

RARE BOOK

MUSAIN SHĀHĪ BENGAL, (1493 - 1538 A.D.)

A Socio - Political Study

DHAKA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY	
Accession No.	A 153246
Classified	
Checked	
Shelved	

Dissertation submitted to the University of Dacca

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Dhaka University Library



A153246

MONTAZUR RAHMAN TARAFTAR M.A.

C O N T E N T S

	<u>P a g e</u>
Preface ...	I - I
List of maps and illustrations -	III
Abbreviations -	IV
Introduction -	VI - XII
 <u>CHAPTER - I</u>	
Husain Shāhi Dynasty (1493 - 1538 A.D.)	
I. 'Alāuddīn Husain -	1 - 41
The early life of Husain. Achievements in Bihār. Expeditions in Kāmṛup and Assam. War with Orissa. War with Tipperah. Occupation of Chittagong. The frontiers of the kingdom. Husain's achievements and his religious policy.	
II. Nāsiruddīn Nasret Shāh -	41 - 51
His relation with the Mughals. War with Ahoms. General remarks.	
III. 'Alāuddīn Fīrūz Shāh -	51 - 55
IV. Ghiyāṣuddīn Mahmūd Shāh -	56 - 61
 <u>CHAPTER II</u>	
Administration under Husain Shāh and his Successors.	
I. The Sultān and the legal background of his position; his servants and the royal household.	63 - 69
II. The nobility -	69 - 70
III. Central departments and officers	70 - 85
The prime minister. The department of correspondence. The police department. Judiciary. Department of finance. Army. Agrarian system -- majmu'adārs. The Portuguese ijārādārs. The system of jāgīr. Zamīndāry: customs. Public works.	
IV. The Provincial Government -	85 - 92
The names of the provinces. Eqīm, Mulk or 'Arṣah and Naḥal. The provindical governor and other subordinate officials. Shiqdār, Jangdār and Muqaddam. Provincial departments.	

V. Relation of Bengal with the administration of the pre-Mughal Gujrat - ...	...	...	92 - 93
VI. General remarks - ...	...	...	93 - 95
 <u>CHAPTER - III</u>			
Economic Conditions:			
I. Agriculture ...	...	...	96 - 103
II. Trade ...	...	...	103 - 109
III. Industry ...	...	...	109 - 13
IV. Medium of exchange ...	...	...	113 - 16
V. The economic classes and their interrelations	...	...	116 - 19
VI. Conditions of the people	...	...	119 - 21
 <u>CHAPTER - IV</u>			
Religious life.			
I. Islām ...	...	...	122- 27
II. Vaiṣṇavism ...	...	...	127 - 36
III. Buddhism ...	...	...	139 - 39
IV. The Dharma Cult ...	...	...	139 - 40
V. The Māth Cult ...	...	...	140 - 42
VI. The Manasā and Candī Cults	...	...	142
VII. Śaivism and Brahminism	...	...	143
VIII. Tāntricism and Hinduism	...	...	143 - 45
 <u>CHAPTER - V</u>			
Relation of Islām with other religious systems.			
I. Islām and Brahminism ...	...	...	146 - 54
II. Sūfī-ism and Yoga philosophy	...	...	154 - 73
III. Islām and Vaiṣṇavism	...	...	175 - 82
IV. The Dharma Cult and Islām	...	...	182 - 85
V. General remarks ...	...	...	185 - 86

CHAPTER - VI

Literature and culture.

I. Bengali literature	...	...	187 - 209
(a) Poems on the Manasā cult	...	...	189 - 95
(b) Bengali translation of the Mahābhārat	...	...	195 - 96
(c) Vaiṣṇava Padas	...	...	196 - 98
(d) Romantic poems	...	...	199 - 209
II. Persian language	...	...	209 - 12
III. Sanskrit literature	...	...	212 - 28
(a) Smṛti	...	...	213 - 16
(b) Nāvya Nyāya	...	...	216 - 18
(c) Poetry and drama	...	...	218 - 26
General remarks	...	...	226 - 28

CHAPTER - VII

Fine Arts and Architecture

I. Calligraphy	...	...	229 - 35
II. Music and Painting	...	...	235 - 40
III. Architecture	...	...	240 - 52
IV. General remarks	...	...	252, - 53

CHAPTER - VIII

Modes of Life.

I. Life of the Muslims	...	...	254 - 61
II. Life of the Hindus	...	...	261 - 75
III. Hindu - Muslim relation	...	...	275 - 79
IV. The Portuguese settlers and Nestorian Christians ^{Christians}	...	...	279 - 80
V. Evolution of a national Life	...	...	280 - 82

APPENDIX - A

The Chronology of the Hussein Shāhī Sultāns	283 - 85
---	-----	-----	----------

APPENDIX - B

Text and translation of the passages contained in plates I and II	286 - 87
---	-----	-----	----------

APPENDIX - C

Bibliography	288 - 301
--------------	-----	-----	-----------

P R E F A C E

The aim of the present work is to give a comprehensive account of socio-political life in Bengal under the Husain Shāhī rule (1493-1538 A.D.) which has significant importance in the history of the country. As a fairly abundant amount of materials has already been unearthed, it is possible to write the socio-cultural history of the period which can not be divorced from its political and economic background. No attempt has so far been made to write a book on the diverse aspects of Husain Shāhī Bengal such as administrative structure, economic life, religious movements, cultural activities and all that significantly counted in the history of the country. The present work makes a modest attempt, for the first time, to deal with these topics analysing the forces that were at work in the socio-political life of Bengal in the period in question.

While discussing the different topics, the author has tried to keep in view their relative importance and taken care to see that nothing of any real significance is ignored or left out. The introductory section of the work, it is hoped, will give an idea about its nature together with some of the humble contributions of the present writer to the socio-political history of the period under discussion.

Materials have been used from published and unpublished sources. It is necessary here to say a few words about some of the unpublished sources. On a comparison of the Varendra Research Society manuscript of the Yoga Qalandar, edited by Dr. Enamul Haq, with two other mss. of the same work in Arabic script, included in Abdul Karim Sāhitya Visārad's Collection (Nos. 386 and 388) of the Dacca University Library, the author has found that their texts do not materially differ except in cases of a few passages quite insignificant for the present purpose. This explains why Dr. Haq's text has been uniformly referred to in this dissertation to the exclusion of the Dacca University manuscripts. The manuscript of the Jnāna Pradīp from which verses have been frequently quoted in the fifth chapter of this work, belongs to the Dacca University Library (No. 152 in Sāhitya

Viṣṣarad's Collection). The two works mentioned above represent a particular aspect of Sūfi-ism in Medieval Bengal. The author acknowledges his debt to the authorities of these two institutions. His thanks are also due to the authorities of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan for giving him permission to consult the photostat copy of the Fathiyya - i - ibriyyah taken from the Bodleian ms. (No. or 589). Illustrations given in figs. I - VI have been taken from Sir Arnold's A Catalogue of Indian Miniatures, Vol-III, pl. 98, The Illustrated Weekly of India, May 18, 1958, Percy Brown's Indian Architecture (Islamic Period), 2nd. ed. and E. B. Havell's Indian Architecture, Its Psychology, Structure And History (pls. XVI and XVII). Maps I and 2 have been taken from the descriptive map of Bengal attached to Da Asia and sheet No. IX in Major Rennell's A Bengal Atlas, Calcutta, 1771.

In transliterating Arabic and Persian words, the method adopted by the International Oriental Conference of 1894, has been generally followed with such minor modifications as $\text{ذ} = z$ or dh, $\text{ظ} = \text{ḏ}$, $\text{ض} = \text{ḏ}$ etc. As to the transcription of Bengali and Sanskrit words, the generally accepted oriental system has been adopted with $\text{চ} = c$, $\text{স} = s$, $\text{ষ} = ṣ$, $\text{শ} = ś$ and $\text{র} = r$. In spelling placenames and names of modern writers, no rigid method has been adopted.

Department of Islamic History and Culture,
University of Dacca,

Momtazur Rahman Tarafder

East Pakistan.

26/2/60

List of maps and Illustrations.

M a p s

1. Joao de Barros's map of Bengal following page 32.
2. Rennell's map of Bengal following page 46.

I l l u s t r a t i o n s

Plate A . Two unpublished coins of Firūz dated 938 A. H. page 54a.

- I. An illustration from Hauz-al-Hayāt of Ghaus Gavāliārī,
showing Garbhāsan following page 173
- II. Another illustration from Hauz-al-Hayāt showing the
Yogic posture called Sabhāsan following page 173
- III. An illustration from Mrgevatī of Qutben .. following page 203
- IV. Doors of the Chota Sonā mosque of Gaud .. following page 249
- V. The facade of Viṣṇupur Temple following page 250
- VI. The facade of the Qadim Rasūl following page 250

AbbreviationsIntroduction

Āin = Āin-i-Akberī of Abūl Fazl.

A. S. R. = Archaeological Survey Report.

E. I. = Epigraphia Indica

E. I. M. or EP. Ind. Nos. = Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica.

I. H. Q. = Indian Historical Quarterly.

J. A. S. B. = Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

J. A. S. P. = Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan.

J. B. R. S. = Journal of the Bihar Research Society.

J. R. A. S. or J. R. A. S. G. B. I. = Journal of the Asiatic Society of Great

Britain and Ireland.

P. A. S. B. = Proceeding of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

S. P. F. = Sāhitye Parīśad Patrikā.

Tab. Ak. = Tabqāt - i - Akberī.

V. R. S. Monographs = Varendra Research Society's Monographs.

I n t r o d u c t i o n

I. An outline of the dissertation

Husain Shāhī rule (1493 - 1538 A.D.) in Bengal was characterised by the territorial expansion of the country, stabilisation of the Muslim administration and certain significant developments in respect of religion, literature, culture, arts and economy.

In the first chapter of this work, dealing with the political events of the period, the author has tried to indicate Bengal's relation with the countries surrounding her. The so-called posthumous coins of Husain Shāh Sherqī of Jaunpūr, ranging in dates between 1499 and 1504 A.D., have been considered by him to be the post-regnal issues of that fallen monarch, struck possibly at the instance of the Sultan of Bengal who had tried to maintain his Jaunpūrī namesake as a counterpoise to the Lūdī imperialism of Delhi. On the basis of literary and numismatic evidences, it has been suggested that Husain Sherqī did not die before 1504 A.D., contradicting the views of Lanepool, H. N. Wright and Stapleton. As to the dates of Husain Shāh's Kāmrūp and Orissan expeditions, certain significant changes have been brought about by the author who adduces numismatic reasons why the Kāmrūp war took place between 1493 and 1498 A.D., and not between 1498 and 1502 A.D., as contended by scholars like Gait, Rakhal Das Banerjee and others. Similar is the question of the Orissan war which continued from 1493 to 1518 A.D., and not from 1504 to 1516 A.D., as suggested by these writers. As the scholars dealing with the history of medieval Assam and Kāmrūp have expressed confusing views with regard to the geographical positions of Kāmrūp and Kāntā, the present writer has drawn upon the ^aBahristān-i-Ghaibī showing that Kāmrūp extended from the Brahmaputra to the Banās and that the region lying between the Banās or Manasā in the east and the Karatoyā in the west was called Kāntā, although both regions might have been occasionally united under a single ruler. Stapleton has noticed a few Koch coins resembling a particular type of Gaud coins in weight, size and design, though not in script. On the basis of these numismatic peculiarities, he has concluded that Visva Siṅha of

Kāmrūp was a vassal of Husain Shāh. The present writer has suggested that like most of the countries that were contiguous with the then Bengal, Kāmrūp found it quite convenient to ape the numismatic features of Bengal which had a standard coinage and which formed a great political power in those days. Moreover, the successors of Viśva Simha had occupied the whole of Kāmrūp parts of which were previously under the Husain Shāhī rule. It was thus quite natural for them to imitate the Muslim coinage with which the people of that country was once acquainted. It has been held by many writers that Ismā'il Ghāzī was a general of Husain Shāh -- a view that stands now contradicted. The Persian booklet Risālatush Shuhadā and the Mandāran inscription of Husain have helped the present writer in accepting 1474 A.D. as the year of Ismā'il's execution by Bārbak Shāh, a previous Sultān. Thus the association of a living Ismā'il with the reign of Husain or Nasrat is a case of historical anachronism. The different dates and phases of the Tipperah expeditions of Husain Shāh have been ascertained in accordance with the evidences supplied by the Bengali chronicle Rājamālā.

The reigns of Nasrat and Ghiyā'suddīn Mahmūd were marked by a gradual territorial expansion in the south-eastern direction. The present writer has shown, with the help of the map and account left by Joao de Barros, that Khudā Bakhsh Khān, the governor of that region, had acquired much influence and power which he must have exerted against the rulers of Tipperah and Arakan. Nasrat Shāh who had to reconcile himself to the rising tide of Mughal imperialism, is said to have been actively helped by the Afghāns in his conflict with Bābur. But the present writer does not accept this view, for it finds no support in the contemporary Afghan and Mughal sources including Bābur's Memoirs. Nasrat's realisation of the strength of the Mughals and the uncertain nature of the Afghāns politics are probably the factors that had militated against the possibility of the formation of an anti-Mughal confederacy between the ruler of Bengal and the Afghāns. Two unpublished coins of Firūz Shāh together with the information available in Buchanan-Hamilton's ms. have helped the present writer to suggest that the duration of his reign was nine months and not three years or three months as contended by the scholars of our time. In determining the boundaries of the then Bengal,

the author has used the maps of de Barros and Rennell, Memoirs of Babur and foreign travellers' accounts. It has been contended by him that the river 'Gangā' noticed by Barbosa and shown in the map of de Barros, was the boundary between Bengal and Orissa.

While discussing the structure of administration, the author has indicated Bengal's indebtedness to the Delhi Sultanate and pre-Mughal Gujrāt. The political and constitutional significance of Husain Shāh's assumption of the title of Khalīfatullāh has been explained. Duties and functions of some of the officers including the prime minister, Debīr - i - Khās, Sharābdār - i - ghair mahallī, Kār - i - farman and others have been carefully discussed. The author has several reasons to think that the term Wazīr - i - lashkar, though apparently looking like an abbreviation of Wazīr-wa-sar lashkar, is an official title quite distinct from the latter and the officer in question was probably connected with the military department which included such branches as infantry, cavalry, artillery and navy. In connection with the nature of the provincial governor called wazīr-wa-sar-lashkar, it has been contended by the author that the term wazīr conveying the sense of the highest revenue officer of the province, was used not only in Husain Shāhī Bengal, but also in the terminology of the Sultanate administration of Northern India. That there was hardly any uniformity in the nomenclature of administrative units is indicated by the fact that a variety of terms such as 'arsah, iqlīm and mulk, could be applied to units of a similar nature and that the governor having the same titles used to be placed over an 'arsah, a thēna, a town or an iqlīm. A tentative list of the provinces into which the then Bengal might have been divided, has been prepared on the basis of information supplied by numismatic, epigraphic and literary sources. Babur has noticed in his Memoirs, some of the administrative peculiarities of Husain Shāhī Bengal. He says that the income derived from a particular area or province, was spent towards the expenditure of that province and was not allowed to flow to any other province. He further states that when an officer of rank was dismissed, his subordinates were also automatically dismissed so that they had to be appointed a new. This was probably a precautionary measure adopted to check the centrifugal forces that might work from time to time. The present writer has

attempted to throw some light on the positions held by the different categories of farmers such as ijaradār, mejmu'dār and adhikārī who used to give to the government a fixed amount out of what they collected from their respective areas. The state of agriculture, industry and trade, nature of land tenure, positions of Muslim cultivators of south-west Bengal and the role played by the important cities and towns have been duly taken into consideration, for these constituted prominent factors in the economic life of the country. The problems connected with the scarcity of gold coins and circulation of silver coins and cowries, have been brought under the perview of our discussion. With the help of Barbosa's account, a chart has been drawn showing the price of certain commodities obtaining in the then Bengal.

Apart from giving a broad outline of religious movements like Islām, Vaiṣṇavism and different minor cults, the author has noticed a gradual process of contact, conflict and compromise between Islām and Brahminism and a probable synthesis of Islāmic mysticism with local, hieratic ideas. An analysis of the contents of such unpublished Bengali poems as the Jñāna Pradīpa and the Yoga Kalender and of the Arabic or Persian translation of the less known Sanskrit yogic text, Amṛta Kuṇḍa, reveals the fact that some of the Sūfīs of Bengal had adopted the regressive process of psycho-physical culture possibly under the influence of the Nāth Cult. Broadly speaking, some of the Sūfīs had accepted a number of Tāntrik practices. Relation of Islām with Vaiṣṇavism and the Dharma cult is another important topic for a student of history.

Sections on literature and culture have been devoted not only to the discussion of the body of literature that was produced in the then Bengal, but also to the analysis of the socio-political forces that led to its creation. While Bengali language and literature received patronage from the Sultāns and their governors, Sanskrit had already become dependent on the isolated efforts and individualistic ability of the Brahmins and their partners. It has been suggested that the Vidvā Sundara of Sābirid Khān was earlier than that of Śrīdhara and that the story bearing significant resemblances to the Sinhala episode of the Padmāvatī, the famous Hindi poem by Jāisī, points to its absorbing certain folk-loric elements

obtaining in Bihār and some other parts of India. The contents of the Mrgāvati of Qutban show influences of the Haft Paikar of Nizami and the presence of a number of Rājput elements. The story of Mrgāvati resembles in many respects other romantic folk-tales of India such as Cāndāin versified by Maulānā Dāūd in Firūz Tughluq's reign, Mairā Sat narrated by the Hindi poet Sādhan and Padumāvati told by Jāisi -- all springing probably from a common source. The present writer has assessed the influence of the Mrgāvati on Bengali romantic poems in general and on the Padumāvati in particular. Writings on nyāya and smṛti tend to suggesting some sort of Brahminical revival as a reaction against Islāmic and other local hieratic ideas.

Different styles of writing together with the artistic and constructional peculiarities of some of the architectural monuments of the then Bengal come within the scope of the present study. It has been indicated that there was a process of contact between Bengal and Gujrāt in the field of calligraphy and architecture and that Muslim architecture of Husain Shāhī Bengal influenced the Hindu temple architecture of a subsequent period. Although the Tughrā style of writing attained to a considerable degree of perfection, there was a perceptible amount of deterioration in the art of building. The existing monuments of the period, though exhibiting grace and elegance, lack in the strength and proportion which can be noticed in the architecture of the Ilyās Shāhī period.

Ways of life of the people, their beliefs and customs together with the peculiarities of the Portuguese settlers and Nestorian Christians, form a part of our study. The nation that was gradually coming into existence, had for its basis, a contiguous territory, a single ruling power and a common literary language.

II. An appraisal of original sources:

In reviewing the history of the period in question, materials from a number of sources have been used. As it is difficult to give an exhaustive survey of all of them, the present writer has selected only the important ones for the present purpose.

A critical use of some of the evidences supplied by Persian sources can help us in reconstructing the political history of the period under review. Persian chronicles like the Taba'at-i-Akbari, the Tarikh-i-Firishtah, the Riyāz-us-Salātīn and the English version of Buchanan-Hamilton's Fāndūā manuscript, give but an incomplete idea about some of the Sultāns of the Husain Shāhī dynasty without touching at all the socio-cultural aspects of life in the country. Though Nizāmuddin and Firishtah briefly narrate the events of the reigns of Husain and Nasrat, they remain silent on the reign of Firūz and refer to Mahmūd, only in connection with Sher Shāh's attacks on Bengal, thus giving the impression to the reader that they did not know that Mahmūd belonged to the Husain Shāhī dynasty. Ghulām Husain Salīn's Riyāz-us-Salātīn is inadequate in as much as he vaguely refers to Husain's conquest of Orissa and Kāmrūp and does not at all mention his Tipperah expeditions and occupation of Chittagong. Dates and sequence of events as given by these writers, are not only confusing, but also misleading. These Persian sources, if corroborated and supplemented by numismatic, epigraphic and local literary sources, can, of course, give a ^{bare} skeleton of political history of the period in question. The Alangīrnāmah and the Fathiyya-i-ibriyya contain an account of Husain Shāh's expedition against Assam which seem to have been closely copied by the writer of the Riyāz-us-Salātīn. Todar Mall's Rent Roll as found in the Ā'in-i-Akbari, helps the students of history in understanding the nature of territorial divisions and administrative units that obtained in Bengal, particularly towards the end of the sixteenth century. Badā'uni's Muntakhabut Tawārikh is useful in so far as it gives information about Husain Shāh's relation with Sikander Lūdī and Husain Sharqī of Jaunpur. While the Memoirs of Bābur throws considerable light on Bengal's relation

Afāghana

with the Mughals, Afghān sources like the Tārīkh-i-Salātīn-i-Afghān of Ahmad Yādgār and the Tārīkh-i-Sher Shāhī of Abbās Sherwānī give us a connected account of events leading to Sher Shāh's occupation of Gaud in 1538 A.C. Sources like the Tārīkh-i-Firūz Shāhī, the Tārīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhī, the Tabqāt-i-Māsiri, the Muḥavvūn Nāmah and the Tāzkiratul Naqāīāt, though relevantly referred to in this thesis, do not have sufficient positive value for the present purpose. The Risālatush Shuhadā is useful for correcting the date of Ismā'īl Ghāzī and ascertaining his political relationship with Bārbak Shāh.

Contemporary Bengali poems constitute an indispensable source for the study of the socio-cultural history of the then Bengal. Works like the Manasā Maṅgal of Vijaya Gupta and the Manasā-vijaya of Vipradāsa not only show the growth of the Manasā Cult, but also throw sufficient side lights on various aspects of Bengali life. Bengali biographies of Caitanya including the Caitanya-bhāgavat of Vrṇḍāvana-dāsa, the Caitanya-caritāmṛta of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, the Caitanya-māṅgala of Locana-dāsa and the Caitanya-māṅgala of Jayānanda, are mines of information, indicating as they do the gradual evolution of Caitanyaism particularly its Navadvīpa tradition. The Caitanya-caritāmṛta of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, may be used quite cautiously, for writing the history of the early phase of Caitanyaism, for it is based on materials and inspiration received from the works of the Vrṇḍāvana Gosvāmins who had hardly any connection with the Navadvīpa tradition of Vaiṣṇavism. The Sab-i-Mi'rāj and the Jñāna Pradīpa of Syed Sultān together with such later works as the Yoga Kalandar of Syed Mortuzā and the Jñāna Sāgara of 'Alī Rājā, give us a clear idea about the process of transformation which Muslim culture was going through in those days. These works, with the exception of the Sab-i-Mi'rāj, betray a strange inter-mingling of Yogic practices with Islāmic mysticism. Arabic and Persian translations or adaptations of the Sanskrit Amṛta Kunda, help us a great deal, in ascertaining the nature of this process. The poems composed by Śrīdhara and Sābirid on the love story of Vidyā and Sundara, represent the early tradition of romanticism in Bengali literature which can be properly understood, if its Hindi-Avadhī background as constituted by the Uṛgāvat of Qutban and the Padmāvat of Jāisī, is borne in mind. The Parāgalī Mahābhārata and the Āsvamedha Perva, apart from indicating

the process of translating Sanskrit religious works into Bengali, give some stray information about Husain's conquests of Chittagong and Tipperah, which may be corroborated by the later Bengali chronicle Rājamālā. Different versions of the Assam Buranjī, though full of traditions, give details about the Husain Shāhī rulers' expeditions against the Ahom kingdom. The Sūnye Purāna, the Dharmapūjā-vidhāna, the GoraKS-vijaya and the Candī-mangala of Kavikankān, supply certain data invaluable for the history of the ~~country~~^{Shrivina}, Natha and Candī cults and many other aspects of life as well.

Sanskrit biographies of Caitanya corresponding to the Bengali ones mentioned above, give a good deal of glimpse of the Navadvipa school of Vaiṣṇavism in its simple, original form. These include the Caitanya-caritāmṛta of Murāri Gupta and the Caitanya-caritāmṛta and the Caitanya-candrodyā of Kavikarnapūra, a brief survey of which will be found in the sixth chapter of this thesis. The Smṛtitattva of Raghunandana which reveals the Brahmanical attitude towards the Hindu life and the different dramas and campūs, give us a fair idea about the socio-cultural milieu that influenced the country for a considerable period of time.

The importance of the foreign travellers' accounts cannot be overestimated. Varthema and Barbosa who came to Bengal in the early sixteenth century, give valuable information about the trade, industry and people of this country. The account of Joao de Barros is important, particularly for descriptions of Bengal's political and geographical conditions relating to the period under discussion. The Portuguese Asia of Faria Y Souza, a seventeenth century writer, contains an account of Bengal substantially similar to the one found in the work of de Barros. The Chinese annals written in the fifteenth century and the Rehla of Ibn Batūta belonging to an earlier period have also been drawn upon, for they contain certain materials useful for the history of our period.

Coins and inscriptions which throw light on the history of Husain Shāhī Bengal, have been used probably not without profit. These have helped the present writer in fixing or correcting certain important dates and gleaning many other peculiarities of the socio-political life of the then Bengal such as the nature of sovereignty and peculiarity of the function of the provincial governor and other officials.

CHAPTER - I

Husain Shāhi Dynasty (1493-1538)

The Husain Shāhi dynasty which ruled over Bengal for about half-a-century, did not fail to shed its lustre on the pages of the history of Bengal, already darkened by the misdeeds of Muẓaffar Shāh, the last of the Abyssinian rulers. The Habshi rule, in general, was far from congenial for the welfare of the country, for she had fallen into a welter of anarchy as a result of constant political murders, frequent changes of rulers and misrule and tyranny attending such a state of hopeless disorder. The Husain Shāhis who restored peace and prosperity to the country by establishing^{ing} a stable government and extending her boundaries on all frontiers, seem to have added a significant chapter to the history of Bengal. Moreover, certain social movements also characterised this period. It is necessary here to study the political history of this illustrious dynasty with a special reference to its founder, 'Alāuddīn Husain Shāh to whom Bengal was indebted for the various advantages he conferred on her people.

'Alāuddīn Husain (1493-1519 A.D).

(1) The early life of Husain

The history of the early life of Husain has given rise to an endless controversy among the scholars of our time. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja tells us that Sayed Husain Khan who was serving under a revenue officer of Gaud, named Suvuddhi Rāya, was once severely whipped for a fault of his own, by the latter, during the excavation of a tank. When he became the ruler of Gaud, Husain did not fail to show favour to his former master. But the Sultān's wife, finding the clear marks of whipping on his body, requested him to put the Rāya to death. Although he did not comply with this ill advice, he finally desecrated the caste of Subudhi Rāya who, however, left for

that the Arab merchant mentioned by de Barros, is Sayed Husain Sharif Makki. ^{1/}

According to Buchanan-Hamilton, Husain was a native of Rangpur district. His Pāndua manuscript contains the following information:

----- The Sultān Ibrāhem, grandfather of Hossyn, was deprived of his life and throne by a converted Hindu, who assumed the name of Jalaluddin; and Hossyn did not recover the government until a rapid succession of murders and insurrections, had weakened the authority of the Hindu and of his successors. During a long period of 76 Muhammedan years, the son of Ibrāhem, and his family seemed to have found refuge in the dominions of the Komoteswari, whose government afterwards Hossyn overthrew. ^{2/}

Presuming that there was a gap of 76 years between Husain and his so-called grandfather Ibrāhem, we may place the latter in the beginning of the fifteenth century. But no ruler of that name is known to have ruled in the then Bengal. ^{3/} But who was this Sultān Ibrāhem ? Ibrāhem Shah Sharqī of Jaunpur who was the contemporary of

been said by Faria Y Souza about the political condition and geographical position of the early sixteenth century Bengal (op.cit., pp. 96-97, 108, 220, 273, 314-15 and 415-422), it appears that he has relied upon de Barros and other Portuguese writers.

1/ J.A.S.B.F., 1873, Old Series, Vol XLII, p. 287.

2/ Montgomery Martin: The History, Antiquities, Topography and Statistics of Eastern India, London; Vol III, p. 448; see also Vol II, pp. 618-619.

3/ The last ruler of the first Ilyās Shāhī dynasty was 'Alauddin Firuz whose coins are dated 817 A.H./1414 A.D. See Nalini Kanta Bhattachali: Coins And Chronology of the Early Independent Sultans of Bengal, England, 1921, pp. 107-108, pl. VII, Nos. 1a and 1b. Shamsuddin Ahmad: A Supplement to Vol II of The Catalogue of Coins in The Indian Museum, Calcutta; Delhi; 1939, pp. 58-59 pl. III No. 133. He was succeeded by Jalaluddin Muhammad Shah the converted son of Rājā Ganēsa. The House of Rājā Ganēsa seems to have controlled the destiny of Bengal till 1435 A.D. after which date Nasiruddin Mahmud restored the Ilyās Shāhī dynasty. A careful study of the history of Bengal shows that no one of the Sultāns belonging to the House of Rājā Ganēsa and the Ilyās Shāhī dynasty was named Ibrāhem. See N.K.Bhattachali: op.cit., pp. 52-134. History of Bengal, Vol II, published by Dacca University, 1948, pp. 103-136.

Jalāluddīn Muhammad had no connection with 'Alāuddīn Husain Shāh of Gaud. The grandson of Ibrāhīm was 'Alāuddīn Husain Shāh who ruled in Jaunpūr. ^{1/} It appears that this 'Alāuddīn has been confused by the writer of the Pāndua manuscript with his Gaudiya namesake. The story of the early life of 'Alāuddīn Husain Shāh, supplied by this source is thus without any historical foundation.


The above views on the early life of Husain Shāh have little connection with Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's statement that he had served a Hindu Official before he became the ruler of Gaud. According to a popular tradition found in the district of Murshidābād, Husain served in his boyhood as a cowboy in the house of a Brahmin of Cāmpādā, a village in Murshidābād, to whom he showed, on becoming the king of Gaud, much gratitude by offering him the village of Cāmpādā on a nominal rent of one anna, so that the Brahmin's zamindary became known as Ekāni Cāmpādā. It is said that the wife of Husain Shāh, bent on desecrating his caste, compelled the Brahmin to take beef so that he had to become a convert to Vaiṣṇavism. ^{2/} The story is almost the same as that mentioned by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja. It may be conjectured here that the poet, while writing the Gaitanya-Caritamṛta towards the end of the sixteenth century, probably found this tradition in wide circulation in Rāḍha whence he might draw the material for this story. But no historian can safely rely on a traditional story like this unless it is corroborated by other known facts. Of course, the tradition current in Rāḍha towards the end of the sixteenth century had possibly some connection with the events which took place in that part of the country at the end of the fifteenth century A.D.

Ghulām Husain Salīm says ^{3/} that Husain, son of one Ashrāful Husainī, who was Sharīf of Makka, and inhabitant of Tirmiz (a town in Turkistan) came "by chance"


1/ Nizāmuddīn Ahmad: The Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī: Bibliotheca Indica, 1935, Vol III, p. 284

2/ Rakhal Das Banerjee: Vānglār Itihās, Calcutta, 1324 B.S. II, p. 243.

3/ Ghulām Husain Salīm: The Riyāz-us-Saltīn: Bibliotheca-Indica, 1890, pp. 131-32.

to Bengal, stayed in the house of a Qāsi of Cānpādā, a village in Rādha, who gave him education and also the hands of his daughter, because of his noble pedigree, and eventually became the vizier of Muẓaffar Shāh. It seems that Salīm has depended for his information partially on the account given by Fārishtah who also calls Husain, an inhabitant of Mecca, ^{1/} or 

Professor Blochmann is in favour of identifying Cānpādā with a village of the same name in Jessore district. ^{2/} But this identification of the locale of Husain Shāh does not seem to be satisfactory. When Salīm has clearly stated that the Cānpādā in question was situated in Rādha or West Bengal, we have got hardly any reason to locate it in Jessore which was not then included in Rādha. Moreover this Cānpādā does not abound in traditional stories about the early life of Husain Shāh which we find in Cānpādā of Murshidābād district. ^{3/} Not a single inscription of Husain Shāh has so far been discovered in the village of Cānpādā in Jessore district. It seems that Cānpādā, also known as Ekāni Cānpādā (probably because of the reason already mentioned) which is at present a village in Murshidābād district, is the place referred to by Salīm. Although the above statement of Salīm does not corroborate the story told by Krīṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, it indicates the association of Husain Shāh's early life with that part of Murshidābād - a fact clearly proved by the discovery of a number of inscriptions of the early reign of Husain Shāh in the villages around Cānpādā. ^{4/} If the association of the Sultān's early life with Murshidābād seems so much well-established, the fact of his serving under a Hindu revenue official there before he became the ruler of Gaud, is also highly probable.

Both Fārishtah and Salīm call him a  ^{5/} and thus indicate that he was an Arab by birth. His Arab lineage is numismatically

1/ Fārishtah: Tārikh-i-Fārishtah: Vol II, Nawal Kishore ed. p. 301

2/ J.A.S.B., 1873, p. 228.

3/ For these stories, see JASB, 1917, pp. 143-47.

4/ J.A.S.B., 1917, pp. 148-150.

5/ Fārishtah: op.cit., II, p. 301.

and epigraphically established. The expression **حسین شاہ السطان** (Sultān Husain Shāh, son of Sayed Ashraful Hussaini) frequently appears on his coins.¹ Thus there may be some truth in Salīm's statement that Husain was the son of Sayed Ashraful Hussaini who was originally an inhabitant of Mecca and who ultimately settled in Tirmidh.

How he became associated with the Habshi government is not clearly known. Both Salīm and Firishtah maintain that he was holding the office of wazīr under Shamsuddīn Muzaffar Shāh.² According to Nizāmuddīn, he was a Sipāhī or ordinary soldier of Muzaffar Shāh.³ But this view does not appear to be reasonable. The nobility and the army Chiefs could hardly select a man of such an inferior status as their ruler. It is, therefore, quite reasonable that he was holding a position of influence and responsibility under the last Abyssinian Sultān. Salīm holds that he was not only the wazīr, but also the manager of the affairs of the government of Muzaffar Shāh.⁴ The account left by Firishtah shows how powerful he had become under Muzaffar.⁵ Nizāmuddīn's view may be partly correct, if we think that Husain was in the beginning of his career an ordinary soldier of Muzaffar Shāh from which humble position he gradually rose to the rank of a minister. But no information is available to corroborate this conjecture. If the Riyāz is to be relied upon, Husain was directly made the minister of the Sultān by the Qāzī of Rādha whose daughter he had married.⁶

It may not be out of place to notice here what Husain did as the minister of Muzaffar Shāh. He had intelligence and sagacity to materialise the ambition which

1. E. H. Wright : Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta; Oxford, 1907, Vol-II, part II, pl. V, Nos. 167, 168 and 175. Stanley Lane-Poole: The Coins of The Muhammadan States of India in The British Museum, London, 1885, pls. V & VI, Nos. 108, 122 & 128. J.A.S.B., 1873, p. 292

2. Salīm : Op.cit., pp. 128, 129 & 132. Firishtah: Op.cit., II, p. 301.

3. Nizāmuddīn : Op.cit., Vol-III, p. 270

4. Op.cit., p. 128. Salīm says

حسین شریف ملی را بمنصب وزارت نواختند
صاحب اختیار امور سلطنت گردانید

5. Firishtah : Op.cit., II, p. 301

6. Supra., 5

- 7 -

seems to have taken possession of his mind. The measures which he adopted to achieve his ends were surely detrimental to his royal patron. He reduced the pay of the soldiery and collected revenues quite extortionately. ^{1/} It may be quite reasonably inferred here that these unpopular actions were the result of a purposely preconceived plan of the minister who wanted to undermine the royal power with a view to gaining ascendancy over Muzaffar Shah who had neither capacity nor determination to take any independent action which the situation demanded. The shrewd minister went, on several occasions, to the extent of telling the people that Muzaffar was a stingy, rude and avaricious ruler whom he was constantly trying to rectify. ^{2/} He was probably preparing the field for his own ascendancy and digging the grave of his master ^{Simultaneously.} ~~simultaneously~~. The shrewd and calculated policy of Husain had its expected results. It created among the principal nobles and military chiefs, a violent opposition to the ruling authority which finally resulted in a sanguinary civil war between the royalists and the nobles. The minister who was waiting for this opportunity cautiously sided with the nobles. Assuming the leadership of the party, he laid siege to the fort of Gaud within the walls of which Muzaffar Shah with a number of soldiers and supporters had confined himself. ^{3/} The part played by Husain at this critical juncture appears to have been in complete conformity with his ambitious policy.

There is a difference of opinion among the chroniclers with regard to the death of Muzaffar. According to the Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Husain, winning the command of the household troops to his side, entered one night into the seraglio of the Sultan and killed him secretly. ^{4/} This view is corroborated not only by Joao de Barros, ^{5/} but also by another writer, Hajī Muhammad Qandahārī, whose work, *has been* ~~although~~ referred to by Firishtah, ~~is no longer extant~~. Firishtah does not accept Qandahārī's view, nor does Salim rely on the Tabaqat. According to them, the

1/ Firishtah: op.cit., II, p. 301. Salim: op.cit., p. 128.

2/ Salim: op.cit., pp. 129-130.

3/ Firishtah: op.cit., II, p. 301. Salim: op.cit., p. 128-129.

4/ Op.cit., III, p. 270.

5/ J.A.S.B., 1873, p. 287.

unfortunate Sultān was killed in the battle field.¹ Neither Salīm or Firishtah mentions the source of his information. It seems that Salīm has entirely relied on Firishtah whose account he has reproduced almost in-extenso. But one can hardly accept their statement about Muzaffar's death in preference ^{to} Mizāmuddīn's view which, as we have already seen, finds support in other sources earlier than Firishtah. This view appears to be acceptable in view of the fact that it reveals consistency in Husain's attitude to Muzaffar.

Thus it seems fairly certain that Husain contributed much to the tragic end of the life of Muzaffar with whom the inglorious Hebshi regime came to a final end. This incident opened a bright chapter in the history of medieval Bengal to which the infamous activities connected with the wazarat of Husain served as an unhappy prelude. The assassination of Muzaffar did not mean the automatic accession of Husain to the throne of Gaud. He was elected king by the leading nobles who had formally met in a council immediately after the death of Muzaffar. Husain in his turn expressed his gratitude to these people promising them all the overground wealth to be found in the city. This was followed by the pillage of the city of Gaud which situation was, of course, promptly brought under control by Husain before it could go to an uncontrollable extent. He started his reign by disbanding the faithless pāiks and insolent Abyssinians, transferring the capital from Gaud to Ekdālā, appointing efficient district officers and getting rid of all disloyal elements.² It seems that these measures were necessary for the stability of the newly established regime.

The Panduā inscription of Muzaffar Shāh is dated 17th Ramazān, 898 A.H/ 2nd July, 1493 A.D.³ and the earliest coins of Husain Shāh are dated

-
1. Salīm - Op.cit., 129. Firishtah: Op.cit., II, p. 301
 2. Mizāmuddīn : Op.cit., III, p. 270; Salīm : Op.cit., pp. 130 and 132-133; Firishtah: II, p. 301
 3. J.A.S.B., 1873, pp. 290-91; pl. VI, No. 2. Abid Ali: Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua, pp. 114-15; Cunningham: A.S.R., XV, p. 84 and Ravenshaw: Gaur: its Ruins and Inscriptions, p. 77. Thus it is conclusively proved that the latest recorded date of Muzaffar's reign is 17th Ramzān, 898 A.H/2nd July, 1493 A.D., and not 10th Rabiul Awal, 898 A.H/31st December, 1492 A.D., as maintained in the History of Bengal, II, p. 141, on the basis of the Maldā inscription bearing the latter date. See E. I. I., 1929-30, p. 13, pl. VIII(a) and F.A.S.B., 1890, p. 242.

~~dated~~ 899 A.H./1493 A.D.^{1/} Thus it is fairly well-established that 1493 A.D. is the first regnal year of Husain Shah. Muza'ffar Shah seems to have remained alive in the early part of that year.

(ii) The military achievements of Husain Shah.

The reign of Husain Shah witnessed the territorial extension of the kingdom of Bengal on every side to which literary, epigraphic and numismatic sources have referred. His military exploits as gleaned from these sources may be grouped under five heads: (a) achievements in Bihar, (b) war with Kamrup and Assam, (c) war with Orissa, (d) war with ~~the~~ Tipperah and (e) occupation of Chittagong.

Achievements in Bihar.

The Sharqi kingdom of Jaunpur was being swallowed up by the Lodi imperialism. Completely defeated by Sikandar Lodi in 1494 A.D., Husain Shah, the last ruler of the dynasty, was forced to go to Bengal with a view to finding refuge with his Gaudiya namesake, 'Alauddin Husain ~~shah~~ Shah. Receiving him with all honour and magnanimity, Husain Shah used to pay proper attention to the Sharqi ruler's comfort and happiness until the latter died in complete obscurity at his residence at Kahlgaon in Bhagalpur.^{2/} The friendly relation of Husain with Sharqi kingdom reveals his attitude to the Delhi Sultante. Sikandar Lodi promptly reacted to this situation by sending an expedition to Bengal. Husain Shah sent an army under his son Daniel to meet the Delhi troops at Barh. Badāuni mentions that the troops of the Lodi ruler suffered from the lack of adequate supplies due to the scarcity of food in Bihar in that year. This is probably one of the reasons why Sikandar was willing to conclude a treaty of peace with the Sultan of Bengal. According to the terms of the treaty, it was agreed upon that both parties should cease to attack each other and that they should not give protection to their mutual enemies.

1/ H.N.Wright: op.cit., II, pp. 172-76, part II, pl. V (Bengal) Nos. 167 and 169.

Lampool: op.cit. pls. V and VI, Nos. 108, 109, 116 and 123, pp. 44-48; A.W. Botham:

Catalogue of the provincial coin cabinet Assam. Allahabad, 1930; 2nd ed. pl. II,

No. 1, pl. IV, No. 5, pp. 166, 168 and 170.

2/ Nizamuddin: op.cit., I, p. 319 and III, p. 287; Salim: op.cit., p. 135. Firishta: op.cit., I, p. 181 and II, p. 310.

Sikandar appointed governors in Bihār, Tughluqpur and Sāran.^{1/} Thus the Persian sources tell us that he occupied almost the whole of the Sharqī kingdom. But epigraphic sources give a different version. The inscriptions found at Sāran and Munghyr^{2/} prove that Husain Shāhī Bengal included the whole of north Bihār and a part of South Bihār. This anomaly may be explained here. Husain Shāh might actually occupy those places; but this fact has been either ~~expressed~~ ^{suppressed} or ignored by the Persian authorities. Again it is just possible that they were occupied by Sikandar immediately after the conclusion of peace with Husain who extended his kingdom subsequently at the cost of the territories of Sikandar Lōdī. Thus the treaty did not adversely affect the political position of Husain Shāh in Bihār, nor does he seem to have respected its terms.

A study of the so-called posthumous coins of the last Sharqī ruler, 'Alāuddin Husain Shāh, may reveal an interesting fact.

Although he had taken shelter at Kahlgaon after having lost his territories in 1494 A.D., the dates of some of his coins range between 901 A.H./1494 A.D. and 910 A.H./1506 A.D.^{3/} These post-regnal coins have presented a problem to the students of history. Following Stanley ~~Lampole~~ ^{Lanepoole},^{4/} Nelson Wright^{5/} and Stapleton^{6/} consider some of these coins to be posthumous. Stapleton has gone to the extent of suggesting that "These coins were probably issued benami by Husain Shāh of Bengal or one of his governors".^{7/} Most of the scholars maintain that Husain Shāh Sharqī died in 905 A.H./1499 A.D.,^{8/} although there is hardly any clear evidence in favour of such a contention. Qutban, one of the close associates of

1/ Nizamuddin: op.cit., I, p. 320. 'Abdul Qādir Badāuni: ^{Muntakhab} ~~Muntakhab~~-al-Tawārikh, Bibliotheca Indica, 1868, Vol I, pp. 316-17. Firishta: op.cit., I, pp. 181-82.

2/ JASB., 1872, p. 335 and 1874, p. 304; P.A.S.B., 1870, p. 297.

3/ Lanepoole: op.cit., p. 107. Botham: op.cit., pp. 204-5. H.N.Wright: op.cit., II pp. 218-19, Nos. 148-155.

4/ Op.cit., Introduction. P.L.

5/ Op.cit., II, p. 207

6/ Catalogue of The Provincial Cabinet of Coins, Eastern Bengal & Assam; Shillong, 1911, p. 108.

7/ Ibid. p. 108.

8/ Ibid. p. 108. H.N.Wright: Op.cit., II, p. 207. Lanepoole: op.cit. Introduction P.L.

the Sharqī ruler, who wrote his Mrgāvat in 909 A.H./1503 A.D. speaks very highly of the kingly virtues of that fallen monarch,^{1/} who would regain, as the poet believed, his lost royal umbrella or shatra and throne or Sinhasana. Again, the last of the post-regnal coins of the Sultān bears the date 910 A.H./1506 A.D. Thus he seems to have lived at least till that year. These post-regnal coins seem to reveal the attitude of the Sultān of Bengal not only to the Sharqī Sultān, but also to the Delhi Sultānat. Actuated by political interests, he appears to have allowed the crownless king to issue coins so that the latter might continue to retain his claim to the Jounpūr kingdom. It was probably an attempt on the part of the Sultān of Gaud to preserve the counterpoise to Delhi with a view to counteracting the growing political influence of the Lōdī rulers in Behār and the western outskirts of Bengal.

Expeditions in Kāmṛup and Assam.

Bengal's hostility to Kāmṛup was of a traditional nature. 'Alāuddīn Hussain Shah who followed this tradition quite faithfully led several expeditions against Kāmṛup. On the coins and inscriptions of the Sultān, we find the mention of two places, viz., Kāmṛup and Kānta. The Baharistan-i-Ghaibi throws sufficient light on the geographical position of these two territories. We are told that Kāmṛup extended from the western bank of the Brahmaputra to the eastern bank of the river Banās (Manasa) and the region lying between this river and the river Karatoyā in the west was called Kānta.^{2/} Nilambar, the third ruler of the Khen dynasty seems to have united both of these regions under him by extending his territory from the Barzadi in the east to the Karatoyā in the west and establishing his headquarters and residence at Ghoraghat and Kānta Duar. In attacking Kāmṛup,

1/ Qutban: Mrgāvat: quoted by Prof. Askari in J.B.R.S., 1955. December., XLI, part IV, pp. 458-59.

2/ Lakshmi Narayana was the king of Kānta and his cousin Pariksit Narayana was the ruler of Kāmṛup in Jahāngīr's time. With the help of Lakshminarayana, the Mughals subdued the king of Kāmṛup. Mirsā Nathan: op.cit.; English Translation by Dr. M.I. Borah, 1936, Gauhati; I, pp. 249-252, see also Vol II of the same work, pp. 806-7, notes 15 and 16.

Hussain is said to have been secretly assisted by Nilambar's minister whose son he had brutally murdered. The Muslim attack on Kantapur, the Khen capital, did not produce any tangible result in its initial stage. The capital was besieged. The siege was a protracted one and the Muslims could ultimately occupy it by certain questionable means.¹ Thus the Khen dynasty was overthrown and Kamrup and Kanta were annexed to the kingdom of Gaud.

On the basis ²⁰⁶ certain points of similarity between the coinage of the Hussain Shahi rulers and that of the Koch Kings of Kamrup, Stapleton has inferred "the fact that Nara Narayan adopted a coin of the Hussaini dynasty as a type for his own coinage, probably points to his father Bisva Sinha having been a tributary of 'Alauddin and his successors".² But the contention seems too far-fetched to stand historical criticism. It is true that the resemblance of some of the Koch coins to a type of the Hussain Shahi coins is quite striking. The type of the coins of Hussain Shah which was accepted by Nara Narayan as model, is represented by four specimens dated 900, 909, 912 and 913 A.H. Their weight and size vary from 161.5 to 164.5 grains and from 1.2" to 1.25" respectively. On each of these coins, there are four lines of inscription and a number of dots.³ The coin of Nara Narayan which resembles the Hussaini coins referred to, is dated 1477 Saka, its weight being 157.49 grains. One may easily notice four lines of inscription on both sides of the coin and dots on the border.⁴ Although the question of the resemblance of the Koch coins to the coins of Bengal cannot be rejected as entirely groundless, we do not have adequate reason to presume that Bisva Sinha had any tributary relationship with Hussain Shah. Persian and Assamese sources dealing with the history of the then Kamrup do not contain any reference to the Koch ruler's subordinate relationship or even indirect contact with the Sultans

1. Martin: Op.cit., III, pp. 410-11 and Vol-II, p. 680. Salin: Op.cit., p. 134.

2. Contributions to the History and Ethnology of North-Eastern India - I.

J. A. S. B., 1910; Vol-VI, No. 4, p. 158.

3. H. N. Wright: Op.cit., II, pt. II, pp. 175-76; Nos. 194-97, pl. V.

4. Blochmann: Contributions to the Geography and History of Bengal, pt. III,

J. A. S. B., 1875, No. 3, p. 306; Stapleton has mentioned also other varieties of the Koch coins resembling Hussaini coins. See Contributions to the History etc., J. A. S. B., 1910, IV, 4, p. 158.

of Gaud. Countries like Assam, Nepal, Tibet and Arakan also imitated the coinage of the contemporary Bengal, although no one of them is known to have been a tributary to this country. One of the coins of the Ahom ruler, Suklemaun, bearing the date 1543,^{1/} shows that the Ahom coinage was modelled on a type of coins belonging to the reigns of Nasrat and Ghiyasuddin Mahmud.^{2/} The Nepalese king Jaya Mahendra Malla (1566-76), seems to have reproduced on his own coinage^{3/} a small circle in the middle and a circle of dots round the margin from two of the coins of Ghiyasuddin Mahmud.^{4/} This type of coin was in circulation also in Tibet.^{5/} A Jayantia coin contains three dots on the right of the first line of the obverse with a crescent above^{6/} which seem to have been taken from a coin of Nasrat or from a similar coin belonging to the reign of Ghiyasuddin Mahmud.^{7/} Some of the rulers of the fifteenth century Arakan used to inscribe the Kalima in Persian script on their coins.^{8/} Thus it is fairly certain that the coinage of Bengal had influence on the coinage of these countries. Since Bengal was a co-terminous with these countries, the coins of the Sultans must have found their way into the adjoining territories. When their rulers wanted to institute their respective coinage, they seem to have felt tempted to imitate the coinage of Bengal which constituted a stable and dominating political force in the then Eastern India. This seems to explain why the coinage of the Koch rulers of Kamrup was modelled on a group of the Husain Shahi coins. This tendency toward imitation may be attributed to another historical fact. After the fall of the Kam Khen dynasty, Husain Shah and his successors exercised political control over Kamrup for a considerable

1/ H. N. Wright: op.cit., I, pl. XXIX, No. 1.

2/ Ibid., II, pt. II, pl. V, Nos. 208 & 216; pl. VI, No. 217. J.A.S.B. 1910, IV, 4, pl. XXIII, Nos. 11, 12 and 13.

3/ J. R. A. S., 1908, pl. II, fig. 9.

4/ Lanepoole: Op.cit., pl. VII, Nos. 147 & 149. See also J.R.A.S., 1908, p. 687 Nos. 1 and 2.

5/ T.H. Walsh: The Coinage of Nepal: J.R.A.S. 1908, pp. 684-86. Stapleton: Contributions to History etc. J.A.S.B. 1910, IV, 4, p. 162.

6/ J.A.S.B., 1895, LXIV No. 3, pl. XXIV, No. 9, see also J.A.S.B. 1910, IV, 4, pl. XXIII No. 9.

7/ Ibid., 1910, IV, 4, PL. XXIII, Nos. 11 and 13.

8/ Sir Arthur Pharo: History of Burma including Burma proper, Pegu, Taungu, Tenasserim and Arakan. London, 1883, pp. 78-80. G.F. Harvey: History of Burma from the

period of time so that the people of that region might have been acquainted with the coins issued by the Muslim rulers. When the successors of Visva Simha consolidated their political power in Kamrūp, they appear to have issued coins imitating those of their predecessors with a view to getting the minds of the people adjusted to their own rule. This psychology seems to have prompted Muhammad bin Sān, Altamsh, Ruknuddīn Firūz I, Reziya, Muizuddīn Bahram, 'Alā'uddīn Mas'ūd and other Muslim rulers to have Nagri script, sanskrit epithet and even a crude representation of the Hindu goddess Lakṣmī on their respective coins.¹

The victorious soldiers of Gaud proceeded eastwards along the upper Brahmaputra valley. According to the 'Ālangīrnāmah, Husain Shāh's army consisting of infantry and cavalry, won an initial victory over the Assamese. Incapable of withstanding the Bengali forces, the king of Assam retired to the hills leaving the plains below to be occupied by the Muslim soldiers. Leaving his son to bring about the subjugation of that region, Husain Shāh returned to Bengal. When rains set in, the Rājā accompanied by his followers, descended from the hills, blocked the roads, surrounded the Muslims and arrested ^{→ them} to the last man.² We find an exact reproduction of this description in the Fathyya - i - 'ibriyya³ and the Riyāz-us-Salātīn.⁴

The Ahom Burāñjī gives more details about this expedition. The Muslim army consisting of infantry, cavalry and boats attacked Assam under the command of 'Mit Malik' and the 'Bada Wazir'. Following the course of the Brahmaputra, they came upto Darrang district and arrived very soon at the banks of the Burai river. They were resisted by the army of the Ahom Rājā at Temeni where the Bengali army

the Earliest times to 10 March, 1624, the Beginning of the English Conquest;

London, New York, Toronto, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras; 1925, p. 140.

1. H. N. Wright: Op.cit., II, pt. I, pls. I-III, Nos. 2, 12, 25, 31, 41, 52 etc. Botham: Op.cit., pp. 72-74, and 76-78 etc. Botham and Friel: Supplement to The Catalogue of the Provincial Cabinet of Coins, Assam; Allahabad, 1919, pp. 30-32 etc. Stapleton: Catalogue of the Provincial Cabinet of Coins etc. pp. 58-61.
2. Mirzā Muhammad Kazim: 'Ālangīrnāmah: Bibliotheca Indica, pp. 730-31.
3. See Bodleian ms. or. 589, fol. 35b. Op.cit., quoted by Blochmann: J.A.S.B., 1872, p. 79.
4. Op.cit., p. 134. Salīm's account of the Assam expedition of Husain Shāh seems to be thoroughly based on the 'Ālangīrnāmah and the Fathyya - i - 'ibriyya.

could not join his new post in Assam before 1498 A.D., for he was in Munghyr at least till that year. Again the Malda inscription of Husain Shah which is dated 907 A.H./1502 A.D. records the victory of Husain over Kām̄rūp and Kānta. ^{1/} Due to these reasons, some scholars are in favour of placing the conquest of Kām̄rūp and Kānta between 1498 and 1502 A.D. ^{2/} But this view seems to be based on a superficial account of facts. That Dānyāl was in Munghyr in 1498 A.D. is confirmed beyond doubt by the Munghyr inscription dated 903 A.H./1497-98 A.D. in which year he constructed a vault over the shrine of Pīr Nafah. ^{3/} But we have hardly any reason to think that the Kām̄rūp expedition started in 1498 A.D. Several Husain Shāhī coins recording the conquest of Kām̄rū and Kānta and ^{Omissa} ~~Orissa~~ and ^{Jajnagar} ~~Jajnah~~ are dated 899 A.H./1493 A.D., 910/1504, 915/1509, 919/1513, 921/1515, 922/1516, and 924/1518. ^{4/} The earliest of these coins reads as follows: ^{5/}

Obyerse	Reverse
حسین شاه	السلطان
السلطان بن سيد	الفتح الكامر وكمته
اشرف الحسيني	وجانگروار سيد
خادم ملكه وسلطانہ	علاو الدين والدين
فتح آباد - ۸۹۹	ابوالمنظف

This legend appears on all the coins mentioned above. Thus we find that the earliest

the Assam Burāñjī edited and translated by Ray Sahib Gopal Chandra Barua, Calcutta, 1930. It is absent also in other versions of the Burāñjī. Due to these reasons, the present writer is unwilling to attach any undue importance to this account.

1/ J. A. S. B., 1874, p. 303.

2/ Rakhal Das Banerjee: Vāᅅglār Itihāsa: Vol. II, pp. 247-48 and 251. Blochmann: J.A.S.B., 1872, pp. 79, footnote, and 335; 1873, p. 240 and 1874, p. 281. Abdus Salam: The English translation of the Riyāz, Calcutta, 1910, p. 132. History of Bengal, Vol. II, pp. 146-47; Gait: op.cit., 41, 43 and 88; Rajani Kanta Chakravarti: Gauder Itihāsa: Malda; 1909; Vol. II, p. 113.

3/ J.A.S.B., 1872, p. 335; Badauni: op.cit., I, p. 317.

4/ Lane Poole: op.cit., p. 47, PL6; No. 122. H.N. Wright: op.cit., II, p. 173; PL. V, No. 175 (Bengal). Botham: Op.cit., pp. 169-171. N.K. Bhattashali: Hakim Habibur Rahman Collection of Coins, 1936, Dacca, p. 24. PL. II, No. 120.

5/ H. N. Wright: Op.cit., II, p. 173, No. 175 in PL. V, Pt. II, (Bengal).

and the latest coins recording the conquest of Kamrūp, Kanta and Orissa are dated 1493 and 1518 respectively. Apparently it seems that Husain Shah led expeditions against these countries from 1493 to 1518 A.D. But an unqualified acceptance of this suggestion is not possible due to certain obvious reasons. That the expedition started in 1493 A.D., seems fairly well-established, for the legend relating to the conquest of Kamrūp and Kanta appears for the first time on the coins bearing that date. Since 1493 A.D. is the first regnal year of Husain Shah, it may be quite reasonably suggested here that he started military operations against Kamrūp immediately after his accession to the throne of Gaud. Why the north-eastern frontier affairs demanded his prompt attention may be explained here. The ruler of Kamrūp probably expanded his kingdom at the expense of the territories of Bengal taking advantage of the Abyssinian interregnum which must have already arrested the progress of Muslim arms against Kamrūp. Nilambar is said to have occupied Kantaduar and Ghoraghat^{1/} which were under the suzerainty of Bengal during the reign of Barbak Shah (1459-1474).^{2/} The Risalat-ush-Shuhada shows that Bengal had her military out-posts at these places. Husain Shah could hardly view with equanimity the loss of these places which had immense strategic importance, for the control of Kamrup over Kantaduar meant a definite threat to the sovereignty of Bengal. Thus Husain Shah seems to have been forced by the circumstances to lead expeditions against Kamrup at his earliest convenience.

But what is the date of the conclusion of Husain's Kamrup war? Traditions give 1498^{3/} as the year of the fall of Kantapur, the Capital of Nilambar. This date is accepted by the scholars of our time.^{4/} This date may also appear to be satisfactory to those who are in favour of connecting Danyal with the affairs of Kamrup and Assam. It seems that Danyal joined his post of Governorship in Kamrup in 1498, i.e. five or six years after the Kamrup expedition had started. He might

1/ Martin: op.cit., II, p. 330 III, p. 410.

2/ The Risalat-ush-Shuhada's text in J.A.S.B., 1874, pp. 235 and 237-38.

3/ Gait: op.cit., p. 43.

4/ Ibid. pp. 41 and 38. Gunabhiram Barua: Assam Buranji, 1875, Nowgong, p. 49.

have gone to Kāmrūp in 1498 even after having completed the erection of the vault at Munghyr in the same year. Thus the Kāmrūp expedition of Husain Shāh seems to have taken place between 1493 and 1498 ^{1/} and not between 1498 and 1502, as certain scholars would have us believe. A gold coin dated 919/1513 records the conquest of Kāmrūp and Kānta and Orissa and Jājmagar. ^{2/} Since gold coins of the independent rulers of Bengal are quite few in number, (and their use was also quite rare), it may be inferred here that this gold coin was issued as souvegnir to commemorate the achievement of the Sultan when the conquest of Kāmrūp and a part of Orissa was already a fait accompli. This also explains why the legend relating to the conquest of these countries appears repeatedly on the coins dated 910, 915, 919, 921, 922 and 924, already referred to by us. The Maldah inscription dated 907/1502 ^{3/} and the Sylhet inscription dated 918/1512 ^{4/} refer to the conquest of Kāmrūp only as an incident of the past.

The traditions show that Kāntapūr was occupied by the Muslims in 1498. It is, therefore, quite likely that Husain attacked Assam immediately after the fall of Kāntapūr. Kāmrūp was used as a stepping stone to Assam because of the geographical contiguity of the two countries. Husain Shāh could conceive the bold project of attacking the upper Brahmaputra valley only after having subjugated the lower valley. The Muslim occupation of Assam narrated in the persian sources did not last for even one year, for the Muslims are said to have been completely defeated in the rainy season that followed the expedition. This defeat seems to have taken place in the rainy season of 1499.

War with Orissa .

There was a state of war between Bengal and Orissa. Barbosa, the portuguese

1/ On this point, see my paper entitled The Dates of Husain Shah's Expeditions Against Kāmrūp And Orissa. The Journal of The Numismatic Society of India, XIX, 1957, pt. I, pp. 54-58. Varanasi.

2/ Lane Poole: Op.cit., p. 47. PL. VI, No. 122.

3/ J.A.S.B., 1874, p. 303.

4/ Ibid, 1922, p. 413. PL. IX.

traveller who visited Bengal in the beginning of the sixteenth century states that Orissa was for sometime at war with the kingdom of 'Bengala'.¹ Ghulam Husain Salim says :²

ورایان اطراف را بطبع ساحتہ تا اوڈ سببہ
تسخیر نمودہ - مالگذاری گرفت -

"and subduing the rāyas of the surrounding region and conquering (countries) upto Orissa, he imposed tribute on them". Buchanon's manuscript history gives to Husain the credit of conquering Orissa.³ These statements find at least a partial support in the contemporary Bengali literature which has incidentally referred to the Orissa affairs of Husain Shah. According to Vrndāvanadāsa, in course of his war with Orissa, Husain Shah destroyed a number of Hindu temples.⁴ After

1. The Book of Duarte Barbosa: Hakluyt Society, London, 1921, Vol-II, p. 134.

He further observes that the people of South-West Bengal were under the rule of Vijaynagar (Op.cit., p.135). This statement does not seem to have had any historical foundation whatsoever. Had he maintained the same view in connection with the boundary between Orissa and Vijaynagar, it should have deserved some considerations, for military hostilities were going on between these two countries from time to time. See the History of Orissa by R. D. Banerjee; Calcutta, 1930, Vol-I, pp. 323-26. There was no war between Bengal and Vijayanagar and the two countries were not contiguous either. It is quite probable that Barbosa has confused Orissa with Vijaynagar.

2. Op.cit., p. 133

3. Martin : Op.cit., II, 619

4. Vrndāvanadāsa: The Caitanya-bhāgavat: ed. Mrinal Kanti Ghosh; Calcutta, 440

Gaurānga Era; antya khaṇḍa; ch. IV, pp. 350 and 351:

ଏ ২(স্বর) সার সর্ব উত্তীর্ণ হইল।
স্বর্গে গেলেন তখনই দেউল হইল।
স্বর্গে গেলেন সার সর্ব উত্তীর্ণ হইল।
স্বর্গে গেলেন সার সর্ব উত্তীর্ণ হইল।
স্বর্গে গেলেন সার সর্ব উত্তীর্ণ হইল।
স্বর্গে গেলেন সার সর্ব উত্তীর্ণ হইল।

his renunciation, when Sri Caitanya was proceeding from Navadvīpa to Puri, Rāmacandra Khan who was probably a frontier officer of Husain Shāh, informed him of the frontier hostilities then in progress between Husain and the Orissa king, Pratāpa Rudra Deva, so that he had to depend on the Khan's help to cross the Ganges at Chatrabhog. ^{1/} While returning to Bengal after passing a number of years in other countries, Caitanya was requested to wait by an Orissa frontier officer until a truce was concluded with the Muslim king. ^{2/} The author of the Caitanya-

1/ Ibid: antya, II, 316.

ମୁଁ ପ୍ରଭୁ-ସ୍ୱରୂପେ ବିଚିତ୍ର ମୟା ।
 ମୋ ଦେଶ-ବିଦେଶ ଯେ ପଥ ଗଢିବୁ ॥
 ଶତାଧିକ ମିତ୍ରମାନ ଧୂର୍ତ୍ତିଆଳୁ ଧୂଳି ଧୂଳି ।
 ମାଧ୍ୟମ ପାଥେ ବସନ୍ତ ବାସିଲୁ ଧୂଳି ॥
 କୋଳ ମିଳ ମିଳ ବା ମାଧ୍ୟମ ଧୂଳି ॥
 ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ଉଦୟ ପ୍ରଭୁ ଜିନି ମନ ମିଳି ॥
 ଧୂଳି ମୋ ବସନ୍ତ ଦିନ ମୋ ଧୂଳି ॥
 ମାଧ୍ୟମ ପାଥେ ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ॥
 ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ॥
 ମୋ ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ॥

"My lord, now that this is a dangerous time, thoroughfare between the two countries has been stopped. The rulers have planted tridents at various places with a view to impaling the travellers that might be found by the spies. I am in charge of the affairs of this place. If they can catch hold of me, I shall face a danger. If you are willing to go under these circumstances, I will carry out whatever order you may give me."

2/ Kṛishṇadāsa Kavirāja: Op.cit, Madhya, XVI, p.179: Addressing Caitanya, the Officer said:

ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ॥
 ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ॥
 ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ॥
 ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ॥
 ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ॥
 ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ମୋ ଧୂଳି ॥

"The drunkard Muslim king possesses the land ahead. No body can walk in the road out of fear for him. He possesses the whole tract of land upto pichaldā, and because of fear for him, no one can cross the river. Wait a few days until we can conclude treaty with him. Then we shall easily send you by boat".

Saitanya-Caritamrita has stated at another place that Sanātana, one of the officers of Husain Shah once refused to accompany him in his expeditions against Orissa, least the Sultan should kill the Udiyās and destroy the deities of Utkalī.^{1/} According to the Mādlā Pāñjī, Surasthāna, one of the commanders of Husain Shah, attacked Purī in 1509 and destroyed a number of temples. Pratāpa Rudra who was absent from his kingdom, came back and compelled the Muslims to fall back on their fortress at Mardāran which was also besieged by the king of Orissa. Because of the treachery of one of his Hindu Officers named Govinda Vidyādhara, he had to withdraw to his own country.^{2/} Thus the Mādlā Pāñjī corroborates the account given by the Vaishnava literature.

These sources give us an unconnected account of Husain's war with Orissa and clearly show that the hostility between the two countries was of a chronic nature. They do not help us in forming a definite idea about the ultimate results of this longdrawn conflict. The Sylhet inscription of Husain Shah dated 918/1512 which throws some light on this event reads as follows:^{3/}

این عمارت رکشان که فتح کننده صفت کامهاریان وزیر و لشکر
بوده شد با وقت فتح کامرو و کامتا و جازنگر و اریشیا لشکری
کرده باشند حاجا بدینال بادشاه ستمشان و عشر و تسعما

1/ Ibidi, 197: অসমীয়া সাহিত্য (অসমীয়া সাহিত্য সংগ্ৰহ) ১৯৭৭

১১ অসমীয়া সাহিত্য - অসমীয়া সাহিত্য সংগ্ৰহ

১২ অসমীয়া সাহিত্য - অসমীয়া সাহিত্য সংগ্ৰহ

১৩ অসমীয়া সাহিত্য - অসমীয়া সাহিত্য সংগ্ৰহ

2/ J. A. S. B., Old Series, Vol. LXIX, 1900, Pt. I, No. 2, p. 186.

3/ J. A. S. B., 1922, PL. IX, p. 413. Only the relevant portion of the inscription has been quoted here. The remaining portion refers to the first conquest of Arsah Srinat by Sikandar Khan Ghazi in the reign of Sultan Firuz Shah in 703 A.H.

"This building (has been erected by) Rukn Khān, the conqueror of Haṣṭ Gaṃhāryān, who being waṣīr and general for many months at the time of the conquest of Kāmṛū, Kānta, Jāznagar and Orissa, served in the army in several places in the train of the king, (written) in the year 918". We find here that the expression

فتح کارو وکامتا و جازنگر و اریشا
 or 'the conquest of Kāmṛū, Kānta, Jāznagar and Orissa' which appears on the Husain Shāhī coins dated variously, is also appearing in this inscription. It has been proved beyond doubt that Kāmṛū was occupied by Husain Shāh. ^{1/} Considering that Orissa was under Pratāpa Rudra Deva, a powerful ruler, ^{2/} should we think that she could not be conquered by Husain Shāh? Then why did he style himself so frequently as the conqueror of Jāznagar and Orissa? Was it an empty boast on the part of a powerful ruler like 'Alauddin? At the present stage of our knowledge, these ^{queries} ~~queries~~ cannot be satisfactorily answered. But it seems that Husain could attain at least a temporary success in his Orissan expeditions. The coins and inscriptions of the sultan dub him as the conqueror of Orissa and this is supported by the sixteenth century manuscript history of Bengal found by Buchanan Hamilton at Pāṇḍua. ^{3/} Bengali sources also depict him as breaking temples and dieties in Orissa. ^{4/} All these evidences seem to indicate that Husain occupied a part of Orissa at least temporarily. This contention is borne out by the Kāvāli plate inscription of Pratāpa Rudra Deva, dated 1432 Śaka/1510-11 A.D., according to which the Orissan ruler assumed the title of Pañca-Gauda-adhināyaka or 'the overlord of the five Gaudas' after having recovered his lost territory from the Muslim ruler. ^{5/}

We have already noticed that the coins which refer to the conquest of Kāmṛū, also refer to the conquest of Orissa and that the earliest of these coins

1/ Supra, pp 11-18.

2/ R. D. Banerjee: The History of Orissa, Vol. I, 322-35.

3/ Supra, p. 19.

4/ Supra, p. 19.

5/ R. D. Banerjee: History of Orissa, I, p. 328.

is dated 1493 and the latest one, 1518.^{1/} It is, therefore, numismatically established that the Orissa expedition started simultaneously with Kām̄rūp expedition in 1493 and continued till the year 1518. Thus the duration of the Orissan war was longer than that of the Kām̄rūp war. The Bengali sources and the Mād̄lā Pānjī which seem to give the dates, 1509, 1513 and 1516,^{2/} do not in any way contradict this contention. Thus it seems fairly well-established that Bengal's war with Orissa continued throughout the reign of Husain Shāh.

It is necessary here to say a few words about Ismā'īl Ghāzī whom the scholars are apt to associate with the reign of Husain Shāh. Facts and fiction have so inextricably mixed around the name of Ismā'īl Ghāzī that almost all writers appear to have accepted the current story about him without any question. Our present knowledge about Ismā'īl Ghāzī has been aptly summarised by Prof. Blochmann in the following words:^{3/}

If we strip the legend of the headless rider of the wonderful, we have the plain story that Ismail, Ganj-i-Laahkar, a general of Husain Shāh, invaded Orissa from Bengal in the beginning of the 16th century, gained a signal victory over the Orissans at Katak, and then returned to Madāran, where he built a fort within the walls of which he lies buried. Whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the historical value of legends in general, it strikes me that the Madāran legend confirms and completes in a most unexpected manner, the Urdu accounts from which Stirling has extracted the above mentioned details of the Muhammadan invasion of Orissa.

Detailing the story, Rajani Kanta Chakraborty^{4/} says that Ismā'īl Ghāzī who attacked Orissa in 1510 A.D., was put to death by Husain Shāh, for he

1/ Supra., P. 17

2/ Supra., pg. 21; History of Bengal, II, p. 148. foot note No. 3.

3/ P. A. S. B., 1870, p. 120

4/ Op.cit., II, pp. 120-21. The Story of this 'headless rider', of Madāran has also been told by Blochmann, P. A. S. B. 1870, pp. 117-120.

suspected that Ismā'īl was trying to revolt against him after having constructed a fort at Mandāran frontier. The headless body of Ismā'īl, mounting a horse, proceeded from Gaud, in the direction of Mandāran, while the severed head followed it hovering high up in the air. Arriving at the gate of Mandāran fort, he wanted some betelleaf from the guards who were waiting there. When they refused to comply with the request of the dead, the trunkless head went back to Gaud and the body was buried at Mandāran. Rakhal Das Banerji also repeats the same story when he says that Ismā'īl Ghāzī, a general of the Nawab of Bengal (Husain Shah), destroyed the city of Purī. ^{1/} Buchanan Hamilton who associates Ismā'īl with Husain's Kāmrūp expeditions, maintains that the saint was alive in the reign of Musrat Shah. ^{2/}

It thus appears that the whole basis of Ismā'īl Ghāzī being regarded as a contemporary and officer of Husain Shah is the story said to have been found in the Mādla Pañji, referred to by Rakhal Das Banerji and Sterling, the latter being the source of Blochmann's observation. These historians have been influenced by the legend of Ismā'īl Ghāzī which is still in wide circulation in South West Bengal. The legendary story mentioned by Rajani Kanta Chakraborty and Blochmann, is a strange admixture of historical facts and popular imagination.

Initially however, the reference to the Mādla Pañji appears to be incorrect for the simple reason that the Pañji speaks of an attack on Orissa in 1509 A.D. by the Surasthāna. ^{3/} The term Surasthāna seems to be a ^{corruption} corruption of the Arabic term Sultān. The Pañji never names Ismā'īl Ghāzī. The term Surasthāna in the Pañji suggests that the attack on Orissa was led by the Sultān himself assisted by his officers. That the Sultān personally took part in some of the campaigns against Orissa is evidenced by the Sylhet Inscription ^{4/} of Husain Shah dated 1512 A.D. and also by a passage in the Caitanya-Caritamṛta. ^{5/} The term Surasthāna

1/ Yānglar Itihāsa, II, pp. 245-46.

2/ Martin: Op.cit., III, pp. 411 and 412. See also K.L.Barua: The Early History of Kāmarūpa, Shillong, 1933; pp. 240-41.

3/ J. A. S. B., 1900; No. 2; p. 186.

4/ J. A. S. B., 1922; p. 413.

5/ Supra, p. 21.

which can thus be easily explained should not be understood to have stood for Ismā'il Ghāzi.

The association of Ismā'il with Hussain Shāhi attacks does not, therefore, bear scrutiny. It is true that one Ismā'il Ghāzi had once attacked Orissa from Bengal. It is also true that Ismā'il was executed at the order of his Sultān. That Hussain Shāh attacked Orissa is as much beyond doubt as that Ismā'il was buried in Mandāran the building of the fortification of which place is associated with his name. The Ismā'il Ghāzi who actually attacked Orissa did so under a previous regime, i.e. ⁱⁿ the reign of Sultān Bārbak Shāh. Ismā'il died under the order of Bārbak Shāh in 878 A.H./1474 A.D. ^{1/} The Bārbak Shāhi attack on Orissa mixed up with the similar incident of Hussain Shāhi regime together with the unfortunate fact of Ismā'il being beheaded by the Sultān's order mixed up in popular legends that grew up in the name of Ismā'il who is almost worshipped as a great saint by both Hindus and Muslims of South-West Bengal. ^{2/} In clearing the jumble the Risalatush-Shuhada comes to our rescue. It was written in 1042 A.H./1633 A.D. ^{3/} that the Risala says

1/ The Risalatush Shuhada: J. A. S. B., 1874, p. 236.

تاریخ چار دہم شب برات روز جمعہ سندان و سبعین و کمانایہ بدرجہ شہادت رسیدند -

2/ Siteram Das, a seventeenth century poet of Bengal has paid tribute to him in the following lines:

১- গদমন্ডরান পির ইসমাইল
২- গদমন্ডরান পির ইসমাইল
৩- গদমন্ডরান পির ইসমাইল
৪- গদমন্ডরান পির ইসমাইল
৫- গদমন্ডরান পির ইসমাইল

Translated, the passage stands thus: I adore pir Ismail at Gad Mandaran. (It is due to his spiritual influence that) tigers and buffaloes live together in the forest. The embankment constructed by him exists at Gad Mandaran. He built up seventy-two strongholds within the fortification of Mandaran. Bowing down on the ground, I adore his feet (Quoted by Dr. Sukumar Sen : Madhya Bangla O Bangali, p. 41, Calcutta, 1952 B.S.)

3/ The Risala: J. A. S. B., 1874, p. 222.

regarding the historical personality of Ismā'īl may be summarised in the following lines:^{1/}

Bhandasī Rāya, the Commandant of Ghorāghat requested Ismā'īl to allow him to build up a fort on the frontier region. Ismā'īl complied with the request. But he poisoned the mind of the Sultān against Ismā'īl telling him that Ismā'īl had entered into a friendly alliance with the king of Kāmrūp. Determined to bring about the ruin of Ismā'īl, the Sultān sent his soldiers against Ismā'īl who repulsed them quite successfully. The Sultān wrote a letter to Ismā'īl asking him to appear at the court immediately. Ismā'īl yielded to the decree of his fate by responding to his call. He was executed at the order of the Sultān on Friday, 14th Shābān, 878 A.H. (4th January 1474 A.D.). His property was confiscated by the royal authority. When the Sultān came to know the role played by the Rāya, he burst into tears. Accompanied by the Queen, he went to Mandāran and Kāntā Dūār in order to show respect to the departed soul.^{2/}

The evidence of the Risāla gets partial confirmation from an inscription^{3/} dated 900 A.H./1494-95 fixed up on the tomb of Ismā'īl at Mandāran in so far as

1/ Ibid., pp. 235-238.

2/ The Risālatush Shuhadā also informs us that the saint came to Bengal with a view to propagating Islām in the East. Bārbak Shāh helped him by recruiting him as one of his military officers and also by entrusting to him the task of attacking the non-Muhammadan rulers of Kāmrūp and Orissa. Ismā'īl Ghāzī seems to have been successful in subduing these rulers. (See the Risāla Persian text, J. A. S. B., 1874, pp. 226-235 and History of Bengal, Vol. II, pp. 133-34). The terrible fate which was awaiting him has already been described. The Risāla seems to be the earliest work to narrate the incidents connected with Ismā'īl's life. Although we lamentably lack in materials to verify the biographical account gleaned from the Risāla, it may be inferred here that the work is based on historical truth. That the political relation of the then Bengal with Kāmrūp and Orissa was far from friendly, is a well-established fact. At a subsequent period, Husain Shāh had also to wage wars against these territories.

3/ J. A. S. B., 1917, pp. 133-34.

putting Ismā'il in a period earlier than 1494-95. He could not have been alive in 1509 when Husain Shāhi attacks on Orissa took place.

The evidence of the Risālatush Shuhadā together with the Mandāran inscription possibly sets at rest the confusion that so long existed about Ismā'il, unless one is prepared to presume the existence of two Ismā'is, one killed ⁱⁿ 1474 A.D., and another leading attack on Orissa in 1509 A.D. both being buried at Mandāran and equally venerated by the local Hindus and Muslims. The presumption would be too far-fetched.

The Husain Shāhi attack on Orissa had nothing to do with Ismā'il Ghāzi who flourished in the earlier period i.e. the reign of Bārbak Shāh.¹

War With Tipperah

Military operations against the king of Tipperah were in progress. According to the Rājamālā which has given a detailed account of the war between Gaud and Tipperah.^{2/} Dhanya Mānikya, king of Tipperah, expelled the soldiers of Gaud from Chittagong in 1435 Saka/1513-14 A.D. after capturing it from the Muslims who were probably defeated by him on this occasion. At this Sultan Husain Shah sent an expedition against Tipperah under the command of Gaud Mallik, who, following the course of the Gumtī, occupied Meherkul in Comillah, while the opposing army under Rāyakācāga^{3/} had released the water of the river held up at a distance by an earthen barrier. After the hasty retreat of the survivors, the king of Tipperah occupied Chittagong in 1437 Saka/1515-16 A.D. To avenge this reverse, Husain Shah sent another expedition against Tipperah under Hātian Khān. Although this general occupied Zamir Khāngad and inflicted an initial defeat on the Tipperah soldiers at

1/ The problem has been discussed by the present writer in a Bengali paper, Ismā'il Ghāzi O Samasamayik Vānglā (Ismā'il Ghāzi; and the contemporary Bengal), Vānglā Academy Patrikā, Dacca 1364 B.S., 3rd issue, pp. 45-54.

2/ This account has been summarised by R. D. Banerjee: Vānglār Itihāsa, II, pp. 251-52. See also History of Bengal, II, p. 149.

3/ In the Rājamālā, the name is Rāyachāga. So we are in favour of transliterating it as Rāyakācāga, and not as Rāichaichag, as spelt in History of Bengal, II, p. 149.

