

STUDIES IN
ISLAMIC CULTURE
IN THE
INDIAN ENVIRONMENT

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STUDIES IN
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IN THE
INDIAN ENVIRONMENT

BY
AZIZ AHMAD

*Associate Professor of
Islamic Studies in the
University of Toronto*

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TO
BERNARD LEWIS

PREFACE

THE development of Islamic culture in India is as much a regional formulation of universal Islamic culture as a response to the tensions arising out of its tenacious persistence for survival, its fear of submergence and the compromises it made from time to time in the overwhelmingly non-Muslim environment of India. It has therefore been studied in this work in separate sections, in relation to the Muslim world in general, and in relation to Hindu India.

The first part deals exclusively with the religio-political 'pull' of Dār al-Islām, felt in various phases of its history by Muslim India: its attitude to the 'authority' and the 'myth' of the 'Abbāsid caliphate; its feeling of insecurity under the Mongol threat; the relations of its Mughal empire with the other two contemporary Muslim empires, the Ottoman and the Safavid, and the rôle of smaller Indian Muslim states in that pattern of the Muslim world; and finally under the British rule the tensions and the division of its political-emotional will between attachment to the centralizing ideologies of Dār al-Islām and the exigencies of separate political development within the sub-continent.

The second part examines the problems of environmental tensions in Muslim culture in India; trends of synthesis and anti-synthesis in various political, cultural and religious fields; mutations and divisions and antagonisms. Hindu and Muslim religions, civilizations and ways of life co-existed together for well over a thousand years, undergoing alternating or simultaneous processes of mutual attraction and repulsion. Neither the attraction nor the repulsion constitutes the whole story, which is interwoven in an infinite pattern of points and counter-points. There can perhaps be no better principle for analysing this long story of divided co-existence of Hindus and Muslims in India, leading to divided existence as India and Pakistan in the twentieth century, than Professor Butterfield's famous observation: 'The historian seeks to explain how the past came to be turned into the present, but there is a very real sense in which the only explanation he can give is to unfold the whole story and to reveal the complexity by telling it in detail.'

III. EARLY MUSLIM STUDIES OF HINDU CULTURE	108
(i) Arab Studies of Hindu Sciences. (ii) Al-Birūnī. (iii) Amīr Khusrau.	
IV. SŪFISM AND HINDU MYSTICISM	119
V. POPULAR SYNCRETISM	140
(i) The Bhakti Movement: Its Response and Resistance to Islam. (ii) Kabīr. (iii) The Bhakti Movement: Later Phase in Relation to Islam. (iv) Sikhism: From Syncretism to Hostility. (v) Minor Syncretic Sects. (vi) Syncretism in Folk-beliefs.	
VI. AKBAR: HERETIC OR APOSTATE?	167
VII. THE NAQSHBANDĪ REACTION	182
VIII. DĀRĀ SHIKOH AND AURANGZEB	191
(i) The Speculative Syncretism of Dārā Shikoh. (ii) The Theocratic Particularism of Aurangzeb.	
IX. THE WALĪ-ULLĀHĪ MOVEMENT	201
(i) The Religious and Political Ideas of Shāh Walī-Ullāh. (ii) The Movement of the Mujāhidīn.	
X. CULTURAL ORIENTATIONS: MEDIEVAL LITERATURE	218
(i) Sanskrit Literature and the Muslim Patronage. (ii) Persian Literature: The Muslim Stream. (iii) The Nature of the Hindu Contribution to Persian Literature.	
XI. CULTURAL ORIENTATIONS: URDU AND HINDI	239
(i) Hindi Literature: Hindu Stream and Muslim Participation. (ii) Urdu: Muslim Stream and Hindu Participation. (iii) The Language Controversy.	
EPILOGUE: MODERN SEPARATISM (1857-1947)	263
BIBLIOGRAPHY	277
INDEX	301

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A. A.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Belleten</i>	Türk Tarih Kurumu
<i>BSOS/BSOAS</i>	Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies/ Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
<i>IC</i>	Islamic Culture
<i>IHQ</i>	Indian Historical Quarterly
<i>JA</i>	Journal Asiatique
<i>JAS(Bombay)</i>	Journal of the Asiatic Society, Bombay Branch
<i>JASB</i>	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
<i>JIH</i>	Journal of Indian History
<i>JPHS</i>	Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society
<i>JRAS</i>	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London
<i>MIQ</i>	Medieval India Quarterly
<i>REI</i>	Revue des Etudes Islamiques
<i>PIHC</i>	Proceedings of the Indian History Congress
<i>RMM</i>	Revue du Monde musulman
<i>SI</i>	Studia Islamica
<i>TRAS</i>	Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society

PART I

MUSLIM INDIA IN RELATION TO
THE ISLAMIC WORLD 710 TO 1947

DELHI SULTANATE AND THE UNIVERSAL CALIPHATE

THE Muslims first set foot in India during the period of the rapid expansion of the caliphate. The expedition of Abu'l 'Ās Mughīra was an effort in this direction¹; its lack of success and the advice of Abū Musā al-Ash'arī against 'Uthmān al-Thaqafī's plan of a land invasion led the second caliph of Islam, 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb, to postpone the venture,² but the collection of military intelligence about India continued under his successor the caliph 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān³; there was an Arab incursion into Sind under the fourth caliph 'Alī in 660,⁴ and a more organized expedition was sent in 664 by Mu'awiyā, the first Umayyad caliph, under 'Abdullāh ibn Sawād which was repulsed by the Hindus.⁵ Other expeditions sent by early Umayyads, under Ahnaf ibn Qays, Rashīd ibn 'Umar al-Jazrī and Mundhir ibn Hārūd al-Basharī were in the nature of exploratory forays and did not make much headway.⁶ Under al-Walid ibn 'Abd al-Malik, the famous governor of Irāq, Hajjāj ibn Yūsuf, sent a well-organized Arab expedition under Muhammad ibn Qāsim in 711, which brought about the conquest of Sind and its incorporation in the Umayyad caliphate. It has been suggested that Hajjāj's plan of conquest was much more ambitious, and that he was planning a huge pincer movement north and south of the Central Asian spinal mass intended to meet in China, under two of the ablest Arab generals, Ibn Qāsim and Qutayba; 'For in the self-same year one was on the Indus, the other on the Jaxartes, in the same longitude, and at the same distance from the eastern goal.'⁷ If so, Hajjāj and his generals seem to have been unaware of the geographical hazards and the vast distances involved in this plan of world conquest.

Sind, however, became integrally a province of the Umayyad, and after its overthrow in 750, of the 'Abbāsīd caliphate, though

¹ al-Balādhuri, *Futūh al-buldān*, Cairo, 1932, 420; *Chach Nāma*, English tr. by K. Fredunberg, 57-58.

² al-Balādhuri, 420; *Chach Nāma*, 58.

³ al-Balādhuri, 420; *Chach Nāma*, 58-59.

⁴ al-Balādhuri, 421.

⁵ *Chach Nāma*, 63-66.

⁶ al-Balādhuri, 421; *Chach Nāma*, 61.

⁷ Elliot, i, 434.

not without a brief struggle on its soil between the adherents of the old and the new dynasty. Under the 'Abbāsids Sind was culturally integrated in the Dār al-Islām. In 871 the 'Abbāsīd caliph al-Mu'tamid bestowed the government of Sind on the Saffārid Ya'qūb ibn Layth who had become the virtual ruler of the eastern frontier provinces of the caliphate from the Indus valley in the south to Tukharistan in the north. When the Saffārid power collapsed, 'Sind, neglected by the imperial government, came to be divided among several petty princes who, though they transmitted no revenue and rendered no political allegiance to the Khalif, were, like other more powerful chiefs, who had assumed independence, glad to fortify their position by acknowledging his spiritual supremacy.¹ Before surrendering to the Qarāmite heresy, Sind passed through a period of partial Hindu dominance, but the *khutba* (Friday sermon) continued to be read in Muslim mosques in the name of the 'Abbāsīd caliph.²

The situation changed when the Qarāmites occupied Sind. The first *dā'i* (missionary) of the Ismā'ilīs had arrived in Sind in 883.³ Ibn Shaybān sent by the Fātimīd al-'Azīz with a military escort took Multan in 977. The *khutba* of the Fātimīd caliphs continued to be read in Multan for several decades and their sovereignty remained loosely effective in Sind.⁴ The ascendancy of the Qarāmites in Upper Sind seems to have outlasted Mahmūd of Ghazna's sack of that city, and they still remained in contact with the Ismā'ilīs and other kindred communities in Syria and Egypt. In 1032 Mukhtāna Bahā al-dīn, one of the principal compilers of Druze writings, addressed an epistle to the 'unitarians of Multān and Hindūstān in general, and to Shayk Ibn Sumar Rājā Bal in particular'.⁵ The effective subjugation of the Qarāmites in Sind took place only after the consolidation of Nāsir al-dīn Qubāchā's power in Sind in the beginning of the thirteenth century.

The Ismā'ilī and later the Buwayhid challenges in Irāq seem to have crystallized the theory of *Khilāfat* as presented by al-Māwardī in the practice of the Sunnī Islam.⁶ It bound the Sunnī successor states to the centralized spiritual authority of the

¹ Elliot, i, 453. ² al-Istakhri in Elliot, i, 28; Ibn Hawqal in op. cit. i, 35.

³ Abū Zafar Nadvi, *Tārīkh-i Sindh*, A'zamgarh, n.d., 200.

⁴ S. M. Stern, 'Ismā'ilī Propaganda and Fātimīd Rule in Sind', *IC* (1949), xiii, 298-307; Shaykh Muhammad Ikram, *Ab-i Kawthar*, Lahore, 1952, 33.

⁵ Elliot, i, 488-91.

⁶ al-Māwardī, *Ahkām al-Sultāniya*, Cairo, 1881. H. A. R. Gibb, 'Al-Māwardī's Theory of the Khilāfat', *IC* (1937), xi, 3, 291-302.

'Abbāsid caliphate, and it gave the ruler of the successor state delegated legal authority in his own territory and a claim to the loyalty of his subjects. 'In theory at least', writes Rosenthal summing up the situation, 'the offices of caliph and emir are united in one and the same person. In practice the caliph often delegates his temporal authority to an emir, who exercises effective power but recognizes the spiritual authority of the caliph. This may be nothing more than a legal fiction; but it alone guaranteed the unity of Islam under the overall authority of the *sharī'a*.'¹

The Muslim advent in north-west India almost coincided with the crystallization of this conception of Khilāfat. In the early eleventh century Mahmūd of Ghazna, who ostentatiously submitted himself in enlightened self-interest² to the spiritual sway of the 'Abbāsid caliphate, was also the monarch who invaded and incorporated north-west India into his kingdom. In his mind the two processes, submission to a 'universal' *khilāfat* and the invasion and occupation of 'infidel' Indian territory were clearly interconnected. The occasion of his investiture by al-Qādir was also the occasion of his vow to extend the impact of Islam in 'pagan' India; and his sack of Somnāt led to a second caliphal investiture with more titles and honours.³ Mahmūd's coins bore the name of the 'Abbāsid caliph beside his own, a practice which was continued by his successors at Ghazna and Lahore.⁴ More than that, he bequeathed to the Ghaznāvid sultans at Lahore and the Turkish sultans at Delhi, the heritage of a Muslim world-view which bound the Muslim sultān, of his own free will, to the theoretical authority of a 'universal' *khalifā*, who did not or could not interfere in the regional sultān's freedom in his own territory, but who consecrated his legal authority among his Muslim subjects and ensured their loyalty, and who was a symbol of association that bound Muslim India to the Muslim world.

Bayhaqī has left us a detailed account of the reception given in 1030 to Abū Muhammad Hashimī, the envoy of al-Qādir by

¹ Erwin I. J. Rosenthal, *Political Thought in Medieval Islam*, Cambridge, 1958, 23.

² Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Min'at al-zamān*, B M. Or. MS. 4619, fo 204b; Gardīzī, *Kitāb Zayn al akhbār*, ed. M. Nazim, Berlin, 1928, 71; al-'Uṭbī, *Tārīkh Yamīnī*, Eng. tr. J. Reynolds (O.T.F.), 299; Muhammad Nazim, *The Life and Times of Sultān Mahmūd of Ghazna*, Cambridge, 1931, 164-5.

³ Gardīzī, 62-63, 87-88; al-'Uṭbī, 299; letter of Mahmūd to al-Qādir in Abū Shujā' al-Rudhrawī and Hūlī al-Sābī, *Tajārib al-umam*, ed. D. S. Morgoliouth and H. Amedroz, Cairo, 1914-16, iii, 341-3.

⁴ E. Thomas, 'Coins of the Kings of Ghazna', *JRAS*, ix, 267; xvii, 138.

Mas'ūd, the son and successor of Mahmūd of Ghazna, and of the sense of security a caliphal investiture brought to a Muslim sovereign.¹

Ghaznāwid sultāns of succeeding generations continued to be honoured by the 'Abbāsīd caliphal investitures. On two such occasions, the investitures of Sayf al-dawla Mahmūd and of Arsalān Shāh (1115-18), the poet Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān wrote glowing panegyrics.² 'Ala al-dīn, the notorious Ghūrīd ruler who sacked Ghazna and earned for himself the unenviable title of Jahānsūz (world-burner) also prided himself, on being the 'lamp of the house of the 'Abbāsīds', an egoistical way of describing his relation as a vassal to the caliphal house.³ The evidence of the coins minted by Mu'izz al-dīn Muhammad ibn Sām Ghūrī, the Muslim conqueror of North India and its first ruler, as well as some architectural evidence dating back to his rule (1174-1206) affirms his submission to the 'Abbāsīd caliph al-Nāsir whose name appears with his own.⁴

After the establishment of his power in North India and the extinction of his rivals Tāj al-dīn Yildiz and Nāsir al-dīn Qubācha (1229), the 'Slave' Sultan Shams al-dīn Iltmish (1211-36) received the investiture of the 'Abbāsīd al-Mustansir as a legal sanction of his monarchy. As the caliphal envoy arrived Iltmish 'observed the rules of obedience and submission as were binding on him' and was 'overwhelmed with Happiness'⁵; and the poet Tāj al-dīn Sangrīza composed his famous panegyric celebrating the occasion.⁶ Iltmish's silver coins bear the name of al-Mustansir on the reverse side, and on the obverse his own as the helper of the Islamic caliph (*nāsir-i Amir al-Mū'minīn*), a legend that was subsequently very frequently used by the sultans of Muslim India; his copper coins bore the name of the caliph on one side and the Indianized form of his title as *Shrī Shalīphāh* on the other.⁷

The name of the last caliph of Baghdād, al-Musta'sim, appeared in India first on the coins of 'Alā al-dīn Mas'ūd, and continued to

¹ Abu'l Fazl Muhammad ibn Husain al-Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Mas'ūdi*, edited by Ghani and Fayyāz, Tehran, 1949, 44-45, 48-49, 77-84, 286, 310, 357, 369-72.

² Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān, *Dirān*, edited by Rashīd Yāsīmī, Tehran, n.d., 113, 275.

³ Minhāj al-Sirāj al-Jūzjānī, *Tabaqāt-i Nāsiri*, Calcutta, 1864, 57.

⁴ E. Thomas, *The Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi*, London, 1871, 12-14, 22-24, 29.

⁵ Yahya ibn Ahmad Sirhindī, *Tārīkh-i Mubārak Shāhi*, Calcutta, 1931, 19.

⁶ 'Abdul Qādir Badāunī, *Muntakhib al-tawārīkh*, Calcutta, 1868-9, ii, 66.

⁷ Thomas, op. cit., 46, 52.

appear even after the murder of that caliph, the apparent end of the 'Abbāsīd dynasty and the sack of Baghdād by the Mongols in 1258, on the coins of the pious Nāsir al-dīn Mahmūd (1246-65), his successors Ghiyāth al-dīn Balban (1266-87) and Mu'izz al-dīn Kayqubād (1287-8).¹ Balban in his inscription on the walls of the mosque at Garhmukteshwar (1283) still called himself the 'helper' (nāsir) of a caliph who did not exist except in theory.² At the same time the political philosophy behind Balban's glorification of the status of the sultan in India,³ and his introduction of such innovations in court ceremonial as prostration, seems to underline the necessity of the sultan asserting his sovereignty 'in his own divine right' like a Sassānid monarch, as there was no caliph in rightful succession of the Prophet to bestow it upon him by investiture.

Jalāl al-dīn Khaljī (1290-6) whose dynasty succeeded that of the 'Slave' sultans in Delhi continued to inscribe al-Musta'sim's name on his coins. But now, nearly half a century after the sack of Baghdād, the theory of the authority of a non-existent *Khalīfa* was wearing thin. Sunnī Islam, more pragmatic than the Shī'ite, was finding the concept of an 'absent' *Imām* difficult to swallow. 'Alā al-dīn Khaljī (1296-1316) and most of his successors until Muhammad bin Tughluq, reconciled themselves to a concept of universal Muslim caliphate in the abstract, with a hypothetical caliph. The title used by these sultans, no doubt on the advice of the *ulamā* and the élite of their court, was the traditional one, *nāsir-i amīr al-mū'minīn* or in the case of 'Alā al-dīn Khaljī even that of *yamīn al-khilāfat* (right hand of the caliphate).⁴ The same titles were used by 'Alā al-dīn Khaljī in his inscriptions on the Qutb Minār.

About this time the word '*khilāfat*', underwent a loosening of meaning in its Persian usage and became synonymous with other terms used for a state or a kingdom like '*dawlat*' and '*saltanat*'. This vulgarization of the term '*khilāfat*' was not confined to India; it was a logical consequence of the sack of Baghdād and the end of the 'Abbāsīd caliphate.

'Alā al-dīn's degenerate son and last of the Khaljīs Qutb al-dīn Mubārak (1316-20) was the first, and in fact the only Muslim ruler in India who appropriated for himself the caliphal titles *amīr*

¹ Thomas, op. cit., 122, 127-9, 141.

² Ibid., 136.

³ Ziya al-dīn Baranī, *Tārīkh-i Firūz Shāhī*, Calcutta, 1862, 103.

⁴ Amīr Khusrāu, *I'jāz-i Khusrāwī*, Lucknow, 1876, 14; Thomas, 168, 173.

al mū'minīn and *imām al-a'zam*, as well as the pseudo-'Abbāsīd ruling name *al-Wāthiq*.¹ His favourite, murderer and successor Khusrau Khān, who apostasized from Islam, continued to call himself by a Muslim name in the empire, and the legend on his coins became confused: on the one hand he appropriated the title *al-Wāthiq* used by his predecessor, on the other on some of his silver and copper coinage he contented himself by claiming to be the '*wali*' (servant) of the Prince of the Faithful.²

Under the Tughluqs, who succeeded the Khaljis, there was a return to the old pattern of loyalty to the hypothesis of a 'universal' caliphate and Ghiyāth al-dīn Tughluq (1320-5) re-adopted on his coins the formula of 'Alā al-dīn Khaljī calling himself the *nāsir* (helper) of the caliph, without mentioning his name. His son Muhammad bin Tughluq (1325-51) was the first ruler in India who regarded his empire as a part of Dār al-Islām, while not insisting like his successor Firūz, on the strict promulgation of the *sharī'a*. Shortly after his accession he sent embassies to the court of the Mamlūk al-Nāsir Muhammad in Egypt, and the Īl-Khān Abū Sa'īd in Persia, while his relations with the Chaghatāy Tarmashīrīn Khān in Transoxiana, who had begun by invading India, matured into that of friendship.³ If one is permitted to apply a modern term to the medieval religio-political idealism of Muhammad bin Tughluq, he can also be described as the first pan-Islamist in India, who believed in the world of Islam as a composite totality, at the centre of which was the authority of the 'Abbāsīd caliph. The kings who had reigned in India without the caliphal investiture, he regarded as usurpers.⁴ This usurpation, according to him, began with Balban, and continued through the Khaljis and the apostate usurper Khusrau Khān to his own father Ghiyāth al-dīn Tughluq; he had their names deleted from Friday sermons. In retrospect, he reproached himself for having appropriated titles and privileges which were becoming to the 'Abbāsīd caliphs alone. He confesses that as a 'usurper' he had come to lose intellectual and religious balance and had passed through a stage of rationalist agnosticism 'which was worse than apostasy'; con-

¹ Thomas, 179-83.

² Ibid. 186.

³ G. Weil, *Geschichte des Abbasidenkalifats in Egypten*, Stuttgart, 1860, iv, 353; *Majma'al-fasihi*, Bankipore MS. fo. 209; Ibn Battutah, *Voyages*, tr. into French by C. Defremery and B. R. Sanguinetti, Paris, 1857, iii, 43.

⁴ Fragment of Muhammad bin Tughluq's Memoirs in B.M. Add. MS. 25, 735, fos. 316a-b; Barani, 491-3.

sequently as a monarch he failed in all his projects, until he arrived at the right solution, the search for the rightful *imām* and *khalīfa* of the *umma*, who alone could have the authority to bestow on him the rights and privileges of sovereignty.¹ He must have known of the existence of the 'Abbāsid successors of al-Musta'sim living in exile in Egypt from his own envoy to al-Nāsir and from the foreign élite in his court. He applied for investiture to the Cairene caliph al-Mustakfi, and pending the caliphal response had his own name deleted from the coins and postponed Friday and 'Īd sermons, which were resumed only after the return of his envoy Hājī Muhammad Sarsari from Cairo in 1343 with the caliphal edict and robes of investiture.² In celebration of the investiture the heavy customs duties that used to be levied on the frontier were abolished.³ The names of the 'Abbāsid al-Mustakfi and his successors al-Wāthiq I (1339-42) and al-Hakīm (1342-52), from whom Muhammad bin Tughluq also received missions of investiture, came to be read in the Friday and 'Īd sermons throughout the Tughluq empire; and perhaps outside Egypt the prestige of the Cairene caliphs was nowhere as high as in Tughluq India.⁴

One of the Cairene caliphal envoys to Muhammad bin Tughluq was no less a person than the 'Shaykh al-Islām' (*Shaykh al-Shuyūkh*) of Egypt whose arrival was celebrated by the poet-laureate of the court Badr-i Chāch in ornate panegyrics.⁵ In Muhammad bin Tughluq's coinage after his investiture his own name was left out and substituted by that of al-Mustakfi and later, of al-Hakīm.⁶

Caliphal investiture came to Fīrūz Tughluq (1351-88) unsolicited from al-Hakīm 'entrusting to him the territories of Hind'.⁷ Fīrūz, like his predecessor, held the view that 'it is by his (caliph's) sanction that the power of the kings is assured, and no king is secure until he has submitted himself to the *khalīfa*'. The 'greatest and best of honours that I obtained through God's mercy was, that by my obedience and piety, and friendliness and submission to the *Khalīfa*, the representative of the holy Prophet, my authority was

¹ Muhammad bin Tughluq, fos. 317a-b.

² Baranī, 494.

³ Ibn Battūah, III, 117.

⁴ cf. D. Ayalon, 'Studies in the transfer of 'Abbāsid Caliphate from Baghdad to Cairo', in *Arabica*, Leyden, 1960, vii, 41-59.

⁵ Badr-i Chāch, *Qasā'id*, Cawnpore, n.d., 13-17.

⁶ Thomas, 207-16, 249-53, 259-60.

⁷ Shams Sirāj Afīf, *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz Shāhī*, Calcutta, 1890, 274-6, Baranī, 598, Sirlundī, 126.

confirmed'.¹ Baranī attributes 'the peace and prosperity' of Fīrūz's reign to the caliphal blessing.² Coins of Fīrūz Tughluq bore the names of al-Hakīm and his successors al-Mu'tadid and al-Mutawakkil. The latter's name, due to the loss of direct contact with Egypt during the chaos that descended on the Delhi sultanate after Fīrūz, continued to appear on the coins of all his successors in the Tughluq dynasty.³

The regional Muslim rulers of North India, whenever they declared themselves independent of the suzerainty of Delhi and struck their own coins, did so in the name of the 'Abbāsīd caliph. The coins of the kings of Bengal bore the name of al-Musta'sim long after its use had ceased in the Delhi mint.⁴ The Sharqī sultans of Jaunpūr called themselves the vice-regents of the Prince of the Faithful, and sometimes inscribed the names of the 'Abbāsīd caliphs on their coins.⁵ The successor states of the Tughluq empire in Malwa, Gujarat and Deccan did not use caliphal legends on their coins. In the case of the Bahmanid kingdom of Deccan this omission may have been due to the Shī'ite influences at the court.

In Delhi, Khizar Khān (1414-21) substituted the names of Tīmūr and Shāh Rukh instead of those of the Cairene caliphs; but this innovation was confined to his own reign. His 'Sayyid' successors, as well as the Lodīs, reverted to the formula of describing themselves on their coins as the viceroys (*nā'ib*) of the caliph of Muslims, until Bābur's advent in 1526.⁶

In the Sūrī interregnum (1538-55) one comes across an interesting development. Instead of a reference to the contemporary 'universal' caliph, the coins of Sher Shāh bear the name of the four holy caliphs.

On the basis of the numismatic evidence one may assume that the name, or in its absence, the authority of the 'Abbāsīd caliph, was accepted practically throughout the period of the pre-Mughal rule in India as the source and sanction of the sultān's legal authority. The use of coinage must have familiarized the common Indian Muslim with the position and authority of the 'universal' caliph; and it will therefore be not unreasonable to hazard a conjecture

¹ Fīrūz Tughluq, *Futūhāt-i Fīrūz Shāhī*, Eng. tr. in Elliot, iii, 387.

² Baranī, 598-9.

³ Thomas, 274-7, 304-5, 308-9, 311, 316.

⁴ Ibid. 194, 197, 201.

⁵ Ibid. 333, 336, 336-9 and *passim*.

⁶ Ibid. 321-2.

that when the name of a particular 'Abbāsīd caliph appeared on the coinage, it was also read out in the Friday sermon (*khutba*); when the name of a caliph long dead like al-Musta'sim, or no name but merely the title of the caliph, appeared on the coins, then perhaps the prescribed passage in the Friday sermons referring to the universal caliph was read out with the name left blank. This was a practice which was also followed in some places in Muslim India after the abolition of Ottoman caliphate in 1924.

II

THE MONGOL THREAT¹

PERSUADING Princess Khudāwand-zādeh to waive the claim of her son to the throne of Delhi in favour of her cousin Fīrūz Tughluq, the argument was pressed in 1351 by Malik Sayf al-dīn Khoju in these words: 'We have arrived in an alien land and a powerful Mongol army confronts us.'² This may have been the description of the actual situation of the Tughluq army by the waters of Indus in 1351, when on the death of Muhammad bin Tughluq it was being harassed by the rebels of Sind on one flank and on the other by the treachery of an auxiliary Mongol force³; but in a larger sense it describes the Muslim Indian situation from 1221, when in pursuit of Jalāl al-dīn Khwārizm the hordes of Chingiz Khān made their first appearance further north on the same river, until the actual sack of Delhi by Tīmūr Leng in 1398. The psychological formula 'Mongol pressure in an alien land' sums up the feeling of insecurity, and consequently that of Islamic solidarity, in the Muslim élite which clung desperately to its foothold in a country where the indigenous Hindu resistance was hostile and from outside the formidable threat of Mongol invasion meant annihilation. It shaped the administrative policy, emphasized conservative trends in religion and culture and separatist trends in politics; it controlled the ebb and flow of conquest within the sub-continent and encouraged a nostalgic interest in the affairs and ideas of the rest of the Muslim world.

Luckily for Muslim India Chingiz Khān's contemporary at Delhi was the saintly but pragmatic Iltutmish, on whom the fatal error of Muhammad Shāh Khwārizm in provoking the Mongol fury and inviting disaster was not lost. His refusal to give asylum to Jalāl al-dīn Khwārizm was as much a gesture of benevolent neutrality to the Mongols, as it was a precaution against the ambitions, military skill and popularity of the Khwārizmian prince.⁴

¹ For a concise survey of Mongol incursions in India see Karl Jahn, 'Zum Problem der mongolischen Eroberungen in Indien (13.-14. Jahrhundert)', in *Akten des Vierundzwanzigten Internationalen Orientalischen-Kongresses*, München, 1957.

² Afif, 46.

³ Baranī, 533-6.

⁴ Ala al-dīn al-Juwaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahānkushā*, Eng. tr. by Boyle, Manchester, 1958, ii, 413-14.

Though the Mongol presence on the Hindu Kush and the Indus served indirectly to consolidate Iletmish's power by weakening his rival Qubācha; it also menaced the very existence of the infant Muslim power in north India. Mongol columns under Chaghatāy and Ögödei ravaged southern Punjab and Chaghatāy spent a winter at Kalinjar.¹ On the whole the Delhi Sultanate maintained a policy of watchful defence and cautious neutrality which extended to dealings with the factions among Mongols themselves. Wary of Mongol wiles, Iletmish gave a discouraging reception to the embassy of Berke of the Golden Horde, newly converted to Islam.²

Luckily again India escaped the main brunt of a Mongol invasion and the fate of China, Central Asia, Russia, and Persia. Its experience of the Mongol onslaught was one of raids, forays and incursions by commanders of secondary rank and skill. These were almost miraculously ill-timed, for if any had occurred when there was a weak sultan in Delhi or internal chaos and rebellion afoot the Muslim state in India could easily have been undermined. Such a situation very nearly developed when on the death of Iletmish his son Jalāl al-dīn took refuge in the court of Mangu, who sent Sāli Bahādur with a Mongol expeditionary force to install him on the throne of Delhi; but this Mongol force could not make much headway beyond Jajjar near Delhi, and Jalāl al-dīn had to be content with a frontier principality bestowed upon him by the Mongols.³

After the sack of Baghdād in 1258, faced with the unsubdued resistance of the Mamluks in Syria and the growing hostility of his Muslim cousins of the Golden Horde in the Caucasus, Hulāgu Khān's policy was one of caution in India. Though Kishlu Khān, the governor of western Sind, had transferred his allegiance to the Mongols and was conspiring with some nobles to overthrow the Delhi Sultanate, the project was discouraged by Hulāgu, whose instructions to Sāli Bahādur were to raze the fortifications of Multan but not to undertake a full-scale invasion of India.⁴ Another reason for the inactivity of the Mongol hordes on the Indian front for nearly thirty years was the series of crises in the Mongol world which followed the death of Mangu in 1259.⁵

¹ 'Ala al-dīn al-Juwaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahānkushā*, i, 325-8.

² Jūzjānī, 447.

³ 'Abdullāh Vassāf, *Tajrīḥ al-amsār wa tajrīḥ al-āthār*, Bombay, 1877, 310.

⁴ Ibid. 319. Jūzjānī, 212-17, 270-1, 314, 322.

⁵ René Grousset, *L'Empire mongol*, Paris, 1941, i, 367.

In these critical years the policy of the Delhi Sultanate under the able guidance of Balban was one of realism and consolidation. At one stage during his rule, probably when the pressure of the Golden Horde and the Mamluks was strong on the Īl-Khānid Mongols, Balban toyed with the idea of an invasion of Transoxiana and Khurasan, but within India he followed a policy of caution against any further expansion at the expense of Hindu rājās while his north-western flank was exposed to the Mongols.¹ In fact as a result of this policy the Muslim conquest of South India was postponed for nearly half a century. The system of frontier defences organized by Balban had a salutary effect in checking Mongol infiltration in India; although in this process he lost his able son Muhammad Sultān (Khān-i Shahīd). Balban's line of defence was based on the Deopapur-Bayana axis where Jalāl al-dīn Khaljī and later Ghāzī Malik, respectively founders of Khaljī and Tughluq dynasties, earned their popularity and prestige as guardians of the marches against the Mongols; the latter achieving the singular distinction of having defeated twenty-nine Mongol expeditions.²

The Mongols had sacked and burnt Lahore in 1241; and after they had left, further havoc was wrought by neighbouring Hindu tribes,³ which were chased out by Malik Qaraqash. Amīr Khusrau was writing biting satires on the filthiness and uncouth appearance of the Mongols.⁴ The accounts of the victory of the Mamluks at 'Ayn Jālūt were narrated by Jūzjānī; but by far the most fascinating of the anti-Mongol repertoire of news was the story of the conversion of Berke and the Golden Horde to Islam. It was even suggested that Bātu Khān had been a crypto-Muslim. In fact just then Berke was more than interested in the anti-Hulāgu alliance proposed to him by Baybars, and in pursuit of this policy he seems to have forgotten the cold reception given to his first embassy by İltmish. His second envoy, a North African Arab, Imām Shams al-dīn Maghribī was hospitably received by the pious Sultān Nāsir al-dīn Mahmūd⁵ under whom the Indo-Muslim psychological resistance to the Īl-Khānids had been stiffening and who had already promulgated that, despite the martyrdom of Must'asim, the name of that last of the 'Abbāsīd caliphs of Baghdad was to

¹ Baranī, 50.

² Baranī, 196, 422; Ibn Battūta, *Voyages*, iii, 202.

³ Jūzjānī, 395.

⁴ Amīr Khusrau, *Qirān al-Sa'dayn*, Lucknow, 1885, 72-73.

⁵ Jūzjānī, 437-51.

continue to be read in the *khutbas* and inscribed on the coins. Jūzjānī ends the Indian section of his history on the optimistic note of a new hope for the world of Islam in view of the conversion of at least one of the great Mongol Khāns.¹

After Hulāgu the initiative of aggression against India had passed on to the Chaghatāys. They were surrounded on all sides by their more powerful cousins, the metropolitan Mongol empire in China, the Golden Horde, the Īl-Khānids, and finally they had to submit to the stranglehold of Ögödeian Qāidu in their own Central Asian homeland. Unlike other Mongols they had remained nomads, and unresponsive and indifferent to the pull of the urban Muslim culture of Transoxiana.² They had only one outlet for the display of their energy, the Indian frontier areas. They consolidated their position in that mountainous region which now bears the name of Afghanistan, and thence made organized attempts to penetrate deep into India.

To this the response of Jalāl al-dīn Khaljī during his short reign (1290-6) was a policy of friendly pacification, especially in relation to those Mongol adventurers who had accepted Islam. A large number of Mongols settled down in his kingdom, and a quarter in Delhi, Mughalpurā, still bears their name.³

This policy had to be completely reversed by his successor 'Alā al-dīn Khaljī, whose quixotic dream of world conquest inspired by the accounts of Alexander the Great and Chingiz Khān was directed on the frank advice of his nobles to two realistic and clearly defined military objectives; conquest of the rest of the sub-continent and consolidation of north-western marches against the Mongols.⁴ In 1297-8 the Mongol forces sent by the Chaghatāy ruler Duwa Khān, who was re-establishing Chaghatāy power and prestige in Transoxiana and the marches of Afghanistan and who was soon to overthrow the Ögödeian yoke in his homeland, penetrated deep into the Punjab but were defeated by 'Alā al-dīn's general Ulugh Khān. Between 1300 and 1305 a Mongol army marched under Duwa Khān's son Qutlugh Khwāja to the very gates of Delhi, and a second force under Targhi besieged Delhi at a time when 'Alā al-dīn's armies were occupied in far-off provinces in extending the frontiers of the Khaljī Empire, leaving its centre

¹ Jūzjānī, 446.

² René Grousset, *L'Empire des Steppes*, Paris, 1939, 398-9, 413.

³ Baranī, 218-19. Dharam Pal, 'Alauddin Khalji's Mongol Policy', *IC*, xxi (1947), 56.

⁴ Baranī, 267-9.

and heart exposed to the Mongols.¹ 'Les contemporains parient même croire un moment que l'Inde allait subir, après un retard de trois quarts de siècle, la conquête gengiskhanide.'² But the Mongols had to abandon the siege of Delhi and retire. Another Mongol force which had penetrated as far as Amroha in the valley of Ganges was defeated by the Khaljī general Akbar Beg; and this time 'Alā al-dīn Khaljī decided to teach the Mongols a lesson in their own style. Twenty thousand of the captured Mongol soldiers were trampled under elephants' feet.³ Chaghatāy incursions, however, continued and were summarily dealt with by Malik Kāfūr and Ghāzī Malik. To deal with the menace of Mongol invasions from abroad and possible indigenous unrest within the empire, 'Alā al-dīn completely revolutionized the economy of his empire, introducing a number of marketing and fiscal reforms,⁴ and with the strength which comes of prosperity he was able to proceed with the conquest of the remaining Hindu states in the sub-continent, holding at the same time the Mongols at bay. He had also learnt to distrust the neo-Muslim Mongols in his lands whom he had ruthlessly massacred.⁵ His distrust extended to the Īl-Khānids. When Oljaitu in consonance with his policy of rivalry with the Chaghatāys over the control of the marches of Afghanistan⁶ sent an embassy to 'Alā al-dīn informing him of his own conversion to Islam and asking for the hand of a Khaljī princess in marriage, 'Alā al-dīn had the Īl-Khānid ambassadors imprisoned.⁷

Between Duwa Khān's death in 1306 and Tarmashīrīn's accession in 1326 the Chaghatāys had no leader of outstanding calibre. Ghāzī Malik who founded the Tughluq dynasty as Sultān Ghiyāth al-dīn (1320-5) was chosen by the *ijmā'* of Muslim nobles as their monarch, on the argument that he was a *ghāzī* by virtue of having disposed of the dual menace to Islam in India, the Mongol incursions as well as the apostate uprising which had resulted in Hindu dominance.⁸

The history of the relations of his son and successor Muhammad bin Tughluq (1325-51) with the Mongol rulers of Persia and Transoxiana is confused. The confusion is worse confounded by

¹ Amīr Khusrau, *Khazā'in al-Futūh*, Eng. tr. by M. Habib, Madras, 1931, 23-24; Baranī, 253-61, 302-4.

² Grousset, op. cit. 412.

³ Amīr Khusrau, 26-28; Baranī, 320-1.

⁴ Baranī, 335-6.

⁵ Amīr Khusrau, 29-30; Baranī, 320-3, 340; Yahya ibn Ahmad Sirhindī, *Tārīkh-i Mubārak Shāhī*, Calcutta, 1931, 72-75.

⁶ Grousset, 413-14.

⁷ Vassāf, 528.

⁸ Amīr Khusrau, *Tughluq Nāma*, Aurangabad, 1933, 140-3; Baranī, 423, 441.

some theories of modern scholars¹ who have rejected the contemporary evidence of Baranī for sources of later date of secondary value. On the basis of contemporary accounts, however, the following picture seems to emerge.

Because of the weakness of Duwa Khān's successors, Muhammad bin Tughluq considered his northern flank secure and went ahead with the hasty project of shifting his capital from Delhi to Deogir (Dawlatabad) in the Deccan in 1327. This was not altogether an unwise move as it would have consolidated Muslim power in the Deccan; but the execution of this project took a form of unnecessary cruelty and wastefulness because of the forced uprooting of the population of Delhi. In the meantime Tarmashīrīn (Mongol version of the Buddhist name Dharmacāri),² who had become the ruler of the Chaghatāy Mongols in 1325, saw in the ruin of Delhi his opportunity of invading India, but was defeated in 1329 by Muhammad bin Tughluq who pursued him to the frontier.³ Soon after that, Tarmashīrīn was converted to Islam and cordial diplomatic relations⁴ developed between him and Muhammad bin Tughluq who had also exchanged embassies with the Īl-Khānid Abū Sa'id.⁵ But it is possible that he saw chaos descending upon degenerate Īl-Khānid Persia, and in the rivalry between the Chaghatāys and the Īl-Khānids, he might have seen the opportunity of extending his own empire, or at least consolidating his military position in the marches of north-west. It has been suggested that his establishment of diplomatic relations with the Egyptian Mamlūk al-Nāsir⁶ was a part of an anti-Īl-Khanid alliance but it seems more likely that all these diplomatic overtures on the part of Muhammad bin Tughluq were projections of his foreign policy, based on the conception of good relations with other rulers within the Muslim society.⁷

¹ Ishwari Prasad, *History of the Qaraunah Turks*, Allahabad 1936; Wolsey Haig, 'Five Questions on the History of the Tughlaq Dynasty', *JRAS* (1929); Gardiner Browne in the *Journal of the U.P. Historical Society*, i, part i, 19; Mahdi Husain, *The Rise and Fall of Muhammad bin Tughlaq*, London, 1938.

² Grousset, 414.

³ Hāji al-Dabīr, *Zafar al-wāliḥ bi-Muzaffar wa-āliḥ* (*An Arabic History of Gujarat*), ed. E. Denison Ross, London, 1921, iii, 865.

⁴ Ibn Battūṭah, iii, 43. Grousset 414.

⁵ *Majma' al-Fasīḥi*, Bankipore MSS. fo. 209.

⁶ Maqrīzī, 836, G. Weil, *Geschichte des Abbasidenchalifats in Egypten*, Stuttgart, 1860, iv, 353.

⁷ Fragment of Muhammad bin Tughluq's Memoirs in B.M. Add. MS. fos. 317a-b.

and heart exposed to the Mongols.¹ 'Les contemporains parient même croire un moment que l'Inde allait subir, après un retard de trois quarts de siècle, la conquête gengiskhanide.'² But the Mongols had to abandon the siege of Delhi and retire. Another Mongol force which had penetrated as far as Amroha in the valley of Ganges was defeated by the Khaljī general Akbar Beg; and this time 'Alā al-dīn Khaljī decided to teach the Mongols a lesson in their own style. Twenty thousand of the captured Mongol soldiers were trampled under elephants' feet.³ Chaghatāy incursions, however, continued and were summarily dealt with by Malik Kāfūr and Ghāzī Malik. To deal with the menace of Mongol invasions from abroad and possible indigenous unrest within the empire, 'Alā al-dīn completely revolutionized the economy of his empire, introducing a number of marketing and fiscal reforms,⁴ and with the strength which comes of prosperity he was able to proceed with the conquest of the remaining Hindu states in the sub-continent, holding at the same time the Mongols at bay. He had also learnt to distrust the neo-Muslim Mongols in his lands whom he had ruthlessly massacred.⁵ His distrust extended to the Īl-Khānids. When Oljāitu in consonance with his policy of rivalry with the Chaghatāys over the control of the marches of Afghanistan⁶ sent an embassy to 'Alā al-dīn informing him of his own conversion to Islam and asking for the hand of a Khaljī princess in marriage, 'Alā al-dīn had the Īl-Khānid ambassadors imprisoned.⁷

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³ Ḥajī al-Dabīr, *Zafar al-nāliḥ bi-Muzaffar wa-āliḥ* (An Arabic History of Gujarat), ed. E. Denison Ross, London, 1921, iii, 865.

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⁷ Fragment of Muhammad bin Tughluq's Memoirs in B.M. Add. MS. fo. 317a-b.

In 1333 Tarmashirīn was assassinated by his Shāmānist and Buddhist nobles,¹ and it appears that this event, rather than the chaos in Persia led Muhammad bin Tughluq in his pan-Islamic zeal to launch upon a programme of preparation for the conquest of 'Khurasan'. This was in a way a continuation of the tradition of similar vague projects by Balban and 'Alā al-dīn Khaljī. 'Khurasan' as a general term vaguely meant a vast undefined area to the north-west of India.² Baranī specifically mentions Transoxiana with Khurasan as the twin-objective of Muhammad bin Tughluq's plan of invasion.³ The plan seems to have been a pincer movement of which the much-discussed Qārāchal expedition seems to have been a part. Qārāchal (Black Mountain) is obviously another name for Qārāqorum (Kara Korum), the mountain range which lies just south of the Chaghatāy homeland in Mughlistān. One wing of the pincer movement against Transoxiana made its way to the Himalayas through the Kangra valley, and occupied Nagarkot in 1337,⁴ but its force of nearly 100,000 was defeated and annihilated in the mountains by hillmen.⁵ The route selected for this ill-fated pincer of the expedition lay presumably through Kangra valley, to the narrow valley of Chenab, then through Kashmir and Baltistan or Ladakh to Central Asia. It was probably then, as until recently, an established though very difficult caravan route; but it was quixotism to conceive it as a practical route for an army of invasion, and betrays an amazing lack of knowledge of geography. What Muhammad bin Tughluq failed to achieve was commemorated in the Hindu legend of Sikander Pāl.⁶ The point at which the Qārāchal expedition met disaster on the Indian side of the great mountain ranges, seems to have been close to the south-western frontiers of the Mongol empire of China.⁷ It was followed by an embassy from the court of Tughān Timūr in 1341 seeking permission to rebuild the Buddhist temples in the Qārāchal region.⁸ Ibn Battūtah was selected by Muhammad bin Tughluq in 1342 for the return embassy to China.⁹

¹ Ibn Battūtah, iii, 41-43; Grousset, 414.

² Ibn Battūtah, iii, 229.

³ Baranī, 477.

⁴ Corresponding to A.H. 738, the date of Badr Chāch's chronogram of the capture of Nagarkot in the Kangra valley (*Qasā'id*, Lucknow, n.d., 103); Sirhindī, 103-4; Wolsey Haig, op. cit. 348.

⁵ Baranī, 475-8; Ibn Battūtah, iii, 325-7.

⁶ The Banāvalī of the chiefs of Kūlū quoted in the *Indian Survey Report for 1907-8*; Ishwari Prasad, 130.

⁷ Baranī, 477.

⁸ Ibn Battūtah, iv, 1.

⁹ Ibid. iii, 448-9.

Because of his tolerance and his general preference for foreign Muslims as the leaders of his administration and army, Muhammad bin Tughluq revived the policy of Jalāl al-dīn Khaljī of employing Mongols. When he died he left his own army's flank exposed to the treachery of a Mongol unit that had come to help him from Farghana under Altun Bahādur, and it was partly this threat which led to the selection of his cousin Firūz as his successor.

Strangely enough it was during the reign of Firūz Tughluq (1351-88), who was chosen to meet this particular challenge of 'Mongol pressure in an alien land' that no Mongol bands crossed Indus into his kingdom.¹ The reason for this inactivity lay in their decadence and loss of prestige in Central Asia. But for the period of the re-occupation of Transoxiana by Tughluq Tīmūr (from 1360 to 1363) the power had passed on from Mongols to Barlās Turks. Actually the Mongol Age was coming to an end in history everywhere. In the decade 1370-80 'three quarters of the Mongol dominions vanished from the map'.²

The winding up of the disintegrated remnants of the Chaghatāy principality was accomplished by Tīmūr, a Barlās Turk of Transoxiana. Delhi, which had escaped the Mongol onslaughts, fell before this new world-conqueror in 1398 and tasted blood and fire at the hands of his partly Mongoloid armies. In strict accordance with the *Yāsa*, Tīmūr who was only a son-in-law of the imperial house of Chingiz, never claimed to be the Khāqān of the Turco-Mongols, but contented himself with the title of Amīr and kept a decorative puppet Khāqān of the purest Chingizid pedigree in his court as a show-piece³; there is no evidence therefore, to suppose that he could have cared any more for the obsolescent title of *Khalifa*, which carried no prestige in Central Asia at that time. All the same the 'Sayyid' ruler of India Khizar Khan 'adorned the *khutba*' with the name of Tīmūr, though it concluded with a prayer for himself.⁴ Tīmūr's successor Shāh Rukh, who was much more Persianized had different ideas. He actually supplied the text of the *khutba* to be read in his name in India.⁵

¹ 'Afif, 264-5; 321.

² Harold Lamb, *Tamerlane*, Garden City, N.Y., 1949, 490.

³ Nizām al-dīn Shāmī, *Zafar Nāma*, Prague, 1937, i, 57-58; cf. Sharf al-dīn Yezdī, *Zafar Nāma*, Calcutta, 1887, i, 207-14.

⁴ Abu'l Fazl 'Allāmī; *A'in-i Akbarī*, ii (Eng. tr. Jarret), Calcutta, 1891, 308.

⁵ Text of the *Khutba* in Haidar ibn Abu'l 'Alī Evoglu, *Majma' al-Inshā'*, B.M. Or. MS. 3482, fos. 38b-39a; Bihmad Khānī, *Tārīkh-i Muḥammadi*, B.M. Or. MS. 137, fos. 311b-312a.

The terror of Tīmūr's invasion lingered on for a long time in the minds of Indians, Hindus as well as Muslims, so that Shāh Rukh, who never invaded India, was regarded by some of India's rulers as their protector, by others as a menace, and by some others as a power to be befriended. Hardly a ruler of Central Asia, before or since, succeeded in dominating the Indian political scene by threat, pressure or diplomacy to such an extent. His threat of dire consequences checked Sultan Ibrāhīm of Jaunpur from invading Bengal, whose sultan had asked for Shāh Rukh's help.¹ This intelligence was not lost on the Hindu rājā of Calicut in southern India, who sent an embassy consisting of some of his Muslim subjects seeking Shāh Rukh's permission to introduce his name in the Friday sermons in the Muslim mosques of his territory.² Shāh Rukh's ambassador to Calicut was 'Abd al-Razzāq, the author of *Matla' al-Sa'dayn*, which gives a picturesque account of the life and manners in the Hindu states of southern India. The rājā of the powerful Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar, hearing of the arrival of the Tartar ambassador at Calicut, invited him and gave him a hospitable reception.

It was the heritage of Tīmūr and Shāh Rukh to which Bābur laid claim,³ and it led to the foundation of the 'Mughal' dynasty in India. These 'Mughals' were really Barlās Turks and not Mongols; but something of the Mongol way of life and their self-identification with the Mongols had become a part of their heritage.

The Mongol pressure throughout these centuries gave Muslim India, through the refugees that came from the heartlands of Islam, its cultural stimulus and its opportunity for a continual intake of values and ideas generated elsewhere in the world of Islam. At the court of Iletmish in Delhi the first wave of these refugees escaping from the hordes of Chingiz Khān, brought 'administrators from Iran, painters from China, theologians from Bukhara, divines and saints from all lands, craftsmen and men and maidens from every region, doctors adept in Greek medicine, philosophers, from everywhere'.⁴ In the face of the danger that threatened to overwhelm their religion and culture they stressed the conservative values; and *taglid* (imitation) thrived at the expense

¹ Kamāl al-dīn 'Abd al-Razzāq, *Matla' al-sa'dayn wa majma' al-bahrayn*, B.M. Or. MS. 1291, fo. 204b.

² Ibid. fos. 204b-205b.

³ Bābur, *Tuzuk*, Eng. tr. by Leyden and Erskine, London, 1921, ii, 95.

⁴ 'Isāmī, *Futūh al-Salātīn*, ed. by A. S. Usha, Madras, 1943, 114-15.

of *ijtihād* (speculation).¹ The wave of Muslim immigrations to India reached another peak during the reign of Balban after Hulāgu's sack of Baghdad. With the conversion of Īl-Khānids to Islam and the influence in the Chaghatāy horde of such Muslim ministers and administrators as Qutb al-dīn Habash-'Amīd (d. 1260), Bahā al-dīn Marghīniānī (d. 1250) and Mahmūd and Mas'ūd Yalvach the situation must have somewhat eased in Transoxiana. But Muhammad bin Tughluq's intellectual curiosity, his preference for foreigners and his policy of get-togetherness in Dār al-Islām brought in a new flood of men and ideas and a new wave of rationalism.²

¹ Muhammad Iqbāl, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, London, 1934, 143-4; P. Hardy, 'Islam in Medieval India', in *Sources of Indian Tradition*, compiled by W. T. de Bary etc., New York, 1958.

² Muhammad bin Tughluq, Fragment, fo 317a; Baranī, 463-5.

III

MUSLIM INDIA AND DĀR AL-ISLĀM IN SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

(i) *Mughal India and Dār al-Islām*

FROM early sixteenth century to the end of the eighteenth, almost the entire territory of Dār al-Islām, except the outlying marches, was absorbed by the three great empires, the Ottoman, the Safavid, and the Mughal. This gives the history of Islam during these centuries a recognizable political and cultural pattern. These empires shared a common Turco-Mongol heritage, noticeable in their systems of administration, but they were preoccupied essentially with their individual problems; the Ottomans primarily with Europe, the Safavids with the consolidation of Shī'ism in Persia, and the Mughals with the process of the incorporation of the whole of the Indian sub-continent in their empire and the evolution of a *modus vivendi* with the Hindūs. There was therefore no integral unity of historical behaviour which one may seek in these three Empires, but a process of interaction, secondary to their individual problems, and yet giving the Dār al-Islām of this period a unity in the midst of diversity.

In addition to the three empires, the Uzbeks of Central Asia played a chequered rôle during these centuries, rising twice, under Shaybānī Khān and under 'Abdullāh Khān Uzbek to imperial status, and falling from time to time into periods of anarchy and civil strife. In relation to the three empires their pattern of behaviour was one of almost perpetual hostility to Persia, of continued friendship with the Ottomans and of watchfulness *vis-à-vis* the Mughals. They played a significant role in shaping the balance of power between these empires, and in the shifts of alliances between them.

Bābur brought with him to India some of the heritage of Central Asian politics and an ever-recurring dream of the reconquest of Transoxiana from the Uzbeks. Shaybānī Khān had driven him away from Samarqand in 1500. To the series of military

defeats Bābur suffered at the hands of the Uzbeks was added the personal humiliation that three of his sisters had either been carried away by the Uzbeks or given to them as ransom.¹ On the other hand one of them, Khānzāde Begum, was restored with due respect to Bābur by Shāh Ismā'il Safavī after his victory over Shaybānī Khān in 1510.² The kingdom Bābur had carved out for himself in Kābul in the first decade of the sixteenth century seemed insecure in view of the growing power of Shaybānī Khān who occupied Harat in 1507, and though Bābur occupied Qandahar in the same year³ . . . the first Mughal occupation of that much-contested city . . . he had to abandon it as Shaybānī Khān proceeded to besiege it. Rather than face the Uzbeks, Bābur eventually decided to turn to India.⁴

Shaybānī Khān's disastrous end in 1510 confirmed Shāh Ismā'il as the most powerful monarch east of the Ottoman empire. Bābur sent an embassy to the Safavid monarch to congratulate him on his victory, and to ask for Persian help to recover his lost dominions in Transoxiana.⁵ With the help of Persian auxiliaries he re-occupied Samarkand (for the third time) in 1511, but had to abandon it in 1512 before a vigorous onslaught of the Uzbeks. A second and much stronger Persian force under Najm-i thāni achieved some initial successes against the Uzbeks even though most of the Persian amīrs were disloyal to him, but the massacre of Sunnīs, against Bābur's advice, invoked the retaliatory fury of the Uzbeks who rallied round Ubayd-Ullāh Khān and Jānī Beg and inflicted several defeats on Bābur and his Persian allies. Due to his dependence on Shi'ite Persia, Bābur lost popular support in Central Asia, and he finally returned to Kābul, reconciling himself to the loss of his ancestral land.⁶

Shāh Ismā'il's support of Bābur was in the centuries old tradition of strong powers in Persia trying to extend their protectorate

¹ Bābur, *Tuzuk* (ed. N. Ilminski), Kazan, 1856, 24-26; Eng. tr. Leyden and Erskine, London, 1921, i, 14-15, 157; Mirzā Haidar Dughlat, *Tārīkh-i Rashidī*, edited by N. Elias and E. Denison Ross, London, 1895, 239.

² Bābur, 117-18; Leyden and Erskine, i, 157; Eng. tr. Beveridge, London, 1931, i, 149.

³ Bābur, 259-73; Leyden and Erskine, ii, 41-56; Beveridge, ii, 330-9.

⁴ Bābur, 259-73; Leyden and Erskine, ii, 41-56; Beveridge, ii, 330-9.

⁵ Khurshāh ibn Qubād al-Husaini, *Tārīkh-i Ilchī-yi Nizām Shāh*, B.M. Add. MS. 23, 513, fos. 456a-458b.

⁶ Dughlat, 260-1; Khurshāh ibn Qubād, fos. 458b-459a; Tānīsh ibn Mīr Muhammad al-Bukhārī, *Abdullāh Nāma*, India Office Pers. MS. No. 3 (Ethé 574), fos. 33b-35a.

over the turbulent marches of Transoxiana through local proteges. Bābur had to strike coins in the name of Shāh Ismā'il and order the reading of Friday *khutba* in his name; he also had to pay at least lip-service to Shi'ism during the Transoxanian campaign of 1518.¹

This situation changed with Bābur's conquest of India and with the death of Shāh Ismā'il in 1524, who was succeeded by his ten years' old son Tahmāsp. The Safavids suffered setbacks at the hands of the Uzbeks who, under 'Ubayd-Ullāh Khān captured Merv and Sarakhs in 1525 and Tūs in 1526. Bābur watched with interest the new balance of power emerging on his north-western frontier, in which his own empire in India was now the stronger. His policy, however, remained one of alliance with Persia, and he noted with approval the achievements of 'Tahmāsp's counter-offensive against the Uzbeks and his victory at Jām.² This revived in Bābur's mind the ambition of reconquering Transoxiana and he commissioned Humāyūn in 1527 to lead the expedition.³ But this project was now of secondary importance and the policies necessary for the consolidation of the newly-acquired Mughal empire in India came first. Qandahar, the bone of contention between the Mughals and the Safavids for generation after generation, actually a trading centre left into the vacuum created by the death of Sultan Husain Bayqarā, had already become a danger spot in the reign of Bābur who had led annual expeditions against that city between 1515 and 1518 and had finally occupied it in 1522. The Persians reconciled themselves to the situation.⁴ With the growth of his own power in India, Bābur laid the foundations of an independent Mughal foreign policy, which followed on the whole a course of non-involvement in the fight between the Safavids and the Uzbeks. In pursuance of this neutralist policy Bābur developed diplomatic relations with the Uzbeks in 1528,⁵ and to minimize the chances of a direct clash with the Uzbeks he created the buffer principality of Badakhshan under Mirzā Sulaymān.

¹ Khwānd Mir, *Ḥabīb al-riyāz*, Bombay, 1857, III, iv, 65-66, 98-99; Iskandar Beg, *Tārīkh-i 'Ālam Ara-i 'Abbāsī*, Tehran, 1955, i, 40; Kāmwar Khān, *Tārīkh-i Salātin-i Chaghātā*, B.M. Add. MS. 25, 787, fo. 77b; Dughlat, 246, 259; Tānīsh al-Bukhārī, fo. 34a; Fazl ibn Rūzbihān Isfahānī, *Sulūk al-Mulūk*, B.M. Or. MS. 253, fos. 3b-4a, 8a; Qipchāq Khān, *Tārīkh-i Qipchāq Khānī*, Bodleian MS. 117, fo. 262b.

² Bābur, 396; Leyden and Erskine, ii, 316; Beveridge, ii, 54.

³ Bābur, 451-2; Leyden and Erskine, ii, 349-50; Beveridge, ii, 626-7.

⁴ Khwānd Mir, iv, III, 103.

⁵ Bābur, 455-6; Leyden and Erskine, ii, 368-9; Beveridge, ii, 630-1.

With the Ottomans Bābur had no direct contact, and his references to them are indirect. He followed the Ottoman method of arranging his artillery in his battle against Rānā Sāngā.¹ Unlike Bābur, the Ottoman sultans were deeply concerned about the survival of the Sunnī rule of the Uzbeks in Transoxiana, threatened by the power of the Shī'ite Safavids. This concern reveals itself in Selīm I's letter to 'Ubayd-Ullāh Khān Uzbek and in Suleimān the Magnificent's complimentary epistle to 'Abd al-Latīf Khān.²

Humāyūn succeeded Bābur in 1530. During the period of Sūrī revolt and civil war, a clash developed between his brother Kāmran and the Persians over Qandahar. Kāmran defeated the Persian general Sām Mirzā in 1535; and though Tahmāsp personally led the expedition against Qandahar and captured that city, Kāmran recovered it in 1538.³ Pique over Qandahar may have been one of the contributory causes for Tahmāsp's decision to extend hospitality to Humāyūn⁴ who came to seek refuge in Persia, expelled from his empire by the victorious armies of Sher Shāh Sūrī and let down by the treachery of his own brothers in Kābul. Humāyūn was given a cordial reception by Tahmāsp, but the moral of his fate as understood by the young Safavid king was that it was divine retribution for the sin of pride,⁵ an argument he did not fail to impress upon Suleimān the Magnificent in a polemical and discourteous letter in which he not only accused Humāyūn of pride but also of abrogating the *sharī'a* and spreading Sunnī 'heresy'.⁶

Tahmāsp finally decided to help Humāyūn to regain his

¹ Bābur, 403, Leyden and Erskine, II, 182, Beveridge, II, 564.

² Feridūn Bey, *Munsha'āt al-Salātīn*, Istanbul, 1848-9, I, 366, 393-4.

³ Dughlat, 468-9, Abu'l Fazl 'Allāmī, *Akbar Nama*, I, 125, Nizam al-dīn Ahmad, *Tabaqāt-i Akbarī*, Calcutta, 1927, II, 40, Fazlī Isfahānī, *Afzal al-Tawārīkh*, II, I, B M Or MS. 4678, fos 84a-85b, 94a-95b, 'Abdul Qādir Badāūnī, *Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh*, Calcutta, 1868-9, I, 348.

⁴ Humāyūn's letter and Tahmāsp's answer in Evoglu, *Majma' al-Inshā*, B M Add MS 3482, fos 105a-106a, Abu'l Hasan Qazvīnī, *Favā'id-i Safaviyya*, B M Add MS 16, 698, fos 15a-17a, Gulbadan Bānū Begum, *Humāyūn Nāma*, edited by Annette S Beveridge, London, 1902, 68-69, Tahmāsp's *Farmān* on the occasion of Humāyūn's arrival in B M Sloane MS 4093, Fazlī, Isfahānī, fos 117a-124a.

⁵ Fazlī Isfahānī, fo 116b, Badāūnī, I, 384-5, 446, K M. Ashraf, 'Life and Conditions of the people of Hindustan', *JRASB*, Calcutta, 1935, 129.

⁶ Text in Evoglu, fos 71b-79a. On Humāyūn's stay in Persia see Gulbadan Bānū, 69. Jawhar Aftābchī, *Tadhkirat al-Waq'āt*, B M. Add MS 16, 711, S Ray, *Humayun in Persia*, Calcutta, 1948, A Rahim, 'Mughal Relations with Persia', *JC*, 1934-5, also Razul Islam, *The Relations between the Mughal Emperors of India and the Safavid Shahs*, unpublished Ph D dissertation submitted to the University of Cambridge, which is a scholarly study of Mughal-Safavid relations.

kingdom; and Humāyūn, like his father had to pay lip-service to the extreme tenets of Shi'ism as practised by the Safavids, as the price of Persian help.¹

Sher Shāh Sūrī sent an embassy to Tahmāsp requesting the extradition of Humāyūn, but the Sūrī envoy's ears and nose were cut off by order of the Shāh: and as a reprisal several Persians were mutilated in India.² The Sūrī king also planned an alliance with the Ottomans against Persia and intended to send a learned divine Sayyid Rafī' al-dīn as his ambassador to Suleimān the Magnificent requesting the Khwāndkār of Rūm to join him in a co-ordinated invasion of the Safavid realm 'which was sure to be overwhelmed by the numerous armies of Hind pressing on one front and the withering fire of the superb Rūmī artillery on the other', and the downfall of Shi'ite Safavids would ensure the free transit of *hajj* pilgrims from India and Central Asia.³ Sher Shāh Sūrī died in 1545 and the embassy did not materialize.

The only contribution of the Persian auxiliary force which Tahmāsp sent with Humāyūn, apart from the prestige it might have given to his campaign of reconquest, was the recapture of Qandahar in 1545, which Humāyūn promptly made over to Tahmāsp's infant son, but on the child's death wrenched it from the Persian governor Budāq Khān, who had refused Humāyūn the hospitality of wintering in the city, and appointed his trusted general Bayrām Khān its governor who was theoretically supposed to hold it in trust for the Persian monarch.⁴

Friendly relations continued between Humāyūn and Tahmāsp after this exchange over Qandahar. Valad Beg Takkalū the Safavid ambassador, arrived in 1546 to congratulate Humāyūn on the capture of Kābul and his retainers fought on Humāyūn's side in the Badakhshan campaign. It was through him that Humāyūn invited the Persian painter 'Abd al-Samad to his court, an event which laid the foundation of the Mughal school of painting. Diplomatic relations continued between Tahmāsp and Humāyūn until the latter's death.⁵ Humāyūn also entered into diplomatic

¹ Badāunī, i, 445.

² Riazul Islam, op. cit.

³ Badāunī, i, 369-71.

⁴ Gulbadan 73; Badāunī, i, 447-8; Bāyazīd Bayāt, *Tadhkira-i Humāyūn wa Akbar*, Calcutta, 1941, 171; Fazlī Isfahānī, fos. 125a-126b; Nizām al-dīn Ahmad, ii, 62-63; Abu'l Fazl 'Allāmī, i, 239-40, 246, 253, 279; Jawhar, fos. 86a-88b.

⁵ Fazlī Isfahānī, fos. 161b-163b; *Jami' al-Inshā*, B.M. Or. MS. 1702, fos. 259a-262b; The note written by Tahmāsp in his own hand and placed with the official letter in Fazlī Isfahānī, fo. 163b.

relations with Shujā' Ahmad Khān, the ruler of Kashghar,¹ a new step in Mughal diplomatic history indicative of their interest in Kashmir.

Before the defeat of Humāyūn at the hands of Sher Shāh Sūrī and his flight to Persia, the expansion of the Mughal empire in India had come to the notice of Suleimān the Magnificent, when in 1536 Burhān Lodī took refuge in the Porte,² and when Bahādur Shāh, the ruler of Gujarat appealed to the Ottoman court for help against the Portuguese as well as the pressure of Humāyūn on the Champanir-Ahmedabad front. A series of naval expeditions were ordered by Suleimān to proceed to Gujarat to check the growing power of the Portuguese in the Arabian Sea and on the coasts of Muslim India; though it has been suggested that Suleimān's objective might have been to bring Gujarat or possibly the whole of India under Turkish suzerainty.³ The last of these expeditions was led by Sidi 'Alī Reis 'Kātib-i Rūmī', who had to abandon whatever was left of his battered fleet in the ports of Gujarat, and make his way overland through Mughal dominions, Central Asia and Persia to Turkey. He received a cordial welcome at the Mughal court. No less a person than Humāyūn's most trusted general, Bayrām Khān was sent to escort him to the capital.⁴ The accomplished Turkish admiral whom circumstances had made the first unofficial ambassador of the Ottomans at the Mughal court, produced a very favourable impression on the minds of Humāyūn and his courtiers. In the Mughal India the tradition of Turkish poetry going back to 'Alī Sher Nawā'ī, and imported to India by Bābur⁵ was still alive in the verses of Bayrām Khān⁶; and Humāyūn, himself no mean poet in Persian,⁷ was deeply sensitive to the beauty of the Turkish admiral's ghazals, whom he compared with Nawā'ī,⁸ though he may have considered Sidi 'Alī Reis's open references to the beauty of individual youths in his court⁹ as

¹ Munshī Bhāg Chand, *Jam' al-Inshā*, B.M. Or MS 1702, fos 265b-266b

² Bernard Lewis, 'The Mughals and the Ottomans', *Pakistan Quarterly*, Karachi (1958), 6, quoting (pseudo-) Ferdi.

³ M. Longworth Dames, 'The Portuguese and the Turks in the Indian Ocean in the Sixteenth Century', *JRAS* (1921), 1-28. Sidi 'Alī Reis, *Mira't al-Mamālik*, Istanbul, 1895, 31-33, Eng. tr. A. Vambery, 26, 32

⁴ Sidi 'Alī Reis, 43-44; Vambery, 47.

⁵ Bābur, *Sobranie stikhotvoroney Imperatura Bābura*, ed. A. Samoilovich, Petrograd, 1917.

⁶ Bayrām Khān, *Persian and Turki Divans*, ed. E. D. Ross, Calcutta, 1910

⁷ Hadī Hasan, 'The Unique Divan of Humāyūn Bādshāh', *IC*, xxv (1951), 212-76

⁸ Sidi 'Alī Reis, 49, Vambery, 50-54

⁹ Sidi 'Alī Reis, 50-51, 53-54.

rather unconventional and typical of the Ottoman as distinct from the Indo-Khurasani tradition where such allusions were veiled and generalized. Sidi 'Alī Reis complimented the Indo-Persian school of poetry by composing Persian ghazals in the style of Khusrau.¹ It is quite probable that his voyage was the first channel through which the works of Indo-Persian poets reached the Ottoman empire, and this may explain the familiarity of Na'imā and others with the Indian literary scene.²

Indirectly and with exemplary tact, Sidi 'Alī Reis presented the claim of the Ottoman sovereign's power and primacy among Muslim rulers, by quoting traveller's accounts that the emperor of China had permitted his Muslim subjects to insert the name of Suleimān in the *khutba*. He noticed no sign of resentment or rivalry in Humāyūn's reaction, who politely observed that the Ottoman sovereign was the only person worthy to bear the title of Pādishāh. Regarding the permission given by Suleimān to the Khān of Crimea to insert his own name in the *khutba*, Sidi 'Alī made the point that the Ottoman sultan alone had the authority to grant the right of *khutba* and coinage. 'This statement seemed to satisfy everybody and we prayed for the welfare of my sovereign.'³

Humāyūn died in 1556 while the Turkish admiral was still at the Mughal court; and it was on his advice based on Pīrī Pāsha's precautions on the death of Selīm I,⁴ that the news of the death of Humāyūn was kept a close secret until the enthronement of Akbar.

Young Akbar, insecure on his throne, began by going further than his father Humāyūn in positive friendliness towards the Ottomans in his letter to Suleimān the Magnificent, sent through Sidi 'Alī Reis, in which he addressed the Ottoman sultan as 'the Khalif on earth, a refuge of the princes of the time, and adjuster of the lords of the age',⁵ with the request to keep the channels of

¹ Sidi 'Alī Reis, 53, Vambery, 54-55.

² Joseph de Hammer, 'Mémorial on the Diplomatic Relations between the Courts of Delhi and Constantinople in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *TRAS*, ii (1830), 463-4.

³ Sidi 'Alī Reis, 51-52; Vambery, 53-54.

⁴ Sidi 'Alī Reis, 56; Vambery, 56.

⁵ de Hammer, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, Budapest, 1827-35, 298-9; de Hammer, *TRAS*, ii, 476-7; on the question of Ottoman claim to universal Khilafat like Becker and Barthold, etc., T. W. Arnold refutes d'Ohsson's account that it was formally transferred by the Cairene 'Abbāsīd Mutawwakil to Selīm, as unsupported by contemporary records of Egypt including Ibn Iyās's *Badā'i' al-zuhūr* (Arnold, *The Caliphate*, Oxford, 1924, 146-7). Arnold's view was contested by Amīr 'Alī who regarded Ibn Iyās as prejudiced against Selīm (A. J. Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs*, 1925, London, 1927, i, 38 (footnote)).

diplomatic correspondence open. This overture is interesting in view of Akbar's later anti-Ottoman diplomatic manoeuvres, and his glorification of his own divine right as a monarch.¹

There is no record of an acknowledgement and answer of this letter from the Ottoman sultan. History was already throwing formidable barriers between the Ottomans and the Mughals, of which the Shī'ite Safavid empire in Persia, generally friendly to the Mughals except on the point of Qandahar, was the least. With the abandonment of the Turkish project to dig a canal across the Suez isthmus,² and the defeat of Turkish naval expeditions in the Persian Gulf and along the coast of India, the Portuguese dominated the high seas. In the north Ivan the Terrible had occupied Kazan and Astrakhan and had driven a wedge in the Central Asian route north of the Caspian, so that the travellers in the Kirghīz steppes warned Sidi 'Alī Reis on his homeward journey 'Whither go ye? Astrakhan is taken by the Russians . . . the way is blocked; be warned and go back'³, and he had to turn back to continue his journey through Persia. The Janissaries who had been sent by Suleimān to reorganize the army of Borāk Khān in Central Asia faced the same problem.⁴ This triple barrier also affected the hajj pilgrims bound for Mecca, from their homes in Central Asia and India—an oft-repeated reason for plans of wars against the Persians or the Portuguese, in the Sunnī diplomatic correspondence.⁵

In 1558, when Akbar was still very young, Tahmāsp occupied Qandahar Akbar offered no resistance, but the relations between the Mughals and the Safavids remained strained until 1563-4 when Tahmāsp assessed the growing stability of Akbar's rule and perhaps felt the first signs of apprehension on the rise of Uzbek power under the leadership of 'Abdullāh Khān.⁶

Tensions had also developed over the difficulties of the *hajj* pilgrims Akbar's Shaykh al-Islām Makhdūm al-Mulk had issued a decree that the *hajj* was no longer binding on Indian Muslims as

¹ See F. W. Buckler, 'A new Interpretation of Akbar's Decree of 1579', *JRAS* (1924), 590-608, though his line of argument is too far-fetched.

² İsmā'il Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tārīhı*, Ankara, 1947-56, III, 1, 32-33.

³ Sidi 'Alī Reis, 7- Vambery, 81. ⁴ Sidi 'Alī Reis, 64; Vambery, 70.

⁵ Letter of the Turkish grand vizier Jarrāh Muḥammad Pasha to 'Abdullāh Khān Uzbek on the problems of *hajj* pilgrims and Muslim merchants after the loss of the Khānate of Astrakhan to the Russians, Ferīdūn Bey, II, 149-50, also op. cit., II, 150-1, II, 151-3.

⁶ Fazlī Isfahānī, fos 2091-b, 223b-225a, Evloglu, fos 1151-116b, Badāunī, II, 40-41, 52.

the land route was held by the 'heretical' Safavids and the sea route by the Christian Portuguese.¹ With the death of Tahmāsp in 1576 and the accession of his son Ismā'il II, who was a Sunnī, the situation temporarily eased.² About the same time something like an understanding seems to have been reached between the Mughals and the Portuguese, for a general permission was given by Akbar to his subjects to proceed to *hajj* by land or sea as they wished, with a promise that the expenses of every pilgrim would be defrayed from the state treasury.³ Soon links with the Hijaz developed in a composite pattern: apart from the *hajj* sailings there began an exchange of theological scholarship; nobles in disagreement with the emperor like Mirzā 'Azīz Kokā sought refuge in the Hijaz, while others like, Makhdūm al-Mulk or Shaykh 'Abdul Nabī were deported there as a punitive measure; and Akbar continued to send gifts to the Sharīf of Mecca, maintaining with him an active correspondence on the affairs and intrigues of his loyal or disgruntled subjects on pilgrimage or in refuge in the Hijaz.⁴

During the chaos which followed the death of Tahmāsp and continued through the intrigues against Ismā'il II, leading to his assassination, Akbar toyed with the idea of occupying the Persian province of Sistan.⁵ This as well as Akbar's hereditary ambition of conquering Transoxiana⁶ had to be shelved because of the new shift of balance on his north-western frontier due to the rise of 'Abdullah Khān Uzbek. In the Mughal mind he evoked the memories of Shaybānī Khān, with this difference that instead of a strong Safavid Persia, a weak one was left as the only possible ally. Akbar must have watched with uneasiness not only the rise of 'Abdullāh Khān but his alliance with the Ottomans, whose respect and admiration 'Abdullāh Khān increasingly won.⁷ After occupying Balkh, on the eve of his successful invasion of Khurasan in 1587-8 he wrote to invite both the Ottoman sultan and Akbar to a joint invasion and partition of Persia.⁸ His letter to Akbar came in the wake of a series of pressures including incitement to the Afghan

¹ Badāunī, ii, 203.

² Ismā'il II's letter to Mirzā Muhammad Hakīm in Evoglu, fos. 148a-b.

³ Badāunī, ii, 239, 251.

⁴ 'Ināyat Khān Rāsikh, *'Ināyat Nāma*, I.O. Pers. MS. 549, fos. 17a-18b; Evoglu, fos. 292a-b, 286b-287b; Badāunī, ii, 267; Abu'l Fazl 'Allāmī, *Maktūbāt*, Lucknow, 1863, 34-37.

⁵ 'Allāmī, *Akbar Nāma*, iii, 211-12, 496-7, 738-9; Jahāngīr, *Tuzuk* (tr. A. Rogers, London, 1909), 26, 89.

⁶ Tānīsh al-Bukhārī fos. 408b-411b, 446b-454a; *Jāmi' al-Inshā*, B.M. Or. MS. 1702, fos. 199a-201b.

⁷ 'Allāmī, *Maktūbāt*, 52-57.

⁸ Feridūn, ii, 143-4, 484-5.

frontier tribesmen of the Roshaniyyah sect, leading to disturbances on the frontier which led to Akbar's decision to visit Kabul personally in 1585 and to order the construction of a road for wheeled traffic through the Khyber pass.¹ In his letter to Akbar sent through his ambassador Mir Quraysh, 'Abdullāh Khān's invitation to Akbar for alliance against Persia, stressed the difficulties of *hajj* pilgrims, but Akbar anxious to maintain the *status quo*, made through his ambassador Hakīm Humām the counter-proposal that both he and 'Abdullāh Khān should go to the help of the Safavid Shāh Khudābande who had appealed for help against the Ottoman aggression; while he disposed of the pious problem of the *hajj* as a *causus belli* by stating that but for his intention to go to the help of Persia against the Ottomans he would have sent an expedition to the 'isles of Europe' to free the sea route for the *hajj* from Portuguese domination.² Akbar's overtures for a Mughal-Uzbek treaty of friendship³ were reported by 'Abdullāh Khān's son 'Abd al-Mū'min to the Ottoman court.⁴ The treaty seems to have resulted in a rough demarcation of frontiers between the Mughals and the Uzbeks,⁵ and seems to have secured Mughal neutrality during 'Abdullāh Khān Uzbek's invasion of Persia and conquest of Harat and greater part of Khurasan in 1588.⁶ The emergence of 'Abdullāh Khān as a power to be reckoned with in the world of Islam was acknowledged in the letter of the Turkish grand vizier congratulating him on his victory at Harat, and informing him of Ottoman victories on the Persian front.⁷

From the Mughal side the pressure against Qandahar increased, indirectly aided by Uzbek pressure on other Persian fronts; and finally Muzaffar Husain Mirzā and Rustam Mirzā, Safavid princes and Persian governors of the Qandahar region succumbed to it, yielding Qandahar to the Mughals and taking up service under Akbar.⁸

¹ 'Allāmī, *Akbar Nāma*, III, 211-12, 241, 368, R. C. Varma, 'Akbar and 'Abdullah Khān', *IC*, XXI (1947), 379-89, A. Rahim, 'Mughal Relations with Central Asia', *IC*, XI (1937), 81-94, 188-99.

² 'Allāmī, *Akbar Nāma*, III, 497-501, B. M. Or. MS 1702, fos 202a-b; Evoglu, fos 281b-286a, 'Allāmī, *Maktubāt*, 23-24, 198.

³ 'Allāmī, *Maktubāt*, 17-26, Rahim, 88.

⁴ Yūsuf Balkhī, *Tadhkira-i Muqīm Khānī*, R. A. S. Morley, 161, fo 55.

⁵ 'Allāmī, *Akbar Nāma*, III, 705, Evoglu, fos. 278b-280a.

⁶ 'Allāmī, *Akbar Nāma*, III, 703, 578, 583-4; Walī Qulī Shāmlu, *Qisas-i Khāqānī*, B. M. Add MS 7656, fos 25b-26b, 30b-32b, B. M. Or. MS 1702, fos 202b-205a.

⁷ Feridūn, II, 151-3.

⁸ 'Allāmī, *Akbar Nāma*, III, 578-84, idem *Maktubāt*, 92-100.

To the Persian diplomatic overtures Akbar's response was reserved and cold. In 1587 'Abbās I wrested the throne from his father Khudābande and began a policy of diplomatic *rapprochement* with the Mughals as well as the Ottomans. Embassies were exchanged between 'Abbās I and Akbar between 1591 and 1595 after an interval of four decades.¹

'Abbās also succeeded in securing peace on his Turkish frontier,² and 'Abdullāh Khān was informed by the Turkish minister, Sardār Farhād Pāsha, of the Turco-Persian peace treaty, although the Uzbek ruler was given assurance of continued Turkish solidarity.³ To give himself a breathing space to consolidate his power in his own country 'Abbās I began negotiations for peace also with his Uzbek enemies, 'Abdullah Khān Uzbek and his son 'Abd al-Mū'min Khān.⁴

Close diplomatic relations were maintained by 'Abdullāh Khān Uzbek as long as he was alive, with Akbar, though to his embarrassment his son 'Abd al-Mū'min Khān occasionally intrigued with and spread anti-Mughal disaffection among Afghan tribesmen.⁵ After the death of 'Abdullāh Khān Uzbek which was soon followed by that of his son, the Safavid 'Abbās sent Minūchihr Beg as his ambassador to Akbar asking for his blessing⁶ for the Persian campaign against the Uzbeks, from whom he recovered Harat in 1598. After fourteen years of stay near his north-west frontier, anxiously watching the growing power of the Uzbeks, Akbar was now able to return to his capital Agra, ignoring 'Abbās I's request to return Qandahar to Persian rule.⁷

But the balance of power of Akbar's north-western frontier had once again completely shifted between 1598 and 1603. The dynasty of Shaybānī Khān had come to an abrupt end with the early death of 'Abd al-Mū'min Khān. Dīn Muhammad Khān, the founder of the new ruling dynasty among the Uzbeks, lost Meshhed and Harat to 'Abbās I and was killed, but his brother Bāqī Muhammad Khān stemmed the Persian tide and turned it back from the heartland of Transoxiana. Akbar's embassy led by Mīr Ma'sūm of Bhakkar in 1603 congratulated 'Abbās I on his victories, but it received a cold reception, for 'Abbās, who

¹ 'Allāmī, *Akbar Nāma*, iii, 656-61; Evoglu, fos. 205b-210b.

² Evoglu, fo. 262b.

³ Evoglu, fos. 253a-254a, 257b-259a.

⁴ I.O. Pers. MS. 379 (Cthé 2067), fos. 41b-54a, 269a-278a; Evoglu, fos.

210b-214b.

⁵ Feridūn, ii, 147-9.

⁶ 'Allāmī, *Akbar Nāma*, 1050-2.

⁷ Iskandar Beg, ii, 673.

had now emerged as one of the most powerful rulers in the world of Islam, still nursed the grievance of Qandahar, though he maintained active correspondence with Akbar.¹

Akbar's diplomatic relations with the rulers of Kashgar² reflect the strategy of security for Kashmir's northern frontier as well as a possible anti-Uzbek alliance in case of need.

About his own eclecticism Akbar was apologetic to 'Abdullāh Khān Uzbek, but sensitive when the Ottoman sultans were mentioned to him as the great upholders of the Sunnī law. He accused his courtier Qutb al-dīn Khān on his criticism of the *Dīn-i Ilāhī* (Divine Faith) of being in the pay of the Khwāndkār of Rūm.³ Without any apparent reason Akbar seems to have developed a policy of antipathy towards the Ottomans. Apart from his letters to 'Abdullāh Khān proclaiming his intention of intervening on behalf of the Safavids in the Turco-Persian war, he toyed with the idea of an anti-Turkish alliance with Philip II of Spain. He went to the extent of designating Sayyid Muzaffar as his ambassador to Spain, though the embassy never sailed, and the good Jesuit Father Rudolph became quite convinced that Akbar's profession of friendship for the Spanish monarch was hypocritical.⁴ All the same Akbar chained and deported the envoy of the Turkish governor of Yemen accusing him and his master of arrogance for having endeavoured to persuade Akbar to wage war against the Portuguese,⁵ probably to keep the Portuguese assured of his friendship and to keep the sea routes open for trade and for communications with the Hijaz. Reports were, however, received in the Ottoman court in 1588 that Akbar was conspiring with the Portuguese to attack Yemen, and Turkish reinforcements were sent there and to Suez and Basrah.⁶ It is interesting that all this was going on while Akbar was assuring 'Abdullāh Khān Uzbek that he intended to send a naval expedition against the Portuguese to clear the sea route for the *hajj*.

Salīm, who succeeded his father Akbar in 1605, began his reign by changing his name to Jahāngīr as his own name 'resembled those of the Caesars of Rūm' and he did not wish to be confused with them.⁷ His early impression of the Ottoman-Mughal relationship

¹ Evoglu, fos. 214b-223a.

² 'Allāmī, *Maktūbāt*, 33-34.

³ Bādāunī, ii, 284.

⁴ *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J. on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*, Eng. tr. Hoyle and Bannerjee, Cuttack, 1922, 163, 171-2, 184-6, 191.

⁵ *Ibid.* 204.

⁶ *Uzunçarşılı*, III, ii, 263-4.

⁷ *Jahāngīr (Rogers)*, 2.

or rather the lack of it, was of a historical heritage of Tīmūr's victory over Bāyazid Yildirim.¹ In 1607 a Central Asian adventurer Āqām Hājī arrived in Jahāngīr's court, claiming to be the Ottoman ambassador, with a letter in an 'unknown writing' (possibly in Uighur) and because of his uncouth appearance he was considered to be a fraud.² Years later Muhammad Husain Chelepi was sent by Jahāngīr to purchase jewels and curios in Istanbul; he was directed to pay his respects on his way through Persia to 'Abbās I, but was given no credentials to present himself at the Ottoman court.³ On the other hand an embassy was sent by the Sharīf of Mecca on Jahāngīr's accession, carrying relics from the Ka'ba.⁴

In the first year of Jahāngīr's reign an unsuccessful attempt was made by the Persians to recover Qandahar, either on the personal initiative of the governor of Farah, or under orders of Shāh 'Abbās, who in his letter to Jahāngīr disclaimed all responsibility and denounced the action of his governor as improper.⁵

In the early years of his reign Jahāngīr's foreign policy was based entirely on a close friendship with 'Abbās I.⁶ Everything pointed in that direction, the influence of his beautiful and accomplished wife Nūr Jahān, the influence of her relatives and other Persian nobles in the court, Jahāngīr's own aestheticism which was attracted to Persian refinements in the art of living, his easy-going, confiding nature which impelled him not only to call 'Abbās I his 'brother', but to think of him as such in his personal memoirs. They exchanged expensive and novel presents, and received one another's ambassadors with great show of ceremony and hospitality.⁷ 'Abbās I wished to drink wine from 'his brother' Jahāngīr's cup, while Jahāngīr sent his Hindu court painter Bishan Dās to paint the portrait of the Persian Shāh.⁸ They both had their names engraved on the same ruby.⁹ Sir Thomas Roe suggests that 'Abbās had sent his embassy of 1616 to obtain financial help from Jahāngīr for his war against the Ottomans 'in which kind he often finds liberal succour'.¹⁰

¹ Jahāngīr (Rogers), 144-5, 153-4.

² Ibid. 144.

³ Ibid. 237-9.

⁴ Ibid. 133.

⁵ Jalāl Munajjim, *Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsī*, Bod. MS. 300, fos. 381b-387a, 393a-b; Iskandar Beg, ii, 672-4; Jahāngīr (Rogers), 112.

⁶ Evoglu, fos. 227a-236b.

⁷ Jahāngīr (Rogers), *passim*; Mu'tamad Khān, *Iqbāl Nāma-i Jahāngīrī*, Calcutta, 1865, 132, 191; I.O. Pers. MS. 379, fos. 55b-56a, 58b-60b and *passim*.

⁸ Jahāngīr, *Tuzuk*, ed. Sayyid Ahmad, Aligarh, 1864, 280. ⁹ Ibid. 325.

¹⁰ *Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe* . . . , ed. W. Foster, London, 1800, ii, 296; cf. I.O. Pers. MS. 379, fos. 76a-78a, 85a-88a.

In 1617 'Abbās I suffered defeat at the hands of the Turks. In 1622, after preliminary diplomatic pressure, he personally marched and occupied Qandahar, the symbol of rival prestige.¹ This came as a great shock to Jahāngīr, who ordered Prince Khurram (later Emperor Shāh Jahān) to lead an expedition against Persia.² 'Abbās I, anxious to avoid war with the Mughals on a large scale sent friendly letters to Khurram³ and Nūr Jahān to create around Jahāngīr an atmosphere of opinion favourable to himself. In his letter to Jahāngīr he persuasively stated the Persian case,⁴ while Jahāngīr's answer combined courtesy with pique.⁵ Khurram's revolt destroyed the Mughal chances of the recovery of Qandahar,⁶ while 'Abbās marched from strength to strength after his recapture of Baghdād from the Ottomans.⁷

Jahāngīr's foreign policy collapsed like a house of cards after the fall of Qandahar. In its place he had to lay the foundations of a new one, based on the triangular Sunnī solidarity of the Ottomans, the Mughals and the Uzbeks, though earlier in his reign he had also cherished ambitions of conquering Central Asia.⁸ In 1621 both the Mughals and the Uzbeks cautiously felt their way towards one another for an anti-Persian alliance.⁹ Through Mīr Baraka normal diplomatic channels were re-opened¹⁰ and Jahāngīr wrote to Imām Qulī Khān on the subject of 'Abbās I's 'heresy' and treachery.¹¹ Imām Qulī Khān proposed to Jahāngīr a treaty of alliance on the model of the previous treaty between Akbar and 'Abdullāh Khān, and promised an Uzbek invasion of Khurasan if a Mughal army marched against Qandahar.¹² He had already written to the Ottoman Sultān Murād IV for a similar alliance.¹³ Jahāngīr also approached Murād IV for an anti-Persian alliance. It was the first clear reversal of the traditional Mughal policy. He received Murād's letter—the first known from an Ottoman sultan to a Mughal emperor—advising him to help Imām Qulī Khān and announcing his own intention of marching against Persia.¹⁴ But the

¹ Iskandar Beg, ii, 970-3.

² Jahāngīr (S. Ahmad), 345-6.

