

# RARE BOOK

SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE MUSLIMS

IN BENGAL

(DOWN TO A.D. 1538)

A Thesis

Submitted to the University of Dacca

for the

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

ABDUL KARIM

Dhaka University Library



A153254

DACCA

JUNE, 1958.

# RARE BOOK

## PREFACE

In the following thesis an attempt is made to gather together all the relevant materials which help in tracing the origin and gradual building up of the Muslim Society in Bengal from the earliest time down to A.D. 1538, the terminal date being chosen as it marks a stage in the social development before the true Pathan (Afghan) and Mughal elements were introduced into Bengal. In this period Islām, which came as a foreign religion, was integrated into the socio-religious system of the people, and while it won over the general mass to its own ideals, many of the local customs, beliefs and practices stole into its fold and became recognised as the part and parcel of the local Muslim Society. Islām became a national religion in Bengal mainly under the patronising spirit of the Independent Sultāns.

The thesis first discusses the sources from which the materials are drawn and then outlines a politico-social background in order to understand the parts played by various forces in the society. The next chapter is the longest, divided into three sections, each assessing the contributions made by the Sultāns, the Scholars and the Sūfīs towards the growth of the Muslim Society. In the next three chapters the society is viewed as an integrated whole and analytical study is made to understand its composition,

the popular elements and the daily life of the people. Finally the concluding chapter sums up the main points.

The whole treatment is historical and no attempt is made to solve any sociological problem. The social questions, as they arise in their historical perspective, have been considered. In short the thesis deals with the Muslim society of Bengal as it passes through centuries on the basis of the available materials, and hence the title Social History of the Muslims in Bengal.

University of Dacca:  
The 16th June, 1968.

ABDUL KARIM

**NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION**

The following system has been used :-

(1) For Arabic and Persian letters :-

ا = a	ع = 'e
ب = b	ض = d
پ = p	ط = t
ت = t	ظ = z
ث = <u>th</u>	ع = 'e
ج = j	غ = <u>gh</u>
چ = <u>ch</u>	ف = f
ح = h	ق = q
خ = <u>kh</u>	ک = k
د = d	گ = g
ذ = <u>dh</u>	ل = l
ر = r	م = m
ز = z	ن = n
ژ = <u>zh</u>	و = v
س = s	ح = h
ش = <u>sh</u>	ی = i
	ی = y

Short vowels -- a, i, u

Long vowels -- ā, ī, ū

Diphthong -- av, ay

(ii) For Bengali letters :-

অ = a	ই = ī
আ = ā	উ = u
ই = i	ঊ = ū

২৭ :: ri  
 ২৮ :: e  
 ২৯ :: ai  
 ৩০ :: o  
 ৩১ :: au  
 ৩২ :: k  
 ৩৩ :: kh  
 ৩৪ :: g  
 ৩৫ :: gh  
 ৩৬ :: n  
 ৩৭ :: eh  
 ৩৮ :: ehh  
 ৩৯ :: j  
 ৪০ :: jh  
 ৪১ :: ñ  
 ৪২ :: t  
 ৪৩ :: th  
 ৪৪ :: d  
 ৪৫ :: dh  
 ৪৬ :: n  
 ৪৭ :: t  
 ৪৮ :: th

৪৯ :: d  
 ৫০ :: dh  
 ৫১ :: n  
 ৫২ :: p  
 ৫৩ :: ph  
 ৫৪ :: b  
 ৫৫ :: bh  
 ৫৬ :: m  
 ৫৭ :: y  
 ৫৮ :: r  
 ৫৯ :: l  
 ৬০ :: v  
 ৬১ :: s'  
 ৬২ :: sh  
 ৬৩ :: s  
 ৬৪ :: h  
 ৬৫ :: r  
 ৬৬ :: y  
 ৬৭ :: ñ  
 ৬৮ :: h  
 ৬৯ :: n

ABBREVIATIONS

- 'Arif = Tārīkh-i-Firūzshāhī by Shams-i-Sirāj-i-'Arif, Bibliotheca Indica, A.D. 1890.
- Akhbār al-Akhvār = Akhbār al-Akhvār fī Asrār al-Abrār by Shaykh 'Abd al-Haq al-Dehlawi, Delhi, A.H. 1332.
- Āyn-i-Akbarī = Āyn-i-Akbarī of Abū al-Faḍl, Vol. II. Translated into English by H.S. Jarrett. Second edition corrected and annotated by J.N. Sarker. Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, A.D. 1949.
- Barani = Tārīkh-i-Firūzshāhī by Diyā' al-Dīn Baranī, Bibliotheca Indica, A.D. 1862.
- Barbosa = The Book of Duarte Barbosa, Vol. II. Translated into English by Mansel Longworth Dames. Hakluyt Society, London, A.D. 1921.
- History of Bengal, Vol. II = History of Bengal, Vol. II. Edited by Sir J.N. Sarker, Dacca University, A.D. 1948.
- Ibn Battūṭah = Rihlat Ibn Battūṭah, text edition and translated into French by Defremery and Sanguinetti, Paris, A.D. 1863-69.
- J.A.S.B. = Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.
- Khazīnat al-Asfiya' = Khazīnat al-Asfiya' by Ghulam Sarwar, Newal Kishore Press, Lucknow.
- Memoirs = Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua by 'Abid 'Alī Khān and Stapleton, Calcutta, A.D. 1931.
- Minhāj = Tabaqāt-i-Nāsiri by Abū 'Umar Minhāj al-Dīn Uthmān bin Sirāj al-Dīn al-Jūzjānī. Bibliotheca Indica, A.D. 1864.
- Muntakhab = Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh by 'Abd al-Qādir Badāyūnī. Bibliotheca Indica, A.D. 1869.
- Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal = Bibliography of the Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal by Dr. A.H. Dani in Appendix to the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Vol. II, A.D. 1957.

Riyād = Riyād al-Salātīn by Ghulām Husayn Salīm,  
Bibliotheca Indica, A.D. 1898.

Tārīkh-i-Ferīshṭah = Tārīkh-i-Ferīshṭah or Gulshan-i-Ibrāhīmī by Muḥammad Qāsim Ferīshṭah,  
Newal Kishore edition, Lucknow.

Yahyā bin Ahmad = Tārīkh-i-Mubārakshāhī by Yahyā bin Ahmad bin  
Abd Allāh al-Sarhīndī, Bibliotheca  
Indica, A.D. 1931.

C O N T E N T S

PREFACE	.....	.....	.....	1
NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION	.....	.....	.....	11
ABBREVIATIONS	.....	.....	.....	v
CHAPTER I - SOURCES	.....	.....	.....	1
(a) Persian and Arabic Works outside Bengal	.....	.....	.....	2
(b) Inscriptions and Coins	.....	.....	.....	7
(c) Writings of Muslim Scholars in Bengal	.....	.....	.....	8
(d) Writings of non-Muslim Scholars in Bengal.....	.....	.....	.....	12
(e) Hagiological Literature	.....	.....	.....	13
(f) Account of Foreign Travellers	.....	.....	.....	18
CHAPTER II - POLITICAL BACKGROUND	.....	.....	.....	21
1. Socio-Political Forces at work	.....	.....	.....	21
(A) Early Muslim Contact with Bengal.....	.....	.....	.....	21
(B) Early Muslim Governors...	.....	.....	.....	22
(C) The <u>Khalji</u> Oligarchy	.....	.....	.....	24
(D) Lakhnavti under Delhi Authority.	.....	.....	.....	27
(E) The Great Revolt	.....	.....	.....	29
(F) The House of Balban	.....	.....	.....	31
(G) The Independent Sultāns..	.....	.....	.....	33
2. Gradual Expansion of the Muslim Territory in Bengal	.....	.....	.....	43



<b>CHAPTER III - THE GROWTH OF THE MUSLIM SOCIETY</b> .....	<b>50</b>
<b>SECTION (A) - THE PART PLAYED BY THE SULTĀNS</b> .....	<b>50</b>
(a) <b>Erection of Mosques.</b>	<b>51</b>
(b) <b>Construction of Madrasahs..</b> .....	<b>54</b>
(c) <b>Promotion of Islāmic Spirit</b> .....	<b>58</b>
(d) <b>Patronising the Ālīms and the Sūfis</b> .....	<b>65</b>
(e) <b>Cultivation of Learning by Sultāns and their Officers...</b> .....	<b>72</b>
(f) <b>Benevolent Activities of the Sultāns</b> .....	<b>74</b>
<b>SECTION (B) - THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE MUSLIM SCHOLARS</b> .....	<b>79</b>
(i) <b>Qādī Rukn al-Dīn al-Samarqandī</b> .....	<b>80</b>
(ii) <b>Mawlānā Taqī al-Dīn Arabī</b> .....	<b>84</b>
(iii) <b>Mawlānā Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah</b> .....	<b>85</b>
(iv) <b>Shāh Muhammad Saḡhīr.</b>	<b>97</b>
(v) <b>Ibrāhīm Qawwām Farūqī.</b>	<b>100</b>
(vi) <b>Muhammad bin Yazdān Bakhsh</b> .....	<b>101</b>
<b>Contribution - a résumé.</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>SECTION (C) - THE SŪFĪS AND THEIR INFLUENCE</b> .....	<b>106</b>
(a) <b>Sūfism</b> .....	<b>106</b>

	(b) Sūfism in Bengal	....	107
	Part I - The Biographical Sketch	....	109
	(a) Sūfis, Believed to have come Before Muslim Conquest....		109
	(b) Sūfis of the Early Muslim Period	....	116
	Part II - The Influence of the Sūfis	....	157
CHAPTER IV - COMPOSITION OF THE MUSLIM SOCIETY		....	179
CHAPTER V - ISLĀM AS PRACTISED BY THE MUSLIMS IN BENGAL		....	203
	(i) Pīrism	....	209
	(a) The Worship of Satya-Pīr	....	211
	(b) The Pānch-Pīr	....	215
	(c) Minor Features Connected with Pīrism....	....	218
	(ii) The Growth of Mullāism or Priestly Influence	....	220
	(iii) The Reverence to the Foot-Prints of the Prophet	....	223
CHAPTER VI - THE DAILY LIFE OF THE MUSLIMS.		....	226
	(i) The Language..	....	226
	(ii) The Profession	....	229
	(iii) Dwelling Houses	....	243
	(iv) Diet	....	245
	(v) Dress	....	247

(vi) Position of Women	....	....	250
(vii) Social Gathering and Entertainments...			251
(viii) Slavery	....	....	252
(ix) Pecuniary Condition	....	....	253
(x) Contact with the Local People		....	256
CHAPTER VII - THE CONCLUSION	....	....	265
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	....	....	273

## CHAPTER - I

### SOURCES.

No attempt has so far been made to reconstruct the social history of the Muslims in this sub-Continent. The attention has centred round the political history chiefly because the Persian Chronicles, which are the main sources of Muslim history, confine themselves to a narration of political events. On Bengal also number of works<sup>1</sup> have been produced dealing only with the political history, though no contemporary chronicle of the pre-Mughal period has so far been discovered in this part of the country. This aspect of the history of Bengal is based on brief references found in the chronicles of Northern India and on the data collected from a study of inscriptions, coins and other archaeological evidence. There is, however, sufficient materials in these chronicles as well as in the contemporary literature - both Persian and Bengali - available, with the help of which social history can be reconstructed.

These materials fall into following groups :-

(a) Persian and Arabic Works written outside Bengal.

- 
1. The following works deserve to be mentioned :- (a) Charles Stewart: History of Bengal, London, A.D.1813. (b) Contributions of Blochmann in J.A.S.B. 1873-75. (c) R.D.Banerjee: Bānglār Itihāsa, Vol. II, Calcutta, 1917. (d) Contributions of Stapleton in J.A.S.B. from 1910-1922. (e) History of Bengal, Vol. II, Dacca University, 1948.

- (b) Inscriptions and Coins.
- (c) Writings of Muslim Scholars in Bengal.
- (d) Writings of non-Muslim Scholars in Bengal.
- (e) Hagiological literature.
- (f) Accounts of foreign travellers.

(a) Persian and Arabic Works written outside Bengal :-

(i) Chronicles :-

The earliest chronicle referring to Bengal is the Tabaqāt-i-Nasirī of Abū Umar Minhāj al-Dīn Uthmān bin Sirāj al-Dīn al-Jūzjānī<sup>1</sup>. Though it is a general history of Islām, the author devotes a section<sup>2</sup> on Bengal dealing with the Khaljī Maliks of Lakhnawtī. Beside this section, he also refers to Bengal while dealing with the Sultāns of Dehlī and their officers connected with the affairs of Bengal<sup>3</sup>. The author visited Bengal during the governorship of Malik ‘Izz al-Dīn Tughral Tughān Khān<sup>4</sup>. He received patronage from the said Malik, joined the war against the king of Orissa and acted as a mediator between his patron and Malik Tamar Khān Qirān, Governor of Oudh, when they were quarrelling for the possession of Lakhnawtī<sup>5</sup>. From his description of Bengal it is clear that the author took pains to collect information about the Khaljī Maliks from their surviving associates<sup>6</sup>

---

1. Published in the Bibliotheca Indica Series, A.D. 1864.

2. See, Tabqat No. 20.

3. See, for example, Tabqat Nos. 21 & 22.

4. Minhāj, Pp. 243-44.

5. Ibid, Pp. 245-46.

6. e.g. the information received from Mutamid al-Dawlah (Minhāj, P. 153).

and about other governors from the information available at the Dehlī court or by his personal observation. But unfortunately the book gives only a chronicle of political events. References to social affairs are limited to general remarks about the construction of mosques and madrasahs, the arrival of Muslim divines and the construction of Khānqahs in the metropolitan city or the striking of coins and the reading of Khutbah in the name of the Sultāns. Nevertheless, it is of importance, as it is the only Chronicle which supplies information about the foundation of Muslim Rule in Bengal.

Other contemporary Chronicles that refer to Bengal are, (a) Tārīkh-i-Firūz Shāhī of Diyā' al-Dīn Baranī<sup>1</sup>, (b) Tārīkh-i-Firūz Shāhī of Shams-i-Sirāj Afīf<sup>2</sup>, (c) Tārīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhī of Yahyā bin Ahmad bin Abd Allāh al-Sahrindī<sup>3</sup>, and (d) Futūh al-Salātīn of 'Isāmī<sup>4</sup>. The first three were written in Dehlī and the last in the Bahmani Capital under the patronage of Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Hasan<sup>5</sup>. None of these authors came to Bengal. Moreover they refer to Bengal only in connection with the invasion of that country by the Dehlī Sultāns. But the chief importance of these chronicles lies in the fact that while describing the battles between the Sultāns of Dehlī and their antagonists of Bengal, they

---

1. Published in the Bibliotheca Indica Series, A.D. 1862.

2. Ibid, A.D. 1890.

3. Ibid, A.D. 1931.

4. Edited by Agha Mahdi Husain, Agra, A.D. 1938.

5. 'Isāmī: Futūh al-Salātīn, edited by Agha Mahdi Husain, Agra, A.D. 1938, Preface.

occasionally refer to the geographical factors affecting the politics of the country<sup>1</sup>, the circumstances leading to the independence of Bengal Sultāns, the composition of their army and other connected subjects. From these chronicles, a student of Social history can sift materials for his own purpose.

The later chronicles are, (a) Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī of Nizām al-Dīn Ahmad Bakhshī<sup>2</sup>, (b) Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh of Abd al-Qādir al-Badāyūnī<sup>3</sup>, and (c) Tārīkh-i-Hind of Abū al-Qāsim Ferishtah<sup>4</sup>. The first two works were written in Dehlī during the reign of the great Mughal emperor Akbar, while the third i.e. number (c) was written in the Deccan. Badāyūnī's Muntakhab is a general history of the Muslim world. He refers to Bengal in connection with his discussion on the pre-Mughal Sultāns of Dehlī. No chapter is devoted in his book to the history of the Independent Sultāns of Bengal, as is done by Nizām al-Dīn Bakhshī and Ferishtah. Hence the two latter Chronicles are valuable, though their information is short and meagre. Another important Chronicle which has a chapter on Bengal is Zafar al-Walīh bi Muzaftar wa Ālih (An Arabic

---

1. See, Baranī, P. 82.

2. Published in the Bibliotheca Indica Series, A.D. 1927-35. There are three volumes, of which Vol. III has a chapter on Bengal.

3. Bibliotheca Indica, A.D. 1869.

4. Newal Kishore edition, Lucknow, A.H. 1281. The second Volume has a chapter on Bengal.

History of Gujrat) of 'Abd Allāh Muhammad bin 'Umar al-Makkī alias Hājī Dabīr<sup>1</sup>. Hājī Dabīr was alive in 1020/A.D. 1611, and the latest event recorded in his book is the accession of Emperor Akbar in 963/A.D. 1556<sup>2</sup>. Though not a contemporary writer, he has utilised some earlier chronicles like that of Diyā'al-Dīn Baranī and one of Husām Khān, now lost to us<sup>3</sup>. He records the construction of a madrasah in the holy city of Makkah by Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad Shāh of Bengal and his receipt of investiture from the Khalīfah of Egypt. This unique information is nowhere available. The writer quotes al-Sakhāwī's Al-Daw al-Lāmī li-ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsī, as his authority<sup>4</sup>.

(ii) Other Works :-

The Āyn-i-Akbarī of Abū al-Fadl<sup>5</sup>, written under the great Mughal emperor Akbar, forms a separate sub-class. This is a book approximating to modern gazetteers. The second volume of the Āyn devotes one chapter on Bengal and another chapter on the Sūfis in which some of the Bengal Sūfis have been included. The list of Bengal Sultāns as available in the Āyn is faulty, but the account of socio-economic condition is important as it gives an opportunity to examine them

- 
1. Edited by E. Denison Ross, London, A.D. 1928, in three volumes. The third volume refers to Bengal.
  2. E. Denison Ross: An Arabic History of Gujrat, London, A.D. 1928, Vol. II, Introduction.
  3. For Husām Khān and his book, See, Ibid, Vol. II, Introduction.
  4. I have not found this information in al-Sakhāwī's book published in several volumes from Cairo, in A.H. 1303.
  5. Published in the Bibliotheca Indica Series, A.D. 1877.



in the light of other corroborative evidences. The chapter giving statistical details of the revenue of Bengal, though of later period, is important in so far as it supplies for the first time names of important places and revenue divisions, some of which can no doubt be traced to our period.

The Qirān al-Sādāyn<sup>1</sup> of Amīr Khusraw occupies a unique place in the Persian literature of this sub-continent. It is more than a poetical description of the meeting between the opposing Sultāns, the father and the son, Sultān Nāṣir al-Dīn Mahmūd Bughrā Khān of Bengal and Sultān Muīz al-Dīn Kayqubād of Dehlī on the bank of the river Sarayu. It clearly brings to our view the licentious life of the kings and princes and their flattering court retinue, dancers and musicians who followed even in the wake of battle.

Another important work is Al-Daw al-Lāmi li-ahl al-Qarn al-tāsi, a biographical dictionary of famous men among the Muslims of the 9th century A.H. written by a contemporary scholar 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Sakhāwī<sup>2</sup>. The author refers to the construction of madrasahs in, and sending of presents to the holy cities of Makkah and Madīnah by Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn 'Azam Shāh. As the author spent much of his time and died in Madīnah<sup>3</sup>, there is no room to challenge the authenticity of

---

1. Edited by Mawlawī Muḥammad Ismā'īl, Aligarh, A.D. 1918.

2. Published in Cairo, A.H. 1303, in several Volumes. Al-Sakhāwī was born in Cairo, in 830/A.D. 1426, and died in the city of Madīnah in 902/A.D. 1496. (See, Introduction to the first volume of Al-Daw al-Lāmi li-ahl al-Qarn al-tāsi).

3. Al-Sakhāwī: Al-Daw al-Lāmi li-ahl al-Qarn al-tāsi, Cairo, A.H. 1303, Vol. I. Introduction.

his evidence. Ghulām Ālī Āzād Bilgrāmī in his Khazānah-i-Āmirah<sup>1</sup>, a history of the Persian literature, supplies the same information as al-Sakhāwī does and thus gives further stress on the authenticity of al-Sakhāwī's view.

(b) Inscriptions and Coins :-

Contemporary inscriptions<sup>2</sup> and coins<sup>3</sup> have been discovered in large number. Their chief importance lies in the fact that they help in building up the chronology of the Sultāns. The find-spots of inscriptions and mint-names on coins enable us to trace the gradual expansion of the Muslim power and settlement of the Muslim population in different parts of the country. The reference to the erection of mosques and madrasahs, the names of Sūfīs, Ālīms and the learned officers and kings found on inscriptions show how different sections of people contributed to the growth of the Muslim society. Similarly the titles of Bengal Sultāns on their coins and inscriptions indicate their attitude towards the

- 
1. Newal Kishore edition, Kānpūr, 2nd Edition, A.D. 1900.
  2. Inscriptions have been published in various historical Journals. Recently Dr. A.H. Dani has compiled a bibliography of inscriptions. (See, Muslim inscriptions of Bengal).
  3. The coins have been published in different Catalogues, for example, (1) Thomas: Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi, London, 1871. (2) Lane-Poole: The coins of the Muhammadan States of India in the British Museum, London, A.D. 1885. (3) H.N.Wright: Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Vol. II, Oxford, A.D. 1907; (4) H.E.Stapleton: Catalogue of the Provincial Cabinet of Coins, Eastern Bengal and Assam, Shillong, A.D. 1911. (5) A.W.Botham: Catalogue of the Provincial Coin Cabinet, Assam, 2nd edition, Allahabad, A.D. 1930. (6) A.W.Botham and R.Friel: Supplement to the Catalogue of the Provincial Cabinet of Coins, Assam, Allahabad, A.D.1919.

Khalīfah of Islām, their love of power and show, their learning and particular inclinations and sometimes dynastic relations.

(c) Writings of Muslim Scholars in Bengal:

(1) Chronicles :-

So far no contemporary chronicle of our period written in Bengal has been discovered. Only two late Works are known which cover the political history of this period - Riyād al-Salātīn<sup>1</sup> of Ghulām Husayn Salīm, which was written at the instance of George Udney in the year A.D. 1788, gives a connected summary account, based on published materials of the Mughal period and the local traditions that the author could gather in Maldah. The other work which remains unpublished but for few extracts translated by H. Beveridge is the Khurshīd-i-Jahān Numā<sup>2</sup> of Sayyid Ilāhī Bakhsh. It does not add any new information.

(ii) Persian and Arabic Works :-

Important works of this category are, a translation of a Sanskrit Yogic work named Amṛitkunda by one Qādī Rukn al-Dīn al-Samarqandī in the reign of Sultān 'Alā'al-Dīn 'Alī

---

1. Published in the Bibliotheca Indica Series, A.D. 1898.

2. H. Beveridge has made a long summary translation in J.A.S.B. 1895.

Mardān Khaljī<sup>1</sup>, a book on Fiqh named Nām-i-Haq<sup>2</sup>, a Persian lexicon named Sharḥnāmāh by Ibrāhīm Qawwām Fārūqī<sup>3</sup> and a transcription of Jāmi' al-Bukhārī by Muhammad bin Yazdān Bakhsḥ, famous as Khwājgī Shirwānī<sup>4</sup>. These works were meant for educating Muslim population in Islamic Sciences and literature.

- 
1. The original translations are nowhere available at the present time, but a second Persian recension made several years after by an anonymous writer is now available in different libraries of Europe and Islamic countries. (For details see, Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, Karachi, Vol. I, Part I, January, 1953, P. 53, note 1). Recently Qazi Ahmad Mian Akhtar of Junagadh has published the preface of this second recension and the titles of chapters of the book in the Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, Karachi, Vol. I, Part I, January, 1953. Ethe in his Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office (See Vol. I, Oxford, A.D. 1903, No. 2002), refers to a manuscript named Bahr al-hayāt. According to him, the book, Amritkunda was translated by one Kanāma, a Brahmin of Kamrup, who accepted Islām when Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī invaded Bengal. The manuscripts in question are probably different transcription of the same work, because only the titles of works and the name of the Brahmin differ. Ethe probably confused between 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī and 'Alī Mardān Khaljī, because at the present stage of our knowledge we know that Sultān 'Alā al-Dīn Khaljī never invaded nor conquered Bengal.
  2. There are two editions of the book, one from Bombay, A.D. 1885, and the other from Kānpūr in 1332/A.D. 1907.
  3. A manuscript copy is now preserved in the 'Alīyah Madrasah Library, Dacca, (MS. No. P.MSS.).  
13/8
  4. Catalogue of Arabic and Persian Manuscripts in the Oriental Public Library at Bankipore, Vol. V, Part I, Nos. 130-32.

(iii) Bengali Works :-

The earliest Bengali Work by a Muslim author is Yūsuf Jolekhā<sup>1</sup> by Shāh Muḥammad Ṣaghīr written in the reign of Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Azam Shāh<sup>2</sup> (A.D. 1389-1409). It gives in verse the love tale of Hadrat Yūsuf and Zulaykhā on the basis of the kitāb and the Qurān.

Dr. Enamul Haq<sup>3</sup> suggests that three other Muslim poets wrote books in Bengali during the period under review. They were Zayn al-Dīn, Muzammil and Afdal Ālī. But a close examination shows that they were of later period. Zayn al-Dīn, in his book Rasūl Vijaya<sup>4</sup> refers to one Yūsuf Khān who is identified by Dr. Enamul Haq with Sultān Shams al-Dīn Yūsuf Shāh (A.D. 1474-81). But except the similarity in name there is no other proof to be adduced. Moreover the name has been written as Yūsuf Khān. Had he been a king, he would have been called as Shāh and not Khān. Ibrāhīm Qawwām Fārūqī<sup>5</sup> in his Sharfnāmāh records that one Amīr Zayn al-Dīn Harwī was the poet-laureate of Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh, the father of Yūsuf Shāh, but it is difficult to identify him with the author of rasūl Vijaya. Muzammil's works Sātnāmā

- 
1. There are three manuscript copies of the book in the Dacca University Library, (Old Catalogue Nos. 225-227 and New Catalogue Nos. 12-14), and one manuscript copy in the possession of Dr. Enamul Haq, Director, Bengali Academy, Dacca.
  2. Muslim Bānglā Sahitya, Pakistan Publications, Dacca, A.D. 1957, P. 56.
  3. Ibid, Pp. 60-70.
  4. Ibid, Pp. 61 ff. (Dacca University MS. No. 594).
  5. Urdū, October, 1952, Pp. 61 ff.

and Nitisāstravārtā have been discovered<sup>1</sup>. Dr. Enamul Haq attributes him to the 15th century A.D. on ground that the poet in one place refers to one Shāh Badar al-Din Pīr, whom the learned scholar identifies with Pīr Badar al-Dīn Badar-i-Ālam of Bihar<sup>2</sup>. But the identification is far from satisfactory; except the similarity of name, there is no other proof for such an identification. A book named Nasihāt nāmā of poet Afdal Ālī has been discovered<sup>3</sup>. Dr. Enamul Haq places it in early 16th century on the following grounds<sup>4</sup>. First, the poet refers to one Shāh Rustam who, according to local people of Chittagong, lived there three to four hundred years back. Secondly, in one Bengali padā (couplet) ascribed to one Afdal Ālī, the poet refers to Sayyid Fīrūz Shāh, identified with Sultān Ālā' al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh (A.D. 1532-33). None of these arguments is weighty. As for the first, the local tradition can hardly be accepted unless corroborated by other evidences; as for the second, there is no proof to identify Afdal Ālī, the padakāra (the writer of couplet) with Afdal Ali, the author of Nasihāt nāmā. Sayyid Sultān's Ophāte Rasūl<sup>5</sup> dated towards the later half of the 16th century A.D.

- 
1. The manuscripts (Nos. 119 & 237) are preserved in the Dacca University Library.
  2. Enamul Haq: Muslim Bānglā Sāhitya, Pakistan Publications, Dacca, 1957, Pp. 66-68.
  3. Ibid, Pp. 72-75.
  4. Ibid.
  5. Edited by Ali Ahmad, Noakhali, B.S. 1356.

and Dawlat Wazir Bahrām Khān's Laili Majnu<sup>1</sup> dated between A.D. 1545-1553 contain in them traditional account of their religious and literary materials. Muhammad Khān's Maktul Hosan<sup>2</sup>, a 17th century Bengali Work records the settlement of an Arab named Māhisawār in Chittagong and his contact with the local people.

(d) Writings of non-Muslim Scholars in Bengal:

The contemporary Bengali books written by non-Muslims are many, but only two of them namely Padma Purāna of Vijaya Gupta<sup>3</sup> and Manasā Vijaya of Vipradāsa<sup>4</sup> make some reference to the Muslim society. Though other books, like Mālādhara Vasu's Srī Krishna Vijaya<sup>5</sup>, Chandīdāsa's Srī Krishna Kīrtana<sup>6</sup>, Kavīndra's Mahābhārata<sup>7</sup>, Srī Kara Nandī's Mahābhārata<sup>8</sup> (Asvamedha Parva) and Dviija Srī Dhara's Vidyā Sundara<sup>9</sup>, do

- 
1. Edited by Ahmad Sharif and published by Bengali Academy, Dacca, A.D. 1957.
  2. Abdul Karim: Bānglā Prāchīn Punthir Bivarana, Part I, No. 1 (Bāngiya Sāhitya Parishad Patrikā, additional No.B.S. 1310, Pp. 157).
  3. There are a few editions of the book, the one edited by B.K. Bhattacharjee and published by Bāni Niketan, Barisal, has been followed.
  4. Edited by Sukumar Sen and published by Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, A.D. 1953.
  5. Edited by Khagendra Nath Mitra and published by Calcutta University, A.D. 1944.
  6. Edited by Basanta Rañjan Roy and published by Bāngiya Sāhitya Parishad, Calcutta, 2nd edition, B.S. 1342.
  7. Edited by Caurī Nāth Sāstrī and published from Dhubri, Assam.
  8. Edited by D.C. Sen and Binoda Bihārī Kāvya-tīrtha and published by Bāngiya Sāhitya Parishad, Calcutta, B.S. 1312.
  9. Bāngiya Sāhitya Parishad Patrikā, Vol. 44, Pp. 22-24.

not refer to the Muslim society, the very fact that many of the authors were patronised by the Bengal Sultāns<sup>1</sup>, or their officers, show the sympathetic attitude of the Muslims towards the non-Muslim authors and their works.

Of the later Bengali literature, the biographies of Śrī Chaitanya Deva, such as Chaitanya Bhāgavata of Brindāvana Dāsa<sup>2</sup>, Chaitanya Charitāmrita of Kṛishṇa Dāsa Kavirāja<sup>3</sup> need special mention. In depicting the superhuman power of Chaitanya and some of his followers, they sometimes refer to the Muslim population. Though shrouded with religious frenzy, they sometimes offer corroborative evidences. Mukunda Rāma's Chandī Maṅgala dated towards the end of the 16th century A.D.<sup>4</sup> also offer important materials for reconstructing the condition of the Muslim society.

(e) Hagiological literature :-

The Muslim Hagiological literature has so far remained untapped except for writing a few articles by Prof. H. Askari. They may be divided into three parts - (i) the Biographies of the Sūfīs, (ii) the malfūzāt or discourses of the Sūfīs and (iii) the maktūbāt or letters written by the Sūfīs. We

---

1. See, D.C. Sen: Bāṅgā Bhāshā O Sāhitya, 8th edition, Calcutta, B.S. 1356, P. 73; Sukumar Sen: Bāṅglā Sāhityer Itihāsa, Calcutta, 1940, Pp.71 ff.

2. There are a few editions of this book.

3. There are a few editions of this book.

4. Published by the Bangabāsi Kāryālaya, Calcutta. The book has also been published in two volumes by Calcutta University, A.D. 1924 and 1926.



shall see later<sup>1</sup> that Bengal was the seat of a large number of Sūfīs, but very few of their malfūzāt or maktūbāt has come to light.

(1) The biographies of the Sūfīs :-

The only contemporary biography so far discovered is Manāqib al-Asfiyā' of Shāh Shu'ayb<sup>2</sup>, but unfortunately it deals with only Makhdūm al-Mulk Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī. In this connection the book makes casual reference to Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah, the teacher of Makhdūm al-Mulk who passed his later life in Sunārgāwn and Mawlānā Taqī al-Dīn, the teacher of Shaykh Yahyā (father of Makhdūm al-Mulk) who lived at Mahī Santosh. Two other biographies that deal with a few Bengal Saints are of later date. They are Akhbār al-Akhyār of Shaykh 'Abd al-Haq Dehlawī<sup>3</sup> (written in the reigns of Akbar and Jahāngīr)<sup>4</sup> and Mirāt al-Asrār of 'Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī<sup>5</sup> written in the reign of Shāh Jahān<sup>6</sup>. Both the works deal more with the activities of the Sūfīs outside Bengal, than their activities in Bengal proper. Mirāt-i-Madārī<sup>7</sup>, also of 'Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī, deals only with the life of

---

1. See, Chapter III, Section (c).

2. Extract printed at the end of the Maktūbāt-i-Sadī.

3. Muḥtabā Press, Dehlī, A.H. 1332.

4. Catalogue of Arabic and Persian Manuscripts in the Oriental Public Library at Bankipore, Vol. VIII, Pp. 27-28.

5. Manuscripts Nos. 16 A.R./143 of the Dacca University Library, and Ma 12/19-20 of 'Alīyah Madrasah Library, Dacca.

6. Mirāt al-Asrār, 'Alīyah Madrasah MS. folio No. 190.

7. Manuscript No. 217 of the Dacca University Library.

Badī' al-Dīn Shāh Madār outside Bengal. Khazīnat al-Asfiyā of Ghulām Sarwar<sup>1</sup> also a later work is practically a reproduction of Akhbār al-Akhyār. Another biographical work is Gulzār-i-Abrār<sup>2</sup> of the Shattāri scholar Ghawthī, written in A.D. 1613. It also contains lives of many Sufis of Bengal.

Beside these, three other biographies dealing with three different Sufis were written in Bengal. The first is Sekh Subhodaya<sup>3</sup>, dealing with the life of Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrizī in Bengal. This is a Sanskrit work attributed to Halayudha Misra, a courtier of king Lakshmana Sena. But the book is said to be spurious and is generally dated to 16th century A.D.<sup>4</sup> The second is Risālat al-Shuhdā<sup>5</sup>, of Pīr Muhammad Shattāri, dated 17th century A.D. It deals with the life of Shāh Ismā'īl Ghāzī in Bengal. The third is Suhayl-i-Yaman of Nāsir al-Dīn Haydar<sup>6</sup>, dated A.D. 1859. The book deals with the biography of Shāh Jalāl of Sylhet. Though of very late origin the author had the advantage of consulting two earlier manuscripts, Risālah of Muhī al-Dīn Khādīm and Rawdat al-Salātīn, now lost to us.

- 
1. Published by Newal Kishore Press, Lucknow.
  2. W. Ivanow: Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta. Work No. 240, Pp. 96-108.
  3. Edited by Sukumar Sen, Calcutta, 1927.
  4. Memoirs, Pp. 105-6.
  5. Text edition and English translation by G.H.Damant in J.A.S.B. 1874.
  6. Newal Kishore edition, Lucknow, 1297/A.D.1880.

(ii) The Malfūzāt :-

The malfuzat of Bengal Ṣūfīs have not come to light, but those of Shaykh Ḥusām al-Dīn Manikpūrī, compiled under the title of Rafīq al-Ārefīn by one of his disciples Farīd bin Sālār have been discovered. Recently Prof. Hasan Askari has published the relevant extracts which throw important light on Bengal<sup>1</sup>. As the Shaykh was a disciple of Shaykh Nūr Qutb Ālam of Pandwa<sup>2</sup> and as he himself visited Bengal, the materials derived from his malfūzāt may claim authenticity and genuineness.

(iii) The Maktūbāt :-

The following eight letters of Shaykh Nūr Qutb Ālam have come to light<sup>3</sup>.

- No. 1 was written to one Shaykh Qādī Asad.
- No. 2 was written to one Shaykh Muīz al-Dīn.
- No. 3 was written to one Shaykh Rukn al-Dīn.
- No. 4 was written to one Rafāt Khān.
- No. 5 was written to one Qādī Zahid.
- No. 6 was written to one anonymous person.
- No. 7 was written to one Qādī.
- No. 8 was written to some dear one.

All these letters, except the last one deal with Tasawwuf and hardly refer to the Socio-Political condition

- 
1. Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, Dacca Session, 1953. Pp. 1 ff. (Reprint Section).
  2. Ibid; Akhhār al-Akhhār, P. 176.
  3. Nos. 1-7 are in possession of Prof. H. Askari of Patna College. Extract from No. 8 has been published by Prof. H. Askari in Bengal: Past and Present, Vol. LXVII, No. 130, 1948, Pp.38-39.

of the country. The last one hints at the interregnum of Rājā Gaṇeśā in Bengal's politics. But letters of two other Sūfīs who visited Bengal throw very important light on the subject. They are Mīr Sayyid Ashraf Jahāngīr Simnānī and Mawlānā Muẓaffar Shams Balkhī. The following letters of Mīr Sayyid Ashraf Jahāngīr Simnānī so far discovered throw light on Bengal's history<sup>1</sup> :-

- (a) One letter to Sultān Ibrāhīm Sharqī of Jawnpūr.
- (b) One letter to Shaykh Nūr Qutb Ālam.
- (c) One letter to Shaykh Husayn Dhukkarposh.

These letters are very important as they throw light on the political condition of the country during the time of the interregnum of Rājā Gaṇeśā and the resultant invasion of Bengal by Sultān Ibrāhīm Sharqī of Jawnpūr. They also refer to the condition of the Muslim divines during the time.

Mawlānā Muẓaffar Shams Balkhī wrote a number of letters<sup>2</sup> to Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Āzam Shāh son of Sikandar Shāh. They deal with various subjects like qualifications of a king, the attitude of a Muslim ruler towards the non-Muslims, requesting the Sultān to arrange for shipping space in Chittagong Port for the followers of the Mawlānā who were out on pilgrimage to the holy cities. As such these letters throw important light on the Socio-political condition of the country.

- 
1. Extracts published by Prof. Hasan Askari in Bengal: Past and Present, Vol. LKVII, No. 130, 1948, Pp. 32-38.
  2. Prof. H. Askari quotes extracts from twelve letters (See, Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Vol. XLII, Part II, 1956, Pp. 1-19.

Beside the hagiological literature, a large number of traditions are current in different parts of the country about various Sūfīs<sup>1</sup>. Though traditions hardly offer good materials for the reconstruction of the history, they sometimes corroborate other evidences. Names of a few Sūfīs have come down to us only through tradition<sup>2</sup>.

(f) Accounts of foreign travellers :-

The first traveller who came to Bengal during the period under review is the Moorish traveller Ibn Battūṭah<sup>3</sup>. He did not stay here for a long time. His intention of visiting Bengal, as he himself says was to meet Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrizī in the hilly region of Kamrup<sup>4</sup>. His account of the early Muslim rulers of Bengal is faulty<sup>5</sup> and as we shall see later he even gives a wrong name of the Sūfī, he met<sup>6</sup>. But nevertheless he supplies valuable information regarding the Socio-economic condition of Bengal, as he gives a list of commodities he found in the markets and their price. He also records the attitude of the ruling Sultān towards the Muslim faqīrs.

---

1. For traditions see, District Gazetteers of Bengal.

2. See, Chapter III, Section (c).

3. The Account of Ibn Battūṭah has been edited with French translation by Defrémery and Sanguinetti in four Volumes, Paris, A.D. 1853-59.

4. Ibn Battūṭah, Vol. IV, P. 216.

5. See for example, Indian Historical Quarterly, 1942, Pp. 65-70.

6. See, Chapter III, Section (C), Pp. 122-23, 125 ff.

The following Chinese records on Bengal throw light on political, social and economic condition of the period under review<sup>1</sup> :-

- (a) Ying Yai Sheng lan compiled by Ma Huan between 1425 and 1432 A.D. It is a general account of Bengal without any reference to the king or court.
- (b) Sing Ch'a Sheng lan, compiled by Fei-Sin in A.D. 1436. This is also a general account of Bengal with some information on the king and the court but the name of the king does not occur. It is an account of Hou-hien's visit to Bengal in A.D. 1415.
- (c) Si Yang Ch'ao Kung tien lu compiled by Huang Sing - ts'eng in A.D. 1520. Beside the general account of Bengal it contains the name of the king and a reference to the various embassies sent by him to the Chinese Court till A.D. 1438.
- (d) Shu Yu Chou Tseu lu compiled in A.D. 1574 by Yen Ts'ong-Kien.
- (e) Ming-She, the official compilation was completed in A.D. 1739 but the materials were old.
- (f) Tao-Yi-che-lee compiled by Wang Ta-Yuan from A.D. 1349-50.

---

1. Only one Chinese Account, <sup>that</sup> of Ma-huan was first translated by G. Phillips in Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1895, Pp. 523-35, and then all the Chinese Accounts were re-edited and translated by P.C. Bagchi and published in visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, Pp. 96-134.

Of the European writers, Nicolo di Conti (Venetian)<sup>1</sup>, Varthema (Italian)<sup>2</sup>, and Barbosa (Portuguese)<sup>3</sup>, have left valuable account on the Socio-economic condition of Bengal but unfortunately they are general accounts and it is hardly possible to find out anything exclusively on the Muslim society.

So far scholars working on the early Muslim history of Bengal dwelt on only the political events and as such they based their findings only on chronicles, inscriptions and coins. The sources such as writings of contemporary Muslim scholars, contemporary and later Bengali literature and the hagiological literature practically remained unexplored. With the help of these materials it is now possible to attempt a social history of the Muslims in Bengal from the conquest of Lakhnawtī by Muhammad Bakhtyār Khaljī down to A.D.1538.

- 
1. For Nicolo di Conti's Account see, Samuel Purchas: Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes, Vol. XI, Glasgow, A.D. 1906, P. 398.
  2. The Itinery of Ludovico di Varthema of Bolognia, English translation by John Winter Jones, edited by Penzer, London, A.D. 1928; Samuel Purchas: Purchas His Pilgrimes, Vol. IX, Glasgow, A.D. 1905, Pp. 55-90.
  3. The Book of Duarte Barbosa, English translation by Mansel Longworth Dames and published by Hakluyt Society, London, Vol. II (London A.D. 1921).

## CHAPTER II

POLITICAL BACKGROUND1. Socio-political Forces at work.(A) Early Muslim contact with Bengal.

Traditional accounts<sup>1</sup> take back Muslim contact with Bengal to the early centuries of the Hijrah. But so far no authentic record has been found to establish their early settlement here<sup>2</sup>. In course of their Eastern trade, the Arabs appear to have visited the Bengal coast<sup>3</sup>, but how far they penetrated inland is not definitely known. Evidences of the preponderance of the Arabic words in the Chittagonian dialect and facial resemblance of the Chittagonian people with the Arabs have been produced<sup>4</sup> to claim early Arab colonisation, but these influences could as well be the result of slightly later contact when Muslims had become predominant in Bengal and carried on trade with the Arab world through the Chittagong port. The existence of the commercial contact with the

- 
1. For traditions see, J.A.S.B. 1889, Vol. LVIII, Pp. 12 ff; J.A.S.B. 1875, part 1, No. 2, Pp. 183-86; J.A.S.B. 1904, part 1, No. 3, Pp. 262-71; Bengal District Gazetteers, Pabna, Bogra, Dacca, Mymensingh. They have also been discussed in Chapter III, Section (C).
  2. The earlier theory that a small Arab kingdom was established in Chittagong, (see, Enamul Haq and Abdul Karim: Arakān Rāisabhāve Bānglā Sāhitya (Bengali Literature in the Arakanese Court), Calcutta, A.D. 1935, P. 3) has recently been refuted. (See, A.H.Dani: "Early Muslim Contact with Bengal" in The Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, Karachi Session, 1951).
  3. Ibid.
  4. Enamul Haq: Purva Pākistāne Islām (Islām in East Pakistan), Dacca, A.D. 1948, P. 19.



Abbasides is indicated by the discovery of a few coins of the Khalīfah<sup>1</sup>. It is possible that these businessmen created by their honesty a favourable atmosphere for the reception of Islām in this idolatrous country, as is traditionally known about the ship-wrecked Muslims who found shelter in Arakan<sup>2</sup>. Stories about a number of Māhisawār and other Muslim saints<sup>3</sup> coming by sea route, are widespread in the country, but it is difficult to examine their veracity or fix them to any definite chronology. One thing is certain that their influence could have hardly far affected the society as no reference is found in the contemporary local literature or inscriptions<sup>4</sup>.

(B) Early Muslim Governors.

Islām, which completely changed the socio-religious pattern of Bengal, came in the wake of Turkish conquest towards the beginning of the 13th century A.D.<sup>5</sup> This conquest of Eastern India does not appear to have been the result of any pre-meditated plan. It was more a dare-devil attempt on

- 
1. Three Abbaside coins, one from Paharpur and two from Mainamati have been found in excavations. (See, K.N.Dikshit: Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 55, Delhi, A.D. 1938, P.87; F.A.Khan: Recent Archaeological Discoveries in East Pakistan; Mainamati. Pakistan Publications, Karachi, P. 11).
  2. J.A.S.B. Vol. X, Part 1, 1844, P. 36.
  3. See, note 1 at page 21.
  4. The only exception is an inscription of Ratnapala which refers to Tālikas, identified with the Arabs. (See, J.A.S.B. 1898, Vol. LXVII, P. 116; Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, 1951, P. 200. In a 15th century manuscript Persian dictionary, the word Tālik has been explained as non-Arabs and Turks. (See, Ibrāhīm Qawwām Fārūqī: Sharfnāmah, Āliyah Madrasah MS. No. P.MBS/13-8, folio No. 128).
  5. Minhāj, P. 151. For date see, Indian Historical Quarterly, June, 1954, Pp. 133 ff.

the part of Muhammad Bakhtyār Khaljī to seek fortune in the Eastern lands<sup>1</sup>, but the easy success that met Bakhtyār's arms in Bihar as well as in Bengal was possibly due to the great consternation spread about the Muslim conquerors<sup>2</sup>. This success has again to be viewed in the general background of that role of conquest and annexation that began with the victory of Muhammad bin Sām at the battle of Tarain in A.D. 1192<sup>3</sup>. Bakhtyār is a link in this chain, as his visit to Qutb al-Dīn Aibak after his possession of Audandbihāra<sup>4</sup> and his presentation of gifts after his conquest of Kāliyā<sup>5</sup> clearly prove. The defeat or flight of the Hindu Rājās was alone to be achieved, as the masses are hardly known to have given an opposition<sup>6</sup> to the conquerors on political or military grounds. The Hindu rulers appear to have formed a class by themselves, looked upon as divinity<sup>7</sup> by the masses. The former must defend themselves or be replaced by others who claimed equal devotion from the latter. It is only on this hypothesis that we can understand the imposition of a new hierarchy of rulers and land holders on the existing Hindu socio-religious structure and the way how these were accepted so willingly by the local people.

---

1. Minhāj, Pp. 147 ff.

2. Ibid, Pp. 148-50.

3. Muhammad Aziz Ahmad: Early Turkish Empire of Dehli, Lahore, A.D. 1949, Pp. 77-79.

4. Minhāj, P. 148.

5. Ibid, P. 151.

6. Minhāj (P. 150), refers to the flight of the Hindus towards Bang and Sanknat.

7. This can be traced right from Gupta time. See, Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Samudra Gupta. (J.F.Fleet: Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. III, Calcutta, A.D. 1888, P. 14, line 26.

(C) The Khaljī Oligarchy.

Minhāj<sup>1</sup> informs us about the entourage of Bakhtyār Khaljī and we learn how men belonging to his tribe flocked around him in the hope of making fortune for themselves. True to the interest of his people Bakhtyār, after occupying a part of the Sena territory, distributed the acquisition among the Khaljī nobles, three of whom, Muhammad Shīrān, Ālī Mardān and Husām al-Dīn Īwad were the most prominent, the latter two being explicitly called Muqtasā<sup>2</sup>. They were not only in charge of the administration and land-revenue collection, but as is known from the example of Muhammad Shīrān<sup>3</sup>, were also military commanders not only for the purpose of defending areas under them but also to wage wars against the neighbouring Hindu Rājās. The history of these Khaljī Amīrs, after the death of Bakhtyār, when each of them tried to establish his own authority at Lakhnawtī or Deokot, shows how jealously they clung to their conquered territory. It is not unlikely that they regarded this land as their own heritage against the Dehlī Sultānate where the Khaljīs had hardly any place. Only mutual rivalry forced them to turn to Dehlī for help as it was in the case of Ālī Mardān Khaljī<sup>4</sup>; otherwise right down to the end of Īwad's reign the Khaljīs were supreme in

---

1. Minhāj, P. 147.

2. Minhāj, Pp. 156, 158.

3. Ibid, P. 157.

4. Ibid, P. 158.

the Lakhnawtī Sultānate. Probably to break this Khaljī monopoly and to establish the Dehlī [Ilbarī] Turks' hegemony over them Iltutmish personally came to Bengal and later sent his favourite son Nāsir al-Dīn Maḥmūd, who crushed their power and established his authority. Subsequent death or probably murder<sup>1</sup> of Maḥmūd, shows the strength that the Khaljīs still possessed in Bengal, and though Balkā Khaljī acknowledged Iltutmish's suzerainty on his coins, Iltutmish himself was bent on uprooting the Khaljīs for ever. Hence he overthrew them root and branch and started the practice of nominating Governors from Dehlī, the first of whom was Malik 'Alā' al-Dīn Jānī<sup>2</sup>.

In this period, beside the problem of their own adjustment to the new surrounding and their strained relation with the Dehlī emperors, the Khaljīs were constantly at war with the neighbouring Hindu Rājās. Their existence was guaranteed only by their recurring raiding expeditions into Hindu dominions, their wealth increased by the imposition of taxes on the Hindu rulers and their prosperity assured by gradual expansion of their territory in the teeth of the Hindu opposition. They are referred to as Gajjanesvaras<sup>3</sup> or Turushkas<sup>4</sup> in Sanskrit inscriptions and literature, which do not betray any cowardice on the part of the Hindu rulers; on the other

---

1. Major Raverty in his translation of Tabaqāt-i-Nāsiri, (Bibliotheca Indica), P. 773, footnote.

2. Minhāj, P. 174.

3. J.A.S.E. Vol. XI, 1915, P. 42, note 3; J.A.S.E. 1952, Vol. XVIII, P. 140.

4. Epigraphia Indica, Vol. II, Pp. 361 ff. Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, Karachi Session, 1951, P.200.

hand they boast of winning victories over the Muslims<sup>1</sup>. The Turkish cavalry was no doubt the deciding factor in the war and the conquest in the early stages followed those directions where the horses could easily move. The river girt Southern Bengal was left immune from the Muslim raids for a long time.

This was the formative period of the Muslim Society in Bengal. On the foundations laid in these few years depended the future edifice of Islām in Bengal. Fortunately the Khaljī nobility came forward to provide facilities<sup>2</sup> for the dissemination of Islāmic learning by founding madrasahs, for the propagation of Islāmic religion by helping the dargāhs, and for the observance of Islāmic rituals and ceremonies by building mosques. Traditional stories about the advent of Muslim saints in this period are many, the most famous among them relates to Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrizī<sup>3</sup>, who is said to have come at the time of Lakshmana Sena and established his reputation in Bengal. All these influences were acting on the then existing society. Its new attitude depended on what shape these new forces were assuming. It is well worth examining the future trend of these foreign influences.

---

1. Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XIII, P. 153.

2. Minhāj, P. 151.

3. Sekh Subhodaya, edited by Sukumar Sen, Calcutta, 1927.  
For details on this saint see, Chapter III, Section (C).

(D) Lakhnawtī under Dehlī Authority.

The break up of the Khaljī monopoly by Iltutmish opened the way for fresh migration of population - especially of the uprooted Turks from Central Asia - into Bengal. This was further facilitated by the appointment of new Governors from Dehlī, who on their part took up their posts at Lakhnawtī with all their adherents, loyal troopers and followers in order to assert their authority over a heterogeneous population. The Dehlī emperor's name was pronounced from the pulpit, and occasionally his coins were issued from Lakhnawtī mint<sup>1</sup>. From time to time presents of elephants and treasure passed from Bengal to Dehlī<sup>2</sup>, and the emperors conferred upon the Governors titles, privileges of drum beating, umbrella and flags<sup>3</sup>. The wealth and special status of Lakhnawtī became proverbial in Dehlī and every ambitious servant of the state aspired to the high post of the Governor of Lakhnawtī. It was this position which earned for them the title of Malik al-Sharq<sup>4</sup> in actual name, fame and wealth. The Government of Lakhnawtī became a replica of that at Dehlī<sup>5</sup>, and this place along with Badāyūn, Kara and Oudh formed strong centres of administration of the Eastern extension of the Dehlī Sultānate. But soon after the death of Iltutmish political squabbles and party

---

1. History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 42-43.

2. Minhāj, Pp. 226 & 243.

3. Ibid, Pp. 181 & 243-44.

4. For inscription with Malik al-Sharq title see, Memoirs, Pp. 163-64.

5. History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 42.

factions weakened the Central authority, which gave opportunity to the Provincial Governors to rise and assert their powers over others on the basis of their own strength. Lakhnawtī was the worst sufferer in this respect as all of them had a covetous eye on it and fought their way to take possession of it<sup>1</sup>. The whole period is a sickening tale of such rivalries and fights between the ambitious Governors. This state of affairs was put to an end by the strong hand of Sultān Gh̄iyāth al-Dīn Balban who appointed his own Governor.

This was a period of turmoil in which fresh blood added to the complications of the then Muslim society in Bengal. New arrivals created new problems and they had to be provided for. Hence we hear of recurrent wars against the neighbouring kings<sup>2</sup>. But there was fundamental weakness of the Muslim power in Bengal due to mutual rivalry. On the other hand the Gaᅅgā rulers of Orissa had not only increased their power but also integrated greater portion of South West Bengal into their territory mainly owing to the weakness of the Senas, who on their part, were being squeezed between the Muslims on the West and the rise of the Devas in the East<sup>3</sup>. For the first time the Muslims suffered reverse in South West Bengal at the hands of Narasimhadeva I, the Gaᅅgā ruler, who is known to have advanced as far as the Ganges<sup>4</sup>. The Muslim territory

---

1. The most important example is the rivalry between Tughral Tughān Khān and Tamar Khān Qirān. (Minhāj, Pp. 245-46).

2. For wars see, History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 42 ff.

3. History of Bengal, Vol. I, Dacca University, A.D.1943, Pp. 253 ff.

4. Minhāj, P. 245; J.A.S.B. 1903, Pp. 121 ff.

shrank, though temporarily<sup>1</sup>, but on the other hand touched Bang along the left bank of the Padmā. Four great Muslim seats emerged in this period - Lakhnawtī, Deokot, Mahisantosh and Lakhnor - this last was temporarily lost to the Ganga rulers<sup>2</sup>. The individual Muslims especially the saints had further penetrated into the villages and even in the Hindu territories, as is known from the numerous graves scattered in the country<sup>3</sup>. Several generations of Muslims had by now passed in Bengal. This long stay had created a peculiar tendency among them, the effect of which was seen in the great revolt.

(E) The great Revolt.

Ḍiyā'al-Dīn Baranī gives an explanation of the revolt. "The wise and the men of experience called Lakhnawtī, Balghāk-pūr, because from a long time past after Sultān Mu'iz al-Dīn Muḥammad (bin) Sām captured Dehlī, any Wālī that the Sultān of Dehlī appointed for Lakhnawtī - Lakhnawtī being far away from Dehlī, being very extensive and wide and there being many ups and downs between Dehlī and Lakhnawtī - revolted (against the king of Dehlī). If the Wālī did not revolt, others revolted against him and killed him and the country was captured. For many years the revolt has become their second nature and habit. And every Wālī appointed there was

---

1. For success of Muḡhith al-Dīn Yūzbak see, Minhāj, Pp.262-63.

2. Minhāj, P. 245.

3. For graves at Mahasthan see, inscription in Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society, Vol. IV, 1918, Pp.178-179.



turned away against the king by the trespassers and balghākiāns (rebels)<sup>1</sup>". However the hold of Dehlī on Lakhnawtī mainly depended on the strength and unity that the reigning Sultān could muster. The local Governors had by then established sufficient security in order to maintain the independence of their possession against any possible Hindu attack. Consequently, the weakness of the successors of Iltutmish inspired a few local Governors to assert their own authority<sup>2</sup>. But the greatest of the revolts occurred in the time of the strong-willed Sultān, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Balban. Mughīth al-Dīn Tughral, a former slave of the Sultān and lately in great favour, rose in rebellion, and Balban met the challenge with full determination. He was the second Dehlī Sultān to come to Bengal, to establish a system and to lay out a future programme of conquest<sup>3</sup>.

1. Baranī, P. 82.  
 دو انبان و ستمبره یافتگان لکنوتی را بلغاکیور خواندندی - که از قدیم الایام از ان باز که سلطان معزالدین محمد سام دهلی را فتح کرد هر والی را که بادشاهان دهلی لکنوتی داده اند از جهت آنکه لکنوتی دور است و عرصه بی فراخ و دراز است و از دهلی تا آنجا غنای بسیار بیشتر است که ان والی بغی و طغیان ورزیده است - و اگر ان والی بغی نکرده است دیگران برو بغی کرده اند و او را کشته و ملک فرو گرفته - و سالهای فراوان است که اهل آن دیار را بغی ورزیدن خوی و طبیعت گشته و هر والی که در ان ملک نصب شده است مشطمان و بلغاکیان آنجا به البته او را از ولی نعمت بگردانیدند -

2. Important examples are those of Mughīth al-Dīn Yūzbak (Minhāj, P. 263. For his independent coinage, see, H.N. Wright: Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Vol. II, Oxford, A.D. 1907, P.147) and Mughīth al-Dīn Tughral (Baranī, P. 83). Others like Tughral Tughān Khān and Tamar Khān Qirān, asserted their own power, though they did not openly revolt. (Minhāj, Pp. 242 ff., 247 ff.).

3. Baranī, Pp. 92 ff.

(E) The House of Balban.

Balban left behind his younger son, Bughrā Khān, in charge of the affairs of Bengal with able advisers who had the explicit instruction to carry forward the limits of the Muslim territory<sup>1</sup>. Soon after Balban's death Lakhnawtī severed its connection from Dehlī. Throughout the period that the Khaljīs were ruling at Dehlī, the Ilbarī Turks of the House of Balban or their supporters like Shams al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh maintained their independent status in Bengal and Bihar<sup>2</sup>. The Sultānate of Lakhnawtī for the first time stood rival to the Dehlī empire and it was in this period that the neighbouring regions of Satgāwn, Sunārgāwn, Mymensingh and Sylhet were conquered<sup>3</sup> and integrated into the Muslim Sultānate. The Gangeto-Brahmaputra Delta, except the marshy tract of Southern Bengal, was united under one scepter, and even the mighty forces of Alā'al-Dīn Khaljī could not crush its freedom. Rightly speaking, the independence of Bengal began with the reign of Bughrā Khān<sup>4</sup>. Only a short interlude set in with the quarrel among the sons of Shams al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh, as a result of which the Tughluq intervention once again established the Dehlī authority and demarcated three clear-cut administrative divisions, Lakhnawtī region, Satgāwn region, and Sunārgāwn region<sup>5</sup>. The administrative divisions could hardly work for

---

1. Baranī, Pp. 92 ff.

2. History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 68 ff.

3. Ibid, Pp. 75 ff.

4. Baranī, P. 148; History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 71.

5. Baranī, Pp.454, 461; History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 97.

a decade, when political chaos and disintegration towards the later half of the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq led local aspirants to try their luck and establish the rule of their own dynasty. Out of these chaotic wars was born the Independent Sultānate of Bengal under the authority of Shams al-Dīn Ilyās Shāh.