Chaghariagad under Gagan Khan, he failed to utilise the experience of his predecessor Gaud Mallik, so that the result of this expedition was the same as that of the previous one. On their way to Rāngāmāti, the soldiers of Hātian Khan were drowned at night in the river. The victory of Dhanya Manikya was largely due to the same stratagem as that to which he had recourse in defeating the soldiers of Gaud Mallik. Hātian Khan was punished by the Sultan for his inefficiency and lack of foresight. The fourth expedition of Husain Shah has not been properly recorded in the Rājamāla.^{1/}

But the Bengali literature of an early period does not corroborate the information supplied by the Rājamāla. According to the Parāgali Mahābhārata, written in the reign of Husain Shah, Tipperah had to surrender herself to the Sultan of Gaud.^{2/} According to the Asyamedha Parva of Śrikara Nandī, another contemporary of Husain Shah, the king of Tipperah who lived in a chronic state of fear for Ghuti Khan, Husain's governor of Chittagong, had to retire to the hills because of the onrush of the Muslim soldiers in his country and ultimately acknowledged his supremacy by offering him a number of horses and elephants as tribute.^{3/}

1/ The Rājamāla: ed. Kaliprasanna Sen. Agartala, Tipperah, Tipperah era 1337, II, pp. 22-28. See also my article: Husain Shah in Bengali literature: I.H.Q. March, 1956 Calcutta, Vol. XXXII, No. 1, pp. 64-67.

2/ Sukumar Sen: Vāṅglā Sahityer Itihāsa, I, Calcutta, 1948, p. 225, foot note:

সুপাত্তন (২৭) সন আৱা পুৰি বৰজগোড় - নৱ,
শ্ৰীপুৰাণ্ড ৩৭০ - ২৪৫।

3/ Śrikar Nandī: op.cit., eds Binod Bibari Kavyatīrtha and Dinesh Chandra Sen. Vāṅgiya Sahitya Parisad, Calcutta, 1312 B.S., pp. 3-4.

সুপাত্তি ২৭ সন আৱা পুৰি বৰজগোড়।
সামন্তসদৰ্ভূতৈ পালৈ বসুধতি ॥
তান বৈ (সামন্ত) বসুধতি বসুধতি বসুধতি।
শ্ৰীপুৰাণ্ড ৩৭০ - ২৪৫ - আৱা পুৰি বৰজগোড় ॥
শ্ৰীপুৰাণ্ড - সুপাত্তি ৩৭০ ৩৭০ ৩৭০ (২৪৫)।
সামন্ত - বসুধতি - ১৩১২ সন আৱা পুৰি বৰজগোড় ॥
সামন্তসদৰ্ভূতৈ - ১৩১২ সন আৱা পুৰি বৰজগোড়।
সামন্তসদৰ্ভূতৈ - ১৩১২ সন আৱা পুৰি বৰজগোড় - ॥
সামন্তসদৰ্ভূতৈ - ১৩১২ সন আৱা পুৰি বৰজগোড়।
সামন্তসদৰ্ভূতৈ - ১৩১২ সন আৱা পুৰি বৰজগোড় ॥

This statement is borne out by an epigraphic evidence also. The Sunargaon inscription of Husain Shah dated 919/1513 shows that Khawās Khān was

سر لشکر زمین تپوره و وزیر اقلیم معظم آباد

'the military governor of the land of Tipperah and Wazir of Eqlim Mu'azzamābād'.^{1/}

The expression seems to indicate that Khawās Khān who was already the governor of Mu'azzamābād was subsequently allowed to exercise administrative control over the newly conquered region of Tipperah. Thus the conquest of a part of Tipperah by Husain Shah seems fairly well-established. In the face of so many positive proofs in favour of this conclusion, it is not possible for us to safely rely on the information supplied by the Rajamālā, written towards the end of the sixteenth century.^{2/}

The Rajamālā appears to have referred to the initial stage of Husain's war with Tipperah in the course of which the Sultān had to face some reverses; but the hostilities culminated in the conquest of a part of Tipperah by Husain Shah. Kavindra Paramesvara's and ^{Nandi's} Srikarāṇḍī statements indicate that Paragal Khān and Chuti Khān, governors of Chittagong, probably exercised some control over a part of Tipperah.

The occupation of Chittagong.

The possession of Chittagong was being disputed by the kings of Gaud, Tipperah and Arakan. The foregoing account shows that the hostilities between the Sultān and the king of Tipperah centred very often on the occupation of Chittagong and that the latter was successful in wresting it from Husain Shah in 1513-14 and 1515-16.^{3/} The Rajamālā categorically states that Tipperah successfully held her control over Chittagong after her war with Husain Shah was over.^{4/} But it is proved beyond

1/ JASB, 1872, old series, Vol, XLI, Pt. I, p. 333. The Governorship of two countries was conferred upon the same person, for Mu'azzamābād identified by Blochmann with Sunargaon region (Ibid, p. 334) was contiguous with Tipperah.

2/ Op.cit., Part-I, 1336 Tipperah Era, Introduction.

3/ Supra, p. 27

4/ The Rajamālā: II, pp. 30, 31 and 33.

doubt that it came under the Sultan ultimately. We are told that the ruler of Arakan (Rosāng), taking advantage of Husain's pre-occupation with Tipperah, occupied Chittagong. ^{1/} The Ahadis-ul-Khawānīn states that Nasrat who expelled the Arakanese from Chittagong, renamed it Fathābād with a view to commemorating the conquest. ^{2/} This statement finds support in Daulat Wazir Bahram Khān's Lāila-Majnu according to which Husain Shah sent one Wazir Hamid Khān to occupy Chittagong which was named Fathābād. ^{3/} It seems that Hamid Khān was sent together with Nasrat to conquer Chittagong. The Parāgalī Mahābhārata maintains that Parāgal Khān was appointed military governor of Chittagong. ^{4/} Corroborating this information, Srikara Nandī says that parāgal was succeeded by his son Chuti Khān in the governorship, their political headquarter being situated on the bank of the river Peni^{5/} Thus the evidences gathered from Bengali literature and the Persian history of

1/ Ibid, p. 24.

2/ Hsmidullah: Ahadisul-Khawānīn: Calcutta, 1871, pp. 17-18.

3/ Op.cit., quoted by Abdul Karim: Vāṅgā Prācīn Puthira Vivarana: Calcutta, 1320 B.S. Sāhitya Paricad ed pt. I, 2nd issue, p. 15. See also Lāili-Majnu: ed. Ahmad Sharif; Dacca, 1957, pp. 7, 8 and 9. Cf. বঙ্গ-কৃত্যাবলী দ্বিতীয় খণ্ড ১০০-১০১

৬৮৫৫৫৫ ৫৫৫৫ ৫৫৫৫ ৫৫৫৫

আমদাশিলা (সৌভাগ্যঃ) উদ্যোগ-২মিলন-স্বর্গে
অধিকারী-ইতি ৬৮৫৫৫৫

4/ Op.cit., quoted by Dinesh Chandra Sen: Vāṅgā Bhāsa O Sāhitya: 1356 B.S., Calcutta, 8th ed. p. 94.

স্বর্গে হু (সন সন সৌভাগ্যঃ) ১
৩৫৫ ২৫৫ (সনসন) ২৩৫ ৫৫৫ ॥
৬৮৫৫৫ - ৫৫৫৫৫৫ ৫৫৫ ৫৫৫৫৫৫।
স্বর্গে-৫৫৫৫ ৫৫৫৫ ৫৫৫-৫৫৫৫৫৫ ॥
৬৮৫৫৫৫ - ৫৫৫৫ ৫৫৫৫ ৫৫৫৫৫৫ ৬৮৫৫৫৫।
৬৮৫৫৫৫৫৫ ৫৫৫ (সন ২৩৫৫) ৫৫৫ ॥

5/ Op.cit., p. 3.

স্বর্গে অসুখ ৩৩-৫৫৫ ৫৫৫৫৫৫।
৫৫৫৫৫ ৫৫৫৫৫ - ৫৫৫৫৫ ৫৫৫৫৫৫ ॥
৬৮৫৫৫৫ - ৫৫৫৫ ৫৫৫৫৫ ৫৫৫৫৫৫।
৫৫৫৫৫৫৫৫৫ (৫৫৫) ৫৫৫৫ ৫৫৫৫৫৫ ॥
৫৫৫৫ - ৫৫৫৫৫ ৫৫৫৫ (৫৫৫৫৫) ৫৫৫৫৫৫।

Chittagong conclusively show that Husain Shah was able to occupy Chittagong which ultimately formed an integral part of his kingdom. This explains why Jao de Silveira, the Portuguese emissary, found Chittagong in 1517, in the possession of the king of Bengal of whom the king of Arakan was a vassal.^{1/} Thus we can distinguish several stages of development in the history of Chittagong under the Husain Shahi rule: first:- the recovery of Chittagong from the Arakanese by Rukūddīn Bārbak (1459-1474)^{2/} and the continuous sway of Gaud over Chittagong till at least 1513-14; second:- the conquest of the place by Dhany Manikya between 1513 and 1516;^{3/} third:- the reconquest of Chittagong by Husain probably in 1516; fourth:- the occupation of Chittagong by the king of Arakan who seems to have taken advantage of Husain's preoccupation with Tipperah and fifth:- the recovery of Chittagong by Husain in 1517 and the uninterrupted hold of Husain and his successors over Chittagong till 1538.^{4/} The tripartite war which was going on among the rulers of Bengal, Tipperah and Arakan over the possession of Chittagong was primarily due to its strategic and commercial importance.

Frontiers

III. The ~~Frontiers~~ of the kingdom:

It is very difficult to form an accurate idea about the frontiers of the Husain Shahi Bengal. Since she had a state of war with Orissa, Delhi, Kamrūp, Assam, Tipperah and Arakan, her frontiers were constantly fluctuating. Still it is worthwhile to discuss the position of the frontiers of Bengal on the basis of

1/ J. J. A. Campos: History of the Portuguese in Bengal. Calcutta, 1919, p. 28; ^{footnote}

O' Malley says in Chittagong Gazetteer, p. 22, that it was under the ruler of Arakan in 1517. But this statement is nowhere supported.

2/ This is proved by the inscription of Rāstī Khān who built a mosque in Chittagong in 1473-74 at the order of Majlis-i-'Alā who was an officer of Bārbak. See Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society. IV, Pt. II, 1918, p. 181. History of Bengal. II, p. 135.

3/ Supra, pp. 27.

4/ Infra, pp. 56. ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Campos: Op.cit., pp. 30-40.

the sources at our disposal.

The meeting points of Bengal and Orissa have nowhere been mentioned. If the Risāla and the Mādā Pañī are to be relied upon, Bengal had a frontier outpost at Mandāran which constituted the base of her operations against the ruler of Orissa^{1/} The whole region extending from Mandāran to Jājnagar appears to have been a debatable ground between Bengal and Orissa. While giving an account of the kingdom of Orissa, Barbosa remarks, "It extends along the coast northwards where there is a river called Ganges (but they call it Guorigua), and on the further bank of this river begins the kingdom of Bengal where also the King of Orissa is sometimes at war".^{2/} Thus we find that the river Ganges has been stated to have formed the boundary between Bengal and Orissa. It cannot be denied that the then Bengal was separated from Orissa by a river reference to which has been made by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja.^{3/-} The universally known Ganges which has always been sacred to the Hindus was not the boundary between Bengal and Orissa, for Mandāran which was included in the kingdom of Husain Shah is situated far beyond the modern Ganges. The map of Joao de Barros shows that Mandāran was at a considerable distance from the river. Barbosa appears to have confused one of the tributaries of the Ganges which was known also by that name, with the principal Ganges. Before projecting this hypothesis, we may cast a glance at the map of Joao de Barros, drawn in 1550 A.D. in which a river called Ganga has been shown as falling into the estuary of the Hugli from the north-western direction.^{4/} The real Ganges is shown as flowing far above south-western Bengal. Let us notice here what de Barros has said about this river. "The kingdom of Bengal", he says, "then is situated in that region where the River Ganges discharges its waters by two principal branches into the Eastern Ocean, and where the land drawing further back from its waters forms the

1/ The Risāla: J. A. S. B., 1874, pp. 237-38. Supra. pp. 2 /

2/ Op.cit., II, pp. 133-134.

3/ Op.cit., p. 179, Supra. p. 20; Footnote 2.

4/ See the map attached hereto.

এটি সাধারণভাবে বলা যায়, ক্ষতিকর
যেকোনো তথ্য ধারণা জ্ঞান ও



Gras esajo, ou 27 legoas

DESCRIPCAO
DO REINO
DE BENGALLA

PATANES

REINO DE ORIXA

REINO DE PIPILIPATAM

great Gulf which geographers term Gangetic and which we now name from Bengal. Into the mouths of these two branches two notable rivers discharge themselves, one from the east, and the other from the west, both being boundaries of the Kingdom The other river enters the western arm of the Ganges below another city called Satigam The other river which enters the Ganges below Satigam runs through the Kingdom of Orixa and its source is on the slopes of the mountains called Gate (Ghate) by the Indians in those parts which are near Chaul. And as this river is a great one, and flows through many lands, the natives, in imitation of the Ganges into which it discharges its waters, give it also the name of Ganga, and hold its water to be as holy as those of the Ganges itself." ¹

If carefully analysed, the above statement of de Barros shows the following features: (a) the river Ganga, drawn in his map, forms the Western boundary of Bengal; (b) falls into the branch of the Ganges below Satgaon; (c) has its sources in the Ghat mountains and (d) is called Gangā by the Hindus who consider its water to be as sacred as that of the Ganges. Gangā was, therefore, an imitation name. It is due to these reasons that we are in favour of identifying the Ganges of Barbosa with the river Gangā shown in the map of de Barros. It seems that this river is intended for modern Kānsāi ² which may be tentatively regarded as the western boundary of Husain Shah's Bengal. De Barros has located Reino de Orixa on the western side of this river. Several inscriptions of Husain Shāh have mentioned 'Arsah Sājla Nankhād together with thāna Iāoblā and the towns of Simlābād, Husainābād and Hādigarh all of which places have been correctly identified by Rakhal Das Banerji and Prof. Blochmann. ³ Thus it appears that the Sarkars of

1. Decada, IV, Bk. IX, ch. I, of Joao de Barros: reproduced in the Book of Barbosa II, pp. 244-45, Appendix - I.

2. This contention seems to be confirmed, if the map of Joao de Barros is compared with that of modern Bengal. The maps of Blaeu (J.A.S.B., 1873; facing p. 310; pl. IV), Rennell and Van den Broucke also corroborate this view.

3. For the inscriptions mentioning these names, see E. I. M., 1915-16, pp. 12-13; pl. IV, J.A.S.B., 1870, pp. 284 and 1909 p. 260. For the identification of these places, see J.A.S.B., 1870, pt. I, p. 294, footnote and p. 295 and 1909, pp. 251-52. Simlābād may be identified with Salimābād, on the left bank of the Dāmodar, south-east of the town of Burdawan. J.A.S.B., 1873, p. 218.

Sātgaon, Sharifābād, Sulaimānābād and Madāran¹ which formed the region south of the Ganges and west of the Bhāgirathī were included in the kingdom of Husain.

The northern outskirts of the Sundarban into which he does not seem to have penetrated probably formed the southern frontier of his kingdom. Vr̄ndāvanadāsa has made incidental reference to Chatrabhoga² the inclusion of which place in his kingdom is proved beyond doubt. The evidence supplied by the Tribenī inscription³ clearly shows that Hādigarh, identified with Hātiagarh, south of Diamond Harbour on the Hugli, formed an integral part of his dominions. It may be reasonably inferred here that Husain's southern frontier extended from this place to Khalifatabād or modern Bāgerhat, for the latter was one of the mint towns of Bengal in the reign of 'Alā'uddin Husain Shah.⁴ He had jurisdiction over Bakhergunge district which was situated in the Taqsim of Bāngdorā in Fathābād division.⁵ Thus he had a continuous frontier in the south.

Regarding the south-eastern boundary of the then Bengal, Joao de Barros has the following :- "..... one of these our people call the River of Chatigam, as it enters the eastern mouth of the Ganges at a city of this name The Chatigam river rises in the mountains of the kingdoms of Ava and of Vagaru, and flowing from N.E. to S.W. divides the kingdom of Bengala from the lands of Codavascam, and along the course of this river lie the kingdoms of Tipora and of Brema Linna which surround Bengala in the East".⁶

-
1. Ain-i-Akbari: ed. Jarret and Sarkar, Calcutta, 1949, Vol-II, p. 153-55.
 2. Supra., p. 20. Chatrabhoga is at present situated in Diamond Harbour subdivision in the 24-Parganas.
 3. E. I. M., 1915-16, pp. 12-13. J.A.S.B., 1870, p. 284
 4. Naqat was allowed to issue coins from this place even in the life time of his father. These coins are dated 922 A.H. H. N. Wright: Op.cit., pp. 177-78, Nos. 211 and 212. M. K. Bhattachali: Taifur Collection, 1936, Dacca, p. 31, No. 162 in pl. V-T. Blochmann: J.A.S.B., 1873, p. 297, pl. IX, No. 10
 5. Vijaya Gupta: Manasa-Manjal. ed. Basanta Kumar Bhattechariya, 3rd ed. Barisal, p. 4. The post writing in 1493-94, says that his village, Fullasri (at present a village in Bakhergunge) was included in *কর্তব্যে বাকেরগঞ্জ*
 6. De Barros : Op.cit., IV, Bk. IX, ch. I, reproduced in the Book of Barbosa, II, pp. 344-45

The map of de Barros shows that what he calls the Chatigam river is nothing but the modern Karnaphulī. We have already noticed that the governor of Husain had their headquarters on the bank of the Feni river. ^{1/} Thus the region extending from the Feni to the Karnaphulī seems to have belonged to Husain Shah at least after the year 1517.

In the east, Bengal was separated from the kingdom of Tipperah by the Gumti river which, as we have seen, the soldiers of Husain Shah tried to cross on several occasions. ^{2/} The Sylhet inscription of Husain Shah ^{3/} clearly proves that Sylhet was under his control. The Brahmaputra river which separated Kamrūp from Assam was, for all practical purposes, the north-eastern boundary of the kingdom of Husain. Kamrūp, which appears as Reino De Comotah, on the map of de Barros, was the northern-most region of Bengal. The capital Kamtapur, marked as Comotah by de Barros, was situated on the bank of the Darla river which joins the Brahmaputra in the South. ^{4/} In the north-west, the kingdom of Husain included probably the whole of northern Bihar and a part of Southern Bihar. ^{5/} De Barros says, "these mountains separate the Bengalas from the Patane peoples, and, lower down towards the south, from the Kingdom of Orixa, the level lands of Bengala lying between the mountains and the stream of the Ganges." ^{6/} These mountains were probably the Kharagpur hills. Thus the Portuguese writer seems to maintain that the Ganges and the mountains of the West separated the Patane people or the Afghans (Pathans ?) of Bihar and the Orissan people from the kingdom of Gaud. This is what he has clearly shown in the map. The soldiers of Sikandar faced the

1/ Supra: P. 30.

2/ Supra: pp. 27-28.

3/ Supra: P. 21.

4/ For this consult the map of Joao de Barros attached to this thesis.

5/ The inscriptions of Husain found at Munghyr, Bonahara and Saran seem to confirm this contention. For these inscriptions, see P.A.S.B., 1870, pp. 112 and 297 and J.A.S.B., 1872, p. 335 and 1874, No. 3, p. 304. Supra, p. 10.

6/ Reproduced by M.L. Dames in the Book of Duarte Barbosa, II, Appendix-I, p. 245.

Bengali soldiers at Barh ^{1/} which seems to have marked the meeting point of Bihar and Bengal. In Rennell's map, Barh is located on the southern bank of the Ganges and is 22 miles north-east of Bihar town. ^{2/}

IV. Husain's achievements and his religious policy.

Nizamuddin holds that Husain Shah died in 929 A.H. after enjoying a considerably long reign of twenty-seven years and a few months. ^{3/} Firishta, ^{4/} and Salim ^{5/} give 930 and 927 respectively as the dates of the Sultan's death no one of which can be accepted. The Sumargāon inscription ^{6/} of Husain shows that he was alive in 925/1519. His son Nasrat Shah began to issue coins in the same year. ^{7/} Thus it is conclusively proved that 1519 is the last year of Husain Shah's reign.

We have seen that Husain was fighting against all of the kingdoms that surrounded Bengal. It is really strange that he could maintain the independent status of Bengal even without entering into any military or political alliance with any one of these powers. His failure at the Assam frontier does not appear to have

1/ Supra, P. 9

2/ The reign of Husain's son, Nasrat, was characterized by the territorial expansion of Bengal in the north-western direction. See Infra, P. 42. See also my paper The Frontiers of Bengal Under the Husain Shahi Rulers: Bengal Past and Present, LIXVII, Pt. I, No. 143, January-June, 1958, p. 44.

3/ Op.cit., Vol. III, p. 271.

4/ Firishta: Op.cit., Vol. II, P. 302.

5/ Salim: Op.cit., P. 135.

6/ J.A.S.B., 1873, p. 295, No. 31.

7/ H.N. Wright: Op.cit., II, pp. 176-78. Pt. II, Pl. V, No. 206. Lanepool: Op.cit., pp. 50-51. Pl. VI, No. 134. A.W. Botham: Op.cit., pp. 172-73. Pl. IV, No. 6. Shamsuddin: Op.cit., pp. 66, 67, 68. N.K. Bhattachali: Talfoor Collection, pp. 82-83. Pl. V, No. 181 and Hakim Habibur Rahman Collection, pp. 26-28. Pl. III, Nos. 133 and 136.

adversely affected the political life of Bengal. It only checked the progress of the Muslim arms in that direction. He seems to have avoided a direct war with Sikandar by concluding a treaty with him; but he succeeded ultimately to expand his kingdom by occupying the parts of the territories that once formed the Sharqi kingdom.

The country enjoyed an undisturbed security and peace during his regime and this was unquestionably due to his personal ability and the efficiency of his government. Even the earliest part of his reign appears to have made an impression upon the minds of his subjects and captured their imagination to a great extent. Vijaya Gupta, a contemporary of Alāuddīn Husain Shāh, who composed in 1494-95, the epic of snake-cult, popularly known as Manasa-Mangala, has spoken very much highly of the achievements of the Sultān. "Sultān Husain Shāh," he says, "is the tilak-mark of kings. He may be compared with Arjuna in fighting and as such he resembles the morning sun. The king rules the earth with the strength of his arm. Because of the protection offered by him, his subjects enjoy happiness regularly"^{1/} The glowing tribute which the poet has paid to the Sultān seems justifiable, if we take into account his subsequent military, administrative and cultural attainments.

His religious policy was free from narrowness and bigotry. His attitude towards the Hindus was marked by tolerance and liberalism. Some of the most important offices were held by the Hindus. On this point Bengali sources are clear and certain. Rupa was the Sakar-Mallik, and Sanātana, the Dabir-i-Khās, of the Sultān. Rām Candra Khān enjoyed a small estate in south-west Bengal. Similar was the case with the Majumdār family to which Hiran̄ya Dāsa and Govardhana Dāsa belonged. Jagāi and Madhāi were the Kotwāls of Navadvīpa. Again Gopināth Vasu,

1/ Op.cit., p. 4. সুন্দর (সুন্দর আর সুন্দর) - ১৩৫৫ ॥
সুন্দর সুন্দর সুন্দর সুন্দর সুন্দর ॥
সুন্দর সুন্দর সুন্দর সুন্দর সুন্দর ॥
সুন্দর সুন্দর সুন্দর সুন্দর সুন্দর ॥

his minister, Mukunda-dāsa, his private physician, Kesava Khān Chatri, the chief of his bodyguards and Anupa, in charge of mint, were Hindus. According to the Rajamāla, Gaud Mallik was placed in charge of the second Tipperah expedition. ^{1/} Some of the governors were patronising the Hindu poets of the time. The names of Parāgal Khān and Ghuti Khān have become proverbially associated with those of Kabīndra Paramesvara and Śrikara Nandī who prepared Bengali versions of the Mahābhārata. ^{2/} The liberal policy adopted by Husain Shāh was followed by his successors. We find Hindu soldiers fighting in the army of Nasrat. ^{3/}

Some writers have maintained that Husain Shāh oppressed the Hindus occasionally. ^{4/} They base their arguments generally on the Suvudhi Rāya episode, mentioned in the Gaitanya Caritāmrita, ^{5/} on the alleged destruction of the temples of Orissa by Husain and also on the view of Jayānanda that the Hindus of Navadvīpa suffered at the hands of the ruler. But their arguments seem to have been based on a superficial account of facts. The Suvudhi Rāya episode does not indicate any persistent policy adopted by the Sultān, but shows only the influence exerted on him by his wife. If anybody infers from the destruction of the Hindu temples of Orissa by the Sultān that he was hostile to the Hindus, such a conjecture is sure to prove unfortunate, for this could happen in the wake of military operations attended by chaos and confusion. What Jayānanda has said may be summarised in the

1/ For the mention of these officers, see, Vrindāvana-dāsa: Op.cit., pp. 8, 82 (1581-87) was the reigning Sultan of Bengal. Husain Shah cannot be held responsible (ādikhanda), 205 (madhya) and 316 and p. 350 (antya); Supra, pp. 21 and 28. History of Bengal, II, pp. 151-52; Sukumar Sen: Madhya Yugera Vāṅglā O Vāṅglī, pp. 14-15. Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj: op.cit., pp. 76 and 278 and 293.

2/ The Parāgalī Mahābhārata: Quoted by D.C.Sen: Op.cit., pp. 94-96. Śrikara Nandī: op.cit., p. 4. Infra: Section on literature.

3/ The Memoirs of Babars: ed. Mrs. Beveridge, London, 1921; Vol. II, p. 673.

4/ Rajani Kanta Chakravarti: Op.cit., II, pp. 103, 106, 107 and 123; R.D. Banerjee: op.cit., II, pp. 306-307. D.C. Sen: op.cit., p. 93 and Tamo Nish Das Gupta: Aspects of Bengali Society from Old Bengali Literature: 1935. C. U. Pub. p. 92.

5/ Supra, pp. 1-2.

following lines:

The followers of the Sultān informed him that the Brahmins of Navadvīpa would usurp the throne of Gaud. In a fit of despotic anger, the Sultān ordered Navadvīpa to be destroyed. The castes of the Brahmins were desecrated and the lives of many of them were taken. The religious activities of the Hindus were suspended and the normalcy of the life of Navadvīpa was seriously affected.

Chaos and confusion were reigning supreme, so that Sarvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya migrated to Benares, leaving his brother Vidya Vācaspati at Gaud. ^{1/}

If we analyse the Bengali text, we find that the Brahminical section of Navadvīpa believed that the throne of Gaud would be occupied by the Brahmins - a fact corroborated also by Vrindābana-dāsa. ^{2/} Whatever might be the reason for this optimistic psychology, this was sufficient to arouse anger in the Sultān who wanted to put an end to the spirit of sedition pervading the Brahminical society of Navadvīpa. This explains why we find him in the above account oppressing the Brahmins only to the exclusion of other classes of Hindu population. One may question the measures he adopted against the Brahmins; but what he did, was meant to stamp out sedition in which communal feeling or religious zeal does not seem to have played any part. Again we have got every reason to doubt the historical authenticity of Jayānanda's account. He says that this incident took place just on the eve of the birth of Śrī Caitanya. Caitanya was born in 1486 A.D. when Jalāluddīn Fath Shāh (1481-87) was the reigning Sultān of Bengal. Husain Shāh cannot be held responsible for what was done by Jalāluddīn, an earlier ruler. Immediately on his accession to the throne of Gaud, 'Alāuddīn is said to have pillaged the city. ^{3/} It seems that Jayānanda has referred to this incident in the course of which some Hindus of Gaud might have suffered.

1/ The Caitanya-Māngal of Jayānanda: ed. Atul Krishna Goswami; Vāṅgīya Sahitya Parishad; Cal; 1307 B.S., pp. 11-12.

2/ Op.cit., pp. 18 and 75.

3/ Supra, p. 8

That the Sultan appointed a large number of Hindus to some of the key-positions under him is a clear indication of the liberalism with which he treated the Hindus. Catholicity of his mind is reflected in the vaishnava works which maintain that he had much respect for Sri Caitanya whom he regarded as an incarnation of God. ^{1/} The kindness and consideration which he showed to the Hindus have impelled the Hindu poets of the day to call him the tilak-mark of kings (Nripati-tilak), the adornment of the universe (jagata-bhūṣaṇa) and the incarnation of Krishna (Kṛiṣṇa-avatāra). ^{2/}

It is numismatically and epigraphically established that the rulers of Pre-Husain Shāhi Bengal used to assume the title, Chauhul-Islām wal Muslemān (the helper of Islām and the Muslims). ^{3/} It shows how closely they associated Islām with the state affairs. The Sultan and his successors made a complete departure from this policy, dropping as they did this title from the coins. The Kalima which appears only on a few coins may be regarded as a traditional feature of their numismatics without having any religious significance. Again the names of the first four Caliphs found on the margin of a single coin ^{4/} shows simply their connection with the sayyeds of Arabia.

Most of the rulers of Northern India imposed Jiziyah or poll-tax on the Hindus. But this institution did not possibly prevail in the Husain Shāhi Bengal, for the Vaishnava literature of the time which has devoted enough of space to the description of Hindu-Muslim conflict, does not mention it at all. The zakāt does not seem to have been realised by the government from the Muslims. In fact, Husain Shah and his successors were probably secularising their state policy. This may be largely due to the precarious circumstances under which the ruling authority was placed. The kingdom of Gaud was surrounded on all sides by a number of hostile countries. No sooner had the Lōdis disappeared from the political

1/ Vrindāvana-dāsa: op.cit., antya, IV, p. 350 and Kṛiṣṇa-dāsa Kavirāja: op.cit., Madhya, I, p. 76.

2/ Vijaya Gupta: Op.cit., p. 4. Śrīkara Nandī: op.cit., p. 3. D.C.Sen: op.cit., pp. 74 and 94.

3/ H.N.Wright: op.cit., II, pp. 154-163. Ft. II, Pl. II, Nos. 52, 57, 66, 68 etc. see also other catalogues.

4/ Lanepool: op.cit., p. 46. Pl. V, No. 118.

field of India than the rising tide of Mughal imperialism began to carry everything before it. Under these circumstances, Hussain Shah and his successors must have tried to strengthen the foundation of the state on the basis of the support and sympathy of the different sections of people irrespective of religion and creed.

To sum up, the reign of Hussain Shah constitutes a brilliant epoch in the history of medieval Bengal. Besides waging wars against the adjoining kingdoms, he conferred all sorts of advantages on his subjects, who acknowledged this by holding him in high esteem so that he is remembered even at present as a legendary hero of medieval Bengal.

II. Nasiruddin Nasrat Shah.

'Alauddin Hussain Shah was succeeded by his eldest son Nasrat in 1519 A.D. He was already associated with the administration of the country and acquainted with the art of war-fare. As an apprentice of his father, he seems to have acquired certain qualities which were necessary for the royal office. Some of his coins bear the dates 922/1516 and 923/1517, ^{1/} on the basis of which it may be suggested that Nasrat as a crown-prince, was allowed by his father to issue coins even before he actually ascended the throne. ^{2/}

I. His relation with the Mughals.

Significant political changes were taking place in the contemporary northern India. Taking advantage of Ibrahim Lodi's weakness, the Lohanis and the Farnulis tried to parcel out among themselves the entire territory from Patna to Jaunpur.

1/ H. N. Wright: Op.cit., II, pp. 177-78. A. W. Botham: Op.cit., p. 172;

Bhattacharya: Taifoor Collection, p. 31, Pl. V, No. 162 and J. A. S. B., 1873, p. 297, Pl. IX, No. 10.

2/ For a detailed discussion on this point, see Appendix - A.

A Lohani kingdom was established in Bihar. ^{1/} This chaotic political condition gave a chance to Nasrat to extend his territory upto Ajangarh the inclusion of which place in his kingdom is proved beyond doubt by the Sikandarpur inscription dated 1527. ^{2/} Annexing the whole of Tirhut to Bengal, he placed it under the control of his brother-in-law, 'Alauddin and Makhdum Alan and Hajipur situated on the confluence of the Gandak and the Ganges became his political head-quarter in north Bihar. ^{3/} Kharid on the right bank of the Ghogra remained under his sway so that Babur, on his way to the east felt the necessity of requesting him for a passage through that region. ^{4/}

Babur inflicted a crushing blow to the Lodi kingdom in the battle field of Panipat in 1526. This meant a threat to the sovereignty of Bengal. The Afghans who escaped to Bengal were given not only nominal shelter, but also pensions and estates by Nasrat, ^{5/} who, it seems, was actuated by humanitarian considerations. In 1527, the soldiers of Babur advanced upto the Ghogra, after having plundered Kharid. ^{6/} Seeing that the Afghans were suffering defeat at every stage in their resistance against Babur, Nasrat was probably at a loss as to the course of action he should follow. As early as 1527, Babur sent Mullah Muhammad Mazhab to the court of Gaud with a view to ascertaining Nasrat's attitude to his military policy in the east. ^{7/} Without giving any direct reply to Babur, Nasrat held up

1/ Badauni: op.cit., I, pp. 328-330. Firishtah: op.cit., I, pp. 190-91. Nizamuddin: op.cit., II, p. 90. Ahmad Yadgar: Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afaghana: Bibliotheca Indica, 1939, pp. 176-77. Ni'amatullah: Tarikh-i-Khan-Jahan-Lodi: in Elliot and Dowson: The History of India As Told By Its Own Historians, London, 1873, Vol. V, p. 105-6.

2/ J.A.S.B., 1873, p. 296. According to this inscription, Kharid was under the control of a governor of Nasrat.

3/ Salim: op.cit., p. 136.

4/ Memoirs of Babur: Trans. by A.S. Beveridge: London, 1921, Vol. II, p. 665.

5/ Salim: op.cit., p. 137. Nizamuddin: op.cit., III, p. 271. Firishtah: op.cit., II, p. 302.

6/ The Memoirs, II, p. 544.

7/ Ibid., II, p. 637.

his envoy for about one year. Babur was not sure of his attitude even towards the end of 1528, for he said, "that explicit representation should be made as to whether the Bengali were friendly and single-minded; that, if nothing needed my presence in those parts, I should not make stay, but should move elsewhere at once."^{1/} Since the whole situation was fraught with danger, Nasrat had to profess neutrality. On January 1, 1529, Babur could know that Nasrat's attitude was "loyal and single-minded," whereupon he decided not to have any "move" on Bengal. In the same month, Nasrat's envoy, Ismā'il Mita, waited on Babur, with presents and a letter from the Sultan.^{2/} With this incident, the first phase of Nasrat's relation with Babur was over. Babur attached much importance to the neutrality of Nasrat, for he seems to have apprehended that an active coalition between Nasrat and the Afghan chiefs would completely frustrate his political ambition in the east. The sequel suggests that he was successful in preventing Nasrat from entering into an entente with the Afghans.

It is generally supposed that Nasrat actively helped the Afghans against Babur.^{3/} But this view does not seem to find support either in Babur's autobiography, or in sources like Muntakhabut-Tawarikh, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Tawarikh-i-Firishtah and Tawarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afaghana. To determine the exact nature of relationship between Nasrat and the Afghans, it is necessary to discuss here Babur's military achievements in Bihar and the adjoining regions. Early in 1528, some of the Afghan Chiefs tried to resist Babur's army at Qanauj but in vain.^{4/} Babur proceeded along the Ghogra and conferred on Shāh Muhammad Farmulī, the government of Saran.^{5/} The persons who could stand on Babur's way were Nasrat of Bengal, Mahmūd Lādī, Jalāl Khān Sharqī and Jaleel Khān Lohānī of Bihar.

1/ Ibid., II, p. 628.

2/ The Memoirs: II, pp. 637 and 640.

3/ History of Bengal, II, pp. 153-57.

4/ The Memoirs, II, pp. 598 and 600.

5/ Ibid., P. 675.

Babur's detailed account in his Memoirs of his relation with these political personalities clearly shows that Nasrat had hardly any connection with the anti-Mughal confederacy which was going to ^{be} formed in Bihar. Mahmud Lodi occupied Bihar in 1529 from the Lohani ruler, Jalal Khan who then proceeded to meet Babur to whom he used to write "dutiful letters" from time to time, ^{1/} probably expressing his intention to accept vassalage under him. What was Nasrat's reaction to these political changes, is not clearly known. Jalal and his followers were detained at Hajipur by Nasrat's soldiers ^{2/} who seem to have acted under the impression that Babur's army reinforced by Jalal might create danger for Bengal. Since Babur had already advanced upto Saran and Kharid ^{3/} which were under the control of Nasrat, it was natural on the part of the governor of Hajipur to weaken the enemy by adopting such a measure. This does not indicate that Nasrat had a previous understanding with Mahmud Lodi as to the formation of an anti-Mughal coalition. *an army of*

But the sequel is quite interesting to us. Having collected ^{of} 10,000 Afghans, Mahmud placed himself at the head of an anti-Mughal confederacy which was joined by several prominent Afghan chiefs such as Bayazid, Biban, Fath Khan ^{Sur} and Sher Khan ^{Sur} all of whom agreed to launch a three-pronged attack on the Mughals. Bayazid and Biban proceeded to the North in the direction of Gorakhpur, while Mahmud accompanied by Fath Khan advanced along the banks of the Ganges towards Ghunar and Benares. If the autobiography of Babur is to be relied upon, the ultimate results of these expeditions were quite frustrating for the leaders of the coalition. ^{4/} Had Nasrat played any role, direct or indirect, in this connection, it would have been mentioned in the sources at our disposal. A careful scrutiny of the details given above, seems to suggest that he was not a party to Mahmud's anti-Mughal scheme.

1/ The Memoirs, II, pp. 659 and 664.

2/ Ibid, II, p. 664.

3/ Ibid, II, pp. 581, 637 and 664; Supra, pp. 42.

4/ Ibid, II, pp. 651-52, 654 and 685.

The Afghān leaders had conflicting interests and antagonistic ambitions so that it was hardly possible for them to stand for a common cause. Mahmūd Lādī, Jalāl Lohānī and Jalāl Sharqī were vying with one another for curving out kingdoms for themselves. This explains why the coalition formed by Mahmūd could not win the support of Jalāl Lohānī and Jalāl Sharqī both of whom had already recognised Babur's supremacy by actively placing themselves at the Mughal conqueror's disposal. ^{1/} Similar was the case with Sher Khan Sūr who accepted service under the Mughals. ^{2/} Nasrat Shāh who was conscious of the inherent weakness of the coalition, does not seem to have joined it, for his active support to the Afghāns could have hardly served his self-interest. Realising that an entente with the Afghāns who were fighting a losing battle, would give unnecessary provocation to Babur, he appears to have evaded the so-called anti-Mughal confederacy. Again it is doubtful if Mahmūd could at all think of inviting Nasrat to join his coalition, for the latter had territorial ambition in the north-west the partial fulfilment of which has already been noticed. ^{3/} Thus his north-west frontier policy which was detrimental to Mahmūd's interests was probably partly responsible for his exclusion from the anti-Mughal confederacy.

The Sultān of Bengal ultimately realised that a direct conflict with the Mughals could hardly be avoided. Having occupied parts of Sarān and Kharīd, they were now going to resume their eastward journey with a view to subjugating the eastern territories. Compelled by these circumstances, Nasrat felt the necessity of adopting certain practical measures to check the progress of the Mughal arms. He sent Qutub Khān towards Bharāich to have certain engagements with the Mughals ^{4/}

1/ Ibid., pp. 651-52, 669 and 676. It has been suggested by Dr. Kalika Renjan Ganungo that Babur wanted to utilise Jalāl Sharqī against the Afghāns. See Sher Shāh: Calcutta, 1921, p. 61; footnote.

2/ Memoirs, II, p. 659.

3/ Supra, p. 42

4/ Salim: Op.cit., p. 137.

of which, no record is preserved in Babur's autobiography. In April, 1529, Mokhadun-i-Alam, governor of Hajipur, posted garrisons along the Gandak and held back a number of Afghans who were going to join Babur. These incidents combined with the treatment meted out to Jalal Khan and his party made it sufficiently clear that Babur's fighting with the Bengalis was "probable". Meanwhile, the Bengali army supported by a number of war-boats was waiting at the meeting point of the Ghogra and the Ganges to face any emergency that might arise. Babur had already written a letter to Nusrat, containing "three articles"; but the latter's reply to it was "long in coming".^{1/} The Bengali envoy, Ismail, was sent back to his master with the following memorandum:

We shall be going to this side and that side, in pursuit of our foe, but no mark hurt or harm will be done to any dependency of yours. As one of those three articles said, when you have told the army of Kharid to rise off our road and to go back to Kharid, let a few Turks be joined with it to reassure these Kharid people and to escort them to their own place. If they quit not the ferry-head, if they cease not their unbecoming words, they must regard as their own act any ill that befalls them, must court any misfortune they confront as the fruit of their own words.^{2/}

This passage explicitly shows that Babur wanted to have a free passage through Kharid - a demand which Nusrat does not seem to have conceded to.

The result was a foregone conclusion. Babur now laid out an elaborate plan for the position to be taken by his generals in the approaching battle with the Bengalis.^{3/} His narrative taken together with whatever topographical details can be gathered from Rennell's map,^{4/} clearly shows that his troops were stationed

1/ The Memoirs, II, pp. 663-65.

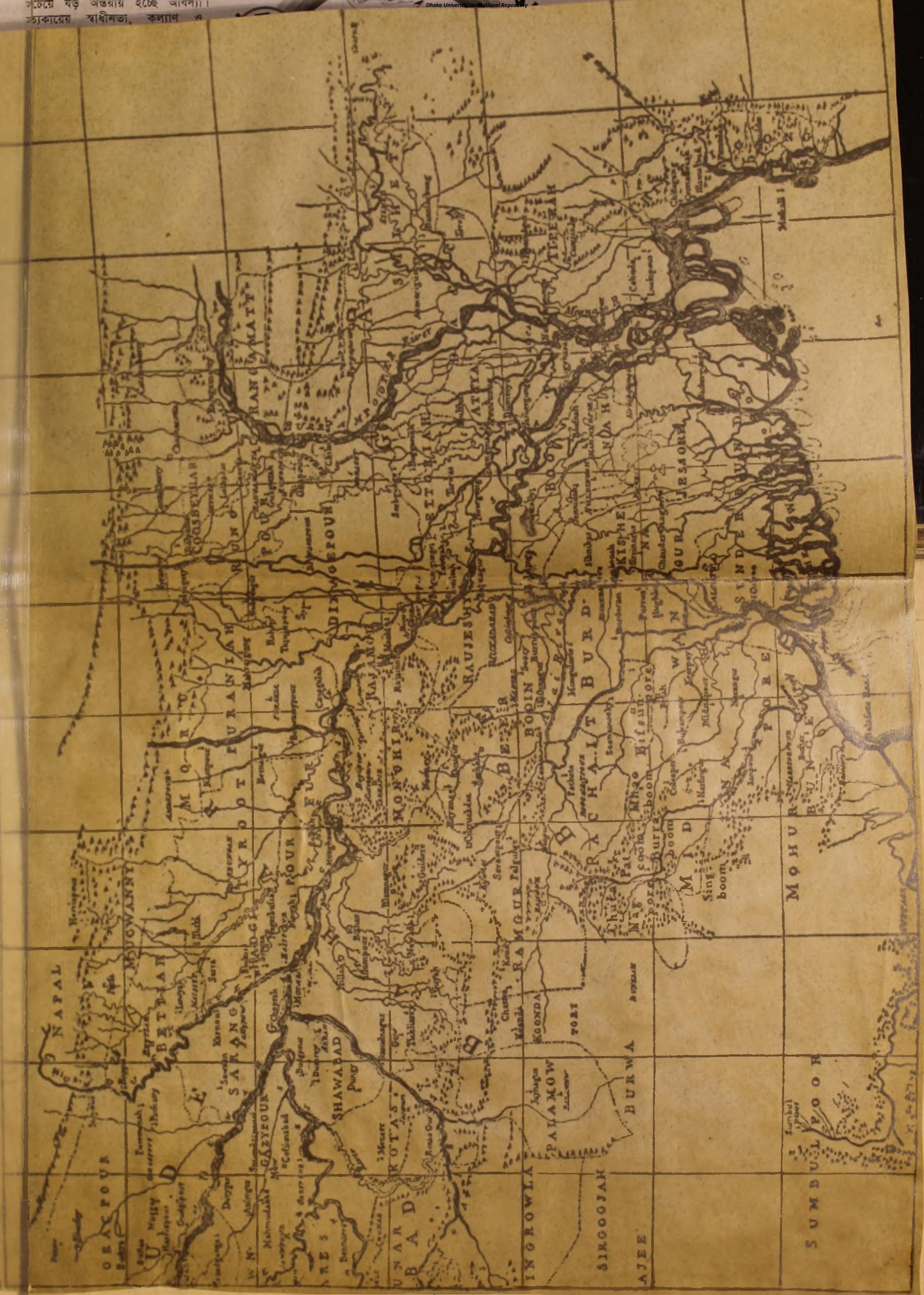
2/ Ibid., p. 665, Only one of the three articles is summarised here. Other two articles are nowhere specified.

3/ Ibid., II, pp. 667-70.

4/ See the map attached to this thesis.

পঞ্জীয়ন ও জাতিগত পরিষ্কার পক্ষে
সচেয়ে বড় অন্তরায় হচ্ছে অবিন্যা।
স্বাক্ষরের স্বাধীনতা, কল্যাণ ও

Dhaka University Institutional Repository



Map 2. (Rennell)

on the northern and southern banks of the Ganges opposite to the Bengali camp at the confluence, along the left bank of the Ghogra and on the rising ground lying between the two rivers. The site of the battle shows that the Mughal soldiery with their camps up and down the stream of the Ghogra could attack the Bengal army from various directions. On the 4th May, 1529, the Mughal general Aughun-birdi, crossing the Ghogra, faced the foot soldiers of Nasrat who were ultimately put to flight, while another group of Bengali soldiers tried to fall on the Mughals under Zaman-Mirsa, posted on the Bihar side of the Ganges. Next day's engagements decided the issue in favour of the Mughal and on the 6th May, Babur crossing over into Kharid, "landed at a village named Kundih in the Nirhun pargana..... On the north side of the Seru (Ghogra)".^{1/} The victory of the Mughals was largely due to the superiority of their military tactics and the advantageous position they took on the western side of the Ghogra. The battle of Ghogra shows how isolated Nasrat stood in his fighting against Babur. Had he been a member of the anti-Mughal coalition of the Afghans, some of their leaders would have sided with him on the Ghogra. This battle is significant, for it extended Babur's territories upto the eastern side of the Ghogra and made the process of the subjugation of the Afghans easier. It brought him to the outskirts of Tirhut, the gateway to Bengal, whence he could have easily proceeded to Bengal proper, along the banks of the Ganges, crossing the Ghandak and the Kosi. But diplomatic considerations seem to have prevented him from proceeding to Bengal before subjugating Oudh and Bihar. The Shah-Zada of Munger named Abul Fath^{2/} and Laskar Wazir Husain Khan, gave consent to the three articles, dictated by Babur, and concluded peace with him on behalf of the Sultan of Bengal.^{2/} Thus Bengal was saved from an impending cataclysm.

The Persian sources which have given a brief account of Nasrat's reign, only mention his submission to Babur,^{3/} but do not give the details of the relation

1/ Ibid., pp. 671-74.

2/ Ibid., pp. 676-77.

3/ Nizamuddin: Op.cit., III, p. 271; Salim: op.cit., p. 137; Firishtah: op.cit., II, p. 302.

between the two, as found in the Memoirs. It is stated that Nasrat was connected with the Afghans in the battle of Daurah fought between Humāyūn and the Afghans.¹ For a statement like this, we have no support in sources earlier and more reliable than Stewart. He says, "Although the king of Bengal, from the pusillanimity of his disposition, did not take an active part in these scenes, yet, regardless of his treaty with the emperor Bābur, he gave every assistance in his power to Mahmūd".² Thus according to this writer, Nasrat who had no active role in the battle of Daurah, gave indirect help to Mahmūd. Stewart does not mention the source of his information. Of the authorities consulted by him, (Op.cit., XIII - XVIII), only Tebqāt-i-Akbarī, Tārīkh-i-Firishtah and Riyāz give scrappy accounts of the reign of Nasrat. But none of these sources mentions that he gave even indirect help to Mahmūd Lūdī in the battle of Daurah. The Afghān sources are completely silent on it. It is true that he gave shelter to a number of Afghāns whom Bābur drove away from Oudh and Bihār.³ But we do not know whether he had any intention to set the Afghāns as counterpoise to the rising Mughal power. 'Abbās Sherwānī, Badāunī, Firishtah, Nizāmuddīn, Gulbadan Begum and Jauhar have described the events connected with this battle.⁴ According to these sources, the battle which took place at Daurah, on the bank of Gumti, resulted in the death of Biban and Bāyazīd and defeat of Mahmūd Lūdī. The contention that Sher Shāh played a treacherous role in it, has been refuted by Qanango.⁵ None of

-
1. History of Bengal, II, pp. 156-57
 2. The History of Bengal, 1903, ed. Calcutta, p. 134
 3. supra., p. 42
 4. 'Abbās : Tārīkh-i-Sher Shāhī; in Elliot and Dowson: Op.cit., IV, pp. 346-50; Ahmad Yādgār: Op.cit., pp. 124-85; Badāunī: Op.cit., I, pp. 361-62, Firishtah: Op.cit., I, pp. 213 and 225; Nizāmuddīn: Op.cit., II, pp. 97-98; Gulbadan Begum: Humāyūn Nāmāh; Eng. Tran. Mrs. Beveridge; London, 1902, p. 115 and p. 29 of the Persian text appended to the Eng. Tran. and Jauhar: Tadhkirat-ul-Waq'at, Eng. Tran. by Stewart in Oriental Translation Fund; London, 1832, p. 3. See also Qanango: Op.cit., pp. 72-75
 5. Qanango : Op.cit., pp. 72-75

these sources seems to have given the correct date of this battle which is 1531 A.D according to Qamungo ^{1/} who has tried to fix it, relying on Gulbaram's account. It is quite interesting to notice that no one of the sources cited above, makes any mention of the name of Nasrat in connection with this battle. Nasrat who was already convinced of the uncertain and vacillating attitude of the Afghans, seems to have avoided joining them.

After the death of Babur, it was rumoured that Humayun was going to attack Bengal. Nasrat sent his envoy malik Marjan, to Bahadur Shah of Gujrat with a view to concluding a friendly alliance with him. Bahadur's response to this proposal was quite favourable for Nasrat, for the former received the Bengali envoy at the fort of Mandu and presented to him a special robe of honour. ^{2/} From time immemorial, Bengal had commercial relation with Gujrat. The political relation which was about to take place between the two countries, was largely due to the antipathy of their Sultans to a common enemy, for like Nasrat, Bahadur Shah had sufficient political reason to be hostile to Humayun. But Nasrat died before the alliance could materialise.

(ii) War with the Ahoms:

Bengal's hold on Kamarup and Kanta was probably unaffected till the end of the reign of Nasrat Shah. He was so much preoccupied with the affairs of the north-western frontier that he had hardly any opportunity to pay attention to Assam. The Muslim governors of Kamarup and Kanta who seem to have acted largely on their own initiative, launched several expeditions against the Ahoms without receiving any help from the Sultan of Gaud. One of such military operations started in 1532 under a general named Turbak who compelled the Ahoms to fall back

1/ Ibid., p. 78, footnote.

2/ Nizamuddin : Op.cit., III, p. 271. Salim :- Op.cit., p. 138 and

Firishtah: Op.cit., II, 302.

on the fort of Salu after having occupied Temani. The Ahom king appointed Chao-Shenglung the commander-in-chief and stationed soldiers at Barnadi, while the Muslims advanced to Kaliabar where they halted for the time being. ^{1/} Nasrat who died in 1532 could not see the conclusion of Bengal's war with Assam.

(iii) General Remarks

The reign of Nasrat Shah marked the beginning of the process of disintegration of the Husain Shahi regime, which found its culmination in the reign of Ghiyasuddin Mahmud Shah. In the north-west, he had to cede the area west of the Ghandak, to Babur who is known to have ruled over Saran and parts of Kharid. ^{2/} Bengal's frontier was thus pushed back to the Ghandak. He does not appear to have suffered any territorial loss at the eastern and north-eastern frontiers. What happened in the south-west, is not clearly known. Two Santoshpur inscriptions dated 938/1530-31^{3/} clearly indicate that the region beyond the river Darakever, was included in Bengal. One may well imagine that the Orissan ruler Pratap Rudra was trying to expand his dominions at the expense of Nasrat's kingdom -- the details of which cannot perhaps never be known.

Nasrat Shah possessed certain noble virtues which could hardly be found in the rulers of the time. The kind and benevolent treatment which he meted out to his own brothers and also to the Afghan refugees by raising them to important ranks, is surely an indication of the humanitarian aspect of his character which, however,

1/ Ahom Buranjis: ed. G. C. Barua, pp. 68-69. This account tallies with what is found in other Buranjis reproduced by S. N. Bhattacharya in Mughal North-West Frontier policy, pp. 89-90. Turbak's expeditions against the Ahoms have been briefly narrated in other Buranjis. See Assam Buranji, ed. Surya Kumar Bhuiya, Gauhati, 1930, pp. 25-26. Deodhai Assam Buranji, ed. S. K. Bhuiya, Gauhati, 1932, pp. 27-28.

2/ supra, pp. 42, 44.

3/ E. I., 1951-52, pp. 24-25, Pl. XI, a & b. (*Arabic and Persian Supplement*).

under-went a complete metamorphosis towards the end of his life. ^{1/} Compared with his illustrious father, 'Alāuddīn Husain Shāh, he appears to be a man of pusillanimous disposition. But while judging his achievements, one may well bear in mind the precarious nature of the circumstances under which he was placed. The weakness of his position was largely due to the uncertain character of Afghan politics and the superiority of the Mughal tactics. Like his worthy father, he gave direct patronage to the cause of Bengali literature in which his name finds repeated mention. ^{2/} While visiting the tomb of his father at Gaud, he is said to have been killed by one of his slaves. ^{3/}

III. 'Alāuddīn Firūz Shāh (1532-33):

Numismatic evidences are suggestive of the fact that Nasrat nominated his younger brother, Mahmūd for succession. ^{4/} But it is proved beyond doubt that he was succeeded by his young son Firūz and not by his brother Mahmūd. Regarding the accession of Firūz, the Riyāz has the following: ^{5/}

"When Nasrat Shāh drank the disagreeable syrup of death, his son Firūz Shāh, by the counsels of the grandees, ascended the throne". (Eng. Tran. p. 137).

1/ It said that he turned quite tyrannical towards the end of his reign. Firishtah: op.cit., II, p. 302. Salim: op.cit., p. 138.

2/ Infra, P. 198

3/ Salim: op.cit., p. 138. Firishtah says that he was unable to ascertain whether Nasrat was killed or died a natural death. Op.cit., II, p. 302.

4/ Mahmūd issued coins in his own name even in the reign of Nasrat. For a complete discussion on this point, see Appendix - A.

5/ Op.cit., Persian text, p. 139:

چون سلطان نصرت شاہ شربت ناگوار اجل چشید - پسرش
فیروز شاہ بتجویہ امرا بر تخت سلطنت فرماندہی جلوس نمود -

A powerful group of nobles seems to have placed Firūz on the throne of Gaud, ignoring the claim of Mahmūd. We can well imagine that on the question of succession, the nobles were divided into two parties, one supporting the claim of Mahmūd and the other standing by Firūz. Firūz Shah had a very brief reign, for Mahmūd who could hardly be satisfied with the obscure position to which he had been reduced, is said to have murdered him soon afterwards. ^{1/}

Bengal's war with Assam seems to have continued in the reign of Firūz who had hardly any direct connection with it. The Muslim general Turbak whose exploits in Assam have already been noticed, made an attempt on the Ahom fort at Sala, from his camp at Geeladhari. The Ahom soldiers defended the fort quite heroically, while the Muslims burnt the houses around Sala and killed several Ahom generals in the field of battle. Finding that Sala could not be surprised by following the land-route, the Muslims now changed their strategy. Advancing both by land and sea, they surrounded the Ahom fort. The siege dragged on for three days and nights and the naval engagement which took place, resulted in the victory of the Ahoms. A Muslim naval officer named Tāju made another attempt to storm Sala, but was defeated at Duimunihila. The result of the battle was quite disastrous for the Muslims who lost their general Shangat together with twenty five hundred soldiers and twenty ships. One Husain Khan backed by cavalry, infantry and elephants came to reinforce Turbak. Coming down to the Dikrai river, they engaged themselves in a serious encounter with the Ahoms at whose hands they suffered a disastrous defeat. Towards the end of 1533, Husain Khan tried to attack the Ahoms near the Bharati river, but was defeated and killed. ^{2/} Thus the attempt of the Bengali Sultans to subjugate upper Brahmaputra valley ended in complete failure. The defeat of the Muslims must have been largely due to lack of help from Gaud and their weakness in naval force. Their failure in Assam had far-reaching consequences. They could

1/ Ibid., p. 139.

2/ Ahom Buranjī: ed. G. C. Barua, pp. 69-73. See also Gait: op.cit., pp. 90-92.

5. N. Bhattacharya: op.cit., pp. 90-92.

proved by the fact that he had a genuine interest in literature - a quality which he must have inherited from his predecessors. The nobles who preferred him to Mahmūd for the throne of Bengal, seem to have been influenced in their decision by the humanitarian qualities which Firūz possessed. But the cruel hand of the murderer put a final end to what appeared to be a brilliant reign.

Good deal of controversy has centred on the problem of the exact duration of the reign of Firūz. Salīm holds that he reigned for three years. To quote him verbatim:

ہنوز سے سال سلطنت کر رہے ہو۔

But Charles Stewart who wrote his History of Bengal before the publication of the Riyāz in the Bibliotheca Indica series, mentions 'three months' as the duration of the reign of Firūz.² This view is accepted by the scholars of our time,³ for they think that Stewart who has based his work mainly on the Riyāz, must have found 'three months' in the manuscript copy of the Riyāz, that he had consulted. These scholars think that the coins and a single inscription which are the surviving records of the reign of Firūz, are dated 939 A.H. But this view is not correct. Although many of his coins bear the date 939 A.H/ 1533 A.D.,⁴ the Decca museum Collection includes two unpublished coins of Firūz, which clearly show the date 938/1532. The photographs of the obverse and reverse sides of each of these coins together with a reading of their inscriptions are attached hereto.⁵ Three inscriptions⁶ show that 938/1532 is also the last regnal year of Nasrat Shāh. Thus it may be quite reasonably suggested that Firūz ascended the throne in 938/1532. The solitary inscription of the Sultān found at Kalna⁷ is dated

1. Op.cit., p. 139

2. Op.cit., p. 135

3. Blochmann: J.A.S.B., 1873, p. 298. Abdus Salam: Eng. Tran. of the Riyāz, p. 137, footnote.

4. H.N.Wright: Op.cit., II, p. 179, pl. VI, pt. II, No. 220; Bhattashahi: Taifoor Collection, p. 35; J.A.S.B., 1873, pl. IX, No. 13

5. See pl. A. As quite usual with some of the Bengal coins, inscriptions on either side of each of these coins are within a solid circle around which there is another circle of dots. Both were issued from the mint of ~~_____~~ = Mulazzama
bad.

6. J.A.S.B., 1874, p. 308; Abid Ali: Op.cit., p. 153. E.I. Arabic & Persian Supplement, 1951-52; pp. 26-27; pls. XI(a) and XI(b).

7. J.A.S.B., 1872, pp. 132 and 332 and 1873, pl. VII, No. 2.

1st Ramzān, 939 A.H/ 27th March, 1533 A.D. Since Ramzān is the 9th month of the Arabic year, it is fairly certain that he reigned for about nine months in 939 A.H. His murderer Mahmūd issued coins in the same year.¹ As already shown, Firūz ascended the throne in 938/1532. If he had occupied the throne even in the last month of 938 A.H., he must ruled at least for nine months. The contention finds direct support in Buchanon-Hamilton's Pānduā manuscript according to which "his (Nasrat's) son Firuz Shah governed nine months, when he was killed by his uncle Mahmud Shah".²

1. H.N.Wright: Op.cit., II, p. 179; Lanepoole: Op.cit., p. 55; Bhattasheli: Taifoor Collection, p.36, pl. V, No. 195; J.A.S.B., 1874, p. 309, pl. XIII, No. 10
2. Op.cit., II, p. 619.

unpublished

Plate - A

Two coins of Alāuddīn Firūz bearing the date 938 A.H.

I

II

Obverse

Reverse

Obverse

Reverse



The legends on the two sides of each of these are as follows :

Obverse

Reverse

السلطان بن
السلطان بن السلطان
علاء الدنيا والدين ابو
المظفر فيروز شاه
السلطان بن

نصرت شاه السلطان
ابن حسين شاه سلطان
الحسيني خلد الله ملكه
بمعظم
الباد ٩٣٨

IV. Ghiyāsuḍḍīn Maḥmūd Shāh (1533-38)

The process of disintegration which started in the reign of Maḥrat Shāh, found its culmination in the reign of Maḥmūd who could hardly check the centrifugal forces operating in the different parts of his kingdom. The governors who were placed in charge of the outlying regions seem to have assumed virtual independence. In the south-east, a realignment of political powers, appears to have taken place. Khudā Bekhsh Khān, who was probably a governor and general of Maḥmūd¹ began to behave like a vassal ruler, having extended his sway over the region lying between the Karnaphulī and the mountains of Arakan. From his head-quarter at Sore,² he was acting largely on his own. De Barros gives the following details about him. "The Estate of Godovascam, a Moorish prince and a great Lord, is between Bengalla and Aracacem. The Bengallas reckon it to be within the bounds of their kingdom, and that of Tipora as well, but these lands being very mountainous the Bengallas say that certain powerful Lords therein have risen against the King of Bengalla, and whereas there was ever hatred and rivalry between the Bengallas and the Tiporitas, as there is wont to be between neighbour Kingdoms, when one claims to be greater than the other, the Tiporitas allied themselves with those of the kingdom of Cou, also unfriendly to the Bengallas".³ This passage shows that Bengal's hold over the estate of Khudā

1. Campos : Op.cit., p. 42 (reference to Castanheda's Historia, Liv. VIII, Cap. CXC VIII).

2. For the geographical position of this estate, see the map of de Barros attached hereto.

3. Extracts from De Asia. Decada IV, Bk. IX, ch. I, p. 557: reproduced in

Bakhsh Khan was not perhaps undisputed. There was intense rivalry between Bengal and Tipperah over the possession of this place and the latter very often allied herself with the kingdom of the Chakmas with a view to weakening Bengal's hold on the south-east. This was probably the continuation of the hostilities between Bengal and Tipperah, which had assumed a significant magnitude during the time of Husain Shah. Details of the relation between the two countries during the reign of Mahmud can perhaps never be known, for the Rajamala is completely silent on it and de Barros is the only source of our information. But the scrappy details supplied by this author suggest that Tipperah, taking advantage of Mahmud's weak position in the north-western frontier, had made a daring bid for expanding her territories at the expense of Bengal. How the kingdom of Arakan reacted to this situation is not known. What fate befell Khuda Bakhsh, is also equally uncertain. But from Castanheda's description,¹ it appears that he could govern his estate until Bengal was finally occupied by Sher Khan Sur. That he could hold on against the countries like Arakan and Tipperah, is a sufficient proof of his ability and strength which were, in a large measure, due to "the military discipline and artillery" of the Moors, spoken highly of by de Barros.² To these developments in the south-east, Mahmud does not appear to have made any direct contributions.

The Book of Duarte Barbosa, II, Appendix-I, p. 245. See also Faria Y Souza:

Op.cit., I, p. 416. Khuda Bakhsh Khan was helped by the Portuguese in fighting against a neighbouring chief. But he did not hesitate to imprison them subsequently at his headquarter at Sore. When Sher Khan occupied Gaud, he tried to take possession of Chittagong town but Nuno Fernandes Freire, the Portuguese agent of Chittagong, helped Khuda Bakhsh's rival, Amirza Khan. Campos: Op.cit.,

pp. 31-32 and 42. See also Faria Y Souza: Op.cit., I, p. 314.

1. Campos : Op.cit., p. 42

2. The Book of Duarte Barbosa, II, p. 245

To a student of History, however, the affairs of the north-western frontier of Mahmud's kingdom, are of immense interest. Having rebelled against the Sultan, Makhdum Alam, the governor of Hajipur, entered into a friendly alliance with Sher Khan, the deputy of the Lohani ruler of Bihar. Mahmud sent Qutb Khan, the governor of Munghyr in 1533, against Makhdum, ostensibly to attack Bihar. Sher Khan tried in vain to dissuade the Sultan of Bengal from following this course of action. Qutb Khan was defeated and ~~is~~ slain by Sher Khan who now increased his strength by acquiring Bengal's treasures.^{1/} For Mahmud, this was a military defeat ultimately resulting in a serious diplomatic catastrophe. Neither Sher Khan nor Makhdum, could any longer be won over to Bengal's side. The possibility of the formation of an anti-Mughal coalition was thus lost for ever.

Mahmud sent an army against Makhdum Alam who was willing to depend largely on Sher Khan's help. Sher was quite ready to join him personally at Hajipur; but this was not possible. Jalal Khan and his Lohani supporters held him back so that he had to send one of his representatives to Makhdum. The engagement which followed ended in Makhdum's defeat and death.^{2/} The attitude taken by the Lohanis to this incident seems to indicate that they had already come to an understanding with Mahmud with a view to taking a concerted action against Sher Khan. Mahmud does not seem to have benefitted by Makhdum's death, for with the removal of that powerful governor, the entire trans-Ghazal region was now open to both the Afghans and the Mughals.

The developments which were taking place in the Lohani court of Bihar, were quite significant. The Afghans seem to have been divided into ^{two} hostile groups, viz., the Shers united under the leadership of Sher Khan and the opposing group consisting of the Lohanis supporting their royal patron, Jalal Khan Lohani. When their attempts to kill Sher Khan failed, they advised Jalal to accept vassalage

1/ Nizamuddin: op.cit. II, p. 94; Salim: op.cit. pp. 139-40; Ahmad Yaqub: op.cit. p. 180. 'Abbas in Elliot and Dowson: op.cit. IV, p. 333. Firishtah: op.cit. Vol. I, p. 223. Badāuni: op.cit. I, p. 360.

2/ Salim: op.cit. p. 140. 'Abbas: op.cit. in Elliot and Dowson: IV, p. 334.

under Mahmūd of Bengal. On the pretext of attacking Bengal, Jalāl preceeded to meet Mahmūd who now sent an army consisting of artillery, cavalry and infantry, under Ibrāhīm Khān, to attack Bihār. The battle which took place in 1534 on the plain of Surajgarh, resulted in the defeat and death of Ibrāhīm and Jalāl had to go back to Mahmūd.^{1/} Impatient of Sher's control, Jalāl had joined Mahmūd to get rid of him with the help of the Sultān of Bengal. But his desire was never fulfilled. His flight to Bengal paved the way for Sher's ascendancy in Bihār. Mahmūd had helped him with the devout object of punishing Sher, the helper of Makhdūm and of acquiring parts of Bihār. But his defeat frustrated his ambition. The battle exposed the weakness of his army and the strength of his opponent. Thus the battle of Surajgarh was not without its significance.

Taking advantage of Humāyūn's preoccupation with Gujrāt in 1535, Sher annexed the territories upto Bhagalpur. In 1536, he appeared before the Taliagarhi which was defended by the Bengali garrisons assisted by the Portuguese soldiers. Finding that entry into Bengal through this pass was almost impossible, he placed a body of troops there under his son, Jalāl and unexpectedly appeared before Caud via Jharkhand. Mahmūd who was extremely terrified at Sher's sudden approach, tried to buy off his hostility by paying him a heavy indemnity, although he was advised by the Portuguese to hold on till the help from Goa was available. Sher Khān now extended his territories upto Taliagarhi^{2/} which was rightly regarded, in those days, as the gateway to Bengal.

By this time, another new force was operating in the political and economic life of Bengal. The Husain Shāhī period of Bengal's history witnessed the introduction of the Portuguese power in this country. Mahmūd's predecessors, Husain and Nasrat were not^{3/} probably sympathetically disposed towards the Portuguese who

1/ Ahmad Yādgār: op.cit., pp. 181-82; Niẓāmuddīn: op.cit., II, pp. 94-95;

Abbās: op.cit., pp. 338-42; Firishtah: op.cit., I, pp. 223-24. Badāunī: op.cit., I, 360.

2/ Ahmad Yādgār: op.cit., p. 183; Abbās: op.cit., pp. 355-56; Campos: op.cit., pp. 38-39; Salīm: op.cit., p. 140. Faria Y Souza: op.cit., I, pp. 419-20. For the identification of the route followed by Sher Khān, see Qanungo, op.cit., pp. 120-124.

wanted trading facilities in Bengal. Affonso de Mello and Duarte de Azevedo who landed in Chittagong in 1533, ostensibly "to open commerce with Bengal", were not kindly received by the Sultān at whose instigation, a good number of Portuguese was killed in Chittagong. Mello and Azevedo were kept confined. In 1534, Nuno de Cunha, the Portuguese Governor of Goa, sent Antonio da Silva Menezes to Bengal, demanding from the Sultān, an explanation of his attitude towards the Portuguese and immediate release of Affonso de Mello. But nothing could improve Bengal's relation with the Portuguese until Mahmūd was forced to depend on the military assistance of the Portuguese to check Sher Khān's attack. In 1537, the Portuguese governor let him know that he was incapable of helping him immediately and that he could "assuredly" do so in the next year. He had already allowed them to build fortresses and factories at Chittagong and Satgāon. The right to have custom-houses at these trade centres together with that of collecting rent from the local people greatly enhanced the power of the Portuguese in Bengal.¹ The short sighted Mahmūd could hardly realise the nature of the economic drainage that such an extravagant concession was going to cause to his kingdom. The political stability of the country was going to

be jeopardised as a result of "the first establishment of the Portuguese in Bengal, almost simultaneously in Chittagong and Satgāon".² Bengal's commercial interests which were quite carefully safeguarded by Ālā'uddin Husain Shāh and Nasrat Shāh, were thus easily sacrificed by their incompetent successor Mahmūd Shāh.

In 1537, Sher Khān's position was far better than what it had been in the previous years, for he was not only the de facto ruler of Bihār, but also the absolute master of Teliagarhi pass. The imprudent and imbecile Mahmūd of Bengal was no match for him, nor could emperor Humāyūn stand a comparison with him. This is what was illustrated by the subsequent developments. Sher came to Gaud for the second time and demanded a large sum of money from Mahmūd as annual tribute. The latter having refused to pay this, he besieged Gaud. When Humāyūn proceeded towards Chunar with a view to laying siege to it, Sher left Jalāl Khān and Khawān Khān to continue in the siege of Gaud and hurried to Chunar to keep the Mughals engaged there until the

1. Campos : Op.cit., pp. 33-40; Faria Y Souza : Op.cit., I, pp. 417-20

2. Campos : Op.cit., p. 39

subjugation of Gaud was completely finished. When the Bengalis were going to face scarcity, Mahmud came out of the fort, encountered the enemy, was wounded and defeated in the battle and fled towards Hajipur in north Bihar. Gaud now fell into the hands of the Afghans on the 6th of April, 1538. He sent an envoy to Humayun who was now at Barkunda after the capture of Chunar, requesting him to attack Sher's army in Bengal. Joining Humayun at Darwespur, he now proceeded towards Bengal. Arriving at Kahlgaon he came to know of the execution of his two sons by the Afghans at Gaud, when the unfortunate Sultan of Bengal died in utter mental affliction.^{1/}

Thus the independence of Bengal came to an end in 1538. Mahmud was quite unworthy of the political legacy left behind by his illustrious predecessors. He had neither diplomatic foresight, nor any practical approach to the political problems which baffled Bengal's life in his reign. Had he been able to win over the Portuguese to his side earlier than 1537, their services could have been fruitfully utilised in checking Sher's aggression. But he does not seem to have dreamt of such a course of action until the circumstances forced him to take their help quite late.

1/ Salim: op.cit., pp. 140-44. Gulbadan: op.cit., pp. 133-34; Persian text (appended to the translation): pp. 39-40. Nizamuddin: op.cit., II, p. 41 and 99. Firishta: I, pp. 225. Abbas: Op.cit., pp. 356, 359-60, 362-65. Campos: Op.cit., pp. 40-41. Qanungo: Op.cit., pp. 160-62. Arriving at Gaud through Teliagarhi, Humayun found it evacuated by the Afghans. He had a luxurious repose in Gaud which he renamed Jinnatabad. The developments which were taking place in Bihar and Northern India were simply detrimental to the imperial interests. Mirza Hindal rebelled in Agra and Sher was giving much trouble to the Mughals after having occupied the whole of south Bihar. Humayun had now to leave for Agra on his way to which he was defeated by Sher Khan at Chausa. After this incident Sher reoccupied Bengal in 1539. Nizamuddin Op.cit., II, pp. 42-46 and 99-100. Gulbadan: Op.cit., pp. 134-36. Akbarnama: Bib. Indica text, I, pp. 159-60, Firishta: I, p. 226. Badāuni, I, pp. 348-52. Jauhar: Op.cit., pp. 17-25. Abbas: Op.cit., pp. 365-78. Campos: Op.cit., p. 41. Salim: op.cit., pp. 144-47.

An early alliance with Sher or Humayun could have delayed the catastrophe of 1538 by a few years more. But he failed totally to have a grasp of the political situation.

The year 1538 marks the end of the glorious period of Bengal history and the beginning of an era of chaos and confusion which troubled her life down to the beginning of the seventeenth century.

The information gathered from the contemporary Persian and Bengali sources.

It was not possible for the Husain Shahs to build up an administrative structure entirely new. They found a system already at work which was followed by the Ilyas Shahs and the Shaysaniyans. All that Humayun could do was to make some improvements upon the existing system. Humayun Shah, the founder of the dynasty who was closely associated with the administrative affairs of the country in the reign of Shamsuddin Husayn Shah (1495-1498), the last of the Shaysaniyans, had no doubt the opportunity of studying the weak points of his administration. Thus it is quite likely that he was greatly benefited by his personal experience in framing the administrative principles for the Kingdom of Gouda. He was conscious of the fact that administrative weaknesses were gaining preponderance over the stability of the state during the Shaysaniyans regime. This explains why he fixed his eyes on the paika and malikdars and other reforms whose conspiracy had already overthrown the country. He addressed himself to the task of political revival by transferring the seat of administration from Gouda to Dacca, appointing a number of efficient governors in the different provinces and removing disloyal elements to order. These reforms adopted by Humayun clearly indicate how anxiously and severely the Sultan was introducing administrative reforms in the country. Thus the administrative order which the Husain Shahs were placed suggest that they were greatly influenced by their predecessors in administrative details.

It is a well-established fact of history that Bengal found a regular practice

CHAPTER - II.

Administration under Husain Shah and his successors.

Administration in the period in question is undoubtedly an interesting subject of our study. Although materials at our disposal are of a fragmentary nature, an attempt may be made to throw some light on the different aspects of the Husain Shahi State on the basis of numismatic and epigraphic evidences supplemented by the information gathered from the contemporary Persian and Bengali sources.

It was not possible for the Husain Shahis to build up an administrative structure entirely new. They found a system already at work which was elaborated and followed by the Ilyas Shahis and the Abyssinians. All that Husain Shah and his successors could do was to make some improvements upon the existing system. Alauddin Husain Shah, the founder of the dynasty who was closely associated with the administrative affairs of the country in the reign of Shamsuddin Muzaffar Shah (1491-1493), the last of the Abyssinians, had no doubt the opportunity of studying the weak points of his administration. Thus it is quite likely that he was greatly benefitted by his personal experiences in framing the administrative principles for the kingdom of Gaud. He was conscious of the fact that administrative anomalies were gaining preponderance over the stability of the state during the Abyssinian regime. This explains why we find him disbanding the paiks and banishing the Abyssinians whose conspiracy and ambition had already convulsed the country. He addressed himself to the task of political settlement by transferring the seat of administration from Gaud to Ekdala, appointing a number of efficient governors in the different provinces and reducing disloyal elements to order.¹ These measures adopted by Husain Shah clearly indicate how anxiously and carefully the Sultan was introducing administrative reforms in the country. Thus the circumstances under which the Husain Shahis were placed suggest that they were greatly influenced by their predecessors in administrative details.

It is a well-established fact of history that Bengal formed a regular province

1. Supra, Ch. I., p. 8.

of the Delhi sultanate from the time of Bakhtyar's invasion down to the first half of the fourteenth century when the Ilyas Shahis successfully tried to assert the independence of this country. During this period Bengal administration was possibly a close copy of the administration of the sultanate of Delhi. It is reasonable that some of the North-Indian features had reached the Husain Shahis through the administrative machinery of the Ilyas Shahis and the Abyssinians. Although they do not seem to have exercised any dominating influence over the Husain Shahi administration, they were to be gradually absorbed into their system. At the present stage of our knowledge, the original contributions of the Husain Shahis can hardly be distinguished from what they had borrowed from the Ilyas Shahis and the Sultans of Delhi. But some of the officers of the Husain Shahis are commonly present in the systems followed by the Ilyas Shahis and the Turko-Afghan rulers of Delhi.¹

The state built up by the Husaini rulers was probably primarily indebted to Alauddin Husain Shah for its policy which was followed by his successors with occasional modifications. Nasrat, Firuz and Mahmud had hardly had any necessity to completely alter the general policies adopted by the founder of the dynasty. The whole political machinery seems to have corresponded to the demand of the time and circumstances.

I. The Sultan and the legal background of his position:
his personal servants: the royal household.

As the supreme head of the state, the Sultan was the fountain-head of all powers. He was inseparably connected with the governmental structure so that the whole picture becomes unthinkable if he is left out. Since he had to personally lead some expeditions against Kanrup-Kante and Jajmagar-Orissa,² it may be suggested that he had to occasionally delegate the exercise of his authority to an

1. For an elaboration of this point, see below.

2. J.A.S.B., 1922, p. 413. The wording of the Sylhet inscription of Husain Shah dated 918 A.H./1512 A.D., shows that he personally took part in these campaigns.

supra, p. 21.

officer to conduct the administration during his absence from the capital. But this was surely a stop-gap measure and the final authority must have remained with the Sultān.

'Alā 'uddīn Husain Shāh assumed the regal title, Khalīfatullāh-Bāi-Hujjat-wal-Burhān,¹ or 'Khalīfah of God by proof and evidence'. We do not know if his successors had also similar titles. The assumption of this title by Husain Shāh does not seem to be an accidental feature of his policy. He simply revived the practice started by Jalāl Uddīn Muhammad Shāh and continued by some of the Ilyās Shāhī and Abyssinian rulers. In fact the title Khalīfatullāh has got a long, constitutional and historical background. The legal authority of the Khalīfah has been explicitly recognised by 'Iwaz Khaljī, Muḥis Uddīn Yūzbak, Rukn Uddīn Kaikāūs, Shamsuddīn Firūz and the last ruler's sons, all of whom have mentioned the name of the 'Abbāsīd Khalīfah on their coins. They have regarded themselves as 'the helper of the Commander of the Faithful'.² With the foundation of the independent state of Bengal, the attitude of the Bengal Sultāns towards the institution of Khilāfat underwent a slight change. Dropping the name of the Khalīfah from the coins, they began to inscribe such legends as 'helper of the commander of the Faithful' and 'helper of Islām and the Muslims'.³ It was Jalāl Uddīn Muhammad Shāh who for the first time

-
1. This title is mentioned on some of the inscriptions of Husain Shāh. See Abid Ali Khan: Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua, Calcutta, 1931, p. 63, footnote, I, pp. 81 and 150; J.A.S.B., 1874, p. 302 and 1895, pp. 224-25. Ravenshaw: Ruins of Gaud, London, 1878, p. 78, pl. 50, No. II; E. G. Glazier: Report on the district of Raigpur, 1873, p. 108; Cunningham: A.S.R., Vol-XV, Cal., 1882, p. 75; E. I., II, p. 285; V. R. S. Monograph, No. 7, p. 38, pl. XVI, 34.
 2. Lanepoole: Op.cit., pp. 9-11, Nos. 1, 3, 4 and 9; H.N. Wright: Op.cit., II, pt. II, pp. 145-48, pl. I, Nos. 3, 6, 7, 9 and 13 (Bengal). A.W. Botham: Op.cit., pp. 133-40.
 3. H.N. Wright: Op.cit., II, pp. 149-57, pt. II, pls. 1 and II, Nos. 17, 21, 22, 28, 30, 38 etc.; Lanepoole: Op.cit., pp. 15, 18-21, 24, 26, 28 and 29; pl. II, Nos. 17, 22, 23 etc.; Botham: Op.cit., pp. 143-46 and 153-55.

in the history of Bengal, declared himself Khalifatullah or 'the Vicegerent of God'.¹ This example was followed by some of the later Ilyas Shāhis and by at least one of the Abyssinian rulers.²

Similar process was at work in the Sultanate of Delhi. The Sultans of this part used to get their rule recognised after having received the diploma of investiture from the Khalifah of Bagdad. Of the Delhi Sultans, Iltutmish and Muhammad bin Tughluq received such investiture.³ There were some Sultans who owed allegiance to the Khalifah even without receiving due recognition from him. This explains why the name of Mustasim continued to be mentioned on the coins issued from Delhi long after the death of that Khalifa.⁴ Rukn Uddin Ibrahim and Ala'uddin Khalji declared their belief in the legal power of the Khalifah by assuming the titles, Nasir-i-amir-al-muminin and Yamin-al-Khalifat respectively.⁵ The Sayyids, the Lodis and Bahmani rulers followed the similar procedure quite traditionally expressing their belief in the legal status of the Khalifah.⁶ Qutubuddin Mubarak Shah of Delhi proclaimed himself 'the Khalifah of the Sustainer of the two worlds', ~~the~~

1. Lanepoole: op.cit., p. 35, Pl. IV, No. 87; H.N.Wright: op.cit., II, p. 163, Pl. II, Nos. ^{104-109.} 3, 4, etc. (Bengal).

