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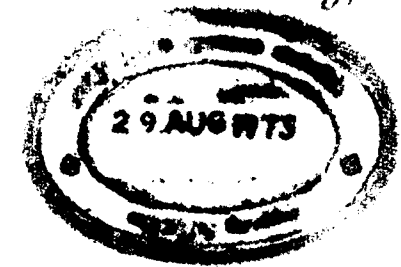
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## EDITORIAL

### L'enfant Terrible :

In an earlier number (Vol. XI, No. 3), we had referred to the birth of a new organisation in the field of history—the Indian Council of Historical Research. It is the latest (certainly not the last) Government Baby. Even in the normal course Government Babies are supposed to be prodigies. The latest Baby perhaps beats all the rest in the ambitious nature of its programme of work. Perhaps the fault lies with the parents who do not know exactly why this child had to be brought into existence. There was already the Indian Council of Social Science Research, and History could have been easily included in the scope of the activities of the ICSSR, as we and many other historians had demanded for several years. But it appears that this was considered too inadequate to serve the cause of History by a new Minister of State for Education who was at one time a teacher of History in a University. Under such a Minister History must have a better deal than other subjects, and there cannot be any question of want of funds or of diverting funds to worthier causes. One wonders whether under the next Education Minister, who may be a Geographer or an Economist, there will be set up an Indian Council of Geographical Research or an Indian Council of Economic

Research, on the lines of the present Indian Council of Historical Research. Perhaps it would not be surprising or unrealistic, provided the Minister is interested in giving a special boost to his own field of study. Some day we may have the good fortune to see similar Councils being set up not only for each branch of academic discipline but, if more funds could be found to throw down the drain, for even particular branches or aspects of any broad discipline. For example, there may be the Indian Council of Land Revenue History, or the Indian Council of Inland Transport History, etc., etc.

The most amusing part is that such bodies are created without any Parliamentary Statute and hence are not discussed at all in our Legislature. Otherwise, there would have been at least some inconvenient questions in Parliament about the need of wasting public funds in such a thoughtless manner when so many other worthy causes are left starving for want of funds.

The Indian Council of Historical Research, started only about a year ago, has undertaken the most ambitious programme of work one could imagine. It includes financial assistance to Research Projects of individuals or institu-

tions, financial assistance for publication of theses and monographs and a scheme of Fellowships to scholars in Universities, Colleges and other higher academic institutions. Fellowships may be awarded for both doctoral and also post-doctoral work. The Fellowship may be available even to those who are working outside India. These opportunities for research assistance are certainly welcome, but one wonders whether it was necessary to set up another huge organisation for this purpose, or the same thing could have been achieved by allotting some more funds to the UGC and other similar bodies which offer Scholarships and Fellowships.

The hard truth is that mere squandering of money does not create good research workers. If we take into account the financial assistance given by the UGC, the ICSSR, the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, the Nehru Memorial Fund (not to speak of the Universities) to research studies in History including publication of theses, etc., it will be clear that the actual results produced are in inverse ratio to the increasing amounts being thus spent. In fact, there are not even half the number of deserving applicants for the total research grants offered per year by different bodies. This wastage of public funds to pamper a small privileged section is all the more shocking when we think of the miserable conditions of Primary and Secondary School teachers and specially the fact that primary education cannot be made compulsory even after 25 years of independence only for lack of funds.

Apart from helping others to carry on research on their own, the ICHR has also a very wide range of research activities under its own agencies. If one goes through the list as given in their reports, one is likely to form the impression that little historical work had been done in India before the birth of this new baby, and that the new baby has been born with a mission to do everything possible in the field of historical studies and not to leave anything for anybody else.

Here are a few wonderful examples. In order to formulate long term programmes of research promotion, the ICHR appointed a Survey Committee "to organise a survey of historical research on India, to review the work done in history in the last 25 years, to identify the new emerging trends and to point out the gaps in historical knowledge that needed attention." At its first meeting the Survey Committee identified 25 themes relating to which the surveys could be organised. The themes cover practically everything under the sun—from Buddhism to Socialist and Communist Thought in India. The list also includes: Works with a strong Archaeological Content and Orientation, History of Political Ideas, Constitutional History, Religious History, History of Language and Literature, India's Relations with the Outside World, Political and Dynastic History, etc., etc. *Simply Terrific!* Each Project is to be assigned to an individual historian and the survey is to be completed within 6 months. Who says that Government agencies do not move fast?

In addition, the ICHR has undertaken an ambitious Project of preparation of source material for both M.A. and research students, covering all the three periods of Indian History. How comprehensive this work will be is evident from a few items taken at random from the list: Persian Chronicles (17th to 19th centuries), Compilation of European Documents in India, Compilation of Epigraphical Material, Publication of Regional Source Material, etc. In the modern period the list includes a series of volumes on the 19th century economic history, a series of documents on the development of the national movement in India, a series of volumes on "towards freedom" (*whatever it might mean!*).

As if this is not enough, the ICHR has also undertaken the production of Source Books on Indian and Asian Civilizations and also a Documentation Centre. One wonders what was the fault of the INSDOC, from which the documentation of a historical nature had to be

transferred to the new body. What again was the fault of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study which had undertaken the project of producing Source Books on Indian and Asian Civilizations.

When an empire is created the neighbouring kingdoms have necessarily to be despoiled. That is why, to give adequate work to the ICHR, tasks which had been so long carried on by other agencies have been all on a sudden transferred to the new body. For example, the history of the INA. The history of the INA, like the history of the Second World War, was entrusted to the Historical Division of the Ministry of Defence soon after independence. We distinctly remember that the history of the INA was completely written after several years of hard labour by a very able young historian about a quarter-century ago (and now the Vice-Chancellor of a Central Government University). Why that work could not be published during the last 25 years passes our comprehension, and specially to entrust the same work to the newly born baby, the ICHR, is really most baffling.

Then again, the ICHR has been entrusted with editing and publishing records on the attainment of freedom. Why this work could not be entrusted to the National Archives of India is again a mystery. If a History of the Second World War is to be transferred to the ICHR, as has been decided, there is hardly any need to maintain the Historical Division of the Ministry of Defence, which had been entrusted with the work since 1948 and which has already produced several volumes.

The conclusion is obvious that the new body favoured by the Minister of State should be the only active body in the field of historical studies and must be entrusted with the work which has been previously carried on by different Governmental agencies. Here is another glaring example. The National Archives of India had been publishing from time to time information regarding the progress of research

in history, particularly doctoral dissertations, at different Universities. Now the same work is being transferred to the ICHR. This is, of course, the only natural way of proceeding; if a new empire has to be created, it must be at somebody's expense. Significantly, the work entrusted to the Historical Division, Ministry of External Affairs, is still left in the old hands and could not be transferred to the new born baby. Perhaps the Ministry of External Affairs proved too tough in comparison with the National Archives or the Archaeological Survey or the Ministry of Defence.

Apart from duplicating the work being done by others or simply usurping their activities, the ICHR has also undertaken a number of original projects: The Role of the Central and State Legislatures in the Freedom Struggle, Preparation of a 6-volumed History of India, Studies on Central Asian Civilizations and History of India for Foreign Readers. Of these 'The Role of the Central Legislature in the Freedom Struggle' was really produced at *supersonic* speed. The work was undertaken and completed in 3 months time so as to enable the President of India to release the publication on 15th August 1972. *Wonderful!*

Another amusing thing is that while the Indian History Congress and the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan have already projects of multi-volumed History of India and while the second project has been completed and the first making progress, the newly born baby has been given the ambitious task of preparing another set of 6-volumed History of India. To quote from the ICHR's report: "these volumes, two on each period, would emphasise the interpretative and analytical aspects of Indian history." *Fine*, but interpretation and analysis on which lines? Certainly the lines favoured by the Minister of State and the friends of the Court who have set the trend of the *nouvelle vague* in Indian Historical Studies in recent years.

The ICHR has also undertaken the noble mission of preparing a text book of Indian his-

tory for foreign readers. We, however, apprehend that an officially sponsored text book of Indian history written on the lines of the *nouvelle vague* will have few foreign readers. It would be interesting in this connection to suggest the appointment of a high level and impartial Enquiry Committee to go into the whole hush-hush affair of Government-sponsored publications, their costs, their sale even in a decade and the colossal wastage of the poor tax-payers' money.

Another ridiculous decision of the ICHR is the rejection of the proposal to translate into regional languages the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Series—'History and Culture of the Indian People', on the ground that the Vidya Bhavan Series have a particular slant and, therefore, the translation work should not be encouraged or officially sponsored. Obviously only that slant which is favoured by those in authority now will be officially sponsored. *C'est magnifique!* Doubts were even expressed about the quality of the editorship of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan series (the Editor was the doyen of Indian historians now, Dr. R. C. Majumdar). It seems that the *nouvelle vague* historians do not admit any limitation to sheer impertinence.

In place of undertaking the translation of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Series, the ICHR decided to undertake :

(i) Translation of 40 titles published during the last 15 years. There is no doubt that these 40 titles have been carefully selected to fit in with the ideas of the *nouvelle vague*, and there are some which have not yet been published in the original. Obviously, books produced earlier than 15 years are not worth taking up. Here again the work will be quick, the translation programme of 40 titles is to be completed in 2 years (1973-74 and 1974-75) at a cost of Rs. 48 lakhs only.

(ii) Preparing a 6-volumed History of

India of 500 pages each. This will again be completed in 3 years, i.e., by 1975-76, and at a cost of Rs. 42 lakhs only.

Comment is really needless. If the Government had an excess amount of 90 lakhs in its treasury and was extremely anxious to dispose of it, certainly some better ways could have been found to spend the money than just throwing it down the drain.

We know that sober criticisms do not have any effect on Government-sponsored agencies. And yet even at the risk of being totally ignored and laughed away, we cannot help making a few humble suggestions :

(a) If the Government really wants to promote historical research in this country, it should disband the ICHR immediately or combine it with the ICSSR (although another white elephant), and try to help those institutions in different parts of the country which have been struggling hard for years and which have produced much better results at a cheaper cost to the nation than what the ICHR or any other Government academic organisation can achieve.

(b) If History is to be a handmaid of those who are in temporary political authority, there will be hardly any stability or continuity in officially sponsored historical projects. Minister X goes out, his courtiers disappear, the money already spent on incomplete projects is scrapped and new projects at equally fantastic costs are undertaken by the new set of people who come to power.

(c) A Government Baby is as weak as a normal baby and should follow the ordinary rules of nature. The baby should not be expected to stand be-

fore it can sit, and should not be expected to run before it can stand. For the tasks allotted to the ICHR, the Government should have borne these home truths in mind.

### Dictionary of National Biography :

We deeply regret the unusual delay in the publication of Vol. II of the *Dictionary of National Biography*. We had expected, as announced in our earlier number, that Vol. II would be out by the end of February. Unfortunately, chronic labour troubles in the press slowed down the progress of work, and about the middle of February the press declared a lock-out. This came at a time when three-fourth of the work had been done already. Most regrettably the lock-out continued for nearly 2 months and printing work was abruptly stopped. However, the lock-out was lifted in early May and we may now expect the Volume to be out by the end of July.

The delay in the publication of Volume II naturally will entail a consequential delay in the publication of the next 2 volumes. We deeply regret the inconvenience caused to our readers, and specially those who had sent pre-publication orders. But we hope, they will kindly appreciate that the delay is due entirely to circumstances which could not be foreseen and over which we had no control. Anyway, we are now trying our best to expedite the printing work as much as possible, and we are yet hopeful that volumes III and IV will still be out by October and January 1974.

### A New Publication :

We are happy to announce that our latest publication, *Historians and Historiography in Modern India* [Royal, pp. 496 ; Price Rs. 80/- (India) and \$ 24.00 (foreign)] is just out. It is mainly a collection of papers read at the 6th Annual Conference of the Institute of Historical Studies held at Srinagar (Kashmir) in October 1968. The publication was delayed

by about 4 years as we wanted to include a few more papers to make the volume a more comprehensive and representative account of historians in modern India. The objective of the volume is to give a concrete picture of the development of Indian Historiography in the 19th and 20th centuries through the writings of some selected eminent historians.

Altogether 40 historians have been selected (including 7 British Historians) representing different parts of India, different periods and different fields of interest in historical studies. We are quite conscious that our list of names may not please everybody. Our purpose was not to produce a complete Directory of Historians on the lines of a Telephone Directory, but to focus attention on the writings, methodology, ideas, bias, etc. of only the prominent historians in different fields of historical studies.

Every new entrant to a craft or every practising craftsman should know not only the general principles of the craft but also the actual practices of the mastercraftsmen of the past. This holds good about the historians' profession also. Historical studies in modern India had started about the middle of the 19th century, and in the course of the first hundred years had developed to a remarkable extent. To understand the nature of the progress made during the first hundred years of historiography in modern India, it is necessary to study in depth the historical ideas, methodology and major writings of those who had contributed most prominently to this progress. Those who are now carrying on the torch lit by the pioneers and those who aspire to do it in future should know how the torch had been carried on by the past generations. And the purpose of the present volume is to help them in acquiring that knowledge. It will perhaps lead to the growth of new ideas and experimentation with new techniques in keeping with the advance in historical science in recent times. The knowledge of the experiences and practices of the past craftsmen will, it is hoped, lead to better craftsmanship and diversification of interest

in future.

The new volume is another monumental publication of which the Institute of Historical Studies can be reasonably proud. The publication is meant not only for libraries and insti-

tutes but also for the personal collection of every serious student of Indian history. The importance of the volume has been greatly enhanced by an introduction by the doyen of Indian historians Dr. R. C. Majumdar, on the 'Evolution of Historiography in Modern India.'

#### RECENT IHS PUBLICATIONS

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##### INSTITUTE OF HISTORICAL STUDIES

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## HUQ-JINNAH RIVALRY : A NEW PHASE IN MUSLIM LEAGUE POLITICS

AMALENDU DE

(Jadavpur University, Calcutta)

In thought and action Fazlul Huq was a true and large-hearted Bengalee. Although he had moved the Pakistan Resolution at Lahore in 1940, he soon realised that it was unreal and was, in fact, directed against the interests of India and Bengal. He felt the necessity of coming out of the narrow shell of communal politics. This was first expressed in a beautiful address delivered by him at the time of moving a resolution on the sad demise of Rabindranath Tagore on the floor of the Bengal Legislative Assembly on 12 August 1941. Fazlul Huq observed : "It is not an easy task to pay a tribute in words to the memory of Rabindranath Tagore. During the past few days men and women all over the world have tried to pay their tributes of love, homage and respect to the memory of the great departed and one cannot but at once see the versatility and the personality of Rabindranath when he finds that people in distant parts of the world have had something to say, something to emphasise, the points that stand out prominently in the character of Rabindranath. Speaking as a Bengalee, belonging to the province which gave Rabindranath birth, speaking the very language which Rabindranath spoke, it is impossible to lose sight of the fact that the great man who earned for the Bengali literature one of the highest positions in the languages and literatures of the world is no more with us, and that all that now live are his works enshrined not merely in books but in the hearts of millions of his countrymen. Sir, I am reminded at the present moment of those beautiful lines of Tennyson referring to the death of his friend whom he has immor-

talised in his *In Memoriam*. We can truly say with the great poet that "we feel it almost half a sin to put in words the grief we feel, for words like nature half reveal and half conceal the sorrow within". It is impossible to try and exhaust the tribute and eulogy which can be fittingly paid to Rabindranath. It is not enough to say that he was great. He was great as a poet ; he was great as a philosopher ; he was great as an educationist ; he was great as a humanitarian ; he was great in his songs, and the whole world knows that he could not merely write poetry and speak poetry but he lived poetry throughout his life. He has actually made it a problem with us. His realities of life are realities when poetry itself is a reality, and when all is said and done we feel as Bengalees that we never knew when he was with us what he was not merely to Bengal, not merely to the whole of India, but to the whole of cultured humanity all over the world. I leave it to others who can do it better to say what we all feel on this side of the House and I hope that the few words which I have been privileged to speak on this occasion will be taken to be indicative of our deep sense of sorrow not as individuals, not as members of a community but as members of the great Bengalee race who are proud today that we had in our midst one like Rabindranath to whom the whole world, whether he was alive or whether as now he was not alive, the whole of the cultured humanity readily pays homage." <sup>1</sup> Thus long before the present outburst of love and respect for Rabindranath among the people of East Bengal, especially among the Bengali

Muslims, Fazlul Huq indicated the right path before his countrymen and made them aware of 'the great Bengalee race'. No other Muslim politician of Bengal had ever paid homage to the Poet in such a manner. Naturally this address should be considered by scholars as an important historical document.

Soon after the realisation of his mistakes committed at Lahore on 23-24 March 1940, Fazlul Huq began to express his views which were contrary to the principles of the Muslim League. It generated ill-feeling between him and the staunch supporters of Jinnah both inside and outside the Bengal Cabinet. Very soon the issues, centering round which Huq-Jinnah rivalry broke out, were publicly disclosed. In July 1941, Fazlul Huq accepted the membership of the National Defence Council which was against the policy of the League. The Viceroy conveyed his wishes through the Governor of Bengal that Fazlul Huq should serve on the Defence Council as the Premier representing that province. He agreed because he felt that it was his duty. Immediately after the announcement of the personnel of the Defence Council Jinnah in a statement said that he considered the action of Fazlul Huq and other members of the League highly objectionable and he was thinking of taking action against them. Fazlul Huq at once issued a statement explaining his position in which he stated that the Premiers were selected in their official capacity and so long they remained in their posts they had no power to disobey the Viceroy. But the followers of Jinnah were not satisfied by his explanation. Jinnah's statement created a wrong impression about Fazlul Huq and others in the minds of the Muslims and they insisted on the resignation of the League Members from the Defence Council. On 30 July 1941, Jinnah issued a statement from Hyderabad in which he announced that disciplinary action would be taken against them and he placed the matter before the Working Committee. The decision of the Working Committee was communicated to Fazlul Huq by Liaquat Ali Khan, Secretary of the All India

Muslim League, through a telegram on 25 August and subsequently through a letter on 26 August, and he was asked to resign from the Defence Council. On 8 September 1941, Fazlul Huq wrote a long letter to Liaquat Ali Khan in which he bitterly criticized the undemocratic behaviour of Jinnah.<sup>2</sup> He observed that the action of Jinnah was unconstitutional because he had personally influenced the Working Committee to compel them to resign from the Defence Council. The Madras Resolution of the Muslim League had empowered Jinnah to take action against any erring member. In spite of that he was not expected to pass any judgment unilaterally without considering the facts and arguments that such a member had to submit in support of his action. It would be a violation of an elementary constitutional right which every one could claim. It could only be done in the case of an emergency. But, Huq argued, the present case was quite different. Jinnah's decision to refer the matter to the Working Committee was meaningless. The members of the Working Committee had to endorse his action. They did not dare to restrain him.<sup>3</sup>

Fazlul Huq threw interesting light on the behaviour of Jinnah on this occasion. On 21 July 1941, Jinnah received an intimation from the Viceroy through the Governor of Bombay that the Premiers were invited to accept the membership of the Defence Council. There might be some controversy over the issue whether they were selected as Premiers or as representative men. But there was no doubt that Jinnah knew this selection at least one day before the publication of their names. It was, therefore, his duty to inform the members that they should resign from the Defence Council. He could even send a note of warning that if they refused to resign he would take disciplinary action against them. But he did nothing. He waited till the publication of their names and then thundered that he would take action against them. The procedure he adopted had placed the members in an awkward position. He did not give them opportunity to explain their position. He was

very much anxious to exhibit his power and position. In this way a simple affair was converted into "a complicated political problem in the history of Moslem India in recent time".<sup>4</sup>

Fazlul Huq maintained that the acceptance of the membership of the Defence Council was not against the League principle or policy. In 1940 the Muslim League had rejected the offer of the Viceroy to form an expanded Council composed of Indian States and the representatives of various political parties. But the present Defence Council was composed of Indian States and the representatives of various Provinces. This made a fundamental difference and, therefore, the membership of the Defence Council did not come "within the mischief of the resolution adopted by the League".<sup>5</sup>

Jinnah declared that the members were selected as representatives of the Muslim Community. But Fazlul Huq maintained that they were selected as Premiers. Incidentally, he reminded Liaquat Ali Khan that ever since the outbreak of the war he had been using his position both official and non-official to induce the people to co-operate with the war effort. As the head of all the organisations functioning in Bengal he had collected funds for war purposes. He had addressed a large number of public meetings and had delivered talks on the radio in support of the war effort. But Jinnah had never expressed his disapproval of these activities. In fact, he had allowed the prominent Muslim League leaders to do this. Fazlul Huq felt that after allowing him to work for War Committees it would be an illogical step on the part of Jinnah to call him to non-cooperate with the Government at the centre. Jinnah could not consider Huq's membership of the Defence Council more significant than his participation in these organizations at the provincial level. Thus, Huq argued, Jinnah had failed to make out any case against him; and he maintained that Jinnah's action, endorsed by the Working Committee, was unjustified.<sup>6</sup>

The Working Committee gave Huq ten days' time to announce his decision. Just after ten days he expressed his opinion in the form of a letter in which he clearly stated that he did not admit that the acceptance of the membership of the Defence Council was an act of disloyalty to the League or that it constituted a breach of the League principles. But Jinnah had created a feeling in the minds of the Muslims that Fazlul Huq had accepted membership of the Defence Council from motives of personal interests or with a view to obliging high officials. He had thus acted against the Muslim interests. It was also pointed out that the majority of the Muslim Community disapproved his action. Fazlul Huq replied: "I do not also admit that my conduct in accepting a membership of the Defence Council has the disapproval of the majority of the Moslem Community of India. Except for a few non-Bengali residents in Calcutta and a few non-Bengali workers in the mills, I do not find any indications that the Moslems of Bengal, as such, are in a mood to condemn my membership of the Defence Council. As regards public opinion outside my Province, I find that there is a large volume of public opinion in my favour. A friend from Lucknow has sent me a long letter which shows that it is not quite correct to say that the whole Urdu Press is supporting Mr. Jinnah. There are numerous Urdu papers who are strongly opposing Mr. Jinnah's dictatorial policy, and have no faith in the Qaid-i-Azam.

