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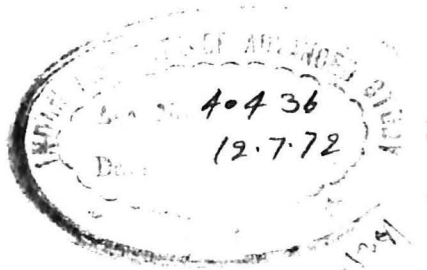
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ORIGIN OF THE CHĀHĀMĀNAS

by

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The Chāhāmānas are one of the most glorious dynasties among the Rajputs. Yet, we know very little about their origin. An attempt is being made here to discuss various theories relating to their origin. There are a number of theories associated with the origin of the Chāhāmānas. These theories may be classified under solar, lunar, Aindra, Vaishnava, foreign, Mālava Āgney and Brāhmanic origins.

In literary sources the theory of solar origin is mentioned in the Prithvirāja vijaya of the Poet Jayānaka of the last quarter of the twelfth century A. D.¹ Hammīra-Mahākāvya, written in the first quarter of the fifteenth century A.D. mentions that the progenitor of the Chāhamānas emanated from the orb of the Sun when Brahmā meditated upon the thousand rayed one. The Surjana³ Charita was written in the middle of the 16th century A.D. by a Bengali poet Chandra Sekhara, who flourished in the court of the Chauhan prince Surjana Rao of Ranathambhore, also informing that Brahmā while performing a sacrifice at Pushkara created Chāhamānas from the disc of the sun. The inscriptions of Adhāi-din-kā Jhonprā of Ajmer⁴ (probably of the time of Vigraharaja IV or near about) and the Bedlā inscription⁵ of Prithvirāja III also mention the Solar origin but the antiquity of these sources does not go beyond the third quarter of the twelfth century A.D.

G.H. Ojha⁶ held this theory but this theory has not been accepted by Dasharatha Sharma.⁷ His main arguments in refuting this

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1. Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. April and May 1873, p. 94.
 2. N.P.P. (New Ed.) Vol. XII, Part III, p. 264.
 3. I. H. Q., Dec., 1940, p. 746.
 4. G. H. Ojha : History of Rajputana, Vol. I, 1927 ed., p. 64, footnote 1.
 5. Dasharatha Sharma : Early Chauhan Dynasties, p. 5.
 6. History of Rajputana, Vol. I, 1927 ed., pp. 63-64.
 7. Early Chauhan Dynasties, p. 5.

theory are that the theory is out-dated for it does not connect Chāhamāna with the ancient solar dynasty of the Ikshvakus. His next argument is that the Chāhamāns are said to have been born after the Kaliyuga had set in and the Buddha was considered as an Avatāra of Vishnu and the Mlechchhas had begun invading India. R. B. Singh is the latest champion of this theory. He has interpreted the evidences beyond their usual meaning. He has argued that the Aindra origin in Sevādī Copper plate⁸ inscription of 1119 A.D. is a proof of solar origin because Indra is said to be one of the twelve Ādityas⁹ (the sun). In the interpretation of the Bijolia Rock inscription¹⁰ he has taken much liberty with the text. The text reads 'विप्रः श्रीवत्सगोत्रेभूत्' It would ordinarily mean that in the gotra of Vatsa was born a Vipra (Brāhmana). A.K. Vyas¹¹ has also interpreted it in the above manner but he has equated Vipra with Mahideva and the latter term with Mahārāja. Dasharatha Sharma¹² says that there is not a single instance in the vast range of Sanskrit literature and epigraphy where the word vipra can conclusively be shown to have been used for a Kshatriya. R.B. Singh¹³ amends the text and makes *vipra* as an adjective of *Srī Vatsa gotra* and then quotes Nighantu and Rigveda¹⁴ to convey the sense that the word vipra means a sage. But Vedic literature is clear about it that a vipra may be a sage but a sage may necessarily, not be a vipra. The Sundhā hill inscription¹⁵ of 1262 A.D. also connects Chāhmānas with vatsa and records that there was the hero Chāhmāna who had the lustre of the affluxion of the eye of Vatsa full with glee and the Mount Abu inscription¹⁶ of 1320 A.D. says that when the solar and lunar dynasties had come to an end, the holy Vatsa, with the help of the moon brought about the creation of a new race of warriors, the Chāhumāna race. R.B. Singh¹⁷ holds that the Vatsa of these inscriptions was born in the solar race of the Aryans and hence Chahāmanās were the Kshatriyas of the solar race.

8. E. I., XI, p. 302, verse 2.

9. History of the Chāhamānas, p. 11.

10. J.A.S.B., 1886, Vol.LV, Pt. I, pp. 41-43, Verse 12; Early Chauhan Dynasties, p. 9.

11. E.I., XXVI, pp. 89-90.

12. Early Chauhan Dynasties, p. 96, note 27.

13. History of The Chahamanas, p. 41.

14. Ibid., p. 41, footnote 66.

15. E.I., IX, p. 74. verse 4.

16. E.I., IX, p. 79. verses 6-10.

17. History of the Chahamanas, p. 11.

There are difficulties in his suppositions. Firstly there is no sage named Vatsa in the Ikshvāku dynasty¹⁸ and secondly Vatsa is the Rishi of their gotra and not their progenitor. It seems that the theory is based on extraneous arguments.

The theory of the lunar origin is based on Lunsligadeva's inscription of 1820 A.D.¹⁹. As shown above, it simply says that Vatsa brought about the creation of the race with the help of moon and thus it does not make them the scions of the lunar race. The other evidence is that of the Hānsī stone inscription of Prithvirāja II. The passage concerned has been translated by Wilson²⁰ as "born in the race of the descendants of the Moon". Tod translated the same as "sprung of the race of Chahamanas"²¹. Tod's translation is appropriate as it is in accordance with the text²². Tod²³ quoting Chand says that of the thirty-six royal races the Agnikula is the greatest : the rest were born of woman; these were created by the Brahmanas. In their gotrācharya he mentions them of Somavansa. The very fact that they were created by Brahmanas would go against their being lunar Kshatriyas of old. Harnām Singh Chauhan²⁴ connects the Chāhamānas with Panchāla on the basis of the identification of Ahichhatra of their inscriptions with the Ahichhatra in Panchāla and as a corollary of the same believes them to be the scions of Rājā Drupada of Mahabharata. The whole argument is based on the supposition because not a single inscription of the Chāhamānas has been found in the ancient Panchāla deśa. Thus the lunar theory is later than the solar one and rests on very shaky grounds.

The Aindra theory based upon Sevāḍī Copper plate inscription of 1119 A.D. stands already discussed above as the scholars²⁵ do not think it proper to suppose that the writer ever meant Indra when he used word Prāchīdikpati. He might have meant 'sun' by it. It, therefore, does not deserve a separate notice.

18. The Purana Text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age. Ed. 1962, p. 9.

19. See footnote 16.

20. Asiatic Researches, Vol. XV, p. 444.

21. Transaction of the Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. I, p. 154.

22. चाहमानन्वये जतः पृथ्वीराजो महीम (प) तिः । I. A. Vol. XLI, p. 19.

23. Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, Vol. II, 1957 ed, p. 357.

24. Aryan Vijaya, pp. 480-82

25. Early Chauhan Dynasties, p. 5; and History of the Chahamanas, p. 11.

Vaishnava origin issue is allied with the traditional Fire origin quoted by Tod,²⁶ according to whom Vishnu formed an image (pootlī) and threw it into the fire and it was from that process that came up a four armed figure like him and it was called the Chatur-bhuja Chauhan. The whole story seems to be based on mere conjecture because none but a supernatural being has four arms. It appears that the bard wanted to give some meaning to the word Chāhumān and this theory was propounded by him to substantiate his guess.