³ B.M. Or. MS. 1702, fos. 212a-213b; I.O. Pers. MS. 2067, fos. 74b-75b.

⁴ Evoglu, fos. 238b-239a; I.O. Pers. MS. 379, fos. 131a-133b; Jahāngīr, 348-50.

⁵ Evoglu, fos. 239a-240a; I.O. Pers. MS. 379, fos. 61a-63a.

⁶ Jahāngīr, 353-4; Mu'tamad Khān, 191.

⁷ Evoglu, fos. 240a-241a.

⁸ Jahāngīr (Rogers), 65, 89.

⁹ Jahāngīr (S. Ahmad), 325, 330.

¹⁰ I.O. Pers. MS. fos. 321a-322b.

¹¹ *Tārīkh-i Badī'a*, fos. 189b-192a.

¹² Kāmgār Husainī, *Ma'āthir-i Jahāngīrī*, B. M. Or. MS. 171, fos. 206b-209a.

¹³ Ferīdūn, ii, 144-5; I.O. Pers. MS. 2068, fos. 40b-43a.

¹⁴ Ferīdūn, ii, 142-3.

alliance remained an idea rather than a fact, and was complicated by such unpleasant episodes as the incursion of Uzbek general Pilangpush in the Mughal province of Kabul.¹

This was the pattern of foreign relations which Shāh Jahān inherited from his father when he succeeded him in 1627. 'Abbās I, powerful in his realm but still anxious to minimize the effects of his occupation of Qandahar, was the first Muslim monarch to felicitate him.² In 1629 'Abbās I died and Shāh Jahān sent a formal embassy of condolence under the veteran diplomat Mir Barka to Shāh Safī.³

The military objectives of Shāh Jahān's foreign policy from the beginning of his reign and throughout it were three; the recapture of Qandahar, extension of his suzerainty over Central Asia, and subjugation of the Shi'ite states in the Deccan. On all these objectives direct or indirect clash with the Safavids was inevitable. Being an orthodox Sunnī it was easy for Shāh Jahān to develop the policy of Sunnī alliance to which his father had switched towards the end of his reign. But the weakest link in the Sunnī alliance was the chaotic and predatory Uzbek Transoxiana. Nazar Muhammad Khān, the Uzbek ruler of Balkh, had invaded Kabul, and the first embassies sent by him and his brother Imām Qulī Khān to Shāh Jahān were apologetic.⁴ Shāh Jahān, however, continued to forge a front of Sunnī solidarity and in 1635 the Mughal-Uzbek frontier demarcation was agreed upon.⁵

In the meantime relations between Shāh Jahān and Safī remained correct, though there was an underlying current of mistrust. In 1637 the Persian embassy of Yādgar Beg informed Shāh Jahān of the Safavid victory over the Turks at Erivan; and in the same year the Mughal embassy in Persia informed Safī of the extension of Mughal suzerainty over the Shi'ite kingdoms of Golconda and Bijapur in the Deccan.⁶ In 1638 when the Ottoman pressure was very heavy on the western front of the Safavids, the Persian governor of Qandahar 'Alī Mardān Khān surrendered that disputed city to the Mughals and was rewarded with the governorship of Kashmir in the Mughal empire,⁷ while Mughal forces defeated a Persian army under Siyāwush and occupied

¹ Jahāngīr (S. Ahmad), 387-8.

² Text in Evoglu, fo. 245b.

³ 'Abdul Hamīd Lāhorī, *Bādshāh Nāma*, Calcutta, 1867, i, 431.

⁴ Ibid. i, pp. i, 455.

⁵ Ibid. ii, 25.

⁶ Ibid. i, pp. i, 232-6; i, pp. iii, 3, 18.

⁷ Ibid. ii, 21-24, 126.

several subsidiary forts to consolidate the Mughal occupation of Qandahar.¹

In 1636 Safdar Khān, the Mughal ambassador at the Safavid court, had sent his master useful intelligence of the relative strength and comparative military problems and tactics of the Ottomans and the Safavids, and of the revolt of Ahmad Khān Ardalān against Safī and his appeal to Murād IV for help.² In 1638 Shāh Jahān sent his first embassy under Mīr Zarīf to the Ottoman court, the purpose of which was proclaimed to be purchase of horses, presumably to allay the suspicions of Shāh Safī and of the Persian nobles in the Mughal court. Mīr Zarīf who carried Shāh Jahān's letter proposing a co-ordinated invasion of Persia by the Ottomans, the Mughals and the Uzbeks,³ passed through Hijaz, Egypt, and Syria before he presented his credentials to Murād IV, who received him graciously, and after the conquest of Baghdad appointed Arslān Āghā as the Turkish ambassador to the Mughal court.⁴ Qandahar and Baghdad were lost to the Safavids about the same time, while their formidable enemies on both flanks were forging an alliance.

In the letter of Shāh Jahān to Murād IV,⁵ sent in 1638, Murād is referred to as the 'Khāqān of Muslim kings', as one chosen by God, 'for the elevated charge of the Khilāfat', as one 'who has devised the union of the monarchs of Islam' . . . 'as the means for destroying the enemies of the faith'.⁶ This lip-service to a Muslim sovereign so remote from India, can hardly be explained away as exaggerated diplomatic flattery, and is in consonance with Shāh Jahān's policy of restoring the prestige of Sunnī Islam;—though it can be argued whether the term 'khilāfat' itself was used in its secondary sense of 'sovereignty' or in its primary sense.

The plan of invasion recommended in Shāh Jahān's letter was that Murād should exert pressure on Iraq and Azarbaijan, whereas Shāh Jahān would march against Khurasan, and the Uzbeks would press upon the Safavids from the north.⁷ Shāh Jahān's detailed advice to Murād IV on military manoeuvres could be considered tactless. Murād, however considered his relations with

¹ Rāsikh, fos. 62b-67a; Lāhorī, ii, 52-63.

² Ibid. ii, 15-19.

³ Na'imā, iii, 357-8, de Hammer, *TRAS*, ii, 466; Lāhorī, ii, 184-6.

⁴ Na'imā, loc. cit.; Feridūn, ii, 59-65; de Hammer, *GOR*, iii, 186, 346-7.

Uzunçarslı, iii, pp. ii, 264.

⁵ Feridūn, ii, 67-69; de Hammer, *TRAS*, ii, 477-8.

⁶ de Hammer, *TRAS*, ii, 479.

⁷ Ibid. ii, 479-80.

Shāh Jahān as quite satisfactory and refused to give any help to Baisunghur, a boorish cousin of Shāh Jahān, and pretender to the Mughal throne, who had taken refuge at the Ottoman court.¹

The text of Murād's IV's answer, which offended Shāh Jahān so deeply as to suspend his policy of creating an anti-Safavid Sunnī alliance, has so far not been traced, and it is remarkable that the collections of diplomatic correspondence compiled in Turkey, India, and Persia should have excluded it. One of the indications of Shāh Jahān's displeasure was a court rumour narrated by Sarkhush in his *Kalamāt al-Shu'arā*,² that Murād had objected to Shāh Jahān's assumption of the title 'shāh-i jahān' (king of the world) while he was, in fact, only the ruler of India. In any case the short term purpose of the Mughal embassy had already been fulfilled while Mir Zarif was still in Turkey.³ The Mughals had occupied Qandahar and the Ottomans Baghdad. In the Mughal answer addressed by Shāh Jahān's chief minister to Mustafā Pāsha, the Turkish grand vizier, the discourtesy was diplomatically attributed to the faulty *inshā* (composition) of the Ottoman *munshis*. It is significant that though no presents were sent with the Mughal ministerial protest, it confirmed the policy of Sunnī alliance and the Ottoman sultān was referred to as 'the successor of the four (holy) *khalifas*' and was complimented on his victories against the 'infidel Franks and innovating Redheads'.⁴

Before Arslān Āghā's return the news of Murād IV's death and the accession of Ibrāhīm (1640-8) reached Shāh Jahān from Gujarat, Sind and Qannuj⁵; this interest in the affairs of the Ottoman empire among Shāh Jahān's governors was an unprecedented development. Shāh Jahān was also informed of Murād's death by a letter from Sidqī Effendi from Turkey.⁶

Mustafā Pāsha's letter to Shāh Jahān's chief minister was apologetic and conciliatory; it admitted the possibility of faulty *inshā* on the Ottoman side⁷; it affirmed that no slight was intended in the late sultān's letter and reproached the Mughal court for not having sent an embassy of condolence; and it ended with the request to continue ambassadorial exchanges.

¹ Na'imā, iii, 211-16; de Hammer, *GOR*, iii, 63-64, 136-7; Uzunçarşılı, iii, pp. ii, 264.

² Quoted by Shibli Nu'mānī, *Shā'r al-'Ajam*, Cawnpore, 1920-3, iii, 209-10.

³ Lāhorī, ii, 188-90.

⁴ Feridūn, ii, 62-63; de Hammer, *TRAS*, ii, 480.

⁵ Ibid. ii, 481.

⁶ Feridūn, ii, 275-6.

⁷ Ibid. ii, 59-61.

The responsibility for the fact that the Mughal-Turkish alliance was still-born, remains with its author, Shāh Jahān. His idealism and modesty in conceding Ottoman primacy, if not actually Ottoman *Khilāfat*, and his egoism and sensitiveness as the powerful emperor of India, seem to have created in his mind a tension that doomed the Ottoman-Mughal axis from the outset. Complacent after the occupation of Qandahar, certain of the military weakness of Persia, Shāh Jahān soon launched upon his hereditary *folie de grandeur*, the plan for the reconquest of Central Asia. In 1639 he personally moved to Kabul, to the alarm of the Uzbek brothers Imām Qulī Khān and Nazar Muhammad Khān. In 1641 civil war broke out between the two Uzbek brothers, leading to the abdication of Imām Qulī Khān and his emigration to the Hijaz.¹ For a short while the whole of Turkestan from Tashqand to Balkh came under the rule of Nazar Muhammad Khān, but he was soon faced with the rebellion of Uzbek nobles with his own son 'Abdul 'Azīz Khān as their leader.² Nazar Muhammad Khān's appeal to Shāh Jahān in 1646 gave him his opportunity for Mughal intervention.³ A Mughal expedition under Prince Murād and 'Alī Mardān Khān occupied Kehmerd, Qunduz and Balkh; where the *khutba* was read in Shāh Jahān's name.⁴ Suspecting that the real Mughal intention was to subjugate him, Nazar Muhammad Khān, who had also been offended by Murād's tactlessness, took refuge in the court of 'Abbās II in Persia. Shāh Jahān's diplomatic pressure on Persia to secure its neutrality was only partly successful.⁵

In fact Shāh Jahān was beginning to realize that Persia under 'Abbās II, as under his grandfather 'Abbās I, was a power to reckon with. Despite his sponsorship of a Sunnī alliance Shāh Jahān had not wanted to see a vacuum in Persia, and had rejected his son Dārā Shikoh's request in 1642 to occupy Sistan and Harat.⁶ In his embassy to Persia sent in 1646, Shāh Jahān sought Persian friendship and advised 'Abbās II to let Nazar Muhammad Khān migrate to the Hijaz⁷; but during this Central Asian crisis, 'Abbās II played his cards well.

¹ Tāhūr Vahīd, *Tārīkh*, B M Add. MS. 11, 632, fos. 24b-30b, Lāhorī, i, pp. 1, 415, ii, 91-93.

² Ibid ii 439-46, Tāhūr Vahīd fo 56b, Shīmlu, fo. 52b

³ Lāhorī, ii, 435-6, B M. Or. MS. 1702, fos. 126b-128b.

⁴ Chandra Bhān Brahman, *Chahār Chaman*, B M Add. MS. 16, 836, fos. 54a-b.

⁵ Lāhorī, ii, 525-38 and *passim*, B.M. Or. M S 1702, fos. 128b-131a.

⁶ Lāhorī, ii, 300-1. ⁷ Ibid. 596; B.M. Or. MS. 1702, 131a-135b

In Badakhshan the Mughals met with very stiff resistance from 'Abdul 'Aziz Khān and the Uzbek chiefs. Shāh Jahān decided to put an end to the Central Asian adventure. Prince Murād was replaced in the Mughal command by Aurangzeb who concluded an agreement with Nazar Muhammad Khān. The Mughals evacuated Balkh in 1647, and Nazar Muhammad Khān returned accompanied by a small Persian force with 'Abbās II's instructions to its commander not to proceed beyond Harat and to avoid armed conflict with the Mughals.¹ Under Aurangzeb the Mughal expeditionary force began its disastrous retreat in winter over the snow-bound Hindu Kush, marking the end of the Mughal dream, which had begun with Bābur, of incorporating Khurasan and Central Asia in a Muslim empire ruled from Delhi.

With the failure of the Central Asian expedition Shāh Jahān's prestige, which was so high in 1642, sank low. His Sunnī alliance had flagged and the Ottoman Sultān Ibrāhīm (1640-8), with whom he had exchanged no direct epistles, remained cold and indifferent. An earlier treaty of peace between Murād IV and 'Abbās II had given the Safavids some sense of security.² According to Persian sources 'Abbās II even received Ibrāhīm's blessing for a diversion in the direction of Qandahar.³ In any case, the Persian Shāh soon began to exercise diplomatic pressure for the return of Qandahar, and finally occupied it by force of arms in 1649.⁴ Three Mughal expeditions between 1649 and 1652 failed to recover it from the Persians.

By 1649 Shāh Jahān, who was the first Indian Muslim sovereign since Muhammad bin Tughluq to think of the Sunnī Islam, if not the whole Dār al-Islām, as a single unity and had initiated a policy for its solidarity, saw his policy crumble in consequence of his own errors. It was ironical that the author of this policy found himself in complete isolation in the world of Islam. His efforts to regain Uzbek confidence were cold-shouldered by 'Abdul 'Aziz Khān who reported them in 1656 to 'Abbās II to win Persian support in his quarrels with Uzbek rivals in Khwarizm.⁵

The only overtures of friendship possible were with the Ottomans, who were still deeply interested in the stability of Uzbek rule and of Sunnī Islam in Central Asia. Sultān Ibrāhīm had

¹ Lāhorī, ii, 662. ² Tāhīr Vahid, fos. 38a-41a. ³ Shāmlu, fos. 54b-55a.

⁴ Tāhīr Vahid, *Inshā*, B.M. Add. MS. 18, 879, fos. 1b-13a.

⁵ Tāhīr Vahid, *Munsha'āt*, B.M. Add. MS. 7692, fos. 29b-30a.

written earlier to Nazar Muhammad Khān deploring the civil strife among the Uzbeks.¹ This was followed by a letter from the Ottoman court to 'Abdul 'Azīz Khān giving him a friendly warning to be loyal to his father.² This was the policy which Muhammad IV (1648-87) inherited on his accession. With the growth of 'Abbās II's power a renewal of Ottoman-Mughal axis was natural. It is quite possible that the way for it was prepared by the verbal message sent by Dārā Shikoh in his semi-official mission to the Ottoman grand vizier Mustafā Pāsha;³ though there is another possibility that this mission led by Mullā Shawqī was sent simply to offer devotions on behalf of the Qādiri Mughal Prince at the tomb of the founder of his order Shaykh 'Abdul Qādir Jīlānī.⁴ Official cognizance of this mission was taken by Mustafā Pāsha, who also sent a conciliatory letter to the Mughal chief minister.⁵

In re-opening diplomatic relations, the initiative came from the Turks who, after the accession of Muhammad IV, sent in 1649 an embassy under Mutafarrika Sayyid Muhyi al-dīn to the Mughal court to support the cause of Nazar Muhammad Khān and to request Shāh Jahān to use his good offices in bringing about a reconciliation between Nazar Muhammad and his son 'Abdul 'Azīz Khān.⁶

Shāh Jahān's return embassy in 1652 was led by Sayyid Ahmad, a man of exceptional learning and charm, who carried lavish presents, and created a very favourable impression in the Ottoman court.⁷ The letter he brought narrated Shāh Jahān's version of the Mughal intervention in Uzbek affairs to settle their internal differences.⁸ The next Turkish ambassador, who visited India in 1653, was Dhulfiqār Āghā, an ignorant Bosniak for whom the Turkish historian Na'imā shows unmitigated contempt.⁹ The letter he brought¹⁰ was regarded by Shāh Jahān as lacking in courtesy, a fault which he attributed to Muhammad IV's youth and inexperience.¹¹ This Mughal reply was sent in 1656 through Qā'im

¹ Ferīdūn, ii, 281-2.

² Ibid. ii, 282-3.

³ This letter could not have been in relation to the war of succession among Shāh Jahān's sons which did not begin until 1657 (cf. de Hammer, *TRAS*, ii, 469; Bernard Lewis, 8).

⁴ de Hammer, *TRAS*, ii, 485-6.

⁵ Ferīdūn, ii, 61-62.

⁶ Ibid. ii, 279-81.

⁷ Na'imā, v, 342; de Hammer, *GOR*, iii, 418; Uzuncārşılı, iii, pp. ii, 266.

⁸ Arabic Text, B.M. Or. MS. 1702, fos. 138b-143b; its Pers. tr. op. cit. fos. 143b-148b.

⁹ Na'imā, v, 342 ff.

¹⁰ Ferīdūn, ii, 69-70.

¹¹ Ibid. 65-67; B.M. Or. MS. 1702, fos. 152a-156b.

Beg, the Mughal ambassador who accompanied Dhulfiqār Āghā on his return journey.¹ The pattern was now set for the Mughal-Ottoman diplomatic correspondence; there was pique and peevishness on Shāh Jahān's part at the discourtesies of *inshā* in the Ottoman letters; and there were conciliatory apologies and requests for the preservation of stability in Central Asia from the Ottoman side. The next Turkish envoy Ma'nzade Husain, son of the Druze leader Fakhr al-dīn Ma'n, was unlike his predecessor an able man, and the letter he carried from Muhammad IV proposed sincere reconciliation.² This would have cemented Ottoman-Mughal friendship, but Ma'nzade Husain arrived too late, when the war of succession between Shāh Jahān's sons had already begun. He presented his credentials to the wrong pretender, Prince Murād, and returned to Turkey in 1659, without accomplishing much.

During this war of succession the Persians were secretly supporting the cause of Murād for the Mughal throne as he was inclined towards Shī'ism.³ 'Abbās II was equally prepared to offer refuge to Dārā Shikoh, in flight before Aurangzeb.⁴ The Safavid monarch carefully watched the Indian situation and wrote about it to Muhammad IV in Turkey.⁵

Subhān Qulī Khān, the Uzbek ruler of Balkh, was the first to recognize Aurangzeb as the emperor of India on his accession in 1658. The embassy of 'Abdul 'Azīz Khān followed in 1660-1.⁶ In his return embassy to Bukhara, led by Mustafā Khān Khawāfi in 1664, Aurangzeb emphasized the principle of Sunnī solidarity as the basis of Mughal-Uzbek alliance.⁷ In the meantime shrewdly observing the consolidation of Aurangzeb's power in India, 'Abbās II sent Budāq Beg as his ambassador to India in 1660, formally congratulating Aurangzeb on his accession,⁸ who in view of his usurpation was badly in need of recognition by a great power.

¹ Na'imā, v, 177, 208, 342 and *passim*; de Hammer, *GOR*, iii, 418, 454; Muhammad Findiqulī Silahdār, *Silahdār Tārīhi*, Istanbul, 1928, i, 41-42, 54; Uzuncārşılı, iii, pp. ii, 267.

² Na'imā, vi, 410; de Hammer, *GOR*, iii, 508; Feridūn, ii, 276-9.
³ Tāhīr Vahīd, *Inshā*, fo. 13a-b; idem. *Munsha'āt*, fos. 6b-7b, 10b-13a; 'Abbās II's letter to Ottoman Muhammad IV on the subject, *ibid.* fos. 3b-5a; Shāmlu, fos. 134a-139b.

⁴ Muhammad Kāzīm, *Ālamgīr Nāma*, Calcutta, 1868, 188, 204-5, 275; Muhammad Sālih, *Bahār-i Sukhan*, B.M. Or. MS. 178, fos. 29b-34a; F. Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire*, Eng. tr., London, 1891, 94.

⁵ Vahīd, *Inshā*, fo. 34b.
⁶ Kāzīm, 606-7, 637-8; Sāqī Musta'id Khān, *Ma'ūthir-i 'Ālamgīrī [M.'A]*, Eng. tr. J. Sarkar, Calcutta, 1947, 22.
⁷ Sālih, fos. 24b-34b; Kāzīm, 863-4.
⁸ Shāmlu, fos. 142b-143a; Tāhīr Vahīd, *Munsha'āt*, fos. 13a-15a.

Aurangzeb's ambassador Tarbiyat Khān who arrived at the court of 'Abbās II in 1662 was first received hospitably, but later cold-shouldered, due to 'Abbās's taking offence at Aurangzeb's anti-Shi'i policies in the Deccan and the Mughal alliance with the Uzbeks.¹ Tarbiyat Khān was sent back to India in 1664 with the most insulting letter in the diplomatic history of the period, in which Aurangzeb was reminded of his usurpation, his treatment of his father and brothers, of his fanaticism and his incapacity in stamping out rebellions in his empire, and was threatened with Persian invasion.² At the same time 'Abbās II incited the Deccan rulers to rise in revolt against him.³ To meet the Persian threat Aurangzeb mobilized his army,⁴ but soon came the news of 'Abbās's death, removing the danger of a Persian invasion, leaving behind a legacy of hostility, sharpened by Aurangzeb's Sunni fanaticism which was matched by the Shi'i bigotry of 'Abbās II's successors Sulaymān (1664-94) and Sultān Husain (1694-1722), with neither of whom the Mughal Emperor exchanged any diplomatic missions. Hostile intrigues continued on both sides. The Persians kept on inciting the tribesmen of north-west frontier against Aurangzeb, who in his turn sought alliance with the Uzbeks to offset Persian machinations.⁵ Aurangzeb's son Akbar who had revolted against him in 1686 was given asylum in Persia where he stayed threateningly close to the Mughal border⁶: whereas Ahmad Khān the Persian governor of Harat who rebelled against Sulaymān in 1688 was given encouragement and assistance by Aurangzeb.

The relations of Aurangzeb with other Muslim rulers outside India were correct and friendly. In 1665 there came envoys from the Sharif of Mecca, the ruler of Hadramawt, the Turkish governors of Yemen and Basrah, and even from the Christian king of Ethiopia.⁷ Vast sums of money were sent to the Hijaz to be distributed among the poor and the needy, though later Aurangzeb was disillusioned by the greed and avarice of the Meccan Sharifs.⁸

Pursuing Akbar's policy of friendship with the rulers of Eastern Turkestan, whose petty kingdom marched with the Mughal province of Kashmir, Aurangzeb exchanged envoys with 'Abdullāh

¹ Sālih, fos. 13a-14b; Kāzim, 844-5, 940, 947; Vahīd, op. cit. fos. 31b-36a; Shāmlu, fos. 151a-b.

² Proceedings of the Indian Historical Record Commission, 1920, ii, 8-18.

³ Shāmlu, fos. 140a-141a.

⁴ Kāzim, 974.

⁵ Ibid. 10 49-51, 1063.

⁶ M. A' 288.

⁷ Ibid. 32; Kāzim, 1025; Bernier, 133.

⁸ Aurangzeb, *Ruq'at*, Eng. tr. J. H. Bilimoria, Bombay, 1908, 167.

Khān in 1665, and gave him honourable refuge in 1668 when he was dispossessed and expelled from Kashghar by his son Bulbars Khān. The deposed ruler of Kashghar lived at the Mughal court until 1675. On his death Bulbars Khān's envoy was received in 1690, and when he died in 1700 Aurangzeb intervened by sending Arslān Khān, a nephew of the late king of Kashghar, who had been serving in the Mughal court, to take possession of that kingdom.¹

In 1671 Aurangzeb received a second envoy from Ethiopia, a Muslim envoy from the King of 'Māchīn' (some kingdom, somewhere in South East Asia), and exchanged diplomatic missions with Anūsha Khān, the ruler of Urganj.² In 1661 Husain Pāsha, the Turkish governor of Basrah, had sent Aurangzeb a letter of congratulations on his accession and a gift of horses; later in disgrace at the Ottoman court he took refuge in India and joined Aurangzeb's service, as did also his successor-designate to the governorship of Basrah, Yahyā Pāsha.³

No Ottoman embassy had arrived on the occasion of Aurangzeb's accession; nor did Aurangzeb's projected embassy to Turkey in 1667 materialize. In 1690, five years after the defeat of Qarā Mustafā at Vienna, when the Ottoman empire was in distress, the Ottoman Sultān Suleimān II (1687-91) sent Ahmed Āqā as his ambassador to India to seek Aurangzeb's aid.⁴ The Turkish ambassador was received coldly and Aurangzeb's answer was not copied in the Ottoman records (*Nāme Defteri*) probably because of its indifferent tone, which might have been occasioned by Ottoman negligence in not sending an embassy to Aurangzeb until the thirty-second year of his reign and even then only to solicit Mughal aid.⁵ The Safavids were now too weak and ineffective to stimulate a renewal of Ottoman-Mughal alliance.

In the early eighteenth century there was little diplomatic activity. Conditions in the sub-continent were chaotic and the Ottoman empire was in retreat in Europe when a Mughal embassy arrived in Istanbul in 1717.⁶

¹ *M.Ā.* 33, 42-48, 69, 261; B.M. Or. MS. 1702, fos. 42b-45a.

² *M.Ā.* 53, 67; Kāzīm, 1047.

³ Sālih, fos. 34b-36a; *M.Ā.* 20-22.

⁴ Text in B.M. Add. MS. 7857 (*Liber Epistolarum et Foederum Turcice*), fos. 18a-19a; Y. Hikmet Bayur, 'Osmanlı Pādīshāhī II Süleyman' in *Gurkânli Pādīshāhī I 'Alemgir (Evrenghiz) Mektubu'*, *Belleten*, liv (1950) 269-87; *M.Ā.* 203; J. Sarkar, *History of Aurangzeb*, iii, 135.

⁵ Bayur, loc. cit.

⁶ B. Lewis 8, quoting Rāshid, anno A.H. 1129, iv, 321-2.

In 1713 Shāh Husain, the Safavid ruler sent Mīr Murtaza as his ambassador to Farrukh Siyyar in India.¹ The Safavid dynasty soon came to an end. But Nādir Shāh invaded India and sacked Delhi in 1738. In 1744 Muhammad Shāh (1719-48) the powerless Mughal Emperor of Delhi, sent Sayyid 'Atā-Ullāh Bukhārī as his ambassador to the Ottoman Sultān Mahmūd warning him against the tactics of Nādir Shāh, and proposing a common alliance against him. The Ottoman reply sent through Selīm Effendi agreed with the Mughal view.² All the same the Turks suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of Nādir Shāh in 1747. In this period the Persians looked at the Indian Muslims with some contempt and their viewpoint is reflected in the memoirs of the poet Shaykh 'Alī Hazīn.³

Diplomatic exchanges between the ineffective Mughal emperors and the rulers of Dār al-Islām continued until the end of the eighteenth century. A Mughal embassy was received in the Ottoman court in 1750.⁴ Ottoman envoys to Delhi between 1750 and 1799 included among others Hājī Yūsuf Āghā, whose son Muhammad Amīn Pāsha became the Turkish grand vizier in 1769.

In the wake of these diplomatic exchanges between the Mughals and the sovereigns of the Muslim world came other associations and influences. Persian, Central Asian, and Ottoman nobles, dissatisfied with the patronage of their masters at home, took refuge in the Mughal court, where they were well received and often appointed to high positions. They included two Ottoman governors of Basrah, three Persian governors of Qandahar, two of whom were Saafavid princes,⁵ and a stream of noblemen from all over Central Asia and Persia. Under Bābur and during the first phase of Humāyūn's reign the court had a Central Asian complexion; after Humāyūn's return from Persia the Persian influx began. Bayrām Khān, Turkish in culture but with pronounced Shī'ite proclivities, represented the synthesis of the two cultural streams. Under Akbar there was an influx of rationalist intellectuals escaping from the inhibiting orthodoxy of 'Abdullāh Khān Uzbek in Transoxiana, and of Persian poets migrating from Iran where the lack of patronage

¹ Rahīm, 129.

² 'Izzī, *Tārīkh*, Istanbul 1784, anno 1157, 13-16, *GOR*, iv, 405, Uzunçürşılı, iv, 1, 300, Hikmet Bayur, 'Osmanlı Devletinin Nadir Şah Afşar'la barış yapmasını önlemek amacıyla guden bir Gurkanlı denemesi', *Belleten*, xlix, 91-96.

³ Shaykh 'Alī Hazīn, *Tārīkh-i Ahwāl bi Tadhkirat-i Hāl*, ed. F. C. Balfour, London, 1831, 257.

⁴ 'Izzī, anno 1163.

⁵ Jahāngīr (Rogers), 262.

by the Safavids was diverting the course of the main stream of Persian poetry from its own soil to hospitable India. These foreign aristocratic, intellectual, religious and cultural elements served as a counter-balance to Akbar's policy of Indianization of the administration and culture of his empire. Having freshly arrived, and conservative of their own cultural values at a high intellectual level, these elements reinforced the Islamic heritage of Indo-Muslim culture, giving it a new impulse of resistance to cultural eclecticism. Resistance to Hindu influences was stronger in the Persian Shī'ī elements; though the complete antithesis to Akbar's heretical eclecticism came in the form of the Naqshbandī movement as sponsored by Khwāja Bāqī-billāh, who had emigrated from Central Asia. Persian painters continued to keep the Mughal school distinct from the Rājput to which the inherent iconographic instinct of the local Hindu painters and their Hindu patrons was giving birth. Turkish architects like Yūsuf, disciple of the renowned Sinān, and Persian builders like Mīrak Ghiyāth¹ provided the antithesis to the movement for the synthesis of Hindu and Muslim styles of architecture. The poetic style of Fighānī brought from Shiraz by 'Urfī gave to the *sabk-i Hindī* (Indian school) of Persian poetry a new intellectual dimension which led not only to great literary creation in its own right during the next two centuries, but also weaned away the general Muslim intelligentsia from taking interest in Hindu and Hindi literatures to which the imperial patronage had been extended by Akbar and his followers. Emigré statesmen like Fath-Ullāh Shīrāzī were the antithesis of Hindu administrators like Rājā Todar Mal²; they grafted on Akbar's educational, fiscal and reform policies an impress of Khurasani institutions.

In Jahāngīr's reign Persian influences were all-powerful in the palace where Nūr Jahān, beautiful, talented and intriguing, ruled the Emperor's heart, and through it the Empire. Her relations, I'timād al-dawlah and Āsaf Khān, were supreme at court. Elder statesmen like Mirzā 'Azīz Kokā reproached Jahāngīr for placing all power in the hands of the Persians.³ Despite Shāh Jahān's strong Sunnī proclivities and his quarrels with Persia, his court was still dominated by the Persian faction. Three of his *amīr al-umarā*

¹ Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture (Islamic Period)*, Bombay 1958, 92-93; Lewis, 9.

² Shāh Nawāz Khān, *Ma'āthir al-umarā*, Calcutta, 1888-1910, i, 101.

³ B.M. Add. M.S. 16, 859, fos. 19a-b.

(chief nobles), Āsaf Khān, 'Alī Mardān Khān and Mīr Jumla, were Persians. 'Alī Mardān Khān, the former Persian governor of Qandahar, who had deserted to the Mughals, was trusted by Shāh Jahān to such an extent that he was appointed governor of Kashmir close though it was to the Persian frontier, and given command of the expedition against the Uzbeks near the north-western borders of the Safavid Empire. But generally the Persian nobles were sympathetic to the Safavid interest, and could hardly be relied upon in the event of military conflict with Persia.¹ Some of them continued to hold vested interests in Persia.² Therefore on the whole Shāh Jahān preferred Central Asians (Tūrānīs),³ and his reign marks the turning point in the rivalry between Irānī and Tūrānī factions at the Mughal court. During the reign of Aurangzeb the Tūrānī party gained definite ascendancy.

Shāh Jahān's court was the centre for an impressive array of elements; the stream of ambassadors arriving from Turkey, Persia, and Central Asia; merchants from Iraq, Khurasan, Turkey, China, South East Asia, and Europe; and scholars and soldiers of fortune who made their way to Delhi in search of a new career from all over the Muslim world.⁴ This was a one-way traffic, leading from Dār al-Islām to India. No outstanding Indian Muslim migrated to Persia or anywhere else except to the Hijaz. With the improvement of sea-communications, though they were at the mercy of the Portuguese, a two-way traffic grew between India and the Muslim Holy Land. Indian 'ulamā like Sayyid 'Alī Muttaqī and 'Abdul Wahhāb Muttaqī settled down in the Hijaz, where they made valuable contributions to the study of Prophetic Tradition (*hadith*) and retained a link with India through their Indian disciples.⁵

(ii) *Dār al-Islām and the Kingdoms of Deccan and Gujarat*

The Bahmanid Kingdom in the Deccan as well as the regional Sultanate of Gujarat, successor states of the Delhi sultānate, in the

¹ Bernier, 153, 211.

² 'Abd al-'Alī Tabrizī, *Munsha'āt*, B.M. Or. MS. 6600, fos. 33b-35a, 48b-49r.

³ Lāhorī, I, i, 457; I, ii, 8, 166, 243; II, 91-93, 99.

⁴ Brahmin, fos. 22b-23a.

⁵ Shaykh 'Abdul Haqq Dehlavī, *Zād al-Muttaqīn*, B.M. Or. MS. 217, fos. 113b-148b.

fifteenth and sixteenth centuries bordered the Arabian Sea, and through merchants, travellers and pilgrims from the Hijaz remained in touch with the news of the major happenings in the Muslim world.

Ahmad Shāh 'Walī' Bahmanī (1422-34) had reversed the policy of his predecessors by giving preference in his administrative appointments to foreigners over Indian nobles. He attracted to his court some distinguished foreigners like Sayyid Husain Badakhshī and 'Abdullāh Kurd, and raised a special corps of 3,000 archers from Iraq, Central Asia, Turkey and Arabia; in due course two factions rose in the Bahmanid court, the Āfāqī (foreigners) and the Deccani.¹

The Bahmanids were also the first in the Indian subcontinent to exchange embassies with the Ottomans. Muhammad III Bahmanī sent an embassy to the Ottoman Muhammad II (1451-81), the Conqueror of Constantinople. Later an ambassador was sent by Mahmūd Bahmanī (1482-1518) through Egypt, where he suffered some misadventures, to Bāyazīd II (1481-1512).²

Gujarat's contact with the Muslim world abroad was a reaction to the Portuguese challenge in the Indian Ocean. It was a common menace to the commercial and navigational interests of the Mamlūks of Egypt and the sultāns of Gujarat in the first decade of the sixteenth century. Amīr Husain, a naval commander of the Mamlūk sultān, Qanswah al-Ghūrī led an Egyptian naval expedition to Gujarat, and with the help of Malik Ayāz, the governor of Diu under Sultān Mahmūd Begra of Gujarat (1458-1511), defeated a Portuguese fleet under Lourenço in 1507-8 at Chaul³ and sunk a large Portuguese vessel carrying rich merchandise. The kingdoms of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur aided the Mamlūk fleet and Malik Ayāz. Portuguese, but not Egyptian or Indian sources, record a Portuguese victory against the Egyptian and Gujarati fleet in 1509.⁴

¹ H. K. Sherwani, 'Cultural Influences under Ahmad Shāh Walī Bahmanī', *JC*, xviii, 365-75.

² Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i al-zuhūr*, Cairo, 1896, ii, 102, 130, 152-3; *Tārīkh Osmāni Mecmūa*, Istanbul, 1848-9, i, 251, 255; Sa'd al-dīn, *Tāj al-tawārīkh*, ii, 47.

³ Sikandar bin Muhammad 'Manjhū', *Mit'at-i Sikandari* (M.S.), Eng. tr. F. L. Faridi, Dharampur, n.d., 75-76; Gaspar Correa, *Lendas da Índia*, Lisbon, 1858-64, i, 762-71; Firishtha (Lucknow, 1864), i, 204; Longworth Dames, 'The Portuguese and Turks in the Indian Ocean in the Sixteenth Century', *JRAS* (1921), 8, 78; E. Denison Ross, 'The Portuguese in India and Arabia between 1507 and 1517', *JRAS*, London, 1921, 549, 560.

⁴ Longworth Dames, 9-10; Ross, 458; cf. M.S. 84.

Malik Ayāz, originally a Russian renegade, culturally a Turk, was sold in captivity to Sultān Mahmūd Begra, but due to his ability as a general and his generosity and foresight as a courtier he rose to be one of the foremost administrators of Gujarat. He was the first in India to realize the significance of the Ottoman Sultān Selīm I's (1512-20) occupation of Mamlūk Egypt and the Hijaz, especially as it introduced the prospect of a new and powerful alliance against the Portuguese as well as greater control over the Indian Ocean for trade with Egypt and beyond, and greater security for pilgrims to Mecca; and wrote to Selīm congratulating him on the conquest of 'Arabistān'.¹

About the same time diplomatic relations with the Safavids were established. In 1511 a Persian embassy from the court of Isma'īl I was received by Muzaffar II (1511-22) in Gujarat.² The defeat of Isma'īl I at the hands of the Ottomans brought home to Muzaffar II the importance of friendly relations with the Ottoman court and he wrote to Selīm congratulating him on his victories in Iraq and Persia, though the greater part of his letter was full of the account of his own victories in Malwa which he had recovered from Medani Raī and his Hīndu confederates.³

In 1525 Suleimān the Magnificent (1520-66) sent his first naval expedition in the Indian Ocean under Salmān Reis, which sailed along the coasts of Yemen and Aden and took punitive action against elements hostile to the Ottomans.⁴ Soon after, Sultān Bahādur of Gujarat (1526-37) appealed to Suleimān for help against Humāyūn and the Portuguese.⁵ So far as Humāyūn was concerned, the responsibility of provocation rested entirely on Bahādur himself, who had given refuge to rebels from his court including Zamān Mirzā, a grandson of Sultān Husain Bayqarā and a pretender to the Mughal throne. In answer to Humāyūn's requests for extradition Bahādur had written rude and threatening letters.⁶ Humāyūn's invasion of Gujarat was initially successful, but he had to withdraw because of the pressure of Sher Khān (later Sher Shāh) Sūrī on his north-eastern flank. Suleimān the Magnificent could have hardly cared about the quarrel between Bahādur and Humāyūn, but the growth of Portuguese sea power

¹ Feridūn, i, 397.

² M.S. 92-94.

³ Feridūn, i, 395-6.

⁴ Hājī Khalifa, *Tuhfat al-kubār fī asfār al-bihār*, a section of Part I tr. into Eng. J. Mitchell (*History of the Maritime Wars of the Turks*), London, 1831, 26-27.

⁵ Ibid. 65.

⁶ Evoglu, fos. 145a-156b; M.S., 180-95, 197-8.

in the Indian Ocean certainly worried him. In 1535 they occupied Diu and two years later invited Bahādur to their ships and murdered him.¹ In 1538 the Turkish admiral Khādīm Sulcimān Pāsha was sent to Gujarat with a force of forty-five galleys, carrying 20,00 men, including 7,000 Janissaries. The Turkish expedition failed to achieve its objective because of the failure of the Gujaratis to keep it in supplies, during the siege of Diu.² Mahmūd III (1537-54) had succeeded Bahādur and civil strife, corruption and demoralization had set in in Gujarat.³ During this expedition Sulcimān wrote to Khudādād Khān, the governor of Surat,⁴ a Turk who had fortified the port of Surat in the Ottoman fashion, and whose artillery was Turkish in model and was known as Suleimāni,⁵ asking him to aid the Turkish expedition. In 1551 Sulcimān sent another naval expedition which was trapped and defeated by the Portuguese in the Persian Gulf, and its commander Pīrī Reis was beheaded by the order of the Ottoman sultan, who sent Murād Bey from Basrah to rescue the Turkish fleet, but he also failed.⁶

In 1553 the famous Turkish admiral Sidi 'Alī Reis, who had seen service in the Mediterranean under Khayr al-dīn Pāsha and Sinān Pāsha, and who like Pīrī Reis was author of books on the art of navigation, was sent to rescue the Turkish fleet from Portuguese blockade in the Persian Gulf and to bring it back to Suez; but his fleet was also battered by the Portuguese and driven by storms, and he had to take refuge in the ports of Gujarat.⁷ On his way along the coast of Mekran, the Balūch chief of Gawadar expressed his devotion to the Ottoman sultān and helped Sidi 'Alī Reis with supplies.⁸ Suleimān the Magnificent wrote to Ahmad Shāh who had succeeded Mahmūd as the sultan of Gujarat in 1554, and to Rajjab Khān, the Gujarati governor of Surat to give all possible help to 'Alī Reis in his *jihād*.⁹ After a brief struggle with the Portuguese in which he helped the Gujarati forces, Sidi 'Alī Reis presented himself at the court of Ahmad Shāh; but Gujarat was deep

¹ Evoglu, fos. 145a-156b; *M.S.*, 198-200.

² İbrāhīm Peçevî, *Tārīkh-i Peçevî*, İstanbul 1866, i, 210-25; Hāji Khalīfa, 65-66; Firishṭa, ii, 372; Fevzi Kurtoglu, 'Hadīm Süleyman Paşanın Mektûpları', *Belleten*, xiii (1940) 53-87; de Hammer, *GOR*, ii, 156-7, 568; Uzunçarşılı, ii, 381-3, 538; *ibid.* i, 262-3.

³ *M.S.*, 209, 212-13 and *passim*.

⁴ Firishṭa, ii, 226; Dames, 23.

⁵ Sidi 'Alī Reis, 17-22; Vambery, 17-23.

⁶ Sidi 'Alī Reis, 22; Vambery, 16.

⁷ Feridūn, i, 219-20; Peçevî, i, 367-84; de Hammer, *GOR*, iii, 298-9.

⁸ Feridūn, i, 404-5.

⁹ Hāji Khalīfa, 71-72.

in the throes of disorganized civil strife, and the Turkish admiral seeing that he would receive no effective reinforcements there to continue his struggle against the Portuguese, and finding it impossible to risk a journey back by sea in his battered ships to Suez, which was now fully under the Portuguese control, started on his famous journey by land through Mughal India, Central Asia, and Persia. Most of the Turkish soldiers under him, took service in the Kingdom of Gujarat and settled down there.¹

The failure of Ottoman naval expeditions against the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean contrasted sharply with the successes of Khayr al-dīn Barbarossa and his successors in the Mediterranean. Suleimān considered seriously the project of a canal across the Suez isthmus, linking the Mediterranean with the Red Sea, and a *farman* was issued to the governor of Egypt to that effect. Later, about 1580 an Ottoman geographer assessing the importance of naval power in view of Europe's command of the oceans and the discovery of the Americas, again put forward the proposal of a canal across the Suez isthmus.² It is interesting that after the Russian occupation of Kazan and Astrakhan, a similar plan was considered by Suleimān, namely, to dig a canal linking the Don and the Volga to re-establish Ottoman communications with Central Asia; and similarly it was given up.

Even though the Kingdom of Gujarat in its weaker and decadent phase could not effectively help the Ottoman expeditions, it continued to accept and absorb Turkish elements. There were Turkish gunners in the army of Muzaffar III (1560-73).³ On the coast of Gujarat Muslims from the Turkish provinces as well as from Persia, East Indies, and East Africa continued to come and settle.⁴ They contributed to the growth of a composite Muslim Gujarati culture: 'most of the elegant arts and crafts that are now common in Gujarat were copied from men of skill and genius from other countries, and Gujarat like an accomplished person became a collection of merits gathered from other sources.'⁵

In the Deccan the rulers of three out of five successor states to the Bahmanī Kingdom, Yūsuf 'Ādīl Shāh of Bijapur (1490-1510), Qāsim Barīd of Bidar (1487-1504) and Qulī Qutb Shāh of Golconda (1512-43) claimed Turkish ancestry. Of these Qutb Shāh

¹ Sidi 'Alī Reis, 27, 37; Hājī Khalīfa, 77.

² *Uzunçarşılı*, III, i, 32-33.

³ *M.S.*, 306.

⁴ *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, Eng. tr. L. Dames, London, 1918-21, i, 119-20.

⁵ *M.S.*, 69.

was descended from the Qarā-Qoyūnlu,¹ the others probably belonged to tribes of Azarbaijan; and 'Ādil Shāh, whose claim to be a descendant of the Ottoman Sultān Murād II was spurious, was 'in fact enrolled among the young slaves of Shaykh Safi' and his descendants continued their loyalty to the Safavid house.² Two of these Deccani dynasties, the 'Ādil Shāhī and the Qutb Shāhī were Shī'ite, while Burhān Nizām Shāh of Ahmadnagar was converted to Shī'ism in 1538 by a Persian emigré, Shāh Tāhir.

These three kingdoms looked to Safavid Persia rather than Ottoman Turkey as their strong link with Dār al-Islām. Only Amīr Barīd of Bidar was hostile to the Safavids. He imprisoned the ambassador of Ismā'il I to Vijayanagar, but later released him on the request of Ismā'il 'Ādil Shāh (1510-34) of Bijapur.³ The name of Ismā'il I and his successors were read in the Friday *khutbas* in Golconda and Bijapur.⁴ Husain Nizām Shāh (1553-65) sent Khurshāh ibn Qubād as his ambassador to Tahmāsp, who stayed in Persia from 1545 to 1563 and wrote there his famous universal history. Close diplomatic ties between the Safavids and the Deccan States continued to be maintained during the reigns of Tahmāsp, Ismā'il II and 'Abbās I; the latter exerted diplomatic pressure on Jahāngīr in their favour.⁵ One of the motives of Safavid intercession during the Mughal expansion in the Deccan at the expense of the Shī'ite states there, might have been, as suggested by Sir Thomas Roe, Persian envy at the growing strength and extent of the Mughal Empire.⁶ Frequent ambassadorial exchanges took place between 'Abbās I, and the rulers and statesmen of Deccan, Muhammad Qulī Qutb Shāh (1580-1612), Ibrāhīm 'Ādil Shāh (1580-1627) and Malik 'Anbar. These Persian diplomatic manoeuvres had very little effect on the Mughal policy of expansion in Deccan,⁷ but when Mughal military pressure against Deccan slackened in 1620, 'Abbās I thanked Jahāngīr for showing 'clemency' to the Deccan rulers.⁸

¹ Khurshāh ibn Qubād, fos. 431a-436b; V. Minorsky, 'The Qarāqoyunlu and the Qutb Shāhs', *BSOAS*, xvii (1955), 50-73.

² Ismā'il Hikmet Ertaylan, 'Ādilshāhler', Istanbul, 1953, 3 and *passim*; Firishta, iii, 3, 43; Dames, 4 (footnote); J. N. Hollister, *The Shī'a of India*, London, 1956, 113-14.

³ *Ibid.* 114.

⁴ Firishta, ii, 329-30.

⁵ *Embassy*, ii, 296; I.O. Pers. MS. 2068, fos. 94b-95a; Evoglu, fos. 251a-252b; Nizām al-dīn Ahmad Sa'īdī, *Hadīqat al-salātīn*, I.O. Pers. MS. 2978, fos. 67b-69a.

⁶ Roe, loc. cit.

⁷ Sa'īdī, fo. 70a-b.

⁸ I.O. Pers. MS. 379, fos. 94a-95a.

After 'Abbās I the Deccan states continued to look to the Safavid Persia for help,¹ but Safī was too weak to exert any pressure on Shāh Jahān, who absorbed Ahmadnagar into the Mughal empire in 1633. In 1636 'Abdullāh Qutb Shāh acknowledged Mughal suzerainty, and in the *khutba* which was now read in the Sunnī manner, Shāh Jahān's name was substituted for that of Safī.² Shāh Jahān informed Safī of these successes in the Deccan in the letter he sent through Mīr Husainī.³ But still the Deccan rulers continued to regard the Safavids as their spiritual protectors.⁴ Apart from the sectarian loyalties, one of the major causes of the attachment of the Deccan states to the Safavids was the presence of Persian nobles who held influential positions in their courts. During the Mughal war of succession (1657-8) 'Abbās II incited the rulers of the Deccan to revolt against the Mughals.⁵ The struggle of Bijapur and Golconda against Aurangzeb was encouraged by him and by his successor Sulaymān I.⁶

The next state in the Deccan which sought friendly ties with Dār al-Islām was that of Mysore. Its ruler Tīpū Sultān sent an embassy to the Ottoman sultān 'Abd al-Hamīd I in 1785 to obtain from him an investiture of confirmation for himself as the ruler of Mysore.⁷ It has been suggested that Tīpū Sultān turned to the Ottoman sultan because his attempts to get recognition from the Mughal court were thwarted by the agents of the Nizām of Hyderabad.⁸ Actually Tīpū Sultān's mission was also meant to forge closer commercial ties and to obtain the services of Turkish technicians; and his chief object was to seek an alliance against the British East India Company.⁹ He received the Ottoman caliphal investiture, but did not succeed in other matters. In fact Tīpū Sultān's correspondence with the Ottomans was parallel to his efforts to make an anti-British alliance with Napoleon. Tīpū Sultān also tried to secure an alliance with Zamān Shāh, the Amīr

¹ Sa'īdī, fos. 132a-134a; 223b-224a.

² Ibid. fos. 146a-147b.

³ Evoglu, fos. 256b-258a.

⁴ Tabrizī, fos. 141b-144a; Abu'l 'Alī Qazvīnī, *Favā'id-i Safaviyyah*, B.M. Add. MS. 16, 698, fos. 36a-37b.

⁵ Shāmīlu, fos. 139b-140a; Vahīd, *Munsha'āt*, fos. 7b-10b, 39a-43b; *idem*, *Inshā*, fos. 13b-22b.

⁶ Shāmīlu, fos. 140a-141a; M.'A., 337.

⁷ Y. Hikmet Bayur, 'Maysor Sultānī Tipu ile Osmānli Pādşahlarından I. Abdül Hamid ve III Selim arasındaki Mektuplaşma', *Belleten*, xlvii (1948), 619-54; Ahmed Jevdet, *Vaqā'i Detlet-i 'Alīya*, Istanbul, 1855, i, 167-8; Mahmud Husain in *A History of the Freedom Movement*, Karachi, 1957, i, 451.

⁸ Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, Introduction to *ibid.* i, 38.

⁹ Mahmud Husain, 451-2, 481.

of Afghanistan, and maintained friendly relations with the Imām of Mascat.¹ In 1798 the Ottoman Selīm III, pressed by his enemies in Europe and Egypt and keen to maintain British goodwill, sent to Tipū Sultān a letter through the British governor-general of India, Lord Wellesley, advising him to direct his hostilities against the French rather than the British. Tipū Sultān wrote back to say that since the British were the aggressors in his territory, his *jihād* could only be against them.²

Throughout the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century elements from the Arabian coast, Arabs from the Hijaz and Hadramawt, Somalis and other East Africans (generally known as *Siddis*) continued to come and find employment in the irregular forces of the Nizāms of Hyderabad, and the sultan of Hadramawt was also a titled noble of the court of the Nizām.

¹ Mahmud Husain, 460-2, 479-80.

² Jevdet, i, 265; Hikmet Bayur, loc. cit.; Mahmud Husain, 488-9.

IV

PAN-ISLAMISM AND MODERNISM

(i) *Sayyid Ahmad Khān and Jamāl al-dīn Afghānī.*

THE Indian Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, or the 'War of Independence' as it is now described in India and Pakistan was also, if one may use a Toynbeeian expression, an 'archaic' attempt of the Indian Muslims to recover their lost power in India. Its failure, due to the lack of organization spelt the disintegration and collapse of the feudal structure of Muslim society. This defeat was accepted as final by the Indian Muslims in the second half of the nineteenth century, and they felt the need of a new kind of leadership—a leadership of adjustment—to find a *modus vivendi* with the British rulers and their resurgent Hindu compatriots. From 1858 to 1898, this leadership was provided by Sayyid Ahmad Khān.¹ The most formidable challenge to it came from a non-Indian Muslim, Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī.²

The disagreement between Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī and Sayyid Ahmad Khān consists of three cardinal points:

1. Al-Afghānī did not agree with the extremist rationalism of at least some of Sayyid Ahmad Khān's views, and regarded his new '*Ilm al-Kalām*' as a heresy in so far as it seemed to falsify the words of the Qur'ān.

2. He regarded Sayyid Ahmad Khān's religious views and his educational programme as ancillaries to his political servitude to British interests in India, whereas al-Afghānī himself was bitterly anti-British.

¹ For studies of Sayyid Ahmad Khān's life and his movement see Hālī, *Hayāt-i Jāwīd*, Cawnpore, 1901; Jurjī Zaydān, *Hāyāt Sayyid Ahmad*, Urdu tr. M. Fāriq, Aligarh, 1903, G. F. I. Graham, *Syed Ahmed Khan*, London, 1885; J. M. S. Baljon, *The Reforms and Religious Ideas of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan*, Leyden, 1949.

² For the studies of the life and work of al-Afghānī see Murtuzā Muddarisī Chahardihī, *Sayyid Jamāl al-dīn Afghānī*, Tehran, 1334 Shamsī, Qāzī 'Abdul Ghaffūr, *Āthār-i Jamāl al-dīn Afghānī*, Delhi, 1940, Muḥammad al-Makhlūmī, *Khātirāt Jamāl al-dīn*, Beirut, 1931; 'Abd al-Qādir al-Maghribī, *Jamāl al-dīn*, Cairo, Ahmad Amin, *Zu'mā'-al-Islāh*, Cairo, 1948, Mahmūd Qūsūm, *Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī*, Cairo, n.d.; Mahmūd Abūriyya, *Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī*, Cairo, 1958, I. Goldziher/J. Jomier, in *ET* ²

3. As a logical consequence of the second point, he saw Sayyid Ahmad Khān as his main adversary in India, opposed to Pan-Islamism, isolating the Indian Muslims from the rest of *Dār-al-Islām*, especially from the Turks, and hostile to the conception of a universal Muslim *Khilāfat*.¹

There is at least one point in common between the views of al-Afghānī and of Sayyid Ahmad Khān: both believe Islam to be capable of an evolutionary process within the present and future history of mankind and in accord with it.² The difference between them is that the Indo-Muslim 'modernist' was always concerned with the particular, the concrete, the detailed; while his adversary was concerned with the general, the generalized and the emotionally surcharged abstract. The transition which marks Sayyid Ahmad Khān's forward journey from apologetics pure and simple to a highly individualistic exposition of a modernist *Ilm al-Kalām*, has again, in stressing the need of an adjustment between religion and science, essential similarities with the views of Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī. Their approach to the necessity of modernism is much the same. In the transitional approach to modernism, they both followed in the steps of the Tunisian Khayr al-dīn Pāsha. No other non-Indian Muslim influenced Sayyid Ahmad Khān to such an extent.³ He and al-Afghānī both adopted the Tunisian pioneer's view that the freedom of expression, which had come in the wake of Western influences, should be used for revolutionizing the ideas and minds of Muslim peoples. Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī kept closer to him in stressing that it was the duty of the *'ulamā* to arrive at a consensus of *ijtihād*, needed for adjustment with a world in which the initiative of progress was in the hands of non-Muslims. Sayyid Ahmad Khān, despairing of the capacity of the *'ulamā*, at least in India, to rise to the occasion, took the burden of *ijtihād* upon himself. He felt this to be his personal responsibility, as he was the pioneer of western education in Muslim India, which maladjusted to the basic values of Islam, threatened to produce an intellectually

¹ *Al-'Urwat al-Wuthqa*, Beirut, 1933, 489-94 and *passim*; A.-M. Goichon (tr), *Réfutation des Matérialistes*, Paris, 1942, 21 and *passim*; al-Afghānī, 'Aghūriyān-i ba shaukat-u-shān' in *Mu'allim-i Shafiq*, Hyderabad, 1879; Aziz Ahmad, 'Sayyid Ahmad Khān, Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī and Modern Muslim India', *SI*, xiii (1960), 55-78.

² Sayyid Ahmad Khān, *Lectures*, Sadhora, 1892, 55; cf. al-Afghānī, 'Asbāb-i haqiqat wa sa'ādat wa shifā-i insān' in *Mu'allim-i Shafiq*, 1881.

³ *Lectures*, 79, 91-92; *Tahdhīb al-Akhhlāq*, ii, 447-58.

uprooted generation.¹ The scholastic method which the Mu'tazilites and the earlier *mutakallimūn* had developed for defence against and compromise with Greek thought was no longer valid for creating a *modus vivendi* with the empiricism of the modern physical sciences. 'Therefore', he argued, 'in this age . . . a modern 'Ilm al-Kalām is necessary by which we may either demonstrate the principles of modern sciences to be erroneous or else show that the principles of Islam are not opposed to them.'²

For this objective he used two media, a popular one, his literary journal *Tahdhīb al-Akhḷāq*³; and a specialized and much more controversial one, a neo-Mu'tazilite exegesis of the Qur'an. In both the entire structure of his argument is based on what he regarded as two basic Qur'anic principles: one of approach, of 'speaking to people according to their powers of comprehension'; the other a scholastic criterion: 'Islam is Nature, and Nature is Islam.'

Starting from these premises he arrived at fifty-two points of divergence from the traditionally accepted Sunnī Islam. Forty-one of these, though contrary to the consensus of Hanafī orthodoxy, are found in the individual writings of earlier Muslim thinkers. His critical views on the authenticity of *ḥadīth* were preceded by those of al-Rāzī.⁴ In his doctrine of Personal Adherence (*taqlid-i-shakhsī*) he extended the easy-going views of Shāh Walī-Ullāh to include, along with the four orthodox Sunnī schools, the Ash'arites and the Mu'tazilites, and even in this he was following the precedent of al-Ghazzālī.⁵ In emphasizing the existence of the laws of nature he was following al-Jāhiz; in denying miracles he was following the Mu'tazilite Hishām bin 'Amr al-Fuwātī. His view that the excellence of the Qur'ān is not due merely to its rhetorical perfection, was based on that of Abū Mūsa 'Isā ibn Sabīh al-Muzdār, and his 'association of angels and devils with man's good qualities and evil instincts' had already been suggested by the Ikhwān al-Safā'.⁶ His denial of the *naskh* (repeal of verses in the Qur'ān) had a parallel development in the writings of Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh, Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī's collaborator and associate; on this question Nawwāb Siddīq Hasan Khān, leader of

¹ *Lectures*, 181; Hīlī, I, 226, 230, Baljon, 88.

² First series, 1870-6, second series, 1896-8.

³ Hīlī, II, 256-63.

⁴ *Lectures*, 180.

⁵ *Ibid.* II, 244-5.

⁶ al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Taḥfīq bayn al-Islām wa'l Zandaqa*, Beirut, 1961, 184.

⁷ Baljon, 91-92.

the *Ahl-i Hadith* movement in India, also agreed with him.¹ The line of modernism taken by the *al-Manār* group in Egypt on questions such as polygamy or slavery is similar to his. To sum up in Hālī's words, 'one would see on reflection that Sir Sayyid has done nothing more than proclaim all at once, openly, and for the scholar and the commoner alike, those views which had been individually set down in the works of individual Muslim writers and were hitherto known only to the most learned among the '*ulamā*'.²

In addition, Hālī counts eleven innovations of his that are without precedent in earlier Islam. These belong to the category of modernist apologetics.³

In a treatise on the principles of Qur'ānic exegesis Sayyid Ahmad Khān affirms the four main theses on which his modern '*Ilm al-Kalām*' is based; first that God is true, and His Word is true; no science can falsify the truth; it can only illustrate its truthfulness. Second, between the Work of God and Word of God there can be no contradiction. Third, the 'law of nature' is God's manifest covenant, and his promise of reward or retribution is His verbal covenant; between these two, again, there can be no contradiction. Fourth, whether man has been created for religion or religion for man, in either case man must possess something which other animals lack, in order to shoulder the burden of religion; this something is reason.⁴

On the constructive side of their common objective, the revitalization of Islam by a re-orientation of the study of the Qur'ān and *Hadith*, Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī did not indulge in the risky adventure of a modern '*Ilm-al-Kalām*'. He pointed out the necessity of a new approach to the consensus of the '*ulamā*'; while Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh showed much more caution and much greater respect for the consensus than Sayyid Ahmad Khān. Al-Afghānī himself attached no importance to such questions as the real substance of angels or the validity of miracles. But he was interested in one thing, in which Sayyid Ahmad Khān's complex system crossed his path, namely: political Islam.

There was a challenge; it was the West. One cannot but agree with the view that Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī 'seems to have been the first Muslim revivalist to use the concepts "Islam" and "the West"

¹ S. M. Ikram, *Mawj-i Kawthar*, Lahore, 1950, 168.

² Hālī, ii, 243.

³ *Ibid.*, ii, 263-6.

⁴ Sayyid Ahmad Khān, *Al-Tahrīr fī usūl al-tafsīr*, Agra, 1892, 10-11.

as connoting correlative—and of course antagonistic—historical phenomena.’¹ Sayyid Ahmad Khān’s response to this challenge was a complete surrender to the impact of modern ideas, although he participated as much as al-Afghānī in the ‘Muslim discovery of the West which was in large part a pained discovery of Western antipathy to Islam.’² But unlike al-Afghānī he was concerned with only a fraction of the Muslim world—the Indian Muslims, whose leadership had been thrust upon him by historical circumstances within India. Al-Afghānī was the strategist of defence; Sayyid Ahmad Khān was the strategist of defeat, and he considered his own mission similar to that of Nasīr-al-dīn Tūsī or ‘Alā al-dīn Juwaynī under the Mongols.³

This in itself might not have led to contemporary and later criticism, had he not carried his programme to extremes, equating the interest of Indian Muslims with an unquestioning loyalty to all policies of the expanding British empire, and equating Islam itself with the values of Victorian England. In this his principal objective was twofold: weaning his community ‘from its policy of opposition to one of acquiescence and participation, and by weaning the government from its policy of suppression to one of paternalism’.⁴ In this approach he showed from 1858 to 1898 a consistency which decade after decade widened the gulf between him and the neo-revivalist political consciousness of Indian Islam inspired by the political convulsions of the contemporary world of Islam. By 1870, partly due to his efforts, but mainly to reorientation by the policy experts of the British government in India, the official attitude to Muslims had considerably softened.

Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī viewed the British very much with the shrewd and suspicious eyes of an Afghan of the border. He was a nomad in politics; not the subject citizen of a powerful universal state. Al-Afghānī’s personality was inspiring and magnetic; but moderation was never one of his cardinal virtues. His attacks on Sayyid Ahmad Khān on this point were violent. The motive he attributed to his adversary’s Commentary on the Qur’ān was that its purpose was ‘to weaken the faith of the Muslims, to serve the ends of the aliens, and to mould the Muslims in their ways and

¹ W. Cantwell Smith, *Islam in Modern History*, Princeton, 1957, 49.

² Ibid. 69.

³ For the analogy between a *modus vivendi* under the Mongols and under the British see Shibli Nu’mānī in *Maqālāt*, A ‘zamgārī 1930-4, 168-74.

⁴ W. Cantwell Smith, *Modern Islam in India*, London, 1946, 16.

beliefs'.¹ Sayyid Ahmad Khān's trust in the *bona fides* of the British Government in trying to improve the lot of the Indian Muslims he regarded as supreme folly, and for Sayyid Ahmad Khān's associates he used even deadlier invective.²

While modern means of communication had brought the countries of the late nineteenth-century world of Islam closer together, Hālī's *Musaddas* had generated a popular interest in historical Islam which was fed at all levels by popular literature. The Indo-Muslim 'romantic' interest in extra-Indian Islam came to be focused at two points of its victorious contact with Europe, the Iberian peninsula and the Ottoman empire.

In 1870 Sayyid Ahmad Khān had been as pro-Turkish as any other educated Indian Muslim. It was he who had popularized the Turkish cap (Fez) in Muslim India. In 1870 in a letter he had complimented Sultān 'Abdul-'Azīz as one 'who graces and defends the throne of the Caliph'.³ He had praised the *tanzīmāt* and the subsequent Turkish reforms.⁴ He had expressed satisfaction at the reception of the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) and his consort in Istanbul in 1868 and Sultān 'Abdul-'Azīz's visit to London as a sign of amity between a Christian and a Muslim power.⁵ In an article in the *Tadhīb-al-Akhhlāq* he had written notes on three Turkish sultans, Mahmūd, 'Abdul-Majīd and 'Abdul-'Azīz, as social reformers whose examples should be followed by Indian Islam⁶; on the Crimean War his opinion was that the Indo-Muslim community should be grateful to the British for helping the Turks.⁷ He paid tribute to Rashīd Pāsha for his enlightened approach to the Qur'ān.⁸ He looked with approval on the adoption of European dress by the Turks.⁹ In fact everything was perfect as long as the British, to whom he had pledged his own and his community's loyalty, and the Turks, towards whom his community felt an emotional attachment were on good terms.

But the disillusionment of the consensus of Indo-Muslim intelligentsia began in 1877-8 over the lack of effective British aid to the Turks against the Russians, the policy of the British Liberal Party, and the political intrigues that preceded and accompanied the Congress of Berlin. A choice then faced the Muslim Indians

¹ al-Afghānī, 'Tafsīr u mufasssīr' in *Dār al-Saltanat*, Calcutta, 1884.

² 'Sharh-i hāl-i Aghūrijān' in *Mu'allim-i Shafiq*, 1879.

³ Graham, 114-15.

⁴ *Tadhīb al-Akhhlāq*, ii, 476-83.

⁵ Ibid. ii, 470.

⁶ Ibid., loc. cit.

⁷ *Khutūt*, 66.

⁸ Ibid., loc. cit.

⁹ Ibid. ii, 482.

between loyalty to their British rulers and sympathy for the Dār al-Islam in retreat. Sayyid Ahmad Khān 'had one love, and only one—Muslim India. He could not tolerate anything which in his view was likely to threaten the future of the Indian Muslims'.¹ He tried to force his choice on his community. The first of his fifty-two innovations listed by Hālī, was his indifference to the consensus.² In this case the consensus, not so much of the 'ulama, as of the middle-class intelligentsia, decided to ignore his advice, and chose not loyalty to the ruling Power and political security, but loyalty to the Dār al-Islam and political adventure. It accepted not only Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī's political ideology of Pan-Islamism, but also his political expediency of recognizing the Ottoman sultan as the *Khalifa* of all Muslims.

In 1880s al-Afghānī's writings were quite familiar in India. Articles from *al-'Urwat al-Wuthqa* were being translated and published in *Dār al-Saltanat*, Calcutta and *Mushīr-i Qaisar*, Lucknow.³ The Muslims of Calcutta professed for al-Afghānī 'something like worship'.⁴ Shiblī Nu'mānī had met Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh in Egypt and had come to some extent under the influence of al-Afghānī.⁵ Later his influence on Abu'l Kalām Azād was profound.⁶ Iqbāl was deeply under al-Afghānī's influence and made him his mouth-piece for his own ideas on the ideal Muslim State.⁷

In al-Afghānī's articles in the *'Urwat al-Wuthqa*, one finds those basic ideas which were later developed by the leaders of the Indian *Khilāfat* movement. He regarded it the religious duty of Muslims to reconquer any territory taken away from them by others, and if this was not possible, then to migrate from what had become as a result of alien conquest the *Dār al-harb* (land of war), to some other land in the *Dār al-Islam*. Resistance to non-Muslim aggression and reconquest was the duty not merely of the Muslims of the particular region involved, but of all Muslims. The tragedy of the Dār al-Islam was that it was being conquered by others in detail without any concerted resistance. Similarly, the cause of the decline of Islam was that it was no longer politically integrated and all-embracing; it had become reduced to religious dogmas without

¹ Ikram, 129² Hālī, II, 256³ *Al-'Urwat al-wuthqa*, 382-3⁴ W. S. Blunt, *India Under the Ripon*, London, 1909, 112.⁵ Ikram, *Shiblī Nāma*, 219-20.⁶ Humayun Kabir (ed.), *Abu'l Kalām Azād*, contribution by Sayyid Mahmud,⁷ Iqbāl, *Jā'id Nama*, Lahore, 1954, 63-93.

the necessary principle of movement to enliven it. The 'ulamā of various lands had lost mutual contact; the common people of one Muslim country knew even less about those of another. Al-Afghānī traced this *malaise* to the political ambition of the 'Abbāsids who had brought about a division between the *Khilāfat* and the movement of (religious) thought (*ijtihād*); this division was contrary to the practice of the four 'orthodox' caliphs; and more than anything else led to the rise of various schisms and heresies in Islam. The solution which al-Afghānī proposed was that the 'ulamā of Islam should build up their regional centres in various lands, and guide the commoners by *ijtihād* based on the Qur'ān and the *hadīth*; these regional centres should be affiliated to a universal centre based at one of the holy places, where representatives of the various centres could meet in an effort towards a unified *ijtihād*, in order to revitalize the *umma* and prepare it to meet external challenges.¹

His Pan-Islamist views were deeply associated with a revivalist interest in historical Islam a trend to which the Indian Muslims had become responsive since the last three decades of the nineteenth century. Now, if the history of Islam was a single historical process, it followed that the threat to the independence of one Muslim country was a threat to all. Al-Afghānī therefore deplored the division of *Dār al-Islam* into petty states, decadent, ruled by petty rulers propped on their thrones by the strategy or rivalry of European powers.²

(ii) *The Ottoman Caliphate*

Along with the search for a universal Muslim centre for the *ijtihād* of the 'ulamā of Islam, al-Afghānī was even more actively occupied in the search for a political centre, a universal Muslim *Khilāfat*. Here again he touched a sympathetic chord in Indian Islam. There were other historical forces which had been working in the same direction. The Treaty of Kuçuk Qaynarjah (1774) which marked the separation of Muslim Crimea from the Ottoman empire and its eventual incorporation in the Russian empire also recognized the Ottoman sultan's claim to be the *Khalifa* of Muslims.³

¹ Urdu tr. of the article in *al-'Urwat al-Wuthqa*, in Ghaffār, 385-94.

² Ibid. 395-400.

³ Text in Ahmed Jevdet Pāsha, *Vaqā'i -Devlet-i 'Alīyah*, Istanbul, 1855, i, 56.

During the century that followed this claim was consolidated due to the continual transfer of Ottoman provinces containing Muslim population to non-Muslim rulers and to the emergence of Muslim solidarity in face of the imperial expansion of the West at the expense of Dār al-Islam.¹ The interest in *Khulāfat* was specially more marked in countries where Muslims were in a minority like Russia² or India. Shāh Muhammad Ishāq had migrated to Mecca in 1841, and since then the trend of Walī-Ullāhī 'ulamā and later of the Deobandīs was to champion the cause of the Ottoman caliphate.³ The Shī'ite intellectual leaders of India Amīr 'Alī, Badr al-dīn Tayyabjī and Chirāgh 'Alī also considered the universal Ottoman caliphate as the political solution for the whole of Dār al-Islam.⁴

Another element which substantiated the Ottoman claim of *Khulāfat* in Muslim India was the earlier British exploitation of it for reasons of policy. During the mutiny of 1857 the British had obtained a proclamation of the Ottoman sultan advising the Indian Muslims to be loyal to the British, and during the Crimean War the British themselves had magnified Turkey in the Indian eyes.⁵

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Sultān 'Abdul-'Azīz's claim⁶ to be the universal *Khalīfa* of Islam was generally accepted by the Indo-Muslim middle-class intelligentsia.⁷ It can be safely assumed that he was the first Ottoman sultan in whose name the *khutba* was read in Indian mosques.⁸

The Ottoman caliph was a symbol which in spite of his deep distrust of 'Abdul Hamīd II, Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī could not afford to ignore. He had examined the possibilities of caliphal

¹ Arnold J. Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs* 1925, London, 1927, 1, 32-33.

² The movement in Russia under Isma'il Bey Gasprinsky had also received its inspiration from al-Afghānī (S. A. Zenkovsky, *Pan-Turkism and Islam in Russia* Cambridge, Mass., 1960).

³ Ubayd Ullah Sindhi, *Shah Wali Ullah aur unki siyasi tahrir*, Lahore, 1952, 110.

⁴ Amīr 'Alī, *Memoirs*, IC, 11 (1932), 505; Husain B. Tyabji, *Badruddin Tyabji*, Bombay, 1952, 50-51, 73; Blunt, 45-59 cf. E. G. Browne, *The Persian Revolution 1905-1909*, 30.

⁵ Sayyid Mahmūd, *Khulafat aur Islam* 80; M. H. Abbas, *All about Khilafat*, 45-59; Chitrol India, London, 1926, 217-18; Tufayl Ahmad, *Musalmanon ka raushan mustaqbil*, Delhi, 1954, 273.

⁶ S. Blunt, *The Future of Islam* London 1882, 81-84.

⁷ Garcin de Tassy, *La Langue et la littérature hindoustanes en 1871*, Paris, 1872, 12 cf. Blunt, *India Under Ripon* 64, 112, but Blunt's writings on the caliphate have a strong anti-Ottoman bias.

⁸ cf. Sayyid Ahmad Khān in *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq*, 11, 402.

candidates in the Sudan and the Hijaz.¹ To the end he toyed with the idea of trying the Egyptian Khedive 'Abbās Hilmī as *Khalifa*²; but Egypt had already come under non-Muslim political and economic tutelage. Al-Afghānī had no illusions about 'Abdul-Hamīd II; the sultan was trying to exploit Pan-Islamism and pro-*Khilāfat* enthusiasm to secure his position at home and abroad, the Afghan idealist was seeking to make these two movements the rallying points of the *umma* for the collective defence of Dār al-Islam. It was a precarious alliance which ended with the death of al-Afghānī in suspicious circumstances in Istanbul in 1897.

In India, Sayyid Ahmad Khān found his community faced at the end of the nineteenth century with the embarrassing question posed by Sir William Hunter three decades earlier: 'Are they bound in conscience to rebel against the Queen?' Whether his community agreed with him or not, his answer remained the same: 'We are devoted and loyal subjects of the British government, . . . We are not the subjects of Sultan 'Abdul Hamīd II; . . . He neither had, nor can have any spiritual jurisdiction over us as *Khalifa*. His title of *Khalifa* is effective only in his own land and only over the Muslims under his sway.'³

He deplored the administrative weakness of Turkey and blamed it for revolts in Crete, Syria, and Herzegovina.⁴ He assured the British that Turkish politics would have no repercussions on Muslim India, despite its natural sympathy.⁵ He persuaded Shibli (who had not yet come under the influence of al-Afghānī) to write an article which upheld the orthodox view that the true *Khilāfat* ended with the first four *Khalifas*, and that even in the sense of universal monarchy, the *Khilāfat* was the privilege of the Quraysh.⁶

These views were resented by his contemporaries; later they were bitterly repudiated. Though Muhsin al-Mulk supported his view on the *Khilāfat* as late as 1906, the era of Sayyid Ahmad Khān's leadership had come to an end.

The Musaddas of Hālī, which Sayyid Ahmad Khān had desired to be sung everywhere, ushered in the era of the political poem, which carried to the masses the revolutionary ideas of al-Afghānī's

¹ Ghaffār, 204.

² Ibid. 284-5.

³ Sayyid Ahmad Khān, *Akhiri Mazāmin*, 32-33; also his *Truth about Khilāfat*, Lahore, 1916.

⁴ *Tahdhīb al-Akhlaq*, ii, 144.

⁵ Ibid. ii, 405.

⁶ Shibli, *Maqālāt*, i, 182-7; Ahmad Husain, *Ba'z Musalmānon ki afsosnāk ghalatfahmīān*, Lucknow, 1897.

Pan-Islamism. Both Hālī¹ and Shiblī² had expressed their disappointment at the limited achievement of Aligarh. *Nadwat al'ulamā* was no longer Aligarh's complement; it became its anti-thesis. Deoband had become a dynamic centre of the Muslim freedom movement. In Aligarh itself a revolt developed under the leadership of Mawlānā Muhammad 'Alī, which forced Viqār al-Mulk to invest all the funds collected for converting the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College into a Muslim university (the cherished dream of Sayyid Ahmad Khān), into Turkish government bonds.³ The birth of the Muslim university was delayed by political interference; and soon Mawlānā Muhammad 'Alī set up its second rival, the Jāmi'a Milliyya-i Islāmiya in Aligarh itself. A supporter of Sayyid Ahmad Khān's religious views,⁴ and an apologist for his political attitude⁵ Muhammad 'Alī was very critical of the loyalist policy followed by the Aligarh movement. Sentenced to imprisonment for his fiery article 'The Choice of the Turks', written when the Turks entered the World War I, he emerged at the end of the war as a dynamic leader of the *Khilāfat* Movement, which soon became a powerful mass agitation. The *Khilāfat* Committee was formed in 1919; and in the following year Muhammad 'Alī led a deputation to England to press the British government to let the Ottoman caliph retain his pre-war frontiers, especially his custody of the Hijaz and Palestine.⁶ The *Khilāfat* Movement emphasized the freedom of the universal *Khalifa*, from foreign control. This explains the *Khilāfat* Movement's sympathy with Mustafa Kamāl rather than the puppet Muhammad VI, and its contempt for Sharīf Husain of Mecca. As a protest against the harsh treatment of Turkey in the Treaty of Sevres, 18,000 Indian Muslims began a movement of unplanned migration to Afghanistan which involved them in untold hardship.⁷

The abolition of the *Khilāfat* by Mustafa Kamāl in 1924 affected Indian Muslims politically more than any other Muslim community. Muslim India was extremely perturbed at the growing British influence in the Hijaz under Sharīf Husain, whose claim to *Khilāfat* was contemptuously repudiated. It gave moral support to Ibn Sa'ūd in his occupation of the Hijaz, though registering

¹ Hālī, i, 86.

² Ikram, *Matf-i Kawthar*, 130.

³ Ikram, *Shiblī Nāma*, 47-76, 211-34.

⁴ Muhammad 'Alī, *My Life, A Fragment*, ed. Afzal Iqbal, Lahore, 1946, 219.

⁵ Muhammad 'Alī, *Presid. Add. in the 1923 session of the Ind Nat. Congress*.

⁶ Toynbee, *op. cit.* 49.

⁷ *Ibid.* 554-5.

shocks at his Wahhābī iconoclasm. The question of the freedom of the Hijaz from non-Muslim dominance had become so important that the question of *Khilāfat* itself receded in the background, and Indian Muslim delegations did not participate in the Cairo *Khilāfat* Conference in 1926.

(iii) *Abu'l Kalām Āzād's theory of Khilāfat*

For the intellectual definition of the *Khilāfat* movement one has to turn to Mawlānā Abu'l-Kalām Āzād, who was educated at Mecca, had come under the influence of Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh, was steeped in the political thinking of al-Afghānī, and had modelled his paper *al-Hilāl* on '*Urwat al-Wuthqa*'.

He distinguished between three contemporary reformist movements in Islam. There was, first, westernized modernism; its followers, 'dazzled by European glamour', had adopted a policy of 'servile imitation'. In this group he included Sayyid Ahmad Khān (India), Sultān Mahmūd, Fuād Pāsha (Turkey), Muhammad 'Alī (Egypt) and Khayr al-dīn Pāsha (Tunisia). The second was the movement of political reform, defence and rehabilitation led by al-Afghānī. In this category he also counted Midhat Pāsha. The third was the movement of religious reform. Its representatives included Shaykh Sadr al-dīn (Muslim Russia), Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh (Egypt), Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahmān ah-Kawākibī and Shaykh Kamāl al-dīn al-Qāsimī (Syria). Abu'l-Kalām Āzād counted himself in this third group. In his view the basic principles on which the programme of this group rested were: firstly, that in the Muslim *Shar'ia* there is no distinction between this world and the next; secondly, that the Muslims can deserve the title of the 'best community' (*Khayr al-umam*) only if they follow the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*; thirdly, that the Islamic *Shari'a* is the last and most perfect of all revealed laws; fourthly, that the decline of Islam has been due to the decline and suspension of *ijtihād*, and preoccupation not with the essentials but with the externalities and minutiae of religion.¹

Abu'l-Kalām Āzād distinguishes between *ta'sīs* (which he equates with, 'religious reconstruction') and *tajdīd*, which is modernism pure and simple (as preached by Sayyid Ahmad Khān). As he believes Islam to be the ideal religion, it must necessarily

¹ Abu'l Kalām Āzād, *Khutbāt*, Lahore, 1944, 199-202.

contain perfection within itself; so what is needed is *ijtihād* to externalize that perfection; reconstruction, not modernism.¹

On the political plane, discussing Pan-Islamism, he distinguished between two kinds of opposing forces, the unifying ones and the dividing ones. The former presuppose a centralized direction of the Muslim social organism, the *jamā'a*; the latter make for secession from it, in disunity and confusion, to a state of chaos which he called *jāhiliyya*.² Powers of centralized direction of the Muslim *jamā'a* were concentrated in one individual, the Prophet, and after him in the *Khilāfat-i Khāssa* of the 'orthodox' caliphs (*Khilāfat-i Rāshida*) which is to be distinguished from the monarchical *Khilāfat-i mulūkī* of the Umayyads, the 'Abbāsids and the Ottomans. He repeated al-Afghānī's views that the 'Abbāsids are to be blamed for having abandoned the duties of *ijtihād*. Even so the institution of a monarchical *Khilāfat* remained the cognizable political centre of *Dār al-Islam*. According to him the foundations of a Pan-Islamic society rest on five pillars: the adherence of the *jamā'a* to one *Khalīfa* or *Imām*; its rallying to the call of the *Khalīfa*; its obedience to the *Khalīfa*; *hijrat*, or migration to the *Dār al-Islam*, which can take many forms; and *jihād* which can also take many forms. For the Indo-Muslim section of the *jamā'a* he favoured a regional *imām* or *qā'id*, a kind of a religious viceroy of the Ottoman *Khalīfa*,³ and tried to persuade Mawlānā Mahmūd al-Hasan of Deoband to accept that responsibility.⁴ This was again, to some extent, in accord with the views of al-Afghānī. He bitterly attacked Sayyid Ahmad Khān's attitude to the Turkish caliphate: and like al-Afghānī, he argued on the authority of the Qur'ān that *jihād* was obligatory against those who had occupied even a part of the *Dār al-Islam*. Political loyalty was due to the Ottoman *Khalīfa*, who unlike the Pope, was not a spiritual but a temporal leader, 'as in Islam spiritual leadership is the due of God and his Prophet alone'. The obedience to the *Khilāfat-i mulūkī* (monarchical caliphate) was therefore binding on all Muslims, though not in the same degree as submission to God and his Prophet. The monarchical *Khalīfa* could be disobeyed only if his orders were contrary to the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*.⁵

¹ Abu'l Kalām Azād, *Khutbāt*, Lahore, 207-8

² *Ibid* 220-31.

³ *Ibid*. 159-60

⁴ *Ibid* 165-6

⁵ *Ibid* 219-20, 249-50, 287-8, these views are not very different from those of Ziya Gökalp, *Türkîş Nationalism and Western Civilization*, Eng. tr. Niyazi Berkes, London, 1959, 226-33.

In emphasizing Muslim integration into the Indian National Congress Abul-Kalām Āzād made the mistake committed by Sayyid Ahmad Khān in a different context, of going against the *ijma'*; and the *ijma'* (now a middle class consensus with mass following) rejected him.

(iv) *Iqbāl; Modernism and neo-Pan-Islamism*

The intellectual leadership of Muslim India passed to Muhammad Iqbāl in the 1920s. His political philosophy was also based on the two essential elements of Islam, the Unity of God, and the Prophethood of Muhammad.¹ According to Iqbāl the Prophet of Islam stood between two stages of the evolution of human society: the psychic and the rational.² Though the source of this revelation was prophetic, its content and spirit felt its way towards the rationalistic future. Islam, therefore, draws upon inner experience as a source of human knowledge and also on two rational sources, nature and history. The dynamism which resulted from the latter sources placed Islam in a position of conflict with what was static in its Hellenistic heritage.³ The growth of this trend in the works of al-Khwārizmī and al-Bīrūnī signifies the passage of Muslim civilization from being to becoming.⁴ It is also discernible in various rationalist, traditionalist and mystic movements in Islam, encouraging a dynamic conception of the universe. In Muslim historiography it encourages the concepts of the unity of human origin and of a sense of the reality of time and life as a continuous movement in time.⁵ Because of the former concept, Islamic Culture as an emotional system rejects racialism, and consequently geographical nationalism.⁶ The unity of human origin finds its ideal parallel in the principle of the Unity of God (*tawhīd*). 'Islam, as a policy, is only a practical means of making this principle a living factor in the intellectual and emotional life of mankind.'⁷ This principle can be interpreted and applied through the ever-changing evolution of society by the dynamic principle of *ijtihād*.

Since the law of Islam, according to Iqbāl, is essentially capable of evolution, *ijtihād* can adapt itself to modern conditions. 'The

¹ Iqbāl, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, London, 1934, 120-1 and *passim*; idem. *Rumūz-i Bikhudī*, Lahore, n.d., 104-18; Eng. tr. Arberry (*The Mysteries of Selflessness*, London, 1953), 11-21.

² Iqbāl, *Reconstruction*, 120-1.

³ Ibid. 131-4.

⁴ Ibid. 124.

⁵ Ibid. 126-7.

⁷ Ibid., loc. cit.

transfer of the power of *ijtihād* from individual representatives of schools to a Muslim legislative assembly which, in view of the growth of opposing sects, is the only possible form *ijma'* can take in modern times, will secure contributions to legal discussion from laymen who happen to possess a keen insight into affairs. . . .¹ This conception of *ijtihād* has been at work for some time in religious and political thought in Turkey, which alone of all Muslim countries has passed from medievalist idealism to positivist realism by a process of intellectual self-realization. One can see its stimulus in Halim Thābit's new theories of Muslim law.² Perhaps in the near future Turkey is to take even bolder steps in religious speculation, to balance which the Indian Islam may have to adhere to a 'healthy conservatism'. For instance, it may not accept the Turkish theory of the separation of religion from the state.³

On the other hand, Iqbāl endorsed the view of Sa'id Halim Pāsha that Islam 'is a harmony of idealism and positivism; and as a unity of the eternal verities of freedom, equality and solidarity, has no fatherland'; and there can be no Turkish, Arab, Persian or Indian Islam; in fact if certain regional customs have been assimilated in various Muslim lands at popular level they are 'more or less an impress of heathenism' and as such have to be discarded.⁴

Commenting on the *ijtihād* of the Turkish Grand National Assembly on the abolition of *Khilāfat*, Iqbāl deduced the theory that *Khilāfat* need not necessarily be vested in a single individual; it can be vested in a body of persons, an assembly or a parliament.⁵ He endorsed the view of Ziyā Pāsha that, although a real universal caliphate of all Muslim nations after they gain their independence would be an ideal thing, until this is achieved each Muslim state should first try to put its own house in order.⁶ In the existing world situation political Islam could best survive neither by narrow nationalism, nor in the form of a universal state, but in a multi-national free association, something like a league of nations of Islam.⁷

Thus on the political plane Iqbāl accepted al-Afghānī's view of regarding Mecca as the accepted religious centre; he searched for a political centre of *Dār al-Islām* by examining al-Māwardī's

¹ Iqbāl, *Reconstruction*, 165.

² Ibid. 145.

³ Ibid. 146.

⁴ Ibid. 148-9; *Jāwid Nāma*, 72.

⁵ Iqbāl, *Reconstruction*, 145, 154.

⁶ Iqbāl, 'Khilāfat-i Islāmiya' in *Fikr-i Iqbāl*, Hyderabad, 1944, 57-88; *idem*, *Reconstruction*, 149.

⁷ Ibid. 151.

theories in the light of recent developments,¹ and in agreement with Turkish thinkers decided to leave the vexed question of the *Khilāfat* aside for the time being, and arrived at a multi-national concept of Pan-Islamism. This made it possible for him to reduce al-Afghānī's concept of a north-west-Indian-and-Central-Asian Muslim state² to the practical limits of Muslim politics in India by suggesting in 1930 the creation of a separate Muslim state within the Indian sub-continent.³ Since the concept of such a state implied secession from predominantly Hindu India, he retained at least one element of Sayyid Ahmad Khān's political thought, Muslim separatism within the sub-continent.

¹ *Fikr-i Iqbāl*, loc. cit.

² Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, in *Sources of Indian Tradition*, ed. W. Th. de Bary, etc., New York, 1958, 827.

³ Iqbāl, Pres. Add. at the Annual session of the Muslim League at Allahabad in 1930; text in *Struggle for Independence 1857-1947*, Karachi, 1958, Appendix iv, 12-27.

PART TWO

MUSLIM INDIA IN RELATION TO
HINDU INDIA 710 TO 1830

I

INTRODUCTORY: THE MUSLIM IMPACT

(i) *Conflicting Nature of the two Cultures*

'FOR twelve long centuries', comments Murray Titus, 'Islam has been in contact with Hinduism in India. For twelve centuries each community has been confronted by the other. . . . Their differences of belief, together with communal aspirations on the one hand contending with an instinct for communal preservation on the other, have been the source of much friction which continues to the present day.'¹

This is on the whole an understatement. The history of medieval and modern India is to a very considerable extent a history of Hindu-Muslim religio-cultural tensions, interspersed with movements or individual efforts at understanding, harmony and even composite development. The divisive forces have proved much more dynamic than the cohesive ones. It might be interesting for a student of speculative philosophy of universal history to travel part of the way with Spengler or Toynbee in their classification of civilizations to see whether the root of the conflict lies in the very nature of what Spengler calls the 'Magian Culture' and Toynbee the 'Syrian Civilization' on the one hand, and the 'Indic' or Hindu civilizations on the other.² It is not proposed here to pursue that line of inquiry, or to study the distinguishing features of the two religions and the two civilizations in detail, but only to outline very broadly the main contours of their tension in the sub-continent.