"I have also received letters from members of Jamait-ul-Ulema both in Bengal and outside, who have strongly supported me and advised me not to resign the membership of the Defence Council. As a matter of fact, I have been flooded with letters and telegrams which prove conclusively that I have a strong volume of public opinion behind me supporting my action in accepting membership of the Defence Council."<sup>7</sup>

Though there was no reasonable ground to resign from the membership of the Defence

Council, Huq felt that his continuance in it, especially after the vacation of seats by the other Premiers, would lead to a split in the ranks of the Muslim Community. To avoid this situation he resigned the membership of the Defence Council. In this connection he had examined the views of Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, the Premier of the Punjab, who was also not in agreement with Jinnah. Fazlul Huq wrote: "In this respect the reasons for my resignation are different from those of Sir Sikander Hyat Khan. He is alleged to have resigned because he felt convinced that he had acted under a misconception of facts; I resign because, although I am convinced I was perfectly right in accepting membership of the Council, my continuance in the Council would jeopardise the interest of the Community. Sir Sikander feels he was wrong and has rectified a mistake; I feel I was right, but I cannot continue to be a member in view of possible consequences."<sup>8</sup>

Fazlul Huq clearly stated that considering the best interests of the community and the country he had decided to resign. There was no scope to conclude from it that he had accepted the interpretation of Jinnah in this matter. He declared that the Muslim leaders of the minority provinces were imperilling the interests of the Muslims of Bengal and the Punjab. He told them not to meddle too much with the politics of the majority provinces. He was determined to keep Bengal free from the domination of outside authority. With much courage and conviction Fazlul Huq commented thus: "Before I conclude, I wish to record a most emphatic protest against the manner in which the interests of the Moslems of Bengal and the Punjab are being imperilled by Moslem leaders of the Provinces where the Moslems are in a minority, popularly known among Moslems as the minority provinces of India. Except in Bengal and the Punjab which together account for nearly 50 millions of Moslems and nearly 50 per cent of the total Moslem population of India, the remaining 50 millions of Moslems are scattered throughout the con-

tinents in such a manner that they are in a most hopeless minority in the so-called minority provinces, in some cases the Moslem minority dwindling to about 4 or 5 per cent of the population. It is evident that these Moslem brethren of ours can never hope to be in the enjoyment of even an effective voice in the administration, leave alone the prospect of their ever being in power. It is conceivable that they cannot realise, nor even imagine, the advantages of the Moslem community being in a dominant position in the administration of Bengal and the Punjab. Nor do they realize the responsibilities of the Moslem Premiers of those provinces. Naturally enough they think that just as all their own political prospects are bleak and barren, even so is the case with the Moslems of Bengal and the Punjab. Naturally enough they do not care for the repercussions on the politics of the Moslems of Bengal and the Punjab of any decision they may take with regard to Moslem India as a whole. I would ask the Moslem leaders of the minority provinces to remember that if they meddle too much with the politics of the majority provinces, they will do so at the peril of the interest of the entire Moslem community of India. For my part, I will never allow the interests of 33 millions of the Moslems of Bengal to be put under the domination of any outside authority, however eminent it may be.

"At the present moment I have a feeling that Bengal does not count much in the counsels of political leaders outside our province, although we constitute more than 1/3rd of the total Moslem population of India. Even in this controversy, the leaders of the minority provinces never cared to take into consideration my particular responsibilities and difficulties and wanted to drown my voice with meaningless slogans which may suit their own conditions of political helplessness, but which are utterly unsuited to the conditions prevailing in my province. I was condemned before I could put before the President my point of view."<sup>9</sup>

Fazlul Huq was mortified to note that the

Muslim leaders endorsed the resolution in which he was condemned for accepting the invitation to serve on the Defence Council even without knowing anything about it. His critics forgot his life-long services to the community and the difficulties under which he had held the banner of his community aloft "in the teeth of opposition from the most highly cultured, the most highly organized and the most powerful non-Moslem Community in India". The entire affair was so stage-managed by Jinnah that he had no other alternative but to act against his considered judgment. The course of action adopted by a "political dictator" like Jinnah was "revolting to sound sense or even conscience". He felt that Jinnah showed scant courtesy to Provincial leaders and arrogated to himself the functions of the Provincial executive. Under these circumstances it was not possible for Fazlul Huq to continue his membership of the Working Committee and the Council of the All India Muslim League. As a mark of protest against the arbitrary use of powers vested in its President he tendered his resignation from these two bodies.<sup>10</sup>

Fazlul Huq pointed out that the proper course for the President of the League was to refer the matter under discussion to the decision of the Provincial Committee. But the President had signally failed to act in "a constitutional and reasonable manner". He concluded his letter with the following observation: "In tendering my resignation I should also like to enter the caveat that recent events have forcibly brought home to me that the principles of democracy and autonomy in the All India Moslem League are being subordinated to the arbitrary wishes of a single individual who seeks to rule as an omnipotent authority even over the density of 33 millions of Moslems in the province of Bengal who occupy the key position in Indian Moslem politics."<sup>11</sup>

It should be noted that the internal rift in the League was first brought to the surface in May 1941. The Indian political leaders were very much amazed to see that Fazlul Huq, Sir

Sikander Hyat Khan and a few others came out with statements in which they practically threw out a challenge to Jinnah. They were very much concerned with the impact of this rivalry on the politics of Bengal and the Punjab. On this topic interesting letters were exchanged between Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and B. Shiva Rao. On 22 May 1941, Sir Sapru wrote to Shiva Rao: "... I see Fazlul Huq, Sikander Hyat and a few others are coming out with statements. They have practically thrown out a challenge to Jinnah and the statements of other Muslim leaders also go to show that if Jinnah had not established on his followers the same kind of dictatorship which the Congress has established on its own followers they would be more free to express their independent opinion. Whether these Muslim leaders who are speaking in the same strain as I with regard to the inactivity of Simla and Whitehall will produce any impression I do not know. I am very doubtful. I shall be glad if they do."<sup>12</sup>

On 5 August 1941, Shiva Rao wrote to Sir Sapru that he met Sir Sikander at Simla on 4 August and had a talk with him. He was eager to know whether Sir Sapru was "willing to accept the formula he had suggested, namely, that of one central government for all India subject to re-adjustments in such matters as the lists of Federal, Concurrent and Provincial subjects, so that the minorities may feel that their interests will not be jeopardised under one all India administration."<sup>13</sup> But his views were not acceptable to the League leaders. A good number of meetings had been organized by the supporters of Jinnah and Pakistan in the Punjab. Sir Sikander was not happy with the affairs of the League. Naturally he was not sure whether he would attend the forthcoming session of the Muslim League at Bombay on 24 August. He was confident that in spite of Jinnah's threat of disciplinary action against him he would retain a comfortable majority in the Punjab Assembly. He stated that as there would be no general elections during the duration of war, he had nothing to fear. But the political situation in Bengal and

Assam was somewhat different. In Bengal Fazlul Huq was opposed by Sir Nazimuddin and Suhrawardy. Perhaps Jinnah would "enforce his authority to the extent of splitting the Bengal Cabinet." In Assam the supporters of Jinnah in the Assembly were gathering strength. As the majority in the Assembly was very small, the defection of a few might upset the Government.<sup>14</sup> Referring to it, Sir Sikander stated that if Jinnah dared to throw out three Premiers because of their support of the war effort he would certainly lose ground under his feet. Undoubtedly, an opportune moment had come to the Congress and the non-Jinnah section of the Muslim League. Now the Congress could come to terms with a section of the League and the British Government and thereby frustrate the designs of Jinnah who was always standing in the way of a settlement. Sir Sikander regretted that influential people had not approached Gandhiji to point out this excellent opportunity. Referring to his conversation with the Punjab Premier, Shiva Rao wrote: "Sikander told me that Jinnah overlooks one important factor: During the last three years the League had had a great deal of influential support from outside, just because of its nuisance value against the Congress. If, however, Jinnah should now decide to challenge the Government and throw out the three Premiers because of their support of the war effort, he will find himself without many of these powerful allies. The question is, can he afford to kick the ladder by which he has arisen? At the same time Sikander is not free from anxiety. He regretted that Gandhiji has not called off C.D. and allowed Congress ministries to function. He suggested that the present will be an excellent opportunity for the Congress and the non-Jinnah section of the Muslim League to come to terms. The War Advisory Council, he pointed out, would consist of the Premiers of the Provinces, representatives of the States and some important people. All these could, apart from participating in the deliberations of the Council, open negotiations for India's permanent constitution. He wondered that influential people have not

approached Gandhiji to point out the excellence of the present opportunity for a settlement not only with a large section of the League but also with the British Government.

"Personally, if I may say so, I am impressed with the force of this argument. For too long, it seems to me, Jinnah has been allowed to stand in the way of a settlement..."<sup>15</sup>

Again on 12 August 1941, Shiva Rao wrote to Sir Sapru that to keep Bengal away from the communal virus a determined effort should be made to come to an understanding with the reasonable sections of the Muslims. This could be done if the Congress abandoned the Civil Disobedience Movement, resumed office, formed coalitions in the Provinces and satisfied the minorities. He was not sure whether Gandhiji would attach any importance to this view. Shiva Rao wrote: "Sir N. N. Sircar who is here gives a most distressing account of the spread of the communal virus in the masses of Bengal, both Hindu and Muslim. There is no other way out of this mess than to impress upon the reasonable sections of the Muslims the desirability of seeking a common solution. That can only come if civil disobedience is withdrawn, the Congress resumes office and forms coalitions in the provinces and later makes a sincere effort to satisfy the minorities. If in this process there have to be radical changes in the structure of India's Constitution, the price is well worth paying. I do not know if the Mahatma would listen to my view."<sup>16</sup>

On 7 September 1941, Sir Sapru wrote to Shiva Rao that on 30-31 August he was in Calcutta and had met Fazlul Huq there. Fazlul Huq expressed his anger against Jinnah. He also stated that once Sir Sikander assured him that he would remain with him in this struggle against Jinnah. But he could not keep his promise. So, it pained him much. Sir Sapru wrote: "I was in Calcutta on the 30th and 31st of August. The Bengalis were extraordinarily nice and cordial to me.... I met Fazlul Huq at Calcutta and had a long talk

with him. He seemed to be very angry with Jinnah and I thought that he was not going to fall into line with him. Up to the present moment he has not responded to the summons from Bombay. What ultimately he will do no one can say. He seemed, however, to be very bitter against Sikander Hyat for having let him down after assuring him that he was going to take a firm stand."<sup>17</sup>

On 14 and 16 September 1941, Sir Sapru wrote a letter to Shiva Rao and made the following observation on Fazlul Huq's letter of 8 September 1941: "Why this prolonged silence? What are the reactions there to Fazlul Huq's letter to the Secretary of the Muslim League? He has no doubt surrendered to the pressure of Muslim opinion but at the same time has given evidence of a spirit of revolt against the autocracy of Jinnah.... Fazlul Huq showed some courage in publicly criticising Jinnah though his resignation from the National Defence Council was neither courageous nor defensible on any reasonable ground. At the same time it is clear that the Muslim League generally is out to down him and although his influence in Bengal is great yet he may find himself unable to cope with the Muslim opposition to him. Do not forget that if rebels like Khare of the C.P., etc. could be bounded out by the Congress, the same thing can be done by Jinnah and the Muslim League."<sup>18</sup>

Thus Jinnah could easily silence the voice of Sir Sikander and thereby strengthen his position in the Punjab. But it was not an easy job for him to keep Fazlul Huq completely under his thumb. In fact, he was very much disturbed by the activities of Allah Bux and Fazlul Huq, Premiers of Sind and Bengal, who had rejected his leadership.<sup>19</sup>

Fazlul Huq's letter of 8 September 1941, created a great furore in the League circle. The followers of Jinnah organized protest meetings in Bengal and other parts of India and demanded the withdrawal of these allegations or his expulsion from the Muslim League. On

27 October 1941, the Working Committee adopted a resolution in which they called upon Fazlul Huq to withdraw these allegations and to express regret for casting aspersions within ten days of its receipt.<sup>20</sup> Just at that moment he was not prepared for any confrontation with Jinnah. So Fazlul Huq pacified the Working Committee by addressing the following letter on 14 November 1941 to the Secretary of the All India Muslim League: "I regret the delay in sending you my reply. It has been due entirely to the poor state of my health, and I did not feel justified in replying to a communication of such serious import without giving the matter most anxious consideration. No one knows better than the President himself that I have always been a loyal member of the League, have never hesitated to carry out its mandates, and once a decision was constitutionally adopted by it, have never hesitated to obey it, even though that decision might not personally commend itself to me. If there were any doubts in regard to this point, my resignation from the National Defence Council amply proves it. It is an irony of fate that, of all those who have given of their best to build up the only national organisation of Muslim India, I should have been the object of so much misunderstanding and so much uninformed criticism. It appears that portions of my letter have hurt the feelings of the President and some of my other friends. I convey to them through you my assurance that nothing was further from my intention than to hurt the feelings of or to cast aspersions on anyone and I hope that my assurance will be accepted and the matter considered as closed."<sup>21</sup>

After studying this letter the Working Committee decided not to take any action against him. Yet, this assurance and explanation could not fully satisfy Jinnah. He secretly deputed Hassan Ispahani as his representative in Bengal to keep an watchful eye on the movements of Fazlul Huq and to fully post him with all the developments there. Ispahani wrote that during this time Fazlul Huq "showed lip-loyalty to the League."<sup>22</sup>

Fazlul Huq was still a powerful figure in Bengal politics. He was at the head of a coalition Ministry of which the Muslim League Party was a component part. He was the President of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League, leader of the Muslim League Party in the Assembly and a member of the two highest bodies of the All India Muslim League. It was, therefore, not an easy task for Jinnah to attack him. He knew that Fazlul Huq wanted to maintain his position as an unrivalled leader of Bengal politics. Whereas Jinnah was determined to assert his authority, as the President of the All India Muslim League, on the affairs of Bengal. To realize this object Jinnah decided to replace Fazlul Huq as the Chief Minister of Bengal by one of his ardent followers. But this was not possible unless he "had either voluntarily vacated office as Chief Minister or had been removed from that office by a vote of no-confidence of the House or dismissed" by the Governor.<sup>23</sup> But there was no possibility of these eventualities. The only course left to Jinnah and his followers was "to force a dissolution of the Cabinet by tendering their (followers of Jinnah) resignations". And they did it. Mischievous rumours were circulated towards the end of November 1941, that Fazlul Huq was going to form a new party by dissolving the coalition party. Immediately he contradicted it by issuing a statement which appeared in the newspapers on 30 November 1941. It ran thus: "Statements have appeared in the press which indicate that as the outcome of disunity in the Cabinet I have accepted the leadership of a new party to be called the Progressive Coalition Party. I desire it to be known that there is no truth whatever in these reports. It is hardly necessary for me to point out that as Chief Minister and Leader of the Coalition Party in the Assembly it would be unconstitutional for me to enter into negotiations with parties now in opposition with the object of forming a new party. It is my desire to maintain the solidarity of the Coalition Party no less than that of the Ministry and to ensure that the decisions of the Coalition Party are accepted by every member of the Party."<sup>24</sup>

In spite of this statement his political opponents abruptly tendered their resignations on 1 December 1941. Thus the Coalition Ministry which was headed by Fazlul Huq from 1937 broke down. The dissolution of the Cabinet had raised high hopes in the minds of the League leaders. Their sole object was to oust Fazlul Huq from power by forming a coalition with other groups in the House. They could not imagine that he could also form an alternative Ministry. But Huq was not sitting idle. He also started consultations with Sarat Chandra Bose, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee and other leaders to frustrate the game of the League. Referring to the situation in Bengal at that time, Ispahani wrote in a secret letter to Jinnah on 1 December 1941: "The fight is on. It will be a life and death struggle. Huq, by no means, is a spent force. He has influence and a following. The Hindus are almost daily with him. They are out to divide and crush the Muslims."<sup>25</sup>

But the hopes of the League to form a Coalition Ministry in Bengal were soon dashed to the ground. Fazlul Huq took the opportunity of forming a Coalition with those very parties whom the League had unsuccessfully approached previously. Then the enemies of Fazlul Huq turned to Jinnah for assistance. They misrepresented facts and invented lies to oust him from the Muslim League. They thought that his expulsion from the League would help them to influence the Muslim M.L.As. of the House to desert Fazlul Huq and thereby he would be unable to form a Cabinet. Jinnah was also in agreement with this assessment of the situation, and he acted swiftly "in his usual autocratic fashion".<sup>26</sup> On 6 December 1941, Jinnah sent a telegram to Fazlul Huq in which he stated that his "conduct amounted to treachery" and he called upon him to submit an explanation within forty-eight hours. At first Fazlul Huq thought of expressing resentment for the rudeness of the language used by Jinnah, but he restrained himself and sent a reply through a telegram in which he requested Jinnah to come to Bengal

to find out facts for himself and to decide the course of his action. Jinnah gave no hearing to it and he again sent a telegram to Fazlul Huq on 8 December 1941, demanding that he should submit his "written explanation so as to reach him on the 10th December". Fazlul Huq wired back to state that it would not be possible for him to submit any explanation unless he was given some idea about the facts that had been alleged against him. Moreover, it would not be possible "to write out an explanation and send it to him within the time fixed because papers would have to be posted by the evening of that very day, if they were to be available to him at Delhi on the 10th". Fazlul Huq commented: "But Mr. Jinnah was deaf to reason or appeal. In his usual autocratic fashion, he passed an ex-parte order on the 10th December, expelling me from the League."<sup>27</sup>

During this time Fazlul Huq's political enemies made wild accusations against him. But they were not able to put forward any facts in support of these charges. He characterised this behaviour as "undemocratic and utterly un-Islamic". He stated that even a criminal had a right to be heard in self-defence. But this privilege was denied to him. Fazlul Huq observed that "a section of the Muslims have behaved towards me in a manner which shows how little they are influenced by the teachings of Islam and how utterly un-Islamic has been their behaviour towards me."<sup>28</sup>

Even before his expulsion Fazlul Huq could assess his position in the League. So, he quickly consolidated his position by forming the Progressive Coalition Party with the Krishak Praja Party, a section of the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha in the House. On 27 November 1941, Fazlul Huq, Sarat Chandra Bose, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Shamsuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Hashem Ali Khan and Hem Chandra Naskar sat together in the house of J. C. Gupta<sup>29</sup>

to explore the possibilities of the formation of a non-League Ministry. At that meeting Sarat Chandra Bose prepared a document and the decision to form the Progressive Coalition Party was finally taken. All the members present excepting Fazlul Huq and Shyamaprasad Mukherjee signed the document on that day. Fazlul Huq was offered the leadership of the Progressive Coalition Party. But he did not accept that on the ground that he was still the leader of the League-Huq Coalition Ministry. The last meeting of that Cabinet was held at the Government House on 28 November 1941. There everything was clear to him. Finally, on 1 December 1941, the Huq-League Coalition Ministry broke down. Fazlul Huq acted vigorously without giving any scope to Jinnah's followers. On 3 December 1941 Fazlul Huq and Shyamaprasad Mukherjee signed the document prepared by Sarat Chandra Bose and Fazlul Huq accepted the leadership of the Progressive Coalition Party on that day. Thus the followers of Jinnah were outmanoeuvred by him and he headed a new Ministry from 12 December 1941. Thus the Muslim League was temporarily isolated.<sup>30</sup>

Hassan Ispahani accused Fazlul Huq of undermining the League's position in Bengal. He wrote that Fazlul Huq did it even when he held important posts of the League. The policy of his paper, the *Nava Joog*, was to reproach the League. He condemned Fazlul Huq for "joining hands with the inveterate enemies of the Muslims, Dr. Shyamaprasad Mukherjee and Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, for the sake of forming a Ministry". Jinnah severely criticised "the conduct of the Governor in commissioning Mr. Fazlul Huq to form the Ministry by questionable means".<sup>31</sup> On 13 December 1941, Jinnah nominated Ispahani as a member of the Working Committee in place of the vacancy caused by the expulsion of Fazlul Huq.<sup>32</sup> Thus the trusted lieutenant of Jinnah in Bengal was rewarded with a prize post.