The theory of foreign origin has appealed much to the European and Indian scholars. Tod²⁷ was the first man to call them of the Takshac race. According to him Takshac²⁸ appears to be the generic term of the race from which the various Scythic tribes, the early invaders of India, branched off. But this is simply hypothetical. The Scytho-parthian origin of the Agnivamsis in general and that of the Chahamanas in particular suggested by Tod²⁹ has been ably disproved by R. B. Singh.³⁰ The main objections of Singh are that according to Tod the regenerated castes are the Scythians, who fought the battles of the Brahmanas and the Daityas against whom they fought are also called the Scythians by him, this would mean the battle of Brahmanic Scythians against non-Brahmanic Scythians of which we have no evidence. Secondly, so far as the Nordic features of the two races are concerned these are common to both Indo-Persians and Scythians. Thirdly we do not find the tumuli, containing the ashes and bow of the Rajputs in the Rajput period. Fourthly the bardic songs are not the gift of the Sakas but are the common property of all warrior races.

A. M. T. Jackson³¹ was the first to suggest that the so-called Agnivamśis were Gurjars. He says "taking this fact in connection with the prevalence of the surnames pavār and Chavān among the Gujars in such remote provinces as the Punjab and Khāndesh, it seems obvious that these two tribes and therefore also the two other Agnikula races, the Parihars and the Solankis are if not of Gurjara

26. Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, Vol. II, p. 356

27. Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, Vol. II, p. 80.

28. Ibid., pp. 85-86.

29. Tod., Op. Cit., Vol. II, p. 357.

30. Ibid., pp. 21-23.

31. Bombay Gazetteer, Vol. I, Pt. I, 1896, p. 468.

origin, at all events members of the great horde of northern invaders, whom the Gurjjaras led. The agreement between this theory and the Agnikula legends of Abu need only be pointed out to be admitted. The origin of the Modern Rajput races has always been one of the puzzles of Indian history. This suggestion seems to offer at least a partial solution".

John Campbell has taken a clue from Jackson and argues that "the fact that well informed Arab writers believed the Khazars to be Georgians, a view which still finds support, may explain, by an eastward movement of the South Armenian and Median Khazars, the Georgian tradition that towards the close of the fifth century their great king Vakhtang (A.D. 469-500) led an army to India"³². But he himself is not convinced of the Gujar origin of the Rajputs as he says "the direct evidence is not strong that the four tribes of Agnikulas, which were reborn in the fire pit of Mount Abu to help the Brāhmanas against the Buddhists and their foreign allies, were Gujjaras"³³.

Baden Powell holds that the clan names of the Rajputs and Jats in Punjab suggest that when the numerous Bala, Indo-scythian, Gujar and Huna tribes settled down, the leading military and priestly houses were accepted as Rajputs while, who frankly took to cultivation, became Jats³⁴.

William Crooke³⁵ is of the opinion that the group denoted by the name of Kshatriya or the Rajput depended on status rather than on descent and it was possible for foreigners to be introduced into these tribes without any violation of the prejudices of caste, which was then only partially developed. He believes that the fire-pit origin was a step towards the purification of these foreigners. V.A. Smith³⁶ agrees with this theory.

D. R. Bhandarkar,³⁷ on the basis of his reading Chahaman in place of Vahman in Vasudeva's inscription takes the Chahaman dynasty to be of Khazar origin. Dasharatha Sharma³⁸ is of the

32. Bombay Gazetteer, Vol. IX, 1901 ed., p. 476.

33. Ibid., p. 483.

34. J.R.A.S., 1899, p. 546.

35. Tod : A.A.R., Crooke's Edn., Introduction, p. xxxii

36. Early History of India, 3rd edn., p. 412.

37. I.A., XLI, pp. 25-29.

38. Op. Cit., p. 8.

opinion that in the Pahlavi script 'V' and 'ch' are never ambiguous and 'V' cannot be read 'ch' or vice versa.

We have nothing to say against the theory of the foreigners finding a place in Hindu caste system. That is always there in a living and growing organisation. We know of a Śātakarni marrying a śaka princess³⁹ (C. 150 A.D.) and the Guhilot prince Allata (953 A.D.) marrying a Huna Hariya Devi⁴⁰. The question before us is whether the Chahamanas as a whole belonged to a foreign tribe. We have no evidence to substantiate it. As far as the Khazar origin of the four Agnivamshi clans is concerned, it may be said that the Khazars were themselves pressed to the west by the Huns and hence the Georgian tradition of their eastern march supported by no other evidence cannot be accepted at its face value. Then Juzrs or Gurjaras of India had their homeland on the river Jozri in Western Rajasthan⁴¹. As far as Jackson's argument of Gujaras known as Chauhans and Pawars is concerned we would like to quote the analogies from the census report of Marwar of 1891 where Gauda Brahmanas are called Gurjar-Gaudas after their migration from Gaur desa to Gurjara land⁴² and the Khandelwāl Brahmanas, though their original habitat was Khandelā, migrated to Ajmer and were called Ajmerā Khandelwals and those who migrated to Sāmbhar were called Sambharās⁴³. Thus Gujars of Gurjaratra, when migrating to different places would have additional adjectives to qualify themselves. Thus we see that the Gurjara appellation does not prove Khazar or foreign origin of the Chāhamānas.

D.R. Mankad⁴⁴ says that the word Chāhamāna looks foreign in origin. The ending māna, he thinks, can be connected with the ending Vāhana (as in Sālivāhana) Vāna-māna. This vāna-vāhana, he thinks, is connected with the ending pāna as in Nahapāna. Vāna-pāna-māna are interchangeable phonetically but he does not stop here and says this pāna can be connected with endings like 'pheru' and

39. Rudradamans Ins. of 150 A.D. E I., VIII, pp. 44-47. E I., X, Appendix, p. 103, No. 994.

40. G H. Ojha : History of Rajputana, Vol. I, p. 55; I.A., XXXIX, p. 191.

41. The Juzrs of Jozri or the Gurjaras of Mandore, an article by the author of this paper in the University of Rajasthan, Studies, Arts Section 1962-63, pp. 1-23.

42. Report Mardumshumari Raj Marwar, 1891, A.D. p. 199.

43. Ibid, pp. 198-99.

44. Bharatiya Vidya VI 5 (N.S.).

'phana' as in Gondophernes, Xenophan and he adds that these name endings were once prevalent in the countries to the north-west of India and there by suggests the Chāhamānas' connection with the countries to the north-west of India. In the same breath he says that the Puranas name a king Śākyamāna of the Mahiṣas at the times of the rise of the Guptas. He suggests that this Śākyamāna (Śakka-Śakha-Chāha-māna) or a namesake of his might have been the ancestor who gave the name of this tribe.

His first theory suggests a foreign origin whereas the second suggests some relations with the Sakyas but both the theories are based upon sounding of the name-ending without taking into consideration the fore part of the name and then both the theories have no facts to substantiate Chahamanas connection with either of the two.