As a religio-cultural force, Islam is in most respects the 'very antithesis of Hinduism'.³ Hinduism is a large aggregate of belief, developed in the course of many centuries, evolving from the sacrificial hymns of the Vedas to the philosophical speculation of the Upanishads, the discipline of Yoga, the metaphysical subtleties

¹ Murray Titus, *Indian Islam*, 1930, 176.

² Oswald Spengler, *Decline of the West*, Eng. tr. C. W. Atkinson, London, 1926; Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, London, 1939-61.

³ T. W. Thomas, *Mutual Influence of Muhammedans and Hindus in India*, Cambridge, 1892, 12.

of Vedanta and the passionate devotion of Bhakti. Islam, on the other hand, is bound by an austere central discipline, revolving round Qur'ān, the *Vox Dei*, and *hadith*, the *Vox Prophetarum*; and whatever speculation it has evolved or borrowed from external sources has been more or less adjusted to these two primary sources of religious authority. Psychologically Hinduism tends to be melancholy, sentimental and philosophical; Islam tends to be ardent and austere.¹ Hindu genius flowers in the concrete and the iconographic; the Muslim mind is on the whole atomistic, abstract, geometrical and iconoclastic.

Islamic civilization in its Arab, Persian and Turkish varieties, had developed in geographical environments very different from the sub-tropical forests of India, teeming with life, and fertility exposed to the mortal challenges of nature's exuberance, which affixed their stamp upon the Hindu mind and shaped the course of much of Hindu religion and mysticism. Islam in India continued to retain throughout the centuries, despite secondary Indian environmental and ethnic influences, its original foreign character. The Indian Muslim remained, as Jadunath Sarkar has put it, on the whole 'an intellectual exotic' who felt that 'he was in India, but not of it'.² Nostalgically he preserved as much of the original intellectual and psychological heritage of the original form of his culture as he could. Sociologically he considered himself as belonging to the Muslim *umma*, the great Muslim community which extended far beyond the Indian frontiers. He was a member simply by virtue of being a Muslim. It remained for him the main unifying religio-political factor amidst the diversity of the Muslim peoples.

In a recent article Nieuwenhuijze has explained the nature of the concept of *umma* which Islam shares with other 'prophetic' or 'revelatory' religions like Judaism and Christianity, and which is antithetical to the assimilative resilience of 'traditional' religions like Buddhism or Hinduism. 'Revelatory religion', he observes, 'may be said to stand for maximization of the religious aspect of human (including socio-cultural) life. . . . The community concept thus engendered breaks away, of necessity, from the tradition of community criteria, much in the same way as prophetic religion

¹ F. W. Thomas, *Mutual Influence of Muhammedans and Hindus in India*, Cambridge, 1892, 12.

² J. Sarkar, *A History of Aurangzeb*, Calcutta, 1912-24, v, 487-8.

breaks away from traditional (say, heathen) religion. . . . By introducing the relatively novel concept of chosen people, church and *umma* respectively, the trend of thought engendered by the prophetic religions postulates one single, unequivocal criterion of membership of the new community, namely common faith in God who reveals Himself. Thus they implicitly criticize the vague and ever varying, ever expansive complex of criteria for unity (and implicitly for membership) of the traditional socio-cultural units.¹

The exclusiveness of the *umma* has been partly religious and partly instinctive. The instinct of self-preservation has been channelled in the Muslim *umma* through the principle known as *ijmā'*, the consensus of the community, which is not a counting of votes, but either a 'slowly accumulating pressure of opinion over a long period of time',² or in hostile surroundings and moments of crisis a spontaneous group decision, such as Muslim India has taken on several occasions in its chequered history.

The non-proselytizing and non-egalitarian resilience of Hinduism, could, on the other hand, 'suck in' and assimilate other faiths absorbing them into its own ever-growing, ever-changing spiritual complex, and fitting the former adherents of other faiths into its caste structure. 'Hinduism', observes Basham, 'can absorb new ideas, and can even if need be find room for new gods; moreover, every passage in the Hindu sacred texts is open to figurative interpretation, so that it is possible for different schools of Hinduism to hold diametrically opposed doctrines without serious antagonism. Islam on the other hand cannot adapt or compromise.'³ Hinduism succeeded in India in re-assimilating the seceding Buddhist religion, and quickly absorbed into its own ranks the Greeks, the Sākās, the Kushanas and the Huns who invaded the sub-continent from time to time. Islam alone, rigidly monotheistic, iconoclastic and religio-culturally insular, resisted Hinduism's assimilative pull.

The Hindu has been a spiritual anarchist,⁴ his faith being intensely personal and individualistic. Inherently the trend of Brahmanical Hinduism has been to accept all worship and to reject

¹ C. A. O. van Nieuwenhuijze, 'The Ummah', *SI*, x (1959), 9, also E. I. J. Rosenthal, *Political Thought in Medieval Islam*, Cambridge, 1958, 25; cf. G. E. von Grunebaum (ed.), *Unity and Variety in Muslim Civilization*, Chicago, 1955.

² H. A. R. Gibb, *Modern Trends in Islam*, Chicago, 1945, 11.

³ A. L. Basham, *The Indian Sub-Continent in Historical Perspective*, London, 1958.

⁴ Tara Chand, *The Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, Allahabad, 1936, 234

none, to bridge the gap between popular fetichism and learned Vedantism, to ensure that the superstitious cults of the illiterate masses remain in at least oblique touch with the metaphysical speculation of the higher intellectual order, and thus to crystallize an ascending hierarchy of religious faith corresponding to the socio-economic scale of caste-structure. This spiritually and materially hierarchical view of religion and society is diametrically opposed to the religio-social egalitarianism in Islam.

In the long history of Hindu-Muslim co-existence in India 'the principle of repulsion has been more obviously at work than the principle of attraction'.¹ Even Tara Chand, a passionate advocate of the theory of composite growth of Hindu-Muslim Culture, has to concede: 'While the Hindu mind was primarily concerned with what is true, the Moslem was exercised over what is right. The Hindu emphasized the private and personal aspect of religious experience, the Moslem its incorporation in the collective body of the faithful. The Hindu was inclined to gloss over the shortcomings of his social customs, the Moslem was annoyed with them. On the other hand, the intolerance of the Moslem and the memory of the past distressed the Hindu. The Hindu felt no kinship with the Arab past which the Moslem hugged to his bosom. The Moslem did not feel at home in Vedic India. While consciousness of group developed, and the element of territoriality was prominent in both, the content of the two did not quite coincide and fuse.'² 'The mutual interaction of the two communities and the mutual influences in manners, ceremonies, superstition, mysticism and a common economic life 'touched merely the fringe and the external element' of their existence; 'neither the Hindus nor the Muslims imbibed, even to the least degree, the chief characteristic features of the other's culture which may be regarded as their greatest contribution to human civilization'; and in the set pattern of their respective behaviour in India, 'the Hindus combined catholicity in religious outlook with bigotry in social ethics, while the Muslims displayed an equal bigotry in religious ideas with catholicity in social behaviour'.³

¹ Percival Spear, *India, Pakistan and the West*, London, 1958, 88.

² Tara Chand in H. Kabir, *Abu'l Kalām Azād*, Bombay, 1959, 238.

³ R. C. Majumdar in *The Delhi Sultanate (D.S.)* (vol. vi of *The History and Culture of the Indian People*), Bombay, 1960, 616-17.

(ii) *The Processes of Muslim Arrival*

Muslims arrived in India in three distinct movements; first as traders and missionaries to India's southern coasts; then in the expanding wave of the Umayyad conquests which carried them to the Rhone, the Syr Darya and the Indus; and finally like the Greeks, the Sākās and the Huns, in a more organized conquest-cum-immigration movement of the Central Asian Turks and Afghāns.

Muslim Arabs arrived on India's coast in the wake of their pagan ancestors¹ who had carried on a tradition of maritime trade across the Arabian sea since nearly the dawn of history. These Arab traders who settled down on India's coasts between the seventh and ninth century were treated with tolerance by Hindu rulers, and the legend of conversion of a Cheraman Perumal rājā shows that they were allowed to propagate Islam.² They intermarried with indigenous women; some of them joined service under Hindu princes; and at least one of them contributed financially to a Hindu temple.³ Several Muslim communities like the Labbes, the Mapillas (Moplahs) and the Nawāit thrived in the south⁴ and their descendants still survive.

The conquest of Sind by Muhammad ibn Qāsim, and the incorporation of that province into the Muslim universal caliphate, brought the Hindus and the Muslims there in a relationship of a very different nature, that of the ruled and the ruler. This form of political relationship, which some centuries later extended to the whole sub-continent, and survived until well into the eighteenth century inevitably led to the creation of tensions which determined very largely the psychological course of the history of medieval and modern India.

¹ J. T. Renaud, *Relations de voyages faits par les Arabes et de les Persanes dans l'Inde et à la Chine dans le 1^{er} siècle*, Paris, 1845, 1, p. xxxix, J. Edkins, 'Ancient Navigation in the Indian Ocean', *JRAS*, 1866, 1-27, S. Sulaymān Nadwī, 'Arabon kī jahāz-rānī', A'zamgarh, 1935, G. F. Hourani, *Arab Seafaring in the Indian Ocean*, Princeton, 1951.

² W. Logan, *Malabar*, Madras, 1887-91, 1, 231-45, Qadīr Husain Khān, contribution in *Madras Christian College Magazine* 1912-13, 241; J. Sturrock, *South Kanara (Madras District Manuals)*, Madras, 1894, 180-1; C. A. Innes, *Malabar and Anyengo (Madras District Gazetteer)*, Madras, 1908, 436-7, M. J. Rowlandson, Intro to his ed. of Shaykh Zayn al-dīn, *Tuhfat al-muyahidīn*, London, 1833.

³ V. V. Mirashu, 'Chunchani Plates of the Arab Feudatory Sugatipri', *J. N. Bannerjee Volume*, Calcutta, 1960

⁴ Al-Mīr'sūdī (Sprenger), 1, 152 ff.

none, to bridge the gap between popular fetichism and learned Vedantism, to ensure that the superstitious cults of the illiterate masses remain in at least oblique touch with the metaphysical speculation of the higher intellectual order, and thus to crystallize an ascending hierarchy of religious faith corresponding to the socio-economic scale of caste-structure. This spiritually and materially hierarchical view of religion and society is diametrically opposed to the religio-social egalitarianism in Islam.

In the long history of Hindu-Muslim co-existence in India 'the principle of repulsion has been more obviously at work than the principle of attraction'.¹ Even Tara Chand, a passionate advocate of the theory of composite growth of Hindu-Muslim Culture, has to concede: 'While the Hindu mind was primarily concerned with what is true, the Moslem was exercised over what is right. The Hindu emphasized the private and personal aspect of religious experience, the Moslem its incorporation in the collective body of the faithful. The Hindu was inclined to gloss over the shortcomings of his social customs, the Moslem was annoyed with them. On the other hand, the intolerance of the Moslem and the memory of the past distressed the Hindu. The Hindu felt no kinship with the Arab past which the Moslem hugged to his bosom. The Moslem did not feel at home in Vedic India. While consciousness of group developed, and the element of territoriality was prominent in both, the content of the two did not quite coincide and fuse.'² The mutual interaction of the two communities and the mutual influences in manners, ceremonies, superstition, mysticism and a common economic life 'touched merely the fringe and the external element' of their existence; 'neither the Hindus nor the Muslims imbibed, even to the least degree, the chief characteristic features of the other's culture which may be regarded as their greatest contribution to human civilization'; and in the set pattern of their respective behaviour in India, 'the Hindus combined catholicity in religious outlook with bigotry in social ethics, while the Muslims displayed an equal bigotry in religious ideas with catholicity in social behaviour'.³

¹ Percival Spear, *India, Pakistan and the West*, London, 1958, 88.

² Tara Chand in H. Kabir, *Abu'l Kalām Azād*, Bombay, 1959, 238.

³ R. C. Majumdar in *The Delhi Sultanate (D.S.)* (vol. vi of *The History and Culture of the Indian People*), Bombay, 1960, 616-17.

(ii) *The Processes of Muslim Arrival*

Muslims arrived in India in three distinct movements; first as traders and missionaries to India's southern coasts; then in the expanding wave of the Umayyad conquests which carried them to the Rhone, the Syr Darya and the Indus; and finally like the Greeks, the Sākās and the Huns, in a more organized conquest-cum-immigration movement of the Central Asian Turks and Afghāns.

Muslim Arabs arrived on India's coast in the wake of their pagan ancestors¹ who had carried on a tradition of maritime trade across the Arabian sea since nearly the dawn of history. These Arab traders who settled down on India's coasts between the seventh and ninth century were treated with tolerance by Hindu rulers, and the legend of conversion of a Cheraman Perumal rājā shows that they were allowed to propagate Islam.² They intermarried with indigenous women; some of them joined service under Hindu princes; and at least one of them contributed financially to a Hindu temple.³ Several Muslim communities like the Labbes, the Mapillas (Moplahs) and the Nawāit thrived in the south⁴ and their descendants still survive.

The conquest of Sind by Muhammad ibn Qāsim, and the incorporation of that province into the Muslim universal caliphate, brought the Hindus and the Muslims there in a relationship of a very different nature, that of the ruled and the ruler. This form of political relationship, which some centuries later extended to the whole sub-continent, and survived until well into the eighteenth century inevitably led to the creation of tensions which determined very largely the psychological course of the history of medieval and modern India.

¹ J. T. Reinaud, *Relations de voyages faits par les Arabes et de les Persanes dans l'Inde et à la Chine dans le ix^e siècle*, Paris, 1845, i, p. xxxix; J. Edkins, 'Ancient Navigation in the Indian Ocean', *JRAS*, 1866, 1-27; S. Sulaymān Nadwī, 'Arabon ki jahāzrānī', *A'zamgarh*, 1935; G. F. Hourani, *Arab Seafaring in the Indian Ocean*, Princeton, 1951.

² W. Logan, *Malabar*, Madras, 1887-91, i, 231-45; Qadir Husain Khan, contribution in *Madras Christian College Magazine* 1912-13, 241; J. Sturrock, *South Kanara (Madras District Manuals)*, Madras, 1894, 180-1; C. A. Innes, *Malabar and Anjengo (Madras District Gazetteer)*, Madras, 1908, 436-7; M. J. Rowlandson, Intro. to his ed. of Shaykh Zayn al-dīn, *Tuhfat al-mujāhidīn*, London, 1833.

³ V. V. Mirashi, 'Chinchani Plates of the Arab Feudatory Sugatipa', *J. N. Banerjee Volume*, Calcutta, 1960.

⁴ *Al-Mas'ūdī* (Sprenger), i, 152 ff.

The nature of the Turco-Afghan invasions and conquest of India from the end of the ninth century onwards was different from Arab expansion into Sind. The Turks and the 'Khurāsānīs' who conquered India and incorporated the greater part of it into the Dār al-Islām, were impelled by a number of new forces; ever-recurring pressures of the Central Asian nomads forcing them to seek new homelands, absorption of fresh manpower from the inexhaustible nomadic 'external proletariat' of Dār al-Islām in Central Asia, the upsurge of a new cultural growth in 'Khurāsān' with a Turkish military core and a Persian orientation, saturated in the religio-political thinking of an élite which was selecting from the formulations of the Sunnī schools of jurisprudence whatever suited its mixed motives of adventure and mission.

With the establishment of Muslim rule in India, the ruling élite conceived its population as a pluralistic society in which the non-Muslim was distinct from the Muslim and required a different social contract.

(iii) *The Impact of Muslim Institutions*

Theoretically the justification for the Turco-Afghan conquest of India, was *jihād*, religious war against the infidels. Had India been under Muslim rule the justification, as indeed in the later Muslim invasions, would have been punishment for the sin of pride or treachery. But the theory of *jihād* could very well be exploited for military and political expansion, though its motivating forces must have been originally economic. *Jihād* had a meaning and a significance in the medieval Islam very different from its original conception in Qur'ānic revelation¹; according to which as Dozy has summed up, 'la guerre sainte n'est imposée comme devoir que dans le seul cas où les ennemis de l'Islām ont été les agresseurs; si on prend autrement les prescription du Koran, ce n'est que par suite d'une interprétation des théologiens'.²

But the interpretation of the theologians suited the Turco-Afghan invaders. This was a position not very different from that of the more or less contemporary Christian world during the Crusades. A deeper historical analysis will no doubt reveal as

¹ T. W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam*, London, 1896, 347-52; Chirāgh 'Alī, *A Critical Exposure of Popular Jihād*, Calcutta, 1885.

² R. Dozy, *Essai sur l'histoire de l'Islamisme*, Leyden, 1879, 152.

Rajendra Prasad has pointed out that 'it is doubtful if any one of these invasions extending over about eight or nine hundred years was a purely religious invasion undertaken by religious fanatics or enthusiasts for spreading Islam. Like all conquests they were actuated by temporal and material motives rather than by religious zeal.'¹

For several centuries, except for the pagan Turks who were in any case accepting Islam in increasing numbers, the main adversaries of Dār al-Islam on all fronts were the Christian 'people of the Book' who were not 'infidels'. Mahmūd of Ghazna's invasion of what was regarded as pagan India was therefore a sensational novelty at the end of the tenth century. The sack of Somnāt and the destruction of its temple came to be considered a specially pious exploit because of its analogy in the past with the destruction of idols of the pagan Arabia by the prophet. This led to invention of popular legends giving Mahmūd's invasions a status of sanctity;² and it explains the idealization of Mahmūd by Nizām al-Mulk Tūsī,³ and the ideal treatment he has received from early Sūfī poets like Sanā'ī and Attār, not to mention such collectors of anecdotes as 'Awfī.

After the conquest of India by Muhammad ibn Sām Ghūrī in the twelfth century, one finds a fixed formula of *casus belli* which holds good until the end of the seventeenth. Muslim invaders or Muslim rulers in India, if they are engaged in hostilities against a Muslim kingdom, justify their aggression by asserting either their right to the contested territory or the treachery or inefficiency of the invaded Muslim ruler. But if the invasion is against a Hindu kingdom no such moral self-justification is considered necessary. 'Jihād is considered to be justification enough and is immediately blessed by courtiers, 'ulamā and the intelligentsia, as it brings to them greater opportunities of career, wealth and advancement. The lip-service to *jihād* is occasionally accompanied by a minor demonstration such as the destruction of a temple, the panegyric of the court-poet or the compliment of the court-historian; but once the territory is conquered and incorporated as a Muslim province or a protectorate, a tolerant and pragmatic co-existence develops.

Jizya (poll-tax payable by non-Muslims and guaranteeing in turn

¹ Rajendra Prasad, *India Divided*, Bombay, 1946, 69.

² 'Isāmī, 42.

³ Nizām al-Mulk, *Sijāsāt Nāma* (ed. Shefer), 77-80, 138-56 and *passim*.

the protection of their lives, rights and property)¹ was levied for the first time in India by Muhammad ibn Qāsim, and graded into three categories according to income; Brahmins were exempted from it and appointed tax-collectors, whose advice to their flock was either to submit to the Muslim law of administration and pay the poll-tax or else to migrate elsewhere in Hindu India.²

In the Delhi sultanate the policy regarding the levy of *jizya* varied from sultan to sultan. 'Alā al-dīn Khaljī substituted the levy of *jizya* by a policy of taxation on land produce and livestock to control the economic prosperity of the Hindus as their increasing wealth 'fostered disaffection and rebellion'.³ Ghiyāth al-dīn Tughluq on the other hand followed a more balanced policy of taxation the object of which was neither to allow the accumulation of wealth in the hands of the Hindus nor to reduce them to poverty and destitution which would cause loss of revenue to the state. The imposition of *jizya* in strict accordance with the Muslim canon law by Fīrūz Tughluq is a distinct departure from the normal policy of the sultanate; though on the other hand he abolished all those taxes which were not specifically sanctioned by the canon law, and levied only four legal taxes: *kharāj*, *zakāt*, *jizya*, and *khums* or one-fifth of the total spoil of war or produce of the mines.⁴ The remarkable feature of Fīrūz Tughluq's policy was its imposition on Brahmins, who should have been exempted according to the classical Muslim theory but whom he regarded as holding 'the keys to the chamber of idolatry'.⁵

Akbar's abolition of *jizya* was in consonance with his general policy of liberalism and of legal equality of all citizens, but it is quite possible that his decision may have been confirmed by such scholars of Muslim law as Fathullāh Shīrāzī and others who must have been familiar with precedents in Islamic history and jurisprudence with cases where *jizya* had been waived in case of

¹ For the definition, history and background of *jizya*, Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-kharāj*, Cairo, 1884, 24, 69, 81; al-Balādhurī, Cairo, 1932, 12, 59, 137, 159-61; Yahya ibn Adam al-Qurshī, *Kitāb al-kharāj*, Cairo, 1928; al-Azdī, *Futūh al-Shām*, Calcutta, 1857, 124-5; Tabarī, anno 12, 49; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, vi, 168-9; Ibn 'Abd al-Rabbih, *al-Iqd al-farīd*, Cairo, 1913, 67-68; al-Shāf'ī, *Kitāb al-umm*, iv, 82 ff.; Khurshīd Ahmad Fāriq, *Hazrat 'Umar k̄ sarkārī khutūt*, Delhi, 1959, 36-37, 145-6, 174-5; Shibli Nu'mānī, 'al-Jizya' in *Rasā'il*, Amritsar, 1911, 105-20; idem, *Maqālāt*, 1, 232-3, 237; C. H. Becker in *EP*, 1, ii, 1050-1; Arnold, op. cit. 56-57; N. P. Agnides, *Muhammedan Theories of Finance*, New York, 1916, 399 and *passim*.

² *Chach Nāma* (Eng. tr.), 164-7.

³ Fīrūz Tughluq (in Elliot), iii, 377.

⁴ Baranī, 432-3.

⁵ Afif, 392-3.

participation of non-Muslim communities in the Muslim state's military or civil services. This seems to have been the main reason for its continued suspension under Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān, when Islam had reasserted itself as the state religion. This again seems to explain the discontent that followed Aurangzeb's re-imposition of it; for by that time as it would appear from the letter of a Hindu noble, probably Shivājī, not only the Muslim, but even the Hindu élite was well aware that *jizya* was in any case not payable until the *dhimmīs* could be fully protected by the Muslim state: 'In strict justice the *jizya* is not at all lawful. From the point of view of administration it can be right only if a beautiful woman wearing gold ornaments can pass from one part of the country to another without fear or molestation. (But) in these days even the cities are being plundered, what of the open country.'¹

It is interesting that in some particular cases, the institution of *jizya* inspired some Hindu rulers to impose upon Muslims a similar discriminatory tax, *Turushkadand* (fine on Muslims) which was a kind of counter-*jizya*. It will also be interesting to trace how far the Marāṭha institution of *chauth* or the extortion of one-fourth of the gross revenue of a vanquished Muslim (or by analogy non-Muslim) province or state was an exaggerated reflection of the aggressive reaction to the former Muslim institution of *jizya*. The pilgrimage tax collected by some Muslim rulers in India from the Hindus had no sanction in the Muslim canon law.

(iv) *Conversion and Apostasy*

Unlike Brahmanical Hinduism, and like Christianity, Islam is a proselytizing religion, although Qur'ānic injunctions discourage forcible conversion. The injunction that proselytization has to be conducted by persuasion and preaching and not by force is stressed in several 'Meccan' verses.² The underlying emphasis behind this tolerance is the Qur'ānic concept of the equal power of God over good and evil; it is by His will that evil and unbelief exist as the antithesis of goodness and faith.³ The same position is reiterated in the 'Medina' *sūras* after Islam had acquired more material

¹ Letter attributed in R.A.S. MS. 71 to Shivājī; in A.S.B. MS. 56 to Shambhaji, by others to Jaswant Singh or Rām Singh; attributed by Sarkar to Shivājī (*Hist. of Aurang.* III, 328).

² Such as the Qur'ān, xvi, 126, xxii, 66-67 and *passim*.

³ Qur'ān, x, 99.

power;¹ and the epitome of the Qur'ānic approach is the oft-quoted verse: 'Let there be no compulsion in religion.'²

In the conversion of large masses of Indians to Islam the use of force was an exception rather than a rule.³ The conversion to Islam of over one-fourth of the sub-continent's population is due to a number of causes. To begin with Islam spread more rapidly in those areas where Buddhism had lingered on until the time of its arrival, as in some north-western and eastern parts of the peninsula. On the Indian coasts proselytization by Muslim traders and settlers was not regarded as a serious challenge by the Hindu rājās, who imposed no restrictions on conversions to Islam which were in those areas, in any case, on a minor scale.⁴ Brahmanical Hinduism offered a much more solid resistance to the spread of Islam, but its Achilles' heel was the caste system. For the lower Hindu castes acceptance of Islam meant an escape from the degraded status they had in the Hindu society to at least theoretical equality with the ruling community; it also meant in the pre-Mughal India better chances of state appointment.⁵

Inter-marriages with Hindu women began with the Arab occupation of Sind as no Muslim women had accompanied the army of Muhammad ibn Qāsim. The practice in India of the Arabs, Turks, Persians, and Afghans, of marrying Hindu women was in line with the general Muslim practice elsewhere. Such marriages took place in all classes of society. While through Hindu wives or concubines Hindu influences and customs crept into Indian Islam, Islam itself penetrated into the families of these women.

The Muslim rulers, on the whole, partly for reasons of policy and partly from genuine tolerance, adopted a general attitude of neutrality to the problem of conversion; though some of them exercised political persuasion from time to time, such as the promise of immunity if an adversary at bay accepted Islam.⁶ Muhammad bin Tughluq, though strongly opposed to forced conversions,⁷ considered the peaceful propagation of Islam by the Sūfis as a more meritorious virtue than their esoteric concentration on the spiritual advancement of individual human souls. Fīrūz Tughluq was one

¹ Qur'ān, lxiv, 12.

² Qur'ān, ii, 257.

³ L. Massignon, *Essai sur les origines du lexique technique de la mystique musulmane*, Paris, 1922, 68-69.

⁴ Arnold, 216-17.

⁵ U. N. Ghoshal in R. C. Majumdar (ed.), *The Struggle for Empire (S.E.)* (vol. v of *The History and Culture of the Indian People*), Bombay 1957, 468; Arnold, 237.

⁶ Ghoshal, op. cit. 500.

⁷ Ishwari Prasad, 258.

of the very few Muslim rulers who showed any enthusiasm for proselytizing: 'I encouraged my infidel subjects to embrace the religion of the Prophet, and I proclaimed that everyone who repeated the creed and became a Musulman should be exempt from the *jizya*. . . Information of this came to the ears of the people at large, and great numbers of Hindus presented themselves, and were admitted to the honour of Islam.'¹ Patronage to the converts to Islam was also extended by Sikandar Lodī.² Aurangzeb's policy was to offer them rewards or prospects of service,³ a policy which was contrary to that of Akbar who had granted equality of the right of conversion or reconversion to Hindus as well,⁴ but not very different from that of Jahāngīr, who was opposed to forcible conversion but encouraged peaceful encouragement of converts.⁵

Summing up, in India as in the rest of the world 'it is not in the cruelties of the persecutor or the fury of the fanatic that we should look for evidence of the missionary spirit of Islam, any more than in the exploits of that mythical personage, the Muslim warrior with sword in one hand and Qur'ān in the other—but in the quiet, unobtrusive labours of the preacher and the trader.'⁶

Among the preachers of Islam in India the Sūfī whose training was more ascetic was closer to the masses of the people than the theologian who was generally a fanatic and lacked character and spiritual sensitiveness. In city, town and village the Sūfī formed himself into a pivot of an inner circle of Muslim disciples and an outer circle of non-Muslims, mainly low-caste Hindus, whom he attracted by his spirituality and humanity. The outer circle was gradually sucked into Islam by an indirect rather than a direct appeal which began with the non-Muslim's admiration for the individual Sūfī, and continued through his observation of Muslim egalitarianism in the inner circle. The exoteric conversion often followed the esoteric. There was a cross-section of Hindus converted to Islam by the Sūfis, who did not practice their new religion openly because of the fear of caste or social ostracism in their original environment on which they were economically dependent.⁷

¹ Firūz Tughluq, in op. cit. 386.

² 'Abdullāh, *Tārīkh-i Dā'udī*, B.M. Or. MS. 197, fo. 23b.

³ *M. A.*, 528; Khāfī Khān, ii, 461; Shāh Nawāz Khān, ii, 281; Sarkar, iii, 316-17.

⁴ Muhsin Fānī, *Dabistān-i Madhūhīh*, Eng. tr. D. Shea and A. Troyer, Paris, 1843, iii, 104.

⁵ Jahāngīr (Rogers), 83, 101.

⁶ Arnold, 4.

⁷ Kalīm-Ullāh Dehlwī, *Maktūbāt*, Delhi, 1883, 25; K. A. Nizami, *Tārīkh-i Mashā' ikh-i Chisht*, Delhi, 1953, 303.

Most of the Sūfī orders as well as individual Sūfīs, at one time or other, regarded the conversion of non-Muslims as one of their primary spiritual objectives in India. Moplahs of the south coast were converted to Islam by the disciples of Mālik ibn Dīnār (d. 744), the Dudwālās and Pinjārās of Gujarat by al-Hallāj (d. 921), Labbes of Trichinopally by Nithār Shāh (d. 1039), Memons of Cutch by Yūsuf al-dīn Sindī, the Dāudpotās of Sind and Baluchistan by the Qarāmīte missionaries of Sind, the Bohras of Gujarat by ‘Abdullāh Kharrāzī, tribes of Wakhān and the Afrīdī Pathāns by Nāsir-i Khusrau, and the Khojās of Gujarat by Ismā‘īlī missionaries like Nūr Satgar.¹ In the Ghaznawī Lahore organized proselytization was begun by Shaykh Ismā‘īl Bukhārī (c. 1005); and al-Hujwīrī is reported in hagiological tradition to have converted Rāi Rājū a Hindu general of the Ghaznawids to Islam.² The foundation of the Chishtī hospice at Ajmer and the Suhrawardī hospice at Multan in the thirteenth century was as much a missionary as a religio-mystical activity. The choice of Ajmer by Mu‘in al-dīn Chishtī in the very heartland of Hindu military aristocracy is especially significant. Shaykh Farīd al-dīn Ganj-i Shakar and Abū ‘Alī Qalandar (d. 1324) among Chishtī mystics are specially noted in hagiographies for their missionary achievements. The Chishtī missionaries resumed their work, after two generations of inactivity under Nizām al-dīn Awliya and his immediate successors, under pressure from Muhammad bin Tughluq.³

In the Qādirī order missionary work was undertaken by Dā‘ūd Kirmānī in the sixteenth century and was later taken up as a common practice by that order. The Kubrāwīya order applied itself to conversion on a large scale and Sayyid ‘Alī Hamadānī is credited to have taken with him an entourage of 700 *mashā’ikh* to undertake the proselytization of Kashmir.⁴

The spiritual policy of these Sūfī missionaries was *sulh-i kul* (peace with all); to the Muslim and the Hindu they preached their doctrine alike and on equal terms, and often relied on the efficacy of *dhikr* (citation of the names or attributes of God) in drawing non-Muslims to their fold.⁵

¹ Massignon, 68-69.

² Aziz Ahmad, 'The Sufi and the Sultan in pre-Mughal India', *Der Islam*, 38, 1-2 (1962), 142-53.

³ S. M. Ikram, *Ab-i Kawthar*, Lahore, 1952, 429-30.

⁴ Kalim-ULLāh, 86; cf. A. Wali, 'Hinduism according to Muslim Sūfīs', *JASB*, xi (1923), 237-52.

Economic betterment did not necessarily follow the conversion of Hindus to the new faith. Most of them retained their skilled or non-skilled ancestral professions, and thus brought into Islam some vague features of caste distinction. Artisan classes and petty merchants were perhaps the first to accept Islam. Agriculture was not a favourite profession with the Muslim, except in those areas where the greater majority of population had accepted Islam, as in Bengal, the north-west or Kashmir.¹ In rural India the Muslim convert continued to associate with the Hindus of his caste, often had Hindu wives, and continued to observe Hindu rites and customs. A polemical literature which culminated in the nineteenth century in the works of the Walī-Ullāhī *Mujāhidīn* and the preachings of the Bengali Farā'izī and Wahhābī movements, had its beginnings much earlier; its purpose being to wean away these new converts to Islam or their successors from a spiritual situation which was still crypto-Hindu. An interesting specimen of this polemical literature is Ibn 'Umar Mihrābī's *Hujjat al-Hind*,² written about 1645, which is an attack on popular Hinduism from the viewpoint of popular Islam. The polemical effort in this work is to fit popular notions of Hinduism into Muslim demonology; gods of the Hindu pantheon (*devas*) are equated with *devs* (fire-demons) of Muslim romance, and denounced as vile and accursed and responsible for the numerous schisms which have led to the creation of Hindu caste system³; the phallic nature of Śakti worship is condemned as obscene, and Hindu myths and legends are quoted in their popular versions to illustrate the licentiousness and impotence of Hindu gods; it is alleged that since no prophets were born in India, the country remained in the grip of paganism and only 'devil's scriptures' could be written with great erudition, and therefore the Brahmins who specialize in them are indifferent and hostile to Islam; the theory of metempsychosis is refuted, and *satī* is disapproved, not because of its inhumanity, but because it is a pagan rite.⁴

There seems to have been also an anti-Islamic Hindu polemical tradition conducted at a more dialectical level by Brahmins, with

¹ Muhammad Yasin, *A Social History of Islamic India 1605-1748*, Lucknow, 1958, 28-29; cf. J. Wise, 'The Muhammedans of Eastern Bengal', *JASB*, iii (1894), 32; W. W. Hunter, 'The Religions of India' in *The Times*, London, 25 Feb. 1888; Ram Gopal, *Indian Muslims*, London, 1959, 8-9.

² Ibn 'Umar Mihrābī, *Hujjat al-Hind*, B. M. Add. MS. 5602.

³ Ibid. fos. 18a, 20a.

⁴ Ibid. fos. 21b-23b, 47a-48a and *passim*.

which al-Shahrastānī shows his familiarity by quoting their polemics against the Muslim ritual of *hajj* or their attacks on the Prophet of Islam.¹

The attitude of the Muslim state to the apostasy of Muslims was severe. Sultān Zayn al-'Abidin of Kashmir and Akbar are perhaps the only two Muslim monarchs who accepted the equal religious right of the Hindus to proselytize or reconvert. Generally, apostasy from Islam was severely dealt with and the brunt of the punishment fell not so much on the person reconverted but on the Hindu proselytizer. A Brahmin who was accused of tempting Muslim women to the erotic Śakti cult was burnt to death by the order of Fīrūz Tughluq.² Unlike his father, Jahāngir considered apostasy a very serious offence, and he records the case of Arjun, a Punjabi Sikh preacher, who attracted to himself several Muslims including the rebel Prince Khusrau, and was sentenced to death.³ This case seems, however, to have a strong political odour.

Reconversion to Hinduism was technically difficult from the Brahmanical point of view. In the case of Harihara and Bukka, neo-Muslim governors of Muhammad bin Tughluq, who reverted to Hinduism and founded the kingdom of Vijayanagar, a special effort had to be made by a political-minded Brahmin sage Vidyaranya and his preceptor Vidyatīrtha to facilitate their reconversion.⁴ The Bhakti movement, especially under the influence of Chaitanya in Bengal encouraged the reconversion of Muslims to Hinduism. But Hindu proselytization of Muslims on a large and organized scale did not begin until the nineteenth century in the movement of the Ārya Samāj.

(v) Iconoclasm

Muslim iconoclasm in India was conditioned by an underlying equation of Indian image-worship with idolatry in pre-Islamic pagan Arabia. This parallelism supplied them with the religious and moral argument for destroying Hindu temples in times of war. Muslim legends developed the theme that the idol of Somnāt, destroyed by Mahmūd of Ghazna, was brought from *Ka'ba* in the days of the Arab *jāhiliyya* and planted in Gujarat. Another

¹ al-Shahrastānī, *Kitāb al-mīlāl wa'l mīhal*, relevant extract tr. into English by Rehatsek in *JAS* (Bombay), xiv (1880), 56-57.

² Afif, 380-1.

³ Jahāngir (Rogers), 72-73.

⁴ R. C. Majumdar in *The Delhi Sultanate*, 271-2.

Muslim legend described the fate of the idol of Somnāt at the hands of Mahmūd of Ghazna, who is said to have broken it into four pieces, one of which was put in front of the great mosque of Ghazna to be trodden under foot, the second in front of the gate of the sultan's palace for the same purpose, the third piece was sent to Mecca and the fourth to Medina.¹ In fact, as al-Bīrūnī has pointed out, Somnāt's real importance lay in its wealth and in its situation near a rich seaport.²

Iconoclasm was considered by some Muslim sultans and their generals as a pious performance ancillary to the greater and the more strenuous virtue of *jihād*; it also served as a proof for the self-satisfaction of the invaders that the wars they were waging were not for self-glorification or for acquisition of plunder or the carving out of an empire, but had religious justification. Mahmūd of Ghazna was struck by the beauty of Hindu architecture at Muttra and described it in glowing terms in his letters to his *amīrs*, but this did not diminish his iconoclastic zeal to destroy them.³ This pseudo-religious vandalism was, however, merely an act of war, and essentially a wartime demonstration; even Mahmūd is not reported by any historian of his time to have demolished a temple in times of peace.⁴

Iconoclasm as a pseudo-religious wartime sport survived in Muslim India until the end of the seventeenth century. The saintly Iltmish, otherwise quite tolerant to the Hindus, sacked the temples of Bhilsa and Ujjain after his siege of those cities.⁵ Idol-breaking occurred frequently during Jalāl al-dīn Khaljī's expedition against Jhāban, and 'Alā al-dīn's vast conquests in the Deccan and Gujarat.⁶ Peacetime instances are rare. Among these exceptions which prove the rule are the cases of iconoclasm by Sikandar Butshikan (idol-breaker) of Kashmir and Sikandar Lodī. The latter is reported to have converted Hindu temples at Muttra into caravan-sarais and to have given away broken pieces of idols to butchers to serve as meat-weights.⁷ This and other humiliations which Sikandar Lodī imposed on the Hindus of Muttra⁸ as punitive measures

¹ Sujan Rāi, *Khulūsat al-tawārīkh*, I O Pers MS 1657, fo 112b, Jūzjānī, 9-10.

² al-Bīrūnī (Sachau), II, 104.

³ Gardizī, *Zayn al-akhbār* (ed. Nāzīm), 75, al-'Utbī, *Kitāb al-Yamīnī* (Eng. tr. by J. Reynolds), 308, Muḥammad Nāzīm, *The Life and Times of Sultān Mahmūd of Ghazna*, Cambridge, 1931, 107-8.

⁴ Nāzīm, 163.

⁵ 'Iḥmī, 223-4.

⁶ Ibid, loc cit.

⁷ Jūzjānī, 176, 'Isāmī, 126-7.

⁸ 'Abdullāh, *Tārīkh-i Dā'ūdī*, fo 23b.

taken in an angry mood against one particular city, do not illustrate the general policy or even the character of this otherwise intellectually alert monarch. He was more interested in rationalism than in theology, and it was he who by throwing Persian studies open to the Hindus set in motion the process of their integration into the higher administration of the Sultanate. More expressive of religious zeal was the iconoclasm of Bābur under whose orders Mir Baqā destroyed the temple consecrated to Rāma in his birth-place at Ayodhya and built a mosque on its site in 1528-9.¹

The theoretical policy of the Muslim state in India was to withhold the permission for building new Hindu temples and to discourage the repair of old ones.² This appears to have been aimed at a gradual and tactful elimination of idol-worship. But judging from the extremely large number of temples that have survived from medieval India the policy seems to have been seldom enforced.

Sultān Zayn al-'Abidīn and Akbar are the outstanding exceptions to this theoretical policy by openly permitting Hindus to build new temples. Jahāngīr continued to give permission for their construction such as the ones built by Vir Singh Bundela at Muttra and Bundela. Conversely temples were destroyed when Jahāngīr was at war with a Hindu kingdom.³ Personally, he was contemptuous of image-worship.⁴ Shāh Jahān reverted early in his reign to the traditional policy⁵ though later in his reign liberalization took place under the influence of Dārā Shikoh who went to the extent of presenting a stone railing to the temple of Keshav Rāo at Muttra.⁶ Aurangzeb revived the policy of prohibiting construction or repair of temples, and destroyed some in peacetime; but strangely enough a number of his edicts granting land endowments to Hindu priests of temples at Maheshwar Nath, Benares, Multan and other places have recently come to light.⁷

So one-sided has been the historiography of Muslim iconoclasm in India, whether in the glowing accounts of fanatical medieval Muslim historians, or the later condemnation of the Western

¹ Sharma, 9; S. K. Bannerjee, 'Bābur and the Hindus' in the *Jour. of the U.P. Hist. Soc.*, 9, ii (1936), 70-96.

² Sharma, 103.

³ Lāhorī, I, i, 452.

⁴ Ibid., loc. cit.

⁵ Sharma, 104.

⁶ Jahāngīr (Rogers), 254.

⁷ Published by Jnan Chandra in *JPHS*, vii (1959), 36-39; vii (1959), 99-100; vi (1958), 55-65; vi (1958), 208-13; v (1957), 247-54. Also Hukm Chand in the *Settlement Report for the District of Multan* quoted by Rajendra Prasad, *India Divided*, Bombay, 1946, 37.

historians emphasizing British tolerance by comparison, that it is refreshing to read the observation of Rajendra Prasad: 'it would be a useful service if some scholar could bring together . . . a list of the numerous endowments and grants made by Muslim kings to Hindu temples and shrines such as has been done of those desecrated or destroyed by them.'¹

Desecration or demolition of mosques by Hindus wherever a Hindu rebellion succeeded or a Hindu kingdom came into its own, was the Hindu parallel of Muslim iconoclasm. Describing Mahī Pāl's sack of Lahore, the Sūfī hagiographical tradition records the massacre of Muslims and demolition of mosques and the building of Hindu temples on their site. In the fifteenth century Hindu *zamindārs* (landlords) in Malwa and even in areas near Delhi are reported to have converted mosques into temples.² Rana Kumbha is said to have seized a number of *Yāvanīs* (Muslim women) and to have demolished a mosque.³ Bābur found mosques at Chanderi, Sarangpur, and Ranthambore converted into stables and plastered with cow-dung by the order of Rāi Sen, a confederate of Rānā Sāngā. Desecration of mosques was complained about by Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī, in the early seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century it was the common practice of the Sikhs and the Jāts. Under Badan Singh the Jāts, according to Jadūnāth Sarkār, 'roamed freely over the (Agra) province demolishing houses, gardens and mosques, disfiguring them for the sake of a knob of copper, a piece of marble or a bit of iron'.⁴

(vi) *Tolerance and Intolerance*

Brahmanical Hinduism clearly discriminated against the Muslims as *yāvanas* (lit. Ionians, foreigners) and *mlechhas*, as the outcasts from a society which had its foundations on a caste structure. Muslims and Hindus therefore lived in separate quarters in the same town: 'the segregation of the Muslim community was rendered necessary', says Majumdar, 'at least to a large extent, by the social rules and habits of the Hindus who regarded the Muslims as unclean and impure (*mlechhas*). The Hindus maintained no

¹ Rajendra Prasad, 35.

² 'Abbās Khān Sarwānī, *Tārīkh-i Sher Shāhī* in Elliot, iv, 403-4.

³ Majumdar, op. cit. 626, 639.

⁴ J. Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Calcutta, 1938, ii, 315.

social intercourse with the other community by way of inter-dining or inter-marriage. They were uncompromising in this respect, and regarded the touch of Muslims, or even the scent of their food, as pollution.¹

In Islam, discriminatory legislation against non-Muslims such as their obligation in a Muslim state to pay respect to the Muslims or to wear a particular kind of dress, had its sanctions in the injunctions of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz and later writings of *fiqh* and was recommended by Muslim political writers in India, but it had no sanction in the Qur'ān or in the practice of the Prophet.² In fact it was a universal medieval attitude, and was not characteristic of the Muslim rule.³ In Muslim India the promulgation of such discriminatory laws was a rare exception.

Sikandar the Iconoclast of Kashmir and his minister Sūha Butt, a convert from Hinduism,⁴ and Sultān Mahmūd Begra of Gujarat did not permit Hindus to ride on horseback, or to go about without wearing a red patch on their person, or to celebrate openly Holi or Dīwālī or other Hindu festivals.⁵ Hindu records in the south and east of India also mention cases of Muslim discrimination.⁶ But, on the whole, as Sharma has summed up 'the position of Hindus in India was generally much better than that of many communities in Europe whose faith differed from that of their rulers . . .'.⁷

In fact there is a consistent tradition of religious and social tolerance throughout the Muslim rule in India. The iconoclast Mahmūd of Ghazna permitted image worship to his Hindu subjects in their separate quarters in his own capital.⁸ In Kashmir Sultān Zayn al-'Ābidīn (d. 1472) reversed the policies of Sikandar the Iconoclast, rehabilitated the exiled Hindus, abolished *jizya*, forbade cow-slaughter, and permitted *satī*. Muhammad bin Tughluq combined tolerance towards Hinduism, with an intellectual curiosity for certain trends in Hindu and Jain religions.⁹ Bahlūl

¹ Majumdar, 619.

² Shibli, *Rasā'il*, 85.

³ For similar discrimination by the Crusaders against Muslims and Jews, Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West*, Edinburgh, 1959, 116.

⁴ Jonarāja etc., *Rājataranginī*, Calcutta, 1879-88, II, 594 ff. 708, cf. G. M. D. Sufi, *Kashir*, Lahore, 1948-9, I, 148.

⁵ Gangādevi, *Madhurāvijayam*, ed. S. Thiruvengatachari, Annamalai, 1957.

⁶ K. A. N. Shastri and N. Venkataramanayya, *Further Sources of the Vijayanagara History*, Madras, 1946, I, 40, 233-4.

⁷ Sharma, 8.

⁸ Nāzim, 163.

⁹ B. A. Saleore, 'Delhi Sultans as patrons of Jaina gurus of Karnāṭaka', *Karnataka Hist. Rev.* iv (1937), 77-86.

Lodī, on the advice of a Muslim divine, rejected the petition of his Muslim subjects at Kurkhet to permit them the use of a tank which was previously in use by the Hindus exclusively.¹ On the highways he built, Sher Shāh Sūrī had separate inns and wells constructed for the Hindus to satisfy their religious susceptibilities, even though these implied the uncleanness of Muslims; and Brahmins were employed in these inns at state expense to provide water and food for the Hindus.² This positive attitude of religious tolerance developed considerably under the Mughals: 'Here', notes Terry, 'every man has liberty to profess his own religion freely.'³ According to Pietro della Valle Hindus and Muslims lived peacefully together in Jahāngīr's India and had equal opportunities in civil and military services.⁴

To quote Rajendra Prasad once again: 'The attitude of the Muslim conquerors had, on the whole, been one of toleration, and in spite of the fanatical zeal manifested by some of them at times, it may be safely asserted that there had been a continuous effort from the earliest days to deal with the Hindus fairly.'⁵

(vii) *Hindu Resistance*

The Muslim occupation of the greater part of northern India within a quarter of a century cannot be explained as a purely military feat. Militarily some of the Hindu states were as powerful as the invading Turks, and more than once inflicted on them heavy defeat. The real causes of the collapse of Hindu resistance can best be summed up in the words of a modern Hindu historian: 'The foremost among these seem to be the iniquitous system of caste and the absence of contact with the outside world. The first resulted in a fragmentation of Indian society into mutually exclusive classes, among whom the privileged minority preserved their vested interests by depriving the masses of many civic rights, specially of education and of free intercourse and association on equal terms with their fellow men, and further, by imposing on them the most irritating disabilities on the one hand, and a tremendous weight of duties and obligations towards the privileged classes

¹ 'Abdullah, fo. 77b-78a.

² *Ibid.* 78a.

³ Terry in Fitch's *Early Travels in India*, ed W. Forster, 315

⁴ *Travels of Pietro della Valle*, ed E. Grey.

⁵ Rajendra Prasad, 86

on the other. And this evil led to another. It bred among the leaders of the Indian people a vain pride in isolationism and insularity. . . .'¹

At the same time the Kshatriya ideal of chivalry paralysed the Rājput defence potential. 'History', continues Pramata Saran, 'had no meaning for Hindu kings who presided over the destinies of their war-stricken land. . . . While individual courage and bravery were certainly not wanting, there was lack of wisdom and statesmanship, of the knowledge of the outside world, and of a desire to keep abreast with the spirit of the time. . . . The utter and precipitate prostration of such a vast and ancient land, endowed with resources far superior and greater to those of her invaders, can be the result mainly of internal decay and not merely of external attacks, which were its effects rather than the cause.'²

The same causes of decadence paralysed the spiritual life of the Hindu people. The higher form of the Hindu religion was denied to the vast masses of the Hindu population. Śankracārya's *aparā vidaya* opened the door of the theistic religion only for the intellectual Brahmins; but for the masses it led to every form of superstition and idolatry.³ Tantric ideas which were then deeply influencing Brahmanism as well as Buddhism paved the way 'for the dominance of erotic and sensual practices which undermined the sense of moral values'.⁴ Muslim invasions cannot be regarded as responsible for the decadence of Sanskrit literature as the decadence had already set in.⁵ 'The great fabric of culture and civilization, reared up in course of centuries, was tottering and it was no longer a question of whether but when it would fall. Foreign invasions merely accentuated the process of decay and hastened the downfall which was inevitable in any case.'⁶

With the decline of the power of the Kshatriyas after their defeat at the hands of the Muslims, the influence of the Brahmins increased among the Hindu masses. This vicious circle hardened the caste structure of Hindu society. Islam's challenge of conversion not merely inspired the counter-challenge of Bhakti eclecticism but also an orthodox Brahmanical resistance with an intensification

¹ Pramata Saran, in Majumdar (ed.), *The Struggle for Empire*, 126-7.

² Ibid. 128; also C. V. Vaidya, *The Downfall of Hindu India*, Poona, 1926, 361-3.

³ Nicol MacNicol, *Indian Theism*, London, 1915, 99.

⁴ Majumdar in op. cit. 400.

⁵ M. A. Mehendale in ibid. 297.

⁶ Majumdar in ibid. 401.

of orthodoxy, based on the Vedic authority and rejecting heterodox philosophies.¹ The impact of this spiritual situation is thus summed up by K. M. Munshi: "The *Dharmashastras* were given high priority; the edge of social ostracism was sharpened. Women were segregated in their homes; infant marriages became almost universal. . . . Caste divided and sub-divided, but remained unmixed."²

Below the surface of the easy Muslim conquest of the greater part of the sub-continent and centuries of Muslim rule there also developed a turbulent challenge of stiff and continued Hindu armed resistance. Although the Ghaznavids never invaded Mewar, an inscription at Chitoregarh suggests that Śaktikumara, a rājā of that Rājput region, had joined in a confederacy convened by Jaipāl against Sabuktigīn in 989.³ Hindu rulers continued to show solidarity in aiding Jaipāl and Anandpal against Mahmūd of Ghazna. Hindu women sold their jewels and sent donations from distant parts of India to be used in organizing resistance against the Muslim invaders. Even the lower castes are claimed to have worked at their jobs feverishly to contribute to the anti-Muslim resistance.⁴

After the first wave of conquest, Mu'izz al-dīn Ghūrī (1174-1206) adopted a policy of political assimilation of Hindus and allowed Hindu tribute-paying chiefs to rule over Ajmer and other areas. In the face of continued Hindu hostility this tolerant assimilative policy suffered a set-back during the reign of Qutb al-dīn Aybak (1206-10).⁵ After Aybak's death the Rājputs recovered Gwalior and Jhansi. Chāhar Deva, the ruler of Narwar organized a Hindu confederacy in Central India and the expedition of Iltutmish in Rajputana in 1266 did not produce any conclusive results. The Hindus fully exploited the difficulties faced by the Sultanate because of the formidable Mongol pressure on its western flank, and regained striking power in outlying eastern provinces like Bengal and Orissa,⁶ while in the south the Chandelas recaptured Jhansi in 1263, and despite Balban's temporary occupation Gwalior remained in Hindu hands until 1298. Even within the provinces administered by the Sultanate, intense Hindu resistance continued and Balban had to suppress such risings in 1247 and

¹ U. C. Bhattacharjee in *ibid.* 465.

² K. M. Munshi, Introduction to *ibid.* xvii.

³ Vaidya, 519.

⁴ R. C. Majumdar, 'Hindu reaction to Muslim Invasions', in *Potdar Commemoration Volume*, Poona, 1950, 347-8.

⁵ Jūzjānī, 519.

⁶ M. Habibullah in Majumdar (ed.), *The Struggle for Empire*, 131, 134-5.

1254. From the Indian viewpoint, remarks K. M. Munshi, 'the territory of the Sultanate was only an arena of resistance which neither wavered nor tired'.¹

In 1226 Bartu, a Hindu chief of Avadh massacred 120,000 Muslims.² A Hindu chief who defeated a Muslim army shortly after its initial conquest openly regarded himself as restoring to India its original name *Āryavarta* (home of the Āryas) by killing off the *mlechchhas*.³ In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Hindu resistance took other forms. Hindu generals who had accepted Islam and were trusted with offices of great responsibility, reverted to their ancient faith. The classical cases of this type are those of Khusrau Khān, and of Harihara and Bukka, the founders of the Kingdom of Vijayanagar. The traditional accounts of the foundation of Vijayanagar reveal its Hindu revivalist basis. Under rulers like Bukka Muslim women were violated.⁴ Ballāla III, the Hoysāla ruler was leader of a movement in the Deccan to expel Muslims, and his concentrated policy aimed at the extermination of the petty Muslim kingdom of Madura.⁵ Earlier in the conflict between the foreign and indigenous Muslim nobles of Muhammad bin Tughluq which led to the loss of the northern Deccan to the Sultanate, Hindu chiefs had lent their support to the forces of disorder.⁶ In the reign of Ibrāhīm Lodī (1517-26) a Hindu chief of Nagor inflicted every kind of humiliation on the Muslims.⁷

Before the rise of the Marāthas the most serious challenge to the Muslim rule in India was the rise of Rānā Sāngā in the early sixteenth century. The defeats he inflicted on the armies of Gujarat including one led by the able Turkish general Malik Ayāz, the even more significant victory he gained against a force of Ibrāhīm Lodī which opened for him vaguely the ambitious prospect of founding a central Hindu empire in Delhi, and his confederacy with Medini Rāi and other Rājput chiefs became a threat to the survival of Muslim power in India, and he was regarded as such by Bābur who finally vanquished him.

Even under the Mughals, one of the causes of the inherent weakness of the Muslim rule, according to De Laet, was the underlying Hindu hostility: 'Large armies cannot operate in such districts which are held by *Rādias* (rājās). . . . These *Rādias* have for many

¹ Munshi in *ibid.* xvi.

² R. C. Majumdar, 'Study of Indian History', *JAS (Bombay)*, (1957), 150.

³ Afif, 274.

⁴ *Ibid.* 221.

⁵ D. C. Ganguly in *ibid.* 55.

⁶ Ishwari Prasad, *Qarāunah Turks*, 193.

⁷ Abdullah, fo. 97a.

centuries been dear to the hearts of their Hindu subjects, who are most conservative and tenacious in their affection for old traditions and superstitions.¹

Aurangzeb's pluralism seems to have accelerated and brought into the open the hard core of Hindu resistance rather than generated it. The Marāṭha revivalism of Shīvajī was to a very large extent a continuation and an externalization of Hindu resistance which had been simmering and seeking opportunities for a volcanic overflow, symbolized by the Marāṭha war-slogan of the revival of Hindu rule, *Hindu pad padshāhi*.² In a curious pattern of theoretical loyalty and practical disloyalty to the Mughal sovereign, the Marāṭha way of humiliating the Mughals was extortionism. In 1754 Ragūnāth Rāo tried to extract the impossible sum of over 8 million rupees from the powerless Mughal emperor 'Ālamgīr II, while Marāṭha bands several times sacked the capital and other cities of the Empire.³ Marāṭha sack of a city was accompanied by remorseless vandalism. In 1760 Sadāshiv Bhau took out the ceilings of the jewels of Mughal architecture in Delhi and coined the silver into a million rupees.⁴

Similar anti-Muslim vandalism is characteristic of the growth and organization of the Jāts towards the end of the seventeenth century. Theirs was a predatory peasant community, free from a number of caste restrictions. The most ironical incident in the Jāt history was their desecration of Akbar's tomb, as a vengeance for his having married Hindu women, though more than any other individual in the entire history of the sub-continent he had sought to give Hindus complete equality with Muslims in all respects and to bring the two peoples together.

One of the most curious forms Hindu resurgence against the Muslim rule took was the usurpation and apostasy of Khusrau Khān in 1320.⁵ He was a low caste Parwāri from Gujarat, a community also known as *Mahār*, or by the more reviling appellation *Dhed*,⁶ generally considered by the Hindus as the very lowest

¹ De Laet, *The Empire of the Great Mogul*, tr. J. S. Hoyland and S. N. Banerjee, Bombay, 1928, 242-3.

² S. N. Chopra, 'Rencontre de l'Inde et de l'Islam', *JVII*, iv-2 (1960), 378.

³ Sarkar, ii, 15, 17-20, 109-10, 142-3.

⁴ *Ibid.* ii, 189.

⁵ S. R. Sharma 'Nāsar-ud-din Khusrau Shah' in *Potdar Commemoration Volume*, Poona, 1950, 70 ff.; K. S. Lal, 'Nasir-ud-din Khusrau Shah', *JIII*, xxiii, 169-80.

⁶ Grant Duff, *History of the Marathas*, London, 1826, 31; Molesworth, *Marathi Dictionary*; E. Thomas, *Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi*, London, 1871, 184.

caste except the *Māng*, and regarded as extremely filthy by the Caste Hindus. The Parwāris were not allowed to build houses within the town, and were employed usually as village watchmen, porters and gate-keepers. Recently the view has been advanced that Khusrau Khān belonged to a higher caste,¹ but the evidence to the contrary is overwhelming,² and all contemporary records point in that direction.³

In a palace revolution Khusrau Khān murdered his sovereign and homosexual lover Qutb al-dīn Mubārak Khaljī, massacred all male children of the ruling house and seized the throne. In the orgy of murder and rape begun by the Parwāris in the imperial house of the Khaljīs every lady of the harem was assaulted and dishonoured. In the dance of devils that continued for several months Muslim noblewomen were taken as slaves; and Khusrau appropriated for himself the widow of his murdered master.⁴ Idols were set up on the pulpits of the mosques. Copies of the Qur'ān were used by the Parwāris as seats.⁵ Brahmins consecrated the rites of the low-caste Parwāris, a quite unorthodox manifestation of Hindu political solidarity.⁶ It was Khusrau Khān's policy to concentrate all power into the hands of fellow Parwāris, and other Hindus. The contemporary Muslim historians record that there was general rejoicing in the Hindu population that Delhi had once more come under Hindu rule and that the Muslims had been superseded and dispersed.⁷

Modern Hindu historians generally recognize in the rise of Khusrau Khān the revolutionary momentum of the Hindu society, trying to seize a convenient opportunity to overthrow Muslim domination. 'The Sultanate of Dihli had lost its prestige, and if a powerful Hindu Rājā had organized a confederacy of his fellow-princes, he might have easily obtained possession of Dihli and the power of the Muhammedans might have been well-nigh extinguished.'⁸ The Parwāris, 'must have been accepted as Hindus before they could find Brahmin priests to perform Hindu rites in

¹ Sharma, op. cit.; Hodivala, i, 396-71; Majumdar in *The Delhi Sultanate*, 44-45; A. L. Srivastava, 'Origins of Nasir-ud-din Khusrau Shah of Delhi', *IHQ*, xxx (1954), 19-24.

² Ishwari Prasad, 9 n.; *Indian Antiquary*, 1847, 130.

³ Amir Khusrau, *Tughluq Nāma* (T.N.), ed. Hashimi Faridabadi, Aurangabad, 1933, 45.

⁴ Ibid. 24-34; Baranī, 408-11; 'Isāmī, 374-5; Badāunī, i, 211-17.

⁵ Baranī, 411-12; 'Isāmī, 375; Yahyā Sirhindī, 87.

⁶ T.N. 60.

⁷ Baranī, 412.

⁸ Ishwari Prasad, 11.

the palace. That in itself represented a revolutionary change in the Hindu society.¹

It is interesting that the challenge of the situation made its first impression on Malik Fakhr al-dīn Jūnā (later Sultān Muhammad bin Tughluq) whose mind seems to have been throughout acutely conscious of the aspirations and apprehensions of political Islam in India. As he escaped from the vigilance of Khusrau Khān and from Delhi to join his father on the frontier, it was he who formulated the case for *jihād* against the apostate usurper.²

His father, Ghāzī Malik (later Sultān Ghiyāth al-dīn Tughluq) was the only general who thought of taking up the challenge for the survival and restoration of Muslim power in India; until his *da'wa* (invitation) for *jihād* 'neither a Turk shook his Turkish spear, nor an Indian attacked the Hindus'.³ This placid acceptance of Khusrau Khān's rule is intriguing. The situation is not without its parallels in the history of Islam; often faced with a *fait accompli* Muslim revolutionary forces have decided to lie low, or at least to mark time. Moreover in those days of difficult communications the news of Khusrau Khān's apostasy and sacrilege might not have travelled fast, or might have been received incredulously in view of Khusrau Khān's former services to the Muslim empire in the Deccan. Outwardly in coinage and title Khusrau Khān had adhered to the Islamic form and tradition. His apostasy, in any case, continued to retain an element of syncretism, if one may judge by the lavish grant of money he presented to Nizām al-dīn Awliyā to pray for him. His rule, which lasted only four months, was much too short to assess what the real reactions of the Muslim governors would have been when most of them, like Ghāzī Malik, became fully aware of the danger to Muslim survival in India. One has on record only the reaction of six *amīrs*, most of them governors of provinces west of Delhi, who were invited to *jihād* by Ghāzī Malik. Of these Malik Bahrām Abīhī, the governor of Uch joined him enthusiastically. Mughlātī, the governor of Multan and Yak Lakhī, the governor of Samana refused to join and were killed by their Muslim soldiery. Conversely Muhammad Shāh Lur, whose soldiers were in revolt against him was restored to authority by them to fight against the apostate. The movement for *jihād* thus seems to have been more popular in the Muslim soldiery than among its generals. The reaction of Hoshang, the governor of Jālūr, to Ghāzī Malik's

¹ Sharma, 81.

² T.N. 44-45.

³ Ibid. 37.

invitation was lukewarm, and that of 'Ayn al-Mulk, who was under the surveillance of Khusrau Khān in Delhi, sympathetic but cautious. The common Muslim population of Delhi seems to have been partly outraged because of the sacrileges and partly confused and even sympathetic to Khusrau Khān due to his regard for Muslim saints; and this may account for the presence of Muslim elements in his army.¹ To Muslim intellectual élite he was the abomination of abominations, the personification of degradation and filth that threatened the very existence of Islam in India. Amīr Khusrau who had formerly eulogized him as a Muslim general in the Deccan, kept aloof from his court and company,² despite his generosity to the poet's spiritual preceptor Nizām al-dīn Awliyā. Much of the extremist pluralistic political thinking in Baranī's *Fatāwa-i Jahāndārī* might have been a reaction to the experience of Khusrau Khān's rule.

The declared objectives of Ghāzī Malik's *jihād* were three: 'to purify the light of the True Faith from the dust of paganism in this dangerous land and to re-establish the glory of Islam; secondly to reconquer this Empire from the Hindu to restore it to its true heir, a Khalji prince if one still survived; thirdly to punish the traitors for their treachery.'³ The idealization of Ghiyāth al-dīn Tughluq in the sultanate's tradition of historiography as a hero of Muslim India is due to his achievement as the warden of the marches against the Mongols, but more specially because he restored Muslim rule and power in India⁴; and it is remarkable that though his relations with Nizām al-dīn were not too cordial on the ground of that saint's acceptance of a gift of money from Khusrau Khān, the two famous disciples of the Chishtī saint, Amīr Khusrau and Baranī show unswerving loyalty to the Sultān as the hero of Islam in India. Despite refusal, twice,⁵ to accept the crown, it was thrust upon him by the *ijma*' of nobles and soldiers since Ghāzī Malik 'had avenged the wrongs done to Islam and the Muslims, he was given the title of Sultān Ghiyāth al-dīn. . . . Islam found a new life and revived, pagan rites disappeared, people felt secure and happy.'⁶

¹ T.N. 112, 120.

² T.N. 140-1.

³ Wahid Mirza, 127-8.

⁴ T.N. 140-1.

⁵ This 'refused dignity' on his part, whatever parallels it may have with Mosaic, Prophetic or Mongol traditions (cf. A. J. Wensinck, 'The Refused Dignity' in *Ajāb Nāma*, London, 1922, 491-9), was regarded by Ghāzī Malik's contemporaries as genuine and in full consonance with his character.

⁶ Baranī, 423.

(viii) *The Hindu Insularity*

Early Hindu epigraphic evidence shows an attitude of disdain towards the Muslims.¹ Al-Bīrūnī, whose approach to Hindu civilization was one of genuine understanding complains that 'all their fanaticism is directed against those who do not belong to them—against all foreigners. They call them *mleccha*, i.e. impure, and forbid having any connection with them, be it intermarriage or any other kind of relationship, or by sitting, eating and drinking with them, because thereby they think they would be polluted. . . . They are not allowed to receive anybody who does not belong to them, even if he wished it, or was inclined to their religion.'²

Al-Bīrūnī then proceeds to complain of the Hindu reluctance to impart the knowledge of Hindu religion or sciences to non-Hindus: ' . . . the Hindus believe that there is no country like theirs, no nation like theirs, no kings like theirs, no science like theirs. They are haughty, foolishly vain, self-conceited and stolid. They are by nature niggardly in communicating that which they know, and they take the greatest possible care to withhold it from men of another caste from among their own people, still much more of course, from a foreigner.'³ 'Their haughtiness is such', he continues, 'that if you tell them of any science or scholar in Khurāsān or Persia, they will think you to be both an ignoramus and a liar.'⁴ He also suggests that this prejudiced haughtiness might possibly be due to hurt pride and political hostility as Hindus of earlier generations, whose sciences travelled to Arab centres of learning, seem to have been more liberal in the dissemination of knowledge to others.⁵

Five hundred years later Abu'l Fazl found himself facing the same problem because of the Brahmanical reluctance to impart the secrets of their religion or sciences, though he blames Muslim indifference, indolence and orthodox prejudice, pointedly as barriers to a better knowledge of Hindu culture.⁶

This Hindu particularism produced a marked effect on the subsequent development of the Hindu community under the Muslim rule. As the Hindus kept themselves severely aloof to 'save their

¹ *Epigraphica Indica*, iv, 119.² al-Bīrūnī (Sachau), i, 19-20.³ *Ibid.* i, 22-23.⁴ *Ibid.* i, 23.⁵ *Ibid.* i, 23.⁶ 'Allāmī, *Ā'in* (Jarrett), iii, 3-6.

purity against the unclean aliens',¹ their religious and social outlook became more and more insular from the eleventh to the fifteenth century, and this inhibited composite development as well as their self-identification with the Muslim state, though its administration at its lower rungs was run almost entirely by them.

Hindu insularity, though inherent in Brahminism underwent a further intensification because of the shattering nature of the Turkish impact.² There was a general movement of Hindu scholarship away from the Muslim-administered areas to Hindu kingdoms on the fringes of the sub-continent.

The excess of Hindu religio-cultural hostility to the presence of Islam toned itself down towards the fifteenth century. By then it had got used to an insular co-existence with Islam; but despite the conscious efforts of a few individuals or movements at eclecticism, the soul of Hinduism remained as distrustful of Islam as ever, and the principle of repulsion remained operative in the case of both, considerably more than that of attraction.

¹ Majumdar in *The Struggle for Empire*, 399. ² al-Bīrūnī (Sachau), i. 22.

II

HINDU ELEMENTS IN THE MUSLIM ADMINISTRATION

(i) *The Assimilation of the Hindu Élite* ¹

AFTER the occupation of Sind, the policy of the Arabs there, as elsewhere in the Umayyad caliphate was to retain as many features of the local forms of administration as were compatible with their administrative outlook. Sind was lucky to have Muhammad ibn Qāsim as its first Muslim governor, who allowed the broad features of Hindu administrative system to continue to operate; and the civil and revenue administration remained either in the hands of the Hindus ² or converts from Hinduism. His boldest innovation was the appointment of Siskar, the former minister of his vanquished adversary Rājā Dāhir, as his adviser after Siskar had accepted Islam.

In the context of the less liberal Turco-Persian conquest of north-west India it has to be remembered that Mahmūd's iconoclasm was aimed against images and not men. He regarded administration of the state as a practical proposition not necessarily related to religion. While he sacked Hindu temples he also mobilized three Hindu divisions in his forces ³ and at least three Hindu generals, Sundar, Nāth, and Tilak rose to positions of high responsibility in the Ghaznawid army. Sundar was the commander of Hindu troops under Mas'ūd (1030-40).⁴ Tilak, the son of a low-caste barber, who would have had no opportunities to distinguish himself in the caste-ridden Brahmanical society, took up service in Mahmūd of Ghazna's court, and by his eloquence in Hindi as well as in Persian, his ability as an interpreter, his alertness of mind, and his capacity of securing the loyalty of the scattered Hindu military communities in the Ghaznawid Kingdom he rose to a position of trust and power. His great opportunity came when he was appointed

¹ For a study of Hindu nobles serving in the Muslim administration, see Shāh Nawāz Khan, *Ma'āthir al-umarā*, Calcutta, 1887-95, ii, 109-358; Sayyid Ahmad Marahravi, *Umarā-i Hunūd*, n.d.

² *Chach Nāma*, 164-7.

³ Nizām al-Mulk, *Sijāsāt Nāma*, 92-93.

⁴ Bayhaqi, 407.

by Mas'ūd, in supersession of Muslim generals, to lead a punitive expedition against Ahmad Yanāltigīn, a Ghaznawid governor who had occupied Benares, and who was reputed to be an illegitimate son of Mahmūd, and therefore suspected by Mas'ūd and intrigued against by Qāzī-yi Shirāz and other Muslim nobles.¹ Tilak defeated and killed Yanāltigīn with a force which was preponderantly Hindu, and in the process he mobilized the support of Hindu Jāts for the Ghaznawid cause reducing Muslim Turkmāns to submission; and he continued to be held in great esteem by Mas'ūd for having re-established Ghaznawid hold on its Indian provinces.²

As under Muhammad bin Sām Ghūrī the whole of north India came under Muslim dominance, everywhere the Hindu framework of administration was accepted and retained. In the army, if not the Hindu generals, at least such of them who had been converted to Islam had considerable share in stabilizing the Delhi Sultanate and in extending its frontiers. Most distinguished of them was Malik 'Anbar who extended the Khaljī empire deep into the Deccan. The apostasy of neo-Muslim generals like Khusrau Khān, Harihara and Bukka and their revolt was counter-balanced by the efficiency and the unswerving loyalty of Khān-i Jahān, Fīrūz Tughluq's chief minister. Ibn Battūtah testifies to the employment of Hindus in Muhammad bin Tughluq's administration, one of whom rose to be governor of Sindh.³ Despite Fīrūz Tughluq's theocratic policies, the finance and revenue departments of his state continued to be run by Hindu petty officials, though they hardly ever rose to positions of high responsibility.⁴ His policy was one of leniency to the Hindu chiefs unless they showed hostility⁵; whereas on the personal level his bodyguard consisted of Rājapūts headed by Bhīrū Bhattī, a relative of his mother.

At the time of Bābur's conquest, the revenue system of the country and its trade was still run mainly by the Hindus.⁶ Despite the Persianization of the administration by Sikandar Lodī and later by Todar Mal, there is reason to believe that revenue records were kept in the Indian languages, except at the headquarters. This implied

¹ Bayhaqī, 400-2.

² Ibid. 409, 423, 433-4.

³ Ibn Battūtah, iii, 105-6.

⁴ Baranī, 572, 575; Riazul Islam, 'A Review of the Reign of Fīrūz Shāh', *IC*, xiii, 258.

⁵ Baranī, 587, 595; 'Afif, 62, 103, 128.

⁶ Bābur, *Tuzuk* (Leyden and Erskine), ii, 241.

the appointment of a large number of Hindus some of whom were paid by the state, others by the cultivators.¹

Akbar's great administrative achievement was the enlisting of Rājput chiefs, who from Prithvī Rāj to Rānā Sāngā had offered stiff resistance to the consolidation of Muslim power in India, to the service and stabilization of that very power by the simple process of integration and liberalization. To that extent his eclecticism was motivated by political considerations. It was remarkable that within one generation the redoubtable Hindu warrior caste of the Rājputs was completely won over, and still remained loyal to Aurangzeb, while a militant upsurge of Hinduism had begun, and had come to be focused, not among the traditional Hindu fighters, the Rājputs, but among totally different Hindu communities such as the Marāthas or the Jāts. To achieve this Akbar had to take some revolutionary steps such as intermarriage with the Rājputs, the appointment of a Rājput to the highest rank among the *mansabdārs* before a Muslim was raised to that rank: Rājā Mān Singh was made commander of 7,000 horse, the first to hold that rank in Akbar's reign; and it was only later that Akbar's foster-brother Mīrzā 'Azīz Kokā was raised to the same rank.² A Hindu, Rājā Todar Mal, was given the highest revenue appointment in the State. Perhaps no medieval administrator, Hindu or Muslim, did more to revolutionize the revenue administration than Todar Mal whose loyalty, sincerity, honesty, intelligence, and efficiency has been praised by most historians though his fanatical orthodoxy has also been commented upon.³ More tolerant Rājput chiefs like Bhagwān Dās, who built a mosque at Lahore, and his son Mān Singh, who took a tolerant interest in Islam,⁴ were actually responding to Akbar's eclectic liberalism.

Under Jahāngīr, Hindu generals continued to serve and extend the frontiers of the Mughal Empire; for instance, Udājī Rām played a considerable part in the Mughal campaigns in the Deccan.⁵ Shāh Jahān reversed Akbar's policy to some extent, giving Muslims preference in service,⁶ but on the whole no dislodgement of Hindus from public services seems to have taken place during his reign.⁷ The list of his Hindu *mansabdārs* cited by Lāhorī, is impressive.⁸ Shāh Jahān's personal bodyguard and his most trusted

¹ S. R. Sharma, *The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors*, 1940, 27 ff.

² 'Allāmī, *Ā'in* (Blochmann), 1, 363

³ Shāh Nawāz Khān, II, 127.

⁴ Jahāngīr (Rogers), 15

⁵ Shāh Nawāz Khān, II, 142-5.

⁶ Khāfi Khān, 1, 399-400

⁷ Sharma, 102.

⁸ Lāhorī, II, 292-328

servant was a Hindu, Mahesh Dās, who stood behind the throne where the emperor's weapons were kept, and followed him wherever he rode out.¹ The indispensability of Rājput generals and troops is obvious in the context of Mughal rivalries with Safavid Persia over Qandahar, and Mughal ambitions in Central Asia. Nobles of Persian extraction could hardly be trusted, if a conflict with the Safavids was envisaged; nor could the Turānīs be entrusted with an expedition against the Uzbeks. Shāh Jahān's Central Asian campaign (1646) though commanded nominally by the Princess Murād and Aurangzeb, and actually by the Persian noble 'Alī Mardān Khān, had as its backbone a Rājput force under Rājā Jagat Singh.²

The consolidation of Aurangzeb's power and his success against his brother was due partly to the loyalty of his Rājput general Jai Singh,³ who also led the first Mughal expedition against Shivājī and secured his submission for a short period. More fluctuating were the loyalties of Jaswant Singh who finally crossed over to Aurangzeb's side in 1659, was raised to the highest rank among the *mansabdārs*, that of a commander of 7,000, and was twice appointed governor of Gujarat.⁴ He was nominated, with Prince Mu'azzam to lead the Mughal forces to meet the threat of the invasion of the Safavid 'Abbās II, and was appointed in 1671 the commander of the Mughal army to pacify the Afghans in the north-west frontier area; though Jaswant Singh was also suspected of secretly conspiring with Shivājī.⁵

Aurangzeb's fanaticism like that of Mahmūd of Ghazna, was directed primarily at the 'false gods' and had its counterpart in his continuation of Akbar's enlightened administrative policy. Thus, while in 1670 the temple of Keshav Rāo was demolished and a mosque built on its site, the same year a veteran Hindu general Rājā Rām Singh was appointed commander of 5,000 horse and his son was given a jewelled turban.⁶ Despite all the theoretical decisions taken by Aurangzeb against the employment of Hindus to higher

¹ Lāhorī, ii, 635.

² Ibid. ii, 466-7, 485, 594-50, 556, 566.

³ See letters of Jai Singh to Aurangzeb in Bhāg Chand, *Jāmi' al-Inshā*, B.M. Or. MS. 1702, fos. 35b-47b; Aurangzeb's letters to Jai Singh during his conflict with Dārā Shikoh in ibid. fos. 92b-96d; cf. Bernier, 58-59.

⁴ Sāqī Musta'id Khan, *M.'A.*, 5-10; Bernier, 78, 86.

⁵ 'Alī Muhammad Khān, *Mir'at-i Ahmadi*, Baroda, 1927-8, i, 244, 276-7; Bernier, 188.

⁶ *M.'A.*, 60-61.

revenue offices,¹ in actual practice he appointed more competent Hindus as higher *mansabdārs*, in the interest of sound administration, than any of his predecessors including Akbar. Three Hindus under Aurangzeb rose to be commanders of 7,000 horse, under Akbar only one; four of Aurangzeb's Hindu generals, but none of Akbar's commanded 6,000 horse; while Akbar had two Hindu commanders of 5,000 horse, Aurangzeb had sixteen. Number of lower Hindu *mansabdārs* under Aurangzeb exceeded several times those under Akbar.² It is possible that the greater number of Hindu *mansabdārs* in Aurangzeb's administration were due to the extension of the empire and its military commitments; and his administrative policy cannot be described as eclectic, but as one based solely on the requirements of administrative efficiency.

The policies of the Deccan Kingdoms in regard to the appointment of Hindus to high offices of the state was even more liberal. For a time in Bijāpūr, Hindi and Marāthī were used as official languages either instead of or along with Persian. This liberal tradition was continued by the Nizāms of Hyderabad, whose first noble the *peshkār*, used to be a Hindu and was often also the chief minister of the state.

(ii) *Cultural Eclecticism of the Hindu Administrative Communities*

Some Hindu communities like the Kāyasthas, the Khatrīs, the Pandits of Kashmir, and the 'Āmils of Sind adopted Muslim Culture, cultivated Muslim languages and literature, participated in Muslim administration affectively, and even moulded their domestic life to the Muslim way of living,³ a social development not unlike the 'westernization' of the élite of other civilizations today. Apart from their religion the members of these communities were hardly distinguishable from the Muslims, whereas in some Muslim cultural strongholds they went to the extent of adopting some secondary Muslim religio-social practices, such as writing elegies (*marthiyas*) on the martyrdom of Husain.⁴ Some of them adopted part-Muslim names like Fīrūz Chand, Mahbūb

¹ Aurangzeb in *Kalimāt-i tayyabāt*, letter 34; Manucci, *Storia di Mogor* (Eng. tr.), II, 154; Khāfi Khān, II, 249, 252.

² Figures based on the analytical statement given in S. R. Sharma, *op. cit.* 68-69, 99-100, 101, 178-80.

³ Mirzā Muḥammad Ḥasan Qatīl, *Haft Tamāshā*, B.M. Or. MS. 467, fo. 54a.

⁴ Ibid. fo. 82b.

Karan or Jawāharlāl. In their self-identification with Muslims some, though not all of them, went to the extreme of partly seceding from their own culture.

The most remarkable of these communities is that of the Kāyasthas. Their origin can be traced in the literary and epigraphic records to the later half of the ninth century. From the eleventh century individuals of their caste began to rise to high administrative positions.¹ There are many theories relating to their origin. In some parts Brahmins regard them as equal to Kshatriyas, though generally they are considered a mixed caste like the Shūdras.² The chief festival of the Kāyasthas is the celebration of the day sacred to Saraswatī, the Hindu goddess of knowledge and eloquence, when they worship the inkstand (*dawāt-pūjā*). Writing is tabooed among them on that festival day, and the next day they begin the use of new pen and ink.³ Kāyasthas were probably the first among the Hindus to take up the study of Persian introduced in schools in the reign of Sikandar Lodī, and then under the Sūrīs.⁴ Of all the Hindu castes they came into closest contact with the Muslims. Compared to other Hindu communities they were less observant of the orthodox ritual, and under Muslim and Bhakti influences less conscious of caste distinctions.⁵ By the time of Akbar they mastered Persian and from seventeenth to early nineteenth century they enriched the Persian literature written in India with Hindu sensitivity embedded in Muslim tradition, while in certain fields such as diplomatic and official letter-writing (*inshā*) they became specialists; though it is difficult to agree with Grierson that they were the real originators of Urdu.⁶ In the eighteenth century in the reign of Muhammad Shāh they came to monopolize nearly all the clerical posts.⁷

The Khatri (Kshatriyas of U.P. and the Punjab) seem to have adopted Muslim culture as Mughal *mansabdārs*, in the milieu of Muslim civil and revenue co-administrators and military comrades-in-arms. Some Rajput chiefs, even at the end of the nineteenth century, continued to retain Muslim cultural orientation by employing Muslim tutors for their children, having their food

¹ U. N. Ghoshal in Majumdar, *The Struggle for Empire*, 477.

² Yusuf Husain, 'Les Kayasthas', *REI*, i (1927), 455-8.

³ Ibid. 457.

⁴ S. 'Abdullah, *Adabiyāt-i Fārsī men Hindustan kā hissa*, Delhi, 1942, 233.

⁵ Yusuf Husain, 465-7.

⁶ Grierson, *Linguistic Survey*, ix, i, 45.

⁷ 'Abdullah, 233 quoting *Majma' al-nafā'is*, MSS. in the Punjab University Library, 428.

killed according to Muslim custom and participating superficially in Muslim festival and prayer.

In the reign of Sultān Zayn al-‘Ābidīn, the Kāshmīrī Pandits, especially the Saprū clan took up the study of Persian.¹ Because of their sharp intelligence, and as the only group of Brahmins who took to the Muslim culture, they soon distinguished themselves in their own land and, after Akbar’s annexation of Kashmir, in the Mughal court and administration in which they rose to become an influential element. Steeped in Persian intellectualism, some of them adopted the externals of the Muslim way of life, while others combined it with erudition in Sanskrit and the study of their own religion. From among the Kāshmīrī pandits rose in the twentieth century men like Tej Bahādur Saprū, who remained a champion of Urdu in the darkest days of Urdu-Hindi controversy and communal strife, and liberal leaders of the Indian National Congress like Motilāl and Jawāharlāl Nehru. Iqbāl came from a family of Kāshmīrī Brahmins converted to Islam, and took pride in his stock. During the Indo-Pakistan dispute over Kashmir, a liberal Kāshmīrī pandit leader and journalist Premnāth Bazāz courted imprisonment in India for his fearless advocacy of Kashmir’s accession to Pakistan.

The ‘Āmils of Sind are a hereditary caste of government servants, though recently they have spread all over the world as petty merchants. It is possible that they obtained their first veneer of Islamic culture soon after the Arab occupation.² In any case, after the incorporation of Sind in the Delhi Sultanate, they turned to the study of Persian and soon became indispensable to the lower as well as higher administration of Sind.³ As adaptable as the Pārsīs (Indian Zoroastrians), and as ambitious, they soon switched over from a Muslim to an Anglicized way of living after the British occupation of Sind; but their contribution to Sindhi literature remained fully integrated with the Muslim tradition and they continue to write Sindhi in the Arabic script.

¹ ‘Abdullah, 10, quoting Kirpā Rām, *Gulzār-i Kāshmīr*, 167.

² U. T. Thakur, *Sindhi Culture*, Bombay, 1959, 56.

³ *Ibid.* 38.

III

EARLY MUSLIM STUDIES OF HINDU CULTURE

(i) *Arab Studies of Hindu Sciences*

WHEN Sind was a province of the caliphate, for a brief period between 718 and 800 some direct rendering of Sanskrit learning into Arabic took place.¹ Arab interest in Hindu sciences, especially in medicine and astronomy, was parallel to their interest in Greek learning. Hindu physicians were invited to Baghdad,² where the house of the Barmakids, converts to Islam from Buddhism and ministers to the 'Abbāsids, was all-powerful and to some extent still interested in the culture from which it had seceded. Al-Kindī's account of India was partly based on the evidence of the envoy sent by Yahyā al-Barmakī to India to procure Indian medicines and to report on Indian religion and customs.³ An Arab physician Ibn al-Tanūkhī visited India in the ninth century to study medicine. A number of Sanskrit treatises on medicines, poisons and snakes were translated into Arabic.

Even before the translation of Ptolemy's *Almagest*, three Indian works on astronomy were rendered into Arabic, the most famous of them being Brahmagupta's *Siddhānta*, given in Arabic the convenient name *Sindhind*, translated by al-Fazārī and Ya'qūb ibn Tāriq, both of whom worked in collaboration with a Brahmin scholar. The other two works on Hindu astronomy were Brahmagupta's *Khandkhādya* and the Āryabhata.⁴ Digests and commentaries of the *Siddhānta* continued to be written until the eleventh century in the Arab world, including Spain where it was studied and commented upon by Ahmad Majritī (d. 1007) and Ibn al-Samh (d. 1035) and others.⁵ This Sanskrit work on astronomy

¹ Louis Massignon, *Essai sur les origines du Lexique Technique de la Mystique musulmane*, Paris, 1922, 64.

² Sulaymān Nadvī, *'Arab u Hind ke Taalluqat*, Allahabad, 1950; Sulaymān Nadvī, 'Literary Relations between Arabia and India', *IC*, vi (1932), 627.

³ Sulaymān Nadvī, 'Early Relations between Arabia and India', *IC*, xi (1937), 178.

⁴ Sachau, Introduction to his English tr. of al-Bīrūnī (*Alberūnī's India*) i, p. xxxi.

⁵ Sulaymān Nadvī, 'Lit. Re.', 631.

was the subject of lively controversy between two Spanish Arab scholars, 'Abdullāh ibn Ahmad of Sargossa (d. 1046) and Ibn Sa'd al-Andalusī (d. 1021).¹

Hindu mathematics left a more lasting impression on the Arab sciences. In the reign of al-Mā'mūn (813-33), the mathematician al-Khwārizmī (780-840) adapted Sanskrit numerals to Arabic orthography. An assessment of Hindu influence on mathematics can be made from the work of al-Nasawī (980-1040) on Indian arithmetic. Some mathematical and astronomical terms were borrowed into Arabic from Sanskrit, though as Massignon reminds us, Sanskrit learning was on so minor a scale among Arabs that it left hardly any considerable impression on their intellectual 'lexique technique'.²

Among other Sanskrit works translated into Arabic were the ethical writings of Cānakya (Shānaq) and the *Hitopadeśa*, and works ranging from logic to magic catalogued by Ibn Nadīm.³ *Pancatantra*, better known to the Muslim world as *Kalila wa Dimna*, was translated via a Sassanid Old Persian version into Arabic by Ibn al-Muqaffa.⁴ The fascinating story of Sindbād, later incorporated into the *Arabian Nights* was partly of Indian origin. Among the Hindu religious epics, parts of the *Mahābhārata* were rendered into Arabic by Abū Sālih ibn Shu'ayb and later by Abu'l Hasan 'Alī Jabalī (c. 1026).⁵

The Arab intellectual curiosity about Buddhism has been, to some extent, exaggerated by Goldziher.⁶ Buddha is referred to in Arab writings as the prophet of *Sāmāniya*.⁷ Works dealing directly or obliquely with the life and teaching of Buddha mentioned by Ibn Nadīm as having been translated from Pehlevi into Arabic are *Kitāb al-Budd*, *Kitāb Balawhar wa Būdhāsaf*, and *Kitāb Būdhāsaf mufrad*. The legend of Balahvar, originally based on the life of Buddha, has also Manichaean, Georgian and Greek versions, and has recently been studied in detail by D. M. Lang.⁸ It was rendered into Arabic verse by a heretical poet Abān al-Lāhiqī (d. 815) and approximated with the Shī'ī doctrine of the absent *imām* by Ibn Bābawayh Qummī (d. 991). Adaptations from it were incorporated

¹ Sulaymān Nadwī, 'Early Re.', 179.

² Massignon, 64.

³ Ibn Nadīm, *al-Fihrist* (Flügel), 305 and *passim*.

⁴ Sachau, i, p. xxxii.

⁵ Elliot, i, 100-2.

⁶ cf. Ignaz Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, Heidelberg, 1925.

⁷ D. M. Lang, *The Wisdom of Balahvar*, London, 1957, 36.