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1. The Bengal Legislative Assembly Proceedings, Eleventh Session, 1941, Vol. LX—No. 3, pp. 1-2.  
The following resolution was moved by Fazlul Huq: "This Assembly records its deep sense of grief at the passing away of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore. Not only Bengal or India but the world itself has suffered an irreparable loss by the death of this noble son of Bengal whose contribution and the quality of whose genius had earned both for himself and his country an honourable place in the comity of nations. As a poet, he provided joy, solace and inspiration to millions, and as a humanitarian he earned the love of all mankind. This House conveys its profoundest sympathy to his son, Mr. Rathindra Nath Tagore and his relatives and mourns with the rest of India the loss of the Great departed." I have been informed from his close quarters that Fazlul Huq himself drafted this resolution though he showed it to others before placing it in the House. On this occasion Sarat Chandra Bose, Kiran Sankar Roy, M. Shamsuddin Ahmed, Jogendra Nath Mandal, W. C. Wordsworth, Maharaja Kumar Uday Chand Mahtab, Anukul Chandra Das, J. W. Chippendale and Speaker Sir Muhammad Azizul Haque addressed the House. (*Ibid.*, pp. 2-9).
2. Letter of A. K. Fazlul Huq to Liaquat Ali Khan, dated 8 September, 1941. Vide *The Statesman*, September 11, 1941.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*
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11. *Ibid.*; Vide also Habibullah, B. D., *Shere Bangla*, in Bengali, Revised and enlarged edition, Barisal, 1374, pp. 99-101.
12. Sapru Manuscripts Series I, Vol. 21, R. 138, pp. 75-79.
13. *Ibid.*, R. 175|1, p. 199.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 200.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 200-201. On 8 August 1941, Sir Sapru wrote to Shiva Rao: "As regards Fazlul Huq I do not think that it will be very easy to dislodge him from his position." Vide *Ibid.*, R. 175|2, pp. 205-207.
16. *Ibid.*, R. 175|3, pp. 213-217.
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22. *Ibid.*, pp. 49-50; vide also Khaleque, Khondakar Abdul, *Ek Shatabdi*, in Bengali, Dacca, 1966, pp. 177-179.
23. Letter of A. K. Fazlul Huq addressed to prominent Muslim Leaguers, dated 20 June 1942. Vide the *Hindusthan Standard*, 21 June 1942.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Ispahani, *Jinnah*, p. 51. Ispahani reproduced this letter in his book.
26. Letter of A. K. Fazlul Huq, the *Hindusthan Standard*, 21 June 1942.
27. *Ibid.*
28. *Ibid.*
29. The Bengal Legislative Assembly Proceedings, Thirteenth Session, 1942, Vol. LXII—No. 3, p. 407.
30. *Ibid.*  
The members of the Congress in the House were divided into two groups—official and non-official. The official group known as the 'Congress Assembly Party' was led by Kiran Sankar Roy and the non-official group known as the 'Bengal Congress Parliamentary Party' was led by Sarat Chandra Bose. Sarat Bose's group actively associated with Fazlul Huq (Vide *ibid.*, p. 384).
31. Ispahani, *Jinnah*, pp. 50, 52-53.
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

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## MORLEY'S DOING OR MINTO'S DOING ?

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The appointment of S. P. Sinha, an Indian, as the Law Member of the Governor-General's Executive Council in March 1909 was an event of profound significance. The membership of the Council—"the Holy of Holies"—was so far an exclusive European preserve. It was thrown open to moderate and responsible Indians for the first time in 1909. The principle of associating Indians in the executive administration of the country was asserted in a powerful manner. The authors of this precedent-making appointment were conscious of its historic importance and characterised it by remarks such as "an act of high policy", a "great thing, and a right thing,"<sup>1</sup> "key-stone of our reforms"<sup>2</sup> and "a very great move—the acceptance of a new principle in our rule of India".<sup>3</sup> The appointment, generally speaking, was welcomed by the Indians.

This historic act is ascribed to the liberalism and sympathy of John Morley, the Secretary of State for India, with Indian aspirations. As a matter of fact, the reforms of 1909, popularly known as Morley-Minto Reforms, are largely attributed to the initiative and reforming zeal of Morley. Stanley A. Wolpert in his book *Morley and India, 1906-1910* (University of California Press, 1967) writes, "the impetus and the direction given to Indian political reforms came from the Secretary of State rather than the Viceroy" (p. 130). Morley, he further writes, "was a leading architect of India's political future, whose reforming zeal and political shrewdness blazed the constitutional

trail Montagu fearlessly followed, and without whose preliminary labours and victories in principle the long strides to responsible rule taken in 1919 and 1935 would hardly have been possible." (p. 166). Despite Morley's capitulation to separate Muslim electorates and sanctioning of repressive measures, he was, in Wolpert's opinion, the "most sympathetic . . . and Liberal (in every sense of that word) statesman ever to rule over the Indian Empire . . ." (p. 236).

It is not to question his liberalism or sympathy for India. But there is one aspect of the Reforms, namely, the appointment of an Indian to the Executive Council of the Governor-General which this paper aims to examine. The chief credit for this bold measure is given entirely to Morley. The liberal Secretary of State is spoken of as the prime author of this appointment. And not only that, the Viceroy, Lord Minto, on the other hand, is depicted as a conservative opposing this appointment and yielding most reluctantly to the pressure from Whitehall. Professor M. N. Das has suggested in his *India under Morley and Minto—Politics behind Revolution, Repression and Reforms* (George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1964) that Minto wanted to shelve the question of the appointment of an Indian to the Viceroy's Executive Council as "impossible of adoption in his time or in the future" (p. 207). He believes that Minto's hands were forced by Morley's intention of appointing one or two Indians to his own Council in London and also by the fear lest the Indian

Member be appointed by the British Cabinet . . . "Knowing the appointment to be a certainty, Minto wanted to steal the credit for this concession too" (p. 210). Wolpert, though giving credit to Minto and considering him to be a convert to Morley's views in this respect, speaks of Sinha's installation essentially as "Morley's appointment" (pp. 168-171).

However, a close perusal of the private correspondence of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State clearly shows that Minto made no mean contribution towards this appointment. It is true that the ball was first set rolling by Morley in his letter of 15 June 1906, but once convinced that the aspirations of the educated Indians had to be satisfied by giving them a larger share in the higher executive administration, Minto continued to strive for the appointment despite persistent opposition from his colleagues and the Anglo-Indian population in India and the conservative section in England. In the beginning his approach was rather hesitant, and he subjected the whole question to a deep analysis. He disliked appointing G. K. Gokhale or R. C. Dutt or any other "Congresswallah", for that, he thought, would be construed as a surrender to Congress agitation. But curiously enough, it was the liberal Secretary of State who did not have sufficient courage to disregard the opposition of his Council and of his own race to carry out this important part of the reforms when Minto supported the proposal officially in his despatch of 21 March 1907.

Lord Minto, no doubt, belonged to the Conservative Party and was appointed Viceroy by a Conservative Ministry in November 1905. The popular impression in India and England was that he was not in sympathy with the aspirations and demands of the people of this country and that he was more or less forced to concede these reforms by one of the most powerful Secretaries of State. But, as far as Sinha's appointment is concern-

ed, it can be justly said to his credit that he honestly and sincerely tried for this and did not act under any pressure from home. Even Wolpert who is a frank and avowed admirer of Morley and who regards him as the fountainhead of liberal and constitutional reforms introduced in the first decade of the present century admits: "Whatever other faults he possessed, Minto was fortunately no bigot like Kitchener, whose example of "bad, wicked race dominance" became notorious in India, nor like Lawley, Governor of Madras, who regarded "any attempt to bridge over the unfathomable chasm . . . between the brown man and the white . . . as hopeless." (p. 169).

In dealing with Indian "unrest", wave of anti-British sentiment and political awakening, Minto thought of conciliating the educated classes of India who had received little consideration at the hands of Curzon. He realised that "we cannot continue to govern India with any hopes of tranquility till we give her educated classes a chance of a greater share in the government of the country." Though he was convinced that India was "perfectly unfit" for representative government (Morley's views in this respect were not very different!) and must be autocratically governed for many years to come, this conviction did not prevent him from repeatedly urging that her best men must share much more largely than they did at the time in the executive administration of the country.<sup>4</sup> He pleaded: "we must recognise individual ability and invite it to rule together with us."<sup>5</sup> By recognising the right of loyal and moderate Indians to a greater share in the government, he wanted to satisfy their aspirations and save India from a "tremendous convulsion". "If we don't do so," he uttered a note of warning, "we shall ere long have a force opposed to us of a strength of which we have had no previous experience."<sup>6</sup>

In the beginning, however, the Viceroy was assailed by doubts and he analysed the issue very closely. There were doubts in his

mind about the effect it would have on the European population in India and of the fact that such a colleague would necessarily become acquainted with "all our State secrets". He had discussed this question with his colleagues—Denzil Ibbetson, Edward Baker, Kitchener and Charles Rivaz. With the exception of Baker, he found all of them strongly opposed to it.

In August 1906 this question was referred to the Reforms Committee headed by Sir A. T. Arundel. Two members of the Committee—Arundel and Baker—were in favour of the appointment. They regarded the admission of an Indian to the "innermost circle" of government "not as the introduction in the citadel of an enemy to be feared, but as the addition to the garrison of an ally whose advice will be highly valued, and whose mere presence will insure the confidence and enhance the loyalty of his fellow countrymen."<sup>7</sup> To the other two members—Ibbetson and Erle Richards—however, the contemplated appointment was "highly impolitic" and appeared as an unfortunate yielding to the agitation.<sup>8</sup> To Lord Minto the arguments of Arundel and Baker were *prima facie* "unanswerable"; but in his opinion the question of a native member was fraught with weighty consideration, and he remained in a "fluid" state of mind.<sup>9</sup> He carefully weighed the pros and cons of the issue. He felt that the appointment in itself would be right; it would satisfy the aspirations of the educated Indians to a share in the highest executive government and thus allay a good deal of the unrest that was in the air. He mentioned the name of Dr. A. Mookherji, Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University and a High Court Judge, as a possible Member whose appointment would be generally approved throughout India. Impressed by his force of character, Minto was convinced that the inclusion of Dr. Mookherji in his Executive Council far from being "a loss of power" would be a "great addition of strength".<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, the Viceroy assailed by

certain doubts confessed that he was "sorely puzzled" about the measure.<sup>11</sup> Realising the "bitter opposition" of his colleagues (with the exception of Baker, Arundel who supported the appointment having retired) and fearing "violent British opposition" in the country, Minto's half inclination was to defer the issue.<sup>12</sup> But at times the thought crossed his mind that if out of "anxiety and respect to British sensitiveness" and in allaying "British nervousness", the Government missed the chance, they risked dashing the hopes of Indians for a direct share in the executive administration and would lose the opportunity of meeting demands for reforms which they would be obliged to deal with sooner or later.<sup>13</sup>

It was in February-March 1907 that Minto, after many doubts which he had expressed to Morley from time to time, decided to advise the appointment of an Indian to his Executive Council. After days of serious thought and agonising appraisal, the Viceroy took the courage of disregarding the views of his colleagues and wrote to the Secretary of State: "I have pinned my colours to the mast."<sup>14</sup> The proposal along with other reforms was embodied in a despatch to the Secretary of State in March 1907. It was supported by the Viceroy and E. Baker alone while the remaining six members of the Council were against it.<sup>15</sup> Minto courageously declared: "For myself I see nothing for it but to stand the shot. If Indian Member is rejected and it becomes known, we shall be accused of giving in to bureaucracy and shall have serious fight before us. My opinion is that it is time to overrule bureaucracy."<sup>16</sup> Nothing could be more frank and weighty evidence of Minto's conviction as to the advisability of this reform measure.

Thus we see that Lord Minto took the decision of recommending the appointment of an Indian to his Council after a careful thought. There is no evidence to suggest that he acted under the pressure of the Secretary

of State or that his hands were forced by Morley's intention of appointing one or two Indians to his own Council at London. Minto recommended this measure in order to conciliate an important section of the Indian society—the western educated moderates.

Now the ball was in Morley's Court. Curiously enough, it was the Liberal Secretary of State who did not accept the proposal on account of widespread opposition to it. The Cabinet, the Council of India, the House of Lords and the various ex-Viceroy's like Elgin, Ripon and Lansdowne were all opposed to the proposal. Morley succumbed to this opposition. He found against the proposal "intractable forces" and "hosts of opposing opinion". Though he was perfectly satisfied with the justness and necessity of the proposal (the arguments against it appeared to him "moonshine"), he believed that the gain of a native on the Viceroy's Executive Council, whether in improving administration or in pacifying the aspirations of Indians, was not "decisive enough to justify the risk of provoking a European fuss".<sup>17</sup> It was the fear of a "European fit of wrath" which was responsible for keeping the native member back. It was not, in Morley's opinion, "the most solid or satisfactory reason" for withholding the contemplated appointment, and he wished that it did not prevail but "Cabinets and Ministers", he said, "have to take the world as they find it."<sup>18</sup>

Though the appointment received a setback, Minto did not relax his efforts in this direction. He continued to impress upon the Secretary of State the necessity of the measure. He believed it to be "one of the keys for a

happier administration of India" and a "very great thing—far greater in my opinion than any other reforms we are likely to be able to inaugurate". He reiterated his conviction that they could not continue to govern India without giving a greater share to the leading representatives of the country in the executive government.<sup>19</sup> In October 1908 the Government of India sent to the Secretary of State reform proposals dealing with the expansion of the Legislative Councils and increase in their powers. These proposals along with the question of the appointment of an Indian to the Viceroy's Executive Council were considered by a Special Committee of the Council of India, and still they were against an Indian Member by five to three.<sup>20</sup> But Morley had now made up his mind and in December 1908 he informed Parliament that if there were a vacancy on the Executive Council of the Viceroy, he would advise the King that an Indian should be appointed.<sup>21</sup> In April 1909, S. P. Sinha, Advocate-General, was admitted to the Council as Law Member.

Thus it is not true to hold that this appointment was principally 'Morley's doing' or 'Morley's appointment' or 'Morley's achievement'. It is not, however, suggested here that it was entirely Minto's doing. But his contribution towards this aspect of the reforms should be recognised. His private papers clearly show that he decided to recommend this measure after a searching examination of the conditions then prevailing in India. And then he persisted in the efforts to see this appointment through. It is time we abandon the erroneous impression that Minto acted under pressure or that Morley was the sole author of this important aspect of the Reforms.

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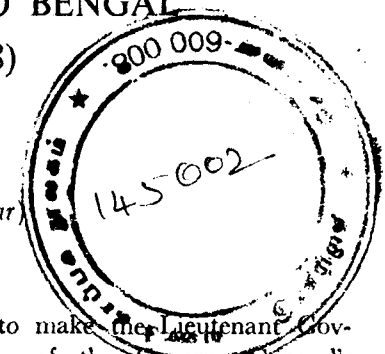
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## SOME PROBLEMS RELATING TO BENGAL ADMINISTRATION (1868)

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The Indian Councils' Act of 1861, put an end to centralised legislation initiated by the Charter of 1833. "The establishment of local Legislative Councils," observes a modern scholar, "was the first step in the direction of decentralisation."<sup>1</sup> But there was still a strong and powerful group in the Government of India willing to re-establish the authority of the Supreme Government at the cost of the local legislative and executive bodies. Failure to make adequate relief operations during the Orissa famine of 1866 provided them with an opportunity to discredit the Government of Bengal. In the words of John Lawrence, the Governor-General of India (1864-69): "The head of the Bengal Government laboured under what may be described as an incapacity to believe in disaster; . . . and wasted valuable opportunities, both of inquiry and of action."<sup>2</sup> The Orissa famine gave rise to a controversy as to what should be the form of government for Bengal in the future. The Secretary of State, in his letter to the Government of India, dated 16th January 1868, sought the latter's opinion on the question of reorganisation of the Bengal administration. He himself suggested three alternatives. In view of the immense size and population of Bengal whether it would not be desirable, he enquired, to place its administration on a footing similar to those of the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay.<sup>3</sup> This suggestion, if carried out, meant the appointment of a full-fledged Governor for Bengal with an Executive Council. The second alternative was to take over the administration of Bengal by the Government of India;<sup>4</sup> and the third

alternative was to make the Lieutenant Governor a member of the Governor-General's Council with the title of Deputy Governor of Bengal.<sup>5</sup> This would have restored the relations that subsisted between the Governor-General and the Presidency of Bengal before 1853. If the last alternative was thought to be expedient, what would be the fate of the Bengal Legislative Council? Would it be abolished altogether? asked the Secretary of State.<sup>6</sup>

The Government of India sought the opinions of various officials including the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal Presidency on the questions raised by the Secretary of State in his Despatch. Lawrence himself wrote a minute stating his views on the subject. Lawrence did not like anything of Bengal—its people, its climate, its environment. "He tended to look on the whole of India as Punjab writ largely."<sup>7</sup> He did not favour the idea that Bengal should be placed under a Government similar to that of the Presidency of Madras or Bombay. "I am in favour of maintaining," he observed, "the present form of Government for Bengal, and the existing relationship between it and the general Government of India."<sup>8</sup> Naturally he rejected the suggestion of placing the administration of Bengal in the hands of the Government of India. Nor was he disposed to recommend the restoration of the relations which formerly subsisted between the Governor-General and Bengal, by making the Lieutenant Governor a member of the Governor-General's Executive Council with the title of Deputy Governor of Bengal.<sup>9</sup>