2. Botham: op.cit., p. 163; H.N.Wright: op.cit., II, pp. 162-68 and 171, Pt. II, Pl. III, Nos. 120, 122 and 125, Pl. IV, No. 140, 146 and 162.

3. Minhajiddin: Tabaqat-i-Nasiri: Bib. Indica, Calcutta, 1864, p. 174. The names of the Abbasid Caliph appear on their coins. H.N.Wright: The coinage and Metrology of the Sultans of Delhi: Delhi, 1936, pp. 18, 122 and 123. I.H. Qureshi: The Administration of the Sultans of Delhi, 1944, Lahore, pp. 27 and 33-35.

4. Edward Thomas: The Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi, London, 1871, p. 145. I.H. Qureshi: op.cit., p. 29.

5. Thomas: op.cit., p. 155. H.N.Wright: The Coinage and Metrology, p. 88. I.H. Qureshi: op.cit., p. 29.

6. Thomas: op.cit., 333, 336, -37, 339-40, 345-46, 358-59, 366 and 376. H.N.Wright: The Coinage and Metrology, pp. 231, 234, 237-38, 243, 250 and 255. I.H. Qureshi: op.cit., p. 37.

'the most mighty Imam' and 'the commander of the faithful'.¹

Thus the legal position of the 'Abbāsid Khalīfah was unquestionably established in India and also in pre-Mughal Bengal. With the destruction of the Khilāfat, the different rulers were assuming the Khilāfat titles. It was in this political milieu that Husain Shah of Bengal was flourishing. So the assumption of the Khilāfat title by him seems easily understandable. Since the institution of Khilāfat had played an important part in the Sunni Muslim world, Husain Shah possibly wanted to win the support of the Sunnis of Bengal by assuming the Khilāfat title. This act thus legalised his position as a ruler. Husain Shah who had supplanted the Abyssinians might have otherwise been regarded as a usurper. Whatever might have been the political motive that actuated him to assume this title, it may be suggested here that Bengal had a legal sovereign in the person of Husain Shah. The reason why his successors did not assume this title can hardly be ascertained.

There was no hard and fast rule of succession, nor was the law of primogeniture strictly enforced. This feature has been noticed by Babur, Farlay Souza and Nizamuddin.² The death of every Sultan was followed generally by chaos and confusion. The nobles used to play an important part in selecting the ruler. In these circumstances, no regular rule of succession could be followed. Husain Shah seems to have nominated Nasrat, as his successor to the throne of Bengal, for Nasrat is found issuing coins in his own name in 1515.³ This is a privilege which could be granted only to the crown-prince. It is suggested by some of the coins of Mahmud⁴ that he was the heir-apparent. Although Nasrat could succeed his father to the Sultanate, his younger brother ~~Shah~~ Mahmud could not succeed him, for the nobles raised Nasrat's son, Firuz to the throne of Gaud after having cancelled the claims of Mahmud. Mahmud, however, asserted his right of inheritance by ascending the throne

1. Thomas: op.cit., pp. 179-182; H.N.Wright: The Coinage and Metrology; pp. 96-102; I.H. Qureshi: op.cit., p. 32. Thus it is clear that this ruler assumed the title of Khalīfah. See H.N.Wright: The Coinage and Metrology, p. 101, Nos. 413-14.

2. The Memoirs of Babur: Vol. II, pp. 482-83. Farlay Souza: op.cit., p. 417. Nizamuddin: op.cit., III, p. 268.

3. H. N. Wright: Catalogue: II, Pt. II, pp. 177-78, Nos. 211 and 212 (Bengal).

4. Appendix - A.

after killing Firūz.¹ This irregularity in succession was a regular feature also in pre-Husain Shahi Bengal. In this connection we may notice a peculiar feature of the Husain Shahi administration. The crown-prince was probably allowed by the reigning Sultan to issue coins in his own name.²

The ruler had several servants and officials attached to his person. There was a number of body-guards who were placed under a chief body-guard. A Bengali source gives us the name of Kesava Khan Chatri who served as the Chief of the guards of 'Alāuddīn'.³ Several palace guards were placed in the Guard-room and on the Band-Stand. They were under the control of a commandant. The guards of 'Alāuddīn replaced the Faiks who together with their commandants were playing an extremely mischievous role under the Abyssinians and the Ilyās Shahis by deposing or murdering one Sultan and placing another on the throne.⁴

There was a private physician or Antaranga⁵ whose services were available for all medical purposes.

Epigraphic records show that there was a Sharābdār-i-Ghair-Mahallī,⁶ or 'the bearer of the cup outside the palace'. He was otherwise known as Jāmdār-i-Ghair-Mahallī.⁷ This office existed also under the Abyssinians and Ilyās Shahis.⁸ We do not come across this officer in the sultanate of Delhi. Although the title seems to be apparently of no significance, it was no doubt an important office. It was generally conferred on one of the local governors who used to accompany the ruler during his expeditions. His duty was presumably to supervise the drinks to

1. supra, Ch. I., P. 52

2. See Appendix - A.

3. Gaitanya-bhagabat: p. 350. Gaitanya-caritamṛta, p. 76.

4. Salim: op.cit., pp. 119-20, 126, 127 and 132-33; Firishtah: op.cit., II, pp. 299 and 301-302; Miṣamuddīn: op.cit., III, pp. 268-70.

5. Sukumar Sen: Madhya Yuger Vāṅgla O Vāṅgali, p. 8.

6. J.A.S.B., 1872, p. 106; E.I.M., 1929-30, pp. 12-13; Cunningham: op.cit., pp. 99-100.

7. See the Sylhet inscription of Husain Shah, dated 911/1505, J.A.S.B., 1873, pp. 298-94

8. See the Sunārgaon inscription of Fath Shah, dated 889 A.H/1484; J.A.S.B., 1873, p. 286; Cunningham: op.cit., p. 141. See the Tribeni inscription of Bārbak Shah dated 860/1455; J.A.S.B., 1870, p. 290 and J.A.S.B., 1873, p. 273, footnote.

be supplied to the ruler so that no one could concoct poison to him through liquors. As poison could be easily administered through drinks, the office was necessarily given to one who enjoyed the full confidence of the ruler. The expression, Sharabdar-i-Ghair-Mahalli suggests that the Sultān had another Sharabdar inside the palace to look after drinks. This is what we practically find in the Delhi Sultanate where drink was generally served by the Sāqī-i-Khas.¹

The royal house-hold required no doubt the services of various minor and major servants about whom nothing is known. The Sultāns of Delhi had wakil-i-dar, amir hajib, na'ib barbek, naqib and other officials whose duties were respectively to control the house-hold affairs, to manage the ceremonies at the court, to act as Sultān's deputy, to proclaim orders to the soldiers and to the populace and so on.² We may reasonably conjecture here that the Husain Shahī could hardly dispense with the services of similar officers whose official titles might have differed from those under the Sultāns of Delhi. It seems that eunuchs and slaves were serving in various capacities in the royal house-hold. In fact they were playing the roles of kings and king-makers during the Abyssinian regime.³ Duarte Barbosa, the Portuguese traveller has maintained that some of them were enjoying lucrative posts.⁴ According to Niḡamuddīn, Malik Marjān who was sent as envoy by Nasrat Shah to Gujrat was a eunuch.⁵

The ruler used to sit in a darbar where he met the important nobles and officials, conferred occasionally honourary titles on them, presented robes of honour to the governors and appointed the high officials, generals and ambassadors.⁶

1. Minhāj: op.cit. 242.

2. I. H. Qureshi: op.cit. pp. 59-63.

3. Salīm: op.cit. pp. 120-124. See also Firishta and Niḡamuddīn: Supra, pp. 67.

4. Barbosa, op.cit. II, p. 147.

5. Niḡamuddīn: op.cit. III, p. 271. See also Salīm: op.cit. p. 138.

6. According to the Parāgali Manabharat, Husain Shah did honour to Parāgal Khān, the newly appointed Lashkar of Chittagong, by giving him golden robe and horses. Op.cit. quoted by D.C.Sen: op.cit. p. 94. Similar information is available in the Ashvamedh Parva, p.3. He appointed and dismissed several generals during his Tipperah expeditions. Rājmalā: pp. 22-28. These could be done obviously in a

It goes without saying that the powerful Husain Shah and his successors must have had a magnificent court in a richly decorated hall to capture the imagination of the people.

Although we know nothing about the functions of the Sultan, it may be maintained here that these must have included the protection of territories, collection of taxes, enforcing laws, maintaining order, appointment of officers and looking after the public interest. These have always been the functions of the royal office.

II. The Nobility

The nobility had played an important part in the administration. It was composed of heterogeneous elements like Arabs, Pathans, Mughals and Bengalis.¹ They used to receive high sounding honorary titles like Khān Akān, Khān Mu'azzam, Pahlū-e-Aṣr-wal-Zamān, Khān Mu'azzam, Majlis-al-Majalis, Al-Malik-al-Mu'azzam wal Kutarran, Malik-al-Wazara wal-Umara and so on.² They influenced the different departments of the government, as administrators, generals and sometimes as king makers. The nobility does not seem to have had any hereditary character. Their influences considerably increased in the reigns of Firuz and Mahmud Shah when they were deciding the fateful issues of the day.³ We have suggested in a subsequent section of this thesis that at least some of them constituted a rent-receiving interest in this country. It is fairly well-established that they were enjoying

darbār, a vivid picture of which is available in Chinese accounts. Si Yang ch'ao Kung tien lu: Sing oh'a sheng lan and Shu Yu chou tseu lu: Tran. by Bagchi in Yisva-Bharati Annals, 1945, Pt. I, pp. 121-22, 126-27 and 131.

1. Salim: op.cit. p. 133. Bengali sources give us the names of the Hindu officers of the Husain Shahis.
2. These titles are found in the inscriptions of the Husain Shahis published in the different issues of E.I.M., J.A.S.B. and E.I., which we have used in this thesis.
3. The nobles were responsible for bringing Firuz to power to the prejudice of Mahmud. The Fiyazi: pp. 139-40. See also Supra, pp. 51-52.

jagirs in Mughal and pre-Mughal India. The nobles of Husain Shahi Bengal seem to have been different from their north-Indian counterparts. Feudalism which was the basis of Bengal administration under the Palas and the Senas seems to have undergone a complete modification at the hands of the Muslims in the course of two centuries and its traces might hardly be found under the Husain Shahis. The system of government introduced by Muhammad Bakhtyar clearly indicates its feudal nature. He divided the country into fiefs among a number of military officers.¹ This type of government was at work even long afterwards. Feudatory chiefs were to be found in Bengal down to the time of Firuz Tughloq's Bengal expedition when he is said to have promised an increase in grants of lands to the nobility and a similar increase in the fiefs of the military officers. This feudal character of the government may be due to the fact that ^{the} early Muslim rule in Bengal could hardly avoid feudal legacies left behind by the Senas and the Palas. But with the emergence of Bengal as an independent power under the Ilyas Shahis, possibly it began to gradually recede into the background. This is suggested by the silence of the authorities on the existence of feudal lords in the Husain Shahi period. Nevertheless, the influences which the nobles were exerting over the political affairs of the country can hardly be over-estimated. Babur has mentioned that the Mansabdary system was prevailing in Bengal under the Husain Shahi Sultans.² For a statement like this, we have no support in the contemporary sources. Babur who was acquainted with the Mansabdary of the Mughal type, seems to have confused the local landlords and provincial governors of Bengal with mansabdars.

III. Central departments and officers:

It was ^{not} possible for the Husain Shahis to conduct the administration without the help of others. They had to depend on a number of officials for the smooth and prompt working of the governmental machinery. In fact, there were several departments, like those of finance, correspondence, police, judiciary and religious

1. Minhāj: op.cit. pp. 156-58.

2. Memoirs, II, p. 482.

affairs. These departments worked under the Sultans of Delhi and under Sher Shah as well. We have hardly had any reason to think that the Husain Shahis could dispense with the services of these departments which are always necessarily connected with every administrative system.

The Prime Minister:

The Prime Minister had some sort of controlling influence over the different departments. Sayyid Husain who was the Vizier and Administrator of the affairs of the government under the last Abyssinian Sultan was directly responsible for reducing the pay of the soldiers, starting the construction of a treasury and making extortionate demands of revenue from the subjects.¹ We find a similar officer named Habash Khan² who was connected with the financial and administrative affairs of Nasiruddin Mahmud II (1490-91). This is of course, the information about the position of Vizier in the pre-Husain Shahi Bengal. It may be conjectured^{used} here that this office was retained also by the Husain Shahis.³ From what has been stated by Salim and Firishta, it is quite clear that the Vizier was closely connected with the finance and military departments at the centre and that he could occasionally act as the Sultan's alterego.

The department of Correspondence:

The department of correspondence was definitely an integral part of the

1. Salim: op.cit., p. 128; Firishta: op.cit., II, p. 301. To quote him:

دسترفی کلی را بمنصب وزارت سرور از ساخته - اختیار ملک و مال گردانید

2. Salim: op.cit., pp. 126-27:

حبیب خان نام غلام حبیبی ملا را المہام امور مالی و منلی شد

Firishta: op.cit., II, p. 300.

3. In some of his works, Sanatana tells us that he was the Mahamantrin or Prime Minister of Husain Shah. See S.K.De: Early History of The Vaishnava Faith And Movement In Bengal, Calcutta, 1942, p. 110.

Central Secretariat. It was under the control of the Dabir-i-Khas¹ or private Secretary who used to deal with all the correspondence between the Sultan and his officials and tributaries or the rulers of the foreign countries. Since the Dabir-i-Khas had to occasionally deal with confidential correspondence, he is supposed to have enjoyed complete confidence of the ruler. This office had its counterpart in the administration of the Delhi Sultanate where it was "a stepping stone to the Wazarat".² It seems that the Dabir-i-Khas was assisted in his activities by a number of Dabirs. This department needed the cooperation of the Kar-i-Farman³ whose duty was probably to issue royal orders to those whom they might concern and the Katibs who had to copy different letters and documents. The inscription of an earlier period clearly shows that the Katibs very often won the title like 'Zarin-dast' or 'golden-handed'⁴ due to their proficiency in the different styles of writing.

The Police Department :

The police department or Diwan-i-kotwali which was placed in charge of the Chief police officer or the Kotwal-Bek'ali is mentioned as a provincial department in the Devikot inscription⁵ dated 1512. It may be quite ~~reasonably~~ reasonably inferred that this Diwan had its central counterpart also. This department had a number of subordinate kotwals whose duties were to maintain peace and order and also to watch the movement of the strangers in the city. It seems that this department^{was} connected with the criminal court presided over by a judge^{or} Munsif⁶

1. Krishnadasa Kaviraja: op.cit., p. 76. See also Chaitanya-bhagavat, pp. 8 and 82.
2. I. H. Qureshi: op.cit., 86-88.
3. See the Deotala inscription of Nasrat Shah dated 1528; Abid Ali: op.cit., p. 171
4. See the Devikot inscription of Sikandar Shah, dated 1363, J.A.S.B. 1872, p. 105
Cunningham: op.cit., p. 98. E.I.M., 1929-30, pp. 10-11. Pl. VII(a).
5. J.A.S.B., 1872, p. 106. Cunningham: op.cit., p. 100. E. I. M., 1929-30,
pp. 12-13, Pl. VIII (b).
6. See Devikot inscription; Cunningham: op.cit., p. 100; J.A.S.B. 1872, p. 106; E.I.M.
1929-30, pp. 12-13.

who used to try criminal cases. There was probably a well-organised espionage system which kept the ruler regularly posted about what was ^{happening} happening in and around his territories. The spies or secret agents who were appointed by the ruler has been called 'jāsu' or Dāni' in Bengali literature.¹ Thus this spy system helped the Sultan in a great deal to exercise effective control over the governors of the outlying regions of his kingdom.

Judiciary :

Although we know nothing about the judiciary department of the Husain Shahis, it may be mentioned here that legal problems and Muslim traditions were interpreted by a learned man who was the Qadū'ī-al-Fuqahā' wal Muhad-dasīn or 'the chief of the lawyers and teachers of traditions', also known as Malikūl-umara' wal wazara', mentioned in the Sunārgaon inscription² of Nasrat Shah. The convicts were confined to jail which was under a chief Jailor.³

Department of Finance :

No information is available about the finance department. It may be easily understood that the vast revenue of the kingdom, its customs and other varieties of income were placed at the disposal of this department with which the prime minister was directly connected. Such was the arrangement made under the Turko-Afghāns and the Mughals. There was an officer called Wazir-i-Lashkar mentioned in Gaud inscription⁴ of Fath Shah dated 1484. Apparently, it may appear to be a mistake for the terms Wazir wa Sar-Lashkar, mentioned so frequently in the inscriptions of the pre-Mughal Bengal. But the term is mentioned in the Sylhet inscription⁵

1. Gaitanya-bhāgavat: p. 316.

2. J. A. S. B., 1872, pp. 337-38. Cunningham: op.cit., p. 144.

3. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāj: op.cit., p. 205.

4. E. I., Vol. II, pp. 287-88. Abid Ali: op.cit., p. 87, Pl. IV. Cunningham: op.cit., p- 65, Pl. XXIII.

5. J. A. S. B., 1922, p. 413, Pl. IX.

of Husain Shah and also in the Memoirs of Babur¹ where it appears as Lashkar wasir. It appears possibly as Bara wasir in the Assan Buranjī.² Both the Memoirs and the Buranjī connect this office with military affairs. It may, therefore, be mentioned that this officer dealt with the financial side of the military department.³ It seems thus identical with the office of the Mir Bakshī or the Pay Master General of the Mughals. He had presumably to come in contact with the head of the finance department in connection with payment to the soldiers. Coins were struck in a mint at the capital and deposited in the treasury. There were a mint-master and a treasurer to look after the mint and treasury administration. A member of Husain Shahī coins containing the term Khazanah⁴ indicates that they were issued direct from the central treasury.

A R M Y :

The Husain Shahis had a well-organised army which was undoubtedly under the jurisdiction of the military department. A rough idea about the numerical strength of the Husain Shahi army may be gleaned from the following. Vasco da Gama remarked in 1498, "Bengala has a Moorish king and a mixed population of Christians and Moors. Its army may be about twenty-four thousand strong, ten thousand being cavalry, and the rest infantry, with four hundred war elephants".⁵ This figure

-
1. Op.cit., Vol-II, p. 676.
 2. Op.cit., ed. G.C.Barua, pp. 61 and 66.
 3. In a succeeding section of this chapter, it has been suggested that the provincial governor of this period, known as wasir, dealt with the provincial finance in addition to his military functions hinted at by the term Sar-i-Lashkar appearing in a number of inscriptions. If any importance is attached to the financial significance of the term wasir, the expression Wazir Lashkar may be taken to mean the office of the Pay Master General of the army, and not probably that of war minister.
 4. Lanepools: op.cit., pp. 44, 46 and 49, Pl. V, Nos. 108 and 116. H.N.Wright: Catalogue.II, pp.172-174 & 176, Pt.II, Pl.V, Nos.167 & 181. Botham: op.cit., pp. 170-171 and 173, Pl. II, No. 1.
 5. Quoted by Campos: op.cit., p. 25.

tallies with what has been given by Shihabuddin Talish according to whom Husain Shah attacked ^{Assam} ~~Assam~~ with 24,000 soldiers.¹ It appears that the Sultan utilised the services of the whole army in his war with the Ahoms. This is impossible, for he must have left a considerable number of soldiers at the capital and also at the different frontiers as a precautionary defence measure against any possible external attack. The total strength of the army must have exceeded 24,000. The invading army of Nasrat Shah who attacked the Ahoms consisted of 1,000 horse, one million men including the land and naval forces, a huge park of artillery and thirty elephants.² This increase in the army of Nasrat may be explained in two ways: (a) The Assam Burañji has perhaps magnified the number of the Muslim soldiers. (b) It may otherwise be suggested that the numerical strength of the army had considerably increased under Nasrat, the change being due largely to the rising tide of the Mughal imperialism which Nasrat was unsuccessfully counteracting. Besides a huge body of infantry and a number of elephants, Hāji Ilyās had a force of 90,000 cavalry.³ If Vasco da Gama is to be trusted, Husain Shah had reduced the number to 24,000 while his successors increased it so much so that it equalled the Ilyās Shāhi army in number. In that case, he had to raise the strength from 24,000 to one million. But this increase seems to be abnormal. It may therefore be suggested that the statement of Vasco da Gama in connection with the numerical strength of Husain Shāhi army is wrong, that Husain Shah maintained an army the strength of which might have amounted to one million and that it was this strength which was inherited by Nasrat. Since Husain Shah was fighting many battles against the rulers of Tipperah, Assam and Orissa, the strength of his army could not be so low as 24,000.

The Husain Shāhi army was composed of infantry or Paiks, cavalry, artillery, navy and elephants.⁴ Since the days of the first Ilyās Shāhis, the Bengali paiks

-
1. J. A. S. B., 1872, p. 79. But the figure mentioned in the Bodleian ms. no. 589, fol. 356, is 20,000.
 2. The Assam Burañji: ed. G. C. Berua, pp. 67-68; Gait: op.cit., p. 90.
 3. History of Bengal, II, p. 108.
 4. The Assam Burañji: ed. G. C. Berua, pp. 67-73; Memoirs, II, pp. 671-673.
- Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī: Vol-II, p. 95. 'Abbas in Elliot and Dowson: Op.cit., Vol-IV, pp. 339-342.

were fighting with reckless valour. There were occasions when they tackled the political situation of the country which very often resulted in serious chaos affecting the normalcy of Bengal's life. Even when Bengal was a part of the Delhi Sultanate, she used to supply best of the pāiks to the Sultans of Delhi.¹ According to Joao de Barros, the Husain Shāhī pāiks used bows, arrows and guns.² Bābur who had the opportunity to meet the soldiers of Nasrat Shāh, has given an account of the disposition of the Bengali foot-soldiers in the battle field. It was generally drawn up into three or four divisions so that they might take the enemy army in the flank and might get to the grips. Without breaking the array, the commander used to fling the foot-soldiers to the front and thus proceeded forward.³ This was a peculiarity of the battle array which could naturally draw the attention of Bābur.

The cavalry was possibly the weakest part of the Husain Shāhī army. Since good horses were not available in this part, they had to always depend on the foreign countries for the supply of horses. From the inscriptions of pre-Mughal Bengal, we can know the title of two cavalry officers, the Sar-e-Khail⁴ and the Sipāh-Sālār.⁵ The reading of the latter being, of course, of a doubtful nature. But the term sipāh-sālār, has been mentioned by Mahuan⁶ who visited Bengal in the beginning of the fifteenth century. These two titles are not at all sufficient for the formation of an idea about the organisation of the cavalry forces of the Husain Shāhīs. But we may see how they have been used in the military organisation of the contemporary northern India. Several horsemen were usually under a Sar-I-Khail; a sipāh-sālār had several sar-i-khails under him; a number of sipāh-sālārs was placed

1. Barani: Terikh-i-Firuz Shāhī. Bib. Indica, Calcutta, 1862, p. 593.

2. Campos: op.cit., p. 34.

3. Memoirs, II, p. 673.

4. See the Tribeni inscription of Barbak Shāh dated 1455, J.A.S.B., 1870, p. 290.

5. ~~See~~ The Wandāran inscription of Husain Shāh, dated 1494-95, contains the term Shālār-Kubrāk. J. A. S. B., 1917, p. 134. It seems that the first unit of the whole expression, Sipāh, has disappeared.

6. Mahuan's account: J.R.A.S.G.B.I., 1895, p. 532. See also Chinese accounts in Viśva-bharatī Annals, 1945, I, p. 118.

under an amir; amirs were subordinate to the Khans.¹ This was, of course, a theoretical arrangement which underwent many changes in practice and the term, sipāh-sālar, was very often applied to the commander-in-chief. Whatever might have been the gradation of the cavalry officers in north India, we have no reason to think that Bengal accepted it without any modification. It appears that the commander-in-chief was known as Sipāh-Sālar and the Sar-i-Khail was the chief of the cavalry in Bengal. The cavalry organisation made by the Ilyās Shāhī, continued under the Husain Shāhī.

The artillery was an important section of the army. Babur has characterised it as a very effective part of the Bengal army.² De Barros says that the military supremacy which the Sultāns of Bengal attained over the rulers of Arakan and Tipperah was largely due to the efficiency of their artillery.³ The Assam Burāñjī gives to the Bengalis the credit of "opening fire from their large guns and flint guns". In fact, canon and guns used by them were of various size and the rulers of Bengal were reputed for fire-working.⁴

The admiralty department was an unavoidable necessity in Bengal which is covered by a net work of rivers. The cavalry could ensure the hold over this country only for a period of six months, whereas the boat backed by the redoubtable Bengali paiks could command supremacy over the enemy in the rainy season covering the other half of the year. The Sultāns of Delhi who had no strong navy used to attack Bengal generally in the dry season, seeing that no effective head-way could be made during the rainy season in this country. Since the time of 'Iwaz, ^{→The} flotilla of war-boats had been playing a significant role in the political history of this country. 'Ala-uddin Husain Shah and his successors used their fleet in different battle fields.⁵

1. Barani: Op.cit., p. 145.

2. Memoirs, II, p. 672.

3. Quoted by M. L. Dames in the Book of Duarte Barbosa, Vol-II, Appendix -I, p. 245.

4. Op.cit., pp. 68, 70, 72 and 73.

5. The Assam Burāñjī: ed. G.C. Barua, pp. 67 and 70-71. Shihābuddin Talish: J.A.S.B. ^{→ op.cit.} 1872, p. 79. History of Bengal, Vol-II, pp. 147, 158 and 158. ^{→ Bodleian ms. Or. 589, fol. 366.}

possibly not without success. The Dasmrai inscription¹ of Fath Shah dated 1482 mentions the official title Mir-i-Bahr or Admiral. It seems highly probable that this office was continued by the Husain Shahis also. The naval department was placed in charge of this officer. According to Abul Fazl, the duty of the Admiral was as follows: (a) to build boats of all kinds for river transport; (b) to fit out strong boats for transporting war elephants; (c) to recruit efficient seamen; (d) to supervise the rivers and (e) to collect duties at the ferryghats. Similar ideas about the function of the Admiralty can be gleaned from the Baharistan-i-Ghaibi.² Towards the end of the Husain Shahi rule, their naval power seems to have become extremely weak.

The elephant played an important part in the Bengal army. The power of Haji Ilyas was due much to his strong and big elephants. Nasrat Shah used elephants in his war with the Ahoms who are said to have captured some of them.³ Sher Khan who defeated Qutb Khan, the general of Mahmud Shah III, captured a good number of elephants.⁴ In the Sultanate of Delhi, an officer called Shahnah-i-Phil, was in charge of elephants. We do not know if the Husain Shahis had similar office. But it is certain that the huge body of elephants maintained by them required the services of several men including the stable-keepers.

Agrarian System :

It is very difficult to form an estimate of the revenue administration of the Husain Shahis, for materials relating to it are extremely meagre. We may take into account what Abul Fazl has said about the revenue system of medieval Bengal. He remarks, "The people are submissive and pay their rents duly. The demands of

1. J. A. S. B., 1872, pp. 109-110.

2. Eng. trans. Vol-I, pp. 4-8, 29, 34, 47, 48, 60-62, 121, 165 etc. and Vol-II, p. 511.

3. Assam Buranjis: ed. G. C. Barua, pp. 68, 71-72 and 73.

4. Nizamuddin op.cit., Vol-II, p. 94.

each year are paid by instalments in eight months, they themselves bringing mohars and rupees to the appointed place for the receipt of revenue as the division of grain between the government and the husbandman is not here customary. The harvests are always abundant, measurement is not insisted upon, and the revenue demands are determined by estimate of the crop. His Majesty in goodness has confirmed this custom".¹

If carefully analysed, this statement shows the following features:

- (a) the annual demands of the government were paid in eight-monthly instalments;
- (b) the cash payments were made by the peasants direct to the government;
- (c) the method of crop-estimation was generally followed;
- (d) survey and measurement were not insisted upon and
- (e) what Abul Fazl has said relates even to pre-Mughal Bengal and this old method was allowed by Akbar to continue.

This account is of immense importance throwing as it does much light on the revenue system which was in vogue towards the last quarter of the sixteenth century. These customs might have prevailed in Bengal in the period of confusion and also in the Murshid Shāhi period, for the Shūres and the Karrānis had hardly had any time to bring about a complete alteration in the revenue administration of the country. In spite of these circumstantial possibilities, the statement of Abul Fazl cannot be accepted in an unqualified manner. So far as our period is concerned, uniformity in the revenue administration all over the country was probably rare. Although this statement may be true of the areas under the direct control of the provincial governors, it might not apply to the lands which were under the native Majmu'adars² and the Portuguese farmers whose existence in some parts of the then Bengal, serves as a strong argument against the possibility of the direct payment categorically mentioned by Abul Fazl. Again the presence of the term taqsim in a Bengali work,³ which relates, according to Moreland,⁴ to the apportionment of produce, points to

1. Ā'in, Vol-II, p. 134.

2. Infra, pp. 80-82 and 97.

3. Vijaya Gupta: op.cit., p. 4.

4. The Agrarian System of Moslem India, Cambridge, 1929, pp. 243-47, appendix- K(c).

the prevalence of the system of division of crop at least in some parts of the country. While speaking about an earlier period, Ibn Batūta informs us that the cultivators of the villages on either side of the 'blue river' used to give to the government half of the crops they produced.¹ Equally untenable is, perhaps, the view that the payment in cash was a regular system in those days when use of coins must have been quite limited. Although measurement might not have been "insisted upon", we do not have adequate reason to believe that it was totally absent in the country. Kavikānkan's incidental reference to the antiquated measuring units like kāthā and kudā, indicated that the system of measurement was in vogue in the then Bengal. The poet's statement that the shiqdar was measuring fifteen kāthās to a kudā without listening to the painful entreaties of the subjects,² hints at the fact that the Mughal officers working in Bengal in the period of transition, were bringing about changes in the existing system of measuring, causing hardship to the people. Thus it may be reasonably suggested that while the system of measurement was followed in some parts of the country, that of crop-estimation prevailed in some other parts.

The Sultāns derived their revenue from the lands under the control of the provincial governors and also from the local estate-holders and the Portuguese farmers. Lands granted as religious endowments were generally free from the payment of revenue.

Majmūdars

There was a section of people known as Majmū'adārs. The Gaitanya-Caritamṛta has referred to the estates possessed by Hiranya Dāsa and Govardhana Dāsa who collected twenty lakhs of rent and paid twelve lakhs to the Government.³ This shows the

1. The Peble of Ibn Battūta, Eng. Tran. by Mahdi Husain, Gaekwad's Oriental Series, No. CXXII, Baroda, 1953, p. 241.

2. Kavikānkan-candī, C.U., 1924, Vol-I, p. 22.

3. Op.cit., p. 293: ১২০ লক্ষের কিস্তি দিয়া মাসে মাসে

১২০ লক্ষের কিস্তি দিয়া মাসে মাসে

nature of Majmu'adāri in South-West Bengal. The Majmu'adars were thus the contracting parties who used to pay a fixed amount to the royal treasury out of what was collected from the peasants. Within their estates, these farmers possibly conducted the revenue administration as they pleased, turning sometimes extortionate to the peasants. The government which was satisfied with a fixed sum of money, could hardly be expected to look into the internal affairs of these estates. But they had no right of hereditary succession to these estates, for they could change hands from time to time.¹ This seems to have served as a positive check on the individual whims of the Majmu'adars. Again they were subjected to the authority of provincial governors who could keep vigilant eyes on their activities. To illustrate this, we may cite the case of Rām Gandra Khān who was mercilessly tortured by the Muslim Wazīr for his arrear rent.²

The Portuguese Ijaradars

The Portuguese also acquired rent-receiving interest in this country. They were allowed by Mahmūd Shāh III to control the customs of Satgaon and Chatgaon, build factories there and collect revenues from the adjoining areas.³ It seems that these Portuguese settlements also corresponded to the Majmu'adāri already discussed. Their relation with the Sultān was based on contract according to which they paid an annual tribute to the Sultān and managed the revenue affairs within their settlements. Abdul Hamid Lahori informs us that the Portuguese received Satgaon "at a low rent".⁴ This means that such margin was left in favour of the Portuguese ijaradars and that the tribute which they were to pay to the Sultān was purely of a nominal nature. It appears from what Castanheda⁵ has said that the chief of the custom-house

-
1. Gaitanya-caritamṛta: pp. 293-94.
 2. Ibid, p. 278.
 3. Campos: op.cit., pp. 39 and 46.
 4. Badshānāmāh: Biblio Indica: I; i pp. 434 and 437. Elliot and Dawson: op.cit. Vol-VII, p. 32.
 5. Quoted by Campos: op.cit., p. 46.

of Chittagong collected much revenue from the Hindu and Muslim inhabitants. Nothing is known about the nature of the agrarian system followed by the Portuguese in these areas. The conjecture made by Moreland in this connection is as follows. "In view of the conditions which prevailed", he says, "it is reasonable to infer that these farms were in the nature of clearing leases, that is to say, a fixed annual payment was accepted for vacant land, which the farmer had to bring under cultivation in order to obtain a profit".¹ It must be mentioned here that nothing has been found as yet to substantiate this statement. It is natural that the Portuguese were giving reasonable advantages to the Christians who were settling in these areas.

The system of jagir

We do not know if jagirdari was a regular system in Bengal in the period in question. Niẓāmuddin tells us, "Nasib Shah bestowed on all of them jagirs, as far as possible and depending on the exigencies of the time".² Similar ideas have also been expressed by Ghulam Husain Salim³ and Firistah⁴ who do not, of course, mention the term 'jagir'. The authors have referred to the Afghan political refugees who came to Bengal after having escaped the attack of Babur. Since they are not mentioned by our writers to have accepted services under Nasrat Shah, we do not find any reason to support the view that they enjoyed jagirs in Bengal. The jagir, in the strict sense of the term, could follow only as a necessary corollary of services which might be rendered to the royalty. Niẓāmuddin who was thoroughly acquainted with the jagir system under Akbar seems to have confused the Afghan settlements of Bengal with jagirdari. These settlements might be of the nature of ijaradari already noticed by us. Should we then suggest that it was totally absent in Bengal? An

1. Moreland: op.cit., p. 190.

2. Niẓāmuddin: Op.cit., III, p. 271. (text). Eng. Tran. III. 444.

3. Op. cit., p. 137.

4. Op. cit., II, p. 302.

affirmative answer to this question cannot be given due to certain reasons. It was widely in vogue in the different parts of India. Nizamuddin actually makes a difference between Zamindari and Jagirdari when he says that Sikandar Lodi granted some parganas in jagir to his own men, taking them from the possession of Zamindars in Bihar.¹ The author has quite categorically mentioned that the system worked under Ibrahim Lodi also.² Mahuan who ~~came~~ ^{came} to Bengal in the early part of the fifteenth century, found the soldiers and military officers receiving cash payments and also noticed the wide circulation of 'Tanka' and gowries.³ The system of cash payments does not preclude the possibility of the prevalence of jagir system, for both might go on side by side in this country. But nothing can be definitely said on this point.

Zamindari :

The Zamindari system in the modern sense of the term was probably absent. Abul Fazl says that in the sarkar Fathabad alone, there were three classes of Zamindars and that the revenue received from the independent Taluqdars of the sarkar Sulaimanabad amounted to 213,067 dams.⁴ Kavikanth states that he lived in the Taluk of Gopinath Neogi.⁵ It may be pointed out here that the Rent-roll of Todar Mall which is the basis of Abul Fazl's information might have confused ijaradari with Zamindari. Again what Kavikanth has said may apply only to the period of transition and not necessarily to our period. Some writers have tried to indicate the antiquity of some of the zamindar families of Bengal.⁶ But their views

-
1. Nizamuddin: op.cit., Vol-I, p. 320. See also pp. 332 and 335.
 2. Ibid., I, p. 343. For the mention of jagira under Sher Shah and Humayun. Consult Tabaqat, II, pp. 38, 86 and 87.
 3. Mahuan's Account: J.R.A.S.G.B.I., 1895, p. 530. See also Ying Yei Sheng lan: Vish-bharati Annals, 1945, I, p. 117, and Si yang ch'ao kung tien lu: op.cit., p.125.
 4. Ain, II, pp. 144 and 154.
 5. Op.cit., I, p. 22.
 6. J.C. Basu: Medinipur Itiha, II, Cal, 1939, pp. 498-99 and 504-533. See also Womensingher Varendra Brahman Zamindar, Part-II, by S.K. Ray Choudhury.

are generally based on local traditions which are not always historically reliable. It seems that the Majmu'adars and ijaradars had grown into hereditary landlords during the period of confusion. Moreland has shown how the term Zamindari was used in various senses.¹ If the local farmers are regarded as Zamindars, we have got nothing to say. What appears to us is that the system was not hereditary in a particular family or families in Husain Shahi Bengal.

Customs

Customs constituted another source of income. They were generally realised at the river-stations and also at the different ports and towns of the country. The ports were generally provided with custom-houses each of which was placed under a custom-chief, directly appointed by the Sultan.² The Portuguese accounts speak of the custom-houses of Chittagong and Satgaon. The chief custom officer was probably as powerful as the provincial governor. The Mint was a regular source of income in those days.

Public works

The Husain Shahis were interested in public works of different kinds which are evidenced by the numerous inscriptions of this period. The tanks, shades for the supply of water, bridges and mosques³ which they constructed undoubtedly improved

-
1. Op.cit., pp. 191-194.
 2. Barbosa: op.cit., II, p. 148. Castanheda: quoted by Campos: op.cit., p. 46. See also p. 39 of the same work.
 3. See inscriptions published in the following works and journals: J.A.S.B., 1861, p. 390. J.A.S.B., 1872, pp. 337-38. J.A.S.B., 1874, pp. 303 and 308. J.A.S.B., 1909, p. 260. I. H. Qs Vol-VII, 1931, p. 18. A.S.R. Vol-XV, p. 144. Abid Ali: op.cit., pp. 153 and 157-159. Ravenshaw: op.cit., p. 94, Pl. 58, No. 24. E. I. N., 1933-34, p. 3, J. B. O. R. S. Vol-IV, 1918, p. 184-86.

the means of communication and greatly facilitated the internal trade of the country. Again these works involved employment of a large number of labours which means that these served as means of circulation of wealth in the country.

IV. Provincial Government.

The names of the provinces.

It is not easy to give a correct list of the provinces of the then Bengal. The Ain has mentioned the following territorial units.¹

The sarkars called Lakhnauti, Furnes, Tajpur, Fajjrah, Ghoraghat, Barbakabad, Bazuhā, Sylhet, Sunargāon and Chatgāon comprised the region north and south of the Ganges.

Satgāon, Mahmudābad, Kalifatabad, Fathābad and Bakla covered the delta of the Ganges.

Sarkars south of the Ganges and west of the Bhāgirathi were Tānda, Sharifabad, Sulaimānabad and Mandaran.

Prof. Blochmann has suggested that the above divisions represent the territorial and fiscal units of pre-Mughal Bengal. This inference can hardly stand scrutiny. The Rent-roll of Toder Mall which has given these sarkars was prepared in 1582 when Mughal state was in a fluid condition. It represents only an ideal picture of Bengal. This explains why Chatgāon has been included in the rent-roll, although it was not conquered during the time of Akbar and Jahāngir. In fact the territorial extent of Hussein Shahi Bengal was greater than what is mentioned in the Ain. But information as supplied by the Ain cannot be summarily rejected, for the inscriptions of our period mention some of these divisions such as Tipperah and Sylhet.²

1. Ain, Vol-II, pp. 142-155. Blochmann: Contributions to the Geography and History of Bengal, Part-II, J. A. S. B., 1873, pp. 215-218.

2. For these inscriptions see J. A. S. B., 1872, pp. 333-34; J. A. S. B., 1873, pp. 285-86; Cunningham: op.cit., p. 141. Thana Laud mentioned in inscriptions of the time formed part of Sylhet.

Again, Husainābād, Fathābād, Nāgratābād, Mu'azzamābād, Khalīfatābād, Bārbakābād, Muḥammadābād and Luẓaffarābād were the mint towns of this period.¹ It may be inferred here that these were the headquarters of Husain Shāhī Bengal, each of these towns representing a particular region after which it was named. Husainābād, Nāgratābād and ~~Muḥammadābād~~ ^{Muḥammadābād} may be regarded as synonyms of Gaud. Bengali literature and Portuguese accounts tell us that Chittagong was under the control of the Husain Shāhīs.²

'Arsah Sājlamankhād appears repeatedly in the Husain Shāhī inscriptions.³ Bengal inscriptions found at Sāran and Munghyr show that the Husain Shāhī kingdom included southern and northern parts of Bihar.⁴ Similar information is supplied by Nizām uddīn and Bābur.⁵ Mandāran which appears in the Āin as a sarkār, was partly included in the Husain Shāhī kingdom. Thus the Āin supplemented by numismatic and epigraphic evidences give us the following provinces of the Husain Shāhī kingdom :

(i) Chittagong, (ii) Tipperah, (iii) Iqlīm Mu'azzamābād, (iv) Sylhet, (v) Fathābād, (vi) Khalīfatābād, (vii) Lakhnautī or Husainābād, (viii) Bārbakābād, (ix) Sātgaon, (x) 'Arsah Sājlamankhād, (xi) North Biḥār with its headquarter at Hājīpūr (xii) South Biḥār with its political centre at Munghyr and (xiii) the newly conquered area of Kāmṛup and Kāmta. We do not know if Panjrah, Ghorāghāt, Tājpur and Furnea existed as separate provinces. They might have formed the parts of North Biḥār, Bārbakābād, and Lakhnautī provinces of the Husain Shāhīs. Similarly, Mandāran might be included in the 'Arsah Sājlamankhād and Bakla, in Fathābād. Sunārgaon was possibly included in Iqlīm Mu'azzamābād.

Iqlīm, Mulk or 'Arsah and Mahal

Each of these provinces was variously known as Iqlīm, Mulk or 'Arsah.⁶ Thus

1. Lanepoole: Op.cit., pp. 45, 47-48, 50-51 and 52-55. H.N. Wright: Catalogue, Vol-II pp. 172-80. Botham: Op.cit., pp. 166-69 and 172-73.
2. Parāgali Mahābhāret: quoted by D.C. Sen: Op.cit., 94; Śrīkar Nandī: Op.cit., p. 3 Campos: Op.cit., pp. 34 and 39
3. J.A.S.B., 1870, pp. 284; J.A.S.B., 1909, p. 260; E.I.M., 1915-16, pp. 12-14.
4. supra., pp. 9-10
5. Memoirs, II, p. 676. Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī, Vol-II, 94.
6. They are mentioned in the inscriptions of the Husain Shāhī period. See J.A.S.B., 1870, pp. 284, 290 and 294. J.A.S.B., 1872, pp. 333-34; J.A.S.B., 1873, pp. 286 and 293-94; E.I.M., 1915-16, pp. 12-14. Cunningham: Op.cit., p. 141. The term Mulk appears in the Manasā-Kāngal of Vijaya Gupta, p. 4

there was hardly any uniform system in the political terminology of the country. The terms, Iqlim, 'Arsah and Diyar were being applied to the different parts of Bengal as early as the last decade of the thirteenth century.¹ 'Arsah Satgaon has been mentioned on the coins of Muhammad-bin-Tughluq.² These terms are found on a number of coins belonging to the Ilyas Shahi period.³ The expression, Mulk Qhawali-atan urf 'Arsah Kamru appearing on a coin of Sikandar Shah, dated 759 A.H.⁴ clearly shows that the term Mulk is identical with 'Arsah. It is evident that the coins containing these terms were representing the provinces from which they were issued. All of them remained in circulation and neither the Husain Shahis nor the Ilyas Shahis seem to have aimed at any uniformity so far as the use of these terms was concerned.

Thus we find that the term sarkar which was used by Sher Shah and the Mughal emperors was totally absent in Husain Shahi Bengal. Prof. Blochmann contends that the term 'Arsah means more than a pargana and that it is equivalent to the Mughal term Sarkar.⁵ This inference is vitiated, for, technically 'arsah or Iqlim of the Husain Shahis is of wider significance than the sarkar of the Mughals. The territorial extent of an 'Arsah might have corresponded to that of a sarkar. But the Sarkar was a part of the Mughal province, and the 'Arsah was the province of the Husain Shahi kingdom. Each of these provinces was divided into a number of Mahals,⁶ the village being the lowest revenue unit.

1. Barani: Op.cit. p. 93.

2. H. N. Wright: Catalogue, II, p. 60.

3. Lanepoles: op.cit. p. 35; H. N. Wright: Catalogue, II, pp. 152, 153, 155, 158 & 159.

4. H. N. Wright: Catalogue, II, 152.

5. J. A. S. B., 1970, p. 295.

6. J. A. S. B., 1870, p. 294. J. A. S. B., 1873, pp. 272-273. The Ain, Vol-II, pp. 142-155.

The rare inscription of Barbak Shah dated 866/1459 shows that Sargamashtah or chief accountant was placed over a Qasbah. E. I., 1953-54, p. 21. The term Sargamashtah indicates that there were other subordinate accountants under him, working in the same Qasbah which was probably the part of the Mahal.

The Provincial Governor and other Sub-ordinate Officials

The province was placed under an officer who had the title Sar-i-Lashkar wa Wazir.¹ This title may be explained here. It has two parts, i.e. Sar-i-Lashkar or Commander-in-chief and Wazir which ordinarily means minister. But the term wazir does not seem to have been used in its generally accepted sense in Hussain Shahi Bengal. It may be suggested here that it means a revenue officer. In fact this term has on several occasions been used in the sense of a financial officer in Indian history. Ghyasuddin Tughluq conferred the office of wazir of Deccan on Malik Burhanuddin.² Similarly Razi-al-Mulk was appointed wazir of Ma'bar; Malik Ashraf, wazir of Tilang and Malik Abu Raja, wazir of Lakhnauti,⁴ for revenue administration. Under Akbar, the provincial diwans were originally called wazir. The Bengali sources of our period associate this officer with the revenue administration of the country.⁵ Thus it seems fairly certain that the provincial governors of the Hussain Shahis were the military and financial heads of their respective provinces. As the highest military officer of the province, his duty was obviously to maintain the soldiers who were placed under him, with a view to utilising their services in times of war. As the financial officer, he had to look after the revenue administration of the country with the help of a number of subordinate officials.

1. J.A.S.B., 1870, pp. 284, 290 and 294. J.A.S.B., 1873, pp. 272-273, 286, 293-294 and 296. J.A.S.B., 1909, p. 260. S. I. M., 1915-16, pp. 12-14. Cunningham: op.cit., p. 141. The

title mentioned above finds repeated mentions in the inscriptions published in these journals.

2. Tab. Ak. Vol-I, p. 192 (*Text*)

3. Barani: op.cit., pp. 454-455.

4. Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shah: Bib. Ind., p. 98. Originally, however, the term wazir does not seem to have been used in the sense of a minister. It might have been derived from al-wazir meaning a burden, from al-wazar meaning a shelter and also from azr meaning the back. This is in view of the fact that the minister bears the burden of the state, that the ruler gets shelter under the minister's help and advice and that his backing adds strength to the position of the King. See Mawardi: Al-Ahkam's - Sultaniyah, Cairo. ed. p. 22. In Bengal administration, the term wazir was applied to the provincial governor probably in the sense of a helper to the king.

5. Krishnadasa Kaviraja: op.cit., pp. 278 and 293.

This will not warrant the conclusion that there was a uniform system of provincial administration all over the country. This explains why we find the governor in various positions. He could be placed in charge of a town in a particular locality where he could enjoy a comfortable plurality of offices. The Devikot inscription of Hussain Shah shows that Khān Rukn Khān 'Alāuddīn Sarhatī who was the Sar-i-Lashkar wa Wazir of the city of Muzaffarābād was also the Kotwāl-i-Bak-Āli or the Chief Police officer and Munshif-i-Diwan-i-Kotwāl or Judge of the criminal court of another town called Fīrūzābād.¹ In this case, the function of a governor in charge of a single city was not as complicated as that of a provincial governor so that it was possible for him to serve in various capacities in other towns. Again the governor could exercise his power over a province together with a number of cities and Mahals.² This may be interpreted in two ways. (a) These cities and mahals might be within the province over which he was placed and their civil and military administration was under the direct control of the governor. (b) Again these cities and mahals might be outside his province. The extension of his governorship over them would mean additional posts and duties for him. Only in a single inscription,³ the same man is found to be the Sar-i-Lashkar of one province and Wazir of another territory. This goes to suggest that a man who ^{was} the highest military officer of a province could also act as the highest revenue officer in the adjacent province. Very often thāmas or military outposts in the frontier region were placed under the control of the governor of the province adjacent to them.⁴

-
1. J. A. S. B., 1872, p. 106. Gunningham: op.cit., pp. 99-100. E. I. M., 1929-30 pp. 12-13, Pl. VIII (b).
 2. J. A. S. B., 1870, pp. 283-84; J. A. S. B., 1909, p. 260. E. I. M., 1915-16, pp. 12-14. See the Tribenī inscription.
 3. J. A. S. B., 1872, pp. 333-34. See the Sunārgāon inscription dated 919/1513.
 4. J. A. S. B., 1870, pp. 283-84; J. A. S. B., 1909, p. 260. E. I. M., 1915-16, pp. 12-14. See the Tribenī inscription of Hussain Shah.

One can easily realise the influence and power enjoyed by these military governors. Certain measures were probably adopted to minimise their power. The Sultan who could appoint them could also dismiss them and dismissal meant a topsyturvy in the whole office. Babur remarks, "If the royal heart demand that a person should be dismissed and another be appointed to sit in his place, the whole body of subordinates attached to that office become the (new) office holders".¹ This statement means that whenever a superior officer was dismissed, the subordinate officers connected with that office were also theoretically dismissed; but they were newly appointed to their respective posts. Thus the subordinate officers were also haunted by a sense of insecurity which prevented them from being blind supporters of a disloyal or rebellious governor or officer. Governorship does not seem to have been hereditary in a particular family. Again, the governor was transferred from one province to another.² These measures checked the centrifugal forces which might operate from time to time. If Babur is to be relied upon, the income of every province was utilised to meet the administrative expenses of that province. "To defray these charges no impost is laid on other lands".³

Shiqdar, Jangdar and Muqaddam

The Mahals were generally placed under an officer bearing the titles shiqdar and jangdar.⁴ The first title suggests that he was connected with the revenue administration of the mahal or mahals under him. The second title is suggestive

1. Memoirs, II, p. 482.

2. The Devkot inscription of Husain Shah shows that Rukn Khan was the governor of Muzaffarabad. See J. A. S. B., 1872, p. 106. Cunningham: op.cit., pp. 99-100. E. I. M., 1929-30, pp. 12-13. According to the Sylhet inscription, the same person was the governor of Kamru-Kamte and Orissa-jajnagar. J. A. S. B., 1922, p. 413. Thus his transfer is indicated.

3. Memoirs, II, p. 483.

4. J. A. S. B., 1873, pp. 272-273; E. I. M., 1937-38, Pl. XII (a).

of the military nature of his office. He had to control the soldiers who might be placed in his mahals. He was thus subordinate to the military governor of the province - a fact evidenced by the Dinājpur inscription of Barbak Shah in which the shiqdar and jengdar "of the affairs of Jor and Baror" seems to have carried out the order of the local governor by constructing a mosque. The muqaddam¹ helped him to collect revenue from the villages. The shiqdar must have transmitted surplus revenues to the provincial governor after meeting administrative expenses in his own locality.

Provincial departments

Hardly anything is known about other officials who were connected with the administrative machinery of the province. It seems highly probable that the provincial administration was a copy of the central structure. We have already seen that there was the police department under an officer called Kotwal Bakāla. The criminal court which was presided over by a munsif was connected with this department.

The judiciary was undoubtedly an important department. In the Manasa-Vangal of Vijaya Gupta, the Qāzī is associated with another official called Kawledar² who seems to be a police officer. Apart from conducting judicial administration, the Qāzī was connected with various civil affairs. Placed in charge of towns and important villages,³ the Qāzī had to, very often, supervise religious endowments, preventing the mullahs and landlords from defrauding "legacies", which has been mentioned as one of "the earnest duties" of the Qāzī and the Makim in the Satgaon inscription of Nasret Shah.⁴ The Qāzī of the political headquarter of the province

1. Vipradāsa: Manasa-Vijaya: ed. Sukumar Sen; Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1953, p. 143.

2. Op.cit., p. 54.

3. Vijaya Gupta: op.cit., pp. 54-56; Gaitanya-bhāgavat, pp. 98, 100, 101, 266, 267, 275-76, 277 and 379. Gaitanya-saritamṛta, pp. 64-67.

4. Infra, Ch. III, P. 99

seems to have been subordinate to the provincial governor. In the Caitanya-bhagabat the Qāzī is found deciding cases finally in accordance with the instructions of the Mulukpatī¹ or provincial governor. Corporal punishment was sometimes inflicted on the accused.

Besides these functionaries, there were possibly other departments, viz. those of finance, correspondence, military affairs and religious affairs about which nothing is known. Coins were issued from the provincial mint towns which must have been placed under mint officials.

V. Relation of Bengal with the administration of Pre-Mughal Gujrāt

It may be pointed out here that some of the administrative terms and honorary titles such as Arsa, Mogta, Jāmdār, Sharabdar, Kotwal, Qāzī, Wazir, Khān-i-Azam, Khāqān-i-Muāzzam and Majlis² appearing in the inscriptions of Bengal are also found in the inscriptions of pre-Mughal Gujrāt.³ A few more official terms such as Arīs (pay master of the forces) and Khwājāh Sarāe (the chief eunuch), which we come across in Gujrāt inscriptions,⁴ are available in Persian chronicles dealing with the history of pre-Mughal Bengal.⁵ One of the inscriptions of Ahmad Shāh of Gujrāt, dated 856 A.H/1452 A.D.,⁶ mentions the granting of six ploughs (شش جفتوار) of rent-free land to an official named Malik Sha'ban. Mukundaram's description of the kingdom of Kalaketu suggests that the cultivator in medieval Bengal had very often to pay the rent in accordance with the number of ploughs used for tilling

1. Op.cit., p. 100.

2. Supra, pp. 69.

3. M.A. Chagatai: Muslim Monuments of Ahmadābād Through Their Inscriptions, Bulletin of the Deccan College Institute, 1941-42, Vol. VII, pp. 107-9, 111-12, 133, 139, 141-42 etc.; Pls. IV (a), IV (b), V, XVII, XXIII, XXIV.

4. Ibid., pp. 128-30, 136 and 138; Pls. XIV, XX (a) and XXI.

5. Tārīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhī, p. 105 and Riyāz, p. 120.

6. Op.cit., p. 129.

the plot of land he possessed.¹ Thus it seems probable that there was a process of mutual contact between Bengal and Gujrat in the spheres of administration and culture. The striking resemblance which the architectural and calligraphic styles of Husain Shahi Bengal bear to those of Gujrat² and political and commercial relationship that appears to have existed between these countries,³ tend to add strength to the above contention.

Administrative features of Bengal seem to have migrated to Arakan, for we are told by Daulat Qazi⁴ that Ashraf Khan, an officer of the early seventeenth century Arakan, had the title of Wazir Lashkar.⁵ The history of the contact of some of the Arakanese rulers with the Sultans of Bengal is quite well-known. Narameikha who was exiled to Gaud in the early part of the fifteenth century, is said to have regained his kingdom with the help of the Sultan of Bengal. His successors started using Muslim designations and titles and issuing coins bearing the Kalima.⁶ These circumstances seem to explain the reason of the influence of Bengal on the administrative system of the then Arakan.

VI. General Remarks.

In spite of a considerable amount of central control over the provincial affairs, centrifugal forces could work whenever the central authority or the ruler was weak. The authority of the governor who behaved almost like a petty king in

1. Infra, Ch. III, P. 99

2. Infra, Ch. VII, sections. I, pp. 234-35 and III, pp. 249-50

3. Supra, Ch. I, P. 49. and infra, Ch. VII, Section-III, P. 250.

4. Seti Maina O Lora Gendrani, ed. Satyendra Nath Ghosal, Visva-bharati, 1362 B.S. p. 46.

5. For the explanation of this term, see Supra, pp. 73-74.

6. Phara: op.cit, pp. 73-80 and Harvey: op.cit, pp. 139-40.

all local affairs tended very often to be supreme. We do not hear of any governor revolting in the reigns of Husain Shah and his immediate successor Nasrat Shah. Towards the end of the period in question, when governmental machinery was going out of gear, the governors of the outlying regions were behaving almost independently. Khudā Baksh Khān, governor of Chittagong and Makhdūm Alam, governor of north Bihar are instances in point.¹ The latter joined hands with Sher Shah and inflicted a crushing defeat on Mahmud's army.

In spite of the vigilance of the rulers, the local officers very often used to oppress the people. This is what is revealed through the Hasan-Husain episode found in the Manasa-Māngal of Vijaya Gupta.² Gaitanya-Caritamṛta has shown how the Muslim wazir destroyed a village in south-west Bengal which formed a part of the estate of Ram Chandra Khān.³ Again, Husain Shah used to complain against the oppressive conduct of Rup.⁴ Thus it seems that there was hardly any effective check on the whims of the local officers who were apt to turn tyrannical to the innocent people. This was probably due to decentralising tendencies which characterised the Husain Shahi rule. Although the Husain Shahi state was not immune from these drawbacks, it must be mentioned in fairness to them that such cases of oppression were rare exceptions at least under the first two rulers.

The defects appear to have ^{been} out-weighed by the benefits which the Husain Shahi rule conferred on the people. All sections of people enjoyed various advantages under a government which was free from religious fanaticism. The rulers might have been actuated by political considerations in following a thoroughly liberal policy; nevertheless it was quite helpful in promoting country's interest. The gradual rapprochement between the ruler and the ruled which characterised this age ushered into being a new era of socio-political existence. The Husain Shahis

1. Supra, pp. 55-56 and 57.

2. op.cit., pp. 54-57.

3. Gaitanya Caritamṛta, op.cit., p. 278.

4. Ibid., p. 197.

identified themselves with the interests of the people so completely that they were regarded as the children of the soil. They represented the aspirations of the people by patronising its literature and giving a local colour to the different aspects of life. Under the benign influences of such a government, trade and industry went on almost on an unprecedented scale, art and architecture flourished and national prosperity considerably increased. Viewed from this angle of vision, Hussain Shahi rule is a landmark in the history of this country.

[Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]

[Faint, illegible text at the bottom of the page, possibly a signature or footer.]

Chapter - III

Economic Conditions

It is worth while to form an idea about the economic life of Bengal in the period under review. Varthema and Barbosa who visited Bengal in the early part of the sixteenth century and Joao de Barros who wrote immediately after the fall of the Husain Shāhi dynasty, have left us quite valuable accounts about the economic condition of the country. These taken together with Bengali poems, Persian literature, coins and inscriptions seem to give a good deal of indications as to the developments in the field of economy that characterised the life of the country. Bengal could derive her wealth mainly from three sources, viz., agriculture, trade and industry. Before giving an account of the different economic classes, it is necessary for us to discuss each of these sources at a considerable length.

I. Agriculture

While the towns and cities were serving as the centres of trade and industry, agriculture could flourish only in the rural areas which provided lands for cultivation and pasturage. The repeated mention of the cowboys in the Bengali literature of our period tends to suggest that they used to graze cattle on fallow lands. It can be inferred here that lands were generally classified into two categories, khil and lal or waste land and arable land. The government appears to have assessed only the lands under cultivation to the exclusion of waste lands. The revenue officers of Akbar, as mentioned in the Candī Mānsal, contributed to the suffering of the people by recording fallow lands as arable.¹ This clearly indicates that the people in pre-Lughal Bengal were not acquainted with this type of unfair assessment. We know nothing about the system adopted by the Husain Shāhis in measuring lands. At this point, also, Kabi Kankan may come to our rescue. The story of the oppressive shiqdar measuring fifteen kathās to a bighā² shows that a bighā

1. Candī Mānsal, I, p. 22. *কান্দী মাসল, I, পৃ. ২২*

2. ibid. : *ইবিদ. : কান্দী মাসল, I, পৃ. ২২*

Abul Fazl says that a bigha could be divided into 20 parts, each of which was known as biswah. Āin, II, 67.

was normally made of more than fifteen kathās. Thus we are getting the measuring units of kathā and bighā, the former being about $\frac{1}{20}$ th part of the latter. We do not know if this system was followed uniformly all over the country. Since Kabi Kankan composed his poems towards the last quarter of the sixteenth century, the measurement units mentioned by him were probably in vogue during the Husain Shāhī period also, for no radical change seems to have ~~been~~ ^{taken} place in the system of measurement within a period of three or four decades.

As to the systems of land tenure that prevailed in Bengal in the period in question, materials at our disposal are extremely meagre. Lands could be divided into several classes. As indicated in the previous chapter,¹ lands might be leased out to local and Portuguese revenue-farmers who used to pay to the government a fixed sum out of what they collected. If Caitanya-caritāmṛta is to be relied upon, these farmers were under the direct control of the provincial governor.² Lands granted to the rulers' relatives and officers in recognition of meritorious works done by them, seem to have been rendered rent-free. Daulat Wazir tells us that wasir Hamid Khan, an officer of Husain Shāh was allowed to enjoy the possession of two sics of land in Chittagong.³ The Sulṭān is said to have given his son-in-law, Qutbul Ashageen, landed estates in Sunārgāon. Although the original Sanad seems irretrievably lost, a number of Mughal documents including one of Shāh Shujā',⁴ dated the 27th Rabi'-al-Sānī, 1031 A.H./5th August, 1641 A.D., confirms Qutbul Ashageen's descendants' claim to the possession of one-hundred and thirty-three bighas of cultivable land in the sarkār of Sunārgāon, making the estate free from governmental interference "on the plea of taxes, government expenses, skilled and forced labour, hunting, raising repeated crops from farms and gardens, 2 percent for choudhury, salami for..... and building a house,

1. Supra. pp. 78-80 - 82.

2. Supra. p. 80.

3. Op.cit. p. 9.

4. For the Persian text and English translation of this document, see Talfoor Collection by Bhattachali, X - XV, Pls. I - T and VI - T.

and percentage for Qarūngo, military governor and collector of revenue".¹ As the document in question was prepared "according to the Sanads granted by the past and present governors",² the conditions and immunities enumerated in it, may be taken to be the continuation of similar advantages enjoyed by the original landlord. Although the grant seems rent-free and accompanied with the assignment of the revenue accruing from it, the donee did not probably have the right to alienate it, nor could he transfer it to his son or immediate successor. Qutbul Ashageen's descendant, Sayyid Mustafa who was willing to transfer, to his son, Sayyid Mohi-uddin, the tract of land he had been enjoying, had to appear before the Mughal authority in order to get the transfer recorded or registered in a document duly endorsed by the seal and the Tughra of Shah Jahan.³ What is not, however, clear to us is whether the grant under consideration was inalienable also in the Husain Shahi period. From this type of land, should be distinguished the religious endowments which appear to have been rent-free and which were made by the rulers in favour of mosques and similar other religious foundations.⁴ In the Deokot inscription of Husain Shah dated 918 A.H./1512 A.D.,⁵ the renewal of these 'pious grants' has been considered to be work of religious merit. As the Mullās

1. Ibid., p. XIII.

... باید که حکام و اعیان و جاگیرداران و کروریان حال و استقبالیان سرکارند کور در استمرار
 و استقرار این حکم عالی کوشیدند اراضی مسطور را بتصرف او باز داشته اصلاح... و تغیر
 و تبدیل بدان راه ندیدند و بعلت بالوجهات و اخراجات محترفه و بیکار و شکار
 و تکرار زراعت و باغات... صد و دویست و چو درائی و سلاسی و خانه باری
 قانونگوئی و چو درائی و تحصیلدارے جمیع تکالیف دیوان مزاحم نشود...

2. See the document of Shujā': op.cit., X, XIII, etc.

2. Ibid., X, Pl. I - T.

4. Among such grants, we may include the villages endowed by Husain Shah for the maintenance of the rest-house connected with the shrine of Nur Qutbul 'Alam. See Riyāz, text, p. 135 and Tab. Ak. III, text, p. 270.

5. J. A. S. B., 1872, p. 106; Cunningham: op.cit., p. 100 and Ep. Ind. Nos. 1929-30, p. 12-13.

and landlords might defraud legacies, "to prevent such frauds" has been regarded as "the earnest duties of governors and qāzīs".¹ All these seem to indicate that the government used to exercise direct administrative control over some of these religious foundations. It is not, however, insisted that the tenures mentioned above, covered the entire cultivable land.

Although nothing is clearly known about the exact relationship between the farmers or the landlords and the actual tillers of the land, it seems fairly certain that the former could behave, within their domains, as freely as they liked. The document of Shāh Shujā' shows that the royal officers were asked to try to "leave the said lands in this management and to allow no change or alteration whatsoever therein".² In some areas at least, the tenant had to pay the rent on the basis of the number of ploughs used for tilling the land.³ We have already suggested that similar system was at work also in pre-Mughal Gujrāt.⁴ Its existence in ancient Bengal is hinted at by the presence of the term hala⁵ in some of the inscriptions of pre-Muslim Bengal, dealing with land tenures. It continues to exist in some parts of eastern Bengal.⁶ It is difficult to ascertain how much land could be covered by one plough. In Sylhet district, a hala or plough can bring about 10½ bighas, or about 3½ acres under cultivation.⁷ Buchanan, speaking about Dinajpur district in north Bengal, says that "the usual extent which can be cultivated by one plough, is 10 large bighas, or 50 Calcutta bighas, or 5 acres".⁸ Thus the nature of hala as an unit of assessment, seems to have varied from place to place.

1. See the Satgaon inscription of Nasrat Shāh. J. A. S. B., 1870, pp. 297-98.

2. Op. cit., XIII.

3. Kavikanth-candī, I, 254 of.

২৭৫ ২৭৫ ৩৭৫ ৩৭৫
২৭৫ ৩৭৫ ৩৭৫ ৩৭৫ etc. "You will pay rupees on each plough and will be afraid of no one".

4. Supra, Ch. II, p. 92r.

5. History of Bengal, Vol-I. ed: Dr. Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, Published by the University of Dacca, 1943, p. 654.

6. Ibid., p. 654.

7. K. I. XIX, p. 279.

8. Martin's Eastern India, op.cit., II, p. 904.

Nothing is clearly known as to the rate or rates of the state demand that obtained in the then Bengal. Ibn Batūta who visited Bengal at an earlier period, says that the villagers living by the "blue river" were subjected to the payment of half of their crops as taxes together with some other contributions.¹

Wang-ta-yuan writing at about the same time says that the state demand in the then Muslim Bengal was $\frac{2}{10}$ th or $\frac{1}{5}$ th of the total produce.² This apparent anomaly may be explained, if we bear in mind that there could be hardly any uniformity in the rate of revenue demands which was likely to vary from locality to locality in accordance with the productivity of the soil and the nature of crops produced in different seasons. Thus in pre-Mughal India, there were several rates ranging from one-half to one-fifth of the total produce.³ There were variations in the rate prevailing in Akbar's India, the ruler's claim being fixed at one-third in some parts of the country.⁴ All that can be conjectured as to the rate of the governmental revenue demand obtaining in Bengal under the Husain Shahi Sultans is that it must have been characterised by similar local variations.

How the tenancy right of the peasants was acknowledged by the government is not known. The system of giving patta to the peasants was generally followed in Mughal and pre-Mughal Bengal. In the Sivayana of Ramesvara Bhattācārya and the Gandī Mangal of Kavikankan, the legendary Rayots are depicted as receiving patta from Indra and Kalketu respectively.⁵ This indicates how the system had become deeprooted in this country. The Husain Shahis must have adopted some such measures to ensure the security of the peasants' tenure.

-
- Rehla*
1. The Rehla of Ibn Batūta: Eng. tran. by Mahdi Husain, Oriental Institute, Baroda 1953, p. 241. See also the English translation of the same appended to Bhattācārya's Coins and Chronology etc., p. 142.
 2. Viśvabhāratī Annals, 1945, I, p. 99.
 3. I. H. Qureshi: op.cit., pp. 115, 117 and 118.
 4. Morelands op.cit., pp. 86-87, and India At The Death of Akbar, London, 1920 pp. 99 and 130-31.
 5. Gandī Mangal, I, p. 254. Sivayana: ed. Ishan Chandra Bose, Calcutta, 1310 B.S. pp. 70-71.

Since Bengal is primarily an agricultural country, it may be reasonably inferred that a vast number of people belonged to the peasantry. The Sūrya Purāna depicts a Hindu god adopting agriculture.¹ This may suggest that even the people of noble birth did not dislike agriculture as a profession. Vipradāsa who has given the picture of the Muslim peasantry of West Bengal, maintains that the cultivators had various economic positions. While some of them and possibly quite a large majority of them were land slaves, instances of big farmers engaging hundreds of labours were also not very infrequent.² Hindu farmers with vast landed estates, employing a large number of agricultural labours were common. The style in which the Hindu farmers lived in those days would compare well with the living standard of the zamīndārs of the modern age.³ In between the big farmers and the landless labours, there used to be another class of agriculturists who were supervisors of these labours and also men of influence and power.⁴ The cow boys⁵ who were sociologically in the pastoral stage seem to have been associated with the agricultural producers, for agriculture could hardly be possible without the help of the cows.

Although agriculture was the backbone of the economy of this country, it was surely of a primitive nature. Implements used in those days did not differ from those of our times. These included cattle, plough, yoke, scythe and others.⁶ Very often the cultivators had to depend on the mercy of rain. Irrigation system was not properly developed. Canals were possibly dug to bring water to the cultivable lands. The poor peasants used to borrow seeds from their rich neighbours or landlords. It was the general idea of the people that the cultivators were nourishing the people of the country by maintaining Lakṣmī at their houses.⁷

1. Sūrya Purāna: ed. Charu Chandra Banerjee, 1336 B.S., Calcutta, pp. 182-94.

2. Vipradāsa: Manasa-vijaya: ed. Sukumar Sen, Bibliotheca Indica, 1953, p. 63.

3. Vijaya Gupta: op.cit. p. 155; Vipradāsa: op.cit. pp. 63 and 66-67.

4. Vipradāsa: op.cit. p. 63.

5. They have been mentioned by Vijaya Gupta: op.cit. pp. 53-55 and also by Vipradāsa: op.cit. pp. 63-66.

6. Vipradāsa: op.cit. p. 63. The Sūrya Purāna, p. 184.

7. Sūrya Purāna, p. 185. Sivavara, pp. 68 and 72-73.

The deltaic region of Bengal which is proverbially fertile, used to produce numerous crops. Paddy was generally planted in the month of Śrāvāna and the reaping of harvest was possible in the month of Agrahāyana.¹ The Śūnya Purāna has thus referred to what is now a days called Aman paddy. But this was not the only kind of paddy, for Abū(Fazl informs us that it was "sown and reaped three times a year in the same piece of land with little injury to the crop." He has mentioned a special variety the stalk of which used to grow up with the gradual rise of water so that it could do no harm to the crop.² The names of the different kind of paddy have been mentioned in the Śūnya Purāna and the Sivāyana and the lists given by them seem to be exhaustive.³ It seems that these names were of a local character and they differed from place to place. In fact, rice was of various kinds. Abūl Fazl corroborates the information supplied by Bengali sources, when he says that a large vase would be filled up, "if a single grain of each kind were collected."⁴ There were other agricultural products among which cotton, sugarcane, ginger, long pepper, turmeric, betelnut, radish, pulses and lentil may be mentioned.⁵ The fruits which we find to-day were surely available in those days also. Some of them were mango, orange, lemon and banana.⁶ It will be futile to reproduce here the list of the products of Bengal found in the accounts left by the Chinese and European travellers who visited medieval Bengal.

The agriculturists had to face certain difficulties which seem to have been insurmountable. If there was any draught, they were sure to be undone. Those who were living in the territories of the petty land lords, had to depend on their mercy. We do not know what measures were adopted by the government to help the

-
1. Śūnya Purāna, p. 186.
 2. Āin-i-Akbarī Vol-II, p. 134.
 3. Śūnya Purāna, pp. 191-194; Sivāyana, p. 113.
 4. Āin, II, p. 134.
 5. Barbosa: op.cit., II, p. 145; Vipradāsa: op.cit., p. 149; Vijaya Gupta: op.cit., pp. 123, 130 and 132-135.
 6. Barbosa: op.cit., p. 147; Kavikānkan Candī: II, pp. 510, 511 and 518.

agriculturists to overcome these difficulties. If Kavikankan is to be relied upon, the cultivators used to enjoy, in times of natural calamities, various concessions from the local landlords such as the renewal of the patta, partial remission of land taxes and unrestricted purchase and sell of grains over which no governmental taxes were imposed.¹

II. Trade.

The sea-borne trade of Bengal which was in a flourishing state presupposes the growth of internal trade also about which nothing is known. The agricultural products and domestic animals which were numerous must have been sold and purchased in the local markets over which the foreign merchants do not seem to have had any direct control. Internal trade when compared with the extensive maritime commerce of this period, appears to be insignificant. The local merchants were probably supplying manufactured goods to the foreign merchants.

Barbosa found the coastal region overwhelmingly populated by the Muslims who had obviously taken to trade and commerce. Attracted by the largeness, wealth and climate of the city of Bengala, a large number of Arab, Persian, Abyssinian and Indian merchants had arrived there. They possessed great ships "after the fashion of Mecca" by which they were carrying on trade and commerce with the different parts of the world. They were carrying the numerous products of this country to "Charamandel, Malacca, Camatra, Peeguu, Cambaya and Ceilan".² Varthema refers to "the richest merchants" of the city of Banghella together with its cotton and silk stuffs which used to "go through all Turkey, through Syria, through Persia, through Arabia Felix, through Ethiopia, and through all India."³ Speaking about the volume of trade which

1. Op.cit., I, pp. 253-54.

2. Barbosa: op.cit., II, pp. 135-145.

3. The Travels of Ludovic^o Di Varthema, translated by John Winter Jones, Esq., F.S.A., and edited with notes by George Percy Badger; Hakluyt Society, London, 1863, p. 212.

Bengal possessed, Joao de Barros maintains that "the King of Bengalla alone held as much as he (Bahādur Shāh of Gujrāt) and the king of Narsinga (Vijaynagar) held jointly."¹ Thus the foreign travellers have referred to the glory of the maritime commerce which Bengal possessed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. We find a definite confirmation of these reports in the account of Mahuan, the Chinese traveller, who visited Bengal in the fifteenth century. He remarks, "the rich build ships, in which they carry on commerce with foreign nations; many are engaged in trade....."² Almost all the Manasa Mangala including those of Vijaya Gupta and Vipradāsa have devoted a large number of pages to the description of the maritime activities of the heroes depicted therein. Even if we make sufficient allowance for the poetic fancy and hyperbolic display of imagination exercised by these poets, it seems almost fairly established that Bengal had established a net-work of commercial ties with the different parts of the world. According to Ralph Fitch, the cotton cloth and rice of Sunargāon were exported to India, Ceylon, Pegu, Malacca, Sumatra and other countries.³ Marco Polo and Ibn Batūta have witnessed the commercial progress and prosperity of medieval Bengal. Again Kavikākan has said that the merchants from Bengal had reached Ceylon and Gujrāt via Utkal and Karamandal coast and that Magadh, Mathura, Vijoynagar and Marāthā were not unknown to them.⁴

An analysis of the accounts left by the foreign travellers shows that the exports of Bengal included rice, wheat, cotton cloth, silk fabrics and sugar.⁵ These sold at an incredibly higher price in the foreign countries. "Cloths which sell on the spot for twenty-two shillings and six pence fetch ninety shillings ⁱⁿ at Calicut," says Vas-Co-da, Gama.⁶ Similar views have also been expressed by Barbosa. He says, "a quintal of sugar would bring in one thousand and three hundred reis in Malabar,

1. De Asia: op.cit., p. 246.

2. The Account of Mahuan: J. R. A. S. G. B. I., 1895, p. 530.

3. Ralph Fitch: Purchas His Pilgrimes, Glasgow, 1905, p. 185.

4. Kavikākan-Candī, Part-I, pp. 224-230 and Part-II, p. 763.

5. Barbosa: op.cit. II, pp. 145-147; Vasco-da Gama: quoted by Compos: op.cit., p. 25. Ralf Fitch: op.cit., p. 185; Varthema: op.cit., p. 212.

6. Quoted by Compos: op.cit., p. 25.

a Choutar of the best kind six hundred reis, a sinabafa two cruzados, and a piece of the best beatilha three hundred reis; and thus those who carried them thither made great profits by selling them".¹ In view of the Portuguese character of the weight and currency referred to here, it is difficult to ascertain the prices of the commodities mentioned by him. But an attempt may be made to get a rough idea about them. A quintal was generally equivalent to 128 Lbs.² A kind of Portuguese coin called cruzado was worth 420 reis which amounted to 9 shillings according to the value ascribed by Yule to the reis in the sixteenth century.³ The prices of the commodities exported may be converted into modern money and the valuation of the current prices may also be drawn up in accordance with the modern standard of weight. This is shown in the following table :

Commodities.	Portuguese weight or measure.	Modern weight.	Portuguese price.	Modern price.
Sugar	1 quintal	128 Lbs.	300 reis	2 1 - 8 sh. approximately.
Chautar (cloth)	1 piece (measuring 3 or 4 by 20 Portuguese Yds).	-- --	600 reis	13 sh. approximately.
Sinabafa (cloth)	1 piece ,,	-- --	2 cruzados or 840 reis	18 sh. approximately.
Beatilha (cloth)	1 piece ,,	-- --	300 reis	6 1/2 sh. approximately.

It must be mentioned here that these were the prices of the commodities of Bengal sold at Melabar. The prices of these articles must have been much lower in Bengal. Although no precise idea can be formed about their prices in Bengal, a tentative suggestion may be made here. The statement of Vasco da Gama shows that the cloth which would sell

1. Barbosa: op.cit., II, pp. 146-147.
2. Campos: op.cit., p. 27, foot note; See also The Book of Duarte Barbosa, I, p. 157, foot note I.
3. Campos: op.cit., p. 33, foot note. The Book of Duarte Barbosa, I, p. 65, foot note I; J. Gerson Da Cunha: Indo-Portuguese Numismatics, Bombay, 1880, p. 22.

in Bengal for 22 shillings could fetch 90 shillings in Calicut. So the ratio between its prices at Calicut and in Bengal is 4:1 approximately. We do not know if this proportion applied to other articles as well.

Of the imports of Bengal, Abul Fazl mentions salt, diamonds, emeralds, pearls, cornelians and agates¹ -- a list which does not materially differ from that obtaining in the Manasa-Mangal poems of the time. In a subsequent section, we have shown that Bengal had numerous industrial products some of which must have been exported to foreign countries.

A very prominent feature of the economic life of Bengal was trade in eunuchs and slaves alluded to by Barbosa, Ibn Batūta and Marco Polo.² The Muslim merchants used to buy native boys and sell them after castrating them and giving them proper training and placed them sometimes in charge of their harem and estates. Some of them rendered valuable service to the Muslim Sultāns as governors and Captains.³

The account of Barbosa taken together with that of Varthema shows that there were two principal sea-routes in those days. One of them led in the south-eastern direction touching the countries like Burma, Arakan, Pegu, Ava, Siam, Malācca, Sumatra, Sunda, Java, the Spice Islands, Celebes, Borneo and Champa and extending upto China.⁴ The other route led in the south-western direction passing Orissa, Charamandal, Ceylon and Malabar coast, and reaching Arabia and Abyssinia via the Persian Gulf and the Arabian sea.⁵ Entering Bengal at the point of Chittagong, sea-going ships could easily go as far as Sonārgāon, following the course of the river Meghna. This route was followed by Ibn Batūta and also by the Chinese ambassadors who visited the court of the Sultāns of the early fifteenth century Bengal.⁶

1. Ain, II, p. 135.

2. Barbosa: op.cit., II, p. 147; Rehla, p. 235. The Book Ser Marco Polo: 3rd ed. Yule and Cardier, London, 1903, Vol-II, p. 115.

3. Barbosa: op.cit., II, p. 147.

4. Ibid., pp. 148-215. Ibn Batūta (Rehla, p. 241) and Barbosa: (op.cit., II, p. 145) noticed the presence of Junks or Chinese ships in the rivers of Bengal. It seems fairly certain that she had trade relations with Bengal. As a matter of fact, her ships visited the principal islands of the Malay Archipelago, India, Arabia and the Persian Gulf. See Barbosa: op.cit., II, pp. 214-15; foot note.