In this period Muslim power in Bengal for the first time had full faith on its own strength. The Sultānate could hope to protect itself not only against Hindu insurrection but also against external aggression, and at the same time carry further Balban's programme of conquest and expansion. Bengal became the refuge of Ibarī Turks and their supporters. One may discern them in the so-called numerous Thugs<sup>1</sup> dispatched by Jalāl al-Dīn Fīrūz Khaljī down the Ganges. Probably this addition in men and power aided in the extension of the Muslim territory. Along with this political growth must be viewed the development in the socio-religious side of the Muslims. We hear of numerous scholars, poets, darwishes and theologians arriving in Bengal and opening up new centres of education and religious instructions<sup>2</sup>. The new cities that rose to prominence were Bihār Sharīf, Satgāwn, Pandwah (Fīrūzābād), Sunārgāwn, and Sylhet<sup>3</sup>. They became the abode of Muslim saints, centres of Islāmic learning, administrative

---

1. Baranī, P. 189; History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 76.

2. See, Chapter III, Sections (B) and (C).

3. Most of these cities received the status of mint-towns. (Mir Jahan: "Mint-towns of Medieval Bengal" in The Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, Dacca Session, A.D. 1953.

headquarters and commercial centres. It is this organisation of the cities that wielded Muslim authority in this vast region, and the spread of Muslim population in the train of the saints, teachers and theologians that this authority sustained against the opposition of the Hindu populace. In this period was also laid the foundation of those institutions, social, religious and educational, that in due course led to the development of local Muslim culture. The foundation was laid by men who came from far afield, like Abū Tawwāmah at Sunārgāwn, Shāh Jalāl at Sylhet and the Madrasah of Zafar Khān at Satgāwn, the tradition of Shaykh Badar at Chittagong and the dargāhs of Shaykh Jalāl Tabrizī and Nūr Qutb Ālam at Pandwah<sup>1</sup>. Culturally the Muslim society in Bengal continued to keep contact or link with the Muslims outside, especially with the Muslim occupation of Chittagong the Arab migration received further impetus. Overseas trade appears to have increased and as a result Bengal silver coinage became a regular feature<sup>2</sup>. However this was a mere prelude to the real prosperity, peace and security that was to come during the period of Independent Sultāns.

(F) The Independent Sultāns.

The Independent Sultānate in Bengal actually began in A.D. 1338, when after the death of Bahrām Khān (Muhammad bin Tughluq's Governor at Sunārgāwn), his silāhdār Fakhrā took

---

1. See, Chapter III, Sections (A), (B) and (C).

2. For coinage of this period, see, H.N.Wright: Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Vol. II, Oxford, A.D. 1907.

the insignia of royalty at Sunārgāwn with the title of Sultān Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh<sup>1</sup>. Two other Governors of Muhammad bin Tughluq, Qadar Khān of Lakhnawtī and 'Izz al-Dīn Yahyā of Satgāwn came out to suppress Fakhrā but were themselves killed and in their place rose to power 'Alī Mubārak, the 'Arid-i-Mamālik of Qadar Khān<sup>2</sup> and Hājī Ilyās, a newly arrived adventurer from Dehlī and a foster brother of 'Alī Mubārak<sup>3</sup>. For the next few years Bengal witnessed two rival Sultānate with headquarters at Fīrūzābād and Sunārgāwn respectively. The former was held one after the other by two rival Sultāns, 'Alī Mubārak, entitled Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī Shāh and Hājī Ilyās, entitled Sultān Shams al-Dīn Ilyās Shāh<sup>4</sup>. The latter was held by the House of Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh<sup>5</sup>. But although there was mutual war among the Bengal Sultāns, the sovereignty did not pass to the Sultāns of Dehlī. Soon the situation took a new turn when in 754/A.D.1353 Shams al-Dīn Ilyās Shāh conquered Sunārgāwn and united the whole of the Muslim kingdom of Bengal under him<sup>6</sup>. Sultān Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq of Dehlī twice attempted to reconquer Bengal<sup>7</sup> but none of them bore any fruit. The result was that from A.D. 1338, when Fakhrā assumed independence in Sunārgāwn till A.D. 1538, when

---

1. Yahyā bin Ahmad, P. 104.

2. Ibid, P. 105; Muntakhab, Vol. I, P. 230.

3. Riyād, P. 95.

4. Muntakhab, Vol. I, P. 230; N.K. Bhattasali: Coins and Chronology of the Early Independent Sultans of Bengal, Cambridge, 1922, Pp. 14-15 and 19 ff.

5. Ibid, Pp. 9-14 and 18-19.

6. Ibid, P. 27.

7. Baranī, Pp. 586 ff; 'Afīf, Pp. 112 ff. and 143 ff.

Sher Shāh captured it<sup>1</sup>, Bengal was completely independent under its own rulers. This long duration of two hundred years is called The Period of the Independent Sultāns in Bengal.

The period saw the rise and fall of four dynasties and a few Habshī usurpers. They are given below.

(1) The House of Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh at Sunārgāwn<sup>2</sup>.

1. Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh 739-750/A.D.1338-1349.

2. Ikhtyār al-Dīn Ghāzī Shāh 750-753/A.D.1349-1353.

Both the rulers of this House ruled in East Bengal with their headquarters at Sunārgāwn. All their coins have been issued from that mint-town. According to Ibn Battūtah<sup>3</sup>, Sultān Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh had only one son, who was killed by Shaydā during his lifetime. But Ghāzī Shāh, in his coins, calls himself Sultān bin Sultān (King, son of king) which suggests that he was the son of Sultān Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh<sup>4</sup>, though strangely enough he does not mention the name of his father.

(II) House of Ilyās Shāh.

1. Shams al-Dīn Ilyās Shāh<sup>5</sup>.. 743-758/A.D.1342-57.

2. Sikandar Shāh<sup>6</sup> (son of No.1).758-795/A.D.1357-92.

---

1. History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 167 ff.

2. N.K.Bhattachali, op cit, Pp. 9-14 and 18-19.

3. Ibn Battūtah, Vol. IV, P. 215.

4. Thomas: "Initial Coinage of Bengal" in J.A.S.E.1867,P.55.

5. N.K. Bhattachali: Coins and Chronology of the Early Independent Sultans of Bengal, Cambridge, A.D. 1922, Pp. 19 ff.

6. Ibid, Pp. 52 ff.

3. Ghiyāth al-Dīn Azam Shāh<sup>1</sup> (Son of No.2). 795-813/A.D.1392-1410.
4. Sayf al-Dīn Hamzah Shāh<sup>2</sup> (Son of No.3).. 813-814/A.D.1410-11.
5. Shihāb al-Dīn Bāyazīd Shāh<sup>3</sup> (Adopted son of No.4).815-817/A.D. 1412-1414.
6. Alā'al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh<sup>4</sup> (Son of No. 5).. 817/1414.

Shams al-Dīn Ilyās Shāh, the founder of this dynasty, was a new comer, but in course of time he was able to build for himself a kingdom in Bengal. This was possible for him by siding with the interests of the local people, the Hindu zamīndārs and the Muslim nobility<sup>5</sup>. These people stood firmly with him when Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq invaded Bengal, and it was mainly due to their support that Ilyās Shāh could retain his independence. He well deserved the titles of "Shāh-i-Bangālah" and "Shāh-i-Bangāliyan" given by Āfīf<sup>6</sup>. He was the first independent Muslim Sultān to rule over the united kingdom of Bengal and it was from this time onward that the term "Bangālah" connoted the whole Sultānate<sup>7</sup>. Its boundary gradually extended and the marshy lands of Southern Bengal were incorporated into it<sup>8</sup>. Muslim arms penetrated even far into the northern regions and Brahmaputra valley<sup>9</sup>. But the very

- 
1. N.K.Bhattachali: Coins and Chronology of the Early Independent Sultans of Bengal, Cambridge, A.D.1922, Pp. 72 ff.
  2. Ibid, Pp. 90 ff.
  3. Ibid, Pp. 98 ff; Rivād, Pp. 109-110; History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 116.
  4. N.K.Bhattachali: op cit, Pp. 107 ff.
  5. Āfīf, Pp. 114-118.
  6. Ibid.
  7. A.H.Dani: "Shamsuddīn Ilyās Shāh, Shāh-e-Bangālah" awaiting publication in Sir Jadu-Nath Sarker Commemoration Volume, University of Panjab, India.
  8. History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 131 ff.
  9. For Sikandar Shāh's coin with the mint-name of Chawalistān or Kāmru, see, H.N.Wright: Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Vol.II, Oxford, A.D.1907, P.152, No.38, Plate II.

support of the local people implied a concession to the local interests, which resulted in the patronage of local culture, art and literature and also in the formation of a party of local zamīndārs as opposed to the party of foreign elements that had so long been strong in the capital. It is from this time onward that we hear the names of Hindu zamīndārs being mentioned among the Sultān's courtiers and supporters, the Muslims taking pride in calling themselves Bengali<sup>1</sup>, and studying Bengali language and literature<sup>2</sup>; the Hindu officers, ministers and army commanders serving side by side with the Muslims<sup>3</sup>, the Hindu poets and writers praising the Sultāns and receiving rewards and titles<sup>4</sup>. The Muslim architecture took a new form and became acclimatised to this soil and climate<sup>5</sup>. The Hindus for the first time became reconciled to the Muslim Sultānate and began sharing in the government and political life of the country. The Muslims looked upon this country as their homeland and began recreating a social order in which their ancestral Islāmic heritage would find due place in the local traditional culture. The religion and spirit of Islām spread widely in the country, and the popular tongue Bengali, found its literary medium side by side with the Persian.

- 
1. For example, the family of Shaykh 'Alā' al-Haq was known as Bangālī. (Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 143).
  2. For Muslim poet writing in Bengali, see, Chapter III, Section (B).
  3. Baranī, P. 593, Yahyā bin Ahmad, P. 125, note 5. Afif, Pp. 114-118. Blochmann (J. A. S. B. 1873, No. 3, P. 214, note) writes, "How extensively the Hindus were employed as revenue officers may be seen from the fact that the Arabic-Persian Shiqdār and Majmu'ahdar have become Bengali family names, generally spelt 'Sikdar' and 'Mozoomdar'."
  4. Indian Historical Quarterly, 1952, Pp. 215-24.
  5. The Museums Journal, Peshawar, Vol. IV, No. 1, April, 1952, Pp. 37 ff.



But the conflict between the foreigners and the local interests sustained throughout this period. The Muslim immigrants continued to pour into this country and establish cultural link with other Muslim countries while pilgrimages to the holy places and the study of Persian and Arabic kept ablaze the idea of Dār al-Islām in the minds of the Muslims<sup>1</sup>. On the other hand local interests demanded a new outlook of life. The climax reached in A.D. 1415 when the Ilyās Shāhī rulers were temporarily set aside, and the House of Rājā Gaṇeśa occupied the Muslim throne after changing their religion from Hinduism to Islām<sup>2</sup>.

(III) The House of Rājā Gaṇeśa.

1. Rājā Gaṇeśa.<sup>3</sup>
2. Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad<sup>4</sup> (Son of No.1). 818-835/A.D.1415-1431.
3. Shams al-Dīn Ahmad Shāh<sup>5</sup> (Son of No.2).835-839/A.D.1431-1435.

The local forces gained victory under the banner of Islām. The local cultural elements burst forth to find expression in the country's life. The king became the Khalīfah<sup>6</sup> for

- 
1. For details see, Chapter III, Section (A).
  2. History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 128.
  3. The former theory that Rājā Gaṇeśa actually crowned himself king (See, N.K.Bhattachali: Coins and Chronology of the Early Independent Sultans of Bengal, Cambridge, 1922, Pp. 117 ff.) has been challenged by A.H.Dani. (See, J.A.S.B. Vol.XVIII, new series, No. 2, 1952, Pp. 121-170.)
  4. J.A.S.B. Vol.XVIII, No. 2, 1952, Pp. 143-54, 158-166.
  5. Ibid, Pp. 166 ff.
  6. Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad was the first Bengal Sultān to assume the title of Khalīfah. (See, Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, Vol. XVII, part II, 1955, P. 90.

the people. Sanskrit and Bengali literature expanded and improved<sup>1</sup>. The Hindus jumped up the ladder of influence and political power. Naturally to the foreign Muslims this sudden change was a defeat of Islām and usurpation of the Muslim power by the Hindus. This attitude is aptly borne out in the invitation to the Sharqī Sultān<sup>2</sup> by Hadrat Nūr Qutb Ālam, who led the opposite party. In spite of these political bickerings the dynasty ruled for two generations and left behind indelible impress on the future trend of cultural development.

(IV) The restored Ilyās Shāhī dynasty.

1. Nāsir al-Dīn Mahmūd<sup>3</sup> I .... 841-864/A.D.1437-1459.
2. Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh<sup>4</sup> (Son of No.1) .. 864-879/A.D. 1459-1474.
3. Shams al-Dīn Yūsuf Shāh<sup>5</sup> (Son of No.2) ... 879-886/A.D. 1474-1481.
4. Sikandar<sup>6</sup> (Son of No. 3)
5. Jalāl al-Dīn Fath Shāh<sup>7</sup> (Son of No.1) .. 886-892/A.D. 1481-1486.

The actual circumstances that led to the restoration of the old dynasty are not properly known, but it seems that

- 
1. For the patronage of Rājā Gaṇeśa to a Bengali poet Krittivāsa and of Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad to a Sanskrit poet Brihaspati Rāyamukūṭa, see, Sukumar Sen: Bānglā Sāhityer Itihāsa, Calcutta, 1940, Pp. 87-88.
  2. Rivād, P. 111.
  3. J.A.S.B. 1952, P. 170; History of Bengal, Vol.II, P.132.
  4. Tārikh-i-Ferishtah, Vol.II, P.298. History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 132-136.
  5. Tārikh-i-Ferishtah, Vol. II, P.298; History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 136.
  6. Rivād, P. 119. (His reign lasted not more than three days.)
  7. Tārikh-i-Ferishtah, Vol. II, P. 299; History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 131-38.

squabbles among the party of the foreign elements favoured the reinstallation of the older line. In these rulers once again the older tradition of unity and harmony became identified. Though local literature continued to grow and local art and architecture flourished under them, the rulers equally patronised Persian literature, even appointed Persian poets at the court<sup>1</sup>, and took keen interest in the spread of Muslim education<sup>2</sup> and maintaining the Muslim dargāhs<sup>3</sup>. But the most important change brought about in this period was the introduction of Abyssinian element in the local populace. Recruited mainly as slaves to support the royalty, the Abyssinians greatly increased their power and with a fortunate chance ultimately broke that very line of the royal dynasty which had so long brought them up.

(V) The Abyssinian usurpers.

1. Bārbak Shāh<sup>4</sup>.
2. Sayf al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh<sup>5</sup> ... 892-896/A.D.1486-1490
3. Nāsir al-Dīn Mahmūd II<sup>6</sup> ... 896-897/A.D.1490-1491.
4. Shams al-Dīn Muzaffar Shāh<sup>7</sup>... 897-899/A.D.1491-1493.

- 
1. See, Chapter III, Sections (A) & (B).
  2. Chapter III, Section (A).
  3. Ibid.
  4. Tārīkh-i-Ferīshṭah, Vol. II, P. 299.
  5. Ibid, P. 300.
  6. Ibid, Pp. 300-301. (His parentage is a subject of controversy. For details see, History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp.139-40.
  7. Tārīkh-i-Ferīshṭah, Vol. II, P. 301.

"From slavery to royalty" is an old proverb, and the Abyssinians like the Mamlūks of an earlier age, rose to the throne of Bengal. From being the support of the royalty, they became kings themselves. Perhaps their introduction in Bengal was the result of an earlier lesson learnt by the Ilyās Shāhīs from their placing over-confidence in the support of the local people. But the lesson was less learnt than lost. The Abyssinians stole a march over others in the confidence of the kings till they usurped the power themselves. They became the sole power and faced the opposition of the country. Their hated rule was overthrown in A.D.1493.

(VI) The Husayn Shāhī Rulers.

1. 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh<sup>1</sup> ... 899-925/A.D.1493-1519.
2. Nāsir al-Dīn Nuṣrat Shāh<sup>2</sup>(Son of No.1).925-939/A.D.1519-1532.
3. 'Alā' al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh<sup>3</sup>(Son of No.2)... 939/A.D.1532.
4. Ghiyāth al-Dīn Mahmūd Shāh<sup>4</sup>(Son of No.1).939-945/A.D.1532-1538.

'Alā al-Dīn Husayn Shāh, a minister<sup>5</sup> of the last Abyssinian ruler, became the new Sultān. With him were restored peace and tranquillity in the kingdom, good administration and political harmony, territorial expansion and commercial prosperity. The Husayn Shāhīs were enlightened and tolerant

- 
1. Tārīkh-i-Ferīshṭah, Vol. II, Pp. 301-2; History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 142 ff.
  2. Tārīkh-i-Ferīshṭah, Vol. II, Pp.301-2; History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 152.
  3. Riyād, P. 139; History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 159.
  4. Riyād, Pp. 139-42; History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp.159 ff.
  5. Tārīkh-i-Ferīshṭah, Vol. II, P. 301.

rulers. It is during their rule that the local Bengali literature<sup>1</sup> found its clear expression and the various religious communities developed in perfect peace and harmony.<sup>2</sup> The spirit of Sūfistic Islām had permeated through the masses and in spite of Chaitanya movement, the mystic religion had overwhelmed various groups of people in Bengal<sup>3</sup>. The kings had endeared themselves to the people, and they on their part had adjusted themselves to share equitably in the prosperity of the country. The prosperity had been doubled by the opening of the European trade with the arrival of the Portuguese<sup>4</sup>. The country's industries and commerce grew and foreign silver poured into the land. The Husayn Shāhī's was an age of peace at home, expansion over neighbouring territories and prosperity in overseas trade.

This period was brought to a close in A.D. 1538 with the defeat of the last representative of the dynasty Ghiyāth al-Dīn Maḥmūd,<sup>5</sup> at the hands of Sher Khān, the future Sher Shāh, who was soon to integrate Bengal into his North Indian Empire.

- 
1. D.C.Sen: History of the Bengali Language and Literature, Calcutta University, A.D. 1911, P. 12.
  2. Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, Dacca Session, A.D. 1953, P. 267.
  3. See, Chapter III, Section (C).
  4. Campos: History of the Portuguese in Bengal, A.D. 1919, Pp. 30 ff.
  5. History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 163.

## 2. Gradual expansion of the Muslim territory in Bengal.

The foundation of the Muslim kingdom in Bengal was laid by Muḥammad Bakhtyār in or about A.D. 1204<sup>1</sup>, with his headquarters at Lakhnawtī. This was nothing more than a small principality in the North-Western part of Bengal, while the vast territory towards the North, East, South and South-West lay outside his dominion. Another run of two hundred and fifty years was to pass before the Muslims could finish the task begun by Bakhtyār. In the beginning Muslim arms penetrated only towards the south and north of Lakhnawtī, where the cavalry could be profitably utilised. Soon they realised that the cavalry was of little use in the vast riverine tract of East and South Bengal. The first ruler to realise this was Ghiyāth al-Dīn Iwād Khaljī, who for the first time organised a flottila of war boats<sup>2</sup>. Strengthened with this new system, the Muslim power advanced beyond the traditional line and encroached towards the east and the south. It is during the later Ilyās Shāhī period that the whole of Bengal was integrated into the Muslim Sultānate.

Muḥammad Bakhtyār's principality was limited to a small tract of land round about Lakhnawtī, with Deokot in the North, the rivers Tistā and Karatoyā in the East and South-East, the main stream of the Ganges in the South, while in the West, he had his possession in Bihar<sup>3</sup>. Before he marched to Tibet, he

---

1. Indian Historical Quarterly, June, 1954, Pp. 133 ff.

2. Minhāj, P. 163.

3. History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 13-14.

sent an army under Muhammad Shīrān Khaljī towards Lakhnor and Jājnagar<sup>1</sup>. Nothing definite is known about the success or failure of this expedition. According to Minhāj<sup>2</sup>, as soon as the news of the murder of Muhammad Bakhtyār reached him, he returned and came back to Deokot. So in all probability Lakhnor remained outside the pale of the Muslim kingdom. This last locality does not come to the picture again before the time of Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn 'Iwād Khaljī<sup>3</sup>.

Meanwhile the situation in Deokot did not go well for Muhammad Shīrān Khaljī. Though he was able to imprison 'Alī Mardān and was accepted as the head of the principality<sup>4</sup>, the latter somehow escaped from prison, fled away to Dehlī and beseeched Sultān Qutb al-Dīn Aibak to interfere in Bengal's politics.<sup>5</sup> The Dehlī Sultān took advantage of the situation and ordered Qāemāz Rūmī, his Governor of Oudh to go to Bengal and settle affairs in Lakhnawtī<sup>6</sup>. Muhammad Shīrān was not the person to surrender before Qāemāz Rūmī. He gave battle but was defeated<sup>7</sup>. The defeat led him to flee away towards Moseda and Santos, identified with Mahisantosh in Dinajpur district<sup>8</sup>.

---

1. Minhāj, P. 157.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., P. 163; Indian Historical Quarterly, March, 1954, Pp. 11 ff.

4. Minhāj, P. 158.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. History of Bengal, Vol. II, P.37. It is now in Rajshahi district. According to Minhāj, (P. 158) quarrel broke out among the Khaljī Amīrs and Muhammad Shīrān Khaljī, became a martyr. But according to a later tradition, (History of Bengal, Vol. II, P.17) he was killed in an engagement with some Hindu zamīndār of that region.

Ghiyāth al-Dīn 'Iwād Khaljī was the first to make an attempt to extend the frontier towards the south and the east. Minhāj says, "In short, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Khaljī was a virtuous, just and good-mannered Sultān. The neighbouring states of Lakhnavtī such as Jājnagar, Bang (Eastern Bengal), Kamrup and Tirthut all sent tributes to him. And he conquered Lakhnor and many elephants, much wealth and treasures came to his hand and he posted his own Amīrs there<sup>1</sup>". This categorical statement of Minhāj leaves no doubt that 'Iwād conquered and annexed Lakhnor. As for the rest of Minhāj's statement, i.e. the kingdom of Jājnagar, Bang, Kamrup and Tirthut sent presents to 'Iwād, it was probably the result of the raids and not of annexation. A study of the pre-Mughal history of Bengal shows that the Bengal Sultāns never annexed the kingdoms of Jājnagar, Kamrup and Tirthut, though portions of these territories were occupied from time to time. In the case of Bang, as we shall see hereafter<sup>2</sup>, it was annexed to the Muslim sultānate only about one hundred years later.

The possession of Lakhnor was lost by the Muslims, during the governorship of Malik 'Izz al-Dīn Tughral Tughān Khān. He achieved some initial success in his battle against

1. Minhāj, P. 163.

فی الجملہ غیاث الدین خلجی مردے باخیر و عدل نیکی سیرت بادشاہی بود اطراف ممالک لکھنوتی  
چنانچہ جاج نگر و بلاد بنگ و کام رور و تربت جملہ اورا اموال فرستادند  
و بلاد لکھنور اورا صاف شد و پیلان و اموال و خزائن بسیار بیت آورد  
و امر خود آنجا بنشاند -

2. See, Infra, P. 47.



Orissa, but subsequently, he was out-generalled by his adversary. The Orissan general followed up his victory upto Lakhnor, killed a large number of Muslims including the Muqta, Fakhr al-Mulk Karīm al-Dīn Lāghirī, and even laid seige to Lakhnawtī<sup>1</sup>. Malik Ikhtyār al-Dīn Yūzbak, who assumed independence with the title of Sultān Mughīth al-Dīn Yūzbak<sup>2</sup>, retrieved to some extent the loss of the Muslim kingdom. He soon entered into war against Orissa and extended his southern frontier as far as Umardan<sup>3</sup> (identified with Mandaran in the Hughli district<sup>4</sup>). But as misfortune would have it, this masterful prince, who brought glory to the Muslim kingdom, lost his life in course of his Kamrup expedition<sup>5</sup>. What became of his possession upto Mandaran after his death is not definitely known.

The appointment of Bughrā Khān as the Governor of Lakhnawtī by his father is an epoch-making event in the history of the expansion of the Muslim kingdom of Bengal. The

---

1. Minhāj, P. 245.

2. Ibid, P. 263.

3. He issued coin from the Kharāj of Nadiyā and Umardan. (H.N.Wright: Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Vol. II, Oxford, 1907, P. 146, part II, plate 1, No. 6. H.N. Wright's reading of بدن in the margin is a mistake for Umardan. The word is written like لرصردن. This has been read by H.N. Wright as ارض بدن. While we cannot suggest any better reading for the earlier portion, the latter portion seems to be Mardan i.e. Umardan. Minhāj also records (see, Pp. 262-63) that Mughīth al-Dīn Yūzbak occupied as far south as Umardan. The word Nadiyā in the coin suggests that Nadiyā which was left in desolation by Muhammad Bakhtyār Khaljī (See, Minhāj, P. 151) was recaptured by Mughīth al-Dīn Yūzbak. (See, History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 52).

4. History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 51.

5. Minhāj, P. 265.

contemporary historian Baranī writes, "And he (Ghiyāth al-Dīn Balban) called him (Bughrā Khān) before his presence in private and made him swear that he (Bughrā Khān) should not merry, nor rejoice anyday, nor drink, nor engage himself in pastime, before conquering the Iqlīm of Bangālah and taking it into his direct control<sup>1</sup>". Here the clear indication is that the Sultān ordered his son to extend the forntier. As a matter of fact it is from this time that an all-round expansion began. We do not know, what part did Bughrā Khān himself play in the expansion. His son Rukn al-Dīn Kaykāūs Shāh was the first to issue coin from the Kharāj of Bang<sup>2</sup>. It is during his time again that the conquest of Satgāwn or Triveni area began under his general Zafar Khān<sup>3</sup>. But the most important achievement in this connection was that of Sultān Shams al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh. During his time, Satgāwn was finally captured, Sunārgāwn, Bang and Ghiyāthpūr appeared as mint-towns<sup>4</sup>, thus indicating that Eastern Bengal including the area round about the present town of Mymensingh was annexed to the Muslim kingdom. The Sylhet inscription<sup>5</sup> shows that the eastern frontier

---

1. Baranī, P. 92. و پیش خود در مجلس خلوت طلبیده سوگند داد که پیش ازان اقلیم بنگاله بدست آرد و در ضبط خود مستقیم کند در هیچ روز مجلس نسازد و شراب نخورد و بلهوشغول نشود -

2. J.A.S.B. 1922, P. 410.

3. Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, July, 1956, Pp. 198 ff.

4. Mir Jahan: "Mint-towns of Mediaval Bengal" in The Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, Dacca Session, 1953.

5. J.A.S.B., 1922, Pp. 413-14. See also History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 79.

of his kingdom extended upto Sylhet. Chittagong was conquered by Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh<sup>1</sup>. The fruits of their annexations fell to the lot of Sultān Shams al-Dīn Ilyās Shāh, who for the first time united Lakhnawtī, Satgāwn and Sunārgāwn under him<sup>2</sup>. The southern outskirts of the province that was still left out was annexed by Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad and Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd I. Chāt-gāwn (Chittagong) and Fathābād appeared as mint-towns for the first time under Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad<sup>3</sup>, thus suggesting that he had firm control over Chittagong and Fathābād (modern Faridpur region<sup>4</sup>). The inscriptions of Khān Jahān's tomb and the erection of mosque by him indicate that the Sundarbana area was occupied by the Muslims under Sultān Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd I<sup>5</sup>. The annexation of Bakerganj is learnt from an inscription dated 870/A.D. 1465 at Mirzaganj in Patuakhali sub-division<sup>6</sup>. As for the northern outskirts of the country, Shāh Ismā'īl Ghāzī, a warrior saint of the time of Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh was buried at Kantaduar in Rangpur<sup>7</sup>, thus indicating that by the time Bārbak Shāh was on the throne, the northern frontier of the Muslim kingdom extended at least upto Rangpur.

- 
1. J.N. Sarkar: Studies in Mughal India, 1919, P. 122.
  2. History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 105. N.K. Bhattasali: Coins and Chronology of the Early Independent Sultans of Bengal, Cambridge, 1922, P. 27.
  3. J.A.S.B., 1952, P. 145.
  4. Ibid.
  5. J.A.S.B. 1867, P. 135; History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 131.
  6. J.A.S.B. 1860, P. 407; History of Bengal, Vol. II, P.135.
  7. J.A.S.B. 1874, Pp. 215 ff.

The above discussion shows that the small Muslim principality of Lakhnawtī of Muḥammad Bakhtyār turned to be the Muslim kingdom of Bengal by the third quarter of the 15th century. The scene of warfare of the succeeding Sultāns e.g. Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh shifted from the inland towards the frontiers against Orissa, Kamrup, Tippera and Arakan<sup>1</sup>.

---

1. For his warfare, see, History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp.143 ff.

## CHAPTER - III

THE GROWTH OF THE MUSLIM SOCIETY.Section(A). The part played by the Sultāns.

The Sultān had a significant part to play in a society which had strong faith in monarchy. But the distinguishing feature of the monarchy in Bengal throughout this period was that in spite of the attempts made to the contrary it remained Muslim. All the political moves on the part of Rājā Ganēśa<sup>1</sup> to found a Hindu monarchy broke when his own son accepted Islām<sup>2</sup> and carried further the work of the earlier Muslim rulers<sup>3</sup>. This attachment to Muslim monarchy was so strong that there was no compunction to accept a newly-arrived Muslim if he could muster strong the unifying forces and establish peace in the country, as we know in the case of Shams al-Dīn Ilyās Shāh and Ālā'al-Dīn Husayn Shāh. The main aim of these monarchs was not only to keep strong the Muslim ascendancy in Bengal but also to build up such institutions or initiate works which would help in the growth of the Muslim Culture. To illustrate the first we can cite the example of the Shaykhs and Ulamā who strongly reacted against Rājā Ganēśa's move to disturb this established rule. But it

---

1. Riyād, Pp. 110 ff.

2. 'Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī: Mirāt al-Asrār, 'Āliyah Madrasah MS. Folio No. 184; Riyād, Pp. 110 ff.

3. E. Denison Ross: An Arabic History of Gujrat, Vol. III, London, A.D. 1928, Pp. 978-79.

is chiefly in the second branch that the real constructive works of the Sultāns are known. These may be grouped as follows :-

(a) Erection of mosques, (b) Construction of madrasahs, (c) Promotion of Islāmic spirit, (d) Patronising Muslim scholars and Sūfīs, (e) Cultivation of learning by some of the Sultāns and their officers, (f) Benevolent activities of the Sultāns.

(a) Erection of mosques :-

The mosques formed an important feature of the Muslim society of Bengal. The construction of mosques began with the conquest of Muḥammad Bakhtyār Khaljī. Minhāj records<sup>1</sup> that after making Lakhnawtī the seat of government, Muḥammad Bakhtyār built mosques, madrasahs and the Khānqahs. He praises Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn 'Iwāḍ Khaljī for building a number of Jāmi' (congregational) and other mosques<sup>2</sup>. As for the construction of mosques in the later period, especially from the time of Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Kāykāūs to the last of the Independent Sultāns, stronger and undoubted evidences are available. A large number of inscriptions recording the erection or repairing of mosques have been discovered from different parts of the country<sup>3</sup>. They were built mostly at

---

1. Minhāj, P. 151.

2. Ibid, P. 161.

3. For inscriptions, see, Muslim inscriptions of Bengal. A considerable number of these mosques exist even today. Notable among them are (a) Adina mosque of Pandwah, (b) Sona masjid of Gaur, (c) Shāt Gumbad mosque of Bagerhat, (d) Bābā Adam Shahid's mosque at Hampala, Dacca. (See, Memoirs; R.E.M. Wheeler: Five Thousand Years of Pakistan, London, 1950, Pp. 111 ff.)

the initiative of the Sultāns or their officers. The inscriptions generally begin either with a verse from the holy Quran or tradition of the Prophet or both, indicating the rewards that await one in the next world for founding such religious institutions<sup>1</sup>. The Sultāns or their officers thus erected mosques not only for mere pomp and show but also in full realisation of their performance of a religious duty. The location<sup>2</sup> of these mosques reveals that the rulers adopted a systematic policy of building up a new society in Bengal; wherever Muslim power penetrated, mosques were built in order to give facilities to Muslim conquerors or the converted Muslims to perform their religious duty. The examples of Khān Jahān's mosque at Bagerhat, the Masjidbārī mosque near Mirzaganj in Bakerganj district, Zafar Khān's mosque at Triveni may be cited. In some cases mosques were built by the side of the tombs of Sūfis<sup>3</sup>, thus making these dargāhs doubly attractive for the Muslims of the surrounding area. The Adina mosque of Pandwah offers some interesting points to be noted. It is the second biggest mosque in this sub-continent with a

---

1. Some of them are as follows :- See Memoirs, Pp. 80-81.

قال الله تعالى انما يعمر مساجد الله من امن بالله واليوم الآخر واقام الصلوة واتى الزكوة ولم يخش الا الله فعسى اولئك ان يكونوا من المحمدين - وقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم من بنى مسجدا لله بنى الله له بيتا في الجنة مثله -

2. The location of mosques may be determined from the find-spots of inscriptions. Inscriptions have been discovered from all parts of Bengal and they reveal that mosques were built simultaneously with the expansion of the Muslim power. For find-spots see, Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal, Pp. 117 ff.

3. For example the mosque near the dargāh of Mawlānā Ātā (J.A.S.B. 1872, Pp. 104-5).

dimension of 507½ feet north to south and 285½ feet East to West<sup>1</sup>. This huge structure was built by Sultān Sikandar Shāh between 766/A.D. 1364 to 776/A.D. 1374<sup>2</sup>. Several considerations might have prompted him to undertake its construction. First non-Muslims were to be impressed by the might of the Muslim power. Most of its building materials were taken from the Hindu temples<sup>3</sup>. It probably played the same part as did the Quwat al-Islām mosque in Dehlī. Secondly, as Ābid Ālī Khān suggests, Sikandar Shāh's idea was to see that all Muslim population of Pandwah could gather in one place for their Friday prayers<sup>4</sup>. If this is true, the Adina mosque played a significant part in the then Muslim society, in as much as it offered a meeting ground for all the Muslims living at the metropolis. Thirdly, as Sultān Sikandar Shāh was the second of the first important dynasty of the Independent Sultāns of Bengal, the idea of exhibiting parallel strength to the Sultānate of Dehlī might have lurked in his mind. The architecture of Bengal Sultans with predominantly local influences<sup>5</sup> and the issue of coins by some later Sultāns beginning from Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Shāh with Khilāfat title<sup>6</sup>

- 
1. Memoirs, P. 127.
  2. Ibid; R.E.M. Wheeler suggests that it was built in the year A.D. 1369 or 1374. (Five Thousand Years of Pakistan, London, 1950, P.112.)
  3. Memoirs, P. 129.
  4. Memoirs, P. 129.
  5. R.E.M. Wheeler: Five Thousand Years of Pakistan, London, 1950, P. 110.
  6. "The Khilāfah as recognised in the coins of Bengal Sultāns" in the Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, Vol.XVII, part II, 1955, Pp. 86 ff.



go to substantiate this view. So long the mosque architecture of Bengal has been studied by historians and archaeologists from the points of view of dates, style and building materials, but to the students of social history, it is of greater significance as it formed the nerve-centre of the Muslim society and the basic root of Muslim culture.

(b) Construction of Madrasahs :-

The next important contribution of the Bengal Sultāns and their officers, was the construction of madrasahs or schools and colleges for imparting religious instructions. Besides the evidence of Minhāj regarding the construction of madrasah by Muḥammad Bakhtyār<sup>1</sup>, the inscriptions supply three concrete examples of madrasahs erected during the period under review.

In the year 698/A.D. 1298 one madrasah was built at Triveni in the reign of Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Kāykāūs<sup>2</sup>. One Qādī al-Nāsir Muḥammad, who for strength of his argument was styled, "Qādī, the tiger", is said to have spent large sum of money on education. The inscription is fragmentary but the few lines that have been deciphered are full of significance. It starts with a tradition of the Prophet calling the people, "You should acquire knowledge, for its acquisition is verily submission, its search is devotion, its discussion is glorification"<sup>3</sup>. Education is compared to "a shield that can avert

1. Minhāj, P. 151.

2. Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, 1917-18, P. 13, plate II.

3. Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, 1917-18, Pp. 13 ff.

(قال عليه السلام) تعلموا العلم فان تعلمه للطاعة وطلبه عبادة وذاكره تسبيح

such evils as cannot be avoided with the help of a shield-bearer."<sup>1</sup> The Qādī is credited to have spent large sum in granting subsistence to "men of learning for the inculcation of the Muslim law", and "to manifest the Divine Faith among the haughty"<sup>2</sup>.

A second madrasah was built in the same locality in 713/A.D. 1313 in the reign of Shams al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh by one Zafar Khān<sup>3</sup>. The madrasah was known as Dār al-Khayrāt (the house of benevolence). A third madrasah was built at the order of Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh in the year 907/A.D. 1502<sup>4</sup>. The inscription is attached to the enclosure wall of Firuzpur mosque, north-west of the English Bazar police-station in Maldah district<sup>5</sup>. It starts with a tradition of the Prophet, "Search after knowledge, even if it be in China"<sup>6</sup>. The madrasah was built "for the teaching of the sciences of religion and for instruction in the principles which lead to certainty, in the hope of obtaining from Allāh the great reward and begging from Him that He will ever remain pleased (with him)"<sup>7</sup>.

1. Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, 1917-18, Pp. 13 ff.

يتقى به الشر ما لا يتقى بالتارس

2. Ibid. لتدريس علم الشرع & لأظهار دين الترسين العطارس

3. Ibid., P.34; J.A.S.B. 1870, P. 284.

4. J.A.S.B. 1874, P. 303; Memoirs, Pp. 157-58.

5. Memoirs, P. 157.

6. J.A.S.B. 1874, P. 303; Memoirs, P. 157. اطلبوا العلم ولو بالصين

7. Ibid. - لتدريس علوم الدين وتعليم احكام اليقين راجيا لشراب العظم من جبر العظم سائله منه رضوانه القديم

Beside these three madrasahs evidenced by inscriptions, traces of other madrasahs are also available. N.N. Law says that Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Iwād Khaljī "built a superb mosque, a college and a caravansarai at Lucknauti soon after his election to the masnad of Bengal"<sup>1</sup>. This statement is based on the evidence of Minhāj<sup>2</sup> who records the bestowal of stipends to the Alims by the Sultān and his other construction activities. In Gaur near the village of Umarpur, between Mahdipur and Firuzpur, there is a plot of land which the local people call Darasbārī (reading-room or madrasah)<sup>3</sup>. The name itself suggests that there was a madrasah in the site. There stands a large mosque in the same site known as the Darasbārī Masjid<sup>4</sup>. An inscription<sup>5</sup> found under the heap of rubbish at this place records that a mosque was built by Shams al-Dīn Yūsuf Shāh in the year 884/A.D. 1479<sup>6</sup>. The inscription is long in size, measuring 11 feet 3 inches in length and 2 feet one inch in height, and heavy in weight and thus it is suggested that it could not probably move from its original site<sup>7</sup>. It is therefore assumed that the inscription originally belonged to the Darasbārī Mosque and that the Darasbārī Mosque and that the Darasbārī or the madrasah was either attached to this mosque or it was a separate building.

- 
1. N.N.Law: Promotion of learning in India during Muhammadan Rule (by Muhammadans), London, 1916, P. 106.
  2. Minhāj, P. 161.
  3. Memoirs, Pp. 76-77; N.N.Law: Op cit, P. 108.
  4. Memoirs, Pp. 76-77.
  5. Ibid. The inscription is preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, numbering 3239.
  6. Memoirs, P. 77, plate III.
  7. Memoirs, P. 77, N.N.Law: Op cit, P. 108.

Ābid Ālī Khān records that at the northern end of the Chhota Sagar Dighī<sup>1</sup>, there lie remains of a large building consisting of a number of grey and black polished stone pillars. The local people call it "the Ehitā of Chānd Sawdāgar". But another tradition records that it is the site of the Belbārī madrasah<sup>2</sup>.

Generally these Madrasahs were built by the side of the mosques, or mosques were invariably built in the madrasahs<sup>3</sup>. In far off places where only mosques were built, they served both the purposes of masiid and maktab. In the Mughal period in Bengal generally the maktabs were held in the rooms provided at the ground floor, while the main mosque was in the first floor, as is found in Khān Muḥammad Mirdhā's mosque at Dacca. The two sets of buildings helped the growth of Muslim society and Muslim culture in Bengal and the ruling power played a significant part towards this end. In Bengal Madrasahs, both private and state owned, are continuing even to this day. The syllabus taught therein shows that there has been little change except the introduction of some modern subjects, thus indicating that these are the remnants of the old system introduced by the Sultāns.

---

1. It is situated beyond the Tantipara mosque at about the same distance from the Nawabganj road to the east, as the Gunmant mosque is to the West. It is called so to distinguish it from the Sāgardighī in the north-west of Gaur. See, Memoirs, P. 86.

2. Memoirs, Pp. 86-87.

3. Even today the system is prevalent.

(c) Promotion of Islāmic Spirit:-

The Sultāns of Bengal were very particular in the promotion of Islāmic spirit. They followed the general Islāmic practice of (i) recognising the Khalīfah as the Amīr al-Mūminīn, (ii) sometimes seeking recognition from the Khalīfah, (iii) by constructing charitable buildings and educational institutions at the holy cities of Makkah and Madīnah, (iv) by sending lavish presents to the holy cities and (v) by helping other Muslims to perform the hajj.

(i) Since the beginning of the Muslim coinage in Bengal, the name of the Khalīfah is found on them, Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn 'Iwād Khaljī was the first to start this practice<sup>1</sup>. This practice was continued even when the Baghdād Khilāfat came to an end and the name of the last Abbasid Khalīfah is found on the coins of the Bengal rulers<sup>2</sup> who came even after A.D. 1258. Still later the name of the Khalīfah was dropped but the phrase Nāsir-i-Amīr al-Mūminīn<sup>3</sup> continued to be used signifying the ruler's strong faith in the institution of Khilāfat.

(ii) We have got one definite instance from Bengal in which a ruler attempted to seek recognition from the Khalīfah. Leaving aside the doubtful question of 'Iwād Khaljī<sup>4</sup>,

1. Thomas: "Initial Coinage of Bengal", Part II, (J.A.S.B. 1873).
2. Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, Vol. XVII, Pp. 86 ff.
3. Ibid.
4. The former theory that 'Iwād received investiture from the Khalīfah (See, "Initial Coinage of Bengal" in J.A.S.B. 1873) has recently been challenged by A.H. Dani. (Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, Vol. XVI, 1954, Pp. 243-52).

we have explicit mention of Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad, son of Rājā Gaṇeśa, Hājī Dabīr in his Arabic History of Gujrat writes as follows<sup>1</sup>, "He (Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Shāh) sent presents to al-Ashraf Barstāy, the ruler of Egypt, and he sought for investiture from the Khalīfah, and the robe of honour was sent to him (Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad) through a responsible man. Then he (Jalāl al-Dīn) put on the robe of honour and sent presents to the Khalīfah. His presents were sent to Egypt and Damascus through one 'Alā' al-Bukhārī". Al-Ashraf Barstāy, the ruler of Egypt, to whom Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Shāh sent presents and from whom he received the robe of honour was Al-Ashraf Sayf al-Dīn Barsbāy<sup>2</sup>, the 9th ruler of the Burjī line of the Mamlūk rulers of Egypt, who ruled from A.D. 1422 to A.D. 1438<sup>3</sup>. This piece of information is of great importance to us, because it is not available in any other source and so long it was lost in obscurity. Even the coins of the Sultān do not bear the name of the Khalīfah. Towards the beginning of his reign till 834/A.D. 1430, he issued coins declaring himself al-Nāsir-i-Amīr al-Muminīn (helper of the Commander of the Faithful) or

1. E. Denison Ross, ed.: Arabic History of Gujrat, Vol. III, London, 1928, P. 979.

وارسل الى الاشراف برستاي صاحب مصر هدية - واستند على التقليد من الخليفة "فجهره له شرف على ايد شريف - فلبس الشريف ثم ارسل للخليفة هدية - وكانت هدايا متواصلة بالعلاء بالنجارى بمصر وبدمشق -

2. P.K. Hitti: History of the Arabs, 5th edition, London, 1951, P. 694, note 3.

3. The dates suggest that Ashraf Barsbāy was a contemporary of Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Shāh, who ruled from 818/A.D. 1415 to 835/A.D. 1431. (J.A.S.B. Vol. XVIII, No. 2, 1952, Pp. 121 ff.)

Ghawth al-Islām wa al-Muslimīn (helper of Islām and the Muslims)<sup>1</sup>. But from 834/A.D. 1430, he issued coins declaring himself Khalīfah<sup>2</sup> ( خليفة الله = Khalīfah of God). It is difficult to explain at the present stage of our knowledge, why he did not inscribe the name of the Khalīfah in his coins even though he is said to have received the recognition and what led him in 834/A.D. 1430 to declare himself Khalīfah. We also do not know what was the date of his receipt of recognition, because in this point, our author is thoroughly unreliable; according to him Sultan Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad Shāh died in 812/A.D. 1409, which goes against the accepted date or the evidence of coins<sup>3</sup>.

(iii) & (iv) It is interesting to note that at least two Bengal Sultāns built and maintained madrasahs (colleges) in the holy cities of Makkah and Madīnah. They were Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Azam Shāh and Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad Shāh. Al-Sakhāwī records the following in connection with Azam Shāh<sup>4</sup>. "Azam Shāh son of Iskandar Shāh son of Shams al-Dīn,

1. Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, Vol. XVII, P. 90.

2. Ibid.

3. J.A.S.E. Vol. XVIII, No. 2, 1952, Pp. 121 ff.

N.K. Bhattasali: Op cit., Pp. 123 ff.

4. Shams al-Dīn Muhammad bin Abd al-Rahmān al-Sakhāwī:

Al-Day al-Lāmi, Cairo, A.H. 1303, Part II, P. 313.

اعظم شاه بن اسكندر شاه بن شمس الدين غياث الدين ابو المظفر السجستاني الأصل  
صاحب منجالة من بلاد الهند كان حنفيًا ذا حظ من العلم والخير مجاب في الفقهاء  
والصالحين شجاعا كريما جوادا ابنتي بمكة عند باب ام هانئ مدرسة  
صرف عليها وعلى اوقافها اثني عشر ألف مثقال مصرية - وقرر بها  
دروسا للذاهب الأربعة وانتهت ودرس فيها في جمادى الآخرة  
سنة أربع عشرة - وكذا عمل بالمدينة النبوية مدرسة بمكان  
يقال له الحصن العتيق عند باب السلام - هذا مع بعثه غير مرة  
لأهل الحرمين بصدقات طائلة -

Ghiyāth al-Dīn Abū al-Muzaffar, al-Sijistānī by origin, (was) the ruler of Bengal in the country of India. He was a Hanafī (belonging to the School of Abū Hanīfah) favoured with learning and wealth, loved in the circle of theologians and pious men, brave, generous and bountiful. He built (established) a madrasah at Makkah at the gate of Umme Hānī (باب ام هانی) and spent for it and for its endowments twelve thousand Egyptian mithqāl (مِثْقَال), established lectures in it, for the people belonging to four madhhabs<sup>1</sup> and the lectures came to an end<sup>2</sup> there in Jamādī II, in the year 14 (probably meaning 814/A.D. 1411). Similarly, he founded a madrasah in the city of the Prophet (Madīnah) at a place called the "old fort", near the "Gate of Peace". This is in addition to his sending rich presents for the people of Haramayn (Makkah and Madīnah) several times".

Ghulām Alī Azād Bilgrāmī<sup>3</sup> gives further details on the point and writes as follows. "Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn, ruler

- 
1. The four madhhabs are, Hanafī, Shāfevī, Mālekī and Hanbalī, named after their founders.
  2. There is a lacunae in the text; انتہت ودرس is probably a mistake for انتہت الدروس
  3. Khazānah-i-Āmirah, Newal Kishore edition, Pp. 183-84.

سُلطان غیاث الدین والی بنگالہ زر بسیار مصوب خادم خود یا قوت عنانی بجزین شیرین فرستاد کہ بر اہل ہردو مکان مقدس تقسیم یا بد نیز مدرسہ و رابطے در مکہ معظمہ بنام سلطان تعمیر شود و اوقات خریدہ در اعمال خیر مثل تدریس وغیرہ صرف گردد و مکتوبہ مولانا حسن بن عجلان شریف مکہ نوشت و ہدایائے جلیلہ برائے او فرستاد - شریف قبول کرد و فرمود تا موافق ارادہ سلطان بعمل آرند - اما شریف سوم حصہ زر صدقہ خود گرفت بطریق معناد خود و آباء خود و باقی را بر فقراء و فقہاء حرمین تقسیم نمود -



of Bengal sent to Makkah and Madīnah a huge sum through his personal servant Yāqūt 'Anānī, to be distributed among the inhabitants of both the holy places, and also to establish a madrasah and to open a sarai in the holy city of Makkah after his name. He purchased land for making waqf and spent on works of public utility such as education etc. He wrote a letter to Mawlānā Hasan bin 'Ajlān, the Sharīf of Makkah and sent him valuable presents. The Sharīf accepted (the presents) and ordered the works to be done according to the wish of the Sultān. The Sharīf took one third (of the wealth sent) according to his family custom and the rest were distributed among the learned and destitutes of the holy cities. So much wealth was sent that everyone of the two holy places got his own share thereof. Yāqūt 'Anānī purchased

آن قدر زر بود ب مردم آنجا علی العموم رسید - و یا قوت عنانی برائے تعمیر مدرسہ و رباط  
 دو خانہ باہم متلاصق نزدیک باب اُمہانی خرید و شکستہ بجائے آن مدرسہ و رباط ساخت  
 و دو اصیل و چہار رجبہ خریدہ بر مدرسہ وقف نمود و چہار مدرسہ مناسب اربعہ و شخصت طالب علم  
 مقرر کرد و اخراجات ایشان را ازاں وقف معین نمود - و خانہ دیگر مقابل مدرسہ  
 بیاضد مشقال طلاء خریدہ برائے مصالح رباط وقف ساخت - و مولانا حسن شریف در عوض  
 ہر دو خانہ کہ بجائے آن مدرسہ و رباط ساختہ شد - و ہر دو اصیل و چہار رجبہ  
 دو وزہ ہزار مشقال طلاء گرفت و سوائے آن زر کہ اخذ کرد کہ مقدار آن را کہ نمیدانند -  
 و نیز سلطان غیاث الدین زرے برائے تعمیر نہر عرفہ یا قوت مذکور فرستادہ بود -  
 مولانا حسن آن را ہم گرفت و گفت این کار را ما سرانجام میدہم - و آن  
 سی ہزار مشقال طلاء بود -

two houses near the place known as Bāb-i-Ummehānī for building the madrasah and the Sarai. The two houses were demolished and the madrasah and the sarai were built (on the same site). Two asil and four rahba<sup>1</sup> of land were purchased and endowed to the madrasah. He appointed four teachers of four madhhabs and sixty students were gathered, the expenditure was to be borne out of the proceeds of the endowment. He bought another house in front of the madrasah at five hundred gold mithqāl and endowed it for the benefit of the sarai. Mawlānā Hasan charged twelve thousand gold mithqāl for the two houses over the site of which the madrasah and the sarai were built and the two asil and four rahba of land. In addition to this he took a large amount, which no one can tell. Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn also sent money for the excavation of a rivulet at Arafah through the said Yāqūt and Mawlānā Hasan accepted it and said, "we shall do the needful" - the amount was thirty thousand gold mithqāl".

The writer quotes from the Tārīkh-i-Makkah of one Qādī Quṭb al-Dīn Ḥanafī<sup>2</sup> and gives the actual Persian rendering of that Arabic work. Moreover the writer says that he visited the places and saw the madrasah, sarai and the rivulet of Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Azam Shāh. The two scholars, al-Sakhāwī

---

1. Asil is derived from Asl (root) and technically it means the original site of a house. Rahba means the courtyard of a house. (See, Lane: Lexicon). What is meant here is that Yāqūt Anānī purchased original sites of two houses and courtyards of four others.

2. I have not been able to lay hand upon this book so far.

and Bilgrāmī give the same account, the latter giving more details than the former.

This singular information at once raises the prestige of the Bengal Sultān to a high point. It illumines the character of Āzam Shāh. He built two madrasahs in the cities of Makkah and Madīnah, which were open to people belonging to four schools of thought. He built a garai at Makkah and caused the excavation of a rivulet at Ārafah. In addition, he also sent presents to the people of the two cities so that everyone got his due share. If he could do so much for the holy cities and the people therein, it may well be imagined how much he did for his own kingdom in Bengal.

The second Sultān who maintained a madrasah in Makkah is Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad Shāh. His madrasah is said to have been awe-inspiring ( آلة ), probably in size<sup>1</sup>. These two instances show that the Bengal Sultāns kept close contact with the holy cities.

(v) The Sultāns also gave facilities to the pilgrims to visit the holy cities during the time of hajj. Recently, Prof. Hasan Askari has published a few letters<sup>2</sup>, written by Mawlānā Muẓaffar Shams Balkhī<sup>3</sup> to Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Āzam Shāh. In a letter the Mawlānā writes, "Now the (Pilgrim)

- 
1. Ābd Allāh Muhammad bin Āmar al-Makkī alias Hājī Dabīr: Op cit, P. 979.
  2. Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Vol. XLII, Part II, 1956, Pp. 1-19.
  3. Mawlānā Muẓaffar Shams Balkhī was a disciple of Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī. (See, Ibid, P. 2; Ābd al-Rahman Chishtī: Mirāt al-Asrār, Āliyah Madrasah Ms. Folio No.199).

season is approaching. A farman may kindly be issued to the officials (Kārkung) of Chatgāon, directing them to accommodate in the first ship the band of Darwesh pilgrims for Mecca who have assembled around me, the poor man"<sup>1</sup>. In another letter he writes "This insignificant mendicant, Muzaffar Shams, offers his peace and blessings. The auspicious 'farman' has been received"<sup>2</sup>. This shows that more than one ship used to sail from Chittagong, the major sea-port of Bengal towards Arabia carrying a large number of pilgrims from this country. The contemporary inscriptions also refer to Hājīs i.e. those who visited the holy cities of Makkah and Madīnah. Hājī Bābā Sālih who built a mosque at Sunārgāwn in the reign of Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh claimed himself to be a "servant of the Prophet, who made pilgrimage to Makkah and Madīnah and who visited the two foot-prints of the Prophet"<sup>3</sup>.

(d) Patronising 'Alims and the Sūfīs :-

The 'Alims and the Sūfīs received patronage from the Sultāns and their officers. Muhammad Bakhtyār Khaljī was the first to build Khānqahs for the Sūfīs<sup>4</sup>. In the reign of Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī Mardān Khaljī, a Muslim scholar and Sūfī, Qādī Rukn al-Dīn al-Samarqandī, was probably under his employ in the capacity of a Judicial Officer<sup>5</sup>. Of Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn 'Iwād Khaljī's encouragement to the 'Alims and the Sūfīs,

- 
1. Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Vol. XLII, Part II, 1956, P. 14.
  2. Ibid, P. 17.
  3. For inscription see, J.A.S.B. 1873, P. 283.
  4. Minhāj, P. 151.
  5. Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, Vol. I, Part I, January, 1953, Pp. 47 ff.

Minhāj writes as follows "And in that country (Lakhnawī) many marks of his goodness remained. .... He gave pensions to good men among the ‘Alims (learned), the mashā’ikh (doctors learned in religion and law), and the Sayyids (descendants of the Prophet) and other people received much wealth from his bounty and munificence<sup>1</sup>. In his time, one Muslim divine, Jalāl al-Dīn, son of Jamāl al-Dīn Ghaznawī of Fīrūz-Koh visited Lakhnawī. He was called upon to deliver a theological lecture<sup>2</sup> in the audience-hall of the Sultān. The Sultān and the nobles presented such a huge sum to him that at the time of return he amassed a sum of eighteen thousand tankahs<sup>3</sup>. Minhāj-i-Sirāj, came to Bengal and himself received patronage from Malik ‘Izz al-Dīn Tughral Tughān Khān, the governor of Lakhnawī<sup>4</sup>. Sultān Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish ordered the construction of a sacred building at Gangarampur near old Maldah. The building was renovated in the reign of Sultān Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd of Dehlī (son of Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish) by Jalāl al-Dīn Masūd Janī, the Governor of Lakhnawī<sup>5</sup>. As the place was probably a seat of a Chillākhānah of Maḥdūm Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrizī, this sacred building was probably attached to that saint<sup>6</sup>. Sultān Mughīth al-Dīn

---

1. Minhāj, Pp. 161-62. *و از وی در آن دیار آثار خیر بسیار ماند. .... و اهل خیر را از علم و مشایخ و سادات ادارات داد و دیگر اصناف خلق را از بذل و اموال و املاک بسیار بدست آمد.*

2. Minhāj, Pp. 161-62. Indian Historical Quarterly, 1954, Pp. 17-18.

3. Minhāj, Pp. 161-62.

4. Ibid, Pp. 198-99, 243.

5. Memoirs, Pp. 163-64.

6. Memoirs, Pp. 163-64.

Tughral, (the rebel governor of Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Balban) was very much liberal towards Qalandars, whom he presented three maunds of gold<sup>1</sup>. Bughrā Khān (son of Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Balban, who assumed independence after his father's death<sup>2</sup>) was the patron of two great poets, Shams al-Dīn Dabīr and Qādī Athīr<sup>3</sup>. The great poet Amīr Khusraw<sup>4</sup> also visited Bengal in the train of the expeditionary forces of Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Balban. Sultān Shams al-Dīn Ilyās Shāh built a mosque in honour of Shaykh 'Alā' al-Ḥaq<sup>5</sup>. He took a great risk by attending the funeral of Shaykh Rājah Biyābānī at a time when he was besieged at the Ikdālah fort by Sultān Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq of Dehlī<sup>6</sup>. Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī Shāh built a shrine in honour of Makhdūm Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrizī<sup>7</sup>. On the Patronage of Sultān Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh, Ibn Battūṭah writes as follows :- "There was an order of Sultān Fakhr al-Dīn not to take money from the faqīrs, while they travelled by the river, to provide them with provision if anybody was in need of the same, and to pay them half a dinār, whenever they reach a town or city"<sup>8</sup>.