R.B. Singh⁴⁵ has suggested a new origin for the Chahamanas. On the basis of the fact that the Malavas were settled in the Ajmer-Tonk-Mewar area he has thought that it is highly probable that the Chahamanas who carved out for themselves a principality round Sambhar and Ajmer in the middle of the sixth century A.D. were one of these people. He has taken his clue from Tod⁴⁶ who opines that the Mallani is (or rather was) one of the Chauhan Śākhā and may be the Mallois who opposed Alexander at the confluent arms of the Indus. There are a number of objections to this theory. Firstly Malavas cannot be connected with Ajmer on the basis of any Archaeological or literary evidence. Secondly Chauhans did not originate or start their royal career from Ajmer. Thirdly all septs of Chauhans trace their origin from Sambhar and the Malavas cannot be connected with Sambhar. Fifthly Mālaṇava Śākhā⁴⁷ took its name from Māldeo the grandson of Dungarsingh, the second man in the line of the chiefs of Padiva (Sirohi district). This Dungarsingh was son of Gajesingh⁴⁸ who was sixth from Deoraja⁴⁹, the founder of the Deorā Śākhā, of Sirohi and Deoraj himself was the third from Kīrtipāl⁵⁰ the founder of the Sonagra śākhā of the Chauhans. Kirtipal was the third son of Ānala⁵¹ the ruler of Nadol. The founder of the

45. Op. cit., pp. 45-46.

46. Op. Cit., p. 358, footnote 2.

47. Chauhan Kula Kalpadruma, Pt. II, p. 201.

48. Ibid., Part II, p. 86.

49. Ibid., Part I, p. 210.

50. Ibid., Part I, p. 166.

51. Early Chauhan Dynasties, p. 142.

Nādol dynasty was Lakshmaṇa,⁵² who was the son of Vākpatirāja of Śākambhari. Thus, the whole hypothesis of Malava origin loses its ground.

The fire origin of the Chahamanas is referred to in the Prithviraj-
 rajaso of Chand,⁵³ Hammiraraso of Jodharaja,⁵⁴ Nensi-ki-khyat
 edited by Pandit Ramkarna,⁵⁵ Vamsabhaskara of Suryamalla
 Misrana,⁵⁶ Chauhan-kula-Kalpadruma of Desai (L.D.)⁵⁷ History of
 the Chauhans of Mainpuri,⁵⁸ and the Sisana inscription of the
 Chauhans of Bedla.⁵⁹

Dasharatha Sharma⁶⁰ is of the view that the bards have taken
 their clue from Navasāhsānkacharita of Padmagupta,⁶¹ where Para-
 maras are said to have been born from the fire-pit. He argues that if the
 bards would have known that the story of the Paramaras is based on
 a similar legend in the Ramayan regarding the Śakas, the Pahlavas,
 the Kambojas and some other non-aryan tribes, who are said to have
 been created by Vasiṣṭha to fight against Visvamitra, the snatcher of
 his cow, Kamadhenu, they would have been astonished. If we quote
 Dasharatha Sharma⁶² himself the story in the Ramayana is that by
 the order of Vasistha Kamadhenu created with her own clung and
 urine, the Pahlavas, the Kiratas, the Śakas, the Barbers, the Yavanas,
 the Mlechchhas, the Haritas and the Kambojas. Vasiṣṭha, Kama-
 dhenu and Visvamitra are common in the story of the origin of the
 Paramaras and the Pahlavas etc., but still there is no unanimity in
 views. Paramaras were born out of the sacrificial pit as a result of
 the oblations offered with a holy hymn, whereas the Pahlavas etc.
 who were not ranked among the Indian Aryan fold are said to have
 been out of the cow dung and urine. The account in the Ramayana
 would lead us to believe that the Pahlavas etc. were simply mercen-

52. Ibid., p. 120.

53. Prithvirajraso Part, pp. 45-51, probably written in the time of Prithviraj
 but acquired its present volume by 17th century A.D.

54. Hammiraraso composed in 1728 A.D. (Nagari Pracharini Ed.), pp. 8-14.

55. Ibid., p. 181.

56. Ibid., p. 515.

57. Part I, p. 6.

58: Chauhan-Chandrika, pp. 41-43.

59. Early Chauhan Dynasties, p. 4.

60. Ibid., p. 4.

61. Sarga XI, V. V. 64-76.

62. Rajasthan Bharti III, No. 2, p. 4.

aries of the wealth represented by the cow where as the Paramaras born from the fire of the Brahmana were the representative's of religion. Another contemporary of Padmagupta Halāyudha, the author of Pingalasūtravṛtti⁶³ has mentioned Raja Munja of the Paramara dynasty as belonging to Brahma-Kshatra-kula which would also lead us to believe that they were the Kshatriyas of Brahmanic origin. Thus fire origin seems to be a symbol of Brahmanic origie. The brahmanas who kept a regular fire were called Agnihotris, and the Agneya vamsa reminds us of their connection with the former. In the book of the bard of the Devara Chauhans ⁴ Raja Chāhamāna or Chāha is said to be born from the sacrificial pit (anala-kunḍa). In a separate Chapter about the history of the eastern Chauhans it is written that in ancient times the kings among the Chahamans were called Risiraja.⁶⁵ It seems that the tradition dies hard and the bards continue the old story and the Chauhan rulers for whom the book was written under their own patronage perhaps did not disagree but took pride in it.

In continuation of the fire-origin we take up the priestly origin of the Chahamanas. It is based upon three inscriptions. Firstly Samanta, the earliest chahamana prince mentioned in records after Vasudeva, has been called a Brahmana (vipra) of the Vatsa gotra in the Bijolia inscription.⁶⁶ of King Somesvaradeva dated 1170 A.D. On the basis of this D.R. Bhandarkar⁶⁷ accepted the Chahamanas to be the Brahmanas but identifying Vāsudeva with the person of the same name on the coin he has taken them to be of foreign origin. The second part of his belief has been discussed and rejected, above. Bijolia inscription is the main evidence in support of this theory. This evidence is earlier in date than the literary and epigraphic sources which trace, the origin of Chahamanas from the solar race. The Sundha hill inscription⁶⁸ says that formerly there was the hero Chahamana who had the lustre of the affluxion of the eye of Vatsa filled with glee. If read in the light of the above inscription it may give the same meaning. The third is the Mount Abu inscription of Lunligadeva of 1320 A.D.⁶⁹ which informs us that when the solar

63. ब्रह्मक्षत्रकुलीनः प्रलीनसामन्तचक्रनुत्तरणः ।
सकलसुर्कतैकपुञ्जः श्रीमान्मुञ्जश्चिरजयति ॥

64. Chauhan Kula Kalpabruna, Part I, p. 6.

65. Ibid., p. 8.

66. J.A.S.B., 1886, Vol. LV, Pt. I, pp. 41-43, Verse 12; Early Chauhan Dynasties, p. 9.

67. I.A., XLI, pp. 25-29.

68. E.I., IX, p. 74, V. 4.

69. E.I., IX, p. 79, VV. 6-10.

and lunar races had come to an end, the holy Vachchha (i. e. Vatsa) with the help of the moon brought about the creation of a new race of warriors, the Chahamana race. The inscription is a conclusive evidence of the fact that the holy Vatsa created a new race of warriors. If we read it with special reference to the information given in the Bijolia inscription it will be clear that some Brahmanas of Vatsa gotra took up to arms (śastra) in place of the books (śāstra). So far as the help of the moon is concerned, we may interpret it in the sense that being Brahmanas they recognised Soma as their ruler (somo-smākam-brāhmaṇānām-rājā). This vedic belief sometimes led scholars and others to believe that they were of lunar origin (soma-vamsa). The above view is also supported by Khyam Khan Raso of the Muslim Chauhan author Jan⁷⁰. Jan makes Chahuvan a descendant of Vatsa of the Jamdaguya gotra; and we have seen that the Sundha inscription says that the Chahamana had the lustre of the afflusion of the eye of Vatsa full with glee. Thus Kyyamkhan Raso supports the above arguments of the Bramanic origin of the Chahmanas.