⁸ Ibid. 11-65.

into the *Rasā'il* ('Treatises) of the Ikhwān al-Safā (Brethren of Purity), whose eclecticism shows some oblique Buddhist influences.¹

Al-Nubakhti's *Kitāb al-āra-i wa'l adyān-i Madhāhib al-Hind*, mentioned by al-Mas'ūdī, seems to have been the earliest study of Hindu sects.² But either due to the secretiveness and exclusiveness of the Brahmins, or indifference on the part of the Arabs, the corpus of Hindu scriptures, the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Sūtras, the Purānas and the *Bhagavad Gita* remained untranslated and unknown to the Arabs. The Arab mind had marvelled at the bizarre elements in Indian life and thinking, but did not actually understand the Hindu mind or Hinduism.³ The sceptical philosophical school, the Sumanniyah, founded by Jarīr ibn Hāzīm al-'Azdī between 737 and 757, which showed Hindu influences was an exception rather than a rule, and it soon disappeared under the polemic attack of theologians like Jahm.⁴ From 796 onwards Hellenistic syncretic works came to be translated into Arabic, which held out a doctrine clearer, more homogeneous, more complete than the one which reached the Arabs through translations from Sanskrit.⁵ Hellenistic syncretism was also much closer to Islam. Greek rationalism stimulated Islam intellectually into speculation and a sensitive adjustment of the balance of faith and reason, while the fragmentary renderings of Hindu sciences touched merely the periphery of the external Arab equipment of learning, and in this comparatively superficial contact did not even remotely touch the sensitive nerve of Arab civilization which was then maturing into form.

Even the superficial contact with Hindu sciences came to an early end as the political grip of Baghdad over the remote province of Sind loosened: 'There is no more mention of the presence of Hindu scholars at Baghdad nor of translations from Sanskrit. Greek learning had already won an omnipotent sway over the minds of the Arabs. . . . Of the more ancient or Indo-Arabian stratum of scientific literature nothing has reached our time save a number of titles of books.'⁶

¹ R. A. Nicholson, *Literary History of the Arabs*, Cambridge, 1941, 370; Lang, 36-38.

² al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahb*, Eng. tr. by A. Sprenger, London, 1841, i, 169.

³ Massignon, 65.

⁴ Abū'l Farj al-Isfahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, iii, 24; Massignon, 65.

⁵ Massignon, loc. cit.

⁶ Sachau, i, p. xxxii.

While this process of Hellenization, to the exclusion of even minor Hindu elements was going on in the great centres of learning in the Dār al-Islam, Hindu India became once again a remote land of mystery, a subject of documented comment for the merchant-traveller arriving at the seaports of Malabar, a routine chapter in historical or geographical literature quoting the travelling geographer, and later a subject of confused comment by the Arab historian writing in Ayyūbid or Mamlūk Egypt.

Sulaymān the merchant who visited India about 851 wrote of curious Hindu customs like trial by ordeal, or the cremation of the dead or burning alive of widows, and praised Hindu proficiency in medicine, astronomy, and philosophy¹; Abū Zayd Hasan al-Sayrāfi, who continued his account after his own visit (c. 916) showed interest in Hindu ascetics and yogīs and commented on the spread of Buddhism from India to China.² The geographer Ibn Khurdābeh (d. 912), who never visited India, based his account on the official records he came across in the 'Abbāsid postal service and on the tales of travellers; and he was sometimes guilty of such inaccuracies as his division of Hindu society into seven castes, or his curious remark that the kings and people of India regard fornication as lawful,³ which might have referred to the popularity of Śakti cults about that time. Al-Mas'ūdī (d. 956) who visited India wrote about it in detail, sketching briefly Hindu religious beliefs, including metempsychosis, reconstructing Hindu history from Hindu legends, complimenting Hindus on their achievements in sciences as the cleverest among 'dark people', and complaining like Sulaymān the merchant of the intolerance of the Rājā of Gujarat.⁴ Two other Arab geographers of the tenth century, Ibn Hawqal, who travelled through the entire length of Dār al-Islam and al-Istakhri (c. 950) whom he met in India, are much more interested in the Muslim province of Sind than in Hindu India. In the same century al-Baghdādī, appears to be more interested in Hindu culture and describes, though not accurately, Hindu sects; divides idol-worship into categories of the worship of images of God, the avatārs, demons and Bodhisattavas, regarding 'Budd' as the genus, idols as the species; and gives a picturesque account of

¹ *Voyage du Marchand arabe Sulayman*, French tr. by G. Ferrand, Paris, 1922,

50-57.

² *Ibid.*, 66-71.

³ Ibn Khurdābeh, *Al-Masālik wa'l mamālik*, ed. de Goeje in *Bibl. Geogr. Arab.*, iv, Leiden, 1889; tr. quoted from Elliot, i, 13.

⁴ *al-Mas'ūdī*, i, 380-3, 384, 389.

the four-handed idol of Śiva and of the sun and moon-worshipping cults and the yogis.¹ Another work which deals with India at some length is Buzurg ibn Shahryār's '*Ajā'ib al-Hind*'.² Al-Yanbū'ī (c. 987), who travelled through India and China, was quoted as an authority by later bibliographers like Ibn Nadīm, Yāqūt and Qazvīnī. In an interesting treatise on the superiority of Blacks over Whites, al-Jāhiz regards Hindus as the chief representatives of dark-skinned peoples, remarkable for their achievements in astronomy, medicine, architecture and the fine arts, for their invention of chess and their taste for perfumes.³

Hindu religion and its sects were commented upon by al-Shahrastānī (1086-1153) who regards Hinduism a great religion with a variety of shades of faith and sects. He points out the confusion in the writings of some Muslims who mixed up Brahmins with the followers of Abraham. He notes that the Hindu rationalistic pantheism is critical of Muslim ritual and faith. He describes briefly the various Buddhist and Hindu sects, and is appreciative of the meditation of Hindu ascetics who separate imagination from their physical environment achieving considerable self-subjugation 'so that when meditation becomes emancipated from this world, the next world is revealed to it'. He is, however, critical of the adoration of idols, which he regards as attributing divinity to the image, and as there is no Divine sanction for using idols as intermediaries, the Hindus are not, in his view, likely to go beyond their idols to God.⁴

Al-Idrisī (d. 1166) comments on Hindu polytheism and animism and sometimes accepts fiction as truth, as in regard to Hindu sexual morality: 'In the country of Balhārā concubinage is permitted with all persons except married women. Thus a man may have intercourse with his daughter, his sister, or his aunt provided they are not married.'⁵

By this time Islam was already established in north-western India as a powerful state and al-Birūnī's famous work on Hindu

¹ Abu'l Farj Muhammad ibn Ishāq al-Warrāq al-Baghdādī, *Kitāb al-Fihrist* section relating to Hindu religion tr. into Eng. by E. Rehatsek, 'Early Moslem Accounts of the Hindu Religion', *JAS* (Bombay) (1880), xiv, 44-50.

² Buzurg ibn Shahryār, '*Ajā'ib al-Hind*', Leyden, 1886.

³ al-Jāhiz, *Fakhr al-sudān al-l baidān*, in *Rasā'il*, Cairo, 1906.

⁴ al-Shahrastānī, *Kitāb al-milal wa'l mhal*, section on India trans. by Rehatsek, op. cit. 55-69.

⁵ Abū 'Abdullāh Muhammad al-Idrisī, *Nuzhat al-mushtāq*; tr. quoted from Elliot, i, 89.

religion and sciences had been written over a century ago, but it does not seem to have made much impression on authors like al-Sam'ānī (d. 1167). By the time we come in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries to the works of al-Maghribī, Yāqūt and Abu'l Fida we find a shift of emphasis in Arab Indology to the Muslim India; and in the writings of al-'Umarī (d. 1348) and al-Qalqashandī (d. 1418) Hindu India is almost forgotten.¹

(ii) *Al-Bīrūnī*

Abū Raihān al-Bīrūnī marks the culmination and fulfilment of the Arab tradition of intellectual curiosity and objective analysis of Hindu religion and sciences, though chronologically he wrote under Mahmūd of Ghazna and his son Mas'ūd in the eleventh century; and the environment around him was that of Turkish Islam which remained until the sixteenth century hostile to Hindu religion and more or less indifferent to and contemptuous of Hindu culture. Al-Bīrūnī was conscious that he was writing at the beginning of a new chapter in history; and regarded his role as interpretative, to enable the conquering Turco-Persian Muslims to discuss with the Hindus the 'question of religion, science or literature on the very basis of their own civilization' ² The differences that divided the in-coming Muslim civilization from the indigenous Hindu civilization were, according to him so fundamental and so many that the two people appeared practically opposites, . . . 'we believe in nothing in which they believe and vice-versa'³ and 'if ever a custom of theirs resembles one of ours, it has certainly just the opposite meaning'.⁴

Added to the inherent difficulties of mutual comprehension were the social consequences of the fierce military impact of Mahmūd of Ghazna which had ravaged the country and driven Hindu scholarship to remote religious centres.⁵ Difficult though the task was of explaining one civilization to the other in that atmosphere of hostility, al-Bīrūnī imposed upon himself the strict discipline of scientific objectivity. He tried to explain the Hindu doctrine without any effort to defend or refute it, taking every possible precaution

¹ al-'Umarī, in Quatremere, *Notices et Extraits*, xiii, 1838; Section on India in al-Qalqashandī's *Subh al-a'shā* tr. into Eng. by Otto Spies (*An Arab Account of India in the 14th Century*), Stuttgart, 1936.

² al-Bīrūnī (Sachau), ii, 246; also i, 7.

³ Ibid. i, 19.

⁴ Ibid. i, 179.

⁵ Ibid. i, 22.

to avoid polemics.¹ If there is no hostility in his attitude there is also no eclecticism which characterized the later studies of Hinduism by Abu'l Fazl and Dārā Shikoh. As the Arab intellectual tradition had become deeply involved with the study of Greek thought and response to the Greek philosophical discipline at that stage, al-Birūnī's approach to Hindu religion and sciences was comparative, detecting cultural analogies between the Greek and Hindu civilizations at various intellectual levels. His conclusion was that compared to the Greeks the Hindus could not bring sciences to classical perfection, and that the scientific theories of the Hindus 'are in a state of utter confusion, devoid of any logical order, and in the last instance always mixed up with the silly notions of the crowd'.²

Al-Birūnī's main contribution lies in his unprejudiced study of Hindu religion which did not appear to him to be mere idol-worship, as it did to most Muslims during the first 500 years of Muslim rule in India between Mahmūd of Ghazna and Akbar. He regarded the essence of Hindu religion as a form of monotheism³ and the Hindu idol-worship as merely the manifestation of the dark and ignorant passions of the crowd.⁴ He was the first to introduce the study of *Bhagavad Gīta* to the Muslim world, and the first Muslim to study the *Purāṇas* and to translate Patañjalī and Sāmkhya into a Muslim language. He was critical of the caste system, but observant of the escape possible from it in the sublime path of Vedantic mysticism.⁵ In considerable detail he outlined the principles of Hindu sciences, astronomy, geography, mathematics, and medicine. He observed that the Hindus had not worked out their astronomical notions as scientifically as the Greeks, but acknowledged piecemeal Hindu influences on Arab writers like Abū Ma'shar. He wrote on the Sanskrit language and Hindu dialects and the multiplicity of their vocabulary, and paid tribute to the boundless literature of the Hindus and their cultivation of arts.⁶

The 'Turco-Persian élite, for whom he had written the *Kitāb al-Hind*, did not derive much benefit from his researches in this field and continued to honour him as an astronomer rather than an Indologist,⁷ until Abu'l Fazl resurrected him 500 years later.

¹ al-Birūnī (Sachau), i, 7.

² Ibid. i, 7, 25.

³ Ibid. i, 27.

⁴ Ibid. i, 111-14.

⁵ Ibid. i, 98-104; ii, 137-8.

⁶ Ibid. i, 259, 325.

⁷ 'Abdullāh Yusuf, 'Alī, *Al-Birūnī's India*, IC, 1927, i, 487 n.

(iii) *Amīr Khusrāu*

In the interval of nearly 500 years between al-Bīrūnī and Akbar the Muslim attitude was generally one of indifference to the study of Hindu religion, arts or sciences, though individual sultans or intellectuals occasionally showed interest in trying to understand Jainism or the yoga or patronized translations from Sanskrit. The one outstanding figure which shows an affectionate response to the Indian environment, though hostility to Hindu religion and ritual, is that of Amīr Khusrāu, the most eminent of Persian poets in India, historian, accomplished courtier, mystic, composer of music and bilingual dilettante.

The tension which divided Amīr Khusrāu's loyalty between the esoteric and political Islam, is analogous to another set of tensions in relation to the Indian environment, an irresistible attraction to the life and landscape of India, and an implacable hostility to Hinduism and to the political and military resistance of Hindu India to the Muslim rule. This unreconciled tension can best be observed in his *'Ashiqā*, celebrating the love of the Muslim prince Khizar Khān for the Hindu princess Dewal Rānī. The poem on the one hand 'is fragrant with the smell of *kewrā*, the *karnā*, the *champak* and hundreds of sweet Indian flowers and spices, and is luminous with the bright Indian sun and the pale, cool moonlight',¹ while on the other it is specified that the India he loves is the land of the splendour of Islam, where the *sharī'a* is honoured and secure, and Hinduism has been conquered and subdued: 'The land has been saturated with the water of the sword, and the vapours of infidelity have been dispersed.'²

Amīr Khusrāu is perhaps the first Indian Muslim to show an assertive pride in his Indian origin. He came from a family of Turkish descent, but his mother was probably an Indian.³ His patriotism is argued in terms of mathematical exactitudes. There are seven arguments to prove that India is the Earthly Paradise; first, that India was the country to which Adam was exiled from the Garden of Eden; second, that peacock which is a bird of Paradise is found in India; third, that the serpent also exiled from Eden came to India and made it its home; fourth, that Adam was

¹ Wahīd Mirza, *The Life and Works of Amīr Khusrāu*, Calcutta, 1935, 180.

² Amīr Khusrāu, *'Ashiqā* (Eng. tr. quoted from Elliot, III, 546).

³ Wahīd Mirza, 227.

unhappy in every other land except India; fifth, that whereas the flowers of India are fragrant, those of Persia and elsewhere are not; sixth, that the Prophet is reported to have said that the joys of this world are not for true believers but for pagans, who will enjoy heavenly bliss on earth and not in the life hereafter, therefore the paradise of India has been given to the unbelieving Hindus; and seventh, that India is a paradise because its ruler is his patron Qutb al-dīn Mubārak.¹ More mathematical exactitudes follow. There are *ten* arguments to prove the superiority of India over 'Khurāsān' (the vague Muslim homelands outside the sub-continent): India's climate is not cold like that of 'Khurāsān'; people die of cold, not of heat; in a warm climate requirements of clothes are few and living is cheap; India is evergreen while spring comes to 'Khurāsān' only for a few weeks; India's flowers have colour and scent, 'Khurāsān's' only colour; Indian flowers remain fragrant even after they fade; Khurāsānīs cannot grow bananas; on the other hand Khurāsānī fruits can be grown in India; India has a rare fruit, banana; and a rare leaf, *pān* (betel).² Reading these arguments one wonders how far Khusrau is serious. They occur in *Nuh Sipihr* which was a command performance, written for Qutb al-dīn Mubārak whose favourite Khusrau Khān was a convert from Hinduism, and all-powerful at the court. Perhaps it was politic and fashionable at that juncture to praise India.

And yet there is genuine absorption of Indian environmental beauty in the creative activity of Khusrau. He praises Delhi, for its mosques, its ravishing Hindu beauties, its splendour and scholarship in which 'it surpassed Bukhārā and Khwārizm' and even Baghdad 'slashed in two halves by the sword of the Tigris', and because it is the capital of his patron.³ He takes pleasure in writing sensually of India's fauna and flora in contradiction to the tradition of Indo-Persian poetry. In his poetic diction, especially in '*Ashiqā*', he blends Hindi words musically and harmoniously. And yet he uses them sparingly and only when they are unavoidable.⁴ For the amusement of his friends⁵ he wrote mixed Persian and Hindi (pre-Urdu) verses. These *dhu'l-lisānayn* (bi-lingual) quatrains⁶ tail off in *jeux d'esprit* which could be read with *double*

¹ Amīr Khusrau, *Nuh Sipihr*, ed. by Wahīd Mirza, Calcutta, 1950, 151-7.
² N.S., 158-161.

³ Amīr Khusrau, *Qirān al-Sa'dayn*, Lucknow, 1885, 22-29; N.S., 143-5.

⁴ Amīr Khusrau, *Dibācha-i Ghurrat al-kamāl*, B.M. Add. MS. 21, 104, fo. 172a.

⁵ Ibid. fo. 172b.

⁶ B.M. Add. MS. 25,807, fols. 439-40.

entendre as Persian or as Hindi. He pleads his ignorance of Arabic, calls himself an Indian Turk and wishes to be interrogated in Hindi so that he may answer eloquently.¹

A great deal of Hindi poetry has been attributed to him and has been traditionally accepted as his work²; but recent linguistic researches have shown that much of it, including the famous, bilingual *Khālīq Bārī*, is spurious and written in dialect forms of much later periods³; so that he only 'Hindi' poetry which can be safely regarded as his genuine work consists of the verses he himself quotes in his introduction to one of his *diwāns*, the *Ghurraṭ al-kamāl*.⁴ But he is alive to the beauty and rhythm of the Indian languages, which he thinks surpass Turkish and Persian in some respects. He observes that in learned vocabulary and complex grammatical structure Sanskrit is like Arabic, though inferior to it.⁵ There is no evidence however, that he ever studied Sanskrit. More than language the pull of music brought him closer to the soul of India, but here again, the determination of his exact contribution to the development of Indian music is difficult.

His defence of the Indian people, pagan or not pagan, against the mockery of foreigners reflects the tension between the 'Khurāsānī' and indigenous factions under the Delhi Sultanate which later came to a head under Muhammad bin Tughluq and the Bahmanids of the Deccan. 'The Khurāsānī who considers every Hindi a fool will even think a *pān* (betel) leaf of no more value than grass.'⁶ In a polemical mood he would say: 'Do not count Hindus among men for they venerate the cow, regard the crow superior to the parrot and read omens in the braying of an ass'⁷; but when it came to defending them against foreigners, he would emphasize that in rational sciences, in logic, mathematics and astronomy, the Brahmins are not inferior to the Greeks; their one short-coming is their ignorance of the Muslim religious law; their learning has remained unknown because the Muslims have not applied themselves to it, but 'I (Khusrau) have tried my hand a little at their sciences and have been able to learn something of their (Brahmins)

¹ *Dibācha*, fos. 172b-173b, 174a-175a.

² Muhammad Husain Azād, *Ab-i Hayāt*, Delhi, 1896, 65-71. *Khusrau kā Hindī kavīta*, Benares, 1921; Misra Brothers, *History of Hindi Literature*, i, 233-80.

³ Mahmūd Sherānī, *Punjab men Urdū*, Lahore, 1928, 128-43; cf. Wahīd Mirza, 231-2.

⁴ *Dibācha*, fo. 172b etc.

⁵ *N.S.*, 172-81.

⁶ *Āshīqa* (Elliot), iii, 558.

⁷ B.M. Add. MS. 25,807, fo. 437b.

secrets.¹ It is true that the Brahmins do not follow the True Faith, but in many respects the essence of their religion resembles Islam,—in monotheism, in the doctrines of existence and annihilation, and in God's power of creation.² In any case, the Hindus are superior to other non-believers like the agnostics, the atheists, the dualists, even Christians.³ Hindu idolatry is an inherited tradition, not an innovation. Again, in mathematical exactitude, he enumerates *ten* reasons to believe that the Indians are superior to other peoples: Indians learn the sciences of other countries, while other countries are ignorant of Indian sciences; Indians can speak foreign languages whereas foreigners never try to learn Indian languages; people come from all over the world to India to learn but no Brahmin has to go anywhere else to educate himself; the Arab numerical system, especially the symbol zero is of Indian origin; *Kalila wa Dimna* was originally written in India; chess was invented in India; these three arts, the moral fable, mathematics and the chess are India's contribution to universal civilization; Indian music is warm and moving and difficult to master; this music charms animals (a popular Hindu belief) as well as human beings; and finally, no other land can boast a poet like Khusrau.⁴ Hindu rites of *sati* in which the woman burns herself to death for the man she has loved, and *jawhar* in which a man dies for the sake of his master or his idol, are no doubt magical and superstitious, nevertheless they are heroic.⁵

After Khusrau there followed centuries of mutual cultural distaste and indifference.

¹ N.S., 161-3.

⁴ N.S., 166-72.

² N.S., 163-4.

⁵ N.S., 194-5.

³ N.S., 165-6.

IV

SŪFISM AND HINDU MYSTICISM

IN comparing Sūfism with the systems of Hindu mysticism and in explaining the general trend of exclusiveness of Sūfism in India from Hindu mystical schools, with which it had so much in common, and in outlining the merely occasional, more negative than positive contact of the two mystical systems on the Indian soil, one has to realize how misleading can be the theories of Renan, Reitzenstein, Blochet, and Browne, of the 'Aryan' origin of mysticism, or those of Jones, Tholuk, Kremer, Goldziher, Horten, and more recently Zaehner over-emphasizing, on the basis of analogy and conjecture and fragmentary evidence, the Hindu-Buddhist heritage of Sūfism.¹ There is a great deal of wisdom in Arberry's view that mysticism is 'a constant and unvarying phenomenon of the universal yearning of the human spirit for personal communion with God'.² The same view has been stressed by Massignon 'Le mysticisme ne saurait donc être l'apanage exclusif d'une race, d'une langue, d'une nation, c'est un phénomène humain, d'ordre spirituel, que ces limitations physique ne sauraient borner'.³ 'Modern research', points out Nicholson, 'has proved that the origin of Sūfism cannot be traced back to a single definite cause, and has largely discredited the sweeping generalizations which represent it, for instance, as a reaction of the Aryan mind against a conquering Semitic religion, and as a product essentially of Indian or Persian thought'.⁴

Basically, Sūfism is rooted in Islam, which is its source and origin, and to which under the stimulus and challenge of alien

¹ L. Massignon *Essai sur les origines du Lexique Technique de la Mystique musulmane* Paris 1922 46 cf. R. Reitzenstein *Das iramische Erlösungsmysterium Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* Bonn 1920 E. Blochet *Le conquêt des états nestoriens de l'Asie centrale par les Schi'ites* Paris 1926 Blochet *Études sur l'esotérisme musulmane* Louvain 1910 E. G. Browne *A Literary History of Persia* London 1909 1 416-44 F. A. C. Tholuck *Sufismus* Berlin 1821 A. von Kremer, *Über die philosophischen Gedichte des Abu l 'Ala Ma'arri*, Wien 1888

² A. J. Arberry *Sufism* London 1950 11 cf. R. C. Zaehner, *Hindu and Muslim Mysticism* London 1960 4-5

³ Massignon 46

⁴ R. A. Nicholson *The Mystics of Islam* London 1914 8

philosophies and heterodoxies it has desperately clung, readjusting again and again external borrowings to the kernel of Islamic faith. 'Even if Islam had been miraculously shut off from contacts with foreign religions and philosophies, some form of mysticism would have arisen within it, for the seeds were already there.'¹ The original source of Sūfism is the Qur'ān and the life of Muhammad. The Meccan *sūras* are permeated with a devotional feeling and one of Allāh's names in *Wadūd*, suggesting the relationship of love. The metaphysical terminology of the Sūfis is largely derived from the Qur'ān: in expressions like *fire* for the purity of God,² 'bird' as a symbol for the resurrection or immortality of the human soul,³ 'tree' as the symbol representing the destiny and vocation of man,⁴ or the convivial imagery of the salutation, the wine and the cup⁵ used for initiation into Sūfī orders and thence borrowed in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Urdu poetry. Derived from the Qur'ān into Sūfism, and paralleled by the Muslim dogma are the Sūfī concepts of the Divine motivation of human action, of Divine justice ('*adl*), of conciliation (*ridā*) with prescribed destiny in the teachings of Hasan al-Basrī, of the realities of *ahwāl* (mystic states) in the discussions of Dhu'l Nūn the Egyptian and al-Muhāsibī and their refutation by Junayd, of the dogma of Divine Unity as stated by mystics like Abū Hamzah, al-Kharrāz and al-Hallāj, of the modality of transporting union with the Divine as in the writings of al-Muhāsibī and Ibn Karrām, of eschatological problems such as *tawbah* (repentance) in al-Tustarī, of the distinction between '*aql* (reason) and *qalb* (mind, heart) and the *mū'min* (believer) and the '*urīf* (gnostic) in Ibn Karrām and al-Muhāsibī, and of the legal qualifications of acts including the differentiation between knowledge and cognition.⁶ Sūfī practice of *dhikr* (recitation of the name or of the attributes of God) is derived from the practice of Qur'ānic recitation (*qir'ā'a*),⁷ and probably not, as has been suggested, from Christian or Indo-Buddhist sources.⁸ Indian Sūfī tradition regarded the 'quiet recitation' (*dhikr-i khafī*) as the practice of the Prophet's companions.⁹ The 'loud recitation' (*dhikr-i jalī*) is

¹ R. A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, London, 1914, 19-20.

² Qur'ān, xxviii, 29; xxiv, 35.

³ Qur'ān, xiv, 29; xxviii, 30; xxxvi, 80.

⁴ Qur'ān, lvi, 18, 25; lxxvi, 21; Massignon, 88-89.

⁵ Massignon, 91-92.

⁶ Nicholson, 10; cf. Yusuf Husain, 'Haud al-hayāt, la version arabe de l'Amratkund', *Journal Asiatique*, ccxiii (1928), 291 ff.

⁷ Ibid. 85.

⁸ Amir Hasan Sijzi, *Fatwā'id al-fuwād*, Delhi, 1865, 127.

derived from the general practice of reciting the Qur'ān in a louder tone of voice (*raf' al-sawt*). The Sūfī proclivity to music as an aid to ecstasy and the institutions of musical assemblies (*majālīs al samā'*) can be traced to the assemblies of devout Muslims for the purpose of reciting the Qur'ān together (*majālīs al-dhikr*).¹

Sūfī asceticism is also Islamic in origin, making its first appearance among such companions of the Prophet as Abū-Dharr al-Ghifārī, Hudhayfah and 'Imrān ibn Husain. Their 'followers' (*tābi'ūn*) and 'followers of followers' (*tabi'ūn al-tābi'in*) established asceticism as a characteristic feature of religious life at Kūfa, Basrah and Medina, with an exaggerated consciousness of sin and an overwhelming dread of Divine retribution, which gave it a quietistic complexion, which in the first two centuries of Islam shows no foreign influences.²

In the third century of the *Hijra* (ninth century A.D.) Islamic civilization, its theology, philosophy and science came deeply under Hellenistic influence. The Arab absorption of Aristotelianism was channelled through the neo-Platonic commentaries of Porphyry and Proclus. The neo-Platonic influence quickened the Christian and the Islamic mystical systems in identical manner. 'About A.D. 850 (*pseudo-*) Dionysus was known from Tigris to Atlantic.'³ Dhu'l Nūn the Egyptian was steeped in neo-Platonic learning; and as Nicholson reminds us, all Muslim speculative systems which were influenced by Greek philosophy reacted powerfully upon Sūfism; such as those of the Murjites who set faith above work and emphasized Divine love, the Qadarites who affirmed and Jabrites who denied that men are responsible for their actions, the Mu'tazilites who built a theological system on the basis of reason, and the Ash'arites who formulated the metaphysical and doctrinal systems that underlie the creed of orthodox Islam.⁴

The ninth century A.D. also marks the strong impress of Christian mysticism on Sūfism. Ascetic and quietistic trends of early Sūfism were bound to accept and accentuate similar Christian elements as it came in contact with Christian mystical doctrines in North Africa and Syria. Many Gospel texts and

¹ Massignon, 85.

² Massignon, 43, 135; R. A. Nicholson, 'A Historical Enquiry concerning the Origin and Development of Sufism', *JRAS* (1906), 1, 304-5; cf. I. Goldziher, 'Materialien zur Entwickelungsgeschichte des Sufismus', *Vienna Oriental Journal*, xliii, 1, 35 ff.

³ Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, 13.

⁴ *Ibid.* 5-6

apocryphal sayings of Jesus came to be cited in Sūfī hagiologies. The wandering Muslim ascetic came in contact with the Christian anchorites. On the metaphysical plane the theory of gnosis as developed in Sūfism, suggests contacts with Christian gnostics.¹

The writings of Ma'rūf al-Karkhī (d. 815), a mystic of Persian Christian background, introduced into Sūfism a theosophical rather than a theological doctrine of the love of God as an end in itself, and an emphasis on the apprehension of Divine realities.² Dhu'l Nūn the Egyptian (d. 859), with whom the inflow of Christian mystical ideas becomes a torrential current, regarded Divine love as a mystery to be practised by the mystic initiates and to be concealed from the uninitiated mass of people.³ He established⁴ into the Sūfī mystical system the concept of spiritual 'stages' and 'stations' (*ahwāl wa maqāmāt*) through which a mystic passes during his spiritual journey. He also introduced into Sūfism magical and theurgical elements of heterodoxy and came to be regarded as a *malāmatī* (one deserving reproach).⁵

Contact with Christianity, rather than with Hinduism or Buddhism,⁶ led Sūfism from the ninth to the twelfth century in the direction of analytical emphasis on asceticism;—an emphasis which begins with Dhu'l Nūn and culminates in Ibn al-'Arabī (1164-1240). Ascetic solitude was stressed by Dhu'l Nūn.⁷ Hunger as an element of ascetic discipline was traced by Nizām al-dīn Awliyā to an (apocryphal) remark of Jesus.⁸ Ibn al-'Arabī bases the structure of Sūfī hierarchy on four elements of asceticism: first, silence (*al-samt*) which is of two kinds, silence of the tongue and of the heart, and which leads to the gnosis of God; second, solitude (*al-'uzlah*) which ensures the silence of the tongue and leads to the knowledge of the world; third, hunger (*al-ju'*) which leads to the knowledge of the real nature of Satan; and fourth, wakefulness (*al-sahar*) which can be of the eye or of the heart and which leads to the knowledge of the soul.⁹ Much of Ibn al-'Arabī's

¹ Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, 10-14; Massignon, 53.

² Nicholson, *JRAS*, 306-7.

³ Al-Qushayrī, *Risāla*, Cairo, 1948, 10, 16.

⁴ Nicholson, 309.

⁵ Farid al-dīn 'Attār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyā*, ed. R. A. Nicholson, London, Leyden, 1905-7, i, 114-15.

⁶ cf. Goldziher, *Muhammad and Islam*, New Haven, 1917, 173-4.

⁷ Shihāb al-dīn al-Suhrawardī, *Awārif al-ma'ārif*, Bibl. Nat. Paris, MS. arabe, 1332, fo. 77v.

⁸ al-Suhrawardī, fos. 119^v, 127^v; Sijzī, 117.

⁹ Muhy al-dīn Ibn al-'Arabī, *Hilyatu-l-Abdāl* (*La Parure des Abdāl*), tr. into French by M. Valsan, Paris, 1951, 12-24; also Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futuhāt al-Makkiyyah*, Cairo, 1876, chapter 73.

syncretism is of Christian origin, gathered during his travels to and fro between Spain and North Africa and his contacts with Spanish, Byzantine, and Syrian Christian mysticism.¹ Also, a direct borrowing from Christianity or its mutation in Islamic Sūfism is the concept of ascetic balance, that asceticism is moral separation from the world and detachment from one's social environment while one may still live in it,²—a concept which has interesting resemblance with the moderation introduced in asceticism in the teachings of the *Bhagvad Gīta* in contrast to the ascetic excesses of yoga.³

Sūfism seems to have come into contact with Hindu and Buddhist mystical ideas at a later stage, and after most of its principal features had been developed either in its original Islamic tradition or by the infiltration of neo-Platonic and Christian elements. Early translation from Sanskrit into Arabic under the 'Abbāsids do not seem to have included any works of Hindu mysticism. The earliest contacts between Sūfism and Buddhism took place in the north-west Persian and Central Asian marches of the caliphate. Goldziher notices analogies between the 'noble path' of the Buddhists and mystic 'path' (*ṭarīqa*) of the Sūfīs, between the Sūfī 'concentration' (*murāqaba*) and the Buddhist *dhyāna*.⁴ The Sūfī robe, regarded by the Sūfīs themselves as a heritage from the practice of the Prophet, is regarded by Goldziher as a borrowing of Buddhist and by Nicholson of Christian origin.⁵ Goldziher also regards the Sūfī interpretation of Divine Unity (*tawhīd*) as 'fundamentally different from' the Islamic monotheistic conception of God, and as borrowed from Indian theosophy.⁶

The conceptions of Divine Unity and *fanā* (annihilation) which inexplicably appear first in the utterances of Abū Yazīd of Bistām (d. 848), a mystic of heterodox views and of Zoroastrian ancestry, have been explained as of Upanishadic and Vedāntic origin,⁷

¹ Miguel Asín Palacios, 'El Místico Murciano Abenarabí', *Boletín de la Academia de la Historia*, Madrid, 1925-8, III, 2.

² Shams al-dīn Ibrāhīm Abṛkūhī, *Maṣma' al-Bahrayn*, Bibl. Nat. MS. Pers. 122, 461-2; E. Blochet, *Études*, 60-78.

³ S. N. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, London, 1932-40, II, 447-8.

⁴ Goldziher, 175.

⁵ al-Huywīrī, *Kashf al-mahyūb*, tr. into English by R. A. Nicholson, London, 1936, 45; Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, 10, Goldziher, 176.

⁶ Goldziher, 176.

⁷ Goldziher, 174-5; Nicholson, 17; Max Herten, *Indische Strömungen in der islamischen Mystik*, Heidelberg, 1927, I, 17-25; also Herten, contribution in *Festschrift Jacoby*, Bonn, 1926, 397-405; Zaehner, 86-109.

transmitted to him by his teacher Abū 'Alī Sindī, a mysterious person generally supposed to have come from Sindh (the valley of Indus), but possibly from 'Sind' a village in Khurasan much nearer home to Bistām.¹ He taught Abū Yazīd al-Bistāmī the doctrine of Divine Unity (*tawhīd*) and 'ultimate truths' (*haqā'iq*), while Abū Yazīd instructed him in the 'obligatory duties of Islam'² or as interpreted by Massignon, precepts of Hanafī law.³ A very elaborate hypothesis has recently been put forward by Zaehner, suggesting that since Abū 'Alī Sindī had to be taught the 'obligatory duties' of Islam, he must have been a convert from Hinduism, and is likely to have brought with him the commonplace Upanishadic view of the mystic's self-identification with God from his native Sind at a time when Śaṅkarācārya had just systematized Vedānta.⁴ Zaehner's argument rests on a few verbal parallels between Abū Yazīd's utterances and similar expressions in Upanishadic texts,⁵ though he concedes that Abū Yazīd 'may have been quite ignorant of the origin of those outrageous theories he made so thoroughly his own'. While the speculative theory of Upanishadic echoes is as interesting a hypothesis as any other, for or against, Zaehner seems to have gone too far in suggesting Śaṅkarācārya's influence on Abū Yazīd, considering that both were contemporaries and that it was most unlikely that Śaṅkara's ideas could have travelled from south India, through Muslim Sind to an obscure town in Khurasan in so short an interval of time. On the other hand one is inclined to share the scepticism of Arberry: 'Considering . . . that the only certain information we have about Abū 'Alī al-Sindī is Abū Yazīd's reported saying that he taught him "the Divine Unity and the Realities", it seems hazardous in the extreme to construct an elaborate theory of Vedānta origins for al-Bistāmī's mystical formation upon so slender a clue.'⁶

The doctrine of *fanā* (annihilation), even if derived from Indo-Buddhist sources, cannot be completely identified with *nirvāṇa*.⁷ Both terms imply the passing away of individuality, but while

¹ al-Sama'ānī, *Kitāb al-ansāb*, fo. 313b; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, Cairo, 1906, iii, 152; cf. A. J. Arberry, *Revelation and Reason in Islam*, London, 1957, 90, quoting Yaqut, iii, 151; H. Ritter in *El*, i, 162.

² Abū Nasr al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-Luma' fi'l tasawwuf*, ed. R. A. Nicholson, Leyden/London, 1914, 177.

³ Massignon, 243.

⁴ Zaehner, 94-95.

⁵ *Ibid.* 94-100.

⁶ Arberry, *op. cit.* 90-91, Also, *idem*, 'Bistāmiana', *BSOAS*, xxv (1962), 28-37.

⁷ Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, 16-18, 149; Nicholson, *JRAS*, 330.

nirvāṇa is purely negative, *fanā*, is accompanied by *baqā*, everlasting life in God. The rapture of the Sūfī who has lost himself in ecstatic contemplation of divine beauty is entirely opposed to the passionless serenity of the *Arahat*.¹ In any case, with the exception of Abū Yazīd and Abū Sa'īd al-Kharrāz, the trend of ninth-century Sūfism is to keep the doctrine of *fanā* in the background and to avoid the language of pantheism.²

Mansūr al-Hallāj visited Sind,³ but it is very doubtful whether his doctrine of the infusion of the Divine into the human soul, which resembles the Hindu doctrine of the illumination of *buddhī* by *Purusha*,⁴ is anything but an unconnected, though analogical mystical development. Similarly, Massignon regards the conjectures of Horten⁵ about the Hindu origins of the scepticism of some of the *mutakallimūn* as baseless, and the theories of Margoliouth⁶ and Kremer⁷ regarding the conversion of Abū'l 'Alā al-Ma'arri to Hinduism as unverified⁸; though it may be admitted that al-Ma'arri's asceticism has striking resemblances with Buddhist doctrines.⁹ The resemblance between the renunciation of a princely life by Buddha and by Ibrāhīm ibn Adham in Sūfī hagiographical literature, regarded by Goldziher as a Buddhist 'motif' borrowed into Sūfism, is analysed by Zaehner as merely circumstantial and superficial, since Buddha's quest for enlightenment was a reaction to the grim realities of life and of human misery whereas Ibrāhīm ibn Adham's renunciation was in answer to the call of God, who according to the Muslim belief always takes the initiative in calling man to himself; in the case of these two 'the actual motive of renouncing the world could scarcely be more different'.¹⁰

At a later date in Transoxiana the impact of Buddhist ideas on Sūfism was considerable. Zaehner has traced Abū Yazīd's imagery of oceans and rivers¹¹ to Buddhist sources like *Udānavarga*. This may or may not have been the case; but certain Sūfī exercises like *habs-i dam* (holding back of breath) seem to have been derived

¹ Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, 16.

² Nicholson, *JRAS*, 328.

³ L. Massignon, Introduction to al-Hallāj's *Kitāb al-tawāsūt*, v.

⁴ Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on Hindu Culture*, Allahabad, 1936, 71.

⁵ Max Horten, *Philosophische Systeme*, Bonn, 1912, 177, 274.

⁶ *Letters*, 1898. ⁷ Kremer, *op. cit.*; also his *Kulturgeschichte des Islams*.

⁸ Massignon, *Essai*, 65.

⁹ H. Baerlein, *Abul 'Alā the Syrian*, 19.

¹⁰ Zaehner, 22.

¹¹ al-Sahlaḥī, *al-Nūr min kalamāt Abī Tayfūr*, ed. A. Badawī, Cairo, 1949, 154; Zaehner, 101-2. cf. Arberry, 'Bistāmiana'.

through Buddhist channels from yogic *prāṇayama*.¹ The Sūfī concept of 'peace with all' (*sulh-i kul*) which is a dominant feature of the Indian Sūfism of later seventeenth and eighteenth century seems to have been borrowed much earlier from Mahāyāna Buddhism rather than directly from Yogic Hinduism.² Some of the *ziyarat*s or tombs or relics of the Sūfis in Central Asia are situated on the ruins of Buddhist stupas.³ Some of the old popular Buddhist beliefs and cults seem to have lingered on in Transoxian Islam. The village near Bukhara, where the leader of the Naqshbandī order, Bahā al-dīn, is buried was called *Qasr-i Hindawī* (Hindu Palace) and was a Buddhist centre of pilgrimage; later as the burial-place of the Naqshbandī saint its name was changed to *Qasr-i 'Arifīn* (Palace of the gnostics).⁴ The Naqshbandī order's practice of *tasawwur-i shaykh*, or concentration on the mental image of the preceptor in the early stages of the initiate's education, seems also to have been a borrowing from Buddhism, traceable ultimately to post-Vedic substitution-meditation in early Hinduism.⁵ Balkh, which had been a Buddhist monastic centre in Central Asia, later became the home of a number of eminent Sūfis. The use of rosary is either a Christian or an Indo-Buddhist borrowing. On a higher plane Buddhist ascetic meditation and intellectual abstraction left their mark on Sūfism. But, as Nicholson reminds us 'the features which the two systems have in common only accentuate the fundamental difference between them. In spirit they are poles apart. The Buddhist moralizes himself; the Sūfī becomes moral only through knowing and loving God'.⁶

In addition to the actual elements of borrowings from Indian sources into Sūfism there are parallelisms in the two mystical systems which might have been connected, partly connected or unconnected. Al-Bīrūnī noticed the identity of the views of the Hindus, the Greeks and the Muslim Sūfis on the 'first causes'; pantheistic trends in heterodox Sūfism which resembled similar Hindu trends; and the doctrine of metempsychosis as believed in by the Sūfis. He points out resemblances between the views expressed in Sāmkhya and those of the Sūfis regarding their allegorical concept of paradise; between the Hindu doctrine of *moksha*

¹ Kremer, *Kulturgeschichte*, 49; Goldziher, 177; Tara Chand, 82.

² cf. Dasgupta, *Hindu Mysticism*, New York, 1959, 74.

³ Aurel Stein, *Innermost Asia*, ii, 866.

⁴ Barthold, *Vostocnye Zapiski*, Leningrad, 1927, 19.

⁵ cf. Dasgupta, *op. cit.* 20.

⁶ Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, 16-17.

(liberation) and Muslim and Christian mystical parallels, and between the ontological monism of Abū Yazīd and similar doctrines in Patañjali.¹

One is struck by the apparently unconnected resemblances in such animistic remarks of Ibn al-‘Arabī as when he regards every worshipped object as a manifestation of God, ‘in spite of its name of a stone or a tree or an animal or a man or an angel’ and the underlying essence of Hindu polytheism²; or Ibn al-‘Arabī’s symbolization of sexual and profane love as a stage leading towards love divine,³ and the same philosophical concept underlying the practices of Hindu Krishna and Śakti cults, which derive from such scriptural premises as the Upanishadic comparison of the bliss of Brahman with unconscious sleep in the arms of a beloved woman.⁴

Apparently unconnected parallels of the doctrines of the Upanishads⁵ are found in al-Ghazzālī’s distinction between the worldly and the spiritual, in al-Hujwīrī’s differentiation between human and divine knowledge, and the doctrine of the descent of the Absolute (*tanzīl*) found in some Sūfis.⁶ Madhva (1197–1276) developed in Hindu mysticism a doctrine of phenomenological monism which has striking resemblances with the development of the same doctrine in Indian Sūfism in the seventeenth century by Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī by a process of semi-theological dialectics, apparently without any influence, or even knowledge of the similar speculations of Madhva. In fact the resemblance between the two ends with Madhva’s denial that God is the material cause of the world.

Equally striking is the running parallelism between the ‘lexique technique’ of Hindu and Muslim mysticism, which tempted Dārā Shikoh,⁷ and more recently Horten,⁸ to confound one with the other. In both mystical systems monism has a similar conceptual terminology: the Reality is Absolute (*mutlaq*; *param*), it is the

¹ al-Bīrūnī, *Kitāb al-Hind* (Sachau), I, 33, 44, 69, 87–88.

² Ibn al-‘Arabī, *al-Fusūs al-hikam*, Eng synoptical translation by Khaja Khan, Madras, 1928, 149.

³ Ibn al-‘Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah*, 445–50, 462–78.

⁴ *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad*, II, 3, 21; Dasgupta, 146–7.

⁵ Rāmānuja, *Bhāṣya*, II, 3, 40, 41; Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, III, 159.

⁶ ‘Iṭarī Chand, ‘Dārā Shikoh and the Upanishads’, *IC*, xvii, 378–96; W. Hustin, *Conception of Divinity in Islam and the Upanishads*, Calcutta, 1939.

⁷ Dārā Shikoh, *Majma‘ al-bahrayn*, ed by Mahfuz al-Haq, Calcutta, 1929.

⁸ Horten, *Indische Strömungen*, II.

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⁶ Tara Chand, ‘Dārā Shikoh and the Upanishads’, *IC*, xvii 378–96; W. Husain, *Conception of Divinity in Islam and the Upanishads*, Calcutta, 1939.

⁷ Dārā Shikoh, *Majma’ al-bahrayn*, ed. by Mahfuz al-Haq, Calcutta, 1929.

⁸ Horten, *Indische Strömungen*, ii.

truth of truths (*haqīqat al-haqā'iq: satyasya satyam*) and so on.¹ It is also interesting that mystical heterodoxies in Hinduism and in Islam, the *pāśupatas* and the *malāmīs* alike, court popular contempt by reproachable or indecent behaviour.

On the other hand there are elements in Hindu religion and in various schools of Hindu mysticism which are the very antithesis of Sūfism which is, after all, firmly rooted in Islam. Among such Hindu concepts is the very position of the Vedas, a 'conception of commands, categorical in nature and external in character without the least suggestion of any commander',² or the sacrificial nature of Vedic hymns. The Upanishadic quest of the self is fundamentally different from the quest of God of the theistic Sūfī. The stress in the *Bhagavad Gīta* and by its commentators of different schools on the performance of allotted caste duties, its affirmation of the doctrine of *karma*, and its anthropomorphic belief in the birth of God as man³ are all opposed to the main trend of Sūfism in Islam. Alien to it also are such elements as Rāmānuja's view that Īśvara grants emancipation from worldly bonds to those who acquire the true knowledge from the study of Hindu scriptures (*śāstras*),⁴ or his view that Īśvara cannot be proved by inference, but is to be admitted on the authority of sacred Hindu texts,⁵ or his acceptance of the Hindu scriptural authority on the division of human society into castes.⁶ The doctrine of *karma* which dominates the entire Hindu mysticism, is even in its Bhakti form in Rāmānuja and Nimbārka, the very opposite of the Sūfī world-view.

It has been suggested that some of the parallelisms between Hindu and Muslim Mysticism might be explained by direct or indirect Muslim influence on the Hindu centres of Mystical learning, where Vedānta was developed and systematized by Śāṅkarācārya (d. 820) and classical Bhakti by Rāmānuja (d. 1137).⁷ Christian or Muslim influence on the Tamil hymns of the *Siddhas* (the Perfect Ones) has been suggested.⁸ Barth points out, it was precisely in those parts of the Deccan where early Arab travellers had established their colonies that from the ninth to the twelfth century, those great religious movements took their rise which are connected with

¹ Tara Chand, 405, 408.

² Dasgupta, *Hindu Mysticism*, 8.

³ Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, ii, 438, 520.

⁴ Rāmānuja, *Vedārth-saṁgraha*, 149; Dasgupta, iii, 160-1.

⁵ Dasgupta, iii, 158.

⁶ Ibid. ii, 441.

⁷ Tara Chand, 106-7.

⁸ R. Caldwell, *A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages* (2nd edn.), Introduction, 127-46; E. C. Grover, *The Folksongs of Southern India*, Madras, 1871; A. Barth, *The Religions of India*, London, 1921, 209-11.

the names of 'Çankara, Rāmānuja, Anandatīrtha, "and Bāsava", out of which the majority of the historical sects came, and to which Hindustan presents nothing analogous till a much later period'.¹ But it would be dangerous to overestimate the possibility of Christian or Muslim influence on the development of Hindu theology or mysticism during this period. 'To neither of these', continues Barth, 'do we feel inclined to ascribe an influence of any significance on Hindu theology, which appears to us sufficiently accounted for by reference to its own sources; but it is very possible that indirectly, and merely as it were by their presence, they contributed in some degree towards the budding and bursting forth of those great religious reforms which, in the absence of doctrines altogether new, introduced into Hinduism a new organization and a new spirit, and had all this common characteristic that they developed very quickly under the guidance of an acknowledged head, and rested on authority akin to that of a prophet or an Imam.'² Both Barth and Tara Chand hold the view that under the historical circumstances that prevailed in the Deccan during those centuries Muslim rather than Christian influence seems more probable.

Another Hindu historian Bhattacharjee suggests that though the exact extent of Christian or Muslim influence on Hinduism is difficult to assess, there is definitely a 'theistic urge' in Hindu religion in the period of early Muslim settlements in the Deccan 'which finds powerful expression in many Vedantic writers who came after Śankarā'.³ On the other hand, Majumdar rejects the theory of any possible influence of Islam on him, and indeed on any Hindu divine or mystic before the thirteenth century.⁴

A contemporary of Rāmānuja was the Bohra missionary 'Abdullāh, who converted large numbers of Hindus to Islam in Gujarat and Malabar⁵; and possible influences of Ismā'īlī mysticism on Rāmānuja have been suggested.⁶ In recognizing the plurality of souls Rāmānuja stands much closer to Islamic orthodoxy than to earlier Hindu religious thinkers. His interpretation of Brahman as the sum total of individual souls is also paralleled in Sūfī concepts and their later treatment by al-Ghazzālī, with this

¹ Barth, 211.

² Ibid. loc. cit.

³ U. N. Bhattacharjee in Majumdar (ed.), *The Struggle for Power*, 459.

⁴ Majumdar in *The Delhi Sultanate*, 552.

⁵ R. E. Enthoven, *Tribes and Castes of Bombay*, III, 72.

⁶ Yusuf Husain, *Mediaeval Indian Culture*, London, 1959, 47.

difference that the Muslim divine believes in souls as created even if they are not subject to space and time.¹ The emphasis on the exaltation of the spiritual teacher, though ultimately traceable to Hindu origin, received a new significance under Muslim influence. The Mahānubhāva, a non-idolatrous Krishna sect founded by Cakrādharaśwāmī (d. 1272) shows the influence of Sūfis who settled near Daulatabad about that time.²

It would be as erroneous to over-rate the Muslim influences on Vedānta and the Classical Bhakti as to over-emphasize the elements borrowed in Sūfism, directly or indirectly from Hindu-Buddhist mystical systems. All the essentials of the mystical thought of Śaṅkarācārya and Rāmānuja and of their successors are of purely Hindu origin. All that Islam and/or Christianity could have done was to offer an atmosphere of spiritual stimulus.

In so far as Sūfism is concerned, even if the theory of Abū Yazīd's conscious or unconscious assimilation of Upanishadic ideas is accepted, these ideas were completely re-interpreted, explained away or reconciled to Islamic orthodoxy by Junayd Baghdādī.

The Islamic principle of Divine Unity was firmly re-emphasized in Sūfism in the twelfth century by al-Ghazzālī, 'Abd al-Qādir Jilānī and Shihāb al-dīn Suhrawardī. Even earlier the doctrine of *fanā* which was so close to Vedānta in Abū Yazīd, had been revolutionized by Junayd for whom it did not mean total extinction but a new life, 'not indeed as God, but in and through God'; *fanā* being the death in one's self to live in God.³ The efforts of al-Muhāsibī and Junayd had succeeded in bridging the gap between the religious law (*sharī'a*) and the mystic path (*tarīqa*) so narrowly that later al-Kalābadhī and al-Qushayrī could argue that Sūfism 'so far from conflicting with the now widely accepted tenets of Ash'ari Islam actually confirmed them'.⁴ The integration of Sūfism with orthodoxy was established by al-Ghazzālī's recognition of mystic experience as a valid, even a superior proof of the existence of God.⁵ A further reconciliation of Sūfism with formal Islam was

¹ al-Ghazzālī, *al-Jawāhir al-ghawālī*, ed. M. Sābrī, Cairo, 1934, 23; al-Ghazzālī, *Kimīya-i Sa'ādat*, Tehran, 1319, Shamsī, i, 12; Zaehner, 16.

² K. M. Munshi, Foreword to Majumdar (ed.), *Struggle for Empire*, xviii.

³ al-Qushayrī, 126; al-Sarrāj, 381; al-Sahajī, 68; Massignon, 75; Zaehner, 140-1.

⁴ Arberry, *Revelation and Reason*, 108.

⁵ al-Ghazzālī, *al-Jawāhir al-ghawālī*, 132-3; al-Ghazzālī, *Mizān al-'amal*, Cairo, 1924, 23-24.

achieved in the doctrines of al-Hallāj, Ibn al-‘Arabī and ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Jīlī, identifying the pre-eternal essence of Muhammad (*al-haqīqat al-Muhammadiyyah*) with the ‘First Intelligence of the Philosophers’.¹

In India, because of the challenge and the risk of disintegration into Hindu mysticism, Sūfism took special care to resolve its differences with orthodoxy. In Islamic religious history the tension between the religious assertion of the transcendence of God and the mystical aspiration for His immanence was perhaps nowhere more thoroughly resolved to a middle of the road position than in India where Islam was propagated mainly by Sūfīs with a firm emphasis on the observance of the tenets of the *sharī‘a*.

The integration of religious law and mysticism in India dates back to the advent of Sūfism itself in the sub-continent in the eleventh century. Al-Hujwīrī equates the three categories of spiritual (esoteric) knowledge, that of the essence and unity of God, of the attributes of God, and of the actions and wisdom of God with the three categories of the knowledge of the *sharī‘a*, the Qur’ān, the *sunnaḥ* and the *ijma‘* (consensus). ‘The exoteric aspect of Truth without the esoteric is hypocrisy, and the esoteric without the exoteric is heresy. So with regard to the Law mere formality is defective, while mere spirituality is vain.’²

According to al-Hujwīrī men are divided into three categories: the wordly (*ahl al-dunyā*), the religious (*ahl al-dīn*) and the ‘special ones’ (*ahl al-khusūsiyyat*), i.e. mystics and saints. The last category concerns itself with the quest of the knowledge of God. Divine Unity is a mystery revealed by God to his servants, and it can not be expressed or written in words. Any attempt to define it would amount to polytheism.³ The Sūfī leads a life of poverty which has a form (*rasm*), that of destitution and indigence, and an essence which is free choice. He who attains the essence of poverty withdraws from the created things to complete annihilation (*fanā*), and concentrating on God alone reaches out to the fullness of eternal life. The lover of God is ‘he that is dead (*fānī*), in his own attributes and living in the attributes of his Beloved’.⁴ Heretical is the heterodox Sūfī view that human personality could be merged and extinguished in the Being of God. Defending al-Hallāj from

¹ R. A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, 110-12, 149-61; Arberry, *op. cit.* 111.

² al-Hujwīrī, 14.

³ *Ibid* 285

⁴ *Ibid.* 20, 32

the charge of magic-craft, al-Hujwīrī considers his doctrines unsound and the views of Hulūliyah sects (believing in Divine incarnation) as tantamount to apostasy.

The views of al-Hujwīrī on the *malāmīs*, who were to make their appearance later in heterodox Indian Sūfism and to form the main bridge of mystic syncretism on the Muslim side, are significant. He distinguishes between three kinds of *malāma* (blame): that courted in following the right path; by intentional actions; or due to the abandonment of religious law. Of these the first category includes the *ahl al-haqq* (followers of truth), whose love of God submits them to vulgar blame. The second, follows 'mere ostentation, which is mere hypocrisy'. The third category which shirks religious law, cannot be considered permissible under any circumstances.¹

Al-Hujwīrī's emphasis on the prescribed duties of religious law is primary theological. They are an end in themselves and not a means to an esoteric end.² Thoroughly integrating the hagiological history of Sūfism with Sunnī Islam, he reiterates the view that Abū Bakr was the first leader of the Sūfī shaykhs who adopted the discipline of contemplative life (*mushāhada*), 'Umar of those who believed in purgative life (*mujāhada*), 'Uthmān represented the position of friendship with God (*khulla*), and 'Alī whose rank is very high in the Sūfī tradition explained the principles of divine truth (*haqīqa*) with exceeding subtlety.³

The Sūfī orders that transplanted their hospices in India in the wake of the Ghūrid conquest continued the principle of the same close correspondence between the esoteric and exoteric elements of religious life. In the Suhrawardiyah order the surest means of approach to the unique Being of God is the prescribed prayer (*salāt*) which unites the created with the Creator.⁴ This order believes in the same doctrine of legal purity as that enjoined in the orthodox Islam.⁵ And Muhammad is considered as the sum total of all the requirements of exoteric as well as esoteric disciplines.⁶

The bulk of Chishtī doctrine was developed in India, and recorded in a series of hagiological dicta. According to Mu'īn al-dīn Chishtī (1142-93), the founder of this order in India, Sūfism is neither a knowledge nor a form (*rasm*); it is a particular ethical

¹ al-Hujwīrī, 62-67.

² Ibid. 301.

³ Ibid. 31-32, 70-87.

⁴ al-Suhrawardī, fols. 108v, 113v.

⁵ Blochet, 30.

⁶ al-Suhrawardī, 102r.

discipline (*akhilāq*) of the mystics. The first stage of this discipline is strict conformity to the *sharī'a*, leading to the second stage, that of mystic path (*ṭarīqa*), which in turn leads to a third stage, that of gnosis (*ma'rifa*), leading finally to the fourth stage, *ḥaqīqa* (Truth).¹ From the very beginning the Chishtī order emphasized the importance of *ḥadīth*, which was regarded by Sūfī Hamīd al-dīn Nāgorī, a disciple of Mu'in al-dīn, as having precedence over mystical cognition.² The popularity of the writings of al-Ghazzālī and Najm al-dīn Rāzī during the reign of Iltutmish (1211-36) reinforced these orthodox trends. Najm al-dīn Rāzī, who had some acquaintance with alien systems of mysticism and who erroneously regarded 'Brahmanical mysticism' as dualistic, considered Islamic mysticism superior to other varieties because of its primarily moral and theological emphasis.³ Nizām al-dīn Awliyā was an erudite scholar of *ḥadīth*, and throughout his dicta in the *Fawā'id al-fuwād*, mysticism and orthodoxy are interdependently interwoven. The concept of 'Sūfī hierarchy' which had a powerful impact on the Chishtī order had been fully reconciled to the religious faith, for a *qutb* could achieve his great position only after having passed through the *maqāmāt* (stations) of various prophets and after having attained the rank of being one of the 'chosen ones of Muhammad' (*khawāss-i Muḥammadi*).⁴

In other Sūfī orders in India in the fourteenth century one finds the same emphasis on religious law, at a time when elements of yogic asceticism were infiltrating in the practices of individual Sūfis. Sayyid 'Alī Hamdānī subordinates mystic discipline completely to the service of the theological. He was also a missionary who converted a large number of Hindus to Islam in Kashmir, and his writings have a strong anti-Hindu bias. His more eclectic contemporary Ashraf Jahāngīr Simnānī, must have imbibed some of his uncompromising orthodoxy during their extensive travels together.⁵ Jalāl al-dīn Bukhārī (1307-83) stresses the need of the observation of the *ṣunnah* by the mystic, probably under the influence of 'Abdullāh Yāfi'i and other Arab divines whom he met in the Hijāz.⁶

¹ Qutb al-dīn Bakhtiyār Kākī, *Dalīl al-'Arifīn* (Delhi edn.), 47 ff.

² Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, *Tārīkh-i Mashā'ikh-i Chisht*, Delhi, 1953, 148-9.

³ Najm al-dīn Rāzī, *Mīrās al-'ibād*, ed. by H. H. Ni'amatallahī, Tehran, 1312, Shamsī, 162.

⁴ Abrikūhī, 507.

⁵ 'Abdul Haqq Dehlavī, *Akhbār al-akhbār*, I.O. Pers. MS. 1450, fos. 152a-b.

⁶ Sabāh al-dīn 'Abdul Rahmān, *Bazm-i Sūfiya*, A'zamgarh, 1949, 404-6.

Due to what Butterfield would describe as the 'whig' conception of history, the role of Sūfis in India has been over-estimated and over-idealized as eclectic and as a bridge between Hinduism and Islam. Majumdar is much nearer the truth in pointing out that the role of both Hindu mysticism and Sūfism and their interaction in the culture of medieval India have often been exaggerated beyond all proportion.¹ In fact the relationship between Sūfism and Hindu mysticism is multi-positional and ranges from polemical hostility through missionary zeal to tolerant co-existence.

In Indian Sūfism anti-Hindu polemics began with Mu'in al-dīn Chishtī.² Early Sūfis in the Punjab and early Chishtīs devoted themselves to the task of conversion on a large scale. Missionary activity slowed down under Nizām al-dīn Awliyā, not because of any new concept of eclecticism, but because he held that the Hindus were generally excluded from grace and could not be easily converted to Islam, unless they had the opportunity to be in the company of a Muslim saint for some considerable time.³ On the Mu'tazilite doctrine that unbelievers as well as those who have committed deadly sins will be perpetually damned in the hereafter, Nizām al-dīn's view was that it was correct only in relation to the unbelievers who believe the objects of their worship to be deities; and since this belief in image-deities continues for their entire lifetime, so does negatively their unbelief in God, meriting for them eternal damnation. The sinners on the other hand, can desist from sinning and be forgiven.⁴ He did not agree with the Ash'arite position that under certain conditions an unbeliever can enter Paradise.⁵

In the performance of miracles the Sūfī hagiographical tradition records cases of 'competitive spirituality' with Hindu yogīs. Miracles like flying in the air in competition with a Hindu yogī were attributed to Safī al-dīn Kāzīrūnī. Miracles of proselytization were credited to Jalāl al-dīn Bukhārī, and contests of spiritual strength between Sūfis like Muhammadi Bilgrāmī and Hindu yogīs were recorded as late as the eighteenth century.⁶

On the other hand, as missionaries of Islam and as liberal

¹ Majumdar in *Delhi Sultanate*, 555; cf. A. Wali, 'Hinduism according to Muslim Sūfis', *JASB*, 1923, xi, 237-52.

² Hamid ibn Fazl-Allāh Jamālī, *Siyar al-'Arifin*, I.O. Pers. MS. 1313, fo. 17a.

³ Amīr Hasan Sijzi, 10.

⁴ Ibid. 41.

⁵ Ibid. 63.

⁶ Ibid. 29-30; Jamālī, fos. 219a-221a; Ghulām 'Alī Azād Bilgrāmī, *Ma'āthir al-karām*, I.O. Pers. MS. 1320, fo. 57a.

leaders of its spirituality, the Sūfis were the first among the Muslim intellectual élite to come in contact with the Hindu masses, and thus indirectly with individual features of Hindu mysticism, especially the Yoga. Sayyid Husain Khangsawār, a Shī'ī disciple of Mu'in al-dīn Chishtī is one of the early Sūfis who came to be venerated by some Hindus.¹ Yogīs seem to have been attracted to the hospice of Farid al-dīn Ganj-i Shakar, where Nizām al-dīn Awliyā met one of them and was impressed by his classification of human body in two parts, the upper the seat of the spiritual, the lower that of the profane aspect of human nature; and by the yogic principle that one was required to develop truth, benevolence and kindness in the upper part and preserve chastity and purity in the lower.²

A not very uncommon feature of Indian Sūfī hagiologies is the narration of parables, borrowed or apocryphal, from Hindu religious and mystical tradition to illustrate the realities of the *tarīqa*. Nizām al-dīn Awliyā narrates the parable of a Brahmin who had lost everything, but was happy that he still had his sacred thread (*zunnār*); deducing the moral that one should not attach oneself to worldly things, and must not lose the love of God, which is the only wealth worth possessing.³ Hindu legends pointing to a Sūfī moral were also narrated by Gesūdarāz.⁴

After al-Bīrūnī the first translation of a work on Hindu mysticism by a Muslim, is that of *Amratkund*,⁵ by Rukn al-dīn Samarqandī first into Arabic, then into Persian, with the help of a Brahmin called Bhūjan, from whom he learnt Sanskrit and whom he claims to have converted to Islam during his visit to Lakhnauti in the early thirteenth century. The work is partly philosophic and partly magical. Planned translations of Hindu mystical classics did not begin however, before the reign of Akbar in the second half of the sixteenth century.

In the fourteenth century, at least one feature of the Hindu-Buddhist asceticism, that of wandering in the forests, accentuated the *wanderlust* of some Indian Sūfis. The slightly heterodox Sūfī, though an active missionary of Islam, Sharaf al-dīn Abū 'Alī (d. 1323) came to be designated a 'qalandar' presumably because of

¹ S. M. Ikram, *Ab-i Kawthar*, Lahore, 1952, 236

² Sijzi, 49.

³ Ibid. 33

⁴ Muhammad al-Husainī, *Gesūdarāz, Jawāmi' al-kalim*, B M. Or. MS. 252, fos 88b-89a, 279a-b

⁵ Yusuf Husain, *Haud al-hayāt*, 291-344

his wanderings.¹ Nasīr al-dīn 'Chirāgh' of Delhi and his disciple Gesūdarāz also began as wandering dervishes; the former was advised by his preceptor Nizām al-dīn Awliyā to live a spiritual life in towns among people.² The most striking case in this category is that of Sharf al-dīn Yahyā Mānerī who established the Firdawsiya order in India, which linked itself to the *silsilahs* going back to Junayd al-Baghdādī and Ma'rūf al-Karkhī. He chose after his wanderings a location for his religious exercises close to a spring in Magadha, sacred to the Hindus and the Buddhists, which is now commonly known as Makhdūm Kund.³ Śaivism was brought into contact with the Naqshbandī order by Lalla the poetess (Lāl Ded) of Kashmir in the fourteenth century.⁴ But in its later development in India in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Naqshbandī Sūfism developed an attitude of uncompromising opposition of Hinduism, especially so in the teachings of Khwāja Bāqī-billāh and Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as Sūfism penetrated into the masses of converts and semi-converts from Hinduism, the Bhakti movements rose as a popular Hindu counter-challenge to the proselytizing pull of Sūfī humanism. About the same time a number of minor heterodox (*bī-shar'*) sects came into being and gained some popular following, though their actual strength and their sphere of operations was very limited. These sects borrowed a number of Tantric practices and popular superstitions from the lower forms of Hinduism.⁵ In this period heterodox Sūfī *qalandars* from India introduced into other countries of Dār al-Islam the use of coffee, opium and hashish among the heterodox Sūfī orders abroad.⁶

Of the seventeen Sūfī orders prevalent in India in the sixteenth century, mentioned by Abu'l Fazl,⁷ eight, the Habībī (followers of Hasan al-Basrī), the Junaydī (pseudo-followers of Junayd al-Baghdādī), the Tūsī (followers of Najm al-dīn Kubrā), the Chishtī, the Suhrawardī, the Qādirī, the Naqshbandī, and the Firdawsi were orthodox and closely integrated with the *sharī'a*. The Karkhī and possibly the Saqatī included Jews and

¹ Sabāh al-dīn 'Abdul Rahmān, 235-6.

² Amīr Khurd, *Siyar al-awliyā*, Delhi, 1885, 238.

³ Ikram, 500.

⁴ 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, 'Social and Economic Life in Muslim India', *IC*, iv (1930), 212.

⁵ Yusuf Husain, *Medieval Indian Culture*, London, 1959, 305.

⁶ Massignon, *Essai*, 86.

⁷ Abu'l Fazl 'Allāmī, *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, (Jarrett), iii, 389-400.

Christians, but probably not the Hindus in their ranks. The Tay-fūrī followed Abū Yazīd al-Bistāmī, but there is no evidence of its having imbibed any fresh Vedāntic elements in the sub-continent. Adhamī followed Ibrāhīm ibn Adham. The founder of the Kazī-rūnī sect, Abū Ishāq ibn Shahryār (d. 1035), was a convert from Zoroastrianism.

The Chishtī order in the hagiographical account of the renunciation of a throne in favour of a spiritual life by Ashraf Jahāngīr Simnānī (d. 1405) repeats the 'renunciation motif' of Ibrāhīm ibn Adham traced, as we have seen by Goldziher to the Buddha-elect, a hypothesis rejected by Zaehner. Simnānī's own teachings emphasized religious law to such an extent that his disciples were better known as theologians than as Sūfīs.¹

The only orthodox Sūfī order which seems to have borrowed in India elements directly from Yoga, and possibly from other forms of Hindu mysticism was the Shattārī, probably linked in its origin with the Bistāmī order. The followers of the Shattārī order lived in forests like the yogīs on a frugal diet of fruits and herbs, and subjected themselves to hard physical and spiritual exercises.² This syncretic element is also discernible in its liturgical formulae. The Shattārī method of *dhikr* (liturgical repetition of the names or attributes of God) implied complete solitude and cleanliness; it began with the Muslim attestation of faith (*kalima*); but the various formulae of *dhikr* itself could be repeated in Arabic, Persian or Hindi.³ Some of the expressions of *dhikr* seem to have been borrowed directly from Hindu mysticism. For instance, the formula *o hī hī* ⁴ is reminiscent of the Upanishadic liturgy in which *hā-i* signifies wind, *i* fire, *ū* sun, and *au-ho-i* all gods.⁵ The physical exercises of the order included and specifically mentioned yogic-*āsanas* and the *samādhi*.⁶ The Shattārī mystic was enjoined to be secretive about his mystic practices to avoid the hostility of the theologians.⁷ The order gained some popularity in the Gawalior region, the home of its most famous representative Muhammad Ghauth, an ascetic held in esteem by Akbar in his youth. Muhammad Ghauth held Hindu mystics in veneration and his *Bahr al-hayāt* is the first treatise written by a Muslim in India on the practices of the yogīs.

¹ Sabāh al-dīn 'Abdul Rahmān, 465.

² Badā'ūnī, ii, 34.

³ Bahā al-dīn Shattārī, *Risāla-i Shattārīya*, I.O. Pers. MS. 2257 (Ethé 1913), fos. 6b-14b.

⁴ Ibid. 14b-15a.

⁵ *Chāndogya Upanishad*, 1, 13, 1-3; Zaehner, 24.

⁶ Bahā al-dīn Shattārī, fos. 14b-15a.

⁷ Ibid. fo. 17a.

Due to the hostility of Akbar's Shaykh al-Islam Shaykh Gadā'ī, he had to retire from the court and return to a life of asceticism.¹

From the fifteenth century onwards Sūfīs in India seem to have begun noticing a resemblance between Ibn al-'Arabī's formulation of the doctrine of ontological monism and their second hand information about the prevalence of similar doctrines in the Vedānta. But in the seventeenth century, despite the translations of Hindu classics of mysticism from Sanskrit under the patronage of Akbar and his successors one does not find any cases of specific interest of Sūfī orders, other than the Shattārī, in either a serious or a superficial study of Hindu mystical doctrines. Apart from Kabīr the only Hindu saint who finds a mention in the Sūfī hagiography of this period is Bābā Kapūr, in 'Abdul Haqq Dehlavi's *Akhhār al-akhhyār*.² A rare case is that of Ahmad (b. 1613) who under the influence of voluptuous Vaishnavite mysticism seceded from orthodox Sūfism and wrote on Hindu themes in Hindi.³ In the middle of the seventeenth century the Muslim élite sometimes equated Vedānta vaguely with Sūfism.⁴ The eclecticism of Dārā Shikoh had behind it the tolerant permission of the official Qādirī order as represented by Shaykh Muhibb-Ullāh Allāhabādī who stressed the view that the Prophet of Islam was a blessing for Muslims and non-Muslims alike.⁵ A late seventeenth-century Chishtī mystic Kalīm-Ullāh held that mystic training could be given to a Hindu even before his conversion, to attract him to Islam.⁶

All the major Sūfī orders in India, the Chishtī, the Qadirī and the Naqshbandī show a similar approach to Hinduism, which begins with hostility, passes through a phase of co-existence and culminates in tolerance and understanding. The Qadirī became perhaps the most tolerant of these in the middle of the seventeenth century under the influence of Dārā Shikoh and Princess Jahān Ārā. The Naqshbandī, so hostile to Hinduism and to any form of syncretism, became liberal in the eighteenth century in the attitude of the poet-saint Mirzā Mazhar Jān-i Jānān (1699-1780) who regarded Vedas as divinely inspired and Hindus, who had 'their revealed scriptures and prophets' like other 'people of the Book'

¹ Badāūnī, ii, 34-35, 64.

² fos. 242a-b.

³ G. A. Grierson, *Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustan*, Calcutta, 1889, 80.

⁴ Jahāngīr, *Tuzuk* (Rogers), 356; Mu'tamad Khan, *Iqbāl Nāma-i Jahāngīrī*, Calcutta, 1865, 95-96.

⁵ Ikram, *Rūd-i Kawthar*, Karachi, n.d., 196-7.

⁶ Shāh Kalīm-Ullāh Dehlavi, *Maktūbāt-i Kalīmī*, Delhi, 1883, 74.

(*ahl al-kitāb*), as monotheists. In this context he even condoned idolatry among them as a means of concentration on God.¹ Shāh Walī-Ullāh and his successors including Sayyid Ahmad Barelvī accomplished the absorption of the much-weakened Sūfī orders and thus their complete submergence in the orthodoxy, and though much of their teaching was concentrated at the elimination of syncretic borrowings from Hinduism, it is interesting that Walī-Ullāh's son and immediate successor Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz regarded Krishna among the awliyā (saints) because of the impact *Bhagvad Gīta* made on his mind.²

¹ His letter in *Kalīmāt-i Tayyabāt*, Agra, 1914; 37-40; Na'im-Ullāh, *Bashārat-i Mazhariyyah*, B.M. Or. MS. 220, fo. 11a.

² *Ikrām*, 394.

V

POPULAR SYNCRETISM

(i) *The Bhakti Movement: Its Response and Resistance to Islam*

THE Bhakti movement was initiated as a cult of love and devotion, based on the *Bhagavad Gita* and other sacred Hindu texts, by Alvār and Adiyār Brahmins of South India. There, the Vaishnavācāryas and the Śaiva Siddhānta teachers developed it into a metaphysical antithesis of Śankarācārya's idealistic formalism. The most outstanding figure among the Vaishnavācārya thinkers was that of Rāmānuja (d. 1137), who in refutation of Śankarācārya's absolute monism established the creed of Bhakti within the Vedāntic philosophy, recognizing at the same time the authority of the non-Vedic Pancarātra. According to Rāmānuja, Brahman is the Supreme Reality, the Lord of all (*Īśvara*), the Highest Person (*Purushottama*). He is perfect and unequalled in excellence. He is the Creator, Destroyer and Preserver. His creation means change from one state to another, from the causal state (*karma*) to the effective state (*kārya*). From within him emerged matter (*prakṛitī*) and soul (*jīva*). "They are both real, they do not bind *Īśvara*, but are subservient to his will and are dependent upon Him for existence."¹

The Bhakti movement travelled from south to north India where it strengthened Vaishnavism and led to the teachings of Bhakta Purāṇas, which preached monotheistic faith based on the conception of God as free, changeless, primordial and without constituents (*nirguna*).² Historically the growth of the Bhakti movement can be divided into two phases: the first, from its early development in South India to the thirteenth century; the second, from the thirteenth century to the seventeenth, when in north India it came in contact with Islam, was inspired by its monotheism and stimulated by its challenge, and developed against it a system of self-defence and self-preservation for Hindu spirituality by borrowing Islam's monotheistic egalitarianism.

¹ Tārā Chand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, Allahabad, 1936, 100-1.

² Ibid. 133-4, quoting Dutta, *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, vii, ch. x.

Rāmānanda who was the chief inspirer of the worship of Rāma in the Bhakti movement in north India towards the close of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century saw the spread of Islam through Sūfī hospices under the Khaljīs, and he seems to have come in contact with learned Muslims at Benares.¹ His followers can be grouped into two schools. The first, strictly orthodox, accepted the authority of the Vedas. It is represented by Nābhādāsa (the author of *Bhaktamālā*) and Tulsīdās, who exalted the puritanical cult of Rāma as an antithesis to the other Bhakti doctrine, the erotico-mystical cult of Krishna preached by Nimbārka (twelfth century), Vallabhacārya (fifteenth century) and Caitānya (1485-1533). This orthodox school of the followers of Rāmānanda is firmly situated within Hinduism, though it seems to have received some stimulus from Islam, mainly in its puritanical challenge to the orgiastic sensuality of the Śaktī and Krishna cults.² The second school which is represented by Kabīr and his followers is more eclectic; it is sceptic in its approach to the Vedas and to the Hindu religious ritual, extending in its eclecticism the same principle of scepticism and rejection of the scripture and ritual of Islam, with which it seeks to establish a spiritual *modus vivendi*, though based on the unswerving homage and worship as Rāma of the supreme God.

From the thirteenth century onwards Sūfī missionaries who spread all over India met with considerable success among the lower castes of the Hindus, for whom conversion to Islam meant release from the humiliating disadvantages of belonging to an inferior social group. Brahmanical formalism could hardly rise to the occasion to meet this challenge of conversion to Islam in the lower strata of Hindu society. But in the sources of the Bhakti movement there was already a suggestion of the possibility of transcending the caste system. According to *Bhagavad Gīta* 'in the sight of God all devotees are equal whether they are born in sin or not, and to whatever caste or sect they may belong'.³ Al-Birūnī has quoted Vāsūdeva on the question of *mukti* (salvation): 'In the judgement of the intelligent man, the Brahman and the Candāla are equal, the friend and the foe, the faithful and the deceitful, nay

¹ M. A. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, Oxford 1909, iv, 102.

² Yusuf Husain, 'The Influence of Islam on the Cult of Bhakti in Medieval India', *IC*, vii (1933), 650-1, 659; Yusuf Husain, *L'Inde Mystique au Moyen Age*, Paris, 1929, 48-49.

³ *Bhagavad Gīta*, ix, 32.

even the serpent and the weasel. If to the eyes of intelligence all things are equal, to ignorance they appear as separated and different.¹ Tara Chand has suggested that the egalitarianism of Mahāyāna Buddhism, its spiritual enfranchisement of women and the Sūdras, its use of vernacular languages, and its organization of monastic orders are all original Bhakti influences.² Thus, most of the ideas underlying all varieties of the Bhakti movement such as religion of love, monotheism, revolt against the formalism of orthodoxy and the basic principles of egalitarianism are of Hindu origin. They were brought into relief by Muslim example, stimulus and challenge. It is possible that the veneration of the gurū (teacher) in the Bhakti movement, though also of Hindu origin, may have received further emphasis by the example of the Sūfis; while the repetition of the 'Name', especially of Rāma, in Bhakti liturgy may have been inspired directly by the Sūfī practice of *dhikr*.

In the hands of Rāmānanda the process of the cult of Bhakti was still one of sublimation. Even though he had disciples from among the low-castes, he recognized and endorsed the caste system; 'and in matters of social concern he could not be expected to cast off the sense of superiority of a Hindu over a Muhammedan.'³ The main contribution of Rāmānanda was to preach the Bhakti doctrine of love in the language of the people, bringing Hindu lower castes in contact with direct religious experience as distinct from religious ritual. Most of the eclectic Bhakti poets rose from lower castes.⁴ Rāidās, one of the disciples of Rāmānanda, a *chamār* (shoemaker) of the lowest Hindu caste, wrote verses condemning Brahmanical ritual and caste inequality,⁵ and used some pseudo-Persian vocabulary. The followers of the Bhakti movement gave themselves the name *avadhūtas* (the emancipated ones) as they had freed themselves from the fetters of caste.⁶ Bhakti egalitarianism, as it tried to meet the Muslim challenge of conversion also provided on a modest and unambitious scale for the reconversion of Muslims to Bhakti Hinduism. Rāmānanda had Muslims among his disciples.⁷ The Krishna cult especially attracted Muslims, and the legend of Ras Khān, who apostatized from Islam, wrote *Prem Pātaka* in

¹ al-Bīrūnī (Sachau), ii, 137-8.

² Tārā Chand, 26.

³ Yusuf Husain, *Medieval Indian Culture*, London, 1959, 14.

⁴ Yusuf Husain, *L'Inde Mystique*, 133.

⁵ Ahmed Shah, *Hindu Religious Poetry*, Cawnpore, 1925, 40-42.

⁶ J. E. Carpenter, *Theism in Medieval India*, London, 1919, 428.

⁷ Tārā Chand, 144-5.

devotion to Krishna and gathered round him a group of Muslim apostates,¹ is interesting in this context.

(ii) *Kabīr*

Kabīrdās, the Bhakti poet of the fifteenth century was spiritually the most liberal of Rāmānanda's followers, and the eclecticism he offered as a meeting ground for the Hindu and Muslim masses, though rooted firmly in the cult of Rāma and therefore broadly within Hinduism, was expressed in sincere and moving poetry.

His birth, life and death are enveloped in the mists of syncretic legend. He is generally represented as the illegitimate son of a Brahmin widow brought up by a Muslim weaver.² Hindu tradition regards him as the rival, and Muslim hagiography as the disciple of a Chishtī Sūfī Shaykh Taqī.³ The Sikh scripture *Ādi-Granth* gives some details, real or legendary of his life; but the Muslim hagiographical literature treats him briefly, if at all. In the *Khazīnat al-asfiya*⁴ he is represented as a Muslim honoured by both communities. Obscurity surrounds dates and events of his life, and with the exception of Abu'l Fazl and Muhsin Fānī, Muslim historiography tended to ignore him. Though the hard core of the legends about him as well as what may be regarded as his authentic work point to the historicity of an individual called Kabīr, the possibility cannot be ruled out that 'il se peut aussi que l'homme connu sous le nom de Kabīrdās ait été une espece de creation collective, personnifiant le mouvement d'idees qui doit son origine au premier contact de l'Inde avec la pensee de l'Islam'.⁵

It is similarly difficult to determine how much of the corpus of work attributed to him is genuinely his and how much of it apocryphal. The verses attributed to him in the *Ādi-Granth* are considered authentic by the Sikhs, but not accepted as such by his own direct followers, the Kabīrpanthīs; ⁶ while the Kabīrpanthī corpus itself is quite uncritical.

The poetry of Kabīr is steeped in the Bhakti religion of love. In his conception of a transcendent God he shows some Islamic influence.⁷ But his monotheism is not undiluted. There is an element

¹ Mahmūd Sherānī, *Punjab men Urdu*, Lahore, 1930, 119-20.

² *Kabīr Kasautī*, Bombay, 1885; G. H. Westcott, *Kabir and the Kabir Panth*, Calcutta, 1953, 3.

³ Westcott, 23-26; cf. Kabīr, *Rāmānī*, 48.

⁴ Ghulām Sarwar, *Khazīnat al-asfiya*, Lahore, 1868.

⁵ Yusuf Husain, *L'Inde Mystique*, 51.

⁶ *Ibid.* 92.

⁷ Tārā Chand, 154.

even the serpent and the weasel. If to the eyes of intelligence all things are equal, to ignorance they appear as separated and different.¹ Tara Chand has suggested that the egalitarianism of Mahāyāna Buddhism, its spiritual enfranchisement of women and the Sūdras, its use of vernacular languages, and its organization of monastic orders are all original Bhakti influences.² Thus, most of the ideas underlying all varieties of the Bhakti movement such as religion of love, monotheism, revolt against the formalism of orthodoxy and the basic principles of egalitarianism are of Hindu origin. They were brought into relief by Muslim example, stimulus and challenge. It is possible that the veneration of the gurū (teacher) in the Bhakti movement, though also of Hindu origin, may have received further emphasis by the example of the Sūfīs; while the repetition of the 'Name', especially of Rāma, in Bhakti liturgy may have been inspired directly by the Sūfī practice of *dhikr*.

In the hands of Rāmānanda the process of the cult of Bhakti was still one of sublimation. Even though he had disciples from among the low-castes, he recognized and endorsed the caste system; 'and in matters of social concern he could not be expected to cast off the sense of superiority of a Hindu over a Muhammedan.'³ The main contribution of Rāmānanda was to preach the Bhakti doctrine of love in the language of the people, bringing Hindu lower castes in contact with direct religious experience as distinct from religious ritual. Most of the eclectic Bhakti poets rose from lower castes.⁴ Rāidās, one of the disciples of Rāmānanda, a *chamār* (shoemaker) of the lowest Hindu caste, wrote verses condemning Brahmanical ritual and caste inequality,⁵ and used some pseudo-Persian vocabulary. The followers of the Bhakti movement gave themselves the name *avadhūtas* (the emancipated ones) as they had freed themselves from the fetters of caste.⁶ Bhakti egalitarianism, as it tried to meet the Muslim challenge of conversion also provided on a modest and unambitious scale for the reconversion of Muslims to Bhakti Hinduism. Rāmānanda had Muslims among his disciples.⁷ The Krishna cult especially attracted Muslims, and the legend of Ras Khān, who apostatized from Islam, wrote *Prem Pātaka* in

¹ al-Bīrūnī (Sachau), ii, 137-8.

² Tārā Chand, 26.

³ Yusuf Husain, *Medieval Indian Culture*, London, 1959, 14.

⁴ Yusuf Husain, *L'Inde Mystique*, 133.

⁵ Ahmed Shah, *Hindu Religious Poetry*, Cawnpore, 1925, 40-42.

⁶ J. E. Carpenter, *Theism in Medieval India*, London, 1919, 428.

⁷ Tārā Chand, 144-5.

devotion to Krishna and gathered round him a group of Muslim apostates,¹ is interesting in this context.

(ii) *Kabīr*

Kabīrdās, the Bhakti poet of the fifteenth century was spiritually the most liberal of Rāmānanda's followers, and the eclecticism he offered as a meeting ground for the Hindu and Muslim masses, though rooted firmly in the cult of Rāma and therefore broadly within Hinduism, was expressed in sincere and moving poetry.

His birth, life and death are enveloped in the mists of syncretic legend. He is generally represented as the illegitimate son of a Brahmin widow brought up by a Muslim weaver.² Hindu tradition regards him as the rival, and Muslim hagiography as the disciple of a Chishtī Sūfī Shaykh 'Taqī.³ The Sikh scripture *Ādi-Granth* gives some details, real or legendary of his life; but the Muslim hagiographical literature treats him briefly, if at all. In the *Khazīnat al-asfiya*⁴ he is represented as a Muslim honoured by both communities. Obscurity surrounds dates and events of his life, and with the exception of Abu'l Fazl and Muhsin Fānī, Muslim historiography tended to ignore him. Though the hard core of the legends about him as well as what may be regarded as his authentic work point to the historicity of an individual called Kabīr, the possibility cannot be ruled out that 'il se peut aussi que l'homme connu sous le nom de Kabīrdās ait été une espece de creation collective, personnifiant le mouvement d'idees qui doit son origine au premier contact de l'Inde avec la pensee de l'Islam'.⁵

It is similarly difficult to determine how much of the corpus of work attributed to him is genuinely his and how much of it apocryphal. The verses attributed to him in the *Ādi-Granth* are considered authentic by the Sikhs, but not accepted as such by his own direct followers, the Kabīrpanthīs; ⁶ while the Kabīrpanthī corpus itself is quite uncritical.

The poetry of Kabīr is steeped in the Bhakti religion of love. In his conception of a transcendent God he shows some Islamic influence.⁷ But his monotheism is not undiluted. There is an element

¹ Mahmūd Sherānī, *Punjab men Urdu*, Lahore, 1930, 119-20.

² *Kabir Kasaufi*, Bombay, 1885; G. H. Westcott, *Kabir and the Kabir Panth*, Calcutta, 1953, 3.

³ Westcott, 23-26; cf. Kabir, *Rāmānī*, 48.

⁴ Ghulām Sarwar, *Khazīnat al-asfiyā*, Lahore, 1868.

⁵ Yusuf Husain, *L'Inde Mystique*, 51.

⁶ *Ibid.* 92.

⁷ Tārā Chand, 154.

of dualism in his conception of God. He believes in *Sat Purusha* (True Existence), the Creator of the world, independent and without passion, and also in his opposite *Kāl Purusha* or *Niranjan*, a diabolical personage with boundless strength who created the world and from whom sprang the three deities of the Triad, Brahma, Vishnu and Maheśa, and who made the four Vedas, the six Śāstras and eighteen Purānas.¹ For *Sat Purusha* he used the expression *Sāhib*,² a Persian loan-word borrowed from the feudal context of the respectful attitude of the lower classes for their lord and later adopted in the vocabulary of religion by the Vairāgīs and the Sikhs.

The religion of love as experienced and expressed by Kabīr is steeped in the Rāmaite approach to *bhakti*; recommended as the only way to understand life.³ *Mukti* is not complete annihilation but union with God.⁴ In the tradition of Rāmānanda, Rāma is the favourite name under which God is loved and worshipped. To this orientation Kabīr's eclecticism is as subordinate as the orthodoxy of Tulsīdās, who considered he was complementing and completing the work of Kabīr.⁵ This cult of devotion, like the ideal of courtly love in medieval Europe implies extreme humility on the part of lover and devotee, 'Kabir, je suis le chien de *Ram*, *Mutiya*, est mon nom, Je porte au cou la chaîne de *Ram*, et je vais où il me tire.'⁶

What distinguishes Kabīr's approach to the worship of Rāma from that of the orthodox school represented by Sūrdās and Tulsīdās is his eclecticism, his cognizance of Islam as the other great religion in India and as a stimulus and a challenge. His eclectic approach to the cult of Rāma therefore implies certain rejections. The central point of acceptance is God, common to both religions, but who can best be worshipped in the name 'Rāma'.⁷ On the uncritical, popular level this name of God, so dear to the Bhakti movement, was capable of alliterative and vocal identification with *Rahīm* (the Merciful), one of the familiar names of God in Islam.

Such alliterative or vocal equations, which had no linguistic or philosophical parallelism, and which in their Arabic counterparts

¹ Kabīr, *Bijak*, ed. by Vichar Nath Shastri, Allahabad, 1928, *tabd*, 43; *Ad-Mangal*, 13-18.

² Kabīr, *Ṭacnūt alī*, ed. by Shyam Sundar Das, Benares, 1925, 2.