1. Baranī, P. 91.

2. Baranī, P. 148.

3. Muntakhab, Vol. I, P. 154, For details on Shams al-Dīn Dabīr, see, Ṣabāḥ al-Dīn 'Abd al-Rahmān: Bazm-i-Mamlūkiyah, Azamgarh, 1954, Pp. 267 ff.

4. Muntakhab, Vol. I, Pp. 154-155.

5. For inscription see, Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, 1939-40, Pp. 7-9, Plate IV(a).

6. Riyāq, P. 97.

7. Ibid, P. 94.

8. Ibn Battūṭah, Vol. IV, P. 293.

وامر السلطان فخر الدين المذكور ان لا يوخد منه اى النهر من الفقراء نول وان يعطى الزاد لمن الازاد له منهم واذا وصل الفقير الى مدينة اعطى نصف دينار -

Sultān Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh was so fond of faqīrs that he made one of them named Shaydā, the ruler of Sudkāwan<sup>1</sup>. But the faqīr proved faithless, killed the Sultān's son and received punishment from him<sup>2</sup>. Sultān Sikandar Shāh ordered the erection of a domed building at the shrine of Mawlānā 'Atā, a great Sūfī, lying buried at Deokot<sup>3</sup>. In his reign a mosque was built by one Khān-i-Āzam Ulugh Mukhlis Khān in the vicinity of the dargāh of Ḥadrat Muḥammad Kabīr Shāh, generally called Shāh Anwar Qulī of Aleppo<sup>4</sup>. In the year 863/A.D.1459, a tomb was erected in honour of a great Sūfī, probably Ḥadrat Nūr Qutb 'Ālam by one Khān-i-Āzam Latīf Khān<sup>5</sup>. Poet Shāh Muḥammad Ṣaghīr, who wrote Yūsuf Jolekhā in Bengali, received patronage probably from Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Āzam Shāh<sup>6</sup>. The Sultān was very much respectful towards the contemporary Sūfīs. He once sent a trayful of dishes to the celebrated Sūfī Ḥadrat Nūr Qutb 'Ālam<sup>7</sup>. He also presented rich garments to Shaykh Muẓaffar Shams Balkhī who came to Bengal on his way to the holy cities of Makkah and Madīnah

- 
1. Ibid, Pp. 214-15. For identification of Sudkāwan see, N.K.Bhattachali: Coins and Chronology of the Early Independent Sultans of Bengal, Cambridge, 1922, Pp. 145 ff.
  2. Ibn Battūṭah, Vol. IV, Pp. 214-15.
  3. For inscription see, J.A.S.B. 1872, Pp. 104-5; Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, 1929-30, Pp. 10-11.
  4. For inscription see, J.A.S.B. 1870, P. 292.
  5. For inscription see, J.A.S.B., 1873, P.271. Memoirs, Pp. 115-116. (Chapter III, Section (C), Pp.136-38.
  6. Enamul Haq: Muslim Bānglā Sahitya, Pakistan Publications, Dacca, 1957, Pp. 56-58.
  7. 'Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī: Mirāt al-Aẓrār, 'Āliyah Madrasah MS. Folio No. 197. Rafiq al-Arefin quoted in the Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, Dacca Session, 1953, (Reprints from the Journal of Pakistan Historical Society Section) P. 5.

for performing hajj<sup>1</sup>. He also made arrangement of ships for the voyage of the Shaykh and his disciples, from Bengal to Arabia<sup>2</sup>. The court of Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh was graced by the presence of a number of scholars, Ibrāhīm Qawwām Fārūqī, the writer of Farhang-i-Ibrāhīmī (better known as Sharfnāmah), Amīr Zayn al-Dīn Harwī, the poet-laureate, Amīr Shahāb al-Dīn Hakīm Kirmānī, the physician who also wrote a Persian lexicon, Mansūr Shīrājī, Malik Yūsuf bin Hamīd, Sayyid Jalāl, Sayyid Muhammad Rukn, and Sayyid Husayn, all of whom were poets<sup>3</sup>. Khān Jahān, who is considered to be the first to bring Bagerhat under the Muslims is credited to be, "the lover of the descendants of the leader of the Prophets and sincere towards the pious scholars"<sup>4</sup>. Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Fath Shāh repaired a stone-building in the precincts of the dargāh of Mawlānā Āṭā Wahīd al-Dīn<sup>5</sup>. Sultān Ālā al-Dīn Husayn Shāh patronised one Muhaddith (traditionist), Muhammad bin Yazdān Bakhsh who transcribed the Sahīh al-Bukhārī in three volumes in 911/A.D. 1503 in the capital city of Ikdālah<sup>6</sup>. He granted land for the maintenance of alms-house attached to the dargāh of Hadrat Nūr Qutb Ālam<sup>7</sup>. In his reign

- 
1. Letters of Mawlānā Muzaffar Shams Balkhī quoted in the Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Vol. XLII, Part II, 1956, P. 16.
  2. Ibid, Pp. 1-19.
  3. Urdu, October, 1952, Pp. 61 ff.
  4. For inscription see, J.A.S.B. 1867, P. 135.
  5. For inscription see, Varendra Research Society Monograph, No. 6, 1935, Pp. 3-4.
  6. Catalogue of Arabic and Persian Manuscripts in the Oriental Public Library at Bankipore, Vol. V, Part I, Nos. 130-32.
  7. Tārīkh-i-Ferīshṭah, Vol. II, P. 302.



a number of sacred constructions were made, attached to the dargāhs of the Sūfīs. A mosque was built by one Majlis Rāhat in the shrine of the descendants of Sultān Adam of Balkh<sup>1</sup>. In the year 900/A.D. 1494-95, a gate was built in the shrine attributed to Shāh Ismā'īl Ghāzī at Mandaran<sup>2</sup>, and a vault was erected in the dargāh of Shāh Nafah, near the old wall of Munghyr (Bihar) by Dānyāl Shāh Zādah (son of Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Ḥusayn Shāh<sup>3</sup>). He (Sultān Ḥusayn Shāh) also built a Siqāyah (shed for supplying drinking water) in the precincts of the tomb of Shaykh Akhī Sirāj al-Dīn<sup>4</sup>, and built a mosque in the shrine of Shāh Gadā<sup>5</sup>. In his reign, one of his officers Khālīṣ Khān erected a sacred building in the dargāh of Shāh Jalāl of Sylhet<sup>6</sup>. During this period, the tomb of Hājī Bābā Sāliḥ was built at Sunārgāwn<sup>7</sup>. The Sultān also caused the excavation of a tank in the village of Mangalkot, Burdwan district near the tomb of Mawlānā Ḥamīd Dānishmand<sup>8</sup>, and one of his officers Rukn Khān built a mosque and a minaret in front of the gate of the dargāh of Mawlānā 'Atā in Deokot<sup>9</sup>. Sultān Nāṣir al-Dīn Nuṣrat Shāh

- 
1. For inscription see, J.A.S.B. 1874, P. 302. Memoirs, P. 152.
  2. For inscription see, J.A.S.B. 1917, P. 134.
  3. For inscription see, J.A.S.B. 1872, P. 335.
  4. For inscription see, Memoirs, Pp. 158-59.
  5. For inscription see, J.A.S.B. 1873, P. 294; Memoirs, P. 149.
  6. For inscription see, J.A.S.B. 1873, Pp. 293-94.
  7. For inscription see, J.A.S.B. 1873, P. 283.
  8. For inscription see, Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, 1933-34, P. 3. Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, Vol. IV, 1918, Pp. 184-85.
  9. For inscription see, J.A.S.B. 1872, P. 106. Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, 1929-30, Pp. 12-13.

built a gateway to the tomb of Shaykh Akhī Sirāj al-Dīn<sup>1</sup> and a mosque in the Chillākhānah of Makhdūm Shaykh Jalāl Tabrizī at Deotala<sup>2</sup>.

The patronage of the Sultāns and their officers towards the ‘Alims and the Sūfis just discussed show that they fall under the following categories :-

- (a) granting of stipend or making presents of money or dress or dish.
- (b) exemption of the Sūfis from the payment of conveyance charges.
- (c) encouragement to the poets and scholars for writing books.
- (d) building of siqāyah or excavation of tanks near the shrine of Sūfis.
- (e) granting of lands for the maintenance of shrines.
- (f) building of tombs or other sacred buildings like mosques attached to the shrine of the Sūfis.
- (g) giving facilities to the Sūfis or ‘Alims for visiting holy places.

As for categories a, b, c, e, and g, these are positive proofs that the Sultāns and their officers tried their utmost to encourage the ‘Alims and the Sūfis with an ultimate view of encouraging the growth of Muslim culture and Muslim society. Categories d and f are only indirect evidences.

---

1. For inscription see, Memoirs, P. 91.

2. For inscription see, Memoirs, P. 171.

Naturally, the dargāhs of Sūfīs became places of pilgrimage<sup>1</sup>, and they were visited by the people. The siqāyahs were built and the tanks were excavated to meet the needs of such visiting people and those who settled round these places. Similarly the construction of sacred buildings like mosques were to give them an opportunity to perform their religious duties. The very fact that tombs were erected, is a sufficient testimony to the attitude of the rulers towards the Sūfīs. The discussion on the patronage of the rulers towards the Ālims and the Sūfīs further proves that from the time of Muhammad Bakhtyār Khaljī upto the end of the period, it was a continuous process; almost all the Sultāns paid due attention towards the well-being of the Ālims and the Sūfīs.

(e) Cultivation of learning by Sultāns and their Officers :-

Some of the Sultāns and their officers were famous for their learning, their proficiency in the Holy Qurān, the Hadīth (tradition of the Prophet) and the Sharīah (the Islāmic law). In the reign of Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Kaykāūs, one Ikhtyār al-Dīn Fīrūz Aitgīn, the governor of Bihar claims himself to be an Ālim<sup>2</sup>. In an inscription, Sikandar Shāh claims himself to be "the lord of the age and the time, the causer of justice and benevolence ..... learned and

---

1. See, Chapter III, Section (C).

2. For inscription see, Annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Vol. XXXVI, 1955, P. 166. Dr. K.R. Qanungo (History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 93) identifies him with Sultān Shams al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh, who later on ascended to the throne after Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Kaykāūs.

great monarch<sup>1</sup>. Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Āzam Shāh was a fellow student of Hadrat Nūr Qutb 'Ālam, the celebrated saint of Pandwah, both receiving education from Qādī Hamīd al-Dīn of Nagor<sup>2</sup>. The Sultān composed verses in Persian<sup>3</sup>. The anecdote recording his presence before the court on an warrant from Qādī Sirāj al-Dīn and his submission to his orders shows that he was fully aware of and had respect for the shari'ah<sup>4</sup>. In an inscription found at Zafar Khān's mosque at Triveni, Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh is called "the just, the liberal, the learned and the perfect"<sup>5</sup>. Of Sultān Shams al-Dīn Yūsuf Shāh, Ferishta<sup>6</sup> writes , "he was a learned, virtuous, and tactful king, who ordered for doing good and prohibited from doing evil. In his time nobody dared drinking openly and disobeying his orders. At interval he called the leading 'Alims to his court and used to say, 'you should not side with anybody in discharging religious matters,

- 
1. For inscription see, J.A.S.B. 1872, Pp. 104-5. Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, 1929-30, Pp. 10-11.
  2. Riyād, P. 108.
  3. Riyād, P. 105, Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Vol. XLII, Part II, Pp. 16-17.
  4. Riyād, Pp. 106-8.
  5. For inscription see, J.A.S.B. 1870, P. 290.
  6. Tārīkh-i-Ferishta, Vol. II, P. 298.

پادشاہ بود بعلم و فضل کار دانی آراسته و در امر معروف و نہی منکر مبالغہ نمیزمود  
 و در عهد او حکم را یار نبود کہ علانیہ شراب خورد و از حکم او تجاوز نماید صدور علماء را  
 بعد از چند روز یکبار بحضور طلبیدہ میگفت شما در مہمات شرعی جانب کسے را بر عی ندارید  
 و گرنہ میان ما و شما صفائی نخواہد ماند و از او بلغ خویم کرد - و چون خود نیز از علم  
 بہرہ داشت بسیار از معاملات را کہ قضات عاجز می شدند بنفس نفیس  
 خود متوجہ شدہ مفروض می ساخت -

otherwise there will be no good terms between you and me and I shall punish you'. As he was a learned man himself, most of the cases in which the Qādīs failed, he used to dispose of himself". Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Fath Shāh is praised in one inscription<sup>1</sup> as, "revealer of the secrets of the Qurān, learned in all branches of learning both concerning religion and body (i.e. theological and medical education)". One Taqī al-Dīn son of 'Ayn al-Dīn, who built a mosque at Sunārgāwn in the reign of Sultān Nāsir al-Dīn Nusrat Shāh claims himself to be "the chief of the lawyers and teachers of Hadīth"<sup>2</sup>. Another Ulugh Majlis Nūr, who built a mosque in the reign of Jalāl al-Dīn Fath Shāh was a "lord of the sword and pen"<sup>3</sup>. Khān Jahān of Bagerhat was closely associated with "the true 'Alims"<sup>4</sup>.

(f) Benevolent Activities of the Sultāns.

The benevolent activities were aimed at ameliorating the distress of the people. Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn 'Iwad Khaljī was the first to attend to such works of public utility. He caused the construction of a series of dykes to protect the city of Lakhnawtī and the suburbs from the inundation of the flood waters<sup>5</sup>. He also connected the two

1. J.A.S.B. 1873, Pp. 282-86; Memoirs, P. 87.

2. J.A.S.B. 1872, Pp. 337-38, كاشف اسرار القرآن عالم علوم الآداب والابدان قدوة الفقهاء والمحدثين

3. J.A.S.B. 1870, Pp. 293-94, صاحب السيف والقلم

4. J.A.S.B. 1867, P. 135, المخلص للعلماء الراشدين

5. Minhāj, P. 162. History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 25.

frontier cities of his time, Deokot on the north and Lakhnor on the south with the head-quarters by causing the construction of a high road which was ten days' journey<sup>1</sup>. "Apart from the strategic and commercial importance of this royal high-way, it proved also a real blessing to the inhabitants of a considerable part of the Sultan's Kingdom as a great cross-country bund that saved their home and harvests from flood - a yearly calamity even now to our people"<sup>2</sup>. At a later time, Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh of the later Ilyās Shāhī dynasty made a similar attempt to control the flood in the vicinity of Lakhnawtī and in this he was assisted by the famous warrior saint Shāh Ismā'īl Ghāzī<sup>3</sup>. Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh's name is associated with construction of well and excavation of tanks<sup>4</sup>. His granting of lands for the maintenance of almshouses in the Dargāh of Shaykh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam has already been mentioned<sup>5</sup>. The Riyād<sup>6</sup> further mentions that he maintained alms-houses in each sarkar of his dominion and bestowed vast treasures to the poor and destitutes. Many of these works were meant to give succour to the people but these certainly popularised the Muslim administration in Bengal, and indirectly popularised the religion that the Sultāns professed.

---

1. Minhāj, P. 162.

2. History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 25.

3. Risālat al-Shuhdā in J.A.S.B. 1874, Pp. 215 ff.

4. Memoirs, P. 90, note I. Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, Vol. IV, 1918, P. 184.

5. Tārīkh-i-Ferīshṭah, P. 301-2. See, Supra, P. 69.

6. Riyād, P. 135.

A Bengali Muslim poet Dawlat Wazir Bahrām Khān<sup>1</sup> gives the following description of the benevolent activities of one Hamīd Khān, one of the poet's ancestors and an officer of Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh :-

"In old days, there was a world-famous king named Husayn Shāh. His beautiful jewelled throne adorned the city of Gaur. His chief wazir was Hamīd Khān, whose qualifications are beyond description. He built houses of food (inns or beggar-houses) and mosques from place to place and he caused the excavation of tanks in different places"<sup>2</sup>.

The poet claims that Hamīd Khān, his ancestor, was the chief wazir of Sultān Husayn Shāh. This information is not available in any other sources.

The discussion makes it adequately clear that the Bengal Sultāns were supporting a cause which ultimately proved to be the foundation of a new society or a new culture

- 
1. Dawlat Wazir Bahrām Khān: Lailī Mainu edited by Ahmad Sharif. Bānglā Academy, Dacca, 1957, Pp. 7-8. The date of composition of the book has been put to A.D. 1545-53 (See, Ibid, Preface).
  2. Ibid, Pp. 7-8.

সুন্দরকাল নবশক্তি                      ভুবন বিখ্যাত অতি  
আছিল হুমায়ুন শাহাবর ।  
তার রক্ত সিংহাসন                      অতি মনো বিবরণ-  
শৌভিত শোভিত মনোহর ॥  
প্রধান উজির জন                      সুনাম হামিদ খান  
তাঁর শ্রুতির অন্ত নাহে ।  
অনু শাসনা স্মৃতি মূর্তি                      অমাজিদ সুনাম  
সুন্দরনী দিলক মনে মনে ॥

in Bengal. The construction of mosques, madrasahs, the close contact with the cultural centres outside the country including the holy cities of Makkah and Madīnah, and the encouragement to the 'Alims, all these helped to a great extent, the foundation of Muslim culture. Due credit should be given to Muhammad Bakhtyār Khalji, the first conqueror, who led the way to initiating cultural pursuits. His warlike disposition did not fail him to realise the danger of the presence of a handful of Muslims in the midst of a hostile multitudes. The construction of prayer houses, madrasahs and Khānqahs was therefore to base his political structure on a solid foundation. Happily for the Muslims in Bengal, his policy was followed with equal or more assiduity by his successors. Two of them Ghiyāth al-Dīn Azam Shāh and Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad Shāh excelled all others by erecting madrasahs in the holy cities and sending presents to the Muslim population there. Their fame transcended the frontier of their own kingdom and resounded in outside cultural centres. The obvious conclusion, therefore, is that, but for the liberal patronage of the Sultāns, the expansion of Muslim culture in Bengal would have been checked at least temporarily if not for ever. For, the individual efforts could not have built so many mosques or madrasahs, or could not have kept contact with the outside cultural centres in such extensive scale or even could not have encouraged the 'Alims in their respective duties. The Kāykāūs inscription of Triveni records that Qādī al-Nāṣir spent money "to



manifest the Divine Faith among the haughty<sup>1</sup>". This probably suggests the propagation of Islām among non-Muslims. Mawlānā Muẓaffar Shams Balkhī's letters to Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Āzam Shāh, discussed earlier<sup>2</sup>, suggest that the Sultāns provided shipping facilities for pilgrims to Makkah. The fact that more than one ship sailed for Makkah manifests that the number of pilgrims was not small. Unless there was state-patronage, the pilgrims would have faced enormous difficulties. It is therefore evident that the part played by the Sultāns in the growth of Islamic culture in Bengal was great and significant.

---

1. Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, 1917-18, P. 13.

2. See, Supra, Pp. 64-65.

SECTION -(B)

The Contribution of the Muslim Scholars.

The very concept of the Islāmic world was such as to facilitate movement of scholars, traders and men of piety from one country to another. As the modern ideas of nationalism had not bound down people to the country of their origin, the Muslims had no compunction to migrate from one country to another and adopt a new homeland where they could find better means of livelihood. This migration of scholars and saintly men helped in both disseminating Muslim learning and religion and raising the general level to a high standard. This was possible by keeping Arabic as the language of the religion and Persian, as far as Southern Asia was concerned, the language of culture. In the higher circles these languages were understood by the people of this sub-continent. It is much later that their ideas, thoughts and traditions were translated in local languages for the benefit of the common mass. In Bengal we have evidence to show how Muslim scholars came from outside, some of them settled here and founded madrasahs, wrote books and held discussions with the non-Muslims and won them over to the religion of Islām. We have also materials produced in Bengali language.

Unfortunately very few of the original writings have come down to us. So far we have been able to trace out (1) one translation of a Yegic work from Sanskrit into Persian

and Arabic, (2) a book of Tasawwuf, (3) a book on Fiqh, (4) a book of romance of religious nature in Bengali, (5) a Persian lexicon and (6) a book on Hadīth. A few letters (maktūbāt) of Sūfīs have also been discovered; they will be dealt with in a separate chapter in connection with the Sūfīs. Names of a few other poets have come down to us, but not their writings; either because they have been destroyed or they have till now escaped the notice of scholars.

(1) Qādī Rukn al-Dīn al-Samarqandī:-

The first Muslim scholar in Bengal, whose writing has come down to us, is Qādī Rukn al-Dīn al-Samarqandī. He translated a Sanskrit work named Amrit Kunda on Yogic system, first into Persian and then into Arabic. The circumstances that led to the translation are as follows<sup>1</sup> :-

"There was in Hind an authentic book well-known among the philosophers and learned men named, Amritkund i.e. "the cistern of Nectar". When the Muslims conquered cities of Hind

1. Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, Vol. I, 1953, Part I, Pp. 46 ff.

كان في الهند كتاب معتبر معروف عند حكمائها وعلمائها وهو يسمى النبوت كندة يعني حوض ماء الحيات - فلما فتح المسلمون بلاد الهند وظهر فيها علم الاسلام بلغ الخبر الى كاشمير (كاشمير) وهو اقصى بلاد الهند وفيها علماء وعلماءها - فخرج واحد منهم لطلب لفتاة طرية مع علماء الاسلام واسمه ابو جبريل بن محمد بن يحيى، معناه بالعربية هو تاجر عالم - حتى وصل الى كلتوت في وقت السلطان على حرد في تبركا (بنگلا) فدخل الجامع يوم الجمعة - فسأل عن العلماء - فاشادوا الى رجل القاضى ركن الدين محمد السمرقندى - فقال من امامكم فقالوا لجد اهل الله عليه وسلم رسول الله - فقال الذى قال فى الريح "هو من امردى" فقال صدقتهم هذا الذى وجدناه فى مصحف ابراهيمان وهما ابراهيم وموسى عليهما السلام - حتى اطاروا له العلماء الغزوى وعرضوا هذه الكتب على القاضى الذى كثر عليه الرحمة فتعجب من ذلك وحمل فيه حتى وصل الى موته - فنقله من الهندية الى الفارسية ومن الفارسية الى العربية

and the banner of Islam was flown there, the news reached Kamrup, the extreme territory of Hind where lived its learned men and philosophers; and one of them came out to hold discussions with the learned divines of Islam. His name was Bhojar Brahmin, the Yogi, meaning in Arabic an ascetic. He reached Lakhnauti in Bengal during the regime of Sultan 'Ali Mardān, entered the mosque on Friday and enquired about the Muslim divines. The people pointed out to him the abode of the Qādī Ruknuddin of Samarqand. The Yogi asked him, "who is your Prophet?" "Muhammad, the apostle of God, (peace be on Him)" was the reply. The Yogi then asked, "is he the same Prophet who said about the Soul 'it is by the order of my Lord'." "Yes, you are right", the Qādī affirmed. The Yogi then declared "we have found this Prophet in the scripture of "Brahmān" or two Abrahāms (i.e. Abrahām and Moses). Thereafter, the Yogi embraced Islam and learnt Islamic sciences to such an extent that the Muslim divines permitted him to pronounce legal decisions. The Yogi then presented this book to the Qādī (God's mercy on him) who admired it and practised the science of Yoga so much so that he reached the Yogi's stage. Then he translated the book into Persian and from Persian into Arabic".

The yogic work 'Amritkunda translated by the Qādī\*, contained ten chapters and fifty ślokas (verses). The titles of chapters themselves, point out the subject matter

---

\* Supra, P.9, note I. After the completion of the work, I have come across the Arabic text, published under the title of "Ḥawḍ al-Ḥayāt", in the Journal Asiatique, Tome CCXIII, Pp. 292-344.

of the book<sup>1</sup>.

- Chapter I :- On the knowledge of microcosm.
- " II :- On the knowledge of the secrets of microcosm.
- " III :- On the knowledge of the mind and its meaning.
- " IV :- On the knowledge of the exercises and how to practise them.
- " V :- On the knowledge of the breathing and how it should be done.
- " VI :- On the preservation of semen.
- " VII :- On the knowledge of whims.
- " VIII :- On the symptoms of death.
- " IX :- On the subjugation of the spirits.
- " X :- On the continuation of the story of physical and metaphysical worlds.

1. Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, Vol. I, Part I, January, 1953, Pp. 54-55.

Arabic table of contents :-

- الباب الاول - في معرفة كيفية العالم الكبير  
 الباب الثاني - في معرفة السموات التي في  
 العالم الصغير  
 الباب الثالث - في معرفة كيفية القلب  
 وحقيقته ومعناه  
 الباب الرابع - في معرفة الرياضة وكيفيتها  
 الباب الخامس - في معرفة النفس وكيفيتها  
 الباب السادس - في كيفية محافظة ماء الحياة  
 الباب السابع - في معرفة كيفية الوهم  
 الباب الثامن - في معرفة علامات الموت  
 الباب التاسع - في معرفة تفسير الروحانيات  
 الباب العاشر - في كيفية تهيئة الحكاية

Persian table of contents :-

- باب اول - در معرفت عالم صغير وماست آن  
 باب دوم - در معرفت تاثيرات عالم صغير  
 باب سوم - در معرفت كيفيت دل وحققت  
 واردرات و تخيلات و غيبات  
 باب چهارم - در معرفت رياضت و كيفيت آن  
 باب پنجم - در معرفت ايجاد انسان و انواع دم  
 باب ششم - در معرفت چگونه حرد و مايست آن  
 و محافظت من  
 باب هفتم - در معرفت وهم  
 باب هشتم - در معرفت فساد قلب و ظاهر  
 شدن علامات مرگ  
 باب نهم - در معرفت تفسيرات روحانيات  
 باب دهم - در معرفت حكايه تهيئه معاد

As clear from the contents of the book, the subject-matter is Yoga philosophy, with its practical application to human beings. Ways and means have been suggested and certain ascetic exercises have been described, which help the ascetics to achieve spiritual ascendancy. Nothing is known about Bhojar Brahmin, the Yogi, or the Sanskrit text, Amritkunda, from other sources. But the book seems to be something like the Charvāpadas or Buddhist mystic songs<sup>1</sup>. In the Charvāpadas, the importance is put on the bodhichitta or the semen virile. Ordinarily, the bodhichitta or the semen virile remains restless and binds one to the illusory world. But by the Yogic practices, the bodhichitta can be carried upwards to the head and when it reaches the head one can attain the mahāsukha or the supreme bliss. This supreme bliss is the goal of the Sahajavāna Buddhists<sup>2</sup>. The Amritkunda was probably a text of similar type, enunciating similar principles.

Bhojar Brahmin, the Yogi, came to Lakhnawī, to hold discussion with the Muslim divines. But ultimately he embraced Islām and himself mastered Islāmic religious sciences. Several other examples of similar disputations between the local Sādhus and the saint Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrizī are

- 
1. H.P. Sāstrī : Bauddha Gāna O Dohā, published by Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta, B.S. 1323. 'Buddist Mystic songs' by Dr. M. Shahidullah in Dacca University Studies, Vol. IV, No. 2, January, 1940.
  2. For discussion on the Charvāpadas, see, P.C. Bagchi: Studies in the Tantras, Part I, Calcutta University, A.D. 1939, P. 85.

found in the Sanskrit work Śekh Subhodaya, in which these Sādhus were won over by the Muslim saint.

Qādī Rukn al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Samarqandī is identified with Qādī Rukn al-Dīn Abū Ḥamīd Muḥammad bin Muḥammad al-ʿAmīdī of Samarqand, who was a famous Hanafi (belonging to the school of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah) jurist and a Sūfī<sup>1</sup>. He was a distinguished Muslim theologian and was the author of Kitāb al-Irshād. He was also the founder of the science of al-khilāfī wal-iaḍl (dialectics). He died at Bukhārā on the 9th Jamādī II, A.H. 615/A.D. 1218. Sultān ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn ʿAlī Mardān Khaljī ruled in Lakhnawtī from A.D. 1210-to 1213<sup>2</sup>. The Qādī was present in Bengal during his time and was probably under his employ. But he went back to his native place, where he died<sup>3</sup>.

(ii) Mawlānā Taqī al-Dīn ʿArabī :-

According to Manāqib al-Aṣfiyāʾ of Shah Shufayb<sup>4</sup>, Shaykh Yahyā (father of Makhdūm al-Mulk Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī) received his education at Mahisun under Mawlānā Taqī al-Dīn. Mahisun is probably Mahisantosh, now in Rajshahi district<sup>5</sup>. Whether the Mawlānā maintained a madrasah is not

- 
1. Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, Vol. I, Part I, 1953, Pp. 50-51.
  2. History of Bengal, Vol. II, Dacca University, 1948, Pp.18-20.
  3. Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, Vol. I, 1953, Pp. 50-51.
  4. Manāqib al-Aṣfiyāʾ, extract printed at the end of Maktūbāt-1-Ṣadī, P. 339.
  5. History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 37. Before<sup>A.D.</sup>/1947 this was included in Dinajpur district.

known, but it proves that he devoted his attention towards imparting religious instruction, and he attracted students from as far a place as Maner in Bihar.

(iii) Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah<sup>1</sup>.

Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah, the teacher and father-in-law of the celebrated saint of Bihar, Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī, came to Dehlī in or about A.D. 1260. He was a Hanafī jurist and a traditionist of great reputation and was well-versed in Chemistry, natural sciences and magic. Soon he gathered a large number of adherents and devotees in Dehlī. The Sultān of Dehlī became nervous at his growing popularity and with a view to getting rid of him urged him to go to Sunārgāwn.

The date of Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah's arrival in Sunārgāwn has been a matter of controversy. Dr. Muḥammad Ishāq, on the authority of Nuzhat al-Khawātir<sup>2</sup> of Sayyid 'Abd al-Hayy is of opinion that he came to Sunārgāwn during the reign of Sultān Iltutmish of Dehlī<sup>3</sup>. Dr. Saghir Hasan al-Masumi<sup>4</sup> is of opinion that the Shaykh came to Sunārgāwn

- 
1. (a) 'Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī: Mirāt al-Asrār, 'Āliyah Madrasah MS. Folio No. 199.  
 (b) Calcutta Review, Vol. LXXI, Pp. 196 ff.  
 (c) Muḥammad Ishāq: India's Contribution to the study of the Hadīth literature, Dacca University, 1955, Pp. 53-54.  
 (d) Islamic culture, Vol. XXVII, No. I, January, 1953, Pp. 8 ff.
  2. Vol. II, published from Hyderabad (India), 1350/A.D. 1931.
  3. Muḥammad Ishāq, op cit., P. 53.
  4. Islamic Culture, Vol. XXVII, No. I, January, 1953, P. 10, note 9.



in 668/A.D. 1270 or 669/A.D. 1271, i.e. in the reign of Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Balban. He cites in his favour the Manāqib al-Asfiyā' of Shāh Shu'ayb<sup>1</sup>, an almost contemporary authority, and says that Makhdūm al-Mulk Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī, who was born in 661/A.D. 1263, accompanied his teacher Abū Tawwāmah to Sunārgāwn at the age of 7 or 8 years.

Dr. Ishāq's opinion may be rejected on the ground that his source-book Nuzhat al-Khawātir, written only a few years back is not corroborated by Manāqib al-Asfiyā', an almost contemporary authority. As for Dr. Saghir Hasan's view, an examination of his source-book, Manāqib al-Asfiyā' shows that the date may be pushed forward at least by a decade. We quote below the relevant passage from the same book<sup>2</sup> :-

"When he (Makhdūm al-Mulk) reached the age of maturity, he engaged himself in the religious learning

---

1. Shāh Shu'ayb: Manāqib al-Asfiyā', vide at the end of Maktūbāt-i-Sadī. Shāh Shu'ayb was a cousin of Makhdūm al-Mulk Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī. (See, Calcutta Review, Vol. 71, 1939, P.196)

2. Shāh Shu'ayb, op cit, See, Maktūbāt-i-Sadī, Pp. 339-40.

چون بیلافت رسید و در تعلیم علوم دین مشغول شد علوم دین بکمال حاصل کرد - در آن وقت آوازه عظمت و نبوغی و دانشمندی مولانا اشرف الدین توامه در ولایت بلخ در عرب و عجم برآمده بود - در جمیع علوم کمال داشت تا علم کیمیا و سیمیا و سیمیا نیز بر وجه کمال داشت - در علوم دین مرجع علماء دین بود - عوام و خواص امراء و ملوک همه معتقد و مطیع و منقاد وی بودند - در علوم سیمیا عجایبها بخلق نمودی - از غایت انقیاد خلق با دشاه دهلوی بر رسید که نباید ملک را بگیرد - بحیل مولانا در سنارگانوں روان داشت - در آن وقت

and attained proficiency in it. At that time the fame of the wisdom, holiness and learning of Mawlānā Ashraf al-Dīn Tawwāmāh had spread in the western regions of India, nay in Arabia, Iran and other countries. He was accomplished in all sciences; even in Chemistry, Natural Science and magic, he had experience and perfection. As for the religious sciences, the learned people used to consult him and the commons, the aristocrats, the Amirs and the Maliks, were devoted to him. In magic, he displayed wonders to the public. Seeing the devotion of the people towards him, the King of Dehlī got nervous, lest he snatched the kingdom from him. He therefore, tactfully induced the Mawlānā to journey to Sunārgāwn. At that time the kingdom of Bangālah was under the possession of the ruler of Dehlī. The Mawlānā also wittily understood the king's motive, but since the obedience to the man of affairs (meaning the kings) is necessary, he undertook the journey to Sunārgāwn. During his sojourn,

---

دلائیٹ بنگالہ در ضبط بادشاہ دہلی بود - مولانا نیز بفرست در یافت از انجا کہ اطاعت اولوالامر واجبست مولانا سفر سنارگانوں اختیار کرد - در اثنا سفر در قصبہ منیر رسیدہ شیخ شرف الدین میری برائے ملاقات رفت - بدین و فور علم و کمال دانشمندی مولانا اشرف الدین توامہ فریفته گشت - گفت تحقیق علوم دین در خدمت و صحبت بغیر اینچنین محققہ حاصل نگرود - عزم کرد کہ در خدمت مولانا و بصحبت او در سنارگانوں برود - و مولانا اشرف الدین توامہ نیز بدین قابلیت و روش صلاح و تقویٰ شیخ شرف الدین میری خوش گشت و گفت در تعلیم علوم دین در حق اینچنین کوشش باید کرد - شیخ شرف الدین میری رضاء مادر و پدر برابر مولانا اشرف الدین توامہ در سنارگانوں رفت - در تحصیل علوم دین باقصہ الغایت کوشید -

when he halted at Maner, Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Manerī paid a visit to him. The Shaykh being impressed by the learning and wisdom of Mawlānā Ashraf al-Dīn Tawwāmah thought that the religious sciences could only be studied with such a vastly learned man. The Mawlānā too admired the talent and manners of the Shaykh and thought it wise to help him in learning religious sciences. Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Manerī therefore, with the permission of his parents accompanied the Mawlānā to Sunārgāwn and endeavoured his best to master the religious sciences".

Two points, derived from the above passage may help us in determining the Shaykh's arrival in Sunārgāwn. (1) The age of Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā who accompanied the Shaykh (Abū Tawwāmah). (2) The categorical statement that Bangālah was at that time under the possession of the Sultān of Dehlī.

Dr. Saghir Hasan al-Masumi says that Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī accompanied his teacher to Sunārgāwn at the age of seven or eight years, but his authority does not bear him out. It says that when Abū Tawwāmah, on his way to Sunārgāwn stopped at Maner, the Shaykh of Maner visited him, he already attained the age of maturity and engaged himself in the study of religious sciences, and attained proficiency in it. He also became impressed by the learning and wisdom of Mawlānā Abū Tawwāmah and thought that the religious science could be studied only with such

a vastly learned man. The very statement that he attained maturity, rules out the view of Dr. Saghir Hasan al-Masumi that he was a boy of only seven or eight years. Secondly, the statement that he engaged himself in studies and attained proficiency in it and that the Mawlānā (Abū Tawwāmah) also admired the talent and manner of the Shaykh, suggest that the Shaykh was not a boy of only seven or eight years, when he accompanied his teacher to Sunārgāwn. Rather, he must have been at least fifteen to twenty years old, so that his talent and manner could impress his teacher, or he could judge the worth of his own teacher. Considering from this standpoint, it may be assumed that they came to Sunārgāwn between the years (A.D. 1263<sup>1</sup> + 15) A.D. 1278 and (A.D. 1263 + 20) A.D. 1283.

The second point that Bangālah was at that time under the Sultān of Dehlī also suggests that the date may be pushed forward even after A.D. 1283. During the time when Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Balban invaded Lakhnawtī to chastise Mughīth al-Dīn Ṭughral, Sunārgāwn was under the possession of one Danūj Rāi, with whom Balban entered into an agreement<sup>2</sup>. Before leaving Bengal, Balban advised his son Bughrā Khān, the new Governor of Lakhnawtī, to conquer<sup>3</sup> Bangālah i.e.

---

1. It is the date of birth of Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī. (See, Islamic Culture, Vol. XXVII, No. 1, January, 1953, P. 10, note 9. Ṣabāḥ al-Dīn Abd al-Rahmān: Baḡm-i-Sūfiyah, Azamgarh, A.D. 1949, P. 350.

2. Baranī, P. 87.

3. Baranī, P. 92. See, also Supra, P. 47.

Eastern Bengal<sup>1</sup> which included Sunārgāwn. It is therefore evident that Sunārgāwn was not occupied by the Muslims at least upto A.D. 1282, when Balban came to Bengal<sup>2</sup>. The first Muslim coin issued from the Kharāi (land-tax) of Bang (Eastern Bengal which included Sunārgāwn) was by Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Kaykāūs<sup>3</sup> in the year 690/1291 and the first Muslim coin issued from the mint-town of Sunārgāwn was by Sultān Shams al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh<sup>4</sup> in the year 705/A.D. 1305. It is, therefore, clear that Sunārgāwn was first conquered by the

1. History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 71.

2. History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 62.

Dr. Saghir Hasan Al-Masumi (Islamic Culture, Vol. XXVII, No. I, January, 1953, Pp. 8 ff.), says that Sunārgāwn together with Bang was first occupied by Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn 'Iwād Khaljī. He cites Minhāj (P. 163) in his favour who says that the kingdoms of Jājnagar, Bang, Kāmruḍ and Tirhut sent presents to him ('Iwād). Any serious student of history will agree that this was just a general remark implying probably the result of raids, because neither of these kingdoms were actually conquered or annexed by 'Iwād Khaljī (History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 20 ff). Moreover the learned scholar fails to note another statement of Minhāj, (Pp. 163-64) saying that when Shahīd Nāsir al-Dīn Maḥmūd (eldest son of Iltutmish) invaded Lakhnawtī, 'Iwād was out in an expeditionary force towards Bang and Kāmruḍ. But as soon as he received the news of the happenings in his capital, he hurried back and fell a prey in the hands of Nāsir al-Dīn Maḥmūd and was killed. This statement implies that 'Iwād could not capture Bang and Kāmruḍ. Again the learned scholar quotes James Wise (J.A.S.B. 1874, P. 83) to say that Ṭughral was punished by Balban in Sunārgāwn, a statement that goes against no less an authority than Baranī, (P. 91) according to whom the punishment was meted out in the city of Lakhnawtī.

3. J.A.S.B. 1922, P. 410.

4. A.W. Botham: Catalogue of the Provincial Coin Cabinet, Assam, second edition, Allahabad, 1930, Pp. 134-38.

Muslims between the years A.D. 1282 (when Balban came to Bengal) and A.D. 1291 (when Kaykāūs issued his coins from the land-tax of Bang). Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah must have come to Sunārgāwn sometime during this period. Kaykāūs, who reigned in Bengal from 690/1291 to 701/A.D. 1301, was for all practical purposes independent as his coins with full regal titles show<sup>1</sup>. After his (Bughrā Khān's) father's death in A.D. 1287, Bughrā Khān also assumed independence<sup>2</sup>. So, if there is any truth in the statement of Shāh Shu'ayb that Bangālah was at that time under the Sultān of Dehlī, the logical assumption is that Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah came to Sunārgāwn in between A.D. 1282 and A.D. 1287<sup>3</sup>.

At Sunārgāwn, Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah devoted himself to cultural pursuits. He maintained a madrasah for his students and a Khāngah for his disciples. Here he was surrounded by a large number of students and disciples, the chief of whom was Makhdūm al-Mulk Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī. The Makhdūm al-Mulk studied under his teacher Tafsīr, Hadīth, Jurisprudence and other branches of Islāmic learning<sup>4</sup>.

- 
1. H.M. Wright: Catalogue of coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Vol. II, Pp. 146-47; Thomas: "Initial Coinage of Bengal," part I, in J.A.S.B. 1867.
  2. Baranī, Pp. 148-49. History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 71, 75.
  3. The dates fit in with another statement of Shāh Shu'ayb that Makhdūm al-Mulk took leave from his parents before accompanying his teacher. Now, as his father died in 690/A.D. 1291 (Calcutta Review, Vol. 71, P. 198), Makhdūm al-Mulk must have left for Sunārgāwn before A.D. 1291.
  4. Islamic Culture, Vol. XXVII, No. I, 1953, P. 11. Calcutta Review, Vol. 71, P. 197.

An idea of the number of his students and disciples or the size of his madrasah and Khānqah may be obtained from the following anecdote concerning the life of Makhdūm al-Mulk Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī<sup>1</sup>. The kantūrī (dinner-table) of Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah, was open to all students, guests and visitors. As the number of those attending the kantūrī was great, it took a longer time to finish one's meal and Makhdūm al-Mulk thought that it was a mere waste of time for himself. So he discontinued to attend it even at the risk of losing his usual meal. When Abū Tawwāmah came to know the reason of his absence from the dinner-table, he arranged to have his meals served separately.

Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah wrote a book named 'Maqāmat', a book on Tasawwuf. The book gained popularity in the whole of India. In a manuscript collection of Tarassul-i-Āyn al-Mulki, there are two letters, one written to Sayyid Nāsir al-Dīn, the Muqta' of Lahore asking for the Maqāmat of Abū Tawwāmah and the other acknowledging its receipt<sup>2</sup>. It is very much regrettable that the book is lost to us. Whether the book was written in Bengal or outside, is not known.

- 
1. Shāh Shu'ayb: Manāqib al-Asfiyā', vide at the end of Maktūbāt-i-Sadi, P. 340; Islamic Culture: Vol. XXVII, No. I, 1953, P. 12.
  2. Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, Manuscript No.F 11. See, J.A.S.B. 1923, Pp. 274, 277.

Dr. Saghir Hasan al-Masumi<sup>1</sup> suggests that the authorship of Nām-i-Haq<sup>2</sup>, a book on fiqh, should also be ascribed to him. But a close examination of the book shows that the book was not actually written by him but by one of his disciples on the basis of his teachings. The author's introduction will bear testimony to it. The relevant portion is reproduced below<sup>3</sup> :-

- (1) "I admit of my inability and short comings. I am not unwise and unawares and ignorant (of my worth).
- (2) "Our predecessors have put forward the excuse, 'he who writes, becomes the target (of critics)' (thus implying that he also puts forward the same excuse).
- (3) "But to try so far as one can is better than to remain silent and inactive.

- 
1. Islamic Culture, Vol. XXVII, No. I, 1953, P. 11.
  2. There are two editions of the book, one from Bombay, A.D. 1885, and the other from Kānpūr, in A.H. 1332.
  3. Nām-i-Haq, Kānpūr, A.H. 1332, Pp. 5-6.

- |                            |                               |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| نی چونا دان احمق دخر نسیم  | (1) من بعجز و قصور معترفم     |
| عذر من صفت قد اشرف         | (2) پیش ازین گفته اند (پس سلف |
| به زیکاری و خموشیدن        | (3) لیک بر قدر خویش کوشیدن    |
| فقد را برد نظم پوشیدم      | (4) من بقدر مجال کوشیدم       |
| که در و حله بیوشانے        | (5) ننگی عیب گرتو بتوانے      |
| لاشه خویشتن نیندازو        | (6) اسپ تازی اگر چه به تازو   |
| لائق روزگار اصحاب است      | (7) شستاد بیت و ده باب است    |
| لاجرم بے نظیر افتادست      | (8) موجزو دلپذیر افتادست      |
| نام او در جہاں بہر طرف است | (9) این تر یادگار از شرف است  |
| در خراسان علوم مکتبش       | (10) از بخار است مولد و نسبش  |



- (4) "I tried upto my ability; I put forward (have written) the fiqh in the garb of verse.
- (5) "Do not find fault with me; rather cover it with the robe of honour (i.e. improve upon it) if you can.
- (6) "Though the Arabian horse runs swiftly, yet the lean and thin ass legs on i.e. somehow goes towards the goal.
- (7) "There are one hundred and eighty verses and ten chapters, which are befitting the people of to-day i.e. commensurating the short time that they can devote towards religious studies.
- (8) "It is short and pleasant, hence it has become unique.
- (9) "This is a reminiscence of Sharf for you; whose name is spread all over the world.
- (10) "His ancestry and birth-place is Bukhārā; he got education and other achievements in Khurāsān".

Verses No. 9 and 10 quoted above record that the book was a reminiscence from one Sharf whose name was spread throughout the world and who was born in Bukhārā and received his education in Khurāsān. So Sharf of the verses may be identified with Mawlānā Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah. But they suggest that he was not the author himself, rather from his reminiscence, some one else, probably his disciple wrote the book. In the first place, if he (Sharf) was the author himself, he would not have introduced himself in the third person

while in the preceding verses, for example from verses 1-7, quoted above, he always used the first person. Secondly, he would not have claimed to be renowned throughout the world, while in the preceding verses, he expressed himself with humility.

Nothing is available in the book to ascertain the name of the author or the place where it was written. But the date of completion of the book suggests that the book was written in Bengal. "693 years have elapsed since the death of Prophet upto this year. In the first half of Jamādī I, this versification was completed"<sup>1</sup>. By the date, '693 years after the death of the Prophet', the author must have referred to the Hijrī year. We have already noted that Mawlānā Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah came to Bengal in between A.D. 1283-1287<sup>2</sup>. The book was probably written in 693/A.D. 1293 in Bengal.

The book is a small one, having one hundred eighty verses and ten chapters. These ten chapters are in addition to three introductory chapters dealing with Hamd (praise of God), Naat (Praise of the Prophet and the four Khalifahs) and the author's introduction. The ten chapters dealing with the subject-matter of the book, are divided as follows :-

Chapter I deals with Wādū' (ablution). It is divided into four sections :-

Section I - Eard (obligatory part) of Wādū'.

---

1. Ibid, P. 28. نود و سه ہفت و شصت و نہاد سال  
 اوفات رسول ﷺ سال  
 بود کاین نظم گشت مستکمل نیمہ از جمادی الاول

2. See, Supra, P. 91.

Section II - Sunnat of Wadū'.

" III - Mustahab (optional portion) of Wadū'.

" IV - Makrūh (that which is hateful and unbecoming) of Wadū'.

Chapter II deals with those matters that nullify Wadū'.

Chapter III deals with Ghusal (bath). It is divided into three sections :-

Section I - Fard of Ghusal.

" II - Sunnat of Ghusal.

" III - deals with the quantity of water that is required in Wadū' and Ghusal.

Chapter IV deals with those matters that make Ghusal obligatory.

Chapter V deals with Tayammum (purification by sand).

Chapter VI deals with Namāz (Prayers). It is divided into four section:-

Section I - Fard of Namāz.

" II - Wajib (near obligatory) of Namāz.

" III - deals with additional prostration necessitated by committing mistakes in course of prayer.

" IV - Sunnat of Namāz.

Chapter VII deals with obligatory (Fard) prayers of the day and night.

Chapter VIII deals with obligatory Sunnat (Sunnat-i-Mu'akkadah) prayers of the day and night.

Chapter IX deals with the fasting in the month of Ramadān.

Chapter X deals with the penalty to be paid for breaking the fast in the month of Ramadān.

Last of all there is the Khātimah or the concluding part in which the date of completion of the book has been given.

(iv) Shāh Muhammad Saghīr:-

Shāh Muhammad Saghīr composed Yūsuf Jolekhā in Bengali in the reign of Sultān Ghiyath al-Dīn Āzam Shāh<sup>1</sup>. The love-story of Hadrat Yūsuf and Zulaykhā, the subject-matter of the book is available in the Holy Qur'ān<sup>2</sup>, and a few works of Persian poets<sup>3</sup>. As will be seen presently, in the words of the poet himself, he based his book on the kitāb (meaning Arabic or Persian works) and the Qur'ān.

The details about the life of the poet is not available. Dr. Enamul Haq<sup>4</sup> thinks that he belonged to a darwish family because he (the poet) takes the title of Shāh. He was probably in the service of the Sultān<sup>5</sup>.

- 
1. Enamul Haq: Muslim Bānglā Sāhitya, Pakistan Publications, Dacca, 1957, P. 56. For criticism see, Muhāmmadi (a Bengali monthly journal of Dacca), Raush, B.S. 1364, Pp.197-202.
  2. Qur'ān, XIII.
  3. The Persian works were written by Firdausī and Shaykh 'Abd Allāh Ansāri. (E.G.Browne: A literary history of Persia, Vol. II, Cambridge, 1928, Pp. 131, 270).
  4. Muslim Bānglā Sāhitya, Pakistan Publications, Dacca, 1957, P. 58.
  5. Ibid, P. 58.

The poet explains why he composed the book in Bengali. It is reproduced below<sup>1</sup> :-

"In the fourth place, I shall relate something about the puṭhi (book). I have made up my mind (to write the book) giving up the fear of sin. The people are plunged in tales and fictions; everybody satisfies himself with what is dear to him. No one writes about the religious tales for fear of being blamed by others. I have thought over and come to the conclusion that the fear is unnecessary (literally false); language does not matter if the words are true. I have heard great men say, 'in the store of jewels, words

1. E. Haq: Muslim Bānglā Sāhitya, Pakistan Publications, Dacca, 1957, P. 59.

“ চতুর্থ কাহিনী কিছু সোখার কথা ।  
 পাশ ড়ম এড়ি আজ দড় কারি অন ॥  
 নানা কাব্য কথা বলে অজে নরজন ।  
 খাব খেই অদ্ভূত সৃষ্টি করে অন ॥  
 ন মেখে কিতাব কথা মনে ড়ম পাএ ।  
 দোষের মকর তাক ইহ ন জুয়ায় ॥  
 প্রণিয়া দেখিনু আক্ষি ইহ ড়ম মিষ্ট ।  
 ন হয় জাযায় কিছু হয় কথা মাত্র ॥  
 শুনিয়াছি মদজনে কাহিনী কথন ।  
 রতন জাযায় মধুে বচন মে ধন ॥  
 বচন বচন মনি যতনে পুরিয়া ।  
 প্রেমরমে ধর্মবানী কাহিনী ভরিয়া ॥  
 জীবক ভাবিনী হৈন ইছুক জনিয়া ।  
 ধর্ম জীব করে প্রেম কিতাবেত মেখা ॥  
 ন হৈতে প্রেমক ড়ম ইছুক অনুর ।  
 জনিয়া মাজির তাক বিরহ মাধুর ॥  
 কিতাব কোবীর মধুে দেখিনু বিশেষ ।  
 ইছুক জনিয়া কথা আমিয়া আশ্রয় ॥ ”

are a real worth.' Taking the jewel-like words I shall write the religious tale of love. Yūsuf and Zulaykhā became lovers; it is written in the Kitāb (Persian or Arabic work) that they loved each other in a religious mood. (Even) when love did not find place in the heart of Yūsuf, Zulaykhā steeped into the sea of tragedy. I have seen much in the Kitāb and the Qurān; the story of Yūsuf and Zulaykhā is full of nectar".

Though the poet claims that he wrote his book on the basis of the Qurān and the Kitāb, it is not free from the local touch. It also depicts the Bengali setting. The following examples may be cited :-

(a) Shāh Muḥammad Ṣaghīr<sup>1</sup> refers to the marriage of Ibn Amīn, younger brother of Yūsuf, with Bidhu Prabhā, princess of Madhupur. Bidhu Prabhā is the name of a Hindu girl and Madhupur is also the name of a place in Bengal. The story of Yūsuf-Jolekhā is found in the Holy Qurān, and the place of their activities is Egypt. The reference to these two Bengali names suggest that the poet wanted to give it a Bengali character.

(b) The merchant who bought Yūsuf, is called a 'Maniru'<sup>2</sup>. But this is a Bengali word derived from mani (Jewel).

---

1. E. Haq: Muslim Bānglā Sāhitya, Pakistan Publications, Dacca, 1957, P. 60.

2. Ibid.

(v) Ibrāhīm Qawwām Fārūqī:

Ibrāhīm Qawwām Fārūqī wrote a Persian lexicon named Farhang-i-Ibrāhīmī, but it is better known as Sharfnāmah, because it was dedicated to the memory of Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī<sup>1</sup>. The book was written in the reign of Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh\*, of whom the author writes as follows :- "May Abū al-Muzaffar Bārbak Shāh be Shāh-i-Ālam (king of the world) and he is. May the kingdom of Jamshid be under him and it is"<sup>2</sup>. Again he writes, "O' (the man), who has given many horses to one who asks for. Those who go on foot were given thousands of horses. The great Abū al-Muzaffar, the world of favour that he is, whose smallest general gift is a horse"<sup>3</sup>. The eulogistic verses show that the author was in some way or other grateful to the Sultān or was probably under his employ.

But the chief importance of the book lies in the fact that he has supplied a few names of scholars and poets of the time. They are as follows<sup>4</sup> :-

- (1) Amīr Zayn al-Dīn Harwī. He is said to have been the poet-laureate ( ملک الشعراء ).

1. Urdū, October, 1952, P. 61. For verses in praise of Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī, see, Sharfnāmah, 'Āliyah Madrasah MS. Folio Nos. 2-3.

2. Urdū, October, 1952, P. 65.

3. Ibid.   
 بلالظفر بارک نے اس عالم بار دوست درتین او ہمیشہ ملک صم بار دوست   
 اب بار دوست سر اس فر او ان اس   
 بلالظفر و ان جهان لطف کہ ہے   
 بیاد کان را خشنود صد سزاران اس   
 کنیز بخش غایت نگاه احسان اس   
 See also, Sharfnāmah, 'Āliyah Madrasah MS. Folio No. 93.

4. Ibid., Pp. 68 ff. (See also, Sharfnāmah, 'Āliyah Madrasah MS. Folio Nos. 23, 43, 49, 60, 185, 231 and 241).

\* Urdū, October, 1952, P. 65.

- (2) Amīr Shahāb al-Dīn Ḥakīm Kirmānī. He is said to have been the 'pride of physicians' (انتخارالکباء). He was also a poet and was the author of a Persian lexicon named "Farhang-i-Amīr Shahāb al-Dīn Ḥakīm Kirmānī"<sup>1</sup>.
- (3) Manṣūr Shīrāzī. He was a Persian poet.
- (4) Malik Yūsuf bin Ḥamīd was a poet.
- (5) Sayyid Jalāl was a poet.
- (6) Sayyid Muḥammad Rukn was a poet.
- (7) Sayyid Ḥasan was a poet.
- (8) Shaykh Wāhedī. He was probably a teacher of the author. He passed this world when the author wrote his book. The author also refers to a book of the Shaykh named Ḥabl Matīn the subject-matter of which is not known.

It is unfortunate that none of their writings have come down to us. We also do not know the subject matter on which they wrote except that of the lexicon of Amīr Shahāb al-Dīn Kirmānī. Ibrāhīm Qawwām Fārūqī quoted a few lines<sup>2</sup>, but they do not throw any new light on the authors.

(vi) Muḥammad bin Yazdān Bakhsh, famous as Khwāizī Shīrwānī:-

He was a Muḥaddith (Scholar on the tradition of the Prophet) and transcribed in Ikdālah, the capital of Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Ḥusayn Shāh three volumes of Sahīḥ al-Bukhārī<sup>3</sup>.

1. Urdū, October, 1952, P. 73.

2. Ibid, Pp. 68 ff.

3. Catalogue of Arabic and Persian Manuscripts in the Oriental Public Library at Bankipore, Vol. V, Part I, Nos. 130-32.



Contribution - a résumé :-

These writings of the Muslim scholars, may be grouped into following heads - (1) Islamic sciences like Fiqh and Hadith, (2) the Persian lexicons and Persian poetry and (3) the religious tales<sup>1</sup>.

(1) The Islamic Sciences.

The writings on the Islamic Sciences are represented by Nām-i-Haq and transcription of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. For a country like Bengal, where Islām just obtained its political hold, books of such nature were of supreme importance. They were meant to teach the people on fundamental principles of Islām. Nām-i-Haq deals with essential principles like Waḍū' (ablution), Namāz (prayers), Fasts (in the month of Ramādān) and Ghusal (obligatory bath), all those subjects that guide the Muslims in their day to day life. This shows that it was intended for ordinary persons i.e. those who did not receive advanced studies on theological subjects.

(2) The Persian lexicons and Persian poetry.

We shall see later<sup>2</sup> that the official language during the period under review was Persian. Moreover many of the

---

1. We do not know where the Maqāmat (see, Supra, 92) of Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah was written, neither do we know what was the subject matter of Ḥabl Matīn of Shaykh Wāhedī (see, Supra, P. 101). We have not included Sūfī writings because (a) they have not come down to us except for a few letters and (b) the activities of the Sūfīs form a separate chapter. See, Chapter III, Section (C).

2. Chapter VI, Pp. 226-27.

religious books available at that time were written in that language. Nām-i-Haq is an important example to be cited. So the importance of the Persian lexicons cannot be underestimated. The fact that one of the poets received the title of Malik al-Shuʿarā' (poet Laureate) suggests that the Persian poetry received patronage from the Sultāns.

(3) The religious tales :-

The importance of the religious tales in Bengali has been explained by Shāh Muḥammad Ṣaghīr (the author of Yūsuf Jolekhā)<sup>1</sup> himself. He says that people were plunged in tales and fictions. The gravity of the situation will be clear if we remember that a large number of local people were converted to Islām<sup>2</sup>; they did not know the Arabic or Persian languages in which the religious books were then available. A Bengali Muslim poet makes the point further clear, when he says, "Bengalees are born in Bengal out of their misfortune. They do not understand Arabic language, nor do they understand their own religion. They all remain satisfied with mythological tales"<sup>3</sup>. In another place he

1. See, Supra, Pp. 98-99.

2. See, Chapter III, Section (C).

3. Sayyid Sultān: Ophāte Rasūl, edited by Ali Ahmad, B.S. 1356, P. 7.

কল্পদৌষে বৃষ্টিত বাস্তবানি উর্ভসন ।  
 না বুজে বাস্তবানি সবে য়ারবি বচন ॥  
 যাপোনা দিনর বোন এক না বুজিল ।  
 সবস্তার সকল বৈয়া মব বৈন ॥

says, "Kavīndra composed the Mahābhārata at the order of Lashkar Parāgal Khān. Both Hindus and Muslims read that book in their respective houses and none remembers the name of Khudā and Rasūl (God and His Prophet)"<sup>1</sup>. Under the circumstance, it was but natural that the Muslim scholars should have taken up their pen to write Muslim religious tales just to divert the people from the non-Muslim ones. More importance may be attached to the fact that it was written in the language of the people and in so doing Shāh Muḥammad Ṣaghīr did a great service to the cause of Muslim culture in Bengal.