Before drawing any final conclusions from the above in the matter, it is necessary to trace the original home of the Chauhanas. The earliest inscription of the Chahamanas is of 756 A.D. of Broach of Bhartri-vaḍḍha II,⁷¹ a feudatory of Nāgāvaloka I of the imperial Gurjara Pratihara line. Broach was ruled by Gurjara Jayabhata III upto 735 A.D.⁷² The Navasari inscription of A.D. 738⁷³ refers to the defeat of the Tajiks at the hand of Avanijanāśraya after they had defeated the Saindhavas, the Kachchhelas, the Saurashtras, the Chavotakas, the Mauryas and the Gurjaras. The Saindhavas of the Navasari plate may be the rulers of Kiraj, who had rebelled against Junaid; the Kachchhellas of Kachchha, the Saurashtras of Surashtra, the Chavotakas of Bhinamala, the Mauryas of Marumāḍa (the desert area of Marwar), the Gurjars of eastern Marwar, Malwa and Broach.⁷⁴ In Futhu-1-Buldan, Al Bikeduri,⁷⁵ a writer of the ninth century mentions, that Junaid, after killing the sons of Dahir and suppressing the revolts of Kiraj, sent his officers to Marumāḍa Mandala, Dahnaj and Barus (Broach). He further informs that he sent a force against

70. V.V. 45-48 (No. 13, Rajasthan Puratatva Granthamala, Jaipur).

71. E.I., XII, p. 201.

72. Bombay Gazetteer, 1896 Vol. I, pt. I, p. 117.

73. Bombay Gazetteer, 1896, Vol. I, Pt. I, p. 109, f. n. 2.

74. U.P.H. Society Vol. VIII, Pt. I, pp. 25-26.

75. E. & D., Vol. I, pp. 125-26.

Ujjain and also sent Habid, son of Marra, against the country of Maliba. According to him they made incursions against Ujjain and attacked and burnt the suburbs of Baharimad. Further he informs us that Junaid conquered Al Bailaman and Jurz. It mentions all the territories mentioned above and adds Dahanaj to them. This Dahanaj has been identified by us with Dadhimati-kshetra (in Nagour District of Rajasthan).⁷⁶ Thus in the whole conflict from the border of Sindh in the west to Aravallis in the east and Navasari in the south we have no mention of the Chahamanas upto 738 A.D. either in the local inscriptions or in the foreign references of the period. Thus the territories of Nagour district cannot be the original place of the Chahamanas as it was the inhabitation of the Dahias from the beginning of the 7th century A.D. The area from Mandore to Merta was the original homeland of the Juzrs and by the beginning of the eighth century A.D. they had occupied Malwa and Broach. Thus this Bhartrivahḍḍa does not seem to be the native of the soil. It is just possible that in their resistance against the Arabs this family helped the family of Nāgāvaloka (of Juzr origin) and thus got the territory of Broach. We do not know how Jayabhata IV was dislodged from power, perhaps he lost against some Arab attack and to strengthen the borders, this family was brought in by Nāgāvaloka. The Chahamanas of Broach as well as of Harsha (Sikar) stone inscription⁷⁸ of 1056 V.S. (999 A.D.) were feudatories of the imperial Pratiharas and Dadhichika (Dahiyaka) Chachha of Kinsariya stone inscription of 1056 V.S. (999 A.D.)⁷⁹ is a feudatory of Durlabharaja, the grandson of Vākpatiraja Chahmana. Thus, the territory of the Chahamanas must be near the territory of the Juzrs on one side and the Dahiyas on the other side. The Harsha inscription shows that Ananta province (the tract near Sikar) was the Chauhans old seat of power in 1030 V.S. The Bijolia inscription of 1226 V.S. (1170 A.D.)⁸⁰ regards Sāmanta as an Ananta Sāmanta and also mentions his originally being at Ahichhatrapura. Dasharatha Sharma thinks Ahichhatra to be an appropriate capital for Anantagochara, i.e., the land of Ananta, the lord of the Nagas.⁸¹ The description in the *Prithvirājavijaya* puts Vasudeva's capital a little to the east of

76. Rajasthan University Studies, 1963-64, p. 34.

77. Rajasthan University Studies, 1963-64, p. 34.

78. I.A., 1913, pp. 57-64; E. & D., Vol. II, pp. 115-30.

79. I.A., 1913, p. 267.

80. J A S.B., 1886, Vol. LV, Pt. I, pp. 14 ff; & E. I., XXVI., pp. 83 ff.

81. E.C.D., p. 11.

Śākambhari (Sambhar). Tradition⁸² maintains that they moved northwards and conquered Delhi from the Tomars. The Harsha inscription also states that Chandanraja son of Guvaka II killed Tomara chief Rudra. This would put them between Delhi and Ajmer in their climax. Nripa or Naradeva the successor of Sāmanta of Ahichhatrapura, is described to have been reigning at Purnatalla. There are two villages with which it can be identified one is Pundlota near Degana and another is Pundla near Merta both of them are in Merta Tehsil. This would show that the boundary of the Chahamanas touched the boundary of the original homeland of the Juzrs. Vasudeva's capital was to the east of Sambhar, Ananta territory is to the north and east of it and Purnatalla is to the south of it. Thus Sambhar seems to be the nucleus of the Chahamanas. It is also corroborated by the fact that the part of their territory was known as Jangaldesa.⁸³ It is the present territory of Bikaner which lies to the north-west of Sambhar. The Chahamanas are also referred to have been existing as supreme rulers of Sapadalaksha.⁸⁴ A good number of Sapadalakshas are mentioned in Kumarikakhand of Skandapurana in which Śākambhar Sapadalaksha is one among many. Thus the Śākambhari was the territory around which lay their two capitals Ahichhatra and Purnatalla and their two territories Ananta and Jangala. It is also the territory from which all the Chahamanas of this day without exception trace their origin. There is one regional deity to which all the Chahamanas pay reverence and it is goddess Śākambhari.

All this would lead to the conclusion that the four dimensions of Sakambhari were theirs and they lived on its four sides (चहुमान) and that is why they were called Chahumāna. Chahumāna was a geographical name of the people living on the four sides of Sambhar lake. They were surrounded by the Tomaras in the north, the Juzrs in the south and east, and the Dahias in the west. The Chahumans are to-day found among the Rajputs, sculptors, tailors, printers and roasters etc. All of them are named after the territory and have no social intercourse with each other. The Chahamanas, who ruled Sakambhari, as shown above were Vipra (Brahmana) who took up arms (śāstra) in place of the scriptures (śāstra) to defend their reli-

82. J.P.A.S.B., XLIII, p. 108, Rajasthan Bharati, III, Parts III & IV, p. 17 ff. & Prithviraja Raso also speaks of Chauhans having reached Delhi from Ajmer.

83. Kirtikaumudi of Somesvara of 12th Century A.D. Canto II, Verse 46.

84. Tawney, Prabandha Chintamani of Merutunga of V.S. 1361, pp. 188 and 190 and Somesvara's Surathotsava Kavya, Canto XV, V. 22.

gion against the Mlechchhas. These Mlechchhas were neither Buddhists nor Muslims of late but the Hunas who had become a danger to the Indian state and culture in the sixth century A.D. According to the ordinance of Manu the Brahmanas had to take up to arms in difficult times (आपत्काल) but as the years rolled on they married among the Ksatrihyas and passed as Kshatriyas. Their Agnikula theory is nothing else but a reminder of the fact that they were once Agnihotri (Vipras) and had to take up to arms. The same was the case with so many other Rajput clans of Rajasthan which was badly ravaged by the Mlechchha Huns. Thus the Chahumana is a geographical name in our opinion which was adopted by a number of communities living there and it is far fetched to believe that so many different communities originated from one and the same man and specially when his own origin is shrouded in mystery. This change of caste on the basis of profession was the sign of life of Indian Culture. It was only after the advent of the Muslims that the Hindu tortoise clasped its hands and feet with its neck under its own shield and rigidly stuck to the past ground, refusing any step forward towards development and progress.