³ Kabīr, *Ṭacnūt alī*, 10, 12, 13, 16.

⁴ Ahmed Shah, *Bijak of Kabīr*, Hammirpur, 1917, 34.

⁵ Kabīr, *Granthāt alī*, French tr. by Charlotte Vaudeville, Pondicherry, 1957, 20.

⁷ Kabīr, *Bijak*, *tabd* 109; Ahmed Shah, 37.

In the case of the rejection of Islamic ritual his criticism ranged from incisive irony to broad polemic: "They cement stones together and build a mosque where the *mullā* calls for prayers. Is God deaf then?"¹ or 'they breed in their own families marrying their first cousins'.² He condemned cow-slaughter by Muslims.³ He denounced the Muslim practice of circumcision and Hindu wearing of sacred thread as quite unnecessary for men since they were not applicable to women.⁴ This dual rejection in his attitude to the formal aspect of both religions⁵ earned him the title *nigūra* (teacher-less).⁶ Actually it was not a rejection of Hinduism outright, but the substitution of Bhakti Hinduism of the idealized worship of Rāma for Brahmanical Hinduism with its emphasis on caste-system and image-worship and the externalities of complicated ritual. However his rejection of formal Islam was final and complete, offering the would-be converts from low-caste Hindu ranks a syncretism of holy names and attributes. His was a popular and revolutionary re-statement of the essence of Hinduism, with a conciliatory gesture of syncretic assimilation for Islam. Like other Bhakti poets his denunciation of the caste system was as much an inspiration of Muslim example as a response to its pull of conversion.

The metamorphosis of Hinduism proposed by Kabīr marks a specific growth in Hindu philosophical thought. Its vocabulary, its ontological explanation, its cosmography all have Hindu roots.⁷ The mystic vocabulary of *Granthāvalī* is almost exclusively Hindu, borrowing concepts like *sant*, *anahad* and *Niranjan* from Yoga, and *sunya*, *man* and *unman* from Hath Yoga.⁸ He continued to believe in metempsychosis and in the doctrine of *karma*.⁹ 'The whole background of Kabīr's thought', comments Westcott, 'is Hindu. His favourite name for God is Rām. Like all his Vaishnavite predecessors he seeks release from transmigration, and opens the path of deliverance by loving devotion. The ancient mythology provides him with frequent illustration; the great gods of the Hindu Triad, Brahmā, Vishnu, and Śiva, still perform their functions in the economy of existence.'¹⁰

It is interesting to estimate the reaction of the Sūfī élite of his

¹ Kabīr, *Rāmāīnī*, 49.

² Kabīr, *Bijak*, śabd 83.

³ Kabīr, *Rāmāīnī*, 39.

⁴ Charlotte Vaudeville, Introduction to her translation of *Granthāvalī*, xiv-xxiv.

⁵ Kabīr, *Bijak*, śabd 108, 110.

⁶ Quoted by Sherani, op. cit., loc. cit.

⁷ Kabīr, *Bijak*, śabd, 84; *Rāmāīnī*, 39.

⁸ Yusuf Husain, 68.

⁹ Ibid. 76.

¹⁰ Westcott, 118.

age to his teachings. Shaykh 'Abdul Haqq Dehlavī records the answer of his own learned grandfather to the query of one of his sons as to whether Kabīr who was a unitarian should be regarded as a Muslim or an unbeliever, that 'it is a secret difficult to comprehend. One should try to understand'.¹

But essentially he was a poet of the common people, and among them, especially among their Hindu cross-section, he won a generalized and lasting popularity. He did not intend to form a new sect. In none of the works attributed to him is there any indication that he was addressing a particular sect,² but it is the logic of syncretism to end up as an island in the gulf it tries to bridge between two hostile religions. The sect which calls itself Kabīrpanthī was founded by one of Kabīr's followers Dharmadās; its sacred book is *Amar Mūl*, a collection of dialogues between Kabīr and Dharmadās. In this work the role of Kabīr as an Ācārya is shown as superior to that of the Prophet of Islam³. Kabīr is described as *Sāhib*, a term which as originally used by Kābīr, suggests an element of deification, which the Kabīrpanthīs reconcile to their doctrine of ontological monism on the basis of a remark of Kabīr: 'the Creator and the created are in me.'⁴ The Kabīrpanthīs believe in the equality of all men, in the religion of devotion and love, in the doctrine of metempsychosis and in abstention from harming all living creatures. They mark their bodies in twelve places, wear *tulsī* necklaces, repeat the holy name and defy Kabīr.⁵ Although some elements influenced by Islam, such as egalitarianism, remain among the basic tenets of the Kabīrpanthī faith, the sect regards itself as Hindu.⁶ Marco della Tomba writing in 1761 describes the sect as a 'specie di riforma della gentilità'.⁷ One of the polemical writings of the sect claiming its superiority over Muslims is *Granth Muhammad Bodh*.⁸ There is also a small Muslim sect of the Kabīrpanthīs; but the Hindu and Muslim sects have little in common except their devotion to Kabīr, from different angles.⁹

¹ *Al ḥbār al-akhyār*, 343

² Yusuf Husain, 95

³ Ibid 96

⁴ Ahmed Shah, *Hindu Religious Poetry*, 38

⁵ Ahmed Shah, *The Bijak of Kabīr*, 44-45

⁶ Yusuf Husain, 98

⁷ Angelo de Gubernatis, *Gli scritti del Padre Marco della Tomba*, Florence,

1878, 191

⁸ Parmanand Kabīrpanthī, *Kabīr Manshūr*, Firuzpur, n.d., 98-99

⁹ Westcott, 67.

(iii) *The Bhakti Movement: Later Phase in Relation to Islam*

Among Bhakti poets of the eclectic group Dādū Dayāl (1544-1603) came nearest to Sūfism.¹ He frequented the company of Sūfīs and was especially impressed by the Suhrawardiya emphasis on the light of God (*nūr*) which appears again and again as a theme of devotional ecstasy in his poetry.² He shows more knowledge of Islam³ than any other Bhakti poet. Though he wrote in Hindi, Gujarati and Mārwarī, some Persian verses have also been attributed to him. His syncretism was quite pronounced⁴; and he did not recognize the difference between the Turk and the Hindu: 'Both brothers have alike hands and feet; both have ears and eyes, the Hindu and the Musulman.'⁵ On the question of animal slaughter by Muslims he tended to be offended.⁶ Like Kabīr he rejected the authority of Hindu and Muslim scriptures, denounced the priestcraft and believed passionately in the worship of God as Rāma.⁷ But the teaching of Dādū was of a quietist type.⁸ 'Whatsoever Rāma willeth, that without the least difficulty shall be. Why therefore do ye kill yourselves in grief, when grief can avail you nothing.'⁹

The Dādūpanthī sect was syncretic in the beginning, one of its early exponents being Rajjabdās, a re-convert to Hinduism.¹⁰ Gradually it transformed itself from an esoteric to a militant orientation under the influence of the Vairāgīs and the Sikhs.¹¹ Towards the end of the eighteenth century it led a predatory existence in the area around Jaipur. 'They went into battle with the name of Dādū on their lips. But of the aims and spirit of the early movement scarcely a vestige remained.'¹² It is ironical that a quietist Bhakti sect which was so close to Sūfism in the mystical experience of its founder, ended up as a gang of mercenary robbers and soldiers of fortune.

Bīr Bhān (b. 1543), a contemporary of Dādū, founded the Satnāmī sect which denounced caste system, but its followers

¹ Yusuf Husain, 128; cf. W. G. Orr, *A Sixteenth Century Indian Mystic*, London, 1947, 50-51.

² Dādū Dayāl, *Parcā*, 228-9; Lālā Sītā Rām, *Selections from Hindi Literature*, Calcutta, 1924, iv, 254.

³ Dādū Dayāl, *ābd* 147; Pad 397; Madhī 46, 48; Sach, 127-8.

⁴ Dādū Dayāl, *Daya Nirbayta*, 7.

⁵ Dādū Dayāl, Sach, 5, 14.

⁶ H. H. Wilson, *The Religious Sects of the Hindus*, London, 1846, i, 214.

⁷ Westcott, 131.

⁸ Orr, 186-7.

⁹ Ibid. 98, 100, 102.

¹⁰ Ibid. 202-4.

¹¹ Ibid. 204.

married within their own sect and were puritanical monotheists. The teachings of Lāldās in the middle of the seventeenth century were similar to those of Kabīr. In Sundardās the eclectic school of Bhakti returned to orthodoxy; though he enjoyed the patronage of Muslim nobles he was essentially a scholar of Sanskrit. His *Sundar Vilāsa* draws purely from Sanskrit sources.¹

The difference between the eclectic and the orthodox Rāmaite Bhakti schools is that whereas the former worshipped God as Rāma, the latter worshipped Rāma, the son of Dasaratha King of Ayodhya as God. The great representative of the orthodox Rāmaite school was Tulsīdās (1532–1623) who is said to have enjoyed the patronage of ‘Abdul Rahīm Khān-i Khānān, but wrote exclusively for the Hindus without any attempt at eclecticism. His great contribution was *Rāma Carita Mānas*, the religious epic of the life of Rāma, and in its spiritual significance a work as great in its way as Valmiki’s *Rāmāyana*, and more popular. Despite Akbar’s enlightened policies, Tulsīdās regarded the age he lived in as one of darkness, rapacity and spiritual as well as economic poverty. He regarded all eclecticism including that of Kabīr and Akbar as hypocritical: ‘*Kāl yog* (evil time) has swallowed the *Dharma* (religion); scriptures are lost; hypocrites have established religious sects at will . . . Brahmins sell the Vedas; the rulers have no sense of morality.’² Escape from the ills of the time is possible only through devotion to Rāma: ‘Peasants, labourers, merchants, beggars, jesters, menials, jugglers and all alike are thieves. Everyone is busy filling his belly; all their actions good or bad are for greed. They sell their sons and daughters. The flames of hunger are stronger than fire in a forest which Rāma’s name alone can extinguish.’³ ‘Neither the farmer has land nor the beggar alms, merchants have no income, menials no jobs; everyone is hungry and distressed. . . . This is all due to the Rāvana of poverty. O Rāma kill this demon of poverty as you killed Rāvana.’⁴

In Bengal where the Bhakti movement flourished in the form of Krishna worship, Muslim challenge was acutely felt, for conversion to Islam had made nowhere such headway as in that province. ‘Their (Muslims’) vehement faith was irresistible and led the Hindu mind involuntarily to the old Aryan faith in the personal God as the many speculative and philosophical theories on religion

¹ Tārā Chand, 191.

² Tulsīdās, *Rām Carit Mānas*, Allahabad, 1949, 542.

³ Tulsīdās, *Kavitāvalī*, Benares, 1923, 225.

⁴ Ibid. 225–6.

current in the country could no longer satisfy the growing spiritual need.¹ In the fifteenth century there was a revival of the popularity of *Bhagavad Gita* in Bengal. Vidyapati Thākur, whose identity and the corpus of whose work pose certain problems, was the founder of a school of Krishna-worshipping master-singers that deeply stirred the religious soul of the Hindu Bengal.²

Popular anti-Muslim elements wove themselves into the Bhakti thought of Bengal from the very beginning. Thus, a popular legend arose about the poet Candīdās (fifteenth century), that he was persecuted by a Muslim Sultan for the love offered to him by that Sultan's wife. It has recently been pointed out that after becoming a *sanyasin*, Caitānya (1485-1533) spent twenty years of his life in the Hindu Kingdom of Orissa away from Muslim Bengal.³ He also engaged himself actively in re-absorbing and re-converting Muslims to Krishnaite Bhakti Hinduism.

Caitānya's cult of Krishna, a faith of love, devotion and ecstasy was also a movement of Hindu reformation, freeing Hinduism from Brahmanical oppression.⁴ The rejection of caste system in the Krishna cult is as vehement as in the eclectic school of Rāma cult, and for the same reason, a response to the challenge of the pull of Islam. Whereas the eclectic worshippers of Rāma were quite content with accepting Muslims as Muslims in their fold, in Caitānya's Krishnaite⁵ teaching there is an orientation towards reconversion to Hinduism in its devotional form, Harīdas, one of his disciples who was a convert from Islam was treated with special favour.⁶ According to the Krishnaite hagiological tradition the chief minister and the chief scribe (*mīr munshī*) of Husain Shāh of Gaur (1493-1518) were reconverted to Hinduism from Islam by Caitānya, whose disciples they became renouncing their life at the Muslim royal court.⁷ Caitānya is also reported to have converted a Muslim theologian Bijli Khān to Vaishnavism,⁸ and according to another tradition a group of Pathāns.⁹ But Kartabhājas, a group among Caitānya's followers were monotheists and syncretic and had

¹ D. C. Sen, *Chaitanya and his Age*, Calcutta, 1922, 14.

² G. A. Grierson, *The Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustan*, Calcutta, 1889, 9.

³ R. C. Majumdar in *The Delhi Sultanate*, Bombay, 1960, p. xxxii.

⁴ Tārā Chand, 218.

⁵ Melville T. Kennedy, *The Chaitanya Movement*, Calcutta, 1925, 213-14.

⁶ Nichol McNicol, *Indian Theism*, London, 1915, 136; D. C. Sen, op. cit. 25.

⁷ D. C. Sen, *History of Bengali Language and Literature*, Calcutta, 1911, 509.

⁸ D. C. Sen, *Chaitanya and his Age*, 219-20.

⁹ Ibid. 228-9.

¹⁰ Kennedy, 213-14.

contacts with Muslim faqīrs; they recruited Muslims and Christians into their fold and celebrated their sabbath on Fridays.¹

The Krishna cult in other parts of India did not play a role of response or resistance to Islam to the same extent as it did in Bengal, though a study of Caitānya was written by Krishnadās Kavirāja in the reign of Jahāngīr. A very charming figure in the Krishna cult of north India is that of the princess Mīra Bāi, who worshipped Krishna in the name of Girdhār-Gopāl or Harī; and though she denounced Hindu ritual, her devotion was intensely subjective and more or less untouched by the polemical atmosphere that was simultaneously borrowing from Islam and rejecting it.

In Maharāshtra the Bhakti cult of Rāma developed in the tradition of Rāmānada; its first exponent was Nāmdev (fourteenth century) whose eclecticism has interesting parallels with that of Kabīr like whom he repudiates ritual in Hinduism as well as in Islam: 'Hindu is blind, Muslim is one-eyed. He who understands is wiser than both. Hindus pray in temples, Muslims in mosques. He (Nāmdev) serves the Name which has no temple and no mosque.'² The favourite name of Nāmdev's personal God is Vithobā. Like Kabīr he rejects caste system and idolatry.³ Unlike Kabīr he shows traces of pantheism: 'He is the idol. He is the temple and He is worshipping Himself.'⁴ His disciples also included some Muslim converts to Hinduism. The Mahārāshtrian Bhakti movement centred around the shrine of Vithobā at Pandharpur. It encouraged the growth of Marāṭhī literature, loosened the rigidity of caste, subordinated ritual to devotion in worship and brought about a certain measure of reconciliation with the presence of Islam in India.⁵ The most influential of Marāṭha saints was Tukarām (b. 1608) whose conception of God was very much like that of Kabīr and who occasionally used Sūfī terms in his hymns. And yet according to Tara Chand 'he was a contemporary of Shivājī and one of the inspirers of the spirit which welded the Marāṭhas into a people'.⁶ Here we have another interesting case of Bhakti eclecticism paving the way for anti-Muslim militarism.

In a way the Bhakti movement, which tried to neutralize the spiritual encroachment of Islam on the Indian soil, itself became

¹ Tārā Chand, 221.

² Yusuf Husain, 120-1.

³ *Adi-Granth*, translated by E. Trumpp, London, 1877, 665.

⁴ Quoted by Yusuf Husain, 122.

⁵ Ranade, *The Rise of Maratha Power*, 50-51.

⁶ Tārā Chand, 225.

an 'exotic' on that soil.¹ The theism it preached ran into contradictions because of the inescapable doctrine of *karma*. Because of this non-theistic or anti-theistic bias, it failed like other systems of Hindu thought to evolve a self-consistent philosophy of theism.² Addressed as it was to the Hindu masses, it did not concern itself with fresh philosophical speculation. Its borrowings from Islam remained borrowings and could not be fully assimilated in its essentially Hindu doctrine and experience. As Orr has summed up: 'It has lived through the centuries on a borrowed philosophy, fundamentally alien to its own spirit and aspirations. The hitherto unchallenged *data* of Hindu speculation are the sunken rocks on which every movement in the direction of a clear, uncompromising theism has finally made shipwreck.'³

(iv) *Sikhism: From Syncretism to Hostility*

The syncretic movement of Sikhism launched by Gurū Nānak (1469-1539) in the Punjab, was intimately linked with Kabīr, some of whose work it incorporates into its scripture *Ādi Granth*.⁴ In his rejection of the authority of Hindu and Muslim scriptures alike Nānak followed the example of Kabīr.⁵ Nānak's syncretic appeal was also primarily directed towards the lower Hindu castes.

In its initial inspiration Nānak's movement shows a genuine monotheistic eclecticism in which Islamic influence is clearly discernable, as also its strong puritanical tone.⁶ But Nānak was not a constructive theologian, had little speculative power, and the dispersed echoes of Hindu and Muslim religious beliefs in his writing failed to be fused into a consistent system.⁷

Structurally Sikhism was modelled on Hinduism from the very beginning. The *gurū* is in some ways the Sikh counterpart of the Hindu *avatār*; God is worshipped as *nirguna* (without qualities) and absolute. The *Granth* is also an anthology of medieval Hindu religious effusion and thus establishes Sikhism well within the general milieu of Hindu eclecticism. Like Hindu Bhakti poets Nānak also 'rest hindoue et sut construire l'édifice theiste sur des bases hindouses'.⁸

By the time of the second gurū Angad (1504-52) Sikhism had already begun to drift away from its superficial Islamic heritage.

¹ Orr, 230.

² Macauliffe, iv.

³ Ibid. 148-9.

⁴ McNicol, 223.

⁵ Ibid. i, 183.

⁶ Yusuf Husain, ch. on Sikhs.

⁷ Orr, 231.

⁸ McNicol, 148, 153.

Angad rejected the Arabic script so far used for the Punjabi language, and developed the Gurmukhī combining elements from various north Indian Hindu scripts,¹ whereas the Muslims of Punjab continued to use the Arabic script and still do so. The Gurmukhī literary language 'embraced to begin with certain old Hindi elements, many obsolescent *deshī* or local "country" terms, and some Arabic and Persian words, all of which were subject to Sikh reconstruction, whether by intention or from sheer circumstance—a most interesting aspect of linguistics in its religious use of terminology'.²

The transformation of Sikhism from genuine eclecticism to a psychological resistance to Islam was inherent in Sikhism itself. The militant expression of this psychological attitude was to some extent a consequence of the ethnological background of its adherents, especially the Jāts. Gurū Rāmdās was the recipient of a land grant from Akbar, but under Gurū Arjun (1563–1606) who succeeded to gurū-ship in 1581 Sikhism became rebellious against the Mughal authority. Arjun called himself the 'true king' (*sachchā bādshāhī*) and collected revenues through his agents.³ He was executed by the Mughal administrators, but his advice for his son and successor Hargobind (1605–45) was to sit fully armed 'on his throne' and to raise an army.⁴ Hargobind took up a military career in Jahāngīr's army, a training which helped him to transform the Sikh community into a military junta.⁵ Since that time the principle of mutual antagonism between the Sikh and the Muslim became well-established.⁶

Gurū Gobind Singh (1666–1708) launched upon a career of open hostility to the Muslims. He created the Sikh military community known as the *khālsa*, which took the vow to observe the five 'Ks',—*kesh* (beard, symbolic of courage and virility), *kangha* (comb, carried in the hair), *kachcha* (loin-cloth), *Kara* (a steel bangle) and *kirpān* (a short sword). Members of the *khālsa* were also required to observe a fourfold rule of conduct: not to cut the hair, to abstain from tobacco and the intoxicants, to abstain from meat slaughtered according to Muslim rite, and to refrain from carnal intercourse with Muslims.⁷

¹ Khushwant Singh, *The Sikhs*, London, 1953, 26

² John Clarke Archer, *The Sikhs*, Princeton, 1946, 109

³ *Dabistān-i Mazāhib*

⁴ Khushwant Singh, 27–28

⁵ Rashid Akhtar Nadwi in *History of Freedom Movement*, Karachi, 1957, 1, 139.

⁶ Archer, 173.

⁷ Khushwant Singh, 29.

A corresponding change also metamorphosed the Sikh religion. Though it continued to reject idol-worship, its original syncretic character receded more and more into the background, and in practice, in ritual and in social affinities Hindu influences became more and more pronounced.¹ It failed in one of its original objectives, the liquidation of the caste system; and retained or re-introduced into its social behaviour caste restrictions on marriages and sometimes on dining together between various Sikh castes.² Even the character of Sikh monotheism changed under Gurū Gobind Singh who elevated God's destructive over His constructive power, elevated death to the status of divinity and steel came to be worshipped as a symbol of destruction.³ He selected the Hindu deity *Durgā* the female aspect of *śakti* or the power of Mahādeva as a special object of worship, and 'ya Durga' became the war-cry of the *khālṣa*.⁴ He severely discouraged the Sikhs from syncretic veneration of Muslim or pseudo-Muslim saints.⁵ Gurū Gobind was killed by one of his Muslim retainers which made the relations between the two communities even more acrimonious.

The trend of reversion of Sikhism towards Hinduism continued in the succeeding generations: 'within a hundred years of Gurū Gobind Singh's death', comments Khushwant Singh, 'ritual in Sikh *gurdwāras* was almost like that in the Hindu temples, and more often than not was presided over by priests who were usually Hindu rather than Sikh. Sikhs began to wear caste-marks; Sikh weddings and funerals followed Hindu patterns. . . . Brahmin priests invested Sikh rulers on their thrones with the burning of sacrificial fires and chanting of Vedic hymns. Marriages took place with Hindu women and were performed by Hindu priests. On death wives were burnt along with their husbands.'⁶

In the Mughal 'time of troubles' in the eighteenth century Sikh hostility *vis-à-vis* the Muslims gathered remarkable momentum.⁷ Under the Sikh leader Banda unprecedented atrocities were committed against the Muslims at Samana and Ambala.⁸ The Sikh pattern of raid and conquest remained the same throughout. 'Sometimes when a mosque was included in a region captured,' writes Archer, 'it was razed at once, and its former custodians were

¹ Khushwant Singh, 45.

² *Ibid.* 45.

³ *Ibid.* 35.

⁴ Archer, 191-3; Khushwant Singh, 46.

⁵ Jadūnāth Sarkār, in *Cambridge History of India*, iv, 246.

⁶ Khushwant Singh, 46.

⁷ *Ibid.* 88-89, 90-91, 179.

⁸ G. C. Narang, *The Transformation of Sikhism*, 178.

forced to wash it with the blood of hogs.¹ In 1763-4 the Sikhs massacred the Muslims of Qasur, Malerkotla and Sirhind. The invasions of Nādir Shāh and later of Ahmad Shāh Abdālī paralyzed the civil and military administration of north-west Mughal India and gave the Sikhs their opportunity, and the twelve Sikh confederate *misl*s (militias) came to control the greater part of the Punjab in the later eighteenth century.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century rose the shrewd and dynamic figure of Ranjīt Singh who established a powerful Sikh state in the Punjab and annexed the north-west tribal area as well as Kasmhir and Ladakh to his kingdom. Although there were Muslims in his army, and Muslim councillors like Faqīr 'Azīz al-dīn in his court, his rule was the most cruel and oppressive that the Muslims of the sub-continent have ever known. Ranjīt Singh's Sikhism had a strong Hindu odour; he celebrated Hindu festivals, observed Hindu ritual, his palace and his wives observed Hindu customs; he visited Hindu temples and gave them financial grants.² The Sikh state decayed after him and was soon liquidated by the British East India Company, but the Sikh drift towards Hinduism continued. It was artificially checked for a time by British army regulations which insisted upon the observation of external symbols like the keeping of the forked beard or long hair by soldiers of a Sikh regiment.³ It is interesting to read the comment of a modern Sikh writer: 'If this process continues at the present pace, within a short period of history (fifty years at the most) we may witness the remarkable phenomenon of a religious community which achieved the semblance of nationhood disappear in the quicksands of Hinduism.'⁴

This prophecy may or may not come true, but the transformation of Sikhism from an eclectic faith which had come into being to bring Hinduism and Islam closer and to be a bridge between them, into a fanatically anti-Muslim militant group idealizing destruction, is perhaps the most tragic instance of the failure of syncretism in India.

(v) *Minor Syncretic Sects*

Apart from the two major religious experiments, the Bhakti movements and Sikhism, popular syncretism made several

¹ Archer, 232.

² Ibid. 243.

³ Kushwant Singh, 179.

⁴ Ibid. 30.

efforts to compromise between Hinduism and Islam by selecting certain elements from each and rejecting others. In most cases this kind of syncretism had a base in one of the two religions while it borrowed from the other. In some cases it chose a middle position outside the pale of both. In all cases the followers of syncretic sects were few, a few thousand, or more often only a few hundred, and often confined to small regions. Their chief interest is as curiosities of mushroom religious growth for the social anthropologist or the historian of religion.

The earliest syncretic beliefs were perhaps quite spontaneous; they grew in Sind, the first scene of Muslim impact, out of the old cults of the worship of the river Indus.¹ Their purely Hindu form was the homage to Underolāl, a personification of Indus, regarded by a later sect, the Daryāpanthī, as a divine incarnation.² Some time after the Muslim occupation Underolāl came to be identified with Khidar, still honoured by the Jāts in Patiala and given the name Zinda Pīr (Living Saint).³ Another syncretic saint of Sind, but perhaps unconnected with the Indus, is Pīr Jhārion⁴ (Saint of the Woods), probably the descendant of some old forest deity. Yet another syncretic saint, probably also a member of the ancient pantheon of the woods, honoured by some Hindu and converted Muslim wanderings beggars is Gūga Pīr, also known by a more Muslim name Zāhir Pīr, the king of serpents.⁵ Pāñch Pīriya, a group of five saints whose names differ in various regions, and honoured by a group of low-caste Hindus as well as a tribe of Muslim musicians,⁶ seem to have represented originally the five rivers of the Punjab, though their veneration extended in north India as far east as eastern Bengal. A syncretic personality of semi-historical origin is the Muslim Sūfī appropriated by Hindus, Salār Mas'ūd Ghāzī, the celebration of whose anniversary festival was prohibited by Sikandar Lodī because of its phallic connotations.⁷ Another syncretic saint of semi-historical origin was Lāl Shāhbāz, probably a heterodox *qalandar*, whom some Hindus of Sind regarded as an incarnation of Vishnū. Other figures whose

¹ Yusuf Husain, *L'Inde Mystique*, 16.

² *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

³ R. C. Temple, *Legends of the Punjab*, London, 1893-1901, ii, 508.

⁴ Yusuf Husain, 15.

⁵ *Ibid.* 21-22.

⁶ W. Crooke, *The Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, Allahabad, 1893.

⁷ Ghulām 'Alī 'Azād Bilgrāmī, *Ma'āthir al-karām*, I.O. Pers. MS. 1320, fos. 114a-b; 'Abdullāh, *Tārīkh-i Daūdī*, B.M. Or. MS. 197, fo. 24a; Ja'afar Sharīf, *Islam in India*, Eng. tr. by G. A. Herklots, Oxford, 1921, 9.

origin lies buried deep in the mass consciousness of folklore include Shāh Makai (Saint Barley) also of Sind, Mānik Pīr honoured in Bengal,¹ and Pīr Bhairon, venerated by Muslim Meos near Delhi who have retained many Hindu religious features after their conversion.²

In Bengal the patron saint of butchers was honoured by the Muslim name of Ghāzī Miān and the Hindu name of Satya Pīr, identified by some Hindu poets as a yogī, by others with Satyanārāyana or Vishnū, and homage to him was encouraged, probably with mixed motives of superstition and policy, by Sultān Husain of Gaur (1493-1518).³

The inherent anthropomorphism of the Hindu religion at the popular level made possible the syncretization of some Muslim saints whose identity is established in history. Thus Sayyid Ahmad (d. 1181), popularly known as Sultān Sakhi Sarwar is considered semi-divine by some tribes of Jāts, who are called Sultānī or Sarwariyya. They hold a fair in the honour of the saint at Dhunkal every year and eat meat slaughtered according to the Muslim rite.⁴ Jāts, converted to Sikhism have converted this saint into an associate of Nānak, and homage to him has inspired the famous Sanskrit poem Dānī Jātī. His followers also include low-caste shoemakers.⁵ The latitude in ritual available to Hindu lower castes and the love of spectacle, fanfare and group exhibition of passion inherent in the Indian character, as well as generalized superstition, often led to the Hindu participation in the Shī'ī religious rites of Muharram.⁶ Under the Qutb Shāhs of Golconda, Hindus participated in Shī'ī processions and ta'ziyās, and named their children born during this period after Husain.⁷ But serious Hindu-Muslim riots occurred, as far back as the eighteenth century when Muharram coincided with Hindu festivals like Rāmanavamī and Dashera.⁸

Syncretic borrowing in higher Hindu castes was more consciously eclectic. In medieval Bengal Hindus participated in Muslim

¹ Yusuf Husain, 33.

² T. W. Arnold, in *Transactions of the Third International Congress of the History of Religions*, i, 314.

³ D. C. Sen, *Folk Literature of Bengal*, Calcutta, 1920, 101-3.

⁴ *Jallunder and Ludhiana Gazetteer*, 121, 124.

⁵ *Ibid.* 124; R. C. Temple, notes to F. A. Steel, *Tales of the Punjab*, London, 1894, 74.

⁶ Nizām al-dīn Ahmad Sa'idi, *Hadiqat al-salātīn*, I.O. Pers. MS. 2978 (Ethé 464), fos. 48b-49a.

⁷ Ja'far Sharif, 9, 166.

⁸ Ja'far Sharif, 167.

feasts and took auguries from the Qur'ān.¹ Dharma, a modified form of Mahāyānā Buddhism which has survived in Bengal during the Muslim rule showed some impress of Muslim ideas.² The Husainī Brahmins represent the most outstanding example of high caste syncretic borrowing from Islam and of transforming the borrowed tenets at will. As their name suggests, they were deeply influenced by the passion of Husain in Shi'ite Islam, but also acknowledged Mu'in al-dīn Chishtī as a titular divinity.³ They honoured Muhammad as one of the Hindu avatārs, fasted like the Muslims in Ramadān, and buried their dead; but wore Brahminical caste-marks on their foreheads, though they accepted alms from the Muslims alone.⁴ They were held in esteem by Muslims, particularly the Shi'is. Kākan, the followers of Kākak a Kashmiri Brahmin, were a monotheistic sect; they admitted Muslims to their fold, but did not impose the ceremonies of either Islam or Hinduism on themselves.⁵ Rām Sānchīs, followers of one Rāmcharan, prayed like Muslims five times a day and denounced the caste system. A yogī sect regarded the Prophet of Islam as a disciple of Goraknāth; another prayed like Muslims and ate cow-flesh.⁶ The Siddhārs practised medicine and alchemy, were monotheists, rejected the authority of the Vedas, believed in one true preceptor (*satgurū*) and showed Sūfī influences in their mystical trends.⁷ Rāmvalabhīs believed in Hindu, Muslim and Christian scriptures.⁸ Sāhib Dhānīs dined with the Muslims.⁹ Panchu Fakīrīs and Kartabhājās admitted Muslims to their ranks; the latter sect had some influence on the Brahma Samāj.¹⁰ Gosāinjānīs were Vaishnavites who included Muslims among their number, prayed five times a day, and collected alms from the rich to distribute it among the blind and the crippled.¹¹ Vairāgīs were also Vaishnavites who believed in neither the Vedas nor the Qur'ān but admitted Muslims into their ranks in the seventeenth century, including some Muslim noblemen.¹² Sanyāsīs, who were śakti-worshippers often took up service under the Muslims.¹³ Sarbhankī, a phallic sect regarded all religions including Islam as essentially orgiastic.¹⁴

¹ Tārā Chand, 217.

² Ibid. 215.

³ Murray Titus, *Indian Islam*, 1930, 166.

⁴ Mirzā Muhammad Husain Qatīl, *Haft Tamāshā*, B.M. Or. MS., 476, fos. 27a-b.

⁵ Muhsin Fānī, II, 229.

⁶ Ibid. ii, 129.

⁷ Tārā Chand, 124-5.

⁸ D. C. Sen, *Chaitanya and his Age*, Calcutta, 1922, 346.

⁹ Ibid. 347.

¹⁰ Ibid. 350; Kennedy, 213-14.

¹¹ Muhsin Fānī, ii, 254.

¹² Ibid. ii, 193; Qatīl, fo. 34a.

¹³ Qatīl, fos. 34a-35b.

¹⁴ Ibid. 40b-41a.

The most numerous and widely spread of Hindu syncretic sects is that of the Lingāyats or Jangams, who seem to have absorbed some Islamic tenets from the Arab coastal settlers in the twelfth century. Their ritual of initiation has Muslim parallelisms. Like Muslims they obtain the bride's permission in marriage, allow divorce, bury their dead, and do not believe in metempsychosis.¹

In the later seventeenth and early eighteenth century the eclecticism of Dārā Shikoh left its mark on some Hindu minds. Prān Nāth in his Gujarati work *Qulzum Sarūp* quotes texts from the Vedas and the Qur'ān to show that they are not incompatible. This intellectual development in Hindu eclecticism is interesting as it constitutes the antithesis of Kabir's rejection of the authority of Hindu and Muslim scriptures. Shivājī's grandfather held Muslim saints in veneration, and named his sons Shāhājī and Sharifjī on the name of his Muslim teacher Shāh Sharif.²

In the case of Muslim syncretic sects, which are less numerous, Hindu elements are usually survivals of Hindu ritual after their conversion to Islam. Thus, Malkānas who are converts from various Hindu sub-castes like the Rājput̃s, the banyās, and Jāts have conserved many Hindu practices. They have retained Hindu names; they visit Hindu temples for personal ceremonies and greet each other in the Hindu manner. But they pray in Muslim mosques, practice circumcision and bury their dead.³ Among the half-converted Muslims are Chūrihāras in the Ganges valley who worship the Hindu deity Kālka Māi; Meos of the Punjab who worship Hindu godlings Siānsī, Magtī and Lālchī; and the Mirāsīs, musicians of north India who worship Durgā Bhawānī.⁴ As late as the nineteenth century before the Wahhābī reformism of the Farā'izī movement made its effect felt, some Muslims of Bengal worshipped Krishna and Durgā.⁵ A syncretic sect among the Marāthas was led by a Muslim, Shaykh Muhammad, whose followers could go on pilgrimage either to Mecca or to Pandharpūr in Mahārāshtra.⁶ The Khānzāda Muslim converts of Rājputāna did not participate in any Hindu festivals or rites, but Brahmins continued to perform their marriage ceremonies.⁷ The Meos of the Punjab still continue some features of their older Hindu social structure such as denying their daughters the right of inheritance, and conforming to near-Hindu

¹ Tārā Chand, 117-19.

² *Census of India*, 1911, vol. i, part i, 118.

³ Murray Titus, 166.

⁴ Tārā Chand, 224.

⁵ Ikram, *Rūd-i Kacchar*, 302.

⁶ Ibid., 118.

⁷ *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, ii, 289 ff.

⁸ *Imperial Gazetteer*, xi, 114.

laws of genealogy and consanguinity.¹ Some Vaishnavite converts to Islam retained Hindu social exclusiveness and did not dine with other Muslims.²

Some Muslim sects which developed, mainly outside India, had elements of faith resembling certain Hindu religious features. Rehatsek has enumerated nine heterodox sects which believed in metempsychosis or in the doctrine of re-incarnation.³ Of these *Haytiyah* is not found in India. The *Ghulūyah* (or *Shī'i Ghulāt*) had doctrines curiously resembling Hinduism. The nature of their faith is described as *ghulū* (excess) because of their belief in anthropomorphism and in metempsychosis (*tanāsukh*).⁴ Individuals practising this extreme form of Shī'ism may have migrated to India, as one can trace its influence on Akbar's *Dīn-i Ilāhī* (Divine Faith), but the followers of this Persian heresy never formed a cognizable group in India.⁵ Kamāliyyah, another extreme Shī'i sect also believed in metempsychosis as a form of sympathetic magic, was of non-Shī'ite origin and cannot be traced in India.⁶ The '*Alī Ilāhiya*, which raised 'Alī to the level of divinity, is an extremist Shī'i sect and its followers are found in parts of the sub-continent including Gilgit, Bāltistan and the former Hyderabad State.⁷ Another Shī'ite sect *Nusayriyyah* originated in 891, and believed in the transmigration of souls and in the multiple incarnations of Adam. It believed in a Trinity consisting of *ma'nā* (meaning), *ism* (name), and *bāb* (gate). This Trinity incarnated itself in the human body in seven *qubāb* (cupolas, epochs).⁸ Syrian Druzes worshipped the Fātimid al-Hakīm (996-1021) as a divine incarnation; elements of the doctrine of incarnation are traceable in Bābism; but both these sects are foreign in relation to India.

The only one of the nine heterodox sects mentioned by Rehatsek which shows elements of direct syncretic borrowings from Hinduism in India is the Khoja branch of the Ismā'īlī sect. Belief in the doctrine of metempsychosis was encouraged by the leader of the Ismā'īlī order Rashīd al-dīn in the twelfth century.⁹ This prepared the way in India for the Khojās who were Lohānā Rājputs before their conversion. Their leader Sadr al-dīn regarded Adam and 'Alī

¹ *Imperial Gazetteer*, loc. cit.

² Qatīl, fo. 29b.

³ E. Rehatsek, 'The Doctrines of Metempsychosis and Incarnation among nine heretic Muhammadan Sects', *J.A.S.* (Bombay), xiv, 1880, 418-38.

⁴ E. G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, London, 1902-6, i, 310, ii, 195.

⁵ Rehatsek, 422.

⁶ Ibid. 423.

⁷ Ibid. 424.

⁸ Ibid. 426-8.

⁹ Ibid. 430 ff.

as the avatārs of Vishnū, and explained Muhammad as another name of Mahesha.¹ The Lohānās, who originally believed in the *śakti* cult, also retained some of their older practices after their conversion to Islam. The Khojās are found in concentrated numbers in the western coastal towns of the sub-continent and are a prosperous community. One of their subjects is the Imāmshāhī, founded by Imām al-dīn (d. 1512), which does not believe in the Āgā Khāns, but calls itself Momina or Satpanthī and resembles Kabīrpanthīs. It follows a number of Hindu practices and its leader is invariably a Hindu who is known as Kākā.² Another prosperous Muslim community on the west coast of India is that of the Bohrās, who have retained a number of Hindu customs, such as the Hindu law of inheritance, the practice of charging interest on loans, and the celebration of Dīwalī as the new year's day in their business lives. In some other ways the Bohrās are more exclusively orthodox than other Muslims; they do not eat food prepared by the Hindus or wear clothes washed by them.³

Another group of Muslim syncretic sects is the one inspired by irreligious (*bī-shar'*) Sūfism which must not be confused with the heterodox Sūfism of the schools of al-Bistāmī or al-Hallāj. In its Indian context it is a series of vulgarizations of Sūfī practices among half-convert religious communities. It concentrated on bizarre practices to catch the eye of the common man. Thus, Musā Suhāg, an effeminate Sūfī of Gujarat dressed himself like a woman and wore bangles.⁴ Hazratī, Gobrai and Pāgalnāthī sects were founded in Bengal by *bī-shar'* Sūfīs and retained some elements of *śakti* worship, but their followers were largely Hindus.⁵

Most remarkable of the *bī-shar'* sects in India was that of the Madārīs, founded by Badi' al-zamān Shāh Madār, a Syrian of Jewish origin who came to India in the fifteenth century.⁶ Sūfī hagiological tradition plays down the heretical element in his mystical teachings and mentions his friendship with Shāh Jahāngīr Simnānī.⁷ Shāh Madār's syncretism was in the first instance derived from Jewish and Christian sources.⁸ His followers believed him to have received the spiritual blessing of the Prophet of Islam at Medina and to have studied Jewish, Christian and Islamic

¹ Yusuf Husain, 34.

² Ibid. 401-2.

³ D. C. Sen, *Chaitanya and his Age*, 349.

⁴ 'Abd al-Rahmān Hasanī, *Mir'at-i Madārīyā*, B M. Add. MS. 16, 858, fo.

⁵ Ibid. fos. 42a-b.

3a.

⁷ Hasanī, fos. 2a, 13a, 33b.

⁸ Ikram, *Ab-i Ka'ithar*, 396-7.

⁴ *Mir'at-i Ahmadi* (Suppl.), 84.

scriptures with Mahdī, the absent but living *imām* of the Shī'is¹; they cite Ibn al-'Arabī as the source of his heretical views and regard him as a *qutb*, the 'Qutb al-Madār'.² Shāh Madār seems to have some oblique link with the Chishtī order,³ but unlike the orthodox Sūfis there was far less emphasis in his teaching on the observance of Muslim ritual⁴; and though he is reported to have been held in esteem by Sultan Ibrāhīm Sharqī of Jaunpur (1402-36), the 'ulamā generally accused him of heresy.⁵ Neither his biographer Hasanī, nor his contemporary Jahāngīr Simnānī mention any yogic influences on him which have been aptly observed among his followers by Muhsin Fānī.⁶ It is quite possible that the popular-esoteric *bī-shar'* cult of the Madārīs was really developed after him by his followers.

The Madārīs borrowed a number of practices from the yogīs. They went about naked like other *malāmīs*; like yogīs they smeared their bodies with ashes, wore their hair long, beat themselves with chains, practised celibacy and most of them refrained from eating meat.⁷ Like Yogīs they were habituated to the intoxicant *bhang*. Their mystic cry *dam Madār* had a double *entendre*: 'Madār is life' or 'don't breathe'. Muhsin Fānī classifies them as Hindus who had adopted *bī-shar'* Sūfism, and who regarded Shāh Madār as superior to the prophets of Islam.⁸ They used a secret language to conceal their doctrine from the Muslims, with whom they had nothing in common and 'knew neither fasting nor prayer'.⁹ Those among them who had more pronounced Hindu proclivities were known as *Malangs*, followers of Shāh Madār's disciple Jāmanjātī, and lived like Hindu *gosāin* ascetics.¹⁰ The sub-sect of Khirqapūsh Madārīs who wore patched robes (*khirqa*) like the Sūfis, believed in a Trinity in which God is the spirit, Muhammad his body and Madār his breath (*dam*),¹¹ a doctrine presumably influenced by Christianity. Jalālīs, another variety of Madārīs, took intoxicants, ate snakes and scorpions, and their leader had the right of sexual intercourse with any woman of the sect he liked,¹² a practice presumably borrowed from the *śakti* cult.

These syncretic sects added until recently colour to the bizarre pageantry of India. Their followers were never more than a few in

¹ Hasanī, fo. 25b.

² Ibid. fo. 42a.

³ Yusuf Husain, 28.

⁴ Ja'far Sharif, 73, 194, 290.

⁵ Ibid. 226-8.

⁶ Ibid. fos. 9a-10a, 27a-b.

⁷ Ibid. fos. 24b, 27a.

⁸ Muhsin Fānī, ii, 220-6.

⁹ Ibid. ii, 228-9.

¹⁰ Ibid. fos. 17b-18b.

¹¹ Muhsin Fānī, ii, 224.

¹² Ibid., loc. cit.

a great mass of humanity which looked at them with uncomprehending, half-superstitious curiosity. None of these sects, except the Khojās and the Bohrās who were well-situated in heterodox Islam, achieved any respectability or strength in numbers or position. Most of them were looked upon by the ordinary Hindu or Muslim as spiritual freaks and were denounced by the religious leaders of both communities. In the nineteenth century most of these sects collapsed before the assault of Hindu and Muslim reformist and fundamentalist movements and took to orthodoxy in one religion or the other.

(vi) *Syncretism in Folk-beliefs*¹

There have been elements in popular Islam, either inherited in a sublimated form from pre-Islamic pagan Arabia, or collected on the way in Islam's expansion over vast areas in Asia and Africa—some of these superstitious elements had the stamp of universal animism which most religions have inherited, while others characterize Muslim folk-beliefs in specific regions.² In India there was considerable influence of popular Hindu animism, especially in the lower strata of society as well as through marriages with or concubinage of Hindu women.

Muslims of artisan and other lower economic classes were generally converts from Hinduism and they retained the bulk of superstitions after their conversion: 'Ils partagent toutes les superstitions des basses classes hindoues, croient comme elles, aux mauvais esprit, aux feés, aux exorcismes, aux amulettes qui écartent les mauvais génies, aux sorcelleries et aux augures.'³ In the rural areas specially where the intellectual influence of the Muslim élite did not penetrate, the heritage of old superstitious folk-beliefs remained strong. Thus in parts of Bengal 'the proselytes brought their old superstitions into their new faith. Their ancient rites and modes of religious thought reasserted themselves with an intensity which could not be suppressed, until the white light of monotheism almost flickered out amid the fuliginous exaltation of Hinduism.'⁴ Before the success of the Wāhhābī

¹ For a detailed study of north Indian (not necessarily syncretic) Folk-beliefs, see W. Crooke, *The Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, Allahabad, 1897.

² S. M. Zwemer, *The Influence of Animism on Islam*, New York, 1920, 1-2.

³ Yusuf Husain, 35.

⁴ *Imperial Gazetteer*, ii, 289 ff.

movement in the first half of the nineteenth century Muslims of rural Bengal joined Hindus in Durgā *pūja* and consulted Brahmins for auspicious days for weddings, &c.¹ Some of them joined Hindus in paying homage to Sitlā, the Hindu folk-deity of smallpox. As late as the present century some of them in the Rajshahi district specialized in *bhāshan gān*, songs in praise of the Hindu deity Mansa, while syncretic hymns in praise of Śiva and Pārbatī were written by Muslim composers.² In other regions Bengali Muslims recited hymns in the honour of Lakshmī, Hindu goddess of wealth.³ 'Musalmāns in South India', we are told by Ja'far Sharif writing in the eighteen-thirties, 'being to a large extent converts from Hinduism, believe in malignant spirits, fairies, Narasinha (the lion incarnation of Vishnu), Mātā the Mother-Goddess.'⁴

In the transfusion of Hindu superstitions into higher Muslim social classes, women played an important role. As everywhere else, Muslim invaders and settlers in India married indigenous women, but their intellectual and spiritual life was almost entirely confined to the male society from which women were excluded. Women were also generally more conservative, and more responsive to animism. In the cities, due to inter-marriage with fresh Muslim immigrants the feminine society became more and more Islamized after some generations. But in rural areas, including the seats of the landed gentry, where Hindu and Muslim women mixed more generally, there was this continuous impress of 'the spirit of superstition influencing the female character'.⁵ In villages as well as in towns Muslim women participated in Hindu fairs,⁶ and vice versa. The engagement ceremony or *mangani* (itself a word of Hindu origin), as well as several other wedding ceremonies found their way into Muslim society through female influence; these include grinding of special perfumes for the bride and the bridegroom, and the singing of gay or even obscene wedding (*suhāg*) songs.⁷ Many of the taboos for pregnant women were borrowed from the Hindus, such as fasting during a lunar eclipse, and the taboo on the wearing of new clothes or the use of henna to avert the evil eye.⁸ The ceremony of *sāl-girah* (birthday knot) was borrowed

¹ Ja'far Sharif, 8.

² D. C. Sen, *History of Bengali Language and Literature*, 793, 796-8.

³ Ibid. 368.

⁴ Ja'far Sharif, 139.

⁵ Mrs. Meer Hassan Ali, *Observation on the Mussulmans of India*, London, 1917, 206.

⁶ Ibid. 387.

⁷ Ja'far Sharif, 70.

⁸ Ibid. 19.

from the Hindu *janamgānth*.¹ Another such borrowing is the breaking of glass-bangles by a woman who is widowed, as a sign of mourning.² The Muslim ceremony of *nithār*, though of pan-Asiatic origin,³ seems to have received some reinforcement by similar Hindu ceremonies, *utārā* and *ārtī*,⁴ also meant to turn away the evil eye or to denote thanksgiving. One of the lower godlings of the popular Hindu pantheon, Mirānji was converted to Islam under the name of Shaykh Saddū and was syncretically honoured as a malignant saint bestowing fertility and granting protection against evil spirits.⁵ Even Shāh Madār found his way in some harems as an obscure saint with vague protective qualities.⁶

Shāh Walī-Ullāh mentions the celebration of the marriage of 'Alī and Fātima by some Muslims and regards it analogous to the Hindu celebration of the union of Krishna and Rādhā; he also regards several other features of Muharram display as derived from Hindu ceremonies.⁷

In the seventeenth century half-converts from Hinduism at Rajaur buried women alive with their dead husbands, in imitation of the Hindu practice of *satī*. Some of them, like some Rājput tribes, killed their infant daughters; others intermarried with the Hindus. Jahāngīr tried to suppress these practices among them.⁸ *Jawhar*, the Rājput practice of heroic mass suicide, was also practised by some Muslims.⁹ Prejudice against the re-marriage of widows inherited from Hinduism, was one of the main targets of attack by the reformist movement of the '*Mujāhidīn*' in the early nineteenth century.

Not all the superstitions in Indian Islam were of Hindu origin. For instance, visits to saints' tombs, a practice which especially resembled Hindu temple-worship, had its origins in Sūfī encouragement and was as common in the sixteenth century Ottoman empire as in Mughal India.¹⁰ Shiblī noticed the veneration of tombs was popular in the late nineteenth century¹¹ in Syria, at a time when it was under heavy attack in India. Nor was the traffic of superstition all one way. A number of Muslim superstitious

¹ Ja'far Sharīf, 46-47.

² Ibid. 95.

³ I am grateful to Mr. Burton-Page for making this suggestion.

⁴ Mrs. Meer Hassan 'Alī, 96 ff.

⁵ Ibid. 175-6.

⁶ Ibid. 372-4.

⁷ Shāh Walī-Ullāh, *al-Balāgh al-mubīn*, Lahore, 1890, 33-34.

⁸ Mu'tamīd Khān, *Iqbāl Nāma-i Jahāngīrī*, Calcutta, 1865, 170.

⁹ Mirzā Nāthan, *Bahārīstān-i Ghaybī*, i, 439-40, ii, 549-99.

¹⁰ cf. Sīdī 'Alī Reis, 3-5.

¹¹ Shiblī, *Safar Nāma*, 207.

practices imported from other countries of Dār al-Islam were adopted by various Hindu sects. Much animism, much superstition is common to all humanity. Certain superstitious practices in North African Islam have been traced by sociologists to Berber origins; curiously enough identical forms of animism and superstition made their appearance in India and have been attributed to Hindu influences. The two streams are largely unconnected, and have their common origin, perhaps, in the very nature of mass belief.

VI

AKBAR: HERETIC OR APOSTATE?

By far the most daring experiment in eclecticism made in Muslim India was by the Mughal Emperor Akbar (1556-1605) both at the personal and at the official level. Born in the strenuous period of his father Humāyūn's loss of the Indian empire and flight to Persia, Akbar did not receive the traditional education of a Mughal prince. He was almost illiterate. At the same time he was an intensely religious person, or rather a person desperately in search of a religion.

At first his approach to religion was a devoted, if superficial, acceptance of traditional orthodoxy and an exaggerated veneration for Chishtī saints, living and dead. Until 1579 he visited the tomb of Mu'in-al-dīn Chishtī at Ajmer almost every year,¹ and in 1567 he had travelled the whole distance on foot in thanksgiving for his conquest of Chitore²; two of his eldest sons were born at the house of Shaykh Salīm Chishtī so as to be under the influence of the saint's blessing.³

But by now Sūfism had lost its spiritual dynamism in India, and orthodoxy was waging a war of intolerance against the Alfī movements. The two Sūfī orders which penetrated deep into and revitalized Indian Islam in the seventeenth century, the Naqsh-bandī and the Qādirī, had not yet gathered any vital momentum.

After the death of Shaykh Salīm Chishtī in 1571 there was no spiritual guide of any calibre who could maintain a hold on the spiritually receptive mind of the emperor. Shaykh Tāj-al-dīn Ajodhanī, whom Akbar met in 1578 when he had already absorbed a great deal of eclecticism, was a heterodox Sūfī, deeply under the influence of Ibn al-'Arabī and 'Abd al-Karīm al-Jīlī. This contact, instead of restraining Akbar within the fold of traditional Islam, seems to have unintentionally smoothed his path to a heretical application of al-Jīlī's conception of the Perfect Man to himself.⁴

By far the most formidable messianistic influence was that of the

¹ 'Abdul Qādir Badāūnī, *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh*, Calcutta, 1868-9, ii, 49, and *passim*.

² *Ibid.* ii, 105.

³ *Ibid.* ii, 108-9, 120, 132.

⁴ *Ibid.* ii, 265.

Alfī (millennium) movements.¹ It was nearly a thousand years since the advent of the Prophet, and a belief was widespread in Muslim India that Islam needed rejuvenation. Its root must have been in a sense of frustration at the static condition of Muslim spirituality in India, which it was felt, could only be restored to vigour by one who possessed the extraordinary authority of an *imām* rather than that of a *walī*.² Sayyid Muhammad of Jaunpur who held out an 'invitation' (*d'awa*) in the first half of the sixteenth century, introduced messianism in Indian Islam by assuming the role of Mahdī, expected in traditional Islam to appear in the darkest days of the *umma* to reform it by his near-prophetic mission. The rise of the Mahdī of Jaunpur led to two significant developments, which in different ways came to exercise a powerful influence on the mind of Akbar. The first was the core of the millennium movement itself, the need for the rejuvenation of the True Faith by a person claiming near-prophetic status. The second was the sequence of events which followed the Mahdī's claim, the trend of reformism and liberalism in religion as represented by his followers like Shaykh Mubārak Nagorī, and the persecution³ of these 'innovators' by an orthodoxy, which happened to be represented at this time by corrupt and degenerate men,⁴ the Imperial Shaykh-al-Islām Makhdūm-al-Mulk and the ecclesiastical chief judge, Shaykh 'Abdul Nabī. Shaykh Mubārak and his two sons, refugees at the Imperial court from the ecclesiasts' inquisitorial wrath, soon became their rivals at court, and finally superseded them.⁵ By 1575 Makhdūm-al-Mulk and his rivals Shaykh 'Abdul Nabī were irretrievably in disgrace, and the House of Worship (*Ibādat Khāna*) built by Akbar for religious exercises in the Chishtī tradition, became the centre of rationalist investigation of the accepted religion itself and later the scene of a comparative study of all religions, and of discussions and polemics. It is interesting to read the verdict of Akbar on the orthodox '*ulamā*' of his court in his diplomatic apologia to 'Abdullāh Khān Uzbek in 1586; he accuses them of having twisted and misinterpreted the celestial message revealed by God through His prophet, and to have showed

¹ Blochmann, Introduction to Abu'l Fazl 'Allāmi, *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, Calcutta, 1927, i, p. xli.

² Abu'l Kalām Āzād, *Tadhkira*, Lahore, 1943, 131-2.

³ 'Allāmi, op. cit. (Jarrett), iii, 460-5; Blochmann, i, pp. xxix-xxx.

⁴ Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī, *Maktūbāt*, Lucknow, 1877, i, 47.

⁵ Badā'uni, ii, 198-9, 202, 255-62.

it to have a meaning other than the real one to assume a position of partnership in the government of the state.¹ Equally interesting is the lament of Badāūnī, the contemporary historian, who represents at a high emotional tension the apprehensions of the *ijma'* of traditional Sunnī Islam in India at that juncture: 'Time-servers and heretics found an opportunity to emerge from their ambush, urged on by wicked views and false doubts, and they showed falsehood in the form of truth, and evil in the garb of good, bewildering a monarch who was a fine evaluator and a seeker after truth, but was common-minded and illiterate and kept company with the pagan and the vulgar. Doubts accumulated in his mind and matters got out of control. The strong defences of the revealed law and religion broke down; and after five or six years hardly any trace of Islam was left in him.'² The assessment of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī is quite frank: 'Every evil that appeared in those days . . . was due to the wickedness of these evil 'Ulamā who have been a menace to mankind and to the word of God.'³

However, by 1578 Akbar was passing through a spiritual crisis which showed a shift from Sunnī orthodoxy towards a generalized eclecticism. The driving force of this trend was undoubtedly the intellectual curiosity of his close associate Abu'l Fazl, the younger son of Shaykh Mubārak Nagorī. From early youth, confesses Abu'l Fazl, 'my mind had no rest, and my soul felt itself drawn to the sages of Mongolia, or to the hermits of Lebanon; I longed for interviews with the Lāmās of Tibet or with the pādris of Portugal, and I would gladly sit with the priests of the Pārsis and the learned of the Zendavesta.'⁴

This ambition was gratified in the Emperor's House of Worship, where discussions were held with the representatives and missionaries of other religions, Hinduism, Jainism, Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism. Akbar's courtiers who took part in these discussions advanced Muslim heterodox or heretical views in their efforts to help him in his gropings for a religious solution of his own; indeed they stretched heresy to great lengths to save him from apostasy. Thus, Sharif Āmulī made the suggestion that Akbar was the restorer of the millennium and the lord of the age⁵; and a similar theory was advanced by Khwāja Mawlānā Shirāzī.⁶ As we

¹ 'Allāmī, *Maktūbāt*, Lucknow, 1863, 21.

² Badāūnī, ii, 255.

³ Sirhindī, *op. cit.* i, 47.

⁴ Blochmann, i, p. xxv.

⁵ Ibid. i, p. xli.

⁶ Badāūnī, ii, 287

have seen, Tāj-al-dīn Ajodhanī's preoccupation with the mystical doctrine of the Perfect Man led Akbar to apply it to himself. He then expected, if not from all visitors,¹ at least from the followers of his own creed, that they should prostrate themselves in his presence; this was an honour which the devout paid only to God, but references to stories of the Prophets by Ghāzī Khān Badakhshī² were brought forward in justification of Akbar's claim. Actually on this point Akbar needed very little by way of apology, for prostration before the monarch seems to have been a common practice under the Delhi Sultanate from Balban's time. It was also a common practice among Chishtī Sūfis.³

Iranian dualism was introduced to Akbar as it had been absorbed into heterodox Sūfism, by Shaykh Ya'qūb Kashmīrī,⁴ who strangely enough was the same mystic who initiated Akbar's religious antithesis Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī into the isolationist Muslim political thought of Sayyid 'Alī Hamdānī.⁵ Shī'ī views were pressed home by Mullā Muhammad Yazdī,⁶ who was later executed for declaring Akbar an apostate. A Hindu, Rājā Dīp Chandra of Majhela, argued that the very fact that the chapter on the cow was the first in the compiled version of the Qur'ān proved the sanctity of that animal.⁷

The Mughal emperor's mind was, in fact, moving in the same direction as that of Ikhnātum in ancient Egypt centuries earlier, towards a solar monotheism. At the same time *hom* or the sacred flame kept alive by the Hindu consorts of his harem, assumed the importance of the Zoroastrian temple-fire and was placed in the charge of Abu'l Fazl.⁸

Badāūnī reports that in 1578 the name of the Prophet came to be excluded from the Friday sermons,⁹ but it is remarkable that the so-called 'infallibility decree' which transferred all powers of interpretation and application of religious law from the hands of the 'ulamā to those of the emperor was issued on the authority of the Qur'ān and the traditions of the Prophet. It was based on the historical principle of Islamic *ijtihād* (speculation)¹⁰ and on *hadith* defining the position of the 'just ruler'. It described Akbar as the 'Sultān of Islam'. Moreover it laid down that an order

¹ 'Allāmī (Blochmann), i, 167-8.

² Baranī, 142; Amīr Hasan Sijzī, *Fatwā'id al-futūād*, Delhi, 1865, 119.

³ Badāūnī, ii, 256.

⁴ cf. Ikram, 150.

⁵ 'Allāmī (Blochmann), i, 157.

⁶ Badāūnī, ii, 261.

⁷ 'Allāmī (Blochmann), i, 157.

⁸ Abu'l Kalām Azād, 49 ff.

⁹ Ikram, *Rūd-i Kawthar*, 63.

¹⁰ Badāūnī, ii, 259.

¹¹ Ibid. ii, 268.

of the emperor would be binding on his subjects 'provided it did not go against any verse of the Qur'ān'.¹ In fact the 'infallibility decree' could have been issued with a clear conscience by the most pious of the Muslim caliphs.

Between 1579 and 1582 Akbar passed through the most critical years of his spiritual experiences. In 1581 he promulgated his *Divine Faith* (*Dīn-i Ilāhī*) which asserted reason as the basis of the approach to religion and prohibited sensuality, lust, misappropriation, deceit, slander, oppression, intimidation, and pride.² To these commandments, common to Islam and all other great religions, he added the Jain dislike of killing that which possesses life and the Catholic virtue of celibacy.³ Ten virtues were enjoined by the Divine Faith; nine of which were derived directly from the Qur'ān, while the tenth was a commonplace basis of all Sūfī thought and experience. These were, liberality, 'forbearance from bad actions and repulsion of anger with mildness', abstinence, freedom from violent material pursuits, piety, devotion, prudence, gentleness, kindness, attachment to God and purification of soul by yearning for God.⁴ The sect had no priestcraft.⁵ Neither in its exaggerated pre-occupation with light, sun and fire nor in its other principles of worship or ritual was there much which could place Akbar's heretical sect in a different category from other miscellaneous heresies within Islam.

The brunt of contemporary criticism seems to have been focused on the cult's indirect suggestion of extolling the emperor to a status of prophethood, or even of divinity.⁶ Akbar called himself the *Khalifa* (viceregent) of God; but this was a logical result of his self-identification with the Perfect Man, an extension to himself of Ibn al-'Arabī's familiar views.⁷ His disciples greeted each other with '*Allāh-u-Akbar*'⁸ the beginning of the normal Muslim call to prayer, with a mystic hint at the presence of the divine in the name of the emperor, pantheism in association with courtly flattery.

¹ Text of the 'infallibility decree' in Badā'ūnī, ii, 272; cf. F. W. Buckler, 'A new Interpretation of Akbar's Decree of 1579', *JRAS*, 1924, 596 ff.

² Muhsin Fānī, i, 83.

³ Ibid., loc. cit.

⁴ Ibid. i, 83-84.

⁵ Makhanlal Roychoudhury, *The Dīn-i Ilāhī*, Calcutta, 1941, 281.

⁶ Mirzā 'Azīz Koka's letter to Akbar in 'Ināyat Khān Rāsikh, *Ināyat Nama*, I.O. Pers. MS. 549, fos. 20b-21a; Mulla Sherī's satire, 'The King has this year claimed to be a prophet; God-willing next year he will be a god', quoted by Badā'ūnī, ii, 308-9; Badā'ūnī's remarks, ii, 211, 255-7, 260-2, 273-5, 286, 301, 305-8, 312, 324-5 and *passim*.

⁷ cf. Ibn al-'Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ al-hikam*, Eng. synoptical tr. by Khaja Khan, Madras, 1928, 6.

⁸ Badā'ūnī, ii, 356.

The return greeting '*jalla-jalāluhu*' contained the same flattering hint, as Jalāl-al-dīn was the emperor's name. But it was a common expression used by various Sūfī sects in *dhikr* recommended by Ibn al-'Arabī.¹ It may therefore be said that behind its rational premises and its stress on the ethical values which Islam enjoins as do other religions, there ran a pseudo-mystic, pseudo-Sūfistic cult of the personality of the emperor, meant not for the general public, but only for a few, the initiates whose number did not exceed eighteen—and even they were strictly ordered to confine this exaggerated spiritual homage to the emperor within the seclusion of the palace.²

Much of the rationalism of the sect, as distinct from its eclecticism, was of respectable Sunnī Muslim origin. It was in the tradition of Taftāzānī, whose followers, along with other Central Asian rationalists, sought refuge in India from the persecutions of 'Abdullāh Khān Uzbek.³ Most prominent among these was Fathullāh Shīrāzī who introduced into Akbar's court the dialectics of Dawānī, Sadr Shīrāzī and Mirzā Jān and broadly based the educational curriculum of the Empire on rationalistic lines.⁴ It is interesting to note that in a number of rationalist positions taken by Akbar *vis-à-vis* popular religious beliefs, such as the nature of Satan, jinns, and angels he foreshadows the critical attitude of Sayyid Ahmad Khān.⁵ His orthographical reforms and his inclination towards Persian at the expense of classical Arabic show an interesting resemblance to the policy of linguistic reorientation in modernist Turkey.⁶

Akbar himself does not seem to have taken his Divine Faith too seriously. It was in a way the emperor's spiritual sport. Though he admonished those whose criticism was fanatical and punished severely those who were subversive,⁷ he restrained many who wanted to be his disciples and often said 'Why should I claim to guide men before I myself am guided?'⁸ Only the persistent were initiated. The initiation ceremony held usually on Sunday, 'the day of the splendour of the sun'⁹ was a replica of the normal practice in

¹ Ibn al-'Arabī, op. cit. 5.

² Abu'l Kalam Azād, 303.

³ 'Allāmī (Blochmann), i, 168, 174.

⁴ Ghulām 'Alī Azād Bulgrāmī, *Ma'āthir al-karām*, I.O. Pers. MS. 1320, fo. 96a.

⁵ 'Allāmī (Jarrett), iii, 426; Badā'ūnī, ii, 273; cf. Sayyid Ahmad Khān, *Tahrir fi usul al-tafsir*, Agra, 1892, and his articles in *Tahdhib al-akhlaq*, ii, Lahore, 1896.

⁶ cf. Ziya Gökalp, *Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization*, Eng. tr. by Niyazi Berkes, London, 1959, 85.

⁷ 'Allāmī (Blochmann), i, 174.

⁸ Badā'ūnī, ii, 284, 319-20, 278 &c.

⁹ Ibid., loc. cit.

the theological schools, where after the completion of his course of study the disciple placed his turban at the feet of the master, who raised it and placed it back on the disciple's head. In much the same way the Sūfīs honoured their chosen disciples. According to Badāūnī the oath of initiation involved the disavowal of 'unreal and imitative Islam' (*Islām-i majāzi u taqlīdī*)¹; and the fourfold renunciation seems to have been based on the Sūfī tradition of the disciple being given by his preceptor the 'cap of fourfold renunciation' (*kulāh-i chahār tarkī*) to wear. On the question of imitation in religion Akbar based his argument on the logic of history: 'If imitation were commendable, the prophets would have followed their predecessors.'² But Badāūnī and the fanatics among his contemporaries referred to Akbar as Zalā al-dīn Akfar (the misleading one in religion and worst of all infidels).³ Badāūnī's own evidence, however, shows that even at the height of enthusiasm for the Divine Faith in 1580-2, a part of Akbar's split personality adhered faithfully to the traditional Islam of his youth. In 1580 he bestowed lands upon Muslim '*ulamā*'⁴; in 1581 Prince Daniyāl was sent on pilgrimage to Ajmer, accompanied by one of the elect of the Divine Faith, the poet Faizī⁵; and the same year on his way to crush the rebellion of his brother Hakim in Kabul, Akbar visited at Thanesar the Chishtī saint Shaykh 'Abdul Haqq Gangohī.⁶ By 1582 it seems that he had considerably reverted to the position of slightly superstitious Islam when he marched four miles on foot to pay homage to a stone, said to bear the impression of the footprint of the Prophet brought from the Hijāz by Abū Turāb, the leader of the Hajj; and Akbar and his nobles carried the stone in turn to bring it respectfully to the capital.⁷

To assess Akbar's position *vis-à-vis* Islam, i.e. to decide whether he was an apostate or merely the founder of a small heretical sect within Islam, it is necessary to take into consideration his famous letter to the ruler of Transoxiana, 'Abdullāh Khān Uzbek, though some allowance must be made for its diplomatic nature. This letter, drafted by Abu'l Fazl, outlines what was, at any rate for diplomatic purposes, Akbar's position in religious matters in relation of religion to the state. Akbar states that the basis of his religious faith has been that 'light-illuminating jewel, reason'. This would have

¹ Badāūnī, ii, 304.² 'Allāmī (Jarrett), iii, 427.³ Badāūnī, ii, 339⁴ Ibid. ii, 278, 287.⁵ Ibid. ii, 288.⁶ Ikram, 38⁷ Badāūnī, ii, 310-11; 'Alī Muḥammad Khān, *Mir'at-i Akmadī*, i, 138-9

been perfectly comprehensible in Transoxiana, which was then one of the main centres of Muslim rationalism. He then proceeds to argue that reason is the one criterion which can pronounce a judgement on the gross misinterpretations of the word of God by self-seeking fanatics whose ambitions are directed not towards the search of truth but towards wordly gain. This realization, says Akbar, led to a growth of curiosity in his mind and he began to study the nuances of the principles of faith, criticisms of the motives of the interpreters of the religious law, accounts of other ancient creeds and the reasons for differences of opinion between the 'ulamā during the last thousand years. Then in all humility he confesses himself to be an ordinary, insignificant mortal, a creature of the Almighty, a believer in His true Prophet, and a follower of the Qur'ān and the *hadīth*.¹

There are only two contemporary sources accusing Akbar of apostasy from Islam. One, is Badāūnī, about whom Akbar said that 'no sword could cut the jugular vein of his narrow mindedness'.² The other comprises the Jesuit priests, whose verdict has been effectively dealt with by a modern Hindu historian who observes: 'Akbar's liberal views and his religious curiosity could not be understood by those clericals who were accustomed to the horrors of the Inquisition on the Continent. Naturally they very often promised their reader the glad tidings of the impending conversion of the Mughal emperor only to confound him later by exhibiting him defending Islam in open debate with them.'³ It is significant that Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī, who blamed Akbar for failing to uphold the interests of the Muslims in India, of interfering with their right of freedom of worship and even of indirectly persecuting them, in short of failing them in his obligations as a Muslim ruler, nowhere accused him of apostasy.⁴ On the contrary, Shaykh Ahmad upheld the principle, which can be quite applicable to Akbar, that the Divine grace is merciful and forgiving in the case of Muslims who have adopted practices of the infidels, as indeed most of the Indian Muslims have done in ignorance, and that if even an iota of Islam remains in them, they will be saved.⁵

In the light of all this it is not difficult to interpret Akbar's famous statement: 'Formerly I persecuted men into conformity

¹ Allāmī, *Maktūbāt*, 11-26; B.M. Add. MS. 6548, fos. 36b-44b; B.M. Or. MS. 3482, fos. 283b-286b.

² Badāūnī, ii, 399.

³ Sri Ram Sharma, *A Bibliography of Mughal India*, Bombay, n.d., 136.

⁴ Sirhindī, i, 65, 82, 106.

⁵ Ibid. i, 327.

with my faith and deemed it Islam. As I grew in knowledge, I was overwhelmed with shame. Not being a Muslim myself it was unmeet to force others to become such.¹ Quite obviously he regards it contrary to Islam to force the Islamic faith on others, and anyone who did that, including himself, did not deserve the title of Muslim. For him true Islam meant tolerance and understanding and an extension of the human rights and privileges reserved in earlier Indo-Muslim political philosophy for Muslims alone, to all non-Muslims, including the rights of conversion and reconversion, promulgation of laws of marriage and laws against abduction, freedom of worship and construction of the houses of worship.²

In modern assessments of Akbar's religious views, European historians generally regard him as an apostate from Islam,³ while modern Hindu historians consider him a liberal Muslim.⁴ The difference of approach is interesting, for the Western assessment is based on the polemical position that Islam is incapable of liberalism, and since Akbar was a liberal he must have necessarily ceased to be a Muslim. The Hindu historians who wish to evolve a *modus vivendi* with Islam in India regard Islam as a liberal religion and Akbar as a good Muslim with some heretical views.

None of Akbar's eighteen followers seem to have taken Akbar's Divine Faith too seriously. Shaykh Mubārak Nāgori, who drafted the 'infallibility decree' and initiated Akbar into the Alfī heterodoxy occupied himself ceaselessly in theological studies and mystic dialectics, and wrote in his last years a four-volume exegesis of the Qur'ān.⁵ His son, the poet-laureate Faizī, who flattered Akbar by composing ghazals rhyming in 'Allah-u-Akbar', devoted a section in his *mathnawī Nal Daman*⁶ to deeply religious invocation to the Prophet, and wrote a laborious commentary on the Qur'ān, which avoids letters containing diacritics and is a remarkable *tour de force*. In the mind of Abu'l Fazl raged an unresolved conflict between his duties as a courtier and his conscience

¹ 'Allāmī, *Ā'in Akbarī* (Jarrett), iii, 429.

² Muhsin Fānī, i, 104.

³ Vincent A. Smith, *Akbar, the Great Mogul*, Oxford, 1927, 209-22, 237; Wolseley Haig in *The Cambridge History of India*, iv, 378 ff.; E. Wellesz, *Akbar's Religious Thought reflected in Mughal Painting*, London, 1952.

⁴ Makhanlal Roychoudhury, op. cit. 224-67; S. R. Sharma, *The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors*, Oxford, 1940; Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, Allahabad, 1936; also Ikram, op. cit. and Hikmet Bayur, 'L'Essai de réforme religieuse et sociale d'Ekbar Gürkanlı', *Belleten*, ii, (1938), 127-85.

⁵ Badā'ūnī, iii, 285.

⁶ Faizī, *Nal Daman* in I.O. Pers. MS. 269 (Lthé 1468), fos. 82-112.

as a Muslim, which reveals itself occasionally in his letters to 'Abdul Rahīm Khān-i-Khānān.¹ In one of these in the form of an invocation he addresses God: 'I do not know what I have done to be degraded by Thee from the position of being Thy creature to become a creature of self.'²

For reasons of state Akbar married Hindu women. This was not an innovation. Such marriages had been common since the appearance of the Arabs on the horizon of Sind. The innovation lay in his permitting the Hindu wives to continue in their faith, to import Hindu ritual and festivals; and in his sympathetically understanding some of their religious experience and absorbing it into his own.

A natural lack of prejudice against the Hindus, even a liking for them, seems to have been one of the unusual features of his youth, and one of the earliest records of it is a Turkish *ghazal* by Bayrām Khān, written obviously before 1560, in which the veteran statesman reproaches Akbar for giving preference to Hindus over Muslims as if he were a Hindu himself.³ Badāūnī confirms this.⁴ Still we have the evidence of a statement of Akbar himself that earlier in his reign he favoured forcible conversions to Islam; and in 1574 he changed the name of the Hindu holy city Prayāg to Allāhābād.⁵

There is not much evidence of any direct influence on Akbar of the thought and teaching of contemporary or near-contemporary Hindu reformers, though Hinduism had by now shed some of its exclusiveness. His study of Hinduism was not an isolated intellectual development. It remained a part of his general spiritual curiosity about many other religions. It is true that, in the particular atmosphere of his palace and his court, he had opportunities of greater familiarity with Hinduism, but it seems that only certain isolated features of Hindu ritual attracted him, and not the Hindu religion itself.

A number of the Hindu social ceremonies which he accepted, were a clear concession to his Hindu queens, such as *rākhi* (binding of a band on the arm),⁶ participation in the lamp-festival of *dīpāvalī*,⁷ which corresponded to *shab-i-bar'at* similarly celebrated

¹ B.M. Add. MS., 18, 879, fos. 174a-180a.

² 'Allāmī, *Maktūbāt*, 102.

³ Bayrām Khān, *The Persian and Turki Divans*, ed. E. Denison Ross, Calcutta, 1910, 84.

⁴ Badāūnī, ii, 161.

⁵ Ibid. ii, 176.

⁶ Ibid. ii, 65.

⁷ 'Allāmī, *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, (Blochmann), i, 216; Badāūnī, ii, 325.

by the Muslims, occasional wearing of the Hindu sacred thread (*zunnār*) to the horror of fanatics like Badāūnī¹ though in any case Sūfī poetry had for several centuries been equating it with the Muslim rosary, and submitting to a saffron caste-mark (*qashqa*)² being daubed on his forehead. But none of these practices had any place in the ritual of the Divine Faith.

A more lasting influence, which may have had its origin in the palace, and which certainly shows the influence of discussions with Hiravijaya and other Jain scholars was cow-protection which led to his partial vegetarianism, and an official policy of discouraging animal slaughter; but vegetarianism and abstention from animal slaughter are virtues commended by Sūfis.³ His practice of drinking Ganges water at home and during his travels, and the cooking of his food with water taken from the Jumna or the Chenāb 'mixed with a little Ganges water' had deeper historical roots, for the beneficial properties of the water of the Ganges were accepted long before him by Muhammad bin Tughluq, who used it for drinking even during distant campaigns; and there had long been a market for Ganges water, even in far off provinces like the Deccan, where it was bought by Muslims as well as Hindus.⁴ By far the most far-reaching influence of the palace was that of the *hom* (the sacred fire)⁵ kept by the Hindu princesses which seems to be the origin of what developed after a series of modifications into one of the dominant rituals of the Divine Faith.⁶

The influence of the Hindu nobles at the court seems to have been comparatively quite insignificant. Bīrbal, who according to Badāūnī misled the emperor⁷ can hardly be described as a serious Hindu, and he later became a convert to Akbar's Divine Faith. Neither the great Rājput chiefs allied to Akbar by marriage, nor Hindu administrators like Todar Mal seem to have opened a

¹ Badāūnī, ii, 260.

² Ibid. ii, 260, 322

³ 'Allāmī (Blochmann), i, 64, 115, 157, 164; Jahāngir, *Tuzuk*, (Rogers), 45; acean and Muslim mystics (Massignon, *Essai*, 43), Sūfis generally discouraged animal slaughter and the *abdāl* particularly abstained from it (Ghulām 'Alī Azād Bilgrāmī, op. cit. fos. 92-102).

⁴ 'Allāmī (Blochmann), i, 58; cf. Ibn Battūtah (Defrémery and Sanguinetti), iii, 96 regarding Muhammad bin Tughluq; Baldeaus, *A Description of East Indian Coast of Malabar and Coromandal*, 593; and P. K. Gode, 'Use of Ganges Water by Muslim Rulers from A.D. 1300-1800', *Annals of Srivenkateswara Oriental Institute*, Tirupati, 1940, i, 3.

⁵ Badāūnī, ii, 261.

⁶ 'Allāmī (Blochmann), i, 50-52, 163, 174.

⁷ Badāūnī, ii, 161, 261, 274.

Hindu vista for the emperor's mind, though it might be assumed that Hindu scholars like Purkhotam¹ might have been introduced to Akbar's House of Worship by the Hindu courtiers.

The doctrine of metempsychosis² is the main Hindu element which seems to have exercised the emperor's mind for a while, though, it found no place in the central structure of the Divine Faith. Here again the way had been paved by certain heterodox positions in the doctrines of the Shī'ī *ghulāt* (extremists)³ as well as by popular Sūfism.

The ritualistic contribution associated with the sun and fire in the solar monotheism of the Divine Faith was on the whole more Sūfistic⁴ and Zoroastrian than Hindu. Its Hindu ancillary, the recital of one thousand names of the sun⁵ seems in turn to have been influenced by a curious juxtaposition of the Sūfī emphasis on the Divine names and Akbar's preoccupation with the number 1,000—the symbol of the Alfī movements. It was a Jain scholar, Bhān Chandra Upadhyay, who composed a sun-cult manual, *Surya Sahasra Nāma* for the emperor⁶; and the poet Mullā Sherī, who had earlier satirized the emperor for his alleged apostasy, wrote a *mathnawī Hazār Shuā'* (A Thousand Sunbeams). The *darśana*,⁷ or the appearance of the emperor at sunrise for his subject to see and adore him, had an unmistakably Hindu origin, though the motive of political popularity is easily discernible. The prayers Akbar used to read in the praise of the sun were in Persian, Arabic, Turkish, and Hindi, 'among which was one prayer which is proper to the Hindus'.⁸

Every other element in Akbar's preoccupation with fire, light, and sun is of Zoroastrian or heterodox Muslim origin. In 1578–9 Akbar received a visit from the Pārsī *dastūr* of Gujarat and he later invited Zoroastrian scholars like Ardeshir and Āzar Kayvān from Persia.⁹ From this religion Akbar borrowed the institution of the celebration of New Year's Day (*navrūz*)¹⁰ as well as ideas for the secularization of the calendar.¹¹ Sūfī elements must have helped him towards his homage to the sun, such as the emphasis on the

¹ Badā'ūnī, ii, 256, 260–1.

² Ibid. ii, 273.

³ cf. E. G. Browne (1909), i, 310; ii, 195.

⁴ cf. R. A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, London, 1914, 14.

⁵ Badā'ūnī, ii, 322.

⁶ Sharma, op. cit. 27 ff.

⁷ Makhanlal Roychoudhury, 153, 160.

⁸ Muhsin Fānī, iii, 94.

⁹ Makhanlal Roychoudhury, 148–50; J. J. Modi, 'Parsis at the Court of Akbar', *JAS* (Bombay), xxi, 1904, 69.

¹⁰ Badā'ūnī, ii, 260.

¹¹ 'Allāmī (Jarrett), ii, 30.

destructive glory of light in the Suhrawardiya order, the constant use of the imagery of sun in Rūmī's *Diwān-i Shams-i Tabrīz*, and the exaltation of the Divine attribute *jalāl*, which was Akbar's own name, regarding the sun as its symbol. "The fire of the sun is the torch of God's sovereignty."¹

Abu'l Fazl has mentioned in detail the fire and sun rituals practised in the Divine Faith. The hours of Akbar's religious devotion or 'self-examination' were the sunrise, the noon, the sunset, and midnight. In addition, at a particular hour in the afternoon, in deference to the declining sun he dismounted from his horse if he was riding or was awakened from sleep if asleep.² These five daily occasions of 'self-examination' are really the solar versions of the orthodox Muslim hours of prayer.

Summing up, an analysis of Akbar's Divine Faith shows a surprising indifference to Hinduism, at a period when Hinduism itself was on the one hand cautiously borrowing from Islam to fortify itself against it, and on the other experimenting in syncretism at the popular level. This is even more surprising in view of his association with the Brahmins, Purkhotam, and Devī, his inquiry into the Hindu articles of faith, his interest in Yoga and in the Indian interpretation of the doctrine of metempsychosis and his intellectual curiosity about Hindu civilization and literature in general. It has been suggested by some modern historians that Akbar's eclecticism was in some way related to the syncretism of Kabīr and others and Hindu legends still survive of his long interview with the blind poet Sūrdās, of his forty days' discussion with Dādū, and of his putting Tulsīdās in prison and later releasing him³; but a careful examination of the Divine Faith would show it to be the very antithesis of Kabīr Panth and such other movements. It was imperial and aristocratic, whereas the other movements were popular and demotic; Akbar created new rituals whereas Kabīr discarded even the old ones; there is no hint in the Divine Faith of the identification of Allah with Rāma or Krishna as in some popular movements of Bhakti. The discussions in the House of Worship do not seem to have left any lasting impression of Hindu religious thought on Akbar's mind. Despite his liberalism, the resurgent upheaval in orthodox Hindu creativity, as manifested in the poems of Tulsīdās looked at him, his court and his Hindu nobles with mistrust, and

¹ Allāmi (Blochman), 1, 50

² Ibid. 50, 161

³ Roychoudhury, 140, Sharma, 21; Tara Chand, 165; Orr, op. cit. 56-57.

sought refuge in the cult of Rāma.¹ The Hindu nobles were more distrustful of the Divine Faith than Muslims, and out of the eighteen converts to the imperial heresy, only one, the not-too-serious Birbal, was a Hindu. Rāja Todar Mal remained to the last an orthodox Hindu. Rāja Bhagwāndās was one of those nobles who strongly opposed, for reasons of state, the emperor's wish for the large-scale propagation of the Divine Faith; and his son Rājā Mān Singh, for whom Akbar had a great regard, when invited by him to join the elect in 1587, answered that he did not mind conversion to Islam, though he would prefer to remain a Hindu, but that he knew of no other acceptable religion.

Akbar's liberal treatment of the Hindus was no doubt influenced by his eclecticism, but in its historical sequence it was a further development of the policies of some of his predecessors on the thrones of Delhi, Kashmir, and the Deccan. In abolishing the poll-tax (*jizya*) he followed the policy of Sultan Zayn-al-'Ābidīn of Kashmir. There was no legal sanction on the basis of the *shari'a* for the levy of pilgrimage tax on the Hindus or other non-Muslims. Akbar abolished these taxes fairly early in his reign while he was still an orthodox, practising Muslim. The abolition of *zakāt* (the religious tax on Muslims) later in his reign was a much more unorthodox measure, showing an attitude so openly opposed to that of the orthodox caliphs Abū Bakr and 'Alī; but Akbar's decision, though an innovation (*bid'a*) in the eyes of orthodox Muslims, was a logical consequence of his abolition of *jizya*. He could not go on taxing the Muslims because they were Muslims, when he had ceased to tax Hindus because they were Hindus. His ordinance made the simple excuse that the country was prosperous and the treasury was full and the official collection of *zakāt* had become unnecessary.² This, of course, did not prevent pious Muslims from paying *zakāt* directly to the poor as a matter of religious duty.

In permitting Hindus converted to Islam to revert to their ancestral faith, he, like his predecessor Sultan Zayn-al-'Ābidīn, was acting on the authority of Qur'ān: 'Let there be no compulsion in religion.' He interfered with what he considered unjust in the Hindu religion, such as *satī*, on which he imposed restrictions.³ He introduced a series of marriage law reforms which interfered more with Hindu than Muslim practices, such as the discouragement of

¹ Tulsīdās, *Kavitāvalī*, Benares, 1923, 223, 226, 247.

² cf. Sijzi, 95.

³ 'Allāmī, *Maktūbāt*, 67-68.

⁴ Sharma, 30.

marriages and permission for the remarriage of widows. On the other hand he forbade marriage between cousins permitted by Hindu law.¹

In the patronage of Hindu arts and sciences, and in sponsoring translations from Sanskrit into Persian he developed to a point of synthesis the intellectual policy of Muhammad bin Tughluq, Firūz Tughluq and some rulers of Bengal and the Deccan. His educational policy, which raised the study of the natural sciences to the same level as the theological, was in the tradition of Sikandar Lodī, and it opened the way for a greater participation by Hindus in Muslim secular intellectualism.² His innovation, perhaps, was the introduction of a course in Sanskrit for those who wanted to take it.³

Appointing Hindus along with Muslims to the highest offices in the land, without any discrimination, he carried to its conclusion an administrative policy initiated by Mahmūd of Ghazni, organized by Sher Shāh Sūrī and continued in general after him by his successors including even Aurangzeb. In the field of state-craft the policy yielded rich fruit. Akbar had also an excellent Muslim argument in its favour in his diplomatic apologia, the *Badāʾunāma* of Ḥusain Khān Uzbek, whom he informs that those Hindu forces had been in persistent opposition and rebellion but have now been completely won over and integrated into his own empire, which were spreading Islamic rule to the farthest corners of India.⁴

¹ *Amīn, Akbar (Jarrett)*, ii, 375-6, 380, iii, 398; *Badāʾunāma*, ii, 306, 336, 356; *of Husain, Medieval Indian Culture*, London, 1959, 90-93.

² *Amīn (Blochmann)*, i, 288.

⁴ *Allāmī Maktūbāt*, 15.

VII

THE NAQSHBANDĪ REACTION

Sūfī order of the Naqshbandīs which became the spearhead Islamic reaction against Akbar's heresy, was a comparative newcomer to India. It was closer to orthodoxy than any other Sūfī order. It initiated a policy of close association with orthodox members of the court to neutralize the effects of the imperial heresy, reviving the tradition of the Suhrawardīs. The Naqshbandī movement gathered momentum on the arrival in India of Khwājā Bāqī-billāh, in the last years of Akbar's reign, at a time when after Abu'l-ʿAlī's death a strong orthodox nucleus of noblemen had gained power in administration. These included Akbar's foster-brother Mirza ʿAzīz Koka, the trusted imperial *bakhshī* Shaykh Farīd and the governor of Lahore Qilich Khān. These, and even the liberal-minded Mirza Abdur Rahīm Khān-i Khānān, who was also alive to the intellectual beauty of Hindu poetry, came under the influence of Khwājā Bāqī-billāh and of orthodox divines like Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir Dehlavī. These nobles and especially Shaykh Farīd¹ held sway imperceptibly, but firmly, the citadel of orthodoxy in Muslim India.

His Naqshbandī mission reached its culmination in the life and work of Bāqī-billāh's most distinguished disciple, Shaykh Ahmad Raza Khān. His scholarship had its firm roots in orthodox theology, and in addition he had received training in the disciplines of the Shāfiʿī, the Suhrawardī, and the Qādirī orders. But he finally chose for himself the Naqshbandī path with its Central Asian emphasis on simple conformity to religion and its capacity to meet the challenge of contemporary heresies. With these latter he was quite familiar because of his contact with Abu'l-ʿAlī and Faizī, who respected him for his learning.²

His first concern was to restore in Indian Islam the prestige of the Prophet, which had been weakened by the Mahdī of Jaunpur's

¹For the life of Shaykh Farīd (Murtuzā Khān Bukhārī) see Shāh Nawāz Khan, *Maʿāthir al-umaraʾ*, Calcutta, 188-90, ii, 633-41.
²Muhammad Hāshim Badakhshānī, *Zubdat al-maqāmāt*, Cawnpore, 1890.

messianic Alfī movement, by veiled hints at Akbar's near-prophetic status, and the dialectics of Abu'l Fazl and others implying that the belief in the Prophet was not a necessary condition for true belief in God. In refutation of this trend he wrote his first considerable work, *Ithbāt-al-nubūwat*. Simultaneously he used the medium of *Maktūbāt*, letters written to individuals for propaganda, a technique already highly developed in India by Shaykh Yahyā Mānerī, for the general propagation of his religious, mystical and political views, directed towards the rehabilitation of Islam in India. These letters contained an outspoken denunciation of Akbar's policies, after his death.