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As regards the Legislative Council of Bengal, the Viceroy felt that there was no real advantage in maintaining a separate legislature for Bengal. In his opinion, "it does not possess the same weight as the other local legislatures. All that it does could be done, and better done by the Legislative Council of India."<sup>10</sup> The Lieutenant Governor of Bengal was already overburdened with heavy administrative work. He was also a member of the Legislative Council of India when sitting at Calcutta. The business of the Legislative Council of Bengal absorbed some considerable portion of his precious time which might be usefully employed if the Bengal Council was done away with.<sup>11</sup> In the absence of a Legislative Council, the Lieutenant Governor should be given powers of summary legislation reserving great questions for the general Legislative Council of India.<sup>12</sup> Lawrence would grant power of summary legislation for all provinces which might be without a local legislature of their own.<sup>13</sup> But the Governor-General should retain full authority to interfere by way of supervision and control, whenever it might be deemed necessary to do so.<sup>14</sup> Finally, Lawrence made the significant suggestion of dividing Bengal Presidency into two administrative units. "I would separate," he observed, "Assam, Cachar, and certain adjacent districts, now belonging to Bengal, from that Lieutenant Governorship, and place them under a Chief Commissioner, subject to the direct control of the Governor-General in Council, re-casting the administration."<sup>15</sup>

Both William Muir, the Foreign Secretary (1865-68), and H. S. Maine, the Legal Member (1862-69), did not concur with the Governor-General in advocating the abolition of the Bengal Legislative Council. There was much local legislation which would be unsuited for the Imperial Legislative Council, and Bengal was too far advanced for the summary legislation proposed by the Governor-General. Such legislation was suitable only for outlying and undeveloped tracts.<sup>16</sup> The Bengal Legislature did its work exceedingly well and the effect of the transfer of the Bengal Business to the Supreme Council would be to break it down

altogether. As Maine pointed out, "We have already too much in the Supreme Legislature of what I hope I may call without disrespect the 'parish vestry' business of the North-West, the Punjab, and the Chief Commissionership."<sup>17</sup> The legislation of the Bengal Council would be a crushing addition to the already overburdened Legislative Council of India.<sup>18</sup> It was felt that the Imperial Legislative Council was not properly constituted for the discussion and decision on the numerous questions of a local nature which came up from the North-Western Provinces and the Punjab. Enactments involving matters of a purely provincial character could not have justice done to them in the Supreme Legislative Council.<sup>19</sup> As a remedy to this problem Muir suggested, and Maine was in complete agreement with him, that Legislative Councils should be established in the Punjab and North-Western Provinces by giving effect to Section 44 of the Indian Councils Act of 1861.<sup>20</sup> Maine pointed out a possible danger which might crop up as a result of the abolition of the Bengal Legislative Council. As he said, "If we undertake to legislate for all Bengal proper, we must, in justice to that wealthy and civilized Province, half fill the Council with Bengal civilians and educated Bengal Natives."<sup>21</sup> But there would be no more dangerous ingredient in the Council than a large number of educated Bengalees. "Nobody charged with the conduct of the Legislative Department will ever fail to be inundated with their proposals for legislative innovation; and, if these proposals are serious, all I can say is that there are many of them which Bentham himself would have thought premature."<sup>22</sup> He dismissed the suggestion of the Viceroy for granting power of summary legislation to the Bengal Presidency and its dependencies as unpractical—a suggestion which smacked of despotism consisting in the blending of executive and legislative power.<sup>23</sup> Finally, he warned that it would be a serious matter to withdraw from the people of Bengal a formal legislature when they had once got it.<sup>24</sup>

With regard to the question whether the head of the Government of Bengal should have an

Executive Council, Muir answered in the negative. In his opinion a Governor or Lieutenant-Governor without a Council was the most vigorous and efficient form of local government.<sup>25</sup> If he were a man of Indian experience, then a Council was not necessary at all. But if he were chosen from persons unacquainted with India, then a Council would be required "because otherwise the Governor or Lieutenant-Governor would be, to a great extent, dependent on irresponsible advisers."<sup>26</sup> Muir was opposed to the proposed merger of Bengal administration with the Government of India. The Lieutenant-Governor should not be diverted from the proper duties of his own government. Even as regards the Legislative Council of India, he need not participate in its work except such as concerned his own government, or special measures of importance on which the Government of India might particularly desire the benefits of his experience.<sup>27</sup> Muir was in complete agreement with the Governor-General in regard to the separation of Assam and its administration being placed under a Chief Commissioner. It would have two advantages. Firstly, the burden of the Lieutenant-Governor would be considerably lightened; and secondly, that part of the country would have freer action and better prospects under the direct control of the Government of India than of Bengal.<sup>28</sup> G. N. Taylor, a member of the Governor-General's Executive Council, however, did not favour the transfer of Assam and Cachar to the control of the Government of India under a Chief Commissioner owing to the intimate commercial and social relations which bound them to Bengal. On the other hand, "I think it would be preferable to transfer Bihar to the North-Western Provinces, with whose people and language it has more in common," he observed.<sup>29</sup>

In a strongly worded minute, dated 13 March 1868, William Grey, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, gave his opinion against the abolition of the Bengal Legislature. As he pointed out, "It appears to me that it will be a very startling example of the vacillating policy

which has been often charged against us, if six years after introducing the experiment of a local, and in some sense a representative, Legislature in Bengal, we suddenly abolish it."<sup>30</sup> Moreover, the educated Bengalis and the English residents of the Province had a reasonable claim to be admitted to a large share in framing laws which were necessary for the local administration.<sup>31</sup> In the Imperial Legislature they were not likely to have their due share unless that body were enlarged to hold an undue proportion of Bengal representatives.<sup>32</sup> Grey pointed out that Canning's object was to make the seat in the Supreme Legislative Council a high dignity which the most powerful nobles of Hindustan should look as an honour to be desired. This policy had been to a great extent "acted upon to the present time."<sup>33</sup> But the gentlemen who had been appointed to the Bengal Legislature were selected on different considerations. The Bengali gentlemen nominated to the local legislature represented the advanced education and civilisation to which Bengal had attained and they had taken a real and an effective share in the business of legislation. "If there is any part of India," Grey observed, "in which the Native public are entitled to have a real share in legislation immediately affecting them, it is the Lower Province of Bengal."<sup>34</sup>

Grey suggested that instead of abolishing the Bengal Legislative Council the number of local legislatures should be increased in accordance with the intention of the Indian Councils' Act of 1861. "Under every government," he argued, "there should be a local legislature separate from, though, of course, comprising, the executive authority."<sup>35</sup> Local legislatures should have powers to impose local taxes for local purposes, such as, education of the masses, vaccination, improvement and construction of roads, etc. Grey observed that the ultimate aim of the Act of 1861 was to restrict the Central Legislature absolutely to matters of general administration.<sup>36</sup> He referred to Wood's Despatch of 9th August 1861, to substantiate his view.<sup>37</sup> He regretted that the principle of

the Act of 1861 had not been strictly adhered to or followed.

Grey also suggested some modifications in the character of the relation borne by local legislatures to the central authority. Under the Indian Councils' Act, a law passed by a local legislature required the assent of the Governor-General individually, and if the Governor-General withheld his assent, he was required to signify in writing his reason for doing so.<sup>38</sup> Grey wanted that the power of vetoing a law passed by a local legislature should vest in the Governor-General in Council. The Governor-General in Council should communicate to the Governor or Lieutenant-Governor concerned a statement of the grounds on which it was thought necessary to do so.<sup>39</sup> The Governor or Lieutenant-Governor might thereupon tender for consideration by the Governor-General in Council such further explanation and statement as might seem to him advisable, and the Governor-General in Council should, after due consideration of such further explanation and statement, communicate his final decision in the matter.<sup>40</sup>

The Lieutenant-Governor thus wanted more autonomy for the provinces at the cost of the Centre. Diametrically opposite of Grey's 'Jeffersonian' ideas were the views expressed by H. M. Durand, the Military Member (1865-70) and W. N. Massey, the Finance Member (1865-68) of the Viceroy's Executive Council. They wanted that the authority and controlling power of the Governor-General in Council should be reinforced rather than weakened in relation to the local governments. As Durand said, "Mr. Grey would place Bengal on the footing of Madras and Bombay, and raise it into a Governorship. I would reduce Madras and Bombay to Lieutenant Governorships."<sup>41</sup> No Executive and Legislative Councils were needed for the Punjab and the North-Western Provinces. They must not be encouraged "to assume the position of independent or, at best, loosely confederate states, owning but a nominal subordination to the Government of India".<sup>42</sup>

The conversion of Bengal, containing the capital of India, into a full government would impair the power and authority of the Viceregal Government,—a result which would be ill-compensated by any improvement in the local administration.<sup>43</sup> Massey apprehended that "the Viceroy would become a mere shadow—the Agent of the Secretary of State. This would be a fatal mistake".<sup>44</sup> He was, however, opposed to the abolition of the Bengal Legislative Council. As he pointed out, most of the business transacted at this Council was of a municipal character, connected with questions of local taxation which were dealt with much more satisfactorily than they would be executively by the Lieutenant-Governor.<sup>45</sup>

In a second minute, Maine subscribed to the views of the Lieutenant-Governor. He maintained that the concession of a full government to Bengal proper would have a very wholesome effect on English public opinion "which knows little of Lieutenant-Governors, but understands a Governor pretty well".<sup>46</sup> It would also relieve the Government of India of an onerous duty which "it is absolutely impossible for us to discharge".<sup>47</sup> Maine did not believe that the conversion of the Bengal administration into a Governorship would weaken the Government of India. The Government of India could still retain an authority over the North-West Provinces and the Punjab, one including 30 millions and the other 14 millions of people.<sup>48</sup> It would still govern directly through Chief Commissioners, Oudh with a population of 8 millions, the Central Provinces with 7½ millions, and British Burma with more than 2 millions. The Governor-General would still retain the power of superintending and controlling the Governors of Madras, Bombay and Bengal proper who ruled together 70 millions of men. More than all, the great centralized department of Finance would be in his hands, implying among other things an effective control over public works throughout the whole of India. When to these duties was added the supervision of a vast European and Native Army, and the conduct of the external and

internal diplomacy of India, "the Governor-General in Council must surely be admitted to be at the head of one of the most colossal governments of the world".<sup>49</sup> Maine asserted that the days of the centralized administration were gone. "It seems to me," he observed, "a man must be very unobservant who does not perceive that a time is near at hand when either the duties of the Government of India must be ill-discharged, or their sphere must be contracted."<sup>50</sup> Finally, Maine opposed the idea of separation of Assam from Bengal. It would adversely affect the flourishing tea industry. "It would be a great misfortune if a Governor-General, from a sympathy with the weaker race, admirable in itself, were to neglect the ingredient of justice in the European view of these questions."<sup>51</sup>

On going through the minutes of his senior colleagues Lawrence realized that a legislature, having once been conceded to Bengal, could not be taken away. Any attempt at deprivation would provoke much clamour and opposition, and would cause much misapprehension. "For this reason, and for this alone, I will assume that the Bengal Legislature must remain as it is," he observed in his Minute, dated 23 March 1868.<sup>52</sup> As E. C. Bayley, the Home Secretary (1862-72), stated very frankly, "In one way, no doubt, especially in Calcutta, good has been gained by the system of local Councils. Men who might have seriously embarrassed Governments by supporting independent public demonstrations now have opportunities of giving official expression to their sentiments in the local Councils, and, in practice, are hardly listened to."<sup>53</sup>

On the question of the opening of Legislative Councils in the Punjab and the North-West Provinces, Lawrence stuck to his guns. He clearly stated that he would not constitute anything of the kind in these Provinces.<sup>54</sup> True, the Act of 1861 contemplated the eventual formation of local legislatures in other Provinces besides Bengal. But the question of time was left to be solved by the Executive Government

of the day. He was clearly of opinion "that the time has not yet arrived for acting on the permission thus accorded".<sup>55</sup> Thus the Viceroy succeeded in postponing the creation of Legislative Councils for North-Western Provinces and the Punjab for a few years. This was indeed a blow to the principle of provincial autonomy. But once the principle was accepted in the Act of 1861, creation of new legislatures could be delayed only. As national consciousness spread westward, there was a persistent demand for local legislative councils by the people of those regions. The Government of India had later on no other alternative but to yield to the pressure of public opinion.

Lawrence also rejected the suggestion of most of his colleagues that Bengal should be placed under a Government similar to those of Madras and Bombay, because if the Government of Bengal were to be made too independent, the weight and prestige of the Government of India would be affected. Differences would arise between the two, and "the general result would be to lower the status of the British Government at the capital of India, and thence generally throughout the land".<sup>56</sup> The Viceroy expressed his doubt on the claim of William Grey that the work of the Bengal Government was becoming too vast in amount for a Lieutenant-Governor unaided by a Council to perform.<sup>57</sup> If the Lieutenant-Governor were really overburdened with work, the proper remedy was not to give him a Council, but to relieve him of some of the outer portions of his very extensive territories. He again recommended that Assam should be separated from Bengal at once which would afford sensible relief to the Bengal Government.<sup>58</sup> If the Bengal Government should be found to be still overweighted, it might be further possible to separate Bihar "which has no real affinity to Bengal proper, and which, together with some parts of the Province of Benares, might be formed into a separate Lieutenant-Governorship."<sup>59</sup> Lawrence also dismissed the proposal of Durand for reducing the Governorships of Madras and Bombay to Lieutenant-Governorship as impracticable.<sup>60</sup>

Lawrence strongly objected to the proposal of Grey that the laws passed by a local legislature, instead of being assented to or vetoed by the Governor-General individually, should be assented to or vetoed by the Governor-General in Council. The Viceroy was the representative of the Queen. This power, therefore, could not be modified without derogation of his just authority.<sup>61</sup> If in doubt, the Governor-General would certainly consult his Council; but after that, he should decide for himself, and on his own responsibility.<sup>62</sup>

When Lawrence was writing these minutes against adopting a policy of decentralisation, his tenure of office was nearing its close. He was not going to be personally affected by whatever changes might be made. He sincerely wanted to hand over to his successor that great office with its authority and prestige unimpaired. The upholders of a strong Central Government during the post-Revolt period were haunted by two possible dangers—an internal revolt, and

an aggression by a foreign enemy. To cope with either of the two, they felt the necessity of one absolute central authority in India. Such an authority could only be possessed by the Governor-General in Council, and in extreme emergency by the Governor-General himself. As Lawrence pointed out, "In no other way can the financial means of the Empire be husbanded and economized in time of peace. In no other way can the power of the Empire be effectively wielded in time of danger. And is not danger to India still possible? . . . I can foresee possible combinations of troubles, widely different from those of 1857, but equally formidable. If in such crisis the Governor-General in Council is really powerful, he may steer the State through the breakers."<sup>63</sup> The Viceroy, therefore, should be the head of a strong Central Government and not of a loose confederation of local governments, so that "the immense interest connected with our Eastern Empire"<sup>64</sup> might not be jeopardised, Lawrence concluded.

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56. *Ibid.*, para. 3.
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58. *Ibid.*, para. 5. Assam was placed under a Chief Commissioner in 1874.
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60. *Ibid.*, para. 12.
61. *Ibid.*, para. 24.
62. *Ibid.*
63. *Ibid.*, para. 37.
64. *Ibid.*

## EXTRADITION TREATIES BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND THE INDIAN STATES

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An exact assessment of the judicial relations between the Government of India and the Indian States in the 19th century is a complicated task. Specially perplexing was the question of extradition of offenders between them. It was so "partly due to the various degrees of sovereignty possessed by the States allied with, or subordinated to, the British Government, and by the different status of the subjects of Her Majesty who form the population of British India"<sup>1</sup> and "partly because of the enormous difference between our (i.e. the British) judicial system and of the system of the Native States, and the general absence in the latter of those guarantees for fair and open trial which we (i.e. the British) have provided in our (i.e. the British) provinces".<sup>2</sup> There were three categories of States which the British Government had to deal with, namely, (i) Foreign States, (ii) Native States of the first grade, which, being in subordinate alliance, retained a considerable degree of sovereignty, and (iii) the larger group of inferior feudatory or tributary states.

The principle of regulating extradition with foreign States, such as the frontier States of Nepal and Burma over which the British Government claimed no jurisdiction, was the principle of reciprocity. It was generally stipulated that neither Government was bound to deliver up its own subjects, but only the subjects of the Government making the demand. Actually the question of extradition with these States was an affair of International Law and was regulated by the interpretation of the treaties

and by the ordinary rules for meeting the demands of foreign powers.

Within the limits of India, there were some States with which the Government of India had concluded treaties of extradition (1869). But the general subordination of the States and the British paramountcy gave the Government of India power to demand the extradition of any person if it was considered necessary to make the demand as an act of State. The Agent to the Governor-General for Central India, in his annual administration report, stated the feeling of dissatisfaction prevalent among the larger Indian States on the law of extradition, then enforced, which gave immunity to criminals of the States for crimes committed within State territory.<sup>3</sup> Despite the existence of extradition treaties between the British Government and some of the Indian States, extradition of offenders to the latter was not permitted.

The right of extradition presupposed a degree of independence, and the British Government did not recognise the omnipotence of 'Native' Governments to deal with offences within their limits, nor did it admit its own powerlessness or want of jurisdiction beyond its own territories. In the larger States like Kashmir, Bahawalpur, Indore, Hyderabad, etc., although they were comparatively independent in their internal administration, the British Government had none the less extensive powers of interference, both by voluntary engagements and by virtue of its supremacy; and in the smaller States it had even assumed judicial administra-

tion.<sup>4</sup> Lee Warner observed: "In many of the protected States the Government of India shares with the sovereign his jurisdiction over his own subjects; and in some the entire administration of justice, both civil and criminal, is conducted under arrangements made by the executive Government, or as it is termed, by the Courts of the Governor-General in Council."<sup>5</sup> The criminal jurisdiction of the Jagirdar of Sandur was denied. He was forbidden to mutilate criminals and he could not inflict capital punishment without the previous sanction of the Government of Fort St. George.<sup>6</sup>

The great bulk of the Indian States had no extradition treaties and the procedure of extradition to them was defined by Act XXI of 1879. Nor was this procedure confined to the States which had no extradition treaties. The procedure of extradition as provided in the Act was much more liberal than the treaties. A State possessing a treaty was also given the option to elect either the process laid down in the treaty or that prescribed by the Act of 1879. It was not at liberty to pick and choose between the two modes of satisfying a particular demand for surrender. It was required either to consistently abide by the treaty, or to adopt the procedure prescribed by the Act of 1879 with the conditions attached.

But the most complicated question was the distinction made between the various classes of subjects whose extradition was demanded whether under the Act of 1879 or under the terms of a treaty with the States. Within the limits of British India a distinction was recognised between European British subjects, 'Native' British subjects, and other persons, not British subjects, but subjects of the State which made the demand for extradition.

The Government of India held that "jurisdiction over European British subjects charged with crimes committed in a Native State is one of the many undefined matters which the British Government in virtue of its position and with reference to the circumstances of

Native States has a right to regulate".<sup>7</sup> Theoretically every independent State had a right to deal, according to its own laws, with any person resident within its jurisdiction. But this right had never been admitted as inherent in any State within India. On account of the subordinate position of the States and their imperfect judicial system the British Government had long ago ruled out the principle of reciprocity, and in fact reciprocity had never been accepted in practice.

In 1836 the Court of Directors laid down that: "(I) British subjects apprehended in British territory on any charge or offence committed within the possession of any native prince, are amenable to British tribunals;" and "(II) The subjects of the Native States, wherever apprehended, are always amenable to the British Courts for crimes and heinous offences committed within the British territory."<sup>8</sup> They justified this want of reciprocity not less "as a proper prerogative of the Paramount power than on the ground of the inequality in the state of civilisation, and of jurisprudence under the British Government and that of Native States".<sup>9</sup> Again in 1841 they objected "to the delivery to foreign States of British subjects alleged to have committed crimes in these territories as at variance with the existing rules, and liable to the objection that British subjects apprehended in British territory are denied the protection of British laws".<sup>10</sup> Thus the right of extra-territoriality belonged to every European British subject in the feudatory States of India; and, as such subjects were amenable to the Courts of British India for offences committed by them in the Indian States, no question of extradition arose (Article 11 of 1869 was naturally repealed).