Syllabus taught in the madrasahs:

It has been pointed out earlier that a number of madrasahs were built by the Bengal Sultāns<sup>2</sup>. Mawlānā Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah maintained an academy at Sunārgāwn<sup>3</sup>, while a few Sūfīs also maintained some madrasahs or imparted religious instructions in their Khāngahs<sup>4</sup>. Nothing definite is known regarding the syllabus taught in these madrasahs. The following references are available in the inscriptions:-

(a) Qādī al-Nāṣir Muḥammad granted subsistence to

1. Sayyid Sultān: Ḥikāyat-e-Rasūl, edited by Ali Ahmad, B.S.1356, Preface.

মস্কুর সরাগান খান আজা শির দারি ।  
কবীন্দ্র জরত কথা কহিন বিচারি ॥  
হিন্দু মোছলমান তথা গুরে গুরে শুরে ।  
খোদা রছুবের কথা কেহ না মোছুরে ॥

2. Chapter III, Section (A).

3. Supra, P. 91.

4. Chapter III, Section (C).

"men of learning for the inculcation of the Muslim Law and to manifest Divine Faith among the haughty"<sup>1</sup>.

(b) Sultān 'Alā'al-Dīn Husayn Shāh built a madrasah "for the teaching of the sciences of religion and for instruction in the principles which lead to certainty"<sup>2</sup>.

Both these inscriptions emphasize the teaching of Muslim Law and the Islāmic religious sciences. The Islāmic religious sciences include the Qurān (the Holy Book), the Tafsīr (the commentary of the Qurān), the Hadīth and the Fiqh. The writing of Nām-i-Haq, a book on Fiqh and the transcription of Jāmi' al-Bukhārī, just discussed earlier<sup>3</sup>, further strengthens the view that these subjects were taught in the madrasahs. Books on these subjects were then available, as also long after, only in Arabic and Persian languages<sup>4</sup>. So it may be concluded that Persian and Arabic languages were also included in the syllabus taught in the madrasahs. The fact that a Persian lexicon was written by Ibrāhīm Qawwām Fārūqī strengthens this view.

---

1. Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, 1917-18, P. 13.

2. Memoirs, Pp. 157-58.

3. Supra, Pp. 93-96, 101.

4. Nām-i-Haq was in Persian, the transcription of Jāmi' al-Bukhārī was in Arabic.

## Section - (C)

The Sūfīs and their influence.(a) Sūfīsm :-

"Of all great religions of Western Asia, Islam has generally been regarded as the most worldly and least ascetic"<sup>1</sup>. Yet from the second century of its existence, it let loose that popular force which later on came to be known as Sūfīsm<sup>2</sup>. "Sūfīsm speaks of advancement in the spiritual life as a 'journey' and the seeker after God as a Sālik or 'traveller'. Its teaching is intended to guide the traveller to the attainment of perfect 'knowledge' (ma'rifat) of God, the only Reality diffused through all things. Subsequently, the wandering soul is led onwards by slow 'stages' (maqāmāt) and through the experience of certain states (ahwāl), along a 'Path' (al-tarīqat), to the desired goal of union with God, called fanā fil-haqīqat, absorption (lit. extinction) in Reality"<sup>3</sup>. This fanā is the state which precedes that of haqā<sup>4</sup> (perpetuity) which is an eternal existence. According

- 
1. H.A.R.Gibb: Mohammedanism, Oxford University Press, 1953, P. 129.
  2. Ibid, Pp. 129-31. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. XI (Saints and Martyrs).
  3. J.A. Subhan: Sufism, its saints and shrines, Lucknow, 1938, P. 67. For details on the stages of Sufi training see, A.M.A.Shuktery: Outlines of Islamic Culture, Vol.II, 1938, Pp. 470-71.
  4. J.A. Subhan: Op cit, P. 83.

to Shushtery, "by Fana, the Sufi means self-negation or negation of earthly tendency, and Baqa, retention of spiritual existence, or extraction of evil qualities or retention of virtue or permanency of mind from sensible objects to spiritual reality, the extinction of material desires and the loss of selfish consciousness"<sup>1</sup>.

Sūfism developed into a number of Orders or Sects of which four exerted great influence in India. They are, (1) the Chishtiyah, (2) the Suhrawardiyah, (3) the Qāderiyah and (4) the Naqsh-bandiya. All other orders that developed later were sub-divisions of these four<sup>2</sup>. The order of many of the Sūfis that came to Bengal, during the period under review, cannot be determined, though it may be assumed that quite a large number of them belonged to the Chishtiyah or the Suhrawardiyah schools.

(b) Sūfism in Bengal :-

The Sūfism in Bengal was not an indigenous growth; it was imported from the West, from Central Asia through Northern India. A large number of Sūfis came to Bengal; according to tradition, some of them came even before the Muslim conquest<sup>3</sup>. An idea of the influence of Sūfis in Bengal may be had from a letter written by Mir Sayyid Ashraf Jahāngīr Simnānī to Sultān Ibrāhīm Sharqī of Jawnpūr<sup>4</sup>. He

1. A.M.A. Shushtery: Op cit, Pp. 482-83.

2. J.A. Subhan: Op cit, P. 174.

H.A.R.Gibb: Op cit, Chapters VII & IX.

3. See, Infra, Pp. 109 ff.

4. This saint was a disciple of Shaykh 'Alā' al-Haq of Pandwah. (Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 166).

writes, "God be praised! what a good land is that of Bengal where numerous saints and ascetics came from many directions and made it their habitation and home. For example at Devgaon seventy leading disciples of the Shaikh of Shaikh Hazrat Shaikh Shahabuddin Suharwardi are taking their eternal rest. Several saints of the Suharwardi order are lying buried in Mahisun and this is the case with the saints of Jalilia order in Deotala. In Narkoti some of the best companions of the Shaikh of Shaikh Ahmad Damishqi are found. Hazrat Shaikh Sharfuddin Tawwama, one of the twelve of the Qadarkhani order whose chief pupil was Hazrat Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri is lying buried at Sunargaon. And then there was Hazrat Bad Alam and Badr Alam Zahidi. In short, in the country of Bengal what to speak of the cities there is no town and no village where holy saints did not come and settle down. Many of the saints of the Suharwardia order are dead and gone under earth but those still alive are also in fairly large number"<sup>1</sup>.

It is, therefore, clear that Bengal became a stronghold of the Sūfīs during the early Muslim period. The present section has been divided into two parts. Part I deals with the biographical sketch of the Sūfīs and Part II with the influence of Sūfīs in the growth of Muslim culture.

---

1. Quoted by Prof. Hasan Askari in Bengal: Past and Present. Vol. LXVII Serial No. 130, 1948, Pp. 35-36.

Part I - The Biographical Sketch:

The following biographical sketch is derived from hagiological literature. The accounts are full of mysterious tales, which on reasonable grounds seem to be preposterous. But no attempt is made to omit those materials. These details have been given to gauge the depth of credulity of the local people and the general influence that the saints exerted on them. Wherever possible, epigraphical and other evidences have been produced to check the mistakes in chronology. No attempt is made to give an exhaustive list of the saints. A select study is made below in order to show how these saints interlinked Bengal with the rest of the Muslim world, and at the same time how they spread out in every part of Bengal.

(a) Sūfis, who are believed to have come before Muslim conquest:-

Some Sūfis are believed to have come to Bengal before the Muslim conquest. They are immortalised in the hearts of men through tradition, handed down from generation to generation. It is difficult to determine how and when they came or how far they contributed to the spread of Islām in Bengal, but the places where they are believed to be lying buried, are venerated by the people even to-day.

(1) Bābā Adam Shahīd of Rampal<sup>1</sup> :-

Bābā Adam Shahīd seems to be the earliest in this category. He is now lying buried at Rampal, about half a

---

1. For the tradition of Bābā Adam Shahīd, See, J.A.S.E. 1889, Vol. LVII, Pp. 12 ff.



mile away from Ballāl-bārī, (believed to be the capital of king Ballāl Sena of the Sena dynasty) in Munshiganj subdivision, Dacca district. While he was living in Makkah as a faqīr, a certain Muslim of Kanai Cheng, a village not far from Rampal fled away from the oppression of king Ballāl Sena for his offence of sacrificing a cow on the occasion of the birth of his son, appeared before him (the saint) and related the whole story. Hearing that there was a country in which there was no religious toleration, the saint was moved, and came to Bengal with six to seven thousand of his followers. He encamped near Rampal and began sacrificing cows. This led to his conflict with king Ballāl Sena. The saint was ultimately killed by the king, but by a curious stroke of fate the king and his family lost their lives by throwing themselves into agnikunda or a pit of fire. The tomb of the saint is found even to-day in front of a mosque, built in the time of Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Fath̄ Shāh<sup>1</sup> in the year 888/A.D. 1483.

It has been pointed out earlier<sup>2</sup> that Muslims had contact with Bengal long before the conquest of Bengal through the Arab traders. But whether this contact could lead to the settlement of the Muslims in the interior in a place like Rampal is doubtful. The Fath̄ Shāh inscription attached to the mosque does not refer to the saint; it is doubtful whether

---

1. For inscription of this mosque, See, J.A.S.B. 1889, P. 23, Plate V. See also J.A.S.B. 1873, P. 285.

2. See, SURRA, P. 21.

Malik Kāfūr, the builder of the mosque, knew about the saint or the tradition. But the story (except its earlier portion i.e. king Ballāl oppressed a Muslim for sacrificing a cow, who fled away to Makkah and appeared before Bābā Adam) has been related by Ananda Bhaṭṭa in his Ballāl Charita<sup>1</sup>. Ballāl's enemy has been named Bāyadumba, obviously a corruption of Bābā Adam, and the enemies have been called as Mlechhas consisting of five thousand strong. The fate of the king and his family has been described as it is found in the tradition. In spite of Ananda Bhaṭṭa's corroboration, the historicity of the event cannot be determined, but it proves beyond doubt that the tradition is a very old one and that a saint named Bābā Adam actually came to Bengal and is now lying buried at Rampal.

(ii) Shāh Sultān Rūmī :-

The dargāh of the saint exists at Madanpur, in the Netrakona sub-division of the district of Mymensingh. In 1829, the Government tried to confiscate the property attached to the dargāh, but the Khādim produced a Persian document of 1671 A.D. and saved the property. The document shows that Shāh Sultān Rūmī came to Madanpur in 445/A.D. 1053<sup>2</sup>. It is said that a certain Koch King accepted Islām at his hands and donated the village to the saint<sup>3</sup>. If this is true, the

1. Ballāl Charita by Ananda Bhaṭṭa translated by H.P. Śāstrī, Chapters XXVI & XXVII. The book was written in 1510 A.D. Some scholars challenge its authenticity. For details see, History of Bengal, Vol. I, Dacca University, 1943, Pp. 239-41.

2. Enamul Haq: Baṅge Sūfī Prabhāva, Calcutta, A.D. 1935, P.138.

3. Ibid; Bengal District Gazetteer: Mymensingh, 1917, P.152.

story must relate to a much later date as the Kochas became supreme in this region<sup>1</sup> long after the overthrow of the Senas in 13th century A.D.

(111) Shah Sultān Māhīṣawār<sup>2</sup> :-

He is lying buried at Mahasthan in Bogra district. It is said that he was the son of a certain king of Balkh. He occupied the throne after the death of his father, but left home being disgusted of luxurious life. He became a disciple of Shaykh Tawfiq of Damascus, who ordered him to preach Islām in Bengal. He arrived at Hariram Nagar via Sandvip and killed a Kālī worshipper, king Balarāma, while the king's minister accepted Islām. Then he went to Mahasthan where he fought against king Parasurāma and his sister Śilā Devī. The king was killed, while his sister drowned herself in the river Karatoya<sup>3</sup>. His war with king Parasurāma, with minor variations, has come down through tradition, recorded by various authors. He is called "Māhīṣawār" or fish-rider. It is said that he came on a boat shaped like a fish or with the figure-head of a fish. It is difficult to identify xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

- 
1. E. Gait : History of Assam, Calcutta & Simla, A.D. 1926, Pp. 46 ff.
  2. For tradition on this saint see, J.A.S.B. 1875, Part I, No. 2, Pp. 183-186.  
J.A.S.B. 1878, Part I, No. 1, Pp. 88-95.  
Bengal District Gazetteers: Bogra, 1910, Pp. 154-5.
  3. Enamul Haq: Bāṅge Sūfī Prabhāva, Calcutta, A.D. 1935, Pp. 140-41.

him<sup>1</sup>, but there is no doubt that he was a great saint who was venerated by the people from time immemorial. In the year 1096/A.D. 1685 Emperor Aurangzeb issued a sanad<sup>2</sup> to Sayyid Muhammad Ṭāhir, Sayyid 'Abd al-Raḥmān and Sayyid Muhammad Ridā confirming their right on the Lākhirāi land attached to the dargāh of the saint. The deed bears the seal of Kokultash Muḥaffar Jang and is in the form of an order to the officials, Mutasaddis, Chowdhuris, and Qarungos of Pargana Silbari in Sarkar Bazuha and directs them to respect the Lākhirāi of the saint Muhammad Māhī-sawār. This sanad refers to earlier sanads and farmāns granted by earlier Sultāns. The dargāh was an old one, but how old nobody can say, because the earlier sanads referred to by this one, have not come down to us.

(iv) Makhdūm Shāh Dawlah Shāhid<sup>3</sup> :-

He is lying buried in Shahzadpur in the district of Pabna. Tradition connects him with Mu'āz-bin-Jabal, a companion

- 
1. Mr. H. Beveridge (J.A.S.B. 1878, Part I, No.1, P. 91) writes as follows :- "The only genuine inference which we can make, I think, from Muhammad Shah's history is, that he was the hero of a popular rising. He was not a fighting man apparently, and is never called a Ghazi, like the famous Ismail of Rangpur, Parasuram was probably a bigoted tyrant, and was killed by those of his subjects who had turned Muhammadans. This view is supported by the local tradition that Parasuram could not bear the sight of a Musalman. It seems also certain that Muhammad Shah was helped by Parasuram's own subjects; for the tradition is, that one Harpal, the Raja's sweeper, used to convey information to Muhammad".
  2. The text and the translation of the sanad will be found in J.A.S.B. 1878, Part I, No. 1, Pp. 92-93.
  3. For tradition regarding Makhdūm Shāh Dawlah, See, J.A.S.B. 1904, Part I, No. 3, Pp. 262-271.  
Bengal District Gazetteers; Pabna, 1923, Pp. 121-126.

of the Prophet. He is said to have come out of Yaman, with the permission of his father Mu'āz-bin-Jabal and accompanied by a large number of followers, some of whom were his near relatives. On way he met Jalāl al-Dīn Bukhārī who gave him two pigeons. Their ship continued eastward sail till at last it struck near Shahzadpur. The king, who is reported to have been the master of Bihar, gave resistance to the settlement of these foreigners; the saint, including some of his followers lost lives in the battle that followed.

The date of the saint is not so old as that of Mu'āz-bin-Jabal who ~~is said to have~~ died in A.H. 17 or 18<sup>1</sup>. But he might have belonged to the family of that companion of the Prophet. Keeping in view the date of Jalāl al-Dīn Bukhārī (1192-1291)<sup>2</sup> whom he is said to have met, it may be supposed that Makhdūm Shāh Dawlah Shāhid came to Shahzadpur, about the time of Muhammad Bukhtyār's conquest of Lakhnawti<sup>3</sup>. The Shahzadpur mosque attached to the dargāh, is endowed with 722 (Seven hundred twenty two) bighās of rent-free lands, held direct from Government by trustees or mutawallis<sup>4</sup>.

(v) Makhdūm Shāh Mahmūd Ghaznawī :-

Dr. Enamul Haq relates a tradition<sup>5</sup> according to which

1. J.A.S.E. 1904, Part I, No. 3, P. 270.
2. John A. Subhan: Op cit, P. 236.
3. This view has been accepted by Abdul Wali (See, J.A.S.E. 1904, Part I, No. 3, Pp. 27, 271.
4. J.A.S.E. 1904, Part I, No. 3, P. 267.
5. Bānge Sūfī Prabhāva, Calcutta, A.D. 1935, P. 129.

the dargāh of this saint exists in Mangalkot in Burdwan district. He is commonly known as Rāhā Pīr. He fought with king Vikram-Keśarī of Mangalkot and preached Islām.

Besides these, the dargāh of Sultān Bāyazīd of Bistām<sup>1</sup> and the fountain attached to the name of Shaykh Farīd, occupy important position in Chittagong. How these names came to be prevalent in Chittagong is not known. Dr. Enamul Haq<sup>2</sup> identifies the former with Shāh Sultān Māhīawār of Mahasthan (No. III above), and the latter with Shaykh Farīd al-Dīn Ganj-i-Shakar<sup>3</sup> (died A.D. 1269). He also suggests that Shaykh Farīd in his wandering, might have once come to Chittagong and Faridpur, which again, according to the same author was after the name of Shaykh Farīd<sup>4</sup>. In the Muslim coins, inscriptions and Bengali literature, Faridpur was for a long time known as Fathābād<sup>5</sup>, a name given to it by the Muslims after its conquest by Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Shāh. Even if Faridpur or Shaykh Farīd's fountain in Chittagong were named after Shaykh Farīd, the visit of the saint was not necessary, his disciples might have given the name as well.

- 
1. For details on this saint see, Tadhkirat al-Awliyā' of Farīd al-Dīn 'Attār, edited by R.A. Nicholson, London, 1905, Vol. I, Pp. 144 ff. The saint did not seem to have come to Bengal.
  2. Bāngē Sūfī Prabhāva, Calcutta, 1935, Pp. 147-48.
  3. Ibid, P. 148.
  4. Ibid, P. 149.
  5. "Mint-towns in Medināval Bengal", by Mir Jahan in Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, third session, Dacca, 1953. Blochmann's contribution in J.A.S.B. 1873. Vijaya Gupta: Padma Purāna, edited by B.K. Bhattacharjee, Bānī Niketan, Barisal, P. 2.

(b) Sūfīs of the early Muslim period :-

Names of Sūfīs of this category are available from comparatively reliable sources like inscriptions and biographical works. Even then, our sources are meagre and knowledge scanty. But as far as can be gathered, they exerted great influence in the spread of Islām; some of them even interfered in the politics of the country. The Sultāns looked upon them with esteem and respect; they visited the shrines, built Khānqahs, tombs and mosques in their honour. Some of them even granted lands for the maintenance of their shrines.

(i) Makhdūm Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrizī<sup>1</sup> :-

Among the saints of this category, Makhdūm Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrizī seems to be the first to come to Bengal. 'Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī, in his Mirāt al-Asrār<sup>2</sup> calls him Abū al-Qāsim Makhdūm Shaykh Jalāl Tabrizī. He was born in Tabriz in Persia and was the disciple first of Shaykh Abū Saīd Tabrizī and then after his death, of Shaykh Shahāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī<sup>3</sup>. Shaykh 'Abd al-Haq Dehlawī has given an example of his extreme devotion to his teacher Shahāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī. Shahāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī often used to make pilgrimage to the holy city of Makkah and Shaykh Jalāl Tabrizī used to

- 
1. Details about him will be obtained from :-  
(a) Āyn-i-Akbarī, Vol. II, P. 406; (b) Akhhār al-Akhhār, P. 44; (c) Khazīnat al-Asfiyā, Vol. I, Pp. 278 ff. (d) Khurshīd-i-Jahān Numā of Ilāhī Bakhsh in J.A.S.B. 1895. There were three Sūfīs in Bengal with the name of Jalāl. For other two see later, Pp.125 ff; 152 ff.
  2. 'Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī: Mirāt al-Asrār, Dacca University manuscript No. 16 A.R./143, Folio 19.
  3. Akhhār al-Akhhār, P. 44. Āyn-i-Akbarī, Vol. III, P. 406. Khazīnat al-Asfiyā, Vol. I, P. 278.

follow him. As Shaykh Shahāb al-Dīn was ill, he could not take cold food. Shaykh Jalāl Tabrizī used to put a stove on his head, so that he could provide his teacher with hot food whenever he wanted<sup>1</sup>. When Shaykh Jalāl Tabrizī reached Dehlī, he was received by Sultān Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish (A.D.1210-1236) and the Shaykh al-Islām Nizām al-Dīn Sughrā<sup>2</sup>. The Sultān ordered that arrangement be made for his stay near the palace. At this the Shaykh al-Islām grew jealous, and brought a few charges against him, the most serious one is that of incontinence with a disreputable woman<sup>3</sup>. But he was on good terms with Khwājah Qutb al-Dīn Bakhtiyār Kākī and Shaykh Bahā'al-Dīn Zakariyā<sup>4</sup>. Ultimately the falsehood of the charge was proved<sup>5</sup>. But Shaykh Jalāl Tabrizī proceeded towards Bengal<sup>6</sup>.

The Spiritual exploit of the saint in Bengal has been the subject of Sekh Subhodaya<sup>7</sup>, a late work attributed to Halāyudha Mīra, a courtier of King Lakshmana Sena (died sometime after A.D. 1205)<sup>8</sup>, the last king of the Sena dynasty.

---

1. Akhhār al-Akhhār, P. 44; Khazīnat al-Asfiyā', Vol. I, P.478.

2. Khazīnat al-Asfiyā', Vol. I, P. 289.

3. Akhhār al-Akhhār, Pp. 44-45.

Khazīnat al-Asfiyā', Vol. I, Pp. 279 ff.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Edited by Sukumar Sen, Calcutta, A.D. 1927. Regarding the authenticity of the book see, Memoirs, Pp. 105-106.

8. History of Bengal, Vol. I, Dacca University, 1943, P. 225.



According to Scholars the book is spurious, "prepared to establish a right to the Bāis Hazārī estates during the preparation of Todar Mal's rent-roll in Akbar's time"<sup>1</sup>. According to this book, the saint came to Bengal before Muḥammad Bakhtyār's conquest, and foretold the impending Turkish attack on Lakshmana Sena's Kingdom<sup>2</sup>. It relates that he was born at Etawah (in modern U.P. in India), his father's name was Kāfūr and he received education with the help of one merchant named Ramadān Khān and left home at the complicity of that merchant. He came to Bengal in black robe, with a turban on head, a bowl and an asā (Stick) in hand. On reaching Bengal he built a Khānqah, where he used to feed thousands of poor, destitutes and travellers<sup>3</sup>. A number of miracles are ascribed to him. According to Sekh Subhodaya, one night while the Shaykh was living in a forest, three tigers came, saluted him and went away<sup>4</sup>. According to Akhhār al-Akhhār, he converted at a look, a Hindu milk-man of Badāyūn<sup>5</sup>. Seeing his miraculous activities, the king (Lakshmana Sena) built a dargāh and a mosque and made liberal grant of land for their maintenance<sup>6</sup>.

The stories in Sekh Subhodaya are fictitious. This strengthens the view that the book is spurious. In the first

---

1. Memoirs, Pp. 105-106.
2. Sekh Subhodaya, edited by Sukumar Sen, Calcutta, 1927, P. 7.
3. Ibid, P. 91.
4. Ibid. P. 11.
5. Akhhār al-Akhhār, Pp. 44-45.
6. Sekh Subhodaya edited by Sukumar Sen, Calcutta, 1927, Pp. 11 & 98-113.

According to Scholars the book is spurious, "prepared to establish a right to the Bāis Hazārī estates during the preparation of Todar Mal's rent-roll in Akbar's time"<sup>1</sup>. According to this book, the saint came to Bengal before Muḥammad Bakhtyar's conquest, and foretold the impending Turkish attack on Lakshmana Sena's Kingdom<sup>2</sup>. It relates that he was born at Etawah (in modern U.P. in India), his father's name was Kāfūr and he received education with the help of one merchant named Ramadān Khān and left home at the complicity of that merchant. He came to Bengal in black robe, with a turban on head, a bowl and an asa (Stick) in hand. On reaching Bengal he built a Khāngah, where he used to feed thousands of poor, destitutes and travellers<sup>3</sup>. A number of miracles are ascribed to him. According to Sekh Subhodaya, one night while the Shaykh was living in a forest, three tigers came, saluted him and went away<sup>4</sup>. According to Akhbār al-Akhyār, he converted at a look, a Hindu milk-man of Badāyūn<sup>5</sup>. Seeing his miraculous activities, the king (Lakshmana Sena) built a dargāh and a mosque and made liberal grant of land for their maintenance<sup>6</sup>.

The stories in Sekh Subhodaya are fictitious. This strengthens the view that the book is spurious. In the first

---

1. Memoirs, Pp. 105-106.

2. Sekh Subhodaya, edited by Sukumar Sen, Calcutta, 1927, P. 7.

3. Ibid, P. 91.

4. Ibid. P. 11.

5. Akhbār al-Akhyār, Pp. 44-45.

6. Sekh Subhodaya edited by Sukumar Sen, Calcutta, 1927, Pp. 11 & 98-113.

place, Shaykh Jalāl Tabrizī was not born in Etawah, rather he was born in Tabriz in Persia<sup>1</sup>. Secondly he could not have come to Bengal before Muhammad Bakhtyār's conquest. According to 'Abd al-Haq Dehlawī who derived his materials from earlier works like Fawā'id al-Fawād of Sultān al-Mashā'ikh Nizām al-Dīn Awliyā, he came to Dehlī, when Sultān Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish was on the throne<sup>2</sup>. So he could not have come to Dehlī before A.D. 1210 when Sultān Iltutmish ascended the throne, not to speak of coming to Bengal before that date (Lakshmana Sena died in A.D. 1206).

In Pandwah, there is a set of buildings which go by the name of Bari Dargah or Shrine of Shāh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrizī<sup>3</sup>. These buildings are, (a) one Jami' masjid, (b) two Chillākhānahs, (c) one Tannūr Khānah (kitchen), (d) one bhāndār khānah (store house), (e) Lakshmana Sena dālān (Lakshman Sena's building), (f) Hājī Ibrāhīm's tomb and (g) Salāmi darwāzah (entrance gate). The original shrine was built by Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī Shāh (A.H. 742-43/1341-42) at the order of the saint in dream<sup>4</sup>. The original mosque was also probably built by him, which was repaired by Shāh Nīmat Allāh in 1076/A.D. 1664<sup>5</sup>. The Bhāndār Khānah was erected

- 
1. Besides the Akhbār al-Akhyār referring him as al-Tabrizī (See Akhbār al-Akhyār, P. 44) an inscription categorically calls him جلال الدين شه تبريزي مولد (See Memoirs, P. 102).
  2. Akhbār al-Akhyār, Pp. 44 ff.  
Khazinat al-Asfiyā, Vol. I, Pp. 278 ff.
  3. For details see, (a) Khurshid-i-Jahān Numā of Ilāhī Bakhsh in J.A.S.B. 1895, Pp. 200-202, (b) Memoirs, Pp. 97-106.
  4. Riyād, Pp. 94-95.
  5. Memoirs, P. 100.  
See also J.A.S.B. 1895, P. 201.

by one Chānd Khān in 1084/A.D. 1673<sup>1</sup>. The inscription attached to the Lakshmana Sena Dālān shows that the astānah of Shaykh Jalāl Tabrizī was repaired by one Muhammad 'Alī of Burji in 1134/A.D. 1722<sup>2</sup>. The inscription in Tannūr Khānah shows that it was built by one Sa'ād Allāh in 1093/A.D. 1682<sup>3</sup>. The endowment to the shrine of the saint is known as Bāis Hazārī (containing twenty two thousand bighās of land)<sup>4</sup>.

There is another chillākhānah at a place called Deotala, which was given the name of Tabrizābād after the name of the saint. Four inscriptions, referring to Tabrizābād have so far been discovered. They are detailed below :-

- (a) Inscription of Sulṭān Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh<sup>5</sup>, dated 868/A.D. 1464. It records the erection of a Jami mosque in Tabrizābād by one Ulugh Murābit Khān;
- (b) a second inscription of the same Sulṭān<sup>6</sup>. The date is broken. It records the erection of a mosque "in the blessed town of Tabrizābād, generally known as Deotala";

---

1. For inscription see, Memoirs, P. 102.

2. Ibid, P. 103; J.A.S.B. 1895, P. 201.

3. Memoirs, P. 104.

4. Ibid, P. 106.

5. Ibid, P. 169; J.A.S.B. 1874, P. 296. Blochmann has wrongly read Tirūābād.

6. J.A.S.B. 1874. فی القصبة المباركة تبرزآباد دیولا

- (c) one inscription of Sultān Nāsir al-Dīn Nuṣrat Shāh<sup>1</sup> dated 934/A.D. 1527. It records the erection of a mosque by one Shir Khān, "in the town of Shaykh Jalāl Muhammad Tabrizī";
- (d) an inscription of Sulaymān Karrānī<sup>2</sup>, dated 978/A.D. 1571. It records the erection of a mosque "in the blessed town of Tabrizābād, known as Deotala".

The above discussion brings out the following important points. The saint was born at Tabriz and his name was Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrizī. His original name might have been Abū al-Qāsim, as found in Mirāt al-Asrār. From the names of his contemporary saints, Qaṭb al-Dīn Bakhtiyār Kākī, Bahā' al-Dīn Zakariya, Shaykh al-Islām Nizām al-Dīn Sughra under Sultān Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish, it may be concluded that the saint lived towards the later part of the 12th and the earlier part of the 13th centuries A.D. The evidence of Sekh Subhodaya that he came to Bengal in the reign of Lakshmana Sena cannot be accepted, because he came to Delhi, not to speak of Bengal, sometimes after A.D. 1210 when Sultān Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish ascended the throne.

The saint exerted a great influence in Bengal, attracting a large number of people around him. Two places in Bengal that received prominence by his presence are Pandwah and Deotala, the latter received the name of Tabrizābād after

---

1. Memoirs, P. 171. [في البلاد شيخ] في البلاد شيخ جلال محمد تبريزي  
is a mistake for [في بلاد الشيخ] (See, Ibid, P. 171, note).

2. Ibid, P. 170. في القصة المباركة "تبريز اباد عرف ديوتالا"

his name. The construction of Tannūr Khānah, Bhāndār Khānah referred to earlier, denotes that the Khānah of the saint made arrangements for feeding the people that came to the dargāh.

The date and place of death of the saint is a matter of controversy. According to Akhbār al-Akhvār<sup>1</sup> he is lying buried in Bengal, but according to Abū al-Faḍl, he died in Deo Mahal<sup>2</sup>, identified with Maldive islands<sup>3</sup>. According to Khazīnat al-Asfiyā' he died in 642/A.D. 1244<sup>4</sup>, while according to Tadhkirat-i-Awliyā'-i-Hind, an Urdu biography of the saints, he died in 622/A.D. 1225<sup>5</sup>.

- 
1. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 46.
  2. Āyn-i-Akbarī, Vol. II, P. 406.
  3. J.A.S.B. 1895, Pp. 230 ff; 1873, P. 260.
  4. Khazīnat al-Asfiyā', Vol. I, P. 283. J.A.S.B. 1873, P.260. John A. Subhan; Op cit, P. 331.
  5. Mirzā Muḥammad Akhtar Dehlawī: Tadhkirah-i-Awliyā'-i-Hind, Part I, P. 56.  
Enamul Haq: Bāṅge Sūfī Prabhāva, Calcutta, 1935, P. 96.  
H. Beveridge (See, J.A.S.B. 1895, Pp. 230 ff.) does not accept either of these dates. He is of the opinion that Shaykh Jalāl Tabrizī lived upto the middle of the 14th century A.D. and Sultān 'Alā al-Dīn 'Alī Shāh had an interview with the saint; that this saint and the one named Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrizī by Ibn Battūṭah with whom he (Ibn Battūṭah) met, were one and the same person and further that he was contemporary of Shaykh Nizām al-Dīn Awliyā' (died A.D. 1325). In forwarding this view, Beveridge has been misled by two statements - one of Ibn Battūṭah and the other of the Khādims of the saint's dargāh at Pandwah. According to the former, he met Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrizī in Kamrup (See, Ibn Battūṭah, Vol. IV, P. 215) and according to the latter the saint lived in Pandwah till 728/A.D.1337 (See, J.A.S.B. 1895, P. 203). Beveridge was so much influenced by these two statements that he suggests that the words بعالم رویا of the Riyād (P. 94, in which the receipt of the order of the Shaykh by Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī Shāh to erect the shrine has been discussed) mean face to face interview with the saint and not in dream.

(11) Makhdūm al-Mulk Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahvā Manerī:-

The celebrated saint of Bihar Makhdūm al-Mulk Shaykh

Beveridge begins with a note, "Ibn Batuta's book is unfortunately confused, and wanting in precision", but his whole argument is based on the testimony of Ibn Battūtah, while the corroboration has been found in the Pandwah tradition. At the present stage of our knowledge, we can say with certainty that Shaykh Jalāl Tabrizī of Pandwah and Shaykh Jalāl with whom Ibn Battūtah met in Kamrup and whom he wrongly calls Tabrizī were two different persons. The inscriptions cited above clearly mention that Shaykh Jalāl of Pandwah was Tabrizī, while the inscriptions discovered from Sylhet (See, J.A.S.B. 1873, P. 293) mention that Shaykh Jalāl of Sylhet was Kunyāyī. Some of these inscriptions were issued within an interval by a few years (Cf. J.A.S.B. 1873, P. 293 and Memoirs, P. 191 for inscriptions of 'Alā al-Dīn Husayn Shāh and Nasrat Shāh). If they were not two different persons, the inscriptions issued within an interval of only twenty two years would not have used two different epithets to their names. Secondly, we know that Shaykh Jalāl Tabrizī was a disciple of Shaykh Abū Saīd Tabrizī and Shaykh Shahāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī and that he came to Dehli during the reign of Sultān Iltutmish when Shaykh Nizām al-Dīn Ṣughrā was the Shaykh al-Islām. How could he then live upto A.D. 1346 when Ibn Battūtah visited Bengal? Even if the testimony of Ibn Battūtah that he lived for one hundred and fifty years is accepted, the identification is impossible. Because if he died in A.D. 1347 after a life of 150 years, his birth falls in A.D. 1197 which means that he was a mere boy when he came to Dehli, though the sources at our disposal assert that he already served two of his teachers, and was a friend of two other great Sufis, Qutb al-Dīn Bakhtiyār Kākī and Bahā' al-Dīn Zakariyā. Therefore Ibn Battūtah's reference to Shaykh Jalāl Tabrizī in Kamrup is a mistake for Shaykh Jalāl Kunyāyī, as he committed in many other cases in connection with Bengal. (Cf. Indian Historical Quarterly, 1942, Pp. 65-70). Thirdly, there is no justification in discarding the evidences of Abū al-Faḍl and Ferishtā, simply on the ground that they are not corroborated by the Pandwah tradition and the doubtful testimony of Ibn Battūtah. Beveridge himself admits that Abū al-Faḍl and Ferishtā make him a contemporary of Qutb al-Dīn Bakhtiyār Kākī and Bahā' al-Dīn Zakariyā which puts his date to early 7th century of the Hijra, but expresses doubt on the ground that Abū al-Faḍl "puts him in his list not only after Bahauddin, but after his son and grandson and also after Nizamuddin Awliya, who died in 725 A.H."

Sharf al-Dīn son of Shaykh Yahyā came to Sunārgāwn<sup>1</sup> with his teacher Mawlānā Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah at the prime of his youth<sup>2</sup> and stayed there upto the age of thirty. Here he passed his whole academic career and "evinced great interest in his studies and became proficient in all the branches of Muslim learning viz. the commentary on the Qur'ān, Tradition, Jurisprudence, Theology, Logic, Philosophy, Mathematics etc. and his works are full of eloquent suggestions on these points"<sup>3</sup>. Sharf al-Dīn also turned his attention towards Sūfīsm. He spent much of his time in meditation and spiritual exercises<sup>4</sup>.

---

If Beveridge had examined Āyn-i-Akbarī carefully, he would have found that Qādī Hamīd al-Dīn Nagorī, who died in 644/A.D. 1246 (according to Akhbār al-Akhvār A.H. 605, see, P. 38) has been enlisted by Abū al-Faḍl after those of Bahā' al-Dīn's son and grandson and of Nizām al-Dīn Awliyā. There is no reason to think that Abū al-Faḍl wrote in chronological order. Except Ibn Battūṭah, there is no other authority which refers to the presence of Shaykh Jalāl Tabrizī in Kamrup. The acceptance of Pandwah tradition in preference to Abū al-Faḍl and the change of meaning of the text (as in the case of عالم رویا of the Riyād, pointed out earlier) to fit in with later evidences are simple questions of ingenuity.

1. For details on this saint see, (a) ʿAbd al-Rahmān Chishtī: Mirāt al-Asrār, ʿAliyah Madrasah MS. Folio Nos. 199 ff. (b) Akhbār al-Akhvār, Pp. 117 ff. (c) Calcutta Review, 1939, Pp. 195 ff. (d) Muhammad Ishāq: India's contribution to the study of Hadīth Literature, Dacca University, 1955, Pp. 66 ff. (e) Islamic Culture, Vol. XXVII, No. 1, Pp. 8 ff.
2. For Mawlānā Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah and the circumstances that led him to come to Bengal, See, SUPRA, Pp. 85-90.
3. Calcutta Review, 1939, P. 197.
4. Ibid.



Shaykh Sharf al-Din married the daughter of his teacher<sup>1</sup> and had three sons by his wife. After completing his studies, he returned to his native place in 690/A.D. 1291 or the following year<sup>2</sup>. Bengal thus lost the services of a great saint who in his later life earned great fame in the world of the Sūfis. But the ground for his greatness was prepared in Bengal.

The following anecdote points out the Shaykh's thirst for knowledge. While in Sunārgāwn, he was so much absorbed in studies that he paid no heed to the letters he received from home. He put the letters in a bag and forgot all about them. After completing his educational career he opened the letters in which he found one containing the news of his father's death<sup>3</sup>.

(iii) Shaykh (Shah) Jalāl of Sylhet :-

This saint must be distinguished from Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrizī discussed before. But unfortunately in the local traditions, even in the account of Ibn Baṭṭūṭah and in his biography, Suhayl-i-Yaman, written in the last century, no proper distinction has been made between the two. On the evidence of inscriptions, we are justified in talking of Shaykh Jalal al-Din Tabrizi on the one hand and Shaykh al-Mashā'ikh Makhdum Shaykh Jalal Mujarrad bin Muḥammad on the

---

1. Calcutta Review, 1939, P. 197. Some say that he married a slave-girl, (See, Ibid, P. 197, note 2.)

2. Ibid, P. 198.

3. Ibid, P. 197.

other<sup>1</sup>. This last saint is said to be Kuqyāyī i.e. hailing from Kuqyā in Turkey in another inscription.<sup>2</sup> Fortunately this epigraphical evidence is corroborated by the account of the saint given in Gulzār-i-Abrār of A.D. 1613, which is based on an earlier account of Shaykh 'Alī Sher's Sharh-i-Nuzhat al-Arwāh.<sup>3</sup> "He was a Turkistan born Bengali. He was a khalifah of Sultān Sayyid Ahmed Yesvī. It is said that one day he represented to his bright-souled pir that his ambition was that just as with the guidance of the master he had achieved a certain amount of success in the Higher (spiritual) ijhad, similarly with the help of his object-fulfilling courage he should achieve the desire of his heart in the Lesser (material) ijhad, and wherever there may be a Dar-ul-Harb, in attempting its conquest he may attain the high rank of a ghazi or a shahid. The revered pir accepted his request and sent 700 of his senior fortunate disciples (May they be honoured!) along with him. Wherever they had a fight with the enemies, they unfurled the banner of victory. Even more remarkable was the fact that in these far-flung campaigns they had no means of subsistence, except the booty, but they lived in splendour. Whenever any valley or cattle

---

1. Memoirs, P. 102. J.A.S.B. 1922, P. 413, Plate IX. Dacca Review, August, 1913, P. 154.

2. J.A.S.B. 1873, Pp. 293-94. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Vol. II, 1957, P. 207.

3. Ivanow: Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta. Asiatic Society work No. 240, Pp. 96-108. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Vol. II, 1957, P. 64.

were acquired, they were entrusted to one of the accompanying saints and he was charged with the responsibility of propagation and teaching of Islam. In short, he (Shaikh Jalāluddīn) reached Sirhat (Sylhet), one of the areas of the province of Bengal, along with 313 persons. Raja Gaur Govind who was the master of one lakh foot soldiers and many thousand horsemen, was the ruler of that place. He was very powerful as compared with this small group, which in comparison with his huge army was not even like salt in bread. When, however, the battle was joined, the manifestation of the verse (With the grace of God the few attained victory over the many) became visible and the idolater took to flight, taking with him only his life to Hell. All the region fell into the hands of the conquerors of the spiritual and the material worlds. Shaikh Mujarrad, making a portion for everybody, made it their allowance and permitted them to get married. In that distribution the town fell to the share of Shaikh Nūrul Hudā Abul Karāmat Saīdī Husainī. He became a householder, begot children and Shaikh 'Alī Sher, who was one of his descendants, has narrated this account in the introduction of his commentary on Nazhatul Arwah.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ikram<sup>2</sup> points out that "Shaikh Jalāl was not a native of Yemen and did not belong to Suhrawardī order. His Spiritual guide, Sayyid Ahmed Yesvī was an important saint of the order of the Khwājās of Turkistan (which later developed into the Naqshbandī order)

---

1. Gulzār-i-Abrār, quoted and translated in Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Vol. II, 1957, P. 66.

2. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Vol. II, 1957, P. 68.

and finds prominent mention in Rashhat of Mulla Husain Waiz Kashifi. He was a contemporary of Hadrat 'Azizan Khwaja 'Ali Ramtini, who died in 715 A.H. (1315-6 A.D.). Kashifi's account of Khwaja 'Ali Ramtini shows that he lived in a period of great confusion and disorder - presumably owing to the Mongol invasion - and Shaikh Jalal's urge for ijhad may very well have been a reaction against those conditions and Mongol aggression in Muslim lands".

It is difficult to decide which of the Shaykhs Ibn Battutah met. As we have seen<sup>1</sup> the earlier one i.e. Shaykh Jalal al-Din Tabrizi died in the year 1225; so he could not have met him. On the other hand this saint from Sylhet is Kunyayī and not Tabrizi. It seems therefore that there is some confusion in the account given by Ibn Battutah. He also attributes in his book several miracles to the saint that he met<sup>2</sup>. The Dargah of the Shaykh in Sylhet is daily visited by a large number of people even to-day. People of East Bengal remember him in the popular ballads<sup>3</sup>.

(iv) Shaykh Akhi Siraj al-Din Uthman :-

He was one of the famous Khalifahs of Shaykh Nizam al-Din Awliya of Dehli<sup>4</sup>. Akhi Siraj, in his boyhood came

---

1. See, Supra, P. 122.

2. Ibn Battutah, Vol. IV, Pp. 217 ff.

3. J.A.S.B. 1873, Pp. 280-281. Dacca Review, 1913-14, P. 142. Enamul Haq: Bangge Sufi Prabhava, Calcutta, A.D. 1935, P. 98.

4. Akhbar al-Akhbar, P. 86.

to Shaykh Nizām al-Dīn, who handed him over to Fakhr al-Dīn Zarrādī to teach<sup>1</sup>. The teacher gave him the title of ‘Uthmān<sup>2</sup>. He read Kāfiyah, Mufussal, Qudūrī and Majma‘ al Bahrayn under Mawlānā Rukn al-Dīn<sup>3</sup>. Shaykh Nizām al-Dīn Awliyā used to call him Āina‘-i-Hindūstān (Mirror of Hindūstān), and asked him to preach Islām in Bengal<sup>4</sup>. After the death of his teacher he came to Bengal and began preaching in Gaur and Pandwah. He had a number of disciples in Gaur and Pandwah, chief among whom was Shaykh ‘Alā‘al-Haq<sup>5</sup>.

It is said that he buried the robes, that he received from his teacher, at a place in Gaur, and ordered his disciples to bury him near the grave of his robes<sup>6</sup>. The Shaykh died in Gaur, in A.H. 758/A.D. 1357<sup>7</sup>. His tomb is lying at the north-west corner of the Sāgar dighī in Gaur<sup>8</sup>. The following inscriptions recording the erection of a gateway to his tomb have so far been discovered :-

(a) Inscription of Sultān ‘Alā‘al-Dīn Husayn Shāh dated, 916/A.D. 1510<sup>9</sup> -

- 
1. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 87.
  2. Ibid, P. 87.
  3. Ibid.
  4. Ibid.
  5. Ibid; Pp. 87 & 143.
  6. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 87.
  7. Ibid; Khazīnat al-Asfiyā, Vol. I, P. 358.
  8. Memoirs, P. 90.
  9. Memoirs, P. 90.

(b) Inscription of Sultān Nāsir al-Dīn Nuṣrat Shāh dated 931/A.D. 1524-25<sup>1</sup>.

It is said that Shaykh Akhī Sirāj al-Dīn originally came from Badāyūn<sup>2</sup>, but he had long connections with Bengal, because, his mother used to live here. Before he was finally ordered to start for Bengal for preaching Islām, he is said to have come here to see his mother<sup>3</sup>.

The anniversary of the death of the Saint is celebrated annually on 'Īd al-Fitr day. The heraldic symbol (ihāndā) and the Pāñiā (reproduction of the hand) of Shaykh Nūr Qutb Ālam are sent to his dargāh from Pandwah as a mark of respect to the saint on the occasion of his death anniversary<sup>4</sup>.

(v) Makhdūm Jahāniyān Jahāngasht :-

A little to the south of the tomb of Shaykh Akhī Sirāj al-Dīn, there is a mosque, called Jhan Jhaniyā Masjid, by the local people. 'Abid 'Alī Khān takes the name to be a corruption of Jahāniyān and is of the opinion that the mosque was named after Makhdūm Jahāniyān Jahāngasht<sup>5</sup>. An inscription attached to the gateway records the erection of the mosque by Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Mahmūd Shāh (A.D. 1533-38)<sup>6</sup>. Two other relics

---

1. Memoirs, P. 91.

2. Khazīnat al-Asfiyā, Vol. I, Pp. 357-358; Memoirs, P. 91.

3. Akhbār al-Akhyār, P. 86; Memoirs, P. 91.

4. Memoirs, P. 91.

5. Ibid, P. 92.

6. Ibid, P. 93.

indicate the presence of this saint in Bengal - Jhāndā (heraldic device mounted on a staff) and the Qadam Rasūl (the stone representation of the foot-print of the Prophet). The first is preserved in the shrine of Shāh Jalāl Tabrizī at Pandwah and the second is preserved in the famous Qadam Rasūl building at Gaur<sup>1</sup>.

His original name was Mīr Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn. He was given the title of Jahāniyān Jahāngasht and the word 'Bukhārī' from the name of his birth place was appended after his name. He was the grandson of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Surkhpush and son of Sayyid Ahmad Kabīr<sup>2</sup>. It is said that he travelled round the world several times and on one such occasion he came to Pandwah<sup>3</sup>. He is said to have joined the funeral ceremony of Sayyid 'Alā'al-Haq and actually led the prayer<sup>4</sup>. Many Muslims including royal officials became his disciples<sup>5</sup>. He died in A.D. 1383 and is now lying buried at Uchh<sup>6</sup>.

(vi) Shaykh Rājā Bivābānī :-

According to the Riyād<sup>7</sup>, Sultān Shams al-Dīn Ilyās

- 
1. Memoirs, P.64.
  2. John A. Subhan; Sufism, its saints and shrines, Lucknow, 1938, P. 236-37. An account of this saint is available in Akhbār al-Akhvār.
  3. John A. Subhan; Op cit, P. 237.
  4. Memoirs, P. 109. According to Akhbār al-Akhvār (P. 143) 'Alā'al-Haq died in A.H. 800 and Makhdūm Jahāniyān died in A.H. 785 i.e. Makhdūm Jahāniyān predeceased 'Alā'al-Haq.
  5. Enamul Haq; Baṅge Sūfī Prabhāva, Calcutta, 1935, P. 97.
  6. John A. Subhan; Op cit, P. 238; H.E. Stapleton in Memoirs, P. 109 note.
  7. Riyād, P. 97.

Shāh (A.D. 1342-57), the founder of the Ilyās Shāhī dynasty in Bengal attended the funeral of this saint in cognito, at a time when he was besieged in the Ikdālah fort<sup>1</sup>, by Sultān Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq of Dehli.

(vii) Shaykh 'Alā' al-Ḥaq<sup>2</sup> :-

Shaykh 'Alā' al-Ḥaq was the son of Shaykh Asād of Lahore. He claimed to be a Qurayshī Hāshimī and traced his descent from Khālid bin al-Walīd<sup>3</sup>. He was the spiritual disciple of Shaykh Akhī Sirāj al-Dīn 'Uthmān<sup>4</sup>. 'Alā' al-Ḥaq was very much proud of his high ancestry. Shaykh Akhī, when he received order from his teacher Nizām al-Dīn Awliyā, to go to Bengal, represented that he was no match for 'Alā' al-Ḥaq. Nizām al-Dīn Awliyā replied that 'Alā' would in time become his (Shaykh Akhī's) pupil. 'Alā' al-Ḥaq is said to have taken the title of Ganī-i-Nabat (Store of refined sugar) for which Nizām al-Dīn Awliyā cursed him, "May God strike him dumb". 'Alā' al-Ḥaq could free himself from the curse only after he became the humble pupil of Akhī<sup>5</sup>. Shaykh Akhī Sirāj al-Dīn used to travel on horse-back; 'Alā' al-Ḥaq followed him with a hot pot on his head, which made him bald. In order to humiliate 'Alā' al-Ḥaq, before his relatives who were occupying high government posts,

- 
1. For identification of Ikdālah fort, See, J.A.S.B. 1922 and History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 107, note 1.
  2. An account of Shaykh 'Alā' al-Ḥaq will be found in (a) Akhbār al-Akhyār, (b) 'Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī: Mirāt al-Asrār, 'Aliyah Madrasah MS. (c) Khazīnat al-Asfiyā, Vol. I, (d) Khurshīd-i-Jahān Numā in J.A.S.B. 1895, Pp. 206 ff. (e) J.A.S.B. 1873, Pp. 261-62, (f) Memoirs, Pp. 108 ff.
  3. Khazīnat al-Asfiyā, Vol. I, P. 368.
  4. Akhbār al-Akhyār, P. 143; Khazīnat al-Asfiyā, Vol. I, P. 368.
  5. Khazīnat al-Asfiyā, Vol. I, Pp. 368-69.



Shaykh Akhī used to take him in this condition to the houses of his relatives<sup>1</sup>.

One of the miracles of Shaykh 'Alā' al-Haq is that he punished two faqīrs, who visited him and vexed him with unbecoming words. One was killed by an ox, another got an attack of orchitis, according to words uttered by the saint<sup>2</sup>. It is said that he spent a large sum of money in feeding the pupils, beggars and wanderers. The Sultān grew jealous because the state treasury also could not have borne such a huge expenditure. He ordered the saint to leave the capital and to go to Sunārgāwn. In Sunārgāwn, the saint spent twice the amount. Nobody knew wherefrom this huge sum came, his possession included only two gardens, which also later on he gave to a beggar<sup>3</sup>.

He is lying buried at Chhotī Dargāh in Pandwah, by the side of his more illustrious son Nūr Quṭb 'Ālam. According to Akhbār al-Akhvār, he died in A.H. 800/A.D. 1398<sup>4</sup>, while according to a book in the possession of the Khādims of the shrine, he died in 786/A.D. 1384<sup>5</sup>.

Sayyid 'Alā' al-Haq left a large number of his disciples, of whom the most illustrious are, (a) his own son Shaykh Nūr Quṭb 'Ālam and (b) Mīr Sayyid Ashraf Jahāngīr Simnānī.

---

1. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 143.

2. Ibid.

3. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 143; Khasīnat al-Asfiyā', Vol. I, Pp. 368-69.

4. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 143.

5. Memoirs, P. 109. Khurshīd-i-Jahān Numā' in J.A.S.B. 1895, Pp. 206-7.

(viii) Shaykh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam<sup>1</sup> :-

He was the son and spiritual successor of Shaykh 'Alā' al-Ḥaḡ<sup>2</sup>. According to the Riyād, he was a fellow student of Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Azam Shāh and received education from Qādī Ḥamīd al-Dīn Nagorī<sup>3</sup>.

Shaykh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam assumed spiritual leadership at a time, when Bengal was passing through a serious political disturbance. One Hindu noble, Kāns (Gaṇeśa) usurped the power and perpetrated oppression on the Muslims including the Muslim Shaykhs and divines. The situation came to such a point that the Shaykh was compelled to write a letter to Sultān Ibrāhīm Sharqī of Jawnpūr imploring his assistance<sup>4</sup>. The Sultān (Ibrāhīm Sharqī) was also encouraged to invade Bengal and to punish Gaṇeśa, by Mīr Sayyid Ashraf Jahāngīr Simnānī, a disciple of Sayyid 'Alā' al-Ḥaḡ, who was then in Jawnpūr<sup>5</sup>. Sultān Ibrāhīm marched with a huge army and encamped at Sarai Fīrūzpūr. Rājā Kāns or Gaṇeśa became frightened, humbled himself before Shaykh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam, begged him to pardon his offences and to remove Sultān Ibrāhīm's domination over the country. The saint demanded that the Rājā, should turn a Muslim. The Raja<sup>6</sup> agreed but his wife forbade him. The Rājā

---

1. An account of Nūr Qutb 'Ālam will be found in (a) Āyn-i-Akbarī, Vol. II, (b) Akhbār al-Akhyār, (c) 'Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī: Mirāt al-Asrār, Aliyah Madrasah MS., (d) Khazīnat al-Asfiyā, (e) Khurshīd-i-Jahān Nūmā in J.A.S.B. 1895, (f) Riyād al-Salātīn, (g) Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua, and (h) J.A.S.B. 1873, P. 262.

2. Akhbār al-Akhyār, P. 152.

3. Riyād, P. 108.

4. Bengal: Past and Present, 1948, Pp. 32 ff. Riyād, P. 112.

5. Bengal: Past and Present, 1948, Pp. 32 ff.

then brought his son Jadū, then twelve years old. The saint converted the boy who was made the king with the title of Jalāl al-Dīn. The saint then requested Sultān Ibrāhīm to leave Bengal. An angry dispute followed in course of which the saint cursed both the Sultan and his Qādī. Sultān Ibrāhīm went back to Jawnpūr, but it is said that both the Sultān and the Qādī died the same year<sup>1</sup>. This description, however exaggerated it may be, shows that Shaykh Nūr Quṭb Ālam was busy not only with the spiritual exercises but that he also interfered in the politics of the country, especially when the interest of Islām and the Muslims was in jeopardy.

It has been pointed out earlier that the Shaykh received his spiritual training from his father. It is said that, in order to practise the virtue of humility, he used to do all sorts of lowly works, such as the washing of clothes of beggars and wanderers, carrying fuel and water, keeping water constantly hot for ablution, sweeping the cell of his father and cleaning the privies attached to the house<sup>2</sup>. He is said to have refused the invitation of his worldly brother Azam Khān who was a Wazīr, to accept an office in the court<sup>3</sup>.

He is lying buried at Chhotī Dargāh in Pandwah. The sources differ widely on the date of the saint's death. An

1. Riyād, Pp. 112-114.

2. Akhbār al-Akhvār, Pp. 152 ff.  
Khazīnat al-Asfiyā, Vol. I, Pp. 392 ff.

3. Memoirs, Pp. 106-7.

inscription of the time of Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd I (A.D. 1442-1459) records the death of a saint on Monday, 28th Dhīl-Hijja 863/A.D. 1459<sup>1</sup>. Āyn-i-Akbarī<sup>2</sup> puts the date 808/A.D. 1406, Akhbār al-Akhvār<sup>3</sup>, 813/A.D. 1410, Khazīnat al-Asfiyā', on the authority of Tadhkirat al-Aqtāb, 851/A.D. 1447<sup>4</sup>, while Mirāt al-Asrār<sup>and</sup> the book in possession of the Khādims of the shrine put the date 818/A.D. 1415<sup>5</sup>.

This last date is generally accepted today. The chronogram for this date is نور بنور شد (light went into light). But the wordings of the inscription of Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd Shāh I, referred to above, lead us to believe that the saint referred to in the inscription was no other than Shaykh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam. The inscription is as follows :- "Our revered Master, the teacher of Imāms, the Proof of the congregation, the sun of the Faith, the testimony of Islām and of the Muslims who bestowed advantage upon the poor and the indigent, the guide of saints and of such as wish to be guided, passed away from this transient world to the everlasting mansion on the 28th Dhīl-Hijja, a Monday of the year 863 (1459 A.D.) during the reign of the Sultān of Sultāns, the Protector of the countries of the Faithful, Nāṣir al-Duniyā wa al-Dīn Abū al-Muzaffar

1. Memoirs, P. 115, Plate VI.

2. Āyn-i-Akbarī, Vol. II, P. 412.

3. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 154.

4. Khazīnat al-Asfiyā', Vol. I, P. 392.

5. 'Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī: Mirāt al-Asrār, Āliyah Madrasah MS. Folio No. 198; J.A.S.B. 1895, P. 207; Memoirs, P. 111.

Maḥmūd Shāh, the Sultān"<sup>1</sup>. Ābid Āli Khān conjectures that this was applied to Shaykh Zāhid, the grandson and successor of Shaykh Nūr Qutb Ālam<sup>2</sup>. But they are applicable more to the high reputation of Shaykh Nūr Qutb Ālam rather than to the comparatively less renowned Shaykh Zāhid. Moreover Ābid Āli Khān himself says that the death of Shaykh Zāhid took place on the 17th Rabī' 1, 860/A.D. 1455<sup>3</sup>. The chronogram of his death is حب دنيا جيزه نراشت ("He had no love for the world"). The epithets applied to the saint in this inscription are comparable to those applied to Shaykh Nūr Qutb Ālam in an inscription of A.D. 1493. It says<sup>4</sup>, "In this Sūfī building the Tomb of the Pole of Poles was built, who was slain by the love of the All-giver, the Shaykh of Shaykhs, Ḥadrat Shaykh Nūr al-Ḥaq wa-al-Sharā wa-al-Dīn Sayyid Qutb Ālam - may Allāh purify his beloved heart and may Allāh illuminate his grave". The Mirāt al-Asrār says that both Jalāl al-Dīn

1. Memoirs, P. 115, Plate VI.  
 و انتقل محدومنا العلامة استاذ الائمة برهان الامة شمس الملة حجة الاسلام المسلمين  
 نافع الفقراء والمساكين مرشد الواصلين والمسترشدين من دار الفناء الى دار البقاء الثامن  
 والعشرين من ذى الحجة في يوم الاثنين وكان ذلك في السنة الثالث والسنتين وثمانمائة  
 في عهد السلطان السلاطين حافي بلاد اهل اسلام المسلمين ناصر الدنيا والدين ابو المظفر  
 محمود شاه سلطان -

2. Ibid, P. 115.

3. Memoirs, P. 118.

4. Ibid, P. 114. الروضة لعقبة الاقطاب قتل محمد وهاب بنى في البيت الصوفية  
 شيخ المشايخ حضرت شيخ نور الحق والشرع والدين سيد قطب عالم قدس سره العزيز ونور القبره -

The inscription was issued in the reign of Sultān Shams al-Dīn Muzaḥfar Shāh.