'The monarch is to the world (state)', he wrote to Shaykh Farīd, 'as the heart is to the body. If the heart remains pure, so does the body and vice versa. The purity or impurity of the state depends upon its ruler. You are aware of what the Muslims have suffered in the previous reign. In former periods of decadence the plight of Muslims had not exceeded the point that they followed their religion, while unbelievers followed their own . . . but in the previous (Akbar's) reign the infidels forced pagan practices on this Muslim land, and the Muslims were prevented from observing their religious commandments.'¹

On the accession of Jahāngīr (1605) he pinned his hopes on the new emperor and advised his powerful disciples at the imperial court to realize their responsibility to impress upon the new sovereign's mind the necessity of moulding the state on the basis of religious law, to introduce to him pious and selfless '*ulamā* for the guidance of his mind and to be wary of self-seeking *mullahs* who had been primarily responsible for the religious disaster of the previous reign.'²

But before Shaykh Ahmad could win Jahāngīr, or for that matter the spiritual élite of Muslim India to his views, there was an element of mystical egoism in his own utterances which deeply disturbed them. In fact Shaykh Ahmad, who brought the Alfī movements in India to an end, was also their product and in a way their climax. Whereas he avoided such extravagant messianic claims as those of Akbar or the Mahdī of Jaunpur, his egoism sought a more esoteric mystical formula in such pronouncements as his hint to have overreached the spiritual stage of Abū Bakr,³

¹ Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī, *Maktūbāt*, 3 vols, Lucknow, 1877, i, 65.

² Ibid. i, 65, 70 and *passim*.

³ Ibid. i, 15.

the first caliph of Islam and the fountainhead, according to the Naqshbandis, of their order,¹ or his claim to have elevated the mystical 'reality of Muhammad' to the 'stage of Abraham'. For these pronouncements he was admonished by Khwājā Bāqī-billāh, imprisoned by Jahāngīr,² and denounced by fellow Sūfī-'ulamā like 'Abdul Haqq Dehlavī.³ His later apologies⁴ still left him open to the charge that he had made public through his widely-circulated letters those esoteric experiences which must not be revealed by Sūfis under any circumstances.

In his implied assertion to be the *mujadid* (renovator) of Islam in its second millenium⁵ he was much more successful. The Alfi movements had prepared the mind of the *ijmā'* in that direction, and Shaykh Ahmad regarded the second millenium of Islam not as an era of its decline, but of its renaissance.⁶ On the Sūfī level he transformed the concept of a *qutb* to that of *qayyūm*, later defined by his followers as the saint 'who held sway over all names, principles, expressions and qualities, who governed the will of all worshippers of God and the form of their worship, and was an intermediary between the worshippers and the Worshipped One', and although he did not himself claim to be a *qayyūm* his later followers regarded him and his two successors as having that rank, which to the orthodox 'ulamā seemed heretical as it suggested for the *qayyūm* the powers not only of prophethood but also of divinity.⁷

Chastened in Jahāngīr's prison, Shaykh Ahmad emerged from it more docile.⁸ The emperor bestowed gifts on the saint and mentioned his name with increasing respect in his autobiography. The saint repeated to him the maxim, 'religious law thrives under the sword' in a letter in which he congratulated him on expanding the 'army of Islam'.⁹ It is difficult to estimate the exact, direct or indirect, influence of Shaykh Ahmad on Jahāngīr, but there is no doubt that the easy-going emperor was by no means the pagan depicted by Sir Thomas Roe and other European chroniclers.¹⁰ We have the evidence of his own autobiography that he held Muslim

¹ Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī, *Maktūbāt*, 3 vols., Lucknow, 1877, i, 231.

² Jahāngīr, *Tuzuk* (ed. Syud Ahmad), 272-3.

³ Text in Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, *Hayāt-i Shaykh 'Abdul Haqq Dehlavī*, Delhi, 1953, 312-44.

⁴ Ibid. ii, 14-15, 17.

⁵ Ibid. i, 208-12, 305.

⁶ Sirhindī, i, 190-202; ii, 174.

⁷ Jahāngīr, 308, 370.

⁸ Sirhindī, iii, 82.

⁹ Ikram, op. cit., 191-2.

¹⁰ *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe*, 313-14; Croyat, *Early European Travellers to India*, 147-8; cf. Ishwari Prasad, *Muslim Rule in India*, Allahabad, 1930, 526; S. R. Sharma, *The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors*, Oxford, 1940, chapter on Jahāngīr.

saints and divines in great esteem,¹ and if he also visited Hindu sanyāsis like Jādrūp it was because he considered they had mastered 'the science of Vedānta, which is the science of Sūfism'.² He obviously considered participation in Hindu festivals or ceremonies like *śivarātri* and *rākhi-bandhan*³ as sound political tradition, but also revived celebration of Muslim festivals like Muharram.⁴ On the other hand, he was contemptuous of Hindu image-worship.⁵ Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī seems to have been quite satisfied with the emperor's personal religious beliefs,⁶ though he records his concern over the fate of Muslims, demolition of mosques and interference in freedom of worship by Hindus⁷—presumably in far-flung parts of the Empire or rural areas far removed from the garrison towns, where the imperial writ does not seem to have run effectively. Shaykh Ahmad regards the king to be the upholder of the religious law by his sword. His relation to the state is like that of heart to the body. It is binding on the Muslim nobles to give him correct advice to uphold the laws of Islam in the land. In their turn the nobles owe their position and security to the Muslim population in the state.⁸

He regards Islam and *kufr* (infidelity; in the context of India, Hinduism) as opposites, antithetical and therefore mutually exclusive. The two opposites cannot integrate; one can thrive only at the expense of the other.⁹ If the unbelievers find an opportunity they will reconvert Muslims to Hinduism or kill them off. It should therefore be realized that the honour and security of Islam is dependent upon the humiliation of the unbelievers and their faith. He who holds infidels in affection and esteem, or keeps company with them, dishonours his own religion; a good Muslim should avoid contact with non-believers even in daily business. Shaykh Ahmad, however, sharply distinguishes this religio-social separatism from Hindu caste-system. The 'uncleanness of the infidels' he points out, is one of false belief and therefore not external but internal.¹⁰

He considers it binding on the Muslims to hold the infidels and their idols in contempt.¹¹ Innovations—presumably those inclined

¹ Jahāngīr (Rogers), 58, 189-90, 249, 256, 428.

² Ibid. 356.

³ Ibid. 246, 361.

⁴ F. Guerrero, *Jahāngīr and the Jesuits* (Eng. tr. Payne), London, 1930, 75.

⁵ Jahāngīr (Rogers), 254.

⁶ Sirhindī, i, 70, 76; ii, 161, *passim*.

⁷ Ibid. ii, 161-2.

⁸ Ibid. ii, 121.

⁹ Ibid. i, 165-6.

¹⁰ Ibid. iii, 36-37; cf. i, 165.

¹¹ Ibid. i, 339.

towards eclecticism—could be tolerated in the days of the glory of Islam, but not in the age of its (political) decline.¹ Here regards *jizya* not as the poll-tax for the protection of *dhimmis*, but as an institution symbolizing their humiliation.²

Within Islam his concern was to close the breach between the religious law (*shari'a*) and the mystical doctrines of the Sūfīs (*tarīqa*), actually to weld them together in a single synthesis. Mystical experience, in his view, should be fully in accord with religious experience, otherwise it would be tainted with heresy or personal fallacy.³ The *Shari'a*, he regarded as all-comprehensive, embracing all the realities of this world and the next and all the possibilities of true mystical experience.⁴ It has two appearances, an external and a real one. The external appearance is based on whatever is unambiguously enjoined in the Qur'ān and the *sunnah*; it is the sphere of the knowledge of the formal '*ulamā*' (*'ulamā-i zawāhir*). Whatever has been left ambiguous and unexplained in the Qur'ān (*mutashābihāt*) is the sphere of the speculation of the profound '*ulamā*' (*'ulamā-i rāsikhīn*).⁵ These '*ulamā*' who follow the lead of the Prophet are superior to the mystics who follow the lead of the saints, as prophethood is superior to sainthood.⁶ Indeed, the observance of a single religious commandment is more profitable for emancipation from sensual desires than 'a thousand years' of self-imposed penance or spiritual concentration; and from this point of view all the exercises of Hindu Yoga are an absolute waste.⁷

Shaykh Ahmad's distrust of heterodox Sūfism was because of its susceptibility to those pantheistic or monistic notions which were common to the esoteric experience of Hinduism and Islam and which, leading to such syncretisms as that of Kabīr at the popular level and of Akbar at the aristocratic, threatened, in his view, the disintegration of Islam in India and its gradual absorption into Hinduism. He therefore subjugates the mystic experience of the Muslim and contains it within the strict confines of the religious experience. From this religio-mystical complex it becomes easy to expel any heterodox elements which may prove sensitive to the pull of Bhakti movement: "To regard Rām and Rahīm identical is the height of folly. The Creator and the creature cannot be identical. . . . Before the birth of Rāma and Krishna no one called God by

¹ Surhindī, ii, 38–39.

² Ibid. i, 50, 54.

³ Ibid. i, 69.

⁴ Ibid. i, 166, 193.

⁵ Ibid. ii, 31.

⁶ Ibid. i, 18, 40.

⁷ Ibid. i, 325.

these names. How could he assume these names after their birth?' ¹ Though he did believe the Divine grace could not have left India without prophets to guide it, he suggested perhaps they came and went unheeded.² Hinduism, as he saw it, was not only anti-theetical to, but also the arch-enemy of, Islam, and therefore he urged Muslims to curse infidel practices, for cursing is the proclamation of enmity.³

Although he does not say it in so many words it seems obvious that his strong criticism of Ibn al-'Arabī's formulation of the doctrine of ontological monism was due to dangerous pantheistic resemblances with Vedānta, while its resilience could lend itself to extravagant heresies within Islam. But then for several centuries all the Sūfī orders had fully assimilated into their systems the influence of ontological monism (*wahdat al-wujūd*) as explained by Ibn al-'Arabī, and a rejection of it involved a revolution in the structure of Indian Sūfism itself. Shaykh Ahmad had himself followed the same path earlier and had regarded all religions as leading to God.⁴ The revolution he brought about in Indian Sūfism negated this position completely. He would not accept any 'allegorical' interpretation or any mystic deviation when the Qur'ānic text was clear on a point: 'We believe in the verse (of Qur'ān), not the *fass* (*Fusūs al-Hikam*); in the light of the victories of Medina (Qur'ān), we may ignore the Victories of Mecca (Ibn al-'Arabī's *al-Futūhāt al-Makkiyāh*).'⁵

According to him monism could be believed in by the Sūfīs in two ways, as ontological or as phenomenological (as *wahdat al-wujūd* or as *wahdat al-shuhūd*). According to ontological monists God alone is existent and all else non-existent. All His 'flashes' and 'appearances' they regard as One-in-all and All-in-one. Therefore the doctrine of ontological monists leads to absolute knowledge ('*ilm al-yaqīn*'). But, argues Shaykh Ahmad, as this doctrine negatives all existence except that of God, it is in conflict with reason and religion.⁶ On the other hand, he argues, phenomenological monism which believes in simple unitarianism and leads to true knowledge ('*ayn al-yaqīn*') presents no such conflict. It has to be realized, he says, that God is existent and is unique (*yagūna*) in His self (*dhāt*), qualities (*sifāt*) and actions (*af'āl*); and in no way any created object can be a part of Him. Qualities and actions of

¹ Sirhindī, 1, 171.

² Ibid. i, 41.

³ Ibid. 1, 171-2, 284.

⁴ Ibid. 1, 121-2.

⁵ Ibid. 1, 325.

⁶ Ibid. 1, 57, 410-14.

His creatures, whose existence has been possible because of His will cannot be compared to His qualities and actions which are unique. God's creation is His reflection; and reflection should not be confused with reality. Therefore it will be wrong to say: 'All is God' (*hama ūst*); it will be more correct to say 'All is from Him' (*hama azūst*). Man's real vocation is that of the creature of God; and creatureliness is the highest stage of saintliness. A creature must not venture to regard himself as anything higher than a creature; and those Sūfis who have committed excesses in claiming to transcend this relationship have done so in flashes of mystical ecstasy, which are nevertheless reprehensible for their lack of consonance with religious precepts.¹

This doctrine of phenomenological monism he claimed to be dynamic whereas the ontological monism of Ibn al-'Arabī and his Indian and Turkish commentators had been static. Its slogan was not 'God is everything', but 'God is the Guide (*Hādī*)'. The mystic relationship it enjoined between man and God was that of love and not that of union (*wasl*); the creature was not an infinitesimal manifestation of the Divine. In the Creator-creature relationship One was *with* the other. It was wrong of the gnostic to cry out 'I am Truth' (I am God, *ana'l-Haqq*). The mystic cry of the lover of God should be 'I am His creature' (*anā-'abduh*).²

So far the criticisms of Ibn al-'Arabī had been either from the rationalists' premises or from the purely orthodox point of view. Never before had an alternative system been built up within Indian Sūfism, and never before in India had Sūfism been brought so close to the religious core of Islam. It is not surprising, therefore, that Shaykh Ahmad's doctrine of phenomenological monism had such a revolutionary impact on Indian Islam. It re-diverted its various streams, orthodox and esoteric into a single channel; it relaxed the tension between the religious law and mystical experience; it resolved whatever conflict there was between the Sūfis and the 'ulamā uniting them in a single synthesis of solidarity. It is also not surprising that Shaykh Ahmad's influence on Islam outside India, especially in Central Asia and the eastern provinces of the Ottoman empire was considerable.³

¹ Sirhindī, i, 57, 311, 316; ii, 6-7; cf. Burhan Ahmad Faruqī, *Mujaddid's Conception of Tawhīd*, Lahore, 1940.

² Sirhindī, i, 38.

³ Mustafa Sabrī, *Ma'wāqif al-'aql wa'l-'ilm wa'l-'ālim*, Cairo, 1950, iii, 275-99.

After secession from the firmly established tradition of ontological monism it was a much easier task to ward off the incursions of the rationalists. To make the orthodoxy of Indian Islam secure on this front, all that Shaykh Ahmad had to do was to re-affirm the position taken up by al-Ghazzālī *vis-à-vis* al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīna, regarding them as outside the pale of Islam, and to repeat forcefully the Ash'arite denunciation of the Mu'tazilites.¹

The *ijmā'* endorsed his title of the 'renovator of the second millennium' (*mujaddid-i Alf-i thānī*), and there is no doubt his writings and his influence checked the process of Indian Islam's disintegration into syncretic heresies. He re-integrated the formalistic dynamics of religion and the inner vitality of deep mysticism. His is perhaps the most distinct contribution of Indian Islam to the religio-mystical thought of Islam in general. But, on the other hand his easy victory, especially the one against the rationalists, gave to Indian Islam the rigid and conservative stamp it bears today. In a way he was the pioneer of what modern Islam is today in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent—isolationist, self-confident, conservative, deeply conscious of the need of a reformation but distrustful of innovations, accepting speculation in theory but dreading it in practice, and insular in its contact with other civilizations. This is not surprising because at one time or other the intellectual leaders of modern Muslim India, Sayyid Ahmad Khān,² Iqbāl³ and Abu'l Kalām Āzād,⁴ widely different though their religious and political solutions have been, had come under the influence of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī.

The professionalization of the theologian in Muslim India had been one of the contributory causes of the heretical neurosis of the sixteenth century which made the advent of the Alfī movements possible. A reaction against these movements led to a movement of re-awakening and re-assessment among some of the 'ulamā. The period of Akbar's heresy coincided with a movement among the more pious 'ulamā to migrate to the Hijāz, not necessarily as a reaction to his heresy. These travels might have been influenced by much deeper reasons, perhaps the instinctive spiritual necessity of renewal of contact with Islam's cognizable centre, and a desire to escape from the chaos of spiritual bankruptcy in Muslim India.

¹ Sirhindī, i, 43, 315-23.

² Sayyid Ahmad Khān, *Namīqa dar bayān-i tasawwuf-i shaykh*, 1852.

³ Iqbāl, *Reconstruction*, 182, 187.

⁴ Abu'l Kalām Āzād, *Tadhkira*, Lahore, n.d., 131-2.

Eminent among the immigrant Indian 'ulamā in Hijāz were Sayyid 'Alī Muttaqī, and his successor 'Abdul Wahhāb Muttaqī, both scholars of *hadīth* at a time, when because of the studies of Ibn Hajar, Mecca had become a centre of studies in that science.

'Abdul Haqq Dehlavī (1551-1642) who went to Hijāz in 1587 was more definitely making a spiritual escape from the court of Akbar and the company of such sceptics as Faizī,¹ though he was dissuaded from permanently residing in Mecca by his teacher 'Abdul Wahhāb Muttaqī.² 'Abdul Haqq was essentially a theologian though he had received mystical training in the Qādirī as well as the Naqshbandī order. In the latter he also, like Shaykh Ahmad was a disciple of Bāqī-billāh, and like both of them, but with a much more traditional bias he also addressed himself to the mission of religious rehabilitation, in correspondence with the orthodox élite of the court, especially Shaykh Farīd.³ On Jahāngīr's accession he wrote a short treatise *Risāla-i Nūrāniya-i Sultāniya* (Nūr al-dīn being Jahāngīr's name) on the duties of a Muslim monarch according to the canon law. He lived to see Shāh Jahān's accession for whom he collected forty traditions of the Prophet on the duties and responsibilities of a good ruler.

He wrote on almost every theological science and may be regarded as by far the most outstanding Muslim theologian in India before Shāh Wali-Ullāh; whom he forecasts in his exegetical work as well as a more synthetic study of *hadīth* based especially on the *Mishkāt*. From him begins the Indian Muslim tradition of the scholarship of *hadīth* which was to culminate in the works of Walī-Ullāh and the *Ahl-i hadīth* of the late nineteenth century.

¹ Nizami, 242-4, 345-77.

² 'Abdul Haqq Dehlavī, *Zād al-Muttaqīn*, B.M. Or. MS. 217, fos. 10b-41b, 483-134b.

³ 'Abdul Haqq Dehlavī, *al-Makātīb wa'l-rasā'il*, Delhi, 1879, 73-77, 83-91, 99-102, 108-13, 160-66; also his letter in *Kalimāt-i tayyibāt*, 82; Nizami, 136-7, 142, 232-36.

VIII

DĀRĀ SHIKOH AND AURANGZEB

(1) *The Speculative Syncretism of Dārā Shikoh*

IN the middle of the seventeenth century the spiritual life of Muslim India reached a point of crisis. The tradition of Akbar's eclecticism on the one hand, and of the orthodox reaction of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī and 'Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlevī on the other had been developing antithetically, each accumulating an intellectual momentum to such an extent, that Muslim India could hardly avoid the choice of one of them to the exclusion of the other. This tension reflected itself in the imperial household, as everywhere else in the Muslim society of India at that juncture. With Dārā Shikoh, Akbar's imperial eclecticism took the form of an intellectualized magical syncretism, in the case of his brother and rival to the throne Aurangzeb, the theological emphasis of 'Abdul Haqq Dehlevī found its exponent in terms of political power and establishmentarian rehabilitation of religious law.

The tension which became polarized in the opposite outlooks of these two sons of Shāh Jahān was between esoteric heterodoxy and conformist orthodoxy. Through them the Muslim *umma* (consensus), which at that stage had gained some knowledge of Hinduism, exoteric as well as esoteric, divided and decided its ultimate spiritual and political future, whether to merge syncretically into Hinduism, or to preserve its identity through a re-orientation towards orthodox formalism and religio-political particularism.

Dārā Shikoh began as an orthodox mystic of the Qādiriyyah order, whereas Aurangzeb had an unmystical mind. Dārā Shikoh was a disciple of the Qādirī Sūfīs, Miyyān Mīr (d. 1635) and Mullā Shāh Badkshī (d. 1661), the latter endorsed his achievement in Sūfī discipline and called him 'the ruler of the realm of heart' (*sāhib-qirān-i dil*), though mysticism does not seem to have sublimated Dārā Shikoh's practical life much.¹ His earlier writings between 1640 and 1646, confined themselves to the doctrinal or hagiological

¹ Tara Chand, 'Dārā Shikoh and the Upanishads', *IC*, xvii (1943), 397-413.

studies of the established canons of Sūfism. In this phase his orthodoxy seems to have been as irreproachable as that of Aurangzeb. The major literary influence on Dārā Shikoh in this phase, was that of Jāmī, whom he imitated in his verse. His *Safinat al-awliyā*, an authoritative work on Sūfī hagiography is modelled on Jāmī's *Nafahāt al-uns*, and his doctrinal *Tarīqat al-Haqīqat* on Jāmī's *Lawā'ih*.

His eclectic studies received no discouragement from his Qādiri preceptors, whose order was passing through a very liberal phase at that time in the sub-continent. So on the one hand Dārā Shikoh associated with well-known Muslim Sūfīs like Muhibb-Ullāh and Lisān-Allāh Rustakī, on the other his spiritual curiosity urged him to seek the company of Hindu mystics like Jagannāth Misrā and Bābālāl Vairāgi. The second phase of Dārā Shikoh's creative writing (1650-5) is devoted mainly either to the translation and syncretic interpretation of Hindu scriptures or to an identification of the Hindu mysticism with the Islamic. He had the *Yoga-Vasīṣṭa* (*Yog-Bashisht*) re-translated into Persian, though he had read its earlier translation *Tuhfat al-majālis* done by Sharīf Qutb-i Jahānī. In 1653-5 he translated the *Bhagavad Gita* into Persian, probably with the help of Hindu pandits. By far the most significant and the most controversial of his translations was *Sirr-i Akbar*, Persian rendering of fifty-two Upanishads, in which he faithfully followed the commentary of Śaṅkarācārya.

In his introduction to *Sirr-i Akbar*, Dārā Shikoh informs us that his spiritual quest, which took him in the direction of the comparative study of Hindu scriptures, began in 1641 when he was absorbed in the exegetic problem of understanding what appears in the Qur'ān as *marmūz* (mysterious, symbolic) in the light of other scriptures like the Old and the New Testament.¹ Since the Qur'ān plainly affirms that no land has been left without prophetic or scriptural guidance,² it follows that Hindu India, which abounds in monists and monotheists, must have had similar true and divinely ordained scriptures, which would of course be the Vedas and the Upanishads. The mysteries which have been left unexplained in the Qur'ān, or mysteriously hinted at, he argued, can therefore be studied in the Upanishads which relate them openly. The Upanishads are thus the 'concealed scripture' (*kutūb-i*

¹ Dārā Shikoh, *Sirr-i Akbar*, B.M. Add. MS. 5616, fos. 18b-19a.

² Qur'ān, xvii, 15; lvii, 25.

maknūn) mentioned in the Qur'ān.¹ On this hypothesis² Dārā Shikoh builds the structure of his syncretism, and regards the Upanishads as the ultimate scriptural source and spring of all monotheism, as not merely in full accordance with the Qur'ān or a commentary upon it, but as its original or ultimate source.³ The thesis he developed is based on accident and analogy and would not bear historical or scientific examination, but he thought that the 'mysteries' of the Qur'ān became intelligible to him through the Upanishads, and therefore he translated them with the help of some Brahmins, but only after taking an augury from the Qur'ān, and keeping in mind the attitude of his readership, which would consist of Muslims, who partly because of the prejudices of the theologians and partly because of the religious secretiveness of the Hindus, were ignorant of the scriptural secrets of the Hindu faith.⁴ His translation must have gained considerable popularity as one can judge by the remarkably large number of manuscripts available.⁵

The basic hypothesis of his introduction to his translation of the Upanishads, the complete and unconditional identification of the ambitiously though equally unscientifically generalized in his essence of Hinduism with the essence of Islam, is found more in *Majma' al-bahrayn*. This work concerns itself with a syncretic 'lexique technique', a collection of pseudo-lexicographical correspondences between Sūfī and Upanishadic cosmologies, esoteric beliefs and practices. He traces in *śabda*, the sound which emanates and is formulated into words, an affinity with *Sarasvatī*, and regards it as the source of *Ism-i A'zam* (The Great Name) of the Sūfīs and *Veda Mukha* or *Om* of the Hindus. He interprets the concept of *Ism-i A'zam* as summing up the three attitudes of the Hindu Triad: creation, preservation and destruction. By analogy, he concludes that the Arabic short vowels *fatha*, *dhamma* and *kasra*, which he identifies with *akāra*, *ukāra* and *makāra* among the Hindus, originate from the *Ism-i A'zam*. Personal equations in his syncretic technique are even more intriguing: he identifies Michael with Vishnū, Israphael with Mahadeva, and Adam/Gabriel with Brahman/Manu.⁶ All this is extravagant. But even when his syncretism approaches the valid ground of comparative study of the

¹ Qur'ān, lvi, 77-79.

² Dārā Shikoh, op. cit. fos. 1a-3b, 191-20b.

³ Ibid. fo. 201.

⁴ Ibid. fos. 19b-20b.

⁵ Tara Chand, 399.

⁶ Dārā Shikoh, *Majma' al-bahrayn*, ed. Mahfuz al-Haqq, Calcutta, 1929.

two religions, his speculation is, more often than not, widely off the mark. Commenting on his equation of the concepts of *rūh* in Islam and of *ātman* and *pramātman* in Vedānta, Bikramajit Hasrat points out that 'the Islamic view of *rūh* (soul) is fundamentally dissimilar to that of the Vedāntist. The former does not consider the soul as reality, or believe in its association or identification with God, and in that *nafs* (self) is sharply differentiated from *rūh* (soul), while in the Upanishads, the central doctrine seeks to establish *ātman* as the sole reality and the realization of Brahman as *ātman* is emphasized.'¹ Similarly Dārā Shikoh's equation of the Sūfī concept of '*ishq* (love) with the Hindu concept of *māyā* (illusion), or his comparison of the Sūfī belief in *Rūh-i A'zam*, 'the complete soul of Muhammad' (*Haqīqat-i Muhammadiyyah*) with the Hindu concept of *Hiranyagrabha* can be regarded as very far-fetched.²

Dārā Shikoh's syncretism was not a movement away from Islam towards Hinduism; it was a sincere effort to underline what he erroneously believed to be common between them. He wanted his syncretism to find favour with the Hindus as much as with the Muslims. The *Majam'al-bahrayn* was translated into Sanskrit under the title *Samudra Sangam*. If the merit, from the present non-Muslim point of view, of his syncretism was its liberal collectivism, its main weakness was its hollowness, its lack of any valid scientific or metaphysical premise, and its unrestrained hypothetical character. His approach to Hinduism and search for common ground was not purely esoteric; the conversations he had with Bābālāl Vairāgī deal with a fairly extensive range of subjects, some of which, like Hindu mythology, cremation of the dead and idol-worship, were related to the orthodox rather than mystic side of Hinduism, and it is interesting that Bābālāl, who was steeped in Bhakti eclecticism, takes on the whole an orthodox rather than eclectic line in his explanation of Hindu religious practices.³

Dārā Shikoh came to believe in an almost Nietzschean conception of the recurrence of history under the influence of the Hindu theories of metempsychosis and re-incarnation. This explains some of his far-fetched interpretations of the verses of the Qur'ān.⁴ His syncretism contained an element of magic and superstition, which influenced his metaphysical speculation as much as

¹ Bikramajit Hasrat, *Dārā Shikoh*, Calcutta, 1953, 216.

² Ibid. 229.

³ Dārā Shikoh, *Mukālīmā-i Bābālāl wa Dārā Shikoh*, ed. L. Massignon and C. Huart in *JA*, 209 (1926), 285-334; Anandghana Khwash, *Kajkulāh*, *Ethé*, i, 1905, 1725.

⁴ Hasrat, 30.

his strategy as a general.¹ 'Even his scholarship seems to have been motivated more by superstitious regard to what he saw in his dreams than by the urge to express the ineffable vision of an inward light.'²

Manucci's impression that Dārā Shikoh had no fixed religion and praised every religion in the presence of its followers³ may be a reflection of the popular opinion about him. But the correct assessment of 'l'element interreligional' of his spirituality seems to be that though his mind was impregnated by Hinduism, he remained a convinced Muslim.⁴

From the very beginning in the war of succession, Aurangzeb's line of challenge against Dārā Shikoh was the latter's alleged apostasy and his association with Hindu theologians and mystics.⁵ The division of the loyalties of the Hindu generals during this civil war⁶ does not alter the situation of the challenge. In any case the most powerful of Hindu nobles, Jaswant Singh, who changed sides more than once was primarily a partisan of Dārā Shikoh, and first of the Mughal generals to fight a pitched battle against Aurangzeb.⁷ Many of Jaswant Singh's Muslim officers were secretly in league with Aurangzeb, and it was the fear of their desertion that impelled him to change sides.⁸ In fact Dārā Shikoh could rely only on the absolute loyalty of Rājput elements of his army and his personal retainers in his struggle against Aurangzeb.⁹ Even Jai Singh whose loyalty to Aurangzeb remained unswerving, was suspected on one occasion of having let Dārā Shikoh escape to Siwistan.¹⁰

The official charge-sheet of Aurangzeb against Dārā Shikoh specifically mentions that he did not confine himself to traditional Sūfism, but turned to Hindus and their faith, kept constant company with Hindu yogīs and sanyasis, regarded their scriptures as the word of God and had them translated, and wore not a Muslim

¹ Tara Chand, 397.

² Ibid. 398.

³ Niccolao Manucci, *Storia do Mogor* (Eng. tr. W. Irvine), London, 1906, i, 223.

⁴ L. Massignon and A. M. Kassim, 'Un essai de bloc islamo-hindou au XVII^e siècle. L'humanisme mystique du prince Dārā', *RMM*, 63 (1926), 1-14.

⁵ Khāfi Khān, 214; Bernier, 26-27.

⁶ K. R. Qanungo, *Dārā Shukōh*, Calcutta, 1934, i, 200.

⁷ Jadunath Sarkar, *A History of Aurangzeb*, Calcutta, 1912-24, ii, 7-22.

⁸ Muhammad Kāzīm, 'Alamgir Nāma', Calcutta, 1868, 72, 78; Manucci, i, 258; Bernier, 37-38.

⁹ Sarkar, ii, 40.

¹⁰ Tala Yār, *Haft Anjuman*, Bibl. Nat. Paris MS. Pers. sup. 476 (Blochet 704), fol. 105a-106b; Sarkar, ii, 202-3.

but a Hindu legend '*prabhū*' on his ring.¹ Apostasy was given as the official reason for his execution.²

That not the officially-stated *casus belli*, but Aurangzeb's personal ambition was the real motive behind the Mughal War of Succession, is quite a valid view-point adopted by some historians.³ Perhaps the truth lies between the two extreme views. In different circumstances Aurangzeb's cause would not have appeared correct from a theological view-point; and though it is debatable whether many or any of Aurangzeb's generals were touched by the zeal of orthodoxy, the support he could otherwise muster might have been less. One does not know which way the general Muslim opinion was divided; but the common people of Delhi were shocked by and lamented the fate of Dārā Shikoh.⁴ To the Hindu intellectual élite his fall appeared ominous, and we find as late as eighteenth century a Bengali poet Dvija Rām lamenting his misfortunes.⁵

Connected with the fate of Dārā Shikoh was that of heretical (*bī-shar'*) Sūfism, as represented by Sarmad, a Sūfī bohemian of Armenian or Jewish origin,⁶ who went about naked in a state of ecstasy, and was associated with Dārā Shikoh, who was later accused of liking 'the company of mad mystics'.⁷ Sarmad, whose slogans were an echo of those of al-Hallāj, without the latter's metaphysical depth, is regarded as the author of some very touching mystical quatrains. His execution by Aurangzeb on the alleged grounds of obscene heterodoxy, was regarded generally as a political rather than religious measure.⁸

(ii) *The Theocratic Particularism of Aurangzeb*

In a number of ways the character of Aurangzeb was the anti-thesis of Dārā Shikoh. Aurangzeb's piety was unmystical; he also conversed with men of God, who in his case were either theologians or the followers of the orthodox Naqshbandī order. 'In his private chamber he never reposed upon a cushion'⁹; he did not wear silk or use vessels of silver or gold; 'in his company no improper word, such as of slander or obscenity or falsehood was

¹ Kāzīm, 34-35; Sāqī Musta'id Khān, *Ma'āthir-i 'Ālamgīrī* (M.'A.), Calcutta, 1947, 2. ² Bernier, 100-1. ³ Sarkar, i, 358. ⁴ Ibid. i, 98-99.

⁵ D. C. Sen, *Hist. of Bengali Lit.*, Cal. 1911, 779.

⁶ Abu'l Kalām Azād, *Mazāmin*, Lahore, n.d., 212, quoting Sher Khān Lodī, *Mīr'at al-khayāl*.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid. 222.

⁹ Kāzīm, 1072; M.'A., 512.

spoken.'¹ His favourite readings consisted of the Qur'ān, the canon law, and the works of al-Ghazzālī, Yahyā Manerī and Mullā 'Abdullāh Tabbākh.² He liked ethical poetry, but not poetry in general: in architecture he was interested essentially in its utility, and he had no love for music and painting.³ While a prince, he desired to retire from administrative to contemplative life of a religious recluse, and incurred thereby the displeasure of his father Shāh Jahān,⁴ though in retrospective judgement Bernier regarded the ascetic strain in his character as hypocritical.

His break with the imperial eclectic heritage of the past was gradual. As long as his great Hindu generals, Jaswant Singh and Jai Singh, were alive, he continued to participate in such Hindu festivals as Dashera.⁵ But the ordinances of his second coronation (1659) gave a new shape to his administrative and religious policy. The solar calendar was replaced by the lunar *Hijra*; *Nawrūz*, a Zoroastrian borrowing, ceased to be celebrated; censors (*muhtasibs*) were appointed to control alcoholism and sexual vices; and taxes which were not based on the Hanafī law, such as transit duties and price-fees on food-grains were abolished.⁶ Between 1659 and 1670 he abolished such imperial ceremonies of self-glorification as *jharoka-darshan* (imperial appearance on a balcony) and the weighing-in-gold on birthdays.⁷

Aurangzeb's pluralism had a positive and a negative side. Its positivism was directed towards a reformulation of the Muslim society in India. Its negative aspect was the denial to his non-Muslim subjects of the social and spiritual rights conceded earlier by Akbar. In the moral reconstruction of Muslim society his administrative measures forecast the intellectual scheme of reforms advocated by Shāh Walī-Ullāh a generation later. To this category belong the prohibition of the roofing of mausoleums and pilgrimage of women to saints' tombs, of prostitution and effeminacy in dress, of processions during *Muharram*, of the cultivation of hashish; and the discouragement of astrology, of the wearing of silk and gold, and of music.⁸ On humanitarian grounds he tried to

¹ Kāzim, 1072; M.'Ā., 314.

² Ibid. 531-2, 391.

³ Sarkar, i, 8.

⁴ Lāhorī, ii, 386, 398; cf. Bernier, 10.

⁵ Sharma, op. cit. 119

⁶ Kāzim, 166, 390-2; M.'Ā., 62; *Mir'at-i Ahmadi*, i, 260; Aurangzeb, *Ruq'at*, Eng. tr. J. H. Billimoria, Bombay/London, 1908, 5-6; Sarkar, ii, 299.

⁷ M.'Ā., 75, 81; Khāfi Khān, ii, 2-3.

⁸ Khāfi Khān, ii, 214; M.'Ā., 75, 146; Manucci, i, 224; *idem*, ii, 9; Bernier, 161-3; Sujān Rāi, *Khulāsāt al-tawārikh*, I.O. Pers. MS. 1657, fos. 44a, 55b, 148a.

introduce a few reforms, of a different kind, in Hindu society also. Among these was his prohibition of *satī* and of obscene songs during the festival of *Holī*.¹ For the reorganization of Muslim society and for converting the Muslim state in India into an Islamic theocracy he commissioned the compilation of *Fatāwā-i 'Ālamgīrī*, which is perhaps the most comprehensive digest of Muslim jurisprudence ever compiled. It also meant some reversal of the former educational policy, and removal from the syllabus of schools, of the works of such unorthodox speculation as those of Muhibb-Ullāh Allahābādī.² Exclusively for Muslim India he aimed to create something like a welfare state, with free kitchens, inns and subsistence allowances, and the abolition of a number of taxes not authorized by the canon law.³

His pluralistic view of society looked upon non-Muslim India as a separate entity. It was up to a point the externalization in state administration of the separatist trend developed in Muslim political thought in India, reflecting basically the Muslim feeling of insecurity. His iconoclasm was, for instance, a reaction to Dārā Shikoh's syncretism. In 1666, 'learning that there was a stone railing in the temple of Keshav Rāi, which Dārā Shikoh had presented to it, Aurangzeb ordered it to be removed, as a scandalous example of a Muslim's coquetry with idolatry.'⁴ The destruction of Hindu temples and schools at Tatta, Multan and Benares in 1669 was ordered on the ground that they were attracting some Muslims also.⁵ It was not until 1670 that iconoclasm was ordered in a generalized manner.⁶

The *jizya* levied by Aurangzeb in 1679 was considered officially among rare virtuous measures (*hasanāt-i gharib*), and the official chronicler Sāqī Musta'id Khān comments: 'The Hindus had not been degraded to such a degree in any other period.'⁷ But whereas Aurangzeb reimposed *jizya*, he abolished a number of taxes not authorized by the canon law, the greater burden of which used to fall on the Hindus.⁸ On the other hand, in some cases the beneficiaries of the abolition of some of these taxes like the customs duties in 1667, were Muslims exclusively.⁹

It is difficult to say whether and to what extent these discriminatory measures were the cause or the effect of the rebellions of

¹ Manucci, ii, 97; Sarkar, iii, 103-4.

² Shāh Nawāz Khān, iii, 606.

³ M.'A., 315-16.

⁴ Sarkar, iii, 303.

⁵ M.'A., 60.

⁶ Ibid. 60, 84, 88, 95-96, 171, 173, 186, 396; Khāfi Khān, ii, 358-9.

⁷ M.'A., 48. ⁸ Khāfi Khān, ii, 87-89. ⁹ M.'A., 530; Khāfi Khān, ii, 87-89.

militant Hindu communities in the Mughal empire. The first phase of Shivājī's revolt ending in 1665 certainly precedes them. Probably it was a vicious circle. The Mughal empire had become inherently decadent, while some Hindu communities, especially the Marāthas and the Sikhs, were emerging into a renaissance of religious vigour. Facing this challenge the Mughal emperor seems to be trying to emphasize by administrative measures the superior status of his community, only to be met with more and more Hindu hostility and resistance. Discriminatory measures of a social character were not introduced by Aurangzeb until 1695 after the risings of the Mathura Jāts, the Satnāmīs, the Sikhs and the Marāthas; then he issued orders that no Hindus except the Rājputs, the official warrior caste which had been very loyal to the Mughal rule, should bear arms or ride on elephants or Arab or 'Irāqī horses or in palanquins.¹

The discrimination was not the entire story. Paradoxically enough, Hindu elements continued to be an integral part of Aurangzeb's civil and military administration.² If on the one hand some temples were abolished, on the other a number of endowments and pensions were given to Brahmins and revenue grants to other Hindu temples. A number of Aurangzeb's grants of this category have been recently brought to light by the documents published by Jnan Chandra.³ Neither his iconoclasm nor his imposition of *jizya* was a new feature. As Sharma has pointed out,⁴ his order forbidding the construction of new and repair of old temples did not promulgate any new law; 'it simply declared and revived an old interpretation of the Muslim law which had become obsolete.'⁵

A view more reflective of Hindu sensitivity than Sharma's is that of Jadunath Sarkar who admires the lack in Aurangzeb of any personal moral weakness, his ability as a man and as a ruler and his simplicity, and can think of only one non-religious weakness in his administration,—over-centralization⁶; but then commenting on Aurangzeb, and through him the failure of the Muslim state in India, he observes: "The failure of an ideal Muslim king like Aurangzeb with all the advantages he possessed at his accession and his high moral character and training, is—the clearest proof

¹ *M.A.*, 224.

² *Supra*, part ii, ch. ii.

³ Jnan Chandra, 'Ālamgīr's grant to a Brahmin', *JPHS*, vii (1959), 99-100 and *idem* in *JPHS passim*.

⁴ Sharma, 152

⁵ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

⁶ Sarkar, v. 475-9.

the world can afford of the eternal truth that there cannot be a great or lasting empire without a great *people*, that no people can be great unless it learns to form a compact *nation* with equal rights and opportunities for all. . .¹

The modern Muslim attitude to Aurangzeb has ranged from apologetics to adulation,² reflective revivalistically of Muslim fear of submergence. How real was this danger of spiritual submergence of Indian Islam into Hinduism during the spiritual conflict polarized in the attitudes of Dārā Shikoh and Aurangzeb can best be summed up in the words of a modern British writer; 'What might reasonably have been expected, had the policy of Akbar been followed by Aurangzeb and his successors, was an insensible modification of Hindu thought (such as had already begun) in the direction of monotheism, accompanied by a progressive absorption of the Islamic faith (or all that survived of it) into the ever-plastic fabric of Hinduism.'³

¹ Sarkar, v, 459.

² Shibli Nu'mānī, *Aurangzeb 'Ālamgīr par ek nazar*, A'zamgarh.

³ W. G. Orr, *A Sixteenth Century Indian Mystic*, London, 1947, 24.

IX

THE WALĪ-ULLĀHĪ MOVEMENT

(i) *The Religious and Political ideas of Shāh Walī-Ullāh*

SHĀH WALĪ-ULLĀH of Delhi, who forms the bridge between mediæval and modern Islam in India, was born in 1703, five years before the death of Aurangzeb, which marked the collapse of Muslim power and the disintegration of Muslim morale in India. His father Shāh 'Abd al-Rahīm was one of the compilers of *Fatāwā-i 'Ālamgīrī*, the encyclopaedic collection of religious edicts commissioned by Aurangzeb; he was a follower of the Mujaddidī branch of the Naqshbandī order,¹ but not without a qualified admiration for the monistic doctrines of Ibn al-'Arabī. The main influence which shaped his mind was that of the doctors of the Hijāz, Shaykh Abū Tāhīr Muhammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Kurdī,² under whom he studied *hadīth* in Medina and Shaykh Sulaymān Maghribī who lectured to him on Mālikite jurisprudence, as well as under other 'Arab scholars like Shaykh al-Sanāwī, and Tāj al-dīn al-Hanafī,³ at a time when his great contemporary, Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb was also studying in these holy cities of Islam, and perhaps among others with these very teachers.⁴ The two systems these two divines of the eighteenth-century world of Islam worked out had the same source of inspiration, going back through the tradition of the study of *hadīth* in unmystical Hijāz to the orthodox discipline of Ibn Taimiya,⁵ and though it is difficult to establish any theory of mutual influence of either on the other, their two systems did come closer, if not actually merge, in the Indian Islam of the nineteenth century.

Like his 'Arab contemporary, Shāh Walī-Ullāh was conscious of the religio-ethical disintegration of Islam in general, and therefore chose 'Arabic rather than Persian as the language for *Hujjat Allāh al-bāligha*, his major contribution to theological dialectics, to rehabilitate the theory and practice of orthodox Sunnī belief. To

¹ Shāh Walī-Ullāh, *Juzw-i latīf*, Delhi, 1897, 27.

² Ibid. 28.

³ 'Ubayd-Ullāh Sindhī, *Shāh Walī-Ullāh aur unkī sīyasī tahrīk*, Lahore,

1952, 7.

⁴ S. M. Ikram, *Rūd-i Kawthar*, Karachi, n.d., 335.

⁵ Sindhī, 7-9.

this end he relied much more on the Mālikite¹ than the Hanafi² approach to the *sunnah*, regarding it as the most distinguished among theological sciences and their source,³ a historically stable factor which could undergo no change.⁴

Historical circumstances helped in the process. So far the religious schools in India had emphasized the study of *fiqh* to meet the Muslim state's requirement of training *qāzīs* for judicial appointments. With the collapse of Muslim power this economic stimulus declined. The static formalism of the study of traditional Muslim jurisprudence could hardly be expected to revitalize the soul of a decadent community. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the two great Sūfī orders of the Mughal era, the Naqshbandī as well as the Qādirī, had lost their spiritual dynamism. Sūfism could no longer be relied upon as in the days of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī, when Indian Islam was facing the challenge of syncretism but had not actually entered the stage of decadence and political degradation. Shāh Wali-Ullāh's contribution to the requirements of religious re-thinking in the early eighteenth-century Muslim India was therefore, subordination of Muslim jurisprudence to the discipline of *hadīth* on the one hand; and a total absorption of the remnants of various Sūfī disciplines into the orthodox Islam on the other. He pointed out that the era of prophetic revelations was followed by the age of mystic revelations beginning with 'Alī and reaching its culmination in the writings of Ibn al-'Arabī.⁵ He then proceeded to reconcile⁶ Ibn al-'Arabī's doctrines of ontological monism with the stress on phenomenological monism in the teachings of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī, the acknowledged precursor (*arhās*)⁷ of his own line of religious and political, if not mystical thinking.⁸ To check the spiritual decadence of Islam in his age he completed the work begun by Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī, the channelling of the streams of Sūfī spiritual heritage into traditional Islam. This also involved a composition of Sūfism's internal

¹ Shāh Wali-Ullāh, *al-Musawwā'at* and *al-Musaffa*, commentaries on Malīk's *al-Mu'watta*.

² Muḥammad Iqbāl, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, London, 1934, 92.

³ Shāh Wali-Ullāh, *Hujjat Allāh al-bālighā (II)* Karachi, n.d. ii, 1-2.

⁴ Ibid. i, 33.

⁵ Shāh Wali-Ullāh, *Tashīmāt al-Ilāhīya*, Delhi, 1906, 122.

⁶ Shāh Wali-Ullāh, *Sat'āt*, Delhi, 1890; *idem*, *Altāf al-Quds*, Delhi, 1889, 4-21.

⁷ Sindhī, op. cit. 81.

⁸ In *Khayr-i Kathīr*, *Lum'āt*, and *al-Qawl al-jamīl*.

differences of practice, and a synthetic merging together of the various Sūfī disciplines of India into one.¹

His sense of a mission to face the challenge of the time led to his self-identification with the *qā'im al-zamān*,² the religious pivot of the age, a conception which re-states more modestly the hierarchical spiritual role of the *qutb*,³ or the more ostentatious one of *qayyūm* as developed by Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī.⁴ The role of the *qā'im al-zamān* is related to the dual nature of the *khilāfat*, which can be either external (*zāhirī*) or internal (*bātinī*). Whereas the external *khilāfat* should occupy itself with the duties of the administration and defence of religious law, the internal *khilāfat* is entrusted with the responsibility of giving a direction to the 'ulama, the rationalists, the legists and the Sūfis. As the *qā'im al-zamān* of his own particular age he considered it to be a part of his mission to restore the solidarity of the *umma* by emphasizing a formula of compromise based on whatever was commonly accepted by the various sects of Islam, and by force of conciliatory logic to blur the dividing line between the mystic and the theologian, between the Mu'tazilite and the Ash'arite, but even more especially between the four orthodox schools of law in Sunnī Islam.⁵ In the midst of its weaknesses and the challenges it faced in the eighteenth century, Islam had to be liberal, resilient, tolerant and composite. So in the view of Shāh Walī-Ullāh anyone who had once professed himself to be a Muslim, remained so, whatever his sins or failings.⁶

According to him all prescriptions and prohibitions of religions have one of the following ends in view: either the cultivation of self; or the propagation and strengthening of religious life; or the service and organization of human society.⁷ Since these are the ends of the religious law, it follows that any particular formulation of it has a relative rather than an absolute value; and has as such no finality. A Sunnī who follows, say Abū Hanīfa, would be well within his rights if he prefers the authority of other *imāms* on a number of points of canon law; and he would be certainly very much in the wrong if he followed a particular *imām* on a point where either the Qur'ān or the *hadīth* have a clear injunction to the

¹ Ikrām, 362.

² Shāh Walī-Ullāh, *Fuyūz al-Harmayn*, 62, 89; originally a Shī'ī messianic concept.

³ Muhy al-dīn Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūhāt al-Makkiyah*, Cairo, 1876, i, 196; ii, 7-11; iv, 95.

⁴ See *supra*, pt. ii, ch vii, 184.

⁵ Ikrām, 341-2.

⁶ *H*, i, 381.

⁷ *Ibid.* i, 284.

contrary. No jurist can be or can have a substitute for the unquestionable authority of the Qur'ān and the Prophetic tradition,¹ which are the only two infallible sources of religious law. In addition, speculative reconstruction (*ijtihād*)² is the basis on which a re-vitalized understanding of religion is possible, rather than imitation (*taqlid*) which owes its origin to a forced choice between the conflicting views of the jurists.³

Ijtihād, in his view, is an exhaustive endeavour to understand the derivative principles of canon law.⁴ He accepts al-Rafi'i and al-Nawāwī's classification of *mujtahids* (speculative thinkers) into two categories; the 'permanent' (*mustaqill*) and the 'affiliated' (*muntasib*); the latter relying upon the former.⁵ The permanent *mujtahid* re-interprets the fundamental principles of religious law and re-examines the decisions of his predecessors.⁶

The necessity of the ever-now 'permanent' speculation arises because of the progress and expansion of religious and human society, which is faced with new problems in a new age and in a new milieu. His emphasis on the role of *ijtihad* is therefore a natural reaction to the element of growth and change in human society. 'The prophetic method of teaching according to Shāh Walī-Ullāh', explains Iqbāl, 'is that generally speaking, the law revealed by a prophet takes special notice of the habits, ways and peculiarities of the people to whom it is specifically sent. The prophet who aims at all-embracing principles, however, can neither reveal different principles for different peoples, nor leaves them to work out their own rules of conduct. His method is to train one particular people, and to use them as a nucleus for the building up of a universal *shari'a*. In doing so he accentuates the principles underlying the social life of all mankind, and applies them to concrete cases in the light of the specific habits of the people immediately before him. The *shari'a*-values (*ahkām*) resulting from this application . . . are in a sense specific to that people; and since their observance is not an end in itself they cannot be strictly enforced in the case of future generations.'⁷

Shāh Walī-Ullāh further points out that in the majority of cases the truth lies between two extremes of difference of interpretation

¹ *II*, i, 361-2.

² *II*, i, 358.

³ Shāh Walī-Ullāh, *al-Musaffa*, 11.

⁴ Shāh Walī-Ullāh, '*Iqd al-Jid fi Ahkām al-Ijtihād wa'al-taqlid*', Eng. tr. by Da'ud Rahbar in *The Muslim World*, 1955, 347-58.

⁵ *Ibid.* 348.

⁶ *Ibid.* 350.

⁷ Iqbāl, 163; cf. *II*, i, 223.

by jurists; that a broad outlook is preferable for the expression of opinion in religious matters; and finally he agrees with 'Izz al-dīn 'Abd al-Salām that a *mujtahid* should normally respect the consensus of other '*ulamā*'.¹ The *mujtahid* has also a responsibility and a mission in relation to non-Muslims; force cannot compel people to accept Islam as they would revert to their ancestral faith in the same or a succeeding generation when they have an opportunity; he should therefore persuade them into acceptance of Islam by precept and example.²

The renewed emphasis on *ijtihād* is Shāh Walī-Ullāh's main contribution to modernist speculative thinking in Muslim India. His own method of induction and argument was classical; but he is generally regarded as the first Indian Muslim 'who felt the urge of the new spirit in him'.³ 'Time has come', he wrote in the introduction to *Hujjat Allāh al-bāligha*, 'that the religious law of Islam should be brought into the open fully dressed in reason and argument'.⁴ For him 'reason and argument' had perhaps a more fundamentalist significance, but they inspired the formula of neo-Mu'tazilite modernism of Sayyid Ahmad Khān, who had received his early education in the seminary of Walī-Ullāh's successors in Delhi, of Shibli's scholasticism and of 'religious reconstruction' in the thought of Iqbāl. In his exegesis of the Qur'ān, which raised such a storm of controversy, Sayyid Ahmad Khān leans heavily on the work of this eighteenth-century theologian. The more classical influences of Walī-Ullāhī concepts of *ijtihād* are reflected in the work of the '*ulamā*' of Deoband whose religious ideology was directly shaped by his school.

It was the speculative attitude of mind, in the background of challenge of the spiritual collapse of Muslim society in India in his age that led Walī-Ullāh in opposition to the bitter polemics of orthodox '*ulamā*' to translate the Qur'ān into Persian. His object was primarily to convey the word of God in translation to the average educated Muslim; and secondarily to break the monopoly of the theologian, who had become petty-minded, far too pre-occupied with externalities of ritual, converting himself into the Muslim counterpart of the Hindu Brahmin. It is true there had been an earlier Persian rendering of the Qur'ān in India by Qāzī Shihāb al-dīn Dawlatābadī; but it was more in the nature of a commentary. Walī-Ullāh simultaneously initiated a movement for the

¹ *Iqd al-jīd*, 358.² *H*, i, 258, 387.³ Iqbāl, 162.⁴ *H*, i, 4.

intellectual appreciation of the Qur'ān by the layman by founding in 1743 a school where Qur'ān and *hadīth* were taught under his personal direction and by writing a treatise on the problems of translating the Qur'ān and a book on the science of exegesis.¹ His son Shāh Rafī' al-dīn translated the Qur'ān into Urdu for the first time. This was a literal rendering and was followed by a more idiomatic Urdu rendering by another of his sons, Shāh 'Abd al-Qādir.

At the same time he was studying the structure, and formulating a theory for the preservation of Muslim society in general and the Indian Muslim community in particular. He divided the history of the growth of human society into four stages. The first of these stages (*irtifāqāt*) is that of primitive society which has a minimal code of social behaviour; the second stage is marked by the growth of urban life which is first led as a good state by its philosophers, but later degenerates into factions and needs centralized control; this necessitates the third stage, that of monarchy to establish order in the place of chaos; and the final stage is that of the universal state which requires a *khalīfa*, with effective authority to hold down various rulers of the decadent civil society.²

This conception of a universal *khalīfat* is a distinct departure from the tradition of Indo-Muslim religious scholarship, which had been either indifferent to the question, or tended to confine it to the first four holy caliphs, regarding the Umayyads and the 'Abbāsids as mere monarchs.³ According to Shāh Wali-Ullāh the right to universal *khalīfat* is confined to Quraysh⁴ but not exclusively to the Banū Hāshim,⁵ a view which accepts as legal the Umayyad caliphate but leads to the negation of the Ottoman claim. The caliph's duties are two-fold; to protect the Dār al-Islam from external aggression, and to be an overlord over Muslim monarchs with effective concentration of power in his hands to see that they administer justice according to the tenets of Islam and do not indulge in civil strife. The responsibilities of the caliph involve an ideal role, and his character and government has to be

¹ Shāh Wali-Ullāh *Muqaddima fi tarjumat' al-Qur'ān al-Majīd and al-Fatṭṭ al-kabīr fī urūl al-tafsīr*.

² *II*, i, 81-82; The entire structure of the theory seemed to have been borrowed from Ibn Khaldūn (cf. *The Muqaddima*, Eng. tr. F. Rosenthal, New York, 1958, i, 249, 72).

³ cf. 'Abd al-Haqq Muhaddith Dehlavi, *Takmil al-Iman wa taḥziyat al-īqān*, Pers. MS. 2765, fo. 96b.

⁴ *II*, ii, 425-6.

⁵ *Ibid.* ii, 426.

exemplary¹ But if a caliph does not combine in himself the qualities necessary for the universal *khalāfat*, the *umma* should not revolt against him and plunge the Dār al-Islam into civil strife² Revolt against a *khalīfa* is justified only when he violates the basic tenets of Islam³

Within the religio-political framework of the universal caliphate, monarchy is necessary to maintain peace and order in an individual Muslim state⁴ This determines the detailed outline of the pyramidal feudal pattern of government in the Muslim administration, for the monarch is advised to appoint *amirs* throughout his kingdom, to protect the rights of the oppressed and to enforce the laws of the *shari'a* and for effective check against apostasy and other major sins⁵ These *amirs* should be under the command of an *amir-i kabir* or governor⁶ In so far as Muslim administration is concerned, states can be of two kinds those with a purely Muslim or with a mixed Muslim and non-Muslim population The latter kind requires a more elaborate system of policing and administration of justice⁷

The nature of human society in general, and of Muslim society in particular is dynamic⁸ and congregational⁹ *Jihād* is in consonance with its dynamic nature It is like a surgical operation on a festering sore Its neglect would amount to the neglect of essential self-defence and self-preservation, especially in a world hostile to Islam¹⁰ The congregational nature of Muslim society is revealed in the assemblies for prayer in mosques on Fridays when citizens come in contact with the *imām* of a city, Islamic egalitarianism blurs out the difference between the rich and the poor, and the tenets of faith are propagated¹¹ The Friday congregation has a much greater importance for the urban compared to the rural Muslim community¹² The *hajj* is the greater occasion of the universal Muslim congregation, giving opportunity to the entire *umma* for various communities of Islam to be mutually acquainted and to display collectively the might and power of their faith¹³

To the rapid collapse of Muslim power in India after the death of Aurangzeb, and to the rise of the anti-Muslim anarchic forces of

¹ *H*, II, 425-6

⁴ *Ibid* I, 91-92

⁵ *Khalīq Ahmad Nizami, 'Shah Wali-Ullah Dehlawi and Indian Politics in the 18th century', IC, (1951) 133-45*

⁶ *Ibid* I, 57, 222

¹¹ *Ibid* II, 100-3

² *Ibid* II, 427

⁵ *al-Tafhimat al Haluyah*, 216

⁶ *Shah Wali-Ullah Dehlawi and Indian Politics in the*

⁷ *H*, II, 498

¹⁰ *Ibid* II, 180

¹² *Ibid* II, 103

³ *Ibid* II, 428

⁷ *H*, II, 498

¹⁰ *Ibid* II, 480, 482, 487

¹² *Ibid* II, 180

the Marāthas and the Jāts, Shāh Walī-Ullāh reacted with pragmatic sensitiveness; and in this reaction formulated the tradition for succeeding generations, of Indo-Muslim resistance to the concentration of power in non-Muslim hands. He was deeply conscious of the economic plight of the Muslim masses, and of the breakdown of the politico-economic structure of the Muslim feudal heritage, hitherto sustained by the Muslim imperial power on which all classes of Muslim population depended for their sustenance.¹ In the anarchic pattern of struggle for power after Aurangzeb, he turned to the time-honoured practice of the Sūfis to appeal to powerful Muslim nobles to come to the rescue of Dār al-Islām. He had the immediate precedent of his own father Shāh 'Abd al-Rahīm, who had advised Nizām al-Mulk I to undertake a holy war against the Marāthas.² Shāh Walī-Ullāh pinned his hope of the revival of Muslim power in India on the Rohilla chief, Najīb al-Dawlah.³ To him and to other Muslim governors like Nizām al-Mulk and Tāj Muhammad Khān Baloch he wrote letters of invitation to *jihād* and of assurance that the defeat of elements hostile to the Muslims was divinely predetermined, but it could be realized as a fact only if the Muslim governors made a concentrated military effort.⁴ When they proved incapable of checking the rise of Marāthā power and Jāt depredations, he invited Ahmad Shāh Abdālī, the ruler of Afghanistān to channel his incursions into India into an organized expedition to liquidate the power of the Marāthas and the Jāts.⁵ He cautioned Abdālī that his invasion of India should not be destructive to Muslim property or prosperity as Nādir Shāh's had been.⁶ He argued that if forces hostile to Islam were allowed to grow unchecked, they would reduce Islam in India to a position in which the Indian Muslims would 'become a people without any knowledge either of Islam or paganism'.⁷ It can be inferred that in shaping the alliance between

¹ Shāh Walī-Ullāh's letter to Ahmad Shāh Abdālī, in *Shāh Walī-Ullāh ke siyāsī maktūbāt*, edited by K. A. Nizāmī, Aligarh, 1950, 51.

² Sayyid Sulaymān Nadvī's introduction to Abu'l Hasan 'Alī Nadvī's *Sīrat-i Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd*, Lucknow, n.d.

³ Quḍrat-Ullāh Sambhalī, *Jām-i jahān-numā*, MS. in the library of Jamī'a Milliyya Islamiya, Aligarh, quoted in *op. cit.*

⁴ *Siyāsī maktūbāt*, 60, 63-64, 65, 85.

⁵ *Ibid.* 47-50.

⁶ *Ibid.* 52; cf. Shāh Walī-Ullāh's letter to Mazhar Jan-i Jānān, in Na'ūm-Ullah, *Bashārat-i Mazhariyyah*, B.M. Or. MS. 220, fos. 84b-85a.

⁷ *Siyāsī Maktūbāt*, 52.

Abdālī and Najīb al-Dawlah¹ and especially in the former's organization of the campaign which resulted in the crushing defeat of the Marāṭha confederacy at Panipat in 1761, these letters of Shāh Walī-Ullāh may have played some part.

On the other hand his attitude to other religions was quite tolerant. He admitted that the essence of all religions was the same; and all of them enjoined similar basic social codes.² But a religion could become corrupt by the practices and innovations of its followers; and then it was superseded by another.³ This was a law of the spiritual history of mankind to which Islam could not have been an exception but for the logical necessity of a final religion which supersedes all previous ones.⁴ The danger to this role of finality is one of syncretism. This is a general weakness which new converts to Islam, especially in India introduce into its faith and practice.⁵ To justify the continued use of pagan practices these converts seek the support of weaker authorities in the traditions of *hadīth*; they even invent false traditions.⁶ Utmost care is therefore required to keep Islam free from *shirk*, from associationism of all kinds with Divine Unity, Divine Will and Divine Power, from all traces of anthropomorphism, and from all concepts which imply parallelism between Divine attributes and qualities and those of the created.⁷ The Walī-Ullāhī movement of purification of Islam from associationism is parallel to Wahhābism, though it avoids its extremism by a process of sublimation which condones such minor deviations as belief in the intercession of the Prophet,⁸ or visiting saints' tombs provided there is no danger of tomb-worship which in India is an evil parallel to Hindu idolatry, and borrowed by Muslims because of their contact with the Hindus.⁹

(ii) *The Movement of the Mujāhidīn*

The militant movement of the rehabilitation of Islam in India, categorized as 'Wahhābī' by the British in the nineteenth century

¹ Sindhī, op. cit. 51-52, 60. For Najīb al-Dawlah's invitation to Ahmad Shāh Abdālī for *jihād* against the Marāṭhas see, Ghulām 'Alī Azād Bilgrāmī, *Khuzāna-i 'Amira*, I.O. Pers. MS. 2079 (Ethé 685), fo. 85a.

² *H*, i, 182.

³ op. cit. i, 191.

⁴ op. cit. i, 253-4.

⁵ Shāh Walī-Ullāh, *al-Balāgh al-mubīn*, Lahore 1890, 2.

⁶ *H*, i, 264.

⁷ Shāh Walī-Ullāh, *Tuhfat al-muttaḥhidūn*, Delhi, 1894, 1-3, 6-7, 10-12, 14-29; *al-Balāgh al-mubīn*, 2, 6; *H*, i, 124-5, 128; ii, 284.

⁸ *Tuhfat al-muttaḥhidūn*, 10-12.

⁹ *al-Balāgh al-mubīn*, 2-3, 6; cf. Blochet, *Études*, 51-52.

because of its resemblances with the Wāhhābī movement of Nejd, and as that of the '*mujāhidīn*' (holy warriors) in modern Muslim Indo-Pakistan, marks the practical culmination of the religio-political thought of Shāh Wali-Ullāh. Its leader Sayyid Ahmad Barelvī was a disciple of the divine's son and successor 'Abdul 'Azīz, whose circle he joined in 1807;¹ and was recognized by the family of his preceptor as the man most suitable to lead the new movement of religious purification and political revolution. Two learned scions of the family of Wali-Ullāh, Shāh Ismā'il and 'Abdul Hayy joined him as his disciples, marking the progress of Shāh Wali-Ullāh's programme from theory to practice, from life contemplative to life active, from instruction of the élite to the emancipation of the masses, and from individual salvation to social organization.²

This basically Wali-Ullāhī movement had assumed its distinct features in Sayyid Ahmad Barelvī's dicta, *Sirāt-i Mustaqīm*,³ compiled before his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1822, where he and his two learned companions could have come in contact with Wāhhābism. A two-way exchange between the Wāhhābī and non-Wāhhābī ideas during their one year's stay in the Hijāz could be naturally expected; but on the whole the stream of Indo-Muslim religious reformism, though parallel to Wāhhābism, remained quite divergent.⁴ Like the movement of Sharīf al-dīn Marjānī among the Volga Tartars,⁵ it may have received inspiration from other sources but remained essentially indigenous.⁶ The classic of the Indian movement, Shāh Ismā'il's *Taqwīyat al-Īmān*⁷ is closely based on his grandfather Wali-Ullāh's *Tuhfat al-Muwahhidīn*.

Sayyid Ahmad Barelvī continued the Wali-Ullāhī tradition of synthesizing the disciplines of the three major Sūfī orders in India, the Qādirī, the Chishtī, and the Naqshbandī, and uniting them with a fourth element of religious experience, the exoteric discipline which he called *Tarīqa-i Muhammadiyah* (the way of Muhammad). His explanation was that the three Sūfī orders were linked with the Prophet esoterically, whereas the fourth one being

¹ Sayyid Muhammad 'Alī, *Makhzan-i Ahmadi*, Agra, 1882, 18.

² Sindhī, 85-86.

³ English synopsis in *JASB*, i (1832), 479-82.

⁴ Sindhī, 79-80, 197-200.

⁵ S. A. Zenkovsky, *Pan-Turkism and Islam in Russia*, Cambridge, Mass. 1960, 4.

⁶ Mahmud Husain, chapter on Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd in *The History of Freedom Movement*, Karachi, 1957, i, 567-8; Sindhī, 196-7.

⁷ Shāh Ismā'il, *Taqwīyat al-īman*, Eng. tr. by Mir Shahāmat Alī, *JRAS*, xiii, 310-72.

exoteric emphasized strict conformity to religious law,¹ and subordinated all activity of the individual Muslim to the devotion and service of God.² He thus harnessed whatever was left of the inward Sūfī experience in the decadent early nineteenth-century Muslim India to the dynamism of a reformist orthodox revival. Unlike the generality of *‘ulamā* and most of the Sūfīs, he chose as his sphere of operation, not the spiritual or intellectual élite, but the Muslim masses in general whom he contacted in cities, towns and villages during his tours and travels. In villages especially he came across pockets of Muslim population, presumably converts from Hindus of a few generations ago, who were Muslims in name only, but whose faith and rites of worship were Hinduized, syncretic, animistic and superstitious. His followers and companions represented a considerable cross-section of Muslim society, rich and poor, learned and ignorant; and he could observe at first hand the feudal structure of Indo-Muslim society crumbling all around him.³ He tried to save and reconstruct the essentially Islamic element in the early nineteenth-century Indo-Muslim way of life into an exclusive emphasis on the Qur’ān and the *sunnaḥ*; and the rejection of the peripheral, the eclectic, the syncretic and the heterodox. It also meant repudiation of all those ‘Indian, Persian and “Roman” customs which were contrary to the Prophet’s teaching’.⁴

It meant the elimination of three kinds of excesses:⁵ those encouraged by heterodox Sūfīs such as the neglect of or opposition to the external tenets of religious law, ‘poetic licence’ in one’s attitude to God or His Prophet, idolization of one’s spiritual preceptor, and homage to saints’ tombs; secondly, those of popular Shi’i origin such as the celebration of Muharram as a public festival⁶; and thirdly, those borrowed from the Hindus.

This last category was by far the most important, and was most vigorously denounced by Sayyid Ahmad Barelvī. It included pilgrimages to Hindu holy places, shouting Hindu religious slogans, and adorning the tombs with *lingams* (Hindu phallic symbols)⁷; worship of Hindu deities, borrowings from Hindu

¹ Ghulām Rasūl Mīhr, *Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd*, Lahore, 1952, 131, S. M. Ikram, *Mawṣ-ī Kawthar*, Lahore, 1950, 12.

² Mīhr, *op. cit.* 1, 131.

³ cf. W. W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans*, London, 1871, 166–78.

⁴ *Sirāt-ī mustaqīm* (JASB), 488–94.

⁵ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

⁶ Abul Hasan Ali Nadwī, *Sirāt-ī Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd*, Lucknow, 1938, i, 106.

⁷ Hasnū Qannūyī, *Ḥayāt al-mū’minin*, quoted by E. Rehatsek, ‘The History of Wahhabys in Arabia and India’, JAS (Bombay), 1880, 382.

animism, consulting Brahmins for good or bad omens, and celebration of Hindu festivals.¹ In abomination next to these, though not of polytheistic nature, were Hindu customs imported in Islam such as the prejudice against the re-marriage of widows,² or excessive expenditure on marriage and other ceremonies which spelt economic ruin. Next came external Hindu manners, such as eating on leaves or keeping pig-tails, or piercing women's ears and nose to wear jewellery or shaving one's hair and eyebrows in imitation of yogis, or even dressing like Hindus.³ As Cantwell Smith sums it up, 'the relevant point here is that the accretions which the reformers set themselves to removing from the Muslims' religion, were mostly borrowings from Hinduism, or superstitious degradations shared with Hinduism'.⁴

The central point of the movement of reform was the removal of the element of polytheism, which had infiltrated into the vulnerable Indian Islam. This is the central thesis of Shāh Ismā'il's work.⁵ Following his grandfather Shāh Walī-Ullāh, he regards polytheistic associationism (*shirk*) to be of four kinds: *ishrāk fi'l-'ilm* (association in Divine Knowledge) such as invocation of a saint, or the study of his name (*shugl*), or concentration on his image (*tasawwur-i shaykh*)—all these savouring of a presumption that the saint shares with God His knowledge of the unrevealed; *ishrāk fi'l-tasarruf* (association in Divine Power) as a belief that a prophet or a saint could grant wishes or solve problems or alleviate miseries; *ishrāk fi'l-'ibadat* (association in worship) such as paying homage to living or dead saints, or diverting to them in any other way the ritual of worship which is due to God alone; and *ishrāk fi'l-adab* (association in respect) such as associating the name of a prophet or a saint with that of God in a wish or a resolution.

The stress in this reformist movement was on absolute monotheism, on the Biblical Qur'-ānic conception of Jehovah who would brook no rival or associate in His omnipotence. It meant the wholesale destruction of a pantheon of confused beliefs, which had accumulated semi-divine deities from multi-religious and multi-cultural contacts, superstition, animism, demotic syncretism, Bhakti movements, Sūfī tolerance, ontological monism, poetic

¹ Shāh Ismā'il, 350.

² Mīhr, i, 143.

³ Shāh Ismā'il, 352-3; Nadwi, i, 215, 240; Mīhr, i, 199.

⁴ W. Cantwell Smith, *Modern Islam in India*, London, 1946, 161.

⁵ Shāh Ismā'il, 319-20, 322-5.

licence and several other sources, Indian as well as foreign, but all of them alien to fundamentalist Islam.

Whereas this attack was mainly directed towards borrowings from Hindu religious practices in Islam, towards the Hindu religion itself and towards the Hindus themselves the attitude of the movement of the *mujāhidīn* was one of tolerant understanding. 'In fact, every religion', observes Shāh Ismā'īl, 'which includes among its followers a considerable number of wise men, and especially those who have achieved esoteric depth such as Christian or Jewish mystics, Greek or neo-Platonic philosophers, Persian dualists or Hindu yogīs, has a special place for them in its sanctuary of sacredness. They are the source of its flow; but later evil ideas mingle in the stream of a religion, obscene rites predominate, commentaries become wrong and corrupt, and the mind is no longer able to grasp the reality as originally revealed to knowledge.'¹

This tolerance may also explain the responsive devotion of some educated Hindus to Sayyid Ahmad Barelvī, such as the *tahsildārs* Harī Ram and Dhankal Singh, and the hospitality offered to the *mujāhidīn* when they were actually on their way to their *jihad* against the Sikhs, by the Marāṭha ruler of Gwalior, and the fact that his brother-in-law and minister Rājā Hīndū Rāo remained one of the helpful contacts of this exclusively Muslim militant movement.²

The practical plan of reform in this movement had two main objectives. These were based on the Walī-Ullāhī adaptation of the classical philosophical distinction between the 'imperfect state' (*madīnat al-nāqisa*) and the 'ideal state' (*madīnat al-tāmma*)—the former being, in the Indian context, the *Dār al-Harb*, the territory occupied by the British or other non-Muslims; and the latter an ideal theocratic state which could be established only by a holy war, preferably in a region where the bulk of the population was Muslim and where individual and social life could follow unhindered the tenets of Islam.³ Sayyid Ahmad Barelvī's movement devoted itself to reformist work in the former, as well as to the actual realization of the latter. For both it was essential to have a

¹ Shāh Ismā'īl, *Al-'Abqāt*, quoted in Sindhī, *op. cit.* 46.

² Nadvī, i, 92, 109; Muhr, i, 287-8, 435.

³ Sindhī, 84-85 quoting Walī-Ullāh's *Budūr al-bāzigha*; cf. al-Dawānī, *Lau'ami' al-ishrāq fī makārim al-akhilāq (Akhlāq-i Jalālī)* Lucknow, n.d., 260-1, &c.

devoted group of workers the *jamā'at*, drawn from a cross-section of the Muslim population, which could operate in India ruled by non-Muslims as an organization of inviters, preachers and reformers, and which could transform itself into a military force for the establishment of the ideal Muslim state.

This *jamā'at* built up its 'programme of invitation' (*nizām-i da'wat*) in the 'imperfect state' of non-Muslim India through a network of centres for the propagation and purification of Islam, villages being the basic units. Propaganda was carried out by word of mouth among the masses, and by popular pamphlets among the literate; *imāms* were appointed in mosques to teach essentials of faith: subscriptions were raised in units to finance the movement and controlled in a public treasury: and Muslim courts were established to administer justice among Muslims according to Muslim law, parallel to government courts.

But the other objective, the establishment of an independent Muslim state had by far the highest priority, in the programme of the movement. It was only in such a state that true Islam, freed from semi-pagan practices could be practised.¹ This necessitated, the supreme act of sacrifice, *jihād*, or a religious war, against overwhelming odds, for individuals in the movement the culmination of a life of dedication, after prayers and fasting and pilgrimage to Mecca.

The time and the place of the projected *jihād* was still vague when Sayyid Ahmad set out for his visit to Mecca in 1822.² The Sikh territory on the north-west frontier of the Indian sub-continent seemed to be an obvious choice eventually; the Pathān tribes were still largely unsubdued in the plains below; the Sikh rule itself was brutally anti-Muslim, denying them freedom of worship, honour and security.³ The Sikhs were also far less formidable than the British. There was already the precedent of Shāh Walī-Ullāh looking up to the Afghāns outside to restore Muslim rule in India. The population of the region was predominantly Muslim. Finally the British Indian Government seems to have more than conived at the diversion of a popular, militant movement from its own territory to that of its Sikh neighbours, whose power was increasing.⁴ A disturbance on the north-western borders of the Sikh

¹ Nadvī, 14.

² Ibid. 194.

³ J. C. Archer, *The Sikhs*, Princeton, 1946, 173, 186-7, 232; Jadunath Sarkar in *Cambridge History of India*, iv, 246.

⁴ Ja'far Thānesari, *Taccārīkh-i 'Ajība*, Lahore, 1890, 70.

state, not involving their own contiguous frontier must have appeared quite welcome to the British in the eighteen-twenties.

The extent to which this movement was anti-British from the start has been the subject of lively controversy.¹ Shah 'Abdul 'Azīz² and Shah 'Abdul Hayy³ regarded India after the British occupation as *Dār al-Harb*, and encouraged Muslims to migrate to other Muslim lands. But on the whole, the non-interference of the Company's administrators with Muslim freedom of worship and personal life, and especially with the organization of Sayyid Ahmad Barelvī's movement in its earlier stages, seems to have created a favourable impression on Shāh Ismā'il, who discouraged war against the British on religious grounds.⁴ It will not be wrong to conclude, that whatever its theoretical origin, the movement's *jihād* was directed originally against the Sikhs,⁵ in the tradition of Indian Islam's defence against indigenous hostility. References to the British rule in India in Sayyid Ahmad Barelvī's letters to the rulers of Bukhārā and Afghānistān and the invitation to them to re-establish Islamic rule in India are of secondary importance,⁶ continuing the Walī-Ullāhī tradition of *da'wat*; but the primary objective explained in them is still the *jihād* against the Sikh tyranny.⁷ Sayyid Ahmad Barelvī's war effort, the miniature theocracy he set up in the frontier hills only to be torn by factions and superstitions of his Pathan followers, his temporary occupation of Peshawar, his final defeat and death at the hands of the Sikhs at Balakot in 1831, are by themselves events not directly connected with the British presence in India, except in terms of historical perspective. It was only when the British succeeded the Sikhs in the Punjab that they met the hostility of a small and ineffective band of surviving *mujāhidīn*, directed not so much against the British Government in India as against its policy of interference in Muslim Afghanistan. This hostility grew from 1840 to 1857 when

¹ Hunter and Rehatsek emphasize its anti-British nature, this view was hotly contested by Sayyid Ahmad Khān and Ja'far Thānesarī (op. cit. 175, 189-90, 192) Mirza Hayrat Dehlavī (*Hayāt-i Tayyaba*, 107-34), Mihr (op. cit. 1, 259-61) and Mahmūd Husain (op. cit. 1, 540) regard the movement as aimed equally against the Sikhs and the British).

² Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz, *Fatāwā-i 'Azīziya*, Delhi, 1904, 16-17, 185, *Malfūzāt*, 58.

³ Quoted by Hunter, op. cit. 140.

⁴ Quoted by Sayyid Ahmad Khān, F. P. I. Graham, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan*, London, 1885, 238.

⁵ Ibid., loc. cit.

⁶ cf. Mihr, op. cit. 1, 15-18, 250-60

⁷ Letter of Sayyid Ahmad Barelvī and Shāh Ismā'il to the rulers of Bukhara and Afghanistan in B. M. Or. MS. 6635.

it allied itself with the Indian Mutiny and was ruthlessly crushed by the British in the sack of the *mujāhidīn's* headquarters at Sithana in 1858 and inflicted on them another heavy defeat in 1863. This was followed by a persecution of the movement all over India. The Tribal War of 1897-8, in which the frontier *mujāhidīn* participated was sparked off partly by resentment against the British attitude in the Graeco-Turkish War. Before, during and after the World War I, the frontier *mujāhidīn* allied themselves with the Khilāfat Movement in India; and during that World War they were contacted and encouraged by Turkish and German agents in Afghanistan.¹

The Farā'izī Movement in Bengal, though similar to that of Sayyid Ahmad Barelvī, was not originally related to it²; it was Wahhābī and not Walī-Ullāhī. Its founder Hājī Sharī'at-Ullāh had lived for twenty years in Mecca, whence he returned in 1802, and began to preach among the Bengālī peasants rejection of pagan or animistic rites borrowed from the Hindus and total reliance on the authority of the Qur'ān and the *sunnah*. By the time of his death in 1830 he had laid foundations of a political consciousness among the Muslim peasantry in Bengal. His son Wudūd Miān, who continued his work, preached a more revolutionary doctrine, that all land belonged to God and should be owned by cultivators without any obligation to pay taxes to the landlord or to the Government. He organized parallel religious courts for the Muslims, and before he died in 1860, he was well on the way of organizing something like a parallel government in some parts of Bengal.³

On the economic plane the Farā'izī movement was the upsurge of suffering, impoverished, ruthlessly exploited Muslim peasantry. The Permanent Settlement of 1793, introduced by Lord Cornwallis and Sir John Shore had reduced the Muslim peasant to the position of agricultural labourer, entirely at the mercy of the Hindu middle man, who had emerged as the newly created landlord.⁴

The other and very similar Muslim peasant movement led in Bengal by Titū Miān, was directly linked with Sayyid Ahmad Barelvī's,⁵ whose disciple he was; though it is likely that he also absorbed Wahhābī elements in Hijaz whence he returned in 1827. Compared to the Farā'izī movement his programme was more militant as 'the petty oppression to which the Hindu landlord

¹ Mihr, *Sarguzasht-i Muhāhidīn*, Lahore, 1957, 483-508.

² Ibid. 214.

³ Ibid. 214-15.

⁴ Mihr, *Sarguzasht*, 216.

⁵ Hunter, 159.

subjected his followers, placed him at the head of an infuriated peasant rising' ¹ Its retaliation against the Hindu landlord led to the proclamation that the British rule, which had created and was protecting that landlord was extinct ² For a time Tītū Miān controlled three districts of Bengal and defeated several small British detachments but he was finally overpowered and slain by a major British expedition in 1831

It is a curiosity of history that over a century before the creation of Pakistan, two miniature Muslim states struggled to emerge vaguely on the horizon of realization, if only for a very short while and against overwhelming odds, but ideologically linked together, and situated in the same Muslim majority areas which today constitute Pakistan

The movement of *Mujāhidin* is in many ways a unique one in the history of Indian Islam. It is its first mass political movement and its last—to use a Toynbeean term—'archaic' effort to recover India from the British and their Hindu and Sikh allies. Its impact on the re-orientation of religious faith and practice was revolutionary and more lasting. In practical implementation of some of the ideas of Shāh Walī-Ullāh it linked them in succeeding generations with the reformism of 'Abd al-Wahhāb. Though generally anti-West, it inspired the technique of religious reform in later pro-West Indian Wahhābism as represented by Sayyid Ahmad Khān. Vaguely it felt its way towards a universal Pan-Islāmism, and with confidence towards a cognizable religio political Muslim centre in India, forecasting the ideology of Pakistan.

¹ Hunter, 45

² Mihr, 216 220 Hunter 46 Rehatsch 220

X

CULTURAL ORIENTATIONS: MEDIEVAL LITERATURE

(i) *Sanskrit Literature and the Muslim Patronage*

THE main stream of Hindu religious and intellectual consciousness continued to flow through Sanskrit literature, which almost ignored the Muslim presence.¹ It was written for the most part in the Hindu states of south India and in Orissa under the patronage of Rājput rājās.² It continued to develop traditions and *genres* which were purely Hindu in religious and secular writing alike. In theological writing its orientation was conservative and Brahmanical, with a concentration on the commentaries on the *Purānas*, and the *dharmaśāstras*, though including such works of philosophical speculation as those of Mādhava. Non-religious writing continued to cover such fields as medicine, astronomy, linguistics, lexicography, poetics, music, and erotica. It included fresh productions *kāvya* (narrative verse), devotional and didactic poems, plays and prose romances.

To this essentially Hindu creative activity Muslim contribution in the way of participation was nil, and in the way of patronage insignificant. But some patronage there was, though until we come to the age of Akbar, it was sporadic. It is said to have begun with Mahmūd of Ghazna, who is credited with having bestowed several forts and a robe of honour on the defeated Chandella rājā of Kalinjar for composing 'Hindi' verses in his honour.³ The Hindu bard Kedār (c. 1150) is said to have attended the court of 'Alā al-dīn Jahānsūz, the destroyer of Ghazna.⁴ Jalāl al-dīn Khaljī (1290-6) is probably the first Muslim sultan of Delhi who showed some intellectual curiosity for Hindu learning and Sanskrit studies.⁵

¹ H. A. Mehendale and A. D. Pusalker in R. C. Majumdar, *The Delhi Sultanate*, Bombay, 1960, 464; cf. C. H. Chakravarty, 'Muhammedans as patrons of Sanskrit learning', *Sāhitya Parishad Patrika*, xlv 1.

² Mehendale and Pusalker 465.

³ G. A. Grierson, *The Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustān*, Calcutta, 1889, 2.

⁴ Gardīzi, 1928, 80.

⁵ Mahmūd Sherānī, *Punjab men Urdū*, Lahore, 1928, 115.

Muhammad bin Tughluq's intellectual curiosity in Hindu learning forms a landmark. He enjoyed the society of Hindu yogis and extended his patronage to Jain divines.¹ Ziyā al-dīn Nakhshabī's adaptation of fifty-two short stories from Sanskrit into Persian in 1330 under the title *Tūtī Nāma* (Book of the Parrot) is by far the most outstanding achievement of Muhammad bin Tughluq's reign in this field. This series of stories by a loyal parrot to the unfaithful wife of his master who is away on a journey, to keep her mind occupied all night in order to save her from adultery, came to be fully transposed into Persian literary tradition in India, and through it into Turkish and early Urdu literature. Nakhshabī's adaptation retains the Hindu milieu and customs in some stories,² while in others names and places have been Islamized and anecdotes of prophets woven in.³

Despite Firuz Tughluq's theocratic policies, the official patronage of Sanskrit learning continued. He commissioned translations of medical works from Sanskrit.⁴ A treatise on Hindu stronomy and astrology was translated into Persian under the title *Dalā'il-i Firuz-Shāhī*, while other translations from Sanskrit during his reign include works on music and wrestling.

Genuine Muslim effort towards an understanding, patronage and participation in Sanskrit learning begins with Sultan Zayn al-'Ābidīn of Kashmir (1420-70) patron of Jonarāja, who continued the great Sanskrit historical work *Rājataranginī*⁵ and a number of Hindu scholars including the physician Śrī Bhat.⁶ He also commissioned the translations of *Mahābhārata* and *Rājataranginī* into Kashmīrī, the first indication of Muslim interest in the pre-Muslim Hindu history of India.

Muslim participation in and patronage of Sanskrit learning reached its highest watermark in the court of Akbar. Some of the Hindu nobles in his court wrote in Sanskrit as well as Persian, like Rājā Manohardās⁷ or Todar Mal (1523-89) who translated

¹ Ibn Batūttah (Defremery and Sanguinetti), iii, 34 ff.; B. A. Saletore, 'Delhi Sultans as patrons of Jaina gūṛus of Kārnātaka', *Kārnātaka Historical Review*, 1937, iv (1 and 2).

² Ziyā al-dīn Nakhshabī, *Tūtī Nāma*, I.O. Pers. MS. 3469 (Ethé 743), fos. 3a-3b; 60b-66a; 83a-87a.

³ *Ibid.* fos. 10a-14a; 18a-20a; 51a-56b.

⁴ 'Abdullāh, *Tārīkh-i Dā'ūdī*, B.M. Or. MS. 197, fo. 23b; Chakravarty, op. cit.

⁵ Jonarāja, Shrivara, Prājyabhata and Suka, *Dvitiya, Tritiya and Chaturthi Rājataranginī*, ed. A. Troyer, Calcutta, 1835; Eng. tr. by P. C. Dutt (*Kings of Kashmir*), Calcutta, 1879-88.

⁶ Firishta (Lucknow ed.), ii, 27.

⁷ Grierson, 37.

Bhāgavata Purāna into Persian.¹ Among Akbar's Muslim nobles 'Abdul Rahīm Khān-i Khānān, Abu'l Fazl and Faizī knew some Sanskrit and translated from it, while other intellectuals and writers, including Badāūnī, translated Sanskrit works into Persian with the help of Hindu pandits. Abu'l Fazl's account of Hindu religion and sciences, of Hindu institutions, of Hindu cosmogony and geography, of the learning of the Hindus, the Jains and other sects,² though partly plagiarized from al-Bīrūnī and partly based on original study with the help of Hindu scholars, marked the re-establishment, after an interval of nearly 500 years, of the Muslim tradition of Hindu studies.

Essentially, the programme of translations from Sanskrit into Persian under Akbar was not an isolated or specific development. It was a part of the intensive project for the improvement of his mind which also included translations from Arabic, Turkish, and Kasmīrī.³ Among the Hindu scholars employed to help Muslim translators like Faizī, Abu'l Fazl, Hājī Ibrāhīm Sirhindī, Badāūnī, Naqīb Khān, Mullā Shāh, and Muhammad Sultān Thānesarī were Kishnājoshi, Gangādhara, Mahesh Mahānand, Devī Misrā, Satavadhava, Madhusūdana-Misra, Chaturbhujā, and Bhavan.⁴ This joint enterprise rendered from Sanskrit into Persian epic classics like *Mahābhārata*⁵ Vālmīki's *Rāmāyana*⁶ and several religious and metaphysical works including parts of the *Purānas*.⁷ Faizī paraphrased the first two *parvas* of *Mahābhārata* into Persian verse.⁸ This Hindu epic, curiously enough, gave the *dāstān* of Amīr Hamza cycle (consisting of the internecine, interminable and monotonously identical adventures of epic romantic heroes, villains, sorcerers and swindlers in magical *milieu*) its particular shape in Muslim India. Another popular translation from Sanskrit was that of *Hitopadeśa* rendered into Persian by Tāj al-Ma'ālī under the title *Mufarrih al-Qulūb*.⁹

Jain literature associated with the court of Akbar included *Hira Saubhagyam* by Devavimāla describing the visit of Jain monks to

¹ Grierson, 35.

² 'Allāmi, *A'in*, iii (Jarrett), 2, 3-125, 229-90, 337-58.

³ Ibid. i (Blochmann), 122-13.

⁴ Ibid. i, 112-13; S. R. Sharma, *A Bibliography of Mughal India*, Bombay, n.d.