Aitchison observes in this connection: "In Mahomedan and heathen countries this extra-territoriality has always been widely extended by Christian powers for the protection of their countrymen. Our own Parliament has passed the Foreign Jurisdiction Act for the express purpose of constituting consular and other

courts to try British subjects committing offences in certain countries beyond Her Majesty's dominions. It is very obvious that in heathen countries this extra-territoriality must be very widely applied as regards Europeans."<sup>11</sup> Lee Warner also observes: "It must be admitted that the relief which capitulations and treaties provide for Europeans in foreign non-Christian countries is also needed in the protected States of India."<sup>12</sup> The British Government provided this 'relief' to European British subjects by refusing to extradite them to the States for offences committed in their territories. The British Government, thus, did not extradite an European offender to an Indian State; it rather demanded the extradition to itself of such offenders. The British Government demanded the surrender of deserters from the Imperial army whilst it did not extradite to an Indian State a deserter from the State's army.<sup>13</sup> The law of extradition was thus one-sided.

Again, with the independent border States, such as Nepal and Burma the British Government concluded extradition treaties, and a similar treaty providing for strict reciprocity was also concluded with Hyderabad in 1867.<sup>14</sup> The British Government later realised the difficulties arising out of the conclusion of such a treaty with Hyderabad. First, Hyderabad was not a sovereign State, and secondly, the conclusion of such a treaty amounted to the admission of the right of extradition of the subordinate States. Several more extradition treaties were also concluded with the Rajput and other States between 1867 and 1869. But later extradition between them and British India was regulated by Act XXI of 1879, after the passing of that Act, in preference to the arrangement embodied in the earlier agreements.<sup>15</sup> Hence those treaties had no practical utility and remained a dead letter. In the opinion of the Government of India treaties of extradition with the Indian States seemed entirely inapplicable. It asserted that being a Paramount power it would not yield to the demand for the surrender of any offender, whether a British subject or not. Being a Paramount power the British

Government had the authority to compel one State to surrender an offender to another, and for this no extradition treaty was deemed essential.

The extradition treaty concluded with the Nizam was revised in 1887, and the Government of India communicated to the Nizam: "Whereas a treaty relating to the offenders was concluded on the 25th May 1867 between the British Government and the Hyderabad State; and whereas the procedure prescribed by Treaty for the extradition of offenders from British India to the Hyderabad State had been found by experience to be less simple and effective than the procedure prescribed by the law as to the extradition of offenders in force in British India; it is hereby agreed between the British Government and the Hyderabad State that the provisions of the Treaty prescribing a procedure for the extradition of offenders shall no longer apply to cases of extradition from British India to the Hyderabad State, but that the procedure prescribed by the law as to the extradition of offenders for the time being in force in British India shall be followed in every such case."<sup>16</sup>

The opinion expressed by Aitchison highlighted the attitude of the British Government on this important matter. He observed: "The fewer extradition treaties executed in future with our feudatory States the better, they should be reserved for the independent States on our frontier...."<sup>17</sup> "Our best policy," he opined, "is to have no such treaties with our feudatories, but depend on our position as the Paramount power for enforcing our demands on them, and to trust to our own laws to enable us to comply with their fair and proper demands."<sup>18</sup> Already in 1853 the British Government had informed the ruler of Bhopal that only the Political Agent had jurisdiction over European British subjects. Even in Travancore, which had recognised precedents, the Government of India insisted that only European Magistrates should try Europeans. Jurists like Sir Henry Maine opined that legally Travancore possessed

every right to try Europeans and no proclamation of Parliament could take away its jurisdiction, and, thereupon a compromise was reached by the Maharaja agreeing to appoint a European Magistrate for the purpose.<sup>19</sup>

In the case of European British subjects the laws of the State ceased to be operative. For instance, the British Government never allowed an Englishman to be imprisoned<sup>20</sup> or put to death in Kashmir or Udaipur for shooting a cow, although cow-killing constituted a capital offence under the laws of the State. "It would be impossible, consistently with the retention of supremacy, to allow our countrymen to be tried on some trivial charge (such as killing a cow) and be subjected to some barbarous punishment, such as mutilation, by a tribunal whose proceedings afforded no guarantee for peace."<sup>21</sup> The English law was thus exceedingly zealous of the rights and liberties of English subjects, specially in countries where there were no guarantees either for a fair trial or that the crime with which a man might be charged was an offence against a natural or a rational code of law. Except for very trivial offences, a European British subject could only be tried by the High (Presidency) Courts for any offence committed by him in the Indian States and the jurisdiction of the High Courts over such offenders was defined in the Notification of the Governor-General in Council, dated 10th January 1867.<sup>22</sup> By Act 11 of 1869, Section 61, power to commit them for trial was conferred on the Justices of Peace in the Indian States.

In regard to the States in India an Englishman carried extra-territoriality with him. And no Court could try him, unless, indeed, his conduct was so flagrant that it would be scandalous to interest oneself in his behalf. The Indian States were further debarred from trying European British subjects by the Government of India Resolution (dated 8th August 1871) which stipulated: "No Native State can be allowed to try a European British subject according to its own forms of procedure and punish him according to its own laws."<sup>23</sup> The

British Government, in justification of this Resolution, observed that in view of the peculiar provisions of the law of the Indian States and the condition of State prisons it was not considered safe to invest those States with "uncontrolled power to deal with European British subjects".<sup>24</sup> It apprehended that a great outcry might be raised if it were understood that European British subjects were liable to trial before State Courts all over the country.

But the Government of India at the same time remarked that "the exercise of our right to control shall not be carried further than is absolutely necessary and care must be taken to avoid any needless assertion of the right to the injury of the honour, dignity and independence of the Native States which the British Government is pledged to maintain."<sup>25</sup> The Government of India was of opinion that "provided the laws and courts of a Native State are on a satisfactory footing, a European British subject who has taken service in the State should as a rule to be left to the jurisdiction of the Native Courts, subject only to the right to interference on the part of the Political Officer if there be any special and sufficient reason for the exercise of such interference in the particular case."<sup>26</sup>

But such exercise of power over European British subjects depended much on the nature of the case and the character of the judicial administration of the State concerned. And while obeying the Court of the State it had been the right of such European British subjects to invoke the aid of the British authorities and it had been the duty of the Political Officer immediately connected with the State to give aid if required. It was also the duty of the State courts to consult that Officer directly while dealing with one who claimed to be an European British subject and to follow his advice. If the Political Officer concerned found that the offence with which the European British subject was charged was one against British law, he should, as a rule, require the transfer of the offender for a trial by a competent British Court, and should not leave him

to be tried by the State courts except under very special circumstances and with the express permission of the local government (or an officer standing in the position of a local government).<sup>27</sup> But if the Political Officer found the offence to be one against the law of the State and not against British law, he was to decide whether in the particular case justice could best be done by leaving the offender to be tried by the State courts, referring, if necessary, to the local government for guidance.<sup>28</sup>

Similarly, if an American or a Frenchman, who was not a British subject, committed a

crime in an Indian State and took shelter in a British territory, and if his surrender was demanded by the State, there was the same objection to giving him up for trial and punishment under Native laws as there was to giving up an Englishman.<sup>29</sup> Panikkar observes in this connection: "Just as the subjects of Indian rulers are under the protection of the British Government when in foreign countries, the subjects of other independent powers are diplomatically under the protection of Britain when in Indian States, and the British Government is answerable for their safety and security while sojourning and travelling through those States."<sup>30</sup>

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5. Lee Warner, *The Native States of India*, p. 337.
6. Aitchison, *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*.
7. Judl. A, September 1873, No. 8.
8. Judl. A, April 1862, Nos. 57-65: Office Note by C. U. Aitchison, Judl. A, August 1871, Nos. 17-27.
9. Office Note by C. U. Aitchison, Judl. A, August 1871, Nos. 17-27.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. Lee Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 369.
13. *Ibid.*
14. C. U. Aitchison.
15. Lee Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 372.
16. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. 9.
17. Office Note by C. U. Aitchison, Judl. A, August 1871, Nos. 17-27.
18. *Ibid.*
19. Panikkar, *Indian States and the Government of India*, p. 93.
20. The very idea of the incarceration of European British convicts in the obnoxious atmosphere of the jails of the Indian States and the supply of bad quality of food horrified the British Government and this was one of the reasons which seems to have stood in the way of the extradition of European convicts to Indian States. "Not one of them, not even Travancore, ..... has a prison in which a European would work out his punishment." (Office Note: Judl. A, Nos. 11-21, September 1870).
21. Office Note by C. U. Aitchison, Pol. A, June 1872, Nos. 195-201.
22. Judl. A, July 1866, No. 2.
23. Judl. A, September 1873, No. 9.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*
26. Judl. A, October 1874, No. 29. Lee Warner, *op. cit.*
27. Judl. A, September 1873, No. 8.
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## DHARANIKOTA AND ITS WESTERN CONTACTS

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Dharanikota, District Guntur (16° 34' 45" lat. and 88° 24' 21" E long.) of Andhra Pradesh, situated on the right bank of the river Krishna, has long been a lure of the archaeologist and the historian owing to the existence of a large rectangular fort, of which a good portion made up of massive embankments of earth, brick and stone, is intact. Its proximity to the modern town of Amaravati, which has attained world-wide fame as a treasure-house of Buddhist religion and art was an additional attraction. Time and again hopes were expressed that this township 'from more than one standpoint would amply repay excavation'.<sup>1</sup> Among the Indo-Western trading stations, Dharanikota attracts special attention next to Arikamedu<sup>2</sup> so far excavated on the Coromandel Coast.

The present operations at Dharanikota go a long way to establish that it was having trade contacts with some Western country much earlier than the Indo-Roman contacts.<sup>3</sup> Imported materials like the glass objects of various colours, and millifiori technique of the early periods B.C., imported glazed wares like the arretine, rouletted and amphora characteristic of the Mediterranean wine-trade of the period of the first century A.D. were recovered from this place during the excavations. The find of the glass objects was brought to light at Arikamedu excavations in association with the wares like the arretine and the rouletted, which date to the first quarter of the first century A.D. In this particular aspect Dharanikota has become unique for the find of glass objects in stratified digging.

#### Stratigraphy of the Site :

The structural build up of the high wall on the western side falls into three periods and was further divided into Periods IA, IB, IIA, IIB and III, of which the earlier two periods IB, IIA and IIB relate to when its function was hardly for defence purpose but rather for serving as an embankment-cum-wharf abutting a deeply cut-navigation channel. The channel was connected to the main river Krishna for leading in the boats laden with merchandise during the tide and to be berthed at the wharf alongside the embankment. In the light of the latest carbon datings the antiquity of the site goes back to 400 B.C.

|                                         |                               |                  |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
|                                         | 2355 ± 95                     | BP               |
| T.F. 246                                | 2425 ± 100                    |                  |
| T.F. 247                                | 2340 ± 100                    | BP               |
|                                         | 2375 ± 100                    |                  |
| T.F. 248                                | 2155 ± 100                    |                  |
|                                         | 2095 ± 100                    | BP               |
| Chronology : Circa 400 B.C. to 100 B.C. |                               |                  |
|                                         |                               | (Pre-Arretine)   |
| Period I                                | (Periods IA and IB)           |                  |
| Period II                               | Circa 400 B.C. to C. 200 A.D. |                  |
|                                         | (IIA and IIB)                 | (Arretine)       |
| Period III                              | Circa 200 A.D. to C. 400 A.D. |                  |
|                                         |                               | (Early Historic) |

#### Archaeological Evidence :

Excavations here brought to light a big cut-navigation-channel in the lower levels of the site which was connected to the main river Krishna for leading in boats laden with mer-

chandise during the tide and to be berthed at the wharf alongside the embankment. The channel was cut to a depth of about 15 feet at mid-centre, width of about 85 feet at top and 70 feet at the bottom in a trapezoid shape (*vide* photograph 1). The huge tunnel-like rock-cut navigation channel was connected with the river which at the point of junction flows down east. No evidence of the temporary mooring of the boats is forthcoming. In all probability the method of lowering anchor to berth the boats all along the wharf was adopted. The habitation deposits in this period, i.e. period IA on the ridge clearly indicate that the users of the ridged wharf by the side of the rock-cut navigation channel had their homes there itself (*vide* photograph 1). To confirm the fact stated above a series of hearths were exposed and a huge quantity of ashy deposits were found by the side of the hearths (*vide* photograph 1). Since no left-out material was found here, these earliest users of the place might not have had their permanent homesteads on the wharf. They might have been only the incoming or the out-going boatmen, or the watch and ward. An interesting passage from Kautilya's *Arthashastra*<sup>4</sup> clarifies this.

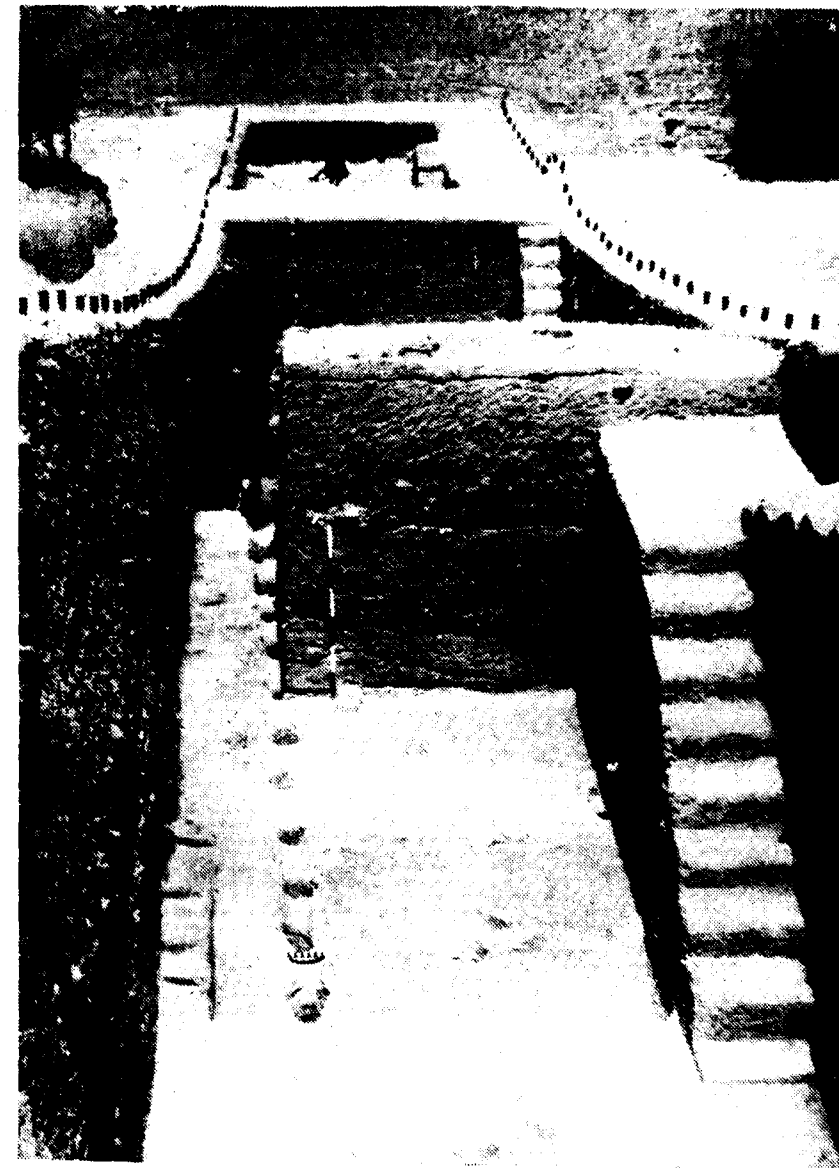
The port seems to have entered upon a busy period in period IIA of the fort wall. It is evidenced by the construction of a huge wharf raised upon wooden posts which is clearly indicated by the row of post-holes. The wharf appears to have been built of wooden planks or cross beams resting on huge posts, since no remains of stone or brick is traceable in this period. Excavations here also revealed that the huge wooden-wharf was constructed at right angles to the navigation channel to a length of about 40 feet from the edge of the cut-out channel. Only one row of post-holes was exposed in the present excavations. The other row or rows of post-holes for setting up the wooden piers on which the wharf platform was laid appear to have stood beyond a span of 10 feet at least, since within this distance traces of parallel alignment of post-holes are not seen. Further excavation only can deter-

mine the width of the span between the two parallel rows of posts over which the wooden wharf must have been laid.

The glass objects are the only remarkable antiquities unearthed in the excavation from this period, i.e. Period IB, while the wharf was in full operation. The nature of the trade and the merchandise that passed through this wharf is clearly brought out by the material remains left over. Of these relics of trade the most noteworthy are the fine bangle pieces doubtless imported through oceanic and riverine trade. Their bewildering varieties of shape, colour and brilliance surpass description. They are broad and opaque, some are jet-black and some are mottled, some are cameo-cut, others are millifiori in blue, grey and greyish with white spots and stains. Their shapes in sections are found, plano-concave, plano-convex with and without facets, channelled with beadings at both the edges and in similar patterns of high taste (*vide* photograph 2).

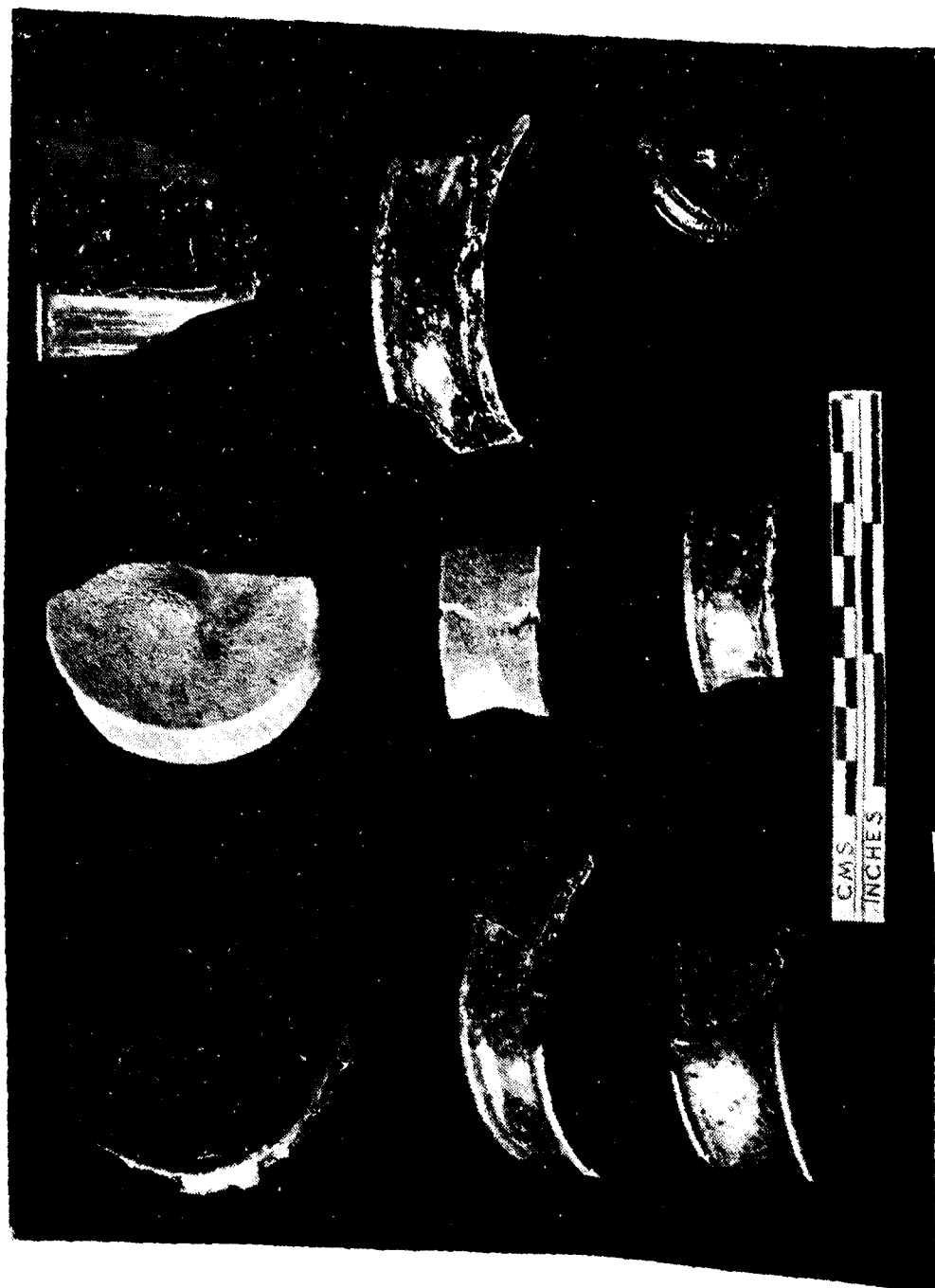
That there must have been a phenomenal growth in the volume of trade in Period IB is more than confirmed not only by the provision of the huge wooden-wharf but also by the import of hitherto unknown wares, like the glass bangles. But no less significant a find in this phase is a collection of a number of broken and discarded limestone marble pieces of which one bears the traces of dressing. These pieces being of the same material as the famous sculptures in the Amaravati *stupa*, it is tempting to suggest that limestone marble stones, whether raw or dressed, were also imported, as a commodity of internal riverine trade, not foreign, and the huge strong wooden-wharf purposely provided for handling this material. If so, this phase in the life of the port might be considered as coeval with the peak period of the structural embellishment of the neighbouring Amaravati *stupa*.