5. Barbosa: op.cit., II, pp. 1-145. Varthema: op.cit., p. 212.

6. Rehla, pp. 235 and 241; Coins and Chronology, pp. 146-47; Chinese Accounts: op.cit. pp. 117, 120-21, 123.

This shows how abundantly the products of Bengal were pouring into these countries. The market for her goods extended thus from Abyssinia to China. One may notice in this connection the comparative insignificance of the land routes along which Bengali goods could pass out of this country. One explanation seems plausible here. Bengal was politically isolated from her neighbours with whom her relation was far from friendly. Probably the hostilities of their rulers prevented the Musain Shāhīz from opening any land routes across these regions. In fact, maritime commerce was the main feature of the economic life of the then Bengal.

Bengal had several sea ports and towns which greatly facilitated her sea-borne trade. Saptagrāma which had replaced the ancient Tamralipti continued to enjoy a unique position down to the middle of the sixteenth century. It figures quite prominently in medieval Bengali literature. The poet Vipradāsa who was the contemporary of 'Alāuddīn Husain Shāh has nicely described the religious sanctity and economic affluence enjoyed by Saptagram.¹ Vradāvanadāsa, the author of the Caitanya-bhāgavat has incidentally referred to the merchant class of Saptagram.² The description of Ralph Fitch clearly shows that this city was frequented by the Arab merchants as late as the last quarter of the sixteenth century.³ Caesar Frederick who visited Bengal in 1567 says, "In the Fort of Satagan every yeere they lade thirtie or five and thirtie ships great and small, with Rice, Cloth of Bombast of divers sorts, Lacca, great abundance of sugar, Mirabelans dried and preserved, long Pepper, Oyle of Zerseline, and many other sorts of merchandise".⁴ In fact, the ancient city of Saptagrāma was a great seaport in those days. Considering its commercial importance, the Portuguese used to call it Porto Piqueno. In the middle of the sixteenth century, the river bed near Saptagrāma dried up so that Joao de Barros

1. Op.cit., pp. 142-43.

2. Op.cit., antya, V, p. 361.

3. Purchas His Pilgrimes, X, p. 182.

4. Ibid., p. 114.

found this port "not so convenient for the entry and departure of ships".¹ Satgaon had thus to gradually yield place to Hugli which began to be frequented by the Portuguese. Sumargāon which was visited by Ibn Batūta, Mahuan and Ralf Fitch used to export rice and cotton cloth to the different parts of the world. Chittagong held a precarious position in the commercial life of Bengal, for its possession was being disputed by the rulers of Bengal, Tipperah and Arakan. But it was of unique importance to the Portuguese who subsequently called it Porto Grande. The lucrative positions held by Chittagong and Saptagrama attracted the covetous eyes of the Portuguese who began to control their custom-houses towards the end of the Musalm Shahi period. Saptagram, Sumargāon and Chittagong have been clearly located in the map of Joao de Barros. It was possibly towards the end of the sixteenth century only that Śrīpur which appears on the maps of later Cartographers like Von den Broucke and Rennell became a prominent trade-centre. One can easily realise the role played by these prosperous cities, with their rich and extensive hinterlands, in the economic life of the then Bengal. They maintained the economic and cultural links between Bengal and the distant parts of the then world.

It may be mentioned in this connection that the sea-borne trade of the then Bengal had completely gone out of the control of the local merchants and it was being thoroughly controlled by the Arab and Persian merchants who were enjoying almost a complete monopoly in the navigation of the Eastern seas. They were maintaining oceanic communication between Bengal and the Persian Gulf area and were carrying the abundant products of this country to the East as far as China and also to Arabia and Abyssinia. They were subsequently overpowered by the Portuguese and other European traders. Barbosa's statement that the Arabs and Persians were largely found in the cities of Bengal indicates that they had not yet made room for the Portuguese whose commercial activities gained momentum in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The period between 1517 and 1538 is marked by a significant conflict between the Sultans of Bengal and the Portuguese merchants who were

1. Da Lains Op. cit., p. 244.

persistently endeavouring to gain a foot-hold in this country. The year 1536 is significant in the commercial history of this country, for in this year Martin Afonso De Melo was allowed by Ghiyās Uddin Mahmūd Shāh III, the then ruling Sultān, to build factories in Chittagong and Satgāon and control the custom houses of these sea-ports. They received grants of land which eventually gave them rent-receiving interest in this country.¹ Muslim Shāhī Bengal thus marked the beginning of that inevitable historical process which eventually put an end to the Arab supremacy in the field of maritime commerce and which accelerated the growth of the Portuguese as a European trading nation in India. The Arabs did not completely disappear from the field, nor do the Portuguese activities seem to have assumed any significant magnitude. The Portuguese settlements had their proper growth at a subsequent period.

III. Industry

Intense commercial activities discussed above presuppose the growth of industry in this country. As a matter of fact, Bengal made considerable progress in respect of industries like textile products, sugar, metal-work, stone-carving and ship-building.

The variety and richness of the textile manufacture of Bengal were sufficient to attract the attention of the foreign travellers who have given valuable information about the textiles that obtained in the country. Barbosa noticed different kinds of fine cloth such as Estravantes used as headdress by the Portuguese ladies and as turbans by the Arabs and the Persians, Mamomas, Duguagas, Choutares, Sinabafa and Beatilha, each of these pieces measuring 3 by 20 or 4 by 20 Portuguese yards.² Although it is difficult to identify these fabrics, it may be tentatively suggested

1. Supra, Ch. I, pp. 58-59. Da Asia; op.cit., pp. 246-48. Faria Y Souza : op.cit., pp. 220, 314, 417-20.

2. Op.cit., II, pp. 145-47.

here that these terms stand respectively for Sirband, Malmal or Maslin, Dugazi cloth, Ghadar, Sinaband and Butidar.¹ Varthema who came to Bengal in the first decade of the sixteenth century, mentions varieties of fabric such as Bairam, Mamone, Ligati, Giantar, Doasar and Sinabaff,² most of them being phonetically similar to those found by Barbosa. Chinese travellers have mentioned several kinds of fine cotton fabric known as Pi-chih, Man-cheti, Sha-na-kiah, Hin-pei-tung-te-li, Sha-ta-urh and Mo-hei-mo-leh.³ Of other foreign travellers who have incidentally referred to the cotton fabrics of medieval Bengal, mention may be made of Marco Polo, Ibn Batuta and Master Caesar Frederick.⁴ Abul Fazl informs us that the Sarkar of Barbakabad produced "a fine cloth called Gangajal" and that the sarkar of Sunargan used to manufacture "a species of muslin very fine and in great quantity".⁵

Jute fabric constituted another variety of textile goods. The terms like Patneta and Patera Paera⁶ which frequently obtain in the Bengali literature of the time, clearly show that these fabrics, were manufactured, like many other varieties, from jute. If Abul Fazl is to be relied upon,⁷ jute cloth was produced in the sarkar of Ghoraghat.

Silk industry appears to have made considerable headway in the period under review. While Mahuan refers to silk-worms and silk fabrics of the fifteenth century Bengal,⁸ Varthema mentions silk stuffs as one of the principal exports of this country.⁹ It seems that sarkar Ghoraghat was quite famous for its silk products.¹⁰

-
1. ibid, pp. 145-46. See the translator's notes.
 2. Op.cit, p. 212.
 3. Mahuan's Account of Bengal: J.R.A.S.G.B.I., 1895, pp. 531-32. For an identification of these terms, see John Beames's notes, ibid, p. 899. These names appear also in other Chinese accounts translated by Dr. Bagchi: op.cit, pp. 119-20, 125-26 and 132.
 4. The Book of Ser Marco Polo. 3rd ed. by Yule and Cordier, London, 1903, II, p.115 Rehla, p. 235 and Furchas His Pilgrimages, X, p. 114.
 5. Ain, II, p. 136.
 6. Vipradasa: op.cit, p. 115 and Ramayana of Krttivāsa: ed. D.C.Sen, Calcutta, 1916, p. 3.
 7. Ain, II, p. 136.
 8. J.R.A.S.G.B.I., 1895, p. 532.
 9. J.R.A.S.G.B.I., 1895, p. 532.
 - (9) Op.cit, p. 212.
 - (10) Ain II, p. 136

Thus it is fairly certain that Bengal was enjoying much prominence as a centre of textile manufacture. Cotton produced in the extensive fields of the country,¹ was generally rendered into finished goods by the local artisans about whose relation with the local and foreign merchants, nothing is clearly known. Clothes were generally "spun on wheels by men and woven by them".² Cottage industry that flourished in the country not only met the requirements of the local people, but also enabled the local merchants to export various fabrics to the different parts of the world.³

The process of the manufacture of sugar seems to have been widely known in the country. The sugar that was prepared here from locally available cane, was extremely white and of good qualities. The people did not know how to crystallize it. So wrapping it "as a powder in parcels of untanned leather, well sewn," they used to export it to the different countries including Malabar and Cambay where it sold at a high price.⁴

Metallic industry must have flourished at least in some parts of the country. Abūl Fazl says that there were iron mines in the sarkar of Bāzūhā.⁵ Although we do not know how far these mines were workable, it seems fairly certain that blacksmiths and goldsmiths constituted distinct economic classes by themselves. The agriculturists of Bengal must have needed the services of blacksmiths for manufacturing and repairing agricultural implements. Mahuan noticed such commodities as painted ware, basins, steel guns, cups, knives and scissors selling in the open market.⁶ Foreign accounts and Bengali literature give vivid description of women wearing gold ornaments of a fairly wide variety.⁷ Firishta tells us that the

1. Barbosa: op.cit., II, p. 145 and Varthema: op.cit., p. 212.

2. Barbosa: op.cit., II, p. 146. Varthema: op.cit., p. 214.

3. ibid., pp. 145-47.

4. ibid., 146. See also Varthema: op.cit., p. 212, and Ibn Batūta: Rehla, p. 235.

5. Ain, II, p. 136.

6. J. R. A. S. G. B. I., 1895, p. 532.

7. Infra, Ch. VIII, p. 267. Chinese accounts in Visvabharati Annala, I, pp. 122, 124 and 132. Barbosa: op.cit., II, p. 143.

wealthy people of the then Bengal not only used gold vessels, but also considered it to be an honour to display them in occasional social gatherings.¹ Allowing for obvious exaggerations which these accounts are likely to contain, it may be reasonably inferred that jewellery constituted a profession for a considerable number of metal-workers.

Stone-carvers' art and craft appear to have attained to a considerable degree of perfection. Numerous Husain Shāhi inscriptions with their elegant styles of writing and beauty of execution² eloquently speak of the artistic skill of the stone-engravers. The use of white marbles in the Husain Shāhi buildings of Gaud and Pandua together with the representation of terracotta art on them³ undoubtedly testifies to the existence of a group of stone-cutters in the then Bengal. The huge brick-work which was involved in the construction of the numerous buildings of the period in question,⁴ had provided occupation to a good number of brick-workers.

Another minor local product was mat which often resembled "wooven selk".⁵ Bengali literature of the time makes frequent mention of lohit-pati or red mat and sital-pati or cool mat.⁶ White paper manufactured from the bark of a tree looked as glossy as deer-skin.⁷ We do not know if the manufacture of mat and paper had assumed the nature and form of any industry.

Ship-building seems to have developed into a considerable industry. Ocean-going ships were made in Bengal.⁸ The extensive forests of the sarkar of Bāzuha used to supply "long and thick timbers" with which masts could be made.⁹

1. Op.cit. II, p. 301.

2. infra, ch. VII, pp. 230-35.

3. infra, ch. VII, p. 245 ff.

4. infra, ch. VII, pp. 240 ff.

5. Ain, II, p. 139.

6. Kavikankar-candi, I, p. 259 and Vijaya Gupta: op.cit., p. 123.

7. See Mahuan's account in J. R. A. S. G. B. I., 1895, p. 532. See also Dr. Bagchi's Eng. tran. of Chinese accounts, op.cit., p. 126.

8. Mahuan's account: op.cit., p. 530. (9) Ain, II, p. 136.

113 -

Thus it is evident that the extensive commerce of the country greatly rested on the various industrial products which Bengal possessed in the period in question.

IV. The Medium of Exchange

With the progress of civilisation, the system of barter began to gradually recede into the background yielding place to money. The Mangal poems of our period, of course, state that it was universally prevailing in this country. This view seems hardly tenable. Mahuan found silver coins called Tangka and sea-shells or cowries in wide circulation in Bengal. He says, "All large business transactions are carried on with this coin, but for small purchases they use a sea-shell called by the foreigners Kao-li".¹ In the face of this categorical statement about the currency of the fifteenth century Bengal, the information supplied by the vernacular literature can hardly be credited. It seems that the poets have simply reproduced their memory of the remote past. In fact, the mint towns of the Husain Shahi rulers, which were many in number, issued coins of various size and weight. The cowries ~~of~~ ^{denomination,} which represented money of the lowest ~~denomination,~~ were in circulation down to the eighteenth century and their use lingered in rural areas till the end of the nineteenth century. The use of the cowries may be explained here. The commodities were probably extremely cheap and the people did not have to use even silver coins (which were undoubtedly of a higher value) in buying the necessaries of their lives. So the cowries could be used most conveniently in day-to-day affairs. Thus the use of coins must have been very restricted. They could be used, as rightly pointed out by Mahuan, only in large scale transactions which inland and foreign trade involved.

1. Mahuan's Account of Bengal: J. R. A. S. G. B. I., 1895, p. 530. This information is available in other Chinese sources, such as Ying Yai Shenglan and Sing Yang Ch'ao Tien lu. Visva-Bharati Annals, 1945, I, pp. 117, 123 and 125.

The Husain Shāhī rulers issued numerous silver coins and only a few gold coins. Copper coin was totally absent. Out of a large number of coins of pre-Mughal Bengal discovered so far, we have got only a single copper coin of the reign of Bārbak Shāh. It seems that they had hardly any necessity of issuing copper coins, for it was being represented by cowries.

There is a sudden influx of silver coins in the Husain Shāhī period. One may wonder at the richness of the variety of these coins, which seems to have been absent in the earlier period. This undoubtedly suggests that there was a considerable increase in the volume of foreign trade in this period. There are three types of silver coins of the Husain Shāhī rulers, the average weight of which is 160 grains, 60 grains and 40 grains respectively. Thus the ratio between the weight of the first and the second types is 2:1 which is also the proportionate relation between the weight of the second and the third types. The ratio between the weight of the first and the third types is 4:1. While the first type is represented by numerous issues whose weight varies from 148 to 170 grains,¹ coins belonging to the second and the third types are comparatively smaller in number.² It seems that these three types of coins stand for the full, one-half and one-fourth rupee respectively. The maximum weight of the coin or coins issued by each of the Sultāns of the period under review is shown in the following table :³

Sultāns.	Maximum weight.	Date.	M i n t.	R e f e r e n c e
Husain	167 grains	899 A.H.	The Treasury	Catalogue, II, pt. II, No. 181, p. 174, pl. V.
Nasrat	165 ,,	925 A.H.	Husainābād and Fathābād	ibid, No. 207, p. 177 and supplement to the Catalogue, II, No. 186, p. 66
Firūz	164 ,,	939 A.H.	Husainābād	Catalogue, II, No. 220, p. 179, pl. VI
Ghiyāsuddīn Mahmūd	170 ,,	935 A.H.	Husainābād	Supplement to the Catalogue, II, No. 216, p. 70.

1. H.N.Wright: Catalogue, II, pt. II, pp. 172-80, Nos. 158-228; Lanepoole: Op.cit., pp. 45-48, 50, 52 & 54; Shamsuddin Ahmad: Op.cit., pp. 63-72, Nos. 159-91, 193-226; Botham: Op.cit., pp. 166-75; Botham & Friel: Op.cit., 148-61; Stapleton: Provincial Cabinet of Coins, East Bengal and Assam: Op.cit., pp. 134-37. These coins vary also in size.
2. Botham: Op.cit., pp. 173-74, Nos. 9-11 & 14; pl. II, Nos. 2-4; Botham and Friel: Op.cit. p. 158, Nos. 17-20; Shamsuddin Ahmad: Op.cit., p. 66, No. 192.
3. The coin of Mahmūd referred to in the table was issued before he became the ruler of Bengal. This problem has been discussed elsewhere. Supra, ch. II, p. 66 and Infra, Appendix-A. The maximum weight of his regular issues is 168 grains. H.N. Wright: Catalogue, II, p. 190, No. 225. Shamsuddin Ahmad: Op.cit., p. 71 No. 223

The average weight of the coins cited in the above table being approximately 166 grains Troy, they significantly differ from the Delhi prototypes under the Lodis, the standard weight of which was generally 145 grains.¹

Gold was also coming ^{to} this country as a result of her foreign trade. Two gold coins of the reign of Husain Shah have been discovered,² whereas we have found only five gold coins³ of the whole pre-Husain Shahi Muslim Bengal. The weight of these two Husain Shahi coins is 176.4 and 159 grains respectively. The average weight of these coins is, therefore, 167 grains approximately. The ratio between the value of gold and that of silver can hardly be ascertained, for material at our disposal on this point is not at all sufficient. Not a single gold coin of the successors of Husain Shah has been discovered. The scarcity of gold coins which we notice in this period, may be explained here. Two suggestions are possible. The later Husain Shahis were probably depositing gold coins in the treasury with a view to meeting any exigency that might arise out of the state of war existing between Bengal and her neighbours. Again, it might be possible that gold was over-valued. In other words, the face value of the gold coin was less than its intrinsic value so that the people melted it down in order to get profit out of it. In that case, silver was cheaper than gold and silver coins which represented bad money, drove away good money out of circulation. But Gresham's Law does not seem to satisfactorily explain the situation in Bengal. We have already pointed out that commodities were extremely cheap in those days. This is what we find in the account of Ibn Batuta who had the opportunity of noticing the prices of certain articles obtaining in the then Bengal.⁴ Because of this cheapness, people could purchase their necessaries with cowries representing money of the lowest denomination. This

-
1. H. N. Wright: Catalogue, II, pt. I, p. 11.
 2. H. N. Wright: Catalogue, II, No. 167, p. 172, Pl. V; Lanepool: op.cit., Nos. 108 and 122, pp. 44 and 47, Pls. V and VI.
 3. H. N. Wright: Catalogue, II, pt. II, Nos. 9, 23(a) and 152; pp. 147, 150 and 169; Pls. I and IV; Lanepool: op.cit., No. 81, p. 34, Pl. IV; Bhattashahi: Habim H. Rahman Collection, No. 119.
 4. Rahla, pp. 234-35. Coins and Chronology, p. 144.

explains why gold coins were issued in small numbers their use must have been quite rare. They seem to have served the purpose of a souvenir, for 'Alauddin Hussain Shah issued such coins commemorating his accession to the throne of Bengal and signalling his victory over the rulers of Orissa and Bihar. Thus the limited use of gold coins which we have noticed above, may be seen to suggest the scarcity of gold in Bengal, for her foreign trade must have brought to her certain quantity of gold and silver.

5. The economic classes and their inter-relationships.

While dealing this discussion, it is necessary to mention the different social and economic groups which constituted the bulk of the Bengali population. We have already seen that the cultivators who were directly connected with the production of wealth could be divided into several categories. That the big farmers and landless labourers were not absent in our period. The weavers and the producers of different kinds of fabrics and silk clothes were another major group of the Bengali population in rural Bengal. They were economically self-sufficient, if not also affluent. Vocationally, they did not have anything to do with agriculture. Suburban, the Muslim ruler of Bengal used to purchase all his necessaries including sweet products and arum. The purchase of these vegetable products, signified two features. The weaver community was so much industrialized that they did not have trouble to produce even these common vegetables for their kitchen requirement. Secondly, they might have been rich enough to buy these from market rather than producing them themselves. Purchase of luxuries by a ruler for his wife only indicates the comparative affluence of the weaver community which was certainly quite natural in those days when Bengal was an exporter

One of these coins issued in 899 A.H. which is Hussain's first regnal year, weighs 176.4 grains. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, p. 46. Another coin dated 919 A.H./1513 A.D., contains legends relating to the conquest of Garu, Kanta, Orissa and Ajmer. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, p. 25.

explains why gold coins were issued in small number. Their use must have been quite rare. They seem to have served the purpose of souvenir, for 'Alauddin Husain Shah issued such coins commemorating his accession to the throne of Bengal and signalling his victory over the rulers of Orissa and Kāmrūp.¹ Thus the limited use of gold coins which we have noticed above, does not seem to suggest the scarcity of gold in Bengal, for her foreign trade must have brought to her certain quantity of gold and silver.

V. The economic classes and their inter-relations.

Before concluding this discussion, it is necessary to mention the different socio-economic groups which constituted the bulk of the Bengali population. We have already seen that the cultivators who were directly connected with the production of wealth could be divided into several categories and that the big farmers and landless labours were not absent in our period. The weavers and the producers of different cotton fabrics and silk clothe were numerous. Weavers, it seems, formed a major section of the Muslim population in rural Bengal.² They were economically self-sufficient, if not also affluent. Vocationally, they did not have anything to do with agriculture. Subadhan, the Muslim Zola in the Manasā Mangal used to purchase all his necessaries including sweet potatoes and arum. The purchase of these vegetable products, signified two features. The weaver community was so much industrialised that they did not take trouble to produce even these common vegetables for their kitchen requirement. Secondly, they might have been rich enough to buy these from market rather than producing them themselves. Purchase of luxuries by Subadhan for his wife only indicates the comparative affluence of the weaver community which was certainly quite natural in those days when Bengal was an exporter

-
1. One of these coins issued in 899 A.H., which is Husain's first regnal year, weighs 176.4 grains. Lanepool: op.cit., p. 44. Another coin dated 919 A.H./1513 A.D., contains legends relating to the conquest of Kāmrū, Kānta, Orissa and Jājmagar. Supra. p. 17.
 2. Vijaya Gupta: op.cit., pp. 59-61. Vipradāsa: op.cit., p. 80-

of cloth to the various parts of the world. The female folk of their community did not have to help them in their work.¹ It may be inferred here that the weavers were so much self-sufficient that they did not feel the necessity of dragging their women folk from the management of house-hold affairs to the economic struggle of life. The looms were supplied by a group of people called Sānakar² or maker of looms, in Kavikāṅkan's time. These people seem to have constituted a minor economic class. We have already noticed the growth of metallic industry which must have involved the labour of various classes such as goldsmiths and baloksmiths. The local merchants as depicted in the contemporary vernacular literature, had not yet gone up in the social ladder and was yet a member of the lower class. It is highly probable that these people served as the connecting link between the producers of industrial goods and the foreign traders.

The Brahmins adopted teaching as profession. Vipradāsa's description of the Brahminical society of Saptagrāma clearly indicates that they had devoted themselves to the worship of gods, teaching and learning philosophy and that poverty and misery could never touch their lives.³ In fact, some of the Brahmins of our period enjoyed much wealth and influence. The Kayasthas were proverbially the clerical group of people. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja has mentioned how assiduously these people were serving the ruling class.⁴ The Vaidyas were traditionally dealing ^{following} with medical practices. Thus a notable section of the Hindu population being composed of Brahmins, Kayasthas and Vaidyas, the lower strata of the society was then, as now, composed of professional classes of cultivators, fishermen, woodcutters, potters, barbers, carpenters, milkmen, oḅhas (snake-charmers who also cured snake bites) ghatakas or match-makers and astrologers.⁵ These classes,

1. Barbosa: op.cit. II, p. 146.

2. Candī-Māṅgal. I, 261.

3. Op.cit. p. 143.

4. Gītānya Caritāmṛta, p. 197. See also Vijaya Gupta; op.cit. p. 4.

5. Vijaya Gupta: op.cit. pp. 4, 71-76, 152-155, 165-167. Kavikāṅkan-Candī, I, pp. 269-73.

originally formed on an economic basis, seem to have assumed the nature of castes. A Musalman priestly class, the mollas had by that time grown in the society whose function was to preside over the religio-social ceremonies of the Musalmans, slaughtering fowls and giving amulets and who, therefore, were at least regarded as men conversant with religious scriptures and formalities.¹ Kavikānkan has given an exhaustive account of the numerous economic classes of the sixteenth century Bengal. It is highly probable that some of these classes, both Hindu and Muslim, existed in the Husain Shahi period also, although the names and nomenclatures which have been applied to them by the poet, might have been unknown in our period. The various professional groups mentioned by us clearly indicate that the then Bengali Society had grown to its full economic stature.

It is a general fashion to divide the people of a country into producing and consuming classes. But this classification is entirely unscientific, for the producers^s are also consumers and those whom one may call consumers may help the production of wealth at least indirectly. One may regard the high government officials of our period as belonging to a purely consuming class. But we should not forget that these officers produced an atmosphere congenial for the production of wealth, by maintaining peace and order in the country and running on the administration efficiently. Brahmins, teachers and the local landlords were no doubt enjoying wealth within their respective jurisdictions; but their indirect contribution to the production of wealth is not negligible, although it may be less significant than that of the direct producers. The rulers and governors directly helped the circulation of wealth by employing a good number of architects to carry on public works and also by giving patronage to several poets and scholars.

Barbosa who has described the lives of the upper class and the lower class is completely silent on the condition of the middle class people. This silence does not preclude the possibility of the existence of that class. Moreland has noticed "the comparative insignificance" of the middle class people in Akbar's India. He has, of course, confessed that this theory does not possibly favourably

1. Vijaya Gupta: op.cit. p. 55. Candi Mangal, I, p. 260.

apply to Bengal.¹ It seems that there was a sound middle class in our period. While the upper class was composed of the high officials and landlords, the lower class included the professional groups like cultivators, weavers, and other minor economic grades of people. The landlords constituted a landed aristocracy and such were distinct from the high officials. The middle class was composed of merchants and traders who had accumulated wealth, and of the Brahmins and teachers whose condition does not seem to have been miserable. This broad classification was undoubtedly based on their respective economic strength.

VI. Conditions of the People

It is very difficult to ascertain the economic condition of the general people living in Bengal in the period under consideration. Foreign travellers give us a rosy picture of the life of medieval Bengal. Thus the fourteenth century Chinese traveller, Wang Ta-Yuan, enthusiastically remarks, "These people owe all their tranquility and prosperity to themselves, for its source lies in their devotion to agriculture whereby a land originally covered with jungle has been reclaimed by their unremitting toil in tilling and planting. 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'en-chiang (Palembang) and equal those of Chao-we (Java)".² Another Chinese account contains the following lines :

"Bengal is rich and civilised. To our ambassadors they presented gold basins, gold girdles, gold flagons, and gold bowls and to our vice-ambassador the same articles in silver. To our officials of the ministry of foreign affairs, they presented golden bells and long gowns of white hemp and silk. Our soldiers got silver coins. If they had not been rich, how could they do it in such an

1. Morelands: India At The Death Of Akbar, pp. 26-27.

2. Visva-bharati Annals, 1945, Pt. I, p. 99.

Although Bengal was a land of plenty in respect of abundance and cheapness of agricultural products,¹ the cultivators do not seem to have enjoyed an enviable position. The state demand which was, in some cases at least, half of their crops in addition to other governmental charges,² appears so high that it was quite likely to have caused hardship to them. The prevalence of the institution of slavery indicates the presence of poverty among certain sections of people. Barbosa informs us that the "Moorish merchants" used to "travel up country to buy Heathen boys from their parents"³ who must have been poverty-stricken. Pictures of poverty obtain in Bengali literature of the time. Vallavācārya, a Brahmin of Navadvīpa, was so poor that he could afford to give only five myrobalans to the bride on the occasion of his daughter's marriage, while Śrīdhara, another poor Brahmin of the same locality, was asked by Caitanya to earn livelihood by worshipping lower class goddesses like Candī and Manasā.⁴ Again Kāvīkaṅkan devotes a considerable section of his poem to the description of the poverty-stricken condition of Fullarā through out the course of the year.⁵ These ~~glimpses~~^{glimpses} of the condition of the common people indicate a position of sharp contrast between the upper and the lower grades of population. The evils of poverty must have been mitigated to a considerable extent by the very nature of the necessaries of their lives, which were quite limited.

-
1. Behla, pp. 234-35; Wang Ta-Yuan's account quoted above. History of Bengal, II, pp. 101-102.
 2. infra, P. 100.
 3. Op.cit., II, p. 147.
 4. Caitanya-bhāgavat, ādi, IX, p. 60 and X, p. 72.
 5. Op.cit., I, pp. 199-202.

Chapter - IV

The Religious Life

The religious life of the period had a number of distinct elements such as Islām, Vaiṣṇavism, Tantrikism and the Manasā, Māth and Dharma cults. In this chapter, an attempt has been made to understand the general nature of each of these religions. The essential features of some of these religious systems, particularly the minor cults, must have remained unchanged in the periods preceding and succeeding the Husain Shāhī rule.

I. Islām

Islām in its simple and austere aspect appears to have characterized the life of a large number of people. Muslims in general were religious and probably orthodox. Literary and epigraphic sources indicate that offering prayers regularly, keeping the Ramazān fast tenaciously, reading the Qurān together with other religious scriptures, paying the poor-rate and going on pilgrimage to Mecca, were quite common practices with them.¹ The Mullā and the Qāzī as depicted in the vernacular literature of the time, seem to have been extremely orthodox in their religious beliefs and ways of life. All that we can gather from these stray materials is the picture of a strict life led obviously in accordance with the rules of Sunnī Islām. Viewed from this angle of vision, the religious aspect of the Muslim life of the then Bengal, did not differ much from that obtaining in other parts of the Muslim world.

1. Most of the inscriptions of this period discovered so far, were fixed to the walls of mosques which were probably numerous. It speaks of the religious mentality of the people. Pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina is clearly mentioned in the Babā Salih inscription of Sunārgāon, dated 911 A.H./1505 A.D. J. A. S. B., 1973, p. 283. For the mention of Ṣalāt (prayer) and Zakat (poor-rate), see another early sixteenth century inscription, I. H. Q., 1950, p. 183. For the orthodox religious life of the Muslim, as depicted by the Hindu poets, see Vipradāsa: Op.cit., pp. 67-68 and 143; Mavikānkan Candī, I, pp. 259-60

But the popular Islam does not seem to have been free from accretions of an amazing nature. The writers of the Mangal poems tell us that some of the influential Muslims used to worship the snake goddess Manasā out of fear for snake-bite.¹ It was probably a result of the Hindu influence on the Muslims. Nasrat Shah constructed a building in order to preserve therein the Qadam Rasūl or the footprint of the prophet.² But veneration of the prophet's footprint does not find support in orthodox Islam. We have shown in the succeeding chapter³ how the Muslim mystics of the time had brought a wide variety of tantrik and yogic ideas and customs to the fold of Islam. Syed Sultan used to believe in the union of the Lord with the Ādyā Sakti or Primordial goddess, to be effected in the physical body⁴ -- a principle hardly compatible with the Islamic idea of monotheism. The idea of Ādi Deva or the primordial god and Ādyā-Sakti or the primordial goddess, obtaining in most of the mystic cults of medieval Bengal, appears to be a modified version of the Sāṅkhya conception of Puruṣa (the unchanging principle of pure consciousness) and Prakṛti (the primordial cosmic substance), who are regarded as the underlying principles of the cosmic evolution.⁵ "Freedom in yoga is Kaivalya, or absolute independence. It is not a mere negation, but is the eternal life of the Puruṣa, when it is freed from the fetters of Prakṛti."⁶ Syed Sultan accepted the doctrine of the primordial male and the primordial female possibly under the influence of the mystic cults that flourished in the then Bengal.⁷ Even if we reject the popular story that Husain Shah was responsible for the introduction of the worship of Satya Pīr,⁸

1. It is narrated in these sources that two brothers named Hasan and Husain worshipped Manasā. Vipra Dās: op.cit., pp. 84-86; Vijaya Gupta: op.cit., pp. 54-61.

2. infra, ch. VII, pp. 243-45.

3. infra, ch. V, section II, pp. 155-74.

4. infra, ch. V, p. 159.

5. Dr. Shashibhusan Das Gupta: Obscure Religious Cults As Background of Bengali Literature, Calcutta, 1946, pp. 264-65 and 379-389.

6. S. Radhakrishnan: Indian Philosophy, Vol-II, London and New York, 1927, p. 363.

7. infra, ch. V, pp. 163-64.

8. Ārif, possibly an eighteenth century Bengali poet, says in his Lalmoner Kicchā (the story of Lalmon). "Husain Shah took away the beautiful lady named Lalmon.... When his desires were fulfilled at the end of the night, he offered to Satya Pīr,

it seems certain that the period under review witnessed the growth of the cult of Pir. Bengali poets tell us that the orthodox Muslims were quite regular in paying homage to the shrines of the Muslim Saints.¹

Islamic mysticism popularly known as Sūfism greatly influenced the society of medieval Bengal. Some of the sufi orders which entered Bengal in the course of several centuries, appear to have influenced the life of people of the period under consideration. The Chistiya sūfi, Nūr Qutb-i-Ālam who died in the first half of the fifteenth century, was held in high esteem by the people. According to Salīm, Husain who used to pay respectful visits to his tomb at Pāndua, spent a large amount of money for the maintenance of a rest-house for those who used to come there to see the tomb from time to time.² His son Nasrat built the tomb of Akhī Sirajuddīn at Sādullahpur.³ The two Chistiya sūfis who had some connection with the religious life of this period are Sheikh Husayn Uddīn Manikpuri, the chief disciple of Nūr Qutb-i-Ālam⁴ and Rājī Hamīd Shah, the disciple of Hushām Uddīn. They died in 1477 A.D. and 1495 A.D. respectively.⁵ Qutban, the associate of Husain Shah Sharqī who was residing at Kahlgaon, after his defeat by Sikandar Lādī,⁶ wrote in 1503 A.D. a romantic poem called Mrgavati which appears to be a symbolical work illustrating the union of the Seeker with the Supreme Being.⁷ He informs us that he was the disciple of Shaikh Burhān,⁸ who was, according to

confectionaries worth 1½ lac of rupees. Satya Pir who was at Mecca, came to know this. With his blessing, Husain became a Badshah in the town of Mogān." Quoted in the S.P.P., 1310 B.S, p. 147. It is probably on the basis of these historically unreliable materials that Dinesh Chandra Sen: (History of Bengali Language And Literature, C.U., 1911, p. 797) and following him, some other scholars, have gone to the extent of associating the name of Husain Shah with the introduction of the cult of Satya Pir in Bengal. Such a contention does not find corroboration in any contemporary or reliable sources. Numerous poems were written on this cult in the eighteenth century, although the cult itself may be of an earlier origin.

1. Vipra Das: Op.cit., p. 67 and Kavikankar-Candi, I, p. 261.
2. Riyāz: text, pp. 135. (3) Ibid., p. 138.
4. Ain, III, ed. Jarret and Sarkar, Bibliotheca Indica, 1948, p. 412.
5. Dr. Esmul Huq: Vange Sūfi Prabhav, Calcutta, 1935, pp. 123-24.
6. supra, ch. I, pp. 9-11. (7) infra, ch. VI, pp. 200-207
8. Mrgavati: quoted by Prof: Askari in J.B.R.S., 1955, Dec., p. 456; Sheik Budhan Jaga Sancha Pir-Manun Lail Sudh Howe Sarir. "Shaikh Burhan is a true Pir in the world. If anybody utters his name, his body becomes pure."

Muhamad Ghauṣī, a Shattāriyā ṣūfī.¹ The Madāriā sect introduced in Bengal in the middle of the fifteenth century, seems to have continued to exist in the period in question. The Sūnya Purāna incidentally refers to the Madāriā slogan, 'Dam Madār' (the breath of Madār).² Kavikanṭha mentions³ the wandering Qalandars of the late sixteenth century. Maulānā Shāh Daulāh (1510) who chose Bāghā in Rājshāhī as the centre of his activities, became the founder of several generations of pīrs in that part of Bengal.⁴ Two of the inscriptions of Husain Shāh dated 911 A.H./1505 A.D. and 912 A.H./1512 A.D.,⁵ contain references to the Saint Shaikh Jalāl Najjarrad bin Muḥammad Turkistānī of Koniya who was alive in an earlier period.⁶ Another ṣūfī venerated by the people of this period was Ismā'īl Ghāzī who was executed at the order of Bārbak Shāh in 1474 A.D.⁷ The Mandāran inscription of Husain Shāh indicates that a gate was erected in his honour in 1494-95.⁸ Shaikh Faizullāh, the poet of the Corakra Vijaya, who flourished probably in the second part of the sixteenth century, tells us that he wrote a poem called Gāzī Vijaya, recounting the achievements of Ismā'īl Ghāzī, the Pīr of Māntāduār.⁹ All these go to show how the Muslim ṣūfis and saints were respected by the people of Medieval Bengal. Some of these ṣūfis appear to have brought about a cultural synthesis by adopting yogic and tantrik philosophy to Islāmic mysticism.¹⁰

It seems that there was a considerable growth of Shi'ite influences in the period under review. It should be mentioned here that the materials at our disposal

-
1. Gulzar-i-Abrār, MS. in the Asiatic Society of Bengal, fol. 98b. See also 'Abdul Huq's Tazkirah Cited in the Current Studies, Patna, 1955, p. 23.
 2. Op.cit., p. 234; See also Dr. Shahidullah's introduction to the same work, p. 37.
 3. Op.cit., I, p. 261.
 4. Vaṅge Sūfī Prabhāv, p. 134.
 5. J.A.S.B., 1873, p. 293 and J.A.S.B., 1922, p. 413, pl. IX.
 6. Gulzar-i-Abrār: quoted in J.A.S.P., 1957, pp. 65 and 67, connects him with the first Muslim conquest of Sylhet which is said to have taken place in 703/1303. See Sylhet inscription of Husain Shāh, J.A.S.B., 1922, pl. IX, p. 413.
 7. supra., ch. I, pp. 26-27.
 8. J.A.S.B., 1917, p. 134. Supra., Ch. I, p. 26.
 9. Satya Pīr of Faizullāh: quoted by Enamul Huq: Muslim Vāṅglā Sahitya, Dacca, 1957, p. 89. We have already seen that Pīr Muḥammad Shattāri wrote Risālatush Shuhadā narrating the activities of Ismā'īl in Bengal and that Sitarāndās, a seventeenth century Bengali poet, mentions his name with respect. Supra., ch. I, p. 25.
 10. infra., ch. V, section II, pp. 154-74.

are not sufficient to establish this point beyond doubt. One of the inscriptions of Saifuddin Abul Muzaffar Firuz Shah (1487-1490) mentions the names of Muhammad, ¹ Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain to the exclusion of the first three Caliphs of Islam. Thus the inscription seems to refer to the Shiite tradition of Panjtan-i-Pak, or the Five Holy Personages which means an auspicious invocation at the beginning of an undertaking. The five epithets appearing in another inscription assigned to the early sixteenth century A.D., ² seem to be an imitation of the number 5 connected with the Shiite Tradition mentioned above. The five names are Ya Budduh, Ya Fattah (Oh Opener), Ya Allah (Oh God), Ya Quddus (Oh Holy One) and Ya Subbuh (Oh Praise-worthy One). The word Budduh is conspicuous by its absence in Arabic and Persian lexicons. After the twelfth century A.D., it appears in Persian manuscripts dealing with amulets. Doutte in his Magie et Religion says that the word is used in Magian ^{philosophy} ~~philosophy~~ as cure against stomach pain and similar other diseases. ³ ~~One~~ ^{One} explanation seems plausible here. Islam came in contact with Magianism in Persia where several obscure Shiite sects including the Kaisanias and Hashimias arose under the influence of Mago-Zoroastrianism. Ubaidullah al-Mahdi, the first Fatimid ruler and Abdullah ibn Maimun, the central figure of the religio-political propaganda scheme of the shiites, are said to have been Magian by descent. The Rawendis founded by Mokanna⁶ in the eighth century, who defied the Muslim power in Khorasan, belonged to an Indo-Magian sect. ⁴ Placed under these circumstances, mediaval Islam was probably influenced by Magian ideas. It is also highly probable that the Magian term Budduh gradually made its way into Islam through Shiism. Hence its presence in Persian manuscripts in the thirteenth century when some sort of compromise must have been effected between Magianism and Shiism. If the term Budduh of the above mentioned inscription of Bengal is of Magian origin, its presence may be regarded

1. J. A. S. B., 1874, p. 300.

2. I. H. Q., 1950, pp. 173-83.

3. I. H. Q., 1950, p. 176. Blochmann considers the term 'Budduh' to be a mystic name of God. J. A. S. B., 1871, p. 256.

4. Amir Ali: The Spirit of Islam, 1949, pp. 325, 327, 330 and 343.

as an indication of Shiite influences in this country.

These epigraphic evidences seem to find indirect corroboration in literary sources. The names of the Muslim heroes who fought unsuccessfully against Manasā, were Hasan and Husain, the revered shiite Imāms and the placename of the Muslims is significantly Husainhāti.¹ Mukanda Rām, speaking about the Muslim colony in West Bengal, does not speak of a masjid there but of Hasanbāti as the place of Muslim worship.² The reason is not probably far to seek. Bengal had direct maritime connection with the Persian Gulf and Iraq, both areas of shia predominance. Barbosa the Portuguese traveller, visiting Bengal towards the beginning of the sixteenth century, found a good number of Persian merchants in the city of 'Bengala'.³ The process of the growth of Shiism in Bengal was accelerated in the seventeenth century by the increase of oceanic communication between this country and Persia and by the largescale immigration of the Persians into Bengal due to the socio-political insecurity they had been suffering under the decaying and tyrannical Safavids.⁴

Sufism with its highly esoteric principles and practices appears to have influenced only a section of the Muslim population and Shēism as a religious institution was yet to come into being. Thus the average Muslim was probably an orthodox sunni.

II. Vaisnavism .

Caitanya did not originate Vaisnavism which constituted for many centuries before him, an important element in the religious life of Bengal. The Sena kings with their leanings towards Vaisnavism, had perhaps produced an atmosphere congenial for the development of the Radha-Kṛṣṇa cult popularized in the Gīta - govinda of

1. Vijaya Gupta: Op.cit., 54-61; Vipradās : Op.cit., pp. 63-86.

2. Kavikānkan-Candī: Pt. I, p. 258.

3. Op.cit., II, p. 199.

4. Jadu Nath Sarkar: History of Bengal, II, p. 224.

Jayadeva,¹ which has been regarded by the followers of Caitanya as one of the sources of their religious inspiration. The Srikr̥ṣṇa-kīrtana of Candīdāsa,² his melodious Padāvalis and those of Vidyāpati of Mithilā³ betray the trend of popular Vaiṣṇavism in Bengal. In the period under review, Caitanya gave it a reality which it did not hitherto possess.

Born in 1486 A.D. in a Brahmin family of Navadvīpa, Caitanya appears to have received elementary education in Sanskrit schools. The death of his father in his infancy and the entire burden of the household falling upon his shoulders, the accidental death of his wife, Lakṣmī, during his absence on a sojourn in East Bengal and his subsequent marriage with a Brahmin girl named Viṣṇupriyā, are some of the incidents connected with his early life. The great change that came over his life is generally attributed to a trip to Gayā that he had undertaken at the age of nearly twenty-two with a view to performing the Śrāddha ceremony of his father. It was at this celebrated place that he was given the Kṛṣṇa Mantra by a spiritual ascetic named Iṣvara Purī whose association combined with the sacred surrounding of Gayā, seems to have aroused in his mind strong religious feelings hitherto ~~Gayā~~ dormant in his nature. On his return from ^{Gayā} Purī, he started a new life saturated with love for Kṛṣṇa and characterised by emotional songs and dances and mystic trances which became striking features of his life from this time. He was joined very soon by Nityānanda, Advaita and others who considered him to be devotion personified. The musical worship called Kīrtana was publicly performed so much so that it was opposed by a group of conservative Brahmins of Navadvīpa. After his initiation into the

-
1. Jayadeva was one of the court-poets of Lakṣmana Sena in whose reign Bengal was attacked by Bakhtiyār Khiljī (early thirteenth century). Quite celebrated for its lyrical charm, rhetorical grandeur and pictorial beauty, the Gīta-govinda of Jayadeva which deals with the erotic Radhā-Kṛṣṇa legend, has appeared in India in several editions. It has been translated into English by Sir William Jones, Collected Works, London, 1807. Edwin Arnold has rendered it into English verses; The Indian Song of Songs, London, 1875.
 2. Ed. Basanta Ranjan Ray, Sāhitya Parishad, Calcutta, 1323 B.S. and 1342 B.S. etc.
 3. He flourished probably in the early fifteenth century. See Sukumar Sen : Yānglā Sāhityera Itihāsa, I, p. 80.

monastic order in 1510 A.D. by Kesava Bhāratī of Katvā, he took to a religious journey covering many parts of southern and western India and including a short visit to Vr̄ndāvana. His meeting with Rupa, Sanātana and the king Pratāpa Rudra of Orissa, was of significant importance to the history and philosophy of Caitanyaism. He spent the remaining eighteen years of his life at Purī, dancing and singing in a state of ecstatic emotion. He passed away in 1533 A.D.¹

Although the name of Caitanya has become closely associated with the history of Vaiṣṇavism, he does not appear to have worked out any theological or philosophical system for the sect, nor has he written any religious work excepting perhaps the following Śikṣāstaka or eight teachings:

May the recital of the name of Śrīkr̄ṣṇa be triumphant, which clears the mirror of the mind, extinguishes the great forest-fire of existence, spreads the rays of the white lily of welfare, maintains the life of learning which is like nectar, swells the ocean of happiness, enables the tasting of full bliss at every step and bathes the whole soul.

You created the different aspects of the name and you put all your powers into that; there is no time for the regular remembrance of the same. Such is your mercy, O God; but so very unfortunate am I that in this life no love for it grew in me.

One should recite the name of Hari by considering oneself lower than the grass, more patient than the tree, devoid of any sense of prestige, but always ready to show honour where it is due.

-
1. Materials for the life of Caitanya are scattered in a number of Sanskrit and Bengali biographical works. Elsewhere, we have given a brief account of the Sanskrit biographies of Caitanya such as Caitanya-caritāmṛta of Murāri Gupta, Caitanya-caritāmṛta of Kavikarnapūra and Caitanya-candradaya-nāṭaka by the latter. Infra, ch. VI, section III(c), pp. 219-21. The Bengali poems dealing with the life of Caitanya are Caitanya-bhāgavat of Vr̄ndāvanadāsa, Caitanya-māṅgalā of Locana-dāsa, Caitanya-māṅgalā of Jayānanda Caitany-caritāmṛta of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja and Kadacā of Govinda-dāsa. We have used these works in this thesis and mentioned their dates and places of publications in proper places. Bivan Bihari Majumdar has given a critical account of the materials for Caitanya's life in Śrī-Caitanya-caritara Upādan, C.U., 1939. For the life of Caitanya, see

O son of Nanda, I, your servant, have fallen into the troubleswaters of the ocean of life. So kindly consider me equal to the dust of your lotus-feet.

When will my eyes be flowing with constant tears, my voice choked with overwhelming words and my body filled with delight at the time of reciting your name?

Not riches, not relations, not a beautiful woman, nor good poetic faculty do I desire, O God. Let my disinterested devotion flow towards you who are my God in all my lives.

Due to my separation from Govinda, the moment has become an age, eyes have become like torrents ^{of} rain and the whole world has become empty.

Let him embrace me or trample my poor self which is engaged in shampooing his feet or let him inflict great misery on my mind due to my not seeing him. Let that rogue do whatever he thinks. He and nobody else is the Lord of my heart.¹

also, M.T. Kennedy: The Caitanya Movement, Calcutta, 1925, pp. 13-51; S.K. De: Vaisnava Faith and Movement in Bengal, Calcutta, 1942, pp. 51-76; Dinesh Chandra Sen: Caitanya And His Age, C.U., 1922, pp. 99-265 etc.

1. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāya: op.cit. Antya, XX, pp. 358-60. Padyāvalī: ed. S.K. De, D.U., 1934, Nos. 22, 31, 32, 71, 93, 94, 324 and 337.

চৌতুদর্শনমাক্ষরং ওষধসদাৰাশিৰিৰূপনং,
 স্নেহং চৌচন্দ্রিকাৰিত্বং বিদ্যাৰত্নকীৰ্তনম্।
 আনন্দাশুচিবন্ধনং স্নাতিকং পূৰ্ণাশুভাস্বাদনং,
 মৰ্জাসুপনং মৰুং বিকল্পিত শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণমজীতনম্।

নাস্থাশুভাৰী-বধুচি ১ নীচসৰ্বকাৰী-
 শুভাশুভাৰী-নিৰাশুভঃ স্নেহং ন-ন-আশুভঃ।
 চৌতুদর্শী-ওষধা-ওষধ ওষধ
 দুর্দৈবশীলী-দুর্দৈবশীলী নানুশুভঃ ॥

তুলাশুভাৰী-সুশীলী ওষধাশুভাৰী-সুশীলী।
 অশুভাশুভাৰী-অশুভাশুভাৰী অশুভাশুভাৰী ॥

অশুভাশুভাৰী-অশুভাশুভাৰী,
 অশুভাশুভাৰী-অশুভাশুভাৰী,
 অশুভাশুভাৰী-অশুভাশুভাৰী-
 অশুভাশুভাৰী-অশুভাশুভাৰী ॥

Besides giving expression to the simple devotional faith of Caitanya, characterised by ^{ra} depth of feeling and a sense of Vaisnavite humility and indicating the devotee's attitude of complete self-resignation to the will of the deity, these verses do not seem to contain any theological meaning. One may, of course, read into the last verse, the doctrine of the Rāgānuga mode of devotion ¹ adopted by Caitanya. Love for Kṛṣṇa with an intense emotion, is thus the fundamental principle of the faith of Caitanya.

The history of the Post-Caitanya Vaisnavism in Bengal is characterised by two distinct religious traditions, one developing at Vr̥ndāvana and the other at Navadvīpa. The Vr̥ndāvana tradition was represented by the six Gosvāmins some of whom are said to have been instructed by Caitanya to systematise the doctrines and dogmas of Vaisnavism.³ Their monumental works in Sanskrit embody the elaborate philosophy, theology and ethics of the Kṛṣṇa cult, with which the Vaisnavas of Bengal were acquainted not before the beginning of the seventeenth century. Their theology and Rasasāstra being "a matter of later deliberate development"³ do not come under the

নন্দনঃ সন্দানন্দকৃত্যং,
বন্দনঃ সন্দানন্দকৃত্যং বিদিত্যং।
সুন্দরীকীর্তিতঃ বন্দনঃ সন্দা,
তব নামসুন্দর-অবিত্যং ॥

ন বন্দনঃ ন বন্দনঃ ন সুন্দরীঃ
অবিত্যং বা বন্দনীকীর্তিত্যং।
সন্দানন্দকীর্তিত্যং সুন্দরীকীর্তিত্যং-
এবং বন্দনকীর্তিত্যং-অবিত্যং ॥

সুন্দরীকীর্তিত্যং বিদিত্যং-এবং বন্দনকীর্তিত্যং।
সুন্দরীকীর্তিত্যং বন্দনকীর্তিত্যং (সুন্দরীকীর্তিত্যং) ॥

সুন্দরীকীর্তিত্যং বা বন্দনকীর্তিত্যং বিদিত্যং বা-
সুন্দরীকীর্তিত্যং বন্দনকীর্তিত্যং।
সুন্দরীকীর্তিত্যং বা বিদিত্যং বন্দনকীর্তিত্যং,
সুন্দরীকীর্তিত্যং বা বন্দনকীর্তিত্যং ॥

1. infra, p. 132 .
2. For the later development of the sect at Vr̥ndāvana and the works of the Gosvāmins like Rupa, Sanātana, Jīva, Gopāla Bhaṭṭe and Raghunāthadāsa, see S.K.De: Early History of The Vaisnava Faith And Movement In Bengal, chs. III - VI.
3. ibid, p. 79.

perview of our discussion. The life of Caitanya with its mystic trances, musical worship of the deity and mysterious happenings was the main concern of his direct and immediate followers at Navadvīpa, who have given expression to their simple emotional faith through a good number of biographical works without caring much for the exposition of the doctrinal aspect of Vaiṣṇavism or of the teachings of Śrī Caitanya. The religious ideas of the Navadvīpa circle of Vaiṣṇavas are preserved in the works of Murāri Gupta, Kavikarnapūra, Vṛndāvanadāsa Locana-dāsa and Jayānanda who do not betray any knowledge of what was happening at Vṛndāvana at about the same period of time -- a position indicating that they stood in a state of complete isolation from the Gosvāmins of Vṛndāvana.

Caitanya who was a living reality to his Navadvīpa followers, was regarded as Param Tattva or the Ultimate Reality and as such the object of direct worship. Murāri Gupta who describes at a considerable length his Mahāprakāśa and Mahābhiseka or Great Manifestation and Consecration as the supreme object of adoration,¹ pays due respect to Caitanya, the four-armed Viṣṇu,² identifying him with the Bhāgavat³ and considering him to be the incarnation in the Kali Yuga.⁴ Kavikarnapūra depicts his two-armed, four-armed and six-armed forms and believes that he came to the world with a view to saving people from suffering and teaching devotional practices to Hari.⁵ He makes a clear distinction between the emotional form of devotion or Rāgānuga Bhakti and the devotion governed by the scriptural injunctions or Vaidhi Bhakti, preferring the former to the latter.⁶ Both Murāri and Kavikarnapūra maintain that one of the objects of his descent was to refute Advaitavād or monism,⁷

1. Caitanya-caritāmṛta: 3rd ed. by Mrinal Kanti Ghosh, Calcutta, 1337 B.S., IV, 12.12-17

2. ibid., i, 1.14.

3. ibid., i. 15.1 and ii. 18.12.

4. ibid., i. 4.26-27; i. 5.4 and i. 12.19.

5. Caitanya-caritāmṛta: published in Bengali characters with a parallel Bengali translation by Rāmanārāyaṇa Vidyaratna from Rādhāraṇ Press, Berhampur, Murshidabad, 1291 B.S., VI, 122 and VII. 19. XVII.7. Caitanya-candrodaya (drama) ed. Kāvya-mālā, 87, Bombay, 1917. i.28.

6. Caitanya-candrodaya. iii.19.

7. Murāri: op.cit. II. 4.22f. Kavikarnapūra: Kāvya. xii. 22-27 and Drama: i.7.

probably because it did not make room for the dualistic conception of Bhakti which distinguished the devotee from the deity. Vr̥ndāvana-dāsa accepts without question Caitanya's divinity and his identity with Kṛṣṇa,¹ rejecting the Gaura-nāgara doctrine developed by Locana-dāsa² and others who regard Caitanya as the nāgara or beloved and his devotees as nāgaris or women in love with Caitanya. The supporters of this doctrine considered the life of Caitanya at Navadvīpa as a counterpart of Kṛṣṇa's Vr̥ndāvana-līlā. Some of the contemporary Pada-writers appear to have ascribed Rādhābhāva to Caitanya considering him to be the incarnation of both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

We find a systematised theory of incarnation in the Vaiṣṇava literature of the time. Vr̥ndāvana-dāsa gives a long list of avatāras: Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Nṛsiṃha, Vāmana, Parāśurāma, Rāma, Naladhara, Buddha, Kalki, Dhanvantarī, Hama, Nārada, Vyāsa, Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya identified with the Bhāgavat, all of whom have been considered to be a manifestation of the same reality which, again, is said to have descended on the earth in the four ages of Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali in white, red, dark and yellow forms respectively.³ The theory of Vr̥ndāvana-dāsa seems to have been influenced by the conception of incarnation found in the Caitanya-caritāmṛta of Murāri Gupte and the Gīta-govinda of Jayadeva. According to Murāri, Sukla, Yajña, Pṛthu and Caitanya are the avatāras in four ages respectively and the ten Kāryāvatāras are Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Nṛsiṃha, Vāmana, Bhārgava, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha and Kalkin.⁴ It is interesting to note here that the first ten avatāras of Vr̥ndāvana's list appear exactly in the same order in the Dāśāvatāra-stotra (the hymn of praise to the ten avatāras) of the Gīta-Govinda,⁵ which has been accepted

1. Op.cit. adi. I, p. 6, II, pp. 10, 14. etc. madhya, II, p. 138; III, p. 142, etc.

2. Caitanya-mangala: 2nd ed. by Mrinal Kanti Ghosh, Calcutta, Gaurange Era 444. adi, pp. 3, 52; madhya, p. 7 and his Padas in the Appendix, pp. 8, 9, 11, 12, etc.

3. Caitanya-bhāgavat. adi, II, p. 15: cf. *সত্যযুগে সূর্য প্রসূত কৃষ্ণক বিষ্ণু।
অবধিমাৎ কুরাও শ্রীশ্রী-ঈশ্বরী-ঈশ্বরী ৥* etc.

4. Op.cit. 1.4. 18-33.

5. Gīta-govinda: Canto I, 5-14.

in a slightly modified form by Murāri Gupta. The Vaiṣṇava poets of the period under discussion appear to have accepted the conventional list of avatāras with a view to finding in it a place for Caitanya.

deities

In the Gaurāṅgānoddēśodīpikā, Kavikarnapūra admits of a plurality of ~~deities~~ in the Pañca-tatta doctrine¹ which established Caitanya, Nityānanda, Advaita, Gadādhara and Śrīvāsa as five objects of worship. A hierarchy of deities has been conceived of by the supporters of this doctrine, for they are willing to regard Caitanya as Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda and Advaita as Prabhus. At about the time when Vṛndāvana-dāsa composed his Caitanya-bhāgavat, the Vaiṣṇavas of Navadvīpa were, perhaps, divided into several groups, each associating itself closely with one of the direct followers of Caitanya such as Advaita, Nityānanda and Gadādhara.² The stray religious ideas that we come across in the writings of the Vaiṣṇavas of the sixteenth century Navadvīpa, seem to indicate that the Navadvīpa tradition did not have for itself any organised system of philosophy.

Whatever might have been the exact nature of the Navadvīpa tradition, Caitanyaism had far-reaching influences on the society and culture of medieval Bengal. The emotional mode of worship emphasised by Caitanya gave to Vaiṣṇavism an added interest and made it widely known not only in Bengal and Orissa, but also perhaps in some other parts of India. It produced a rich literature in Bengali and Sanskrit,³ which may be regarded as a storehouse of socio-religious information. Although Caitanya did not abolish caste-system,⁴ he opened the door of his emotional faith to all people irrespective of caste or religion⁵ -- a catholic attitude that must

1. Ed. Murshidabad, Pādharāman Press, 1912, pls. 9-12. Kavikarnapūra has attributed the origin of this doctrine to Svarūpa Dāmodara.

2. Op.cit., madhya, III, pp. 146-47, X, pp. 192-93, XIII, p. 209

3. For the Bengali and Sanskrit works dealing with Caitanyaism, see supra, p. 129, footnote I and infra, ch. VI, Section III(c), pp. 219-21. The religio-philosophical literature produced by the Goswāmins of Vṛndāvana, is the direct product of the Caitanya movement.

4. Kennedy: Op.cit., pp. 57 and 118-19

5. Rūpa, Śaṅkara, Haridāsa, and Nityānanda who were men of doubtful social status and Raghurātha-dāsa and Murāri Gupta who belonged to the Kāyastha and Vaidya castes respectively, came in close contact with Caitanya and rendered valuable services to Vaiṣṇavism. Kṛṣṇā-dāsa Kavirāja: Op.cit., antya, IV, pp. 282-88. It is said by this biographer that "Caste and family do not count in the worship of Kṛṣṇa". ibid., p. 283. cf. *কৃষ্ণ উত্তম নারী কীর্তি-কৃত্তিকাবলি* ।

have stood in sharp contrast with the conservative spirit of Brahminical orthodoxy, amounting to a significant social revolution in those days.

It is difficult to ascertain what factors contributed to the origin and growth of Caitanyaism and the consequent mental loosening of a significant section of Bengali people. It is necessary to understand the movement against its wide socio-logical background about which the literature of the time gives a good deal of information. The local cults of Manasā, Candī and Dharma seem to have stood in direct opposition to the orthodox order of the Brahmins¹ who wanted to keep themselves aloof from the local influences by reviving the old, stringent socio-religious regulations as laid down in the ancient and medieval works on law and religion.² The self-centred and complacent attitude of the Brahmins must have checked the process of rapprochement between the upper grade of population represented by the Brahmins and the lower grades of the society. Dominated politically by the Muslims, the Hindus of the then Bengal were being gradually influenced by Muslim ideas and practices.³ Elsewhere we have suggested that Islam had sympathy and understanding for some of the local cults and for the mystic ideas underlying their philosophical systems.⁴ Converts to Islam under these circumstances must have grown in number.⁵ The discursive faculty of the Brahminical mind which found expression through the cultivation of a highly abstruse branch of knowledge called Navya Nyāya,⁶ seems to have produced an arid atmosphere of pure intellectualism to which the Vaisnavas reacted vehemently. This explains why the path of devotion was preferred to that of knowledge by Caitanya and his followers.⁷ Describing the socio-religious conditions

1. infra, ch. V, section IV and ch. VI, section I(a), pp. 193-95.

2. infra, ch. VI, section III(a); ch. VIII, section II, pp. 274-75.

3. infra, ch. VI, section II, p. 210. ~ ; ch. VIII, section III, p.

4. infra, ch. V, sections II and IV.

5. infra, ch. V, section I, p. 146.

6. infra, ch. VI, section III(b). For the reaction of the Vaisnavas to logicians, see Vṛndāvana-dāsa: op.cit., ādi, VI, 36.

7. Vṛndāvana-dāsa: op.cit., ādi, VI, 36 and Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja: op.cit., ādi, XVII, pp. 62-63.

of Navadvīpa on the eve of Caitanya's birth, Vr̄ndāvana-dāsa regrets that people were worshipping Śakta-tantrik goddesses like Gāndī, Manasa and Vasulī and that even those who cared to read the religious scriptures like Gīta and Bhāgavat, did not attach any importance to the worship of Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu.¹ The writers of the period believe that Caitanya descended on the earth with a view to fully establishing the cult of Bhakti.² Considering the socio-religious conditions of Bengal on the eve of the growth of the Caitanya movement, it may be maintained that it had originated probably in response to certain social demands, in order to bring about some sort of reconciliation of the different conflicting elements prevailing in the then society.

III. Buddhism .

Buddhism was no longer a dominant factor in the religious life of Bengal, although its influences could, perhaps, be traced in the mystic philosophy of the different major and minor cults of the time. Contemporary literature contains references to the Buddhists against whom the tirades of the followers of Caitanya were probably directed. While Kavikarnapūra deploras in the second Act of his drama, Caitanya-candrodaya, the influences of the Buddhists, Tantrikas, Māyāvādins, Jainas, Kāpālikas and Pāśupatas, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja depicts the Buddhists as being defeated by Caitanya and accepting the Vaiṣṇava mode of musical worship of Kṛṣṇa.³ Vr̄ndāvana-dāsa goes to the extent of making his master Nityānanda kick the Buddhists in a fit of whimsical anger.⁴ All these indicate not only the hostility of the Vaiṣṇavas to the Buddhists, but also possibly the decadent condition of Buddhism in medieval Bengal. But it did not fail to have its impact on the cultural life of the

1. Vr̄ndāvana-dāsa: op.cit., adi, II, 12-14.

2. Ibid., adi, II, pp. 14 and 15; Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja: op.cit., adi, XVII, p. 62.

For Kavikarnapūra's views on this point, see supra, p. 132

3. Caitanya-caritāmṛta, madhya, IX, 125 : স্বয়ং লোক-লোক-স্বয়ং-স্বয়ং-স্বয়ং

4. Caitanya-bhāgavat, adi, VIII, 54: কৃষ্ণ-স্বয়ং-স্বয়ং-স্বয়ং-স্বয়ং-স্বয়ং

Hindus of the period in question. While the Sanskrit writings of Rayamukuta Vṛhaspati betray Buddhist influences,¹ Buddha has been regarded as the ninth incarnation of Viṣṇu in standard Vaiṣṇava works of the time. The tendency towards religious syncretism noticed in the vaiṣṇava writings was probably of a traditional nature, for the process was started as early as the time of Jayadeva.²

The Buddhist invocation appearing at the beginning of the doubtful Sābhar inscription ascribed to the end of the fourteenth century,³ the copying of the Mahāyāna work Vodhicaryāvatāra at Venugrama in 1436 A.D., by a sadvāddha-karana-kāyasta-thakkura, named Srī Amitābha,⁴ and Candīdāsa's mention of the Trimūrti Buddha incarnation,⁵ probably the reminiscent of the Triratna or the three jewels of Buddhism, are some stray materials which do not help us in forming an accurate idea about the nature of Buddhism obtaining in Muslim Bengal. Passing through the stages of Mantrayāna, Vajrayāna, Kālacakrayāna and Sahajayāna,⁶ Buddhism was gradually putting emphasis on Hathayogic esoteric practices quite similar in nature to those obtaining in the Tantric philosophy which seems to have absorbed it in the course of several centuries, the process of assimilation being completed sometime after the beginning of the Muslim rule in Bengal. All that remained of Buddhism, must have been its Tantric form which we come across in the Gāryā songs and which slowly transformed itself, by an inevitable historical process, into what came to be known as Sahajiyā Vaiṣṇavism,⁷ in the post-Gaitanya period.

-
1. For a detailed discussion on the point, see Haraprśad Śāstri: Rayamukuta Vṛhaspati: S.P.P., 1338 B.S., 2nd ^{issue} īssu, 63-64.
 2. supra, P. 133.
 3. Dacca Review, 1920, pp. 113-14; Dinesh Chandra Sen: Vṛhat Varga, I, C.U., 1341 B.S., pp. 277-78.
 4. Sukumar Sen: Prācīna Vāṅgā O Vāṅgālī, Viśva-vidyāsangraha, Calcutta, 1353 BS, pp. 30-31.
 5. Candīdasera Padāvalī, ed. Nilraten Mukherjee, Vāṅgīyā Sahitya Pariśat, 1321 B.S. p. 18.
 6. For the peculiar features of each of these stages of Buddhism, see S.B. Das Gupta: Obscure Religious Cults etc., pp. 7-37; History of Bengal, Vol-I, pp. 419-22; Nihar Ranjan Ray: op.cit., pp. 636-39.
 7. The Sahajiyās put emphasis on the element of love, consider Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā to be the male and female aspects of the absolute reality and maintain that the highest

The Caitanya-bhagavat gives an account of the wanderings and religious activities of Nityānanda,¹ originally a member of the Avadhūta sect which was probably a branch of Tāntrik Buddhism. As the work under reference does not give us a clear picture about the esoteric practices and inner doctrines of the sect, it is difficult to ascertain how much it owed to Buddhism proper and how much to tānticism and Saivism. It seems fairly certain that the followers of this sect used to put emphasis on the nerve, Avadhūti, identified with the Susumnā of the Brahminical Tantra, which played an indispensable part in the Hathayogic physical culture.² Caryā songs contain frequent references to the Avadhūtikā which was inseparably connected with the Yogic discipline of the Buddhist Sahajiyās. The nerve Avadhūti has been described as that which puts easily an end to the evils of sufferings, as that which does away with the process of thought-construction of existence, which is without beginning, and as that the radiant nature of which destroys all sins.³ The Buddhist Sahajiyās believed that the realisation of the Absolute or Sahaja consisted in the non-dual state of union of Prajñā and Upāya, the female and the male aspects of the Absolute, to be attained by controlling the right and the left nerves and making the female energy Candālī or Avadhūtikā move upward towards the cerebrum region through the middle nerve Avadhūti.⁴ The Avadhūta sect, named probably after the middle nerve Avadhūtikā or after the female energy of the same name whose counterpart is called Kundalinī Śakti in the Hindu Tantra,⁵ seems to have retained some of the distinctive features of the early Buddhist Sahajiyā philosophy which represented a tantrik form of Buddhism. It seems that the followers of this sect adopted the regressive method

spiritual realisation is possible through the union of the human couple. S.B. Das Gupta: Obscure Religious Cults, pp. 139-61. See also Manindra Mohan Bose: Post-Caitanya Sahajiyā Cult, C.U., 1930. The literature of the sect belongs to the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and its doctrines seem to have been formulated long after the death of Caitanya.

1. Op.cit., ādi, VIII, mādyā, III-V and XI-XII. How lightly he regarded the caste system, is illustrated by the fact that he admitted lower class Hindus to the fold of Vaiṣṇavism. Ibid., antya, V, pp. 381 and 383.
2. Infra., ch. V, p. 158. See also section V of this chapter.
3. Hājara Vachanera Purāna Vāṅgalā Bhāṣāye Vauddha Gāna O Dohā (Caryācarya-viniścaya) ed. M. Narayana Sāstri, Vaṅgīya Sahitya Parishad, 1358 B.S. Commentaries on song No. 2 and Dohā No. 4, pp. 6 and 9.
4. S. B. Das Gupta: Obscure Religious Cults, pp. 111-16.
5. Infra, ch. V, Section-II, p.158. See also section-V of this chapter.

of physical culture which formed an integral part of almost all obscure cults of medieval Bengal.¹

IV. The Dharma Cult

The Dharma cult seems to have found a regular place in the religious life of the fifteenth and sixteenth century Bengal. Lurking traces of the cult is available in the Manasa-vijaya of Vipradāsa who has narrated how Gaṅgā turned all white by casting ^a glance at the white Dharma who had come to visit the house of Śiva during his absence. On his return, Śiva was immensely impressed by the all-white sight of Gaṅgā, then seated on a white bed, and he came to know what had happened during his absence. As a matter of fact, Śiva had been performing, for twelve years, hard penances, on the bank of the Vallukā, with a view to having a sight of Dharma. A good number of gods and goddesses including Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Lakṣmī and Indra came to pay respect to Gaṅgā who had been favoured by Dharma, the ultimate reality.² Though of a legendary nature, the story seems to emphasise the superiority of Dharma to the Hindu Triad, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva -- a feature quite prominent in the liturgical texts on the Dharma cult.³ It is believed that Dharma put Śiva in charge of creation after having created the universe⁴ -- the idea being an echo of the cosmogonical conception obtaining in the Dharmite mythology.⁵ Following the traditional ideas of the Dharmites, Vipradāsa depicts Dharma as a white god, using a white umbrella, riding on the legendary owl Uluka and carrying a staff and a waterpot in hands.⁶

1. infra, ch. V, section, pp. 158-59.

2. op.cit., pp. 6-8.

3. Śūnya Purāna: pp. 40-42, 168 and 179; Dharmapūjāvidhāna, ed. Nani Gopal Banerjee, ad 1323 B.S.; Calcutta; Sahitya Parisat Series No. 56, p. 89, verse No. 140 and p. 215.

4. Manasa-vijaya, p. 7.

5. Śūnya Purāna, Srstipattam, pp. 40-42.

6. Op.cit. p. 6. For similar description of Dharma, see Ruparām: Dharmamāṅgala, ed. Sukumar Sen and Panchanan Mandal, pt. I, Calcutta, 2nd ed., 1363 B.S, pp. 2, 13, 18 etc. Śūnya Purāna, 8 ff. Dharmapūjāvidhāna, pp. 81, 87, etc.

With a view to creating an indirect relationship of Manasa with Dharma, the poet says that Siva was instructed by Dharma to find out Manasa in the lotus garden of Kalidaha.¹

Haraprasad Sāstri considered the Dharma cult to be an offshoot of Buddhism,² -- a theory that stands contradicted now a days.³ Dr. Sukumar Sen who regards Dharma as "predominantly the War God of the fighting tribes like the Dom and others," contends that the cult is a very primitive one, possibly of Austric origin, which has absorbed a variety of Aryan and non-Aryan elements including much of the abstractions of Varuna, the vedic sun god, the Iranian sun god, the Puranic incarnation Kalki, the tortoise incarnation and others. He further holds that the white goat sacrificed to Dharma, is a substitute for a young boy mentioned in the mythology and that the story connected with the account in the Aitareya Brāhmana, of the sacrifice of Sunahṣepa, son of a Brahmin named Ajigarta, in place of Rohitāsva, son of King Hariscandra, is probably a myth of Austric origin which had found a place in Brahminical literature in pre-Buddhist times.⁴

V. The Natha Cult

Nāthism seems to have been one of the important religio-philosophical systems obtaining in the then Bengal. The Gorakṣa-vijaya contains a versified form of the popular story of Gorakṣanātha and Matsyendranātha that must have had wide circulation among the people of those days. Qutban, the poet of Mrgavati has referred to the

1. Manasa-vijaya, p. 7. For Dharma's relationship with Manasa, see section VI of this chapter.
2. Discovery of the remnants of Buddhism in Bengal, P.A.S.B., 1894, p. 135. Buddhism in Bengal Since the Muhammadan conquest, J.A.S.B., 1895, LXIV, pt. I, No. I, pp. 55-61 and Śrīdharmamangala: A distinct echo of Lalita-vistara, J.A.S.B. ibid, pp. 65-68
3. K.P. Banerjee: Dharma Worship, J.A.S.B., 1942, VIII, 131-32 and Dr. Sukumar Sen: Is the Cult of Dharma a living relic of Buddhism in Bengal? B.C. Law Volume, pt. I, pp. 670-72.
4. Sukumar Sen: Is the Cult of Dharma a living relic of Buddhism in Bengal? op.cit. pp. 669, 672-73. See also his Introduction to the Dharma-mangala of Ruparāma, 2nd ed., pp. 3-18; See also Suniti Kumar Chatterjee: Buddhist Survivals in Bengal, B.C. Law Volume, I, p. 78.

wanderings of the Gorakṣapanthī monks with such trappings as beads, long matted hair, revolving wheel, ring, rosary, staff, earthen cup, leg clogs, necklace, hide, wire, cowdung ashes, trident, lyre and wallet.¹ Muhsin Fani, the writer of Dabistān, gives a very peculiar account of the manners, customs and religious practices of the followers of Gorakṣanātha.² Literary evidences are available to show that the cult obtained not only in Bengal, but also in Bēhār, northern and north-western India and Mārāthā country.³

The followers of this Śaiva-tantric cult used to consider the attainment of immortality to be the highest object of their life. They believed that liberation could be achieved in a ripe body by adopting certain methods of Yogic-tantric discipline aimed at bringing about a state of union between Śiva, the principle of rest and Śakti, the principle of phenomenal manifestation. Accordingly they developed a theory of nerves and six circles to be controlled and penetrated by the Nāthpanthī so that he might raise the dormant kundalīnī Śakti in the Mulādhāra-cakra situated at the lowest part of the spinal chord, give it an upward motion and finally unite it with Śiva in the Sahasrāra in the head.⁴ With this regressive process of physical and psychological culture was also connected the recital of the Soham mantra (or the hymn, 'He is I') and the production of the anāhata-nād (or the unrestricted sound) which would come out of the anāhata-cakra situated in the heart.⁵ The idea

1. Extracts from the Mrgavati: op.cit., p. 475.

2. Dabistān-i-Mazāhib: Bombay ed. pp. 141-45.

3. Kalyani Mallik: Nātha Sampradāyera Itihāsa. Darśana O Sādhanāpramāli: Calcutta, 1950, pp. 11-24. see also Nāthapantha by the same writer, Viśvevidyēsangraha, Calcutta, 1357 B.S., pp. 14-19.

4. For a further elaboration of the Yogic theory of nerves and six circles and the regressive process of Yogic exercise, see infra, ch. V, section II, pp. 158 etc.

5. See S.E. Das Gupta: op.cit., pp. 250-269. Kalyani Mallik: Nātha Sampradāyera Itihāsa etc. pp. 395-98, 433-35 etc. Nāthapantha, pp. 21-24, 27-29 etc.

5. Kalyani Mallik: Nātha Sampradāyera Itihāsa, pp. 459-60, 479 etc. Nāthapantha.

of void obtaining in the Nath and Dharma cults is probably of Austric origin -- a suggestion strengthened by its presence in the religious beliefs of the Polynesian people who belong to Austric races. The conception of void obtaining in Buddhism is probably an indication of the influence of the Dharma cult on Tantrik Buddhism.¹

VI. The Manasā and Candī Cults

Of several other cults, those of Manasā and Candī were quite prominent. We have elsewhere discussed the vernacular literature dealing with the legendary story of Manasā² and have referred to the ceremonials and superstitious beliefs connected with the worship of the snake goddess.³ The cult appears to be of a composite nature, for it contains a number of vedic, purānic and non-Aryan elements.⁴ We have already suggested that the cult had some connection with the Dharma worship.⁵ The suggestion finds support in the Yamayamī-sūkta of the R̥gVeda which refers to the matrimonial relationship between Dharma and Ketakā (Manasā).⁶

The worship of the goddess Candī is frequently mentioned in the Caitanya-bhāgavat.⁷ Towards the end of the sixteenth century, Mukandarāma wrote a long poem recounting the achievements of this goddess.⁸ Going back to a slightly earlier period of Bengal history, we find that Dankjamerdana and Mahendra declared their faith in this cult calling themselves Sri Candī carana parāyana or devoted to the feet of Candī.⁹

1. Sukumar Sen: article in B.C.Law Vol-I, pp. 669 and 671. Kalyani Mallik: Natha Sampradāyera Itihāsa, pp. 340-61.

2. infra, ch. VI, section I(a), pp. 189-93.

3. infra, ch. VIII, p. 271.

4. Sukumar Sen: Introduction of Manasā Vijaya, VI, XXXVI-XLII

5. supra, section IV of this chapter P. 140.

6. Sukumar Sen: Introduction to Ruperāma's Dharmamangala, P.I.

7. Op.cit., ādi, ch. II, p. 11; ch. IV, p. 24; madhya, ch. XIII, p. 210; antya, ch. IV, p. 362 and ch. V, p. 384.

8. infra, ch. VI, section I(a), pp. 194-95.

9. The expression appears on several coins of these rulers, dated 1339 Śaka/1417 A.D. and 1340 Śaka/1418 A.D. See N.K. Bhattasali: Coins and Chronology of The Early Independent Sultans of Bengal, pp. 118-22 and Pl. VIII.

VII. Saivism and Brahminism.

Saivism which had been flourishing in Bengal from time immemorial, appears to have become quite decadent in the period under review. As indicated in the contemporary literature,¹ it was not only opposed but also possibly over-shadowed by the Śakta-tāntrik cults of Manasā and Candi. The Paṅgapatas who formed a branch of the Saivite sect,² were probably looked down upon by the Vaiṣṇavas of the period in question.³ Saivism under these circumstances was gradually becoming mild and inactive and the puranic Śiva converted into an average Bengali agriculturist.⁴

It seems that Brahminism was passing through a precarious state of existence. The Brahmins composed a number of works on Smṛti or ritualistic law in order to enforce the rules of ceremonial purity of Brahminism so that it might not come under the influence of lower class and alien hierotic ideas. As the point has been discussed in some of the succeeding chapters of this thesis,⁵ it needs hardly any further elaboration here.

VIII. Tāntricism and Hinduism

There was a considerable amount of influence of Tāntricism on the Hindu society of Bengal. Contemporary works are replete with references to Tāntrik ideas and practices. Vipradāsa has tried to depict Candi as a corrupt ~~woman~~^{woman} whom morally

1. infra, ch. VI, 1(a), pp. 190, 193 and 194.

2. History of Bengal, Vol. I, p. 405.

3. supra, section III of the present chapter, p. 136.

4. The Sūrya Purāna contains a section on Śiva taking to cultivation (pp. 182-94), the theme being elaborated by Rāmeśvara Cakravartī at a later period of time when the process of the transformation of Śiva into an ordinary agriculturist was probably completed. See Sivāyana, pp. 68-75.

5. infra, ch. VI, pp. 213-16 and ch. VIII, p. 275

6. Op.cit., pp. 10-11.

degraded people used to worship by offering meat and wine at her altar.¹ Vrndavana-dāsa seems to have hinted at tāntrik practices in the following lines:

They bring five girls at night after having reciting the mantras.

Various articles also come as concomitant thereof.

These include eatables, scented garlands and different clothes.

After taking food they cohabit with them variously.²

The protective Brahminical culture had to absorb tāntrik influences. Raghunandana has dealt at a considerable length with the auspicious times of tāntrik initiation. According to him, the months of Caitra, Jaistha, Āśāḍha, Bhādra and Paus are inauspicious, and Vaiśākḥ, Śrāvana, Āsvin, Kārttik, Mārgaśīrṣa, Māgh and Fālgun auspicious for initiation. He goes on to speak of the particular week days, the ascendancy of the different asterisms and the nature of the preceptor all of which had to be taken into consideration at the time of tāntrik initiation.³ Thus tāntrik influences seem to have saturated Brahminical religious practices and beliefs.

Some of the important tāntrik works composed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, have elaborately discussed the tāntrik rites, practices and philosophy. Kṛṣṇānanda Ācāryavāgīśa, who has given an exposition of tāntrik doctrines in his celebrated work Tantrasāra,⁴ is regarded as a contemporary of Caitanya. The Sarvollāsatantra,⁵ another tāntrik work, is said to have been written in the latter half of the fifteenth century. These together with other sixteenth century works

1. Caitanya-bhāgavata: antya, V, 384.

2. Ibid., madhya, VIII, 176:

বাস্তি কবি মনু পাঠে পঞ্চ কন্যা আন।
লালাবধি দ্রব্য-সহস্রে তা মগ্ন মন ॥
ওহু-বেশি মনু মনু বিসিষ্ট বসন।
সহস্রে তা মগ্ন মনু বিসিষ্ট বসন ॥

3. Extracts from Mānasa-tattva and Dīkṣā⁰: given by Bhabatosh Bhattacharya.

Raghunandana's Indebtedness to His Predecessors: J.A.S.B. 1953, Vol-XIX, No. 2, pp. 175-76.