Chahamanas, to sum up, inspite of several controversial theories having been associated with their origin, had an important role to play in the early mediaeval history of Rajasthan.

“THE THEORY OF WAR IN THE MAHABHARATA”

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The unstable political condition in ancient India rendered war inevitable. The war is one of the traditionally recognised six modes of foreign policy¹ (Sadgunya). The Mahabharata proclaims the glory and justification of war on various grounds :—

(i) *Fighting ordained by the Ksatriya's Svadharma* :—The Mahabharata repeatedly emphasizes the Ksatriya's obligation of fighting in accordance with the inexorable law of his order (Svadharma). War is extolled as the Ksatriya's highest dharma. “The duties of the Ksatriyas”, says Bhishma, “consist in laying down, their lives in battle. When the Ksatriya slays in battle his sires, grandsires, his sons, relatives and friends, who are engaged in unrighteous acts, that is declared to be his duty (dharma). A Ksatriya, when challenged to fight, should always fight, since fighting has been declared by Manu (in his case) to lead to both heaven and worldly success.”²

(ii) *Sublimation of war as a lofty act of religious merit* :—The Mahabharata, like other Indian texts, holds out the promise of heavenly abode to the king and the warriors who die in battle³. The battle is likened to a holy sacrifice (yajna) fraught with high spiritual merit for which every armed warrior qualifies by facing the enemy troops⁴. For a Ksatriya, the sacrifice of his body in the battle is held to be the highest renunciation⁵.

(iii) *Justification of War on the ground of social utility* :—The Santiparvan seems to justify war on the ground of social utility when it states : As the reclamer of a field plucks up both the weeds and the corn without, however destroying the latter, so the kings, says Bhishma, by their fighting destroy those that deserve destruction and preserve the rest. Such extensive destruction, however, only causes the growth and advancement of other creatures⁶.

(iv) *Concept of war-preparedness as the best guarantee of peace* :—Bhisma quotes a dictum attributed to Usanas, the great master of statecraft : “As a snake swallows mice living in holes, so the Earth swallows these two viz , a King who does not fight (an invader), a brahman who does not go on a journey (for acquiring knowledge)”⁷. The same dictum occurs in several other books of the Epic⁸. At one place its authorship is ascribed to Brihaspati in place of Usanas⁹. It will be seen that this dictum remarkably anticipates the modern idea that preparation for war is the best guarantee of peace.

(v) *Krisna's justification of war on pragmatic, social and metaphysical grounds* :—The most emphatic justification of righteous warfare occurs in the Bhagvadgita. Krisna first justifies war on the very pragmatic grounds of the attainment of concrete gains, the acquisition of booty, territory,¹⁰ honour and fame¹¹. According to Krisna the greater justification of war consists in the fulfilment of one's duty as a Ksatriya¹². For there is nothing more meritorious to a Ksatriya than righteous warfare ordained by his svadharma¹³. The most notable contribution of the Gita to the Indian political philosophy lies in its metaphysical justification of political violence by the arguments of the schools of Vedanta and Sankhya. These arguments are: (i) the immortality of the human soul (ii) the metaphysics of non-dualism (iii) the man is only an apparent doer of actions, God himself being the real doer of everything¹⁴.

(vi) *Justification of war as a retaliatory move* :—The possession of full enemy character by a combatant provided full justification for violence in retaliation. Bhisma categorically states that the king should kill even his own priest if he rushes with an uplifted weapon, to strike at him¹⁵. In the Gita Krisna contends that the Kauravas, though relations of the Pandavas, are assailable in war since they have assumed a full enemy character by their actions¹⁶.

From the above it follows that the ancient Indian theorists placed the highest premium upon the warrior community as the custodian of peace and order. The exaltation of warfare in Indian thought seems to have been inspired by sound historical and political factors. Since ancient India was divided into a large number of States frequently at war with one another, a constant war-preparedness alone could guarantee the independence of a State. Perhaps there was also

a deeper reason behind this ceaseless advocacy of war in ancient India. The vision of an all-India empire always inspired the Indian writers and statesmen who held up the ideal of world conquest (Digvijaya) and territorial conquest before every ruler.¹⁷

PACIFICISM VERSUS MILITARISM

Though righteous warfare (Dharmayuddha) was extolled, rank militarism did not always find favour with the ancient Indian writers. The Mahabharata repeatedly urges that before actually resorting to war, a ruler should try to gain his objective by employing the three expedients of Sama, Dana and Bhada.¹⁸ The Santiparvan insists that the war should be resorted to only when all endeavours after peace fail, for a victory achieved by battle is not only very inferior but is also dependent on caprice or destiny.¹⁹ In another place the sage Vamadeva quoted in the santiparvan says: "The king should win victory without battle. Victory achieved in war is highly reprehensible."²⁰

Positive Condemnation of War : The Epic not only stresses the policy of peace as against that of war but also contains a positive condemnation of war which is a rare phenomenon in Indian literature. While advocating the employment of other expedients short of war, Bhishma emphasizes the brutal character of war: "At the very sight of a hostile force, fear paralyses the timid, and the limbs of those that go to join it, as also of him that is conquering and perspire profusely. The entire country that is the seat of war becomes agitated and afflicted with all its mobile and immobile population. The very marrow of embodied creatures scorched with the heat of weapons, languishes with pain".²¹ In the Udyogaparvan Yudhisthira presents a more graphic picture of the evils of war: "In a war, both sides suffer by sustaining heavy losses in men and money and even the victor appears as defeated in consequence of his loss in men and money. Under all circumstances war is a sin against humanity."²² The speaker next refers to the pernicious effects of war on society. War is said to devour the best members of the community. Those who are quite, modest, virtuous and compassionate are slain in battle, while they that are wicked always escape.²³ The speaker next refers to the psychological strain caused by the war: war remains an evil even after victory for it causes ceaseless mental agony to the victor and the vanquished alike. War does not end the state of hostility

between the combatants but creates a perpetual animosity between them.²⁴ The speaker further illustrates his point by drawing a striking contrast between the blessings of peace and the evils of war : He that is peaceful sleeps in happiness, giving up all thoughts of victory and defeat, whereas he that has provoked the hostility always sleeps in misery with, indeed, an anxious heart, as if sleeping with a snake in the same room.²⁵ The speaker further illustrates the brutal and inhuman character of war by likening it to a dog-kennel. Dogs bark, counterbark and fight with one another for the sake of meat, In the contest the stronger dog defeats his antagonist and takes its meat. It is the same with men when they fight; there is no difference whatever.²⁶

It will thus appear that the ancient Indian theorists, though they recognised war as a mode of policy, were opposed to rank militarism. Pacificism was admired as an ideal worth practising in the sphere of inter-state relations. In ancient India there were some schools of thought which gave their unqualified support to the ideology of peace and strongly urged the pacific orientation of diplomacy. A faint echo of such schools is, however, preserved in the discourses of Vamadeva and Yudhisthira which bring into clear relief the brutal and inhuman character of war and amply exhibit the Indian thinkers' deep concern for peace.

LAWS OF WARFARE

Since war was considered an unavoidable evil for the preservation and expansion of the state, the ancient Indian writers tried to mitigate the horrors and atrocities of war by framing a just and human code for its regulation. The Bhismaparvan states that before resorting to war, a code of the laws of warfare was mutually agreed upon between the Kauravas and the Pandava's²⁷.