That these glass objects, namely, the bangles and especially the ear-rings of glass were prized and actually worn by the inhabitants of the



Dharanikota, 1963

General view of the cutting across the western fort wall showing details of hearths of Period IA ; Postholes of Period IB ; Brick rivetment Period IIA ; and overall view of the cut navigation channel.



Glass Ear-rings and Bangles.

place and served to satisfy the prevailing fashion is borne out by the sculptures at Amaravati where persons are portrayed adorned with such typical ornaments." This merchandise in high class ware in particular, though evidently imported from the Mediterranean, had its market in South India and on the east coast. Their occurrence so far anywhere else has not been reported.

The port had entered upon a new period of even greater and more intense commercial activity in Period IIA of the fort-wall. The plan of the wharf was totally altered. The wooden wharf of the previous phase, namely, phase II appears to have gone into disuse or become out-dated and removed totally. Secondly, instead of the wooden wharf a structural one of bricks of size 20" x 10" x 3" was constructed all along the navigation channel in its inner edge. From behind the brick structure an earthen embankment was raised. The apex of this ramp was limited to form a gradual activity to the brick wharf. From the apex, the ramp was given a gradual slope on the inner side also, so that the ramp functioned both as a backing to the wharf and as a flood bank during high tide. It also admirably served as a ramp for hauling up the merchandise received at the wharf and for lowering it down on the outer side. The replacement of wooden wharf by brick wharf all along the entire length of the navigation channel shows that the volume of trade handled at this port increased considerably.

It is necessary to bear in mind that the finds in this made-up ramp belong to some habitation area elsewhere and the deposits brought over from there may belong to one or several periods earlier than the laying of the ramp. These finds have a dating value only to the extent of determining that this structural phase of the port was later than the finds. The finds in this mud-ramp include glass bangles of the finest hues, fragments of glass cups of various colours, fine glass ear-rings of exceptionally brilliant colour and finish, arretine ware sherds,

rouletted ware in large numbers and a Roman amphora handle piece. The occurrence of the imported articles like glass bangles, ear-rings, cups amphora, arretine and rouletted wares indicate that the import of these commodities commenced after Period IB of the life of the port and the flow of this foreign trade may be taken to have been in full swing at the time of the laying of this ramp of Period IIA or prior to it. One more aspect is noted here in this period of the port, that in Period IIA of the port excepting glass objects, arretine, rouletted and non-stamped pottery were recovered. The above mentioned wares were not present in either Period IA or Period IB but appeared in the succeeding phase, namely, in Period II. Their occurrence in Period II of the earthen ramp relegates the first Period IA and IB as pre-arretine and Period II as arretine.

#### Conclusion :

That the ornaments, namely, the ear-rings and bangles of glass were prized by the people and actually worn by the inhabitants of the place and served to satisfy the prevailing fashion is borne out by the sculptures at Amaravati where persons are portrayed adorned with such typical ornaments. Further it has been suggested above that traffic in limestone marble for the embellishment of the *stupa* at Amaravati was at its peak during this period, i.e. Period IB, and since a large quantity of structural pieces of *stupa* bear inscriptions referable, on palaeographical grounds, to 2nd-1st centuries B.C., for the close of this phase first century B.C. does not appear to be wide off the mark. This shows that these glass objects might have reached India not as a result of Roman trade but much earlier to the Indo-Roman contacts. Their occurrence in this Period, namely, Period IA, and their absence at Arikamedu, the Indo-Roman trading stations *par-excellence*, are significant. These articles must have reached India not as a result of Roman trade but through other earlier foreign contacts, not excluding the possibility of late Egyptian contact. These glass objects must

have been imported, since no evidence exists of the same being manufactured in the vicinity of Dharanikota during that period. The glass finds at this place might have been brought through the river Krishna and the cut-naviga-tion channel which came to light during the excavations. As the glass objects can reasonably

be given a date as early as the first century B.C., the discovery of the port at Dharanikota, through which they might have been imported, clearly proves that this port and the trade were much earlier than the period of the Indo-Roman contacts and much earlier than Arika-medu which was excavated in 1948.

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2. Sir Mortimer Wheeler : *Ancient India*, No. 2, p. 217.
3. In the excavations at Dharanikota glass objects were brought to light in Phase II of the fort wall. This merchandise, high class glass ware in particular, though evidently imported from the Mediterranean region had its market in South India and on the east coast. Their occurrence anywhere else during this period has not been reported. Though glass bangles were not reported at many excavated sites, the following sites have reported the occurrence of glass ear-rings or glass ear-reels as shown below :

It is also known that Alexandria chiefly manu-factured glass for export as a kind of expensive curiosity. Alexandrian glass was imported into India and sent to China as early as the Hellenis-tic period. The traffic of Egypt with Arabia and with India was of great importance, as is brought out in the interesting account of an Alexandrian merchants, *Periplus Maris Erythraei*. The Arabian merchants served as intermediaries between the Egyptian traders and those of India (*Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, Oxford, Vol. I, pp. 372-74 ; Vol. II, pp. 95-97).

4. Kautilya's *Arthashastra* clarifies that every port had its own customs, rules and these were en-forced on the users of the ports by the Superin-

| Place            | Archaeological Stratum | Period          | Objects            | References                                               |
|------------------|------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Taxila        | II                     | C. 300-200 B.C. | ear-reels          | Marshall Taxila Volumes.                                 |
| 2. Ujjain        | II                     | C. 500-200 B.C. | ear-reels, bangles | IAR 1956-57, p. 27.<br>IAR 1957-58, p. 36.               |
| 3. Maheshwar     | IV                     | 400-600 B.C.    | ear-reels          | Excavations at Maheshwar & Nandakota, 1952-53.           |
| 4. Kaundinyapura | II                     | 300 B.C.        | ear-reels          | H. D. Sankalia, pp. 219-20.                              |
| 5. Nasik         | II A                   | 400-200 B.C.    | ear-reels          | Report on Nasik & Jorwel, 1950-51, pp. 100-01, pt. XXII. |

It will be surprising to note that even if the finds of the above mentioned sites are put to-gether the finds of glass ear-rings at Dharani-kota much exceed them in number. A single site like Dharanikota brought to light nearly two dozens of ear-rings, not to speak of beauti-ful, multifarious coloured bangles from the early stratum.

tendent of the port. Evidently there was watch and ward to see that the rules were observed day and night.

5. *History and Culture of the Indian People*, Vol. II, p. 690.
6. *Bulletin of the Madras Govt. Museum* (N.S.) General Section IV, 1956. Plates XXXIV 1, 2 ; Plate XXXVI 1.

## THE BILARA ARCHIVES

G. P. PILANIA, I.P.S.,

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Bilara is an ancient town, situated on the main road from Jodhpur to Ajmer, at a distance of 50 miles from Jodhpur City. At present, Bilara is a Tehsil Headquarter in the District of Jodhpur (Rajasthan). According to Ms. *Aii-Ugra Prakash*<sup>1</sup> in Rajasthani dialect, the place was known as Bilpur, which subsequently came to be known as Balipur and the present name Bilara is a derivation from Balipur.

Tradition preserved in various works, at present in the possession of the Dewan of Bilara, informs us that Raipal, son of Rao Duhad of Marwar, was the forefather of the Jagirdar (Dewan) of Bilara. Chandoji, who was one of the sons of Raipal, came to Bilara and settled there. According to the information contained in *Aii-Puran* (a 17th century poetical work in Rajasthani dialect), Chandipal, a descendant of Rao Duhad, was the founder of the Bilara Dewanship. The present Dewan of Bilara is a descendant of Chandoji, in his 23rd generation.<sup>2</sup> They are of the Rathore clan, but at present head of a semi-religious community known as 'Sirvi', who are followers of a religious deity, 'Aiimata', and also call themselves as Doraband. They are in prepon-derance in the District of Jodhpur and Pali in Rajasthan and some parts of Malwa. They are mainly agriculturists. The Dora-band claim to belong to four branches of Rajputs—Parmar, Parihar, Gehlot and Solanki.

The disciples of 'Aiimata'<sup>3</sup> focus their attention towards Bilara, because the goddess settled there in her old age in the year 1464

A.D. (1521 V.S. Bhadwa Sud Duj Saturday) and after her death a temple was consecrated to her holy memory by the Thikanedar of Bilara, Madhoji, son of Janoji Rathore (Kam-dar of the then Jagirdar of Bilara).<sup>4</sup> He became a devotee of Jiji and, at her bidding, married for the second time a lady from the Sirvi caste. Naturally, his son Govind, who ruled over Bilara from 1477 to 1498 A.D., called himself as the Dewan of Jiji,<sup>5</sup> whom her followers called as 'Aiimata'.

Bilara was not only a centre of religious activity, but the Dewans also played a signi-ficant role in the political life of Medieval Rajasthan. They were Jagirdars under the rulers of Marwar and many Dewans had personal contacts with the rulers of other States as well. Therefore, Dewan Bhagwan Das of Bilara (1689-1716 A.D.), was given the title of 'Rai' by the ruler of Mewar. Kanwar Haridas of Bilara met Maharaja Malhar Rao Holkar at Lashkar, on the other side of the river Jamuna near Faridabad.<sup>6</sup> Naturally, the study of the political history of Bilara throws light on the inter-State relations during the decline of the Mughal Empire, following the death of Emperor Aurangzeb. Dewan Rajsingh went to Jamrud along with Maharaja Jaswant Singh I of Marwar.<sup>7</sup> His son and successor, Bhagwan Das, was a close friend of Durga Das Rathore. He gave shelter to the family of Durga Das,<sup>8</sup> when the Rathore hero was in distress following the death of his Master Maharaja Jaswant Singh, I. One of the daughters of Durga Das was married to Maharajkumar Sangram Singh,

son of Maharana Amar Singh II of Mewar.

It is also preserved in the accounts of the Bilara Archives that Rai Bhagwan Das had contacts with Rao Chhatrasal of Kota and the latter presented him a horse, which was in turn presented to Maharana Amar Singh of Mewar by the Dewan of Bilara. This leads one to conclude that the Dewans played a significant role in bringing together the rival ruling families during the so-called dark period of medieval Indian history. Maharaj-kumar Abhai Singh of Marwar (son and successor of Maharaja Ajit Singh) also visited Bilara on Maha Badi 12 V.S. 1764 (A.D. 1707). At that time presents befitting the dignity of the prince of Marwar were offered.

The account of marriage ceremonies, as preserved in the Bahi of Bilara, throws ample light on Rajput customs, social rituals and on the economic life of the people of Bilara during first quarter of the 18th century. It also informs us about market rates of various commodities, which were consumed at the time of marriage.

A good deal of information is preserved about the economic life of Bilara in the Bahi, which is still preserved in the Archives of the Thikana. Kanwar Hari Das of Bilara went to Nimbach and from there to Kurki, thence to Ajmer and reached Kishangarh. From there he marched to Bagru via Narain. During the march, he realised that weights and measures differed from place to place. At Bagru, a seer weighed 24 Paisa, while at Ajmer it weighed 44 Paisa and at Kishangarh 30 Paisa. Ghee was sold at the rate of 4½ seers per rupee. At Jaipur the rate of Ghee was 6½ seers for Rs. 1.25.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, it is clear that the Thikana Bilara occupied an important place in the social and political life of medieval Rajasthan. The Dewans of the Thikana were the religious heads of the Sirvi community, which lived in Rajasthan and Malwa. They were also important Jagirdars under the rulers of Marwar. Very often their services were utilised by the rulers of Jodhpur. They also played a significant role in bringing together the Hindu rulers of the 18th century India.

The glorious deeds of the ruling family are preserved in the religious and bardic literature. *Aii-Charitra* composed by Khuman Singh Adha, *Aii-Puran* composed by Charan Aiidan, *Aii-Anand Vilas*<sup>10</sup> composed by Bhawani Das Pushkarna, *Aii-Chatritva* composed by a Bareth Dheerji and *Aii-Ugra-Prakash* composed by Vyas Tarachand—are religious works, sacred for the followers of 'Aiimata', but they also incidentally throw light on the contemporary social and political events. The geneological table of the Dewans of Bilara and the horoscope of Dewan Raj Singh leads us to think that they were Surya-Vamshi (Sun-born) Rajputs. *Bilara-Dewan-Sahib-Ki-Sankshipt-Khyati* is a brief political history of the Thikana, still awaiting publication. The manuscripts, documents, Bahis and other original records of considerable importance, which could throw light on the political history, economic condition and socio-religious movements of those times, are lying unattended, bound in Bastas, heaped in the Record Rooms of the Bilara Archives. The author along with Dr. V. S. Bhargava visited Bilara and found that a systematic study of the records in the Bilara Archives could yield fruitful material to researchers history.

# REFERENCES

1. *Aii-Ugra-Prakash* was composed by Vyas Tarachand, a Pushkarna Brahmin, who was Kamdar of Shivdan Singh, Dewan of Bilwara (1852-1869 A.D.). It is a poetical work of great literary merit in Rajasthani dialect, giving a brief biographical sketch of 'Aiimata' and her moving and settling at Bilara. A historical account of the Dewans of Bilara from Lakhdhir to Shivdan Singh is also recorded. The exploits of Dewan Rohitas and his relations with Jodhpur Ruler Mota Raja Udai Singh have been mentioned in detail. For details of *Aii-Ugra-Prakash*, refer to an article in the *Nagri Pracharni Patrika*. Year 71—Vol. III-IV (2023 V.S.).
2. This information has been supplied by Dewan Madhav Singh of Bilara on the basis of Geneological Table of Dewans of Bilara, which is in his possession.
3. According to *Mundiyyar-Thikana-Ki-Khyat* (which is a popular and authentic source of information for the history of Marwar), Jiji was the daughter of Bika Dabi of Khed (Gujarat). She shifted from Khed to Amba (Abu) and from there to Bilara via Dialana (a village in Godwad region of Pali District, which was presented as an offering to 'Aiimata' by the then Ruler of Mewar). Being very beautiful in her young age, she is said to have attracted the voluptuous eyes of a contemporary Muslim Sultan of Mandu (Malwa), Mohammad Shah. She demonstrated her supernatural powers and the Sultan begged pardon. She moved from place to place in Malwa, Gujarat and Mewar and ultimately came to Bilara in the ripe old age of 108 years in 1521 V.S. She settled there, performed miracles and breathed her last on Chaitra Sudi Duj, Saturday, 1561 V.S. (vide *Aii-Ugra-Prakash*, Canto 12-14—the account is in hyperbolic words).
4. This information is based on a manuscript known as *Dewan-Sahab-Bilara-Ki-Sankshipt-Khyati* which is a brief history of Bilara in 164 folios, from the beginning till the death of the present Dewan's father Hari Singh. The work under reference was written during the time of Hari Singh's father, Pratap Singh who was Dewan of Bilara from 1904 to 1921 A.D.
5. Just as the rulers of Mewar are known as Dewans of 'Eklingji', similarly the Jagirdars of Bilara are considered as Dewans of 'Aiimata'. 'Aiimata' declared Goyandadas, Jagirdar of Bilara, as Dewan (chief priest) on Magh Sudi Duj, Saturday, 1557 V.S.—*Ali-Ugra-Prakash*.
6. Vide *Bilara-Ki-Bahi*.
7. Vide information preserved in a Chopania, which is an extract copy from manuscript Khyat of Badher Bilara. This manuscript is important because it preserves the day to day account of a journey undertaken by Dewan Raj Singh. It also throws light on the then geographical conditions, on the route which he followed and on his followers, who joined him in the Peshawar march.
8. Certain original letters of Durga Das are also preserved in the Bilara Archives. The local tradition as preserved in the *Dewan-Sahab-Bilara-Ki-Khyati* names Maharajkumar Tej Karan, while the Bahi informs that Maharajkumar Sangram Singh was married to the daughter of Durga Das Rathore.
9. Vide *Badher Bilara-Ki-Bahi*, written about 260 years ago.
10. *Anand-Vilas*, a poetical manuscript in Rajasthani dialect composed by Bhawani Das, a Pushkarna Brahmin, contains information from Rao Duhad of Marwar to the Dewans of Bilara down to Kalyan Singh (1734-1773 V.S.). The manuscript has been written by Sirvi Navyuvak Mandal, Bilara.

## MATHON RAJPUTS OF JULLUNDUR DOAB

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There are about 35 villages of the Mahat Rajputs, popularly known as Mahton Rajputs, in the Jullundur Doab. Among the historians, there is a great controversy about their origin. These Rajputs link their lineage with the main branches of the Rajputs of India. I happen to read some accounts, written in vernacular, by some local historians, which are not convincing. Some of these accounts are based on merely hearsay, while others have laid much stress on Indian mythology.

The Jullundur Doab is full of Rajput population, but the present paper will be confined to the Rajputs who are in occupation of a small belt of the Doab, almost on both sides of the canal which runs from Garshankar to Adampur Doab. The Rajputs of these 35 villages are generally known as Mahton Rajputs.<sup>1</sup>

Some historians are of the opinion that the word 'Mahton' has been derived from 'Mahtam' or 'Matam'. They say that 'Mahtam' or 'Matam' is a caste of obscure or probably composite origin found spread across the Punjab from Dera Ghazi Khan to Lahore. The name 'Mahtam' is phonetically identical with the term 'Mahton'. In spite of the occurrence of several common 'gotra' names in this and in the 'Mahtam' caste the two castes appear to be distinct. Sir Denzil Ibbetson, author of the *Punjab Castes*, wrote about the Mahtam: "The Mahtams, or as they are called in the Jullundur Division Mahton (nasal 'n'), are found chiefly in the Satluj Valley, and along the foot of the hills

between Jullundur and Gujrat. They are of exceedingly low caste, being almost outcaste by origin. They are vagrants, and in some parts they apparently retain their wandering habits; while everywhere they are still great hunters, using nooses like those of the Bawarias. But in many districts, and especially on the middle Satluj they have devoted themselves to husbandry and are skilful and laborious cultivators. The great majority of them are classed as Hindus, but about one-fifth were Muslims (before 1947 A.D.) and as many again Sikhs. The Muslim section, even in the Multan Division, used to eat wild pigs and retained most of their Hindu customs, and were consequently not admitted to religious equality by the other Muslims."