4. Ed. R. N. Chatterji, Dacca, 1915.

5. Tapan Kumar Ray Choudhury: Bengal Under Akbar And Jahangir. Calcutta, 1953, p.237. The rest of the paragraph is summarised from this work, pp. 125-36.

deal with a number of philosophical problems such as the nature of the soul, the supreme soul, the doctrine of Karman or action, the spiritual relation between the devotee and the Absolute, the source of Supreme knowledge and others. These dogmas embodying a high ideal were influenced by the Vedānta and the ancient Tantras. On the question of the admissibility of wine in worship, the Tantrik worshippers were divided into two rival groups called Paśva-Cāra and Kula-Cāra. "Besides eschewing wine in worship, the Paśvacharins generally adhered to the Vedic rites and rules of life modified through centuries of change and influence of the Tantra. The Kulacharin, on the otherhand, developed a form of mystic culture in which the notorious five 'm's. (pañca makara) -- wine, women, meat, fish and fried cereals, -- featured most prominently." The preceptor, the initiation and the mantra or hymn were considered to be the first three essentials of Tantrik worship. The external rites and rituals were meant to aim at a particular end, viz. unity with the Supreme Being after death. The devotee had to perform the mystic-yogic exercise of Satcakraheda, said to have brought about his freedom from worldly bondages. The Kulācāra Tantrik mystic culture had its culmination in the inner worship connected with Yogic physiology and the outer worship associated with the pañca m' kara in which sex played an important part. In the course of its development, the Paśvācāra seems to have been greatly influenced by the Kulācāra. A careful study of the literature of the time shows that the relation between the Vaiṣṇavas and the Tantriks was quite unfriendly.

We have given above an idea about the general nature of the different religious systems. Their constituent elements seem very often linked with one another and are thus indistinguishable. This is suggestive of a long-drawn process of contact among these religions, although they have also points of conflict.

Chapter - V

Relation of Islām with other Religious Systems

We have already noticed that certain socio-religious forces had evolutionised the life of Bengal under the Husain Shāhī rule. As a matter of fact, this period witnessed an important stage in the process of the gradual evolution of Bengali society. As Islām was an important factor in the social life of the country, it is necessary to ascertain its relation with some of the local religious systems discussed in the preceding chapter.

I. Islām and Brahminism

Throughout the pre-Mughal period, there seems to have been an imperceptible conflict between Islām and Brahminism. With the decline of Buddhism and its consequent degeneration into Tantricism, the field was open to either to assert itself. In the contest, however, Islām had a natural advantage. Besides the political advantage enjoyed by Islām, its liberalism as against Brahminical casteism, had a natural social appeal to the Bengalis who were coming to the fold of Islām with the expectation of certain political and economic advantages. It has been clearly stated by Barbosa that the Hindus were regularly embracing Islām in order to receive favour from the ruling class.¹ Thus it seems to have held out before the mass of the population, not only the proverbial ideal of socio-religious equality, but also a bright prospect of immediate material gain. Conversion to Islām under these circumstances must have been quite inevitable. The social appeal of Islām must have been greatly minimised when Vaiṣṇavism grew in Bengal, took the sting out of Brahminism and this saved the country for Hinduism. Thus Islām was one of the most powerful rival forces which Brahminism confronted. In fact, relation between Brahminism and Islām seems to have been one of contact and conflict ending in a temporary compromise in the Husain Shāhī period.

In the pre-Muslim period, the Brahmins had enjoyed a monopoly of social and

1. Op.cit., II, p. 148.

political supremacy to which the foundation of Muslim rule gave a rude shock. They were no longer the political master of the country. Their social importance was naturally reduced to a great extent. It was at this time that several anti-Brahminic forces were at work in Bengal. We have elsewhere pointed out that the local cults of Manasā, Gandī and Dharma appear to have opposed Brahminism to a great extent.¹ These coupled with the advent of Islām created a peculiar situation to which the Brahmins appear to have reacted by trying to revive their lost glory. This Brahminical attitude is exemplified by the foundation of the Navadvīpa school of Nyāya, the composition of a number of Smṛti texts by Raghunandana and his contemporaries and the general revival of classical culture embodied in the Sanskrit works composed in the Husain Shāhī period and the period immediately following it.² The attitude of the Brahminical section of population to the Muslim ruling class, seems to have been far from friendly. The Hindu political power had gone down with the Senas; attempts at its revival in the fifteenth century through the short-lived dynasty established by Rājā Gaṇeśa had also failed completely. The rise of Rājā Gaṇeśa to power does not seem to be an accidental political phenomenon in the history of Bengal isolated from its social background. It may be regarded as an outburst of a force that had been working since the foundation of Muslim rule in this country. It has been stated in the kulajī literature that the Brahmins of Varendra contributed a great deal to the success of Rājā Gaṇeśa.³ Although we do not have any direct support for this statement, it cannot be summarily rejected. The period of Bengal's history occupied by Rājā Gaṇeśa and his successors, is characterised by a sudden revival of Brahminical culture.⁴ Completely bereft of political power, the Brahmins must have felt bitter towards the later pre-Mughal Muslim rulers. Vr̥ndāvanadāsa informs us that the people of Navadvīpa used to believe that the throne of Gaud would be occupied by the

1. infra, ch. VI, pp. 190-95.

2. infra, Ch. VI, pp. 212 ff.

3. Jagendra Nath Dasu: Vāṅger Jūtiya Itihāsa, Vol. I, Pt. I, Brāhman Kānda p. 194 and Vol. III, Pīrālī Brāhman Vivaraṇa, Calcutta, 1331 B.S., pp. 64-65.

4. Vr̥haspati Miśra who flourished in the court of Jalāluddīn Muhammad Shāh received several honorary titles from the Sultān, such as Kavieskravartī, Rāja Pandit, Pandita-Sarbabhaṇa, Kavi-Pandita-Cūdsamānī, Mahācārya and Rāyamukuta. Sukumar Sen: Madhya Yagera Vāṅglā O Vāṅglī, p. 10. For the works composed by this Kulīn

Brahmins.¹ We find a distinct echo of this statement in the Caitanya Maṅgal of Jayānanda.² Rationally interpreted, it means that the Brahmins were not in a position to reconcile themselves to the Muslim rule. To such a group of people, the Muslim rulers could hardly be friendly. This seems to explain the conflict between the Brahmins and Muslim rulers, quite elaborately depicted by Joyānanda.³ The persecution of the Brahmins at Navadvīpa, by the Muslim ruler narrated by Joyānanda, is an indication of their attitude to the Brahmins. It is true that several Brahmins were serving under Husain Shah and his successors. Rūpa, Sanātana, Jagāi and Madhāi⁴ are instances in point. This compromise of Brahminism with the Muslim ruling class was quite superficial, for, the spirit of reaction was working from beneath the surface of the society. While meeting Sri Caitanya, Rūpa and Sanātana told him that they had lost their mental purity because of their having been associated with the Muslim ruler with whom slaughtering cows and hating Brahmins were quite usual.⁵ The Muslim ruling class needed the service of the Brahmins to conduct the administrative machinery and the Brahmins also associated themselves with it with a view to earning livelihood. Thus the contact between the two groups, forced as it was by sheer necessity, was not the result of mutual understanding. In the field of administration, however, they did not enjoy absolute monopoly, for, a good number of ^{Kāyasthas} Kayasthas was appointed by Muslim Sultans. Most of the vernacular poets seem to have come from the Kayastha stock. Vijaya Gupta, Jasorāja Khan, Śrīkara Nandī and Kabindra Paramesvara, were all Kayasthas. In helping the growth of Bengali

Brahmin, see infra, Ch. VI, P. 213; ^{note.} foot He mentions in some of his works, the names of Rājā Gaṇeśa and his converted son, Jalāluddīn. infra, Pp. 212-13, footnote.

In fact, the progress in Brahminical culture which this period seems to have attained, would not have been possible, had it not been patronised by the rulers. Yrhaspati held an important position in Jalāluddīn's court. His sons and other Brahmins seem to have controlled the state affairs and enjoyed various advantages from the rulers. See the Smṛtiratnahāra: quoted by Dr. Hazra: I.H.Q., 1941, p. 447. See also quotations from Pada Candrikā: ibid., p. 444.

1. Op.cit., ed. I, III, p. 18 and X, p. 75.
2. supra, Ch. I, P. 38. 39.
3. supra, Ch. I, P. 38. 39.
4. supra, Ch. I, P. 38. 37.
5. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja: op.cit., maddhya, I, p. 76.

literature, the Muslim Sultāns helped the Kāyastha class indirectly. It is almost fairly established that the Kāyasthas constituted the landed aristocracy of the country under the Husain Shāhī rulers. We have shown¹ that Laskar Rāmachandra Khān and Hiranya Majumdār had lucrative estates in south-west Bengal. Abul Fazl, writing about the end of the sixteenth century, says that many of the Zamindārs flourishing in the different Sarkārs of Bengal, were Kāyasthas.² The Muslim rulers had probably direct support behind the growth of this Kāyastha landlord class. Whether they had supported the Kāyastha poets and landlords with the object of counteracting Brahminical influence in Bengal, is not clearly known; but the growth of the Kāyastha intelligentsia and landlords, must have minimised Brahminical influence in the country.

The ruling class does not seem to have had any sympathy whatsoever, for the Brahminical culture. Most of the Sanskrit poets and litterateurs discussed in the succeeding chapter,³ did not have any connection with the Husain Shāhī court. The Sanskrit works written in and around Navadvīpa, do not have any genuine reason to mention the names of the rulers of Gaud, although Bengali works are replete with reference to the Muslim Sultāns. This is suggestive of the fact that Sanskrit literature did not receive any patronage from the Muslim rulers of the time.⁴ Sanskrit was thus being pushed to the background, and Bengali, receiving the recognition of the ruling class. Mahuan, the Chinese traveller mentions that Bengali and Persian were in use in the fifteenth century Bengal.⁵ He does not say anything about Sanskrit probably because it had no general acceptance. From whatever evidences can be gathered from the history of Bengali literature, it may be reasonably inferred that the Husain Shāhī rulers were helping the people's culture in crystallizing itself, by giving patronage to Bengali literature. The growth and development of the culture of the people must have checked the influence of Brahminical culture.

1. supra. Ch. II, pp. 78-80, - 81.

2. Āina Eng. Trans. II, pp. 143 and 145. supra, Ch. II, p. 81.

3. infra, Ch. VI, section III.

4. This point has been discussed in Chapter-VI of this thesis.

5. J. R. A. S. G. B. I., 1895, p. 530. Viśva Bharatī Annals, 1945, Vol. I, p. 117.

Husain Shāh is known to have been tolerant to the growing Vaiṣṇavism.¹ This seems to suggest that the Sultān wanted to check the progress of the orthodox Brahminical culture by tacitly supporting the liberal vaiṣṇavism of ŚrīCaitanya. As a matter of fact, contemporary or almost contemporary works clearly state that the Brahmins of Navadvīpa were opposed to the Caitanya movement, at least in the beginning.² Husain Shāh's tacit recognition of Caitanyaism is thus quite significant.

Now that the Muslim rule had come to stay, the Brahmins could hardly expect anything tangible in the field of politics. All that they could do was to put emphasis on their intellectual superiority by resorting to cultural pursuits. This seems to explain why the life of contemporary Navadvīpa was characterised by intense intellectual activities. Barren and abstruse branches of knowledge like logic, grammar and smṛti could now easily attract their attention. There was probably a regular process of the filtration of Islāmic ideas and practices to the Brahminical society. Jayānanda has deplored Islāmic influences on the Brahmins of the time. According to this poet, they used to grow beard, put on socks, carry sticks, handle guns and recite the Masnawī after the Muslim fashion.³ They must have tried to stop the process of this filtration. They could attain this end by tightening up their own, orthodox, socio-legal system. Raghunānanda seems to have written his works in response to this social demand of the Brahmins.⁴ It appears to have had the result of separating the Brahminical section, not only from the Muslims, but also from all other lower class groups of Hindu population. Thus Brahminism wanted to lead a self-centred existence within the walls of the ancient Dharma Śāstra which it had raised around itself. Within its own limitations, however, it carried on intellectual

1. supra., ch. I, p. 40.

2. Caitanya-bhāgavat : ādi, XIV, p. 107.

3. Op.cit., p. 139; cf: ব্রহ্মসংহিতা-সম্বন্ধে দ্বিতীয় অধ্যায়ের প্রথম অঙ্কে।
 (স্বয়ং যোগী নৃসিংহ দেবের কথন)।
 স্বয়ংসং (?) স্বয়ংসং কথন।

4. infra., ch. VI, pp. 216 and 227-28.

pursuits and the centre of this Brahminical, orthodox culture, was Navadvīpa which was linked up with the Aryan culture of Bihar and Northern India, by the river Ganges. It was at this place that Raghunātha Sīromani founded the school of Navyama-yāya and Raghunandana composed his famous works. It was the city of Navadvīpa that witnessed the renaissance of Hindu culture through the resurgent Vaiṣṇavism of Śrī Caitanya. Southern and Eastern parts of Bengal seem to have been comparatively free from the impact of this culture. This explains why the local cults of Maṃgā and Nātha could reign supreme in these regions. The followers of these two cults are found even to-day in south and east Bengal. Although Brahmins might have immigrated into this part from time to time, their influence must have been quite limited due to the popularity of the local cults.

But the Brahmins could hardly maintain their isolated existence for long, for contact with the Muslims and lower-class Hindus was unavoidable for them. They had to ultimately reconcile their social order to this situation. It appears that the process of this reconciliation has been hinted at in the Kulajī literature the genuineness of which is very often doubted.¹ According to the same source, the

1. Prācyavidyā Mahānava, Nagendra Nath Basu, is probably the first writer to make an exhaustive use of materials from the Kulajī literature in reconstructing the social history of medieval Bengal. His monumental work called Vaṅgera Jātiya Itihāsa written in several volumes, has ^{preserved} ~~preserved~~ the contents of various Kulajī texts which are neither readily available nor easily accessible. This work has certain glaring defects, for the author's account of the origin and development of the castes and sects in the medieval Hindu society is not systematic, nor does he have any scientific approach to the sociological problems. Several scholars of Bengal have doubted the historical authenticity of Kulajī works without giving any reason in support of their view point. Dr. Ramesh Chandra Majumdar who has discussed the problem at a considerable length, has maintained that the Kulajī works in general, are historically unreliable. The defects of this literature, as mentioned by him, may be summarised here : (a) the historically unsound story of Adisūra who is said to have brought five Brahmins from Kanauj, is the pivot around

Kulinism of the Brahmins of Bengal was being frequently injured as a result of their association with the Muslims who had become the political master of the country. This led to serious complications in the Brahminical society. Those who had any touch with the Muslims, were being regarded as fallen and low in their own community. They were thus face to face with a critical situation. A social organisation called Jatirāla Kāchāri, was established under the presidency of a Brahmin called Datta Khas who was probably one of the chief officers of Nasiruddin Mahmūd Shah (death in 1459 A.D.). He organised what was called the fifty-seventh Samī Karana or social conference

around which the whole Kulaji literature revolves; (b) most of the Kulaji works including the Gosthikathā of Nulo Pañcānana, the Kularāma of Vācaspati Mīra, the Kalapradīpa of Dhanāñjaya, the Melaparyāyaganana, the Varendra Kulapañji, the Kularānava, the Kārikā of Edu Mīra, the Nirdosa-Kulapañjika and the Kārikā of Hari Mīra being comparatively modern, cannot give us the genuine information about the ancient Hindu society; and (c) there have been deliberate interpolation, alteration and omission in the Kulaji texts. For the views of Dr. Majumdar on Kulaji literature, see History of Bengal, I, pp. 623-34, Appendix-I. Bhāratvarsa, 1346 B.S.; see Kartik-Falguna issues. Most of the Kulaji works were written in the Muslim period. That the Mahāvamsāvalī was composed in 1407 Saka = 1485/86 A.D. is known from the colophon found in the same work. See the Mahāvamsāvalī: quoted by N. N. Basu: Vānger Jatiya Itihāsa: Brāhmana Kānda, Vol-I, Pt. I, p. 202. The Gosthikathā of Nulo Pañcānana and the Kularāma of Vācaspati Mīra, appear to have been written in the sixteenth or seventeenth century A.D. These together with other Kulaji works mentioned above, must have given a picture of the Hindu society of the time. The details given by this literature, may or may not correspond to the actual state of things existing in the then society; but it seems to bring home to us the various tendencies of the age in which it was produced. Dr. Ramesh Chandra Majumdar and Dr. Nihar Ranjan Ray, who consider Kulaji literature to be unreliable, do not fail to mention that it must have reflected the spirit of the time in which it was brought into being. See, History of Bengal, I, pp. 632 and 633 and Vāngalir Itihāsa: Ādi Parva, pp. 263 and 265. The Kulaji works cited in this section, clearly show that there was the impact of Islām on the Kulin Brahmins who had reacted to such a process by reorganising their own social system.

presumably to solve the problems of the Kulin Brahmins. At a subsequent date, however, Udayanācārya Bhādudī classified the Varendra Brahmins into several parties or groups. In 1480/81 A.D., Devivara introduced what is called the Mela system. He is said to have divided the Rādhiya Brahmins into 36 melas the names of which are Ballavi, Surai, Cattaraghavi, Bhairavaghataki, Madhai, Candai, Vijaya-panditi, Satārandakhani, Maladhakhani, Kakusti, Candrapati, Vidyadhari, Paramānandamisri, Cayi, Fulia, Khadaha, Dehta, Vengala, Bali, Nadiya, Panditaratni, Acavita, Acaryasekhari, Cayi, Parihala, Sungsarvarandi, Pramodini, Harimajundari, etc.¹

The Mela system of Devivara seems to have added a new chapter to the history of Bengali Kulinism. The Brahmins who had fallen victim to various dosas or defects, could now regain their social status. If this information is correct, it must be said that the role of Devivara in the history of the evolution of the then Brahminical society, was quite significant. He was a progressive social reformer in those days of caste rigidity. Realising the new forces that were at work, he wanted to get the Kulin society adjusted to the changing circumstances, with a view to preserving the integrity of the then Brahminical section of population. This was probably intended to save Kulinism from an impending danger.

The history of the different melas mentioned above, clearly shows that most of them were created as a result of Yavana - dosa touching the Brahmins. Bhairavaghataki, Dehta and Harimajundari melas are instances in point.² The Pirali Brahmins and Serkhani and Srimantakhani melas are said to have belonged to the same category.³ The Brahmins who were classified under these groups, were considered to have lost their social position because of their contact with the Muslims. This meant a serious threat to the security of Kulinism. Besides Yavana-dosa, there were

1. Vāngera Jātiya Itihāsa: Brahman Kānda, Vol-I, Pt. I, pp. 192-202.

2. ibid. pp. 205 and 210.

3. For the history of these melas, see N. N. Basu: op.cit., Vol-I, Pt. I, p. 260, Vol-III, Pirali Brahman Vivarana, pp. 152-160.

other defects which could touch a Kulin Brahmin. These were being childless, going to brothel-house, marrying within one's Svajana or community, marrying wicked or deformed girls, killing Brahmins, committing adultery or fornication etc.¹ Devivara who had found the Kulinism of the then Brahminical society significantly injured by their association with various dosas and the whole structure standing on the verge of destruction, reorganised it in order to preserve its integrity. Nulo Pañcanana who could not like the liberal views of Devivara and Sri Caitanya,² tried to re-establish the old social order in order to retain the orthodox pattern of the Hindu society. Thus there seems to have been a conflict between orthodoxy and liberalism in the then society. Even if we doubt the accuracy of the details of Kulaji literature, we can hardly ignore the general social trends which it reveals. The process of the contact, conflict and compromise of Brahminism with local and alien forces which we have noticed,³ is reflected in Kulaji works. Further, the political and religious impact of Islam on the life of Bengal seems to have created a social unrest among the Brahmins who reacted to such a situation by trying to reorganise their own society from within.

II. Sufi-ism and Yoga philosophy.

Though there are clear indications of a socio-political conflict between Islam and Brahminism, the mystic aspect of Islamic religion represented by Sufism, seems to have got itself adjusted to the peculiar nature of the indigenous culture. Almost all the works of Syed Sultan, a sixteenth century Bengali poet,⁴ give expression to this syncretic tendency. The catholic influence of sufi-ism is noticed in

1. N. N. Basu, op.cit., Vol-I, Pt-I, p. 204.

2. ibid., I, I, p. 270.

3. See the relevant sections of the chapter on Literature and Culture, of this thesis. See also Supra, relevant portions of the present chapter.

4. Enamul Haq: Muslim Vāṅglā Sahitya. Dacca, 1957, pp. 144-45.

the works like Jñāna Pradīpa and Jñāna Cattisā, characterised by an interesting synthesis of Islāmic mysticism and Indian yoga philosophy.

Great emphasis has been put in the sūfi-yogic Bengali literature on the human body described very often as a microcosm of the universe. The sūfis believe that the body contains the sumtotal of qualities available in the universe.¹ It is considered to be an abode of four Vedas, nine planets, various signs of Zodiac, seven heavens, seven infernal regions and several mystic realms.² Biological phenomena like women's conception and abortion, the formation of the body of the child in the mother's womb, sexual intercourse, preservation of semen and location of sexual feelings in the different parts of the body of women at different times, are elaborately discussed in the literature under consideration.³

Because of the unlimited importance of the body, the essential principles of Yogic sūfi-ism as propounded by the Bengali sūfis, have been located in the physical system. Following the idea of the Sat-Cakra or six nerve - plexuses found in the tāntrik and yogic texts, they have conceived of the existence of six circles namely Mulādhāra-Cakra or the sacri-coecygeal plexus having four petals and the brightness of the morning Sun, Svādhīsthāna-cakra or the sacral plexus, Manifura-cakra or the lumber plexus, Anāhata-cakra or the abode of life possessing twelve petals and the colour of burning gold, Viśuddha-cakra or the laryngeal and pharyngeal plexus with sixteen petals, having the brightness of the Moon and Ajñā-cakra having two petals over which there is the thousand petalled lotus, the abode of Ādyā Sakti or the primordial goddess.⁴

In the sūfi-yogic psycho-physiological processes, nerves play an important part. Syed Sultan has given a theory of nerves in the following lines: "Ingala and

1.. Syed Sultan: Jñāna Pradīpa. Dacca University ms. fol. 9b. cf:

বসন্ত (২) ও বসন্ত (২) - অর্থাৎ।

2. ibid, fols. 3b, 8b, 9a, 9b etc.

3. ibid, fols. 6b-8a, 12b etc.

4. ibid, fols. 9a and 10a - 10b.

and Pingala are the two nerves running by the two sides of the spinal chord and looking like two creeping plants hanging by the two sides of a tree. The nerve Ingala in the right may be compared with the Sun and the Pingala in the left resembles the Moon. The Ingala is the flow of the Ganges and the Pingala that of the Jumna. The nerve running between the god and the demon is called Susumna. These three meet at a point which is regarded by the wise as the confluence of the three sacred rivers." ¹ We come across the description of other nerves such as Gandhari, Kuhu, Hastijihva, Alambusa, Sankhini and others together with slight references to the functions of some of them. ²

It has been said that there are numerous Asanas or sitting postures of which Padmasana or the 'Lotus posture' is quite important. In this posture, the sufi sits with his left leg placed on the right leg, his hands resting on the legs, his chin touching the chest and his concentration fixed on the nose. ³ Syed Sultan has tried to simplify, the yogic process of physical exercise by accepting the Padmasana to the exclusion of other postures which are defined in yogic and tantrik texts.

The regulation of breath occupies a prominent place in the yogic eufi literature under reference. Describing the process, the poet says, "The middle nerve Susumna is the best of all nerves. This is the passage through which the ^{primordial} goddess

1. ibid., fol. 10a; cf:
 (सुकुमलु इति नला निनि नला दुहे नाडी ।
 येन सुक दुहे नाडि नर आहु वेद ॥
 दाकान निनि नला नाडी-येन दिवस ॥
 कसनाले इति नला नाडी-येन कसरी ॥
 इति नला-देवस नर । निनि नला अरुना ।
 सुकसुं (सुक) (सुक) नाडि-सुकसुं ॥
 इति नाडी-दुहे इहे-आहु-दुहे नाडी ।
 इति नाडी-दुहे इहे-आहु-दुहे नाडी ॥

2. ibid., fols. 9b-10a: इति नला निनि नला नाडी-दुहे (सुक) सुकसुं ॥
 कसरी-दुहे इति नला सुकसुं अरुना ।
 सुकसुं-अरुना सुकसुं-अरुना ॥ (आरुना)

3. ibid., fol. 9b. The description of the Padmasana as given by Syed Sultan slightly differs from that found in the Hathayoga Pradipika. Eng. Tran. by Srinivas Iyengar; Bombay Theosophical Publication Fund, 1893, Ch. I. Verse 46, p. 20.

can be worshipped..... Take air by the left nostril while the right one is closed, the process being similar to that by which a piece of thread passes through the eye of a needle.... When the air will enter into the body, a peculiar sound will come out. Listening to the sound, your mind will be fixed..... You are to find out light in that sound so that your mind may be annihilated. This is the path leading to the

Lord."¹ ^{We} find frequent references to Purak (inhalation of breath by the left nostril), Kumbhak (retention of breath), dhyana (fixed attention), mudra (posture), and Samadhi (ecstatic concentration)² although there is no detailed description of these yogic methods.

The different ideas and practices relating to the physical body appear to have been utilized by the Sufis as means to a particular end about which there are clear indications in the sufi literature of Bengal. By resorting to various bodily attitudes combined with inhalations and exhalations of breath and the fixation of the gaze on certain particular points, the sufi can attain not only physical perfection and freedom from diseases, but also immortality.³ As already noticed, this physical culture is also "the path leading to the Lord."⁴

Yogic and tantrik systems of Indian philosophy are characterized by the development of a physiological system of a number of nerves including Ingala, Pingala and the Susumna, six cakras or psychic circles and a secret female energy residing

1. Jnana Pradipa, D.U. ms. fol. 10a

স্বস্তিত্ব সুখী হইল। - অর্থাৎ (স্বাস্থ্য) ১
স্বাস্থ্যকরকৈ আনন্দ কায় - (স্বাস্থ্য) ২
স্বাস্থ্যকর সুখী হইল। - অর্থাৎ (স্বাস্থ্য) ৩
স্বাস্থ্যকর সুখী হইল। - অর্থাৎ (স্বাস্থ্য) ৪
স্বাস্থ্যকর সুখী হইল। - অর্থাৎ (স্বাস্থ্য) ৫
স্বাস্থ্যকর সুখী হইল। - অর্থাৎ (স্বাস্থ্য) ৬
স্বাস্থ্যকর সুখী হইল। - অর্থাৎ (স্বাস্থ্য) ৭
স্বাস্থ্যকর সুখী হইল। - অর্থাৎ (স্বাস্থ্য) ৮
স্বাস্থ্যকর সুখী হইল। - অর্থাৎ (স্বাস্থ্য) ৯
স্বাস্থ্যকর সুখী হইল। - অর্থাৎ (স্বাস্থ্য) ১০

2. ibid. fols. 11a, 12a, 12b etc.

3. ibid. fols. 4b and 12a.

4. ibid. see above.

at the lowest part of the spine. Remaining as it does in a coiled condition, it is called Kundalinī Sakti or Coiled energy which, when aroused, can make the circles work. The spinal column is the abode of the nerve Susumna which extends from the Mūlādhāra-cakra or the basal region of the vertical column to the Sahasrāra situated in the cerebral region. The other five cakras are the Svādhisthāna situated near the root of the penis, Manipura in the region of navel, Anāhata in the heart, Viśuddha at the meeting place of the spinal chord and the medulla oblongata and Ajñā between the eye-brows. To the right of the chief nerve Susumna, there is Pīngalā and to its left Ingālā. These three nerves are known in the yoga literature as the Ganges, the Yamunā and the Saravati respectively, their meeting point being called the trivenī or the confluence of these three rivers. Ingālā and Pīngalā are also known as the sun and the Moon respectively.¹ Of the eight Yogāṅgas, the method of ethical preparation as represented by Yama (abstention) and niyama (observance), āsana (physical postures), prāṇāyāma (breath control) and pratyāhāra (withdrawal of senses from their normal external functioning) constitute the preparatory state of purgation. Dhyāna (fixed attention) and dhāraṇa (contemplation) represent the state of illumination, while Samādhi or concentration constitutes that of union.² The biological and psychological processes of tāntrik and Hathayogic philosophy aim at arousing the Kundalinī sakti and giving it an upward flow with a view to uniting it with śiva in the highest region of Sahasrāra. Śiva being the motionless immortal Being and Sakti the principle of change, union of Śiva with Sakti indicates the suspension of the process of change and activity and the attainment of the changeless state of immortality through a bio-psychological method of retrogression. As the practice is of an upward nature, it is generally known as

1. Nerves, cakras and the Kundalinī Sakti are frequently mentioned in the Hathayoga Pradīpikā, op.cit., Chs. I, II and IV; Kapilāśramiṇya Patañjala Yogadarsana, ed. and Bengali tran. by Hariharānanda Aranya, Dharmamegha Aranya and Ray J. G. Bahadur, C. U., 1949, 4th ed. pp. 203-204. Sukhamaya Bhattacharya: Tantra Paricaya Viśva Bharatī, 1359 B.S; pp. 46-49. S.B. Das Gupta: Obscure Religious Cults etc., p. 106, footnote I. Upendra Nath Bhattacharya: Vāṅglar Vaul O Vaul Gan, Cal., 1364 B.S., pp. 438-48. S. Radhakrishnan: op.cit., II, 352, footnote I.
2. S. Radhakrishnan: op.cit., II, p. 357.

ultra Sādhanā or the regressive culture resorted to by almost all of the mystic cults including Tāntricism, Buddhist Sahajiyā, Vaisnavism, Nāthism and Baul sect. The germs of the regressive Sādhanā can be found in the Upanisada, the Bhāgavat Gīta and the Vedānta.¹

A comparison of these yogic and tāntrik ideas and practices with those embodied in the Bengali sūfī literature analysed above, clearly shows that the Muslim mystics had adopted them from the indigenous systems of yogā and tantra philosophy. The Jñāna Pradīpa is full of indications of the yoga-tāntrik regressive discipline. Apart from regarding the nerve Susumnā as "the passage through which one can worship the primordial goddess," Syed Sultān places the Lord or Prabhu in the region of Sahasrāra.² Thus he appears to have presupposed union between the two, which, as we have already found, is also the ultimate aim of the followers of the yogic-tāntrik cults of medieval Bengal. At one place, he says, "sins of crores of birth can do no harm to him who takes his bath at the ghāt of Trivenī."³ It is at the confluence of the three rivers that the yogic and tāntrik spiritualists start their mental and physical disciplines by stopping the flow of the Ganges (Pīngalā) and the Yamunā (Ingālā) and diverting them along the upward course of the Sarasvatī (Susumnā).⁴ Thus it is highly probable that the regressive spiritual discipline had been accepted by some of the sūfīs of the then Bengal.

Before considering the possible source of the yogic and tāntrik ideas of Bengali sūfism, we may try to take into account some of the sūfī elements betrayed by the

1. S. B. Das Gupta: Obscure Religious Cults, 109-10, 115, 263-67 etc. and Bharatiya Sadhanar Aikya, Viśvavidyāsangraha, 1358 B.S., pp. 4-52. Sukharaya Bhattacharya: op.cit., p. 49. supra, Ch. IV, pp. 138-39 and 140.

2. Jñāna Pradīpa, fol. 10b.

3. ibid, fol 10a: অসংখ্য জন্মের পাপ হইবে স্মরণ করিয়া-খাও।।

হইবে খাও (হইবে জন্ম-স্মরণ করিয়া)

কোমল (কোমল মনুষ্য-স্বভাব হইবে) খাও।।

4. S. B. Das Gupta: Bharatiya Sadhanar Aikya, p. 49.

mystical literature under review. After identifying the manjil (stations) of Shari'at (The Islamic cannon law), Tariqat (The Path), Haqiqat (The Reality) and Marifat (The Gnosis), with the maqamat or eufi-istic stages of Nasut (humanity), Mahut (dominion), Jabrut (almightiness) and Lahut (divinity) respectively, Syed Sultan goes on ^{ax} ~~prescribing~~ ^{prescribing} religious duties to be performed by the Sufi at each of these stations. Prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, cultivation of altruistic virtues and physical purity are meant for the manjil of Shari'at. Each of the stages being of a preparatory nature, the disciple who has fulfilled his obligations satisfactorily at the station of Shari'at, can reach the next higher stage of Tariqat or the Sufi Path where he should suppress his sexual desire, anger, temptation and delusion. At the station of Haqiqat or the Reality, he should check hunger, thirst and idleness and possess self-control. Arriving at the station of Marifat or the Gnosis, he is in a position to know himself.¹

The four maqamat frequently mentioned by the sufis of Bengal should be distinguished from the maqamat or the acquired virtues of the sufis as elaborately discussed by Abu Nasar as Sarraj² and 'Ali bin 'Usman al - Jullabi al-Hujwiri.³ Describing maqamat, Hujwiri says, "Station (maqam) denotes anyone's 'standing' in the Way of God, and his fulfilment of the obligations appertaining to that 'station' and his keeping it until he comprehends its perfection so far as lies in a man's power. It is not permissible that he should quit his 'station' without fulfilling the obligations thereof. Thus the first 'station' is repentance (tawbat), then comes conversion (inabat), then renunciation (zuhd), then trust in God (tawakkul), and so on: it is not permissible that anyone should pretend to conversion without repentance, or to renunciation without conversion, or to trust in God without renunciation."⁴ There

1. fols. 1a - 1b.

2. Kitab - al - Luma' - fi' l - Tasawwuf: ed. Nicholson, London, 1914. While walking along the mystic path, the sufis has to traverse each of the maqamat of repentance, abstinence, renunciation, poverty, patience, Trust in God and satisfaction. ibid., pp. 43-54.

3. Kashf - al - Mahjub: Eng. Tran. Nicholson, London, 1911, pp. 180-82 and 370-71.

4. ibid., p. 181.

is fundamental difference between a maqām (station) and ḥāl (state). Hujwiri further says, "State (ḥāl), on the other hand, is something that descends from God into a man's heart, without his being able to repel it when it comes, or to attract it when it goes, by his own effort. Accordingly, while the term 'station' denotes the way of the seeker, and his progress in the field of exertion, and his rank before God in proportion to his merit, the term 'state' denotes the favour and grace which God bestows upon the heart of His servant, and which are not connected with any mortification on the latter's part. 'Station' belongs to the category of acts, state to the category of gifts. Hence the man that has a 'station' stands by his own self-mortification, whereas a man that has a 'state' is dead to 'self' and stands by a 'state' which God creates in him."¹ Apart from accepting the tenets as enumerated above, the later sūfīs believe that the gradual ascent of the soul of the sūfī is related to the four maqāmāt of Nāsūt, Malakūt, Jabrūt and Lahūt.² Nāsūt is the natural state of humanity possessed by every individual. Malakūt is the sacred state of angels and delicate bodies, whence the sūfī starts the spiritual journey. Here he prays to God, absorbing himself in the divine thought and giving up all actions and evil contemplations. In the state of Jabrūt, the sūfī realises and acquires divine power. The state of Lahūt is a pantheistic one where the sūfī finds himself in the nature of God which comprehends everything of the universe. These four states again correspond to Sharī'at, Tarīqat, Ma'rifat and Haqīqat respectively.² Allegorically speaking, the sūfī traverses a long 'path' or Tarīqat consisting of acquired virtues and mystical states, before reaching the higher spiritual planes of the Gnosis or Ma'rifat and the Truth or Haqīqat where he realises

1. ibid. p. 181. The 'states' or ahwāl are meditation, nearness to God, love, fear, hope, longing, intimacy, tranquillity, contemplation and certainty.

Kitāb-al-Lum'a', pp. 55-72.

2. John A. Subhans: Sūfism. Its Saints And Shrines. An Introduction to the Study of Sūfism With Special Reference to India, Lucknow, 1938, p. 75. Sikdar Iqbal Ali Shah : Islamic Sufism, London, 1933, p. 294.

no distinction between his self and the Reality. "Gnosis is the life of the heart through God, and the turning away of one's inmost thoughts from all that is not God."¹ Marifat or the Gnosis as distinguished from intellectual and traditional knowledge may be defined as "knowledge of the attributes of the divine Unity, peculiar to the saints who behold God with their hearts," and is attainable in a state of ecstasy.² In the sūfī philosophy, the term Haqīqat or the Truth signifies "a reality which does not admit of abrogation and remains in equal force from the time of Adam to the end of the world" and it also means "a man's dwelling in the place of union with God, and the standing of his heart in the place of abstraction (tanzīh)".³ Besides including all these sūfī elements in his philosophical system, Syed Sultān holds the panentheistic view that the Creator who lives in the eternal void, is the ultimate Reality and the underlying principle of causation.⁴ Sūfīs like Sarrāj and Hujwiri hold that 'Alī possessed a great deal of mystic knowledge.⁵ In the Jñāna Pradīpa, he is depicted as receiving esoteric knowledge from Muhammad⁶ whom the sūfīs call the Perfect Man or Insān-al-Kāmil.⁷ Capable of imparting instructions in mysticism, Syed Sultān has gone to the extent of identifying the prophet not only with the creation but also with the Creator.⁸ This is probably an indication of pantheism which occupies a prominent place in the philosophical system under review.

1. Hujwiri: op.cit., p. 267.

2. R. A. Nicholson: Mysticism, in Legacy of Islam, ed. Thomas Arnold and Alfred Guillaume, London, 1949, pp. 214 and 215. For a detailed discussion on this point, see Nicholson: The Mystics of Islām, London, 1914, Ch. III, pp. 68-101.

3. Hujwiri: op.cit., pp. 383 and 384.

4. Op.cit., fol. 6a.

5. Kifāb-al-Luma', p. 129 and Kashf-al-Mahjūb, pp. 74 and 269.

6. The whole book is in the form of dialogue between 'Alī and Muhammad, the former putting some questions about mystic knowledge and the latter answering them.

7. R. A. Nicholson: Mysticism, op.cit., p. 225.

8. Addressing Muhammad, 'Alī says: تو خلقی و خالق و حقیقتی (2/239)

"Thou art the Creation, the Creator and The Reality". op.cit., fol. 6b. Similar ideas are found in many other passages which may not be quoted here.

The Sūfis of Bengal lived, moved and had their being in an atmosphere saturated with the Yogic and Tāntrik culture which they incorporated in their own religio-philosophical system possibly under the influence of the Nāth Cult. As already pointed out, the ideas of the piercing of the six circles, the theory of nerves, the practical regressive culture leading to the union of Śiva with Śakti and the preservation of nectar, are some of the essential features of Nāthism. ~~A~~ A significant part of the Nāth text, Gorakṣa Vijaya is in the form of dialogue ¹--- a traditional pattern followed also in the Jñāna Pradīpa and Jñāna Saṅgraha. While imparting esoteric knowledge to his own teacher Mīna Nāth, Gorakṣa Nāth discusses thirty mystic topics.² Syed Sultan holds that there are thirty knots in the spinal column which, when penetrated, bring varying degrees of spiritual success to the Sūfī.³ The Gorakṣa Vijaya enumerates a number of signs of the approach of death,⁴ most of which are mentioned also in the Jñāna Pradīpa. The tradition of eighty-four Siddhās, though of an unhistorical nature, plays an important part in the Nāth philosophy.⁵ Syed Sultan has vaguely referred to eighty-four exhalations of breath to be performed by the Sūfī.⁶ Muslim contacts with the Nāth Cult of medieval Bengal is evidenced by the fact that the authorship of the famous Gorakṣa Vijaya which recounts the achievements of Gorakṣa Nāth, is very often ascribed to a Muslim poet named Shaikh Faizullah. The system of various control called Khaṇḍa (literally meaning safety, security or tranquillity) in the Nāth terminology, is described as

-
1. Gorakṣa Vijaya : ed. Panchanan Manial, Vina Bhāratī, 1356 BS., pp. 130-47.
 2. ibid., pp. 131-43.
 3. Op.cit., fol. 11b
 4. Op.cit., pp. 143-45.
 5. S.B. Das Gupta: Obscure Religious Cults, pp. 232-36; Kalyani Mallik : Nātha Sampradāyera Itihāsa, Darsana O Sadhana Pranālī, pp. 11 and 90.
 6. Op.cit., fol. 9b.

a vigilant sentinel to be placed in the different centres of the body so that the wealth of the body may not be taken away by death, decay or change.¹ While describing the function of Khemā, Syed Sultān identifies it with the supreme reality, and religion and thinks that it can check mortality.² The mouth of the curved duct Sāṅkhini which extends from the Sahasrāra to the palatal region and which forms the passage through which Soma-rasa or nectar passes, is called in Nāthism, the tenth door of the body by closing which one can preserve and drink nectar.³ The Jñāna Pradīpa contains references to the tenth door and the Sāṅkhini which is described as a nerve having three bent portions, a knowledge of which is supposed to take away the fear for death.⁴ The Muslim poet describes the process of drinking nectar as one of turning the tongue backwards into the hollow above with a view to preserving amṛta (nectar) so that it may be taken by the Sūfī.⁵ In this work, we frequently come across Nāth conceptions of Ajapājapa, Hamsanāda and void.⁶ The presence of so many Nāth elements in the Sūfī literature of Bengal, is thus suggestive of the fact that most of the tāntrik and yogic ideas prevailing among some of the sūfīs, had come through the channel of Nāthism.

The sūfīs of the period in question had possibly genuine reasons to accept the regressive physical and spiritual culture which was not totally foreign to their system. The mystical journey from the lowest state of humanity or Nāsūt to the highest one of divinity or Lāhūt involves an upward process. In an abstract sense, the devotee tries through this regressive practice to give an upward motion

1. S.B. Das Gupta: Obscure Religious Cults, pp. 267-68.

2. Op.cit., fol. 2b.

3. S. B. Das Gupta: Obscure Religious Cults, pp. 275-76.

4. Op.cit., fol. 3a: শ্রীমদ-নাথোঃ কমা চিন চৈবৈ (বঙ্গীয়)
সেৱক অনাথৈ নঃ স্তুত্বং নমি কাম্যং

This curved nerve is referred to also in the Gorakh Vijay, p. 92: বঙ্গীয়
শ্রীমদ-নাথোঃ কমা চিন চৈবৈ (বঙ্গীয়)
"Oh Guru, practise (physical culture) through the curved duct."

5. Jñāna Pradīpa, fols. 2a, 10b and 12a.

6. Op.cit., fols. 4b and 10 b. For an explanation of these Nāth ideas, see supra, pp. 140-42.

to his generally downward tendencies with a view to attaining perfection. As Nicholson puts, it, "Hence the upward movement of the Absolute from the sphere of manifestation back to the unmanifested Essence takes place in and through the unitive experience of the soul."¹ The Naqshbandi sūfīs of Northern India developed a theory of six Latīfas or centres of divine light to be located in the human body. These are Qalb or heart, Rub or soul, Sirr or secret heart, Khafī or secret soul, and Nafs or evil self. It seems that the theory of Lataī'f is an imitation of the theory of six circles of the Yoga philosophy.² To the list of Lataī'f, the Qadiri Sūfīs add a few more names such as Dil Mudawwarī or the circular mind situated in head, Dil Nilūfari or the mind of blue lotus situated in the middle part of the two groins, Dil Sanūbarī ^{→ on the conical mind} situated beneath the left breast and Dil 'Ambarī or the mind of amber under the right breast. It is believed that various kinds of divine light descend on these centres when the Sūfī performs dhikr.³

Thus it seems well-established that some of the Sūfīs of Northern India had developed certain mystic ideas quite akin to those obtaining in the Indian Yoga Philosophy. The presence of the tētrik and yogic ideas in the religio-philosophical system evolved by some of the Sūfīs of Bengal, may be satisfactorily explained, if we bear in mind that Sūfism, both Indian and Iranian, is a syncretic movement which has absorbed a good deal of elements from a variety of sources such as christianity, Neo-Platonism, Buddhism and Vedānta philosophy.⁴ In Bengal also, it has adapted

-
1. Studies in Islamic Mysticism, Cambridge, 1921, p. 84.
 2. John A. Subhan: Op.cit., pp. 61-62 and 149. Dr. Enamul Huq: Sūfism in Bengal (unpublished thesis).
 3. Dr. Enamul Huq: Unpublished thesis - Explaining the term Lataī'f (Sing. Latīfa). Hujwiri says that they mean "A symbol (ishārati), presented to the heart, of subtleties of feeling." Op.cit., p. 385.
 4. R. A. Nicholson: The Mystics of Islam, Introduction, pp. 10-19 and Mysticism in Legacy of Islam, pp. 213 and 215; Philip K. Hilli: History of The Arabs, 4th ed. London, 1949, p. 433.

itself to the local, ~~philosophical~~ ^{philosophical} ideas and mystic practices.

The complicated type of Yogic-Tāntrik Ṣūfīsm discussed above continued to prevail in Bengal also in the succeeding periods. The Yoga Qalandar of Syed Mortuzā, considered to be a seventeenth century work,¹ and the Jñāna Sāgara² of 'Alī Rājā who seems to have been alive in the early nineteenth century, preserve almost whatever we find in the Jñāna Pradīpa and give us a fair idea about the changes that were gradually taking place in the Ṣūfī pantheon of Bengal.

Besides dealing with the signs of death, the constituent elements of the body, the place of the Murshid or the spiritual teacher in the Ṣūfī hagiology and the sources of light such as the sun, the moon and water on which the ṣūfī is advised to concentrate his mind at the time of meditation,³ the writer of the Yoga Qalandar gives a detailed account of the maqāms of Nāsūt, Melkūt, Jabrūt and Lāhūt, identifying them not only with the manjils of Shariāt, Tariqat, Haqiqat and Marifat, but also /with the Cakras of Mūlādhāra, Manipura Ajñā and Anāhata respectively, locating an angel at each of these regions and considering them to be the abode of seasons like Summer, autumn, spring and Sārat or the period following the rainy season.⁴ The religious duties prescribed for each of these maqāms do not at all differ from those mentioned by Syed Sultān. Following the Ṣūfī custom, the writer of the Yoga Qalandar mentions four kinds of mind such as Dil Mudawwari, Dil Sanūbari, Dil Amberi and Dil Milūfari.⁵ Muhammad, the Perfect Man of the Ṣūfīs, has been placed in the maqām of Lāhūt ^{where} ~~the~~ the ṣūfī may come in contact with his light (nūr).⁶

1. Enamul, Haq: Muslim Vāṅglā Sāhitya, pp. 193-95.

2. ed. Abdul Karim Sāhitya Visārad, 1324 B.S., Sāhitya Parisad Series No. 59.

3. The unpublished composite text of the Yoga Qalandar in the Varendra Research Society Museum, ed. by Dr. Enamul Haq, pp. 5-8 and 12-16. We have compared this text with a copy of the Yoga Qalandar in Arabic script, now in Dacca University Library. It does not differ from Dr. Haq's edition.

4. ibid. V. R. S. Museum ms. pp. 2-5 and 7-8.

5. ibid. p. 10.

6. ibid. p. 5.

The Sūfi work under consideration contains a good deal of Nāth-Yogic elements. Apart from mentioning some of the Cakras or circles, the poet enjoins upon the sūfi the performance of the Ajapājapa of Nāthism, refers to the Anāhata sound and considers the thousand petalled lotus to be the abode of the Lord or Frabhu with whom preliminary contacts can be made at the Trivenī or the confluence of the three rivers.¹ There is a description of postures like Padmāsana (lotus posture), Mayūrāsana (peacock posture), Garbhāsana (posture resembling that of a child in the mother's womb) and Yogāsana (yogic posture)² which have been described in the yogic works like the Hatha-yoga Pradīpikā and the Gorakṣa Saṁhitā.³ Apart from betraying a general air of Nāth influences, the Yoga Śalandar contains a few elements of the Hindu Tantra and Upaniṣad. It has been said that the four maqāms of Nāsūt, Malsūt, Jabrūt and Lāhūt, identified with the four Cakras, are dominated by the four elements of fire, air, water and earth respectively.⁴ Instead of placing the abstract sentinel or khemā of the Nāth Panthis at the various places of the body, he locates the angel Azrāil at Nāsūt or Mulādhāra, Iṣrāfīl at Malsūt or Manipura, Mikāīl at Jabrūt or Ajñā and Jibrāīl at Lāhūt or Anāhata, the four angels having the appearances of a tiger, a snake, an elephant and a peacock respectively putting on red, green, white and yellow garments and each riding on a horse of a similar colour.⁵ In the Hindu Tantras, the five cakras of Mulādhāra, Svādhisthān, Manipura, Anāhata and Viśuddha representing the elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether respectively, are presided over by the five gods, viz., Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Īśāna and Mahādeva. The first three gods have red, blue and vermilion colour and the last two gods are white.⁶ Syed Martazā's colour scheme resembles the Tantrik one. The angels residing

1. ibid., pp. 5, 6 and 14.

2. ibid. p. 11.

3. Hathayoga Pradīpikā, Ch. I. Verses, 31, 46 etc. Gorakṣa Saṁhitā, ed. Prasanna Kumar Kaviratna, Calcutta, 1813, Śloka, see Śls. 8 and 10.

4. V. R. S. Museum ms. pp. 7-8.

5. ibid. pp. 2-4, 7-8 and 10.

6. S. B. Das Gupta: Obscure Religious Cults., p. 356.

at the different maṇḍas or cakras seem to be the Islāmic counterparts of the gods of the Hindu tantras. Again the union of the Jivātma and Paramātma, which has been regarded by Mortuzā as one of the spiritual attainments of the sūfi,¹ is an Upanisadic conception. In the Upanisat, they have been depicted as two birds living on friendly terms on the same tree. Jivātman or the sentient soul can taste the sweet fruit of the material, worldly experience which is scrupulously avoided by Paramātman or the Supreme Being.² Thus sūfi as represented by the Yoga Qalandar, appears to be of a composite nature.

The Jñāna Sāgara of 'Alī Rājā contains several Nāth or Yogic-tāntrik ideas. Speaking of the six cakras, the poet says, "Inside the body there are six lotuses containing six circles which are the resting-places of six seasons and six rāgas or musical scales".³ He refers to the Ajapajapa, Hamsarāda and the Yogic method of breath-control.⁴ The regressive process of physical culture finds a regular place in the mystic theory propounded by 'Alī Rājā. He says that the path of love is a regressive one. One who does not have the knowledge of this reverse process, cannot enjoy real life. Here the forward is the backward and the backward is the forward. The world process is connected with the principle of inversion. The Lord has kept the path of spiritualism concealed and the unreal path open. This is why men and fairies, after their birth in this world, follow the unreal path of material enjoyment. One can achieve spiritual success by walking along the regressive path.⁵ The idea of Sūnya or vacuity forms an integral part of the sūfi philosophy obtaining in Bengali literature. Syed Sultān says that the contemplation about the unseen

1. V.R.S.Museum ms. p. 5a

"Know that the Supreme Soul resides with the Sentient Soul."

২২৩৭২ (৫৪৭৭) "The Sentient Soul has been united with the Supreme Soul" etc. Jivātma and Paramātma stand for the human personality and the Divine personality respectively.

2. Mundakopanisat, 3.1.1. and Sveta, 4.6

3. 'Alī Rājā: Jñāna Sāgara, p. 71; see also p. 45

4. ibid., pp. 55-56. For an explanation of these Nāth-yogic terms, see supra, ch. IV, p. 141.

5. Op.cit., pp. 20 and 36-38

vacuity can give us an insight into the nature of the ultimate Reality.¹ A distinct echo of this idea is found in the Jñāna Sāgara where in it is said that the ascetic who is the void personified, recites the name of the void and attains spiritual success with the help of the void. He enjoys love dalliances with vacuity which resides in the void. Its main functions are identical with the void. Vacuity contains the supreme reality and gives us the knowledge of reality. The yogic contemplation is an accessory to the acquisition of the knowledge of reality.² The void is identical with the delicate body. The form of beauty is without any shape. The ocean of the void reveals to the spiritualist the ocean of beauty wherein he finds success.³ We have already seen that the idea of the void representing a very primitive element possibly of Kol or Austric origin with subsequent Brahminical accretions, had been accepted by the Dharmite faith, Nāthism and Tāntrik Buddhism.⁴ The indigenous sūfism of Bengal seems to have absorbed this idea because of its being in contact with these local cults. Like Syed Mortuzā, 'Alī Raja also puts emphasis on the union of Jīvatmā and Paramatmā⁵ which, as already indicated, is an Upaniṣadic conception.⁶

1. Jñāna Pradīpa, D.U. ms. fol. 4b: *দোষিত বা পানি মাত্রে-তাত্রে বাসি সূন্য।
তাহাতে চিত্তিলে দোষিত সুকীৰ্ত্তং ধন্য॥*

2. Op.cit., p. 22: *সুসাত্রে কামিত সূন্য জীব সূন্যময়।
সূন্য হইতে কামিত সিদ্ধি মৰ্জ্জয় ॥
নাম সূন্য, কাম সূন্য সূন্যে মাত্রে সিদ্ধি।
সে সূন্যে মাত্রে কামিত কামিত সিদ্ধি ॥
সূন্যেত পংকজং সূন্যে ব্রহ্মকায়।
মমাত্রে পংকজং তম মমাত্রে ॥*

3. ibid., p. 42

4. supra., ch. IV, p. 142.

5. Jñāna Sāgara, p. 49: *জীবাত্মা পরাত্মা সুকল মিশ্রিত।*

"Jīvatmā or the sentient soul and Paramatmā or the supreme soul are the pair that remain mixed".

6. supra., p. 168

It may be mentioned in this connection that 'Ali Raja has not hesitated to accept the doctrine of Parakiyā love. He says, "Love to a Svakiyā or lawfully married wife is no intense love; but love to a Parakiyā or woman belonging to another is suitable for a loving mind."¹ The doctrines of Svakiyā and Parakiyā may be explained in this context. "Parakiyā literally means 'pertaining or belonging to another', and hence the culture called Parakiyā..... means the observance of mystic practices in the company of women other than one's wedded wife, specially with a married woman whose husband is living."² The term Svakiyā, "when applied to a woman, means a lawfully married wife who is always ready to carry out the wishes of her husband for whom she cherishes unqualified love."³ The doctrine of Parakiyā "may properly be regarded as the very foundation whereon rests the mystic edifice of the spiritual culture of the Sahajiyās"⁴ who formed one of the branches of post-Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism in Bengal. The Parakiyā element in the Sūfī philosophy seems to be a post-Caitanya accretion.

To these local ideas, 'Ali Raja has added several pantheistic conceptions obtaining in Islāmic mysticism. His cosmogony is dominated by the love of God. He says, "There is not even a single particle that is created except from His love. The Lord is creating everything out of His love. All objects have their origin in the ocean of love. The living being lives on the strength of love; it dies when it does not have love."⁵ Created beings are but His manifestations. It compares quite favourably with the idea expressed by the mystic poet Jāmi' in the following lines:

Although He beheld His attributes and qualities as a perfect whole in His own
essence,
Yet He desired that they should be displayed to Him in another mirror,
And that each one of His eternal attributes should become manifest accordingly
in a diverse form.
Therefore He created the verdant fields of Time and Space and the life-giving
garden of the world,
That every branch and leaf and fruit might show forth His various perfections.⁶

1. Jñāna Sāgara, p. 80.

স্বকীয়ঃ স্মৃতি নর্যে আরো প্রেমবৃত্তম।

পরকীয়ঃ স্মৃতি যোগ্য প্রেমঃ সাননম ॥

2. Manindra Mohan Bose: op.cit., p. 19.

3. ibid., p. 20.

4. ibid., p. 19.

5. Jñāna Sāgara, pp. 26-27.

6. Cited by R.A. Nicholson: The Mystics of Islam, p. 81.

Hallaj used to believe that God in the state of aloneness could not realise Himself so that He had to bring into being the Divine image personified by the newly created Adam.¹ While accepting this panentheistic principle, 'Alī Rāzā has replaced Adam by Muhammad, the Perfect Man. He says that the Lord was alone in the beginning. Out of His love, He created a dual who was named Muhammad. They represented the original lover and the beloved. In aloneness, no one can enjoy love; so there is the necessity of a pair.² It has also been held by the poet that 'Alī has given mystic knowledge by the prophet Muhammad.³ Thus the *sūfī* philosophy of 'Alī Rāzā is a combination of a number of diverse ideas.

There seem to have been contacts of the Muslim minds with Yogic and Tāntrik mysticism as early as the beginning of Muslim rule in Bengal. It is said that a yogi of Kāmrūp named Bhejar Brāhman, hearing of the spread of Islam in India, reached Lakhnautī in the reign of 'Alī Mardān (1210-1213 A.D.) in search of a Muslim scholar with whom he might discuss spiritual problems. The yogi was introduced to Qāzī Ruknaddīn Samarqandī. After some discussions, he accepted Islam and subsequently acquired the right of issuing *fatwa*. He is said to have dedicated to the Qāzī his book Amrta Kunda or 'the Reservoir of Nectar' which was translated by the Qāzī into Arabic and Persian.⁴ At a later period, the work seems to have been repeatedly translated by the Muslim *sūfīs* --- a fact indicating possibly something more than mere academic interests of the Muslims in such a work. Muhammad Ghāus Cavāliwārī, the sixteenth century Indian *Sūfī*, translated this work into Persian under the title

1. R. A. Nicholson *son* : Studies in Islamic Mysticism, p. 80

2. Jñāna Sāgara, pp. 24-25

3. ibid., pp. 1, 5, etc.

4. Hauz-al-Hayat or the Arabic version of the Amrtakunda has been published by Yousuf Hussain in Journal Asiatique, TomcoXIII, 1928, October-December, pp.306-44 Imprimerie Nationale, Paris. For the story connected with the Yogi's conversion and the rendering of the Amrtakunda, see text, op.cit., pp. 311-13

Bahr-al-Hayāt or 'The Ocean of Life' which was illustrated in the early seventeenth century.¹

The Arabic version of the Amrtakunda gives an account of the human body viewed as the microcosm, the nature and form of the heart, Yogic postures, the nature of the self, the protection of semen, the faculty of imagination, the functions of breath, the signs of the approach of death together with the means of warding them off and the spiritual regions presided over by different goddesses.²

Without entering into the details of this work, we may try to find out some of its important features. One of its hymns contains the names of Min or Matsyendra Nāth and Goraks Nāth³ who are inseparably connected with the history, legend and religion of the Nāthiats. In the second chapter of the book, the right nostril of the microcosm has been called the Sun and the left nostril the Moon.⁴ It seems to be an echo of the Nāth-yogic theory of the Sun and the Moon representing the nerves Pingalā and Ingalā respectively.⁵ The introductory section of the work refers to one Ambuanāth upon whose help the translator of the Amrta Kunda had to depend.⁶ The name ending with 'nāth' indicates that he was a follower of the Nāth cult. Though a few Āsanas have been described in the Arabic Haus-al-Hayāt and the Persian Bahr - al - Hayāt,⁷ it has been stated in both versions that the total number of these yogic postures is eighty-four⁸— a number quite prominent in the Nāth mythology. The illustrated manuscript of Gavalīārī's Bahr-al-Hayāt contains

-
1. The Persian version called Bahr-al-Hayāt by Md. Ghaus has been published from Bombay in 1310 A.H., at the Faizul Karim Press. For an account of the illustrated ms. of this Persian translation, see A Catalogue of the Indian Miniatures by Sir Thomas W. Arnold, revised and edited by J.V.S. Wilkinson, vol-I, London, 1936, The Library of A. Chester Beatty Series, pp. 80-82.
 2. Haus-al-Hayāt, text, Op.cit., pp. 316-44.
 3. Ibid., p. 337
 4. Ibid., pp. 316-17
 5. S. B. Das Gupta: Obscure Religious Cults, pp. 269-80. Kalyani Mallik: Nāth Saṃpradāyera Itihāsa Darśana O Sādhanā, pp. 536-37
 6. Haus-al-Hayāt: Op.cit., p. 313
 7. In the Haus-al-Hayāt, only five postures have been described. Op.cit., pp. 323-25; but twenty-one postures have been illustrated and described in a ms. of the Bahr-al-Hayāt; see Thomas W. Arnold: A Catalogue of Indian Miniatures, I, pp. 81-82
 8. Haus-al-Hayāt, Op.cit., p. 323. Arnold: A Catalogue of Indian Miniatures, Vol-I, p. 80.

illustrations and descriptions of twenty-one Āsanas including Padmāsana (lotus posture), Sinhāsana (lion posture), Khecari Mudrā and Savāsana (posture resembling the one taken in a meeting),¹ which have been duly defined in some of the works on yoga culture.² The following passage of the Arabic translation of the Amṛta-kuṇḍa seems to hint at the regressive physical culture: "The microcosm is like a tree reversed. If you like to reverse it, you can reverse but its meaning without affecting it. When its meaning is reverse, it becomes straight. Then it becomes reverse in form and straight in meaning".³ The idea seems to correspond to the Upaniṣadic conception. This world is considered to be a perpetual fig tree whose roots are upward and whose branches are downward. The root of this tree has been identified with the white light, the reality and nectar. People are sheltered by it. Nobody can go beyond it.⁴ Some of the signs of death mentioned in the Amṛtakuṇḍa are found in the Gorakṣa Vijay.⁵ While discussing the Nāth Cult together with its yogic ideas and practices, Muḥsin Faṇī, the writer of the Dabistān-al-Maḥāhib has incidentally mentioned that the Amṛtakuṇḍa is the religious book of the followers of Gorakṣa Nāth.⁶ Thus it seems fairly certain that the book was used, if not written, by the Nāthists.

The development that took place in the Sūfī philosophy in Bengal in the period under review, was probably a continuous one in the course of which yogic and tāntrik ideas had been transmitted to the Muslims through a long process of change in their religio-philosophical mentality. The act of borrowing ideas from indigenous sources

1. Arnold: Catalogue of Indian Miniatures, I, p. 82.

2. Gorakṣa Saṁhitā, Verses 8 & 10. Hathayoga Pradīpikā, ch. I, verses 46 and 50-51. Turning the tongue into the hole of the palate is technically called Khecari Mudrā. See Hathayoga Pradīpikā, ch. III, verse 37. See also Arnold: A Catalogue of Indian Miniature Painting, I, p. 82; illustration No. 14. We have already seen that Khecari Mudrā is also the Nāthist method of drinking nectar which was accepted by some of the Bengali Sūfīs. supra., p. 164. The illustrations of the Garbha and Sabhā postures obtained in the ms. of Ḥāus Gawālīyārī's Bahr-al-Hayāt have been published by Arnold: The Catalogue of Indian Miniatures, III, pl. 98. See also pls. 1 and 2 attached hereto.

3. Hauz-al-Hayāt, Op.cit., p. 341

4. Kathopanishat, 2/3/1

5. Hauz - al - Hayāt, p. 335 and Gorakṣa Vijaya, p. 143

6. Dabistān - al - Maḥāhib, Bombay ed. p. 144.

چون طالبی خواهد که باین شغل مشغول نماید باید که جلسه کربه آن
 پیشش گیرد که آن آرزو کند که بنا بجز بجه در شکم ما در می باشد در باید
 بای جیب بر بای است نهاده دوسرین رود بای داشته و سزا



دو زانو برداشته و دو آرنج بر دو تنی کا نهاده و دو دست
 بر دو گوش کرده ناف را به پشت رساند از ناف رفتی که سینه
 آرزو بجزن میگویند عبارت است از است دم جسم کسیند

Plate - I

An illustration from *Haq-al-Hayat* of *Ghaus Cavalieri* showing Carbhāsan

توجه که ذکر کنبهنگ کند با وی که بر اعضا شده است از پورک سر
 با هم اندام مغز بر دقت نکند و اگر نه اعضا شکسته شوند چون نام اندام مغز
 چشم را و از دار و ز باز اسبک جفت اند نفس از راه بینی آسوده است
 بعد آمدن دهر باز غسل بود که را از سر آغاز کند چون درون کشند
 گویند چون برود بر آرد کنبهنگ نامند چون مکرار در یکجک خوانند



در کسبها آسن برای قوت زنی در کھا کردن و بشت و مضم
 طعام و خشک شدن نهان که بند نای تن است این جلسه نکا بدارد
 که پای است با ساق بر آن چپ نهد و پای چپ با ساق بر آن راست
 مند نیمی دست کی تا آنکه عادت پذیر کرد و در آغاز مشکل است

Plate - II

Another illustration from Maus-al-Hayat showing the Yogic posture called Sabbhasana.

does not appear to be of a deliberate nature. The mystic philosophy of Syed Sultān bears remarkable resemblances to Nāthism. Syed Nartuzā and 'Alī Rājā who may be reasonably regarded as his spiritual successors, have added to his mystic ideas, a few Sabajiyā and Upaniṣadic conceptions without affecting the spirit of his philosophy. While emphasising the influence of indigenous ideas upon these Muslim mystics, one should not overlook the presence of Sūfistic conception of pantheism in their works.

The spirit of synthesis obtains also in other works of Syed Sultān such as Nabi Vamṣa and Ofat-i-Basul¹ in which the poet has combined history with mythology. While giving an account of the prophets recognised by Islām, he regards the four Vedas as a series of divine revelation. As he finds hardly any difference between an avatāra (incarnation) and a nabi (one who has received revelation), he considers Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Mahēśvara and Kṛṣṇa, the gods of the Hindu mythology and Muḥammad, the prophet of Islām, to be the incarnations of God. He says that the teachings of these four Hindu gods who were given the divine scriptures of Rg, Sāma, Yaju and Atharva Vedas respectively, stood obsolete in course of ^{Time} ~~time~~. So that Adam, Sī, Nūh, Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, Dāwūd, Sulaymān, 'Īsa and Muḥammad appeared gradually on the earth with a view to propagating Tawhīd or monotheism. He has tried to put emphasis on the idea that the advent of the prophet Muḥammad has been prophesied in the four Vedas.² Like a Hindu poet, he gives a vivid description of the Vṛndāvana-Līlā of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.³ One of his Vaisṇava poems⁴ depicting the scene of Rādhā's union with Kṛṣṇa, seems to have referred to the union of the sentimental soul with the supreme Being, the whole poem being thus a symbolical one.

-
1. Ofat-i-Basul or 'the demise of the Prophet' has been edited by Maulavi Ali Ahmad and published from Noakhali, 1356 B.S. Several mss. of Nabi Vamṣa are available, one being included in Abdul Karim Sahitya Vicārada's Collection in D.U. Library.
 2. Extracts and quotations from ^{Nabi} Nabi Vamṣa, given by Dr. Enamul Haq: Muslim Vāṅglā Sahitya, pp. 149-50 and S. P. P., 1341 B.S., 2nd issue, p. 50.
 3. Vaisṇava pada of Syed Sultān: Quoted by Enamul Haq: S. P. P., 1341 B.S., pp. 47-48.
 4. Quoted by Jatindra Mohan Bhattacharya: Vāṅglār Vaisṇava Bhāvāpanna Musalman Kāvī. Calcutta, 1356 B.S., No. 94

The cultural synthesis which has thus been attempted by the poet may be causal or accidental connection between the two systems of philosophy. It is due to attributed to the force of the socio-religious circumstances under which the Bengali Muslims lived in those days. He tells us that he was writing on Islāmic themes for the Bengali Muslims who were acquainted with local fictions and not with Islāmic stories.¹ He was probably conscious of the fact that Islāmic ideas, if combined with Hindu elements, would appeal to the minds of the local Muslims to whom the Hindu mythology was already known. This psychology seems to explain his acceptance of Avatāravād or the doctrine of incarnation and yogic-tāntrik ideas of Sa t-Cakra as integral parts of his religious philosophy.

III. Islam and Vaisnavism

Vaisnavism, the powerful religious movement initiated by Śrī Caitanya, carried every thing before it for a considerable period in the life of the then Bengal. It is necessary here to discuss its relation with Islām which was also making rapid progress in the country. Attempts have been made to assess the influence of Islāmic mysticism on the emotional philosophy of Vaisnavism. Hal (ecstatic condition), Dhikr (recitation of the name of God), and Samā (gatherings of the sūfīs for musical performances) have been regarded as the possible counterparts of Dāsa, Kṛānānā and Kīrtana of Gaudiya Vaisnavism.² Again the strong pantheistic monotheism of Vaisnavism, its stress on divine love or Prema and its attitude to caste system, have also been attributed to Sūfī influences.³ But it is very difficult to ascertain whether these points of similarity between sūfīsm and vaisnavism indicate any

1. Ofat-i-Rasul, pp. 7-8 and Sab-i-Mi'raj: quoted by Enamul Huq: Muslim Vāṅḷā

Sāhitya, p. 144 and S. P. P., 1341 B.S., p. 40, footnote 3 and p. 44.

2. Dr. Enamul Huq: Vaṅḷe Sūfī Prabhāva, pp. 165-70; also his unpublished thesis, Sūfīsm in Bengal.

3. Dr. Enamul Huq: Vaṅḷe Sūfī Prabhāva, pp. 171-78. Also his unpublished thesis.

causal or accidental connection between the two systems of philosophy. It is due to these reason that some echolars have tried to disprove the theory of Sufistic influence on Vaisnavism by pointing out the points of difference between the two and suggesting the influence of Buddhism, Jainism, Tantricism and Siva cult on the Vaisnava literature of the time.¹

Without entering into this endless controversy, we may point out certain other facts to throw some light on this point. A careful study of the biographies of Caitanya shows that he did not live with any sūfi for a considerable period of time, nor did he come across any Islāmic or sūfi literature. He was born in an orthodox Brahmin family which does not seem to have had any contact with Islāmic ideas and practices. Most of the biographies of ŚrīCaitanya show that the lives of his parents were characterised by an excessive amount of religious austerity which did not have any scope for Islāmic influences. It is true that the life of the then Bengal was saturated with Sūfi-istic influences. How far sūfiism could make itself felt at Navadvīpa, is undoubtedly a debatable point. As a matter of fact, Navadvīpa, the birth place of ŚrīCaitanya, was still retaining its position as an important centre of classical learning. It seems that he was greatly influenced by the Bhāgavata - Purāna which contains prediction to the practice of Kīrtana.² which was also performed by the Alvar Saints of the South. Again the practice of singing and dancing was common with the Maulawia Sūfi order of Jalāluddīn Rūmī³ which does not appear to have gained any ground in medieval Bengal. The postulation of the influence of the Samā of the Maulawia Sūfis on the Kīrtana of the Vaisnavas, seems thus unwarrantable. Equally untenable is probably the view that the Sūfi-istic Hāl had influenced the Kīrtana of the Gaudiya Vaisnavas, for some Indian Saints used to attain the

1. Dr. Sukumar Sen : Vāṅglā Sāhityer Itihāsa, I, pp. 283-87; S. K. De: Vaisnava Faith etc., pp. 21-22.

2. The Bhāgavata - Purāna : quoted by S. B. Das Gupta: Obscure Religious Cults, p. 193, footnote No. 2.

3. See A. Subhan : Op.cit., p. 38

state of ecstasy in the course of their religious experiences. Mādhavendra Purī is said to have had occasional fainting fits due to the impact of Kṛṣṇite religion on his mind.¹ The recitation of the name of God was not anything new with the Vaiṣṇavas of Bengal. The devotional recital of God's name is mentioned in the Bhāgavata.² Thus the Dhikr of the sūfīs does not appear to have had any influence on the Vaiṣṇavite religious practice, called Kṛṣṇānāma. The element of love is present in pre-Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism also. God has been regarded as a Beloved in the Bhāgavata.³ The pantheistic ideas are found so abundantly in the Upanisats that we have hardly any reason to trace them in sūfīsm. Among the points of difference between sūfīsm and vaiṣṇavism, the absence of the female intermediary between God and the devotee in sūfīsm, is one. She is invariably present in vaiṣṇavism. Monotheism does not appear to be the essential feature of Vaiṣṇavism, although it forms the cornerstone of sūfī-istic belief. The Vaiṣṇavas conceive of a hierarchy of gods in which Kṛṣṇa is placed in the first and most position.⁴ One may very well think that the attitude Caitanya took towards the caste system was probably influenced by Islāmic social order. It is true that his religious emotionalism did not attach importance to caste rigidity; but he does not seem to have tried to abolish it, nor did he introduce inter-dining and inter-marriage among the Hindus of various castes. Thus the influence of sūfīsm on the vaiṣṇavism of ŚrīCaitanya is a point which is yet to be investigated.

It has been contended that ŚrīCaitanya checked the progress of Islām deliberately by converting a large number of Muslims to his creed.⁵ The cases of Haridāsa, Bijuli Khān and the Muslim officer living at the Orissan frontier, are cited as examples in point. But we may not forget here that most of the vaiṣṇava works were composed by the followers or devotees of ŚrīCaitanya who must have credited their

1. Caitanya-bhāgavata, ādi, VIII, pp. 54-55

2. Quoted by Sukumar Sen : Vāṅglā Sāhityer Itihāsa, I, p. 283

3. ibid.

4. S. K. Das : The Early History of Vaiṣṇava Faith etc., p. 353 and 359

5. Enamul Haq : Pūrva Pākistāne Islām, Dacca, 1948, pp. 112-17.

Lord with the conversion of a number of Muslims. As a matter of fact, a study of the Vaisnava works clearly shows that the achievements of Srī Caitanya have been greatly glorified. His zealous adherents could hardly resist the temptation of showing that Vaisnavism as propounded by Caitanya was swallowing even a powerful religion like Islām. But the large scale conversion of the Muslims could hardly be possible in those days when the Muslims were the political master of the country. It is stated in the works like Caitanya Caritāmṛta and Caitanya-bhāgavata that the Kīrtana of ~~the~~ Caitanya had made deep impression on the minds of some of the Muslims who used to utter the name of Harī^{on} seeing the Vaisnavas dancing and singing.¹ Rationally inter-pretted, it means that the musical performances of the vaisnavas had evoked emotion in the minds of some of the Muslims who uttered Harīnāma only for the time being. It can hardly be believed that these Muslims had embraced vaisnavism, giving up Islām for ever. We may mention in this connection the case of the Muslim tailor working at the house of Srīvāsa. Seeing the scene of Kīrtana, he was so much emotionally moved that he was infatuated to the point of madness.² But this seems to be a changing psychological state of his mind which had possibly no permanent duration. The story of the conversion of Haridāsa together with his life history is shrouded in obscurity. Caitanya-Caritāmṛta and Caitanya-bhāgavata, earlier works than Advaita-Prakāśa, Prema-Vilāsa and Bhakti-Ratnākara, nowhere mention that he was a Muslim by birth, subsequently converted to Vaisnavism. How the stigma Yavana came to be attached to his name is not clearly known. It is quite likely that Haridāsa, a Hindu by birth, was brought up by a Muslim and was known as a Yavana as a result of his association with a Muslim family. As a matter of fact, this is what has been hinted at in the Advaita Prakāśa of Īśāna Mēgara.³ The conversion of Haridāsa to Vaisnavism does not appear to be identical with that of a Muslim to the Vaisnava faith. He is alleged to have converted numerous Muslims.⁴

1. Caitanya-bhāgavata: antya, IV, p. 349 and V, p. 381.

2. Caitanya-Caritāmṛta: ādi, XVII, p. 67.

3. Op.cit., ed. Prīnal Kanti Ghosh, Calcutta, 1339 B.S., 3rd ed. pp. 25 and 26.

4. ibid., p. 35.

But the earlier and more reliable works like Caitanya-Caritāmṛta and Caitanya-bhāgavata which have described at a considerable length, the achievements of Haridāsa, are quite silent on this ~~incident~~ ^{incident}. The latter work has depicted him as a great saint with broad and liberal views. Even when cruelly oppressed by the Muslim Qāzis, he says:

Listen, oh my children, all people have the one and the same God.

The Hindus and the Muslims make difference only in His name.

The Qur'ān and the Purāna aim at ~~the~~ ^{one} ultimate Reality.

One faultless, indivisible, unending, eternal Being fills up everybody's heart.¹

It seems quite unlikely that Haridāsa who had such broad, pantheistic views, had converted Muslims to Vaiṣṇavism. The episodes connected with the conversion of Bijuli Khān and the Orissan Frontier officer, already referred to, appear in the Caitanya-Caritāmṛta² and have not been mentioned at all by Vṛndāvanadāsa and other writers earlier than Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja. Although he has mentioned the sources of his information with regard to many incidents connected with the life of Sri Caitanya, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja is silent on the sources of these stories. In the face of these difficulties, it is not at all safe to rely on the episodes of the conversion of Bijuli Khān and the frontier officer, narrated by the zealous Vaiṣṇava writer, Kṛṣṇadāsa. The number of the Muslims converted to Vaiṣṇavism, if there were any, must have been limited. Now, how to explain the conflicts between the Muslims and the Vaiṣṇavas, depicted in the literature of the time.³ Hari Samkirtana

1. Caitanya-bhāgavata: ādiXIV, p. 99.

ভিন্ন নাম মতবস্তে - কহেই নৈক - ॥
 নাম মত্রে ভেদ করেই বিদ্বত্তে মতন।
 পরমাট্ম - এক কহেই কোথায় - যখন - ॥
 এক ভক্তি রসিত) কহেই এক কোথায় অকৃত।
 কহেই - কহেই কোথায় মতন - মতন ॥

2- Op.cit., maddya, XVI, p. 180 and XVIII, p. 196.

3. Caitanya-Caritāmṛta: ādi, XVII, pp. 64-66; Caitanya-bhāgavata: maddhya, II, p. 137, XXIII, pp. 266-67 and 274-77.

performed by the Vaiṣṇavas, seems to have been a new practice at Navadvīpa which attracted the attention of the people. There was a Brahminical reaction against it in the beginning.¹ When the Hindus of the place wanted to get it suppressed, with the help of the Muslim local officer,² he had to comply with their request not only to please them, but also to maintain peace and order in the city. When the Kīrtana was opposed, the Vaiṣṇavas, in a mood of furious fanaticism, went to the extent of attacking the Qāzī and burning his house.³ Thus an analysis of the Muslim-Vaiṣṇava conflict shows that it did not involve any ideological or religious issue. If there is any religious tinge in it, it is simply because of the fact that the officer who had to deal with the situation was a Muslim, although he does not seem to have had any anti-Vaiṣṇava attitude. It must be mentioned that Śrī Caitanya counteracted the liberal forces of Islām by admitting the people of all sects and castes to the fold of Vaiṣṇavism. The lower class people of the Hindu society whom Caitanya converted, might have otherwise embraced Islām. Thus Vaiṣṇavism saved Hinduism from Islām.

It is true that Caitanyaism let loose certain socio-religious forces which seem to have jeopardised the influence of Islām in this country. As noticed above, the attitude of Śrī Caitanya towards Islām was not probably hostile, nor does he seem to have had any genuine intention to direct his movement against it. But the post-Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism which had become a militant church with proselytizing zeal, appears to have developed a contentuouse attitude towards Islām. The works of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, Jayānanda and Isāna Nāgara all of whom flourished in the post-Caitanya period, breath a spirit of hostility and opposition to Islām. We may quote here what Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja has said about Islām:

Cow-slaughterers must have to suffer in eternal hell-fire for the sins they have committed. The maker of your (Muslims') Śāstra has been misled, for he has enunciated these principles (those of cow-slaughter and others) without knowing

1. Caitanya-bhāgavata: ādi, XIV, p. 107.

2. ibid., maddhya, II, p. 137 and VIII, p. 176.

3. ibid., maddhya, XXIII, pp. 274-77.

their essence..... As this Śāstra is modern, it cannot stand the test of logic.¹ Such bitterness against Islām could hardly be found among the vaiṣṇavas so long as Caitanya was alive. The same work states that Caitanya was converting the Muslims in order to raise them from the depth of degradation into which they had fallen.² Similar ideas are expressed in the Advaita-Prakāśa of Īśāna Nāgara. To quote only one passage :

The Śāstra of the Muslims is against reason. Those who follow that śāstra are known as Yavanas. The Omnipresent Supreme Being is without any beginning. His body is full of six virtues, pure and Satvamaya (or possessing the quality of goodness). The study of the śāstra which regards Him as mild and shapeless, leads to the increase of māyā (illusion) and moha (delusion).³

It will be futile to quote similar other passages from the works produced in the post-Caitanya period. Suffice it to say that Islāmic influences on the Hindu society have been deplored by almost all vaiṣṇava poets of the time.

Various causes may be attributed to the hostile attitude of the Vaiṣṇavas belonging to the post-Caitanya period. The Husain Shāhī period had already come to an end and the Mughal rule was being established in the country. The Husain Shāhī rule represented the national aspirations of the people not excluding the Hindus and the Vaiṣṇavas who seem to have received much religious tolerance from the ruling class. But the Mughal rule appears to have presented a sad contrast in this respect,

1. Caitanya-Caritāmṛta : ādi, XVII, p. 65

2. ibid., ādi, VIII, p. 38 and maddhya, I, p. 76

3. Op.cit., p. 36. See also pp. 15-16, 25-26, 35, 39 and 75 of the same work. The genuineness of the works like Prema-Vilāsa and Advaita-Prakāśa are very often doubted. See Dr. Sukumar Sen : Vāṅmā Sāhityer Itihāsa : I, pp. 276 and 408.