Muhammad (died 835/A.D. 1431) and his son and successor Shams al-Dīn Ahmad Shāh (835/1431 to 839/A.D. 1435) became disciples of Shaykh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam<sup>1</sup> though the author puts his death in 818/A.D. 1415. What has been discussed above, leads us to conclude that probably his death occurred not in A.D. 1415 but long after, may be in 863/A.D. 1459.

It has been pointed out earlier that 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh granted a number of villages for maintaining the alms-house attached to the dargāh of Shaykh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam<sup>2</sup>. The Sultān used to come every year from Ikdālah to Pandwah to visit the shrine of the saint<sup>3</sup>. Shāh Shujā' (Son of Mughal Emperor Shāh Jahān) made a fresh grant to Shaykh Kabīr in the year 1058/A.D. 1648<sup>4</sup>.

Shaykh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam had two sons, Shaykh Rifaq al-Dīn and Shaykh Anwar<sup>5</sup>. Both of them received their spiritual teaching from their father. The former was celebrated for his humility and used to say that he was of less account than a market-dog<sup>6</sup>. The latter died a martyr in Sunārgāwn in the hands of Rājā Gaṇeśa<sup>7</sup>. Another spiritual disciple of the Shaykh was Shaykh Husām al-Dīn Manikpūrī<sup>8</sup>.

- 
1. 'Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī: Mirāt al-Asrār, 'Āliyah Madrasah MS. Folio No. 184.
  2. Nizām al-Dīn Ahmad Bakhshī: Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī, Vol. III, Bibliotheca Indica, Pp. 270-71; Tārīkh-i-Ferīshṭa, Vol. II, Pp. 301-2.
  3. Ibid. According to 'Abid 'Alī Khān, (Memoirs, P. 113), 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh made a grant of forty seven villages.
  4. Memoirs, P. 113.
  5. Memoirs, P. 111; Khazīnat al-Asfiyā', Vol. I, P. 393.
  6. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 165, Khurshīd-i-Jahān Numā' in J.A.S.B. 1895, P. 208. Memoirs, P. 118.
  7. Ibid.
  8. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 176.

(ix) Mīr Sayyid Ashraf Jahāngīr Simnānī:-

It has been pointed out earlier that he was a disciple of Shaykh 'Alā' al-Ḥaq. He came to Bihar, just when the renowned saint Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yaḥyā Manerī had died in 782/A.D. 1380. Then he passed on to Bengal. He stayed there for six years under the celebrated Bengal saint Shaykh 'Alā' al-Ḥaq. Then he went back to Jawnpūr where he finally settled and laid the foundation of the famous Khāngah of Kachaucha Sharif<sup>1</sup>.

His love for the land of his spiritual teacher is known from his letter to Sultān Ibrāhīm Sharqī of Jawnpūr. This letter was written in reply to one written to him by the Sultān seeking his opinion on his intended invasion of Bengal at the instance of Shaykh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam. Among other things, he writes as follows :- "If the sons and descendants of these holy personages (earlier he gave a list of such holy personage<sup>2</sup>), and particularly the son and family members of Hazrat Qutub Alam, are rescued from the clutches of the black infidels with your aid and assistance and the courage and bravery of your troops it would be an excellent thing ..... I, the afflicted Darwash of the Alai order congratulate you on the firm resolve that you have made and I offer my prayer for the deliverance of Bengal from the hands of the infidels. I have already recited the Fatiha prayer to God to render justice. As your object and that of your nobles is to free the land of Bengal and to champion the cause of Islam, if

---

1. Akhbār al-Akhyār, P. 166. Bengal: Past and Present, 1948, Pp. 34-35.

2. Quoted elsewhere in this Chapter. See, Supra, P. 108.

God wills you will achieve your aims in the best manner possible ..... As the firm resolve and the sound judgment of the king are directed towards helping the cause and satisfying the heart's desire of the son of Hazrat Makhdum you should not neglect showing favour to that dear holy personage and you should never refrain from meeting him and fighting for his cause"<sup>1</sup>.

(x) Shaykh Badar al-Islām :-

He was a contemporary of Shaykh Mūr Qutb Ālam. It is said that one day he sat before Kāns or Rājā Gaṇeśa without saluting him. When he was asked the reason for this conduct, he gave an evasive reply. Another day, the Rājā sat in a low room having a narrow entrance door and summoned the Shaykh before him. The Shaykh could realise the purpose. He first put his foot inside the room and then entered<sup>into</sup>/it, without having had to bow his head. The Rājā got furious and had the Shaykh instantaneously put to death<sup>2</sup>. Mir Sayyid Ashraf Jahāngīr Simnānī<sup>3</sup> in his letter to Sultān Ibrāhīm Sharqī of Jawnpūr refers to two Shaykhs, Ḥadrat Bād Ālam and Badr Ālam Zāhidī. The latter has been identified by Hasan Askari<sup>4</sup> with Shaykh Badar al-Dīn Zāhidī, son of Khwājah Fakhr al-Dīn Zāhidī, who was a contemporary of Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī. The mausoleum of Shaykh Badar al-Dīn Zāhidī is at Bihar. Probably the former may be identified with Shaykh Badar al-Islām.

- 
1. Quoted by Syed Hasan Askari in Bengal: Past and Present, 1948, P. 36.
  2. Riyād, Pp. 110-11.
  3. Bengal: Past and Present, 1948, P. 36.
  4. Ibid, note 28.



(xi) Shaykh Husayn Dhukkarposh :-

From the Bayāz of Mullā Taqyyā<sup>1</sup>, we know that Shaykh Husayn Dhukkarposh was a Khalifah of Sayyid 'Alā' al-Haq. While Rājā Gaṇeśa was perpetrating oppression on the Muslims he also shared the same. His son was slain by Rājā Gaṇeśa<sup>2</sup>. Mīr Sayyid Ashraf Jahāngīr Simnānī gave him consolation in one of his letters. It reads as follows :- "Those who traverse the path of God have many calamities to suffer from. They have to undergo many trials and tribulations ..... It is hoped through the spiritual grace of the souls of Suharwardia and Ruhania saints of the past that in near future that kingdom of Islam will be freed from the hands of the luckless non-believers. The royal army is being sent from this side to render assistance and the result will soon become apparent. My Makhdum Zada (the son of my spiritual guide), "the blossoms of the garden of Alai and Khalidia house" may rest assured of the help of this Darwesh"<sup>3</sup>.

Shaykh Husayn Dhukkarposh (dust ridden) maintained his Khānqah at Purnea<sup>4</sup>. He was the son of Makhdūm Shāh Husayn and Bibī Kamāl, the female saint of Kako in the Gaya district. She was the daughter of Hadrat Sulaymān Langar-Zamīn and of Bibī Hadda, who was one of the four daughters of the famous Jethuli saint, Makhdūm Shāhāb al-Dīn Pīr Jagjōt.<sup>5</sup>

---

1. Quoted by Syed Hasan Askari in Bengali: Past and Present, 1948, P. 36, note 31.

2. Ibid, P. 37.

3. Bengali: Past and Present, 1948, P. 37.

4. Ibid, P. 37, note 32.

5. Ibid.

(xii) Shaykh Anwar :-

It has been pointed out earlier that Shaykh Anwar, son of Shaykh Nūr Qutb Ālam was a martyr at the hands of Rājā Ganesa. He was famous for his generosity and used to have sheep fattened and killed for the faqīrs, though he did not touch the meat himself<sup>1</sup>. About his death, the Riyād states as follows :- When the cruelties of Kāns or Ganesa passed all bounds, Shaykh Anwar complained to his father against the tyrant and said, 'It is a matter of regret that in spite of such a holy saint of the time as yourself, Musalmāns should be oppressed and ground down by the hand of this infidel'. Shaykh Nūr Qutb Ālam was at that time absorbed in prayer and meditation. On hearing the utterance of his son he got enraged and replied in a fit of anger, "This tyranny shall cease only, when thy blood shall be shed on the earth", Shaykh Anwar knew well that whatever came out from the lips of his holy father, was sure to pass.<sup>2</sup> It so happened that Rājā Ganesa banished both Shaykh Anwar and Shaykh Zāhid (grandson of Shaykh Nūr Qutb Ālam) to Sunārgāwn. There inhuman cruelties were perpetrated on them, so that they might divulge the whereabouts of the hidden treasures of their fore-fathers. Shaykh Anwar was actually murdered. It is said that on the very day and the very moment when Shaykh Anwar was murdered at Sunārgāwn, and his sacred blood was shed on the earth, Rājā Kāns passed away from this world<sup>3</sup>.

- 
1. Khurshīd-i-Jahān Nurā in J.A.S.B. 1895, P. 208.
  2. Riyād, Pp. 115-116.
  3. Ibid.

(xiii) Shaykh Zāhid :-

Shaykh Zāhid was the son of Shaykh Rafaq al-Dīn and grandson of Shaykh Nūr Qutb Ālam. He was also banished by Rājā Gaṇeśa to Sunārgāwn along with Shaykh Anwar. About him Shaykh Nūr Qutb Ālam said, "The drum of the virtues of Zāhid shall resound till resurrection-day<sup>1</sup>". He was also oppressed by the officials of Rājā Gaṇeśa to divulge the whereabouts of the treasures of his forefathers. When they attempted to take the life of Zāhid, he stated that in a certain village a large couldron was hidden. The couldron was found out but it contained only one gold-coin. On enquiry Shaykh Zāhid said, "Apparently some one has stolen it". But it is said that it was the outcome of miracle<sup>2</sup>. After the death of Kāns or Gaṇeśa, when Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad (the converted son of Gaṇeśa) assumed sovereignty he "called back the saint Shaykh Zāhid from Sunārgāwn and paid him every respect and honour, and rendering him services, was very often in attendance upon him"<sup>3</sup>.

Shaykh Zāhid died in 860/A.D. 1455. He is lying buried at Pandwah in the precincts of the Chhotī dargāh<sup>4</sup>.

(xiv) Shaykh Husām al-Dīn Manikpūrī :-

He was a disciple and Khalīfah of Shaykh Nūr Qutb Ālam<sup>5</sup>.

1. Riyād, Pp. 115-16.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Memoirs, P. 118.

5. Akhbār al-Akhyār, P. 176; Āyn-i-Akbarī, Vol. II, 371.

He was a great Sūfī of his time. His malfūzāt have been compiled by his followers and given the name of Rafiq al-‘Arefīn<sup>1</sup>. It is said that, after he received his spiritual education from his teacher, he observed fast for seven years<sup>2</sup>. He died in 882/A.D. 1477<sup>3</sup>.

(xv) Badī‘ al-Dīn Shāh Madār<sup>4</sup> :-

His original name was Badī‘ al-Dīn, and Shāh Madār was his title. He was the son of Abū Ishāq Shāmī of Syria, who was a direct descendant of Ḥadīrat Ḥarūn (brother of Ḥadīrat Mūsā)<sup>5</sup>. According to Akhbār al-Akhvār, he did not take meal for twelve years and he lived in one cloth. He used to cover his face with a veil, because it is said that he was so beautiful that people had to prostrate before him at his look<sup>6</sup>. He was born in A.H. 715/A.D. 1315 in Syria and died in A.H. 840/A.D. 1436, on 18th Jamādī I at Makanpūr in the district of Kānpūr in the reign of Sultān Ibrāhīm Sharqī<sup>7</sup>.

1. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 176.

2. Khazīnat al-Asfivā, Vol. I, P. 400.

3. Ibid, P. 401.

4. A biography of the saint has been written by Shaykh Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī in A.H. 1064. The title of the book is Mīrāt-i-Madārī. There is a manuscript in the Dacca University Library, MS. No. 217.

5. ‘Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī: Mīrāt-i-Madārī, Dacca University manuscript, P. 3.

6. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 164.

7. ‘Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī: Mīrāt-i-Madārī, Dacca University, MS. P. 81.

Badī' al-Dīn Shāh Madār visited various places in India. He visited Gujrat, Ajmir, Kanauj, Kalpi, Jawnpur, Lucknow and Kanpur<sup>1</sup>. We may assume that he also visited Bengal. There is a reference to calling of "Dam Madār" in "Niranjaner Koshma" of Sūnya Purāna<sup>2</sup>. The chapter is said to be a 15th century interpolation<sup>3</sup>. At any rate, it may be said that the Madāriyah Saints became popular in Bengal during the period under review.

The influence of the Madāriyah Saints in Bengal is visible even to-day. Dr. Enamul Haq thinks that Madaripur Sub-division in Faridpur district and Madarbari and Madarsha in Chittagong district were named after Shāh Madār<sup>4</sup>. There are a few customs in East Bengal which also bear testimony to Madāriyah influence. These are (a) lifting of bamboo of Madār, an annual festival in memory of Shāh Madār and (b) the name Madārī that is given to fish or tortoise in the ponds attached to a dargāh<sup>5</sup>.

(xvi) Pir Badar al-Dīn Badar-i-Ālam :-

He is lying buried in the Chhotī dargāh of Bihar<sup>6</sup>. He is said to have travelled from place to place. The name of Badr Pīr is associated with dargāhs of various places. In

- 
1. Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī: Mirāt-i-Madārī, Dacca University, MS. Pp. 55 ff.
  2. Sūnya Purāna, edited by C.C. Bandopadhyay, Calcutta B.S. 1336, Pp. 232-36.
  3. Ibid, Preface by Dr. M. Shahidullah.
  4. Bānge Sūfī Prabhāva, Calcutta, 1935, P. 112.
  5. Ibid, P. 113.
  6. J.A.S.B. 1873, P. 302.

Chittagong there is a dargāh which go by different names - 'Badar Pīr', 'Badar Awliyā', 'Badar Shāh' and 'Pīr Badar'<sup>1</sup>. It is said that it is through one Badar Pīr that Islām spread in Chittagong.

In Kalna, Burdwan district, there are two tombs, one of Majlis Sāheb and the other of Badar Sāheb<sup>2</sup>. It is said that they were two brothers, who came to Bengal to preach Islām. Their tombs are still venerated by the people, both Hindus and Muslims. Between the two tombs, which are apart by about a mile, people are considered to be safe from any accident. People offer them clay horses, fruits, sweets and flowers.

1. Dawlat Wazīr Bahrām Khān: Lailī Mainu, edited by Ahmad Sharif, Banglā Academy, Dacca, 1957, P. 9.

নগর ফতেয়াবাদ                      দোখিয়া পুরএ মারি  
চাটগ্রাম সুনাথ প্রকাশ ।  
মনোভব মনোবদ                      অপরীকীর মধ  
সারি ময় জ্বলক নিবাস ॥  
নবপাধু মনিকট                      কর্ণফুলি নদীতট  
শুভপুরী আতি দিব্যমান ।  
চৌদিক সবর্ভগড়                      আরিক উত্তরতর  
তাঁত শাহী বদর আনাম ॥

Translation:- "The sight of the city of Fateyābād (Fathābād) fulfils the desire of one (who desires to look at it); it is better known as Chāṭigrāma. In beauty it is like Amarāvati and it is inhabited by many virtuous and honest men. It is near the sea (literally saline water), on the bank of the river Karnaphuli. The city is heavenly. It is surrounded by hills and hillocks. Herein (lies) Shāh Badar 'Ālam".

2. Muhammad Enamul Haq: Bānge Sūfi Prabhāva, Calcutta, 1935, Pp. 132-33.

In Hemtabad, Dinajpur district, there is a dargāh of one Pīr Badr al-Dīn. According to tradition he came to preach Islām, while a certain Hindu King named Mahesā, was ruling there. Being oppressed by the Hindu King, the Pīr begged for help to Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh. The Sultān helped him; the result was the defeat of the Hindu King and the spread of Islām in the region. People locate the Husayn Shāhī takht (throne of Husayn Shāh) and the palace of Mahesā in the ruins not far from Hemtabad<sup>1</sup>.

It seems very likely that Pīr Badar of the few places mentioned above were one and the same person, identifiable with Pīr Badar al-Dīn Badar-i-Ālam. Probably he visited all these places where later on dargāhs were erected and legends have grown up.

Pīr Badar al-Dīn Badar-i-Ālam has become a legendary figure in the imagination of the people. The sailors of East Bengal take the name of Badar Pīr even to-day when they apprehend any danger<sup>2</sup>. Pīr Badar al-Dīn is said to have arrived at Chittagong floating upon a stone slab<sup>3</sup>. The local tradition is that Chittagong was at that time the abode of fairies and hobgoblins and no one could live there. Pīr Badar al-Dīn begged a space for his lamp. This was granted but when he lit

---

1. Bengal District Gazetteers; Dinajpur, 1912, P. 20.

2. Enamul Haq: Muslim Bānglā Sāhitya, Pakistan Publications, Dacca, 1957, P. 23.  
Eastern Bengal District Gazetteers; Chittagong, 1908, P. 56.

3. Ibid.

it, its magic power was so great that the spirits were frightened away. In the local dialect the lamp is called Chāṭi and people believe that the name Chāṭigrāma took its origin from this. There is a hillock in Chittagong town called Chāṭi pāhār (hillock of lamp) where Pīr Badar is said to have lit his lamp. Candles are offered there by people, Hindus and Muslims and they are kept burning at night<sup>1</sup>.

(xvii) Shāh Safī' al-Dīn :-

In Chhota Pandwah (Hugli district) is situated the tomb of Shāh Safī' al-Dīn. Tradition<sup>2</sup> current at Pandwah has that Shāh Safī' al-Dīn, son of Barkurdār, a noble of the Court of Delhi and brother-in-law of King Fīrūz Shāh came to preach Islām in Bengal. But the local king, Pāṇḍav Rājā was very powerful and antagonistic towards the Islāmic faith. Quarrel broke out between the saint and the king over the sacrifice of a cow, on the occasion of the circumcision of a boy. The boy was killed by the king. The saint appealed to his uncle Fīrūz Shāh who sent a large army for the religious war. The saint also received the boon from the famous saint Bū 'Alī Qalandar of Panipat-Karnal. In the war that followed, the Hindu king was defeated. It is said that two other men of repute joined this war; one was Zafar Khān Ghāzī<sup>3</sup>, whose

- 
1. Eastern Bengal District Gazetteers: Chittagong, Pp. 56-57.
  2. Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1870, P.123-25.  
Bengal District Gazetteers: Hugli, 1912, Pp. 297 ff.
  3. J.A.S.B. Vol. XVI, 1847, Pp. 394-97.  
J.A.S.B. 1870, P. 287.  
J.A.S.B. 1909, P. 248-51.



shrine is at Triveni, and the other was Bahrām Saqqā, whose shrine is at Burdwan<sup>1</sup>.

As the tradition refers to Bū 'Alī Qalandar who died in 724/1324 A.D., Blochmann identifies Fīrūz Shāh of the tradition with Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Fīrūz Khaljī<sup>2</sup>. But this identification can no longer be accepted. Bengal became independent after the death of Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Balban. Although independent coinage of Nāsir al-Dīn Mahmūd Bughrā Khān has not come to light, there is no doubt that his son and successor Rukn al-Dīn Kaykāūs was completely independent with full insignia of Royalty. During this time the sending of troops by Jalāl al-Dīn Fīrūz Khaljī does not arise. Secondly, there is undoubted evidence to show that Satgāwn-Triveni area was brought under the Muslims, by one Zafar Khān Ghāzī, during the period from 1298 to 1313 A.D. under Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Kaykāūs and Shams al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh<sup>3</sup>. The tradition also refers to one Zafar Khān Ghāzī. This shows that Shāh Safī' al-Dīn was contemporary of Zafar Khān Ghāzī and in the campaign that was undertaken by Zafar Khān Ghāzī, Shāh Safī' al-Dīn also took part. And if there is any truth in the statement that Shāh Safī' al-Dīn was related to Sultān Fīrūz Shāh, he was related to Sultān Shams al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh of Bengal and not Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Fīrūz of Dehlī.

- 
1. Bengal District Gazetteers; Burdwan, Calcutta, 1910, P.190. According to the District Gazetteer, Bahrām Saqqā was a contemporary of Akbar, the Mughal Emperor. It seems, therefore, that the tradition got confused with some other saints.
  2. Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1870, P.125.
  3. History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp.77 ff.; Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, Vol. IV, Part III, July, 1956, Pp.198-202.

(xviii) Shāh Anwar Qulī Halwī<sup>1</sup> :-

At Mulla Simla, Phurphura, in the district of Hugli, there is an old mosque and the tomb of the saint Shāh Anwar Qulī Halwī. His original name was Muḥammad Kabīr. Probably he came from Aleppo. Tradition relates that a Bāgdī king ruled in the area who was defeated by the saint and his companion Karam al-Dīn, but later on they were also killed by the enemy. The most important offering to this saint is the looking-glass, because it is said that looking-glass was very dear to the saint. Blochmann suggests that this was probably due to the fact that his birth-place was formerly famous in the East for its glass-wares<sup>2</sup>. An inscription attached to the entrance of the dargāh records the erection of a mosque by Ulugh Majlis Khān, in 777/A.D. 1375, in the reign of Sultān Sikandar Shāh<sup>3</sup>. The inscription was probably taken from a nearby mosque, which is without any inscription.

(xix) Shāh Ismā'īl Ghāzī<sup>4</sup> :-

Shāh Ismā'īl Ghāzī, a descendant of the ~~family of the~~ Prophet, was born in the holy city of Makkah. He was a devout follower of religion and spent his time in preaching and teaching. After a long and tedious journey, he arrived at Lakhnawtī, the capital of Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh.

1. An account of this saint will be obtained from :- (a) Bengal District Gazetteers; Hugli, Pp. 302-3; (b) J.A.S.B. 1870, Pp. 291-92.

2. J.A.S.B. 1870, P. 292.

3. Ibid, Pp. 291-92.

4. An account of this saint is obtained from Risālat-al-Shuhdā (See, J.A.S.B. 1874, Pp. 215 ff.).

Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh was then busy to find out ways and means for controlling the flood in the vicinity of Gaur. He engaged all Engineers and craftsmen for the purpose, but failed. At last following the advice of Shāh Ismā'īl Ghāzī, he came out successful. This brought the saint to the notice of the Sultān. The saint was then appointed to conduct warfare in different frontiers of his Kingdom. He defeated Gajapati, the Rājā of Orissa and wrested from him Mandaran. Rājā Kamesvara of Kamrup was defeated by him, who was forced to pay tribute to the Bengal Sultān. Moreover the king of Kamrup polluted his caste by chewing the pān (betel leaf) from the mouth of Ismā'īl Ghāzī.

This warrior-saint, who did so much for the Muslim Sultānate, was beheaded by the order of the Sultān in 878/A.D. 1474. One Rājā Bhāndsi Rāi, a Hindū commander of Ghoraghat sent a false information to the Sultān that Ismā'īl Ghāzī had entered into an offensive and defensive alliance with the Rājā of Kamrup and intended to set up an independent kingdom. The Sultān got alarmed and at once ordered for beheading the Saint<sup>1</sup>.

Tradition has that the head of the Saint was buried at Kantaduar in Rangpur district and the body at Mandaran. Both the places have since been sacred to the Muslims. In the district of Rangpur, there exist at present as many as four dargāhs<sup>2</sup>.

---

1. J.A.S.B. 1874, Pp. 215 ff.

2. Ibid.

(xx) Mullā Ātā :-

Mullā or Mawlānā Ātā is lying buried in Gangarampur in the district of Dinajpur. His dargāh is a place of pilgrimage even to-day. Two inscriptions have so far been discovered from the shrine of this saint :-

- (a) An inscription (attached to the shrine) of the time of Sikandar Shāh, dated 765/A.D. 1363<sup>1</sup>.
- (b) An inscription attached to a mosque in front of Mawlānā Ātā's Shrine is of the time of Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh. It is dated 918/A.D. 1512<sup>2</sup>.

From these two inscriptions, it is clear that Mawlānā Ātā died in the reign of Sultān Sikandar Shāh at the latest. So he may be grouped with the earlier Sūfīs; he was probably a contemporary of Shaykh Akhī Sirāj al-Dīn (died in 758/1357). The mosque in front of his shrine was built by Rukn Khān, a general of Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh.

(xxi) Shāh Jalāl Dakīnī<sup>3</sup> :-

Shāh Jalāl Dakīnī was the disciple of Shaykh Piyārah. He was one of the greatest of holy personages of his time. He came to Bengal, sat on the throne like kings and exerted great influence upon the people. The Sultān of Gaur became suspicious of his power and beheaded him.

---

1. J.A.S.B. 1872, Pp. 104-5.

2. Ibid, P. 106.

3. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 173.

The royal army beheaded the Shaykh and his followers. According to Akhbār al-Akhyār, while his followers were being killed, he exclaimed, "Yā Qahhār, Yā Qahhār" (O Destroyer, meaning God), but while he was himself killed, "Yā Rahmān" (O Merciful) and after his execution his head called out "Ya Allah" (O God)<sup>1</sup>. The date of his execution is 881/A.D. 1476<sup>2</sup>.

According to Late Hakīm Habīb al-Rahmān, he is now lying buried with his followers within the precincts of the present Government House at Dacca. The area was formerly known as Moti Jheel. The mausoleum of the saint is an one-domed structure<sup>3</sup>.

Ibrāhīm Qawwām Fārūqī in his Sharfnāmah has devoted a few verses in praise of one Jalāl al-Dīn wa al-Dunyā. Dr. N. B. Baloch identifies this Jalāl al-Dīn with Shāh Jalāl Dakīnī<sup>4</sup>. The verses are as follows<sup>5</sup> :-

زہی در حوضہ جاہلیت خان (ع) گنبد مینا - خطاب استغاب بابت الحق جنت الماوا  
 کہنراں دولت ظہمت چو از کف آہوئے باقل - گرفتہ رفعتت شدہ چوں دامق و امن طذرا  
 فرار ازین میگویند چوں من قدسیان ہر دم - توئی (وہی) حضرت ساس جلال اللہین والذین

"Bravo! the paradise is a pinnacle of the palace of your high rank; its door may correctly be called "Jannat al-Mawā". The authority of your antagonist is fleeing before you just

1. Akhbār al-Akhyār, P. 173.

2. Khazīnat al-Asfiyā', Vol. I, P. 399.

3. Āsūd-gān-i-Dhākāh, Dacca, 1946, Pp. 32 ff.

4. Urdū, October, 1952, P. 66.

5. Ibid.

as a wild deer. Your high position has touched the heaven just as Wāmaq caught hold of the skirt of 'Adhrā. The heavenly angels as well as I, say every moment on the throne of God that thou art the great Jalāl al-Dīn wa al-Dunyā".

(xxii) Mawlānā Shāh Dawlah :-

The saint is lying buried at Bagha in the Sadar Sub-division of the Rajshahi district<sup>1</sup>. His original name was Mawlānā Shāh Mu'azzam Dānishmand<sup>2</sup> but he is known by his more familiar name Shāh Dawlah. Tradition<sup>3</sup> records that he was a descendant of Hārūn al-Rashīd, the Abbaside Khalīfah of Baghdād. He ran away from Baghdād, reached Bagha in the reign of Sultān Nāsir al-Dīn Nuṣrat Shāh (A.D. 1519-32), and married the daughter of a certain influential noble 'Alā Bakhsh Barkhurdār Lashkarī of Makhdūmpūr not far from Bagha. Since then the Mawlānā settled at Bagha and his descendants are living there even to this day. An inscription discovered from the place records that one mosque was built by Sultān Nāsir al-Dīn Nuṣrat Shāh in 930/A.D. 1523-24.

The following popular story about the saint is available.<sup>5</sup>

"An emperor of Gaur on his way to Dacca encamped near Bagha. As fire was wanted men were sent out to find a house. Coming to a jungle from which smoke was ascending, they found a

---

1. J.A.S.B. 1904, No. 2, Pp. 108 ff.

2. Ibid, P. 111.

3. Ibid, P. 113.

4. Ibid, P. 111.

5. Ibid, Pp. 109 ff.

fakeer who, though fires were burning and tigers were roaring round him, went on quietly with his prayers to God. The men seized up some fire and rushed back with it to the camp where they told the Emperor what they had seen. The Emperor, filled with curiosity, went forth and visited the fakeer and found him as has been reported. Then the Emperor waited on the fakeer whose name was Shah Mahamed Doola (Shāh Muḥammad Daula) and besought him saying, "O man of God, shall thy servant advance to Dacca or wait here". Then the Fakeer answered and said, "Wait thou here one day". So the Emperor waited. And it came to pass the very same day there came messengers to him from Dacca saying, "Behold, the fighting is over, and the victory is thine". The Emperor was so pleased that he offered rent-free lands to the saint. As the saint did not accept the lands, the Emperor made a grant of 22 villages to the saint's son, Ḥaḍrat Ḥamīd Dānīshmand<sup>1</sup>. According to another account 'Abd al-Wahhāb, son of Mawlānā Ḥamīd Dānīshmand received a grant of forty two villages with an annual rent of Rupees eight thousand from Emperor Shāh Jahān, when the latter rebelled against his father and temporarily held the dictatorship of Bengal<sup>2</sup>. 'Abd al-Laṭīf<sup>3</sup>, who travelled in North Bengal in A.D. 1609 in the reign of Emperor Jahāngīr met one Hawadha Mian at Bagha, an old saint aged about one hundred years. The old man maintained a college, built of

---

1. J.A.S.B. 1904, No. 2, P. 110.

2. Ibid, Pp. 112 ff.

3. Bengal: Past and Present, Vol. XXXV, Part II, Pp. 143-46.

grass-thatched roofs and mud-plastered walls where many of his descendants and other students engaged themselves in study. The entire country-side around the village was granted to Hawadha Mian for his subsistence (madad-i-ma'ash). Hawadha Mian of 'Abd al-Latif's account may be identified either with Mawlānā Ḥamīd Dāniṣhmand or with his son 'Abd al-Wahhāb. In any case, there is no doubt that Bagha continued to be a Muslim cultural centre since the arrival of Mawlānā Shāh Dawlah till at least A.D. 1622 when Shāh Jahān came to Bengal in course of his rebellion against his father.

Besides these there are a few more saints whose names at least may be noted. Among these the most famous are Shāh Langar<sup>1</sup> at Mu'azzampūr (Dacca District), Shāh Nīmat Allāh<sup>2</sup> at Purana Paltan (Dacca District), Shāh Gadā<sup>3</sup> at Mughaltuli (Maldah), Shāh Lankāpati<sup>4</sup> at Old Maldah and Shāh Kākū<sup>5</sup>, a disciple of Shaykh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam.

- 
1. E. Haq: Baṅge Sūfī Prabhāva, Calcutta, A.D. 1935, P. 144.
  2. Ḥakīm Ḥabīb al-Rahmān: Āsūdḡān-i-Dhākah, Dacca, A.D. 1946, Pp. 30 ff.
  3. Memoirs, P. 149.
  4. Ibid, P. 153.
  5. Khazīnat al-Asfiyā', Vol. I, P. 400.  
Dr. Enamul Haq (See, Baṅge Sūfī Prabhāva, Calcutta, 1935, P. 143) thinks that Shāh 'Alī Baghdādī now lying buried at Mirpur, a few miles away from the city of Dacca was living in the 15th century and died sometimes before A.D. 1480. His argument is that the mosque over his grave was built in A.D. 1480. But as the saint is lying buried within the mosque it is reasonable to suggest that the mosque is earlier than the death of the saint.



Part - II :- The influence of the Sūfis:

The biographical sketch of the Sūfis reveal that their activities were not confined only within the four walls of their Khānqahs, rather they exerted a great influence in the people's minds and in the society. Even if one is hesitant to accept the statement of Mir Sayyid Ashraf Jahāngīr Simnānī that "there is no town and no village where holy saints did not come and settle down<sup>1</sup>", the names of Sūfis and their account that have come down to us, either through tradition or literary and epigraphic sources establish the fact that their number was not too small to be by-passed. They came, established Khānqahs, gathered disciples around them, imparted instructions, while some of them settled and died in this country. Thus they added another factor in the Muslim society with those of the ruling class and the Ālims (scholars). If only the location of their dargāhs is taken into consideration we find that, they did not concentrate only in the metropolitan cities, but scattered throughout the country, extending from Chittagong and Sylhet in the East<sup>2</sup>, to Mangalkot (Bardwan district) in the West and from Bagerhat and Chhota-Pandwah in the south to Kantaduar (Rangpur) in the North. Their dargāhs, and tombs are visited and venerated by hundreds of people even to-day. They influenced deeply the minds of

---

1. Quoted in Bengal: Past and Present, 1948, P. 36.

2. The Sūfis visited further East as the tomb of Ghiyāth al-Dīn in Hajo Tahsil in the Kamrup district, Assam, suggests. (See, Assam District Gazetteers; Kamrup, Allahbad, 1905, Chapter III, P. 101.

the people in their lifetime. Sūfism, thus, became a powerful factor in the then society and its contribution may demand a careful and proper assessment from the scholars.

The influence of the Sūffis on the growth of the Muslim Society in Bengal may be grouped under the following heads :-  
(i) the expansion of the Muslim power, (ii) influence over the ruling class, (iii) imparting of religious instructions, (iv) and their influence over the society and missionary activities.

(i) The expansion of the Muslim power :-

The expansion of the Muslim power in different parts of Bengal and how and when they were subjugated have been discussed in a previous chapter<sup>1</sup>. But traditions and later writings record that some of the Sūffis fought against the local non-Muslim kings either on their own account<sup>2</sup> or in collaboration with the Muslim rulers<sup>3</sup>. Generally these accounts are full of superhuman colouring, thus raising suspicion on their validity. As for example, traditions of different places supply identical stories with minor variations. They refer to the existence of a Muslim family in the midst of a large number of Hindus; the trouble generally arose over the

---

1. See, Chapter II.

2. The examples of Bābā Adam Shahīd, (Supra, Pp. 109-111), Shāh Sultān Mahisawār, (Supra, Pp. 112-13), Makhdūm Shāh Dawlah Shahīd (Supra Pp. 113-14) may be cited.

3. See for example the accounts of Shāh Jalāl of Sylhet (Supra, Pp. 125 ff.), Shāh Ismā'īl Ghāzī (Supra, Pp. 150 ff.), and Shāh Sa'ī al-Dīn (Supra, Pp. 148 ff.)

sacrifice of a cow on the occasion of the birth of a son or his circumcision. A kite was invariably there to carry bit of flesh and throw it in the vicinity of a Brahmin family and then the war broke out. The superhuman colouring and the identical stories show that there have been exaggerations of what actually happened. The clash between the incoming Muslims, be he a Sūfī or a layman and the local people who lived in this country from generation to generation can not be altogether ruled out. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the Sūfīs required time to pacify or influence the local people by their peaceful pursuits, simplicity of life and devotion to God. The collaboration of some of the Sūfīs with the Sultāns in the expansion of the Muslim power cannot also be ruled out altogether, because they thought that fighting for the cause of Islām was a Jihād (religious war), provided by the Islamic law. It is from this standpoint that we should judge the collaboration of Shaykh Jalāl with the general of Sultān Shams al-Dīn Firūz Shāh in the conquest of Sylhet or of Shāh Ismā'īl Ghāzī with Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh in his wars against Kamrup or Orissa. These are the examples in which the saints themselves took to fighting for the cause of Islām. On the other hand there are a good many examples from Bengal which supply information of a reverse type; that is we have got real soldiers and conquerors treated as saints probably after their death, and their tombs attaining the rank of shrines or dargāhs. Two important examples of this nature are the dargāh of Khān Jahān of Bagerhat in Khulna

district who was an official and a conqueror of this region in the time of Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd Shāh (A.D. 1442-1459), and the other is Zafar Khān Ghāzi who conquered Triveni area in the time of Rukn al-Dīn Kaykāūs (A.D. 1291-1301), but today he is the renowned saint in that area.

(ii) Influence over the ruling class :-

The above point will be more clear, if we remember that the Sūfis also interfered in the internal politics of the country and sometimes tried to influence the Sultāns in moulding their state-policies. We have pointed out elsewhere<sup>1</sup> that the Sultāns were respectful towards the Sūfis, helped them in their missionary activities, built mosques, madrasahs and Khāngahs in their honour and even granted lands for their maintenance. But it is difficult to explain why, in spite of generally respectful attitude of the Sultāns to the Sūfis, Sikandar Shāh turned Shaykh 'Alā' al-Ḥaq out of Pandwah and banished him to Sunārgāwn. The reason put forward by the author of Akhbār al-Akhvār<sup>2</sup> is far from satisfactory, because he says that by a super-human power, the Shaykh spent so much money in feeding the beggars, pupils and wanderers that even the state-treasury could not have borne such a huge expenditure. The Sultān grew jealous and ordered the Shaykh to leave the Capital. On the other hand we know that the same Shaykh, 'Alā' al-Ḥaq, was looked upon with regard and esteem by his (Sikandar's) father Ilyās Shāh who built a

---

1. See Chapter III, Section (A).

2. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 143.

mosque in his (the Shaykh's) honour<sup>1</sup>. Even Sikandar Shāh's attitude to the Sūfīs was all along one of respect and veneration; he built a mosque in honour of Mawlānā 'Ātā<sup>2</sup>; he was in correspondence<sup>3</sup> with the celebrated saint of Bihar Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī. In view of these facts we are apt to conclude that there must have been very strong reasons that led him to take such a step. The subsequent history of Bengal leading to the Hindu interregnum after supplanting the Ilyās Shāhī dynasty, suggests that there must have been a wide difference between the Sultāns and the Sūfīs on the matters of state-policy, particularly on the question of the appointment of non-Muslims in the key-positions. That the situation took such a turn is proved from a few letters of Ḥadrat Mawlānā Muẓaffar Shams Balkhī, addressed to Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Āẓam Shāh of Bengal. The relevant extract is given below<sup>4</sup> :- "The Exalted God has said, "Ye who believe! take not into your intimacy those outside the ranks". The long and short of the matter is that in commentaries and lexicons they have said that the faithful should not make the unbelievers and strangers their confidants and ministers. If they say that they do not make them their favourites and friends but for the sake of expediency,

- 
1. For inscription see, Epigraphia Indico-Moslemica, 1939-40, Pp. 7-9, Plate (a).
  2. J.A.S.B. 1872, Pp. 104-5.
  3. Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Vol. XLII, Part II, 1956, P. 8.
  4. "The correspondence of two 14th century Sufi Saints of Bihar with the contemporary sovereigns of Delhi and Bengal", in Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Vol. XLII, Part II, 1956, Pp. 10-11.

the reply is that God says that it is not expediency but the cause of trouble and sedition. He says "Lā Yā'lunakum Khabālan" (they will not fail to corrupt you) i.e. La Yaqsaruna Ifsād-i-Amrekum" (they will not hesitate or spare themselves in creating troubles for you). Therefore, it is incumbent on us that we should listen to the divine command and cast aside our weak judgement. God says 'Wadduna Mā Anittum" (may only desire your ruin) i.e. when you make them intimate with yourself they will love to involve you in evil deeds. An infidel may be entrusted with some work, but he should not be made 'Wāli' (Chief Supervisor or Governor) so that he may have control over and impose his authority on the Muslims. God says "let not the believers take for friends or helpers unbelievers and neglect God: if any do that, in nothing will there be help from God except by way of precaution, that ye may guard yourselves from them. There are severe warnings in the Qurān, the 'Hadis' and historical works against those who have given authority to the unbelievers over the believers. God grants opulence and provisions from unexpected sources, and He gives delieverence from them". There is an authoritative promise of provisions, victory and prosperity. The vanquished unbelievers with heads hanging downward, exercise their power and authority and administer the lands which belong to them. But they have also been appointed (executive) officers over the Muslims, in the lands of Islam, and they impose their orders on them. Such things should not happen".

The letter clearly indicates that the Bengal Sultāns allowed the non-Muslims to participate in the administration and even appointed them in the key-positions of the state. In fact this policy was first adopted by Sultān Shams al-Dīn Ilyās Shāh. Diya' al-Dīn Baranī, a contemporary historian writes as follows about Ilyās Shāh, which according to him justified the Lakhnawtī invasion of Fīrūz Shāh: "That Ilyās, the ruler of Lakhnawtī, who has taken possession of that country by force, at this time gathered together the pāiks (foot-soldiers) and dhanuks (bowmen) from the river-girt Bangalah and invaded Tirhut without any reason<sup>1</sup>". In another place the same author writes in describing the battle between Ilyās and Fīrūz Shāh, "The well-known pāiks of Bangālah who, for years, gave themselves the name of Abū Bangāl (the Father of Bengal) and claimed to be (heroic) men, took promise before Ilyās, the Bhāng-eater, to sacrifice their lives (for him); and standing in front of his (array of) horses, together with the Rāis of the river-girt Bangālah, (they) bravely threw about their arms and legs. In the time of battle, when faced with the brave soldiers and archers of the army of the victorious, (they) put their fingers (in fear) into their mouths, lost their sense, threw away swords and arrows from their hands, rubbed their foreheads on the ground, and fell

---

1. Baranī, P. 586.

که ایسا ضابطہ لکھتے ہیں کہ تختہ آن دیار را فرو گرفته است درین وقت حشری  
از بایک و دایک آب گرفته بنگالہ جمع کرده است و از عاقبتی در سرست بازید

to the swords of the enemies"<sup>1</sup>. The above passages therefore, reveal that Ilyās Shāh recruited the local people in his army as foot soldiers and bowmen. Yahyā Sarhindī gives the name of one Bengali supporter of Ilyās Shāh; his name was "Sahdeo" or "Sahdeva"<sup>2</sup>. The condition of his time demanded such a policy from Ilyās Shāh, as he was opposed initially by two rivals in Bengal itself<sup>3</sup>, while towards the middle of his reign Sultān Firūz Shāh Tughluq of Dehli made a desperate bid to snatch away his sovereignty. The position was not better under Sikandar Shāh. Just on his accession to the throne, he faced the second invasion of Sultān Firūz Shāh Tughluq. In the face of such unfavourable circumstances, it was but natural that they turned towards the local people for help and appointed them in the important offices of the state. This very policy, which the rulers found as an expediency, was bitterly opposed by the Ṣūfis, as has been shown from the letters of Hadrat Muzaffar Shams Balkhī. Now if Ghiyāth al-Dīn Azam Shāh could be warned by a ṣūfī of Bihar, was it not be possible for Shaykh 'Alā' al-Haq to do

1. Baranī, P. 593.

یا کیاں معروف نگار کہ سہ ما خود را ابو بنگالی خوانا نند نہ و مرد باہمی گو ما نندید و سرہ  
 حاشیہ از انہا کہ بنگالی ہر جی نرفتند و بنگالی کتاب آن سودا بار بنگالی انہا کہ  
 نگار کہشت و باہمی از نند در حالت حار بہ در نند ہر انہا کہ نند و تیر اندازان لشکر  
 منصوب ہوا کہشت در دیان ہی انداختند و خبر در آہی کردند و تیغ و تیر انہا کہ نند  
 و بیٹانی بہ زمین ہی مالیدند و علف تیغ ہی نند

2. Yahyā bin Ahmad, P. 125, note 5.

3. For rivalry among 'Alī Mubārah, and Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārah Shāh and Ilyās Shāh, See, History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 97 ff.



the same in the time of Sikandar Shāh? It is unfortunate that the correspondence between Sikandar Shāh and Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī has been lost to us. It would have probably thrown further light on the subject, and in fact Muzaffar Shams Balkhī alludes to this when he says, "You are enjoying the fruits of these blessings"<sup>1</sup> i.e. blessings of Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Manerī through his letters to Sikandar Shāh, Azam Shāh's father. The above facts lead us to believe that the estrangement between Sikandar Shāh and Shaykh 'Alā' al-Haq was not due to any personal jealousy, as Shaykh 'Abd al-Haq Dehlawī would have us believe<sup>2</sup>, rather it was due to their wide difference on matters of state-policy. Sikandar Shāh, put in an adverse situation as he was, due to a hostile attitude from the Sultān of Dehlī, could not but rely upon the non-Muslim local people, thus giving a popular shape to the Muslim Sultānate in Bengal. The political condition and state-craft demanded such an outlook from the Sultān, while the Muslim divines reading the canonical law between the lines could not approve this attitude of the Sultān.

It is difficult to say who were right, the Sultāns or the divines, but the subsequent happenings leading to the Hindu interregnum of Rājā Gaṇeśa show that the policy of the Sultāns received a setback at least temporarily which required Shaykh Nūr Quṭb 'Ālam, the greatest Muslim divine of Bengal of the day, to take active part in politics.

---

1. Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Vol. XLII, Part II, 1956, P. 8.

2. Akhbār al-Akhyār, P. 143.

All the authorities<sup>1</sup> agree that the Muslim Sultānate of Bengal passed through a critical period towards the beginning of the 15th century. Taking advantage of the liberal policy of the Ilyās Shāhī Sultāns, Ganēśa or Kāns gained ascendancy<sup>2</sup> and perpetrated oppressions on the Muslims including the divines. This oppression led Shaykh Nūr Qutb Ālam to invite Sultān Ibrāhīm Sharqī of Jawnpūr to invade Bengal and to save the Muslim Kingdom there. He also wrote a letter to Mīr Sayyid Ashraf Jahāngīr Simnānī requesting him to utilise his good offices to urge upon Sultān Ibrāhīm Sharqī to come to the aid of the Muslims of Bengal. When Sultān Ibrāhīm reached Bengal and encamped in Fīrūzābād, Ganēśa was terrified and submitted before the saint. As regards the conversion of Jalāl al-Dīn the Riyād and Mirāt al-Asrār differ; according to the former<sup>3</sup>, Ganēśa took his twelve year old son Jadū to the Shaykh, got him converted to Islām and renounced his sovereignty in favour of his son, but according to the latter Jadū, finding it difficult to rule over the Muslims embraced Islām, "because of his lust for Kingdom"<sup>4</sup>. Whatever might have been the case, there is no denying the fact that the conversion of Jalāl al-Dīn and the restoration of the

---

1. 'Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī: Mirāt al-Asrār, Āliyah Madrasah MS. Folio No. 184. Riyād, Pp. 110-116. Bayāz of Mullā Taqqyā, quoted in Bengal: Past and Present, 1948, P. 36, Note 31. Maktūbāt -i-Mīr Sayyid Ashraf Jahāngīr Simnānī, quoted in Bengal: Past and Present, 1948.

2. Recently Dr. A.H. Dani has tried to prove that Ganēśa or Kāns did not crown himself king. (See, J.A.S.B. Vol. XVIII, No. 2, 1962, Pp. 121-170).

3. Riyād, P. 113.

4. 'Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī: Mirāt al-Asrār, Āliyah Madrasah MS. Folio No. 184.

Muslim Sultānate in his person was due to Shaykh Nūr Qutb Ālam. The Muslim Kingdom of Bengal was deeply indebted to this Muslim divine, but for whose timely action, the sovereignty of Bengal might have passed out of the hands of the Muslims for many years to come.

Two other saints who seem to have taken part in politics were Shāh Ismāīl Ghāzī and Shāh Jalāl Dakinī. Shāh Ismāīl Ghāzī was executed at the order of Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh. According to Risālat al-Shuhdā the reason of his execution was as follows :- One Rājā Bhāndsi Rāi, a Hindu commander of Ghoraghat sent a false information to the Sultān that Ismāīl Ghāzī had entered into an offensive and defensive alliance with the Rājā of Kāmarupa and intended to set up an independent kingdom. The Sultān got alarmed and at once ordered for beheading the saint<sup>1</sup>. It seems unreasonable that the Sultān took action on a false charge against a person who did so much for the cause of the Sultān and his Kingdom. He assisted the Sultān in building a dam for controlling the flood in the vicinity of Gaur<sup>2</sup>. He was the man who defeated Rājā Gajapati, the king of Orissa and Kāmesvara, the King of Kāmarupa,<sup>3</sup> and made them<sup>to</sup> pay tribute to the Bengal Sultān. Moreover Sultān Bārbak Shāh was a great patron of scholars and literature; his court was adorned by a number of Persian poets<sup>4</sup>; he

---

1. J.A.S.B. 1874, Pp. 215 ff.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Urdū, October, 1952, Pp. 61 ff.

encouraged Mālādhār Vasu, the writer of Śrī Kṛishṇa Vijāya who was given the title of Guṇarāj Khān<sup>1</sup>; he himself was an Ālim. All these show that the Sultān took action not on a false charge but probably on stronger reasons. Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh was the first to recruit Ḥabshī slaves and appointed them in the key position of the state; he recruited about eight thousand of them<sup>2</sup>. This policy later on proved disastrous to the Bengal Sultānate as we find a Ḥabshī interregnum in Bengal about half a century after the interregnum of Rājā Gaṇeśa. Was there any difference between the Sultān and the Warrior-saint on this policy or was it a fact that the warrior-saint actually proved faithless and intended to set up an independent Kingdom? These questions cannot be answered with certainty, but there is no doubt that there was some sort of a disagreement between the two.

Of Shāh Jalāl Dakīnī tradition has it that<sup>3</sup>, he sat on the throne as kings and exerted great influence upon the people. The Sultān of Gaur became suspicious of his power and beheaded him. Though no clear idea may be obtained from such general remarks, it probably implies that the saint exerted some influence in the internal politics of the country. It is difficult to identify the Sultān of Gaur who beheaded the saint, but if the identification of the saint with Jalāl

---

1. Sukumar Sen: BāṅglāSahityer Itihāsa, Calcutta, 1940, P.72.

2. Tārīkh-i-Ferishtah, Vol. II, P. 298.

3. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 173.

\* Supra, P. 73.

al-Dīn of Sharfnāmah is correct<sup>1</sup> as has been done by Dr. N.B. Baloch, we may identify the Sultān with Rukn al-Dīn Barbak Shāh.

The above discussion makes it sufficiently clear that the Sūfīs did not remain merely a spectator of the political events in Bengal, rather they in their own way, tried to influence them, when they thought that the Sultān's action was going against the spirit and interest of Islām.

(iii) Imparting of religious instructions :-

From the beginning the Sūfīs paid their attention towards educating the people. Besides general reference to the establishment of Khānqahs and educating the people, we have some concrete examples to show that they taught the people and sometimes maintained academies for the purpose. The first important example is that of Bhojar Brahmin, the Yogi, who mastered himself in Islāmic Sciences<sup>2</sup> under the guidance of Qādī Rukn al-Dīn al-Samarqandī. The examples of maintaining academy or imparting instructions by Mawlānā Taqī al-Dīn and Mawlānā Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah have been cited already<sup>3</sup>. The next Sūfī who maintained a madrasah was Hadrat Nūr Qutb 'Ālam. In praise of Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh, Stewart writes as follows :- "Amongst the numerous

---

1. Urdū, October, 1952, P.66.

2. Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, Vol. I, Part I, January, 1953, P. 47.

3. See, Supra, Pp. 84 ff.

instances of his piety, he settled a grant of lands for the support of the tomb, college and hospital of the celebrated saint Kuttub al-Alum, which are continued to this day; and every year made a pilgrimage on foot, from Akdala to Pundwah, to visit the holy shrine of that saint"<sup>1</sup>. All later histories<sup>2</sup> confirm that Husayn Shāh granted lands for the maintenance of the alms-house in the dargāh of the saint, but none of them refers to the maintenance of the college. We do not know wherefrom Stewart got this information, but if it proves to be true, it will leave no doubt that the saint Qutb Ālam maintained a college, which continued after his death and received a land grant from Sultān Husayn Shāh. N.N. Law suggests<sup>3</sup> that the college was founded by Sultān Husayn Shāh himself as a memorial to the saint, but Stewart, his authority does not bear him out. The passage quoted above suggests unequivocally that Husayn Shāh granted lands for the support of the college that was already in existence.

The importance of the teaching of the Bengal Sūfīs is borne out by the fact that a number of Muslim divines received training under them. Thus Shaykh Yahyā, father of Makhdūm al-Mulk Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī studied under his teacher Mawlānā Taqī al-Dīn in Mahisun (Mahi-Santosh) now in Rajshahi district<sup>4</sup>, Makhdūm al-Mulk himself studied under

- 
1. Stewart: History of Bengal, Calcutta, 1903, P. 129.
  2. Tārīkh-i-Ferishtah, Pp. 301-2; Riyād, P. 135; Nizām al-Dīn Bakhsī: Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī, Vol. III, Bibliotheca Indica, Pp. 270-71.
  3. N.N. Law, Op cit, P. 109.
  4. Shāh Shu'ayb: Manāqib al-Asfiyā', at the end of Maktūbāt-i-Sādī, P. 339. See, Supra, P. 84.

Mawlānā Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah in Sunārgāwn<sup>1</sup>, Mīr Sayyid Ashraf Jahāngīr Simnānī and Shaykh Husayn Dhukkarposh studied under Shaykh 'Alā' al-Ḥaq in Pandwah<sup>2</sup>, Shaykh Husām al-Dīn Manikpūrī, Shaykh Kākū under Shaykh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam in Pandwah<sup>3</sup>. Sūfism received so much prominence that they introduced new Sufistic orders in Bengal. Mīr Sayyid Ashraf Jahāngīr Simnānī, in his letters refers to the following orders<sup>4</sup> :- (1) Suhrawardīyah, the great Sufistic order after the name of Shaykh Shahāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī, (2) Jalīliyah\* of Deotala, after Makhdūm Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrizī, in whose honour Deotala was given the name of Tabrizābād<sup>5</sup>, (3) Qadarkhānī, to which Shaykh Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah belonged, (4) 'Alāī, after the name of 'Alā' al-Ḥaq, (5) Khālīdīyah, meaning the order of Shaykh 'Alā' al-Ḥaq who traced his origin to Khālīd bin Al-Walīd, (6) Nūrī, after the name of Shaykh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam, (7) Husaynī, after the name of Shaykh Husayn Dhukkarposh and (8) Rūhānīyah the identification of which is difficult. This shows that each Sūfī gathered a number of disciples round him who claimed themselves to have belonged to the order of their respective teachers.

---

1. Shāh Shu'ayb: Manāqib al-Asfiyā', at the end of Maktūbāt-i-Sādī, P. 339-40.

2. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 166.  
Bengal: Past and Present, 1948, P. 36, note 31.

3. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 176.  
Khazīnat al-Asfiyā', Vol. I, P. 400.

4. Quoted by Hasan Askari in Bengal: Past and Present, 1948, Pp. 32-39.

5. Memoirs, P. 170.

\* Jalāliyah?

(iv) Their influence over the Society and missionary activities :-

A minute study of the biographical sketch of the Sūfīs reveals two important facts. First, they were conceived of having been endowed with superhuman powers like giving relief to the poor, sick and destitutes, being present in several places at a time, giving life to the dead, killing anybody at the will and foretelling the future. Secondly, their Khānqāhs were open to all poor, destitutes, mendicants and wanderers, who received food and shelter therein. Beside traditions, a number of contemporary inscriptions substantiate this view. The dargāhs of the Sūfīs were considered to be, "rest-giving building on earth" ( بعالم این راحت آفرینا ), "where people attain their wishes", ( از دے خلاق راست تحصیل تمنا )<sup>1</sup>. The way in which the inscriptions refer to some of the Sūfīs is noteworthy. Shaykh 'Alā' al-Ḥaḡ has been referred to as, "the benevolent and revered saint, whose actions of virtue are attractive and sublime inspired by Allāh, may He illuminate his heart with the light of divine perception and faith, he is the guide to the religion of the Glorious"<sup>2</sup>. Shaykh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam has been referred to as (a) "Ḥadrat Shaykh al-Islām, crown of nation, full moon among the saints, who have been united with Allāh", (b) "Ḥadrat Sulṭān al-'Ārefīn (Sulṭān of Saints) Qutb al-Aqṭāb ( pole of poles)", (c) "Our revered

1. Memoirs, P. 104.

2. Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, 1939-40, P. 9.

الشیخ المنعم المکرّم الذی اعماله بالتقوی جباله (؟) عالیہ من ..... انا واللہ قلبہ بنور  
المعرفة والایمان وهو المعادی الی دین السبجان -



master, the teacher of Imāna, the proof of the congregation, the sun of the faith, the testimony of Islām and the Muslims, who bestowed advantages upon the poor and the indigent, the guide of saints and of such as wish to be guided", (d) "the sun of the sky of religion and the moon of the mine of truth, a guide to the way of spirituality"<sup>1</sup>. According to another inscription, "Jalāl al-Dīn Shāh (Tabrizī) was the accepted of Allāh, Angelic in disposition and king of religion and of the world"<sup>2</sup>.

Now were these epithets attributed to the Sūfis for nothing? The answer must be an emphatic no. The people really believed that they were endowed with super-human powers, they were inspired by Allāh, their hearts were illumined by the divine perception and they were the mine of truth. And all these were in spite of the fact that they led the life of simplicity and austerities. They did not hesitate to perform humble works even to work as sweeper at the bidding of their teacher. Makhdūm Shāykh Jalāl Tabrizī used to follow his teacher with a heated stove on his head and a cooking pot thereon, so that he could provide his master with hot food

1. Memoirs, Pp. 109, 115, 123.

- (a) حضرت شیخ الاسلام تاج الامۃ بدر الواصلین مقبول بارگاہ رب العالمین -  
 (b) حضرت سلطان العارفین قطب الاقطاب -  
 (c) مخدومنا العلامة استاذ الائمة برهان الامۃ حجة الاسلام والمسلمین  
 نافع الفقراء والمساکین مرشد الواصلین والمسترشدین -  
 (d) شمس سماء الشریعة قمرکان الحقیقة هادی راہ ارادة - 2. Ibid. P. 104.

جلال الدین شدہ آن مقبول بادی - فرشتہ حوی شاہ دین و دنیا

on demand<sup>1</sup>. While he came to Bengal, he had only a bowl and an 'asā (stick) in hand<sup>2</sup>. Shāh Jalāl of Sylhet observed fast for forty years which he used to break only after ten consecutive days. As for his possession, he had only a cow<sup>3</sup>. Shaykh 'Alā' al-Haq used to accompany his teacher Shaykh Akhī Sirāj al-Dīn 'Uthmān with a hot stove on his head, the cooking pot thereon, so that he became bald<sup>4</sup>. Shaykh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam used to perform all sorts of menial works, including the carrying of wood and cleaning of lavatory<sup>5</sup>.

Such were the Sūfīs who made Bengal the cradle-home of their lives. They were renowned for their simplicity of life, strength of character, devotion to faith and peaceful pursuits; their Khānqahs were rest-giving refuge, their almshouses were open to all, poor, destitutes, wanderers and mendicants; they were conceived of having endowed with superhuman powers. Naturally, the people were attracted and enchanted towards them and it is in this way that they won over the mass of the Bengali people to Islām. Examples are not rare that substantiate the statement. We know from Śekh Śubhodaya that many people were attracted to Shaykh Jalāl Tabrizī. The Shaykh restored to life a dying man whose wife was named Mādhavi.

---

1. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 44; Supra, P. 117.

2. Śekh Śubhodaya, edited by Sukumar Sen, Calcutta, 1927, P.7.; Supra, P. 118.

3. Ībn Battūṭah, Vol. IV, P. 218.