Sir Denzil Ibbetson further states: "There is a Bahrup tribe of Banjaras or, as they are called in the Punjab, Labanas; and the Labanas and Mahtams of the Sutlej appear closely to resemble each other." Elliot's description of the Bahrup Banjaras<sup>2</sup> tallies curiously in some respects with that of the Bahrupia Mahtams of Gujrat given by Captain Mackenzie at page 71 of his *Settlement Report of Gujrat District*, and on the whole it seems probable that the Mahtams are Banjaras or Labanas, in which case it is possible that the Satluj group have come up from Rajasthan, while the sub-montane group are merely a western continuation of the Banjaras of the lower hills.

The charges of the learned scholar Sir Denzil, who tried to link these valiant Rajputs

with the low caste Mahtams of the Satluj Bet area, can emphatically be refuted with the argument that the Rajputs of Jullundur Doab had and have their independent entity. They all rightly claim their ancestry from their original houses to which they belong. On account of some of them participating in political activities against the British Government, Sir Denzil perhaps was offended and thus tried to degrade them. There are numerous instances on record where the freedom fighters of this community openly challenged the British authority.

But it is generally accepted that the Jullundur Doab Rajputs trace their origin from Jammu. They had conquered Rahon<sup>3</sup> from the Gujars and were in turn deprived of it by the Ghorewaha Rajputs, probably not less than five centuries ago. At the same time it should be noted that the Mahton of Hoshiarpur and the neighbourhood hold a much higher social position than the Mahtams of the Satluj Bet area; and it may be that the two are really distinct.

According to some other historians the name 'Mahton' was derived from 'Mahta', which is a title of honour current among the Rajputs of the hills; and this agrees with the Montgomery tradition also. It is held that the 'Mahtons' have no connection with the 'Mahtams' of the Satluj Bet area. Their origin is from 'Mahta' (the plural of which is 'Mahton'), a title of honour. The Mahton Rajputs have a high status like other Rajputs belonging to the old houses.

But this argument is not sound. The plural of 'Mahta' cannot be 'Mahton'. It is grammatically wrong. The plural of 'Mahta' either could be 'Mahte' or 'Mahtian'. Some historians tell us that the word 'Mahton' was derived from a Persian word 'Mahtar', meaning the leader. But the plural of 'Mahtar' should again be 'Mahtian'.

Hereunder a few traditional versions are

given which may help in forming an idea about the origin and history of these people.

In Kapurthala, the Mahton tradition is that the Mahton's Raja Jai Singh Sawai had two sons, of whom one, Raja Jagna, having quarreled with his father came to the Punjab and founded Banga<sup>4</sup> in Jullundur and Bajaura<sup>5</sup> in Hoshiarpur. Panchhata in Kapurthala was subsequently founded by five of his descendants, while Mahta, his eldest son, founded Mayyopatti in those parts. Again tradition says that two brothers, Ratiji and Matiji, came from Ajudhia to Jammu where the Brahmans invoked their aid against the Muslims. The latter were defeated in a desperate encounter near Jullundur. Matiji was slain but Ratiji founded five villages.<sup>6</sup>

Similarly from Jammu came Mian Mota, who first settled in Jaswan-Kopti near Chamba, and then in Rajpur near Hoshiarpur, whence he founded Narur in Kapurthala, naming it after the elder of his two sons, Nar Chand and Zahir Chand.

On the other hand, Thakarwal, in Hoshiarpur, was founded by a Mahton from Jaipur or Jodhpur, and thence a village of the same name was founded in the Phagwara tahsil of Kapurthala. At one period the Mahtons also appear to have been settled in the Bir Manaswal plateau in the Hoshiarpur Shivaliks.

According to another account the Mahtons of the Jullundur tahsil claim to be Manhas Rajputs, and to have come from Jammu about one thousand years ago. Their ancestor, Raja Dhund, came on a hunting expedition, liked the country, settled down and formed a matrimonial alliance with the ruler of the place, Raja Hari Chand, who gave him a large tract to govern. The first settlement was at Haratah, in Hoshiarpur. Afterwards, owing to constant feuds, the Manhas lost their chiefship, and finally they fell back on agriculture. After being deprived of the chiefship, they became known as Mahtas, and it is only

since the last 150 years that they have been known as Mahtons (nasal 'n'), a name which they at first considered a disgrace. The Mahton Rajputs of Nawanshahr claim that they were Surajbansi Rajputs who came here before the rule of the Muslim Kings of Delhi. They occupied a great part of Nawanshahr, till the Ghorewaha Rajputs treacherously murdered a number of them when assembled for religious purposes at the Surajkund tank at Rahon. This was followed by a general massacre of the Mahtons, the remnant of whom settled at Sahlon.

Mr. Barkley notes that the Ghorewaha Rajputs admit that the Mahtons preceded them at Rahon and Gunachaur,<sup>7</sup> and that the tradition is that the Mahtons had expelled the Gujars. The Nawanshahr Mahton Rajputs further confirm that they had adopted the custom of widow-marriage (*karewa*), on which they were called 'Mahtar'. Here I fully agree with Mr. Barkley, that the enlightened people of the area must have appreciated an advancement upon orthodox Rajputs who did not marry widows. Thus on account of this progressive outlook they came to be known as the 'Mahtars' or the leaders of the tribe. 'Mahtar' is a Persian word.<sup>8</sup> This was corrupted into 'Mahta',<sup>9</sup> of which the plural is said to be 'Mahton'.

The tribe is more interesting than important. Its chief strength in Jullundur Doab is in a group of villages about Darauli, near Adampur, in Jullundur tahsil. Here they hold the large villages of Darauli Kalan, Darauli Khurd, Padhiana, and the smaller villages of Kalra, Gurial, Chukhiara and Domunda. These are in the 'Sirwal' tract which has a rich soil, retentive of moisture, with water at no great depth. They were thus enabled to grow sugar cane without irrigation, sinking 'kuchcha' wells only when the rainfall was deficient.

In Nawanshahr they possess the fine estate of Karnana, near Gunachaur; Sahlon, a vil-

lage between that and Rahon; and Ranipur, a small village recently founded on the Bein from Reehlu in Hoshiarpur. In Phillaur they own most of Sirwal Mundian, a few miles to the west of Gunachaur. They also hold 22 villages in the Hoshiarpur district.

While writing about Garshankar town, one historian has given one more tradition about the settlement of a few Rajput villages in this region. He says, "If tradition is to be believed, the town has a very ancient history. Before the first Muslim invasion, Raja Shankar Das is said to have built a fort on the site of the present town; this fort was taken by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, and subsequently given by the Emperor Shahab-ud-din Ghauri to Hawaha and Khachwaha, sons of Raja Man Singh of the Jaipur State. The Mahtons, who appear to have been the original inhabitants, were overpowered and driven out by the Rajputs in 1175 A.D. The descendants of these Mahtons are to be found in the neighbouring villages of Binjon, Jalwehra and Panjaur, and those of Jalwehra still abstain from drinking the water of Garshankar. The Rajputs of Garshankar appear to have kept up petty feuds with their neighbours, especially with the men of Jaijon. The best remembered chieftain of these Rajputs was Rai Rup Chand, of whom the present inhabitants were descendants. He had four sons, each of whom had given a name to one of the four sub-divisions of the township. Rai Rup Chand, a Ghorewaha Rajput, was converted to Islam in the time of Jalal-ud-din Akbar.

As to the tradition that the Mahtons expelled the Gujars, and were in turn driven out by the Ghorewaha Rajputs, it seems an idle tale. The Rajputs certainly came to this part of the country while the Satluj ran under the old north bank. Their villages, especially in Nawanshahr, are numerous along the ridge, and the presumption would be that they settled along the river. But the Gujars are now located between the Rajput villages and

the present stream, showing that they came after the Rajputs. So we must assume that the Gujars came on two occasions, separated one from the other by centuries, if the Mahton tradition is to be accepted.<sup>10</sup>

But there is nothing to support such an assumption. It is, moreover, absurd to suppose that, if the Rajputs had expelled the Mahtons, as said, the latter could have maintained themselves in the isolated villages of Sahlon, Karnana and Sirhal Mundian, close to the powerful Rajput centres of Rahon and Gunachaur. It has been stated that the Ghorewahs claim to be Kachwahs, though perhaps, erroneously. There will be found an account of how the Kachwahs, on the occasion of the Diwali festival, "filled the reservoirs in which the Meenas bathed with their dead bodies."<sup>11</sup> "It is further related that the Haras almost annihilated the Oosaras, who are said to be the sole representatives of the Meenas, the unmixed race of hill-men of central India."<sup>12</sup> What is more likely than that the bards of the Kachwahs or Haras, noting the similarity of names of the Mahatas (as the Mahtons were generally called) and Meenas, should have transferred the tale of the massacre at the tank of Rahon?

We find that the physical and moral qualities of the Mahtams and Mahtons of the present day are not the same. The Mahtons are remarkable for their tall stature and good physique, and at the same time are notorious for their quarrelsome disposition. But the Mahtams are generally short statured and are not quarrelsome at all. Much stress cannot be laid on the fact that the Mahtams were found on the banks of the rivers, and did not so much care for cultivating from wells as other tribes did, while the Mahtons are also found mostly in the Sirwal, both of Jullundur and Hoshiarpur, where artificial irrigation was not needed, and on the Bein and its tributaries. Nor ought too much stress be laid on the claim made by the Mah-

tams in Montgomery area (now in Pakistan) to a Jullundur origin.

So in the end, keeping in view all the observations given above, it can safely be concluded that the word 'Mahton' attached to these Rajputs is a misnomer. At certain time this name must have been used by somebody either humorously or through sheer jealousy, which became popular in this area unconsciously.

It is not surprising that many English writers also began to equate them with low caste Rajputs. The confusion arose from the phonetical similarity between 'Mahton' and 'Mahtam'. Possibly, the English writers were not be able to contact well-educated people of the community to verify the statements which have been erroneously recorded in their books. Another reason may be that the British Government did not like the patriotic spirit evinced by some of the freedom fighters belonging to this community. Since the first decade of the twentieth century these Rajputs became all the more adventurous when they went to foreign countries, where they exhibited their industry and spirit of enterprise. They were laborious, mentally alert, and physically strong. Sardar Mayo Singh of Paldi may be taken as an example. These people liberally contributed to the Komagata-maru Movement in Canada and America, both with men and money.

However, there can be many more reasons for the name 'Mahton' being erroneously given to these Rajputs. This article is not a comprehensive study. I have just ventured to inspire this community of Rajputs of the Jullundur Doab to try to make further investigation and to write a complete history of the community. It can be initiated by the History Departments of their two Colleges, recently started by the enlightened people of this region at Darauli Kalan and Narur-Panchhata. I am sure there is much scope to find necessary material in (a) Revenue records at

the District headquarters ; (b) Dand Katha (i.e. oral accounts from generation to generation) ; and (c) their traditional customs so far preserved.

## REFERENCES

1. There are two more villages of the Mahton Rajputs, e.g. Khanian, near Amlah in Nabha tahsil and the other Bahadurgarh, near Sirhind.
2. Elliot, *Races of the North-West Province*, Vol. I, P. 54.
3. The town of Rahon is said to have been founded 2,000 years ago by Raja Raghav, who called it Raghupur, by which name it is still called in correspondence by the Pandits. After that it came into the possession of the Gujars who were driven out by the Mahtons, who in their turn succumbed to the Ghorewaha Rajputs, whose conquest of the country was put down as having occurred in the time of Shahab-ud-din Ghorî. Their leader, Raja Rajpal, renamed the town 'Rahon' (*Jullundur District Gazetteer*, P. 303).
4. The shrine of the Mahton's ancestor in Banga was built by bricks from Dharanagri. It is said to have been founded by Gola, alias Banga, a Man Jat, of Paniani, in Garhshankar tahsil, in 1663 A.D.
5. Certainly not Bajwara, see *Punjab Under the Sultans* by Dr. Bakhshish Singh Nijjar, P. 69.
6. Which villages? Information is not forthcoming.
7. A small but historically very important village, about one and a half miles from Banga to the south.
8. The Ruler of Chitral is called 'Mahtar-i-Chitral'.
9. Mahta, again a high title.
10. The following passage in *The Races of the North-Western Provinces of India* (London, 1869), Volume I, page 323, may explain this story about the Gujars and Kachhwahas: "These claim descent from Kush, the eldest son of Ram. They traced back to Jaipur, which now forms their chief seat and whence they expelled the Minas and Bargujars." The remark refers to Zilla Agra. It is almost needless to say that the Bargujars are Rajputs.
11. Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, Vol. II, P. 321.
12. *Ibid.*

## A NOTE ON INDIAN OCEAN HISTORIANS CONGRESS

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The Indian Ocean International Historical Association (Association Historique Internationale De L'Océan Indien) and the International Commission of Maritime History (Commission Internationale D'Histoire Maritime) held their IV International Conference in collaboration with the UNESCO, at Saint Denis, La Réunion (Indian Ocean) from 4th to 9th September 1972. The theme of the Conference was 'Population Movements in the Indian Ocean from Ancient to Modern Times'. The participants and delegates came from various parts of the world—from the French and British Universities, and from Madagascar, Réunion, Mauritius, Indonesia, Australia, U.S.A. and India.

On the evening of the 3rd September, the Préfet (Governor) of Réunion gave a reception to the delegates at his official residence. The next day, on 4th September, at 10 a.m. the Conference was declared open by the Préfet, while the main addresses were delivered by Dr. A. Toussaint, President of the Indian Ocean International Historical Association and Professor M. Mollat, President of the International Commission of Maritime History.

In the course of 6 days of the Conference around 20 papers were presented. The titles of the papers and names of writers are listed below :

## SEPTEMBER 4—I SESSION.

1. "La Vie quotidienne des colons européens à Bourbon au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle"

by J. Barassin, diplômé de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes de Paris.

## II SESSION

1. "Muslim expansion in the western Indian Ocean", by H. N. Chittick, directeur de l'Institut Britannique en Afrique Orientale.
2. "Islamic expansion and slave trade in medieval Africa", by S. Labib, professeur à l'Université de Utah.
3. "Couches ethniques et couches culturelles à Madagascar : essai de synthèse des Migrations", by J. Poirier, professeur à l'Université de Nice.
4. "Nouvelles données sur le peuplement de Madagascar", by P. Verin, professeur à l'Université de Madagascar.

## SEPTEMBER 5—III SESSION.

1. "The possibilities of Indonesian Colonies in Africa with special reference to Madagascar", by R. K. Kent, professeur à l'Université de Californie.
2. "The Banyan or Indian presence at Massawa, the Dahlak Island and the Horn of Africa", by R. Pankhurst, directeur de l'Institut d'études éthiopiennes de l'Université Haile Selassie, Ethiopia.
3. "Archival documentation on the

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Calendar of Persian Correspondence, 1794-95,** K. D. Bhargava.

Edited by A. I. Tirmizi, Assistant Director of Archives, Government of India, Government of India Press, Calcutta-1, pp. 423 with Bibliography, besides Introduction (pp. i-xxxvi) and Index, corrigenda and addenda (pp. i-Liv). Price Rs. 25/-, Foreign 58 sh. 4 d. or 9 \$.

Letters constitute a more dependable storehouse of accurate source materials than even standard chronicles. The latter may be coloured by personal idiosyncracies or bias of the writer. But letters reflect the exact feelings of the writer and contain the actual developments. Letter-Books may be quite voluminous, as in the case of Aurangzeb's letters of which we have five series. Such letter-books are of inestimable importance for historical purposes, e.g., the Golkonda letters of Abdul 'Ali Tabrezi, *Guldashta* and *Ruqaat i Shah Abbas Sani* (compiled by Tahir Wahid), etc. for the seventeenth century. For the second half of the eighteenth century and the early British period, the *Fort William-India House Correspondence* and the *Calendar of Persian Correspondence* constitute a mine of information, political, social, economic and even at times religious. These are collections of letters, either in original or of copies, and represent the efforts, first of the Imperial Record Department (nurtured by G. W. Forrest since 1891, Dr. Wilson and E. Denison Ross from 1906) and later of the Archives Department (now National Archives) of the Government of India to preserve these very important raw materials of history. The *Calendar of Persian Correspondence* series started from 1911. The first ten volumes covering the period from 1759 to 1793 have been edited by E. Denison Ross, A. F. Scholfield, A. F. M. Abdul Ali, S. N. Sen and

The volume under review (No. XI) covers the period of two years from 1 January 1794 to 31 December 1795 and includes 1671 entries. Except a few letters in Bengali, Marathi and Hindi, the whole correspondence is in Persian (p. xxxiv). Mr. Tirmizi has carefully edited the text and written a very valuable Introduction as in the case of Vol. X. On the basis of the informations derived from the correspondence, he has divided it into six sections: (i) Political Affairs in India; (ii) Relations with Neighbouring Non-Indian Powers; (iii) The East India Company's Mercantile Character; (iv) The Social Scene; (v) Hindu-Muslim Cultural Ties; and (vi) Conclusion.

The first section discusses the then political situation in India after the departure of Cornwallis. The Mughal emperor still enjoyed a halo, but all rulers including Mahadaji Sindhia, his 'nominal slave', were virtually masters in their own spheres. The preeminence, if not supremacy, of the British had been universally recognised, Cornwallis had imposed some order in the midst of this chaos, by asserting British sovereignty over the Company's territories and by having representatives at the Courts of the Indian rulers. The resultant balance of power weighed heavily in favour of the Company, which was in no mood to refurbish the shrunken *imperium* of the Empire. Letters No. 207 to 212 refer to the restoration of two sons of Tipu Sultan (the power worst affected by the Cornwallis system) and the latter's appreciation of British goodwill. But Tipu's reduction encouraged the Peshwa and the Nizam to reassert their political ambitions so long held in check by his growing power and there-

by threatened to upset the balance of power in the Deccan. Shore, wedded to the 'balance of power' system, did not encourage the Nizam who expected support from the Company, and failed to uphold the balance (p. x). In the Carnatic too, Shore favoured the *status quo*, and failed to help its pensioner, the Nawab of Arcot, against the encroachments of the *poligars*, though Hobart, Governor of Madras, wanted to assume full administrative control (pp. 259, 267, 269).

In Oudh, the scene of maladministration and degradation, Shore at first exhorted the Nawab to reform the Government and then warned the Diwan, Raja Tikait Ray. The death of Fayz Allah Khan of Rampur (1794) was followed by a rebellion among the Rohillas on account of the disreputable greed of the Nawab Wazir (pp. 246-49).

In Bengal Nasir ul mulk succeeded his father Mubarak ud daulah (1793) as Nazim, but Munni Begam, widow of Mir Jafar, controlled the *Nizamat*. The two did not see eye to eye, and made complaints and counter-complaints to the Governor-General. The Nazim attributed the difference to Rai Manik Chand (the successor of Itibar Ali Khan) who practically eclipsed Raja Mahanand, Diwan of Munni Begam, 261.

In Assam (then outside the British sphere), torn by the Moamaria rebellion, Shore maintained strict neutrality. Captain Welsh helped Raja Gaurinath Singh but was asked by Shore to return. After his departure from Rangpur (July, 1794) there was a recurrence of trouble. But Shore refused to help Kamaleshwar Singh, the new Raja (December, 1794) in spite of repeated requests (pp. 245, 252-54).

(II) In international relations, too, Shore maintained the policy of non-intervention. But the *Calendar* yields the very interesting information that the Governor-General felt the need of exploring new openings for the

Company's diminishing overseas trade and collecting authentic details regarding countries with which British contact had been occasional:

(a) Malayan kingdom of Kedah, where an outpost was expected to check the commercial ambitions of European rivals of Britain.

