to extort the tribute with severity and not to levy it equally upon cultivated and uncultivated land. He prohibits all duties over and above the tribute,—duties which had for ages been multiplying in the territories once Persian : presents at the Nauruz festival and Mihrigan-festival, fees for subordinate officials, wedding-fees, stamps for documents, and the *a'in*, i.e., literally custom, possibly in the sense of toll, like the English "custom."[3] Wellhausen on the authority of Tabari says elsewhere, "With regard to the Christians he kept absolutely within the bounds of justice though it might seem otherwise to them. He protected them in the possession of their old churches, which were assured to them by the terms of their capitulation, and only did not allow them to build new ones . . . . The law which he here exercised was certainly the formal law of the jurists, but he could not do otherwise without renouncing Islam."

Great authorities differ in their judgments on the policy of Umar II. Kremer and Muller are of opinion that he was simply obsessed by his pious Utopia, and according to some historians, the sum total of the effect of his policy was to undermine the foundation of the Umayyad Empire by making the Mawli more politically conscious, and more desperate enemies of the Arab Imperialism when the succesors of Umar II reversed his policy. Wellhausen differs from this view and with cogent reasons. It is true that the political abilities of Umar II were not equal to his good intentions. Besides, his reign of two and half years was too short a period to make a complete success of his great reforms. He was a Muslim of the old school, and he swam against the current. We admire his moral courage if not his political wisdom. The interests of Islam are certainly greater than those of an Arab national empire, and of the Arab race, though the most important of the numerous races that constitute the glory of Islam. If the Umayyad Empire suffered, Islam certainly gained by the policy of

[3] These old but illegal dues were known as *abwabs* in India, which were abolished by orthodox rulers, Firuz Tughlaq and Aurangzib.

Umar II. There was darkness and irreligion before him, and darkness again closed in upon Islam when he closed his eyes at the age of 39 on Friday, 9th Feb. 720.

Umar II was succeeded to the caliphate by Yazid II, son of Abdul Malik by Atika, daughter of Yazid I. His first act was to have revenge upon the Qais for wrongs in the reign of Sulaiman done to the Kalb, who were his maternal grandfathers on his mother's side. He made invalid everything having the stamp of puritan seriousness of Umar II. He was more of a love-lorn knight than an administrator . . . . and devoted his time not to business but to the generous passions. He reigned for four years and died on 26th January, 724.

Hisham, son of Abdul Malik, succeeded his brother as caliph. He was a man of honour and good morals, thoroughly businesslike and level-headed. Had he come after Walid I, Hisham could have just maintained the tempo of progress of Walid's reign. Though he himself was not much of a soldier he resumed wars with the hostile neighbouring nations on all fronts, in Spain and against the Byzantine empire and the Turks on the Caspian Sea. Internal decay of the Umayyad empire was hidden for a time under the blaze of wars abroad with varying fortunes. Hisham pursued with great vigour war against the Franks. At last the victory of Charles Martel on the field of Poitiers (Oct. 732 A.D.) saved Europe and Christianity from the fearful consequences of Muslim conquest. Caliph Hisham found a good substitute for Walid I's Hajjaj bin Yusuf in Khalid al-Qasri, as the viceroy of Iraq. Khalid's mother was an uncoverted Christian Arab lady. Though otherwise a very successful soldier and statesman, he exceeded even the limit of Umayyad indifference to Islam. Allegations were made that he allowed churches and synagogues to be built by Christians and Jews, and placed Zoroastrians over the heads of Muslims in finance and administration. Khalid bin al-Qasri in proud consciousness of his intellectual superiority looked down upon the externals of Islam. He was accused of uttering blasphemies, against Zamzam as a brackish and verminous well, against Kaba, the Prophet and his family and against the Book of God itself. These could possibly be believed sincerely even by those who made them out of political enmity. Khalid bin al-Qasri, however, represented a type of intellectuals among the Umayyad official aristocracy who maintained a discreet silence whereas Khalid al-Qasri courted arrest and dismissal by his impolitic vanity and outspokenness.