Biman Bihari Majumdar: Op.cit., pp. 446-58 and 507-14. Some of the details about the life of Caitanya as found in these works may not find corroboration in reliable works on the subject- Portions of them may even be spurious. But the Vaiṣṇava attitude to Islām as depicted in them does not fundamentally differ from that found in the Caitanya-Caritāmṛta of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja.

for it had little connection with the people. This explains why Muslim rule is regarded as the root of all evils in a passage of the Prema-Vilāsa.¹ Islām which was making rapid progress in the country was taking away a large number of people from the fold of Hinduism. Muslim influences on the Hindu society ~~was~~ ^{were} quite perceptible. The foreign rule and creed with its manifold impact on the life of Bengal could hardly be tolerated. All these seem to have produced a powerful reaction against Islām.

IV. The Dharma Cult and Islām

The Dharma cult seems to have had passive sympathy for Islām possibly under the pressure of the Brahminical persecution it suffered in those days. It is very often maintained that there are palpable Islāmic influences on the Dharma cult.² Such a conclusion may be taken only in a qualified sense. The idea of the shapeless God of Islām is not in any way similar to the Sūnyavāda in the Dharmite faith. The Sūnyavāda is negative in essence and the Islāmic idea of Godhead, quite positive. Monotheism is the cardinal point in Islām; but it is not so in the Dharmite cult, recognising as it does the different gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon. In the Sṛsti - Pātana of the Sūnya - Purāna, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Ādyā Śakti or Pārvatī, have been duly recognised.³ Thus Islāmic theology does not seem to have influenced the philosophy of the Dharmites of Bengal. Muslim influences on the followers of the Dharma cult, if there were any, appear to have been limited to the field of their habits and customs. Some of their customs probably became intermingled with Muslim practices. Slaughtering animals after the Muslim custom and reverence for the western direction are noticed in the Dharmapūjā-Vidhāna. Sometimes they regarded the Sultān of Gaud as Dharma personified.⁴ Some of the

1. Nityānandadāsa: op.cit., Calcutta, 1913, Ch. I.

2. Dr. Shahidullah: Introduction to the Sūnya-Purāna: op.cit., pp. 12-13 and 36-38.
S. B. Das Gupta: Obscure Religious Cults etc., pp. 304 and 306-07.

3. Op. cit., pp. 36-38.

4. The Dharma Pūjā-Vidhāna: pp. 215 and 219.

Muslim poets have used the Dharmite terminology in their works. Thus the shapeless God of Islām has become identical with the Nirañjana of the Dharma cult.¹ All these presuppose certain understanding between the Muslims and the followers of the Dharma cult in the social sphere about which detailed information is not available. The latter appears to have turned friendly to the Muslims due to the hostile treatment they received from the Brahmins.

That they were persecuted by the Brahminical section, is borne out by the following passage of the Śūnya-Purāna :

There are in Jājapura sixteen hundred vedic Brahmins who are, in reality, tyrannical people, and not Vedic Brahmins. They go out in search of Dakṣiṇā (sacrificial fees offered to the Brahmins); if they do not get it, they burn the houses of the people by cursing them.... Making a common cause against the Saddharmīs, these powerful people persecute them. Reciting verses from the Vedas, they move about like fire striking terror into the minds of the people. In their utter despair, people pray to Dharma for help. Thus the Brahmins destroy creation doing much injustice to the people. Dharma who is in Heaven becomes aggrieved and surrounds himself with the darkness of māyā or illusion.²

Then the poet narrates how Dharma in the guise of the Yavana destroyed the Brahmins by attacking Jājapura.³ Stripped of its legendary veil, the story shows how the followers of the Dharma cult were being mercilessly oppressed by the Brahmins. Long afterwards, Mānika Gāngulī hesitated to write poems on the Dharma cult lest he should be persecuted.⁴ Probably because of the revival of Brahminism, the followers of the Dharma cult had to live in a state of chronic fear and began to adopt certain precautionary measures for self-protection. Whenever anybody went

-
1. Dr. Shahidulla's Introduction : Op.cit., p. 13
 2. Op.cit., pp. 232-33
 3. Ibid., pp. 233-35. The Muslim attack on Jājapura in Orissa mentioned in the Nirañjanera Usmā in the Śūnya Purāna may be identified with the Orissan expeditions of Husain Shāh in the course of which he is said to have destroyed a number of temples and deities. supra., ch. I, pp. 18-23
 4. Mānika Gāngulī's Dharma Mahāla : ed. H.P. Shastri and D.C. Sen, Calcutta, p. 9

to the temple to worship Dharma, the priest used to put certain intelligent questions to him which were as follows :

Let my hands and feet be as hard as iron, Let the enemy go to hell. Where is your house? Which god do you worship? Which diety do you meditate on? Which god do you adore? Which direction do you say your prayers in? Which Vedas do you read? Where have you got the copper bracelets (that you put on?) Let me know the origin of copper.¹

Answer to these questions were as follows :

I live on the bank of the Vallukā. I adore shapeless god, meditate on the Sūnya-Mūrti (an image of the Void), and worship figurate god. I say my prayers facing the west and read the fifth Veda.... This copper has been made by Viśva-karmā.²

When the devotee was thus in a position to satisfy the Dharma priest, by answering his questions properly, the priest could easily take him to be a follower of the Dharma cult. Thus we find that the Dharmites had to resign themselves to an obscure existence possibly under the pressure of Brahminical persecution. Under these circumstances it was quite natural that they would like to take help from the Muslims.

When they found that the Muslims had attacked Jājapura, they regarded it as an outbreak of the anger of Dharma against the Brāhmins. The advent of the Muslims seems to have given them a sense of relief. Thus they had good reasons to tacitly recognise the prophets and religious personalities of Islām. In the Sūnya-Purāna, Muḥammad, Adām, Eve and Fātimah have been identified with Brahmā, Śiva, Candī and Padmāvatī respectively and Islāmic terminology has been used with facility.³ The Dharmite liturgical text, Dharmapūjā-Vidhāna, contains a section called Kālimājāllāla⁴ which besides giving a description of the Muslim attack on Orissa (also narrated in the Sūnya-Purāna), identifies a Muslim Khandakar with Dharma Thākura who is made to settle Hindu-Muslim disputes. He is depicted as a Muslim

1. The Dharmapūjā - Vidhāna: p. 165

2. ibid., p. 165

3. The Sūnya-Purāna, pp. 235-36

4. Op.cit., pp. 219-21

Judge, dressed in Muslim dress, adopting Muslim customs and taking whatever food is taken by a Muslim. An analysis of the Kālimā Jāllāla shows that the Dharmites did not have any aversion to the Muslim society of the time. How the Muslims responded to this attitude of the Dharmites is not clearly known. But the fact that some of the Muslim poets of medieval Bengal used Dharmite terms quite unhesitatingly,¹ goes to indicate Dharmite influences on the Muslims.

V. General Remarks

We have suggested that the conflict between Saivism and the local cults of Manasā, Candī and Dharma, which had been going on for centuries, ultimately ended in a synthesis of Brahminical culture with local, hieratic ideas as a result of which the scope of the Hindu pantheon was broadened.² From what we have discussed above it follows that a regular process of religious blending was going on side by side with conflict between Islām and Brahminism that took place in the period in question. Islām was influenced not only by the Hindu Yoga philosophy but also by the Tāntrik physiology of Ṣaṭcakraveda or the penetration of the six mystical circles in the body. As a matter of fact, Islāmic mysticism, flourishing as it did in an atmosphere saturated with Yogic-tāntrik ideas, could hardly be immune from the influence of such a body of local ideas. Islām was sympathetic not only to the Dharma cult but also possibly to the Nāth religion on which Muslims used to sing songs and compose poems in those days. This is illustrated by the fact that the Goraks-vijaya, a famous work on the Nāth cult, is very often ascribed to a Muslim poet named Fuizullāh. The gulf that existed between the Brahminical culture and local Hinduism, must have retarded the natural growth of the Hindu society. With the introduction of the alien rule, a realignment of socio-religious forces, seems to have taken place. The Muslim rulers appear to have brought the culture of the

1. supra.. p. 183

2. infra, ch. VI, p. 195

people to the fore-ground by giving patronage to vernacular language. The local gods and goddesses which had gone to the background could now make their influence felt through vernacular literature.¹ As a result of the self-centred nature of the Brahminical group of people and their direct hostility to this local culture, the Dharmites, Buddhists, Nāth Fanthīs and other groups of so-called non-Aryan people must have sought the protection of the Muslims. That is what seems to have been hinted at in the Nirañjanera Usmā cited above. The orthodox Sunni Islām does not seem to have given recognition to these local ideas; but its mystic aspect represented by liberal Sūfism did not hesitate to reconcile itself to the local hieratic forces. Hence the impact of Yogic-tāntrik philosophy on the writings of the mystic poets like Syed Sultān, 'Alī Rajā and Faizullāh. As a matter of fact, Sūfism of Bengal has much affinity with these local mystic ideas.

As noticed above the movement of ŚrīCaitanya appears to have brought about a synthesis of the conflicting forces that were at work in the body of the Hindu society. In doing so, it seems to have affected the progress of Islām to a considerable extent.

In Summary

While studying the history of Bengali literature, one should not underestimate the contributions of the Muslim rulers to its growth and development. Literary activities could be hardly possible in the thirteenth century due to the prevailing social and political conditions which followed in the wake of the Muslim conquest. The history of Bengali literature begins with the establishment of the political

1. For an elaboration of this point, see Ch. VI of this thesis.

CHAPTER - VILiterature and Culture

The period in question witnessed intense literary activities which were quite unparalleled in those days. The medium was both Sanskrit, the vehicle of Brahminical culture and the vernacular language which appears to have attained a definite form quite capable of giving expression to the religious and secular ideas of the people. Although frowned upon by the Hindus of the higher social strata, Bengali began to enjoy certain advantages which Sanskrit and Persian could not. Since the conquest of Bengal by the Muslims, Sanskrit had been losing its ground because of the decline of Brahminism as a culture. It had to eventually yield place to the vernacular tongue which had Sanskrit for its grand father and Magadhi Prakrit for its father. An imperceptible conflict was going on between the Brahminical culture and the local ideology even in pre-Muslim Bengal. The growth of Bengali language and the birth of Bengali literature symbolised the triumph of the native culture over the Brahminical one. The Husain Shahi period marks the culmination of this sociological process. In the Mughal period, the vernacular language greatly helped Brahminism in transforming itself when it felt the necessity of entertaining the new set of socio-religious ideals bred in the bones of the nation. Persian which was closely connected with the life of the court, does not seem to have had any direct impact on the ordinary people, nor could it produce literature of any importance in our period.

I. Bengali Literature

While studying the history of Bengali literature, one should not underestimate the contributions of the Muslim Sultans to its growth and development. Literary activities could be hardly possible in the thirteenth century due to the unsettled social and political conditions which followed in the wake of the Muslim conquest. The history of Bengali literature begins with the establishment of the political independence of Bengal under the Ilyas Shahi rulers who could restore peace and

prosperity to this country in the middle of the fourteenth century. Candī-dāsa Kṛttivāsa and Malādhara Vasu, who flourished in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, paved the way for further development in the field of literature by composing poems in and translating Sanskrit works into Bengali. The process which was already at work continued in the Husain Shāhī period when the vernacular literature received a new lease of life. The Sultāns of our period took active interest in the growing indigenous literature by patronising some of the poets of the time. They seem to have been actuated by political considerations to come in close contact with the people. It was almost impossible for them to build up a good system of administration without knowing the socio-religious ideas and tradition of the people they wanted to govern. So the question of rendering patronage to their language and literature arose. There were other reasons too. Bengal held a politically precarious position in the face of the hostilities of the powers surrounding her, against whom the Husain Shāhī rulers were fighting almost simultaneously. They could hardly expect military success without having won the sympathy and support of the subjects, for internal stability was a necessary pre-requisite of a sound foreign policy or a successful warfare. It should be remembered here that the Husainī rulers, though of Arabian origin, did not have any direct connection with their homeland. They could not foster any Arabian culture on the soil of Bengal separated by thousands of miles from Arabia. The Arab merchants who used to come to Bengal from time to time, did not stay here permanently to enrich such a culture. Thus the ruling class had to forget its foreign origin and associate itself closely with the local culture. Again the growing influence of the local culture already noticed by us greatly accelerated the process of the growth of vernacular language. Brahminism which was already shorn of political power had hardly had any reason to be friendly to the Muslim ruling class. It seems that the Sultāns wanted to check it by tacitly recognising the culture which stood in opposition to Brahminism. Contemporary Bengali sources would have us believe that the rulers and governors of the time used to listen to the paurānic stories and legends recited by the court poets.¹ Of the Bengali poets of the period, Yasorāj Khān, Kavindra ~~Parameśvara~~^{Parameśvara}, Srikantha Māndī and

1. We have elaborately discussed this point in a subsequent section of this chapter.

Sridhara received direct court patronage. Vijaya Gupta and Vipra-dāsa, both composing verses on the story of the snake-cult, have not failed to admire Husain Shāh, although they do not appear to have received any patronage from the court.¹ The Sultāns who were Bengalised because of their being closely associated with the people gave status and dignity to Bengali language which now began to play the role that was played by Sanskrit in pre-Muslim Bengal.

The poetry which was produced in this period had at least four varieties in so far as its themes were concerned. These were (a) the poems dealing with the snake cult; (b) the versified translation of the Mahābhārata; (c) the Vaisnava Padāvalī and (d) romantic poems represented by the Vidyā-Sundara of Sridhara. A careful analysis of each of these types is necessary.

(a) Poems on the Manasa Cult

One of the local deities of this period was Manasā which seems to have originated even before the Muslim conquest of Bengal. She was an anti-Brahminic and non-Aryan goddess worshipped by those who belonged to the lower rung of the social ladder, and subsequently recognized by the higher class people. The songs which were composed about her in the remote past and which were in oral circulation among the people were compiled and given a proper shape by the poets of our period when these poems again began to be sung by the professional singers of the rural society. This is why the ragas in which they were to be sung have been mentioned in these poems. It may be mentioned here that the poets who composed epics on the Manasā cult were simply catering for the needs of the time without being influenced by any literary motive. Dinesh Chandra Sen has tried to assess the influence of Islam on the local cults including Manasā. He says "The Mahammadans with their vigorous living faith, had by this time come to Bengal. Their Koran which they believed to be inspired, lays it down that the God of Islam helps believers and destroys unbelievers. The strong belief of Islam in a personal God had to be counteracted in this country by forms of religion in which the personal element of divinity predominated. So the

1. infra.

Śakta and the Vaiṣṇava religions flourished and the Śaiva religion with its impersonal ideal and mysticism in which man rose to the level of his God in the Advaita-bāda was gradually thrown into the background, as the masses did not comprehend its ^{speculative} ~~speculative~~ feature.¹ But such a conclusion seems unwarranted.

The cults of Manasā and Candī would have grown and predominated even without the presence of the living God of Islām in this country. The passive, abstract and impersonal god as represented by Śaivism could hardly fulfil the hankering of the minds of people who are generally apt to depend on a personal god who is capable of evoking the deepest sentiment in popular minds. The emergence of the personality of Manasā and Candī in Bengal is perhaps largely due to this human psychology and not to Islāmic influences as contended by the much lamented scholar. This psychology was responsible for the reaction of the local culture against the mystic culture of Brahminism or Śaivism.

The two poets who composed poems on the snake cult are Vijaya Gupta and Vipradāsa. The story narrated by them may be summarised in the following lines:

Manasā who was born mysteriously was the daughter of Śiva. He kept her concealed in the beginning at his own residence until Candī, wife of Śiva, found her out. She was subsequently married to a Saint named Jagatkāru. Frustrated in his conjugal life, Jagatkāru, however, went away to spend his life in meditation and penance. It was the step-motherly jealousy of Candī which compelled Śiva to banish his daughter to Jayantinagara where Viśvakarma, the legendary architect constructed a house for her accommodation. Now she wanted the people to worship her as the goddess of Snakes and soon she was recognized and worshipped by the lower classes as such. Her attendant and friend, Netravatī or Netāi helped her a great deal in spreading her worship among the people. Hasan and Husain who prevented the cowboys from worshipping Manasā, were severely ^{penalised} ~~punished~~ by her. She had an altercation with Candradhara, a famous merchant of Campak-Nagara, who had refused to worship her. As a result of this dispute, Cand lost every thing including his six children. In course of the sea-voyages which he undertook, Cand was reduced to a miserable plight, the calamity being largely the outcome of Manasā's

1. D. C. Sen: History of Bengali Language and Literature, pp. 237-38.

anger. His youngest son, Lakṣmīndar, who was married to Behulā died of snake-bite on the night following the marriage. The grief of Sonakā, Cānd's wife, knew no bounds. While Cānd was a worshipper of Śiva, his wife was a devotee of Manasā. Undaunted, Cānd went on, even under these straitened circumstances, refusing to acknowledge her as a goddess. Having passed through a number of ordeals, Behulā went to Kailāspurī, enchanted Śiva and Pārvatī by her wonderful dance and got back the life of her husband. Chastened by the miseries he had gone through, Cānd began to worship Manasā. By the mercy of the serpent goddess, he got back all his children whom he had lost in the wake of his quarrel with Manasā. Lakṣmīndar, accompanied by Behulā, went to heaven, Cānd also followed them.

The Manasā-Māngal of Vijaya Gupta was composed in 1416 Śaka = 1494 A.D. when Husain Shāh was the Sultān of Gaud. The date mentioned in the Manasā-Māngal of Vijaya Gupta edited by Basanta Kumar Bhattacharya¹ is 1407 Śaka = 1485 A.D. This is obviously a mistake, for Husain Shāh, eulogised by the poet was not the ruler of Bengal in that year. The date 1416 Śaka found in a manuscript which Stapleton came across² is quite correct. In the introductory section of his work the poet has mentioned that he lived in the village of Phullasrī, the abode of scholars situated in the Taqim of Bāngrodā included in Fathhabād division of the kingdom of Gaud ^{which} over ~~which~~ Husain Shāh, the Tilakmark of kings was ruling.³ This village may be identified with the village, Phullasrī of modern Barisal district. A modern scholar⁴ has doubted the authenticity of this work on the following grounds:- (a) since Vijaya Gupta composed his poems two years after the accession of Husain to the throne of Gaud, the poet could hardly regard him as Nrpatitilaka from Vanga separated from Gaud by a vast distance; (b) secondly, the language of the Manasā-Māngal of this poet is comparatively modern and no genuine manuscript containing the date 1416 Śaka

1. Op.cit., ed. B. Bhattacharya: Barisal, p. 4, 3rd edition.

2. D. C. Sen: Vanga Bhasā O Sahitya, pp. 111-12, footnotes.

3. ibid., pp. 111-12. Manasā-Māngal: ed. B. K. Bhattacharya, p. 4.

4. Sukumar Sen: Vāṅglā Sahityer Itihāsa, I, pp. 150-51. In the Introduction of the recently published edition of the Manasā-Vijaya, Sukumar Sen has modified his

which is said to have been the date of its composition, is available. Although the questions raised by the learned scholar appear to be pertinent, they can be easily answered. According to an inscription, Barisal the district of our post, formed an integral part of the kingdom of Gaud as early at least as 870 A.H. = 1465-66 A.D. when a mosque was constructed at Mirganj in the same district by one Azial Khan.¹ So it is crystal-clear that this district was well-connected with Gaud by the time when Vijaya Gupta wrote his Manasa-Mangal. Moreover, Husain Khan had already left his impression on the pages of the history of Bengal as the minister of Shamsuddin Muzaffar Shah.² In these political circumstances, the news of his accession must have been noised throughout the different regions of the kingdom of Gaud. As to the linguistic aspect of the work, it has undergone much interpolation and alteration at the hands of the different copyists and on the lips of numerous singers. The linguistic adulteration which one comes across in this work speaks of its popularity and wide circulation in East Bengal. The singers who used it for musical purposes seem to have changed its language from time to time. But why should we level this charge against the Manasa-Mangal of Vijaya Gupta alone? The famous works of Candidāsa, Kṛittivāsa and Vr̥ndavana-dāsa are not exceptions to this general misfortune. Although the language of this work has undergone considerable change, its theme remains intact, for the story it has embodied, tallies in essential points with that found in the Manasa Vijaya of Vipra-dāsa whose work is genuine and is one of the earliest works on the Snake cult. The charge that the date 1416 Śaka is found in no manuscript is without any real foundation. Stapleton found in the village of Gailā adjacent to Phullas̥rī, an old manuscript containing the following lines:

Itu Śasī Veda Śasī parimita Śaka

Sultān Husen Sāh nr̥pati-tilaka.³

opinion by holding that "the Original form of the poem(not the poem as we know it now) belonged to the sixteenth century." op.cit., p. XIX.

1. J. A. S. B., old series, 1860, Vol-XXIX, p. 407.

2. supra., Ch. I., pp. 6-8.

3. D. C. Sen: Vāṅga Bhāṣā O Sahitya: p. 112, footnote.

The first line gives the date 1416 Śaka and the second line clearly shows that the work was composed in the reign of Sultān 'Alāuddīn Husain Shāh.

The Manasa-Vijaya of Vipradāsa was composed in 1495-96, also in the reign of Husain Shāh who has been regarded by the poet as "an auspicious sign in Gaud."¹

The story narrated in these works shows how the worship of Manasā was spreading among the different sections of people. Although this cult was opposed in the beginning by the higher class people, their heads finally bent low before it. This is what is symbolised by the Cānd Vene episode. Manasā was most probably a goddess of indigenous origin and it is quite natural that the Brahminical section disliked this vulgar cult as they called it. The whole story gives the picture of conflict between Śaivism and the local cult of Manasā and shows how the former was gradually being overpowered by the latter. Manasā ~~cannot~~ ^{cannot} be satisfied until she is worshipped by Cānd-Sadagar, originally a devotee of Śiva. Manasā is all the while active and does not hesitate to adopt even barbarous measures to force Cānd into worshipping her. But Śiva is inactive and inert and does not come forward to save the life of his devotee. The local cults were again contending with one another with a view to establishing their respective supremacy in Bengali society. This is what is clearly indicated by the scenes of conflict between Cāndī and Manasā depicted so frequently in the poems of our period.

Thus it is evident that the Manasa-Mangala of our period have preserved certain salient features of the social history of this country. Although the story they tell is a ^{ob} legendary nature, various historical informations may be gleaned from it. They refer to the various tendencies of the age and bring home to us the different aspects of the fifteenth or sixteenth century Bengali life.

Although no work is known to have been composed on the cults of Cāndī, Dharma and Nath in the period under discussion, it must not be inferred that these were

1. The Manasa-Vijaya has been recently edited by Sukumar Sen from the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1953. For the references to the date of its composition and to the reign of Husain Shāh, see p. 3 of this edition.

absent in the then Bengal. In fact, each of these local cults was crystallizing in pre-Mughal Bengal. It has been stated in the Manasa Vijaya of Vipradāsa that Siva had to meditate on the white Kirāñjama, Dharma Thākura for about twelve years who was regarded by other gods of the Hindu pantheon as Supreme Being or Parama Brahmā.¹ Rationally interpreted, it means that people used to attach much importance to the Dharma cult which superseded the Siva cult. Vr̄ndāvanadāsa, writing in the third quarter of the sixteenth century, had sufficient reason to deplore the impact of the Candī cult on the Hindu Society of Navadvīpa.² The Nāth panthis were so numerous that they could easily attract the notice of Qutban who is said to have composed the Mrgāvat in Bhagalpur.³ We have already mentioned that almost all of these cults opposed Brahminism to a considerable extent. Most of the Candī Mangal poems composed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries abound in scenes of conflict between Saivism and the Candī cult.

In these works, she is depicted as showering her favour on those who worship her and chastising those into obedience who refuse to follow her.⁴ It is clearly stated in the contemporary sources that Siva was being regularly worshipped long before the acceptance of Candī as a goddess by the people. The supremacy of Siva could hardly be tolerated by Candī who was now out to assert herself. Manasa and Candī seem to have been non-Brahminic and non-Aryan goddesses and their victory as elaborated in the Mangal poems may be rightly regarded as the victory of the culture

1. Op.cit., ed. Sukumar Sen: pp. 5-6

2. Op.cit., ādi, I, p. 11 and madhya, XIII, p. 210

3. infra: See extracts from the Mrgāvat of Qutban: published in J.B.R.S., 1955, Dec., XLI, pt. IV, p. 475.

4. Kalketu who worshipped Candī was amply rewarded by the goddess. Through the mercy of Candī, he got enough wealth and the kingdom of Gujrat. Though defeated and imprisoned by the ruler of Kalinga, he was released by the latter as a result of the intervention of Candī. For the story of Kalketu, see Kavi-Kāñkan-Candī, pt. I. The story appears in other Mangal poems as well. While Dhanapati was a devotee of Siva, his wife Khullana used to worship Candī whom her husband insulted on the eve of his leaving for Ceylon. He was subjected to much hardship by Candī and compelled to worship her ultimately. Ibid., pt. II.

of the non-Aryan people of Bengal who appear to have led an obscure existence under the Brahminical influence in pre-Muslim Bengal. We have no reason to believe that the influences of these local cults were limited to the lower class people. In fact, there was a regular process of filtration of lower class socio-religious ideas to the upper class Brahminical circle. Mukandarama Cakravartī and Madhav Acarya who composed poems on the Candī cult towards the end of the sixteenth century, Manik Ganguli, Ruparam Cakravartī and Khelaram Cakravartī who wrote on the Dharma cult in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, were Brahmins. Thus in the course of the adaptation of Brahminism to the changing circumstances, the local cults of Manasā, Candī and Dharma could find a suitable place for themselves in the Hindu pantheon. The Aryan god Śiva was now brought down to the level of an average Bengali agriculturist as depicted in the Śivāyana of Ramesvara Bhattācārya. In the course of this transformation, Brahminism lost much of its original rigidity and received a new meaning. It could thus come very close to the minds of the ordinary people. This socio-religious evolution could take place in the course of several centuries. But we find the beginning of this process in the fifteenth century or even earlier. While Halāūdh Miera has mentioned the worship of Candī in his Brahmana Sarbvasva, Govindanada has described the rituals of the Manasā cult in his Sarti text.¹ If the Caitanya-bhāgavat is to be relied upon,² some of the Brahmins of Navadvīp had become the priests of Manasā and Candī with a view to earning a decent livelihood. Thus it seems evident that under the pressure of economic needs, some of the Brahmins were giving recognition to the popular local cults. Bengali literature had its growth and development amidst the sociological conflict and compromise, noticed above.

(b) Bengali translation of the Mahābhārata.

Of the translators of the Mahābhārata into Bengali, the names of Kavindra Parameśvara and Srikanan Nandi stand out predominant. The former was patronised by

1. Sukumar Sen: Madhya Yuger Vāṅglā O Vāṅglī, p. 37.

2. Op.cit., adi. Ch. X, p. 72.

Parāgal Khān, and the latter by his son, Chūṭī Khān, both father and son being the governors of Chittagong under Husein Shāh. Both of the poets have profusely eulogised their patrons in the introductory sections of their works. Sometimes Śrīkar Nandī's Asvamedha Parva is attributed to Kavīndra Parameśvara. But this is done on a very weak ground. Out of the numerous Bhanitās appearing in the Asvamedha Parva published from the Vaṅgiya Sahitya Parishad, only two or three¹ contain the name of Kavīndra and the rest uniformly mention Śrīkar Nandī. In these two or three Bhanitā's also, the name of Kavīndra has been mentioned together with that of Parāgal Khān. It seems that Śrīkar Nandī has thus reasonably referred to his contemporary poet Kavīndra and his patron Parāgal Khān, for he was following the footsteps of Kavīndra by translating the Asvamedh Parva into Bengali. One may confuse Śrīkar Nandī with Kavīndra; but Chūṭī Khān the patron of Śrīkar Nandī can hardly be confused with Parāgal who was Kavīndra's patron. Śrīkar Nandī has repeatedly mentioned that Chūṭī Khān was his patron; but he has never said so about Parāgal Khān. Thus it seems fairly well-established that Kavīndra and Śrīkar Nandī were two different persons who composed two different works in the reign of Husein Shāh. Had they been identical with each other, the name of Śrīkar Nandī would have appeared also in the Parāgalī Mahābhārata which was written by Kavīndra.²

The story of the Mahābhārata which appeared thus in Bengali language through the Sanskrit version of Jaimini, seems to have enjoyed such popularity among the people of the then Bengal. The Bengalicised version of the Mahābhārata once again marks the victory of the laukik culture already referred to by us.

(c) Vaiṣṇava Padas

Of the few writers of Vaiṣṇava Padas belonging to our period, the name of

-
1. Śrīkar Nandī: Asvamedha Parva: ed. Binodbihari Mahapatra and D.C.Sen: Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta, 1312 B.S., pp. 63, 139 and 140.
 2. Abdul Karim Sahitya-Visharad's conjecture that Parāgal Khān was one of the translators of the Mahābhārata can hardly be circumstantially established. Abdul Karim Sahitya Visharad: Vaṅgīya Prācīna Puthir Vivaraṇa, Vaṅgiya Sahitya Parishad ed. pt. I, Vol-I, pp. 10-12.

Yasoraj Khan who is said to have served as an official of Husain Shah, has become immortal. A Vrajavuli poem of Yasoraj which has appeared in the Rasa Manjuri of Pitamvaradasa¹ breathes a spirit of tenderness and delicacy of an unapproachable excellence. This may be regarded as one of the finest examples of the Vrajavuli padas written in medieval Bengal.

Sheikh

A similar pada containing the Bhanita of ~~Shah~~ Kabir has come down to us. The translation of this poem into any foreign language cannot preserve the softness and elegance of the original. We quote it below with a rough English translation.²

1. S. P. P., 1306 B.S., p. 8.

2. *আজি অপকণ্ণ কৃষ্ণ-বধনী ঘনি ঘনি ।*
চলিত মেঘের সজকর বধনী ঘনি ঘনি ॥ *বু*
জাম্বু কঙ্কিত ঘনী-মান ববন জাম্বু ।
এমোকা জেম্বু বিম্বন বম্বন দাম্বু ॥
উমান না বব ঘনি ঘনি অতি মাম্বাঘনি
কুম্বাঘনি কাম্বু জাম্বু জেম্বু পাম্বু ঘোবনি ॥
মুম্বাঘনি চাম্বুঘনি বম্বন বোম্বাঘনি হাম্বনি ।
আম্বাঘনি বাব্বাঘনি কোম্বু সাম্বু পূম্বাঘনি ॥
মেম্বা ঘাব্বাঘনি এনে-আম্বি জাম্বু-পাম্বাঘনি কাম্বনি ।
হুম্বাঘনি মাম্বাঘনি সাম্বাঘনি পূম্বাঘনি-হুম্বাঘনি ॥

What a wonderful beauty the maiden possesses!
 Her movement is as slow as that of an elephant.
 Her collyrium-coloured eyes on the white forehead
 Look like bees in a beautiful lotus-garden.
 She is devoid of pride and her waist is thin.
 Her youth will bend down under the pressure of her breast.
 The beautiful maiden possessing a moon-like face
 speaks smiling.
 Like the full autumnal moon, it pours nectar.

Sheikh Kabir says that his humble self appreciates this goodness
 And Sultan Nasir Shah is wandering in the lotus garden.
 See S.P.P., 1344 B.S., pp. 22-23, for this Bengali pada.

We are in favour of ascribing this poem to the early sixteenth century for reasons more than one. The concluding line of the poem contains the name of Nāsir Shāh who is undoubtedly identical with Nāsiruddīn Nasrat Shah (1619-1632 A.D). Kavi Sekhara also known as Chota Vidyāpati, who was a contemporary of Nasrat Shah, has called him Nāsir Shah in another pada.¹ Again the different Bhanitās given by Sridhara in his Vidyā-Sundara shows that Nasrat was known as Nāsir Shah whose son was Firūz Shāh.² Thus it is evident that Nasrat was very often called by his Jalūg name. The padas written by Kavi Sekhara may be "supposed to refer to Nasrat's leaning towards Vaisnava-like divine love."³ Similar idea is also gleaned from the pada quoted above. The language, metre and idea of this poem do not radically differ from those found in the padas of Yasorāj Khān and Kavi Sekhara. That Shekh Kabir was a contemporary of Nasrat seems fairly well-established. Another Vrajavuli poem containing the Bhanitā of Kabir deals with the Holi-līlā or spring festival of SriKṛṣṇa.⁴ It seems that this Kabir is identical with Shekh Kabir.

The name Shekh Kabir indicates that he was a Muslim poet. Although the details about his life are not known, it seems that he was intimately connected with Sultān Nasrat Shāh. Like Yasorāj Khān, he might have been an officer of Nasrat Shāh. Thus the Muslims were making valuable contributions to Bengali language and literature. Down to the fifteenth century, their literary activities do not seem to have assumed any significant importance possibly because of the socio-political circumstances under which they were placed. The Muslim foreigners who were settling here were gradually being Bengalised and the native people who were converted to Islām were probably at a loss as to their fortune in this country. This sociological process must have taken long time during which the Bengali Muslims had tried to get themselves adjusted to the changed circumstances. This seems to explain the comparative insignificance of Muslim Bengali literature which we notice down to the end of the fifteenth century.

1. Quoted by Sukumar Sen : Vāṅglā Sahityer Itihās. I, p. 73.

2. supra., p. 53

3. History of Bengal, II, p. 158, footnote.

4. Quoted by J. M. Bhattacharya: Op.cit., Pada No. 28

(d) Romantic Poems

As already mentioned, this period marks the growth of romanticism in Bengali literature. Śrīdhara who wrote the Vidyā-Sundara, ^{→ received} patronage from prince Fīrūs,¹ son of Nasrat Shah. A Muslim poet named Śābirid Khān, wrote another Vidyā-Sundara,² the date of the composition of which cannot be properly ascertained, for the bhanitās obtaining in the poem, do not contain any indication thereof. The language of some portions of Śābirid's work resembles that of the Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Kīrtana.³ The antiquated forms of the verb-ending and the second case-ending appearing frequently in the poem, point to its undoubted ancientry.⁴ These linguistic peculiarities can hardly be found in the work of Śrīdhara which does not seem to be earlier than Śābirid's Vidyā-Sundara. The most curious point to be noticed about the two poems, is the striking resemblance which their narratives bear to each other. One can easily come across frequent coincidences of narration and also of expression, between the Vidyā-Sundaras of the two poets. The narrative in the work of Śābirid Khān is considerably long and that of Śrīdhara's work, short. The latter does not possess the rich variety of metres and simile which the poem of Śābirid abounds in. The limpid lucidity of the style that obtains in Śābirid's work, cannot be had in the work of Śrīdhara. The various musical scales or rāgas mentioned by Śrīdhara, are conspicuously absent in the poem of Śābirid Khān. Considering these points of resemblance and difference existing between the two poems, it may be reasonably suggested that Śrīdhara has prepared an abridged version of the work of Śābirid Khān and made it suitable for the singers by inserting rāgas in proper places, without acknowledging his indebtedness to Śābirid Khān.

-
1. The poet has mentioned the name of Prince Fīrūs and his father Nasrat Shah. Supra, p. 53. The mutilated text of Śrīdhara's work has been edited and published by Ahmad Sharif in The Sahitya Patrikā, 1364 B.S, I, pp. 115-34.
 2. The incomplete text, edited by ~~Sharif~~ Ahmad, ^{→ Sharif} has been published in the Sahitya Patrikā, 1364 B.S, I, pp. 96-114.
 3. Sukumar Sen: Vāṅglā Sahityer Itihās, I, pp. 599-600.
 4. Ashutosh Bhattacharya: Two Early Writers of Vidyā-Sundara, Bengali Literary Review, April, 1956, Vol-II, No. 1, Karachi, p. 15.

The composition of poems on the romantic episode of Vidya and Sundara, by the poets mentioned above, is a significant event in the history of Bengali literature. As far as it can be ascertained from a careful perusal of the published portions of the poems, the religious background of the story hinted at in the opening lines,¹ has not been able to do away with its human interest. The attention of the poet was thus being gradually diverted from the world of gods and goddesses to that of human beings with its sensibilities, sorrows and joys. The works of Śrīdhara and Śābirid may be regarded as indicating a definite phase of transition from the religious literature to the secular one and from medievalism to modernism. The literary tradition established by these poets, was followed by a powerful eighteenth century poet, Bharat Candra. The stylistic description of the beauty of Vidya, given by Śābirid,² has a clear echo in that of Bharat Candra's work. Like Śābirid and Śrīdhara, he has used Sanskrit verses in certain portions of his work, devoted to the conversation between Vidya and Sundara.³ The work of Bharat Candra is saturated with religious influences, for it has been composed with the avowed object of recounting the greatness of the goddess Candī.

To the developments which were thus taking place in the Bengali literature of the time, the cultural milieu of the contemporary Jaunpur and the regions surrounding it, seems to have made significant contributions. Husain Shah Sharqī who was residing at Kahlgaon after having been defeated by Sikandar Lōdī,⁴ had perhaps brought with him a number of Sufis and poets to Bengal. One of such refugees was Qutban who composed in 909 A.H./1503 A.D.,⁵ a romantic poem in Hindi, called Mrgavati. The story narrated in the poem is summarised here:

Rajkumar, son of Ganapat Deo, the Suryavamsī ruler of Candragarh, was once on a

1. Sahitya Patrika: 1364, I, pp. 96-99 and 115-17.

2. ibid., p. 122.

3. Bharat Candrera Granthāvali: ed. Brajendra Nath Banerji and Sajani Kanta Das; Vangiya Sahitya Parishat, Calcutta, 1850 B.S., Vol. II, pp. 36-37.

4. supra., Ch. I, p. 9.

5. The poet gives nau sai nau sambat or 909 A.H. as the date of the composition of the Mrgavati. See Mrgavati quoted by Prof. Askari, J.B.R.S., 1955, Vol-XLI, pt. 4, p. 459.

hunting excursion. Enamoured of a seven-coloured, fleeting deer, he ran seven 'yojanas' or twenty-eight 'crosses', following the mysterious animal till he arrived at the shore of a lake flowing under a huge tree with green foliage. The deer disappeared in to the lake. The prince also jumped into it with a view to catching hold of the animal. His attempts having ended in failure, he started staying on at the shore of the lake where his father had, a seven-storied house constructed for his dwelling. The elusive deer was Mrgāvati, the beautiful daughter of Rūpa Murāra, the king of Kāñcannagar. Mrgāvati could assume the garb of a deer whenever she so desired. Once the prince noticed seven nymph-like ladies sporting and taking their bath in the lake. The most beautiful one of these seven women, was Mrgāvati. When Mrgāvati came once again to take her bath in the lake, on an Ekādasi day, the prince could win her hands by seizing her clothes. But the union was followed by a painful separation. Taking advantage of the prince's absence, Mrgāvati once fled away. In his longing stupor, the prince set out in quest of Mrgāvati. On his way, he arrived at a mountainous sea-shore where he saved one Rukmini, from the clutches of a demon, after having killed it. At the earnest entreaties of Rukmini's father, Rājā Devī Rāj Sindhia, who was a Raghunansi Rajput, the prince married her. But the loving nature of the wedded wife could not banish the thoughts of the first love from his mind. Encountering a series of difficulties, he reached Kāñcannagar where the couple had the long-cherished union. The messengers sent by Ganapat Deo, came to know of Rāj Kumār's whereabouts from the love-stricken Rukmini who was pouring out her heart before a bird in the form of a varamāsa. They met the prince at Kāñcannagara who now returned home together with Mrgāvati. On their way, they took Rukmini with them. The story has a tragic end. While on a hunting expedition, the prince died, falling from a mad elephant. The two queens became Sati.¹

As to the source of the story, the poet says that he has collected materials from the local language in which it was narrated in adhel and arya metres.² The idea

1. Extracts from the Mrgāvati: J.B.R.S., 1955, pt.4; pp. 460-83.

2. Mrgāvati: quoted by Prof. Askari: ibid, p. 459.

of the elusive deer obtains in the story of Nārīca in the Rāmāyana and also in the Rāmāyana and also in the Sudhana-Manoharā episode found in the Mahāyāna Vauddha Vinayapitaka.¹ Whether Qutban had any access to these sources is not clearly known. There is the role of a deceptive deer at the beginning of the twelfth century Kitāb Samakāvār of the Bodkian Library of Oxford,² although it does not have any necessary connection with the long narrative of the work. The Haft Paikar of Niṣāmi, written towards the end of the twelfth century, refers to a mysterious and fleeting, female omager following which Bahrām Gūr, the Persian prince, arrives at the cave of a mountain. After having killed a dragon, he enters into a mysterious room containing pictures of seven beautiful ladies who represent seven climes. Bahrām's marriage with these seven girls is followed by the construction of a seven-domed building in which he spends seven nights with his wives. Seven stories told by these ladies, constitute the narrative of the Haft Paikar.³ As already noticed, the Mrgāvati of Qutban not only depicts a seven-coloured deer, but also mentions seven 'yojanas', seven-storied building and seven ladies taking their bath in the lake.⁴ Both Niṣāmi and Qutban appear to have attached mystic importance to the number seven. Qutban, the poet of the symbolical work Mrgāvati, seems to have been influenced, to some extent, by the Haft Paikar which is also considered to be of a symbolical nature.⁵ It seems quite natural for a sūfi poet like Qutban to have received inspiration from the work of the Persian sūfi, Niṣāmi. In indicating Persian influences on Qutban's poem, it is not however asserted that the story of Mrgāvati is entirely Persian in character without having any Indian background. As a matter of fact, it contains a good deal of Indian elements which will be noticed below. Moreover, the

-
1. Sukumar Sen: Islami Vāṅglā Sahitya. Buḍwan Sahitya Sabha, 1358 B.S., p. 10.
 2. Ethe's Catalogue of Persian Mss. in the Bodkian Library, pp. 422/ ^{no. 442, 23.} Cassley Nos. 379-80
 3. Op.cit., Eng. Tran. by C.R. Wilson, Vol-I, London, 1924, pp. 51-56 and 106 ff.
 4. supra., P. 201. See also extracts from Mrgāvati, J.B.R.S., op.cit., pp. 461 465 and 466.
 5. The story of Bahrām Gūr as told in the Haft Paikar is regarded as illustrating the progress of the sūfi through the seven spiritual stages. See Introduction to Haft Paikar, p. XVIII.

scenes of the fair damsels sporting and taking their bath in the lake and the prince stealing the clothes of Mrgāvati resemble those in the story of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-līlā which the poet incidentally mentions together with the numerous gopīs or milkmaids.¹ Though allegorical in character,² the Mrgāvati does not lack in human interests which appear to have added a rare lyrical charm to the poem. Spiritual symbolism of the story seems to have been combined with its essential humanism. Gaṇapat, Rukmiṇī, Mrgāvati and the prince are all human beings placed in a surrounding of reality.

The medieval Hindi romantic stories such as those of Mrgāvati, Padmāvati and Lerak Candā or Mainā Sat³ have a good number of common elements which may be

1. Extracts from Mrgāvati: op.cit., p. 466.

2. infra., P. 207

3. The Mrgāvati of Qutban has not been published. Prof. S. M. Askari has given in a long paper, extracts from the Delhi and Maner mss. (both in the Persian Script) with copious quotations (J.B.R.S., 1955, Dec, pt. 4, pp. 452-87) on which the present writer's discussion on the Mrgāvati is mainly based. Illustrations in one of the two mss. in the Kaithi script, now at the Bharatiya Kala Bhavan, Banaras, exhibiting angularity in facial expressions, staring blank eyes and vigorous drawings of the figures, all of which point to the primitiveness of the art, indicate the popularity of Qutban's work even in that early period of the Gujrati school of painting. See pl. III, attached hereto. See also The Illustrated Weekly of India, May, 18, 1958, p. 20 and Karl Khandalavala: The Origin and development of Rajasthan painting. Marg. Vol-XI, No. 2, 1958, March, p. 19, figs. 1-5 and p. 33, figs. 1-2. Of the various editions of Malik Muhammad Jaisi's work, Padmāvati, ed. Grierson and Sudhakar Trivedi, in the Bibliotheca Indica series, together with an English translation of the same by A.G. Shirreff, Bib. Ind., 1944, may be consulted. The Mainā Sat of Sadhana and the Candāvan of Maulana Dāud, are available only in mutilated mss. Maulana Dāud composed Candāvan dealing with the story of love between Lerak and Candā in the reign of Firuz Shāh Tughluq, in honour of his Nasir, Juna Shāh. Badauni: op.cit., I, Bib. Ind.

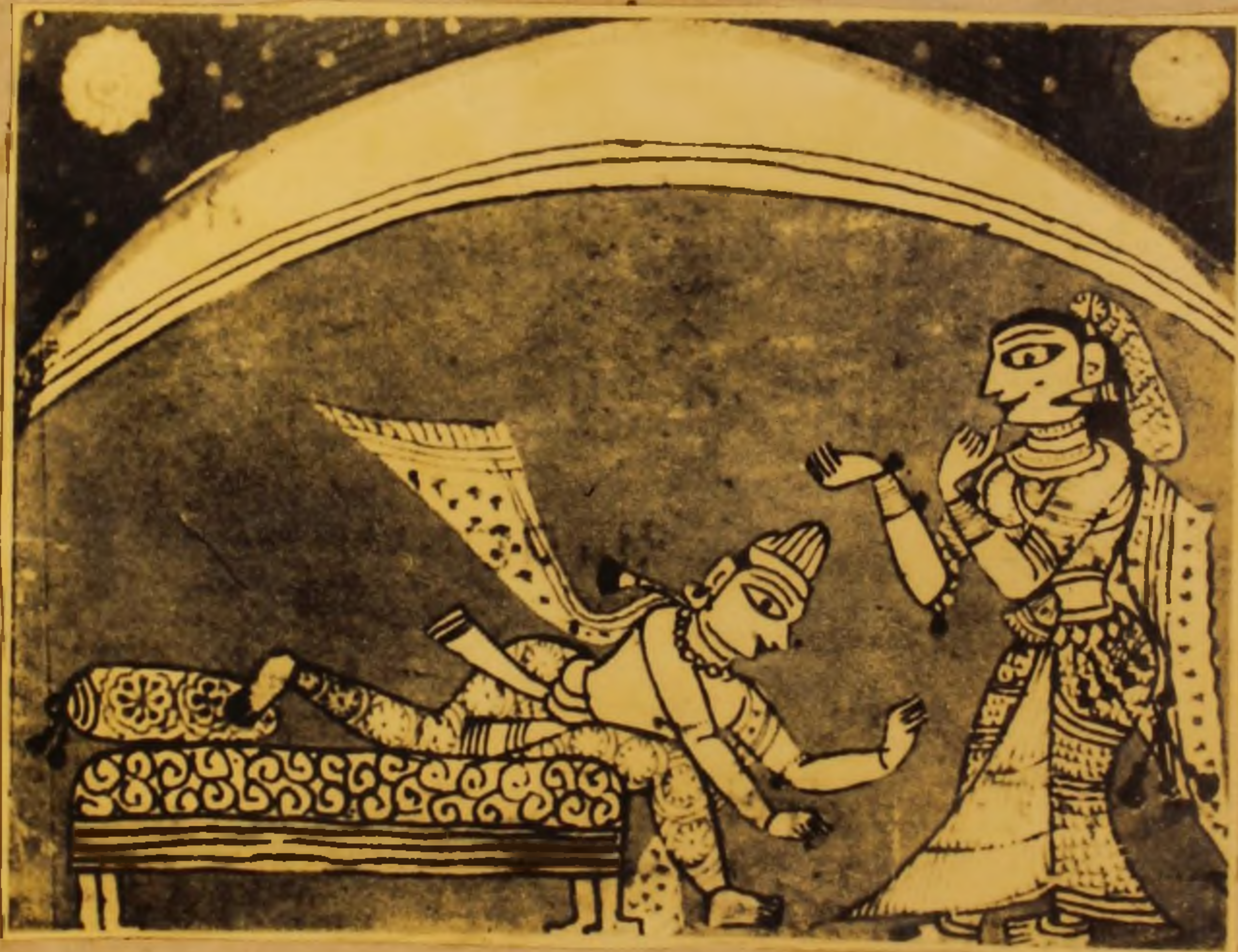


Plate - III

An illustration from *Mrgāvati* of Qutub

brought out in a bold relief, if a comparative study of these works is undertaken. In each of these stories, the hero wanders about in search of his beloved, encountering a series of difficulties, on the way, including fighting with demons and man-eaters, while ^{the} wedded wife whom he has left behind, pours out her heart, generally in the form of an orthodox Varamāsa, describing the varying nature of her separation throughout the course of the twelve months of the year. When he returns to his former wife after having won the hands of his beloved, his eventual death is followed

text. p. 250. Quotations from the Maner ms. of this work, discovered by Prof. Askari, J.B.R.S., 1955, No. 4, p. 453, refer to this incident together with the date of its composition, i.e. 781 A.H. Prof. Askari has given profuse quotations and extracts from the work in another paper, Rare Fragments of Chandain And Mri-gavati, Current Studies, Patna College, 1955, pp. 6-23. Rājasthānī and Apabrah̄ṃsā illustrations of the story of Lūrak-Candā are now preserved in Lahore Museum, Chandigarh Museum and Bharat Kalā Bhavana of Benaras. See Basil Gray: Rajput Painting, the Faber Gallery of Oriental Art, pl. 3 and The Art of India and Pakistan, London, 1949, colour pl. A and pl. 82, fig. 399(b); Karl Khandalavala: Leavees from Rajasthan, Murg, Vol-4, No. 3, p. 13, fig. 13 A. Chagtai: A few Hindu Miniature Painters of the 18th and 19th century, Islamic Culture, Vol-8, No. 3. ^{pl. 3} Rai Krishnadasa: An Illustrated Avadhī Ms. of Laur-Chanda In the Bharat Kalā Bhavan, Lalit kalā, New Delhi, Nos. 1-2, 1955-56, pp. 66-71. pls. F and XVII, figs. 1-4.

In a long letter addressed to Dr. Habibullah of the University of Dacca, Prof. Askari has summarised the story of the Mainā Sat of Sādhanā, on the basis of some incomplete mss. of the same that he has come across. It is a long Varamāsa narrating the sorrows of Mainā, forsaken by her husband Lūrak who has gone out in search of Candā, and also showing how contemptuously she is refusing the love of Chātan, another prince. Comparing this with the varamāsa portion in Daulat Qāzī's Bengali poem, Sati Mainā O Lora-Candrānī, ed. Satyendramath Ghosal, Vivāha Bhāratī, 1362 BS, pp. 111-40, the present writer has found that the two works tally in essential points. It seems fairly certain that Daulat Qāzī's work is based on Sādhan's Mainā Sat which the former has acknowledged in his work. Op.cit. p. 49. Nothing is known about the time of Sādhan. Keay, in his History of Hindi literature, p. 15, mentions Sādhan Bhagat, a mystic poet of Sind, who is said to have lived in the early fifteenth century. We do not know if he is identical with the poet of the Mainā Sat.

by the incident of the two queens practising Sattī. Without multiplying the instances of such common elements, we may suggest here that strange coincidence of events which is noticed in the stories cited above, may be attributed to the fact that all of them have come from some common source, possibly the popular folk-tales which had been in oral circulation in the northern and north-western parts of India from time immemorial. The mention of Lurik dance made by the early fourteenth century writer, Jyotirīvara Kavisekharācārya and the antiquarian nature of the folk-tale of Lurik-Malla obtained^{ing} in south Bihar,¹ speak of the popularity these romantic episodes enjoyed in early times.

The influences which have been exerted by the Mrgāvati of Qutban, on the course of the development of romanticism in Bengali literature, are quite far-reaching. The story of Mrgāvati has been followed by five Bengali poets whose dates range from the seventeenth to nineteenth century.² But its indirect impact on the medieval Bengali literature is of a significant importance. Malik Muhammad Jaisī appears to have accepted the Mrgāvati as model for his celebrated prem-gāthā, Padumāvati in which he makes a clear reference to the Mrgavat-Rāj Kumar episode.³ Besides possessing the common elements noticed above, the two works stand in clear relationship with each other. One can easily notice a predominance of Rajput elements in the work of Qutban who regards Ganapat Deo and Rājā Devī Rāi Sindhia as belonging to the Rajput tribes of Suryavansha and Raghuvansha respectively.⁴ The placename, Candragarh sounds like Candravati,⁵ or more properly like Canderi, the Rajput state in

1. Sukumar Sen: Islami Vāṅglā Sahitya, pp. 28-29. See also Verrier Elwin: Folk-songs of Chhattisgarh, Bombay, 1946, pp. 338-70 and Hunter: A Statistical Account of Bengal, Bhalpur, London, 1877, Vol-XIV, pp. 87-89.

2. These poets are Dvija Paśupati, Dvija Rāma, Muhammad Khater, Karīm Ullāh and Ibadat Ullāh. Sukumar Sen: Islami Vāṅglā Sahitya, pp. 30-40 and 134.

3. Padumāvati: Bib. Ind. XXIII, 512:

Rājkuṅvar Kāncanpur Gayu

Mrgāvati Kānha Yogi Bhaiy

The prince went to Kāncanpur

He became a yogi for the sake of Mrgāvati.

4. Extracts from Mrgāvati: op.cit., pp. 475 and 476. For the legendary history of these Rajput tribes, see Tod: Annals And Antiquities of Rajasthan, ed. William Crooke, 1920; Vol-I, pp. 55 and 247.

5. For the topography and history of Candravati in Jhalawar, see Tod: op.cit., I, 109

Qālior.¹ The Rājput ladies of noble birth used to remember at the time of entering into the funeral pyre of their dead husbands, the name of certain Mrgāvati² of the Bhatti capital of Derawal, who is supposed to have become a legendary figure by becoming a sati. This Rājput episode resembles the story of Qutban's Mrgāvati who is depicted as practising sati.³ The discovery of the manuscripts of the Mrgāvati in the Kaithi script at Bikanir and Chaukhanbha together with the mid-sixteenth century Gujrāti paintings illustrating one of them,⁴ shows how popular the story had become in medieval Rajasthan. The acquaintance of the Rājput mind with similar romantic stories is evidenced by the fact that Kusallāva of Jaisalmer, versified in Rajasthan language, in 1550 A.D., the folk-love of Dholā-Māravani.⁵ All these point to the Rājput background of the Mrgāvati which seems to have been based on materials culled from folk-tales obtaining in the then Rājputana and the countries surrounding her, which Qutban might have heard from the Sūfi coming from these regions.

The Rājput colouring seems quite clear in the Padumāvati in which the hero Ratna Sen has been presented as the king of Ghitor which was attacked by Alāuddīn Khalji. Jaisi gives an elaborate picture of Manasarodaka lake with Padumāvati and her attendants sporting and taking their bath in it,⁶ which seems to be a close copy of the scene of the lake in which Mrgāvati and the beautiful ladies accompanying her, have their occasional bath.⁷ Ratna Sen has his first meeting with Padumāvati,

III, 1784-86 and I.G.I., Oxford, 1908, Vol-XIV, 123-24.

1. Tod: op.cit. I, 47-48, footnote 7 and 180; I.G.I., X, 163-64.

2. Tod: op.cit. II, 1030.

3. Extracts from Mrgāvati: op.cit. p. 483.

4. supra. p. 203, footnote, 3. See pl. 3 attached hereto.

5. Sukumar Sen: Islāmi Vāṅglā Sahitya, pp. 13-14.

6. Op.cit., Canto IV.

7. Op.cit., pp. 466 and 468-69.

on a Vasant (spring) pañcamī day, in the temple of Mahādeva,¹ whereas Rājkumār is united with Mrgāvati on an ekādasi day, in the seven storied temple having beautiful windows and paintings depicting scenes from the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata.² As indicated in one of the opening stanzas of the Mrgāvati,³ the story is illustrative of the union of the seeker with the ultimate reality. Jaisi brings out the symbolism of his story in the following words:

We make the body Chitaur, the mind the king; we recognise the heart as Singhala, the intellect as the lotus lady. The spiritual guide is the parrot who showed the way: without a spiritual guide who can find the absolute in the world? Nagnati is the cares of this world; he whose thoughts are bound up therewith does not escape. Raghava the messenger is Satan, and the Sultan 'Alāuddin is illusion. Consider the story in this manner: receive instruction if you are able to receive it.⁴

Such is the probable influence exerted by Qutban on Jaisi whose work was rendered into Bengali verses by the illustrious poet Alaul⁵ who flourished in the court of Arakan in the seventeenth century. As already pointed out, the plot of the Maina Sat of Sadhana which has resemblance to that of the Mrgāvati and the Padmāvati,⁶ has made its way into Bengali literature through Daulat Qazi's Sati Maina O Lora Candrani. Qutban may thus be regarded as one of the sources from which romanticism has flowed to medieval Bengali literature.

It is very difficult to say if this Hindi-Avadhī background has got any necessary connection with the story of Vidya-Sundara as told by Śrīdhara and Sabirid Khān.

1. Padmāvati: Canto XX.

2. Extracts from the Mrgāvati: op.cit., pp. 466 and 468-472.

3. Op.cit., p. 455.

4. Padmāvati: Eng. Tran. by Shirreff. Bib. Ind. 1944, p. 371.

5. The Padmāvati of Alaul is available in Bazar editions. The first part of the work has been edited by Dr. Shahidullah from Dacca in 1950.

6. supra. Pp. 203-204.

The incomplete text of their works gives the events upto Sundara's arrival at Kāncīpur, the capital of Vidya's father. The fragmentary verses at the end of Śrīdhara's work¹ refer to the arrest of Sundara by the Kotwāl and Vidya's impo-
 tunate lamentation following it and about the rest of the story, the reader is left
 in the dark. As these stories generally follow a stereotyped pattern and a systema-
 tic and logical line of development, it may be possible to reconstruct the missing
 portions of the story by consulting the relevant part of Bhārat Candra's work in
 which it has been stated that Sundara, while frequenting the bed chamber of Vidya
 through an underground tunnel, is caught hold of by the Kotwāls and ordered by the
 king to be impaled. Vidya gives vent to her feelings in pathetic words, as she
 observes from her balcony the kotwāls inflicting inhuman torture on Sundara. He can
 save his life and win the hands of Vidya after having fervently prayed to the goddess
 Candi. The matrimonial ceremony is followed by the return journey of Sundara accom-
 panied by his consort Vidya. The poet adds a few lyrical touches to this by giving
 a description of the six seasons.²

Peculiarly enough, all these have their distinct parallels in the Singhal
 episode of the Padmāvati of Jaisi: Ratna Sen tries to enter into the Singhal
 through an underground passage at the exit of which he is arrested by the watchman
 of the king who orders him to be impaled. The agony of Padmāvati who watches from
 her balcony the kotwāls punishing Ratna Sen, is unbounded. As a result of the
 interference of Mahadeva and Parvati, the king not only saves the life of Ratna Sen,
 but also gives his daughter, Padmāvati, in marriage to him. They leave for Chitor.
 Here also we come across a description of the six seasons.³

The Sanskrit version of the story of Vidya-Sundara as represented by the work
 of the fourteenth century Jain poet, Rajasekhara-Sūri and the Bihār-Yaminīpūranatīlakā

1. Sahitya Patrika, 1364 B.S., I, pp. 132-34.

2. Op.cit., II, pp. 48-163.

3. Padmāvati, Cantos XXIII-XXIX and XXXII.

episode,¹ is quite different from its Bengali counterpart obtaining in the works of Śrīdhara, Śābirīd and Bhārat Candra. But the strange coincidence which the Bengali Yidyā-Sundara bears to the Sinhalese episode of the Padumāvati, is suggestive of the fact that the story has come to Bengal after having ~~passed~~^{absorbed} a good deal of folkloric elements from upper India and Bihar. But the contention cannot be pushed further unless more reliable evidences are available. The story seems to have been brought to Bengal by the followers of the Sharqī ruler, Husain Shah.

The biography of Sri Caitanya occupies an important place in the history of Bengali literature. It is strange that no prominent Bengali biography of this great religious leader was written during his life time. The famous works like the Caitanya-bhāgavat and the Caitanya-Caritamṛta were composed towards the end of the sixteenth century when Caitanya was no more. The only work belonging to our period is the Kadacā of Govinda-dāsa who is said to have been a close associate of the Lord. But the problem of the historicity of this work has been a subject of keen controversy among Bengali scholars some of whom have gone to the extent of regarding it as entirely spurious. Rakhaī Das Banerji who seems to have attached much importance to the Kadacā has tried to detail the life of Caitanya on the basis of the information supplied by this work.² Dinesh Chandra Sen has laboured much to emphasise the historical value of the Kadacā.³ But the Vaiṣṇavas do not take it to be contemporaneous at all with the life of Caitanya. Thus the controversy centering on the book is endless. The language, ideas and expressions found in it are undoubtedly modern and the work seems spurious.

II. Persian Language

Besides Bengali, the local language, Persian was also in use. Although a foreign language, Persian had become so prominent in pre-Mughal Bengal that it could

1. Sukumar Sen: Vāṅglā Sahityer Itihās. I, pp. 824-28.

2. R.D.Banerji: Vāṅglār Itihās. II, pp. 296-97 and 300-305.

3. Govindadāsar Kadacā: ed. Dinesh Chandra Sen: Published by the University of Calcutta, 1926. Vide Introduction given by the editor.

easily attract the notice of the Chinese traveller, Mahuan¹ who visited Bengal in the first part of the fifteenth century. It seems to have enjoyed the status of court language in the period under review. Down to the middle of the fourteenth century, Bengal was an integral part of the ~~Bahli~~ ^{Delhi} kingdom where Persian was the official language. The Ilyās Shāhīa who established the independence of Bengal, must have retained Persian for all official purposes. We do not have any convincing proof to show that the Husain Shāhī Sultāns replaced it by Arabic. In epigraphic and literary sources, we have such official titles as Sharābdār, Jāmdār, Shiqdār, Sar-i-Lashkar, Wazīr-Lashkar, Lashkar Wazīr, Sar-i-Khail, Kār-i-Farman, Sar-i-Gumastah and Dabīr-i-Khās.² all of which are Persian terms. It is mentioned in the Gaitanya-Mangal of Joyānanda³ that Jagāi and Wadhāi were reciting verses from the Maṅsavi and that some of the Brahmins were reading Persian literature. This information is valuable, indicating as it does that Jagāi and Wadhāi, two of the officers of Husain Shāh, had to learn Persian. All these tend to support the view that Persian was adopted as official language by the Husain Shāhī rulers. We may notice here what the numismatic and epigraphic sources have to say on this point. The coins of this period bear Arabic language. But this does not lend any support to the conjecture that Arabic was the court language, for coins generally contain the names of the ruling Sultāns, their dates, mint towns and kalima and there was little scope for the use of Persian inscriptions on them. We notice the presence of the Persian alphabet Gāf, ^گ in those coins which have recorded the conquest of Jājnagar (^{ججنگ})⁴: Of course, there is a predominance of Arabic inscriptions. Majority of them contain Arabic, and a few, Persian.⁵ As the inscriptions were

1. J.R.A.S.G.B.I., 1895, p. 530. See also Bagchi's Eng. Tran. of the Chinese Accounts in the Viśva-Bhāratī Annals, 1945, I, pp. 115 and 124.

2. For these official titles, see supra, Chapter on Administration.

3. Op.cit., pp. 56 and 139.

4. supra., p. 16.

5. The Sylhet inscription of Husain Shāh dated 912/1512 which declares Husain Shāh to be the conqueror of Kāmrūp, Kānta, Orissa and Jājnagar, is written in pure Persian language. See J.A.S.B., 1922, Pl. IX, p. 413. Supra, p. 21. For other Persian inscriptions, see J.A.S.B., 1872, pt. I, XLI, pp. 106. J.B.O.R.S., Vol-IV, pt. II, p. 184. A.S.R., XV, pp. 99-100. R.I.N., 1929-30, p. 12.

fixed to mosques and tombs, they had to necessarily contain Qur'anic verses to justify the construction of these religious edifices. Although the scope for the use of Persian on inscriptional tablets was thus limited, we have several bilingual inscriptions. The portions of them which are meant for communicating any information to the public have been written in Persian.¹ That the Sylhet inscription of Husain which records his victory over the rulers of Kamrup and Orissa, is written in Persian is quite significant.²

Although Persian language exerted influence on the life of Bengal, Persian literature does not seem to have flourished in the Husain Shahi period. In fact, no specimen of Persian literature that can be safely ascribed to the pre-Mughal Muslim period, has come down to us. Bengal was politically isolated from northern India and this political isolation led to her cultural isolation. Delhi was receiving fresh waves of immigrants from Persia and other countries that surround her. This is undoubtedly one of the factors leading to the development of a rich Persian literature in pre-Mughal northern India. This was not possible in Bengal, for she does not appear to have had any cultural relation with the then Delhi kingdom, nor did she have a permanent bond of friendship with Persia. Barbosa has noticed the presence of the Persian merchants in the cities of Bengal,³ in the early part of the sixteenth century. The Persian merchants who used to come here direct from

1. See the Devikot inscription of Masrat Shah, J.A.S.B., 1870, pt. I, No. 4, p. 297. The first part of the inscription contains a Qur'anic passage, LXII, 9, and a tradition, and the second part written in Persian, reads:

بنا بر آنکه جمیع مملایان و ارباب اگر بھرن اوقاف خیانت کنند ملعنت
خدا گرفتار شوند، واجب و لازم آید حکام و قضات را بجای آنکه مانع
خیانت شوند، تا روز قیامت در نظام گرفتار نیایند۔

"Because the Mullās and Zamīndāre (arbāb), if defrauding legacies, are overtaken by the curse of God, it is the earnest (bejāne) duty of governors and qazis, to prevent such frauds, so that on the day of resurrection they may not be caught in their wicked deeds." (Blochmann's translation) ibid, p. 298.

2. supra., p. 21.

3. Supra., p. 103.

Persia, via the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal, must not have been as numerous as their Arab partners, nor did they settle here permanently to contribute to the growth of Persian literature in Bengal. The state of things remained unchanged until Bengal was conquered and annexed to the Mughal empire.

III. Sanskrit Literature

Sanskrit literature was in its hey-day in the Sena period which found a galaxy of poets and scholars. Then there was a standstill in all spheres of creative activities which may be attributed to the socio-political anomalies that characterised the life of Bengal for more than a century following the Muslim conquest. The whole Muslim rule covering a period of more than five centuries could produce neither a Jayadeva nor a Dhoyī. The reasons are not far to seek. Sanskrit literature depended, for its growth and nourishment, generally on the patronage of the Sena Court and the Brahminical culture that the nobility fostered. With the disintegration of the Sena power, it had neither the court nor the nobility to depend upon nor did the alien Muslim ruling class interest itself in Sanskrit language and Brahminical culture. The political stability which was brought about by the Ilyās Shāhī rulers, must have given a sense of social security to the different classes of people, not excluding the Brahminical section. Moreover, the short-lived Hindu dynasty, established by Rājā Gaṇeśa, appears to have given impetus to Brahminical culture. It was in this socio-cultural milieu that Śulapāni and Rāyamukuta Vṛhaspati, two of the famous digest-writers of medieval Bengal flourished.¹ The former was primarily a Smṛti-writer, and the latter, a Smṛti-writer as well as a commentator on ancient Sanskrit epics and lexicography. There was little that could be called

1. Śulapāni's date cannot be accurately ascertained. Rai Bahadur Mana Mohan Chakravarti has suggested on some reasonable grounds that he "flourished in the beginning of the fifteenth century A.D., if not earlier". The History of Smṛti in Bengal and Mithila J.A.S.B., 1915, Vol-XI, No. 9, p. 342. It is fairly certain that Vṛhaspati Miśra wrote some of his works in the reign of Jalāluddīn Muhammad Shāh (1415-1431), the converted son of Rājā Gaṇeśa, both of whom he

creative art, for Sanskrit drama and creative poetry, remained unrepresented in the Ilyās Shāhī period. The creative faculty of the Hindu mind seems to have been paralysed. Coming to the Husain Shāhī period, we notice a sudden outburst of literary activities to which the ancient Dharmasastra, the Maithili school of neo-logic and the growing Gaudiya Vaisnavism, appear to have supplied inspiration.

(a) Smṛti.

So far as Smṛti was concerned, Bengal built up a brilliant tradition in the past. She produced a good number of digest-writers of whom the names and works of Bhavadeva Bhaṭṭa, Jīmūta-vāhana, Halāyudha Bhaṭṭa, Sūlapāni and Vṛhaspati are quite famous.¹ The digest-writers of our period, must have been greatly influenced by the writings of these scholars. The most illustrious digest-writer of the period under review, is Raghunandana, whose work, Smṛti-tattva, was meant to be encyclopaedi² in its range of socio-religious regulations. It gives the sum-total of Smṛti-knowledge that the Hindu mind possessed in those days. Also known as Astāvimsati Tattvāni² this work covers the entire field of Smṛti and deals with a wide variety of subjects

has mentioned in an introductory verse of the Smṛti Ratna-hāra quoted by Dr. R.C. Hazra: I.H.C., XVII, 4, p. 447. The other books written by him are commentaries on the Kumāra Sambhava, Raghuvamśa of Kalidāsa, the Śisupālavadhā of Magh and on the famous Sanskrit dictionary, Amarakośa. See Dr. Hazra's paper, Rāyamukuta Vṛhaspati, Ibid. pp. 442-455. See also D.C. Bhattacharya: Date and Works of Rāyamukuta, Ibid. pp. 456-71.

1. For the dates and works of these nivandhakāras, see Rai Bahadur Mohan Chakravarty: Op.cit., pp. 313-342. For Vṛhaspati Rāyamukuta, see above. All of them were predecessors of Raghunandana. See also P.V. Kane: History of Dharmasastra, Rhande N-car Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1930, Vol-I, pp. 298-306, 318-27 and 393-96.

2. The work is called Astāvimsati-tattvāni, or twenty-eight tattvas, because it is divided into 28 parts known as Malamāsatattva, Dāva,^o Saṅkāra,^o Suddhi,^o

connected with the Hindu Socio-religious law, such as intercalary month, inheritance, partition, sacraments connected with the birth and marriage of the devout Hindu, purification, expiation, lunar days, Janmāstamī and Dūrgotsava festivals, law, consecration of idols and temples, the daily duties of a house-holder, the duties and privileges of a Sūdra, pilgrimage, funeral ceremonies and similar other topics.¹ The Smṛtitattva abounds in quotations from the numerous, ancient and medieval digest-writers of Bengal and different provinces of India and from the Purānas, the Bhāgavad Gīta, the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata.² The influence of these works on the writings of Raghunandana can hardly be over-estimated. He has introduced devotional elements in the dharmasastra possibly under the influence of the Gīta which he quotes several times in his writings.³ Following the same authority, he maintains that one can attain salvation by freeing oneself from attachment to worldly objects and surrendering one's actions completely to God.⁴ While dealing with the questions of inheritance, division, legal procedure and proper times for the performance of religious duties, he frequently quotes the views of Jīmūtavāhana, Bhavadeva Bhatta, Sūlapāni and other Bengali Smṛti-writers⁵ and accepts almost all of them as authoritative. The comprehensive works of Raghunandana gradually superseded those of his

Prāyascitta°, Vivāha°, Tithi°, Janmāstamī°, Dūrgotsava°, Vyāvahāra°, Ekādśī°, Jalāsayotsarga°, Chāndogāvrotsarga°, Yajuh-vrotsarga°, Rg.vrotsarga°, Vrata°, Deva-pratisthā°, Mathapratisthā°, Divya°, Jyotiṣa°, Vāstu-yāga°, Dikṣā°, Āhnikā°, Kṛtya°, Puruscottama°, Srāddha°, Yajuh-srāddha°, and Sūdra-kṛtya°. This list of the tattvas is taken from M.M.Chakravarti's article, op.cit., p.363. In arranging the tattvas, the writer has followed the order in which they are mentioned in the Malanāsa of Raghunandana. They do not indicate any chronological order. The title of each of these tattvas is suggestive of the subject it discusses. The Smṛti-tattva of Raghunandana has been edited by Jivānanda Vidyāsāgara, in 2 vols, Calcutta, 1895. There is another edition by Śyāmakānta Vidyābhūṣana, Calcutta, 1941.

1. These topics are scattered over the 28 tattvas the titles of which are suggestive of the subject matter they contain.
2. For a list of works and writers cited by Raghunandana, see M.M.Chakravarti: Op.cit. Appendix B, pp. 362-75.
3. Āhnikā°, pp. 425, 433 and Malanāsa°, p. 837, Jivānanda's ed.
4. Malanāsa°, p. 837, Jivānanda's ed.
5. See M.M.Chakravarti: op.cit., pp. 316, 318, 340 etc.

contemporary nibandhakāras including Śrinātha, Rāmbhadra and Govindānanda.¹ In fact, Raghunandana who is the life of the Navedvopa school of Smṛti, seems to have given a final shape to the dharmasāstra, for his injunctions are found even to-day to govern the socio-religious behaviour of the orthodox Hindus of Bengal. Although he has a galaxy of brilliant predecessors in the field of Smṛti, he remains without a worthy successor in Bengal. The Brahminical mind was now being diverted to writing the biographies of Caitanya and discussing Vaiṣṇava philosophy. Moreover, the birth of Bengali language, seems to have obscured all classical learning which was cultivated through the medium of Sanskrit.

We have seen above that Raghunandana who has tried to codify Hindu socio-religious laws, has largely drawn upon the ancient Smṛti and the works of a good number of Bengali digest-writers. He not only gives citations from the works like Manusmṛti, Yājñavalkya-smṛti, Nārada-smṛti, Parāśara-smṛti, Agastya-Saṃhitā and the Purāṇas,² but also accepts the views of these authorities as entirely authoritative. This gives us the impression that Bengali socio-religious customs and laws

-
1. Śrinātha, the teacher of Raghunandana, wrote several works and commentaries including Dayabhāgtippanī, Kṛtya-tattvāṅga, Ācāra-Candrikā, Śrāddhadīpikā, and Sūddhi-viveka, citations from some of which are to be found in the Sūddhi, Ahnikā, and other works of Raghunandana. Śrināth's son, Rāmbhadra wrote Dayabhāgavivṛti, and Smṛtitattva-vinirmaya. See M.M.Chakravarti: op.cit., pp. 343-50. Govindānanda wrote Varsakriyākaṇḍī, Dāna^o, Śrāddha^o and Sūddhi^o. These have been edited by Kamalakṛṣṇa Smṛtitīrtha, in Bibliotheca-Indica series, 1902-5. For information about Govindānanda, see M.M.Chakravarti: op.cit., p. 355. P.V.Kane: op.cit., pp.414-15.
 2. He quotes the Manusmṛti in the Pravāścitta^o, p.533, 540-41, Śrāddha^o, pp. 229-30, Ahnikā^o, pp.451-54, Sūddhi^o, p.364, Jyotiṣ^o, pp.716-17, Malamāsa^o, p.742. These citations deal with food, professions to be adopted by the Hindus, the religious merit of gifts and similar other topics. For the quotations from the Yājñavalkya-smṛti, see Sūddhi^o, p.318, Divya^o, p.589, Samakāra^o, pp.943-44, Malamāsa, p.747 and Udvāha^o, pp. 127-28. These citations deal with cremation, the legal procedure, marriage, birth rites etc. The works like Ekadasi^o, Malamāsa^o, Tithi^o, Ahnikā^o, etc are replete with citations from the Agastya-Saṃhitā and the Parāśara-smṛti. The references to the works of Raghunandana in this section are to those in Jivānanda's edition.

had remained unchanged for thousands of years. But this is an absurd proposition. In fact, important changes were taking place in the then Hindu society. As already noticed, lower class socio-religious ideas and practices were gradually finding their way into Brahminical society and non-Brahminical gods and goddesses like *Mamasa*, *Gandī* and *Dharma*, trying to find a suitable place in the Hindu pantheon. Further, there was the impact of Islam on the social life of Bengal. The writings of the famous digest-writer shows that he has tried to frame socio-religious regulations quite traditionally, without recognising the changes that had already taken place. This is undoubtedly an indifference to the realities of life. We have hardly any reason to think that he was not conscious of the social and political movements that had far-reaching effects on the life of Bengal. One explanation seems plausible here. Finding that Islamic and local ideas were about to strike at the structure of Brahminism, he seems to have tightened up the ancient Brahminical socio-legal system, with a view to retaining the religious integrity and social stability of the Brahminical section of population. Thus he appears to have failed to realise the fact that the different conflicting forces that were at work in the society, needed a liberal synthesis and that the ancient conservative *Sāstra* required accordingly a general overhauling. In fairness to Raghunandana, it must be said that a liberal course could hardly appeal to him in those days of crystallized conservatism which allowed no innovation in socio-religious behaviour, nor could he disobey the dictates of the ancient *Sāstra*. His writings do not have the effect of narrowing the difference that existed between the Brahminical section and the lower class Hindus.

(b) Navya Nyāya .

It was in this speculative branch of knowledge that the Bengali scholars excelled and surpassed the logicians of other parts of India. The Navya Nyāya school of *Navadvīpa* is inseparably connected with the name of Raghunātha Tārikā Śīromani who may be regarded as its real founder. Flourishing in the first half of the sixteenth century, he wrote a considerable number of works of which the Tattva-cintāmani-dīdhiti and the Padārtha-khandanam, are quite famous. While the former work is

a critical commentary on Gaṅgeśa's work, Tattva-cintāmaṇi, and a running criticism on the different topics of Nyāya including negative particles, the latter, an extremely controversial criticism of the categories found in the Vaiśeṣika system. Other works of Raghunātha are mostly commentaries and subcommentaries on the writings of his Maithili predecessors. It seems highly probable that the works of Raghunātha had become quite famous in his own life-time, for they are known to have been cited and commented upon by some of his contemporaries including Jānakīnātha Bhaṭṭācārya Cūdamani, Kanāda Tarkavāgīśa, and Haridāsa Nyāyalankāra.¹ The school of Navya Nyāya established by Raghunātha in the beginning of the sixteenth century, continued to influence the intellectual life of India down to the eighteenth century. Of the numerous commentators on the writings of Raghunātha, Bhavānanda Siddhantavāgīśa, Mathurānath Tarkavāgīśa, Jagadīśa Tarkalankāra and Gadadhara Bhaṭṭācārya Cakravartī² living in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, were the celebrated logicians who made valuable contributions to the history of the school of neo-logic.

It is fairly certain that the Mithilā school of Navya Nyāya founded by Gaṅgeśa in the tenth century and enriched by some of his prominent successors including Vardhamāna and Jayadeva, greatly stimulated nyāya studies in medieval Bengal. Almost all prominent scholars belonging to the Bengal school of neo-logic, are known to have written commentaries on the works of some of the Maithili scholars³ mentioned above. That Bengali scholars vigorously criticise the views of the

-
1. M.M.Chakravarti: History of Navya Nyāya in Bengal and Mithila. J.A.S.B., 1915, pp. 274-76; Mr. Satish Chandra Vidyābhūṣana: History of Indian Logic, Calcutta, 1921, p. 465. Panibhūṣana Tarkavāgīśa: Nyāya Paricaya, pp. 25-26, Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharya: Vāṅgalīr Sarasvata Avadāna, I, Calcutta, 1358 B.S, pp. 79-87 and 97-102, etc.
 2. For the works and times of these logicians, see M.M.Chakravarti: History of Navya Nyāya etc., J.A.S.B., 1915, pp.277-78, 281-82, 285-86, 287-90. DeC.Bhattacharya, op.cit., pp.133-48, 153-71, 178-85. Satish Chandra Vidyā Bhūṣana: op.cit., pp. 467, 469 etc.
 3. For the names of the works of Gaṅgeśa, Udayanācārya, Vardhamāna and other Maithili scholars, which were commented upon and criticised by Raghunātha and his successors, see the works and articles cited above.

Maithili logicians, goes to prove that there was rivalry between the two schools. The school of Navadvīpa seems to have ultimately overshadowed that of Mithilā which lost its prominence towards the end of the sixteenth century.

When peace returned to Bengal during the Ilyās Shāhī and Husain Shāhī periods, Bengali students desirous of studying logic had to necessarily flock to Mithilā, for it was then the only prominent centre of nyāya studies. Immune from Muslim attack for a long time, it could maintain its seats of learning which received patronage from the rulers of the dynasty of Kamesvara (1350-1515). Again the Navya nyāya school was established here long before the fourteenth century. Bengal had thus to depend on Mithilā for inspiration. The process of amalgamation of old Nyāya with Vaiśeṣika system known as Navya nyāya, started at Mithilā and found its culmination in Bengal. Hence the impact of Mithilā on the literature and logic of Bengal.