1. *A distinction between the righteous and unrighteous war :—* A distinction between a righteous and unrighteous war is a cardinal feature of this code. It is only a righteous war—a war fought in accordance with the injunctions of the Sastras, that is accepted as a legitimate mode of behaviour amongst the states. The victory achieved through unrighteous war is denounced as the most reprehensible.²⁸ The epic theorists strongly disapprove of the application of unrighteous means for winning a war. "The king," it is stated,

“should never desire to subjugate the Earth by unrighteous means, even if such subjugation would make him the sovereign of the whole Earth.”²⁹ What king is there that would rejoice after obtaining victory by unfair means? A victory stained by unrighteousness is uncertain and never leads to heaven. Such a victory weakens both the king and the Kingdom.³⁰ Bhishma quotes Manu’s saying that the battles should be fought fairly. The righteous should always act righteously towards those that are righteous. If a Ksatriya, whose duty is to fight righteously, wins a victory by unrighteous means, he becomes sinful. Even he that is wicked should be subdued by fair means. It is better to lay down life itself in the observance of righteousness than to win victory by sinful means.³¹

It will be seen that the epic theorists’ view of a differentiation between righteous and unrighteous war anticipates the Grotian concept of just and unjust battle hundreds of years ago.³²

*Disapproval of an unlimited violence in war :—*The Santiparvan strongly deprecates the use of an unlimited violence in war. It does not behave one, it is stated, to deal heavy blows at the enemy, or to deceive him; people often die of such hard blows.³³ This view, it will be noticed, anticipates the regulation of the Hague Peace Conference that “only so much stress may be put upon an enemy as is sufficient to destroy his power of resistance.”³⁴

*No Molestation of non-combatants (Ayuddhamanas) :—*The most remarkable principle of warfare in ancient India was that the non-warring elements should not be interfered with in the course of a battle. The Santiparvan enumerates certain categories of persons who should not be killed or molested under any circumstances: “No one should slay those that are asleep or thirsty or fatigued, or those whose accoutrements have fallen away, or one that has set his heart on final emancipation, or one that is flying away, or one that is walking (unprepared) along a road, or one engaged in drinking or eating or one that is mad, or one that is insane, or one that has been wounded mortally, or one that has been exceedingly weakened by his wounds, or one that is staying trustfully, or one that has begun any task without having been able to complete it, or one that is skilled in some special art, or one that is in grief, or one that goes out of the camp for procuring forage or fodder; or men who set up camps or are camp-followers, or those that wait at the

gates of the king or of his ministers, or those that do menial service unto the chiefs of the army, or those that are chiefs of such servants.”³⁵ “A weak or wounded person should not be slain, or one that is sonless; or one whose weapon has been broken; or one that has fallen into distress; or one whose bow-string has been cut; or one that has lost his vehicle.³⁶ The aged and the children should not be slain; nor one that is a woman; nor one that is flying away; nor one that holds a straw (a blade of grass) in his lips; nor one that says ‘I am thine’³⁷.

It will be seen from the above list that persons exempted from slaughter or molestation in the course of battle comprised mainly the civilian elements, the persons doing auxiliary work in the army without belonging to the combatant forces, and such troops as have lost their morale and laid down their arms. It was in recognition of the non-combatant character of these persons that an exemption from molestation was granted to them. A distinction between combatants and non-combatants thus is a remarkable feature of the ancient Indian code of warfare. The idea was that fighting always remained confined to the actual fighting line and persons not directly belonging to the army, as also the civilian elements of the population were treated with humanity and were not injured or killed. It is worthwhile to note that the Santiparvan³⁸ injunction that ‘persons accompanying the army for auxiliary work without directly belonging to it should not be struck in battle’ bears a comparison with Article XIII of the Hague Regulations concerning the laws of customs of war on land.³⁹

Prohibition of indiscriminate fighting :—The Epic strongly condemns indiscriminate fighting and urges that no injury should be inflicted on an unarmed, unequalled and fallen foe. It is repeatedly insisted that one should fight only with one similarly equipped, that is, a foot-soldier with a foot-soldier, elephants with elephants, horses with horses and so on. One should not kill a soldier who is engaged in fighting with another, or who has turned back from fight or is without armour. One must fight only with one person at a time. If anybody is unable to fight, he should be left out. If one comes at the head of an army, then he should be met by an army. When an antagonist has fallen into distress he should not be struck; nor should one that has been frightened, nor one that has been vanquished.⁴⁰

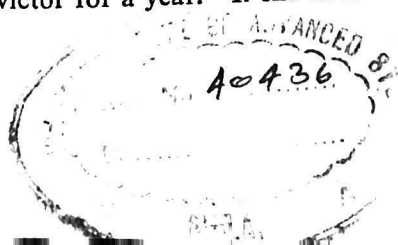
Prohibition of the use of deadly weapons :—The prohibition of the use of deadly weapons in the course of a battle is another bright aspect of the ancient Indian code of warfare. The Santiparvan describes deadly weapons like poisoned or barbed arrows as the weapons of the wicked and prohibits their use in the course of a battle.⁴¹

Treatment of the prisoners of war :—An advocacy of a humane treatment of the prisoners of war is a bright aspect of the code. The Santiparvan strongly urges that a lenient treatment be met to the vanquished troops.⁴² It is stated that a warrior whose armour has fallen off, or whose weapons have been put aside or who begs for quarter, saying—‘I am thine’, may simply be seized but never slain.⁴³ It is stated in another place that compassion and mercy should be shown to the troops, who surrender themselves or who are made captive in the course of battle.⁴⁴ An enemy captured in war should not be killed but should be treated as one’s own son.⁴⁵ He may be brought by the victor to his abode and made a slave for a year only; otherwise he should be set free.⁴⁶ The king should try his best to soothe the survivors of the vanquished army.⁴⁷

Treatment of the sick and the wounded :—The Santiparvan provides that the sick and wounded enemy troops should be accorded adequate medical treatment : “those whose weapons are broken”, says Bhishma, “and those who are in serious condition in the battle field (Vipannasca), should be brought home, and given medical aid necessary for their recovery, or they should be sent back to their own places.”⁴⁸

Immunity of the Brahman-Peace-maker :—The person of the Brahmana, who acted as a peace-maker, was considered sacrosanct. The Santiparvan prescribes that whenever a Brahmana appears in the battle-field with the object of negotiating peace between the combatants, fighting should be stopped immediately, and he should be given a chance and offered cooperation.⁴⁹ If any Ksatriya, it is further stated, breaks this rule and slays or wounds a Brahmana, he would be the violator of an eternal rule and would become a wretch of his order.⁵⁰

Disposal of booty obtained in war :—As to the disposal of booty obtained in war, the Santiparvan gives important directions : A maiden brought by force from the house of the vanquished foe, may be kept by the victor for a year. If she does not agree to wed



him by that time, she should then be sent back. The victor should behave similarly in respect of all kinds of wealth such as slaves that are acquired by force. The kine taken from the enemy by force should be given away to the Brahmans. The bulls taken from the enemy should be set to agricultural work or returned to the enemy.⁵¹

These rules of warfare were considered immutable and sacrosanct by the people in ancient India. Frequent references to them amply testify to their authoritativeness in relation to the contemporary diplomatic practice. They could not be defied with impunity, for public opinion was an effective sanction behind them. It is true that these rules of warfare were sometimes violated under the exigencies of circumstances. The Epic narrative speaks of several wilful breaches of the laws of righteous warfare. Bhishma, Dron, Karna, Bhurisravasa, and Duryodhana were all killed in the Mahabharata war by subterfuges or tricks which violated the chivalrous code of fighting⁵². The Kauravas were just as unscrupulous as the Pandavas. But every time, whenever, a rule of righteous warfare was violated a strong protest was raised. The Mahabharata tells us how violation of the law of mace-fighting by Bhishma invited a strong condemnation from Balarama⁵³. When Asvathama planned to murder the sleeping Pandavas at night, Kripacharya, scornfully remarked: 'It is wholly wrong. It would be an unprecedented crime against the laws of Ksatriya conduct'⁵⁴. This sublime code of warfare, although often violated under the exigencies of circumstances, did tend to minimise the horrors of war in ancient India.