⁵ B. M. Add. MS. 5638-40; I. O. Pers. MS. 1641 (Ethé 1928).

⁶ B. M. Or. MS. 1248.

⁷ I. O. Pers. MS. 753 (Ethé 1955).

⁸ I. O. Pers. MS. 761 (Ethé 1945).

⁹ Tāj al-Ma'ālī, *Mufarrih al-qulūb*, I. O. Pers. MS. 3350 (Ethé 1983).

the court of Akbar and a biography of Khem Chand, who introduced Jains into Akbar's court, by Jayasoma.¹

Akbar's court developed complementary but separate intellectual traditions, the Muslim and the Hindu, which co-existed in mutual tolerance, but did not merge. The Hindu intellectual enclave received equality of patronage with the Muslim. But the great Persian literature written in this period, with the exception of some of the writings of Faizī and Abu'l Fazl remained almost totally uninfluenced by and indifferent to Sanskrit. The Hindu stream of creativity in Sanskrit as well as in Hindi remained equally unresponsive to Muslim presence, contact or cultural heritage. The net achievement of Akbar's patronage of Hindu studies was the relative familiarity with fragments of Hindu religion and epical literature of the Muslim élite under the Mughals, compared to its predecessor under the Sultanate.

This partial intellectual familiarity with Hinduism is reflected in Jahāngīr's accounts of the sociological basis of the four *āshramas* of the Brahmins, the four Hindu castes, the psychological motives of *satī*, and his equation of Vedānta with Sūfism.² He continued the patronage of translations from Sanskrit into Persian as well as of Hindu scholars who wrote on Hindu law, sciences and lexicography written during his reign.³

Outstanding in the Hindu scholarship of the reign of Shāh Jahān were works on Hindu law; of these the *Nirnaya Sindhū* of Kamalakara Bhatta and writings of Nilakantha Bhatta have been recognized as authoritative works on Hindu law in modern times by the High courts of Bombay and Calcutta. Popularization of Hindu religion seems to have been the keynote of the Hindu literature written under Shāh Jahān, which probably received patronage from Dārā Shikoh.

Among Shāh Jahān's protégés were the famous court poets Sundardās and Cintāmānī as well as Kavīndrācārya who wrote a commentary on the *Rigveda*. Jagannāth Misra, most distinguished of Shāh Jahān's Hindu court-poets, wrote Sanskrit panegyrics in the honour of Dārā Shikoh as well as tracts in praise of the Ganges, the Jamuna and the sun. Hindu savants and poets associated with Dārā Shikoh, himself a scholar of Sanskrit, were Kavī

¹ S. R. Sharma, op. cit. 82.

² Jahāngīr, *Tuzuk* (Rogers), 244-6, 357-61.

³ S. R. Sharma, *The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors*, 87; *Bibliography*, 154-5, 157-8.

Hari Rām, Pancrāj of Benares, and Phatan Misra. The learned Kavindrācārya seems to have wielded some influence in the court of Shāh Jahān, possibly through the support of Dārā Shikoh, for he successfully led a deputation of pandits requesting the emperor to abolish the pilgrimage tax on Hindus in Benares and Allahabad.¹

Despite Aurangzeb's negative attitude to Hindu culture, his court included Hindu scholars or poets like Indrajit Tripāthi and Sāmant, while one of his Muslim courtiers, Fāzil 'Alī Khān was a patron of the Hindu poets Jai Dev and Nāthand, and of the prosodist Sukhdās Misra.² Outside the Hindu stream, the most remarkable work interpretative of Hindu good-living ever written in Persian, was the *Tuhfat al-Hind* of Mirzā Muhammad, commissioned by Kokaltāsh Khān for the instruction of Aurangzeb's son Jahāndār Shāh.³ The book deals with the orthography and sound laws of Indian languages, especially Hindi, comparing the rules of Sanskrit prosody with those of Arabic;⁴ and with Hindu arts of love⁵ and of music.⁶ It is followed by three chapters on the Hindu science of sexual knowledge, physiognomy and lexicography.

During the decadence of the Mughal empire the patronage of Sanskrit studies by the powerless Mughal emperors was ineffective; still Niwāj, a court poet of Ā'zam Shāh (1707) translated Kālidāsa's *Śakuntalā* into contemporary Hindī.⁷ The ancient story of *Bakāwalī*⁸ was translated into Persian from a Hindi dialect version with Persianized interpolations, and later formed the basis of translations into Urdu leading to Dayā Shankar Nasīm's famous narrative poem *Gulzār-i Nasīm* (1838).

At least in one respect the contact with and patronage of Muslims awakened a new feeling in Sanskrit and other Hindu literatures—a feeling for history. After the latter parts of *Rājataranginī*, another Sanskrit work written partly as a direct result of Muslim patronage, covering a Muslim historical theme is the *Sarvadeśavrittānta Samgraha*, a history of the Mughals up to the reign of Akbar. Mughal historiography rather than the ancient Rājput epic seems to have been the inspiration of the Jaipur and

¹ Bikramajit Hasrat, *Dārā Shikoh*, Calcutta, 1953, 112, 115, quoting *Kavindrācāndradāya*, Poona, 1939.

² Grierson, 60.

³ Mirzā Muhammad, *Tuhfat al-Hind*, B.M. Add. MS. 16,868, fos. 1b-2b.

⁴ Ibid. fos. 136b-155a.

⁵ Ibid. fos. 169a-246b.

⁶ Ibid. fos. 155a-168b.

⁷ Grierson, 76.

⁸ Shaykh 'Izzat-Ullāh, *Bakāwalī*, I.O. Pers. MS. 1413 (Ethé 828).

Udaipur *Khyāts* and *Kāviyās*, chronicles of the Rājput dynasties composed in the Mughal period.¹

Of the languages and literatures that have descended from Sanskrit, next to Hindi and Urdu, Bengali has been the most susceptible to composite influences. From the beginning of the thirteenth century, with the establishment of Muslim rule in Bengal, Arabic and Persian loan-words, chiefly the vocabulary of administration, luxury and good-living, made deep inroads into the Bengali language, displacing the older vocabulary of Sanskrit origin.² Hindu writers strongly resisted this trend, and adhered to purely Sanskrit vocabulary even after it had been discarded in popular usage.³ On the popular level one comes across Muslim influence in Bengali folk-tales such as the introduction of fairies in the story of Madhūmālā.⁴ The *Mahābhārata* was translated from Sanskrit into Bengali by order of 'Alā al-dīn Husain Shāh (1493-1518) and his son Nasir al-dīn Nusrat Shāh (1518-33), Sultans of Gaur.⁵ Another patron of Hindu learning in Bengal was the Muslim general Chuttī Khān.⁶ Muslim Bengali poets sometimes wrote on Hindu themes. Alāol wrote poems on the familiar Hindu love theme of Rādhā and Krishnā, and shows considerable first hand familiarity with Hindu religious ceremonies, ritual and customs, with Sanskrit classification of feminine emotions, and with Sanskrit prosody.⁷ Still, the Muslim Bengali literature retained a distinct personality and identity of its own, which accepted without any inhibition the Arabic and Persian heritage of Muslim culture⁸ while the Bengali literature written by Hindus is generally hostile and resistant to Muslim influences. In so far as Muslim patronage of the Hindu Bengali literature is concerned, Majumdar reminds us that only three among the Muslim rulers and officers of Bengal patronized the Hindu stream of Bengali literature.⁹

(ii) *Persian Literature: The Muslim Stream*

The Central Asian Turks who formed the ruling élite of Muslim India used Persian as the language of culture and administration; and in India generally in the second generation after the arrival of

¹ Sharma, 72.

² D. C. Sen, *History of Bengali Language and Literature*, Calcutta, 1911, 381-2.

³ Ibid. 382.

⁴ Ibid. 774.

⁵ Ibid. 201-3.

⁶ Ibid. 205-7.

⁷ Ibid. 625.

⁸ In'am al-Haq, *Muslim Bengali Literature*, Karachi, 1957.

⁹ Majumdar in *The Delhi Sultanate*, Bombay, 1960, Intro. xxxi-xxxii.

a Central Asian emigré his native Turkish speech was forgotten. Though at Ghazna under Mahmūd and Mas'ūd Arabic writing flourished along with the Persian, in the secondary Ghaznawid capital, Lahore, the 'little Ghazna', Persian held complete sway. The first Persian poet resident in Lahore and attached to the court of Mas'ūd I (1030-40) was Abū 'Abdullāh Rūzbeh. His tradition was continued by Abu'l Faraj Rūnī, court poet of the Ghaznawid Ibrāhīm (1099-1114); and by his greater contemporary Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān (1046-1121), whose *qasidas* referring to the battles fought against the Hindus or his patriotic nostalgia for Lahore when travelling abroad, are the first reflection in Indo-Persian verse of the cultural history of Muslim India as emotionally experienced by the Muslim élite.¹

This reflection of a sense of history as lived and felt is one of the outstanding features of Indo-Persian verse. After Salmān it runs through the topical verses of Abu 'Alā 'Atā ibn Ya'qūb Nākok and Jamāl al-dīn Yūsuf ibn Nasr al-Kātib, both minor poets of Ghaznawid Lahore. It reflects the megalomania of 'Alā al-dīn Jahānsūz who sacked and burnt Ghazna.² It records, through the panegyrics of 'Abd al-Ra'ūf Harvī and Abū Bakr Khusravī, the transfer of power in India from the Ghaznawids to the Ghūrīds (1186), and the expansion of Muslim rule in northern India.

Soon after this two new factors seem to have deeply affected the course of Persian literature in India; the stream of refugee élite, fleeing before the Mongol onslaught in Transoxiana and Khurasan; and the stabilization of Muslim military and political centres in the Indian sub-continent. In garrison towns of the Delhi Sultanate, like Deopapur, Ajodhan, Hansi, and Siyalkot Muslim intelligentsia flocked not only from abroad, but from its former disrupted centre at Lahore, now exposed to Mongol incursions.³ Distinguished among these regional centres was Multan under Nāsir al-dīn Qubāchā between 1210 and 1227, to whose court flocked historians and literary chroniclers like Jūzjānī and 'Awfī, who after his fall joined the service of Iletmish in Delhi; while at the hospice of Bahā al-dīn Zakariyyā at Multan, 'Irāqī perfected his own incomparable style of mystical *ghazal*, which later, through his friend Sadr al-dīn of Konya, may have been one of the formulative influences that shaped the mystical genius of Jalāl al-dīn Rūmī.

¹ Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān, *Diwān*, ed. by Rashīd Yāsīmī, Tehran, n.d.

² Jūzjānī, 57.

³ S. M. Ikram, Introduction to *Armaghān-i Pāk*, Karachi, 1953, 33.

Conservation of the cultural heritage of Dār al-Islam, which almost faced extinction under the Mongol threat, is the keynote of literature produced under Iletmish and his successors in Delhi, and marks the political thinking of Fakhr-i Mudabbir, the historiographical attitude of Jūzjānī, the critical approach and sense of values, moral and artistic, in 'Awfī, as well as in translations from Arabic of such 'anchor-sheet' literature as the works of al-Ghazzālī.

In Delhi and in provincial headquarters and the garrison towns, the Persian speech, though it had flowed from several streams, resembled closely its Transoxonian form and usage.¹ It also became the expression of Muslim religio-cultural exclusiveness, and evolved a self-sufficient sensitivity of its own.

In this phase of the consolidation of Persian as the intellectual and cultural language of the Delhi sultanate, its poets continued to reflect as before, from a courtly distance, the process of the march of Indo-Muslim history, not as continuous or dynamic growth but as an atomistic series of 'present moments', topical assessments of the 'now' culturally experienced, which added together sum up to a historical continuity. The topical verses of Tāj al-dīn Sangrīza and 'Amīd Sannāmī illustrate this process. The deeply moving elegy of Khusrau on the death of Prince Muhammad the son of Balban who lost his life fighting against the Mongols, is perhaps the first Persian poem written in India with distinct consciousness of the causality of history.² In the *mathnawīs* of Khusrau, written later, the historical epic developed, and reached its culmination in the *Futūh al-Salātīn* of 'Isāmī.

During the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq, new and eccentric elements from Central Asia introduced new vogues in Indo-Persian poetry. The sceptic rationalism of the poet 'Ubayd,³ and the studied obscurity of Badr-i Chāch who reduced poetry to a form of stimulating crossword puzzle, seem to have thrown the traditionally developed taste of the Indo-Persian school, which had so recently witnessed the greatness of Khusrau's genius, into the melting-pot. Historical consciousness, however, remained intact during this new vogue, and is reflected in Badr-i Chāch's *qasidas* on the investitures of Muhammad bin Tughluq by the Cairene 'Abbāsīd caliphs and in his chronograms.⁴ The inimitability of

¹ Amīr Khusrau, *Dibācha-i Ghurraṭ al-kamāl* in *Kulliyāt*, B.M. Add. MS. 21, 104, fos. 139b-190b.

² Text in *Kulliyāt*, B.M. Add. MS. 21, 104; also in *Bīdā'ūnī*, i, 138-50.

³ Barānī, 465. ⁴ Badr-i Chāch, *Qasā'id*, ed. by Hādī 'Alī, Cawnpore, n.d.

this new vogue as well as Fīrūz Tughluq's indifference to fine arts including poetry led to a barrenness epitomized by Qāzī 'Ābid's lament on the lack of patronage and inspiration.¹

Bābur ushered in a new era in Indo-Persian literature. With him came the Central Asian poets Abu'l wāhid Fārighī, Nādir Samarqandī and Tāhir Khwāndī; while the historians Zayn al-dīn Khawāfī and Mirzā Haidar Dughlat followed him into India. For a generation Turkish poetry, carried in Harat to great heights by 'Alī Sher Nawā'ī vied with Persian for supremacy at the Mughal court in Delhi. Bābur and Bayrām Khān both wrote in Turkish and though Humāyūn composed only in Persian² his court was not unlike that of his contemporary Suleimān the Magnificent, where Persian and Turkish flourished side by side as cultivated languages.³ But soon Turkish declined and Persian regained its former position of unrivalled supremacy due to a number of causes including the Pathān Sūrī interregnum during Humāyūn's reign, the influx of Persian intelligentsia after Humāyūn's return from Persia and the withering away of Turkish genius not only among the Mughal élite of Turkish stock, but in its chief source of supply, the Uzbek Central Asia. In prose the proud Turkish heritage of imperial autobiography was transplanted into Persian by Jahāngīr.

Whatever the causes of the decline of Persian poetry under the Safavids,⁴ in this respect Persia's loss was India's gain. 'Urfī brought to the Mughal court the tradition and style of Fighānī from Shirāz. Nazīrī Nishāpūrī, Zuhūrī, and Malik Qummī migrated from Persia to the hospitable courts of the Deccan.⁵ On the other hand, poets like Mir Sanjar who was attached to the court of Ahmadnagar, were reluctant to accept the offers of Safavid patronage and emigrate to Persia.⁶ Sā'ib, who migrated to India after he had already acquired fame in Isfahān compared his nostalgia for India to a lover's longing for his beloved.⁷ 'Alī Qulī Salīm compared perfection in poetry to henna which could attain full

¹ Ikram, op. cit. 45.

² Bābur, *Sobranie stickhotvoroney Imperatura Babura*, ed. by A. Samoilovich, Petrograd, 1917; Bayrām Khān, *Persian and Turkī Dīcāns*, ed. by E. Denison Ross, Calcutta, 1910; Hādī Hasan, 'The Unique Diwān of Humāyūn Bādshāh', *JC* xxv (1951), 212 ff.

³ Sīdī 'Alī Reis Kātīb-i Rūmī, *Mir' at al-Mamālik*, Istanbul, 1895, 43-55.

⁴ E. G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, iv, 24-28; Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, i, 347-402; H. A. R. Gibb, note in *ibid.* i, 401-2.

⁵ Ghulām 'Alī Azād Bilgrāmī, *Sarv-i Azād*, I.O. Pers. MS. 1852 (Ethé 683), fo. 18a.

⁶ *Ibid.* fo. 16a.

⁷ *Ibid.* 46b-47a.

colour only in India. The poet-laureates of Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān, Tālib Āmulī, Qudsī Mashhadī and Kalīm Hamadānī, all hailed from Persia. Among the immigrants from Harat was Qāsim Kāhī, who claimed to be a disciple of Jāmī; while Tadarvī Abharī had come from Ottoman Turkey and attached himself to the entourage of Bayrām Khan.¹

It is interesting to watch the curiously sensitive responses of Indo-Persian poets to the tensions that developed within the Mughal culture in the Indian environment. For instance, Akbar's heresy was openly complimented but secretly satirized by Mulla Sherī,² 'Urfī Shirāzī (d. 1591) and Qudsī (d. 1646) reacted to the Alfī heresies by their devotion to the Prophet of Islam. Faizī's mind was torn between intellectual scepticism and religious remorse,³ 'clinging sometimes to heaven, sometimes to earth', and 'tasting poison and antidote' alike.⁴

The prose literature which developed in the Mughal court and in the contemporary courts of the Deccan carried on the tradition of the Persian prose of the sultanate. The older Indo-Muslim tradition of a historiography perfected by Juzjānī, Baranī and 'Afif merged with the imported heritage of the Ilkhānid and Timurid historians in the works of Abu'l Fazl, Badāūnī, Firishta and a host of others. *Inshā*, the courtly art of epistolography, was cultivated to a standard not inferior to that of the courts of the Ottomans and the Safavids, Indo-Persian literature was enriched with translations from Arabic, Sanskrit, and Turkish. Stylized prose was cultivated at the courts, and developed into a self-sufficient art by Zuhūrī and Bedil.

The decline of Muslim society in India came to be mirrored in the Indo-Persian poetry from the seventeenth century onwards. Zuhūrī's (d. 1615) *Sāqī Nāma* reflects the coming disintegration of Muslim society in the Deccan. The decadence of Mughal India seems to permeate the degenerate flavour of Ghanīmat Kunjāhī's *Nayrang-i 'Ishq* with its sensuous moroseness and its overripe sentimentality. Nī'mat Khān 'Alī's satire in prose and verse, though sectarian and polemical, shows a greater awareness of the future doom.

¹ Badāūnī, iii, 203.

² Ibid. II, 201, 308-9, 322 ff.

³ Faizī, in his devotional verses to the Prophet at the opening of the *Nal Damān*. Also see Shibli, *Shu'ar al-'Ajam*, Cawnpore, 1920-3, iii, chapter on Faizī.

⁴ Faizī's letters to 'Abdul Haq Dehlavī in K. A. Nizāmī, *'Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavī*, Delhi, 1953, Appendix, 345-77.

'*Sabk-i Hindī*' or the 'Indian Style' is used generally as a stylistic rather than a regional term, referring to the Persian poetry composed in India in a particular mode of expression during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Vālih Dāghistānī was perhaps the first to attribute its origin to the influence of Fighānī Shrāzī (d. 1519).¹ 'Abdul Bāqī Khān regarded Fighānī's school as having a new style.² Ghālib classified all Persian poetry into three schools: the first represented by Khāqānī preserving the traditions of Rūdakī and Sa'dī, the second represented by Zuhūrī and the third by Sā'ib, the last two having developed in India under Fighānī's influence.³ Lutf 'Alī Āzur prefers a simpler regional classification for all poets who wrote in India, from Khusrau to his own day, though among them various schools of style could be distinguished.⁴ Shibli follows the view of Vālih Dāghistānī in confining the 'Indian Style' to the poetry written in India in imitation of Fighānī during the sixteenth century and after.⁵

Foreign scholars like Mirzoev⁶ and Bertels regard the 'Indian Style' as having originated in Sultān Husain Bayqarā's court in Harat in the works of poets like Nawā'ī and Jāmī, and thence to have travelled to India. Bertels⁷ especially refutes the theory of Fighānī's influence and objects to the term *Sabk-i Hindī* as misleading, taking the view that it is neither a national nor a geographical concept, but essentially a social phenomenon; he urges that it has first to be properly studied, analysed and defined. Bausani, accepting this position as essentially valid observes that 'cerebralism' and 'artificiality' which are regarded as distinctive features of the 'Indian Style' are in fact common characteristics of all Persian traditional poetry, as indeed of traditional poetry in all languages, and turns his attention to an analysis of the 'Indian Style' rather than of its origins.⁸

Looking at the entire mass of Indo-Persian poetry as the product of a single traditional creative process, it is difficult to resist the

¹ Shibli, iii, 28.

² Shibli, iv, 214.

³ Ghālib, '*Ūd-i Hindī*', Lucknow, 1941, 65.

⁴ Lutf 'Alī Beg Āzur, *Ātishkada*, I.O. Pers. MS. 2929 (Ethé 693).

⁵ Shibli, iii, 27-28.

⁶ A. M. Mirzoev, *Sajdo Nasafi i ego mesto v istorii tadzikskoj literatury*, Stalinabad, 1954, 34-56.

⁷ E. E. Bertels, 'K voprosu ob "indijskom stile" v persidskoj poezii', in *Charisteria Orientalia*, Prague, 1956, 56-59.

⁸ Alessandro Bausani, 'Contributo a una definizione dello "stile indiano" della poesia persiana', in *Annali dell'Istituto Universitario di Napoli*, n.s. vii (1958), 167-78; Bausani, *Storia delle letterature del Pakistan*, Milano, 1958, 57.

conclusion that the so-called post-Fighānī 'Indian Style' is not a departure from the tradition of that mass, but a by-product of it, in a way indeed, its intensification, due to certain influences from abroad which stressed the intellectualization of imagery and expression. The post-Fighānī style therefore appears to be an accentuated growth within the traditional Indian style which begins with Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān. In its origin, and through centuries of development, it remained, as Amīr Khusrau has observed, close to the Central Asian (Khurāsānī) style.¹ Its intellectualization has not been due to a sudden impact of Jāmī or Fighānī on the Indo-Muslim mind, but to a long historical process, in which wave after wave of Central Asian refugees, who came to India to escape the Mongol horror, or the cupidity of the Chaghatāys or the chaos that followed the Uzbek occupation of Samarqand and Harat and subsequent Safavid-Uzbek conflicts, partook to apply symmetrical rationalism to well-defined norms of experience and feeling. They mentally rejected Indian life and landscape around them. To be emotionally self-contained within the poetic aesthetics of their own original culture, they had to treat the poetry they wrote as emotional-intellectual mathematics, in which images, like numbers could be added, subtracted and multiplied, and split into infinitesimal decimals. Rashīd Yāsīmī was conscious of something like this process in the 'Indian Style' when he defined it as 'Persian twisting upon itself'.²

The elements of 'Indian Style' are nebulous in Amīr Khusrau. He had clear-cut models like Nizāmī to follow. Earlier he had come under the influence of poets of Persian like Anwarī and Kamāl Isfahānī,³ only to reject them, in fact to reject the entire Persian School (*Sabk-i Fārsī*) of Persian poetry in his maturity. It was this rejection of the purely Persian style in Indo-Persian poetry that distinguished Persian poetry written in India from that of Persia. Khusrau's 'cerebralism' is generally experimental, as in *Nuh Sipihr*; he was far too original and far too great a poet to rely entirely on decorative fancy. Yet it is there.

The rôle of Badr-i Chāch in the 'cerebralization' of Indo-Persian has been grossly neglected. His work included in the school curricula since the Lodī period, constituted a discipline, which

¹ Amīr Khusrau, *Dibācha*, loc. cit.

² Quoted by Bausani, 'Contributo a una definizione', 168.

³ Wahid Mirza, *The Life and Works of Amīr Khusrau*, Calcutta, 1935, 158.

prepared the way for the much simpler 'metaphysical' image-complex of Jāmī, which Jāmālī and later the court poets of Bābur and Humāyūn introduced into India. Bertels and Mirzoev are right in suggesting the pre-Fighānī element of the influence of Alī Shēr Nawā'ī and Jāmī on the 'Indian Style', but this influence was neither the first nor the only formulative one. It was a new current of the familiar Khurāsānī style which the Indo-Persian poetry had chosen as its model.

The strangeness and attraction of Fighānī's influence which reached India in the later sixteenth century lay in its parallelism, though not similarity to the method of intellectualization of image and emotional expression which Indo-Persian poetry had itself been evolving. In the later sixteenth century, the two streams, the traditional Indian and the Fighānīan were to some extent separately discernible and distinguishable in the work of Faizī and 'Urfī respectively,¹ but the process of merging together had already begun. The patterns of their intellectualization received a common guidance and a common critical stimulus from Hakīm Abu'l Fath Gīlānī, to raise poetry to the level of a difficult art. Despite Ghālib's distinction between the styles of 'Urfī and Zuhūrī on the one hand and Sā'ib and Kalim on the other, one notices that the process of merging together in one composite style works irresistibly in the work of all of them and their other contemporaries writing in the sub-continent.

The two streams jointly—and neither of them separately—constitute the 'Indian Style' of sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; concentrating on parallel statement, partly image, partly the imaged which is either atomistic experience or mere convention; on imagic argument (*mithāliya*) as developed by Ghānī, Sā'ib and Kalim²; on complex conceit like that of the seventeenth-century English 'metaphysical' poets, arising out of economy of expression and telescoping into a single image a variety of emotional states; on 'cerebral' artifice in pushing familiar images to unfamiliar and unexpected lengths³; and on the creation of a synthetic poetic diction in which a whole phrase constitutes a single image.

The stylization of the 'Indian Style', as Bertels has observed, is to a large extent a sociological phenomenon. Its roots lie in the intellectual snobbery and exclusiveness of the Muslim élite in

¹ Ikṛām, 51.

² Shibli, iii, 21, 196, 205.

³ Shibli, iii, 24; E. G. Browne, op. cit. (1951), iii, 461.

India, and in its mental escape from the physical environment around it, into the labyrinth of its own hair-splitting fancifulness

Mirzā 'Abdul Qādir Bedil (d. 1721) in whom this style reaches its culmination, sums up and multiplies unto himself all the intellectual formulae of style practised by his predecessors in India. And yet the intensity of his subjective assessment¹ is so acute and factual, and his metaphysical experience so intense, that genuine poetry emerges in all its splendour through all the bottlenecks of artifice, achieving a unity of metaphysical theme and highly conceptual image. From him much of the liberal 'poetic licence' of Urdu poetry is derived. His distinguished disciple Sirāj al-dīn Khān Ārzū disseminated his spiritual, if not his stylistic legacy to the great Urdu poets of the eighteenth century, Mir, and Mazhar Jān-i Jānān. His stylistic impact on the mind of Ghālib was tremendous, and though Ghālib moved away from the mere imitation of him, in a deeper sense, in conceptual imagery he continued the tradition of Bedil in his Persian and his Urdu verse to the end. Bedil's influence on Iqbāl was of a different kind, it was essentially an intellectual and not a stylistic one—the attraction of Bedil's inherent dynamism and his firm faith in the expanse and creativeness of man's subjective self.

In Ghālib and Iqbāl the 'Indian Style' progressively dissolves itself. In escaping from the extremisms of Bedil's stylistic novelties Ghālib turned to 'Urfī and Faizī and in the end discovered himself. This discovery in terms of the style of his Persian poetry remained imitative. His Persian verse, occasionally rising to the heights of great poetry, broken on fresh ground as his Urdu poetry did, founded no school and found no great disciples. The decline of the *Sabk-i Hindī* in Persian was a part of the general decline of Persian in India, where it had been superseded by Urdu as the accepted language of poetry by the Muslim elite in the eighteenth century. Iqbāl chose to write in Persian for very different reasons, to convey his philosophical and political thought to a Muslim readership well beyond the frontiers of the sub-continent, without any pretensions of poetic value or linguistic polish, and turning for inspiration outside the Indian tradition to the Sūfistic humanism of Jalāl al-dīn Rūmī.

'Largely by means of poetry', remarks Murray Titus, 'Sūfī ideas

¹ For a traditional study of this side of Bedil's mind see Khwāja 'Ibād Allah Akhtar, *Bedil* Lahore, 1952.

have been spread throughout India.¹ Persian poetry became one of the vehicles of expression of the Sūfī intuitive 'flashes' in Muslim India as elsewhere. Some of the surviving verses of al-Hujwīrī show this, though they are prosaic versification of orthodox precepts rather than outbursts of mystic volition. The *diwāns* attributed to the Chishtī saints Mu'in al-dīn and Bakhtiyār Kākī are probably spurious,² but that of Jamāl al-dīn Hānswī (1184-1260) can be regarded as authentic.³ Its content is largely exoteric and directly connected with Hanafī doctrine and theology, though occasionally dispersed with flashes of mystical experience. Among orthodox Sūfī poets were Mas'ūd Bek, a relative of the ruling family of the Tughluqs, who renounced wealth to join a mystic order, and Jamālī (d. 1535), the hagiologist and spiritual luminary of the age of Sikandar Lodī, and a poet of ascetic Sūfism, who met Jamī during his travels abroad and was probably the first to convey some of his influence into Muslim India. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a reaction developed in Muslim India against the Sūfī 'material of poetry', possibly due to the vogue of the Shī'ī emigré poets like 'Urfī and Kalim, and the discouragement of Sūfism as well as of poetry related to it in the contemporary Safavid Persia; but Dārā Shikoh and his later contemporary Bedil rehabilitated Sūfism in Indo-Persian poetry again in the middle of the seventeenth century.

Remarkable in the Persian poetry written in India, except for a few specimens in Amīr Khusrau, is the complete rejection of Indian life and landscape as valid poetical material. In exile in India, Persian poetry continues to occupy itself with Transoxonian and Persian flowers, the tulip and the rose rather than the Indian *champak* or lotus; it ignores Indian birds and beasts, the aroma of Indian bāzārs and the fragrance of Indian spices: and concentrates entirely on borrowings from a life and a scene of which most Muslim poets in India had no first hand knowledge. They relied exclusively for their metaphors, 'compound epithets' and poetic formulae on the 'recognized' inter-Islamic imagery, based on the example and authority of great Persian and Central Asian poets outside India. This foreign imagery woven into complex and multiple patterns became the accepted stock-in-trade of Indo-Persian and later, Urdu conventional poetic diction. Unlike Sanskrit and

¹ Murray Titus, *Indian Islam*, 1930, 110.

² *Ikrām*, 38.

³ *Ikrām*, 38.

Hindi, in Persian and in Urdu the beloved is of indeterminate sex, and could be either man or woman. This situation raised no grammatical problem in Persian; Urdu chose to deal with it by using the masculine gender throughout.

Though the poetic diction completely ignored the Indian *milieu*, Indian loan-words occasionally found their way into Persian poetry as early as the eleventh century in the diction of Firdawsī, Farrukhī and Minuchihrī, court poets of Mahmūd of Ghazna.¹ Amīr Khusrau deliberately borrowed Indian words when the context demanded local colour or description, but not in his *ghazals* in which he also strictly adhered to the conventional poetic diction. After Khusrau there was a long interval before anyone discovered the Indian scene around him; until Jahāngīr in his sensuous response to beauty in all forms, described in his prose autobiography the varieties of the Indian water-lily, or the love of the bee for the lotus in the Hindu lore, or the *koel* (cuckoo) as the nightingale of India.² Calendar poem which came to be written in Indo-Persian is presumably of Indian origin; so also is possibly the *shahr āshub* (elegy on the ruin of a city or a culture) though it might have grown out of similar Persian poems written abroad such as Sa'dī's elegy on the Mongol sack of Baghdād.

Apart from Urdu, which is modelled entirely on the Persian tradition, other languages of Muslim India show considerable influence of Persian. Bengālī borrowed from it nineteen forms of metre and the *ghazal*.³ The influence of Persian on the languages of what is now West Pakistan was even greater. Punjābī, Pashtu, Sindhī, Baluchī and Kashmirī are written in Persian script and have borrowed Persian loan-words without inhibition. The Sūfī literature of the Punjab and Sind, though it based itself anecdotally on what was originally Indian material in the works of Shāh 'Abdul Latīf⁴, Bulhe Shāh and Wārith Shāh,⁵ is that of Persian mysticism. The translations were made from Persian into Punjābī and Sindhī

¹ Mahmūd Sherānī, *Punjāb men Urdu*, Lahore, 1928, 29.

² Jahāngīr, *Tuzuk* (Rogers), 412-13, 226.

³ Salīm-Ullāh Fahmī, contribution in *Pākistān kī 'Ilāqā' i zabānon par Fārsī ka athar*, Karachi, 1953, 18; Bausani, *Storia delle letterature del Pakistan*, 337-45.

⁴ U. M. Daudpota, *Sindhī Literature*, Karachi, 1951; Pīr Hisām al-dīn Rāshidī, *Sindhī Adab*, 1954. H. T. Sorley, *Shah Abdul Latif of Bhut*, London, 1940.

⁵ Muhammad Sarwar, *Punjābī Adab*, Karachi, 1954; Lajwanti Ram Krishna, *Punjābī Sūfī Poets*, London, 1938.

and vice versa.¹ The Sindhi language today has 25 per cent Persian vocabulary.² Pashtu is linguistically and in literary tradition even closer to Persian. Apart from verbs, the greater part of spoken Kashmiri vocabulary consists of borrowings or formations from Persian, and apart from a few folk-tales the greater part of Kashmiri literature is of Arabic-Persian derivation.³ It will be no exaggeration to say that after Islam, the common religion, and the common fear of Hindu dominance, the third common element between the regional cultural groups which today constitute the people of Pakistan, is the heritage of Persian literature of Pakistan regions; it is discernible, for instance, in a large percentage of Marāthī administrative vocabulary, in Marāthī grammatical structures and syntax, and in its *modī* script which is based on Persian *shikasta* (broken).⁴ Shivājī's efforts to replace Persian by Sanskrit terminology were not successful and did not outlast his lifetime; Tilak, on the other hand, though a Hindu revivalist, was opposed to the elimination of Persian vocabulary from Marāthī.⁵

(iii) *The Nature of the Hindu Contribution to Persian Literature*

Sikandar Lodī's (1489-1517) Persianization of the administration yielded literary results almost immediately, and though the view recently advanced that the nature of Persian spoken and written in India changed to some extent because of its adoption by certain Hindu communities⁶ may be regarded as unsubstantiated, there is no doubt that even under the Lodīs individual Hindus came to attain a high degree of proficiency in Persian,⁷ and a Hindu poet 'Brahmin' composed commendable verses in it.⁸ In the succeeding generations among Hindu poets of Persian, there was Mirzā Manohar Tausanī, a devoted retainer of Akbar.⁹ In the reign of Jahāngīr, Kāyasthas achieved a high degree of proficiency in *inshā* (epistolography) and the work of Munshī Harkaran¹⁰ came to

¹ Muhammad Bāqir, *Punjabī Qisse Fārsī Zabān men*, Lahore, 1958; Abdul Vāhid Sindhi, contribution in *Pākistān kī 'Ilāqā'ī zabānon par Fārsī kā athar*, 43-44.

² Ibid. 44.

³ M. Yusuf, in *ibid.* 69-70.

⁴ Moulvi 'Abdul Haq, 'The Influence of Persian on Marāthī', *IC*, x (1936), 553-5, 577-6, 606.

⁵ Ibid. 556.

⁶ M. J. Borah 'The nature of the Persian language written and spoken in India during the 13th and 14th centuries', *BSOS*, vii (1933-35), 325.

⁷ Firsihta, i, 344.

⁸ Badā'uni, i, 323.

⁹ Nizām al-dīn Ahmad, *Tabaqāt-i Akbarī*, Calcutta, 1913-31, iii, 388; Badā'uni, iii, 201-2.

¹⁰ *Inshā-i Harkaran*, B.M. Add. MS. 26, 140.

be considered later of a standard high enough to be prescribed as a textbook in schools.

The first Hindu to achieve literary distinction in Persian prose and verse was Chandra Bhān 'Brahmin', the son of an imperial scribe, and a disciple of the Muslim divine 'Abdul Hakīm Siyal-kotī, in whose company he might have acquired some of that eclectic spiritual understanding, which placed him in the right atmosphere in the service of Dārā Shikoh.¹ His prose chronicle, *Chahār Chaman*² and his *Diwān* of Persian verse is delightful reading. One of his contemporaries was Jaswant Rāi Munshī, who also composed a *Diwān* in Persian.

Bhopat Rāi, better-known as 'Begham Vairāgi' (d. 1719) a Khatrī of Jammū was the disciple of a preceptor of his own sect Narāyan Vairāgi, as well as of a Muslim Sūfī Muhammad Sādiq. In his famous Persian *mathnawī*, Vedāntic and Sūfī elements inter-fuse into a unified ecstatic experience, which shows remarkably enough some influence of Jalāl al-dīn Rūmī. Among the eighteenth-century Hindu poets in Persian are Anand Rām 'Mukhlis' a disciple of Bedil³; Lālā Amānat Rāi who chose devotional themes from *Rāmāyana*, *Bhagavad Gīta* and Vedantic literature for his poems; Lālā Hukm Chand who translated the *Bhagavad Gītā* into Persian verse;⁴ Shrī Gopāl 'Tamīz' author among other works of a *mathnawī* in praise of Mathura; and Basāwanlāl 'Bedār', disciple of the eclectic Naqshbandī saint-poet Mazhar Jān-i Jānān. The remarkable feature of the Persian poetry written by Hindu poets in the eighteenth century is its choice of Hindu religious themes.

Official correspondence (*inshā*), a great and courtly art in Persian, became the speciality of the Kāyasthas in the eighteenth century, as the immigration of Persian *munshīs* ceased.⁵ In the period of chaos that engulfed the Mughal and the Safavid empires, the tradition of Kāyastha Persian epistolography which had begun with Harkaran and continued through Chandra Bhān had already achieved classical status in the *Inshā* of Madhū Rām during the reign of Aurangzeb. The chief *munshīs* of the nawwāb-vazīrs of Avadh⁶ and of several regional Muslim rulers during the eighteenth

¹ Iqbāl Husain, 'Chandra Bhān Brahman', *IC*, xviii (1945), 115.

² Chandra Bhān Brahmin (Birhamin), *Chahār Chaman*, B.M. Add. MS. 16.863.

³ Ghulām 'Alī Azād Bilgrāmī, *Khizāna-i 'Amira*, I.O. Pers. MS. 2079 (Ethé 685), fos. 322a-323a; also Shayfta, *Gulshan-i bikhār*, Lucknow, 1910.

⁴ I.O. Pers. MS. 1696.

⁵ Sayyid 'Abdullāh, *Adabiyyāt-i Fārsī men Hindutvaon kī hissa*. Delhi, 1942, 259.

⁶ *Ibid.* 95.

and early nineteenth centuries were Hindus. Hindu contribution to some branches of Persian writing had already overtaken and in some cases surpassed contemporary Indian Muslim achievement. For instance in the field of lexicography Tek Chand Bahār's encyclopaedic *Bahār-i 'Ajam* and Siyālkotī Mal's *Mustalihāt-i Wārusta*, a dictionary of idioms based on the linguistic authority of the usage of solely the Persian poets of Irān, came to be recognized as authoritative works.

The development of Hindu historiography, for which Persian served as the main vehicle during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, is an interesting field of study. In the absence of a classical Hindu tradition it identified itself entirely with the Muslim style. It began in the seventeenth century with works like Chandra Bhān Brahman's *Chahār Chaman*, which is modelled to some extent on Abu'l Fazl's *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, though with a much more conscious concentration on style, and the *Shāh Jahān Nāma* of Bhagwant Dās.¹ Banwālī Dās Walī, who was attached to the entourage of Dārā Shikoh made use of the Hindu epic and legend in writing of the ancient rulers of Hindu India, though the technique and framework of his history remained that of Muslim historiography. Aurangzeb also found a Hindu historian to celebrate his victories; he was Ishwardās Nāgar, the author of *Futūhāt-i Alamgiri*.²

Munshi Sujān Rāi's *Khulāsat al-tawārīkh*, written in 1695, is perhaps the most interesting work of history written by a Hindu in Persian. Written in the age of Aurangzeb, it deplores intolerance and takes an eclectic view of religion,³ regarding the establishment of Muslim rule in India as an act of Divine will,⁴ Sujān Rāi is idyllically sensitive to the beauty of Indian landscape and seasons, to the fragrance and the teeming life in its cities.⁵ Like Banwālīdās he also draws upon *Rāmāyana* and *Mahābhārata*, but his account seems to be based on their Persian renderings undertaken in the Mughal court. His other sources are the translations of later Hindu histories, like Madhū Rām's Persian version of the Hīndī *Rājavalī* as well as 'Imād al-dīn's translation of *Rājatarangīnī*.⁶ An interesting feature of Sujān Rāi's placing and spacing of his account of Ancient India is his conformity to the pattern of Muslim uni-

¹ Rieu, i, 302.

² Rieu, i, 269.

³ Sujān Rāi, *Khulāsat al-tawārīkh*, I.O. Pers. MS. 115, fos. 2b-3a.

⁴ Ibid. fos. 119b-120a.

⁵ Ibid. fos. 112-14b.

⁶ Ibid. fos. 4b-5a.

versal histories where the description of pre-Islamic world formed a brief and unimportant chapter. The same pattern was followed by the eighteenth-century Kāyastha historian, Khushhal Chand in his *Tārīkh-i Muhammad Shāhī*.¹ In imitation of Hindu historiographers in Persian, Ghulām Bāsīt, a Muslim historian of Karnātak also incorporated a brief chapter on ancient India in his history.² Some Hindu historians of the eighteenth century such as Neh Narāyan Kāyastha, author of *Gulshan-i Asrār* show Hindu bias.³ Another history with a strong pro-Marāthā bias, and critical of the Muslim historical approach to their exploits is the *Bisāt al-Ghanā'im* (1799) of the *tadhkira*-writer Lachhmī Narāyan Shafaq.⁴

An interesting work which confounds history with myth but forms a landmark between Abu'l Fazl's *Ā'in-i Akbarī* and the modern gazetteer is Rāmlāl's *Tuhfat al-Hind*.⁵ Its syncretism keeps the two components quite distinct. Thus, the Muslim account of the creation of Adam and Eve is followed by the Hindu accounts of the creation of the universe,⁶ and the accounts of the Hindu avatārs precede the legends of Moses and Solomon.⁷ India is said to have been named after its first colonizer Hind, the son of Ham, the son of Noah; other sons of Ham being Sīnd, Habash (Abyssinia), Zanj and Nubia.⁸ Genealogies of pseudo-Muslim origin are applied to probe into the unknown mysteries of ancient Indian history. Thus, the founder of the Kushan dynasty is supposed to be the son of Pūrab (East, Bactria?), son of Hind.⁹ The vague folk-memory of pre-Islamic invasions from Central Asia and Persia are telescoped with Firdawsī's *Shāh Nāma* into supposed invasions of India by Afrāsiyāb and Bahrām Gūr.¹⁰ The most striking feature of this work is the author's complete self-identification with the Muslim view-point. This leads to an apologetic approach to Hindu religion; tracing the origin of idol-worship in sun-worship, which is supposed to have been followed by Brahmanical ancestor-worship.¹¹ He shows no Hindu bias in his description of the Marāthas, regards Shivājī as a traitor in accordance with the Muslim historical tradition which he follows even in repeating verbatim the formula describing the Marāthā leader's death: 'And

¹ B M. Add. MS. 24,027.

² Rcu, III, 917.

³ Rāmlāl, *Tuhfat al-Hind*, B M. Add. MSS 6583 and 6584

⁴ Ibid (6583), fos 5b-6a, 6b-11a

⁵ Ibid (6584), fo. 158b

⁶ Ibid. fos 165a-b, 170a-171a

⁷ B M. Add. MS. 27,250.

⁸ B M. Add. MS. 26, 274

⁹ Ibid. fos. 11a-19b, 20b-221.

¹⁰ Ibid. fo. 159a.

¹¹ Ibid. fo 163a.

Shivā departed to hell.’¹ Like most Muslim historians Rāmlāl was not the only Hindu historian who described the death of a Hindu in history as his being dispatched to hell.²

This eighteenth-century Persian tradition of Hindu historiography³ has left a strong mark on the historiography of Muslim India by some Hindu historians of today. It explains the almost embarrassing liberalism of Tārā Chand who in all the magnitude of his scholarship subordinates historical data to his thesis showing how strong and integral has been the influence of Islam on Hindu culture in India.⁴ It explains the apologetics of Sri Ram Sharma, Rajendra Prasad and Jnan Chandra in favour of Aurangzeb.⁵ To this tradition may be traced Beni Prasad’s clear-cut and objective view of the communal tensions in modern India.⁶ Its eclecticism is reflected in Bikramājīt Hasrat’s study of Dārā Shikoh. It is remarkable that in fair assessment of historical data, in that human understanding which is forgiveness and history’s contribution to the future, and in consideration of the sensitivities of the Muslims, these Hindu historians, modern successors of the eighteenth-century historiographers who had chosen to write in Persian, present a striking contrast to the rather prejudiced and generalized analysis of some British historians of Muslim India. Conversely some other modern Hindu historians, belonging to the same tradition like Jadunath Sarkar or Ishwari Prasad, reflect the attitude of Neh Narāyan Kāyastha and Lachhmi Narāyan Shafaq in showing a Hindu bias, and a sense of grievance which is based on historical source-material of Muslim origin.

In fact the modern Hindu historiography of Muslim India, like medieval Hindu literature, flows into two streams, the orthodox and the eclectic. The orthodox stream of historiographic attitude to Islam and Islamic rule in India is represented today by a large group of Hindu historians such as R. C. Majumdar and K. M. Munshi. To them Islam in India was an alien, aggressive and hostile interlude—a few centuries of foreign interlude in the millennia of purely Hindu Indian history.

¹ Rāmlāl, *Tuhfat al-Hind*, B.M. Add. MSS. (6584), fos. 58a, 60a.

² Ibid. fos. 146a–152a.

³ S. ‘Abdullah, op. cit. 271.

⁴ Tārā Chand, *The Influence of Islam on Hindu Culture*, Allahabad, 1936.

⁵ S. R. Sharma, *The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors*, 152 ff.; Rajendra Prasad, *India Divided*, Bombay, 1946, 37; Jnan Chandra, op. cit.

⁶ Beni Prasad, *Hindu Muslim Questions*, Allahabad, 1941.

XI

CULTURAL ORIENTATIONS: URDU AND HINDI

(i) *Hindi Literature: Hindu Stream and Muslim participation*

'HINDI' is a vague term. As we know it today, it is more or less a product of the nineteenth century.¹ But literature written in Devanāgarī script, in four closely related north Indian languages, Rājasthānī, Braj Bhāshā, Maithilī and Avadhī, from the eighth century onwards, also bears the same generic name. This literature has a pronounced Hindu orientation.

The Hindi literary tradition which cuts across the distinction between dialects began with the bardic poetry of Rājasthān written between 700 and 1300, and though originally championing the valour of one Rājput hero against another, in the twelfth century and later it became the chief vehicle of Hindu heroic poetry of resistance to the Muslim conquest. This tradition faded with the firm establishment of Muslim power which reduced Rājput rulers to the status of tributary chieftains.

As the Hindu mind turned inwards to the religious sublimation of Bhakti poetry, escaping from a sense of material defeat under the Muslims, it also tried, especially in the works of Tulsīdās, to conserve and re-establish orthodox Hindu religious experience. Tulsīdās kept himself aloof from the intellectual eclecticism which was developing in the court of Akbar and which was concentrating, after the Persian example, more on experiments in style than on Hindu spirituality.² Out of the various Hindu cults Tulsīdās evolved a composite norm of Hindu religious belief and conduct in his poetry; His *Rāmcaritmanas*, culled the ethical essence of the Vedas, the Purāṇas and the Upanishads, 'interwoven into the life, character and speech of the Hindu population for more than three hundred years'.³ In his approach to religious and social life

¹ K. B. Jindal, *A History of Hindi Literature*, Allahabad, 1955, 25.

² *Ibid.* 56-57.

³ G. A. Grierson, *The Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustan*, Calcutta, 1889, 42-43.

Tulsīdās is a 'Hindu of Hindus',¹ accepting the authority of the Brahmins, the unquestionable sanctity of Hindu scriptural law and the traditional Hindu orthodoxy. It was Tulsīdās who established the concept of Rāma as the ideal man, and of *Rāma Rājya*² (the 'Kingdom of Rāma') as the ideal state, a concept which was revived by the orthodox Hindu leaders of the Indian National Congress in the twentieth century and resented by the Muslims.

Modern Hindi, the chief literary language of the Hindus of north India, may be said to have come into existence in the nineteenth century, in a conscious effort of Hindu revivalism and of separatism from Islamic-orientated, Persianized Urdu. 'It is of modern origin', says Grierson, 'having been introduced under English influence at the commencement of the last (i.e. nineteenth) century. Up till then when a Hindu wrote prose and did not use Urdu, he wrote in his own local dialect, Awadhī, Bundelī, Braj Bhāhā or what not. Lallū Lāl, under the inspiration of Dr. Gilchrist changed all this by writing the well known *Prēm Sāgar*, a work which was, so far as the prose portions went, practically written in Urdu, with Indo-Aryan words substituted wherever a writer in that form of speech would use Persian ones. It was thus an automatic reversion to the actual vernacular of the Upper Doāb. The course of this novel experiment was successful from the start. The subject of the first book written in it attracted the attention of all good Hindus. . . . Then, the language fulfilled a want. It gave a *lingua franca* to the Hindus. It enabled men of widely different provinces to converse with each other without recourse to the (to them) unclean words of the Mussalmāns.'³ This view has been hotly contested by Hindu scholars like Shyām Sundar Dās and Rāmchandra Shuklā who regard Lallū Lāl's modern Hindi not as the first work of Hindi prose in the *Khari Bolī* dialect, and point out to some earlier works in Hindi prose.⁴

Since Lallū Lāl's time (c. 1803) Hindi developed for itself certain rules of style to differentiate itself from Urdu and to approximate itself to Sanskrit. Agra and Benares became the two centres of modern Hindi, the latter favouring greater Sanskritization.

¹ Jindal, 84.

² Ibid. 117.

³ G. A. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*, Calcutta, 1916, IX, i, 46; also Grierson, 'Indo-Aryan Vernacular', *BSOS*, I, ii, 1918, 52; Grierson, *The Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustan*, xxii.

⁴ A. Barannikov, 'Modern Literary Hindi', *BSOS*, 1936, 376-82; Sajjād Zaheer, *Urdu, Hindī, Hindustānī*, Bombay, 1947, 29-33.

Muslim poets who wrote in Persian in India, sometimes turned to a colloquial Hindi dialect for amusement. The tradition narrated by Amīr Khusrau, that Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān composed a *diwān* in Hindi¹ (Punjabi?) seems to be without foundation.² Amīr Khusrau himself regards his own occasional Hindi verses as composed occasionally for the entertainment of friends.³ As we have seen above, most of the Hindi poetry attributed to Amīr Khusrau may be regarded as apocryphal on the basis of linguistic analysis and lack of sufficient internal or external evidence.

Muslim poets who chose to exercise their talents occasionally in a Hindi dialect, usually wrote in Braj Bhāshā, sometimes using it also for experiments in bilingual (part-Hindi, part-Persian) versification and for composing music,⁴ in the form of *dohās*, with divine love as their oblique theme, to be sung in the presence of Sūfi saints.⁵

The first considerable work extant, written by a Muslim in Hindi is Qutban's (c. 1500) *Mrigāvatī*, composed thirty-seven years before Malik Muhammad Jāisī's famous *Padmāvat*. The *Mrigāvatī* is a verse romance of purely Hindu origin and background, though of no direct religious interest.⁶ Its plot repeats the pattern of the Sītā legend, a fair princess in the clutches of a demon, and ends with the self-immolation of the two queens on the pyre of the dying *rājā*; this last element seems to be the direct source of the ending of Jāisī's *Padmāvat*. The plot of Manjhan's *Madhūmālī* follows the same pattern.⁷

Jāisī's (1493-1542) *Padmāvat* is a unique case of the secession of a Muslim mind from its own culture and choosing self-expression, though not synthesis, in the rival Hindu cultural heritage. Jāisī's language is the purest Avadhī dialect of the time, though generally considered to have been written directly in the Persian script.⁸ The Chishtī Sūfi heritage which reached him through his heterodox, rural preceptor Bodlē Shāh seems to have been submerged in his knowledge and assimilation of Hindu mystical literature⁹; and although he shows no direct impress of Rāma or Krishna cults, he

¹ Amīr Khusrau, *Dibācha-i Ghurraṭ al-kamāl*, B.M. Add., MS., 25,807, fo. 175a.

² Rashīd Yūsufī, Introduction to Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān, *Diwān*, Teheran.

³ Amīr Khusrau, *Dibācha*, fos. 174a-b.

⁴ Mahmūd Sherānī, *Punjab men Urdū*, Lahore, 1928, 106.

⁵ Ibid. 114.

⁶ Ibid. 157-8; also Shyamdas in the Report of Nāgari Prāchārī Sabhā, Benares, 1903.

⁷ Jindal, 43.

⁸ Grierson, *Modern Vernacular Literature*, xviii.

⁹ Kalb-i Mustafā, *Malik Muhammad Jāisī*, Delhi, 1941, 49.

seems to have been under the influence not only of Kabīr but of popular Hindu lore and yogā.¹ The cosmography of the poem is Hindu, though the poem conforms to the tradition of Persian *mathnawīs* in devoting a section to the praise of the Prophet. In the eulogy of Sher Shāh Sūrī, the imagery is drawn from Hindu mythology. As a love-poem it follows not the Persian tradition but that of Hindu love-romances like *Premāval* and *Madhūmālī*.² In the legend of the banishment of Rāghava Chetan there might be a faint echo of the story of the disgrace of Satan; but if so, it is oblique. Chetan's magic is steeped in Hindu astronomy and the ethical verdict on his magical practices is one of Hindu orthodoxy: 'Those who do not walk in the way of the Vedas lose themselves in the forest.'³ Alien though the theme of this poem was to the Indian Muslim tradition, it continued to have a few Muslim admirers; it was translated into Bengali by 'Alāol; into Urdu verse in 1786 and 1873 and into Urdu prose in 1898.

'Uthmān's *Chitrāvalī* (1613) repeats the theme of Jāīsī's poem but includes a larger share of Muslim element.⁴ Among later Muslim poets whose fame depends entirely on their Hindi writings were Shaykh Nabī, the author of *Jnān Dīpak* (1619), Qāsim Shāh author of *Hans Jawhar* (1731) and Nūr Muhammad who wrote *Indrāvati* in 1744.

Muslim poets, Sūfis and dilettanti wrote an occasional verse in Hindi. Qazi Mahmūd Baharī and Shaykh Dānyal Chishtī composed Hindi verses to be set to music.⁵ Shaykh 'Abdul Quddūs Gangohī (d. 1538) wrote in Braj Bhāshā under the pen-name Alakhdās, and so did another respected Sūfī Bahā al-dīn Barnāwī.⁶ Sher Shāh Sūrī is credited with composing a Hindi verse occasionally.⁷ Hindi poetry was considered a fashionable pastime in the court of Akbar and the assemblies of some of his nobles, notably 'Abdul Rahīm Khān-i Khānān. In its lighter vein it moulded itself on the Persian styles of Faizī and Urfī.⁸

Todar Mal translated the *Bhāgavata Purāna*, and both he and Bīrbal are credited to have written Hindi verses; though the occasional vernacular verses attributed to Akbar himself are probably

¹ Grierson, Introduction to his edition of Jāīsī's *Padmāvatī*, 1.

² Kalb-i Mustafā, 16.

³ Sherānī, 175-6.

⁴ Jāīsī (Shirreff), 265.

⁵ Ibid. 116.

⁶ Ibid. 161-2; Mas'ūd Husain, *Muqaddima-i Tārīkh-i Zabān-i Urdū*, Delhi, n.d., 132.

⁷ 'Abdullāh, *Tārīkh-i Dā'ūdī*, B.M. Or. 197, fos. 77a.

⁸ Jindal, 56.

spurious. 'Abdul Rahīm Khān-i Khānān, a patron of Hindi poets including Gangā Kavī and Tulsīdās,¹ was a considerable poet of Braj Bhāshā.²

In the second half of the sixteenth century, which saw the height of Akbar's eclectic tolerance, the Muslim élite came to the closest point of the appreciation of, if not large scale participation in Hindi poetry as a diversion from its main preoccupation with Persian poetry which was also at this time passing through one of its great phases of creativity. But the reaction set in before the close of that century; the main reason being the development of Hindu religious feeling among Hindu poets like Sūrdās and Tulsīdās which negated eclecticism, and the complete pre-occupation of the main stream of Hindi poetry with the cults of Rāma and Krishna³; though Jahāngīr continued to patronize Hindi poets and his brother Dāniyāl occasionally composed Hindi verses.⁴

At the level of mystical experience and in the process of proselytization an occasional Sūfī would continue to use Hindi along with Persian. Thus, Shaykh Barakat-Ullāh (c. 1698) a scholar in Arabic and Persian, chose to write in Hindi as well.⁵ During the reign of Aurangzeb 'Abdul Jalīl Bilgrāmī wrote in all the three languages.⁶ Syncretism was attempted in his *Qiyāmat Nāma* by Prem Nāth (c. 1650), founder of the sect which took his name, using a Muslim religious theme, and diction which was very close to Urdu having been borrowed from Persian, though the grammatical structure remained purely Hindi.⁷

Dilettante Muslim interest in Hindi poetry, as an escape from the intellectual rigours of Indo-Persian, continued throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries sporadically, and was confined more or less to rural centres of culture like Bilgram in the valley of Ganges. Among the dilettanti Hindi poets of Bilgram, Āzād mentions Rahmat-Ullāh, an eighteenth-century poet whose disciples included Hindus as well as Muslims,⁸ Dhawqī and

¹ Grierson, *Modern Vernacular Literature*, 37.

² Pandit Vanshīdhar, 'Abdur Rahīm Khān-i Khānān and his Hindi Poetry', *IC*, xxiv (1950), 123, 33; 'Abdul Rahīm Khān-i Khānān, *Rahīm Sudhā* (ed. by Tripathi); *Rahīm Vilās* (compiled by Braj Ratandās).

³ Sherānī, 116.

⁴ Jahāngīr (Rogers), 36, 141.

⁵ Shaykh Barakat-Ullāh, *Pem Prakāsh*, ed. by Pandit Lakshmi Dhar; Ghulām 'Alī Āzād Bilgrāmī, *Saru-i Āzād*, I.O. Pers. MS. 1852 (Ethé 683), fos. 169b-170a.

⁶ Ibid. fos. 162-169b; Shiblī Nu'mānī, *Bhāshā Zabān aur Musalmān*, in *Maqālāt*, A'zamgach, 1930-4, II, 79-91.

⁷ Grierson, op. cit. 68. ⁸ Āzād Bilgrāmī, *Saru-i Āzād*, fos. 160b-162b.

‘Ārif Bilgrāmī.¹ Āzād himself composed Hindi verses, though his fame rests entirely on his Persian *tadhkiras* (bibliographical dictionaries).

(ii) *Urdu: Muslim Stream and Hindu Participation*

‘Urdu’, a Mongol word meaning a military camp, was introduced into Persian historiography by al-Juwaynī,² and was adopted in India for his court and army by Khizar Khān as a token of submission to the authority of Timūr.³ After Bābur’s conquest it came to be applied generally to the imperial camp. Its use as the name of the language spoken by the army did not begin until well into the seventeenth century. The language which is known as Urdu today was called by a number of names by the Indian Muslims who were developing and using it: Amīr Khusrau called it ‘Hindawī’ or ‘Hindi’ (Indian) and Abu’l Fazl ‘Dehlavī’ or the dialect of Delhi. In the Deccan where it was producing a rich harvest of literature it was known as ‘Dakanī’ or ‘Dakhani’ or ‘Hindi’; in Gujarat it was variously called ‘Hindi’ or ‘Gujarī’ or ‘Gujarātī’⁴—misleading titles, as it was quite different from the languages which bear some of these names today. It is possible that the language came to be called Urdu or ‘Urdū-i Mu‘llā’ (the language of the exalted camp) in the reigns of Shāh Jahān and Aurangzeb, during the latter’s campaigns in the Deccan, to distinguish the northern and more elegant though unliterary form of the indigenous language of the Muslims, from its Dakanī variety which had preserved older features, had borrowed Hindu cultural vocabulary on a larger scale and had already achieved literary distinction. During the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries ‘Urdu’ and ‘Dakanī’ must have begun to denote the northern and the southern varieties of the language. After the Mughal conquest of the Deccan, the absorption of the Muslim élite of the Deccan courts of Bijapur and Golconda led to a two-way integration of the language: the northerners gave up Persian to write poetry in the Dakanī tradition, while the southerners discarded the more indigenous local vocabulary for the refined and more highly Persianized linguistic forms of the north. The literary name used for Urdu prose in the eighteenth century,

¹ Āzād Bilgrāmī, *Sarv-i Āzād*, fos. 170a–172a.

² al-Juwaynī, *Tārīkh-i Jahānkushā*, i, 148, 162.

³ ‘Allāmī, *A’in* (Jarrett), ii, 308.

⁴ Shams-Ullāh Qādīrī, *Urdū-i Qadīm*, Lucknow, 1929, 45.

however, continued to be 'Hindī', while Urdu verse came to be called *rikhta* (literally, 'spilled' or 'building mortar') which was originally a musical mode in which Indian tunes were mixed with the Persian.¹ 'Urdu' as the name of the language was certainly used as early as the middle of eighteenth century.²

This name 'Urdu', in contradistinction to modern Hindi or High Hindi or Literary Hindi as it is sometimes called, applies to a language descended from one or more of the dialects of Sauraseni Prākṛit, adapted by the Muslims through unrestrained borrowings from Persian, and written in the Persian script, whereas all the other Hindi dialects used by Hindus continued to be written in the indigenous Devanāgarī script. It is essentially a language developed by the Muslims in India who were either converts to Islam, or had settled down in India and intermarried. It served as a means of communication with the Hindu tradesman or peasant or menial, and in the home with the womenfolk, who were quite often of Indian origin, and being secluded and conservative, had no opportunity of keeping pace with the fresh waves of Persianization which swept in from abroad. Only in a larger sense can it be called a language which developed as a synthesis of Hindu and Muslim cultures in India; it developed rather as a means of contact between two mutually exclusive cultures. It was born of the everyday necessity of intercommunication elements of the local dialect and grafted on to them an overwhelmingly foreign structure of nouns and adjectives. The growth of Urdu as the spoken and literary language of the Muslims, was a phenomenon totally different from the dialectal and literary growth of such essentially Hindu Hindi dialects as Braj, Avadhī, or Bundelī which were alive with Hindu self-consciousness, and in which Muslim participation was, on the whole, inconsiderable and confined to those who would be regarded from the Muslim point of view as intellectually *declassé*.

In its earliest form pre-Urdu must have originated soon after the Ghaznawid foothold in the Punjab was established and the Turco-Persian Muslims came in contact with the Indians.³ A theory which has won considerable support is that Urdu is not derived from the Kharī Bolī, the dialect spoken round Delhi, but from the Punjabi of the area in and around Lahore, during the

¹ Sherānī, 14-18, quoting 'Alā al-dīn Barnāwī, *Kutāb-i Chishtīya*

² Sirāj al-dīn 'Alī Khān Arzū refers to it in his *Tashih-i Gharīb al-lughāt-i Hindī*, as *zabān-i Urdū-i Shāhī* (the language of the royal camp)

³ Shams-Ullāh Qādirī, 21-22, Sherānī, 21 ff.; Grierson, *LSI*, 15, pp. i, xiii.

Ghaznawid rule; and that after the establishment of the Sultanate at Delhi in the twelfth century, this mixed language was taken by Muslim elements from the Punjab to Delhi, where they went in search of service and patronage.¹ The contact between Delhi and the Punjab remained intimate because of the constant garrisoning of the Punjab outposts during the Mongol pressure. This language of the Muslim soldiery of the Punjab was carried to the Deccan by the armies of 'Alā al-dīn Khaljī, and further reinforced there by the immigration of the citizens of Delhi to Daulatabad under Muhammad bin Tughluq. Many of the families that had migrated did not return to Delhi and made the Deccan, soon to become an independent Muslim kingdom under the Bahmanids, their home, and that of their new language.²

Other theories of the origin of Urdu tracing it to Multānī-Sindhī, or Haryānī or Braj have been put forward,³ but none of them can be accepted without considerable linguistic investigation; though there is no doubt that in the secondary stage of its growth in Delhi, Urdu came strongly under the influence of the Haryānī and Khari Bolī, dialects spoken around Delhi; and also accepted Braj elements during the shift of the imperial capital to Agra from Delhi.⁴

Muslim intellectual interest in the new language was in the beginning secondary and only half-serious. In the tradition of Amīr Khusrau's *jeux d'esprit*, a bilingual one-quarter Turkish, three-quarters pre-Urdu verse was composed by Bābur.⁵ One is inclined to hesitate in accepting the genuineness of other such verses attributed to a number of outstanding Muslims, in the absence of conclusive historical evidence, but it can be safely assumed that the composition of an occasional verse in pre-Urdu was quite a popular diversionary pastime.

But the Sūfis took the new language more seriously, for it brought them in contact with semi-converts and the unconverted. Hagiographies record a number of pre-Urdu phrases, ranging from occasional exclamations to dicta, attributed to men who lived

¹ Sherānī, 21-43.

² Sherānī, 45-46; T. Graham Bailey, *Studies in North Indian Languages*, London, 1938, 1.

³ Hisām al-dīn Rāshidī, in *Urdu*, Karachi, 1948; Mas'ūd Husain, *op. cit.*; Muhammad Husain Azād, *Ab-i Hayāt*, Delhi, 1869.

⁴ Mas'ūd Husain, 138; Sherānī, 190-4.

⁵ *Facsimile of Dīwān-i Bābur Bādīshāh*, ed. by E. Denison Ross, *JASB*, (1910), Plate xvii.

between the thirteenth and the sixteenth centuries.¹ Others composed *dohās* (couplets) in the vernacular to be set to music and sung. Some of these may be spurious, like the ones attributed to Abū 'Alī Qalandar,² which need careful linguistic examination; whereas others, as those in Bahā al-dīn Bājan's (d. 1388) *Khizāna-i Rahmat* can be safely regarded as authentic.³ The spoken pre-Urdu developed in the fourteenth century to the extent of enabling some Sūfis to pass on from its occasional verbal or musical use to sustained writing. Gesūdarāz's *Mi'rāj al-'āshiqīn*, is generally regarded as the first prose work written in Urdu⁴; while Mīrānjī Shams al-'Ushshāq (d. 1496) established Urdu (coloured by 'Gujarātī' and Dakanī dialectal features) as a recognized medium of Sūfī narrative verse. At this, the literary stage of the Sūfī use of nascent Urdu, much of the theological and mystical vocabulary of Islam was transferred to the language, while monistic eclecticism as well as the need for attracting the would-be convert permitted the occasional use of familiar Sanskrit loan-words. Translations of Sūfī works from Arabic and Persian into Urdu began quite early in the eighteenth century.

The development of Urdu in Gujarat in the thirteenth century with the works of Bahā al-dīn Bājan was almost exclusively a Sūfī undertaking; it continued through the writings of Alī Gāmdhanī⁵ and Khūb Muhammad Chishtī. The only known secular poem written in Gujarat is *Bahrām Gūr and Husn Bānū*, based on an old Persian romance.⁶ Sūfis of the Qādirī order often wrote poems in Urdu in praise of the founder of their order 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī in Gujarat as well as in the Punjab.

In the Deccan the development of Urdu was a more composite process. The establishment of independent Muslim kingdoms in the Deccan, where the nucleus of the Muslim élite consisted of the descendants of early Muslim pioneers and conquerors from the north who had brought Urdu to southern India, encouraged the development of an insular dialect which borrowed its intellectual diction from the Persian emigré élite, and increased its everyday

¹ Amīr Khurd, *Siyar al-Atulyā* (Lahore), 182; Moulvi 'Abdul Haqq, *Urdū Kī ibtidāi nashv-u-mumā men Sūfiyā-i Karām kā kām*, Karachi, 1953, 9-14.

² Azūd Bulgrāmī, *Ma'āthir al-karām*, I.O. Pers. MS., 1320; Shams-Ullāh Qādirī, 46; Abdul Haq, 31-32.

³ Edited by Moulvi 'Abdul Haq, Hyderabad Deccan, 1927.

⁴ 'Alī Gāmdhanī, *Jawāhar-i Asrār-i Ilāh*, ed., by Shāh Ibrāhīm, Bombay, A. H. 1248.

⁵ *Mi'rāt-i Sikandari*, 280.

vocabulary by borrowing from indigenous sources. 'Hindī' (i.e. pre-Urdu) was made the official language of the Bahmanid Kingdom by its founder 'Ala al-dīn Hasan Bahman Shāh (c. 1347)¹; and at least once again in the history of the Deccan it replaced Persian as the language of administration, under Ibrāhīm Ādil Shāh II.² In the north, on the other hand Persian continued to monopolize the court, the administration and the primary creative activity until the beginning of the eighteenth century. Todar Mal's, and indeed before him Sikandar Lodī's, decision to replace Hindi by Persian as the language of lower administration must have inhibited the growth of literary Urdu in north India, which was exactly the reverse of what happened in the Deccan. Though political and emotional links were strong between the Shī'ite kingdoms of the Deccan and the Safavid Persia, and though several Persian intellectuals had migrated to the courts of Deccan as they did to the Mughal court in the north, on the whole Persian was two degrees removed from the Deccan. For the Muslims in the Deccan, where Hindus spoke southern languages like Marathi, or Dravidian languages like Telugu or Kanarese, Urdu (Dakanī) was a much more practical proposition than Persian for the expression and preservation of their specific Muslim cultural values, as 'they did not want to be absorbed among the Marāthas, the Kannadas and Telugus who were overwhelmingly Hindus. So they decided for the Hindusthani which they had brought with them from the North, as for them it meant a living touch with Delhi and other centres of Muslim power and culture in India. . . . So very much associated was this North Indian speech with the Muslim ruling classes in the Deccan that it acquired the name of *Musalmānī* as well, among the Hindus.'³

Nevertheless, early Urdu in the Deccan showed a resilience, and a tolerance in borrowing linguistic elements of Hindu origin, which is almost entirely absent in the growth of its north Indian form. Muhammad Qulī Qutb Shāh, a great poet in his own right,⁴ felt himself very close to the Indian soil, and wrote intimately of love of Indian women in a vein contrary to the Persian tradition, of the charm, bustle and spectacle of Hindu festivals, of the sun-baked rain-soaked beauty of Indian landscape rich in vegetation, fruit and

¹ Bailey, op. cit. 2.

² Khāfī Khān, iii, 307.

³ Suniti Kumar Chatterji, *Indo-Aryan and Hindi*, Ahmedabad, 1942, 186.

⁴ Muhammad Qulī Qutb Shāh, *Kulliyāt*, ed. by Sayyid Muhiuddin Qadri, Hyderabad, Deccan, 1940.

flower and alive with the colour and music of Indian birds. He and Nazīr Akbarābādī constitute two great but rare exceptions to the general rule of the rejection of Indian life and landscape by Urdu poetry until the middle of the nineteenth century. Under the liberal patronage of the courts of Golconda and Bijapur, Urdu borrowed loan-words from the local languages Telugu and Marāthi as well as from Sanskrit. But this trend was offset by the fact that Persian writers of outstanding calibre like Zuhūrī formed and dominated the intellectual taste of the élite and the norms and standards of literary appreciation.¹

Analysis of the thematic content of Dakanī Urdu literature reveals the process of its moulding on Persian models. In the court of Golconda, Mulla Ahmad's *Layla Majnūn* marks the introduction of foreign Muslim romantic themes. Mullā Wajhī's *Sabras*,² a prose allegory of the conventions of love, based on the *Dastūr al-Ushshāq* of Fattāhī Nishāpūrī,³ follows its source in its plot, allegorical sequence and the mystical interpretation of its allegorical framework.⁴ In vocabulary it shows Indian influences, but its rhymed and euphuistic style sets the standard for the ornate Persianized manner which characterized Urdu prose until the middle of the nineteenth century. Wajhī's poem *Qutb Mushtarī*,⁵ celebrating the love of his patron Abdullah Qutb Shāh (1625-74) for a courtesan, has a local theme and follows the Indo-Persian example of Amīr Khusrau's *Khizar Khān and Dewal Rānī*. Ghawwāsī, writing in the court of Golconda in the middle of the seventeenth century strikes a balance between foreign and indigenous elements. His *Sayf al-mulk wa Badī' al-jamāl* marks a hardening of the traditional Muslim romance derived from the *Arabian Nights*, whereas his *Tūtī Nāma* goes back through Nakhshabī's famous rendering to a Sanskrit original.⁶ Mirān Husainī's *Tuhfat al-'Ashiqīn* also goes back through a Persian rendering to a Sanskrit work on sexology. The didactic *mathnawī* of Ibn Nishātī,⁷ the religious *mathnawī* of Qutbī and the love romances of Tab'ī and

¹ Ram Babu Saksena, *History of Urdu Literature*, Allahabad, 1940, 34.

² Mulla Wajhī, *Sabras*, ed. by Moulvī 'Abdul Haq, Karachi, 1952.

³ Fattāhī Nishāpūrī, *Dastūr al-'Ushshāq*, ed. by R. S. Greenshields, Berlin, London, 1926.

⁴ Aziz Ahmad, 'Sabras kē ma'ākhidh wa mamāthul', *Urdu*, Karachi, 1949.

⁵ Wajhī, *Qutb Mushtarī*, ed. by Moulvī 'Abdul Haq, Karachi, 1951.

⁶ Ghawwāsī, *Sayf al-mulk wa Badī' al-jamāl*, Bombay, 1873; *idem Tūtī Nāmā*, Hyderabad Deccan, 1939.

⁷ Ibn Nishātī, *Phulban*, ed. by Shaykh Chānd, Husain, Karachi, 1957.

Fā'iz, all written in the seventeenth-century Golconda have no indigenous elements.

Even more prominent Islamic elements formulate the pattern of the growth of Urdu poetry in the court of Bijāpūr, where orthodox Sūfism and theological ethics blend in the works of Mirānjī Shams al-'Ushshāq, Shaykh Amīn al-dīn and in the *Sharī'at Nāma* of Shāh Malik.¹ An interesting work of this genre, written in the seventeenth century, is the '*Ishq Nāma* of Mū'min, a sectarian poem in praise of the heterodox 'Mahdī' Sayyid Muhammad of Jaunpur.² Among Shi'ite martyrological epics are the translations of Muhammad ibn Hisām al-dīn Khawāfī's *Khāwar Nāma*³ and of Wā'iz al-Kāshifī's *Rawzat al-Shuhdā*. Nusratī's (c. 1650) ⁴ *diwān* of ghazals marks the complete absorption of Persian conventions of theme, imagery and diction into Urdu, setting the pattern for the Urdu ghazal for centuries to come, while his *Gulshan-i 'Ishq*,⁵ as well as his contemporary Malik Khushnūd's *Hasht Bihisht*⁶ transfer the traditions of Khusrau and Nizāmī's secular *mathnawī* to Urdu. Nusratī's '*Alī Nāma*'⁷ describing his patron 'Alī 'Ādil Shāh's court and his victories, transfers to Urdu Amīr Khusrau's tradition of eulogical epic. Only two considerable poems written in the court of Bijāpūr show Indian elements: *Manohar and Madmālī* of Nusratī, which is a Hindu love story, and Hashimī's (d. 1679) *Yūsuf Zuleykā*, which though thematically based on a Qur'ānic legend shows unmistakable influence of the Hindu convention of a woman pining for her lover.

Hindu thematic elements made greater headway in the Dakanī narrative poetry of the late seventeenth century in the period of the decadence and collapse of the kingdoms of Bijāpūr and Golconda. Muqīmī's *Chandarbadan wa Māhyār* is a mixed romance with a Muslim hero and a Hindu heroine; while his *Somhār*, a study of village life, shows intimate contact with Hindu rural society.⁸ 'Ishratī's *mathnawīs*, *Dīpak Patang* and *Chat Lagan* are steeped in the literary eclecticism of Jāisī.⁹ Hunar's *Neh Durpan* is a Rājput

¹ Shams-Ullāh Qādirī, 88-89; Blumhardt, I.O. Cat. 3.

² MS. in the Asāfiyya Library, Hyderabad Deccan, Biography section, No. 250. ³ Blumhardt, I.O. 35.

⁴ Moulvi 'Abdul Haq, *Nusratī*, Aurangabad, 1937.

⁵ Nusratī, *Gulshan-i 'Ishq*, ed. by Moulvi 'Abdul Haq, Karachi, 1954; Blumhardt, I.O. nos. 36, 104-7; Blumhardt, B.M. MS. 45-46; Shams-Ullāh Qādirī, 85-87.

⁶ Blumhardt, B.M. MS. 50.

⁷ Nusratī, '*Alī Nāmā*', ed. by 'Abdul Majid Siddiqi, Hyderabad Deccan 1959.

⁸ Blumhardt, I.O. 100; Shams-Ullāh Qādirī, 94-95. ⁹ Ibid. 98-99.

romance, and Fayyāz Walī's *Ratan wa Padam* is again an echo of Jāisī. The traditional Islamic allegorical tradition was, however, preserved by Wajhī's imitators, Mujrimī and Za'ifī, the latter being also a writer of theological tracts in verse.

This was the state of the Urdu literature in the Deccan when the speakers of Urdu of the 'exalted camp' of Shāh Jahān and Aurangzeb came into contact with it, and the two divergent trends of Urdu, the northern and the southern blended together. This was a fusion, and not the 'birth' of Urdu as supposed by its nineteenth-century historians.¹ In a sense it was a transformation. The cultural exchange took place at Aurangabad, Aurangzeb's secondary capital situated in the northern Deccan, where the Muslim intellectual élite migrated from Golconda and Bijapur in search of patronage. It must have been the lack of this patronage in the puritanical court of Aurangzeb which led to the end of the narrative poem in the Dakanī Urdu, in which, after a struggle of over a century, Indian elements had gained a thematic supremacy over Muslim elements. Aurangabad, situated very close to Daulatabad, was a centre of Chishtī Sūfis, and the new generation of poets which arose there, of which Walī (1668-1744) and his contemporary Sirāj were the most distinguished, specialized in the ghazals of mystic love, in full consonance with the tradition tolerated by orthodoxy. Linguistically, both Sirāj and Walī have two styles; the earlier one is Dakanī, with its particular dialectal features and a higher percentage of Hindi words, while their later style shows a remarkable adaptability to the idiom of the north, Persianization of vocabulary and intellectualization of imagery and diction.²

In the north, the Indian Muslim élite under the inspiration of Walī, who visited Delhi twice in 1700 and in 1722, was happy to find a new medium in Urdu, already tested and perfected in the Deccan, at a juncture when Persian was failing to provide the right scope for the expression of its genius, as the in-flow of poets from Persia had stopped after the break in diplomatic relations between Aurangzeb and the Safavid Persia. The regional impetus of the 'fresh style' of the Indo-Persian ghazal, which had begun in the reign of Akbar, had completely exhausted itself in the intensely intricate intellectual formalism of Bedil. It is remarkable that within

¹ Sayyid Ahmad Khān, *Āthār al-sanādīd*, Cawnpore, 1904, III, 104-5; 'Abdul Ghafūr Nassākh, *Tahqīq-i zabān-i Rikhta*, Delhi, 1890.

² Walī, *Kulliyāt*, ed. by Ahsan Marāḥrawī, Aurangabad, 1923, Sirāj, *Kulliyāt*, ed. by Abdul Qādir Sarwarī, Hyderabad Deccan, 1942.

a generation, in the early eighteenth century, the Muslim élite of Delhi had discarded Persian in favour of Urdu; but in doing so it had accepted Urdu poetry as a continuation, not of the styles of Nusratī or Ghawwāsī, but of Bedil. The poets of Delhi accepted Walī as their linguistic model, but transformed him as a poet in their own image. Sa'd-Ullāh Gulshan, Walī's preceptor in the Naqshbandī order, and his disciple as a poet, advised him to compose in the Persian rather than in the Hindi tradition, using Persian conventions and images.¹ Sirāj al-dīn 'Alī Khān Ārzū (1689-1756), the most influential of the first generation of Urdu poets in Delhi, wrote in the language of Walī, but his idiom was that of his intellectual preceptor Bedil. Through Ārzū, the heritage of Bedil, as indeed of earlier Indo-Persian poets, transplanted itself into Urdu verse, beginning with Ārzū's own writing and that of his contemporaries, and culminating in that of his great direct or indirect disciples, Mir Taqī Mir (d. 1810), Mazhar Jān-i Jānān (1698-1781), Khwaja Mir Dard and Mirzā Rafī' Saudā (1713-81). The poets of Delhi, proud of the 'pure' Urdu of the imperial camp, which had attained considerable modal and expressional proximity to Persian, rejected the Dakanī principle and practice of borrowing extensively from Indian languages,² and especially so if these borrowings were related to Hindu religion, culture or world-view.

This rejection of the Indian and Hindu elements was an unconscious operation of group-psychology, an instinctive effort to preserve in a culturally alien and hostile milieu its own cultural roots, signs, symbols, and insular patterns of expression. In this process imagery was drawn exclusively from Persian precedents, i.e. from the unseen and unexperienced sights, sounds and smells of Persia and Central Asia; rejecting totally the Indian sights, sounds and sensuous experiences as materials regarded not sublime enough for poetic expression. The operation of this psychological process in Urdu poetry is analogical to the Persianized conventionalization of Ottoman Turkish poetry, which ignored Anatolian life and landscape as valid material for courtly polished verse, and left it for the exercises of the folk-poets. Images that were realities in Persia or Central Asia, became in Urdu poetry either symbols in the analysis of generalized emotions, or 'designs' for weaving the expressionist texture of style. As 'designs' these images carried

¹ Mir Taqī Mir, *Nukāt-i shu'arā*, Aurangabad, 1935.

² Ghulam Mustafa Khan, 'Saqaḥatī Urdu', *Najā Daur*, Karachi, 1960, 344-5.

forward the already difficult tradition of Bedil to impossible extremes which ended, wherever the touch of emotional or analytical genius was absent, in the banal or the ridiculous.

The state of poetic mind which works entirely in terms of this exclusively non-Indian imagic symbolism can perhaps be illustrated by an occasional poem of Ghālib (1796-1869), the greatest of Urdu poets, on an object so purely Indian as a roasted betel-nut. He used eight metaphors to describe it, seven of which are of non-Indian Muslim cultural origin; the burnt 'star' (of the destiny) of Qays, the black mole on Layla's beautiful face, the Black Stone in the Ka'bā, the black musk in the navel of the deer of Khotan, the 'scal' of clay which the Shī'ites use for prayers, the brick supporting the conventional wine-jar, the 'black spot' in the heart (as supposed in the Graeco-Arab medicine). Only one of the eight images is Indian: 'the black-powdered fingernail of the beautiful one', but even so the diction conveying the Indian image is overwhelmingly Persianized.

Urdu poetry did not miss the Indian atmosphere, much of which it had chosen to ignore. It created for itself, by a process of mathematical multiplication, an inexhaustible wealth of symbols, images and designs, which corresponded to generalized necessities of emotion and intellect. It was a desperate unconscious clinging to the origins of the symbols of Muslim India's cultural experience which had begun abroad, and an instinctive escape from the fear of submergence into the Hindu cultural milieu, with its strange gods, its almost pagan love of the actual Indian nature, its startling realism, and its tempting fragrance and rhythm. In Urdu poetry, the eighteenth-century Muslim diaspora, no longer in a position of political or economic power, and threatened generally by chronic upheavals, chaos, insecurity, and the fear of extinction, found its insular emotional escape. Its rejection of Indian themes was also an imposition of self-discipline, an uncompromising conformity to a conservative emotional symbolism, to remain spiritually and emotionally and creatively distinct and different. It did not mean or envisage a conflict with the Hindu traditions of expression or their active repudiation. The attitude of Urdu on the positive side, was motivated by a semi-conscious urge for preservation of artistic solidarity with the external world of Islam with which it had lost direct touch; on its negative side it was a detachment from India, the land of the Hindus, without any considerable effort.

The rejection and gradual elimination of 'Hindi' poetic diction by the Urdu poets of Delhi and Lucknow was similarly an instinctive process. It followed almost automatically in the wake of thematic exclusiveness. Mīr, Sauda and Mazhar eliminated the use of the 'double entendre' which was a heritage of the Hindi *dohā*.¹ Nāsikh's (d. 1838) elimination of Hindi vocabulary in his standardization of poetic diction was not an act of deliberate rejection; it was a logical consequence of that standardization, which meant a strict reliance on the authority of former masters who wrote in Persian.

Not only on the Arab mind, as Gibb has observed, but on the Muslim mind everywhere 'the impact of artistic speech is immediate; the words, passing through no filter of logic or reflection which might weaken or deaden their effect, go straight to the head'.² This explains the symbolization and multiple growth of the images of Turco-Persian origin, centuries after their direct experience had ceased to be known at first hand. Similarly the atomism of the Arab mind seems to have left a very strong mark on the Muslim cognizance of poetic experience everywhere. This can explain the concentration of appreciative energy on the form of the *ghazal*, where each verse is independent in meaning, and the whole poem is linked together, like a string of pearls, by the formal thread of a common rhyme scheme.

These modes of aesthetic appreciation, rooted so deeply in the essence of universal Islamic culture, remained more or less incomprehensible to the Hindu mind. Its reaction has been summed up by Chatterji: 'Throughout the whole range of Urdu literature in its first phase . . . the atmosphere of this literature is provokingly un-Indian—it is that of Persia. Early Urdu poets never so much as mention the great physical features of India—its Himalayas, its rivers like the Ganges, the Jumna, the Indus, the Narmada, the Godavari, etc.; but obscure mountains and streams of Persia, and rivers of Central Asia are always there. Indian flowers, Indian plants are unknown; only Persian flowers and plants, which the poet could see only in a garden. There was a deliberate shutting of the eye to everything Indian, to everything not mentioned or treated in Persian poetry.'³ The rejection of the Indian milieu in

¹ Saksena, 45, 54.

² H. A. R. Gibb, *Modern Trends in Islam*, Chicago, 1945, 5.

³ Chatterji, 216.

Urdu led to the rejection of Urdu by the bulk of Hindu community who adopted, after Lallū Lāl's experiment in 1803, modern literary Hindi, which is a Hinduized and Sanskritized form of Urdu.¹ This counter-revivalism which created and accepted universally the Hindu-biased Hindi language, was an exaggerated response to the Muslim challenge of quest for extra-territorial inspiration. 'A language and literature', writes Chatterji, 'which came to base itself upon an ideology which denied on the soil of India the very existence of India and Indian Culture, could not but be met with a challenge from the sons of India, adherents of their national culture; and that challenge was in the form of highly Sanskritized Hindi.'²

Urdu prose, before the utilitarian-modernist revolution it underwent under the inspiration of John Gilchrist at the Fort William College in Calcutta at the dawn of the nineteenth century, shows an even more intriguing pattern of escapism from the Indian environment. Whereas in theological writings it aimed to imitate Arabic syntax, in prose romance it lost itself into the fantasies of the *dāstān* chiefly of the cycle of Amīr Hamza which was current throughout the Islamic world from Turkey to Java. In Urdu the *dāstān* became an interminable, intricate and interminable maze of stock situations in which the heroes of Amīr Hamza's (a legendary transformation of the Prophet's uncle) army or their prototypes, aided by 'tricheurs' ('*ayyār*'), triumphed over unbelieving villains, men and women, who in their turn practised magic and lived in enchanted cities, or were aided by sorcerers. These sorcerers of romance are semi-identified with Hindus³; and in the stereotyped and perpetual conflict of the *dāstāns* there is a stylized and vague reflection of the chronic chaos in which one community fought against the other during the Mughal 'times of trouble' in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Compared to this slant of ignoring Indian atmosphere and environment, the instances of the acceptance of Indian elements are few and far between. The autobiographical or topical poem of complaint described the physical background of the poet, sometimes realistically enough. Very little of the 'matter of India' was accepted in narrative verse; one of the exceptions being the *Tūtī Nāma*, which saw three imitators of Nakhshabī in Dakanī,⁴ and a prose version done in the early nineteenth century by Haider

¹ Grierson, *Modern Vernacular Literature* 107.

² Chatterji, 196.

³ Aziz Ahmad, Intro. to Muhammad Hasan 'Askari (ed.) *Intikhab-i Tilism-i Hoshrubā*, Lahore, 1953.

⁴ Shams-Ullāh Qādirī, 124-5.

Bakhsh Haidarī¹ at the Fort William College. Unlike Hindi, and like Persian, Urdu tended to blur the distinction between sexes in the situation of love, and the love of a woman for a man was not considered fit subject-matter for poetry.

The only considerable north Indian poet before the middle of the nineteenth century who found colour, richness, and rhythm in the Indian life and atmosphere, and who wrote about it without any inhibition, borrowing his vocabulary from all sources, unmindful of all polished courtly criteria, was Nazir Akbarābādī (d. 1830), ignored and almost unknown in his own generation, but respected and revived when fashions changed in the later half of the century. His other worldliness rooted in popular Sūfism, was eclectic to the extent of celebrating in his verse the festivals of other creeds, Sikh or Hindu. He is the first, and until the thirties of the twentieth century the only Urdu poet to have come in contact with the masses of the Indian people and to have catered to their taste without any distinction of creed. His spirituality, his reflective ethics, his uninhibited sense of the enjoyment of the beauty of all creation, of birds and beasts and human crowds at fairs, is of a popular type. This thematic involvement in the realism of Indian life with its bizarre show and colourful variety, its superstitions and moralizations could only be expressed in a language which was drawn directly from the mouths of the people, and was throbbing with the infinite variety of colloquialisms, transcending the rigid bounds of poetic diction which the poets of Delhi and Lucknow had been imposing upon themselves generation after generation. On the other hand in his *ghazals*, which Nazir considered his 'respectable' as distinct from his popular poetry, he also conformed to the established courtly standards.²

Inshā's *Rānī Ketkī kī Kahānī* (1809) is regarded by some as an early example of Hindu prose.³ This would be the retrospective application of a criterion of distinction. Inshā could not possibly have imagined that he was writing in anything except Urdu, from which, not for the purpose of 'Hindification', but as a literary *tour de force* he excluded all Arabic and Persian vocabulary, like Faizī before him who had written a commentary on the Qur'ān without diacritics.