Vṛndavana-āśa informs us that the six systems of Indian philosophy were studied regularly at Navadvīpa in the period under review.¹ Though the systems of Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā and Pātāñjal, might not have been neglected altogether, no prominent work seems to have been written on anyone of them. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī flourishing possibly in the sixteenth century, wrote on Advaitavād. Of his works, the Advaita-Siddhi, which tries to establish the soundness of Advaita doctrines, is quite famous. In his other works,² he dealt with Vedānta philosophy, comments on the Bhāgavat-gītā and the works of Śaṅkarācārya and regards Bhakti as a means for the attainment of Salvation.

(C) Poetry and Drama .

The emotional Vaisnavism of Sri Caitanya and the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cult with its

1. Op.cit., adi, XI, p. 80.

2. Chintaharan Chakravarti : Bengal's contribution to philosophical literature,

Indian Antiquary, 1929, see pp. 204-05.

lyricism fertilised Sanskrit literature to a great extent. Although no biography of Caitanya was written in Bengali in the period under discussion, a beginning was made in Sanskrit language and the biographers are said to have been the direct associates of Caitanya. Although these works could hardly be free from the subjective elements of the authors, they give us valuable information about the life and philosophy of Sri Caitanya. Historical accuracy and authenticity which are very often paralysed by the poetical fancy and devotional psychology of the writers, are not the main features of these writings. Nevertheless, they give us clear ideas about the growing vaishnavism as a devotional cult and its impact on the life of the people.

The Caitanya-Caritamṛta,¹ written by Murāri Gupta is probably the earliest Sanskrit biography of Caitanya. Written in the Kāvya style, it consists of four Prakramas or sections and seventy-eight cantos and covers almost all the facts of Caitanya's life from birth to death. The concluding verse gives 1435 Śaka=1513-14 A.D., as the date of its composition. But this cannot be the exact date of its composition, for it narrates events connected with the last part of Caitanya's life. The Gambhīra-līlā² is an instance in point. Moreover, it describes the incidents connected with Caitanya's death,³ which took place in 1533 A.D. It may, therefore, be reasonably inferred that the work was composed immediately after the death of Caitanya. This contention is borne out by the fact that this work was consulted and closely followed by Kavikarnapūra who wrote the epic Caitanya-Caritamṛta in 1542.⁴ But the date 1435 Śaka = 1513-14 A.D., given at the end of the printed text, cannot be satisfactorily explained.⁵ The importance of the work lies in the

-
1. It was edited and published by Śyam Lal Gosvāmī in 1303 B.S. and in 1317 B.S. from Calcutta. The third edition was published by Mrinal Kanti Ghosh in 1337 B.S. from Calcutta.
 2. Op.cit., IV, 24.
 3. ibid., 1, 2, 12-14.
 4. Kavikarnapūra: op.cit., ed. and Bengali translation by Śrī Rāṅgharāyaṇa Vidyāratna Berhampur, Murchidabad, 1291 B.S., see XX. 42 and 49.
 5. The presumption that "the concluding verse, which gives its date of composition,

fact that it was consulted and partly utilised by subsequent biographers including Kavikarnāpūra, Locanadāsa and Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja.¹ Thus it is fairly certain that it was regarded as a valuable source of information by the biographers of Caitanya who came after Murāri Gupta. Abounding in a variety of metres, this work does not appear to have had enough of artistic value.

originally occurred, as it should, at the end of the second section, but was somehow retained even when the supplementary section or sections were added", (S.K.De: Early History of the Vaisnava Faith and Movement, p. 29), has got no genuine ground. Should we then suppose that the first two prakramas were written in 1513-14 and the third and fourth ones, after the death of Caitanya? But for such a supposition, we have no evidence.

1. Locana-dāsa says:-
কবি মুকামাচন্দ্র (কামাচন্দ্র) ।
(যে বস্তু) কবির (মতে) কৈলেন। ১৫৫৫ ॥

See Caitanya-Māṅgal, Second ed. Kṛṣṇa Kanti Ghosh; Gaṅgāraṅga era, 444, p. 86 Mādhyā Khanda. He mentions Murāri's name and the source of his knowledge of Caitanya's life at other places of this work. See p. 7, Sūtrakhanda; p. 27, Ādi; p. 80, Mādhyā; and p. 118, Śeṣa:

মুকামাচন্দ্র কবির মুকামাচন্দ্র-কবির ।
মুকামাচন্দ্র কবির কবির-কবির ।
মুকামাচন্দ্র কবির কবির-কবির ।
মুকামাচন্দ্র কবির কবির-কবির । etc.

In fact, he translates some times the account given by Murāri Gupta. He seems to have borrowed the Vibhīṣana-episode from Murāri's work (IV.21). That Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja consulted Murāri's work is known from the following lines :

কবির মুকামাচন্দ্র কবির-কবির ।
মুকামাচন্দ্র কবির কবির-কবির ॥
কবির মুকামাচন্দ্র কবির-কবির ।

Caitanya-Caritaṃṛta: Ādi:Ch.XIII, p.51. Biman Bihari Majumdar has stipulated the influences of the work of Murāri Gupta on the Caitanya-bhāgavat of Vṛndāvana-dāsa and also on the Bhakti-ratnākara, the eighteenth century biography of Caitanya. Op.cit., 71-72.

and S.K.De: Op.cit., p. 34, footnote 10

Dāmodara Svarūpa is said to have written a Kadacā or a biographical work¹ which seems irretrievably lost. Had it survived, we would have probably gleaned from it some ideas about the doctrine of Pañca-tattva² which is said to have been introduced by Dāmodara. Moreover, the value of such a biography is quite evident from the fact of Dāmodara's being a direct associate of Śrī Caitanya.

Of other biographical works on Caitanya which were composed in the years immediately following our period, the Caitanya-Caritamṛta and the Caitanya-Candrodaya of Paramānanda Sena, also known as Kavikarnapūra, are of considerable importance. The former work, a Mahākāvya in twenty Cantos (Sargas), written in 1464 Śaka = 1542-43 A.D.³ deals with the incidents of the forty-seven years of Caitanya's life. While writing about the early life of Caitanya, the author closely follows his predecessor, Murāri Gupta. But cantos from XII to XX appear to be independent of Murāri's work. Thus it seems that after canto XI, Kavikarnapūra depended upon other sources and possibly upon whatever information he could gather from his contemporaries. Although this work shows the poet's rhetorical capacity, his control over a large number of metres and his power to give beautiful poetical descriptions of scenes and events, it has little poetic merit to its credit. Kavikarnapūra's Caitanya-Candrodaya⁴ is a ten-act-drama dealing ^{with} the life of Caitanya. It seems to be an abridged, dramatised version of the Caitanya-Caritamṛta, the poetical work of the author, with the remarkable difference that the drama depicts elaborately the later part of Caitanya's life which is briefly treated in his poetical work and that the mythical and allegorical elements found in the drama, are significantly absent in the poem.

1. It is quite clear that Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāj had the opportunity to consult and draw upon this work. See Op.cit., Quoted above. See also ādi, XIII, 50 and madhya, IX 123.
2. Supra., Ch. IV, P. 134.
3. The concluding verse of the Śrī Caitanya-Caritamṛta, (sl.49) reads: Vedō resāh śrutaya induriti-prasiddhe etc. Veda = 4, rasa = 6, śruti = 4, and indu = 1. Thus we have 4641 = 1464 Śaka.
4. Edited from Bombay, 1917, Kāvymālā, 87. For a discussion on the controversy connected with the date of its composition, see Biman Bihari Majumdar, Op.cit., pp. 89-94 and S.K.Des Op.cit., p. 34, footnote 1.

Besides these biographical works, there were poems and dramas, dealing with the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cult. The Dāna-kālī-kaumudī, the Lalita-mādhava and the Vidagha-mādhava¹ are the dramas, composed by Rūpa Gosvāmī, which have the erotic Vr̥ndāvana-līlā of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa as their commonplace theme. The Hansa-dūta and the Uddhava-sañidēśa of Rūpa² and the Bhramara-dūta of Rudra Nyāya Vācaspati which have the motif of sending love-message, follow the pattern of the Meghadūta of Kālidāsa, although they are in no way capable of standing comparison with that famous poem. It seems that Bengal had a tradition of imitating the Meghadūta, for Dhoyī, living in the court of Lakṣmana Sena, modelled his Pavana-dūta on the pattern of the Dūta-kāvya of Kālidāsa.³ The Dūta-kāvyas of our period have the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa legend as their theme. The Padyāvalī⁴ of Rūpa is an anthology containing poems of a number of medieval and ancient poets, the verses being devoted to the Kṛṣṇa-līlā episode. The Sadukti-karmārta⁵ of Śrīdhara-dāsa, another anthology dated Samvat 1127 = 1205 A.D., seems to have suggested to Rūpa the plan of this compilation. In fact, he reproduces a good number of verses from that anthology in the Padyāvalī. His familiarity with that work is thus established beyond doubt. The theological works of the Vr̥ndāvana Gosvāmīs, the different Campūs which utilize both prose and verses, the Kāvyas like the Kṛṣṇa-hārika-kaumudī of Kavikarnapūra, the Govinda-līlāmṛta of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, the Samkalpa-kalpadruma and the Mādhava-mahotsava of Jīva, though composed in the third and fourth quarters of the sixteenth century, show the gradual evolution of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cult which process must have started in the days of Jayadeva (who deals with the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa love in his Gīta-govinda) or even earlier.

-
1. These have been published at Berhampur, Murshidabad, by the Rādhāraman Press. The Vidagha-mādhava, has also been published from Bombay, 1903, Kāvya-mālā, 81.
 2. Kāvya-Saṅgraha ed. by Jīvananda Vidyāsagar, Calcutta, 1888, A.D., pts. ii, pp. 441-507 and iii, pp. 215-275.
 3. See History of Bengal, I, pp. 363-64.
 4. Edited by Dr. S. K. De; published by the University of Dacca, 1934.
 5. Edited by Nānāvātāra Śarmā : Published in the Punjab Sanskrit Series, Lahore, 1933.

The works of Murāri Gupta and Kavi Karnapūra clearly show how the Caitanya cult was crystallising in the first half of the sixteenth century. We are told that Visnu-priya made an image of Caitanya with a view to worshipping it,¹ that he was regarded as an avatāra or incarnation of Kṛṣṇa even before his death and that his divinity was explicitly recognised by his associates.² In fact, Murāri Gupta and Kavikarnapūra, frequently depict Gitanya as the two-armed, four-armed and six-armed Kṛṣṇa.³ These works bring home to us the idea that Bhakti or devotion is the cardinal point of the Caitanya cult and that the Lord and his followers were extremely hostile to Advaitavāda.⁴ The biographies written by Murāri Gupta, Kavikarnapūra and Vr̄ndāvana-dāsa show that the Vaisnavism of ŚrīCaitanya was a simple, devotional faith, possessing hardly any doctrinal complication. The pattern of the Vaisnava theology and Rasa-Śāstra, noticed in the scholarly works of the Vr̄ndāvana Gosvāmīs, seem to have been woven by them at least a few decades after the death of Caitanya. The Lord seems to have aimed at the realisation of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cult through Bhakti saturated with intense emotionalism. The worship of Caitanya as inculcated in the earlier biographical writings such as those of Murāri Gupta, Kavi Karnapūra and Vr̄ndāvana-dāsa, does not appear to have been the essential feature of the Vaisnava philosophy expounded by the Vr̄ndāvana school which puts much emphasis on the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cult by glorifying the Vr̄ndāvana-līlā and putting esoteric interpretation to it.⁵ Some of the Vr̄ndāvana Gosvāmīs acknowledge the divinity of Caitanya in their Namaskriyās,⁶ although this is not regarded as a theological question.

1. Murāri Gupta : Op.cit., IV, 14.8

2. Caitanya-Candroday. Act. I

3. ibid., Act.II, Caitanya-Caritāmṛta of Kavikarnapūra VI, 122, VII, 19, XII, 33.
Murāri Gupta: Op.cit., II, 8

4. Murāri Gupta : Op.cit., II, 7. 10-18 and III. 12.12-13. Kavi Karnapūra: Caitanya-Caritāmṛta: XII. 21-24

5. Jīva, conscious of the erotic aspect of the Vr̄ndāvana-līlā, comes forward with a theological apology in his Gopāla-Campū, composed towards the end of the sixteenth century. He maintains that the apparently erotic Vr̄ndāvana-līlā has got an esoteric significance which cannot be realised by ordinary lovers. See Op.cit., ed. Rāsavihāri Saṅkhyatīrtha. Berhampur, 1940, ch. XXIV.

6. See S. K. Das : The Early History of etc., pp. 323-30

Thus the list of the Sanskrit works,¹ produced in our period is quite impressive, although their standard does not deserve any special credit. As most of the poets were great scholars, their writings bear the stamp of their scholarship and laborious artificiality. Whatever elegance and beauty are found in the Kāvya and dramas are undoubtedly the result of the technical skill possessed by the poets concerned. What they produced, is neither original nor novel. This is due, in a large measure, to the fact that they selected the life of Caitanya and the Kṛṣṇalīlā as their themes which provided hardly any scope for originality or novelty. The voluminous Smṛti writings and the commentaries and sub-commentaries on the Nyāya texts do not have literary interests at all, nor did those who produced them have any literary end in view. The works on Smṛti seem to have been meant for providing the Hindu society of the time with social and religious laws. Navya Nyāya which is a highly speculative and abstruse branch of philosophy does not appear to have had a general appeal. It was probably the result of a continuous intellectual exercise having some academic interests. The list of the logicians and digest-writers of this period² shows that the cultivation of Navya Nyāya and Smṛti was monopolised by the Brahmins. In the field of creative literature, we come across a few non-Brahmins, such as Murāri Gupta, Kavikarnapūra and Raghunāth-dāsa³. They seem to have received recognition in the world of theologians and ^{literateurs} ~~literatures~~ due to the overwhelming influence of liberal Caitanyaism on the life of the upper class Hindus.

1. Most of the works, cited above, are edited and printed.

2. supra., pp. 213-18.

3. Murāri Gupta and Kavikarnapūra were vaidyas by caste, whereas Raghunāth-dāsa, a Kayastha, enjoyed landed estate in Hugli. Raghu Nath subsequently became one of the Six Gosvāmīs of Vr̥ndāvana and made remarkable contributions to Vaiṣṇava theology and literature. For the information about Murāri, see Caitanya-bhāgavat, adi, II, p. 58. For Kavikarnapūra, see S.K.De: The Early History of Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement, p. 32. For Raghunāth's estates and literary contributions, see Caitanya-Caritamṛta, antya, VI, 293-94, and S.K.De: The Early History etc., pp. 89-93.

These non-Brahmins appear to have worked as junior partners of the Brahmins in the field of literature where the latter exercised almost a dominating influence. Thus the bulk of the literature of this period comes from the Brahmins. The works on Sūrti and Navya Nyāya embody a culture that is essentially Brahminical. These together with the poems and dramas bring home to us aspects of a larger society; but their appeal must have been quite limited. Essentially Brahminical in character, the Sanskrit literature of the time does not seem to have attracted the minds of the ordinary people to whom it was not accessible either. Further, the literature of the time, being the product of the cultivated mind overloaded with the knowledge of poetics, theology, Rasa-sāstra and music, could hardly be understood by the common people. The artificial elegance, the artistic embellishment and a considerable amount of technical skill, which characterise the Sanskrit poetry of the time, are suggestive of the fact that there was the impact of urban civilisation on it. If we except the two Kavyas and one drama on the life of Caitanya, the whole body of Sanskrit literature is replete with erotic sentiments and¹ amorous pictures. The poets dealing with the Vr̄ndāvana-līlā, go to the extent of giving detailed description of the sexual union of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, their erotic gestures, their amorous dalliances and their passionate relationship.² It seems that the poets,

1. Most of the Sanskrit dramas and poems of this period are made to follow the principles of Rasa-Sāstra. The Vidagdha-mādhava of Rūpa may be cited in illustration. The different moods of Rādhā, as depicted in it, strictly conform to the grammar of Rasa. Most of the writers are again, apt to display their rhetoric knowledge and capacity. The Govinda-līlāmṛta of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja: ed. Sacīmandana Gosvāmī, Vr̄ndāvana, 1908, XXII, 79-81, 85-92, 97-101; XXIII, 7-14 does not fail to mention elaborately the technical aide of music.

2. Rādhā is pictured as Abhisārikā, Vasakasajjā, Utkanthitā, Vipralabdā and Khanditā woman in the Vidagdha-mādhava. The Pūrva-Rāga of her rival Candrāvalī is also described. See op.cit., ed. Kavymāla. 81, Bombay, 1903. Act. IV, Act. III gives a vivid description of the union of Kṛṣṇa with Rādhā. For the erotic sports of Kṛṣṇa at Vr̄ndāvana, see the Lalita-mādhava, Acts. I-III (Bahrampur ed.). For

while dealing with the Vr̄ndavana-līlā, have unconsciously reproduced the picture of the amorous life of the court or the upper class society, which they had in their minds. This seems quite natural in view of that fact that some of the writers of the time such as Rūpa, Saṁtana and Jīva were closely associated with the court at least in the beginning of their lives.¹ Of course, the works of Jayadeva and Gaṇḍīdāsa who also deal with the erotic theme of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-līlā, seem to have influenced their writings to a considerable extent. The works of these two poets again, seem to reflect the condition of the upper class circle of Sena and post-Sena Bengal. The Vaiṣṇava Sanskrit poetry with its urban culture, rigid technique and theological scholarship and the writings of Nyāya and Smṛti with their dry intellectuality could hardly appeal to the minds of ordinary people. The cultivation of Sanskrit literature was thus confined to the highly educated, upper class people and did never become the Vehicle of the culture of the general mass of the population who now picked up their vernacular language with a view to giving expression to their ideas and sentiments. Bengali literature, thus dependent on rural culture for inspiration, was characterised by a vigour and freshness which could hardly be noticed in the highly stylised, urban, sanskrit literature that was a spent force.

Whatever might have been the nature and scope of the sanskrit literature of the period in question, the revival of classical literature and culture noticed above, is undoubtedly a significant event in the history of medieval Bengal. The Caitanya movement was directly responsible for the production of the vaiṣṇava works

Kṛṣṇa's dalliances with the Gopīs, his union with Rādhā and his other erotic activities, see Kavikarnapura: Kṛṣṇāhnikā Kaumudī: ed. Haridās-dāsa, Navadvīpa, 1941. Prakāśa I: Stavakas: 30-37 and IV: 71-82, and II: 12-31 etc. For similar topics including the sexual enjoyment of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa; see Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's Govinda-līlamṛta: ed. Gosvāmī; Madhyāhna-līlā: Canto, VIII, IX and X. It is needless to refer to more authorities. The poetical works of Jīva and the Campu are full of similar topics.

1. supra., p. 37.

including the biographical writings and the Kavyas, dramas and Campus dealing with the Krama cult. The growth and development of the schools of Navya Nyaya and smṛti seem to have been the result of the working of certain socio-political forces. Conscious of the permanent nature of the Muslim rule, the Brahmins who had lost political power, seem to have tried to assert their intellectual supremacy by reviving the speculative and discursive branches of knowledge through the medium of the obsolete, classical language, Sanskrit. The cultivation of the subjects like Smṛti and Nyaya is thus suggestive of the defeatist mentality of the Brahmins. As the period under discussion was characterised by the consolidation and stabilisation of the administrative system, the rulers must have tried to give code of laws to the people. The Brahmins appear to have apprehended that the basic integrity of their society would be affected as a result of the probable enforcement of the body of laws which might be essentially Islamic. To stop the process of filtration of Caitanyaism and Śakte-tāntrik lower class ideas to the upper Brahminical circle was probably another motive that actuated them to undertake the task of writing smṛti. Similar process was perhaps at work also in the Sena period which witnessed the composition of a number of Dharma-sāstras intended to enforce the rules of ceremonial purity so that the disruptive forces of Buddhism might not convulse the Hindu society. Most of the smṛti writings of the period including the Dānasāgara ascribed to Vallāla Sena, betray avowed hostility to the Buddhists.¹ In the period in question they seem to have reacted to the situation by codifying their own socio-legal system with a view to applying it to the society. This attempt is probably exemplified by the works of Raghunandana. Again the cultivation of Smṛti needed a basic knowledge of Nyaya, for regulated, clear thinking must have been a necessary pre-requisite of the former. This explains why some of the digest-writers were also well-versed in Nyaya.² Raghunandana's approach to the Dharmasāstra, is characterised by the

1. R.C.Mitra: The Decline of Buddhism in India, Viśva-Bharatī, 1954, pp. 78-79.

2. D. C. Bhattacharya: Vaṅgalīr Śārasvatā Avadāna, p. 49. Śulapāni, the famous digest writer, wrote on the Mīmāṃsā system of philosophy. ibid, p. 63.

Purvamānsa method of reasoning. Thus Smṛti and Nyāya appear to have been twin sciences. But the Brahminical revivalism did not afford any scope ^{for} social progress and expansion.

The Muslim ruling class could hardly be sympathetic to the protective Brahminical culture. It is quite doubtful if the Sanskrit poets of the period had received even any indirect patronage or encouragement from the Husain Shāhī Sultāns who do not seem to have lost sight of the significance of the Brahminical revival. The Sanskrit poets did not have any reason to mention the names of the ruling Sultāns, frequently referred to by the vernacular poets. The decadent Brahminism had to ultimately make room for the growing local culture which was already permeating the different aspects of the life of Bengal. The socio-cultural vacuum which was being created by Brahminism for years together, was thus filled up by Bengali language and the fresh and vigorous local culture it encouraged and embodied.

CHAPTER - VII

Fine Arts and Architecture

Mahuan, the fifteenth century Chinese traveller, found in the cities of Bengal, a good number of professional artists. It is really unfortunate that we have hardly any specimen of the arts and crafts produced by these people. During the period in question, Bengal's contributions to arts other than literature and architecture, were quite insignificant. Still it is worthwhile to form an idea about some of the branches of arts flourishing in this period. Architecture and Calligraphy were largely the product of the Court patronage. Similar was the case probably with music, particularly its classical branch which seems to have flourished in the Court. We do not know if the rulers of our period had any direct connection with local painters that must have obtained in those days. Nevertheless, the different types of arts seem to have corresponded to the chequered experiences of social life by absorbing various local elements.

I. Calligraphy

Inscriptions were generally written in Arabic or Persian languages. Arabic and Persian alphabets have got a character specially suitable for ornamentation and decoration. This is one of the reasons why the art of Calligraphy had a continuous growth and development in Muslim Bengal. It seems to have received proper encouragement from the Muslim Sultans of pre-Mughal Bengal. The numerous inscriptions which were fixed to the mosques and buildings constructed at the express order of the Sultans and their governors clearly exhibit the different styles of writing flourishing in those days. The silver and gold coins which have been discovered so far, throw much light on the history of Calligraphy. Here, as in Mughal India, the rulers used to confer on the scribes working at their court, various, honorific titles like zarin-dast¹ or 'golden-handed'. This Persian

1. The title zarin-dast was conferred on Ghyas who is regarded by Blochmann, as the Katib of Bikandar Shah. See the inscription of Bikandar Shah, dated 765 A.H/ 1363 A.D. A.A.S.B., 1872, No. I, p. 105.

term reminds us of similar terms such as 'Zarrīn-Qalam, Shīrīn Qalam and Anbarīn Qalam that obtain in the history of Mughal painting and Calligraphy.¹ A careful study of the Muslim coins and inscriptions of the pre-Husain Shāhī period, reveals that the different major and minor styles of writing such as Kūfic, Naskh, Suls and Tughra² were practised here by the Calligraphists. The art of writing seems to have attained a considerable degree of perfection in the Husain Shāhī period.

Some of the styles mentioned above were prevailing in the Husain Shāhī period. A modified form of Naskh style is noticed in the Tribeni inscription of Husain

-
1. Ain: ed. Blochmann and Philot. Bibliotheca Indica, 1939, 2nd ed. Vol-I, pp. 106, 109 and 114. Zafar Hasan: Specimens of Calligraphy in the Delhi Museum, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 29, p. 10.
 2. Most of the coins of this period show the Naskh style. Only a few coins of Jalāluddīn Muhammad Shāh, Nāsiruddīn Mahmūd Shāh and Ruknuddīn Bārbak Shāh contain Tughra inscriptions. For the Tughra character of inscriptions on coins see Lanepool: Op.cit., pl. IV, Nos. 81, 83 (Tughra form only on the reverse), 85 (only the reverse) and 87. H.N.Wright: Catalogue, II, pt. III, Bengal, pl. III, Nos. 106, 110 (see the obverse only), III (obverse only) and 125 (obverse only). The upper panel of the Adina Mosque inscription shows the Kūfic style of writing and the lower one, the Tughra style, see Indo-Iranica, Vol-IV, Nos. 2-4, fig. I. See also J.A.S.B., 1873, pt. I, p. 256-57. The Rājshāhī inscription of Jalāluddīn Fath Shāh dated 887 A.H. exhibits Naskh style. See V.R.S. Monographs, No. 6, March, 1935, pl. II. This inscription seems to indicate transition from Naskh to Suls, for it has slight signs of the latter style. The Biral inscription of Saifuddīn Firūz dated 880 A.H. shows Suls style. Ibid., pl. I. The same style is shown by the Nāsiruddīn Mahmūd Shāh inscription of Gaud, dated 863 A.H. in which shafts are systematic and curves, disproportionate and neglected. J.A.S.B., 1873, pt. I, pl. V, fig. 4. The Fath Shāh inscription of Dacca dated 886 A.H. (Ibid., pl. VII, No. 1) shows the thin type (Khafi) of Suls while the Nāsiruddīn Mahmūd Shāh II inscription of Hazrat Pandua (Ibid., pl. VII, No. 3) shows the bold type (Jali) of Suls with Tughra Characteristics. Hazrat Pandua inscription of Sikandar Shāh dated 770 A.H. is a specimen of Tughra style. Ibid., pl. V, No. 3. Five

Shah¹ in which the shafts are peculiarly elongated. Thus it is evident that it shows the influence of Tughra style. The Suls which has been defined by Abul Fazl as consisting of "one-third curve lines, and two-thirds straight lines"² is found in the Kalma inscription of Firuz Shah,³ dated 939 A.H. The curves are comparatively poor and neglected and shafts, systematically arranged and elongated. To the same category, belongs the Haji Baba Saleh inscription of Husain Shah⁴ in which the style is of an intricate nature.

But the Suls and the Naskh, if compared with the Tughra, appears to have been minor styles of this period. The Tughra is not an independent style, but is a sub-styles of ornamental writing containing some sort of artificial arrangement of script in which the alphabets are so inter-woven that they assume a decorative shape difficult to read.⁵ In the course of its gradual process of evolution, the Tughra style appears to have passed through three distinct stages. At the first stage, the vertical strokes are straightened and arranged in a systematic order in a line of spears and the Tughra inscription of this stage is almost similar to the Suls inscription so far as the characteristics are concerned. In the second stage, one may notice in upper portions of the vertical strokes certain slanting signs looking like arrows. In the third and final stage, some letters such as Nun (ن), Sin (س), Shin (ش), Yay (ی) and others in which there are curvatures, are written across the body of the shafts in the shape of bows. The elongated shafts are tipped as arrows and the bows are formed by the concave letters mentioned above. The style popularly called 'Bow and Arrow', is thus an

inscriptions of Barbak Shah show Naskh and Tughra styles. E.I., 1953 and 54.

Arabic and Persian supplement, pls. VII(a) and VIII.

1. Indo-Iranica, Vol-IV, Nos. 2-4, fig. 7.

2. That is also the precise characteristics of the Naskh style of writing.

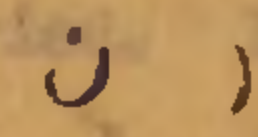

Ain, Vol-I, p. 106

3. J. A. S. B., 1873, pl. VII, No. 2.

4. Syed Aulad Hasan: Notes on the Antiquities of Dacca, 1912, p. 55.

5. Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 29, p. 18.

ornamental style of writing in which the concave letters are arranged across the bow-headed ones with the 'bow and arrow motif' characterising the whole form of writing. It is undoubtedly the most prominent Calligraphic style of the Husain Shahi period. A careful examination of the inscriptions of this period shows that the Tughra became more and more elegant, flowery and decorative so that it overshadowed other styles of writing.

Two Mugli inscriptions of Nasrat Shah,¹ dated 938 A.H./1530-31, clearly exhibit the 'Bow and Arrow' type of Tughra. In both of the inscriptions, the elongated shafts of the vertical strokes have been given the shape of arrow-heads at the tips and the curvature of the concave letters such as Mūn () and Yah () drawn horizontally, looks like the strings of the bows. The 'Bow and Arrow' type is illustrated by a very beautiful inscription of the same ruler dated 930 A.H. which is now lying in Dacca Museum. The curvatures of the letters are carefully drawn and the vertical shafts, nicely elongated. The artistic set up is further embellished by a foliaceous decoration inter-woven into the writing so that it is very difficult to separate the letters from decoration. This intricacy does not affect the artistic integrity of the entire Calligraphic representation. The Gaud inscription of Nasrat Shah² dated 926 A.H./1519-20 seems to illustrate the final stage in the process of the development of the 'Bow and Arrow' type of Tughra. The arrow-headed shafts are systematically perfect and the curvatures intertwining about them, artistically drawn. Some of the inscriptions of Husain Shah³ representing this type, are characterised by a considerable degree of artistic elegance. This type of Tughra, seems to have lingered in Bengal down to the third quarter of the sixteenth century. The Rajshahi inscription of Ghiyasuddin Bahadur Shah

1. E. I., Arabic and Persian Supplement, 1951-52. Pl. XI, figs. a and b.

2. Ep. Ind. Mos., 1911-12, Pl. XXXI.

3. I. H. Q., 1950, Pl. facing p. 183; J. A. S. B., 1871, pt. I; 

Pls. IV and V.

Shur,¹ dated 956 A.H./1558-59 clearly exhibits the 'Bow and Arrow motif'. Besides having the regular elongation of the arrow-headed strokes and horizontally drawn curvatures, the inscription possesses certain letters which give rise to interesting animal forms. The word ش occurring in the beginning of the inscription, gives us a perfect form of a hooded serpent. This characteristic is present in the Hughli inscriptions of Nasrat Shah, discussed above. The Murshidabad - Babargram inscription of Husain Shah² dated 905 A.H. represents the organ - pipe type of Tughra in which the elongated shafts are systematically arranged in rows.

One can notice the absence of the Kufic writing in this period. It was a primitive type of Arabic writing, generally used in copying the Qurān. In the beginning, it was quite simple; in course of time, it became so artificial and decorative in nature that the inscriptions having this style could not be deciphered by ordinary people. The reaction which started against it seems to have resulted in the complete disappearance of the Kufic style by the thirteenth century A.D. from the whole Muslim world.³ This explains why it is almost totally absent at the subsequent stage of Indo-Muslim history, although it is found in some of the inscriptions attached to the buildings and mosques belonging to the early period of the Turke - Afghan rule.⁴ The Husain Shahi Sultans could hardly feel the necessity of reviving a style which was already obsolete in the contemporary Muslim world. The Naṣṭaliq style of writing was also absent in the Husain Shahi Bengal due to an obvious reason hinted at by Abul Fazl, according to whom it was only from the time of Akbar that the style of Naṣṭaliq began to receive "a new impetus."⁵

1. V. R. S., Monographs. No. 6, March, 1935, Pl. III.

2. M. Ziauddin: A Monograph on Muslim Calligraphy. Calcutta, 1936, p. 70, fig. 162.

3. Zafar Hasan: op.cit. p. I.

4. The Kufic inscriptions are found in the Quwwatul Islam mosque and the Arhai Din Ka Jhopra mosque at Ajmeer and on the tombs of Sultan Ghari and Iltutmish. EP. Ind. Mos. 1911-12. Pls. XVI and XXVII.

5. The Ain: Vol-I, p. 109.

It should be mentioned here that Bengal did not enjoy absolute monopoly in the cultivation of the 'Bow and Arrow' and 'Organ-pipe' types of Tughra, for they flourished in other parts of the fifteenth or sixteenth century India. Some of the coins of the Sharqī rulers of Jaunpūr bear the Organ Pipe type of Tughra.¹ It is quite interesting to note that the inscription on the top slab of Mirza Muhammad Amin's grave at Golconda,² bearing the date 1004 A.H./1596 A.D., contains a beautiful specimen of the 'Bow and Arrow' type of Tughra. Although the process of the filtration of Bengali influences to these regions is not clearly known, it may be reasonably inferred here that the Jaunpūri and Deccani artists had received inspiration from Bengal. As Bengal and Jaunpūr were contiguous, one country could easily influence the cultural life of the other. The sudden appearance of the 'Bow and Arrow' type Tughra in Golconda towards the end of the sixteenth century cannot be satisfactorily explained. We are told by the chroniclers that the Abyssinians who were expelled from Bengal by Husain Shāh, migrated to Deccan and Gujrāt.³ It is just possible that they had carried with them the Calligraphic tradition of Bengal to the South. The thorough acquaintance of the Abyssinians with the Calligraphic art of Bengal is proved beyond doubt, for the Hazrat Pāndīā inscription of the last Abyssinian ruler, Musaffar Shāh⁴ (898 A.H.) clearly shows that the Bow and Arrow type of Tughra had already attained a great degree of perfection. If we take into consideration the circumstances narrated above, it seems highly probable that the Calligraphic style of Golconda was influenced by the art of Bengal. The Bow and Arrow type of Tughra which attained a great degree of perfection in the period in question, had its crude beginning in Gujrāt as early as

-
1. Lanepoole: Op.cit., Pl. IX, No. 263 (see the obverse only). H. N. Wright: Catalogue, II, pt. II, Pl. VIII, Nos. 1 and 110 (Reverse only).
 2. Indo - Iranica: Vol-IV, Nos. 2-4, See fig. No. II in the plate facing p. 16.
 3. Salīm :- op.cit., p. 133. Firishtā:op.cit., II, p. 302.
 4. The inscription is one of the finest specimens of the Bow and Arrow type of Tughra. J.A.S.B., 1873, Pl. VI, Fig. No. 2. Indo-Iranica, Vol-IV, Nos. 2-4 Fig. VI.

the first quarter of the fifteenth century.¹ The process of this cultural contact has been discussed elsewhere.²

The peculiar Tughra style of our period did not last long, for the Mughal conquest introduced here the different styles practised by the Mughal artists and here, as in northern India, Nasta'liq overshadowed other styles as a result of which the highly stylised Tughra of the Husain Shāhi totally disappeared.³

Thus it is evident that the Tughra style of writing reached its climax in perfection under the Husain Shāhi rulers of Bengal who seem to have nurtured it most by adding grace and elegance to the Bow and Arrow type. The Calligraphy of this period is characterised by delicacy and grace which we do not find in the art of the contemporary Delhi school showing a great degree of vigour and splendour. The arts and literature of the Husain Shāhi period show predominance of local elements. The rich foliage decoration noticed in the inscription of Nasrat, seems to represent the beautiful jungle scenes of Bengal. The Bow and Arrow and Organ Pipe, totally absent in the Calligraphic art of the contemporary Delhi school, may be regarded as Bengal's significant contribution to this art and seem to be the outcome of the influence of the local elements on Calligraphy.

II. Music and Painting

Due to the paucity of materials, it is difficult to form an accurate idea about the arts of music and painting that must have obtained in the Husain Shāhi

-
1. M. A. Chegtai: Muslim Monuments of Ahmedabad etc., op.cit. Pls. 4-6, Nos. VIII, Xa, XIII, XIV, etc.
 2. supra., Ch. II, pp. 92-93. and section III of the Ch., pp. 249-50.
 3. Although the Bow and Arrow type of Tughra seems to have disappeared with the Mughal conquest, other forms of Tughra continued to be practised. Official seals and signatures were very often in Tughra character. See the document of Shah Shujā' in Bhattasali's Taifoor Collection, Pl. I-T. The top of the document shows signatures of Shah Jahan and Shujā' in Tughra character.

Bengal. There was hardly any distinction between poetry and music, for poems were generally composed for musical purposes. Contemporary Bengali poems mention a good number of Rāgas or scales in which they were meant to be sung. A careful examination of these Rāgas shows the nature of music obtaining in the then Bengal. Frequent mention of the Rāgas like Kedāra, Dhamarī, Śrī, Mallār, Tudī, Belābelī and Bhairavī¹ is suggestive of the fact that these classical airs played important role in the field of Bengal's music. The music of this country seems to have been connected with the tradition of the classical music of northern India, for the Rāgas mentioned above, find a regular place in that system.² How and when these classical elements made their way into Bengal's music, is not clearly known. The musical tradition of Sind, Mārāthā and other regions of India, appears to have influenced Bengal's music to a considerable extent. The modes like Sindhurā and Mārhatī³ probably indicate that these were originally the local airs of Sind and Mārāthā respectively, ultimately finding a suitable place in the Bengali system of music. Of other Rāgas that find regular mention in Bengali poems, we may notice here Pathamanjērī, Barādī, Gujārī, Bihagadā, Ramakelī (Ramagiri), Syāma-Gaudā, Ahīrā, Vāṅgālā, Desakh and others.⁴ Although it is not possible to give here an exhaustive list of the different modes which were in circulation in the then Bengal, it may be quite reasonably inferred that most of them were classical. 'Alauddīn Husain, the last ruler of the Sharqī dynasty of Jaunpūr, gave immense impetus to classical music by introducing

-
1. Vipra-dāsa: op.cit., pp. 6, 46, 54, 57, etc. Chaitanya-bhāgavat: pp. 5, 78, 128, 147, 159, 198, 219 and 414. Vijaya Gupta: op.cit., p. 41. Locana-dāsa: op.cit., pp. 2, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13; Sūtra-Khaṇḍa, pp. 9, 11, 19, 21, etc.; Ādi; p. 20. Maddhya. Caṇḍī-dāsa: Śrī-kṛmā-kīrtanā: ed. Basanta Ranjana Ray: Vaṅgīya Sahitya-Paricad: 1361 B.S. 5th ed pp. 3, 6, 9, 13, 14, 18, 22, 30, 31, 62, 75 etc. Śrīdhara's Vidyā Sundarā: op.cit., pp. 120-23, 125, 129-30 and 132-33.
 2. Legacy of India: ed. O.T. Garret, 1938, Oxford, pp. 320-21. A.H. Fox Strangways: The Music of Hindostan. Oxford, 1914, pp. 170-71.
 3. Vijaya Gupta: op.cit., p. 92. Śrīdhara's Vidyā-Sundarā: op.cit., p. 120. Locana-dāsa: op.cit., pp. 4, 7; Sūtra, p. 40, Ādi, p. 16, Maddhya: Caṇḍī-dāsa: op.cit., pp. 70, 71 and 114. On this point, see Nihar Ranjan Ray: op.cit., p. 769.
 4. Chaitanya-bhāgavat: pp. 17, 160; Locana-dāsa: op.cit., pp. 1, 25. Sūtra Khaṇḍa, 5, 16,

new elements and inventing several airs.¹ His continued residence at Kahlgaon in Bhagalpur after his defeat by Sikandar Lodi in 1494 A.D.² was of immense significance to the cultural history of Bengal. A good number of artists and musicians must have immigrated into Bengal immediately after the dissolution of the Sharqi dynasty. How much they contributed to Bengali art is difficult to ascertain. We have already suggested that Bengali literature owed much to the romantic elements found in Qutban's Mrgavat and that the Organ-pipe type of Tughrā writing practised by the Bengali Calligraphers can be noticed on some of the Sharqi coins.³ It is thus fairly established that there was an exchange of ideas and forms between the artists of Bengal and those of Jaunpur. Bengal's music must have received inspiration from the musicians of Jaunpur. The celebrated poet Qutban, already referred to by us, has given in his Mrgavat, a long list of Rāgas and Rāginis including Bhaira, Sandhurā (Sindhurā), Banglā (Vāngāla), Todi (Tudi), Desākh (Desākh), Patamanjari (Patamañjari), Barari (Barādi), Dhanāsari (Dhānasri), Sri Rāg (Sri Rāga), Malar (Mallār), and Gujri (Gujjari).⁴ We have shown above that these modes of music were in vogue in the contemporary Bengal. Some of the airs introduced by Husain Shah Sharqi must have been accepted by the Bengali musicians. The Rāga

20,36,49,52,55,58. Ādi, 8,10,26,42,51. Madhya, 94,113 Sesa. Candī-dāsa: op.cit 1,2,3,4,5,6,9,11,136 etc.

1. Dr. A. Halim: North Indian Music. J.A.S.P., 1956, Vol-I, No. I, pp. 59-60.

Legacy of India, p. 298.

2. supra, pp. 9-11.

3. supra, P. 234.

4. See the extract from the Mrgavati op.cit., pp. 486-87. Other Rāgas mentioned by him are Madhi Malti, Bairatik, Gunki, Kausik, Gauri, Deokali, Khanbhavati, Kun Kumbh, Hindol, Beirari, Nant, Sahajagta, Avedi, Deepakad, Kanod, Panch Baranganā, Keraj (?), Megh, Malsari (Malari or Malsi in Bengali ?), Sarangī, Kandhari, Hemkali, Bhuyun, Bhilasi and Khatto (?). See ibid.

Gaudi-Syamā, said to have been introduced by him,¹ is mentioned by Locana-dāsa² as one of the airs obtaining in the sixteenth century Bengal. The Rāga Geurī, included in Qutban's list³ and mentioned as Rāga Gaudā in the Garyācaryavinīscaya,⁴ seems to have been connected with the country of Gaud. The period in question witnessed the beginning of the tradition of Kīrtana which seems to have crystallized towards the end of the sixteenth century. Classical modes were so predominant in Bengali music that a good number of works were composed on them in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Commonly known as Rāganāma or Talanāma,⁵ these works deal with the origin, growth and history of some of the classical airs. Dance as a corollary of music, both vocal and instrumental, had a highly stylised character. The last canto of the Govinda-Līlāmṛta contains a specimen of the versified dancing Tāla in the following lines:⁶

Dhām dhām drk drk caṁ caṁ niṁṁ nam niṁṁ nam

niṁṁ nam

Tuk tuk tum tum guḍu guḍu guḍu drām drām guḍu

drām guḍu drām

Dhek dhek dho dho kiriti kiriti, dho drām drimi drām

drimi drām

Āgatyāivam muhur iha mudā śrīmad-īśā nārta.

While emphasising the classical nature of the music of the time, we should not overlook the presence of certain local elements in it. Some of the local Rāgas

1. Dr. A. Halim: North Indian Music : op.cit., p. 59.

2. Op.cit., B. 8, Meddhya.

3. Op.cit. see above.

4. Op.cit., p. 32, Song No. 18, see also Song Nos. 2 and 3.

5. Abdul Karim Sāhitya Visārad has given an account of these works in the Vēṅglā Prācīna Puthira Vivaraṇa: pt. I, Vol-I, pp. 79, 105-06, 117-18, 143 and 187.

6. Quoted by S. K. De: The Early History of Vaisnava Faith etc., p. 463.

like Pahādiya and Bhātivāli¹ seem to have been quite famous. It will not be unreasonable to infer that Bangāla was originally a local mode of Vāṅga' or modern east Bengal. How it made a niche for itself in the structure of the classical music of Northern India is not clearly known. Songs about the Pala Kings² and local gods and goddesses, which had an appeal to the mind of the larger society, must have assumed the nature of folk music. As a matter of fact, some of the Sanskrit poems of the time divide the Rāgas into Marga or classical and Desi or native ones.³ Local musicians and dancing girls who must have been innumerable, used to enliven the social gatherings and festive occasions of the wealthy people by their lively native songs and local dances.⁴ The Chinese account, Si Yang Cha'o Kunr Tien lu, compiled in 1520 A.C., speaks of the local instrumental songs in the following lines: "There is a class of musician called Ken - Siao - Su - lu-mai (players on Kānsā or bell-metal and Sānāi or flute ?). They go to the houses of the wealthy people and the high officials and always play their musical instruments every morning. One beats a small drum, another a big one, and the third blows a pi-li (flageolet). There music begins in a low and slow tone but ends swiftly and in a high pitch. When they finish their musical performance the hosts reward them with wine, food and tangka" (silver coins).⁵ The music of the Husain Shāhi period was thus a combination of local and classical elements.

-
1. Vijaya Gupta : Op.cit., pp. 91, 94, 100, 101; Caitanya-bhāgavat: pp. 173, 272, 295; Locana-dāsa : Op.cit., 19, 34, Adi; Candī-dāsa: Op.cit., pp. 16, 32, 160 etc.
 2. Caitanya - bhāgavat, p. 362.
 3. Govinda - lilāmṛta: XXIII. Canto XXII gives a list of Rāgas (see verses 85-87 and 97-101).
 4. Viśva - Bhāratī Annals : 1945, Vol-I, pp. 124-25. J. R. A. S. G. B. I., 1895, p. 532.
 5. See Viśva - Bhāratī Annals, Op.cit., p. 124. J. R. A. S. G. B. I., 1895, p. 533.

Hardly anything is known about painting in the period in question. We cannot say that this branch of art was totally unrepresented in this period, for, we are told that Sri Caitanya, on his way from Ramakeli to Vr̄ndāvana, found at the village of Kāminātasāla, a good number of paintings which had Kṛṣṇa - Līla as their theme.¹ Thus it is evident that the paintings of the time had a religious character. This contention finds corroboration in the illustrated manuscript of the Harivamśa dated 1401 Saka, now preserved in the Asiatic Society of Calcutta.² On the cover of this manuscript, different paurānic gods and goddesses and scenes from the Vr̄ndāvana - līla of Kṛṣṇa have been depicted. These paintings reflect the emotionalism of the Kṛṣṇa cult which seems to have saturated entire cultural life of the then Bengal. The paintings published by Dinesh Chandra Sen³ breathe the spirit of Neo-vaishnavism. They may or may not belong to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to which period they have been ascribed; but they indicate that they could hardly be produced, had Bengal maintained no tradition of painting at an earlier period.

III. Architecture

When the Husain Shāhī dynasty came into being, Bengal had already developed a sound tradition of architecture. The grand Adina mosque, the marvellous Eklakhi mausoleum, the virile Dakhil Darwāza and the effeminate Tantipādā mosque are some of the representative buildings of the previous period, which mark important stages in the gradual evolution of architecture in Bengal. Although the Husain Shāhī architecture is a continuation of its Ilyās Shāhī or even Abyssinian counterpart, it makes at least a partial departure from the art of the preceding period. This will be noticed by us subsequently.

1. Kṛṣṇa-dāsa Kavirāja: Caitanya-Caritamṛta: madhya, I, p. 77.

শ্রী কৃষ্ণ দাস কবিরাজঃ চৈতন্য-চরিতমৃতঃ মধ্যমঃ, I, পৃ. ৭৭।
কামিনীতালার গ্রামে কৃষ্ণ-লীলা চিত্রিত।

2. Tapan Kumar Ray Choudhury: op.cit., p. 156.

3. Vr̄hat Vamśa, II, Calcutta, 1942 B.S. See the plates, showing Vaishnava paintings.

The surviving monuments of this period do not show sufficient richness in variety and constructional peculiarities. Generally rectangular in plan, these buildings have a long and low facade with the usual curvature exhibited by the cornice above and a number of pointed arches below and have an octagonal tower at each of the corners. Neither the exterior having a series of rectangular panels nor the interior divided into several aisles and bays by stone pillars and brick piers supporting the arcades of pointed arches above, can make any deep impression upon the mind. The internal space is either rectangular or square and the carved mihrābs are very often many on the internal side of the western wall. The walls are very often faced with stones or glazed tiles.

The ground plan of the Latān mosque appears to have been derived from the Cānkāti mosque, though the former is of a slightly bigger dimension with its square room measuring 34 feet each side and the corridor on the eastern side being 11 feet wide. Measuring externally $72\frac{1}{2}$ feet long by 51 feet wide, its front has got three arched doorways and deep vertical panels, each possessing a niche formed of a multi-cusped arch springing from the decorated pillars. Each of the six corner turrets, four at four corners of the square room and one each at either end of the Verandah, has been divided into three sections having round flutes, by means of decorative mouldings. The projected mihrāb at the back of the western wall is flanked by fluted columns. Besides the main dome covering the square hall, there are three smaller ones spanning the corridor and rising above the nicely curved cornice and battlements. The central dome of the corridor resembling some of the domes of the Chota Sonā mosque, is shaped on the model of the Bengali Caucālā, possessing as it does four curved parts connected by bent ridges and having dripping eaves. The main hemispherical dome which covers the hall has a cylindrical basement including blind merlons, which is internally a flat vault resting on an octagonal form, the square being transformed into the octagon by means of arches springing from black stone pillars.

Cunningham has described at a considerable length the decorative features of the mosque which have disappeared at present. He remarks, "The general view of the

Lattan Masjid is certainly pleasing; but for graceful outline, beauty of ornament, and stateliness of appearance, I greatly prefer the Old Minār, the Thāntipārā Mosque, and the Dakhil Gateway.¹ The learned writer seems to have failed to notice that the group of buildings represented by the Lattan mosque is quite different from that to which the Firūzah Minār, the Tāntipādā and the Dakhil Darwāza belong. The two groups differ from each other not only in architectural beauty, but also in their essential nature. They were constructed in two different periods characterised by a marked difference in the artistic traditions and aesthetic ideals of the people. Considerably free from the littleness of composition obtaining in the buildings of the later period, Dakhil and Tāntipādā have each a universal appeal whereas Lattan reflects the richness and dazzling effect of the prosperity of the age in which it was built up. Creighton² and Cunningham³ are in favour of dating it in 880 A.H. in the reign of Yusuf Shāh, although there is hardly any evidence in support of such a conclusion. Though the general plan of the mosque is a copy of that of the Cankāṭi mosque, in no other respect, it represents the Ilyās Shāhī period. The architectural style of the buildings bears clear impressions of the Hussain Shāhī period.

The Gunti gate⁴ is a single-domed square building with octagonal towers at the four corners. Measuring externally 42 feet and 8 inches square, it has a passage leading from the east to the west through an arched doorway 5 feet wide. The entrance is bordered within a rectangular frame the upper part of which exhibits

1. Op.cit, p. 65. He observes that the surface of the mosque was once covered with glazed tiles in different patterns of green, yellow, blue and white colours, that the pleasing view of the arch over the prayer niche "is completely spoiled by narrow horizontal lines of different colours in the spandrils" and that "the lotus flowers of blue and white in the middle of the spandrils are rich and effective, the cornices are all good, and the battlements round the dome, wherever they have been spared by the weather, show a bold treatment that is wanting in the designs of the interior." Op.cit., pp. 63-65.

2. H. Creighton: The Ruins of Gaur: London, 1817, No. IX.

3. Op. cit., p. 62.

4. Abid Ali is in favour of connecting it with an inscription dated 918 AH/1512 A.D.

tiers of mouldings surmounted with small decorative niches. There are fluted columns of brickwork on both sides of the doorway on the east and west. The base mouldings of the corner tower only exist. The usual curvature of the Bengali hut is imitated in battlements and cornice which shows the traces of decoration. Of the three rows of cornice, the lowest one is a pattern of lattice-work and the upper two have a number of small decorative niches; each row has been separated from the other by means of a line of lozenges. The ornamentation of the entire cornice has been effected with coloured enamel-bricks. On the side walls, there are vertical effects and recesses having boldly projected panels and carved designs exhibiting the stereo-typed 'chain and bell motif'. The inner room, 25 feet square, is roofed over by a single dome of hemispherical shape with stone pillars supporting it and the phase of transition being achieved by means of using squinches. In ornamentation and architectural features, it differs from the Lattan mosque, though both have a dazzling charm of a feminine beauty. Again there is a good deal of difference between the Dakhil Darwāza and the Gunti Gate, the former possessing much robust and chaste ornamentation and the latter having a dazzling, feminine grace.

The Qadam Rasūl built, according to an inscription fixed on its doorway, by Nusrat Shāh in 937 A.H./1531 A.D.,¹ consists of a central hall, 19 feet square with a verandah on three sides, 15 feet wide. The external dimension is 60 feet by 39 feet 6 inches excluding the four corner towers. Apart from the three doorways of the hall, one in front and two at the two sides, the corridor has three arched openings supported by short, massive and octagonal stone pillars. The spandrels of the arches are embossed with lotus rosettes above which tiers of moulding can be noticed. The elegant curvature shown by the triple cornice and battlements is followed by another brick-moulding dividing the facade into two equal parts. Each

1. For this inscription, see Cunningham: Op.cit., p. 55; E.G. Glazier: Op.cit. p. 108; J. A. S. B., 1872, pt. I, p. 338; Ravenshaw: Op.cit., p. 20, Pl. 57 No. 23. E. I., II, p. 286; Abid Ali: Op.cit., pp. 61-62.

half has two rows of panels exhibiting the conventional 'chain and ball motif'. Thus the highly decorated front facade is different from other sides which are relieved by horizontal mouldings and vertical offsets. Each of the octagonal corner turrets is crowned with a small stone pinnacle which is not found in any other building of the period. The central room is covered by a single dome with a lotus finial at the top and the corridor by barrel vaults flattened outside. Percy Brown finds in this building "the beginning of the decadence",¹ while Fergusson enthusiastically ^{observes} observes, "The general character of the style will be seen in the example from a mosque (?) called the Qadam - i - Rasul at the south-east gate of the fort at Gaur, and is by no means devoid of architectural merit. The solidity of the supports go far to ~~redeem~~ ^{redeem} the inherent weakness of brick architecture, and by giving the arches a firm base to start from, prevents the smallness of their parts from injuring the general effect. The facade is relieved by horizontal mouldings and panels of moulded brick, whilst string-courses of the same extend its whole length. It also presents, though in a very subdued form, the curvilinear form of the roof, which is so characteristic of the style."² The frequent appearance of stereotyped features and repetition of monotonous panels on the facade have marred the organic beauty of the building.

Most of the scholars call it a mosque³ probably because of the fact that it has corridors on three sides. But it does not have any mihrāb and pulpit, nor does ~~the~~ inscription on its doorway call it a mosque. The centre of the room containing a small carved pedestal of black stone shows that it was meant to receive the stone representation of the prophet's footprint which has been respectfully mentioned in the inscription referred to above. Buildings purposeely constructed

1. Indian Architecture (Islamic Period) : Bombay, 2nd ed. pp. 41-42.

2. A History of Indian And Eastern Architecture, London, 1910, Vol-II, p. 256.

3. Creighton: Op.cit., No. XI; Cunningham: Op.cit., p. 54; Fergusson: Op.cit., p. 256 and E. B. Havell: Indian Architecture, Its psychology, Structure And History From The Earliest Muhammadan Invasion To The Present Day, London, 2nd ed., 1927, pp. 59 and 127.

to house the stone representation of the prophet's footprint are also found at different other places such as Ahmedabad in Gujrat and Nabiganj in Dacca.

The Jahaniyan mosque, built in 941 A.H/ 1535 A.D.,¹ is an oblong building, 56 feet by 42 feet, with four octagonal corner turrets, each crowned with an elongated stone pinnaole. The entire elevation is divided by slightly curved bands of cornice into four parallel rows of uniform panels showing terracotta decorations. Internally divided into two aisles, the mosque has three decorated mihrabs on the western wall corresponding to the three arched openings in front. Each of the domes covering the roof has been finished with a lotus finial outside.

The buildings which have been described in the foregoing section, were made of bricks which were, of course, profusely used as building materials in the pre-Husain Shahi period. A modern writer² has quite reasonably regarded this style as the "brick style of Bengal". As the period under review was characterized by a revival of stone-cutters' art, stones were used in some of the buildings constructed possibly at the express orders of the royal patrons of art. The latter group is represented by the Golden mosques of Gaud and many other buildings obtaining in the different parts of the kingdom.

The Chota Sonā mosque built in the reign of Husain Shah, is a five-bayed, multi-domed, rectangular building, 82 feet by 52½ feet, with four octagonal corner towers each of which has bands of shallow mouldings. The front of the masjid has five arched doorways, the arches being cusped on the outside and their spandrels embossed with prominent rosettes. A rectangular frame, which has scroll-work as its decorative feature, encloses each of the doorways with a slight variation

-
1. This date is given in the inscription fixed over the middle doorway of the mosque. See J. A. S. B., XLI, 1872, pt. I, p. 339; Cunningham: Op.cit., p. 73; Ravenshaw: Op.cit., p. 10, Pl. 58, No. 25 and Abid Ali: Op.cit., p. 93.
 2. Sarasi Kumar Saraswati : Indo-Muslim Architecture In Bengal. Journal of The Indian Society of Oriental Art, 1941, Vol-IX, 33.

being noticed in the middle one the vertical sides of which have ornamental panels. The facade is embellished by means of rows of horizontal mouldings along which there are two rows of panels, those at the top being considerably smaller than the lower ones. The conventionalised 'chain and bell motif' depicted by these panels has been greatly influenced by the terra-cotta art. The mosque has been faced with stones completely on the outside and partially on the inside. The side walls have each three doorways opening into the three longitudinal aisles of the building.

The internal measurement of the mosque is 70 feet 4 inches by 40 feet 9 inches. The central bay which is larger than the side ones has been covered by three caucala domes, each possessing four flat segments meeting in the middle and representing the curvature of typical Bengali huts. The four other bays are roofed over by twelve hemispherical domes which, together with the pyramidal ones, rise above the gently curved cornice and battlements. At the north-western corner of the mosque, there is a ladies' gallery on the upper story which is supported by a number of stone pillars and to which a flight of steps on the north provides for the entrance. Apart from the small niche in the ladies' gallery, there are five ones on the internal side of the western wall, corresponding to the five front archways. Originally the mihrab had a deep alcove fronted with an arched niche supported by several carved pillars. A hanging lamp is carved within the alcove together with a number of small panels exhibiting the 'chain and bell motif'. The whole composition is bordered within a frame decorated with scroll-work. At the top, there are mouldings crowned with unidentifiable blind merlons. 'Kalasa motif' can also be noticed.

The decoration of the interior panel may be discussed here at a considerable length. The nucleus is constituted by a niche together with a cusped arch, support by conventional pillars. There hang from the apex of the arch, a chain and strings of beads together with a bell suspended from the chain, the terminus of the string being constituted by a floral design. The 'tree-motif' found in the spandrel of the arch, intertwines a roselle within the branches.

Although the central nave of the building flanked by two side wings, seems to

Chota

be a copy of the prayer hall of the Adīmā mosque,¹ the richly decorated ~~Sona~~ ^{Chota} Sona Masjid representing the best type of the stone-cutters' art in the period in question, cannot, however, stand any favourable comparison with the buildings of the earlier period which it blindly imitates in design and decoration.

Fronted by a quadrangular courtyard on every side of which there is an arched doorway measuring $38\frac{1}{2}$ feet by $13\frac{1}{2}$ feet, the Bada Sona mosque² is a massive rectangular building, 165 feet by 76 feet, with six corner turrets, four at the four corners of the hall and two at either end of the verandah. The eastern side has eleven arched doorways. The facade is a plain one leading to the corridor in front of the prayer chamber entered by corresponding number of arched entrances. The arched openings of the side walls open into the three longitudinal aisles into which the mosque has been divided by several stone pillars. The three north-western bays constitute the ladies' gallery access to which is obtained by a flight of steps on the north. Of the forty-four hemispherical domes which originally covered the building, only the remaining eleven ones of the corridor rise above the curved cornice and horizontal line of battlement. While Cunningham speaks very highly of the beauty of the interior of the mosque,³ Fergusson has genuine reason to remark that the Bada Sona masjid is "perhaps the finest memorial now left at Gaur."⁴ The grand corridor of the mosque, its sparing and simple decoration and the massive solidity of the entire construction, have added to its impressiveness which is rarely found in the buildings of the period.

During the period under review, many mosques and buildings were constructed outside the cities of Gaud and Pandua. The walls of the mosque at Sura in Dinajpur district are faced with stones showing panels and different designs which resemble

1. Cunningham: Op.cit., p. 90, Pl. XXV. Abid Ali: Op.cit., p. 127 and fig. 24 on p. 128.

2. It is evidenced by an inscription that the mosque was constructed in 932 A.H./1526 A.D., in the reign of Nasrat Shah. Creighton: Op.cit., No. V; Cunningham: Op.cit., p. 67; Abid Ali: Op.cit., p. 47. Ravenshaw: Op.cit., p. 15.

3. Op.cit., p. 69.

4. Op.cit., p. 257.

those of the Chota Soma masjid. From a careful examination of the stylistic feature of the mosque, it appears that it was built in the Husain Shahi period. Constructed on the model of the Lattan Masjid, the building has a central hall 16 feet square, a corridor in front 17 feet 6 inches long and six octagonal towers at the different angles, four at four corners of the hall and one each at either end of the corridor. The eastern side has three arched entrances and the corridor is covered by three hemispherical domes rising above the usually curved cornice. The prayer hall has three doorways on the east corresponding to the three mihrabs on the western wall and one entrance each in the side walls. The square hall is roofed over by a single hemispherical dome carried on squinches and supported by pillars. The brick-built mosque of Hentabad in Dinajpur district (906 A.H/1500 A.D), follows the general plan of the Chota Soma masjid. The mosque of Bagha, said to have been built in 930 A.H/1523 A.D.¹ follows the Tantipada masjid² not only in plan but also in dimension. Measuring 75 feet 8 inches by 42 feet 2 inches, it has four corner towers. There are five entrances on the eastern side, with an ornamental frame bordering each of them. Two rows of panels have decorated its facade. The same decorative panels are repeated on the facets of the towers. Two side openings at each end open into the two aisles of the building which are roofed over by ten domes. The north-western corner seems to have been occupied by a ladies' gallery. The terra-cotta art of the period is illustrated by the decoration of the mihrabs in the western wall. The Navagrama mosque in Pabna district built in 932 A.H/1526 A.D.³ is a single-domed square building with octagonal towers at the four corners. It imitates the decoration and design of the Lattan mosque and the Gunti gate. The Majlis Aulia mosque of Pathrail in Faridpur and the Sankarpas mosque of Sylhet though undated, seem to have been constructed in the Husain Shahi period, for they have the rich embellishment and conventionalised designs which characterise the

1. J. A. S. B., 1904, LXIII, p. 111.

2. For the details of this building, see Cunningham: Op.cit., pp. 61-62;

Creighton: Op.cit., Pl. XII. Abd Ali: Op.cit., pp. 70-72.

3. E. I. M., 1937-38, pp. 37-38.

buildings of this period. Thus the architectural monuments found outside Gaud and Fānduā, seem to have been the replica of the buildings of those metropolitan cities, for they imitate them in general plan and decoration. Displaying tasteless and repeated patterns, most of these buildings do not possess adequate sense of movements in carvings and designs.

It may be pointed out here that some of the architectural features of the Bengal monuments of this period resemble those of the buildings in Gujrat constructed in the fifteenth century A.D. The architraves of the two doorways of the Chota Sonā mosque¹ are strikingly similar to those used in the mihrab of the Jamī' masjid of Junagarh.² The method of placing additional pillars across each of the corners of the central square room housing the tomb of Shaikh Ahmed Khattri at Sarkhej (1441-51 A.D.) is also employed in some of the square-roomed buildings of Gaud. The vacant space which is thus created at each of the angular points of the square room of the Gujrat building, looks quite superfluous and is not at all pleasing to the eye. The Bengali architects who were possibly conscious of this technical deficiency, found the necessity of filling up this unnecessary gap with bricks in order to give a pleasant look to the room. The Chota Sonā and also the earlier Adina mosque with the central nave of each flanked by two side wings and a ladies' gallery at the north-western corner, look more like the mosques of Ahmedabad³ than like their north Indian counterparts. The 'palm and parasite motif' with its elaborate foliage decoration appearing in one of the terracotta designs of the Darasbādi mosque of Gaud (1479 A.D.), is quite similar to one depicted on the perforated screen of the Sidi Sayid mosque⁴ of Ahmedabad (1510-15 A.D.). The former does not, however, possess the elegant flow and graceful movement characterising the art in the screen of the Sidi Sayid mosque. The Qutub Shāhi mosque of

1. Percy Brown: Op.cit., Pl. XXVIII, fig. 2; Abid Ali: op.cit., p. 80, fig. 17 and Havell: op.cit., Pl. XXXI; pl. No.4 attached hereto.

2. Havell: Op.cit., XXXII.

3. See Jamī' mosque of Ahmedabad with its central nave and the ladies' gallery illustrated in Percy Brown's work : Op.cit., Pls. XXXIV and XXXV, fig. 1 and Havell: Op.cit., Pl. XXV.

4. Percy Brown: Op.cit., Pl. XLI, fig. I; Fergusson, Op.cit., No. 394 on p. 237 and



Plate - IV

Doors of the Chota Somā Mosque of Gaud.

Hazrat Pandua built in 990 A.H/1582 A.D., and possessing some of the characteristic features of the Husain Shahi buildings such as curved battlement, four corner turrets with usual mouldings on them, the use of stones and the probable existence of gildings on walls,¹ has got a square platform in front of the minbar,² which is found also inside the mosque at the mausoleum of Shaikh Ahmad Khattri (1451 A.D.) All these seem to point to a long process of exchange of artistic ideas and forms between Bengal and Gujrat which might have been facilitated by overseas trade which linked up these two distantly situated countries in those days. Nasrat Shah was about to effect a political alliance with Bahadur Shah of Gujrat³ who is said to have had a definite knowledge about the formidable position of Bengal in the field of maritime commerce.⁴ Similar contacts seem to have been quite usual in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. As already pointed out,⁵ some of the administrative and epigraphic features of Bengal in the period under review, resembling those of the fifteenth century Gujrat, are suggestive of a cultural relationship between these countries.

The style which was evolved by the Husain Shahi rulers, seems to have influenced the Hindu architecture of medieval Bengal. The facade of the mid-seventeenth century temple at Vishnupur⁶ resembles that of the Qadam Rasul⁷ building in many respects. Both have arched openings supported by short and squat pillars

1. Havell: op.cit., Pls. LXII and LVIII.

1. Cunningham: Op.cit., pp. 86-88 and Abid Ali : Op.cit., p. 121, fig. 21.

2. Abid Ali: Op.cit., p. 122, fig. 22.

3. supra., p. 49

4. Joao de Barros: Op.cit., reproduced in the Book of Duarte Barbosa, II, p. 246.

5. supra., pp. 92-93 and 234-35.

6. See Pl. No. 5 attached hereto.

7. See Pl. Nos. 6 attached hereto.



Plate - V

The facade of Visnupur Temple.



Plate - VI

The facade of the Qadam Rasūl.

with curved cornice and battlements above. The facade of the Visnupur temple contains an elaborate ornamentation which is also found on the facade of the Qadam Rasūl, although the latter, being a Muslim building does not exhibit figures of gods and goddess on its walls. The cusped design of the arch in the above mentioned Hindu temple is quite similar to that in Muslim buildings including the Chota Sonā mosque of Gaud. Again the Dinapur gateway with its side turrets, curved battlement and a pointed arch over the entrance ¹ seems to be an imitation of the architectural style of the Husain Shāhi period. It compares quite favourably with the courtyard gateway of the Bada Sonā mosque of Gaud. ²

The Ilyas Shāhi rulers represented the classical age of Bengali architecture which appears to have come to an end with the foundation of the Husain Shāhi rule in Bengal. The Sultāns of our period could produce neither a Dakhil Darwāza nor a Tantipāda mosque and the buildings constructed in this period, lack in the excellent design and superb proportion which we notice in the Ilyas Shāhi monuments. The vigour and strength which are expressed through the massive structures of the earlier buildings, can no more be found in the monuments of our period which are rich in flowering and brilliant in tillery. The Husain Shāhi buildings, possessing as they do, feminine grace and artistic elegance, reflect the general prosperity of the period and consequent love for pomp and show. The Bada Sonā mosque, the Chota Sonā mosque, the Lattan mosque and the Gurnatt Gate are instances in point.

In this period, we find a sudden revival of stone-cutter's art. Although the use of inscriptional tablets and stone-pillars, was quite common in the pre-Husain Shāhi period, one can notice a comparative scarcity of other kinds of stonework in that period. The Husain Shāhi rulers seem to have brought stone from the distant hills of Rajmahal. Stone-cutter's art has not the life and depth which we notice in the brick-style of Gaud architecture.

1. Gait: Op.cit. Pl. facing p. 245.

2. Abid Ali : Op.cit., p. 44, fig. 6.

The architectural forms and features which the Ilyās Shāhīs developed, were closely imitated by the Craftsman of our period. Terracotta art was deep-rooted in the earlier traditions of the country, for we find it flourishing even in the pre-Muslim period.¹ With the independence of Bengal, local traditions revived; terra-cotta art received much impetus. Local taste finds expression in the curvature of cornice and battlements and copy of Caucala. For the first time, the curvature of bamboo huts was introduced in the battlements and cornice of the Eklakhi Mausoleum.² The buildings of the later Ilyās Shāhīs also faithfully copy this. We have already seen that it survives in the buildings of our period. The earliest imitation of the Caucala is found in the Sat-Gumbad mosque of Bāgerhat, built by Khan Jahan who died in 1459.³ This pyramidal dome is found in the Chota Sona mosque and the Lattan mosque both of which belong to our period. The artists of the Husain Shāhī rulers began to imitate terra-cotta art in stone. This could not give the vivid impression of the original art which represents the jungle scenes of Bengal. All these clearly show that the Husain Shāhī period was marked by a deterioration in the art of building. Nevertheless, architecture of this period clearly reveals local influences and gives frank expression to Bengal's life and culture. In rich ornamentation Husain Shāhī style stands also in strong contrast with rather austere style of the previous phase.

IV. General Remarks

The foregoing discussion shows that Bengal in the period in question did not witness the emergence of any new forms of art. The surviving specimens of fine arts

-
1. This is proved beyond doubt by the discovery of terra-cotta plaques at Mahasthan, Bahadpur and Mainamati.
 2. Percy Brown: Op.cit., p. 40.
 3. Bengal District Gazetteers, Khulna; Calcutta, 1908, pp. 168-69.

and architecture are characterised by a considerable amount of embellishment which apart from indicating an advanced stage of Civilization attained by the country, seems to reflect the prosperity of the period. Generally speaking, the tradition of arts under the Husain Shahis was but a continuation of that established in the preceding period. No significant experiment was made in any branch of art. The attempt at copying terra-cotta art on stone, though a novel experiment, does not appear to have been successful so far as its artistic depth and representation are concerned. It is true that the highly ornamental style of writing represented by the Bow and Arrow type of Tughra is a notable element in the history of arts. But the later Elyas Shahi period found its beginning, although it arrived at the culmination in its perfection under the Husain Shahi rulers. There was a renaissance in the field of literature. But no such revivalism can be noticed in the history of pure arts and architecture of the period.

The foreign sources which have given a lot of details about the pure political history of this land, are quite silent over the social conditions. Due to these limitations, our study of the social history of Husain Shahi Bengal is likely to be hypothetical and conjectural, unless our conclusions in this connection have to be necessarily tentative.

The upper section of the Hindu society was composed of the Kayasths, the Brahmins, the Pathans and the Arab and Persian merchants living in large number in towns and cities. According to the Khulasa Salimiyah, some of these Hindu foreigners used to hold important governmental offices in the Kingdom of Gauda. It is obvious that the Kayasths who had not yet become the political masters of India, were regarded to be represented as a social element in the Hindu population of the country. The Sarmadana has been mentioned in the Khulasa Salimiyah of Vijayanagar and has associated the Kayasths with the Pathans. It is quite possible that some of the Kayasths who were allowed by Salim and Alauddin Khalji to settle

1. The Khulasa Salimiyah of Vijayanagar, p. 142; Bartholomaeus, Chronicle, II, pp. 122-23.
 2. Khulasa, p. 134.
 3. Khulasa Salimiyah, p. 142; Bartholomaeus, Chronicle, II, pp. 122-23.

CHAPTER - VIII

Modes of Life .

I. The Life of the Muslims.

Islam and Hinduism were the two main component elements which constituted the whole Socio-religious structure of the country. It is necessary to study each of these societies separately. The picture of the Muslim society in vernacular literature appears to be meagre and fragmentary. The obvious inference is that there was little contact of the Hindu poets with the upper class or native lower society of the Muslims. What Vijaya Gupta, Vipradāsa and Kavikānkan have said about the Muslims appears to be more casual. Strangely enough, the Persian sources which have given a lot of details about the pure political history of this land, are quite silent over its social conditions. Due to these limitations, our study of the Muslim society of Husain Shāhi Bengal is likely to be hypothetical and conjectural; nevertheless, our conclusions in this connection have to be necessarily tentative.

The upper section of the Muslim society was composed of the Syed, the Mughal, the Pathan and the Arab and Persian merchants living in large number in towns and cities.¹ According to the Riyāz-us-Salātin, some of these Muslim foreigners used to hold important governmental offices in the kingdom of Gaud.² It is obvious that the Mughals who had not yet become the political masters of India, were beginning to be represented as a social element in the Muslim population of the country. The term Māngal has been mentioned in the Manasā-vijaya of Vipradāsa who has associated the Māngals with the Pathans.³ It is quite possible that some of the Māngals who were allowed by Jalāl-uddin-Firūz and 'Alā-uddin Khiljī to settle

1. The Manasā Vijaya of Vipradāsa: p. 143; Barbosa: op.cit., II, pp. 138-39.

2. Op.cit., p. 133.

3. Vipradāsa: Op.cit., p. 143.

নিবন্ধে বর্ণিত কত

গোহা বা বাসিন্দা কত

সেখানের পক্ষের (সংস্কৃত)

around Delhi¹ had immigrated to Bengal in the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. Since Nasrat Shah had diplomatic relation with Babur, it is just possible that a number of Mughals had come to settle in Bengal during his reign. Pathans, of course, were there though not as yet driven out from upper India or as political master of Bengal which they soon became. The numerous clans of the Pathans, Subali, Nehali, Pani, Kudani and others, as mentioned by Kavikankan,² possibly existed in our period also; otherwise, one is sure to be at a loss as to explain their sudden appearance in Bengal in Kavi Kankan's time. Husain Shah, the contemporary Sultan, was of Arab origin and claimed to have descended from Husain.³ The same factor explains the immigration of a large number of Sayeds who on their arrival, secured the patronage of the ruling authority of the country. Most of the Arabs and Persians had adopted trade and commerce as their professions which have already been discussed. The description of Charamandel and Malabar as given by Barbosa, clearly shows that they were greatly responsible for the spread of Islam along the coastal region of India. At Malabar during the period, the Arabs or the Mauplers, as they were called there, had taken to navigation and agriculture, the latter being their absolute monopoly.⁴ The immigrant Muslims were taking there native wives and were being absorbed in the population of the country. Similar process seems to have been at work in Husain Shahi Bengal also. Some of them probably grew into territorial overlords. The concentration of white men in urban areas, as suggested by the Portuguese traveller, shows the nature of the professions adopted by the Arabs and the Persians. It is fairly certain that there used to be inter-marriages between the Arabs and the Persians and the issues of such union and their descendants used to command much respect and influence in the society. 'Alauddin Husain Shah who was an Arab by birth, seems to have taken a Persian wife. It is

1. The Advanced History of India : Majumdar, Ray Choudhury and Dutta, 1950, London, pp. 297 and 300.

2. Op.cit., I, P. 260.

3. supra. Ch. I., pp. 5-6.

4. Op.cit., II, pp. 74-76.

said that he gave his daughter, Ragshan Akhtar Banu, of Persian origin, in marriage to Qutubul Ashagin whose descendants possessed landed estates in the Sarkar of Sonargaon down to the times of the Mughal rulers.¹

Barbosa's description of the life lived by the respectable Muslims shows that they enjoyed complete economic affluence and spent their lives in luxury and "extravagancy".² In towns and cities they lived in brick-built houses which had flat roofs and flight of steps.³ They had great bathing tanks attached to their houses and took sumptuous dishes. They used to put on very thin, white, long garments reaching their ankles with girdles of clothes beneath them and silk scarves over them, used rings studded with jewels, and turbans and carried publicly daggers in girdles.⁴ According to an earlier Chinese account, their food included smoked and roasted beef and mutton, banana, jack-fruit and pomegranate. After the meals were over, they used to have a course of honey and sweetened rose-water.⁵ Drinking wine was common in the upper class circle. Barbosa has incidentally mentioned a kind of wine prepared from palm and used by the respectable ladies.⁶ Mahuan who noticed many drinking shops in the towns of Bengal, has maintained that wines could be prepared from cocoanut, rice, tarry and kadjang and that ardent spirits were sold in the market places.⁷ The wealthy Muslims had their occasional social gatherings which were rendered quite lively by music and dance. On such occasions, they invited musicians and dancing girls⁸ whose coloured dress and dazzling ornaments used to add much pomp and grandeur to the festivities.

1. Bhattashali: Taifoor Collection, VII - XV. Supra, Ch. III, pp. 97-98.

2. Op.cit., II, p. 147.

3. The Chinese Account: Translated into English by Prabodh Chandra Bagchi: op.cit., pp. 121 and 124.

4. Barbosa: Op.cit., II, p. 147.

5. Chinese Account: Op.cit., pp. 119 and 131.

6. Barbosa: Op.cit., II, p. 148.

7. J. R. A. S. G. B. I., 1895, p. 531. See also Bagchi's Tran. of the Chinese Annals: Op.cit., p. 119.

8. J. R. A. S. G. B. I., 532. See also Si yang Ch'ao Kung tien Iu: Eng. Tran. by Bagchi: Op.cit., pp. 124-25.

So bewildering was the nature of the luxuries of Bengal that Humāyūn who came to Gaud in 1538 A.D., is said to have been struck with wonder at the sight of her beautiful palaces provided with fountains and gardens having flower-beds and stone channels of water. Chinese tiles were used in the floor and internal walls of the rooms of these palaces which contained valuable furniture and luxurious curtains. The entire environment must have had a fascinating effect on the mind of Humāyūn.¹

The luxurious habits of the wealthy Muslims were responsible for the prevalence of several/^{social}institutions. Polygamy was widely practised by them and the number of their wives was possibly without any limit. While confining these women to their respective houses, they did not forget to behave well with them, "giving them great store of gold, silver and apparel of fine silk". The female folk used to meet only at night, the occasions being attended by, "great festivities, and rejoicings and superfluity of wines". They could skilfully play on different musical instruments.² Barbosa has mentioned the terms, 'gold', 'silver' and 'apparel of fine silk' which clearly indicate that the noble ladies used to put on gold and silver ornaments and silk clothes. The Chinese account seems to corroborate this view.

Concubinage appears to have been closely associated with the life of the upper class people. The women of Mahmūd Shah III amounted to 10,000.³ De Barros who had every reason to be hostile to the Sultan might have thus magnified the number of his concubines. But it cannot be denied that his statement contains some grain of truth, for this information is confirmed by Barosa according to whom, the respectable Moors used to have "three or four wives or as many as he can maintain."⁴ As strict Islamic regulations do not allow a Muslim to possess more than four wives at a time, the contention of Barbosa can be satisfactorily explained, if we think

1. Naqi'at-i-Mushtaqi of Risqullah Mushfiqi: cited by Kunwar Muhammad Ashraf in Life and Conditions of the people of Hindustan: J. A. S. B., 1935, Vol-I, No. 2, pp. 334-35.

2. Barbosa: Op.cit., II, pp. 147-48.

3. Extracts from De Barros: given by Blochmann: J.A.S.B., 1873, Pt. I, p. 398.

4. Supra, Ch. III, p. 106. op.cit., II, pp. 147-48.

that the wealthy Muslim had concubines, besides several married wives. Excessive wealth is sure to generate luxury and luxury is responsible for the growth of such an institution. These wealthy people seem to have utilised services of eunuchs and slaves. The institutions of polygamy, concubinage and slavery which prevailed in those days may be attributed to the overflow of wealth characterising the upper class of the then society.

It may be reasonably mentioned here that the description of the life of the rich Muslims including the Mughal garrises, as given in the Bahristan-i-Ghaibi and also in the accounts of the foreign travellers visiting Bengal during the Mughal rule, is possibly true of the Muslim aristocracy of our period also, at least in respect of pomp and grandeur. The regional governors with their courts had developed a culture and civilisation of their own, ^{and} unlike the Mughal officers, had direct touch with the people with whose language they were possibly conversant. We are told that the local governors were very often interested in the stories of the Mahābhārata which were narrated to them in Bengali verses by the local bards flourishing in their courts.¹

While the upper class of the Muslim society was thus composed of the Sayeds, Mughals, Pathans and the high governmental officials, the cultivators, weavers and those who had adopted similar other professions, belonged to the lower strata of the population. The economic position of the Muslim cultivators and weavers has already been discussed. It is quite natural that some of them were converts from Hinduism or their descendents. Some of the professions were monopolised by the Muslims. Even the Hindus had to depend upon Muslim tailors.² The sailor class of Bengal was mostly composed of the Muslims. The broad economic divisions of the Muslims including the pithari (cake-seller), kabadi (fish-seller), Kagazi (the maker of paper), rangrez (the cloth-dyer), hazam (those whose profession was to circumcise children), kasai (butcher) and ganakar (the maker of looms)³ bear out the truth

1. Supra., Ch. VI, pp. 188 and 195-96.

2. Chaitanya-Caritamṛta: ādī, XVII, 67. *ক্রিয়াকার-এর মিলে মিলে মসলী-২০৮।*

3. Kavikāṅkar-Candī, I, pp. 260-61.

of the conclusion that the economic structure of the Muslim society had grown almost to its full stature towards the end of the sixteenth century and that the process of this growth was already at work during our period.