4. Akhbār al-Akhvār, P. 143; Supra, P. 132.

5. Ibid, Pp. 152 ff; Supra, P. 135.

Both husband and wife became his slaves<sup>1</sup>. It is also said that four servants of a certain minister of King Lakshmana Sena were jealous of the growing popularity of the Shaykh. They one day conspired together to test the super-human power of the Shaykh. They feigned to be blind, went to the Shaykh and asked him to cure them. The Shaykh listened to them carefully and asked them to see him some other day. While coming out, the servants found to their horror that they became actually blind. They immediately surrendered to the Shaykh and implored for pardon. The Shaykh became pleased and cured them. Since then, they with their wives became servants of the Saint<sup>2</sup>. The Saint influenced the people so much that, "all the people think only of the Shaykh. They consider him as king ..... . The king (Lakshmana Sena) also does not remember anybody else except the Shaykh"<sup>3</sup> Shāh Jalāl also influenced the people of the hilly region of Sylhet. According to Ibn Battūṭah, both Hindus and Muslims of the area used to bring gifts for the Shaykh and his followers lived mainly on those gifts<sup>4</sup>. The conversion began since the time of Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī, who converted a certain Mech Chief and gave him the name of 'Alī'<sup>5</sup>. He was the person who led Bakhtiyār in his expedition to Tibet. Beside the general references evidenced by traditions, we have some undoubted evidence to show that the Sūfīs converted

---

1. Sekh Subhodaya, edited by Sukumar Sen, Calcutta, 1927, Chapter III.

2. Ibid, Chapter IV.

3. Ibid, Chapter IV, P. 24.

4. Ibn Battūṭah, Vol. IV, P. 218.

5. Minhāj, P. 152.

people to Islām. In the reign of Sultān 'Alī Mardān Khaljī Qādī Rukn al-Dīn al-Samarqandī converted one Bhojar Brahmin, the Yogi<sup>1</sup>. Shaykh Nūr Qutb 'Alam converted Jadū (Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad Shāh) and his son Ahmad Shāh<sup>2</sup>. The people of the hilly region of Sylhet accepted Islām in the hands of Shāh Jalāl<sup>3</sup>.

One great factor that must have helped in bringing the Muslim saints to the notice of the general mass is the fact that most of their dargāhs in Bengal are found on the top of the older sacred buildings. Shāh Sultān Māhīawār's dargāh at Mahasthan in Bogra district stands on the top of a Śaiva temple<sup>4</sup>; at the famous Buddhist monastery at Paharpur in Rajshahi district stands Satyapīr Bhita<sup>5</sup> and on actual excavation Muslim relics were found there<sup>6</sup>; the dargāh of Bayazīd Bistāmī at Chittagong is occupying the top of a mound; and even the Khānqah of Shaykh Jalāl at Sylhet is placed prominently on an ancient mound. If we bear in our mind the attachment of the local people (Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims all alike) to the sacred places of old, it is not difficult to realise how these dargāhs continued to attract

1. Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, Vol. I, Part I, P. 47.
2. 'Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī: Mirāt al-Asrār, 'Alīyah Madrasah MS. Folio No. 148.
3. Ibn Battūtah, Vol. IV, P. 217.
4. Prabhas Chandra Sen: Varendra Research Society's Monographs, No. 2. (Mahasthan and its Environs) Varendra Research Society, Rajshahi, Bengal, August, 1929, P. 4.
5. K.N. Dikshit: Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 55, Dehli, A.D. 1938, P. 80.
6. Ibid, P. 87.

the general mass even when they had replaced the earlier object of reverence.

This archaeological evidence is of great importance. It at once reminds us of the stories given in Sekh Subhodaya where we learn about the disputations held between the Muslim saints and the local Sādhus. It is not difficult to realise that after the defeat of the Sādhus and their conversion to Islām, their habitat was occupied by the saints and turned into dargāhs. Such an hypothesis alone explains the presence of so many dargāhs on top of mounds and at the same time rationalises the stories given in literature. These Sādhus, who were mostly Tāntric Gurus had mysterious influence over the credulous masses. They were more than mere religious teachers. They had become an institution by themselves, round whom flocked the villagers in search of salvation, relief from miseries and solace in the distracted world. Their abode had become a tīrtha (place of pilgrimage). The people had blind faith on them. Naturally when these Sādhus were converted by the Muslim saints who occupied the old places, the devotion of the masses to these places did not diminish. On the other hand the miracles and the piety of the new saints worked more in their imagination leading ultimately to mass conversion of the local populace. They became Muslims in name retaining all their local beliefs and customs. They learnt the rudiments of Islam by attaching themselves to the new saints, but did not discard their own language, and their

particular ways of life. As a result there is a strong local element<sup>1</sup> in the Islām of Bengal. In this Islām the dargāhs quite naturally have played, and are playing today the most important part. It would not be an exaggeration to say that they are the nerve-centre of the Bengali Muslim Society. They have all the three, religious, educational and sociological significance. Some of the saints have been so popular that their names are incorporated in the local boat songs<sup>2</sup>.

In conclusion, it must be stated that the Muslim saints and the dargāhs have deeply affected the growth of the Muslim society in Bengal.

---

1. See, Infra, Pp. 209 ff.

2. Dacca Review, August, 1913, P. 142.

## CHAPTER - IV.

COMPOSITION OF THE MUSLIM SOCIETY.

The building up of the Muslim Society in Bengal is a long process of gradual growth, as has been discussed in the last chapter. The composition of the society quite naturally also differed from century to century. Two factors were mainly responsible in swelling the ranks of the Muslims in Bengal: (i) the immigration of the foreign Muslim populace, and (ii) merging of the local populace in the Muslim Society after their conversion.

The foreigners migrated into Bengal on several occasions - some came in the wake of conquest<sup>1</sup>, some joined later in the services<sup>2</sup>, some followed the appointment of new Governors from Dehli<sup>3</sup>, some trekked in as peaceful settlers in search of livelihood<sup>4</sup>, some ventured as traders and businessmen<sup>5</sup>, and some were fired with missionary zeal<sup>6</sup>. Almost all of them

- 
1. Minhāj (P. 147) refers how the Khaljīs flocked together round Muḥammad Bakhtyār, after his initial successes in Bihar. Minhāj (P. 152) also refers to ten thousand soldiers with whom Bakhtyār marched against Tibet.
  2. The most important example is that of 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh (later on Sultān) who first accepted office under the Sultān. (Tārīkh-i-Ferishtah, Vol. II, Pp. 301-2). For appointment of Mabshī slaves see, Ibid, P. 298.
  3. For those who were left in Bengal with Bughrā Khān, see, Iṣāmī: Futūh al-Salātīn, edited by Agha Mahdi Husain, Agra, 1938, P. 166; Muntakhab, Vol. I, P. 94. For recruitment of soldiers by Alī Mardān Khaljī, see, History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 18.
  4. For example Amir Zayn al-Dīn Harwī, the poet-laureate of Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh (See, Supra, P. 100) and Mawlānā Abū Tawwāmah, (Supra, Pp. 85 ff.)
  5. For a businessmen under Alī Mardān Khaljī see, Minhāj, Pp. 159-60.
  6. For Sūfīs, see, Chapter III, Section (C).

came along with that horde of migration that was set afoot by the devastating flood of Mongol eruption from their homeland<sup>1</sup> north of China. Many uprooted families from Central Asia sought refuge in this sub-continent, many of the crowned heads thrown out from their maghads took the garb of royal saints<sup>2</sup>, and moved on to a new missionary life, many craftsmen, architects, poets and painters flew away from the raging scourge and found shelter in the plains of this sub-continent. In the biographical sketches of the saints and scholars we have traced before how they moved out of their homeland and settled in Bengal.

These immigrants introduced new elements in the Muslim Society. They came under the banner of Islām, but they brought with them their particular ways of life, and as far as practicable tried to keep a homogeneity of their group. The earliest such people were the Khaljī conquerors. Minhāj<sup>3</sup> says how men belonging to Khalj tribe flocked around Bakhtyār, hearing about his dare-devil conquests. It is they who formed the first Muslim nobility in Bengal, and it is round their oligarchy that the Muslim society began to take shape in Bengal. Later with their subjugation new Turks poured into this country till towards the end of the 13th century A.D. Bengal became a refuge of the Ilbarī Turks driven out from

---

1. Dr. K.R. Qanungo in History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 1.

2. For such saints, see, Chapter III, Section (C), Pp.112,154,156.

3. Minhāj, P. 147.



Dehlī<sup>1</sup>. Lakhnawtī and Dehlī, for more than a quarter of a century, stood face to face with reversed position; the Khaljīs along with the local converts occupying supreme place in Dehlī, and the Ilbarī Turks with their supporters holding their own in Bengal. The Tughluqs, who were Qaraunah Turks, broke this rivalry and isolation<sup>2</sup> and once again opened the way for fresh migration. Their supporters from far off places like Panjab, Multan and Sijistān found an easy opening to Bengal. One such immigrant was Hājī Ilyās from Sijistān<sup>3</sup>, who founded the Independent Sultānate and who was the first to unite the whole of Bengal under him in A.D. 1353<sup>4</sup>.

In the years to come we hear of the importation of the Abyssinian slaves<sup>5</sup> by Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh. Still later came the Afghāns<sup>6</sup> (popularly known as Pathans) when they lost power in Dehlī to the Mughals, and the latter in chasing the Pathans spread out in the East, but their real supremacy in Bengal belongs to a period subsequent to that discussed here.

- 
1. Under the House of Balban and their supporter Shams al-Dīn Firūz Shāh and his children.
  2. Baranī, Pp. 450 ff., 454.
  3. Al-Sakhāwī: Al-Daw al-Lāmi' li-ahl al-qarn al-tāsī, Cairo, A.H. 1303, Part II, P. 313.
  4. N.K. Bhattachali: Coins and Chronology of the Early Independent Sultans of Bengal, Cambridge, A.D. 1922, P. 27.
  5. Tārīkh-i-Ferishta, Vol. II, P. 298.
  6. Ibid, Pp. 301-2.

On the other hand the local converts hailed from different ranks in the society. The large majority came from the general mass, who being attracted by the miracles and piety of the Muslim saints, accepted Islām. There are traditions which speak of the rivalry<sup>1</sup> between Buddhists and the

1. An important example is found in Chapter "Niranjaner \* Rushma" of Sūnya Purāna, edited by C.C. Bandopadhyay, Calcutta, B.S. 1336.

জাজপুর পুরবাদি হোমোম ভজ গ্রহ বোদি  
 বোদি লম্ব কেবোম দুর্জয় ।  
 দাখিন্যা মাগিডে জাজ জার গ্রহে নাহি পাঅ  
 মাংস দিয়া শূড়াই ডুবন ॥  
 মানদেহে নাগে কর দিনঅ কল্প যুন  
 দাখিন্যা মাগিডে জাজ জার গ্রহে নাহি মাংস  
 মাংস দিয়া শূড়াই ডুবন ॥  
 মানদেহে নাগে কর না চিনে আশন পর  
 জোনের নাহিক দিমমাং ।  
 বাবশ্চে হইল বড় দম বিম হুয়া জড  
 মদুম্মির কর এ বিনাং ॥  
 বেদ করে উচ্চারণ বের্যাজ আশি স্বান ঘন  
 দোখিয়া মজাই কল্পমান ।  
 মনেত পাঠিয়া সন্ন্য মডে বোলে বাথ বিন্ন  
 জোমা বিনা কে করে শরিত্তান ॥  
 এইকমে দ্বিজ গন করে শাস্তি মণ্ডারন  
 ই বড় হোইল আবিচার ।  
 বৈকুণ্ঠে জাকিয়া ধর্ম মানত পাঠিয়া সন্ন্য  
 মাগিডে হোইল অনুকার ॥  
 ধর্ম হৈয়া জবনকপি মাথাএত কান টোপি  
 হাতে মোড়ে শিকচ কাগান ।  
 চাপিয়া উত্তম হয় বিডুবনে নাগে ডয়  
 হোদাং বাবশা এক নাম ॥

Hindus, and the former welcoming the Muslims and joining hands with them. Many of the humbler people chose to identify

নিরঞ্জন নিরাকার                      হৈন্য ডেপ্ত অর্জার  
 মুখেত বনেত দধুদার ।  
 জতেক দেবতাগন                      মডে হুয়্যা একমন  
 আনন্দেত পারিন হৈজার ॥  
 ব্রহ্মা হৈন মঠামদ                      বিষ্ণু হৈন্য পেকাম্বুর  
 আদম্বু হৈন মুনপানি ।  
 গনেশ হৈজা গাজী                      কাণ্ডিক হৈন কাজি  
 ফাকির হৈন্য জতে মুন ॥  
 জেজিয়া আশন ডেক                      নারদ হৈন্য মেক  
 শুরমর হৈন মনান ।  
 চন্দ্র মধ্য আদি দেবে                      পদাতিক হুয়্যা মেবে  
 মডে মিন বজায় বজনা ॥  
 আশুরি চণ্ডিকা দেবি                      তিষ্ঠ হৈন্য হুয়্যা বিবি  
 পদ্মাবতী হুয় বিবি নূর ।  
 জতেক দেবতাগন                      হুয়্যা মডে একমন  
 প্রবেশ করিন জাজশুর ॥  
 দেউন দেহারী জাধে                      কাড়্যা ফিড়্যা থায় বধে  
 মাখড, মাখড বোমে বোন ।

Translation :- "There are sixteen hundred families of the Brahmins in Jāipur. They go to different places demanding dakshinā; where they do not get any, they pronounce their curse and thus burn the world. At Maldah they levy a regular tax. They go demanding dakshinā, where they do not get any, they pronounce their curse and thus burn the world. At Maldah they levy a regular tax upon all without distinction. There is no end of their knavery. They have grown very strong; ten to twenty come together and destroy the worshippers of Dharma. They pronounce the Vedas, fire issues forth incessantly, everyone trembles before them. Being aggrieved at heart, people say, O' Dharma, protect us. Who is there other than yourself

themselves with the Muslims in order to be free from social injustice and to gain good position in the society<sup>1</sup>. It is these elements which created the popular aspect of Islām<sup>2</sup>. But there were higher section of the people who were gradually succumbing<sup>3</sup> to the influence of Islām, either political or religious. Among these may be mentioned the names of Bhojar Brahmin<sup>4</sup>, Sultan Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad<sup>5</sup> and 'Pirali Brahmanas'<sup>6</sup> (converted to Islām) in Khulna district. It is the presence

---

who can rescue us? Thus do the Brahmins destroy the creation. This is burning injustice. Dharma, from his seat in the Vaikuntha knew all this in his mind. He produced illusion and produced darkness. He assumed the form of Yavana (i.e. Muslim), wore a black cap on the head with bow and arrow in hand. The best is achieved without fear with the utterance of one name of Khodā (God) who is formless and without any attribute and who is incarnate in Behist (Paradise). They utter the name of Madār (Shah Madār?). All the gods with one accord wore the trousers with great delight. Brahma became Muhammad; Vishnu, Paighambar (prophet); Siva, Adam; and Ganesa became Ghāzī. Kārtika became Qādī and muni became faqir. Throwing away his proper vestment Nārada became a Shaykh, Indra became a Malāna (Mawlāna). The sun, the moon and other gods became foot soldiers, and all began to play martial music. Chandikā transformed herself into Eve and Padmāvati became Bibī Nūr. All the gods with one accord entered Jajpur, broke the temple and images, seized (property) and called out 'catch hold of' him or them".

1. R.C.Mitra: The Decline of Buddhism in India, Visva-Bharati, A.D. 1954, Pp. 78-79, 81. According to Duarte Barbosa (Barbosa, P. 148) "the heathens daily become Moors to gain royal favour".

2. See, Infra, Pp. 209 ff.

3. Chaitanya Bhāgavata, Adi, 14th.

হিন্দু কুনে কেহ হেন ইচ্ছয়া ব্রাহ্মণ ।  
আপন আশিয়া হুই ইচ্ছায় যবন ॥

Translation :- "Among the Hindus some being Brahmins, become Yavanas according to their own will!"

4. See, Supra, P. 81.

5. Rivād, P. 113.

6. J.A.S.B. 1867, P. 132.

of such people in Islām, which reacted to foreign elements and were mainly responsible in giving a local colour<sup>1</sup> to the Muslim society of Bengal.

There were also children of mixed marriages. Several examples of Muslim migrants taking Hindu wives<sup>2</sup> are found in the literature. The children of such persons attained rank in the society depending upon their father's station in life. The example of Muhammad Khān<sup>3</sup>, a 17th century Bengali poet may be cited, whose ancestor, a certain Mahīsawār came to

1. A.H. Dani: "The House of Rājā Gaṇeśa of Bengal" in J.A.S.B. 1952, Introduction.
2. (a) Vijaya Gupta: Pandma Purāna, edited by B.K.Bhattacharjee, Bānī Niketan, Barisal, P. 56.

সেই দিনে হিন্দু কন্যা তাঁর কর্মফলে ।  
বিবাহ করিল কাজি শরি আমির বলে ॥

Translation :- "She was a Hindu girl. It was her misfortune that the Qādī forced her away and married her!"

- (b) Abdul Karim: Bānglā Prāchīn Punthir Bivaraṇa, Part I, Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Patrika, additional number, B.S. 1310, P. 159.

আমি আচাৰ্য্যৰ তৰে সে দেশে এমন্তু জুৰে  
দোষিমেৰু আচাৰ্য্য নাম্বি ।  
ৰূপে বিদ্যাৰ জিনি সুৰাশামি ধৰ্ম্মবানী  
নয়ান অমন কমানি ॥  
দোষি আমি আচাৰ্য্যৰ বিপ্রদ্বাৰে তে কন্যাৰ  
আগিমেৰু বিবাহ কৰিত ।

আচাৰ্য্য না দিন জুৰে ব্রাহ্ম আৰোহিয়া তৰে  
বিপ্রদ্বাৰ আট্টন ত্ৰাৰিত ॥  
ডমে ধৰ্ম্ম বিপ্রজন আচাৰ্য্য ডাৰিয়া বন  
দাঁত কৈলা আসনা নাম্বি ।

Translation :- "While Mahī Asawār (correctly, Mahīsawār) was travelling through that country (Chittagong), he saw

Bengal, married a Brahmin girl, and left behind a line of children, who were governors<sup>1</sup> in Chittagong in the later Ilyās Shāhī and Husayn Shāhī periods. Tradition makes Husayn Shāh

the daughter of Acharya. She excelled Vidyādhara (the heroine of Vidyā Sundara legend) in beauty, her smile and talk outpoured nectar and her eyes were like lotus. When Māhisawār saw her, he proposed to the Brahmin to marry her. When Acharya did not agree, he rode on a tiger and appeared before the Brahmin. All the Brahmins fled away out of fear, Acharya paused and gave his daughter in marriage!

(c) For one Shāh Kamāl's marrying a Hindu lady see, J.A.S.B. 1874, P. 285.

(d) According to tradition Ilyās Shāh married a Hindu lady. (N.K.Bhattacharya: Coins and Chronology of the Early Independent Sultans of Bengal, Cambridge, A.D. 1922, P. 83.

3. Abdul Karim: Bānglā Prāchīn Punthir Bivaranā, Part I, No. 1, Bānglā Sāhitya Parishad Patrikā, additional number, B.S. 1310, Pp. 159-161.

1. Muhammad Khān gives the following geneology :- (Abdul Karim: Bānglā Prāchīn Punthir Bivaranā, Part I, No. 1, Pp.177 ff. E. Haq and Abdul Karim: Arakān Rājisabhāve Bānglā Sāhitya, Calcutta, A.D. 1935, P. 74).

Māhisawār

↓

Hātim

↓

Siddiq

↓

Rāstī Khān (identified with Rāstī Khān, Governor of Chittagong under Rukn al-Din Bārbak Shāh).

↓

Minā Khān (identified with Parāgal Khān, Governor of Chittagong under 'Alā'al-Dīn Husayn Shāh).

↓

Gābhur Khān (identified with Chhute Khān, Governor of Chittagong under 'Alā'al-Dīn Husayn Shāh and Nusrat Shāh).

↓

Hamza' Khān

↓

Nusrat Khān

↓

Jalāl Khān

↓

Ibrāhīm Khān.

Mubāriz Khān.

↓

Muhammad Khān.

(See also, Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, Karachi Session, 1951, Pp. 201-202.

in his early life a servant of a Brahmin<sup>1</sup>. He rose by dint of merit to be the Sultān of Bengal. The Habshī slaves rose to masnad simply with the help of sword<sup>2</sup>. Nizām al-Dīn Ahmad Bakhshī<sup>3</sup> remarks, "They say that during some years, there was such a custom in Bangālah that whoever slew a ruler, and sat on the throne, everyone became submissive and obedient to him". Low origin does not seem to have offered any barrier in gaining position in the society. There also does not appear to have been any stigma attached to the children of mixed marriages nor did they form any distinct class of their own.

Local tradition also attaches some significance to the migration of Arab traders in Chittagong and the growth of a Muslim population mixed with Arab blood in that region<sup>4</sup>. There is no doubt that the Arabs carried on trade with the Chittagong coast<sup>5</sup>, but as we have shown earlier<sup>6</sup>, no definite record is available to substantiate the hypothesis of such

- 
1. Chaitanya Charitāmrita, Published by Vasumati Sahitya Mandir, Calcutta, P. 304. Bengal District Gazetteers; Murshidabad, Calcutta, A.D. 1914, P. 20.
  2. Tārīkh-i-Ferīshṭah, Vol. II, P. 299.
  3. Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī, Vol. III, Bibliotheca Indica, P. 268.  
گویند سالی چند در بنگالہ چنین رسم شد کہ ہر کہ حاکمرا کشتہ بر تخت نشست  
بہر مطیع و فرمان بردار او می شدند -
  4. E. Haq and Abdul Karim: Arakān Rāisabhāve Bānglā Sāhitya, Calcutta, A.D. 1935, P. 3.
  5. A.H. Dani: "Early Muslim Contact with Bengal" in The Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, Karachi Session, A.D. 1951.
  6. See, SUDRA, P. 21.

an Arab fusion. It must however be maintained that Chittagong, being an important port-town, Arabs, Persians and many other foreign merchants came there for commerce and trade. Barbosa<sup>1</sup> gives a similar account of the city of Bengal<sup>2</sup> and records the presence of "Arabs, Persians, Abexis and Indians".

How were these people divided into social organisation, is still more difficult to say. The Holy Qur'an says, "O mankind, Lo ! we have created you men and women, and have made you nations and tribes that you may know one another. Lo ! the noblest of you in the sight of Allāh is the most pious of you. Lo ! Allāh is Knower, Aware"<sup>3</sup> Thus the distinction among the Muslims is in respect of their piety and their affiliation to the nations or tribes, and not in the sense of class distinction as it technically means to-day or what the caste distinction means in Hinduism. But this is a general religious principle. In practical life it is possible to distinguish some groups of people having mutual relations based on common interest. The earliest reference to such groups is found in the Inshā-i-Mahrū<sup>4</sup>, which contains a proclamation by Sultān Firūz Shāh Tughluq issued in the name of the people of the territory of Lakhnawtī on the eve of

---

1. Barbosa, Pp. 135, 139.

2. For identification of the city of Bengal see, Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. XIX, A.D. 1943, Pp. 316 ff.

3. Qur'an, 49; 13.

4. Quoted in J.A.S.E. 1923, P. 280.



his first invasion of Bengal (A.D. 1353). Here the people are grouped as follows :-

- (i) The Sādāt, Ulamā, Mashā'ikh and others of similar nature;
- (ii) The Khāns, Maliks, Umarā, Sadrs, Akāber and Mā'arif;
- (iii) The 'train and suit' of No. (ii);
- (iv) Zamīndārs, Muqaddams, Mafruzman, Madkān and such like;
- (v) Hermits, Sains and gabrs (probably gurus).

Here we meet with a good cross-section of the upper class of the society in Bengal, who counted for being mentioned in the royal proclamation. It is not difficult to determine their exact meaning with the help of other details given in the document. In connection with Nos. (i), (ii) and (iii) the order speaks of "their fiefs, villages, lands, stipends, wages and salaries". Obviously these were the sources of income to the persons concerned. Among these we can easily distinguish (a) Sayyids, (b) Alims, i.e. scholars, (c) Shaykhs i.e. saints, (d) Officers, bearing titles like Khān etc. and (e) the servants of lower cadre attached to (d). It is important to note that the Sayyids, Scholars and Saints are grouped together and they are given precedence over the officials. With respect to class (iv), the order speaks of the "revenue", "produce", and "illegal taxes and dues" — obviously implying that these have got to do with agricultural produce as distinct from the official class and the scholarly

and saintly groups. To the last class are assigned "hermits, sains and gabrs (?)" who also enjoyed income from "fiefs, villages, lands, wages and stipends etc.". Their privileges are almost the same as those of class (i), (ii) and (iii). But the very fact that they are mentioned separately shows that there was some fundamental difference between the two broad groups. If the terms used are indicative of their true affiliation, it can be deduced that the persons of earlier group are Muslims and those of the latter are non-Muslims as Sain can be derived from the sanskrit word Sādhu and gabr is probably a mistake for guru.

It is necessary here to say something about the persons implied under different terms.

(i) The Sayyids :-

They, being the descendants of the Prophet, were looked upon with veneration and respect by the general population. Khān - Jahān of Bagerhat, who was first to bring Khulna-Jessore area under the Muslim domination, claims himself to be a "lover of the descendants of the Prophet"<sup>1</sup>. In the reign of Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn ʿIwāḍ Khalji, they received stipend from the State<sup>2</sup>. Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq promised increment of stipends to the Sayyids<sup>3</sup>. They had no hesitation to have matrimonial connections with those who did not claim such a noble ancestry or to receive training from those who were

---

1. J.A.S.E., 1867, P. 135, Appendix I.

2. Minhāj, P. 161.

3. J.A.S.E., 1923, P. 280.

spiritually or in other way superior to them. For example, Sayyid Husayn Makkī (later on Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh) married, according to tradition, the daughter of a Qādī of Rādhā<sup>1</sup>, while his son Nuṣrat Shāh married the daughter of Sultān Ibrāhīm Lodī<sup>2</sup>. It has been said earlier that Māhīawār, the ancestor of poet Muhammad Khān married a Brahmin girl<sup>3</sup>. Shaykh 'Alā' al-Haq, who claimed to be a Sayyid, received his spiritual teachings from Shaykh Akhī Sirāj al-Dīn 'Uthmān al-Badāyūnī, who did not claim such a high birth<sup>4</sup>.

The proclamation of Fīrūz Shāh shows that the Sayyids formed an important element in the society of Pandwah<sup>5</sup>. Similarly Vipradāsa's description of the Muslim population of Satgāwn refers to the Sayyids as an important group<sup>6</sup>. A Sayyid dynasty, consisting of four rulers, ruled over Bengal for long forty five years from (A.D. 1493-1538)<sup>7</sup>. Lastly, a large number of Sūfis claimed to be Sayyids and traced their origin to the family of the Prophet<sup>8</sup>. The fact that Sayyid Sultān<sup>9</sup>, a mid-16th century poet wrote in the local language

1. Riyāḍ, P. 132.

2. Tārīkh-i-Ferīḡhah, Vol. II, P. 302.

3. See, Supra, P. 185, note 2.

4. See, Chapter III, Section (C), Pp. 128-29.

5. J.A.S.E., 1929, P. 280.

6. See, Infra, Pp. 196-97.

7. History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 142-163.

8. See, Chapter III, Section (C), Biographical Sketch of the Sūfis.

9. For details on Sayyid Sultān, see, Ophāte Rasūl, edited by Ali Ahmad, B.S. 1356, Introduction.

shows that the Sayyids not only settled in this country, but some of them mastered the local language also. The Sayyids thus came to Bengal in different times, settled here and engaged in various professions. All the same the Muslims in general paid due respect to them in whatever walk of life they might be. They did not form a professional class, nor can this class be regarded as Brahmins are in the Hindu society, though in both the factor of birth is common. Unlike the Brahmins the Sayyids have no legal claim to superiority, though in practice they are respected because of their connection with the family of the Prophet.

(ii) The Ālims :-

Etymologically, the word Ālim means one who knows, but technically it means a person who is well-versed in Islāmic sciences. Whoever could master the science of religion was called an Ālim. Bhojar Brahmin, the Yogi, learnt the Islāmic science<sup>1</sup> to such an extent that the Muslim divines permitted him to pronounce legal decisions. The Ālims could also attain the status of a Sūfī. Mawlānā Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmāh was a Sūfī, as his book Maqāmat suggests<sup>2</sup>.

Generally the Ālims accepted the profession of teaching. Sayyid Sultān, a Bengali poet records the following duty of an Ālim. "Living in the country, if any Ālim does not teach

---

1. Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, Vol. I, Part I, January, 1953, P. 47.; See also Supra, P. 81.

2. See, Chapter III, Section (B), Pp. 85 ff.

(the religious principles), he will surely be put to the hell. If the people commit sin, God will catch hold of 'Alims and will punish them"<sup>1</sup>. The 'Alims thus considered it their obligatory duty to teach the people. This is further substantiated by the fact that the 'Alims maintained academies, imparted instructions and sometimes wrote books on religious sciences. We have seen earlier that Qādī Rukn al-Dīn al-Samarqandī converted and taught Bhojar Brahmin, the Yogi<sup>2</sup>; Mawlānā Taqī al-Dīn, whose student was Shaykh Yaḥyā of Maner, imparted instructions<sup>3</sup>; Mawlānā Sharf al-Dīn Abū Tawwāmah maintained a madrasah where he taught all branches of religious sciences<sup>4</sup>. Nām-i-Haq, a book on jurisprudence, was also written here by an 'Alim<sup>5</sup>. Moreover, the erection of madrasahs by the royal patrons, as referred earlier<sup>6</sup>, necessitated the appointment of 'Alims to impart education on "the sciences of religion and instruction in the principles which lead to certainty"<sup>7</sup>.

1. Sayyid Sulṭān: Ophāte Rasūl, edited by Ali Ahmad, B.S. 1356, Pp. 3-4.

দেমেত য়ানিম থাকি জদি না জানাএ ।  
 মে য়ানিম নাকৈ সাড়ি মবব'থায় ॥  
 নর ম'ব সাশ টেকবে য়ানিমিক শরি ।  
 য়ানির সাশকাত মারিবেনু বের'বোডি ॥

2. See, Chapter III, Section (B), P. 81.

3. Ibid, P. 84.

4. Ibid, P. 91.

5. Ibid, Pp. 93 ff.

6. See, Chapter III, Section (A), Pp. 54 ff.

7. Memoirs, Pp. 157-158. لتدريس علوم الدين وتعليم احكام اليقين

Secondly, as they were learned in the religious sciences, they were also appointed as Qādīs i.e. the office in which an incumbent was required to be well-versed in Islāmic Law. We have, on the authority of Ferishta<sup>1</sup>, discussed earlier, that Sultān Shams al-Dīn Yūsuf Shāh used to call the ‘Alims at intervals to admonish them not to side with anybody in discharging religious matters.

(iii) The Shaykhs :-

The word 'Shaykh' means old, but technically it means doctors in Muslim law and theology. In this sense they are ‘Alims, but the Shaykhs are those ‘Alims, who adopt the profession of teaching. This explains why the Inshā-i-Mahrū draws a distinction between the ‘Alims and the Shaykhs<sup>2</sup>. The word 'Shaykh' has been appended to the names of almost all the Sūfīs of Bengal about whom we have discussed<sup>3</sup>. This is probably due to the fact that the Sūfīs actually devoted themselves to the teaching of Islamic Sciences along with their mystic performances. We have, therefore, identified the Shaykhs with the Sūfīs.

The Shaykhs played a prominent part in the Bengali society. We have seen earlier that a good number of them made different part of this country the scene of their activities by establishing Chillakhānahs or Khāncāhs. Each of them had a large following under them<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, as has been pointed

---

1. Chapter III, Section (A), P. 73,

2. Supra, P. 189.

3. Chapter III, Section (C).

4. Ibid.

out earlier, they helped the expansion of Muslim royal power, imparted instructions, influenced the ruling class and lastly converted the local people to Islām. They maintained poor houses, giving relief to the poor and the destitutes<sup>1</sup>. In this period, especially in Bengal, the word 'Shaykh', as said before, was applied only to the Muslim saints. But today the connotation is changed. According to E. Haq and Abdul Karim,<sup>2</sup> in some parts of West Bengal it signifies the lower class Muslims, generally converted ones, and in East Bengal, especially in Chittagong it is used for the aristocratic non-Sayyids.<sup>3</sup>

(iv) The Official Class :-

The bureaucracy in the Kingdom formed the official class in the society. They bore the title of Khān, Malik, Amīr, Sadr, Kabīr and Maārif. In the inscriptions of the period, Khān is the simplest title conferred on the officers. Their further elaboration is as follows<sup>4</sup>:- Khān Muāzzam, Khān al-Āzam, Khān-i-Khānān, Khān al-Muāzzam al-Mukarram, Khān Khān al-Sharq wa al-Sīn. Malik is another title borne by the officials. It has also different grades as follows<sup>5</sup>:- Malik al-Muāzzam, Malik al-Muāzzam wa al-Mukarram, Malik

1. See, Chapter III, Section (C), Part II.

2. E. Haq and Abdul Karim: Arakān Rāisabhāve Bānglā Sāhitya, Calcutta, 1935, P. 92.

3. Ibid.

4. For inscription see, J.A.S.B. 1870, P. 290; 1872, P. 106; 1873, Pp. 272-73; 293-94; 1860, P. 407; 1909, P. 260; 1917, P. 149; Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, 1935-36, Pp.57-58.

5. For inscriptions see, Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, 1933-34, Pp. 23-24, J.A.S.B. 1872, Pp. 337-38; J.A.S.B. 1873, P.283.

al-Mulk, Malik al-Mulk al-Sharq, Malik al-Umarā wa al-Wuzarā.  
But sometimes this was also assumed by the princes. Bārbak Shāh (later on Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh) is called in the inscription, Malik al-'ādil al-bādhil al-fādil al-kāmil (the Malik, the just, the liberal, the learned and the perfect)<sup>1</sup>. We have only one instance of the use of Amīr before the name of a Sultān and that is in the case of Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad Shāh<sup>2</sup>. Sadr probably was the chief of the department of justice<sup>3</sup>. Kabīr and Ma'ārif probably implied the renowned official of the kingdom.

This evidence about the Muslim society, derived from the Persian source, needs to be checked from the local information. Fortunately we have a similar reference in Manasā Vijaya of Vipradās dated A.D. 1495<sup>4</sup>, who mentions about the Muslim population of Satgāwā<sup>5</sup>. He speaks of the following people:

1. For inscription see, J.A.S.E. 1870, P. 290.
2. Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal, P. 14.
3. I.H. Qureshi: Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi, 2nd edition, Lahore, A.D. 1944, P. 85.
4. Sukumar Sen: Bānglā Sahitver Itihāsa, Calcutta, A.D. 1940, P. 105.
5. Ibid, P. 114.

নিবাস যবন যত                      জাফা বা বানি [ব] কত -  
মোকদ্দিম খাতিব মোকদ্দিম ।  
মৈয়দ মোস্তা কাজি              কোজব কোবাপ কাজি,  
দুই ওজ কবে জহান্নি ॥

Translation :- "The Muslim population of (Saptagrāma) is innumerable, they belong to Mughals, Pathans and Mokādims (Makhdūms). The Sayyids, Mullas and Qādīs are busy with the Qurān and the Kitābs (religious books)!"



- (i) Mongol, Pathan.
- (ii) Mokadim (i.e. Makhdūm).
- (iii) Sayyid.
- (iv) Mullā.
- (v) Qādī.

All these people he calls by the general name of "Yavana", and speaks how they pray in the mosque and read Qur'an and Kitāb (probably religious books). Herein we get a picture of the Muslim society as it appeared to a Hindu living far away from the capital. Here there is no reference to the official class, except the Qādī, who came in contact with the common people in smaller towns more than the higher officials. The name of Mullā is very significant. The part played by him has been discussed in another place<sup>1</sup>. The Sayyids have already been discussed before<sup>2</sup>. The Makhdūm is another name by which the Muslim saints are remembered in the inscriptions<sup>3</sup>. They have been dealt with before<sup>4</sup>. Mongols and Pathans are racial terms, used probably to refer to the foreign Muslim populace of the place.

The use of these two racial terms in<sup>A.D.</sup> 1495 by Vipradāsa is difficult to explain. In the Sanskrit inscriptions we get only Turushka<sup>5</sup> or Tajika<sup>6</sup>, besides the general nomenclature

- 
1. See, Infra, Pp. 220 ff.
  2. See, Supra, P. 190.
  3. For inscriptions see, J.A.S.B. 1872, P. 107; J.A.S.B. 1873, Pp. 271, 290, 294; Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, 1929-30, Pp. 11-12.
  4. Chapter III, Section (C). See also, Supra, P. 194.
  5. Epigraphia Indica, Vol. II, Pp. 361 ff.; Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, Karachi Session, 1951, P. 200.
  6. J.A.S.B. 1898, Vol. LXVII, P. 116.

Yavana<sup>1</sup>. It is true, Mongols were not unknown to the Muslim historians of this sub-continent, as we have several references to them in connection with invasion from the north-west, and they are also known to have settled in Dehli<sup>2</sup>. But no other evidence is available to show that the peaceful Mongol settlers pushed as far east as Satgāwn, especially in such a large number as to have been mentioned by Vipradāsa. Even the use of the word 'Pathan' throws some doubt on the authenticity of the evidence. 'Pathan' is no doubt, the general term used in the sub-continent for 'Afghān', but the use of this word became more current after the overthrow of the Afghāns from Dehli by Mughal invasion in A.D. 1526 (and later the destruction of the Sūrī empire) and their consequent spreading out in Eastern India. In Bengal the descendants and supporters of Dāūd Khān Karrānī (died in A.D. 1576<sup>3</sup>) are referred to as Afghāns or Pathans as opposed to the Mughals who displaced their authority and established their rule here. Most probably from this time onward in Bengal the generic term Pathan was used for pre or non-Mughal Muslim population as opposed to the Mughals. In common parlance in India we get only four terms - Shaykh, Sayyid, Mughal and Pathan. The first refers to the saints, the second to the descendants of the Prophet and the last two are the same kind of generic

---

1. Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XIII, P. 153.  
J.A.S.B. 1892, P. 325.

2. Baranī, P. 219.

3. History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 192.

terms as used by Vipradāsa. Though no definite date can be fixed to the origin of this general proverb, it seems that it is of Mughal or post-Mughal creation. Therefore, it appears that the use of the terms 'Mongol' and 'Pathan' by Vipradāsa may not be taken seriously.

From another Bengali poet, Mukunda Rāma of a slightly later date (late 16th century<sup>1</sup>) we get a picture of the Muslim society of a lower cadre. He says<sup>2</sup> " There are some people called golā (correctly goalā or milk man). They do not perform Rozā (fasting) and Namāz (prayer). Those who accept the occupation of weaving are called jolhā (weavers). Those who drive bullocks are called Mukeri. Some sell cakes and are called Pithāri. Those who sell fish are called Kābāri; they

1. Sukumar Sen: Bānglā Sāhityer Itihāsa, Calcutta, 1940, p. 433.
2. Mukunda Rāma: Kavikañkan Chandī, published by Baṅgabāsi Karyālaya, Calcutta, P. 86.

বোজা কামাঙ্ক না করিয়া কেহ হৈব গোলা ।  
তাঁহর করিয়া নাম ধরাইল জোলা ॥  
বন্দুদ বাছিয়া নাম বন্দুদ মুকোরি ।  
পীঠী বোচিয়া নাম ধরায় পীঠারি ॥  
মুগু বোচিয়া নাম ধরায় কাবারি ।  
নিরকুর মিথ্যা কহে নাহি বাঢ়ে দাড়ি ॥  
শিকু হৈবে মুমন্নান বৈবে গম্ভীর ।  
বগন হৈবে গম্ভীর কেহ পাশ্চাত্তি নিশাকান ॥\*

\* Another reading:-

নিশাকান ডিঙ্গা পাগল নাম ধর কান ॥  
( cf. J.N.Das Gupta: Bēngal

in the 16th Century , Calcutta University. A.D.1914,  
Pp. 89 ff.)

do not keep beard and always tell a lie. Those Hindus who became Musalmāns, are called Ghorskāl (correctly Gol-sāz or maker of firework). Those who beg for alms at night are called Kāl. Those who make the looms are called Sānakār; they earn their livelihood at the mercy of weavers. Some go from town to town with their paintings, while others make bows and are called Tirakar (bowmen). Some make paper and are called Kagchā (from Kāghaz), while the Qalandars wander from place to place. Some who paint their cloths with dye-stuff are called Rang-raz; they wear red clothes on their head and they possess manliness. Some perform the work of circumcision and are called Hāiām, they move from one town to another without any rest. Some sell beef and are called Kasāi. They will have no place in Yamapura (next world). Those who cut cloths and then sew them are called darzi (tailor)".

---

মাস্তা বাক্শিয়া নাম ধীরে আসাকার ।  
 জীবন উপায় তার পাওয়া তাঁতিয়ার ॥  
 পটে পাড়িয়া কেহ ফিরিয়ে নগরে ।  
 তীরকর হুমে কেহ নিপ্পারণে শরে ॥  
 কাগজ কুটিয়া নাম ধবান্য কাগতি [কাগচা] ।  
 কনকর হুয়া কেহ ফিরে দিবারতি ॥  
 বমন বশায়্যা কেহ ধীরে বস-বেজে ।  
 মোড়িত বমন শিরে ধীরে মহাতেজে ॥  
 মুন্নত কাখিয়া নাম বোবান্য শাজাম ।  
 মগরে মগরে ফিরে না করে বিশ্বাম ॥  
 গোমাতুম বোচিয়া নাম বোবান্য কমাত্তে ।  
 এষ্টে হেতু যম-পুরে তার নাহি থাকি ॥  
 কাটিয়া কাপড জোড়ে দরজির গটা ।

\* ( cf. J.N.Das Gupta: Bengal in the 16th Century , Calcutta University. A.D. 1914, Pp. 89 ff.)

The above description gives only professional classes and throws light on the occupational groups of the Muslims. The first is named golā (golā?<sup>1</sup>). Then follow jolhā or julāhā, the weaver, mukeri in the sense of cowherd, pithāri i.e. baker, kābāri i.e. fish seller. Strangely enough the converted Muslims are called ghorsāl, a term, the meaning of which is difficult to determine, unless we take it for gol-sāz (maker of firework<sup>2</sup>). Other classes include kāl, i.e. beggar, sānākār i.e. loom maker, painter, tirakar i.e. bowmen, kagchā i.e. paper-manufacturer, rangrez i.e. dyers, darzī i.e. tailors, kasāi i.e. seller of beef, and hājām who performed circumcision. One more class mentioned is that of the Galandars i.e. wandering darwishes.

It appears that most of these professional classes were hereditary groups as they have been noticed in later period of history<sup>3</sup>. This is an important evidence suggesting that in the lower cadre the class system was based on profession and probably also on heredity. This may be an influence

---

1. That Muslims also adopted the profession of milkman is supported by James Wise, who made an elaborate study of the Muslim society in the last century. (Notes on the Races, Castes and Trades of Eastern Bengal, London, A.D. 1883, P. 68.)

2. James Wise (Ibid, P. 77) writes "The maker of fireworks, always a Muhammadan, is often called "Gol-saz", but the Persian title of "Atash-baz" is no longer in use".

3. James Wise: Op cit.

from the Hindu society, but it is not possible to say definitely how far they accepted other caste rules, like those of marriage, diet etc. of the Hindus.

As a whole the materials at our disposal give us a picture of the Muslim society divided into two broad classes - the higher class and the lower class: the higher class follow the usual pattern of the Muslim society in this sub-continent, but the lower class show survivals of local practices or influences from the Hindu society.

## CHAPTER - V.

ISLAM AS PRACTISED BY THE MUSLIMS OF BENGAL

The spread of Islām in Bengal was a gradual process. As the number of immigrants into Bengal does not appear to be considerably high, it was all the more necessary to win over the support of the local people either by converting them or by pacifying them. This necessity implied some sort of compromise with the local customs and beliefs, as it has been said before<sup>1</sup>. But fortunately, the problem was not so difficult for Islām in Bengal, because, (i) there has always been a preponderance of non-Aryan population in this region<sup>2</sup> and (ii) Buddhism has been a great competitor of Hinduism throughout the pre-Muslim period<sup>3</sup>. The non-Aryan elements had somehow identified themselves in the degraded Buddhism of the pre-Muslim period<sup>4</sup>. When such a keen rivalry was raging in the country, Islam came as a relieving force<sup>5</sup>, in which many found an easy opening to success and salvation. As it has been said before, there seem to have been mass conversion in Bengal wrought by the Muslim saints<sup>6</sup>. These converts retained their long-inherited customs, beliefs and even love

- 
1. See, Chapter II, P. 37. For local influences see, Infra, P. 209.
  2. A.H.Dani, "Evolution of the Bengali Muslim Society" in Bengali Literary Review, Karachi, A.D. 1956.
  3. History of Bengal, Vol. I, Dacca University, A.D. 1943, Chapter on Buddhism.
  4. A.H.Dani, "Evolution of the Bengali Muslim Society" in Bengali Literary Review, Karachi, A.D. 1956.
  5. "Niranjaner Rushma" in Sūnya Purāna, edited by C.C.Bandopadhyay, Calcutta, B.S. 1336. For quotation see, Supra, Pp. 182-83.
  6. See, Supra, Pp. 172 ff.

for old Hindu epics. Even in the late 16th century the Bengali poet Sayyid Sultān<sup>1</sup> complains of the Muslim masses' more devotion to this literature than to Qurān and other Islāmic subjects. Such being the state of affairs, it is not unnatural to expect that many popular elements have crept into the general belief of Islām in Bengal. However, this does not mean that Islām in its orthodox forms was not practised here at all. The following points help in understanding the nature of this aspect of Islām:

- (1) A large number of mosques<sup>2</sup> were erected that enabled the Muslims to offer their prayers, individual or congregational.
- (2) A number of madrasahs were established wherein religious instructions were imparted<sup>3</sup>.
- (3) Muslim scholars wrote books on Hadith and Fiqh. These were to teach the Muslims the fundamentals of Islām<sup>4</sup>.
- (4) People of Bengal visited the holy cities of Makkah and Madīnah<sup>5</sup>.
- (5) Muslims in Bengal observed fasts as it was in the case of Shāh Jalāl of Sylhet<sup>6</sup>.

---

1. Sayyid Sultān: Ophāte Rasūl, edited by Ali Ahmad, B.S.1356, P. 7. For quotation see, SUNRA, P. 104.

2. For details see, Chapter III, Section (A), Pp. 51 ff.

3. Ibid, Pp. 54 ff.

4. Chapter III, Section (B), P. 102.

5. Chapter III, Section (A), Pp. 64-65.

6. Ibn Battūtah, Vol. IV, P. 217.



Beside these, some important information is also supplied by the Bengali literature.

(1) Chaitanya Bhāgavata<sup>1</sup> :-

Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shah said to Haridāsa (Yavana Haridāsa of Vaishnava literature) :

"It is a good fortune that you became a Yavana, why do you follow Hindu practices? We do not take our meal after seeing a Hindu; you forsake that (religion), although you belong to Mahāyāna (great family). You violate the rules of your own community and religion; how will you escape (punishment) in the next world? Remove whatever sins you have committed out of ignorance by reciting the Kalimah".

This passage refers to the important tenets of Islam, the Day of Resurrection and the belief in the Oneness of God and belief in the Prophet as the Messenger of God.

---

• Chaitanya Bhāgavata, Adī, 14th.

কত ভোগ্য দেখে ছুঁমি হুঁচকি মন ।  
তবে কেন হিন্দুর আচারে দেখ মন ॥  
আমরা হিন্দুরে দেখি নাহি খাটে ভাত ।  
অন্য ছাড়া হুঁমি মদ্যবৎশ জাত ॥  
জাতি ধর্ম নাহি কর অন্য ব্যবহার ।  
পরলোকে কেমনে বা পাইবো নিশ্চয় ॥  
না জানিয়া যে কিছু করিবা অসার ।  
সে পাপ হুঁচকি করি কলিমা উদ্ধার ॥

The question of Haridāsa is a controversial point in Bengali literature. According to the Hindu version, he was converted from Islām to Vaishnavism, long before the birth of Chaitanya. But the miracles attributed to him throw doubt on the whole story. This quotation from Chaitanya Bhāgavata is also a Hindu version of the story.



was assigned to them. There came the Mughals, the Sayyids and the Qādīs mounting on horse. Pīr gave them rent-free lands for their houses. They built their houses at the extreme western end and named it Hasan Hāfi. They rise early in the morning and spreading a red pāṭī (mat), they say their prayers five times a day. Counting the Sulaymānī beads, they meditate on Pīr and Paighambar (Prophet) and illuminate the seat (dargāh) of the Pīr. Ten or twenty sit together to decide cases and always recite the Qurān and the Kitāb, while others sitting in the market places distribute the shirni (offerings of confectioneries) of the Pīr, beat the drum and raise the flag. They are very wise, they care for none, they never give up roza (fasting) as long as they have life in them. Their appearance is formidable, they keep no hair on their head but allow their beard to grow down to their chest. They always adhere to their own ways, they wear tensided caps on their head, and they wear

---

দশ বিশ বেবাদবে, বাসিয়া বিচার করে,  
 অনুদিন কিজার কোরাণ ।  
 মাঁজে জনা দেই গটে, সৌরব সৌরী বাঁটে,  
 মাঁবে বাজে দগড় মিশান ॥  
 বড়ই দারিমবদ, কাজকে না করে ছন্দ  
 শ্রাণ গেলে বোজা নাহি ছাড়ি ।  
 বিবধে কাঞ্চাজ বেশ, মাখে নাহি বাখে বেশ,  
 বুক আচ্ছাদিয়া বাখে দাড়ি ॥  
 না ছাড়ে আপন পথে, দশ রেখা টুপি মাখে,  
 ইজার সবয়ে দঢ় কারি ।  
 মার দেখে খানি মাথা, জা শূন না কহে কথা,  
 মারিয়া চেনার[চেনার?] মাখে বাড়ি ॥

ijār (trousers) which is tied tight to their waist. If they meet one who is bare-headed, they pass him by without uttering a word, but going aside they throw clods of earth at him".

Here the poet gives the description of a group of religious minded Muslims.

In the orthodox form of Islām, the Muslims practised religious principles, notably the fundamentals like Imān or belief in God and His Apostles, Namāz or prayer to God, Roza or fasting and Hajj or pilgrimage to the holy cities of Makkah and Madīnah. Of the fifth i.e. Zakāt (poor rate) reference is not available. It is not possible at this stage of our knowledge or with the materials at our disposal, to say whether all the Muslims or a substantial portion of them did adhere to all the fundamental principles of the orthodox Islām. But this much is certain that the conception was there and it was the endeavour of those at the helm of affairs to forge out a culture in accordance with the Islāmic principles. Mukunda Rāma's description also shows that there were people who held fast to the orthodox Islām.

The popular form of Islām included (i) the Pīrism or the concept of the supremacy of the Pīrs, (ii) Mullāism or the growth of the priestly influence and (iii) the reverence to the foot-prints of the Prophet.

(1) The Pīrism :-

Etymologically the word Pīr means old. But it is used generally to denote the teachers from whom people receive the spiritual instruction. As hundreds of people learnt from the Sūfīs during the period under review, the Sūfīs came to be known as Pīr in the popular phraseology<sup>1</sup>. It has been pointed out earlier<sup>2</sup> that super-human powers were ascribed to the Sūfīs such as giving relief to the poor, destitutes and the patients, being present at several places at a time, giving life to the dead, killing anybody at their wish and foretelling the future. Naturally, the Khānqahs, Chillākhānahs or tombs of the Pīrs became places of pilgrimage where constructions were made giving the name of Dargāh<sup>3</sup>. The devotees illuminated the graves and made offerings to the Pīrs or their departed soul. Ibn Baṭṭūṭah records that the people of the hilly region of Kamrup used to come and visit Shāh Jalāl

- 
1. "Pīr is a term denoting a spiritual director or guide among the Sūfīs, or mystics of Islām. The functionary described by the title is known also under the names: Shaikh, murshīd, ustādh. Pīr is a Persian word, but is applied to a spiritual guide more commonly in India and Turkey than in its native home; Shaikh in our special sense is in general use throughout Islam; murshīd is also wide-spread, but in Turkish or Arabic-speaking countries rather than in India; ustādh is found in Persia". (Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. X, P. 40.)
  2. See, Chapter III, Section (C), Part II.
  3. The following examples of Dargāhs may be cited:
    - (a) Bārī dargāh at Pandwah (see, Memoirs, Pp. 97 ff.)
    - (b) Chhotī dargāh at Pandwah (see, Memoirs, Pp. 106 ff.)
    - (c) Shrine of Mawlānā 'Atā' (see, J.A.S.E., 1872, Part I, P. 107; 1873, Part I, P. 290).

and bring for him gifts and presents<sup>1</sup>. It was on these presents that the dargāh subsisted. It may also be remembered that Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh granted lands for the maintenance of the shrine of Shaykh Nūr Qutb Ālam<sup>2</sup>.

The reverence to the Pīr or the concept of the super-human power of the Pīr was not of Bengali origin, rather it was imported from the West through Northern India by the immigrants. But in Bengal they found a fertile soil and were established on a solid foundation. The existing local population, the Buddhists had the practice of worshipping the chaityas or the stupas and adorning them with flowers and burning incense<sup>3</sup>. The Hindus had an identical idea in their Avatāriṣm<sup>4</sup>. The Pīrs appeared to them either as the Tāntric gurus or the teachers of the Sākta order. It is no wonder

1. Ibn Battūṭah, Vol. IV, P. 218.

2. Tārīkh-i-Ferīshṭah, Pp. 301-2.

Later traditions record that articles of daily use were also offered to the memory of the Pīrs. For example, people offered looking-glasses to the memory of Shāh Anwar Qulī Halwī (see, Chapter III, Section (C), P. 150). In some places clay horses are offered with the belief that lame babies get recovery through the good will of the saint (see, Enamul Haq: Baḡce Sūfī Prabhāva, Calcutta, 1935, P. 238).

3. For Buddhist monasteries and stupas in Bengal, see, R.E.M. Wheeler: Five Thousand Years of Pakistan, London, 1950, Pp. 98 ff.

4. Books were written on the Avatāriṣm of Krishna, see, for example, (a) Chandīdāsa: Śrī Krishna Kīrtana, edited by Basanta Rañjan Roy and published by Baḡgiya Sāhitya Parishad, Calcutta, B.S. 1323; (b) Malādhār Vasu: Śrī Krishna Vijaya, edited by Khagendranath Mitra, published by Calcutta University, 1944.

that the converts found the Pīrism in Islām somewhat parallel to their own traditions and superstitions. The following facts lend support to this conclusion. First, a large number of places where the tombs of Muslim Sūfīs or their Chillā-khānahs stand to-day were originally Hindu or Buddhist sites<sup>1</sup>. Secondly, sometimes false tombs were erected in those places. They became the places of pilgrimage and satisfied the superstitious nature of hundreds of people<sup>2</sup>.

(a) The worship of the Satya-Pīr:

A huge literature grew up in Bengal towards the beginning

1. For details, see, Cunningham: Archaeological Survey of India, Vol. XV.; R.D. Banerjee: "Saptagrāma" in J.A.S.B. 1909; see, Supra, P. 176. Dr. K.R. Qanungo (History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 69-70) writes on the subject as follows:

"The 'saints' of Islam completed the process of conquest, moral and spiritual, by establishing dargāhs and khan-gahs deliberately on the sites of these ruined places of Hindu and Buddhist worship. This served a double purpose of preventing the revival of these places of heathen sanctity, and later on, of installing themselves as the guardian deities with tale of pious fraud invented by popular imagination. Hindus who had been accustomed for centuries to venerate these places, gradually forgot their past history, and easily transferred their allegiance to the pirs and ghazis. The result of this rapprochement in the domain of faith ultimately created a more tolerant atmosphere which kept the Hindus indifferent to their political destiny. It prepared the ground for the further inroad of Islam into Hindu society, particularly among the lower classes who were gradually won over by an assiduous and persistent propaganda regarding the miracles of these saints and ghazis, which were in many cases taken over in toto from old Hindu and Buddhist legends".

2. Examples of false tombs are as follows: (a) tomb ascribed to Bēyazīd of Bistām in Chittagong (see, Enamul Haq: Bānge Sūfī Prabhāva, Calcutta, 1935, P. 147), (b) tombs in Mandaran ascribed to Shāh Ismāīl Ghāzī (see, J.A.S.B., 1917, Pp. 131 ff). Late Mawlwī Hamīd Allāh Khān of Chittagong in his book Abādīth al-Khawānīn (Calcutta, 1871, P. 17) composed and published in the 19th century writes as follows:

دران حسین بعضی از آوارگان جهان نورد و سیاحان صحرا گرد از فقرا و مسکین  
اسلام می آمدند و بمقابلہ مشاہد ہندوان و معابد مکھان مزارات و قبور باطلہ

of the 18th century A.D. centering round the Satya-Pīr<sup>1</sup>. While the Muslim writers call him Satya-Pīr, the Hindus change the word Pīr for Nārāyana though there is hardly any difference between the Satya-Pīr of the Muslims and the Satya-Nārāyana of the Hindus<sup>2</sup>. The worship of the Satya-Pīr (or Satya-Nārāyana) by both Hindus and the Muslims could be noticed in different parts of Bengal, especially in the western and northern districts even in the 20th century<sup>3</sup>. A wooden plank is used to denote the seat of the Satya-Pīr and offerings of edibles like confectioneries, milk, sugar, betel-leaf, betel-nuts are made. The earliest work on Satya-Pīr is attributed to Shaykh Fayḍ Allāh, said to have been composed in between A.D. 1545-1575<sup>4</sup>. It is needless to mention that the Satya-Pīr idea could not have grown in a day or in a year; it took many years to gain popularity among the people and to be a part and parcel of the social customs. If we allow

بنام قبر یا آستانه سلطان العارفين بائيد بسطامي قدس سره السامی و حضرت غوث الاولیاء  
شیخ عبدالقادر جیلانی رحمۃ اللہ تعالیٰ علیہ کہ گمان ہے این بزرگان درین دارالکفر نیامده بود  
امثال آن ساخته و برداخته ذریعہ ارزاق و وسیلہ اجتماع مردمان از نواحی  
و اتفاق کرده بودند کہ بتدریج سبب آمد و شد مسلمانان ہم پیدا شد و تخمیناً زیادہ از دو-  
ست

1. Sukumar Sen: Bāṅglā Sāhityer Itihāsa, Calcutta, 1940, Pp. 832 ff.
2. Ibid; see, E. Haq: Bāṅge Sūfī Prabhāva, Calcutta, 1935, P. 241.
3. Ibid.
4. E. Haq: Muslim Bāṅglā Sāhitya, Pakistan Publications, Dacca, 1957, Pp. 113-14.



at least one hundred years for the Satya-Pīr idea to obtain force in popular imagination so that it could influence a poet to write on it, and if the date assigned to Shaykh Fayḍ Allāh proves to be true, or even if his date is pushed forward by at least half a century, it may be concluded that the Satya-Pīr idea emerged sometimes in the later part of the period under review. D.C.Sen<sup>1</sup> thinks that Sultān Ālā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh was the originator of the Satya-Pīr movement, but there is no evidence to support his view.