The failure of Hisham's long reign of twenty years (died Feb. 643) indicated the approching doom of the Umayyad Empire, which could not be saved even if the ruler might be an orthodox Muslim of old school. It is difficult to differ from Wellhausen's verdict on Hisham :

"The opinion of Alfred von Kremer and his successors may be that he (Hisham) reverted to the old sound principles of the Umaiyids, after the alleged wreck of the state-economy by Umar II, but in any case the end of his fairly long and toilsome reign was as unhappy as it could be . . . . . He left the broad kingdom in a far more disconsolate state than he found it, and it was no mere accident that the propaganda of the Abbasids became active in his time."

The history of the reigning caliphs after the death of Hisham ceases to be the history of the Umayyad Empire, not even the history of Syria. Hisham was succeeded by Walid II, son of Yazid II. He had grown up in dissolute company delighting in chase, women and wine and "thinking more of music and poetry than of the Qoran". While others were content with the cup and cellar, Walid had a reservoir built within the palace and large and deep enough to drown a man, and filled it with wine. He would drink out of this reservoir while listening to musicians from behind a screen. One day in a fit of ecstasy he plunged into the reservoir and was about to be drowned when a slave pulled him out by catching his hair. When he came to his senses he ordered the execution of the slave for the indignity offered to his august body by catching him by the hair !

There was a plot among the members of the ruling family to proclaim a rival caliph in Damascus. After an inglorious reign of ten months Walid II was killed by the partisans of Yezid III. His palace was stormed and while reading the Quran his head was cut off and delivered to Yazid III (Thursday, 27th April 744). Islam was thus doubly avenged, because this was also the day of political suicide by the ruling house of Umayya. If Yazid III could seize the caliphate by intrigue and force of arms, why not Marwan the Ass ? Yazid III died a natural death after a reign of 162 days (25th Septr., 744) ; but his nominee was recognised as caliph only in half of the province of Syria. Marwan the Ass was a bastard Umayyad but a clever politician and a brave soldier who had grown old in years and wars as the governor of the frontier province of Armenia. With a well-appointed army he marched upon Damascus,

and was proclaimed caliph in the Umayyad capital (Dec. 7, 744 A.D). He was the last of the Umayyads to rule in Damascus.

The above sketch of the history of the later Umayyads illustrates the personal incapacity of despots to ruin any empire. Now to turn to the decline of "Communal sense", as a cause of the downfall of the Umayyad Empire.

Communal sense is born either of the pride of racial superiority or of the unity of faith as a cement of the state structure. There was a decline of "Communal sense" towards the close of the Umayyad rule in both the aspects among the ruling race of Arabs, most of whom conceived Islam and the Caliphate as joint-stock concerns of the Arabs with an assured dividend to every Arab. Islam had failed to conquer the pagan Arab tribalism that put up a stiff fight to it. Under the Umayyad rule, the Bedouin tribes were like cats fighting over a cake and at last inviting a third party to hold the scales even. This inter-tribal feud and jealousy enabled the ruling house of Umayyids to keep itself in power at the centre, and their viceroys in the provinces. But the game could be played successfully only by a Muawiyah or an Abdul Malik. Khurasan became a replica of pre-Islamic Arabia with a veneer of Islam. There the Arabs indulged unbridled in their pagan passions of tribal feud, heedless of the fact that Khurasan was not Arabia but a land of non-Arabs ready to take every advantage of their suicidal feuds, political and tribal. After the pacification of Iraq by the able viceroys like Hajjaj bin Yusuf, Khurasan became the storm zone that reacted on the central government more powerfully than Spain or Africa. How the Arab tribes in Khurasan thought and acted we can guess from reflections of its governors on their delicate position. Ibn Khazim once remarked, "Rabia always rages against God, since He has raised up the Prophet from Mudar". A favourite poet of Nasr, the governor of Khurasan analysed the political situation thus for his master :

"We balance Qais with Rabia, and Tamim with Azd, and so the decision lies with Kinana."