The lower class people living in towns and cities were greatly influenced by the upper class whom they used to imitate in their day-to-day affairs. They put on "short white shifts which come half-way down their thighs, and on their heads little twisted turban of three or four folds", and also used "well-wrought" and "gilded" sandals and shoes.¹ The pious Muslims used to shave their heads, kept ~~beard~~ ^{beard}, and put on ijār, turban and cap. While meeting one another, they did not forget to exchange salām. Lighting up evening lamps at the shrines of the pir, and offering confectionaries to them, were quite usual with them.² In fact, mosques and mosams were the meeting places for them. The picture of the pious Muslims of Bengal as depicted in the vernacular literature, does not fundamentally differ from that of the religious minded Muslims residing in other parts of the world. Thus it seems that the poets of our period have given an idealistic picture of the Muslim community to which they had hardly any access.

Widow remarriage was a common institution at least among the Muslims of lower classes. It was so repugnant to the Hindu of the orthodox society that the author of the Marnasā-Manṅal tried to picture a Musalman woman as marrying three husbands in course of a month and yet longing for another, while the dead body of her husband had not yet been committed to the grave.³ Little wonder that an orthodox Hindu whose ideal was Satī, would frown upon the idea of widow remarriage which was nothing but infidelity of Musalman women, while fidelity to the dead husband is the theme of Behulā's story. The Musalman widows also duly mourned their husbands' death by abstaining from taking meat or fish for at least a week.⁴ The term nica

1. Barboosa : Op.cit., II, P. 148.

2. Vipradāsā : Op.cit., pp. 87-88; Vijaya Gupta : Op.cit., pp. 55-56; Mahuan's Account : Op.cit., p. 530; Kabikānkar-Gandī : I, p. 259.

3. Vijaya Gupta : Op.cit., p. 60.

4. ibid., p. 60.

has been frequently used in the vernacular literature of the time to mean the institution of widow remarriage, practised in the Muslim society.¹

The general level of education and culture attained by the Muslims can hardly be ascertained. Husain Shah encouraged the spread of education among his subjects by establishing a number of colleges and educational institutions. The English Bazar inscription of Husain Shah dated 907 A.H./1502 A.D. records the construction of a madrasah² "for the teaching of the sciences of religion and instruction in those orders which alone are true". This wording clearly shows that education was of a religious nature and that the students were generally instructed in the rules of fiqh or jurisprudence and law. The teachers appointed by the rulers were generally well-versed in traditions and ~~and~~ ^{hadis} and enjoyed much prestige in the society. Taqiuddin, one of such teachers, whose name is recorded in the Sunargāon inscription³ of Nasrat Shah, had the high-sounding title of Malik-al-umara' wal-Wazara' and was regarded as the Chief of the lawyers and teachers of ~~Hadis~~ ^{Hadis}. The importance attached by the Husain Shahis to education is evidenced by the fact that the English Bazar inscription already referred to begins with the famous saying of the prophet, "search after knowledge, and if it were in China". These fragmentary materials can thus help us to get some idea about the nature of the educational institutions of the time; but nothing is known about the types of secondary education and higher education. How far the institutions established by the rulers had been successful in ameliorating the condition of the people is not clearly known.

Because of the gradual spread of Islam in this country, Muslim society was undergoing a gradual process of expansion. Thus one could notice two distinct elements in the Muslim population of our period. These were the foreigners including

1. ibid., p. 60.

2. J. A. S. B., 1874, p. 303.

3. J. A. S. B., 1872, pp. 337-38; Cunningham: A. R. S. R., XV, P. 144.

the Arabs and the Persians who had associated themselves partly with the royal authority and partly with trade and commerce. Another important element was the local ^{converts} ~~converts~~ who had hardly any reason to give up their original ideas, beliefs and professions. By virtue of their being converted to Islām, they were called Muslims; but in reality, they did not differ much from their Hindu brethren. Thus they represented an indigenious culture while the foreigners stood for what may be called Arabic or Persian culture. But we do not observe any cultural conflict within the Muslim community. This seems to have been due to the Catholic attitude of the Hussain Shāhī rulers who were interested in the local culture.

II. Life of the Hindus

Hindu society was based on caste system which was again formed on the basis of different professions taken up by the various sections of Hindu community. Brahmins, Kāyasthas and Vaidyes were the prominent castes of the Hindu society of our period. Rādhī and Vārendrī Brahmins who derive their names from Rādh in West Bengal, and Verendra, the small strip land, east of the Ganges in Rājshāhī, were not absent in Bengal. Kavi Kankana has mentioned the Vārendrī Brahmins living in West Bengal towards the end of the sixteenth century.¹ These Vārendrī Brahmins were classified into several divisions or patis by Udayanācārya Bhāduri of Rājshāhī living in the middle of the fifteenth century. If the Premvilās is to be relied upon, marriages between these two sections of Brahmins were quite common in those days. Vaidic Brahmins could be largely found in South-East Bengal. Vijaya Gupta who has given the picture of the Hindu society, obtaining in the region, east of the Bhāgirathi, has mentioned that the Brahmins living in that area were Caturvedi Brahmins,² or the Brāhmins who had the knowledge of the four Vedas. From what

1. Op.cit., I, p. 263.

2. Op.cit. p. 4: বুর্ত্তি-প্রতি তহা ব্রাহ্মণ-সম।

has been said by Vijaya Gupta and Vipradāsa,¹ it appears that the Brahmins were traditionally following their religious pursuits and the study and teaching of scriptures. But this statement cannot be taken in an absolute sense, for there were cases of deviations from the duties and functions of the Brahmins as prescribed by the ancient Śāstrakāras. Jagāi, Kādhāi, Rūp and Sanātana, though Brahmins, were serving under the Husain Shāhī government. This was not in any way a new development in the then Hindu society. Even in ancient Bengal, some of the Brahmins were adopting professions other than what was prescribed by the Śāstra.² Raghunandana writing about the middle of the sixteenth century, quotes the Manusmṛiti to support the view that Brahmins if pressed hard with poverty, can adopt any means of livelihood.³ Thus it is evident that socio-economic changes had already taken place in Hindu society. The caste system of the Husain Shāhī Hindu society did not radically differ from its counterpart in pre-Mughal Bengal. Gandhavanik (sellers of spices, scents and drugs), Tentuvāya (Weavers), Kumbhakāra (potters), Karmakāra (black-smiths), Tāmbulik (betel-leaf sellers), Malākar (flower-sellers), Saṅkhavanik dealers in conch-shells), Kāmsakāra (braziers), Jāliā (fishermen), Nāpit (barbers), Goālā (milkmen), Cāmār (tanners), Dom, Cāṇḍāl and the comparatively higher castes like Kayastha, and Vaidya were traditionally pursuing their respective professions in Husain Shāhī Bengal.⁴ A learned scholar has clearly shown that these castes existed in pre-Muslim Bengal and also in the nineteenth century Bengal.⁵ It is fairly certain that almost all the sects and subsects mentioned in the Vṛhaddharma-purāna and the Brahmavaivartapurāna⁶ existed in our period. The Kṣatriyas do

1. Supra, Ch. III, p. 117.

2. History of Bengal, Vol-I, p. 584.

3. The Suddhitattva: ed. Jivananda Vidyasagara in Smṛti-tattva, p. 362.

4. Gaitanya-bhāgavat: pp. 120, 264 and 278. Vijaya Gupta: Op.cit., pp 4, 71-76 and 152-55. Gandī-mūḍgal: I, pp. 266-73.

5. History of Bengal, I, pp. 568-70 and 573-74.

6. Vṛhaddharmapurāna: Bib. Ind. Chs. XIII and XIV; Uttarakhanda, Brahmavaivartapurāna ed. Jivānanda, Ch. X, Brahma-Kṣanda.

not seem to have formed a regular caste in Musain Shāhi society. They are no doubt mentioned by Kavi Kāṅkan who seems to have associated them with the Rājputa.¹ It must be mentioned here that Kavikāṅkan composed his poems when Mughal rule was going to be established in this country and that they had brought here a new set of officials from northern India. It seems that the Kṣatriyas referred to by Kavikāṅkan came to Bengal in the wake of the Mughal conquest. The rigidity of caste system seems to have prevented inter-marriage and inter-dining. The Sūdras could not read the Purāṇas and the Vedas.² It is quite recently that the caste system of the Hindus has begun to lose its former rigidity.

Hindus had then, as now, various social ceremonies and institutions connected with their birth, marriage and death. At birth the Hindu baby was washed with Ganges-water and its head smeared with oil. Different musical instruments including conch-shell and flute were played upon on this occasion. Sasthī, the goddess of Children was worshipped on the sixth day following ^{the} birth. This was followed by a ceremony called Kosthi-gaṇanā or the calculation of the destiny of the new-born baby by the aspects of the planets at its birth and this could obviously be done by a Brahmin who had some astrological knowledge. After a month was over, the mother used to celebrate Valak-utthāna parva by taking a bath in the Ganges and worshipping the river. Possibly in the beginning of the second month, a name was given to the child. When the child was six-month old, the first rice-ceremony known as annaprāsana was celebrated. On this occasion, Brahmins were invited. At an auspicious moment, the baby's ears were pierced. The next ceremony was called Gudākaraṇa or the ceremony of first tonsure. The educational career of the child was started quite ceremoniously.³ It seems that these customs had no uniform character throughout the whole country. This explains why all of them are not commonly mentioned by Vr̥ndāvanadāsa, Kavikāṅkan and Vijaya Gupta who represented different localities.

1. Op.cit., I, p. 265.

2. Gaitanya-bhāgavat, ādi - XIV, p. 107.

3. Gaitanya-bhāgavats ādi, pp. 16, 18, 19 and 31. Vijaya Gupta: Op.cit., pp. 150-51.

Marriage proposal was generally made to the girl's father through an intermediary who used to be a friend or a relative of the boy's father. A class of professional marriage brokers (ghatak) was not only common, but they often played very important role in marriage negotiations. The astrologer was to fix the auspicious hour with reference to the Pañjī (almanac) and Kusthi (horoscope) and also to the stars and signs of Zodiac.¹ Freedom of marriage thus seems to have been restricted to a great extent. The marriage was a colourful ceremony with intermingling of religious rites and social customs which varied from place to place. Marriage began with Adhivāsa ceremony, a religious rite performed usually on the preceding date of marriage. Instrumental and vocal music accompanied it. The next ceremony was that of Vṛddhi, when the father of the bride offered sacrifice and prayer in the names of the ancestors. This was followed by colouring the fig-leaf with vermilion, reciting prayers to sixteen divine mothers or Ṣoḍaś-mātrkā and worshipping the earth. Nāndīmukh, a Srāddha ceremony celebrated on this occasion was believed to have added to the pleasure and happiness of the region of manes.² In the course of the whole ceremony, full jars, lamps, paddy, banana trees and various musical instruments were used possibly to add sanctity to the occasion.

There followed the ceremonial bath to which much importance was attached. It was attended by smearing the body of the bridegroom with paste prepared from sandal, tumeric and myrobalans. All this was done by the ladies who were playing significant parts in marriage affairs. When the bath was completely finished, the bridegroom used to put on fresh clothes and different ornaments including ear-rings, anklets and crown and also used perfumes like auger, and cuā. Then there followed the pompous bridal procession attended by the relatives and friends of the bridegroom, a good number of archers, paiks and panegyrist. Elephants, cradles and horses were

1. ibid., pp. 59-60; Kavikāṅkan-Gaṇḍī, part-I, pp. 134-35 and pt. II, pp. 366-68 and 382-83. Vijaya Gupta: op.cit., pp. 165-67.

2. Gaitanya-bhāgavat, pp. 60 and 92-93. Vijaya Gupta: Op.cit., pp. 24-25 and 169-70. Kavikāṅkan Gaṇḍī: Part-I, pp. 136-39 and Part-II, pp. 385-89.

also profusely used on this occasion.¹

Maṅgalācāra or the ceremony of auspicious decoration, celebrated at the bride's house, presented really a colourful picture.² A detailed account of this is unnecessary, for it greatly resembled its modern counterpart. The bride used to put on numerous ornaments the list of which has been given in the literature of the time. The Maṅgalācāra was followed by the reception of the bridegroom by the father of the bride, when the priests recited the Vākya, made argument, and celebrated what was known as padya, arghya, acāmana and madhuparka (offer of some specified articles to gods in token of worship). Having worked round the bridegroom seven times, the bride received him with paddy, dubgrass and jute cloth. There was at this time the exchange of garlands between the two which indicated the union of the two lives. The religious formalities attending the ceremony were those of the recital of the hymns from the Vedas, playing on certain musical instruments and lighting up fire. The bride's father had then to offer her to the bridegroom by placing her hands on those of him and with these the formalities of marriage practically came to an end. The bridegroom used to receive as dowry certain things such as cows, land, bed, servants, water-vessels, clothes and ornaments. The bride was taken to the bridegroom's house where the couple were properly received by the bridegroom's mother accompanied by other invited women.³ The ceremony of marriage thus marked the starting point of the conjugal life which was very often happy and peaceful. After the death of the first wife one could take a second wife. This is illustrated by the life history of Śrī Caitanya. It is necessary to say few words about the position of Hindu women in the then society. Since those were peaceful times, women had to perform no outdoor works. The Maṅgal poems of our period have given us the picture of an ideal woman who does not seem to have played any active part in the society and whose existence was felt only in the kitchen. But we have got no reason to overlook the importance of the female folk in society. The women

1. Caitanya-bhagavat: ādi, XIII, pp. 94-95. Vijaya Gupta: Op.cit., pp. 171-72 and

2. Vijaya Gupta: Op.cit., pp. 182-83.

3. Caitanya-bhagavat: ādi, XIII, pp. 95-96. Vijaya Gupta: Op.cit., pp. 26, 27, 183-84, 187, 194 and 195.

of the then Hindu society were affectionate mothers and devoted wives. Besides managing the household affairs quite thoroughly, they were helping their husbands in various ways. In the Caitanya-bhāgavat, we find that Śacī, the mother of Caitanya was thinking about the future of her son and requesting her husband to continue the education of Caitanya even after it had been stopped by her husband.¹ The Chinese Account has also thrown some light on the co-operation rendered by the wife to the management of the day-to-day affairs of the husband. But the management of household affairs was their absolute monopoly. Cooking was the main concern in their routine-bound daily life. It was quite traditionally that they used to fast, observe ekādasi and perform similar ^{These} ~~every~~ religious formalities.² The position of the conservative Hindu women has not undergone any considerable change in the course of the last few centuries.

Dress, ornaments and toilets used by them were those traditionally mentioned in the literature of the time. These included jute cloth, cotton cloth, ring, necklace, nose-trinket, golden bracelet, ear-rings, golden tathi, Sāṅkhā, pāsali, khādu, crown, collyrium, lac, vermilion and musk mixed with sandal. Her hair properly combed and shaped in the form of chignon and pigtail with flowers and peacock feathers attached to them, was perfumed with auger and incense-smoke.³ It should be mentioned in this connection that these ornaments and toilets were generally used on matrimonial occasions and in ordinary life, these must have been as simple as possible.

Widows generally used coarse jute-cloth, golden bracelets and fag-powder as substitutes for Khani, Sāṅkhā and vermilion.⁴ Although the institution of sattī has been mentioned in some of the contemporary works,⁵ it does not seem to have

1. Op.cit., adi, VII, pp. 40 and 42.

2. Vijaya Gupta: Op.cit., p. 164.

3. ibide., pp. 26 and 187.

4. Vijaya Gupta: quoted by D. C. Sen: ibide., p. 108.

5. Malādhār Vasu: Srikrama-vijaya: ed. Khagendra Nath Mitra, C.U., 1944, p. 294.

Vatthem gives a detailed description of the institution as practised at the city of 'Tarmassari'. Op.cit., 206-08.

Vaṅgabhāṣā o Sāhitya

been universally practised in this country. When Jagannāth Misra, father of Sri Caitanya died, his wife did not die with him. Again, the existence of the widow class occasionally referred to in the contemporary works presupposes that sattī was not a regularly or uniformly practised institution. The institution was, however, religiously practised in other parts of India, both in the North and in the South. In fact, Sattī was a common practice in upper Indian Hindu society two centuries earlier, notice of which has been made by Ibn Batūta. The Mughals had tried to suppress the practice without much success.¹ Writing about it in 1667 Bernier said, "There are so many writers of voyages relating the custom of the Indian women, burning themselves with their husbands, that I think something at last will be believed of it. For my part I am going to take my turn also, and to write to you of it like others; yet in the meantime observing withal, that 'tis not true what is said of it, and that now they do not burn themselves in so great a number as formerly, because the Mahamedans, that bear sway at present in Indostan, are enemies to that barbarous custom, and hinder it as much as they can; not opposing it absolutely, because they are willing to leave their idolatrous people, who are far more numerous than themselves, in the free exercise of their religion, for fear of some revolt: But by indirectly preventing it, in that they oblige the women, ready to burn themselves, to go and ask permission of the respective governors, who send for them make converse with their own women, remonstrate things to them with annexed promises, and never give them this permission, but after they have tried all these gentle ways, and till find them fix'd in their Sottis resolution. Which yet hinders not but that many burn themselves, especially those that live upon the lands of the Rajas, where no Mahamedan governors are".² However effective the Mughal intervention might have been in upper India, the nature

1. Advanced History of India: pp. 376, 400, 496 and 568. Vincent A. Smith: Abbar the Great Mughal: 1926, 2nd ed. pp. 226 and 382.

2. Quoted by J. N. Das Gupta: Bengal in the Sixteenth Century A. D., C. U., 1914, pp. 44-45, footnote.

of the Mughal rule in Bengal does not warrant similar conclusion about Bengal. Raghunandana, the famous digest-writer of Bengal, has prescribed severe austerities to be performed by the widow immediately after her husband's death.¹ This clearly shows that the institution had no regular recognition in the Sastra. It may reasonably be suggested that the institution was ^{absent} absent in many parts of the country, although it might have prevailed in some other parts.

Society was patriarchal and the joint family system was the order of the day. The rich, both Hindus and Muslims, used to live in brick-built houses and the poor had their houses built of bamboo with straw thatchings.² The ruins of the pre-Mughal architecture scattered over the different places of Bengal clearly show that brick was profusely used for the construction of these edifices. Moreover, the Chinese account written in the middle of the fifteenth century mentions that rich people were residing in palatial buildings, made of bricks and decorated internally in floral designs and animal patterns. These houses had flight of steps and flat roofs resting on a number of pillars.³ But the bamboo huts were of general use and some of them were "so constructed that the cost of a single one will be five thousand rupees or more and they last a long time."⁴ Abul Fazl seems to have referred to the bamboo houses which were specially constructed by the rich. The huts of the poor must have been of a poorer nature, for they could hardly spend any extravagant sum for the construction of houses. The Goucala bamboo houses were so famous that they did not fail to influence the pre-Mughal architecture of Bengal and the Mughal architecture of northern India. Inside the bedroom of the rich, one could find richly decorated bedstead, beautiful pillows, different jars and mosquito curtains made of silk or jute.⁵ But the requirements of the poor in this respect must have been as limited as possible.

1. Suddhitattva, P. 245 in Jivēnanda's ed.

2. The Āin, II, p. 134.

3. The Chinese Account: Op.cit., pp. 121, 124, 130-31.

4. The Āin, II, p. 134.

5. The Gaitanya-bhagavat, madhya, VII, pp. 164-65. The Candī-Mangal, II, p. 520

Bengali food has not changed materially in the course of the last few centuries. Rice, as now, was the staple food of the people. Pantābhāt or Qmāni (rice soaked in water) appears to have lost much of its original relish. It was not the breakfast only of the poorer class as now, but the richer section of the community used to take it with relish. Sorasa vyanjana or sixteen dishes were common in rich Hindu houses and these included various vegetables, fish, milk, meat, fruits, curd, butter, cakes and sweet meats. Ghee, oil, sugar, salt, chilly and different spices were used in preparing food.¹ After finishing the meals, people used to take betel-leaves which were also supplied to the guests on festive occasions. The list of Bengali eatables given in the Māṅgal poems, represents a picture which is more, ideal than real. Bengali food was simple, palatable and nourishing. Adulteration in food had not yet started. Culinary art was the exclusive concern of the women folk who used to attach religious devotion to the job. In fact, like every institution of Bengali life, the institution of cooking was also connected with semi-religious ceremonies. Lighting of fire in the kitchen had associated with it a number of elaborate ceremonies which included going round the fire seven times and prayer to the god of fire.²

The Hindus had various festivals and social functions one of which was connected with the worship of Durgā, celebrated with much pomp and grandeur. It should be mentioned in this connection that Raghunandan has devoted a considerable part of his work tithitattva to the description of the festivals of Rāghavāni and Durgotsava. Candī Māṅgal, Manasā Māṅgal and Saiva songs and the songs recounting the achievements of the Pāla kings of ancient Bengal were sung by palas by the singers or gāins who seem to have acquired much proficiency in the art of singing.³

1. Caitanya-bhāgavat: pp. 158, 178 and 182. Candī Māṅgal, Part II, pp. 510-13 and 515-16. Vijaya Gupta: Op.cit., pp. 96-97.

2. Vijaya Gupta: Op.cit., p. 96. See also Candī-Māṅgal, II, 514-15.

3. Caitanya-bhāgavat: pp. 11, 171, 210 and 266.

Theatrical performances gained much popularity among the people. Caitanya used to take part in some of them. The subjects of these dramatic performances were various pourānic stories such as Kṛṣṇa-Līlā and Lāṅkā-Vijay, which were attended by the Hindus and the Muslims alike.¹

Hindus worshipped then, as now, a number of gods and goddesses including Sivalinga, Siva, Dūrgā, Candī, Viṣṇu, Narāyana, Vyasa, Brahmā, Fire, Sitalā, Sasthī and the Ganges.² Manasā was one of the most important and powerful goddesses of the Hindus. The composition of poems on Manasā by Vijaya Gupte and Vipradāsa towards the end of the fifteenth century, is a clear indication of the importance attached to the worship of the serpent goddess by the people of East and West Bengal who used to believe in her supernatural power. Certain popular prejudices centred on the worship of Manasā. It was believed that Manasā used to be present at those places where songs were sung about her, to give boon to her devotees and curse her enemies. According to the popular belief, she could cure the diseased persons, give children to the childless and liberate the prisoners.³ Manasā could be worshipped with such materials as incense, lamp, sunned rice, sandal, different flowers and the sacrifice of buffaloes and goats. The ceremonies connected with the worship in West Bengal were probably less pompous than ^{those} in East Bengal.⁴ The Hindus who worshipped the river Ganges, held its water to be sacred and wished to pass their last days and die near this river. Raghunandana has dwelt at a considerable length, with the religious efficacy of bathing in the water of the Ganges and worshipping it with devotion.⁵

Customs in the then Hindu society were intermingled with prejudices. It was believed that musical performances would lead to the increase of the price of paddy

1. Caitanya-Caritamṛta: madhya, XV, p. 167 and antya, V, 288. Caitanya-bhāgavat, madhya, XVIII.

2. Caitanya-bhāgavat: pp. 11, 12, 13, 19, 21, 48, 156, 160 etc. Vijay Gupta: Op.cit., pp. 137 and 162.

3. Vipradāsa: Op.cit., pp. 63, 70 etc. Vijaya Gupta: op.cit., p. 4.

4. Vipradāsa: Op.cit., p. 62. Vijaya Gupta: Op.cit., p. 52.

5. Barbosa: Op.cit., II, p. 134, De Barros: quoted by M. L. Dames: The Book of Duarte

and create famine in the country.¹ If the pitcher that used to be kept on the exit-door (the Yatraghat) was broken by any accident, or if the head touched the upper doorframe, the journey was considered to be inauspicious. There appears to be no end of inauspicious signs. The Chirping of the house lizard on the left side, the movement of the snake on the right and the howling of jackale were all considered as indicating that the journey would not be an auspicious one. The falling of vermilion from women's head and of bracelets from their hands and the breaking of sankhas were regarded as inauspicious signs. In the morning people did not like to look at the face of a childless man who was believed to be helpless in the next world.² Some of these superstitions are still lingering in a modified form in the Hindu society of modern rural Bengal. Vr̥ndavanādhāsa who used to regard Śrī-Caitanya as an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa has associated a number of supernatural signs with the childhood of Caitanya.³

The system of education followed in the then Hindu society was different in many respects from its modern counterpart. Village schools were common in those days. They were ~~attended~~ ^{attended} by a large number of students coming not only from the richer class in the society but also from the poorer section as well. Birth in a low class, such as that of ~~Vaniya~~ ^{Vaniya} was no bar to one's studying Śāstras in East Bengal, although this was frowned upon in an orthodox Hindu society where the study of the Śāstras was an exclusive privilege of the Brahmins.⁴ The education of a Hindu boy began with the ceremony called Hatekhardi and he used to learn the alphabets possibly at his own home.⁵ When this initial stage was over, he could go to join one of the neighbouring tole conducted individually by a Brahmin Pandit. Since

Barbosa, II, Appendix-I, p. 245. Tirthatattva, p. 120. Prāyascittatattva, pp. 498-500, 508-09.

1. Caitanya-bhāgavat: pp. 105 and 176.

2. Vijaya Gupta: Op.cit., pp. 98, 100, 122, 162 and 180.

3. Op.cit., pp. 20-25.

4. ibid., ādi, XIV, p. 107. Vijaya Gupta: Op.cit., pp. 51 and 95.

5. Caitanya-bhāgavat, ādi, V, p. 31. *২৭৩ ২৪ ২(২০) মিনি ১৪০০।*

It seems that these Brahmin brothers were greatly influenced by the upper class Muslims of Gaud. One of the forces undermining the then Hindu society was tantricism. Vr̥ndavanadāsa has mentioned tāntrik practices in the Caitanya-bhāgavat.¹ The standard of morality specially in the mercantile community was not high. Prostitution came into vogue, but this was probably absent in the rural society. This particular institution was connected with trade centres where the prostitutes used to have separate quarters allotted to them. Though the institution was absent in rural society, the peaceful lives in the villages were often disturbed by their women folk being kidnapped.²

Bengali Hindu society of the period in question was essentially conservative. It could hardly transcend the barriers that were created around it by the ancient Sāstrakāras. Our contention is borne out, if we try to get an idea about the Hindu society as depicted by the celebrated nivandhakāra, Raghunandana who composed his works on Smṛti in the first half of the sixteenth century. Like his predecessors, he prescribes five Mahājajnas (i.e. teaching, propitiation of the manes, sacrifices, food offerings to animals and hospitality) to be regularly practised by a Brahmin so that he can relieve himself of the sins resulting from the use of the five necessary elements found in his own house. He opines that no one should take food without offering it to gods. He has given a long list of persons whose food cannot be partaken of. Śrāddha gifts should be made to the manes in the full-moon tithis of the months of Āśāḍha (June-July), Kārttika (October - November) and Māgha (January - February).³ He says that the non-performance of the daily duties prescribed by him will lead to the downfall of the man concerned.⁴ It will be quite futile to cite all the rigid socio-religious regulations laid down by him for the guidance of the Hindu society. The picture of the Hindu society given by

1. Caitanya-bhāgavat: madhya, VIII, pp. 172 and 176.

2. Vijaya Gupta: pp. 72, 80-81 and 153. Caṇḍi-Māṅgal. I, p. 273.

3. Prāyaścittatattva: p. 533. ed. Jivānanda: Ahnikatattva: pp. 425, 433, 451-52; Valśmāsatattva, p. 837; Tithitattva, p. 135.

4. Ekādasitattva: ed. Jivānanda: pp. 26-28.

him may be partly idealistic; but it reveals the tendency of the age in which he lived. ^{Conservatism} Conservatism characterising the then Hindu community may be attributed to caste rigidity and the tendency of the people to put extraordinary emphasis on the orthodox regulations embodied in the ancient Śāstras. Again the Brahmins seem to have been actuated by self-interest in framing socio-religious regulations with a view to retaining their privileged position in the society. While detailing the religious duties and privileges of a Śūdra, Raghurandan points out that a śūdra can enjoy the fruits of dharma by worshipping gods and Brahmins.¹ Brahmins are thus placed on an equal level with gods. While discussing the conservative nature of the Hindu society, we should not overlook the noble virtues it cultivated. Putting much emphasis on the religious efficacy of gifts and penances and dealing with the efficacy of self-less actions,² the Smṛtikāras seem to have placed an ideal before the people.

III. Hindu - Muslim Relation

The Brahmins seem to have constituted a small group of minority in the general mass of the population, the majority of which were the Kshatriyas. The conflicts between the Muslims and the Brahmins, which were due to certain socio-political reasons which are not probably known, were responsible for these communal conflicts. Again there were cases of communal disturbances purely because of religious differences. Social contact between the Hindus and the Muslims of the period in question is not without interest to a student of history. Though possibly the Catholic influence of Sūfism made Hindu pantheism less repugnant to the Muslims, clash between the two sections of population was not totally absent. In fact, almost all the writers of the Manasā - Mangal poems have devoted a chapter to the conflict between the two communities.³ Touchy and Conservative as the Hindus were about their castes, the Muslim administrator took the easiest way of inflicting the severest injury to them by desecrating their castes, although this was neither

1. Malanāsattva: p. 793.

2. Pravāścittatatta, p. 467; ed. Jivānanda: Malanāsattva, p. 837; ed. Jivānanda.

So far as these ideas are concerned, Raghurandan seems to have been influenced by the Bhāgavata which he quotes frequently.

3. See the next two footnotes.

encouraged nor supported by the Sultans whose attitude towards the non-Muslims in general appears to have been one of sympathy and understanding. In the Vanasa Mahal of Vijaya Gupta, the Muslim Qazi who was the local administrator in a village called Musainhati, had no objection to the Hindu practices being observed; but the Mullah or the Musalman priest whose care it was to see Islam well-established, admonished the Qazi for his slackness in not preventing the worship of the earthen vessel dedicated to the serpent-goddess. Religious fanaticism once roused, played its usual havoc. Whoever then was found with tulsi - leaves, was taken before the Qazi and mercilessly beaten. Brahmins had to lose their paita or holy thread. They, therefore, made it a point to live always quite away from the Muslims of that particular locality.¹ The story given by Vipradasa,² does not differ much from Vijaya Gupta's version. It appears from a careful study of these works that the personal whim and religious fanaticism of some of the Muslim officers were responsible for these communal conflicts. Again there were cases of communal disturbances purely because of political reasons.³

The Brahmins seem to have constituted a small group of minority in the general mass of the population, the majority of which must have been lower-class Hindus. The conflicts between the Muslims and the Brahmins, discussed above, were due to certain socio-political reasons which did not probably influence the social relationship between the Muslims and the lower class Hindus. Furthermore, we have hardly any reason to magnify the incidental cases of religious riots which we come across in the vernacular literature of the time, for these do not appear to have influenced the whole course of sociological evolution. The Hindus and the Muslims many of whom were possibly born of Hindu mothers or their descendants, lived and both co-operated in the different aspects of national life. It has already been

1. Vijaya Gupta : Op.cit., pp. 54-61.

2. Vipradasa : Op.cit., pp. 63-66.

3. Supra, Ch. I, p. 29.

conclusively shown that many of the Hindus were holding important governmental offices under the Husain Shāhī rulers,¹ who must have prepared a congenial atmosphere for rapprochement between the two major communities. The attitude of the ruling class to their non-Muslim subjects is clearly revealed through the patronage they rendered to the cause of Hindu culture by encouraging the translation of the Mahābhārata and the composition of the Vidyā - Sundara, which has some indirect relation with the worship of Kālī.² Had the Hindus and the Muslims been always fighting, the Hindu poets of the period would not have eulogised the Muslim rulers.

The Hindus and the Muslims influenced each other's life. Muslims with local nomenclature were plenty.³ In the rural areas they lived quite peacefully and there was happy relation between them. The Qāzī of Navadvīpa even when attacked by Sri Caitanya and his followers, did not forget this. Addressing Caitanya, he said:

So far as village relationship is concerned, Cakravartī is my uncle. Village relationship is purer than blood relationship. Nīlāmbara Cakravartī is your maternal grandfather. So you are my nephew.⁴

1. Supra, Ch. I, pp. 37-38.

2. See the text of Vidyā-Sundara in Sāhitya Patrikā, 1364 B.S. I, text, pp. 115-17.

3. Two of the inscriptions of this period record the name of one Bibi Malatī who constructed a mosque in the reign of Mehmūd Shāh III and a shade for drinking water in the reign of Nasrat Shāh. See the old Maldah inscription dated 938/1531; J.A.S.B., 1874, p. 308 and Gaud inscription dated 941/1535; J.A.S.B., 1872, p. 339. The lady was possibly a Muslim. This is evidenced by the construction of a mosque by her. She could hardly be a Hindu lady, for the construction of a mosque is not at all usual with a Hindu. The name Malatī is obviously a local term which indicates Hindu influence on Muslim society. The name of the Muslim weaver as given in Vijaya Gupta's work was Suvodhan. Op.cit., p. 59. It is a Hindu name.

4. Caitanya-Caritamṛta: ādi, XVII, p. 65.

সকল মঙ্গল হইল ২০ জ্যৈষ্ঠ ১৫৩১
 ৬৪২ মঙ্গল ১২০-২৫ মঙ্গল মঙ্গল ১১
 ১৫৩১ ৬৪৩ ২০ জ্যৈষ্ঠ ১৫৩১
 (২০ মঙ্গল ২৩ ২০ মঙ্গল ১৫৩১)

The common Muselman joined the social ceremonies of the Hindus and even the bridal procession of a rich Hindu would not be complete without their presence.¹ It is mentioned in the Vaisnava literature that the Muslims also enjoyed the Sam-Kirtan performed by the Vaisnavas.² The relation between the Hindus and the Muslims was thus cordial and the scenes of fanaticism were rare.

In the field of culture, there was understanding between the Hindus and the Muslims. We have already suggested³ that the Hindu officials had to learn Persian which was the court language. The knowledge of this language seems to have developed in the minds of some of the upper class Hindus, a genuine sympathy for Persian culture. This explains why they were reading Masnawi,⁴ the famous poetical work of the Persian poet, Jalaluddin Rumi. The Hindu poets of the age did not hesitate to use in their works loan words from Arabic and Persian.⁵ Some of the Muslim poets and scholars seem to have had thorough acquaintance with Sanskrit language and Hindu mythology. We may cite here the name of Sabirid Khan the fifteenth or sixteenth century Bengali poet who composed a poem on the romantic story of Vidya and Sundara. The whole poem is interspersed with Sanskrit verses probably of the poet's own composition.⁶ The language of the poem is Sanskritized Bengali with a rare use of Arabic or Persian words. His knowledge of the Hindu mythological stories is proved beyond doubt, for, in the opening section of the poem, he does not fail to mention certain incidents connected with the lives of the legendary kings like Dilipa and Dasaratha.⁷ The poet does not hesitate to

1. Vijaya Gupta: Op.cit., p. 179.

2. Caitanya-Caritāmṛta: ādi, XVII, p. 67.

3. Supra, Ch. VI, Section II, p. 210.

4. Supra, Ch. VI, p. 210.

5. The terms like Kalima, nikāḥ, Ruzāḥ, Darbish, Kitāb, Qurān, Salām, Faṭa, Ghulam and Masjid are used by Vipradāsa : Op.cit., pp. 63-70.

6. Sahitya Patrikā, Dacca, 1364 B.S. 1st issue, pp. 96-114. For Sanskrit Slokas, see pp. 96, 104, 108, 110, 111, 112 and 113.

7. Ibid., p. 97.

tell us that the origin of the story narrated in his work, is connected with the worship of Pārvati.¹ Thus we can glean from Sabirid's work, some ideas as to the poet's attitude to the Hindu culture. We have discussed in a previous chapter how Islamic mysticism had absorbed yogic and tantrik ideas and practices.

IV. The Portuguese Settlers and Nestorian Christians.

The Portuguese had not yet become a social class in Bengal. They were mainly connected with trade and piracy and their stay in this country was circumscribed due to the hostility of the ruling class and the Arab and Persian merchants. It was only in the beginning of the seventeenth century that they began to lead a regular social life in their settlements. Of course, they were given the custom houses of Sātḡāon and Chittagong and were allowed to collect revenues from the people of the adjoining localities.² Unfortunately nothing is known about the relation of these Portuguese farmers with the local people. But this seems to have been far from friendly, for their hostility to the Sultāns of Bengal and Arab merchants is proved beyond doubt.³ Their activities in the period in question had both religious and commercial aspects. Following the expulsion of the Arabs from the Andalusian peninsula, they seem to have declared Crusades against the Muslims wherever they could be found.⁴ But the economic side of the question cannot be ignored. The Portuguese came to the East in search of wealth. Finding that the field of mari-time commerce in Bengal was occupied by the Arabs, they turned hostile to them.

1. Op.cit., text in Sahitya Patrika, 1364 B.S., I, pp. 97-98.

2. Supra, Ch. I, p. 59, Ch. II, pp. 81-82 and Ch. III, p. 97.

3. Campos: Op.cit., pp. 27-36. History of Bengal, II, 351 ff.

4. While visiting Malabar, the Portuguese traveller Barbosa, describes the 'Moors' as the followers of "the abominable Mafamede". Op.cit., II, p. 3.

Varthema found in the city of 'Banghella' a few Nestorian Christians who were dealers in silk stuffs, aloes-wood, benzoin and musk. They had come from the city of Sarnau and were subject to the 'great Khan' of Cathai. They put on red cap and folded jerkins having sleeves quilted with cotton. Although they did not use shoes, they had "breeches made of silk, similar to those worn by mariners, which breeches are all full of jewels." They took meals at tables and ate "every kind of flesh." Following the practice of the Armenians, they would write from right to left.¹

About their religious practices and beliefs, Varthema tells us that they believed in the 'Trinity, twelve Apostles and four Evangelists and had baptism with water. As orthodox Christians, they would "keep the Nativity and the Passion of Christ, and observe our Lent and other Vigils in the course of the year".²

V. Evolution of a national life.

One could notice points of difference between the social customs and dialect of East Bengal and those of West Bengal. The people of the Western part of the country had a chronic dislike for East Bengal dialect and the people who spoke it and regarded them, then as now, as Vāṅgāls.³ Caitanya used to speak tauntingly of the Vāṅgadesī people residing at Navadvīpa, whereas Kavikāṅkan and Ketākādās-Kṣemānanda have sneered at this peculiar local language which they have jokingly imitated in their renowned works.⁴ But these differences did not stand in the way of the development of cultural relation between the two parts of the country.

1. Varthema: Op.cit. pp. 212-14.

2. ibid., p. 213.

3. Gaitanya-bhāgavat: Ādi, XII, p. 88.

4. Kavikāṅkan Cāṇḍī, II, p. 655. Manasā Maṅgal of Ketākādās-Kṣemānanda, ed.

Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharya, C.U., I, 1943, p. 211. The two works have preserved the specimen of the then East Bengal dialect only in a corrupt form, for the poets composing them had no direct knowledge about it.

Caitanya's tour over East Bengal which took place in the early part of his life, had no doubt some cultural and educational significance¹. Vaishnavism had also claimed subsequently a good number of followers in Sylhet and Chittagong.² Moreover, the educational centres of Navadvip and Santipur used to attract students from this part.

The life of Bengal with many of its customs and institutions was thus a chequered one. The ancient territorial divisions such as Radh, Varendra and Vanga had not yet disappeared. But they were walled together into a greater geographical unit roughly corresponding to the territorial extent of modern Bengal. The term Bengale or Bengal which had already evolved was now being applied to the whole tract of land extending from Chittagong to Mandāren and from the Bay of Bengal to the hills of Assam.³ What is of more importance is that Bengal had by then developed a language of her own which could be uniformly followed by the poets and literature⁴ of the time. The Bengalis had thus several factors common in their lives. These were a single, contiguous territory to live in, a common literary language and a common political power to govern them. These served as powerful bonds of union and gave an integrity to their character. This was no mean achievement to which the ruling power must have made direct contribution. The Husain Shahī period seems to have marked a definite stage in the growth of the Bengali nation over which the waves of Afghan conquest and the subsequent Mughal imperialism

1. Caitanya-bhāgavat: ādi, XII, pp. 85-88.

2. ibid., pp. 10 and 62. Ādi. See also Sri Caitanya-Parisade-Jamasthāna-Nirūpana S.P.P., 1317 B.S. 4th issue, p. 223.

3. The Husain Shahī kingdom has been called the kingdom of Bengal or Bengala by Barbosa, Op.cit., II, p. 135, Babur, Op.cit., II, p. 482 and also by De Barros.

4. The language of the Parāgali Mahābhārat, and the Āsvamedh Parva written in East Bengal, does not differ much from the language used by Vipradēsa, the West Bengal poet of our period.

seem to have thrown cold water. This social feature may be explained here. The ruling authority was surrounded on ^{all} sides by a number of actively hostile countries on whom they were persistently trying to put check. In doing so, they had to concern themselves with the internal peace and integrity of the country which they could attain by promoting the cause of local culture and looking to the interest of the people. Thus the subjects were drawn closer to the ruling power whom they had genuine reason to sympathise with. They enhanced the economic status of the country by throwing it open to foreign merchants and traders and also probably encouraging the internal trade. Thus sympathy with a common ruling power seems to have generated a sense of unity among the people.

Certain obscure points of the Muslim Shahi coins may be mentioned here. It is already stated, Nagari issued coins in 933/1527, 934/1528, 935/1529 and 936/1530 from Nagardah, Mahamadabad, Farahid and Husainabad.³ Nagari reigned from 935/1529 to 938/1532. So it is fairly certain that Mahad issued these coins during the lifetime of his predecessor, Nagari Shah.

Nicholson who was the first scholar to notice the irregular issue of coins by Nagari remarks, "they either indicate an extraordinary delegation of power or point to a successful rebellion".⁴ On the basis of the irregular coins of Nagari, a scholar writes and opines that "he set up an independent government even in the reign of Nagari Shah in a particular part of the kingdom of Deccan" and that "the rebel Mahad" continued his rule subsequently with Firuz "in the territories that he had formerly acquired".⁵

1. The descriptions of coins used in preparing this table have already been referred to in connection with the reigns of Husain, Nagari and Firuz. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of India*, 1914, pp. 26-41, 247-54 (a) with relevant footnotes may be consulted for these references. For the coins of Mahad, see also pp. 24-25, *The Numismatic Chronicle*, p. 71 and A.S. Vishnu *Shahi*, pp. 174-75.

2. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of India*, p. 41 footnote No. 1.

3. H. Wright's *Shahi*, II, p. 179; *Numismatic Chronicle*, pp. 24-25, p. 71, Nos. 147 and 148; *Numismatic Chronicle*, pp. 70-71. The numismatic inscriptions show that he was using royal designs in 929/1525. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of India*, 1894, pp. 214-25.

4. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of India*, 1897, pp. 214-25. It is also p. 147 of the same journal where Nicholson has said that Nagari struck coins in opposition to his father.

5. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of India*, pp. 4, p. 14.

Appendix - A

The Chronology of the Sultāns of our period is as follows:¹

Husain Shāh	=	899	-	925 A.H.	=	1493	-	1519 A.D.
Nasrat Shāh	=	925	-	938 A.H.	=	1519	-	1532 A.D.
Firūz Shāh	=	938	-	939 A.H.	=	1532	-	1533 A.D.
Mahmūd Shāh	=	939	-	944 A.H.	=	1533	-	1538 A.D.

Certain obscure points of the Husain Shāhī coins may be discussed in this connection. As already stated, Nasrat issued coins in his own name in 922/1516 and 923/1517 from Khalifatabād, Fathābād and Husainābād mints.² Both of these dates clearly show that he was exercising the right of issuing coins when his father 'Alā'uddīn Husain Shāh was alive. Mahmūd also issued coins in 933/1527, 934/1528, 935/1529 and 938/1532 from Nasratābād, Muhammadābād, Fathābād and Husainābād.³ Nasrat reigned from 925/1519 to 938/1532. So it is fairly certain that Mahmūd issued these coins during the lifetime of his predecessor, Nasrat Shāh.

Blochmann who was the first scholar to notice the irregular issue of coins by Nasrat remarks, "They either indicate an extraordinary delegation of power or point to a successful rebellion."⁴ On the basis of the irregular coins of Mahmūd, a modern scholar has opined that "he set up an independent government even in the reign of Nasrat Shāh in a particular part of the kingdom of Gaud" and that "the rebel Mahmūd" continued his rule simultaneously with Firūz "in the territories that he had formerly acquired".⁵

1. The Catalogues of coins used in preparing this table have already been referred to in connection with the reigns of Husain, Nasrat and Firūz. Supra, pp. 9, 36, 41, 54-54(a) with relevant footnotes may be consulted for these references. For the coins of Mahmūd, bearing the date 944 A.H. See Shamsuddin: Op.cit., p. 71 and A.W.Botham: Op.cit., pp. 174-75.

2. Supra, p. 41 footnote No. 1

3. H.N.Wright: Op.cit. II, p. 179; Lanepoole: Op.cit. pp. 54-55, pl. VII, Nos. 147 and 149. Shamsuddin: Op.cit. pp. 70-71. The Sadullahpur inscription shows that he was using royal insignia in 933/1527; J.A.S.B., 1895, pp. 214-15.

4. J.A.S.B., 1873, p. 297. See also p. 227 of the same journal where Blochmann has said that Nasrat struck coins in opposition to his father.

5. V.R.S. Monograph, No. 6, p. 18

These scholars are in favour of propounding a theory of dual governments as illustrated in the following table :-

The name of the rulers.

The period of dual rule.

Husain Shah |

922/1516 to 923/1517.

Nasrat Shah |

Nasrat Shah |

933/1527 to 935/1529 and in

Mahmūd Shah |

938/1532.

Mahmūd Shah |

938/1532 to 939/1533

Firuz Shah |

This means that there was a rebellion in the reign of each of the Sultāns of the period in question. This is an absurd proposition for which we find no support in the sources at our disposal. 'Alā'uddin Husain Shah was too powerful a ruler to allow any rebel to flourish on the bosom of his kingdom. The four mint towns from which Mahmūd issued coins in the lifetime of Nasrat, must have covered an extensive territory. It would have been impossible for him to rule over so vast a region without being opposed by his more powerful brother, Nasrat. But history does not preserve records of any civil war between the two brothers. If there had been so much repeated rebellion in this period, the wonderful progress which we notice in the military, economic and cultural life of the then Bengal, would have been impossible.

The coinage of a particular ruler is, not doubt, the indication of the exercise

APPENDIX - B

The text together with an English translation of the Persian passages contained in pls. I and II attached to page 173 of this thesis, is given below. They describe the garbhāsana (or the posture resembling that of a child in the mother's womb) and the sabhasana (or the posture looking like the one taken in the meeting), illustrated in pls. I and II respectively.

Plate I

Text

چون طالبی خواهد که باین شغل مشغولی نماید باید که جلوسه گریه آسن پیش گیرد،
گریه آسن آنرا بگوید که چنانکه بجه در شلم مادر می باشد در باید پای چپ بر
پای راست نهاده دوسرین بر دو پای داشته و سر میان دو زانو برداشته
و دو آرنج بر دووی گاه نهاده و دو دست بر دو گوش کرده ناف را بر پشت
رساند از ناف رستی که پیدا است آنرا زنجین میگویند عبارت از

Translation

است دم را حبس کند

Translation

When anybody likes to engage himself with this particular exercise, he should adopt the garbhāsana. This is called garbhāsana, as it is like the form of a baby in the womb of the mother. He should put the left foot on the right foot keeping the two buttocks on the two feet and the head in between the two knees kept upward, while keeping the two elbows in the abdomen and the two palms on the two ears. The navel should be pressed towards the back. The position appearing from the navel is called nirāṅjana meaning ———— stopping the breath as much as possible.

To begin with, it is difficult.

Plate II

Text

خواهد که ذکر کنبهک کند بادی که بر اعضا شده است از پورک تدریجاً بام
 الدماغ برو قوت نکند و اگر نه اعضا شکسته شوند، چون بام الدماغ رسد
 چشم را و از دارد زیبا تر بکام جفشانده نفس را از راه بینی آهسته آهسته
 بدر آمدن دید باز عمل پورک از سر آغاز کند چون درون کشند پورک گویند
 چون بیرون بر آرد کنبهک نامند چون بگذارد ریجک خوانند و اگر هم
 برای قوت پی در کبها گردن و پشت و مضمط طعام و خشک شدن
 نهان که بند بای تن است این جلسه نگاه دارد که پای راست باساق
 بران چپ بند و پای چپ باساق بران راست بند بزمی و آهسته
 تا آنکه عادت پذیر گردد، در آغاز شکل است.

Translation

Whoever likes to perform (the dhikr of) Kumbhak, he should take care of what his organs have borne (hardship) gradually upto the origin of brain due to pūrak. least his organs should suffer from breakage. When he reaches the centre of the brain he should moisten the eyes and the tongue with wine and should let the breath come out from nostrils slowly and slowly. Then he should begin with the exercise of pūrak. When he inhales, it is called pūrak; when he exhales, it is called kumbhak and when he discharges (air), it is called reçak.

Description of sabhasana meant for strengthening the nose, the veins of the neck and the back, and digestion of food and drying of the internal organs which are the servants of the body. The right foot with the leg be placed on the left thigh and the left foot with the leg on the right thigh, gently and slowly till he gets accustomed. To begin with, it is difficult.

Fāriḥ-i-Shāhī : Tārīkh-i-Shāhī, text, Maulvi Khwāja ed., Lucknow, Eng. trans. by John
Briggs, Vols. I, II and IV, 1910.

APPENDIX - C

Ganeshdas Banerjee (editor) : Asiatic Researches, 1875.

Bibliography

Gulabdas Banerjee : Asiatic Researches : translated by A. S. Beveridge in Oriental
Researches, Vol. I, Part I, Printed and published by the Royal Asiatic
Society, London, 1900.

I. ORIGINAL SOURCES

1. Chronicles
Gulab Das Banerjee : Asiatic Researches, Vol. I, Part I, Printed and published by the
Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1900.

Abul Fāzī : Ain-i-Akbarī, Vol. I, tran. by H. Blochmann; 2nd ed.; revised by D.C.
Phillott. Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta, 1939. Vols. II and III, tran. by H. S.
Jarrett; revised and further annotated by Sir Jadu Nath Serkar in 1949 and 1948
respectively in Bib. Indica. Text ed. by H. Blochmann and published in Bib.
Ind. Series (1867-77).

Abbās Sherwānī : Tārīkh-i-Sher Shāhī; tran. in Elliot and Dowson's History of India
as told by her own Historians, Vol. IV, London, 1872.

Abdul Hamīd Lāhorī : Bādshāhnāmāh : Vol. I, Sec. I. text. ed. Kabiruddin Ahmed and
Abdur Rahim in Bib. Ind., 1867. Abridged tran. in Elliot and Dowson's work:
Op.cit., Vol. VII, London, 1877.

Abdul Qādir Bada'ūnī : Muntakhabut Tawārīkh, Vol. I, text. ed. Maulavi Ahmad Ali,
in Bib. Ind., 1868. Eng. tran. by George S. A. Ranking; Bib. Ind., 1898.

Ahmad Yādgar : Tārīkh-i-Shāhī or Tārīkh-i-Salātin-Afāghānā, text ed. M. Hidayet
Husain in Bib. Ind., 1939. Eng. tran. in Elliot and Dowson's work: Op.cit., V
London, 1873.

Bābur : Memoirs of - Vol. II. Eng. tran. (from Turkish Original) by A.S. Beveridge,
London, 1921.

Buchanan-Hamilton, Francis (discovered by) : an anonymous ms. history of Bengal;
Summarised by him in Martin's Eastern India, Vols. II, London, 1836.

Firishtah : Tārikh-i-Firishtah, text, Nowal Kishore ed. Lucknow. tran. by John Briggs, Vols. I, II and IV, Calcutta, 1908-09 and 1910.

Gumabhiran Barua : (editor) : Assam Burāñjī. Nowgong, 1875.

Gulbadan Begum : Humāyūn Nāmāh; translated by A. S. Beveridge in Oriental Translation Fund. New Series I. Printed and published under the patronage of the Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1902.

Gopal Chandra Barua (editor) : Assam Burāñjī, Calcutta, 1930.

Ghulam Husain Salim : Riyāṣus Salātin, text. ed. Maulavi Abdul Hak Abid. Bib. Ind. 1890-91. Eng. tran. by Abdu Salam, Bib. Ind. 1910.

Hamidullah : Ahadisul Khawānin, Calcutta, 1871.

Jauhar : Tagkiratul Waqīāt. Eng. tran. by Stewart in Oriental Translation Fund, London, 1832.

Kaliprasanna Sen : (editor) : Rajamālā, Vols. I and II, Agartala, 1936-37, Tipperah Era.

Minhaj-i-Siraj : Tabaqat-i-Nasiri; text ed. by W. Nassau Lees, Khādim Husain and Abdul Hayy in Bib. Ind. 1864. Eng. tran. by H.G. Raverty, London, 1881 in Bib. Ind.

Muhammad Kazim : 'Alangirnāmāh, text. ed. Khādim Husain and Abdul Hai in Bib. Ind. 1868.

Mirza Nathan : Bahāristān-i-Ghaibi, 2 Vols. Eng. tran. by M. I. Borah, Gauhati, 1936.

Nizamuddin Ahmad : Tabaqat-i-Akbari; 3 Vols, text. ed. B. De; published in 1927, 1931 and 1935 in Bib. Ind. Eng. tran. of these 3 Vols. by B. De, published in Bib. Ind. in 1927, 1936 and 1939 (Vol. III revised by Bainsi Prasad).

Ni'amatullah : Tārikh-i-Khān Jahān Lūdi, Eng. tran. in Elliot and Dowson: Op.cit. Vol. V.

Surja Kumar Bhuiya : (editor) Assam Burāñjī, Gauhati, 1930.

Deodhai Assam Burāñjī, Gauhati, 1932.

Shihabuddin Ahmad Talieh : Fathiyya-i-ibriyya, Bodleian Library ms. or 589. Eng. tran. by H. Blochmann in J. A. S. B., 1872, p. 79.

Yahya bin Ahmad bin 'Abdullah ^{Sindhī} ~~Sindhī~~ : Tārikh-i-Mubarak Shāhi, text. ed. M. Hidayat Husain, in Bib. Ind. 1931. Eng. tran. by K. K. Bose in Gaekwad's Oriental series

Zia'uddin Barani : Tārikh-i-Firus Shāhi, text. ed. Maulavi Syed Ahmad Khan Shahib in Bib. Ind. 1862.

2. Literature : Poems, dramas, religious works etc.

Abū Naṣr-as-Sarraġ : Kitābul Luma' fit Tasawwuf - text. ed. R. A. Nicholson,
London, 1914.

Alaol : Padmāvati, pt. I. ed. Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah, Dacca 1950.

Ali Rājā : Jñāna - Sāgara, ed. Abdul Karim Sāhitya-visārad, Vāngiya Sāhitya Parisat
work No. 59, Calcutta, 1324 B.S.

Ali bin Usmanul Jullabi'l Hujwiri : Kashful Mahjub, tran. by R. A. Nicholson,
London, 1911.

Bhārat Chandra Rāyagunākar : Vidyā-sundara, Bhārat Chandrer Granthāvali, pt. II. ed.
Brajendra Nath Banerji and Sajani Kanta Das. Vāngiya Sāhitya Parisat, Calcutta,
1350 B.S.

Candī-dāsa : Srikṛṣṇa - kīrtana, ed. Basanta Ranjan Ray, Vāngiya Sāhitya Parisat,
Calcutta, 1323 B.S., 1342 B.S. etc.

Candī - dāsera Padāvali, ed. Nilratan Mukherji, Vāngiya Sāhitya Parisat, 1321 B.S.

Daulat Qasī : Satī Mainā O Lora - oandranī, ed. Setyendra Nath Ghosal in Sāhitya-
prakāśika, pt. I. Vidyābhavana : Visvabhāratī, Sāntiniketan, 1362 B.S.

Daulat Wasir Bahram Khān : Laili Majnū, ed. Ahmad Sharif; Bengali Academy, Dacca,
1957.

Govinda - dāsa : Kadacā, ed. Dinesh Chandra Sen, Calcutta University, 1926.

Haraprasad Sāstri (editor) : Caryācarya - viniscaya, Vāngiya Sāhitya Parisat,
Calcutta, 1358.

Harīharānanda Arānya, Dharmamegha Arānya and Rāya J.C. Bahadur (translators and
editors) : Kapilāsramiya Patañjala Yogadarsana, 4th ed. Calcutta University,
1949.

Isān Nāgar : Advaita - prakāś, ed. Mrinal Kanti Ghosh, 3rd ed. Calcutta, 1339 B.S.

Jayadeva : Gita - govinda, Eng. tran. by Sir William Jones in Collected Works.
London, 1807.

Jayamanda : Caitanya - māngal, ed. Atul Krishna Gosvami, Vāngiya Sāhitya Parisat,
1307 B.S.

Jiva Gosvami : Madhava-mahotsava, ed. Haridās Das, Navadvīp, 1941 and Sankalpa -
kalpa-druma, Berhampur-Murshidabad ed. from Rādhāraman Press.

- Kavikarnapūra (Paramānanda Soma) : Caitanya - caritāmṛta, ed. Rāmārāyana Vidyaratna, Rādhārāman Press, Berhampur - Murshidabad, 1291 B.S.
- Caitanya - candrodaya-nāṭaka, Kāvyaśālā, 87, Bombay, 1917.
- Gauro - ganoddēśa - dīpikā, Rādhārāman Press, Berhampur - Murshidabad, ed. 1912.
- Kṛṣṇāhnikā - kāmudī, ed. Haridās Dās, Navadvīp, 1941.
- Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja : Caitanya-caritāmṛta, ed. Atul Krishna Gosvāmī, 3rd ed. Calcutta, 1325 B.S.
- Govinda - lilāmṛta, ed. Sachinandan Gosvami, Brindaban, 1908.
- Kṛttibāsa : Ramayana, ed. Dinesh Chandra Sen, Calcutta, 1916.
- Ketakādēśa - Kṛṣṇānanda * Manasā - maṅgal. Pt. I, ed. Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharya, Calcutta University, 1943.
- Locana - dāsa : Caitanya - maṅgala, ed. Mrinal Kanti Ghosh, 2nd ed. Calcutta, 444 Caurāṅga era.
- Mālādhār Vasu : Bhikṣu - vijaya, ed. Khagendra Nath Mitra, Calcutta University, 1944.
- Malik Muhammad Jāisi : Padumāvati, ed. Grierson and Sudhakar Trivedi in Bib. Ind. 1911. Eng. tran. by Shirreff in Bib. Ind. 1944.
- Maulānā Dāud : Chandain; extracts by Prof. Hasan Askari : "Rare Fragments of Chandain And Mrigavati," Current Studies, pp. 6-23. Patna College, 1955.
- Mukundaram Cakravartī : Chandī-maṅgal or Kavikāṅkan-candī, Vols. I and II, Calcutta University, 1924 and 1926.
- Murāri Gupta : Caitanya-caritāmṛta, ed. Mrinal Kanti Ghosh, 3rd ed. Calcutta, 1337 BS
- Muhsin Fāni : Dabistanul Mafahib, Bombay ed. (no date).
- Nizāmī : Haft Paikar : Vol. I. Eng. tran. by G. E. Wilson, London, 1924.
- Prasanna Kumār Kaviratna (editor) : Gorakṣa-Saṁhitā, Calcutta, 1813 Saka.
- Pir Muhammad Sattāri : Risalatush Shuhadā, text together with an abridged Eng. tran. by G. H. Danant in J. A. S. B., 1874.
- Qutban : Mrigavati; extracts by Prof. Hasan Askari : Qutban's Mrigavat - A Unique Ms. in Persian Script, Journal of Bihar Research Society, Vol. XLI, pt. 4, 1957 Dec. (pp. 452 - 87).

- Rāmāi Pandit : Sūnya Purāna, ed. Charu Chandra Banerji, Calcutta, 1336 B.S.
- Dharma-pūjā-vidhāna, ed. Nani Gopal Banerji, Calcutta, 1323 B.S.
- Rāmesvara Bhattācārya : Sivāyama, ed. Ishan Chandra Bose, Calcutta, 1310 B.S.
- Raghunandana : Smṛti - tālīva, 2 Vols. ed. Jīvananda Vidyāsāgara, Calcutta, 1893.
- Rūpa Gosvāmī : Hansa-dūta and Uddhava-sandēśa, Kāvya-saṅgraha ed. by Jīvananda Vidyāsāgara; pts. II, pp. 441-507 and III, pp. 215-75, Calcutta, 1888.
- Vidagdha-mādhava, Kāvya-mālā ed. 81, Bombay, 1903.
- Lalita-mādhava and Dama-keli-kaumudī, Radharaman Press, Berhampur - Murshidabad.
- Padyāvalī: ed. S. K. De, Dacca University, 1934.
- Rūparām : Dharma - māṅgal, pt. I, ed. Dr. Sukumar Sen, Panchanan Mandal and Sunanda Sen, 2nd ed. Calcutta, 1363 B.S.
- Sābirid Khān : Vidyā-sundara : ed. Ahmad Sharif; Sāhitya Patrikā, 1364 B.S. I. pp. 96-114, Dacca.
- Sādhan : Maimā Sat: extracts from Mamer ms. and another ms. in possession of Pandit Udaya Shankar Chaturvedī, sent by Prof. Askari to Prof. A.B.M. Habibullah of Dacca University, and used by the present writer.
- Sheikh Faisullāh : Goraks-vijay, ed. Panchanan Mandal; Viśvāharatī publication, Calcutta, 1356 B.S.
- Sridhara : Vidyā-sundara, ed. Ahmad Sharif, Sāhitya Patrikā, 1364 B.S., I. pp. 115-34, Dacca.
- Sridhara-dāsa : Saduktī-karnāmṛta, ed. Rāmāvatāra Sarmā in Punjab Sanskrit Series, Lahore, 1933.
- Srikara Nandī : Aśvamedha Parva, ed. Binod Bihari Kāvya-tīrtha and Dinesh Chandra Sen, Vaṅgiya Sāhitya Parisat, Calcutta, 1312 B.S.
- Srinivās Iyāngar (editor) : Mathayoga-pradīpikā, Bombay Theosophical Fund, 1893.
- Syed Sultān : Jñāna-pradīp, ms. 152 in Abdul Karim Sāhitya Viśārad's Collection, Dacca University Library.
- Jñāna - cautiśā, ms. 153 in Sāhitya Viśārad's Collection, D.U. Library.
- Ofat - i - Rasūl: ed. Ali Ahmad, Noakhali, 1356 B.S.
- Syed Mārtazā : Yoga Kalandar, mss. 386 and 388 (in Arabic script) in Sāhitya Viśārad's

- Collection, D. U. Library. A composite text (yet unpublished) of this book, prepared by Dr. Kamal Haq, now in Varendra Research Society Museum of Rajshahi together with another un-numbered ms. of the same organisation, has been used.
- Vipradāsa : Maṅgalā-vijaya, ed. Dr. Sukumar Sen in Bib. Ind. Calcutta, 1953.
- Vijaya Gupta : Maṅgalā - maṅgal, ed. Sacanta Kumar Bhattacharya, 3rd ed. Varanasi, Barisal (No. date of publication).
- Vṛndāvana-dāsa : Śrīcaitanya - bhāgavat, 4th ed. by Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Ghosh, Calcutta; 440 Gauranga era.
- Yusuf Husain (editor) : Maṅgal Maṅgal with an abridged French trans. Journal Asiatique, Tome CCXIII, pp. 271-344. Paris, 1928.
3. Coins
- (a) Catalogues and books
- Botham, A.W., : Catalogue of the Provincial Coin Cabinet of Assam, 2nd ed. Allahabad, 1930.
- Botham, A.W. and Friel, : Supplement to the Catalogue of the Provincial Cabinet of Coins, Assam, Allahabad, 1919.
- Lawrence, Stanley, : The Coins of the Purnea State of India in the British Museum, London, 1885.
- Mahin Kanta Bhattacharya : Catalogue of Coins, Collected by Mahin Kabiur Khan Khan, Dacca, 1934.
- Catalogue of Coins from Vaifoor Collections, Dacca, 1934.
- Coins and Chronology of the Early Independent Sultans of Bengal, Cambridge, 1922.
- Shamsuddin Ahmad : A Supplement of Vol. II of the Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Delhi, 1939.
- Stapleton, H.E., : Catalogue of the Provincial Cabinet of Coins, Eastern Bengal and Assam, Shillong, 1911.
- Thomas, H., The Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi, London, 1871.

Wright, H. Nelson., Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Vol. II,
pt. II. Oxford, 1907.

The Coinage and Metrology of the Sultans of Delhi; Delhi, 1936.

(b) Papers with notices of Coins

Blochmann, H., Contributions to the Geography and History of Bengal, Nos. II and
III in J. A. S. B. for 1874/ - 75.

Stapleton, H. E., Contributions to the History and Ethnology of North-Eastern India,
pt. I, J. A. S. B., for 1910 Vol. IV, No. 4.

S. Sharafuddin : A note on the reign of 'Alāuddīn Firūz Shāh III. Varendra Research
Society's Monograph, 6. fig. 5, pl. IV.

Walsh, E. H., The Coinage of Nepal. J. R. A. S., 1908.

4. Inscriptions

(a) Books

Abid Ali Khan : Memoire of Gaur and Pandua. Edited and revised by H.E. Stapleton.
Calcutta, 1931.

Ahmad Hasan Dani : Bibliography of the Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal (down to 1538).
Published as an appendix to the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan.
Vol. II, Dacca, 1957.

Cunningham, Alexander., Archaeological Survey of India Report, Vol. XV, Calcutta,
1882.

Glazier, E. G., A Report on the district of Rangpore, Calcutta, 1873.

Ravenshaw, J. H., Gaur : Its Ruins and Inscriptions, London, 1878.

(b) Papers containing text, translations and plates
of inscriptions.

A.K. Bhattacharya : Two unpublished Arabic inscriptions of Nurat Shāh from Santoshpur
Epigraphia Indica, Arabic and Persian Supplement; for 1951-52. Department of

- Archaeology, India. Delhi, 1956. pp. 24-27. pl. XI, (a) and (b). His paper on Bengal Calligraphy in Indo-Iranica, Vol. IV, Nos. 2-4, figs. 1, 7, 11 etc. Also his paper on Bengal inscriptions in Indian Historical Quarterly, 1950.
- A.K. Maitra : Rajshahi Inscription of 'Alauddin Husain Shah. appendix V, pl. XVI (34) in Varendra Research Society Monograph No. 7. Rajshahi, 1949.
- Abdul Wali : Mandaran and Mubarak-Mansil, in the district of Hugli and Traditions about Sultan 'Alauddin Husain Shah, J. A. S. B., 1917. NS. XIII.
- Blochmann, H., Notes on the Arabic and Persian Inscriptions in the Hugli district. J. A. S. B. for 1870. pt. I, No. 4.
- Notes on Several Arabic and Persian inscriptions, Nos. I and II in J.A.S.B., for 1871, pt. I. No. 3 and for 1872, pt. I. No. 1.
- On a new king of Bengal ('Alauddin Firuz Shah), and notes on the Husaini kings of Bengal and their conquest of Chatgaon. J. A. S. B., 1872, pt. I, No. 4.
- Contributions to the Geography and History of Bengal, Nos. I and II in J.A.S.B. for 1873 and 1874.
- Also his paper dealing with Saran, Munghyr and Bonahar inscriptions in P.A.S.B. 1870.
- Beveridge, H., The Khurehid Jahan Numa of Sayyad Ila'hi Bakhsh al Hussaini Angrezabadi J.A.S.B., 1895 Vol. LXIV, pt. I, No. 3 (pp. 198 and 214-15 for inscriptions of Husain and Ghiyasuddin Mahmud).
- Horn, Paul., Muhammadan Inscriptions from Bengal. Epigraphia Indica, Vol. II. Government of India Press, Calcutta, 1894.
- Niradbandhu Sanyal : Dhorail Inscription of the Reign of Mahmud Shah : Saka 1455. Indian Historical Quarterly Vol. VII, 1931, March (with a plate).
- Rakhal Das Banerji : Some Unpublished Records of the Sultans of Bengal, Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, Vol. IV, pt. II. (For the accounts of Saptagrama or Satgram). With a note on a new inscription of 'Alauddin Husain Shah, by Dr. T. Bloch. J.A.S.B., 1909 NS. V; text of the inscription on p. 280.
- Stapleton, H. E., Contributions to the History etc. No. IV. J.A.S.B., 1922, p. 413 and pl. IX.

S. Sharafuddin : Rajshahi inscription of Ghiyasuddin Bahadur Shah, 966 A.H. Varendra Research Society's Monograph No. 6, pl. III.

Shamsuddin Ahmad : His papers on Bengal inscriptions in Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, for 1933-34 and 1937-38.

Y. K. Bhkhari : Four unpublished Arabic inscriptions of Sultan Barbak Shah of Bengal. Epigraphia Indica, Arabic and Persian Supplement, 1953-54, pp. 18-23. pls. VII (a) and VIII.

Yazdani : His papers on Bengal inscriptions in Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, for 1911-12, 1915-16, 1929-30 and 1933-34.

5. Foreign Travellers' Accounts

Barbosa, Duarte., The Book of Duarte Barbosa, 2 Vols. Eng. tran. by M.L. Dames; Hakluyt Society; London, 1918 and 1921.

Barros, Joao de., Decadae; extracts in The Book of Duarte Barbosa, II; appendix I, pp. 239-48.

Ibn Batuta : The Rihla of Ibn Batuta. Eng. tran. by Dr. Mahdi Husain in Caekwad's Oriental Series. Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1953. Text and French tran. in Voyages d'Ibn Batoutah by Defremery and Sanguinetti; Paris, 1922. The account of Bengal is contained in Vol. IV of this edition.

Mahuan : Kingdom of Bengala. Eng. tran. by George Phillip; J.R.A.S., 1895.

Mahua's Account together with other Chinese accounts about Muslim Bengal, Eng. tran. by Dr. Prabodh Chandra Bagchi in Visvabharati Annals, pt. I, 1945.

Marco Polo : The Book of Ser Marco Polo, Vol. II. 3rd ed. Yule and Cordier, London, 1903.

Purchas, Samuel : Purchas His Pilgrims, Vol. X. Glasgow, 1905 (for the accounts of Caesar Frederick and Ralph Fitch).

Souza, Faria Y., The Portuguese Asia, Vol. I, Eng. tran. by Stevens; London, 1695.

Varthema, Ludovico di., The Travels of Varthema, Eng. tran. by John Winter Jones; edited by George Percy Badger; Hakluyt Society; London, 1863.

II. SECONDARY WORKS

1. Political histories, Imperial Gazetteers, District Gazetteers and Topographical Accounts.

- Campos, J.J.A., History of the Portuguese in Bengal, Calcutta, 1919.
- Gait, E. A., History of Assam, Calcutta, 1906.
- Harvey, O. E., History of Burma from the Earliest Times to 10 March, 1824, the Beginning of the English Conquest, London etc. 1925.
- Hunter, W.W., A Statistical Account of Bengal, Bhagalpur, Vol. XIV, London, 1877.
- I. H. Qureshi : The Administration of the Sultāns of Delhi; Lahore, 1944.
- Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vols. X and XIV. New edition. Oxford, 1908.
- K. R. Ganungo : Sher Shāh, Calcutta, 1921.
- K. L. Barua : The Early History of Kamrup, Shillong, 1933.
- Martin, Montgomery., The History, Antiquities, Topography and Statistics of Eastern India, Vols. II and III. London, 1838.
- O' Malley, L.S.S., Chittagong Gazetteer, Calcutta, 1908.
- Phayre, Arthur., History of Burma including Burma proper, Pegu, Taungu, Tenasserim and Arakan, London, 1883.
- R.C. Majumdar, H. G. Raychaudhury and K. Datta : An Advanced History of India, London, 1950.
- Rakhal Das Banerji : Vāṅglār Itihās, II, Calcutta, 1324 B.S.
- History of Orissa, I, Calcutta, 1930.
- Rajanikanta Chakrabarti : Gauder Itihās, II, Malda, 1909.
- Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar (editor) : History of Bengal, II, published by the University of Dacca, 1948.
- Smith, V. A., Akbar the Great Mughal, 2nd ed. revised. Oxford, 1926.
- Stewart, Charles., History of Bengal, Calcutta, 1903 ed. Vāṅgavāsī Press.
- S.N. Bhattacharya : A History of Mughal North-Eastern Frontier Policy, Calcutta, 1929.
- Tod : Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, Vols. I, II and III. W. Crooke's edition Humphry Wilford; Oxford University Press, London etc. 1920.

1 (a) Papers

Montazur Rahman Tarafder : Husain Shah in Bengali Literature, published in Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. XXXII, No. I, pp. 56-80 (ed. N.N. Law. Calcutta, March, 1956).

The Dates of Husain Shah's Expeditions Against Kamrup and Orissa, published in The Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, Vol. XIX, pt. I, pp. 54-58 (ed. V.S. Agrawala and A.K. Narain, Benares, 1957).

The Frontiers of Bengal under the Husain Shahi Rulers, published in Bengal Past and Present, Vol. LXXVII, pt. I, pp. 40-49, Calcutta Jan. - June, 1958).

Ismail Chāsi and the Contemporary Bengal, published in Bengali Academy Patrika, 1364 B.S. No. 3, pp. 45-54, Dacca.

2. Economic and Social histories

Dinesh Chandra Sen : Vrhat Vāṅga, Vol. I and II, Calcutta, 1341-42 B.S.

J.N. Das Gupta : Bengal in the Sixteenth Century A.D., Calcutta University, 1914.

Kunwar Muhammad Ashraf : Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan (1200-1550 AD) in J.A.S.B., 1935, Vol. I, No. 2, article 4.

Moreland, W. H., India at the Death of Akbar, London, 1920.

The Agrarian System of Moslem India, Cambridge, 1929.

Nagendra Nath Bose : Vāṅger Jātiya Itihās, Vol. I, pt. I (Brāhman Kānda) and Vol. III (Pirāli Brāhman Vivaran), Calcutta, 1331 B.S.

Nihar Ranjan Ray : Vāṅgalir Itihās, ādi parva, Calcutta, 1359 B.S.

Ramesh Chandra Majumdar (editor) : History of Bengal, Vol. I, Dacca University, 1943.

Sukumar Sen : Prācin Vāṅglā O Vāṅgalī, Visvavidyā-samgraha, Calcutta, 1353 B.S.

Maddhya Yuger Vāṅglā O Vāṅgalī, Visvavidyā-samgraha, 1352.

Tamonash Chandra Das Gupta : Aspects of Bengali Society from Old Bengali Literature, Calcutta University, 1935.

Tapan Kumar Ray Choudhury : Bengal Under Akbar and Jahangir, Calcutta, 1953.

3. Literary and Cultural histories

(a) Books

- Abdul Karim Sahitya-visarad : Vāṅglā Prācīn Puthir Vivaran, pt. I, 2nd issue.
Vāṅgiya Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta, 1920 B.S.
- Arnold, Sir T. W., A Catalogue of Indian Miniatures. Vol. I and III; revised and
edited by J.V.S. Wilkinson. The Library of A. Chester Beatty, London, 1936.
- Brown, Percy., Indian Architecture (Islamic period), 2nd ed. Bombay.
- Creighton, H., Ruins of Gour, described and represented in 18 views. London, 1817.
- D.C. Bhattacharya : Vāṅglār Sārasvata Avadān, I, Calcutta, 1358 B.S.
- D. C. Sen : Vāṅgabhāsa O Sahitya, Calcutta, 1356 B.S.
History of Bengali Language and Literature, Calcutta, 1911.
- Elwin, Verrier : Folk-songs of Chhattishgarh, Bombay, 1946.
- Enamul Haq : Muslim Vāṅglā Sahitya, Decca, 1957.
- Ethe : Catalogue of ^{The} Persian Mss. in the Bodkian Library. Oxford. 1889.
- Fanibhūsan Tarkavāgīś : Nyāya Paricaya. Jadabpur; 1340 B.S.
- Fergusson, J., A History of Indian and Eastern Architecture, Vol. II, London, 1910.
- Foxstrangways, A.H., The Music of Hindostan, Oxford, 1914.
- Garret, G. T., Legacy of India, Oxford, 1938.
- Gray, Basil., Rajput Paintings; The Faber Gallery of Oriental Art. London.
The Art of India and Pakistan, London, 1949.
- Havell, E.B., Indian Architecture, Its Psychology, Structure and History From The
Earliest Muhammadan Invasion to The Present Day, 2nd ed. London, 1927.
- Hilli, Philip K., History of The Arabs, 4th ed. London, 1949.
- M. Ziauddin : A Monograph on Muslim Calligraphy reprinted from the Vieva-bhāratī
Quarterly, Calcutta, 1936.
- P. V. Kane : History of Dharmasāstra, I, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute,
Poona, 1930.
- Satish Chandra Vidyābhūsan : History of Indian Logic, Calcutta, 1921.
- S. Radhakrishnan : Indian Philosophy, Vol. II, London, etc. 1927.
- Sukumar Sen : Vāṅglā Sahityer Itihāsa, I, Calcutta, 1948.
Islāmi Vāṅglā Sahitya, Burdwan Sahityasabhā, 1358 B.S.

(b) P a p e r s

Abdul Karim Sahitya-visārad : Gaudesvarer adese racita Vidya-sundar; Sahitya Parisat Patrika, Calcutta, 1344 B.S., pp. 22-24.

Chintaharan Chakrabarti : Bengal's Contribution to Philosophical Literature, Indian Antiquary, 1929.

D.C. Bhattacharya : Date and Works of Rāyamukuta; Indian Historical Quarterly, XVII, 4.

M. M. Chakravarti : The History of Sarti in Bengal and Mithilā, J.A.S.B., 1915 Vol. XI.
History of Navya Nyāya in Bengal and Mithilā, J.A.S.B., 1915, XI.

M.A. Chagatai : Muslim Monuments of Ahmadābad Through Their Inscriptions, Bulletin of the Deccan College Institute, Vol. III, 1941-42.

R. C. Hazra : Rāyamukut Vrhaspati, Indian Historical Quarterly, XVII, 4.

Rai Krishnadas : An Illustrated Avadhi Me. of Laur - chanda In the Bhārat Kalābhavan, Lalit Kala, Nos. 1-2, 1955-56, Delhi.

4. Works on Religious sects and movements

Amir Ali : The Spirit of Islam, London, 1949.

A. Sobhan, John : Sufism, Its Saints and Shrines, Lucknow, 1938.

Biman Bihari Majumdar : Chaitanya-cariter Upādān, Calcutta University, 1939.

D. C. Sen : Chaitanya And His Age, Calcutta University, 1922.

Eramul Huq : Vange Sufi Prabhava, Calcutta, 1935.

Purva Pakistāne Islam, Dacca, 1948.

Jatindra Mohan Bhattacharya : Vāṅglar Vaisnav-bhāvāpanna Musalmān Kavi, Calcutta, 1356 B.S.

Kalyani Mallik : Nāthsampradāyer Itihās, Darsan O Sādhanaprenālī, Calcutta University, 1950.

Nāthpantha : Vivevidyā-saṅgraha, 1357 B.S.

Kennedy, M. T., The Chaitanya Movement, Y. M. C. A., Calcutta, 1925.

Norman Bose : The Fort - Gaitoria Sahajya Cult of Bengal, Calcutta

1930.

Nicholson : Studies in Islamic Mysticism, Cambridge, 1921.

History of Islam, London, 1914.

Islam in Legacy of Islam, ed. T. Arnold and A. Guillaume, London, 1940.

Shankar Das Gupta : Obscure Religious Cults As Background of Bengali Literature,

University, 1946.

via Sadhanar Akya, Viewavidya-sangraha, 1950 B.S.

Shah Wali Shah : Islamic Sufism, London, 1933.

Sukhattacharya : Tantra Paricaya, Viewbharati, 1950 B.S.

Sushil Das : Early History of Vaishnava Faith and Movement in Bengal, Calcutta,

Upendranath Bhattacharya : Vāṅglār Vāṅl O Vāṅl Gāṅ, Calcutta, 1966 B.S.

Monira Mohan Bose : The Post - Caitanya Sahajiyā Cult of Bengal, Calcutta University, 1930.

Nicholson, R.A., Studies in Islamic Mysticism, Cambridge, 1921.

The Mystics of Islām, London, 1914.

Mysticism in Legacy of Islām, ed. T. Arnold and A. Guillaume, London, 1949.

Shashbhusan Das Gupta : Obscure Religious Cults As Background of Bengali Literature, Calcutta University, 1946.

Haratiya Sadhanar Aikya, Visvavidya-sangraha, 1358 B.S.

Sikdar Iqbal Ali Shah : Islamic Sufism, London, 1933.

Sukhaya Bhattacharya : Tantra Paricaya, Visvabharati, 1359 B.S.

Sush Kumar De : Early History of Vaishnava Faith And Movement in Bengal, Calcutta, 1942.

Upema Nath Bhattacharya : Vāṅglār Vaul O Vaul Gaṅ, Calcutta, 1364 B.S.