The later Bengali literature records two traditions<sup>2</sup> regarding the Satya-Pīr (or Satya-Nārāyana) worship. According to the first, Śrī Hari (Hindu god) appears in the guise of a faqīr before a poor Brahmin and advises him to make offerings of shirni (confectioneries) to the Satya-Nārāyana. The Brahmin obeys the order and becomes rich due to the boon of the faqīr. The second tradition is as follows: A certain merchant obtains a female child with the blessing of the Satya-Nārāyana. He gives his daughter in marriage and takes the son-in-law with him on a certain trading voyage. There he was put to troubles before a certain king, because he did not worship Satya-Nārāyana. But as his wife worshipped him, he got out of troubles and returned home. When they reached near the house, the merchant's daughter neglected prasāda (offerings) of the Satya-Nārāyana and rushed out of the house to see her husband, and thus enraged Satya-Nārāyana. The

---

1. D.C.Sen: History of the Bengali Language and Literature, Calcutta University, A.D. 1911, P. 797.

2. Sukumar Sen, Op cit, P. 835.

boat capsized. Satya-Nārāyana was again worshipped. The merchant, his son-in-law, all trading vessels were recovered from the water.

How the Satya-Pīr idea originated in Bengal, no one can say for certain. But a close examination of the traditions and the method of worship give the following points:

(i) Satya-Pīr or the Satya-Nārāyana is claiming worship from the devotees in the same manner as the Hindu local goddess Manasā and Chandī did, as depicted in the Bengali literature<sup>1</sup>.

(ii) The method of worship shows that Satya-Pīr is not represented by any deity but by only a wooden plank.

(iii) Offerings of edibles are made just as they are made to the Hindu gods and the Muslim Pīrs.

These points indicate that there is both Muslim and Hindu elements in the conception of Satya-Pīr or it can be said with some amount of certainty that the Satya-Pīr concept originated through a mixture of the Muslim idea of the Pīr and the Hindu notion of their deities. Judging from this standpoint, the origin or evolution of the ideal may be

---

1. For details, see, (a) Vijaya Gupta: Padma Purāna, edited by Basanta Kumar Bhattacharjee, Bani Niketan, Barisal; (b) Mukunda Rāma; Divyākāvya; Chandī, edited by D.C. Sen, Calcutta University; (c) T.W. Clark: "Evolution of Hinduism in Mediaval Bengali Literature: Śiva, Chandī, Manasā", in Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, Vol. XVII, Part III, 1955.

traced as follows: It is the result of the Pīrism or the Muslim conception of the super-human power of the Pīrs. When the local people were converted to Islām, they got this conception of Pīrism mixed up with their old ideas of the super-natural power of the deities. A further evolution of this process saw the culmination in the personification of the Pīrism in Satya-Pīr or the Pīrism itself began to be conceived of as a super-human power.

(b) The Pānch-Pīr or the Five Pīrs :-

Closely associated with the Pīrism and probably directly derived from it is the worship of Pānch-Pīr which played a prominent part in the Bengali Muslim society. In some districts of Bengal like Midnapore and Burdwan, the Pānch-Pīr is worshipped even to-day<sup>1</sup>. "In West Bengal the 'five saints' form one of the main objects of adoration, not only of Muhammadans, but also of Hindus of the lower grades. They are often worshipped as family deities, represented by a small mound on a clay plinth erected in the north-west corner of one of the rooms of the house. On this is fixed a piece of iron, resembling in its shape the human hand, each finger symbolizing one of the quintette, with a piece of yellow cloth bound where the wrist should be"<sup>2</sup>. In Sunārgāwn, there is a dargāh, known as Pānch-Pīr dargāh<sup>3</sup>. The sailors of East Bengal

---

1. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. IX, P. 600.

2. Ibid.

3. Cunningham: Archaeological Survey of India, Vol. XV, Calcutta, 1882, P. 139.

remember the Pānch-Pīr even to-day along with the name of Pīr Badar<sup>1</sup>, with a view to getting relief from dangers.

It is difficult to trace the origin of the worship of the Pānch-Pīr. It is hardly possible to put any date for the Pānch-Pīr dargāh of Sunārgāwn. The tombs are now found in a modern wall-enclosure. By its side there is a mosque, which has also been completely renovated. It is just mentioned that the Pānch-Pīrs are remembered by sailors along with the name of Pīr Badar. Who is this Pīr Badar? If he is identified with the celebrated Bihar saint Pīr Badar al-Dīn Badar-i-Ālam, the origin of the worship or at least the conception of the Pānch-Pīr may be dated to the 15th century A.D. But there may be objections to such conjecture, because the Pānch-Pīr could have been associated with the name of Pīr Badar at a later date as well.

Equally difficult is to answer the question, who were the five Pīrs? The list of five Pīrs differ from place to place,

- 
1. E. Haq: Bānge Sūfī Prabhāva, Calcutta, 1935, Pp. 242 ff. Dacca Review, August, 1913, P.142.

জাম্বরত আছি শোনা শান  
গাজি গঙ্গা নিদ্রাবান ।  
পিরে মঙ্গা দরিশা  
পাঁচ পীর বদর বদর ॥

Translation :- "We are little children, Ghāzī and Gāngā are our protectors. We bow our heads to thee, Oh Ganges stream. (Help us) Oh Five Saints. We invoke you in the name of Badar, Badar".

though the name of one or two local Pīrs are found in the lists<sup>1</sup>. In Bengal it differs from district to district, though in all lists, Ghāzī Miyān finds prominence<sup>2</sup>. It is also difficult to say whether Ghāzī Miyān is a historical figure. It seems therefore, that the conception of Pāñch-Pīr is purely conventional, and there were no five Pīrs who constituted the list.

An examination of both Hindu and Muslim religious practices shows that the numeral five is important to both Hindus and Muslims. The Hindus put importance to (a) the Five chaste women, viz. Kaushalyā, Draupadī, Kuntī, Tārā and Mandudari; (b) the Pañchavaṭī i.e. the jungles of Five Vatas where Rāma and Sītā were exiled; (c) the Five Pāndava brothers and (d) the Five rivers i.e. the five feeder rivers to the Indus<sup>3</sup>. The Muslims also put importance to the numeral five in some respects, because they have to say their prayers five times a day, to recite five Kalimahs, and according to Islamic principles there are five pillars of Islām i.e. Imān (belief), Namāz (prayer), Roza (fasting), Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah and Madīnah) and Zakāt (poor-rate). The Buddhists had the conception of Five Dhyāni Buddhas. It may thus be suggested that the worship of Pāñch-Pīr originated through the extreme reverence to the Pīr by both Hindus and Muslims. Though the approximate date of its origin cannot be fixed with certainty,

---

1. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. IX, P. 600.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. E. Haq: Baṅge Sūfī Prabhāva, Calcutta, 1935, Pp.242 ff.

this much is certain that it took a long time for the system to gain a popular force and to be accepted by both Hindus and Muslims as a part of their socio-religious life.

(c) Minor features connected with Pīrism :-

Later practices show that a number of imaginary Pīrs receive reverence from the credulous masses. These Pīrs are given different names like Mānik Pīr, Ghorā Pīr, Kumbhira Pīr, and Madāri Pīr. Offerings are made to them motivated by various gains and relief from dangers. For example, offering of milk and fruits are made to Mānik Pīr in North, South and South-West Bengal<sup>1</sup>. Folk songs called Mānik Pīrer Gān are composed and sung in various districts<sup>2</sup>. In South-West Bengal offering of clay horses are made to Ghorā Pīr with the notion that lame babies get recovery at the boon of the Pīr<sup>3</sup>. Kumbhira or crocodiles are offered edibles and meat<sup>4</sup>. The following account of the crocodiles of the Khān Jahān's tank at Bagerhat, will throw light on the point<sup>5</sup>. "..... the fact appeared to be that the simple people of the district believe that these crocodiles can bless young ladies to come into an interesting condition, and their blessings are sure to bear fruit. Accordingly many young women repair to this place to bathe in sacred water of the tank, and implore the blessing of the saurian monsters. They offer them fowls and kids; then paint a human

---

1. E. Haq: Bānge Sūfi Prabhāva, Calcutta, A.D. 1935, P.240.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid, P. 238.

4. Ibid, P. 239.

5. J.A.S.B., 1867, P. 129.

figure with red lead on a stone pillar in the neighbourhood, and, embracing it, vow to give away to the crocodiles the first fruit of their blessings. This vow is never broken, the first born is invariably brought to the tank, and when, at the call of the Fakirs, the crocodiles rise to the surface, the child is thrown on the water's edge with words implying a presentation. But it is taken up immediately after, and borne home amid the rejoicings of the family". In some dargāhs people bind coloured threads to the branches of nearby trees to have the desired effect<sup>1</sup>. In some places stones or walls attached to dargāhs are washed with lime<sup>2</sup>. Sometimes people offer edibles to fish or tortoise of the tanks attached to the dargāhs<sup>3</sup>. The fish or tortoise are called Madāri. In some districts like Tippera, people arrange a festival known as Madārer Bāngtolā (lifting of the bamboo of Madār) in memcrium to Madāri Pīr<sup>4</sup>. It is difficult to trace the origin of these practices and beliefs. There is no evidence to show that they were prevalent during the period under discussion. But it is probable that they were also the result of popular influence as we have seen in the case of Satya-Pīr or Panch-Pīr.

- 
1. As in the case of the dargāh ascribed to Bāyazīd of Bistām in Chittagong.
  2. As it is found in Sunārgāwn.
  3. For example, the dargāh of Bayazid of Bistām in Chittagong.
  4. E.Haq: Bāngē Sūfī Prabhāva, Calcutta, A.D. 1935, P. 113.

(ii) The growth of Mullāism or priestly influence:-

Vijaya Gupta, a contemporary Bengali poet, supplies the following information about the Mullās:

(a) "A certain Mullā (learned man) named Takāi (correctly Taqī) is well-versed in religious books. If the Qādī arranges a feast, he is called in before anybody else. The Mullā tells many things (implying that he gives instructions) by unfastening the edge of his cloth and after finishing his iana (probably recitation of names of God) he kills the fowl"<sup>1</sup>.

(b) "There was a teacher of the Qādī named Khālās (correctly Khālīs or Ikhlās) who always engaged himself in the study of the Qurān and other religious books. .... He said, 'if you ask me, I say, why are you afraid of demons, when you have got the religious books. Write (extract) from the book and hung it down the neck. If then also the demons bite, I shall be held responsible. The Qādī accepted what the Mullā said and all present took amulet from him (the Mullā)"<sup>2</sup>.

---

1. Vijay Gupta: Padma Purāna, edited by Basanta Kumar Bhattacharjee, Bānī Niketan, Barisal, P. 54.

তকই নামে মোস্তা কিজার জান জাম ।  
কাজির খেজপার হইল আঙ্গ জর জাম ॥  
কাছা পুরিখা মোস্তা ফরমায অনেক ।  
জপ মাঙ্গ করি মোস্তা মারায় মোরগে ॥

2. Ibid, P. 61.

কাজির ওস্তাদ এক নামভে প্রাণাম ।  
কেজার কোরাণে জর বড়ই অভ্যাম ॥



Mukunda Rāma writing towards the end of the 16th century, corroborates to some extent what Vijaya Gupta wrote and gives some more information. It is quoted below<sup>1</sup>:

"Many Miyās (persons) settled there with their own taraf (landed property). Some of them contract nikā, some biyā<sup>2</sup>. The Mullās performs the ceremony of the nikā and get a reward of four annas and bless the couple by reading the Kalimah. He (mullā) takes a sharp knife, kills the fowl and gets a reward of ten gandās<sup>3</sup> of cowri. For butchering a she-goat, the mullā gets six buris<sup>4</sup> of cowri, as also the head of the animal killed".

---

মৌলানা বলে আশ্বাসে জিজ্ঞাসা যদি কর ।  
 কেজব থাকিত কেনে হুতের জুর মর ॥  
 কেজব নিশিখা দাও গলে যেন থাকে ।  
 জুর যদি হুত বড়ো যে দোষ মৌলুর লাগে ॥  
 মৌলানার বচন এখন কাজির মনে নথ ।  
 জাবিজ নিশিখা তখন মকলুয়ে নথ ॥

1. Mukunda Rāma: Kavikanṅkan Chandī, Bengabāsi edition, Calcutta, P. 86.

বামিন জানক শিখা,                      আপন তরফ নৈখা,  
 কেহ নিকা কেহ করে বিখা ।  
 মৌলানা পড়াখা নিকা,                      দান পাখ নিকা নিকা,  
 দোয়া করে কলখা পড়াখা ॥  
 করে ধরি খর ছুরী,                      কুকুড়া জবাই করি,  
 দশ গুণা দান পাখ কাজি ।  
 বকারি জবাই যখা,                      মৌলানারে দেই মাখা,  
 দান পাখ কাজি ছয় বুড়ি ॥

2. Nika is derived from Arabic word  $\text{نِكَاح}$  (nikāh) and biyā is derived from Sanskrit word hibāha. Here Mukunda Rāma draws a distinction between nikā and biyā, though in strict sense both the words mean marriage. But in popular usage in some districts of Bengal like Dacca, even to-day biyā is used for first marriage and nikā for second marriage.

In these passages we have got the conception of a Mullā as he was ordinarily held in the villages of Bengal — a practice which is not far different from what we see even to-day in the villages. The Mullā, who was fairly well-versed in religious knowledge, especially who was master in the day to day practice of Islām, was usually consulted by the ordinary less educated villagers. He, therefore, had a special role to play in the Muslim village society, as it was considered necessary that all the ceremonies and the functions should have an Islamic touch<sup>1</sup>. This was done variously as has been described by Vijaya Gupta and Mukunda Rāma. For this purpose the Mullās charged certain fees, the rates in one village have been given before on the evidence of Mukunda Rāma. As similar functions had to be performed in most of the Muslim villages, it was very necessary to have at hand the services of a Mullā. As a result the number of Mullās must have grown sufficiently and also their hold on the then society. The Mullās lived on the petty income that they made by religious performances. But it is very difficult to say whether the Mullās did form a class by themselves. Probably they did not as it could not

---

(Note continued from the previous page)

3. Ten gandās of cowri are equivalent to 1/3 of a pice. (See, J.N. Das Gupta: Bengal in the 16th century, Calcutta University, 1914, Pp. 89-92.)
  4. Six buris of cowri are equivalent to about a pice (See, Ibid).
- 
1. For example uttering the name of God before starting a work, performing a milād ceremony before a house is built, uttering the first kalimah before a goat or a fowl or a cow is killed etc.

be maintained against the explicit injunctions of Islām. However, Mullās were a force in the society and they kept together the credulous masses by sanctioning popular religious ceremonies. As we learn from an inscription of the time of Nuṣrat Shāh, they formed an important group<sup>1</sup> in the society and they were in charge of the property belonging to a mosque, just as a Mutawallī is to-day.

(iii) The reverence to the foot-prints of the Prophet:-

The Qadam Rasūl building of Gaur stands even to-day<sup>2</sup> and bears testimony to the fact that the foot-print of the Prophet was an object of veneration to the then Muslims of Bengal. Even to-day it is an object of veneration to the Muslims. It was built by Sultān Nāsir al-Dīn Nuṣrat Shāh to preserve the stone-representation of the foot-print of the Prophet, said to have been brought from Arabia by Makhdūm Jahāniyān Jahāngasht<sup>3</sup>. It was formerly preserved at Pandwah in the Chillākhanah of Makhdūm Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrizi<sup>4</sup>. From that place it was removed by Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh to Lakhnawtī and put it in a beautiful wooden box-table, inlaid with gold and silver<sup>5</sup>. Sultān Nuṣrat Shāh placed it

---

1. Muslim inscriptions of Bengal, P. 72.

2. Memoirs, Pp. 61 ff.

3. Ibid, P. 64.

4. Ibid, P. 63.

5. Ibid.

in the above mentioned building<sup>1</sup>.

The stone-representation of the foot-print of the Prophet is not permitted by orthodox Islām. Outside Eastern India such examples are not known. Its reverence must have been incorporated in the Muslim society of Bengal as a result of the popular force. On the eve of the Muslim conquest and after, the Dharma worshippers of south-west corner of Bengal comprising the modern Burdwan division (West Bengal, India) used to worship Dharma-pāduka (footwear of Dharma)<sup>2</sup>-

The feet of elder people are always held sacred in the Hindu society<sup>3</sup>. We hear in the Sanskrit inscriptions such names as Vishnu-pāda giri (i.e. the hill bearing the foot-print of Vishnu<sup>4</sup>). Even the early Buddhists revered Buddha's foot-print<sup>5</sup> (Buddhapāda). In Bengal even today one form of

1. Two such buildings, built in the later period, are still to be found, one at Nabiganj, opposite Narayanganj in the district of Dacca, and the other in one room attached to a mosque, known as Qadam Mubārak Masjid in the Chittagong town. According to Mirza Nathan, the author of Baharistān-i-Ghaybī, the foot-print now deposited at Nabiganj was obtained by Masum Khān Kābulī from some merchants, who brought it from Arabia, on payment of a large sum of money. (See, Baharistān-i-Ghaybī, translated by M.I. Borah, Government of Assam, A.D. 1936, Vol. II, P. 710).
2. Sūnya Purāna, edited by C.C. Bandopadhyay, Calcutta, B.S. 1336, Pp. 48, 55, 111. For details on Dharma-worship, see, (a) "Dharma-Worship" by K.P. Chattopadhyay in J.A.S.B., 1942, (b) Introductions to Sūnya Purāna, edited by C.C. Bandopadhyay, Calcutta, B.S. 1336.
3. The wooden sandal of Rāma Chandra is too well-known to be cited.
4. Mehrauli pillar inscription of Chandra in Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1897, P. 6.
5. Albert Grunwedel: Buddhist Art in India, London, A.D. 1901, P. 72.

salutation observed by the Muslims is that the youngsters touch the feet of the elders<sup>1</sup>. It is therefore not unlikely that the symbolic representation of the foot-print of the Prophet is of local origin.

1. An important reference is found in Resūl Vilāya of Zayn al-Dīn. (E. Haq: Muslim Bānglā Sāhitya, Pakistan Publications, Dacca, A.D. 1957, P. 61. The date of the poet is controversial. (See, Supra, P. 10).

মানু দানু গুণবন্ত                      ময়াদার সাহি অনু  
 সীর শাহ মোহাম্মদ খান ॥  
 তাঁর পদবজ-শব্দ                      ভাবে তিন পারি রস  
 কহে জৈনুদ্দীন ইহ মোকে ।  
 জয় দিব নিরঞ্জন                      ধীর সিয়া যে চরণ  
 কোন শোকে তাঁর মন দুখে ॥

Translation :- "(My) Pīr, Shāh Muhammad Khān is modest and virtuous; there is no end of his prestige. Anointing the forehead with the dust of his feet (as a tilak), Zayn al-Dīn says, "go and catch hold of his feet; God will grant you success, what sorrow is there to perturb your mind?"

## CHAPTER - VI.

THE DAILY LIFE OF THE MUSLIMS.

Having discussed the gradual development of the Muslim society and its composition in Bengal, we are now in a position to discuss their life i.e. the language they spoke, their profession, dwelling houses, the diet, the dress, the position of women, the social gatherings, the system of appointing slaves, their pecuniary condition and their contact with the local people.

(1) The language :-

The immigrants must have brought with them their own mother-tongue, Arabic, Persian or Turkish as the case might be, while the language of the local Muslims (converts) must have been Bengali. No official document of the time except inscriptions and coins has come to light. The coins were issued in Arabic<sup>1</sup>, while the inscriptions were issued both in Arabic and Persian, majority being in Arabic, only one so far discovered being in Sanskrit<sup>2</sup>. The official titles used in inscriptions such as Sar-i-Lashkar, Shiqdār, Mir-i-Bahr, Kotwāl, Sharābdār-i-Ghavr-i-Mahālī, Jāmdār-i-Ghavr-i-Mahālī are all Persian<sup>3</sup>. This shows that the official language

---

1. For specimen of coins see, H.N. Wright: Catalogue of coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Vol.II, Oxford, 1907.

2. For inscriptions see, Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal.

3. For titles see, Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal, Pp.94-102.

was Persian, while they adopted Arabic in all religious matters. It has been pointed out earlier<sup>1</sup> that the Persian language received patronage from the ruling power. This is evidenced by the fact that Sultān Rukn al-Dīn Bārbak Shāh appointed one Zayn al-Dīn Harwī as the poet-laureate<sup>2</sup>. Moreover in his time there flourished in Bengal a number of Persian poets and at least two lexicon writers<sup>3</sup>.

The Chinese account<sup>4</sup>, compiled by Ma Huan between A.D. 1425-1432 says that "the language in universal use is Pang-Kie-li (Bengali); there are also those who speak in Pa-enl-si (Farsi = Persian)". The Chinese mission came to visit the royal court and the account shows that it deals more with the description of the court than with the general condition of the country. Similarly it may be assumed that they came in contact more with the ruling class than with the common people. In spite of this when the Chinese Account says that the language in universal use was Bengali, it may logically be assumed that not only the local people spoke in Bengali but also some of the immigrants. The following points add strength to the validity of this view. In the first place, the immigrants settled in the country for a long time and had long association with the local people. The first Muslim immigration must have begun with the foundation of the

---

1. See, Chapter III, Section (B).

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Visva-Bharati Annals, 1945, Vol. I, P. 117.

Lakhnawtī Kingdom by Muhammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī and the Muslim settlement also began from his time. Apart from the ruling dynasties, the most important example of such settlement is of the family of Asād Lāhorī. Due to the settlement of the family in Bengal, his son Shaykh 'Alā' al-Ḥaq received the epithet Bengali with his name<sup>1</sup>. Secondly, they had established social contact with the local people. We have already pointed out that the immigrants sometimes accepted local wives<sup>2</sup>. But they also established some sort of a village-relationship which they considered to be more genuine than the matrimonial one. Kṛishṇa Dāsa Kavirāja<sup>3</sup> records the following dialogue between the Qādī of Nadiyā and Chaitanya Deva. "The Lord (Chaitanya) says, 'I am a guest to you; how is it that you kept yourself concealed at my approach?' The Qādī says, 'You came indignant, so I kept myself concealed to make you cool. Now that your anger has subsided I have

- 
1. Akḥbār al-Akhyār, P. 143.
  2. See, Supra, Pp. 185-86.
  3. Chaitanya Charitāmṛita, Adī, 17th.

প্রভু ব্রহ্ম আমি তোমার আশ্রয়িত ।  
 আমি দোষি বুদ্ধিহীন এ বিষয় কেমনত ॥  
 কাজী কহে তুমি আশ্রয় বুদ্ধি হইয়া ।  
 তোমা শত্রু করাইতে বহিষ বুদ্ধিহী ॥  
 এবে তুমি শত্রু হইবে আমি স্মিতান ।  
 জগ্য মোর তোমা হৈন আতিথি পাঠনাম ॥  
 গ্রাম মম্বকে চক্রবর্তী হই মোর দান ।  
 দেহ মম্বকে হৈতে হই গ্রাম মম্বক মান ॥  
 নীলাধর চক্রবর্তী হই তোমার নাম ।  
 মে মম্বকে হও তুমি আমার ডাগিনা ॥  
 ডাগিনার হৈন নাম অবশ্য মম্বক ।  
 মাতুলের অশরিক ডাগিনা না বম্ব ॥



come to meet you. It is my good fortune that I have got a guest like you. According to the village-relationship, Chakravarty (Nilāambar Chakravarty, maternal-grandfather of Chaitanya) is my uncle, and you know village-relationship is more genuine than bodily (or blood) relationship. Nilāambar Chakravarty is your maternal-grandfather, so you are my nephew. The maternal-uncle tolerates the anger of the nephew while the nephew does not take into account the faults of the uncle". Thirdly, in conducting the administration of the country they came in contact with the people in general and with their colleagues, many of whom were recruited from the children of the soil<sup>1</sup>.

While the immigrants learnt the local language, the local Muslims also, at least some of them, must have learnt Arabic and Persian. The very fact that they accepted Islām necessitated them to learn atleast something of Arabic, because without Arabic it was difficult to follow some of the fundamentals as in the case of saying prayers. Similarly, if they accepted office and there is no reason why they or some of them should not have accepted office, they must have learnt Persian, the official language.

(ii) The Profession :-

The Muslims were engaged in various kinds of professions, like service, trade and commerce, artisanship, agriculture and medical profession.

---

1. For appointment of Hindu Officers under Husayn Shāh, See, History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 151 ff.

(a) Service :-

As the heads of the state were Muslims,<sup>1</sup> they appointed a large number of Muslims under them. The sources supply the names of the following offices<sup>2</sup> - Iqtādār, Wazīr, Dabīr-i-Khās, Sar-i-Lashkar, Arīd-i-Lashkar, Silāhdār, Qādī, Shiqdār,

1. The former theory that Rājā Ganeśa actually crowned himself King (See, N.K.Bhattachali: The Coins and Chronology of the Early Independent Sultans of Bengal, Cambridge, 1922) has recently been challenged. (See, A.H.Dani, "The House of Rājā Ganeśa of Bengal", in J.A.S.B. Vol.XVIII, No.2, 1952).

2. Iqtādār - 'Alī Mardān Khaljī and Husām al-Dīn 'Iwād Khaljī were iqtādārs under Muhammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī (Minhāj Pp. 156, 158). Iqta' is derived from أقطاب (Pieces). So Iqtādārs were appointed over a piece of territory into which the state was divided at the initial stage of Muslim administration.

Wazīr - The Wazīr was the highest officer of the state with both administrative and financial powers. Among the Muslim Wazīrs we may mention the names of Azam Khān, brother of Shaykh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam (Akhbār al-Akhbār, P. 156), Malik Andīl Ḥabshī (Tārīkh-i-Ferīshṭah, P. 299), and Husayn Sharīf Makki, later on Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh (Ibid, P. 301). Contemporary inscriptions show that Wazīrs were sometimes entrusted with the administration of smaller units like 'Arṣah and Shahr and combined in them other posts like Sar-i-Lashkar. (For inscriptions, See, Muslim inscriptions of Bengal).

Dabīr-i-Khās - As the name suggests, Dabīr-i-Khās (Private Secretary) occupied an important position with the rank of a minister. Shams al-Dīn Dabīr who accompanied Bughrā Khān to Lakhnawtī, probably, did not go back and remained under the employ of Bughrā Khān. (Baranī, P. 95; Muntakhab, Vol.I, P. 154). Besides Shams al-Dīn Dabīr, the name of no Muslim Dabīr has come down to us, though we know definitely that the office of Dabīr-i-Khās did exist (According to Bengali literature, Rup was a Dabīr-i-Khās of 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shāh. See, Chaitanya Bhāgavata, published by M.K.Ghosh, Calcutta, Gaurāṅḍī, 440, Pp. 82 & 350). The functions of a Dabīr required an incumbent to be

Mir-i-Bahr, Kotwāl, Jāmdār-i-Ghayr-i-Mahālī, Sharābdār-i-Ghayr-i-Mahālī, Jāndār, Hālib and Darbān. Some of these officers used to take lofty titles like Khān, Khān-i-Āzam,

well-versed in literature and the art of composition and to be a master of style and diction (I.H. Qureshi: The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi, Lahore, 2nd Edition, 1944, Pp.86-7) and as the official language was Persian (See, Supra, P. 226-29), it may be concluded that the Dabīrs must have been appointed from among the Muslims.

Sar-i-Lashkars were the army officers, having a number of soldiers under them. For reference to Sar-i-Lashkar, in contemporary inscriptions, See, J.A.S.B. 1870, Pp. 290, 293-4, J.A.S.B. 1873, Pp. 272-73, 285-86.

Silāhdār- Fakhrā, later on Sultān Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh was the Silāhdār of Bahrām Khān, the Imperial Governor of Sunārgāwn. (Yahyā bin Ahmad, P. 104). From the analogy with Delhi we know that Silāhdārs were armed soldiers who waited upon the rulers when they gave public audience or rode out. (See, I.H. Qureshi: The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi, Lahore, A.D.1944, P. 63).

Qādī - The Qādī was charged with the administration of justice. (See, Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, Dacca Session, 1963, P. 258; Riyād, Pp. 106 ff.

For references to Shiqdār (persons entrusted to the administration of the Shiq), Mir Bahr (Commander of the fleet), Kotwāl (City Superintendent of Police), Jāmdār-i-Ghayr-i-Mahālī (cup-bearer outside the palace), Sharābdār-i-Ghayr-i-Mahālī (cup-bearer outside the palace), Jāndār (body-guards), in contemporary inscriptions, See, J.A.S.B. 1872, Pp. 106, Pp. 109-10, J.A.S.B. 1873, Pp. 272-73, J.A.S.B. 1870, P. 290. For references to Hālib (Chief officer of the Royal palace) and Darbān (porter) See, Riyād, Pp. 100, 106, 120-25).

Ārid-i-Lashkar - He was the paymaster of the army. 'Alī Mubārak, later on Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī Shāh was the Ārid-i-Lashkar of Qadr Khān, the Imperial Governor of Lakhnawtī. (See, Yahyā bin Ahmad, P. 105).

Khān-i-Jahān, Mailis-i-'Alā, Mailis al-Maiālis, Khān-i-Mailis, Mailis-i-Nūr, Malik al-Mu'azzam and Mailis al-Mu'azzam<sup>1</sup>. The sources do not help us in determining the implication of these titles, though there is no doubt that these titles were conferred upon officers according to their rank and grade.

(b) Trade and commerce :-

The foreign accounts and the Bengali literature furnish a long list of agricultural, natural and industrial products of the country under the Muslims<sup>2</sup>. These products became the source of extensive internal and foreign trade. The interwoven rivers and rivulets within the country facilitated the transportation of commodities from one side to the other and developed internal trade while the fretted sea-coast afforded the country to carry on extensive trade with foreign merchants like the Arabs, the Chinese and the Portuguese<sup>3</sup>.

1. For these titles in the contemporary inscriptions, see, J.A.S.E. 1873, Pp. 271, 272-77; J.A.S.E. 1874, Pp.296-97; J.A.S.E. 1872, Pp. 337-38, 333; J.A.S.E. 1870, P. 290. See also, Muslim inscriptions of Bengal, Pp. 94 ff.
2. Agricultural, natural and industrial products :-
  - (a) Fruits :- Oranges, Lemons, mango, banana, jack-fruits, sour-pomegranates.
  - (b) Domestic animals :- Camel, horse, mule, water-buffalo, marine goats, fowl, duck, pig, goose, dog, cat.
 (See, Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, Pp.96-134; Barbosa, Pp. 136-48; Malādhār Vasu: Sri Krishna Vijaya, edited by Khagendra Nath Mitra, Calcutta University, 1944. Vijay Gupta: Padma Purāna, edited by B.K. Bhattacharjee, Bānī Niketan, Barisal).
3. Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, Pp. 96-134. Barbosa, Pp. 136-48.

Contemporary authorities refer to the existence of market-places where shopkeepers dealt in various commodities. Baranī refers to the market-place of Lakhnawtī, which was one mile in length, on each side of which the shopkeepers sold their commodities<sup>1</sup>. Ibn Battūtah saw commodities being sold cheaper in Bengal's markets<sup>2</sup>. The Chinese visitor Hon-Hien saw Sunārgāwn "a walled place with tanks, streets and bazars which carried on business in all kinds of commodities"<sup>3</sup>. He saw the bazar of Pandwah "well-arranged, the shops side by side"<sup>4</sup>. The foreign writers refer to the sea-ports of Chittagong and Satgāwn. According to the Chinese Account, the first port that the merchants were to enter in Bengal from the South and South-East through the Bay of Bengal was Chittagong, situated on the mouth of the sea. It is in this port that the merchants from foreign countries came from outside and anchored their ships. It is there again that they assembled and divided the profit of their merchandise<sup>5</sup>. The first reference to Satgāwn in foreign accounts is to be found in that of Master Caesar Frederick<sup>6</sup>, according to whom, "In the port

---

1. Baranī, P. 91.

2. Ibn Battūtah, Vol. IV, P. 210.

3. Viśva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, Pp. 96-134.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Quoted by J.N.Das Gupta in Bengal in the 16th century. Calcutta University, A.D. 1914, P. 106. Barbosa (Barbosa, P. 136) and Varthema (J.N.Das Gupta: Op cit, P. 117) did not mention Satgāwn but they referred to the city of Bengala. (For identification of the city of Bengala, see, Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. XIX, A.D. 1943, Pp.316-17.

of Satagan every yeare lade thirtie or five and thirtie ships great and small ..... . The citie of Satagan is a reasonable fair citie for a citie of the Moores, abounding with all things". All these towns mentioned by the foreigners as important centres of commerce and trade were under the possession of the Muslim Sultāns. Both Lakhnawtī and Pandwah<sup>1</sup> were seats of government, while Sunārgāwn and Satgāwn, sometimes occupied the status of provincial capitals<sup>2</sup>. All these towns including Chittagong were the mint-towns of the Sultāns<sup>3</sup>. Besides, a study of the coins issued by the Bengal Sultāns suggests that a large number of mint towns were developed, thus indicating that they were important centres of administration. Besides Lakhnawtī, Pandwah, Satgāwn, Sunārgāwn and Chittagong, these mint-towns include, Muazzamābād, Ghiyāthpūr, Fathābād, and Khalīfatābād<sup>4</sup>. Apart from their importance in the administration of the country, they also must have been commercial centres.

It is difficult to determine what part did the Muslims play in this extensive internal and external trade. There are occasional references but they are far from satisfactory. Minhāj refers to a Muslim merchant who lost his fortune and

- 
1. Minhāj, P. 151; Riyād, P. 96.
  2. Yahyā bin Ahmad, P. 98; Baranī, P. 451; Tārīkh-i-Mubārak-shāhī, translated by K.K.Basu, Gaskwad Oriental Series, Pp. 106-7.
  3. "Mint towns of Mediaval Bengal", by, Mir Jahan, in 'Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, Dacca Session, 1953, P. 234.
  4. Ibid, Pp. 224 ff. Those mint-towns which have been identified with Lakhnawtī, have been omitted here. For identification of these mint-towns, see, Ibid.

prayed for help from Sultān 'Alā'al-Dīn 'Alī Mardān Khalji<sup>1</sup>. The Chinese Account says, "Every one of them is engaged in business, the value of which may be ten thousand pieces of gold, but when a bargain has been struck, they never express regret"<sup>2</sup>. According to Duarte Barbosa, the Muslim merchants used to go upcountry to bring slaves for selling them to exporters<sup>3</sup>. These references prove beyond doubt that the Muslims did take part but they do not give any clear idea of the actual position they held in the country's trade and commerce. The Chinese Account, if literally accepted, indicates that the Muslims played an important part and carried on an extensive trade, but it should be accepted with caution. In the first place, as the account shows, the Chinese visited only the metropolitan cities from Chittagong to Pandwah via Sunārgāwn; they did not go inland. Secondly, the Chinese Accounts do not categorically refer to Muslim traders, though the statement has been made in course of describing the Muslim population, dealing with the Hindu customs separately. Thirdly, the Chinese Account is not corroborated by any other source. Minhāj refers to only one businessman and Barbosa refers to only slave trade.

The medium of exchange in Bengal's trade was the coins. The introduction or rather the re-introduction of coins both

---

1. Minhāj, P. 159.

2. Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, P. 122.

3. Barbosa, P. 147.

of silver and gold by the Bengal Sultāns is an important factor in the Socio-economic history of Bengal. While coinage was not unknown to Bengal rulers of the early period<sup>1</sup>, not a single coin of the Pāla and the Sena period has so far come to light, and the medium of exchange during the period was in all probability the cowrie<sup>2</sup>. The reintroduction of the coinage in Bengal by the Muslim Sultāns, therefore, greatly facilitated both internal and external trade of the country, though cowrie was also current during the period under review<sup>3</sup>.

(c) The artisan class :-

The only clear cut reference to the industry in which the Muslims engaged themselves is weaving. Vijaya Gupta refers to a weaver family, who were undoubtedly Muslims<sup>4</sup>. The weaving or the textile industry developed to such an extent that the foreign writers are loud in praise of the cotton and silk

- 
1. History of Bengal, Vol. I, Dacca University, 1943, Pp.665-67.
  2. Ibid. Recently silver coins of the Pattikera type have been discovered at Mainamati excavations. F.A.Khan: Recent Archaeological Discoveries in East Pakistan; Mainamati, Pakistan Publications, Karachi; F.A.Khan: Second Phase of Archaeological Excavation in East Pakistan; Mainamati, Public Relations Department, Government of East Pakistan.
  3. Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, Pp. 96-134. Cowries have also been mentioned in the Bengali literature of the Muslim period. See for example, Chandī Dāsa: Sri Krishna Kirtana edited by Basanta Rañjan Roy, Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta, 2nd edition B.S. 1342; Malādhār Vasu: Sri Krishna Vijaya, edited by Khagendra Nath Mitra, Calcutta University, A.D. 1944.
  4. Vijaya Gupta, Padma Purāna, edited by Basanta Kumar Bhattacharjee, Bani Niketan, Barisal, P. 59. That the weaver family was Muslim is clear from the following facts :- The husbandman, who died of snake-bite was buried, arrangement was made for his Kāfan (wrapping the dead body with cloth before burial, according to Islamic system of funeral), and his mother-in-law was considering to get her daughter married a second time.



fabrics produced in Bengal of various size and use<sup>1</sup>. The Āyn praised Sunārgāwn for its fine Muslin<sup>2</sup>. Ibn Battūtah testifies to the extraordinary cheap prices of fine clothes<sup>3</sup>. The Chinese Account has referred to the following varieties of textile goods<sup>4</sup>.

- (i) Pi-pe:- It was of several colours and of cotton stuff. According to one account, it was over three feet broad and fifty six feet long and according to another over two feet broad, the length being the same. It was as fine and glossy as painted stuffs.
- (ii) Man-che-ti :- It was of ginger yellow colour, four feet broad and over fifty feet long. It was very closely woven and strong.
- (iii) Sha-na-pa-fu :- It was five feet broad and thirty feet long. It was like Sheng-lo of the Chinese and a cotton gauze.
- (iv) Ki-pai-lei-ta-li :- It was three feet broad and sixty feet long. It was loosely woven and coarse. It was a cotton gauze.
- (v) Sha-ta-eul :- It was a stuff used for turbans. Its measurement was either five inches broad and forty feet long or two and half feet broad and four feet long. It was like San-so of the Chinese.

---

1. Viśva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, Pp. 96-134. Barbosa, Pp. 135-48.

2. Āyn-i-Akbarī, Vol. II, P. 136.

3. Ibn Battūtah, Vol. IV, P. 211.

4. Viśva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, Pp. 96-134.

(vi) Ma-hei-ma-lie :- It was a stuff four feet broad and twenty feet long. On the wrong side it was covered with a nap half an inch long. It was like tu-lo-kin of the Chinese.

Besides these the Chinese refer to silk and embroidered silk handkerchiefs and brocaded taffetas. The presents which the Bengal Sultān sent in A.D. 1438 to the Emperor of China included among other things Sa-ha-la (Shawl), Cha-fa-hei-ta-li cloth and tu-lo-kin<sup>1</sup>.

Duarte Barbosa<sup>2</sup> praises the Bengal textiles as follows:- "in it are woven many kinds of very fine and coloured clothes for their own attire and other white sorts for sale in various countries. They are very precious, also some which they call estravantes, a certain sort, a very thin kind of cloth much esteemed among us for ladies' head-dresses, and by the Moors, Arabs and Persians for turbans. Of these great store is woven so much so that many ships take cargoes thereof for abroad; others they make called mamonas, others duguazas, others chantares, others sinabafas, which latter are the best of all, and the Moors held them the best for shirts. All these sorts of cloth are in pieces, each one whereof contains about three and twenty or four and twenty Portuguese Yards. Here they are sold good cheap, they are spun on wheels by men and woven by them".

---

1. Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, Pp. 96-134.

2. Barbosa, Pp. 145-146.

It is difficult to determine, to what extent did the Muslims contribute to the manufacturing of these textile fabrics, which received so much praise from the Chinese and Portuguese writers. It has just been pointed out that the jolhā (weaver) family as described by Vijaya Gupta was Muslim.

The foreign accounts<sup>1</sup> show that the paper and sugar industry also developed in Bengal, though it is not possible to determine, with the material at our disposal, how far the Muslims contributed to the growth of these industries. Mukunda Rāma<sup>2</sup>, writing towards the end of the 16th century says that there was a section of Muslims who were known as Kāgchē, because they prepared and sold kāghaz or paper. Although Mukunda Rāma wrote a few years later<sup>3</sup> than the period under review, it may be assumed that the condition of the people did not change suddenly.

The erection of a large number of mosques<sup>4</sup> and the issuing of a large number of inscriptions<sup>5</sup> suggest that the Muslims produced masons and stone-workers. The non-Muslim masons or stone workers might have been appointed for the

---

1. Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, Pp. 96-134; Barbosa, P. 146.

2. Kavikañkan Chandī, published by Bangabāsi Karyālaya, Calcutta, P. 36.

3. See, Supra, P. 199.

4. Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal.

5. Ibid.

purpose, but it is futile to think that during the whole period of about three hundred and odd years, they depended solely on the Hindu Masons and stone-workers.

Krishna Dāsa Kavirāja<sup>1</sup> refers to a Muslim tailor, who prepared shirts for Śrī Bāsa, a companion of Śrī Chaitanya Deva. We shall see later<sup>2</sup> that the Muslims used sewn cloth like gown, shirt and sash. It is, therefore, reasonable to hold that tailoring was an important profession adopted by the Muslims.

(d) Agriculturists :-

Ferishta<sup>3</sup> says that Nāsir al-Dīn (later on Sultān Nāsir al-Dīn Maḥmūd I), before he was put to the throne, was engaged in agriculture<sup>3</sup>. Though Ferishta<sup>3</sup> does not clearly say whether he was actually the tiller of the soil, the very fact that he belonged to the ruling dynasty, supplanted by the House of Rājā Gaṇeśa, suggests that he was no ordinary cultivator, rather he was of the nature of a land-owner, working as a middle man between the ruler and the tillers of the soil. The land-owning class was not altogether absent during the period under review. We have on the authority of Minhāj<sup>4</sup> that the Rāes sent kharāj (land-tax) to Sultān 'Alī

1. Krishna Dāsa Kavirāja: Chaitanya Charitāmrita, published from Basumati Sahitya Mandir, Calcutta, P. 85.

2. See Infra, Pp. 247 ff.

3. Tārīkh-i-Ferishta, Vol. II, P. 298.

4. Minhāj, P. 159.

Mardān Khalji when he assumed independence. According to Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afif'<sup>1</sup>, when Sultān Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq reached Lakhnawtī and Ilyās Shāh took shelter in Ikdālah fort, the Rāes, Rānas and the zamīndārs of the place joined Fīrūz Shāh and were favourably received. In his proclamation, Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq promised relief of tax and revenue to the Zamīndārs and muqaddams of Bengal<sup>2</sup>.

We have also got references to actual tilling of the soil carried out in the country. The Chinese Account says, "Their fields are very fertile and yield two crops in the year. There is no need of sowing the seeds (? irrigation) - the crops grow by themselves in the proper season. Both men and women are diligent in ploughing and weaving"<sup>3</sup>. "These people (of Bengal) owe all their tranquillity and prosperity to themselves, for its source lie in their devotion to agriculture whereby a land originally covered with jungle has been reclaimed by their unremitting toil in tilling and planting"<sup>4</sup>.

(e) Medical profession:-

Ibrāhīm Qawwām Fārūqī<sup>5</sup> says that one Amir Shahāb al-Dīn Kirmānī was an Iftakhār al-Hukamā' (the pride of the physicians).

---

1. 'Afif, P. 112.

2. Quoted in J.A.S.E. 1923, P. 280.

3. Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, P. 132.

4. Ibid, P. 99.

5. Urdū, October, 1952, Pp. 68 ff.

Mukunda Rāma refers to the following occupations adopted by the Muslims<sup>1</sup> - Jolhā, Mukeri, Pithāri, Kābāri, Sānākar, Tīrakar, Kagchā, Qalandar, Hājām, Darzi. As for Jolhā, Kagchā and darzi, we have already shown<sup>2</sup> that the Muslims adopted these professions. As for Mukeri, because Bengal was an agricultural country, cattle formed an important element of the country's economy; the tilling of the soil required the help of the cows or bullocks as it is also the system even to-day. So the existence of cattle drivers or shepherds cannot be denied. As for Kābāri, or seller of fish, fish was abundantly available in Bengal as it is the case at present. Even now the Bengalees, Muslims or non-Muslims take more fish than meat. As weaving was an important industry as has been mentioned before<sup>3</sup>, the Sānākar or manufacturer of looms found their profession profitable and the same thing applies to tīrakar or bow-makers because the fighting with bow and arrow did prevail<sup>4</sup> during the period under review. Similarly the existence of Pithāri or seller of cakes also cannot be ruled out altogether. The profession of Hājām is important because circumcision is an integral part of the Islamic practices. It is adopted by a section of the Muslims in Bengal even to-day. Mukunda Rāma's testimony that the Hājām did not find rest

---

1. Kavikāṅkan Chandī, published by Bāngabāsi Karyālaya, Calcutta, P. 86.

2. See, Supra, Pp. 236-39.

3. Ibid.

4. Baranī (P. 586) refers to the nāiks (foot-soldiers) and dhanuk (bow-men) gathered by Ilyās Shāh against Sultān Firūz Shāh Tughluq of Delhi.

suggests two inferences - either the number of Hājām was less or the number of neo-Muslims was great. The local people who were converted to Islām, in most cases, must have retained their former profession. These professions seemingly minor in importance were adopted by the poorer section. The sources do not help us to say who adopted these professions, only the local people or the immigrants as well.

(iii) Dwelling houses :-

The Chinese Account is loud in the praise of the Royal palace, built of bricks, ornamented with flower representation and animal figures, having flat roofs, supported by pillars and having flight of steps. The halls were white-washed inside. The doors were of triple thickness and of nine panels. There were verandahs on each side of the audience halls<sup>1</sup>. Poet Krittivāsa reached the King's court after crossing nine halls<sup>2</sup>. The peon who was sent by Qādī Sirāj al-Dīn to summon Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Azam Shāh to the court, could not have access to the king. He began to recite the Adhān (calling to prayer) and thus drew the attention of the Sultān<sup>3</sup>. The Royal palace was surrounded by fortified wall and the palace doors were well-guarded. The ruins of the Royal palace can be seen even today in the cities of Gaur and Pandwah<sup>4</sup>.

---

1. Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, Pp. 96-134.

2. Quoted by Sukumar Sen in Bānglā Sahityer Itihāsa, Calcutta, 1940, P. 84. The word used by Krittivāsa is গণ্ডু which is used even to-day to denote outer-house or audience-hall or the visiting room.

3. Riyād, Pp. 106-7.

4. For ruins, see Memoirs.

An idea of the dwelling houses, other than the royal palace may be obtained from the following sources. The Vaishṇava literature refers to the garden in front of the house of the Qāḍī of Nadiyā, which is said to have been destroyed by Chaitanya's followers<sup>1</sup>. According to Duarte Barbosa, "they bathe often in great tanks which they have in their houses"<sup>2</sup>, and according to Abū al-Faḍl, "their houses are made of bamboos, some of which are so constructed that the cost of a single one will be five thousand rupees or more and they last a long time"<sup>3</sup>. Even to-day the houses of the poorer section of the people are built of wood or bamboos. The difference between the richer and the poorer people was probably in the amount of expenditure; while the rich spent more and used good quality wood or bamboo to make the house stronger and more lasting, the poor could not do so. Every house whether of the poor or the rich must have the roof over it, as in Bengal practically half the year was (as it is even to-day) covered by the rainy season. The dwelling houses built of bamboos at the present time are not flat-roofed rather they are sloping from a central ridge so that the rain-water can immediately go down and does not get stuck on the roof. Such domical roofs are known from the existing mosques<sup>4</sup> of the time like the Khān

---

1. Chaitanya Charitāmrita, Adi, 17th.

2. Barbosa, P. 147.

3. Āy-e-Akbarī, Vol. II, P. 134.

4. As in the case of Bābā Adam Shāhid's mosque at Rampala in the district of Dacca. It was built by one Malik Kāfur in the reign of Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Fath Shāh. For inscription see, J.A.S.B. 1873, PP. 282-83.



Jahān's mosque at Bagerhat and Chhota Sona Masjid at Gaur. The testimony of Barbosa that the Muslims had tanks of their own is significant. At present, in some districts at least<sup>1</sup>, there is hardly a family who does not have its own tank. The tanks were essential to the Muslim families, as we shall see presently, unlike Hindu women, the Muslim women observed pardah (seclusion) and could not have gone out for having their bath in the rivers.

(iv) Diet :-

Their diet included meat consisting of beef<sup>2</sup>, mutton<sup>3</sup>, fowl<sup>4</sup> and duck<sup>5</sup> prepared with spices<sup>6</sup>. According to the Chinese Account, they took both smoked and roasted meat<sup>7</sup>. Though reference to fish and vegetables are not available in the sources at our disposal, there is no reason to believe that the Muslims did not take these things. Bengal being primarily an agricultural country with riverine tracts, both fish and vegetables were abundantly available<sup>8</sup>, as it is the

- 
1. As in eastern districts of Bengal.
  2. Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, P. 127.
  3. Ibid; Kavikañkan Chandī, published by Baṅgabāsī Karyālaya, Calcutta, P. 86.
  4. Vijay Gupta: Padma Purāna, edited by B.K. Bhattacharjee, Bānī Niketan, Barisal, P. 54.
  5. Dharmapujā Vidhāna, edited by Nani Gopal Bandopadhyay, Bāṅgiya Sāhitya Parishad, Calcutta, B.S. 1323, P. 221.
  6. Sekh Subhedaya, edited by Sukumar Sen, Calcutta, 1927, P. 8.
  7. Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, Pp. 96-134.
  8. The Chinese Account (Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, Pp. 96-134) has given a long list of Bengal's products. According to the Vaishṇava literature (See, Chaitanya Bhāgavata) Chaitanya was fond of sāk (preparation of vegetable leaves).

case even to-day. Moreover the local people who were converted to Islām, as we have seen earlier<sup>1</sup>, must have retained the practice of taking fish and vegetables. We have just seen that Mukunda Rāma's account<sup>2</sup> refers to a group of Muslims known as Kābāri who used to sell fish.

The aristocratic people used to drink wine; it is not definitely known whether the common people were accustomed to it. According to the Chinese Account there were four kinds of wine in Bengal, one was made from coconut, the second from rice, third from the aquatic plant called Kajang and the fourth from Tung seeds<sup>3</sup>. The same source records that on certain occasions drinking of wine was prohibited on the ground that "it might lead to trouble" and it was a "breach of decorum"<sup>4</sup>, but they used to drink on festive occasions<sup>5</sup>. It is further recorded that after meals sweetened rose water and honey were supplied<sup>6</sup>. Naturally this was a custom prevalent among the aristocrats. The Muslims also took the various fruits available in the country, such as banana, jack-fruit, pomegranates and sugar-cane<sup>7</sup>.

1. See, Chapter III, Section (C).

2. Supra, P. 242.

3. Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, Pp. 96-134.

4. Ibid.

5. Barbosa, P. 148.

6. Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, P. 122.

7. Ibid.

(v) Dress :-

The following account of the dress of the Muslims is available from the sources :-

(a) Vijaya Gupta<sup>1</sup>, refers to a certain Mullā who kept beard and put on turban on head and ijār (trouser) tied down the waist.

(b) The Chinese Account :-

(i) Sing cha Sheng lan, compiled by Fei-Sin in A.D. 1436<sup>2</sup> :-

"The men wear a white cotton turban and a long white cotton shirt. On their feet they wear low sheep-skin shoes with gold thread. The smarter ones think it a correct thing to have designs on them.....

"The women wear a short shirt, wrap around them a piece of cotton, silk or brocade. They do not use cosmetics, for they have naturally a white complexion; in their ears they wear ear-rings of precious stones set in gold. Around their necks they hang pendants and they do up their hair in knot behind. On their wrists and ankles are gold bracelets and on their fingers and toes rings".

(ii) Si Yang Chao Kung tien lu compiled by Huang Sing-tseng in A.D. 1520<sup>3</sup> :-

"All men cut off their hairs and wrap their head

- 
1. Vijaya Gupta: Padma Purāna, edited by Basanta Kumar Bhattacharjee, Banī Niketan, Barisal, Pp. 54-55, 61-62.
  2. Visya-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, P. 122.
  3. Ibid, P. 124.

with a cotton turban of white colour. They wear long gown with a round collar with a coloured sash on the lower part of their body, and put on leather slippers on their feet. The women dress their hairs in knot on their heads. They wear a short shirt and wrap their body with a piece of coloured cloth, silk or brocade. They wear ear-ring of precious stones set in gold. Around their neck they have pendants, on their wrists and ankle gold bracelets and on their fingers and toes rings".

(c) Barbosa's account<sup>1</sup> :-

"The respectable Moors walk about clad in white cotton smocks, very thin, which come down to their ankles, and beneath these they have girdles of cloth, and over them silk scarves, they carry in their girdles daggers garnished with silver and gold, according to the rank of the person who carries them; on their fingers many rings set with rich jewels, and cotton turbans on their heads".

(d) According to Śekh Śubhodaya<sup>2</sup>, the Shaykh (Jalāl Tabrizī) came to Bengal in black attire, with turban on head and a bowl and ʿAṣā (stick) in hand.

(e) Krishna Dāsa Kavirāja refers to a certain Turk called a Pīr in black attire<sup>3</sup>.

---

1. Barbosa, P. 147.

2. Śekh Śubhodaya, edited by Sukumar Sen, Calcutta, 1927, P.127.

3. Cheitanya Charitāmrita, published by Vasumati Sahitya Mandir, Calcutta, Pp. 227-29.

The passages quoted above show that the dress of the Muslim men included turban on head, long shirt or gown with collar, ijār (trouser) or sash on the lower part of the body, shoes or slipper on the leg and rings of jewels or gold in hand. They cut off their hair and kept beard. The dress of the females included a short shirt on the upper part of the body, a piece of cloth like the sārī of the present day to wrap the body, they used various kinds of ornaments like ear-rings of precious stones, they hang pendants round their neck, they used gold bracelets on their wrists and ankles and used rings on fingers and toes. They bound their hairs in knot and did not use cosmetics. The Pīr or Muslim facīrs used black attire. But it seems to have been a picture of the Muslim nobles and aristocratic class. For example the ijār or the trouser and the shoes and slippers could not have been used by all the people. In a country like Bengal where practically half of the year is covered by rainy season and the roads or pathways remain inundated or muddy, it is futile to think that all people, especially the labourers, the tillers of the soil could have used this dress. Even to-day hundreds of people living in the villages go without shoes or use a piece of cloth tied up to the waist. Apart from the pecuniary condition of the people, one reason why they use this sort of dress is the climatic condition of the country. As regards other dress of both men and women including the ornaments, these might have been used by the people, according to their

own means. The rich spent larger amount and used jwelleries and golden ornaments, while the poor were satisfied with baser metals or even conch-shell.

(vi) Position of women :-

Women observed purdah (seclusion) and did not come out of their houses at day time; in the words of Barbosa "they kept them carefully shut up"<sup>1</sup>. But they received well-treatment from their husbands who gave them great store of gold, silver and apparel of fine silk<sup>2</sup>. Polygamy was prevalent. According to Barbosa, "every one has three or four wives or as many as he can maintain"<sup>3</sup>, though the general Islamic law is to have not more than four wives at a time. Sometimes, Muslims accepted Hindu wives<sup>4</sup>. The widow-remarriage was prevalent<sup>5</sup>. A specific time was observed by widows, before which they were not remarried<sup>6</sup>. Vijaya Gupta<sup>7</sup> refers to taking vegetables by the Jolhā's widow. This is because, probably the Jolhā family were neo-Muslims, who were not fully acquainted with the Islamic practice. According to the Chinese Account, their marriages and funerals were both according to the Islamic law<sup>8</sup>.

---

1. Barbosa, P. 148.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., Pp. 147-48.

4. Vijaya Gupta: Padma Purāna, edited by B.K.Bhattacharjee, Bāni Niketan, Barisal, P. 56. See, Supra, Pp. 185-87.

5. Ibid., Pp. 59-60.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Visva Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, P. 124.

**(vii) Social gatherings and entertainments :-**

They occasionally met in social gatherings, in which visitors were entertained with music and dances<sup>1</sup>. Sometimes, the Sultans set in Assembly with nobles, in which games, music and dances were the common features<sup>2</sup>. Actresses and dancing girls were dressed in coloured cloths with decorations of flowers. They used ornaments of various types and of high value<sup>3</sup>. Generally visitors were entertained with betel-leaf and betel-nuts, but when they invite guests, they arranged for feastings and amusements<sup>4</sup>. When the ladies visited their relatives or neighbours at night, they had great festivities, rejoicings and superfluity of wines<sup>5</sup>. Riyāq al-Salāṭin and Tārīkh-i-Ferishta, record that the nobles in Bengal used to take food in golden plates and for a time it became the custom that whoever could present more golden plates on festive occasions was considered to be higher in status<sup>6</sup>. Besides these, there were other entertainments like tiger-play in

- 
1. Visva Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, P. 124.
  2. The indirect reference is available from an order of Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Balban to his son Bughrā Khān. He ordered him not to indulge in such assemblies. (See, Baranī, P.92).
  3. Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, Pp. 122, 125, 132; Barbosa, P. 148.
  4. Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, P. 124.
  5. Ibid.
  6. Riyād, P. 132; Tārīkh-i-Ferishta, Vol. II, Pp. 301-2.

the market-place and before the houses of the rich<sup>1</sup>.

(viii) Slavery :-

The higher class people used to appoint slaves (servants) both males and females for house-hold works. The Riyād refers to the affection of Sultān Ghiyāth-al-Dīn Āzam Shāh towards three slave-girls, Sarw, Gul and Lālah<sup>2</sup>. Vijaya Gupta refers to a bāndī (slave-woman) in the house of the Qādī of Hasan Hāṭi<sup>3</sup>. The Abyssinian slaves appointed by later Ilyās Shāhī Sultāns proved to be usurpers of the throne<sup>4</sup>. The slaves were bought and sold in the market-places. Ibn Battūṭah purchased one beautiful slave girl named 'Ashūra<sup>5</sup>.

---

1. The Chinese Account (Vijaya-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, Pp. 118-19), has given the following account of these amusements :- "There are people called Ken-Siao-su-lu-nai who are mounte-banks. Every day at the stroke of five they come around the gates of the houses of high officials and of the wealthy people blowing go-na (Surna-flageolets) and beating drums and then pass on to another. When comes the breakfast hour they go to each house to be rewarded with wine, food, money or other things. Besides these there are also every other kind of players.