¹ Haider Bakhsh Haidarī, *Totā Kahānī*, London, 1825.

² Nazir Akbarābādī, *Diwān*, ed. by Mirzā Farhat-Ullāh Beg, Delhi, 1940.

³ T. Grahame Bailey, 'Hindi Prose before the Nineteenth Century,' *BSOS*, ii, 1923-25.

Urdu poetry turned to India after the shattering of the Muslim values of conservative aesthetics, as an aftermath of the mutiny of 1857, under Western criticism of its insularity, artificiality and of being 'decrepit in its cradle' in imitation of Persian, and under Western inspiration of realistic love of nature. But while one finds Hālī or Muhammad Husain Āzād emphasizing the principle of closeness to Indian 'nature' and the need of going back to earlier Hindi literature, and while both of them wrote on nature themes, their effort is still self-conscious and their imagination and intellect nearly as Persianized as that of their predecessors. One of the features of this inherent Persianization is the generalization of the particular in appreciation and imagery, which one comes across even in Iqbāl's early poems on Indian themes with the single exception of *Nayā Shivāla*.

Hindu participation in Urdu literature has remained confined to the eclectic communities, the Khatrīs, the Kāyasthas, and the Kashmīrī Brahmins, and to a few 'marginal' groups of Indo-Gangetic plains. It was a continuation of their former use of Persian, and their adoption in varying degrees of some aspects of the Indo-Muslim culture. The main stream of Hindu intellectual consciousness chose, not Urdu, but the dialects of Hindi or Indian regional languages or Sanskrit for its expression. The minor Hindu element which chose Urdu as its mother tongue or as the language of its self-expression had to accept in it, in the first instance, the Muslim norms of detachment from Indian environment. The Hindu who wrote in Urdu, before the middle of the nineteenth century, therefore not only seceded intellectually from his own culture, but accepted in its place another one based on external origins, from which he was twice removed. This inhibited the creative energy of early Hindu poets of Urdu, who could hardly rise above the level of dilettanti, but who, as dilettanti, became outstanding compilers of biographical dictionaries of poets or of anthologies of poetry, like Lachmī Narāyan Shafaq or Lālā Śrī Rām.

The perseverance of Hindu eclectic communities in holding on to Urdu is admirable. Perhaps the first of these poets was Walī Rām, a contemporary of Shāh Jahān, who wrote in pre-Urdu as well as in Arabic and Persian. In the reign of Shāh Ālam II, in the beginning of the nineteenth century Hindus constituted a cognizable percentage of Urdu poets.¹ Himself a poet, Chandūlāl

¹ Bhagwāndās Hindi, *Saf'na-i Hindi*, Patna, 1958.

Shādān (1766-1845), chief minister of Hyderabad State, was a famous patron of Urdu poetry. The most outstanding of Hindu poets was Dayā Shankar Nasīm (1811-43), whose *Gulzār-i Nasīm* became an outstanding classic.

In the later nineteenth century when the Hindī-Urdu controversy was raging fiercely, some of the Hindu writers of Urdu turned to Hindī, others concentrated on transferring the Hindu heritage of scripture, literature and science to Urdu prose. The *Bhagavad Gītā* was translated into Urdu three times, Bhartṛihārī twice; there was translations of, and commentaries on the Vedas, of the classics of Vedānta, and of works on Hindu ceremonial; and Urdu was also used for Aryā Samāj polemics. But the main stream of Hindu religious and cultural activity was already flowing in modern Hindī. In this phase and in the twentieth century, those poets of the eclectic Hindu castes who still chose to write in Urdu, like Chakbast or Durgā Sahāy Sarūr (d. 1910), made a conscious effort to acclimatize Urdu to Hindu religious themes, and while they, as well as the leading Hindu poet of Urdu writing today, Firāq Gorakhpūrī, belong intellectually to the Persian tradition, they gave to Urdu, persuasively, something of their Hindu sensitivity and a sensuousness that was voluptuous as well as religious, absorbing cautiously, wherever relevant, the spontaneity of emotive poetic diction borrowed from Hindī dialects. And yet, with the possible exception of Firāq, they remained poets of secondary calibre. Much though they loved Urdu and identified themselves with it, the dilemma of cultural tension prevented the process of individual mastery in a medium essentially foreign.

On the other hand in fiction the Hindu writer of Urdu far surpassed his Muslim colleague. Here the iconoclastic Muslim mind, which could not easily create a three-dimensional human character moving in a milieu which would throb with the intensity of life, had lost itself in the earlier phase in the phantasmagoria of the *dāstān*, in which the character was as decorative and stereotyped as the enchanted maze through which he moved. The Muslim novelist of Urdu had under Western inspiration, barely emerged from the *dāstān*, and showed some promise of originality as in the case of Nazīr Ahmad, when he was again submerged in the repetitive two-dimensional phantasmagoria of Sharar's pseudo-historical, chauvinistic romanticism. The only kind of novel he could write well, before the twentieth century, was that associated with

courtesans, because of the identity of its imagic nature with the ghazal of Lucknow. On the other hand, the Hindu iconographic mind was capable of creating a rounded human figure in sensitive and realistic relationship to a given situation, within a realistically portrayed social environment. Thus Ratannāth Sarshār (1846-1902), under the influence of European picaresque novel, succeeded in creating amazingly realistic minor characters and in capturing the multiple atmosphere of Indian life in the court, the harem, the bazaar, the fair, and the railway compartment. His major characters tend to be types, but at least in one of them, in his Khojī, he created an Indian Sancho Panza. His familiarity with the domestic life of Muslim middle classes is amazing; and he catered, quite unabashed, to Muslim political emotionalism, in sending his hero Āzād to the Crimea to fight on the side of the Turks against the Russians. Prem Chand (1880-1936) began as an Urdu novelist, but later turned to Hindī and is acclaimed in both languages as one of the greatest writers of fiction.

(iii) *The Language Controversy*

The literary languages, Hindi and Urdu, under the influence of rival revivalisms in the nineteenth century, emphasized in their parallel and rival growths not the fusion, but the deep-rooted spiritual antagonism of the two cultures. As we have seen, modern literary Hindi, which according to Grierson began with Lallū Lāl in 1803, is a recent and antithetical growth. The separatist and repudiatory character of literary Hindi *vis-à-vis* Urdu was not much disputed by the Hindus, who regarded it as 'not ceremonially pure or correct', and called it *ġāmanī* or *Yāmanī* or *Yāvani*, 'a language suitable for *Yāvans* or non-Hindu barbarians'.¹ It is interesting that the first work written in 'pure' and highly Sanskritized Hindi (*Sanskrit nistha*) Hindi was the *Satyārtha Prakāśh* of Dayānand Saraswatī, the founder of the aggressive revivalist Aryā Samāj, who was the first to give a conscious and definite expression to the view that Hindi should be the 'pan-Hindu language of India'.² Not very different was the analysis of Mawlānā Muhammad Ali arrived at from the opposite point of view: 'Hindi is the constructive works

¹ Chatterji, 188

² V. D. Savarkar, Address at the Calcutta session of the Hindu Mahāsabha, 1939, 4.

of the advocates of pan-Hinduism . . .; its first creation is the result not of comprehension and inclusion, but of elimination and exclusion.' ¹ Where as the Āryā Samājist Dayānand considered it the religious duty of every Hindu to promote Hindi, the *Āryā Bhāshā* (the Aryan language), the more moderate and traditionalist movement of Hindu revivalism, the Sanātan Dharam, led by Pandit Shārda Rām, also recommended its use.²

By 1867 the emphasis had already begun to shift from the use of Hindi as the exclusive language of north Indian Hindus to propaganda and pressure for its exclusive use, at the expense of Urdu, as the language of administration at the lower levels. The movement originated at Benares, and Bābū Fateh Chand organized committees with this intent.³ The early political eclecticism of Sayyid Ahmad Khān received a shock when Bābū Shiv Prasād, himself a writer of Urdu, pushed his dislike of the former Muslim rule in India and its heritage to the extent of pressing the Hindu members of Sayyid Ahmad Khan's Scientific Society to replace Urdu by Hindi as the language of transactions in the Society.⁴ The main opposition to Sayyid Ahmad Khān's plans for a Muslim University came from the Hindu supporters of Hindi.⁵ These developments lit the first spark of modern Muslim separatism in the mind of Sayyid Ahmad Khān, who in an interview with Shakespeare, then the Commissioner of Benares, talked for the first time of the separate political evolution of Muslims, and expressed a prophetic regret that the 'two nations', Hindu and Muslim, would not seriously work together for a composite growth.⁶

Bābū Shiv Prasād created a press and propaganda machinery for the propagation of Hindi. An even more extremist stand was taken by Tārā Mohan Mitra and Sādasukh Lāl who favoured complete Sanskritization.⁷ Bhimsen Sharmā, associated with the Āryā Samājist movement went to the extreme of writing a 'fantastic article in which the root of Arabic and Persian words was traced back to Sanskrit'.⁸

Conversely, Sayyid Ahmad Khān regarded the loss of the Urdu language as detrimental for the Indian Muslims as the loss of their

¹ Mawlānā Muhammad 'Alī, *Selected Speeches and Writings*, ed. by Afzal Iqbāl, Lahore, 1944, 39.

² Sajjād Zaheer, 34-35.

³ Altāf Husain Hālī, *Hayāt-i Jāwīd*, Cawnpore, 1901, i, 140.

⁴ Garcin de Tassy, *La Langue et la littérature Hindoustanie en 1870*, Paris, 1871, 40-41; Sayyid Ahmad Khān, *Khutūt*, 66.

⁵ *Collection of Educational Despatches*, India, Home Department, xiii, 21; xi, 18.

⁶ Hālī, i, 140.

⁷ Jindal, 222.

⁸ Jindal, 229.

religion.¹ In 1870 Garcin de Tassy gloomily recorded that the language controversy was dividing Hindus and Muslims into two hostile camps and that some Hindus would much rather adopt English as the official language than Urdu.²

In the early 1870s the language controversy took a new, and from the Muslim view-point an alarming turn, when the British official policy yielded in some areas to the pressure of Hindu agitation. First, in Bihar Urdu was officially replaced by Hindi as the written medium of recording in law courts, then in 1872-3 it had to give place to Hindi in the subordinate offices in the Central Provinces and in the Darjeeling district of Bengal; and the Hindu pressure for a similar change in the North Western (later United) Provinces increased.³ In 1881 the Government of Bengal ordered the exclusive use of Hindi in Devanāgarī script in Bihar. The climax of the British patronage of Hindi came in 1898 when Sir Anthony Macdonell, the governor of North-Western Province not only enforced Hindi in the place of Urdu in the lower courts of that province, but showed an incomprehensible vindictiveness in face of the Muslim agitation that followed, and a hostility to Muslim educational institutions like Aligarh and the Nadvat al-'ulamā, humiliating Sayyid Ahmad Khān's successor, Muhsin al-Mulk.⁴

In 1893 Nāgarī Prachārī Sabhā was founded at Benares for the propagation of Hindi and for impressing the Hindu view-point on the British government. One of its founders was Pandit Madan Mohan Mālviya, later a leader of the Indian National Congress. Hindi Sahitya Sammelan was founded at Allahabad for the same purpose. As a reaction to these Hindu bodies Anjuman-i Taraqqī-yi Urdu grew out of the Muslim Educational Conference in 1903, with Shiblī as its first secretary. But by then, the struggles for Hindu and Muslim separatism had passed on from the linguistic to the directly political field; linguistic hostility came to be partly taken for granted, and partly regarded as one of the major sources of the communal disunity, though not the main one. It came to the fore again in 1937 when the Indian National Congress ministries in various provinces took up linguistic question. Mr. Gāndhī was strongly in favour of Hindi in the Devanāgarī script to be used both by the Hindus and the Muslims, as he considered that

¹ Muhsin al-Mulk, *Lectures and Speeches*, Lahore, n.d., 1, 393-4.

² Garcin de Tassy, 13.

³ Ibid. (1874), 7-8.

⁴ Hālī, 143-4; S. M. Ikram, *Mawj-i Kawthar*, Lahore, 1950, 109-14; Muhammad Amin Zuberi, *Tadhkira i Mulam*, Delhi, 1935, 102.

script 'akin to the great provincial scripts of the languages descended from Sanskrit'.¹ He was not even prepared to adopt the Anglo-Indian name Hindustani for Hindi,² and was opposed to the use of Latin script³ which could have negatively united Hindi and Urdu. The Hindu Mahāsabhā pledged itself to the use of Sanskrit as the sacred language of India, and of *Sanskrit nistha* Hindi as the national and official language.⁴ The Muslim attitude had been epitomized some years earlier by Mawlānā Muhammad 'Alī who regarded the use of Urdu instead of Persian by Indian Muslims as in itself a concession to Indian patriotism. In his view, more than that they could not concede, as the Persian script formed a link with the rest of the Muslim world.⁵ Moulvī 'Abdul Haq, secretary of Anjuman-i Taraqqī-yi Urdu since 1912, whose sympathies had been radical and broadly nationalist, and who had all these years striven to keep the language question out of the Hindu-Muslim political controversies, parted company with the nationalists in 1937 after fruitless discussions with Gāndhī. On the other hand Sir Tej Bahādur Saprū, President of the Anjuman, continued bravely to be at the same time an eclectic champion of Urdu and a staunch liberal nationalist, while Mawlānā Abu'l Kalām Āzād, who wrote highly Arabicized Urdu quite incomprehensible to an average Hindu, championed the cause of Hindi as a nationalist leader and later as India's Minister for Education.

¹ M. K. Gāndhī, letter to Jawaharlal Nehru, dated 3 August 1937, in Nehru, *A Bunch of Old Letters*, Bombay, 1948, 239.

² Ibid. 239.

³ Jawaharlal Nehru, *Autobiography*, London, 1942, 451.

⁴ Savarkar, op. cit. 21-23.

⁵ Muhammad 'Alī, op. cit. 43.

EPILOGUE

MODERN SEPARATISM (1857-1947)

THE chaotic pattern of Hindu-Muslim tension in the Mughal 'time of troubles' gave place to a new and unprecedented situation as British power firmly established itself over the whole of the sub-continent. This brought to the fore a more complex pattern of tensions arising out of the problems which faced each community in adjusting itself not only to the new ruling power, but to its language, values and civilization; it transformed the nature of the Hindu-Muslim conflict into one of mutual competition for economic and later political advancement under foreign rule.

The Government of East India Company was on the whole more unsympathetic to Muslims than Hindus, for a number of reasons. In its first areas of expansion, as in Bengal and Arcot, its adversaries were Muslims, from whom it had wrenched power. Its administrative policy drove a greater wedge between itself and its Muslim subjects when the series of changes introduced by Cornwallis and Shore led to the Permanent Settlement of 1793. From the Muslim point of view the British, though they had won Bengal by the sword, held it only under the legal title of the Mughal Emperor's Chief Revenue Officer.¹ Conversely, the whole tendency of the Permanent Settlement was 'to acknowledge the subordinate Hindu officers who dealt directly with the husbandmen.'² This created a class of Hindu middlemen which economically and culturally exploited the Muslim peasantry for nearly a century and a half. Parallel to this was the rapid disintegration of the feudal structure of Muslim society; the destruction of the Muslim aristocracy in Delhi and neighbouring areas in reprisal for its participation in the Mutiny of 1857, and of other institutions on which the nourishment of Muslim culture had been depending for centuries.

The replacement of Persian by English in 1835 as the language of education and administration placed the Muslims at a much

¹ W. W. Hunter, *The Indian Mussalmans*, London, 1871, quoting the *farmān* of 12 August 1765 in Aitchison's *Treaties*, and East India Company's *Collections*, nos. 2111-22, 1812.

² Hunter, 159.

greater disadvantage than the Hindus. For the Hindus it meant merely the change from one foreign language to another. Centuries of Muslim rule had helped Hinduism to shed its shell of insularity, and infused it with an apparatus of eclectic receptivity by which it could adapt itself to comfortable co-existence with the influx of Western ideas which education in English brought necessarily in its wake. Muslim India had passed through no similar process of immunization. For it the change meant secession from its own cultural heritage to adopt an alien one. It was unconscious of the revolutionary dynamism of Western civilization, and like the rest of the Muslim world slow in appreciating the economic advantages of the change. And so while in the nineteenth century it found itself at a disadvantage compared to the Hindus, in the later decades of that century and the first half of the twentieth it found itself more dependent on the British than did the Hindus.

European Oriental studies inspired and led to the establishment of Hindu and Muslim traditions of the study of their own pasts. In this process they developed separately their own mechanisms of revivalism and apologetics. In their emotional response to the history of Muslim India the two processes of revivalism clashed. The two revivalisms 'stimulated each other, competed with each other and became more and more different in outlook. . . . Hindus and Musalmans alike began to give up many practices which they had imbibed from one another and which had formed bridges between the two communities.'¹ Most of the reformist movements of the mid-nineteenth century bore the stamp of this revivalist tension. Among the Hindus it found its most virulent expression in the fundamentalist and missionary movement of the Āryā Samāj, and tainted even such liberal movements as the Brahma Samāj founded by Rām Mohan Roy, the Prārthana Samāj and the Theosophical Society.² Their counterpart among Muslims were the Anjuman-i Himāyat-i Islām, and more especially the vigorous Ahmadiyya heresy founded by Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad of Qadiyan.³ The pattern of Sayyid Ahmad Khān's Muslim separatism in India was not revivalist⁴ or essentially anti-Hindu; it was co-existential. He had preached Hindu-Muslim amity⁵ from 1867 to

¹ Beni Prasad, *Hindu-Muslim Questions*, Allahabad, 1941, 24.

² J. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements in India*, London, 1924, 30; S. N. Shāstri, *History of the Brahma Samāj*, Calcutta, 16-17; Ram Gopal, *Indian Muslims*, 61.

³ Khutūt, 150.

⁴ Farquhar, 137.

⁵ *Lectures*, 33-35, 118-19, 145-6, 168.

1884, until the implementation of Gladstonian liberal policies by Ripon in India leading to the creation of self-governing institutions suggested the possibility of a coming struggle for power between the Hindus and the Muslims. Sayyid Ahmad Khān did not oppose the Indian National Congress in 1885 when it came into existence, and not until 1887 when the election of a Muslim, Badr al-dīn Tayyibjī, as its president, appeared to him to involve the risk of a politically unprepared and immature Muslim participation in it, detrimental to the political and economic interests of the Muslims. In his anti-Congress speeches at Lucknow (1887) and Meerut (1888) he emphasized that in representative institutions Muslim share in proportion to the ratio of their population would be insignificant; even if they were given parity they lacked the educational standard to share administrative power at the helm; and that the withdrawal of British rule would usher in an era of chaos and Hindu-Muslim struggle for power.¹ He was the first modern Muslim to suggest that Hindus and Muslims constituted two separate nations in India.² Amīr 'Alī, who had founded the Central National Muhammedan Association in Calcutta, pressed similar views.³ Even Badr al-dīn Tayyibjī, who remained an Indian Nationalist to the end, ceased to participate actively in the deliberations of the Indian National Congress,⁴ presumably in deference to the feeling of the Muslim consensus. The instinctive acceptance by the overwhelming consensus of Muslim India of Sayyid Ahmad Khān's policy of separatism in Indian politics stands in sharp contrast to its simultaneous rejection of his opposition to pan-Islamism and the Turkish *Khilāfat*, and to the generally accepted traditionalist criticism of his religious eclecticism.

The demand for separate electorates for the Muslims was the logical outcome of Sayyid Ahmad Khān's policies, and of the challenge of the growing political strength of the Congress under the revivalist leadership of Tilak which was basically anti-Muslim. The deputation of Muslim élite to Minto in 1906, formulating the

¹ *Lectures*, 240-53, 254-67. Hill, *Hayāt-i Jawīd*, i, 274-6, *Abstract of the Proceedings of the Council of the Governor-General*, vol. xxii, meeting of 12 January, 1883; V. Lovett, *A History of Indian National Movement*, London, 1921, 35; Shams al-dīn Shā'iq, *Ā'ina-i National Congress*, Gurdaspur, 1888, cf. Kanwar Sen, *Jawāb-i Lecture*, Sialkot, 1890.

² Husain B. Tayyibjī, *Badriddin Tayyibjī*, Bombay, 1952, 203.

³ *Report of the Committee of the Central National Muhammedan Association*, 1885-8, 21-22; Amīr 'Alī, *Memoirs*, IC, vi (1932), 336-51; Ram Gopal, 80-81.

⁴ Tayyibjī, 225.

demand for separately elected Muslim participation in all representative institutions, commensurate not with the Muslim numerical strength, in India, but its political strength might have been encouraged by the British government, but does not seem to have been 'inspired' by it.¹ It was merely working out the next stage of the policy initiated by Sayyid Ahmad Khān.²

Antithetical to Muslim political separatism was the direct application of Hindu revivalism to politics by Tilak. 'When the rampant Hindu nationalist spoke of purging the sacred soil of India of the foreigners, he meant Muslims as well as Englishmen.'³ After the Hindu-Muslim riots in the Bombay province in 1893, Tilak launched a programme of organizing the Hindu masses on a vast scale 'to be strong enough to live in peace with the Muslims'⁴ by abstaining from the age-old syncretic participation in Muslim festivals, by evolving and celebrating parallel Hindu festivals, like that of the elephant-headed god Ganpati, which was modelled on the Muslim Muharram; and by introducing the purely political commemoration festival of Shīvajī, who had challenged Muslim imperial power in the late seventeenth century.⁵ Whereas the heritage of Tilak remained polarized in the pro-Hindu faction of the Congress until 1947, its inspiration outside the Congress led to the creation of the Hindu Mahāsabhā in 1928. Its prominent leaders Moonje and Savarkar were Maharāshtrian. Its organizational projection *Sanghatan* had Maharāshtrian origins.⁶ It culminated

¹ Letter of Archbold to Muhsin al-Mulk on the eve of the Simla deputation quoted in Tufayl Ahmad, *Musalmānōn kā raushan mustaqbil*, Delhi, 1945, 360-1, and in Rajendra Prasad, *India Divided*, Bombay, 1946, 112-13; Muhsin al-Mulk's letter to Archbold dated 4 August 1906 and Minto's letter to Morley dated 8 August 1906 in *Morley Papers*, iii, I.O.; Āftab Ahmad Khān in the *Pioneer*, 11 August 1906; Āga Khān, *Memoirs*, London, 1954, 103-4; Amīr 'Alī, 'India and the New Parliament', *Nineteenth Century*, August 1906; Mary, Countess of Minto, *India, Minto and Morley*, London, 1934, 45-48; John Buchan, *Lord Minto, A Memoir*, London, 1924, 244. Text of the Address in B. R. Ambedkar, *Pakistan or the Partition of India*, Bombay, 1946, Appendix xii, 428-38; Minto's Reply to the Address, in *ibid.* 439-40. Congress allegation of the British 'inspiration' of the Simla Deputation, Tufayl Ahmad, 223-94; Rajendra Prasad, 99-109. Refutation of the Congress allegation, in Munir-ud-din Chaghtai, *Muslim Politics in the Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent 1858-1906*, unpublished D. Phil. dissertation, University of Oxford, 1960, 241-55.

² C. Mansherdt, *The Hindu-Muslim Problem in India*, London, 1936, 71.

³ D. V. Thamankar, *Lokamanyā Tilak*, London, 1956, 56.

⁴ *Some Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India*, Bombay 1958, ii, 204-5. *Sedition Committee Report*, Calcutta, 1918; V. Chirol, *Indian Unrest*, London, 1910, 44; Ram Gopal, 15, 85.

⁵ For Mahāsabhā and its programme, V. D. Savarkar, Speech at the Calcutta session of the Hindu Mahāsabhā, 1939, 14-17; *idem*, Presidential Address at the Ahmadabad session of the Hindu Mahāsabhā, 1937; N. V. Damle (ed.),

in the creation of Rāshtra Sewak Sangh, with a predominantly Maharāshtrian membership in the 1940s, thoroughly trained for genocide; and finally in Godse it produced the revivalist fanatic who assassinated the greatest Hindu of modern times, Mahātama Gāndhī (1948), for preaching communal harmony and tolerance towards Muslims.

From the 1890s the Indian National Congress in its approach to the Muslim question, shows two divergent developments. The anti-Muslim faction was led by Tilak, the liberal one by Gokhale. The two factions merged under the tolerant guidance of Gāndhī in 1919, only to be polarized once again, after the collapse of the *Khilāfat* Movement in 1924, into two wings, the liberal one of Motilāl Nehru, and its antithesis the orthodox Hindu one led by Madan Mohan Mālwiya and Lālā Lājput Rāi. In the latter 1930s and 1940s the liberal faction spoke with two voices, that of Rajā-gopalachārya conceding Muslims the right of self-determination, and of Jawaharlal Nehru withholding it and offering secular integration. The anti-Muslim faction was led during this period by Sardār Vallabh Bhāi Patel; while Gāndhī occupied a middle position, linking and balancing the two.

The Muslim League came into existence in 1906. In 1909 in the Minto-Morley Reforms separate electorates were conceded for the Muslims. The anti-climax of the British policy so recently favouring Muslim separatism came when the partition of Bengal made by Curzon in 1905 to give Muslims a favourable majority and opportunities to develop, was annulled in 1911 under Hindu political pressure. In this year, which also saw a series of international encroachments on other parts of the Muslim world, Sayyid Ahmad Khān's policy of unconditional loyalism finally collapsed. Between 1911 and 1919 Muslim political leadership worked for a political alliance and a *modus vivendi* with the Hindus, signalized in 1916 by the Congress-League Pact which conceded separate electorates to Muslims, allowed weightage in all the provinces and accepted the principle of communal safeguards in central and provincial legislation.

In 1919 Muhammad 'Alī and his brother Shaukat 'Alī, freed from internment, brought the consensus of Muslims with them

Hindu Sanghatan, its Ideology and immediate Programme, Bombay, 1940;
A. S. Bhide (ed.), *Veer Savarkar's Whirlwind Propaganda*, Bombay, 1941,
Reginald Coupland, *The Indian Problem*, Oxford, 1942-3, ii, 193.

into the Congress and into the Muslim organizations like the *Khilāfat* Conference and *Jamī'at al-'ulama-i Hind* working in close co-operation with it. The years 1919-22 represent the period of the closest Hindu-Muslim political solidarity in the entire history of the sub-continent. And yet as Jawaharlal Nehru has analysed it, it was 'a strange mixture of nationalism and politics and religion and mysticism and fanaticism. . . . This nationalism was itself a composite force and behind it could be distinguished a Hindu nationalism' and 'a Muslim nationalism partly looking beyond the frontiers of India'.¹

The Congress-*Khilāfat* alliance carried within itself tensions that were explosive. 'I belong to two circles of equal size which are not concentric', confessed Muhammad 'Alī, 'One is India and the other is the Muslim World'.² This internal conflict of the Muslim mind reached its illogical climax in looking up to the medieval buffer state of Afghanistan as the cognizable centre for refuge in the *hijrat* (migration) movement of 1919-20 which caused appalling miseries to those involved, and for defence, when leaders like Muhammad 'Alī invited Afghanistan to attack India to the consternation and strong resentment of their Hindu colleagues.³ The most shameful of the symptoms of the failure of this alliance were the Moplah riots when an anti-imperialist agitation, originally inspired by the *Khilāfat* movement, got out of control and its nature changed in the hands of ignorant mobs to a fratricidal and inhuman massacre of its own Hindu allies. The final collapse of the alliance came with the collapse of the *Khilāfat* movement itself, after the abolition of the *Khilāfat* in 1924; leaving the Muslims in utter confusion and leaving the Hindus with a bitter realization that now that the external stimulus of Muslim anti-imperialism had failed, they might have to carry on the struggle alone; and that instead of being allies the Muslims might develop into a third force in the triangular fight for the sub-continent's advance towards freedom.

After the collapse of the *Khilāfat* movement a few individual Muslim leaders continued to support the Congress, but without any mass following. In 1928 a Nationalist Muslim Party was founded within the Congress by Mukhtar Ahmad Ansārī. In 1929 the Pathān leader 'Abdul Ghaffār Khān formed a pro-Congress

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru, *Autobiography*, London, 1942, 72.

² Muhammad 'Alī, *Selected Writings and Speeches*, Lahore, 1944, 465.

³ Ram Gopal, 152-3; Tufayl Ahmad, 512; Rabindra Nath Tagore in the *Times of India*, 18 April 1924.

nationalist corps *Khudāi Khidmatgār*, popularly known as Red Shirts, the only large Muslim group which remained consistently with the Congress for a number of years; though in 1947 the Frontier Pathāns voted solidly for accession to Pakistan. The pro-Congress Shī'a Political Conference was founded in 1929, and the Momin Conference originally founded in 1923 was revived in 1942 with Congress support as an anti-Muslim League group. The Ahrār, a pro-Congress splinter-group of the *Khilāfat* Conference came into existence as provincial political party of the Punjab Muslims in 1928. Among individual Muslim leaders who threw in their lot completely with the Congress, the most outstanding was Abu'l Kalām Āzād, one of the first political rebels against the political teaching of Sayyid Ahmad Khān. Though Āzād had worked out a political theory for the *Khilāfat* movement, he never succeeded in evolving from within Islam a political doctrine which could justify a composite Indian nationalism, which he could only equate with human fraternity.¹ Steeped though he was in classical Muslim theology, he had little respect for the consensus of Muslim intelligentsia and of the Muslim masses, though the 'ulamā of Deoband largely supported him. To the vast majority of Muslim India Āzād's continued participation in the Congress was annoying, especially his allowing himself to be re-elected the President of the Congress year after year in the early 1940s as a counterweight to the Muslim League's claim to be the sole representative of the Muslim political opinion, and against the aspiration for Pakistan. Other nationalist Muslim leaders, like Ansārī and Hakīm Ajmal Khān, had even less following. The educationist Zākir Husain was the author of the controversial Wardha Scheme, hotly opposed by the Muslims between 1937 and 1939. The most interesting of the nationalist Muslim intellectuals was the religio-political eccentric 'Ubayd-Ullāh Sindhī, a convert from Sikhism who after extensive travels in the Hijāz, Turkey and Russia, evolved a curious political philosophy of his own, a kind of pseudo-Wali-Ullāhī communism.² Since the 1880s, but more specifically after 1924 Indo-Muslim political separatism was feeling its way out of the complex of Indian unity. Edged by a fear of submergence and subjugation, in the

¹ Abu'l Kalām Āzād, 'Islām aur Qaumīyyat' in *Mazāmin-i Āzād*, Lahore, n.d., 159-92. *idem*, *Tarjumān al-Qur'ān*, Calcutta, 1, 6.
² 'Ubayd-Ullāh Sindhī, *Shāh Wali-Ullāh aur unki siyāsī tahrīk*, Lahore, 1952, 228-32; Muhammad Sarwar, 'Ubayd-Ullāh Sindhī, 35, 44-47, 81-86, 135-6, 150-1, 164-8, 228-9, 354-61 and *passim*.

journey into the political unknown, they were at first concerned with safeguards and weightage. The demand for safeguards implied not merely separatism, but the continued presence in some form or other of a third arbitrating party as a guarantor, a continuity of British influence in some manner; though paradoxically enough Muslim political organizations stood as much for political independence as the Congress. After the Round Table Conferences (1929-31) the British White Paper which was the blue-print of the sub-continent's political future conceded separate electorates, but the principle of weightages was so applied that while Muslims obtained additional seats in the legislatures of the provinces in which they were in a minority, they still remained a minority not only there and in the Centre, but also in provinces like Bengal and the Punjab where they constituted majority of the population because of the weightages allowed in these provinces to the non-Muslims. Such developments led to the gradual return of Muslim political lead into the hands of constitutionalists like Mr. Jinnah, who had earlier distinguished himself as the negotiator with the Congress achieving such political landmarks as the Lucknow Pact (1916) and his famous fourteen points which led the Congress to appoint the Nehru Committee (1928) to go into the problems of political adjustments within India. After the death of Mawlānā Muhammad 'Alī (1931) the reputation of the rest of the *Khilāfat* leaders collapsed. Āgā Khān, for whom Indian politics was a hobby, had always been a decorative figure. A new generation of landed gentry, politically of modest stature, represented by Liāqat 'Alī Khān, Ismā'īl Khān and Sikandar Hayāt Khān filled the vacuum, supported by a new set of professional politicians like Fazlul Haq in Bengal. In 1936 they resurrected the Muslim League to bring back Mr. Jinnah, who had temporarily withdrawn from the chaotic Indo-Muslim political scene, as its leader.

In the 1937 elections, held to implement the restricted provincial autonomy given in the Government of India Act of 1935, the Congress swept the polls in the Hindu-majority provinces, while the newly revived Muslim League did not do so well in the provinces where Muslims constituted the majority. The differences between the Congress and the League might have been minimized, if not actually resolved, had the Congress leadership taken the imaginative step of sharing the power in provincial cabinets with the Muslim League, as the League generally expected. The insist-

ence of the Congress to accept only such Muslims as would join the Congress itself was resentfully considered by the League as aimed at its own elimination, and at the liquidation of independent Muslim political life in India. The situation might not have deteriorated if, after the assumption of power, the Congress ministries in various provinces, especially in the Central Provinces, had shown some understanding of Muslim apprehensions and susceptibilities in their educational and linguistic policies. Instead they tried to disrupt the Muslim League by encouraging unsuccessfully the growth of a number of anti-League mushroom parties of the Muslim, by an ill-planned and not very sincere movement of mass contact and by other political manoeuvres.¹ In this first considerable experience of the Muslims to live under Hindu administration, Muslim opposition became more and more solid and defined; and with it the Muslim League emerged, as it had been claiming, the sole representative of the Muslim masses in the political struggle that lay ahead.² In September 1939 when the Congress ministries resigned at the advent of the second World War, the political tension was so acute that 'Indian observers agreed with the British officials that Hindu-Muslim relations had never in their experience been so bad'.³

'The delay in discovering the philosophical justification for Pakistan', writes Ambedkar, 'is due to the fact that the Muslim leaders had become habituated to speaking of Muslims as a community and as a minority. The use of this terminology took them in a false direction and brought them to a dead end. As they acknowledged themselves to be a minority community, they felt there was nothing else open to them except to ask for safeguards which they did and with which they concerned themselves for practically half a century.'⁴ The way out of this cul-de-sac of safeguards and weightages was blasted by the romantic imagination of a poet, Sir Muhammad Iqbal.⁵

¹ Coupland, II, 189-91; *Report of the Inquiry Committee appointed by the Council of the All-India Muslim League to inquire into Muslim Grievances in the Congress Provinces* (Purpur Report), 1938; *Kamāl Yār Jung Educational Committee Report*, Calcutta, 1942; Abdu'l Kalām Azād, *India Wins Freedom*, Calcutta, 1959, 16, 160-1; Jawaharlal Nehru in *New York Times*, 8 February, 1959. B. P. S. Ray, *Parliamentary Government in India*, Calcutta, 1943, 366-7; Beni Prasad, 60; Aziz Ahmad, 'Les Musulmans et le nationalisme indien', *Orient*, Paris, xii (1962), 75-94.

² Ibid. II, 132.

³ Ambedkar, 331.

⁴ Coupland, II, 191.

⁵ Aziz Ahmad, *Iqbal, Nai Tashkil*, Karachi, 1950; *idem* 'Iqbal et la théorie du Pakistan', *Orient*, Paris, xvi (1961), 81-90.

In the pan-Islamic phase of his writings (1908-38) Iqbāl had dissociated politics from nationalism, and tried to correlate it with religion and culture. This implied also the rejection of the modern Western concept of the duality of church and state.¹ In the universal political life of the Muslims, there could be only two criteria of grouping, Muslims and non-Muslims. Non-Muslims constituted a single community antithetical to the Muslim *umma*.² This did not mean that the Muslims were in any sense a superior or chosen people; in fact the Muslim community was potentially, and not actually, the *khayr al-umam* (best among the communities), not merely by virtue of its following the Prophet of Islam, whose Prophethood was meant to promulgate freedom, equality and brotherhood among *all* mankind,³ but by the community's own effort to apply the ethical values of the Prophet's teachings to the harnessing of the forces of nature.⁴

In its dispersion all over the world the Muslim community has a cognizable centre (*markaz-i mahsūs*), the Ka'ba. It is a geographical focus. Whereas the Ka'ba remained the symbolic cognizable centre for the entire *umma*, a regional centre as a politically defined regional centre was necessary for the survival of the Muslims in the sub-continent. The Muslim majority areas therefore stood in relation to the diaspora in the rest of the sub-continent as a politically realizable 'cognizable centre'. This resilience marked a retreat from Iqbāl's original position, his denunciation of regionalism. But by 1930 he had come to the conclusion that while a universal Muslim *Khilāfat* was impractical in the modern world, the only tangible form the political expression of pan-Islamism could take was that of Muslim multi-nationalism, realizing itself in regional national states.⁵

In his Presidential Address at the annual session of the Muslim League in 1930, Iqbāl first put forward the proposal for the creation of a separate Muslim state in India. 'The religious order of Islam', he argued, 'is organically related to the social order which it has created. The rejection of the one will eventually involve the

¹ Iqbāl, Presidential Address at the annual session of the Muslim League at Allahabad in 1930, *Struggle for Freedom, 1857-1947*, Karachi, 1958, Appendix iv, 13.

² Iqbāl, 'Jughrāfi Hudūd aur Musalmān' in *Mazāmin-i Iqbāl*, Hyderabad, Deccan, A.H. 1360.

³ Iqbāl, *Ramūz-i Bekhūdī*, 119-28; Eng. tr. A. J. Arberry, *Mysteries of Selflessness*, London, 1953, 21-82.

⁴ Iqbāl, *Reconstruction*, 151; Pres. Add. 12-13.

⁵ Iqbāl, *op. cit.* 164-8; Arberry, 56-59.

rejection of the other. Therefore, the construction of a polity on Indian national lines, if it means a displacement of the Islamic principle of solidarity, is simply unthinkable to a Muslim.¹

In comparing the concept of Islamic solidarity as a social unity, with the modern Western conception of a nation, Iqbāl had taken his cue from Ernest Renan. 'Une nation est une âme, un principe spirituel. L'une est dans le passé, l'autre dans le présent. L'une est la possession en commun d'un riche legs de souvenirs; l'autre est le consentement actuel, le désir de vivre ensemble, la volonté de continuer à faire valoir l'héritage qu'on a reçu indivis. . . . Avoir de gloires communes dans le passé, une volonté commune dans le présent; avoir fait de grandes choses ensemble, vouloir en faire encore, voilà la condition essentielle pour être une peuple.'² 'Une nation est donc une grande solidarité, constitué par le sentiment de sacrifice qu'on a faits et de ceux qu'on est disposé à faire encore. Elle suppose un passé; elle se résume pourtant dans le présent par un fait tangible; le consentement, le désir clairement exprimé de continuer la vie commune.'³ Judged from this standard the Hindu-Muslim political complex in India did not constitute a nation. The fact of diversity within the so-called Indian nation was therefore to be recognized, for the co-operation of its two major units. There was a Hindu solidarity and a Muslim solidarity. The former had its cultural affinities with the Buddhist world in the Far East and South East Asia; the latter had its links with the Muslim Middle East. India was therefore Asia in miniature.⁴

This was the first unapologetic assertion of the 'two-nation' theory, which had been so far only vaguely suggested by Sayyid Ahmad Khān and Muhammad 'Alī. This led to the demand for the regional self-determination of the Indian Muslim nation: 'The principle of European democracy cannot be applied to India without recognizing the facts of communal groups. The Muslim demand for the creation of a Muslim India within India, is, therefore perfectly justified. . . . I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single state. Self-government within the British Empire, or without the British Empire, and the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim state appears to me to be the final destiny of

¹ Pres. Add. 15.

² Ernest Renan, *Qu'est ce qu'une Nation?*, Paris, 1882, 26-27.

³ Ibid. 27.

⁴ Iqbāl, Pres. Add. 15-16

the Muslims at least of North-West India.¹ For India the creation of a Muslim state within it would ensure 'security and peace resulting from an internal balance of power; for Islam an opportunity to rid itself of the stamp that Arabian imperialism was forced to give it, to mobilize its law, its education, its culture, and to bring them into closer contact with its original spirit and with the spirit of modern times.'²

During 1936-7 Iqbāl and Jinnah came in close political contact. In a series of letters to Jinnah, Iqbāl pressed the view that the creation of a separate Muslim state was the only feasible solution for the Muslims and for peace in India.³ In the larger interest of Muslim survival in India, Muslim minorities in Hindu majority provinces should sacrifice their own interests for the creation of a separate Muslim state in the zones of Muslim majority.⁴ The economic pattern of the Muslim state envisaged was to be a kind of socialist democracy.⁵ In his introduction to these letters of Iqbāl, Jinnah acknowledges that Iqbāl's views finally led him to the same conclusion, the demand for a separate Muslim state (Pakistan).⁶

Ambedkar, the leader of the Hindu depressed classes, who later drafted the first constitution of the independent India wrote in 1942: "That Muslim position should have run a parallel course and should never have merged in the Hindu current of politics is a strange fact of modern Indian history. In so segregating themselves the Muslims were influenced by some mysterious feeling, the source of which they could not define, and guided by a hidden hand which they could not see but which was all the same directing them to keep apart from Hindus. This mysterious feeling and this hidden hand was no other than their pre-appointed destiny, symbolized by Pakistan, which unknown to them, was working within them."⁷

This would perhaps be an oversimplification of history. But there is no doubt that, between Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī who first conceived the idea of an utopian Central-Asian-and-Northwest-Indian Muslim state in the 1880s,⁸ and Iqbāl, who, under al-Afghānī's influence,⁹ worked out a political philosophy for it in 1930, the feeling of territorial separatism was gradually, though

¹ Iqbāl, Pres. Add. 16-17.

² Ibid. 17.

³ *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah (Struggle for Freedom, Appendix v)*, 35.

⁴ Ibid. 35.

⁵ Jinnah's Introduction to *ibid.* 29.

⁶ Ibid. 33-34.

⁷ Ambedkar, 333-4.

⁸ Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, contribution in *Sources of Indian Tradition*, ed. W. T. de Bary, &c., New York, 1958, 827.

⁹ Iqbāl, *Jawid Nāma*, Lahore, 1945, 63-92.

not quite coherently, taking shape in the minds of the Indian Muslims. In 1923 an insignificant tribal chief Muhammad Gul Khān, in his evidence before the North West Frontier Inquiry Committee, suggested the establishment of separate homelands for Muslims in the north-west extending as far as Agra.¹ After Iqbāl's demand for the creation of a separate Muslim state, a popular name for it was suggested by a group of Muslim students at Cambridge, including Chaudhārī Rahmat 'Alī, whose later extravagant writings became quite embarrassing for the Muslim political leadership. This name, *Pakistan*, which caught the popular imagination, was mnemonically formed from the names of Muslim majority areas of the north-west: Punjab, Afghānia (North West Frontier), Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan.² It can be safely asserted that this name was the only contribution of the Cambridge group to the Pakistan Movement.

On 26 March 1940 the Muslim League in its annual session at Lahore finally adopted a resolution for the setting up of sovereign Muslim states in the north-western and eastern zones of the sub-continent where the Muslims constituted the majority of the population.³ Despite the reference in the Muslim League resolution to the possibility of the creation of a plurality of Muslim states, the unanimous comments of the Muslim League leaders made it quite clear that the resolution actually envisaged the creation of a single Muslim state, embracing both zones, north-western as well as eastern.⁴ In March 1942 the demand for Pakistan received its official British recognition in the proposals for India's self-determination and co-operation in the war effort brought by Sir Stafford Cripps.⁵ Its first realistic appraisal by Hindu leadership came from C. Rājagopālāchārya, though his resolution for diluted Muslim territorial autonomy within a centralized India was rejected by the

¹ Report of the North-West Frontier Inquiry Committee, 1924, 122-3.

² Chaudhārī Rahmat 'Alī, *Now or Never*, Cambridge, 1933; *idem*, *The Millat of Islam and the Menace of Indianism*, Cambridge, 1940, 1-4; *idem*, *The Millat and the Mission*, Cambridge, 1942, 1-81. For other blueprints of Muslim territorial self-determination see P. C. Joshi, *They Must Meet Again*, Bombay, 1945; G. Adhikari, *Pakistan and Indian National Unity*, London, 1942; Ambedkar, *op. cit.*; Rajendra Prasad, *op. cit.*; Coupland, *op. cit.*; S. A. Latif, *The Cultural Future of India*, Bombay, 1938; *idem*, *A Federation of Cultural Zones for India*, Sikandarabad, 1938; *idem*, *Muslim Problem in India and its Introduction* by 'Abdullah Haroon, Bombay, 1939; Sikandar Hayat Khan, *Outlines of a Scheme of Indian Federation*, Lahore, 1939.

³ Text in *The Struggle for Independence*, Karachi, 1958, 40-41.

⁴ Khalid bin Sayeed, *Pakistan, the Formative Phase*, Karachi, 1960, 124.

⁵ Draft Declaration for Discussion with Indian Leaders (Cripps Proposals), March 1942.

Congress.¹ Later his formula formed the basis of unsuccessful political discussions between Gāndhī and Jinnah.²

As a Labour Government replaced Churchill's war coalition, the British government applied itself seriously to the question of Indian independence and a British Cabinet Mission arrived in India in March 1946, and finally proposed a three zone federation in India, with an All-India Union Government which would deal with foreign affairs, defence, communications and fundamental rights with the necessary powers of taxation; and with Hindu-Muslim parity in the Central Legislature as well as the Central Cabinet. The residuary powers were to rest with the provinces. The Union was to sub-divide itself in three zones; of which Zone B would contain the bulk of the sub-continent and an overwhelming Hindu majority, Zone A consisting of north-western provinces would have a considerable Muslim majority, and Zone C consisting of Bengal and Assam would have a slight Muslim majority. This ingenious plan conceded sub-continental federal unity to the Congress, and the substance of autonomous though not independent Pakistan to the Muslim League plus Muslim weightage in the Centre. The Congress hesitated, mainly under pressure from Assam Congress leaders who would have liked to see that province included in the Hindu Zone B, and possibly to other factors of political analysis; in its hesitation it lost the final opportunity of retaining a united India.³

Jinnah, perhaps for the first time in his political career, went against the consensus of Muslim India in accepting the Cabinet Mission's proposals; only to reject them later, partly because of the Congress hesitation in accepting them, partly due to the pressure of the rank and file of the Muslim consensus and of the Muslim press. The secret of the success of Jinnah's leadership of Muslim India lay in essence in exactly the opposite of what appears to be the situation. He did not lead, but was led by the Muslim consensus. His role was that of a sincere and clear-headed lawyer who could formulate and articulate in precise constitutional terms what his client really wanted.

On 3 June 1947, both the Congress and the Muslim League accepted the Mountbatten plan for partitioning the sub-continent of India into two sovereign states, India and Pakistan.

¹ Gwyer and Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution 1921-1947*, London, 1957, ii, 525.

² P. C. Joshi, *op. cit.* 13.

³ Abdu'l Kalām Azād, *India Wins Freedom*, 155.

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INDEX

- 'Abān al-Lāhīqī, 109
 'Abbās I, 32-36, 52-53
 'Abbās II, 39-40, 42-43, 53, 104
 'Abbās Hilmī, 64
 'Abbāsids, 3-11, 62, 67, 108, 111, 123, 225
 'Abd al-Latīf Khān, 25
 'Abd al-Mū'min Khān, 31-32
 'Abd al-Qādir Jilānī, 41, 130, 247
 'Abd al-Ra'ūf Harvī, 224
 'Abd al-Razzāq, 20
 'Abd al-Samad, 26
 'Abduh, 57
 'Abdul 'Azīz, Shāh, 139, 210, 215
 'Abdul 'Azīz, Sultan, 63
 'Abdul 'Azīz Khān Uzbek, 40-42
 'Abdul Ghaffār Khān, 268-9
 'Abdul Hakīm Siyālkotī, 235
 'Abdul Hamīd I, 53
 'Abdul Hamīd II, 63-64
 'Abdul Haq, Moulvi, 262
 'Abdul Haqq Dehlavi, 138, 182, 184, 190, 191
 'Abdul Haqq Gangohī, 173
 'Abdul Hayy, Shāh, 210, 215
 'Abdullāh, 129
 'Abdullāh b. Ahmad, 109
 'Abdullāh Khān (of Kashghar), 43-44
 'Abdullāh Khān Uzbek, 22, 29, 30-33, 35, 45, 168, 172-3, 181
 'Abdullāh Kharrāzī, 84
 'Abdullāh Kurd, 48
 'Abdullāh Qutb Shāh, 53, 249
 'Abdullāh Tabbākh, 197
 'Abdullāh Yāfī, 133
 'Abdul Jalīl Bilgrāmī, 243
 'Abdul Latīf, Shāh, 223
 'Abdul Nabī, 30, 168
 'Abdul Quddūs Gangohī, 242
 'Abdul Rahīm Khān-i Khānān, 176, 182, 243
 'Abdul Rahīm, Shāh, 201, 208
 'Abdul Wahhāb Muttaqī, 47, 190
 'Abū, 226
 Abū 'Abdullāh Rūzbeh, 224
 Abū 'Alī al-Ma'arrī, 125
 Abū 'Alī Qalandār, 84, 135, 247
 Abū 'Alī Sindī, 124
 Abū Bakr, 180
 Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī, 121
 Abū'l Fazl 'Allāmī, 99, 143, 169, 170, 173, 175-6, 179, 182-3, 220-1, 236-7, 244
 Abū'l Fidā, 113
 Abū Hamzah, 120
 Abū Hanīfa, 203
 Abū Sa'id, 17
 Abū Sa'id al-Kharrāz, 125
 Abū Tāhir Kurdī, 201
 Abū Yazīd al-Bistāmī, 123-5, 130, 137
Ādī Granth, 152
 'Ādil Shāhī/Bijapur, 51-53, 105, 244
 Adiyars, 140
 Āfāqī faction, 48
 al-Afghānī, polemics against Sayyid Ahmad Khan, 55, 59, and the British, 55, 59, reformism, 56-58, 61-62, and the West, 59, and pan-Islamism, 55-56, 61-64; and the Ottoman Caliphate, 63-64; influence of, 55, 61, 66, 69-70, 247-8.
 Āgā Khān, 161
Ahl al-Haqq, 132
Ahl-i Hadīth, 58, 190
 Ahmad, 138
 Ahmad Āqā, 44
 Ahmad Barelvī, Sayyid, 139, 210-16
 Ahmad Khān Ardalān, 37
 Ahmad Majrūtī, 108
 Ahmadnagar (see Qutb Shāhīs)
 Ahmad Shāh Abdālī, 155, 208-9
 Ahmad Shāh Bahmanī, 48
 Ahmad Sirhindī, Shīkh, reaction against Akbar, 182-3, relations with Jahāngīr, 183-5, orthodox particularism, 185-6; rejection of eclecticism, 186-7; polemics against Ibn al-'Arabī, 187, theory of phenomenological monism, 187-9, influence on Indian Islam, 189, and *passim*
Ahmadiyya, 26
 Ahmad b. Qays, 3

- Ajmal Khān, 269
 Akbar, and orthodoxy, 167, 171, 174;
 messianic influences, 168-170; ecle-
 ticism, 168-75; rationalism, 172-4;
 and the Hindus, 176-81; assimila-
 tion of Rājapūts, 103-5, 176, 181;
 and European historiography, 175;
 and Hindu historiography, 175; 28,
 29-33, 45-46, 88, 95, 107, 137-40,
 153, 160, 182-3, 186, 189, 190, 197,
 200, 218-21, 234, 242-3, 251
 akhlāq, 133
 'Alā al-dīn Bahmanī, 248
 'Alā al-dīn Jahānsūz, 6, 218, 224
 'Alā al-dīn Khaljī, 7, 15-16, 18, 87,
 218, 246
 'Alā al-dīn Mas'ūd, 6
 'Ālamgīr II, 95
 Alāol, 223, 242
Alfi movements, 167-8, 178, 182-4,
 198, 227
 'Alī, 3, 160, 165, 180, 202
 'Alī Gāmdhanī, 247
 'Alī Hamadanī, 84, 130, 170
 'Alī Hazīn, 45
 'Alī Ilāhiya, 160
 'Alī Mardān Khān, 36, 39, 47, 104
 'Alī Muttaqī, 47, 190
 'Alī Qulī Salīm, 226
 'Alī Sher Nawā'ī, 27, 226, 230
 Aligarh, 56, 65
 Altūn Bahādūr, 19
 Alkās, 140
 Ambedkar, 274
 'Amīd Sannāmī, 225
 'Amils, 105, 107
 Amīr 'Alī, 63, 265
 Amīr Hamza *cycle*, 220, 255
 Amīr Husain, 48
 Amīr Khusrāu, 14, 115-18, 229, 232-
 3, 241, 244, 246, 249
Amratkund, 135
 Anandpāl, 93
 'Anbar, Malik, 52, 102
 Angad, 152
Anjuman-i Himāyat-i Islām, 264
Anjuman-i Tarraqī-yi Urdū, 261-2
 Ansārī, M. A., 268-9
 Anwarī, 229
 Āqām Hājī, 34
 Arab, invasions of India, 3; occupa-
 tion of Sind, 3-4, 77-78, 101, 107;
 traders on Indian coasts, 77;
 interest in Hindu learning, 108-
 10; and Buddhist literature, 109-
 10; accounts of India, 111-13;
 historiography of Muslim India,
 112-13
 Ardeshir, 178
 'Arif Bilgrāmī, 244
 Arjun, 153
 Arsalān Āghā, 37-38
 artī, 165
 Aryābhata, 108
Aryā Samāj, 86, 258, 260, 264
 Ārzū, 231, 252
 Āsaf Khān, 46-47
 al-Ash'arī, Abū Musā, 3
Ash'arites, 130, 134
 Ashraf Simnānī, 133, 137, 161
 'Attār, 79
 atomism, of Muslim mind, 254, 258
 Aurangzeb, and Hindu *mansabdārs*,
 104-5; theocratic particularism,
 196-200; grants to Hindu institu-
 tions, 199; 40, 42-44, 80, 94, 181,
 191-2, 201, 207-8, 235, 243
 'Awfī, 79
 Ayāz, Malik, 48-49, 94
 Aybak, 93
 'Ayn Jālūt, 14
 Āzād, Abū'l Kalām, theory of Cali-
 phate, 66-68; 189, 262, 269
 Āzād Bilgrāmī, 243-4
 Āzād, Muhammad Husain, 257
 A'zam Shāh, 222
 Āzar Kāvyān, 178
 Āzar, Lutf 'Alī, 228
 'Azīz Koka, 30, 46, 182
 Bābā Kapūr, 138
 Bābālāl Vairāgi, 194
 Bābism, 160
 Bābur, 20, 22, 23-25, 27, 40, 45, 88,
 89, 94, 230
 Badā'unī, 170-4, 177, 220, 227
 Badr-i Chāch, 9, 18(n), 225, 229-30
 Badr al-dīn Tayyabji, 63, 265
 Bahā al-dīn Zakariyya, 224
 Bahādūr of Gujarat, 49-50
 Bahār, Tek Chand, 236
 Bahlūl Lodī, 90-91
 Bahmanids, 47-48, 51, 117, 248
 Bahrām Abīhī, 97
 Bājan, 247
 Bakhtiyār Kākī, 232

- Jalakot, 215
 Jalban, 7, 14, 18, 21, 170, 225
 Balhāra, 112
 Ballāla III, 94
 Banda, 154
 Banū Hāshim, 206
 Bāqī-billāh, 46, 136, 182
 Barkat-Ullāh, 243
 Baranī, 10, 98, 227
 Barīds, 51-52
 Barka, Mīr, 36
 Barlās Turks, 19-20
 Barmakids, 108
 Barnāvi, 242
 Bartu, 94
 Bātū, 14
 Baybars, 14-15
 Bayhaqī, 5
 Bayrām Khān, 26, 45, 176, 227
 Bedār, 235
 Begham Vairāgī (Bhopat Rāi), 235
 Berke, 14-15
Bhagavad Gīta, 110, 114, 123, 128, 139, 141, 192, 235
Bhāgavata Purāna, 220, 242
Bhakti movement, 74, 86, 92, 106; Hindu origins, 140-2; borrowings from Islam, 140-2, 144, 148; resistance against Islam, 140-2, 146, 148, 151; conversion of Muslims, 142-3, 150; and Mahayana Buddhism, 142; eclecticism, 142, 144-5, 148, 151; Maharashtra school, 151; Rāma cult, 141, 144, 146, 148-9, 151-2, 179-80, 239-41; Krishna cult, 141-3, 149-51, 179, 241, 243; religion of love, 143-4; and *passim*
 Bhān Chandra Upadhyay, 178
 Bhartrihārī, 238
bhāshān gān, 164
 Bhagwāndās, Rāja, 180
 Bhimsen Sharma, 260
 Bhūjan, 135
bid'a, 180, 196-8, 209, 211-12
 Bidil, 227, 231, 232, 235, 251-2
 Bijapur, *see* 'Adil Shāhīs
 Bijli Khān, 150
 Birbal, 177, 180, 242
 Bīr Bhān, 148
 al-Bīrūnī, 68, 112, 113-15, 226, 135, 141
 Bishan Dās, 34
 Brahmagupta, 108
 Bohras, 161, 163
 Brahmā/Brahman, 146, 193
 Brahmanical formalism, 141-2, 151
 Brahma Samāj, 158, 264
 British, rule in India, 263-76; and the Turks, 56, 59-61, 267; and the Indian Muslims, 64, 263, 265, 267-8, 270-1, 275-6; impact on Muslim India, 263-4; occupation of Sind, 107; and the *Mujāhidīn*, 209 214-16; and the Congress, 265, 270-1, 275-6; Cabinet Mission, 276
 British East India Company, 155, 263
 Budāq Beg, 42
 Budāq Khān, 26
buddhī, 125
 Buddhism, and Sūfism, 125-6, 136, 137; Mahayāna, 126, 158
 Bukka, 94, 102
 Bulbars Khan, 44
 Buzurg b. Shahryār, 112
 Cairene 'Abbasids, 9-10, 225
 Cairo Khilafat Conference, 66
 Caitānya, 86, 150-1
 Cakradharaswāmī, 130
 Calphate, universal, 3-11; al-Māwardī's theory of, 3-4; and the Delhi Sultanate, 3-11; and modern Muslim India, 62-70, 268; Ottoman, 11, 62-70; reference to, in Friday sermons, 4, 9, 11, 14-15, 19; Walī-Ullāh on, 203, 206-7; al-Afghānī on, 63-64; Āzād on, 66-68; Iqbāl on, 69-70; 'confined to the Quraysh', 64, 206; the abolition of, 65, 69, 268
 Cānakya, 109
 caste system, 93, 95-97, 111
 Chaghatāy, 13
 Chaghatāys, 15-18, 19, 21
 Chakbast, 258
 Chandelas, 93, 218
 Chandulāl Shādān, 257-8
 Chandra Bhān 'Brahmin', 235-6
 Chelepi, 34
 Churchill, Winston, 276
 Chutī Khān, 223
 Chingiz Khān, 12, 15, 19-20
 Cintūmanī, 221
Chūrihāras, 159

Congress of Berlin, 60
 Crimean War, 60, 259
 Cripps Stafford, 257-6
 Crusades, 78
 Curzon, 267

Dādū Dayāl, 148

Dāhir, 101

Dāniyāl, 243

Dānī Jātī, 157

Dārā Shikoh, 39, 42, 88, 114, 127,
 138, 159, 191-6, 198, 200, 221-2,
 232, 235

Dār al-Saltanat, 61

Dashera, 157, 197

dāstān, 255, 258

Daryāpanthis, 156

Dā'ūd Kirmānī, 84

Dāudpotas, 84

al-Dawānī, 172

Dayānand, 259

Deccani faction, 48

Delhi Sultanate, and the 'Abbasid
 Caliphate, 6-10; Mongol policy of,
 13-19; Hindu resistance against,
 93-94; 117, 224

Deoband, 65, 67

Dewal Rānī, 115

Devavimala, 220

Devī Misra, 220

dharma, 149

Dhawqī, 243

dhikr, 120-1, 137, 172

dhimmis, 186

Dhu'l-fiqār Āghā, 41-42

dhu'l lisānayn, 116, 242

Dhu'l Nūn, 122

dhyāna, 123

Din-i Ilāhī, 33, 160; its components,
 171-2, 175, 177; its followers, 175;
 and solar monotheism, 178-9;
 Sūfī elements in, 167, 172-3, 177,
 178-9; syncretic borrowings in,
 171, 177-8; its indifference to
 Hinduism, 179-80

Dipāvalī/Diwālī, 161, 176

Dīp Chandra Majhela, 170

Dīn Muhammad Khān, 32

doha, 254

Druzes, 42, 160

Dūdawlār, 84

Durgā worship, 154, 159, 164

Duwa Khān, 15-16

Edward VII, 60

European, command of the seas, 51;
 oriental studies, 264

Faizī, 173, 175, 182, 190, 220-1, 227,
 231, 256

Fakhr al-dīn Ma'n, 42

Fakhr-i Mudabbir, 225

fanā, 123-5; and *baqā*, 125, 130

Faqīr 'Azīz al-dīn, 155

al-Fārābī, 189

Farā'izī movement, 84, 159

Farīd, Shaykh, 182-3, 190

Farīd al-dīn Ganj-i Shakar, 84, 135

Fārighī, 226

Farrukhī, 233

Fatāwa'i 'Ālamgīrī, 198, 201

Fateh Chand, 260

Fath-Ullāh Shirāzī, 46, 80, 172

Fayyāz Walī, 251

al-Fazārī, 108

Fazlul Haq, 270

Fiqhānī, 226, 228

fiqh, 90

Firāq, 258

Firdawsī, 233, 237

Firishta, 227

Firūz Tughluq, 8, 9-10, 12, 19, 80,

82-83, 86, 102, 181, 219, 226

Fort William College, 255-6

Friday sermons, see *khutba*

Fuād Pāsha, 66

al-Fuwātī, 57

Gadā'ī, 138

Gāndhī, 262, 267, 276

Gangā Kavī, 243

Ganges water, 177

Ganpatī festival, 266

Gesūdarāz, 135-6, 247

Ghālib, 231, 253

Ghanī, 230

Ghanimat, 227

Ghauth, Muhammad, 137-8

Ghawwāsī, 249, 252

ghazal, 224, 233, 254

Ghāzī Khān Badakhshī, 170

Ghāzī Malik, see Ghiyāth al-dīn
 Tughluq

Ghaznawids, 4-6, 84, 93, 101-2, 113,
 224; and the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate,
 4-6

- Ghaznawid Punjab, 5, 84, 224, 245-6
 al-Ghazzālī, 57, 127, 129, 130, 189,
 197, 225
 Ghiyāth al-dīn Tughluq, 8, 14, 16,
 80, 97-98
 Ghulām Ahmad of Qādiyān, 264
Ghuliyah/Shi'i Ghulāt, 160, 178
 Ghūrīds, 6, 224
 Gilchrist, J., 255
 Girdhārī-Gopāl, 151
 Gobind Singh, 153-4
 Gobrai, 161
 Godse, 267
 Gokhale, 267
 Golconda, *see* Qutb Shahs
 Golden Horde, 13-14
 Goraknāth, 158
 Gosāinjānis, 158
 Government of India Act of 1935,
 270
Granth Muhammad Bodh, 147
 Greek heritage in Islamic Culture, 68,
 108, 110-11, 114, 121, 126, 253
 Gulshan, 252

habs-i dam, 125
hadīth (Prophetic Traditions), 47, 57,
 58, 62, 74, 133, 170, 174, 190,
 201-3, 206, 209
 Haidar Dūghlat, 226
 Haidarī, 255-6
hajj, 26, 29-31, 86, 173, 207
 Hajjāj b. Yūsuf, 3
 al-Hakīm (Cairene), 9-10
 al-Hakīm (Fātimid), 160
 Hālī, 58, 60, 61, 65, 257
 Halīm Thābit, 69
 al-Hallāj, 84, 120, 131, 132, 161
 Hamīd al-dīn Nāgorī, 133
al-haqīqat al-Muhammadiyah, 131,
 194
 Hargobind, 153
 Harīdās, 150
 Harihara, 86, 102
 Harkaran, 234-5
 Hasan al-Basrī, 120, 136
 Husain Khangsawār, 135
 Husain Nizām Shāh, 52
 Husain Pasha, 44
 Husain (Safavid), 43, 45
 Husain Shāh of Gaur, 150, 157
 Husain, Sharif of Mecca, 65
 Husainī Brahmins, 158

'Ibādat Khāna, 168-9, 178
 Ibn al-'Arabī, 122, 127, 131, 138,
 162, 167, 171-2, 187-8, 201,
 202
 Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, 109
 Ibn Battūtah, 18
 Ibn Hawqal, 111
 Ibn Karrām, 120
 Ibn Khurdadbeh, 111
 Ibn al-Muqaffa, 109
 Ibn Nadīm, 109, 112
 Ibn Nishātī, 249
 Ibn Sabīh al-Muzdār, 57
 Ibn Sa'd al-Andalusī, 109
 Ibn al-Samh, 108
 Ibn Sa'ūd, 65
 Ibn Sina, 189
 Ibn Taimiyya, 201
 Ibn al-Tanūkhī, 108
 Ibn 'Umar Mihrābī, 85
 Ibrāhīm I, 40
 Ibrāhīm b. Adham, 125, 137
 Ibrāhīm 'Adil Shāh, 52, 248
 Ibrāhīm of Jaunpur, 20, 162
 Ibrāhīm Lodī, 94
 al-Idrīsī, 112
ijmā', 68-69, 98, 169, 189, 191
ijtihād, 21, 56-58, 62, 66-67, 68-69,
 170, 204-5
Ikhwān al-safā, 57, 110
 Iletmush, 6, 12-13, 20, 87, 93, 133,
 224, 225
 Il-Khanids, 14-17, 21, 227
'Ilm al-Kolām, 35-58
 Imām Qulī Khān, 35-36, 39
 Imāmshāhis, 161
 Indian National Congress, 261; early
 relations with Muslims, 265; anti-
 Muslim faction, 265-7; pro-Muslim
 faction, 267, 275; and concessions
 to Muslims, 267, 270-1, 276; and the
Khulāfat movement, 267-8; and the
 nationalist Muslims, 265, 269-70;
 and Muslim League, 267, 270-1,
 275-6; Muslim grievances against,
 271, 276
 'infallibility decree', 170, 175
 Inshā, 256
inshā, 38, 106, 227
 intermarriages, 82, 163
 Inquisition, 174
 Iqbal, 61, 107, 189, 231; modernism,
 68-69; neo-pan-Islamism, 69-70;

- Iqbāl, (*contd.*)
 theory of Pakistan, 271-4; contacts with Jinnah, 274
 'Irāqī, 224
 'Isāmī, 225
 Ishāq, Shāh Muhammad, 63
 'Ishratī, 250
 Islam, and Hinduism, 73-6; Sūfism and, 119-39; and the Bhakti movement, 140-2, 144, 148
 Islamic, universalism, 4-11, 13-14, 17-18, 40, 61-70; modernism, 55-70; elements in the *Dīn-i Ilāhī*, 167, 171-4, 177-9; fundamentalism, 209, 210-14, 217
 Ismā'il I, 23-24, 49, 52
 Ismā'il II, 31, 52
 Ismā'il 'Adil Shāh, 52
 Ismā'il Bukhārī, 84
 Ismā'il, Shāh Muhammad, 210-13, 215
 Ismā'ilīs, 4, 84, 129, 160
 al-Istakhrī, 111
 I'timād al-dawla, 46
 Ivan the Terrible, 29

 Jabrites, 121
 Jadrūp, 185
 Jagannāth Misra, 221
 Jagat Singh, 104
 Jahān Arā, 138
 Jahāngīr, 33-36, 46, 83, 86, 88, 91, 103, 151, 165, 183-5, 190, 221, 227, 234
jāhiliyya, 67, 87
 al-Jāhiz, 57, 112
 Jahm, 110
 Jai Singh, 104, 195, 197
 Jainism, 115, 169, 219, 220, 221
 Jaipāl, 93
 Jāisi, 241-2, 250-1
 Jalāl al-dīn Bukhārī, 133-4
 Jalāl al-dīn Khaljī, 7, 14, 15, 19, 87, 218
 Jalāl al-dīn Khwārizm, 12
 Jalāl al-dīn Rūmī, 179, 224, 231, 235
 Jalālīs, 162
 Jamālī, 232
 Jāmanjātī, 162
 Jāmī, 192, 227-30, 232
Jām'a Milliyya-i Islamiyya, 65
Jam'iyyat-i 'ulamā-i Hind, 268
 Janissaris, 29
 Jarīr al-'Azdi, 110
 Jaswant Singh, 104, 105, 197
 Jāts, 89, 95, 102, 103, 156-7, 159, 199, 208
jauchar, 118, 165
 al-Jazrī, 3
 Jesuits in Akbar's court, 33, 169, 174
 Jesus, in Sūfī tradition, 122
jihād, 50, 54, 67, 78-79, 97-98, 208, 214-16
 al-Jīlī, 131, 167
 Jinnah, 270, 274-6
jizya, 79-81, 83, 90, 180, 198
 Jonarāja, 219
 Jumla, Mīr, 47
 Junayd, 120, 130, 136
 Juwaynī, 59, 244
 Jūzjānī, 14, 224-5, 227

 Ka'ba, 86, 253, 272
 Kabīr, 138, 143-7, 151, 186
Kabīrpanthis, 143, 147, 161, 179
Kākak(Kākan), 158
 al-Kalābhadhī, 130
Kāl Purusha, 144
 Kālīdāsa, 222
Kalīla wa Dimna, 118
 Kalim, 227, 230, 232
 Kalim-Ullāh, 138
 Kamāl al-dīn al-Qāsimī, 66
 Kamāl Isphahānī, 229
 Kamalakaran Bhatta, 221
 Kamāliyyah, 166
 Kāmran, 25
 al-Karkhī, 122, 136
harma, 140, 145, 146, 152; and *kārya*, 140
 Kartabhājas, 150, 158
 Kashmir dispute, 107
 Kashmiri Pandits, 105, 107, 257
Kavindrācārya, 222
kaviyas, 223
 al-Kawākibī, 66
 Kāyasthas, 105-6, 234-5, 257
 al-Kāzīrūnī, 134
Khālīq Bārī, 117
 Khaljis, 7-8, 15, 102, 141
khalsa, 154
 Khān-i Jahān, 102
 Khānzādas, 159
 Khāqānī, 228
 Khatri, 105-6, 257
 Khawāfī, 226

- Khayr al-dīn Barbarossa, 50-51
 Khayr al-dīn Pāsha, 56, 66
Khayr al-umam, 66, 272
Khilāfat, see Caliphate
 Khilāfat Committee, 65, 267-8
 Khilāfat Movement, Indian, 65, 216, 260-70
 Khizar Khān, 10, 19, 244
 Khojās, 84, 160, 161, 163
 Khūb Muhammad Chishtī, 247
 Khudabande, 31-32
 Khushhāl Chand, 237
 Khushnūd, 250
 Khusrau Khān, 8, 94-98, 102
khutba, 4, 9, 11, 14-15, 19, 28, 63, 145
 al-Khwārizmī, 68, 109
khyāts, 223
 al-Kindī, 108
 Kishlu, 13
 Krishna, 139, 145, 159, 165, 179, 186;
 —cult, 140-3, 149-51, 241, 243
 Kumbha, 89
 al-Kubrā, Najm al-dīn, 136
- Labbes, 84
 Lachmī Narāyan Shafaq, 237-8, 257
 de Laet, 94
 Lāldās, 149
 Lallu Lāl, 240, 255, 259
 Lāl Shahbāz, 159
 Lājpat Rāi, 267
 Liāqat 'Alī Khān, 270
 Lingāyats, 159
 Lodīs, 229, 234
 Lourenço, 48
- MacDonell, A., 261
 Madārīs, 161-2
 Mādhava, 127, 218
Madhūmāla, 223
 Mādhū Rām, 235-6
 al-Maghribī, 201
Mahābhārata, 219-20, 223, 236
 Mahānubhava, 130
 Mahdī of Jaunpur, 168, 182, 250
 Mahmūd Bahmanī, 48
 Mahmūd Bahri, 242
 Mahmūd Bagra, 48-49
 Mahmūd of Ghazna, 4, 79, 87, 90,
 101-2, 104, 113, 181, 218, 224, 233
 Mahmūd al-Hasan, 67
 Makhdūm al-Mulk, 29-30, 168-9
- Mālik b. Dinār, 84
 Malik Qummī, 226
 Mālviya, 261, 267
 Mamlūks, 8, 48-49
 al-Mā'mūn, 109
 Mān Singh, 103, 180
 Manjhan, 241
 Manohardās, 219
mansabdārs, 103-5
 Ma'nzāde Husain, 42
 Marāthas, 81, 94-95, 103, 151, 207-9,
 213
 al-Marghīniānī, 21
 Ma'rūf Karkhī, 136
 Mas'ūd I, 6, 101-2, 224
 Mas'ūd Bek, 232
 Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān, 6, 229, 291
 al-Mas'ūdī, 110-11
 al-Māwardī, 4
 Mazhar Jān-i Jānān, 138, 231, 235,
 252, 254
 Medini Rāi, 94
 Mīdhat Pāsha, 66
 Minūchihirī, 233
 Minto, 265, 266
 Minto-Morley Reforms, 267
 Mīr, 231, 252, 254
 Mīr Ma'sūm, 32
 Mīra Bāi, 151
 Mīrānjī, 247, 250
 Mīrāsīs, 159
mlechchas, 89-90, 94, 99
 Mominas, 161
 Momin Conference, 269
 Mongol, sack of Baghdad, 7, 13, 21;
 threat to India, 12-19; cultural
 consequences of—onslaught, 20-21
 monism, ontological, 187-8; phenom-
 enological, 188
 Moonje, 266
 Moplahs, 77, 84
 Mountbatten, 276
 Mubārak Nāgori, 168-9
 Mughal, integration of the Rājputs,
 103-5, 106-7, 181; patronage of
 Hindu learning, 207-9, 219-22;
 'time of troubles', 263; War of
 Succession, 195-6; foreign policy,
 22-47
 Muhammad II, 48
 Muhammad IV, 41-42
 Muhammad VI, 65
 Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb, 201

- Muhammad b. Qāsim, 3, 77, 80, 82, 101
- Muhammad b. Sām Ghūrī, 6, 79, 93
- Muhammad b. Tughluq, 8-9, 12, 40; foreign relations, 16-18, 21; Qırđchal expedition, 18; 82, 86, 90, 94, 102, 117, 177, 181, 219, 225, 246
- Muhammad 'Alī, Mawlānā, 259, 262, 267, 268, 270, 273
- Muhammad 'Alī Pāsha, 66
- Muhammad Qulī Qutb Shāh, 52, 248-9
- Muhammad Shāh, 106
- Muhammad Shāh Khwārizm, 12
- Muharram, 157, 185, 197, 211 and *passim*
- al-Muhāsibī, 120
- Muhib Ullāh Allāhābādī, 138, 192, 198
- Muhsin Fānī, 143
- Muhsin al-Mulk, 261
- Mu'in al-dīn Chishtī, 84, 133-4, 158, 167, 232
- Mujāhidīn, movement of, beginnings, 210-12; rejection of syncretism, 211-13; fundamentalism, 212-14; *jam'd'at*, 213-14; plan of *jihād*, 214-16; and *passim*.
- Mukhlis, 235
- Mukhtānā Bahā al-dīn, 4
- Muqīmī, 250
- Murād IV, 36-38
- Murād, Prince, 39-40, 42, 104
- Murjites, 121
- Mūsa Suhāg, 161
- Muslim Educational Conference, 261
- Mustafā Pasha, 38-39, 41
- al-Mustansir, 6
- al-Musta'sim, 6, 10
- Muzaffar, II, 49
- Nādir Shāh, 45, 155, 208
- Nadvat al-'ulamā, 261
- Nāgari Prācharṇī Sabha, 261
- Na'imā, 28, 41
- Najīb al-Dawlah, 208-9
- Najm al-dīn Kubra, 136
- Najm al-dīn Rāzī, 133
- Najm-i Thānī, 23
- Nakhshabī, 219, 255
- Nāmdev, 151
- Nānak, 152, 157
- Nāsikh, 254
- al-Nāsir, 8, 17
- Nasir al-dīn 'Chirāgh', 136
- Nāsir al-dīn Mahmūd, 7, 14
- Nasir al-dīn al-Tūsī, 59
- Nāsir-i Khusrāu, 84
- al-Nawāwī, 204
- nawāwī*, 178, 179
- Nazar Muhammad Khān, 36-41
- Nazir Akbarābādī, 249, 256
- Nazirī, 266
- Nehru, Jawaharlal, 107, 267
- Nehru, Motilal, 107, 267
- Neh Narāyan, 237
- nir'dna*, 124-5
- Nizām al-dīn Awliyā, 84, 97, 98, 122-3, 136
- Nizāms of Hyderabad, 53-54, 105
- Nizāmī, 229, 250
- al-Nubakhtī, 110
- Nūr Jahān, 34-36, 46
- Nusratī, 250, 252
- Ögödei, 13
- Ottomans, relations with the Mughals, 22-47; and the Uzbeks, 22-47; Caliphate, 11, 56-59, 66; claim of primacy, 37-39; and the Portuguese, 48-51; and modern Shī'ī attitude, 63, 67
- Pakistan, movement, 70, 271, 274-5; Iqbāl's theory of, 272-4; Resolution, 274-5; Cambridge Group, 275; name, 275; genesis, 217, 274-6
- pan-Hinduism, 259-60, 262
- pan-Islamism, 56-70, 268, 272-4
- Panchū Fakiris, 158
- Parsis, 107, 169
- Parwāris, 95-98
- Patañjali, 114, 127
- Patel, V., 267
- 'Perfect Man', 131, 167, 170
- Permanent Settlement, 263
- Persian, the 'Indian style', 28, 116, 225, 228-32; historiography, 225-9; rejection of Indian environment in —poetry, 232-3; Hindu contribution to, 236-8
- Persian influence, on Urdu, 244-6, 251-5; on Bengali, 233; on Punjabi, 233; on Sindhi, 233-4; on Kashmiri, 234; on Marāṭhi, 234
- Persianization of administration, 234; supersession by English, 263

- Philip II, 33
 Piri Reis, 50
 Prarthana Samāj, 264
 Premnath Bazaz, 107
 Prithvī Rāj, 103
Purānas, 110, 114, 140, 220, 239
 Purkhotam, 178-9
- al-Qādir, 5
 Qāidu, 15
 al-Qalqashandī, 113
 Qarāmites, 4-5, 84
 Qarā Mustafā, 44
 Qarā Qoyūnlū, 52
 Qāsim Barīd, 51
 Qāsim Kāhī, 227
 Qazvīnī, 112
 Qubācha, 4, 6, 13, 224
 Qudsī, 227
Qur'ān, 58-60, 66-67, 78, 81, 83, 90, 96, 120-1, 145, 158, 174, 180, 187, 192-4, 197, 211, 216
 Qutb al-dīn Khālījī, 96, 116
 Qulī Qutb Shāh, 51
 Qutb Shāhs/Golconda, 48-53, 157
 Qutlugh Khwāja, 15
 al-Qushayrī, 130
- Rāidās, 142
 Rajagopālachārya, 267, 275-6
Rajataranginī, 219, 222, 236
 Rājapūts, 103, 195, 218, 222, 239
rākhi, 176, 185
 Rām Mohan Roy, 264
 Rām Sānchīs, 158
 Rāma, the cult of, 86, 141, 144, 146, 148-9, 151-2, 179-80, 239-41, 243
Rāma Rājya, 240
 Rāmananda, 141-2, 144-5
 Rāmānuja, 128-30, 140
Rāmāyana, 220, 235-6
 Rāmdās, 153
 Rāmlāl, 237-8
 Ranjit Singh, 155
 Renan, E. 273
 'refused dignity', 98
 revivalism, 264-6
Rigveda, 221
 Roe, T., 184
 Round Table Conferences, 270
 Rudakī, 228
 Rūnī, 224
- Sadāsukh Lāl, 260
 Sa'dī, 228
 Sadr al-dīn of Konya, 224
 Safavids, and the Mughals, 22-47; and the Uzbeks, 22-47; and the Deccan States, 43, 49, 52-53; and Shī'ī solidarity, 43, 52-53; and *passim*
 Safī, 36-37
 Sāhib Dhānīs, 158
 Sā'ib, 226, 228, 230
 Sa'id Halīm Pāsha, 69
 Šakhī Sarwar, 157
 Saktī cult, 85-86, 141, 154, 162
 Sālar Mas'ūd Ghāzī, 156
 Salīm Chishtī, 167-8
 al-Sam'ānī, 113
Sāmkya, 114, 126
 Sāngā, 25, 94, 103
 Sangrīza, 225
 Sankarācārya, 124, 128-30, 140, 192
 Sanyāsīs, 158
 Sapru, T. B., 107, 262
 Sāqī Musta'id Khān, 198
 Sarshar, 259
 Sarmad, 196
satī, 90
 Satnāmīs, 198-9
 Satya Pir, 157
 Sauda, 252, 254
 Sayyid Ahmad Khān, loyalism, 55, 59-61, 265-7; separatism, 264-5; modernism, 55-58; and the Ottoman Caliphate, 60-64; polemics against, 55; reformism, 56-58, 61-62; and the West, 59; and pan-Islamism, 55-56, 61-64; and *passim*
 Selim I, 25, 28, 49
 Selim III, 54
 Separatism, Hindu, 261, 265-7; Muslim, 261, 264-6, 269-76
 Sepoy Mutiny/War of Independence, 55, 263
 Shāh 'Ālam II, 257
 Shāh Jahān, 35-42, 46-47, 81, 88, 103, 221-2, 227, 251, 257
 Shāh Madār, 161-2, 165
 Shāh Rukh, 20
sharī'a, 25, 66-67, 115, 131, 204, 207
 Sharar, 258-9
 al-Shahrastānī, 86, 112
 Sharī'at-Ullāh, 216
 Shaukat 'Alī, 267

- Shaybānī Khān, 22-23, 30
 Sher Shāh Sūrī, 25, 27, 49, 91, 242
 Sherī, 178, 227
 Shiblī, 64-5, 228, 261
 Shiv Prasād, 260
 Shivājī, 95, 104, 151, 199, 266
 Shore, J., 216, 263
 Siddiq Hasan Khān, 57
 Sidi 'Alī Reis, 27-29, 50-51
 Sikandar the Iconoclast, 90
 Sikhism, origins of, 152-3; Muslim influence on, 152; transformation of, 153-5; anti-Muslim tradition in, 152-5; Hindu Syncretism and, 154-5; the 5 Ks, 153
 Sikandar Lodī, 83, 87, 102-3, 232, 234
 Sinān, 46
 Sinān Pāsha, 50
 Sirāj, 251
 al-Suhrawardī, 130
 Sufī, contribution to Indo-Persian poetry, 231-2; to Urdu, 246-7; compositions in Hindi, 241-2; missionaries of Islam in India, 83-85; *malāmī*, 122, 128, 132, 161-2; hagiological tradition, 122, 125, 135
 Sufī orders: Chishtī, 84, 133-4, 136-8, 143, 167, 170, 182, 210, 232, 251; Qādirī, 41, 136, 138, 182, 190-2, 202, 210, 247; Suhrawardī, 136, 138, 179, 182; Naqshbandī, 126, 136, 138, 182-90, 196, 201-2, 210, 235, 252; Shattārī, 137-8; Kubrā-wīya, 133; Tirdawsī, 136; Habībī, 136; Junaydī, 136; Tūsī, 136; Karkhī, 136; Saqatī, 136; Tayfūrī, 137; Adhamī, 137; Kāzırūnī, 137
 Sūfism, Qur'ānic origins, 120; rooted in Islam, 119-20; and orthodoxy, 131, 132-3; Neo-Platonic elements in, 121; Christian elements in, 120-3, 126, 161-2; Buddhist elements in, 125-6, 136-7; Hindu elements in, 119-20, 122-6, 135-6, 137-8; *bi-shar'*, 136, 161-2, 196; *ahwāl wa maqāmāt* in, 120, 122-6; Divine Unity, 68, 120, 123-5, 130-1; Divine Love, 120-1, 131; parallels with Hindu mysticism, 126-8; anti-Hindu polemics in, 110; pantheistic trends in, 126; and Yoga, 135, 137-8
 Suleimān the Magnificent, 25-29, 49-50, 51, 111, 226
 Suleimān II, 44
 Sumanniyah, 110
 Sundardās, 221
 Sunnah, 66-7, 131, 204, 211, 216
 Sūrdās, 144, 179, 243
 Syncretism, Islamic borrowings, 157-9; Hindu borrowings, 159-63; in popular custom, 163-6; fundamentalist reaction against, 165, 209, 211-13, 216; river godlings, 156
 Tadarvī Abrahī, 227
 al-Taftāzānī, 172
 Taldib al-Akhḡlāq, 57, 60
 Tāj al-dīn Ajodhanī, 167, 170
 Tāj al-Ma'ālī, 220
 Tālib, 227
 Tarmashirīn, 8
 Tanzimāt, 60
 Tariqa-i Muhammadiyya, 210
 de Tassy, 280
 Tilak, 101-2
 Tilak, B. G., 265-7
 Timūr, 20
 Timūrids, 20-21
 Tīpū Sultān, 23-24, 53
 Titu Mian, 216-17
 Todar Mal, 102-3, 180, 219, 242, 248
 Tughān Timūr, 18-19
 Tukārām, 151
 Tulsidās, 141, 144, 149-50, 179, 239-40, 243
 Turkish Grand National Assembly, 69
 Turkish literature, 27, 45, 226, 252
 Turushkadand, 81
 'Ubayd-Ullāh Khān, 23, 25
 'Ubayd-Ullāh Sindhī, 269
 'ulamā, 47, 61, 63, 162, 168-70, 186, 190-1, 205-6, 269
 umma, 74-75, 207-9
 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, 90
 'Umar b. al-Khattāb, 3
 al-'Umarī, 113
 Umayyads, 3, 77, 206
 Upanishads, 110, 123, 128, 130, 137, 192-4, 238
 Urdu, etymology, 244; as distinguished from Hindi, 245-6; growth in the Punjab, 245-6; in Delhi, 246

- Urdu literature, early experiments, 246; Sūfī contribution, 246-7; in the Deccan, 247-51; northern tradition, 251-2; Persianization of, 252-4, 256; conventionalization, 252-4; rejection of Indian environment, 252-5; Indian elements in, 248-9, 255-7; Hindi contribution to, 257-9; fiction, 58-59; *Urdū-i mu'allā*, 244, 252
- 'Urfī, 46, 226-7, 230, 231-2
- al-'Urcat al-rcutliqā*, 61-62, 66
- 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, 3
- Uzbeks, relations with the Mongols, the Ottomans and the Safavids, 22-47, 226, 229
- Vairāgīs, 148
- Vallabhaçārya, 141
- Vālmiki, 149, 220
- Vedas*, 110, 158-9, 239
- Vedānta, 74, 76, 123, 128, 130, 137, 138, 140, 187, 194, 235
- Vidyapatī Thākur, 150
- Viqār al-Mulk, 65
- Wahhābis, 66, 159, 163, 201, 209, 216-17
- Wā'iz al-Kāshifī, 250
- Wajhī, 249, 251
- Walī, 251-2
- Walī, Banwālī Dās, 236
- Walī-Ullāh, Shāh, 139, 165, 190, 197; intellectual background, 201-2; interjudicial pluralism, 203-4; theory of *ijtihād*, 204-6; sociological views, 206-9; fundamentalism, 209; and *passim*
- al-Wāthiq, 9
- Wellesley, 54
- West, and Islam, 58-59, 61-62
- Wudūd Miān, 216
- Yahyā al-Barmakī, 108
- Yahyā Mānerī, 136, 183, 197
- Yahyā Pāsha, 44
- Yālvach, Mahmūd and Mas'ūd, 21
- al-Yanbū'ī, 112
- Ya'qūb b. al-Layth, 4
- Yāqūt, 112-13
- Yāvanas*, 89, 259
- Yıldırım, 34
- Yıldız, 6
- Yoga, 115; and Sūfism, 135-8, 146
- Yūsuf 'Ādil Shāh, 51
- zakāt*, 80, 180
- Zakir Husain, 269
- Zamān Shāh, 53
- Zayn al-'Ābidīn, 88, 90, 107, 180, 219
- Ziya Gökalp, 67(n)
- Ziya Pāsha, 69
- Zoroastrianism, 137, 169, 178-9
- Zuhūrī, 226-8, 230, 249