20

Arab Chauvinism and the non-Arabs

Like every race suddenly sprung to power and dominion over other races, the Arabs in their imperial pride developed a sort of the theory of "blue blood", more pronounced than their innate sense of racial superiority of the pagan age. Islam's teaching of equality and fraternity within its fold had no hold on the Arabs except among a handful of pietists who did not count in the Arab society of the Umayyad regime. They divided human beings into three categories, e.g., *man, quasi-man* and *non-man. Man* meant an Arab only ; a client was *half-man* whereas a non-Muslim was a *non-man.* Islam, according to them, conferred sovereignty and rule not on the Muslims as such but on the Arabs alone ; conversion to Islam could as much make an Arab of a non-Arab as the waters of Zamzam could turn a donkey into a camel. Hajjaj bin Yusuf prevented exodus from villages to towns for conversion to Islam, and even when converted the villagers were sent back home with the name of the village branded on the hand of every man so that they might not evade payment of poll-tax. The Mawali (clients) of whatever race were "*barbarians* and *foreigners*" in the eyes of the Arab. The Arab expected gratitude and loyalty from the clients at least for saving them from hell-fire and being dragged up in chains to Paradise after death by those who conferred Islam on them ; for does not the Saying go, "God marvels at men who are dragged up to Paradise ?". There was only one way open to the client to rise to prominence, if not in the estimation of the Arab : and this was the door of learning. Learning, like "taking to orders" in Christendom, to a certain extent removed the stigma of non-Arab birth. Hasan al-Basri, a client by birth, became the Qazi of Basra at the time of Umar II. But the typical Arab entertained a contempt for a client climbing to high position by his worth and learning. "When, later

on, a *maula*, Nuh (*bin*) Darraj, became the Qazi of Basra, this verse was made upon him, 'The last day is surely come, since Nuh has become Qadi ! . . . .". Greek and Iranian slaves were generally made *freed* men and enrolled as household clients if they were educated. Clients soon became teachers of their rude and unlettered masters, but their lot did not change. They were denied social equality in every sphere of life. They were only a degree higher than a slave in bondage. They sat where the Arab guests left their shoes outside the dining hall, and food was served to them there in a feast. In spite of the learning of clients an Arab would look upon school masters as equal to Iranian asses in stupidity.

The Arab considered himself as a specially gifted being of superior brand, and by birth itself entitled to sovereignty over non-Arabs. Among the Arabs, the Quraish were supposed to possess certain physical properties superior to other Arabs, e.g., fertility of Quraish women after sixty (?). The social gulf between an Arab and his client was as wide as that between a Brahman and a Sudra in India. The Arab could marry as secondary wives daughters of clients, but not *vice versa*. When the Arabs had fallen into adversity under the Abbasids, the same social differentiation was observed by pious clients almost as inviolable as a religious injunction like god-fearing Sudras in the nineteenth century Brahminical society. A son of a client was once considered acceptable as bride-groom by his Arab master's impoverished clan. His father gave the boy a good beating for lifting up his eye to a girl of his master's house, and bitterly scolded the Arabs for having fallen so low.

However, the Mawali played a more important role as teachers of their masters than the Greek slaves had played in the Roman household after the Roman conquest of Greece. Rome had a solid though rough structure of a distinct civilization of her own long before she conquered Greece. Captive Hellas gave the Roman civilization a graceful finish, a colourful touch and a liberal tone ; whereas the Mawali of old Aryan stock of Iran and Byzantine built for the Arab altogether a new edifice from the bottom for the Arabs retaining only an Arab stamp, because Arabic was the mortar of that civilization. Some acholars hold the view that there is no such thing as *Arab* culture or *Arab* civilization, though a great Muslim civilization built up by non-Arabs in the fold of Islam is a growing organism till today. In fact, there were very few Arabs of pure blood among the builders of the Islamic civilisation of the Middle Ages. Nicholson, the eminent author of the *Literary History*

of the Arabs, claims all those who wrote in Arabic as Arabs, whereas Browne in his *Literary History of Persia* claims most of them as sons of Iran on more cogent grounds. It was only an accident that though undoubtedly Iranians by blood they wrote it in Arabic, the greatest international language of that age next to Latin only. However, if Arab civilisation is a misnomer, Aryan civilisation of India in its full bloom would fare no better under a close historical scrutiny. But there is no denying the fact that the Arabs and the Indo-Aryans respectively were the driving forces in creating these civilisations.

Arab chauvinism cost the Arabs very dear in the long run. Islam created a new Iranian nation out of the ruins of the Zoroastrian Iran. Within one hundred years the Mawali of Iran led by Abu Muslim under the black flag of the Abbasids hurled the Umayyads from their pedestal of glory, ushered in the *Daula* (Era) of the Abbasids, and sustained it in glory for a century till a more vigorous nation, the Turks became the standard bearers of Islam.

Amen ! Amen !