"(Thus there are people who) go about the market places and to the houses with a tiger held by an iron chain. They undo the chain and the tiger lies down in the courtyard. The naked man then strikes the tiger who becomes enraged and jumps at him and he falls with the tiger. This he does several times, after which he thrusts his fist in the tiger's throat without wounding him. After this performance he chains him up again and the people of the house do not fail to feed the tiger with meat and reward the man with money. So the tiger-tamer has a promising business".

2. Riyād, P. 105; Memoirs, Pp. 25-56.

3. Vijaya Gupta: Padma Purāna, edited by B.K. Bhattacharjee, Banī Niketan, Barisal, P. 61.

4. History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 138 ff.

5. Ibn Battūṭah, Vol. IV, P. 212.



According to Barbosa, Muslim merchants used to go up country to purchase heathen boys either from their parents or from those who stole them. Boys so purchased were castrated, (in which process many would die) and then they were sold to the merchants. The people engaged them as the guardian of their women, estates or for other house-hold works<sup>1</sup>. A slave sale deed of the time of Sultān Nāsir al-Dīn Mahmūd Shāh I is available in the Dacca University Library<sup>2</sup>.

(ix) Pecuniary condition :-

From economic point of view, the Muslims may be divided into two distinct classes - the rich and <sup>the</sup> poor. It has been pointed out earlier that the officials received salary, villages and lands<sup>3</sup>. The army received salary and rations<sup>4</sup>. Obviously they were richer and had a better living. It has also been pointed out that the nobles used golden plates and it became a custom to display wealth through the number of such plates they possessed<sup>5</sup>. The merchants formed the next richer class, who sometimes invested ten thousand gold coins<sup>6</sup>. There were also people, who built their houses at a cost of five thousand rupees<sup>7</sup>. Their dress, diet, practice of keeping

---

1. Barbosa, P. 147.

2. Attached to a Bengali manuscript Sāradā Tilaka No. 4608 dated S.E. 1361/A.D. 1439.

3. Inshā-i-Mahrū, in J.A.S.B. 1923, P. 280.

4. Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, P. 118.

5. Tārīkh-i-Ferīqat, Vol. II, Pp. 301-2.

6. Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, P. 122.

7. Āyn-i-Akbarī, Vol. II, P. 134.

slaves, and their dwelling houses go to indicate that the people were rich and happy. But this is one side of the picture. The picture of the Mullās as drawn by Vijaya Gupta and Mukunda Rāma is very deploring. The fees received by the Mullās were meagre in amount. They received ten gandās of cowri (about one third of a pice) for killing fowls, six buris of cowri (about a pice<sup>1</sup>) for killing goat and the head of the animal killed, only four annas for performing the marriage rituals<sup>2</sup>. Though the Mullās served as priests in the society and as such deserved the respect and veneration of all, their dress (only ijār or trouser and cap) shows that they did not enjoy a rich living. The Mullā, named Khālās (correctly Ikhlas or Khālis) who was the teacher of the Qadī of Hasan Hatī, is seen moving with a torn ijār (trouser). The reference to his movement from house to house indicates, how difficult it was for him to earn his livelihood. On the other hand, he was the man, who always engaged himself in the study of the Quran and the Kitāb<sup>3</sup> (holy book). The weaver of Hasan Hatī who died of snake-bite left only four pana of cowri (about half an anna) for his wife<sup>4</sup>. The above references show that there was a section of Muslims who were poor.

While considering the economic condition of the people, one has to remember that the cost of living was very low.

---

1. See Supra, Pp. 221-222.

2. Mukunda Rama: Kavikāṅkan Chandī, published by Baṅgabāsi Karyālaya, Calcutta, P. 86. The relevant passage has been quoted above. See, Supra, Pp. 221-222.

3. Vijaya Gupta, Padma Purāna, edited by B.K. Bhattacharjee, Bānī Niketan, Barisal, P. 61.

4. Ibid, P. 59.

The following index of price level supplied by Ibn Battūṭah will throw light on the subject<sup>1</sup>. (Taken from the table drawn in History of Bengal, Vol. II, in terms of present standard of weight and money.)

(approximately) 8½ maunds of rice	were sold at	Rs. 7/-
" 28 " of paddy	" " "	Rs. 7/-
" 14 seers of ghee	" " "	Rs. 3/8/-
" 14 " of sesame oil	" " "	Rs. 1/12/-
" 14 " of rose water	" " "	Rs. 7/-
" 14 " of sugar	" " "	Rs. 3/8/-
" 8 fat fowls	" " "	Rs. 0/14/-
" 1 fat ram	was " "	Rs. 1/12/-
" 1 milch cow	" " "	Rs. 21/-
" 15 pigeons	were " "	Rs. 0/14/-

Judging from the price-level drawn above, it may be assumed that the common people were not hard hit by their low income. Those were the days when one was satisfied having a gift of a jute-piece, as in the case of Kṛittivāsa, who received one such piece from the King of Gaura<sup>2</sup>. Śrīdhara, a disciple of Chaitanya, earned his livelihood by dealing in radish, sheath of bamboo, and the spathe of plantain tree<sup>3</sup>. The needs of the people were not great and they were happy with their lot. Judged from this standpoint, the people were

1. Ibn Battūṭah, Vol. IV, Pp. 210 ff.  
History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 101-2.

2. Quoted by Sukumar Sen in Bāṅglā Sahityer Itihāsa, Calcutta, 1940, P. 86.

3. Brindāvana Dāsa: Chaitanya Bhāgavata, published by M.K.Ghosh, Calcutta, Gaurāṅḍa, 440, Pp. 72-73.

generally happy. According to the Chinese Account, "the seasons of heaven have scattered the wealth of the Earth over this kingdom, the riches and integrity of its people surpass, perhaps those of Ch'in Chiang (Palembang) and equal to those of Chao-wa (Java)"<sup>1</sup>.

(x) Contact with the local people :-

It has been pointed out earlier<sup>2</sup> that some of the social features of the Muslims such as the worship of Satya-Pir and the introduction of the foot-print of the Prophet were due to the mixture of both Muslim and non-Muslim conceptions. There was a close contact between the people of diverse communities. That such contacts were not rare may be gleaned from the following facts.

- (a) We have seen earlier<sup>3</sup> that a number of local people were converted to Islām.
- (b) Muslim rulers in their fight against the Dehli Sultāns recruited local soldiers<sup>4</sup>.
- (c) Local people were appointed in important positions of the state<sup>5</sup>.

Beside these there are references in the Bengali literature to show that the Muslim learned men held discussions with

---

1. Visva-Bharati Annals, Vol. I, 1945, P. 99.

2. Supra, Pp. 211 ff.

3. Chapter III, Section (C).

4. See, Chapter II, P. 36.

5. For appointment of Hindu Officers by 'Alā' al-Dīn Husayn Shah, see, History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 151 ff.

those of the non-Muslims on religious matters. Krishna Dāsa Kavirāja refers to two such discussions, one between Chaitanya and the Qādī of Nadiyā, and the other between Chaitanya and a certain Turk called a Pīr.

(A) The discussion between Chaitanya and the Qādī of Nadiyā.

The Qādī prohibited the kīrtana in Nadiyā, probably due to a number of complaints he received from some anti-Vaiṣṇava Hindus<sup>1</sup>. But Chaitanya ordered for nagara-kīrtana

1. That the Qādī received such complaints is clear from the following verses of Krishna Dāsa Kavirāja himself. (See, Chaitanya Charitāmṛita, Adi, 17th.)

হেন কাল সাযন্তী হিন্দু পাঁচ মাত আইল ॥  
 আমি করে হিন্দু বিদ্‌ম জাশিল নিম্নাই ।  
 যে কীর্তন প্রবর্তাইল কতু শুনি নাই ॥  
 . . . . .  
 অক্ষয়চণ্ডী বিধ্বস্তী করে জাগরণ ।  
 জাত নৃত্যগীত বাদ্য ধোণু আচরণ ॥  
 পূর্বে জান ছিল এই নিম্নাই পাণ্ডিত ।  
 গয়া হৈতে আমিয়া চান্নাল বিপরীত ॥  
 উচ্চ কারি গায় গীত দেয় করজানি ।  
 অদৃশ করজানি শব্দে কর্ণে নাগে জানি ॥  
 না জানি কি খাশা মতু বন্দী নাচে গায় ।  
 শ্যাম কৌদে পাড় জেঠে গড়াগড়ি যায় ॥  
 নগরীধাকে সাগর কৈল মদা মকীর্তন ।  
 কাল্য বিদ্রা নাহি খাই করি জাগরণ ॥  
 নিম্নাই নাম ছাড়ি এবে বোলায় গোরহরি ।  
 হিন্দু বিদ্‌ম নষ্ট হৈকল সাযন্তী মজারি ॥  
 কৃষ্ণের কীর্তন কল নীচ বার বার ।  
 এই সাপে নবদ্বীপ হইবে উজাড় ॥

(kīrtana in procession) in violation of the Qāḍī's order.

According to Krishna Dāsa Kavirāja, Chaitanya at the height of his emotionalism reached the Qāḍī's palace and had the following discussions with him<sup>1</sup>.

"The lord says, 'I have come to put some questions! The Qāḍī says, 'say whatever is in your heart'. The lord says, 'You take cow-milk, so cow is your mother. Bulls earn food

দিকু শাক্তে দেবুর নাম মহাপ্রভু জ্ঞানি ।  
সব্ব বোক শুনিব প্রভুর বিঘ্ন হয় জানি ॥  
প্রভুর ঠাকুর জ্ঞানি প্রভু জেগার জন ।  
নিম্নায়ে কোলায়েয়া তাঁর করত বজ্রন ॥

Translation :- "At that time, some five to seven pāshandī (irreligious Hindus) came and complained that Nimāi (Chaitanya) was destroying the Hindu religion and that they did not hear such kīrtana before (as was introduced by him) ..... Dance, song and beating of drums were befitting to the Chandī and Manasā worship. Formerly this Nimāi Pandit was good, he went astray after his return from Gaya. He sings loudly and claps his hands; the scound of drum and clapping deafen those who hear. Nobody knows what edibles give him strength to become mad, to dance, sing, laugh, cry and to go on rolling. The towns-men are maddened with continuous kīrtanas so that they cannot sleep at night. Now they call him Gaur-Hari in place of Nimāi; being irreligious, they are destroying the Hindu religion. Even the lowly persons make kīrtana of Krishna; at this sin Nāliya will be depopulated. In the Hindu religion, the name Isvara is a mahāmantra; if everybody hears, the mantra loses its sanctity. You are the Thākur (leader or officer in charge) of the village; call Nimāi before you and urge upon him to give up (this peculiar way of life)".

1. Chaitanya Charitāmṛita, Adi, 17th.

শ্রদ্ধ কহে শ্রদ্ধ লাগি আয়েয়ায় জেগার স্মৃতি ।  
কাজী কহে আজ্ঞা কর হৈ জেগার রূপ ॥  
শ্রদ্ধ কহে গোদুগ্ধ খাও গাজী জেগার মাজ ।  
কৃষ্ণ অন্ন উপজায় তাঁত তিহি পিতা ॥  
পিতা মাজ মারি খাও এবা কোন ষ্টর্ম ।  
কোন রূপ কর জ্ঞানি একত বিকর্ম ॥

for you, so bulls are your father. What is this that you kill your father and mother and eat their flesh? How do you do this illogical work " The Qādi says, 'As you have the Vedas and the Purānas, I have my religious books, the kitāb (holy book) and the Qurān. According to these books, there

কাজী কহে তোমার তৈছে বেদ পুরাণ ।  
 তৈছে আঁমার শাস্ত্র কেতাৰ কোৰাণ ॥  
 সেই শাস্ত্ৰে কহে প্ৰবৃতি-নিবৃতি মাৰ্গ ভেদ ।  
 নিবৃতি মাৰ্গে জীৱমাত্ৰ বৰ্ধেৰ নিষেধ ॥  
 প্ৰবৃতি মাৰ্গে গোবৰ্ধে কৰিত্তে বিধি হয় ।  
 শাস্ত্ৰ আজায় বৰ্ধ কৈলে নাহি পাপ ভয় ॥  
 তোমার বেদতে আছে গোবৰ্ধেৰ বাণী ।  
 অতএব গোবৰ্ধ কৰে বড় বড় মুনি ॥  
 প্ৰভু কহে বেদে কহে গোবৰ্ধে নিষেধে ।  
 অতএব হিন্দু মাত্ৰ না কৰে গোবৰ্ধে ॥  
 জীয়াইতে পারে যদি জৰে পারে আণী ।  
 বেদ-পুরাণে এই আছে আজ্ঞাবাণী ॥  
 অতএব জৰদগৰে পারে মুনিগণ ।  
 বেদমত্ৰে শীঘ্ৰ কৰে তাহাৰ জীৱন ॥  
 জৰদগৰে হুকা খুৰা হয় আঁৱৰ ।  
 তাতে তাৰ বৰ্ধ নহে হয় উপকাৰ ॥  
 কামিকালে তৈছে শক্তি নাহিক ব্ৰাহ্মণে ।  
 অতএব গোবৰ্ধে কহে না কৰে এখনে ॥  
 তোমরা জীয়াইতে নাৰ বৰ্ধমাত্ৰ মাৰ ।  
 নৰক হুইতে তোমার নাহিক নিস্তাৰ ॥  
 গৰুৰ যতক বোম তত মহত্ৰ বয়মৰ ।  
 গোবৰ্ধে বোঁৱৰ মৰ্শ্যে পঢ়ে নিৰন্তৰ ॥  
 তোমা মৰাৰ শাস্ত্ৰ কৰ্ত্তা সেই প্ৰান্তু হৈন ।  
 না জানি শাস্ত্ৰেৰ মৰ্ম্ম এঁছে আজী দিন ॥

is distinction between 'Path of Active Life' and 'Path of Passive Life'. According to the latter, the killing of animal is prohibited, while according to the former killing of cow or bull is allowed. There is no sin in killing in the manner as it is prescribed by religion. Your Vedas allow killing of cow, and so great munis (sages) used to kill cow'. The lord says, 'The Vedas prohibit killing of cow, so no Hindu kills any cow. According to the Vedas killing of animal is allowed only if they can be restored to life. So the munis (sages) killed old-aged ones and restored their life with the help of the Vedic mantras. The old-aged became young ones, so the killing became a boon for them. In the present time, Brahmins have no such power, so nowadays they do not kill cow. You only kill, you cannot restore to life, so you will not escape hell. The cow-killers will live in hell as many thousand years as there are hairs in the body of the cow. Your religious leader has gone astray, so he has given such direction without knowing the significance of sāstra (religious law)'. Hearing this, the Qāḍī became dumb, he could not utter any word and said, 'I accept defeat, O' Pandit, you have told the truth".

---

শুনি মুকু টেন কাজী নাহি সুরে বানী ।  
 বিচারিয়া করে কাজী পরাভব মানি ॥  
 ভূমি যে কহিলে পাণ্ডিত সেই মত হয় ।



(B) Discussion between Chaitanya and a certain Turk called a Pir :-

Kṛishna Dāsa Kavirāja refers to the meeting of Chaitanya with ten horsemen<sup>1</sup>. Chaitanya was then coming back from Vrindāvana. There was among these men, one clad in black attire, called a Pir. The story is that once Chaitanya fell senseless in extreme devotion. The horsemen came to the spot and suspected his followers of robbing of his all by making him swallow the leaves of dhukurā (a kind of intoxicating leaves) and arrested them. On recovering from the state of senselessness, Chaitanya testified to the innocence of his followers. He entered into argument with the black-clad horseman until the latter was convinced. All the horsemen accepted Vaishnavism. Their meeting has been described as follows<sup>2</sup> :-

"He (the Pir) propounded monotheism and one common God, on the basis of his holy book (viz. the Qurān). But the

---

1. Chaitanya Charitāmṛita, Madhya, 18th.

2. J.N. Sarkar: Chaitanya's Pilgrimages and Teachings (English translation of Madhya-līlā of Chaitanya Charitāmṛita), London, 1913, Pp. 226-27.

The Bengali verses (Chaitanya Charitāmṛita, Madhya, 18th) are as follows :-

[যেই য়েই এক পবন গম্ভীর ।  
কান বন্ধ করে সেই লোক কহে পীর ॥  
চিও আদ্র হৈন জর প্রভুক দেখিয়া ॥  
নিবিশেষে বন্ধ মুগ্ধে মুগ্ধ উগ্ধিয়া ॥  
অদ্বৈত ব্রহ্মবাদ সেই করিল মূশন ।  
আরি শাস্ত্র মুক্ত্যে প্রভু করিলা খণ্ডন ॥  
যেই য়েই কহে প্রভু মকবি খণ্ডন ।  
উত্তর না আয়েম মুখ ময়া মুক্ত হৈন ॥

Master refuted all his propositions by arguments based on the scripture, till the man was silenced. The Master continued, "Your scripture establishes one common God (in the beginning) and refuting that theory sets up in the end a particular God, who is full of all powers, dark of hue, the

প্রভু কহে তোমার শাস্ত্র মূলে নিরীকেশ্বর ।  
 তাঁরা খাপি মাশিশেষ মূলাদিয়াছে শেষ ॥  
 তোমার শাস্ত্র কহে শেষে একই ঐশ্বর ।  
 মটেক স্বর্গ্য মূর্ণ তিহো শ্যাম কলবর ॥  
 মাচ্চিদানক দেহ মূর্ণ ব্রহ্ম স্বকম ॥  
 মবর্বাআ মবর্বজ্ব নিজ মবর্বাদি স্বকম ॥  
 মূর্ষি মূর্ষি প্রনয় তাঁরা হৈতে হয় ।  
 মূর্ষ মূর্ষ জগতের তিহো মনাময় ॥  
 মবর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ মবর্বারশি কারণের কারণ ।  
 তাঁর জন্ম হয় জীবের মৃত্যুর কারণ ॥  
 তাঁর মেরা বিরা জীবের না মায় মৃত্যুর ।  
 তাঁহার চরণে প্রীতি পুঙ্কমার্থ মার ॥  
 মোক্ষাদি আনক হয় মার এক কণ ।  
 মূর্গানক-প্রাপ্তি তাঁর চরণ মেরন ॥  
 কর্ম জ্ঞান যোগ আগে কারিয়া মূর্গন ।  
 মকল খাপিয়া মূলে ঐশ্বর মেরন ॥  
 তোমার মাচিত মবার নাহি শাস্ত্রজ্ঞান ।  
 মূর্বামর বিধি মূর্ষি পর বনবান ॥  
 নিজ শাস্ত্র দেখে ভূমি বিচার কারিয়া ।  
 কি নিখিয়াছে শেষে নির্ণয় কারিয়া ॥  
 স্নেহ কহে মেরে কহ মেরে মতু হয় ।  
 শাস্ত্র নিখিয়াছে কহে বহুত না মারয় ॥  
 নিরীকেশ্বর গোমাকি বনকি কবরন ব্যাখ্যান ।  
 মাকার গোমাকি মেরু কার নাহি জ্ঞান ॥  
 মেরে ত গোমাকি ভূমি মাঙ্কায় ঐশ্বর ।  
 মোরে কৃপা কর মুকি আর্থাগু মাংর ॥

embodiment of sat chid and ananda, the perfect spirit, the soul of all, all-pervading, eternal, the self of everything, the source of creation, life and destruction, the refuge of all universes whether gross or fine, the most excellent, adorable by all, the first cause of everything. Men are saved by faith in Him, and freed from the bondage of the world only by serving Him. Delight in Him is the supreme human attainment, while salvation can give only a particle of that bliss. The highest beautitude comes only from serving His feet. After first insisting on work, knowledge and mental abstraction, these are then set aside and the service of God is laid down as the final duty. Your theologians have no knowledge of their own scriptures; they forget that where there are two injunctions, the latter is stronger. Decide after studying your own holy books, and see what is laid down as the final conclusion".

"The Muslim replied, 'True are your words. What is written in the scriptures cannot be changed by men. The abstract God (Gosain) is discussed by theologians; nobody thinks of adoring the incarnate God. You are such, God's own self. Have mercy on me, unworthy sinner!"

The discussions prove that learned men of one community were conversant with the religious books of the other community. For example, the Qādī of Naiiyā referred to the Vedas and the Purānas in his discussions with Chaitanya. Unless

there was a close contact between the two people such discussions could not have been possible. Krishna Dāsa Kavirāja goes a step further and says that both Qādī of Nadiyā and the Turk called Pīr were convinced of the arguments of Chaitanya and begged of him to make them his disciples. This is not corroborated by any other source. Such important events, conversion of an important officer like the Qādī and another Pīr, would not have been left unnoticed by other Vaishṇava writers, if there was any basis in it. Vrindāvana Dāsa<sup>1</sup> also refers to the Qādī - Chaitanya encounter, but he does not say that the Qādī accepted the teachings of Chaitanya. The whole book of Krishna Dāsa Kavirāja was written to deify Chaitanya and to paint his character with a superhuman colour. In this particular case also he could not rise above the sectarianism and probably exaggerated the facts.

---

1. Vrindāvana Dāsa: Chaitanya Bhāgavata, Madhya, 23rd.

CHAPTER - VII.

THE CONCLUSION.

To a student of political history, the history of Bengal from the conquest of Nādiyā by Muḥammad Bakhtyār Khaljī<sup>1</sup> till A.D. 1538 is a mere record of events in the gradual expansion and consolidation of Muslim political power. In fact, during this period of more than three hundred years the Muslim power expanded throughout the nook and corner of Bengal<sup>2</sup>. But to a student of social history, the period unfolds a greater significance, as it witnessed the introduction and gradual development of a fresh element i.e. the Muslim society, in the socio-religious history of the country. Although the political history of Bengal offers several landmarks, the social historian hardly finds any, because the social forces have got a continuous growth and development without caring for or rather encouraged by time and tide. The period covered by the present study passed from the formative stage of the Muslim society to a complete overhaul of the social forces in the country in which the religion of Islām and the Muslims became predominant.

The Muslim society in Bengal developed on three important supports: the Muslim ruling class, the Muslim scholars and the Muslim Sūfis. The most important contribution of the

---

1. For date of the conquest of Nādiyā, see, Indian Historical Quarterly, June, 1954, Pp. 133 ff.

2. See, Supra, Pp. 43-48.

ruling class was that they expanded the political power so that the small principality of Lakhnawtī of Muhammad Bakhtyār was, within about one century and a half of its existence, turned to be a great Muslim kingdom of Bengal. Without the political power at the top, the Muslim society would hardly have survived the throes of its birth in clash with the hostile multitudes round about them. To the ruling class, especially to the Independent Sultāns, goes the credit of giving Bengal a homogeneous Muslim kingdom, independent of the political forces of Dehli. Shams al-Dīn Ilyās Shāh was the first to unite the whole of Bengal under him<sup>1</sup>, while his successors till A.D. 1538 held the same position without break. The Muslims thus got an opportunity to consolidate their position without any hindrance. Besides the expansion of their power, the ruling class also encouraged the scholars and the Sūfīs, built mosques, madrasahs and khāngahs, afforded facilities to the Muslims for visiting the holy cities of Makkah and Madīnah. In short, they helped the growth of a distinct Muslim society in Bengal. The scholars, in their turn, wrote books on Islāmic sciences and literature. They paid special attention to Fiqh, Hadīth, Tasawwuf, Persian poetry and even Bengali language<sup>2</sup>. They also maintained academies and imparted instructions to the people<sup>3</sup>. The contribution of the Sūfīs covered a wider range. They were not

- 
1. History of Bengal, Vol. II, Pp. 103-6. A.H. Dani: "Shams-uddin Ilyās Shāh, Shāh-e-Bangālah" to be published in the 'Sir Jadu Nath Sarker Commemoration Volume', Panjab University, India.
  2. Chapter III, Section (B).
  3. Ibid.

indifferent to the political happenings, but sometimes, influenced the rulers in moulding the state-policy on Islāmic lines<sup>1</sup>. They even helped the expansion of political power. But the most important contribution of the Sūfīs was that they educated the people in religious principles, helped the poor and the destitutes, attracted the local people around them by their religious disposition and converted many to Islām<sup>2</sup>. It is thus clear that they devoted themselves to the cultural pursuits and with or without the help of the royal power, trained the Muslims in the observance of religious principles. Based on these three supports, the Muslim society developed to such an extent that it occupied a prominent position in the socio-religious life of the people.

When Muḥammad Bakhtyār Khaljī laid the foundation of the principality of Lakhnawtī, the Muslim population was composed of merely immigrants, numbering a few thousands<sup>3</sup>. They came either with the invading hordes or as adventurers after the conquest. The society thus established, was subsequently fed in two ways, either by fresh immigration from the West or by local conversion<sup>4</sup>. Thus, we notice that the Muslim society comprised of people from Arabia, Shīrāj, Herāt, Samarqand, Tabriz, Bukhārā, Balkh and Abyssinia. As regards tribal affiliation, there were the Khaljīs, the Turks, the

---

1. Chapter III, Section (C).

2. Ibid.

3. According to Minhāj (P.152) in the Tibet expedition, Bakhtyār's army consisted of ten thousand soldiers.

4. Chapter IV.

Afghāns, the Ḥabshīs and probably the Mughals. Similarly the society included a few groups of people like the 'Ālīns, the Sayyids, the Ṣūfīs and the local converts<sup>1</sup>. These people helped the growth of the Muslim society in their own way; some formed the bulk of the ruling class, being appointed in civil, military and revenue departments, while others educated the people<sup>2</sup>. In their daily life the Muslims used both Persian and Bengali languages. Bengali was used not only by the converted local Muslims, but also by the immigrants. The immigrants did not try to keep themselves isolated from the social current of the country. They adopted various professions like trade and commerce, crafts and industry, and agriculture, beside accepting offices in the State. They built their dwelling houses with the materials locally available. Even the court-patronised stone or brick architecture developed a local style, suited to the climate of the country. Their diet included meat, fish or vegetables as they were locally available<sup>3</sup>.

The fame of the Muslim kingdom and the Muslim population of Bengal spread far and wide. Beside trying to obtain political hold over the neighbouring kingdoms, as evidenced by occasional raids, the Bengal Sultāns exchanged ambassadors with the kingdoms of China, Dehī and Khurāsān<sup>4</sup>. On occasions,

---

1. Chapter IV.

2. Chapters III and IV.

3. Chapter VI.

4. Viśva-Bharatī Annals, Vol. I, 1945, Pp. 96-134; J.A.S.B., 1952, Pp. 168-69; Yahyā bin Ahmad, Pp. 126-27.



the Bengal Sultāns were invited to help settling disputes over succession in favour of one or the other prince in Arakan and Tippera<sup>1</sup>.

The Muslim society in Bengal developed the orthodox principles of Islām and at the same time gave way to the popular forces. As for the orthodox side, they adhered to the principles of Imān or belief in God and His Prophet, Namāz or prayer, Rozā or fasting and Hajj or pilgrimage to the holy cities of Makkah and Madīnah<sup>2</sup>. The society looked for its strength towards the mosques, madrasah and Khānqah. These served as the pillars of the social structure and all eyes were turned towards them for guidance. Besides, the Bengali Muslims, through the favourable attitude of the Sultāns, kept a close contact with the holy cities of Makkah and Madīnah. Both Sultān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Azam Shāh and Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad Shāh deserve special mention for establishing madrasah in Makkah and Madīnah and making liberal grants for the people thereof<sup>3</sup>.

---

1. History of Bengal, Vol. II, P. 59; J.A.S.B., 1844, Pp.44 ff.

It is said that the Burmese king appointed Muslim soldiers including shipmen under them, (Islamic Culture, July, 1936, P. 426) though it is difficult to say whether they were from Bengal. At a later date the Ahom King Rudra Singh (A.D. 1696-1714) imported masons and artificers from Bengal (E. Gait: A History of Assam, 2nd edition, Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta and Simla, 1926, P. 181). But it is not possible to determine whether they were Muslims.

2. Chapter V.

3. Chapter III, Section (A).

The most important element of the popular force in Islām was the Pīrism<sup>1</sup>. The people considered the dargāh of the Pīr as a place of pilgrimage. They made offerings to the Pīrs or their departed soul, built tombs and illuminated them. The rulers made endowment of land for the maintenance of their shrines and other establishments attached to them<sup>2</sup>. They also introduced the stone-representation of the footprint of the Prophet (Qadam Rasūl). The Pīrism did not originate in Bengal, but the long settlement of the Muslims in this land side by side with the local people, many of whom were converted and taken to the fold of Islām made the conception deeply rooted in the society. The converts found in the Pīrs a resemblance of the Tāntric gurus and in the tombs and dargāhs that of Chaitya or Stupa. Moreover, the converts could not readily learn the religious principles, as the religious books were then available in languages foreign to them. No doubt, the religious teachers tried to teach them the fundamental principles of Islām, but it is futile to think that they succeeded in keeping the converts completely isolated from their age-old customs and traditions. This is why, Sayyid Sultān, a mid-16th century Bengali poet, regretfully writes that the Bengali Muslims engaged themselves in reading Hindu mythological tales due to their ignorance of Arabic language<sup>3</sup>.

---

1. Chapter V.

2. Chapter III, Section (C).

3. Sayyid Sultān: Ophāte Rasūl, edited by Ali Ahmad, B.S. 1356, P. 7.; Supra, 103-104.

The Pīrism gave way to the further growth of concepts like those of Satya-Pīr, Pāñch-Pīr, Mānik-Pīr, Ghorā-Pīr and Madārī-Pīr. Evidences for them are not available during the period under review, though it may be said with certainty that the Pīrism formed the basis of their growth. The Hindu society of the day worshipped deities like Manasā and Chandī for relief from all sorts of dangers<sup>1</sup>. The Satya-Pīr etc. probably occupied the same place among the Muslims, as these deities did in the Hindu society.

The Muslims of Bengal did not confine themselves to the orbit of their own society, rather they had contact with the non-Muslims, sometimes they held religious discussions with them<sup>2</sup>. Credit goes to the liberal Muslim administration that although the rulers helped the growth of the Muslim society, they did not persecute anybody simply for difference of faith. Rather they encouraged the non-Muslims, recruited them in the army and even appointed them in the key position of the State.<sup>3</sup> They also encouraged poets to write in the local language by awarding rewards and titles<sup>4</sup>. They also attended to the local problems by the construction of dykes and roads and excavation of tanks and digging wells<sup>5</sup>. These

- 
1. Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1955, Vol.XVII, Part III, Pp. 503 ff.
  2. See, Chapter VI.
  3. Barani, P. 586. Afif, Pp. 114-18; History of Bengal, Vol.II, Pp. 150-52.
  4. D.C.Sen: Bāngla Bhāshā O Sāhitya, 8th edition, Calcutta, B.S. 1356, P. 73; Sukumar Sen: Bāngla Sāhityer Itihāsa, Calcutta, 1940, Pp. 71 ff.
  5. See, Supra, Pp. 74-76.

were for the benefit of all and sundry and not of any particular group of people. This explains why the local people stood at the back of the Sultāns in their fight for independence against the Sultāns of Dehli.

To conclude, therefore, it can be said that the Muslim society in Bengal developed gradually, so that after a lapse of more than three hundred years, it became a part and parcel of Bengal's body politic. The facts that the Muslims settled in this country, learnt the local language, lived in harmony with the local people, accepted local wives, adopted various professions suited to their genius, and that in their dietary system and dwelling houses they depended on materials locally available, bear out that they considered Bengal as their homeland. Side by side they adhered to the Islāmic religious principles and built religious institutions of their own. There is, therefore, good ground to suggest that a Bengali Muslim society already passed its formative stage, took a definite shape, and breathed a new spirit of tolerance, equality and universal love in the country so much so that large masses accepted Islām and even the then Hinduism was deeply affected as traceable in some of the elements of the Chaitanya movement<sup>1</sup>.

---

1. For example, their mass worship, their kirtana, their caste-less society etc. For details see, E. Haq: Bāṅga Sūfi Prabhāva, Calcutta, A.D. 1935, Pp. 164 ff.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY.

(1) PERSIAN MANUSCRIPTS:-

Inshāh-i-Hāsirah li-Khazānah-i-Āmirah

by Hamīd Allāh Khān.

(MS. in the collection of Islamic Intermediate College, Chittagong.)

Mirāt al-Asrār

by 'Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī.

(Dacca University MS. No. 16AR/143; Āliyah Madrasah MS. No. Ma 12/19-20).

Mirāt-i-Madārī

by 'Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī.

(Dacca University MS. No. 217).

Maktūbāt-i-Hadrat Nūr Qutb Ālam.

(MSS. in possession of Prof. H. Askari of Patna College. Mr. S.M. Ikram (Member, Board of Revenue, Government of East Pakistan) has got typed copies).

Sharfnāmah

by Ibrāhīm Qawwām Fārūqī.

(Āliyah Madrasah MS. No. P.MSS/13-8).

(11) PUBLISHED WORKS IN ARABIC, PERSIAN AND URDU :-

Ahādith al-Khawānīn

by Hamīd Allāh Khān, Calcutta, A.D. 1871.

Akhbār al-Akhvār fi Asrār al-Abrār

by Shaykh 'Abd al-Haq Dehlawī, Dehli A.H. 1332.

Al-Daw al-Lāmi' li-shi' al-Qarn al-Tāsī'

by 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Sakhāwī, Cairo, A.H. 1353-55.

'Arab wa Hind ke Ta'alluqāt

by Sayyid Sulaymān Nadawī, Allahabad, A.D. 1930.

'Arabūn ki Jahāzrānī

by Sayyid Sulaymān Nadawī, Azamgarh, A.D. 1935.

Āsūdghān-i-Dhākah

by Hakīm Ḥabīb al-Rahmān, Dacca, A.D. 1946.

Āthār-i-Manīr

by Shāh Murād Allāh, Bankipore, A.H. 1367.

Āyn-i-Akbarī

by Abū al-Faḍl.

Edited by H. Blochmann, Bibliotheca Indica,  
Calcutta, A.D. 1877.

Bazm-i-Mamlūkīyah

by Ṣabāḥ al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān, Azamgarh, A.D. 1954.

Bazm-i-Sūfīyah

by Ṣabāḥ al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān, Azamgarh, A.D. 1949.

Futūḥ al-Salātīn

by 'Isāmī.

Edited by Agha Mahdi Husain, Agra, A.D. 1938.

Gulshan-i-Ibrāhīmī

by Muḥammad Qāsim Ferīshṭah, Newal Kishore edition,  
Lucknow.

Hindūstān kī Qadīm Islāmī Darasgāḥen

by 'Abū al-Ḥasanāt Nadawī, Azamgarh, A.D. 1936.

Khazānah-i-'Āmirah

by Ghulam 'Alī Azād Bilgrāmī, 2nd edition,  
Kānpūr, A.D. 1900.

Khazīnat al-Asfiyā'

by Ghulam Sarwar, Newal Kishore edition, Lucknow.

Maktūbāt-i-Sadī

of Shāykh Sharf al-Dīn Yaḥyā Manerī, Bihar, A.H. 1286.  
Urdu translation published from Bihār Sharīf, A.D. 1926.

Manāqib al-Asfiyā'

by Shāh Shuayb.

Extract printed at the end of Maktūbāt-i-Sadī.

Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh

by 'Abd al-Qādir Badāyūnī, Bibliotheca Indica, A.D. 1869.

Nām-i-Haq

by anonymous author, Kānpūr, A.H. 1332; Bombay, A.D. 1885.

Nuzhat al-Khawātir

by Sayyid 'Abd al-Ḥayy, Hyderabad (Deccan), A.H. 1350.

Qirān al-Sādavn

by Amīr Khusrav.

Edited by Mawlawī Muḥammad Ismā'īl, Aligarh, A.D. 1918.

Qurān (The Holy Qurān).

Risālat al-Shuhdā

by Pīr Muḥammad Shattārī.

Text edited by G.H. Damant in J.A.S.B., 1874.

Riyād al-Salātīn

by Ghulām Husayn Salīm.

Bibliotheca Indica, A.D. 1898.

Suhayl-i-Yaman

by Naṣīr al-Dīn Ḥaydar.

Newal Kishore edition, Lucknow, A.D. 1880.

Tabaqāt-i-Nāsiri

by Abū 'Umar Minhāj al-Dīn 'Uthmān bin Sirāj al-Dīn al-Jūzjānī. Bibliotheca Indica, A.D. 1864.

Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī

by Nizām al-Dīn Ahmad Bakhshī.

Bibliotheca Indica, A.D. 1927-35.

Tadhkirat al-Awliyā'

by Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār.

Edited by R.A. Nicholson, London, A.D. 1905.

Tadhkirat-i-Awliyā'-i-Bangālah

by Mawlawī 'Ubayd al-Ḥaq, Feni.

Tadhkirat-i-'Ulamā'-i-Hind

by Raḥmān 'Alī, Lucknow, A.D. 1914.

Tārīkh-i-Firūzshāhī

by Diyā' al-Dīn Baranī,

Bibliotheca Indica, A.D. 1862.

Tārīkh-i-Firūzshāhī

by Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afīf, Bibliotheca Indica, A.D. 1890.

Tārīkh-i-Mubārakshāhī

by Yahyā bin Ahmad bin 'Abd Allāh al-Sarhindī.

Bibliotheca Indica, A.D. 1931.

Tuhfat al-Nazar fi Gharāyb al-Amsār wa 'Ajāyb al-Asfār, commonly known as Riḥlat Ibn Baṭṭūṭah

by Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad bin Muḥammad of Tanjah, alias Ibn Baṭṭūṭah.

Text edited and translated into French by Defremery and Sanguinetti, Paris, A.D. 1853-59.

Zafar al-Wāliḥ bi Muẓaffar wa-alih (or An Arabic History of Guirat)

by 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad bin 'Umar al-Makkī, alias Ḥājī Dabīr.

Edited by E. Denison Ross in three volumes, London, A.D. 1921-22.

(111) BENGALI MANUSCRIPTS : -

Nitiśāstravārtā

by Muzammil. (Dacca University MS. No. 237).

Rasul Vajaya

by Zayn al-Din (Dacca University MS. No. 594).

Sātnāmā

by Muzammil (Dacca University MS. No. 119).

Yūsuf Jolekhā

by Shāh Muhammad Saghir (Dacca University MSS. Nos. 225-227).

(iv) OLD BENGALI, ASSAMESE AND SANSKRIT WORKS :-

Ahom Burañji

Text edited and translated into english by K.L.Barua, Shillong, A.D. 1933.

Bauddha Gāna O Dehā

Edited by H.P.Śāstrī.

Bāṅgiya Sāhitya Parishad, Calcutta, B.S. 1323.

Chaitanya Bhāgavata

by Brindāvana Dāsa.

Edited by Atul Krishna Goswāmin, 3rd edition, Chaitanya Era, 452.

Chaitanya Charitamrita

by Krishna Dāsa Kavirāja.

Published by Basumati Sāhitya Mandir, Calcutta.

Dharmapūjā Vidhāna

Edited by Nanigopal Bandopadhyaya.

Bāṅgiya Sāhitya Parishad, Calcutta, B.S. 1323.

Kavikaṅkan Chandī

by Mukunda Rāma.

Published by Bāṅgabāsī Karyālaya, Calcutta.

Published by Calcutta University, A.D. 1924 and 1926.

Laili-Majnun

by Dawlat Wazir Bahrām Khān.

Edited by Ahmad Sharif, Bengali Academy, Dacca A.D.1957.

Mahābhārata

by Kavindra.

Edited by Gaurināth Śāstrī, Dhubri, Assam.



Mahābhārata (Asvamedha Parva)

by Sri Kara Nandi.

Edited by D.C. Sen and Benoda Bihāri Kavyatīrtha.  
Bāṅgiya Sāhitya Parishad, Calcutta, B.S. 1312.

Manasā Vijaya

by Vipradāsa.

Edited by Sukumar Sen.  
Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, A.D. 1953.

Ophāte Rasūl

by Sayyid Sultān.

Edited by Ali Ahmad, Noakhali, B.S. 1356.

Padma Purāna

by Vijaya Gupta.

Edited by B.K. Bhattacharjee, Bani Niketan, Barisal.

Rāmāyana

by Krittivāsa.

Edited by P.C.De, Calcutta, A.D. 1926.

Adi Kāṇḍa edited by N.K. Bhattasali, Dacca University,  
A.D. 1936.

Śrī Krishna Kīrtana

by Chandīdāsa.

Edited by Basanta Kañjan Roy,

Bāṅgiya Sāhitya Parishad, Calcutta, 2nd edition, B.S.1342.

Śrī Krishna Vijaya

by Malādhara Vasu.

Edited by Khagendra Nath Mitra, Calcutta University,  
A.D. 1944.

Śrī Rājasmālā (History of the Kings of Tippera).

Edited by Kaliprasanna Sen, Agartala, Tripura Era, 1336.

Sūnya Purāna

Edited by C.C. Bandopadhyay, Calcutta, B.S. 1336.

Śekh Subhodaya

Edited by Sukumer Sen, Calcutta, A.D. 1927.

(v) MODERN WORKS IN BENGALI :-

Ahmad, K.C. Amanatullah (compiled by) : A History of Cooch  
Behar, Part I, Cooch Bihar, A.D. 1936.

Ahmad, A. : Bāṅglā Kalanī Punthir Vivarana, Noakhali, B.S.1354.

Banerjee, R.D. : Bāṅglār Itihāsa, Vol. I, Calcutta, B.S.1321;  
Vol. II, Calcutta, B.S. 1324.

- Basu, J.C.: Medinipurer Itihāsa, Calcutta, B.S. 1346.
- Bhattacharjee, A.: Bānglā Maṅgal Kāvyer Itihāsa, Calcutta, B.S. 1346.
- Chakravarty, M.N. (edited by): Bīrbhūm Vivarana, Part III, Birbhum, B.S. 1334.
- Chakravarty, R.K.: Gaurer Itihāsa, Vol. II, Malda, A.D. 1909.
- Chawdhuri, A.C.: Śrīhatter Itivṛitta, Part I, Calcutta, B.S. 1317, Part II, Calcutta, B.S. 1324.
- Das Gupta, M.M.: Śrīhatter Itihāsa, Sylhet, A.D. 1903.
- Devasharma, P.C.Sen: Bagurār Itihāsa, Rangpur Sahitya Parishad, A.D. 1912.
- Haq, E.: Muslim Bānglā Sāhitya, Pakistan Publications, Dacca, A.D. 1957.
- Haq, E.: Baṅge Sūfī Prabhāva, Calcutta, A.D. 1935.
- Haq, E.: Purva Pākistāne Islām, Dacca, A.D. 1948.
- Haq, E. & Karim, A.: Arakān Kājsabhāve Bānglā Sāhitya, Calcutta, A.D. 1935.
- Karim, A.: Bānglā Prāchīn Punthir Vivarana, Part I, No. 1, Bāngliya Sāhitya Parishad Patrikā, additional Nos., B.S. 1309-12.
- Mitra, S.C.: Jaśore-Khulnār Itihāsa, Vol. I, 2nd edition, Calcutta, B.S. 1336, Vol. II, Calcutta, B.S. 1329.
- Majumdar, B.B.: Śrī Chaitanya Chariter Upādāna, Calcutta University, A.D. 1939.
- Majumdar, K.: Maimansinger Itihāsa, Calcutta, A.D. 1906.
- Saha, R.R.: Pābnā Jelār Itihāsa, Part III, Pabna, B.S. 1333.
- Sen, D.C.: Baṅga Bhāshā O Sāhitya, 8th edition, Calcutta, B.S. 1356.
- Sen, D.C.: Baṅga Sāhitya Parichaya or Typical Selections from Old Bengali Literature, Vol. I & II, Calcutta University, A.D. 1914.
- Sen, D.C.: Vrihat Baṅga, Part I in two volumes, Calcutta University, B.S. 1341 & 42.

Sen, S.: Bānglā Sāhityer Itihāsa, Calcutta, A.D. 1940.

(vi) WORKS IN EUROPEAN LANGUAGES :-

Ahmad, A.: History of Shah Jalal and Khadims, Sylhet, A.D. 1914.

Ahmad, M.A.: Early Turkish Empire of Dehli, Lahore, A.D. 1949.

Ahmad, S.: A Supplement to Vol. II of the Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Delhi, A.D. 1939.

Ahmad, K. & Muqtadir, A.: Catalogue of the Arabic and Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the Calcutta Madrasah, Calcutta, A.D. 1905.

Ali, S.A.: A Short History of the Saracenes, London, A.D. 1921.

Allen, B.C.: Assam District Gazetteers: Sylhet, Calcutta, A.D. 1905.

Allen, B.C.: Assam District Gazetteers: Kamrup, Allahabad, A.D. 1905.

Arnold, T.: The Preachings of Islam, new edition, Lahore, A.D. 1956.

Ashraf, K.M.: "Life and Condition of the People of Hindustan (1200-1250)" in J.A.S.B., 1935, Vol. I, No. 2.

Bagchi, P.C.: Studies in the Tantras, Part I, Calcutta University, A.D. 1939.

Bakhsh, S.K.: Essays: Indian and Islamic, London, A.D. 1912.

Bakhsh, S.K.: Studies: Indian and Islamic, London, A.D. 1927.

Banerjee, R.D.: History of Orissa, Vol. I, Calcutta, A.D. 1930.

Barua, K.L.: Early History of Kamarupa, Shillong, A.D. 1933.

Basak, R.G.: The History of North-Eastern India, London, A.D. 1934.

Basu, K.K.: Tārīkh-i-Mubārakshāhī (English translation of) Gaekwad's Oriental Series, A.D. 1932.

Bhattachali, N.K.: Coins and Chronology of the Early Independent Sultans of Bengal, Cambridge, A.D. 192.

Bhattachali, N.K.: Catalogue of Coins (collected by Sayyid A.S.M. Taifoor of Kawser House, Dacca and presented to the Dacca Museum), Dacca, A.D. 1936.

- Bhattachali, N.K.: Catalogue of Coins (collected by Maulvi Hakim Habibar Rahman Khan Akhonzada of Dacca and presented to the Dacca Museum), Dacca, A.D. 1936.
- Borah, M.I.: Bahāristān-i-Ghaybī. (English translation of Bahāristān-i-Ghaybī of Mirza Nathan). Published by the Government of Assam, A.D. 1936.
- Bose, M.M.: Post-Chaitanya Sahajiya Cult of Bengal, Calcutta University, A.D. 1930.
- Botham, A.W.: Catalogue of the Provincial Coin Cabinet, Assam, 2nd edition, Allahabad, A.D. 1930.
- Botham, A.W. & Friel, R.: Supplement to the Catalogue of the Provincial Cabinet of Coins, Assam, Allahabad, A.D. 1919.
- Brockelmann: Geschichte, Supplement, Leiden, A.D. 1938.
- Brown, P.: Indian Architecture, (Islamic Period), 2nd edition, Bombay.
- Browne, E.G.: A Literary History of Persia, Vol. II, Cambridge, A.D. 1928.
- Cunningham, Sir A.: Archaeological Survey of India, (Report of a Tour in Bihar and Bengal in 1879-80), Vol. XV, Calcutta, A.D. 1882.
- Damant, G.H.: Risālat al-Shuhdā (English translation of) in J.A.S.B., 1874.
- Dames, M.L.: The Book of Duarte Barbosa, Vol. II, Hakluyt Society, London, A.D. 1921.
- Dani, A.H.: Dacca: A Record of its Changing Fortune, Dacca, A.D. 1956.
- Dani, A.H.: Bengali Islamic Architecture. (Manuscript).
- Dani, A.H.: Śekh Śubhodaya (English translation of). (Manuscript)
- Dani, A.H.: Bibliography of Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal. (Appendix to the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Vol. II, 1957).
- Das Gupta, T.C.: Aspects of Bengali Society from Old Bengali Literature, Calcutta University, A.D. 1935.
- Das Gupta, S.B.: Obscure Religious Cults, Calcutta University, A.D. 1946.

- Das Gupta, J.N.: Bengal in the 16th Century, Calcutta University, A.D. 1914.
- Das Gupta, J.N.: India in the 17th Century, Calcutta University, A.D. 1916.
- De, S.K.: Early History of the Vaisnava Faith and Movement in Bengal, Calcutta, A.D. 1942.
- De, B. & Prashad, B.: Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. III, (English translation of). Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, A.D. 1939.
- Dikshit, K.N.: Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 55, Delhi, A.D. 1938.
- Ethe, H.: Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office, Vol. I, Oxford, A.D. 1903.
- Elliot and Dowson: History of India as told by its own Historians.
- Fārūqī, B.A.: Mujaddid's Conception of Tawhīd, Lahore, A.D. 1940.
- Fleet, J.F.: Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. III, Calcutta, A.D. 1888.
- Gait, E.: A History of Assam, 2nd edition, Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta & Simla, A.D. 1926.
- Gastrell, J.E.: Geographical and Statistical Report of the Districts of Jessore, Puredpore and Backergunje, Calcutta, A.D. 1868.
- Gibb, H.A.R. & Kramers, J.H.: Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, Leiden, A.D. 1953.
- Gibb, H.A.R.: Ibn Battuta (Broadway Travellers Series), London, A.D. 1929.
- Gibb, H.A.R.: Mohammedanism. (Home University Library Series, No. 197), 2nd edition, A.D. 1953.
- Grunwedel, A.: Buddhist Art in India, London, A.D. 1901.
- Gupta, J.N.: Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers: Bogra, Allahabad, 1910.
- Habib, Prof.M.: Sultān Mahmūd of Ghaznīn, Aligarh University, A.D. 1927.
- Habib, Prof.M.: Life and Works of Hadrat Amīr Khusraw, Aligarh, A.D. 1927.

- Haig, Sir Wolsley (edited by): The Cambridge History of India, Vol. III, Cambridge, A.D. 1928.
- Harvey, G.E.: History of Burma, London, A.D. 1925.
- Hastings, J.(edited by): Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Edinburgh, Vol. IX, A.D. 1917; X, A.D. 1918; XII, A.D. 1921.
- Hitti, P.K.: History of the Arabs, London and New York, 5th edition, A.D. 1951.
- Hodivala, S.H.: Studies in Indo-Muslim History, Bombay, A.D. 1939.
- Hughes, T.P.: A Dictionary of Islam, London, A.D. 1885.
- Hunter, W.W.: The Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. IV, London, 2nd edition, A.D. 1885.
- Husain, A.M.: The Rise and Fall of Muhammad bin Tughluq, London, A.D. 1938.
- Ishāq, M.: India's Contribution to the Study of Hadith Literature, Dacca University, A.D. 1955.
- Ivanow, W.: Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, Work Nos. 240, 241, 244, 248.
- Jarrett, H.S.: Āin-i-Akbarī, Vol. II (English translation of). Second edition corrected and annotated by Sir Jadunath Sarkar. Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, A.D. 1949.
- Khān, A.A.: Short Notes on the Ancient Monuments of Gaur and Pandua, Malda, A.D. 1913.
- Khān, A.A.: Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua. Edited by H.E. Stapleton, Calcutta, A.D. 1931.
- Khan, F.A.: Recent Archaeological Discoveries in East Pakistan: Mainamati, Pakistan Publications, Karachi.
- Khan, F.A.: Second Phase of Archaeological Excavations in East Pakistan: Mainamati. Public Relations Department, Government of East Pakistan.
- Khan, F.A.: Further Excavations in East Pakistan: Mainamati, Pakistan Publications, Karachi.
- Lane, Lexicon, London, A.D. 1863.
- Lane-Poole, S.: The Coins of the Muhammadan States of India in the British Museum, London, A.D. 1885.

- Law, N.N.: Promotion of Learning in India during Muhammadan Rule by Muhammadans, London, A.D. 1916.
- Law, N.N.: Studies in Indian History and Culture, London, A.D. 1925.
- Levy, R.: The Social Structure of Islam, Cambridge, A.D. 1957.
- Majumdar, R.C. (edited by): History of Bengal, Vol. I, Dacca University, A.D. 1943.
- Majumdar, R.C. & Pusalkar, A.D. (edited by): The History and Culture of the Indian People, Vol. V (The Struggle for Empire). Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, A.D. 1957.
- Martin, M.: The History, Antiquities, Topography and Statistics of Eastern India, Vol. I & II, London, A.D. 1838.
- Mitra, R.C.: The Decline of Buddhism in India, Visva-Bharati, A.D. 1954.
- Mukherjee, R.K.: The Changing Face of Bengal, Calcutta University, A.D. 1938.
- Nicholson, R.A.: The Mystics of Islam, London, A.D. 1914.
- Nicholson, R.A.: The Idea of Personality in Sufism, Cambridge, A.D. 1923.
- O'Malley, L.S.S.: Bengal District Gazetteers: Patna, Calcutta, A.D. 1907.
- O'Malley, L.S.S.: Bengal District Gazetteers: Bankura, Calcutta, A.D. 1908.
- O'Malley, L.S.S.: Bengal District Gazetteers: Khulna, Calcutta, A.D. 1908.
- O'Malley, L.S.S. & Chakravarty, M.M.: Bengal District Gazetteers: Howrah, Calcutta, A.D. 1909.
- O'Malley, L.S.S.: Bengal District Gazetteers: Birbhum, Calcutta, A.D. 1910.
- O'Malley, L.S.S.: Bengal District Gazetteers: Midnapore, Calcutta, A.D. 1911.
- O'Malley, L.S.S.: Bengal District Gazetteers: Hooghly, Calcutta, A.D. 1912.
- O'Malley, L.S.S.: Bengal District Gazetteers: Jessore, Calcutta, A.D. 1912.

- O'Malley, L.S.S.: Bengal District Gazetteers: Murshidabad, Calcutta, A.D. 1914.
- O'Malley, L.S.S.: Bengal District Gazetteers: Pabna, Calcutta, A.D. 1923.
- O'Malley, L.S.S.: Bengal District Gazetteers: Faridpur, Calcutta, A.D. 1925.
- O'Malley, L.S.S.: Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, Cambridge, A.D. 1917.
- Peterson, J.C.K.: Bengal District Gazetteers: Burdwan, Calcutta, A.D. 1910.
- Phayre, A.P.: History of Burma, London, A.D. 1884.
- Prasad, I.: History of Medieval India, Allahabad, A.D. 1933.
- Prasad, I.: History of the Qaraunah Turks in India, Allahabad, A.D. 1936.
- Purchas, S.: Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes, Vols. IX, X, XI, Glasgow, A.D. 1905-6.
- Qanungo, K.R.: Sher Shah, Calcutta, A.D. 1921.
- Qureshi, I.H.: The Administration of the Sultanate of Dehli, 2nd edition, Lahore, A.D. 1944.
- Ranking, George S.A.: Muntakhabu-T-Tawārikh, Vol. I (English translation of). Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, A.D. 1898.
- Ray, H.C.: The Dynastic History of Northern India, Vol. I, Calcutta, A.D. 1931.
- Ray Chaudhuri, T.K.: Bengal under Akbar and Jahangir, Calcutta, A.D. 1953.
- Rieu, C.: Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum.
- Raverty, Major H.G.: Tabakāt-i-Nāsiri (English translation of). Bibliotheca Indica, A.D. 1880.
- Sachy, E.A.: Bengal District Gazetteers: Mymensingh, Calcutta, A.D. 1917.
- Sarkar, J.N. (edited by): History of Bengal, Vol. II, Dacca University, A.D. 1948.
- Sarkar, J.N.: Chaitanya's Pilgrimages and Teachings, (Etranslation of Madhya Lilā of Chaitanya Charitāmrita of Krishna Dāsa Kavirāja). Calcutta, A.D. 1913.



- Sastri, H.P.: Vallala Charita (English translation of),  
Calcutta, A.D. 1901.
- Sastri, H.P.: Discovery of Living Buddhism in Bengal, A.D. 1896.
- Sen, B.C.: Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions of Bengal (Pre-Muhammadan epoch). Calcutta University,  
A.D. 1942.
- Sen, D.C.: History of the Bengali Language and Literature,  
Calcutta University, A.D. 1911.
- Sen, D.C.: Vaisnava Literature of Mediaeval Bengal, Calcutta  
University, A.D. 1917.
- Sen, D.C.: Chaitanya and His Companions, Calcutta University,  
A.D. 1917.
- Sen, D.C.: The Folk-Literature of Bengal, Calcutta University,  
A.D. 1920.
- Sen, K.: Mediaeval Mysticism of India, London.
- Sen, P.C.: Mahasthan and its Environs. (Varandra Research  
Society's Monograph, No. 2). Rajshahi, A.D. 1929.
- Shushtery, A.M.A.: Outlines of Islamic Culture, Vol. I & II,  
Bangalore, A.D. 1938.
- Singhal, C.R.: Bibliography of Indian Coins, Part II,  
Bombay, A.D. 1952.
- Smith, V.A.: The Oxford History of India, Oxford, 2nd  
edition, A.D. 1921.
- Soofi, G.M.D.: Al-Minhāi, Lahore, A.D. 1941.
- Stapleton, H.E.: Catalogue of the Provincial Cabinet of Coins,  
Eastern Bengal and Assam, Shillong, A.D. 1911.
- Stewart, C.: History of Bengal, London, A.D. 1913.
- Strong, F.W.: Eastern Bengal District Gazetteers: Dinajpur,  
Allahabad, A.D. 1912.
- Subhan, J.A.: Sufism, its Saints and Shrines, Lucknow,  
A.D. 1938.
- Taifoor, S.M.: Glimpses of Old Dhaka, Dacca, A.D. 1952.
- Tarachand : Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, Allahabad,  
A.D. 1946.

- Thomas, E.: Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi, London, A.D. 1871.
- Thomas, E.: "Initial Coinage of Bengal" in J.A.S.B., 1867, 1873.
- Titus, M.: Indian Islam, London, A.D. 1930.
- Vas, J.A.: Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers: Rangpur, Allahabad, A.D. 1911.
- Webster, J.E.: Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers: Tippera, Allahabad, A.D. 1910.
- Webster, J.E.: Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers: Noakhali, Allahabad, A.D. 1911.
- Westland, J.: A Report on the District of Jessore: Its antiquities, its history, and its commerce, Calcutta, A.D. 1871.
- Wheeler, R.E.M.: Five Thousand Years of Pakistan, London, A.D. 1950.
- Wise, J.: Notes on the Races, Castes and Trades of Eastern Bengal, London, A.D. 1883.
- Wright, H.N.: Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Vol. II, Oxford, A.D. 1907.
- Wright, H.N.: The Coinage and Metrology of the Sultans of Delhi, Delhi, A.D. 1936.
- Yule, H.: Cathay and the Way Thither, Vols. I & II, London, A.D. 1866.

(vii) JOURNALS AND PERIODICALS: -

- Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Patrika, Calcutta.
- Bengal: Past and Present, Calcutta.
- Bangali Literary Review, Karachi.
- Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.
- Calcutta Review, Calcutta.
- Dacca Review, Dacca.
- Dacca University Studies, Dacca.

- Epigraphia Indica, Government of India, Cutchamond.
- Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, Government of India, Cutchamond.
- Indian Historical Quarterly, Calcutta.
- Islamic Culture, Hyderabad (Deccan).
- Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.
- Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca.
- Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Patna.
- Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, Patna.
- Journal of the Ebandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona.
- Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, (formerly published from Bombay and now being published from Banaras).
- Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, Karachi.
- Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London.
- Museums Journal, Peshawar.
- Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, Karachi Session, 1951; Dacca Session, 1953.
- Urdū, Karachi.
- Visva-Bharati Annals, (Visva-Bharati).