Indeed, the above code reflects noble sentiments of humanity and chivalry. It prohibits the employment of unrighteous means for winning a war. Apart from forbidding the use of cruel and deadly weapons, it advocates a generous and human treatment of the defeated troops. The exemption of non-combatants from molestation is the most noteworthy feature of this code. It will be seen that the rules of warfare formulated in the Epic bear a remarkable resemblance to those given in the Dharmasutras and the Manusmriti and are far ahead of those in the Kautilya's Arthashastra⁵⁵. The Epic theorists' passionate plea for the employment of righteous means in the course of battle strikingly contrasts with the Kautilyan view that all possible means, fair or foul, should be employed to conquer the enemy⁵⁶. This code of warfare reflects great credit

upon the political wisdom and humanitarian spirit of the Epic theorists and may justifiably be regarded as their outstanding contribution to International Law. These rules anticipate the conventions of the Geneva and Hague conferences⁶⁷. No other nation of classical antiquity except India, can boast of such accomplishment.

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3. Śāntiparvan, 78.31; Śānti, 100. 1-18 cr.ed. cf. Vanaparvan, 33.73.
4. Santiparvan, 98. 12-13 Bomb, ed. or 99. 2-13 cr ed.
5. ibid; 65. 3 cr.ed
6. ibid; 97. 7-8
7. Santiparvan 57 3
भूमि रैतौ निगरिति सर्पो विलशयानिव ।
राजानं चाप्ययोद्धारं ब्राह्मणं चाप्रवासिनम् ॥
8. Sabhaparvan, 55, 14 Bomed. Udyogaparvan, 33.49 Anusasanaparvan, 36.16, cf., also, Sukranitasara, IV.7 303.
9. Santiparvan, 23.15-16 cr.ed.
10. Bhagvadgita, II.37
11. ibid; II, 32-35
12. ibid; II, 31-33; IV. 40, 42-43, 45-47
13. ibid; II, 31-33. XVIII. 46-48
14. ibid; II,
15. Santiparvan 69,
16. Bhagvadgita, 11.33
17. See, P. C. Chakravarty, The Art of war in ancient India, p. 18
18. Santiparvan, 69. 23-24 c.f. 63 26; Udyogaparvan, 72.3; cf. Yajnavalkya, I. 34
19. Santiparvan, 102. 17, 22 cr. ed.
20. ibid; 94. 1
अयुद्धेनैव विजयं वर्धयेद्वसुधाधिपः ।
जघन्यमाहुर्विजयं यो युद्धेन नराधिपः ॥
21. Santiparvan, 102.23-25
22. Udyogaparvan, 72.49-55
23. ibid; 72. 56-57
24. ibid; 72. 48, 59, 62, 63
25. ibid; 72. 60
26. ibid; 72. 70-72; cf. Bhīmaparvan 73.4; cf. Manu, vii. 199
27. Bhīmaparvan I. 27-32
28. Santiparvan, 96. 21

29. *ibid*; 96. 1-3 Bom. ed.

नाधर्मो महीं जेतुं लिप्सेत् जगतीपतिः ।
अधर्मविजयं लब्ध्वा को नु मन्येत भूमिपः ॥
यथार्थमेव योद्धव्यं न क्रुध्येत जिघांसतः ।
धर्मो निधनं श्रेयो न जयः पापकर्मणा ॥ १७

30. Santiparvan, 96. 1

31. *ibid*; 95. 17-18 Bom. ed. cf. Bhismaparvan, 21.10

32. Lawrence from *De Jure Belli Ac Pacis*, Bk I, Ch. II. P. 311

33. Santiparvan, 96. 15 Bom. ed.

34. Vide Higgins, *The Hague Peace Conference*, pp. 5-6

35. Santiparvan, 100. 27-29

36. Santiparvan, 95 cf. *ibid*; 297 4

37. *ibid*; 98. 48-49 To take up a straw and hold it between the lips is an indication of unconditional surrender, vide, Karnaparvan 90. 111-112; cf. Manu, VII. 91-93; Megasthenese, *Frag. I.* p. 32.

38. Santiparvan 100. 28

39. Vide Higgins, *The Hague Peace Conferences*, p. 227

40. Santiparvan, 95. 7-14; *ibid*; 96 3; *ibid*; 297.4; Bhismaparvan, I. 27-32; Dronaparvan, 143. 8; Karanaparvan, 90. 111-113; Sautikaparvan V. 11-12; cf. Manu, VII 90-94; Baudhayana, I.1, VI. 21-23;

41. Santiparvan, 95.11 Bom. ed.

42. Santiparvan, 102 30

विजित्य क्षममानस्य यश राज्ञो विवर्धते ।

43. *ibid*; 96. 3-4

44. *ibid*; 102. 34

कृतान्जलिं न्यस्तशस्त्रं गृहीत्वा न हि हिंसयेत् ।
क्लेन विजितो यश्च न तम् युद्धयेत भूमिपः ॥
अक्रोधेनाविनाशेन नियन्तव्यः स्वपुत्रवत् ॥

45. *ibid*; 102.32

46. *ibid*; 102.34

47. *ibid*; 103.30-38

48. Santiparvan, 95. 13-14

भग्नशस्त्रो विपन्नश्च कृतज्ञो हतवाहनः ।
चिकित्स्यः स्यात्स्वविषये प्राप्यो वा स्वगृहे भवेत् ॥
निर्द्वेषश्च स भोक्तव्यं एष धर्मः सनातनः ।

49. *ibid*; 96. 8-9

ब्राह्मणो नर शान्तिमिच्छन्नुभयतो न योद्धव्यम् तदा भवेत् ॥

50. *ibid*; 96.9

51. *ibid*; 96. 5-7

52. Śalyaparvan, 61

53. *ibid*; 61. 8-10

54. Mahabharata, X. 5. 11-12

55. Gautama, X. 17 ff. ; Apastamba, II. 10, 11 Baudhayana, I. 18, 10-12; Yajñavalkya I, 326; Manu, VII. 90-93; also Kautilya,

56. Arthasastra, BK. X.. Chap. 3

57. See Kane, *Hist. of Dh.* Vol. III. p. 209

“RELIGIOUS CONVICTION OF AŚOKA”

by

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The ascension of Aśoka in the firmament of Indian history synchronised with some events of far-reaching importance. Inscribing the rocks and pillars with royal commands and thereby preserving direct evidence for the reconstruction of history of the period in question was one of them. It is surprising, however, that although abundant inscriptions become available with a dramatic suddenness for the study of Aśoka and his times, one finds himself involved in one of the most baffling problems as he approaches the sphere of his religious faith. Curiously enough, excepting a counted few, almost all extant edicts of Aśoka deal with his religious conviction and his activities in that regard.

Variations in the interpretation of religious conviction of Aśoka are many. Fantastic views have been held from time to time. In *Rājataranginī* Aśoka has been said to be a follower of Jina.^{1a} Edward Thomas, on the authority of Abul Fazl on whose part lies the fault, says that Aśoka was a Jain.^{1b} It may be noted here that jina also was a title of Buddha. Some scholars have even attempted to bring Aśoka in Brāhmaṇical Hindū fold and have maintained that he was not a Buddhist at all.² More or less identical views have been held by H.H. Wilson and H. Heras. F.W. Thomas also thinks that there is a total omission of any allusion to Buddhism in the inscriptions.³ In the light of the Bhābru Edict or Second Bairāt Edict these views are rendered untenable. Dr. J.F. Fleet starts on the same track and comes to the conclusion that the Dhamma of the rock and pillar edicts was not Buddhism but simply *rāja-dharma* i.e., code of conduct prescribed for pious kings.⁴ Dr. Fleet appears

1a. *Rājataranginī* I. 102.