(b) As regards Burma, Shore handed over the Arakanese fugitives to the Burmese government. Capt. Michael Symes was, however, sent to Ava with numerous presents to secure commercial concessions for the East India Company, but no substantial commerce resulted. The Burmese were more interested in cultural matters—in getting a special chariot and coins of silver and copper, in the settlement of a learned Brahman there, and in acquiring some Bengali books (pp. 367-68).

(c) In Bhutan George Bogle had demarcated the countries in the time of Warren Hastings but in 1794 depredations were committed in Dinajpur and Purnea. Debraja sent a goodwill mission to Shore and the latter issued orders for a settlement of the border disputes.

(d) Shore's policy towards Nepal was also one of benevolent neutrality. Kirkpatrick's mission was unpopular there. There were border disputes. Parganas of Purnea and Dinajpur were plundered by the *faqirs* from Morang. Zorawar Singh was appointed *Subahdar* of Morang to punish them. For developing trade Shore sent Maulavi Abd al Qadir with a few presents to Kathmandu, through the good offices of a *guru* of the Raja of Nepal (pp. 241, 286). The mission was successful in settling a dispute between some areas of Oudh, claimed by Nepal (p. 263).

(e) Tibet: A mission was sent to Lhasa under Pirzada Mir Bahauddin with Shore's letters to the Dalai Lama and Teshu Lama and to Tajanchun-Fu, the Chinese *Wazir*

(then at Lhasa). The Chinese *Subahdar* of Lhasa came and saw the Pirzada and asked about the type of justice under the English. The Pirzada said approvingly of it. The Pirzada sent a very interesting report about the movements and methods of the Chinese army—marching “from *ghati* to *ghati*”, establishing “*chaukis* all over up to Ladakh”, emphasizing artillery and military exercises, and collecting grain, causing scarcity in Lhasa (p. xix).

(f) Kabul: Sayyid Ghulam Muhammad al Husayni was sent (1794) to report on the state of affairs at Kabul. There was exchange of presents between the Governor-General and Zaman Shah. But the latter regarded himself as the suzerain of India, and the pompous letters of Kabul statesmen did not mean much.

(g) Relations with Iran and Iraq were cordial. Prince Muhammad Mirza Safavi visited Shah Alam and went to Lucknow. Mir Sayyid Ali of Ispahan also settled at Purnea. The latter left a vast movable property there.

(h) Sulaiman Pasha of Iraq sent his chief merchant to the Nawab Wazir of Oudh with presents. Agha Muhammad Nabi, a *darwesh* of Dacca, wanted to dig a canal from the Euphrates to Najf, the site of Ali's tomb, for public benefit.

(i) Mecca: Sharif Muhammad, related to Governor of Mecca, visited India (1791). Mir Jafar's niece's husband left for Mecca on a pilgrimage (1795).

(j) Muscat: To promote commercial relations between Bengal and Muscat Shore wrote a letter (21st January 1794) to the Imam of Muscat. Its merchants imported rocksalt to Bengal and carried grain, Calcutta being the port of lading and unlading. Shore wanted Arab horses to improve the breed of his own.

(III) The present volume throws light on the East India Company's mercantile character as well as economic changes. Though the Company was both a mercantile as well as a sovereign body, it had virtually become bankrupt on account of the expanding China trade and the dwindling India trade, the latter caused by unequal competition of Indian goods with the British. The Company's efforts to prop up this trade were unsuccessful, e.g. the Symes mission to Burma, Abdul Qadir's mission to Nepal and efforts to open up trade with Tibet. Interesting details are available in the *Calendar* about the trade in pepper and salt; the condition of the cultivator; the position of and the part played by the Indian mercantile community—traders, *mahajans* (money lenders) and *sarrafs* (financiers) whose *kothis* acted as banks; the use of bills of exchange and *hundis*; the prevalence of the system of insurance (*bima*); the condition of inland trade by land or water; the transporters (*banjaras*) and the means of transport (human or beasts and carriages on land and boats on water); prices of articles; famines; and price level.

(IV) The *Calendar* throws very interesting light on the social scene, that was marked by “stagnation and degeneration”. Society was status-ridden; the king traded in empty titles; the upper classes led ‘lazy, luxurious and incontinent lives’. The old ruling classes were receding to the background, and the new mercantile classes, the *mahajans* and the *sarrafs*, came to the fore. Indebtedness was rampant not only among the rich but also among the peasants (the latter, because of the Permanent Settlement and the rackrenting of the *Zamindar*). Society again was based on caste and sub-castes, with rigid rules regarding interdining and intermarriage. The two principal cults in the land were Saiva and Vaisnava. If the Moanarias of Assam were militant, the Bairagis of Puri were peace-loving. The Maharaj sect in Gujarat was developing under Rani Bahuji of Surat (p. 365). Two ladies were famous for their

charitable and noble works in this period: Rani Ahalya Bai of Indore and Rani Bhavani of Natore. The Hindu soldiers of XV Battalion of Native Infantry refused to go to Malacca. References to social prejudices, superstitious and religious practices or customs including pilgrimages to holy places, the *urs* ceremonies of the saints, etc. abound. Social and cultural ties also grew between different communities at the *dargahs* (shrines of saints) and *bargas* (courts of rulers). Hindus and Muslims were appointed respectively by Muslim and Hindu rulers. As Tirmizi says: “By the middle of the eighteenth century the cultural movement started in the days of Akbar had reached its culmination” (p. xxxiii).

(V) As regards cultural forces, the *Calendar* indicates a continuation of the earlier movement towards Hindu-Muslim *rapprochement* in different aspects. This was noticeable particularly in literature. The vocabulary, the structure, the literary idiom, the diplomatic form, the seals, dates, etc. are the same, irrespective of the writer, Hindu or Muslim. The editor calls the resultant Persian as Indian Persian. This was because the numerous *munshis* of the Indian rulers were Hindus who used Hindi and English words in the correspondence, and modified the structure of the Persian language. The English also learnt Sanskrit and Persian, imitated the manners and customs of this land, and many were known as *nabobs* and were given high-sounding titles (p. 416). Sir William Jones, a keen patron of Oriental learning like Warren Hastings, and the founder of the Asiatic Society, died in 1794.

(VI) In conclusion Tirmizi has observed: “This cultural harmony is reflected in the social and cultural institutions of the period” (p. xxxvi).

Dr. Sen had expressed the hope (in vol. vii) that “these letters are likely to be used by a growing number of research students in

India.” Unfortunately, the reviewer feels that not much use of these volumes has been made. He ventures to make a few suggestions. First, the time lag in publication has to be minimised. The present volume has taken seven years for its publication. Such a delay for an India Government publication seems rather strange. Second, the usefulness of the Introduction would be increased if the Introduction contains a list of the principal subjects with references to letters (as in vols. I and II). These would undoubtedly help the scholar to proceed without much difficulty through the tangled web of correspondence chronologically arranged. The present plan of writing a general Introduction without references started from the 3rd volume. References to letters should be given within brackets in the Introduction, as was done in the previous volume (X) by Tirmizi himself.

Nevertheless it must be admitted that Tirmizi has done a herculean job in editing approximately 1700 entries, fixing their dates and distinguishing dates of receipt and issue, identifying the personages and places and adding explanatory notes and writing a very useful Introduction. At the end of the *Calendar* he has given (i) a list of *wakils* of the different Chiefs and Notables of India with the Governor-General at Calcutta; (ii) a list of Persian titles of Europeans; and (iii) lists of Collectors, Governors, Magistrates and Judges. Besides, the Bibliography and Index, a Corrigenda and Addenda has been given to correct the numerous printing mistakes.

J. N. SARKAR

**Index Indo-Asiaticus** No. 1 (Sir William Jones number), 1966, pp. 24+16+8 and **Index Indo-Asiaticus** No. 12 (Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar number), 1970, pp. 84, edited by S. Choudhuri, Post Box 11215, Calcutta-14: Price not mentioned.

The publication under review may rightly be looked upon as a series of Indices of learn-

ed journals and periodicals written in Indian and foreign languages and dealing with subjects bearing on the culture and history of India and ancient Asia or the Indo-Asiatic world. The scope and plan of the work, as explained by the Editor, is "to provide a listing of all periodicals of importance, in English and other foreign languages as well as in the different languages of Modern India, with reference to Asia in general, and to the Indian Subcontinent in particular, on the following subjects,—archaeology, art, epigraphy, ethnology, geography, folklore, all aspects of (ancient, medieval and modern) history, languages, literatures, linguistics, numismatics, philosophy, religion, history of scientific thoughts, etc." The Index is divided into two parts, viz., (1) Current Index, and (2) Cumulative Index.

A work of this nature is very welcome to those who carry on research in specialised fields and need for their enquiry ready reference to diverse learned journals.

From the scope of the Index it seems clear that it is a laudable enterprise and useful to those who are interested in the study of the history and culture of India and other Asian Countries. The editor, an expert in cataloguing and indexing, deserves our heartiest congratulations, and the publication itself deserves the support of scholars, institutions and State and Central Governments for its progress and survival.

B. K. MAJUMDAR

**Indian Revolutionaries Abroad.** By A. C. Bose (Bharati Bhawan, Patna, 1971, pp. 268 ; Price Rs. 30).

Dr. Bose's book which has grown out of a doctoral thesis throws a good deal of new light on the heroic endeavours of Indian revolutionaries to liberate the country from British rule, their sacrifice and patriotism, and the factional fights that weakened the common cause. The central theme seems to be

that the revolutionary movement arose out of the disenchantment of the middle-class youth with the aims and methods of the Moderates. It is also Dr. Bose's contention that the revolutionary movement made a deep impact on the nationalist movement of the Gandhi era.

The story begins in 1905 which witnessed the growth of extremism in Indian politics ; the revolutionary movement reached its peak during the First World War. The revolutionaries turned to Germany and even "forged a working agreement with pan-Islamism ;" Ghadar volunteers were sent to India and arms also were smuggled into India. With the collapse of Germany the revolutionaries working abroad suffered frustration ; by 1922 the movement had become moribund, and some of the revolutionaries chose to join the Congress.

Dr. Bose has examined the causes of the collapse of the revolutionary movement. Only a small section of the urban middle-class had joined the movement. "The proletariat and the peasantry had not yet entered the political arena, and the feudal and moneyed classes usually kept aloof from them." Recent research, however, indicates that working class and peasant actions had started between 1905 and 1922 ; working class movement was gathering momentum, notably in Bombay and Bengal, and the All-India Trade Union Congress was formed in 1920. What was perhaps the most significant development was the new orientation of the nationalist movement in the 1920's, which marked the increasing participation of the Indian masses in the anti-imperialist movement.

The biographical sketches of the revolutionary leaders and a full bibliography appear at the end of the volume.

SUNIL SEN

**Civil Disobedience and Indian Tradition** (with some early nineteenth century documents) by Dharampal, Sarva Seva Sangh

Prakashan, Varanasi, 1971, First Edition, pp. LXIV+122. Price Rs. 30.00.

The work under review is primarily a collection of archival material—records found in the India Office, London, and the West Bengal State Archives—relating to some isolated movements of civil disobedience which took place during the years 1810-12 in different parts (mainly urban centres) of eastern India, such as Benares, Patna, Saran, Murshidabad and Bhagalpur against the imposition of new and arbitrary taxes on houses and shops by the British rulers of this country. These movements of peaceful non-cooperation and civil disobedience bear a striking resemblance in their spirit and methods to the mass movements launched by Mahatma Gandhi in the post-World War I period, and the powers of resistance demonstrated by the common artisans and workmen during these early nineteenth century movements were amazing indeed. According to an official report quoted in this volume, nearly two hundred thousand people participated in the civil disobedience movement at Benares in December 1810, and they included both Hindus and Muslims. Normal civic life was completely paralysed, and the papers displayed by the passive resisters were so inflammatory in character that the District Magistrate of Benares offered a reward of Rs. 500/- "for every man on whom such a paper may be found". "Such powers and apparently well-practised methods of popular resistance," Jayaprakash Narayan rightly points out in his Foreword to the work, "could not have sprung up suddenly from nowhere," but must have been inherited by the people "as part of a well-established social-political tradition." According to Dharampal, it was Gandhiji's awareness of this tradition of mass passive resistance among the Indian people (Gandhiji himself admitted it long ago in his *Hind Swaraj*) and his ability to apply the technique on a countrywide scale that explain his extraordinary success as a leader of our freedom struggle.

The documents collected by Dharampal also reveal how the British rulers of our country made conscious and calculated efforts to destroy every vestige of the old Indian tradition which they looked upon as a continuing challenge to their rule. They could not perhaps feel safe, as Dharampal suggests, until they had beaten the people into a state of unquestioning obedience, and the ultimate sanction they relied upon to achieve this object was military force.

Finally, the author discusses the place of 'satyagraha' or mass passive resistance in post-independence India, and observes that had the democratic Government of India conceded the right of the people to disobey and resist peacefully whatever seemed unjust or oppressive to them, there would have been less recourse to violent action on the part of the people and also less of abject surrender on the part of the Government following such violent outbursts.

Dharampal's work thus raises many interesting questions, but it also leaves many questions unanswered. The author does not probe deeply into the causes of the popular unrest in the period chosen by him nor does he discuss fully the history or antiquity of the tradition of mass passive resistance among the Indian people. He, however, acknowledges his indebtedness to Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri's earlier work on the *Civil Disturbances during the British Rule in India, 1765-1857*. The general get-up of the book is attractive, but the quality of printing is not very satisfactory and the price is rather high.

AMITABHA MUKHERJEE

**Unish Shataker Samaj O Samskriti**, by Amitabha Mukhopadhyaya, M.A., Ph.D., Published by General Printers and Publishers Private Ltd., 119, Dharamtala Street, Calcutta-13, 1971. With a Foreword by Dr. Ramesh-chandra Majumdar. Pages 175. Price Rs. 6.00.

Dr. Amitabha Mukhopadhyaya's book under review is a collection of thirteen essays in Bengali published in different journals. The author does not have to develop any central thesis in these chapters. Instead he has chosen to give an account of the social conditions and reform movements of the nineteenth century Bengal without being partisan in his assessment. The chapters are classified under five divisions, viz., society, religion, literature, politics and a short concluding chapter with a general observation. These discussions are in no way exhaustive, but the information contained in these papers will undoubtedly be of great use to the students of social history. The nineteenth century Bengal, particularly its social and cultural aspect, has attracted a number of researchers to work on it since the late Brajendranath Banerji published his monumental *Samvad-patre Sekaler Katha* in two volumes (1932 and 1933). These two volumes, however, have remained our main source of information and have undergone several editions. The late Pandit Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharya did amazing research on the genealogy and caste-structure of the Bengali Hindus. The present author has ransacked other materials also, memoirs, biographies, reports, gazetteers, etc. as the bibliographies appended to the chapters show.

The sociological study has now become an essential part of the history of the so-called Bengal Renaissance, which according to Dr. Mukhopadhyaya and others was confined mainly to the Bengali middle and upper classes. Any endeavour to understand the actual significance of the great movements started by Raja Rammohun Roy, Pandit Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, Swami Dayananda Saraswati (whose influence in Bengal has been rather meagre, even more meagre than that of the Theosophical Movement of Mrs. Annie Besant) and Swami Vivekananda, without a thorough acquaintance with the social condition, is bound to be imperfect. Dr. Mukhopadhyaya in the first five essays on the state of

the Hindu society has given a graphic picture of the intricate caste-system and an extremely age-worn practice known as 'Kulinism', both of which brought with them stagnation and other horrible vices in our society. The author would have done well if he had inserted a chapter on the 'Satee' in the book. Like the widow-marriage movement in the fifties of the last century, of which the author has traced a detailed history of previous attempts, the 'Satee' movement was also one of the major events of the nineteenth century. The other two chapters of this section, those on the 'Churak' and the human sacrifice are fascinating reading. The 'Churak' is still now in vogue though not in its old form. The human sacrifice before the goddess Kali has totally disappeared, even the animal sacrifice has become somewhat scarce. Incidentally, while casteism, Kulinism and Satee have either become or are gradually going to be obsolete, the widow-marriage has not yet become acceptable by the Hindu society. This really calls for a deeper analysis of the Hindu mind.

Equally interesting are the different religious movements. There are four chapters in the book, one on Rammohun, one on neo-Hinduism, one on Swami Dayananda and the fourth on Swami Vivekananda. The last chapter, strictly speaking, is not on religious reformation, but on the Swamiji's contribution to the Indian awakening. The author's assessment of Rammohun's reform-endeavour is likely to arouse controversy. Rammohun, according to him, was more interested in social progress than any kind of spiritual realisation. He was not a *Sadhaka*. His movement was a device to make our society dynamic. This was a noble purpose, no doubt, but what Dr. Mukhopadhyaya has pointed out are some of the curious anomalies between his practice and preaching which led some of his followers to deviation from the track. The author's contention will add to the intensity of controversy recently aroused by Dr. R. C. Majumdar's lectures and books on Rammohun. As a matter of fact, except-

ing Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, who as a *Sadhaka* fell in the traditional line of Indian yogis, and Swami Vivekananda, who underwent a *Sadhaka's* penance and is said to have attained *Siddhi*, none of the 19th-century religious leaders had that spiritual realisation. Their zeal for reformation was not inspired by their spiritual quest. In fact Bentham and Mill played no insignificant part in shaping their utilitarian bias to bring about a change in religious outlook, and religion itself became more moral than spiritual. It is not without significance, that all the religious institutions had social service wings attached to them. Dr. Mukhopadhyaya's chapter on neo-Hinduism is somewhat sweeping and sketchy. These movements have been held responsible for the gradual weakening of the Brahmo trend. It is not unlikely. Yet some Hindu religious leaders like Krishnaprasanna Sen, Sasadhar Tarka-Chudamani and Bijaykrishna Goswami unfortunately have been left out of this otherwise important chapter. The rift in the Brahmo Samaj in the second half of the nineteenth century should also have been given due consideration. The later Hinduism has left deep impacts on the nation. The changed concept of religion undoubtedly moulded the national character in the following years.

The other two essays, one on Mrityunjay Vidyalkar, the prose-writer, and other on Balgangadhar Tilak are enlisted respectively under literature and politics. There could have been more topics as well, but so far as the pioneering effort in Bengali prose is concerned, the discussion on Mrityunjay naturally becomes especially important. The author

differs on this point from Dr. R. C. Majumdar and the late Brajendranath Banerjee and holds Rammohun to be a better prose-writer than Mrityunjay. The account of Balgangadhar Tilak and the beginning of terrorism similarly attains special importance. The nineteenth century saw the birth of Indian nationalism independently in Maharashtra and in Bengal. Bankimchandra, the exponent of nationalism in Bengal, warned us about the danger inherent in it. Curiously, Tilak's agitation took to this dangerous recourse to achieve a noble end. The author makes some very pertinent remarks in this connection.

The concluding chapter on the limitation of the Bengal renaissance is comparatively small. It contains the author's general observations. There is naturally scope for difference of opinion as Dr. Majumdar in his Foreword has mentioned. But the author has boldly put forward his own views and these deserve to be noted. The Bengal renaissance which was largely the product of Western education (Sir Jadunath Sarkar holds this out entirely to the credit of the British contact and Mr. Nirod C. Choudhuri agrees) suffered from a lack of mass-contact. It was confined to the middle-class intelligentsia only. Is this really a limitation? Can the renaissance-spirit be expected to reach the distant corners and touch the lowest stratum of the society all at once? It takes time and education. That is why Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya and Rabindranath Tagore, two great renaissance figures, desired so intensely the mother-tongue, Bengali, to be the medium of our education.

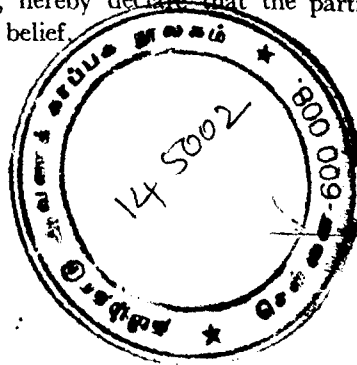
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