1b. *J.R.A.S. (N.S.)* Vol. IX. pp. 155 and 187.

2. V.R.R. Dikshitar, *Mauryan Polity*, 1953. p. 276.

3. *C.H.I.* Vol. I p. 455.

4. *J.R.A.S.*, 1908, pp. 491-7.

not to have noticed the simple fact about the Dhamma that it was intended to be practised mainly by the masses and not by the king himself.

J.M. Macphail has a slightly modified contention to make when he remarks that in these edicts Dhamma does not stand for Buddhism but for the simple piety which Aśoka wished for his subjects.⁵ Taranath's imagination goes to the extent of associating Aśoka with Tantric Buddhism and he takes him to be a devotee of the mother-goddess⁶. It has been pointed out that the cult of mother-goddess was prevalent among the humbler folk in Aśoka's time, but Tantric Buddhism developed many centuries later⁷. Late Dr. V. A. Smith, at one place, remarks that there is nothing distinctively Buddhistic in the Dhamma of Aśoka⁸. Dr. Bhandarkar points out some contradiction⁹ in Smith's own views, when he notices the latter asserting at another place that the Dhamma was saturated with Buddhist ethical thought¹⁰.

Dr. R. K. Mookerji has tried to distinguish between Aśoka's personal religion which he accepts was Buddhism, and the religion that he sought to preach and introduce among the people at large¹¹. With regard to the latter he says that it was certainly not Buddhism but the essence or sāra of all religions¹². Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar has very well demonstrated the discrepancy¹³ in the views of Dr. Mookerji, since the latter had himself maintained elsewhere that Buddhism influenced the Essenes and Therapeutae¹⁴. It is really unintelligible as to how it was that Buddhism was able to cast its effect on these distant ideas, if Buddhism was confined only to the personal conviction of Aśoka which presupposes a restricted realm of activity.

Dr. Bhandarkar's own treatise on Aśoka, which devotes three lengthy chapters on his religious activities, does not appear to

5. Macphail, Aśoka, 1951, p. 48.

6. Geschichte des Buddhismus in Indien. VI p. 28.

7. Romila Thapar, Aśoka and the Decline of the Mauryas, 1961 p. 148.

8. Smith, Aśoka. pp. 59—60.

9. Bhandarkar, Aśoka, 1955, p. 126.

10. Smith, op. cit. pp. 29-30.

11. R.K. Mookerji—Aśoka, 1955, p. 59.

12. Ibid, p. 68.

13. Bhandarkar, op. cit. p. 116, (foot-note).

14. R. K. Mookerji, op. cit. p. 77.

do justice to the subject. We are constrained to remark that it is full of discordant notes. It may be noted that he begins with the assertion, 'any one who considers Aśoka's code of Dhamma can not fail to be struck by the remarkably simple nature of his teaching. His Dhamma may be described as the common property of all religions'¹⁵. He repeats this observation more than once¹⁶. It is interesting that he takes no time in contradicting his own stand, while he remarks that the basis and source of inspiration in regard to the Dhamma of Aśoka was the code of conduct prescribed for the Buddhist laity¹⁷.

The puzzle, which seems to have caused such a wide range of disagreement among the scholars, is obviously the fact that, on the one hand, Aśoka is represented to have become a Buddhist and, on the other, he is consistently busy in propagating and preaching what he calls Dhamma. It is this trap in which eminent scholars, who have worked on the subject, could not help falling. But the trap is thoroughly illusory. A deep understanding of the background history of Aśoka and the events that followed his reign combined with the critical observation of the evidence at our disposal tends to cut at the root of these differences of opinion.

The French scholar Senart drew pointed attention to the striking parallelism between the ethical ideas of Aśokan edicts and those of the Buddhist Dhammapada¹⁸. He, however, misconceived that the edicts represent the entire picture of Buddhism, and what we to-day have as Buddhism is theological encrustation added afterwards. It is significant to note here the observations of Prof. G. C. Pande that by the time of Aśoka at least Vinaya, first four Nikāyas of the Sutta and major portion of the fifth Nikāya had already been compiled; and it is this existent Tripiṭaka whose gleanings we find in the Dhamma of Aśoka¹⁹. Our study of the subject, so far, inclines towards the same line of thinking that essentially Buddhism and the Dhamma of the edicts of Aśoka are one.

Although Aśoka's conversion to Buddhism was a direct concomitant of the Kalinga war,²⁰ yet it was not the start of a

15. Bhandarkar, op. cit. p. 97.

16. Ibid, p. 100, 102, 103.

17. Ibid, p. 109-10, 122.

18. I.A., 1891 pp. 264-5.

19. G. C. Pande, *Bauddha Dharma Ke Vikāsa Kā Itihāsa*, p. 229.

20. R.E., XIII. (See Aśokan Inscriptions edited by R.G. Basak for the edicts referred).

process, rather an end of one that had its plantation right at the time of the inception of the Mauryan dynasty. The history of Magadha, before the rise of the Mauryas, is full of contemptible bloodshed. The span of time, starting from the Haryanka dynasty whose every ruler had been a parricide, and ending with the Nandas of baser origin, must have provided an avenue to the people for sincere disapproval and rejection of the ways of life existing. Its replica is evidently provided in the political developments of the time. It is not strange if the people became interested in the ascetic attitude towards life, which was capable of providing comfort to those who were tired of the above state of affairs. It is interesting to note that the spring of asceticism blossomed right in the Magadhan metropolis and attracted the king himself irrespective of the fact that the king owed even his kingship to the orthodox brahmin Kautilya whose influence on him ought to have been irrevocable. It is reported that Chandragupta became a Jain in his later years and abdicated the throne. He, as a wandering ascetic, died through slow starvation²¹. Ājivaka influence in the court of Bindusāra is also evidenced, since it was a saint of that denomination who had predicted the future of Aśoka, when he was born²². It is probable, therefore, that ascetic ideas had been attracting the rulers of Mauryan dynasty, the culmination of which was reached at the end of Kalinga war, when Aśoka was converted to Buddhism to emerge as the greatest royal patron of that faith. However, it should not be taken to mean that this was the peak of Aśoka's fervour for Buddhism; for his interest in Buddhism was destined to go still deeper which is evident from a comparative study of his records²³.

Undoubted as it is that Aśoka had become a Buddhist and he wanted the new religion to spread far and wide, he was, at the same time, fully conscious of his duties as the king of a vast kingdom. He was also endowed with the foresight to visualise the implications of forced transmission of his religious conviction to the people, or its transmission in its deep entirety. It would have been rather foolish on his part, if he had tried to propogate in the masses the subtle points of that religion, for which it was a prerequisite to

21. *Parīśiṣṭaparvan*, VIII. 435-45.

22. *Divyāvadāna*, XXVI. pp. 370.

23. *Kalinga Edict*, *Schism Edict* and *M.R.E.*,

renounce the household. 'It was in this reasonable unaggressive fashion that Aśoka strove to spread the doctrine of the Buddha and establish the regime of morality'²⁴. Prime concern of Aśoka was mass welfare, the concept of welfare state having been already ushered in by the rise of the Mauryas to power²⁵. Idea of warless state and its successful governance in accordance with that had already occurred to Buddha himself²⁶. Aśoka had to combine the two fundamental and apparently apart duties; the first he owed to one, dependent to whom he must have considered himself, and the other to those, who were dependent to him. In Dhamma he found a happy compromise. It was through the medium of Dhamma that he tried to germinate the basic principles of Buddhism in the masses, and it was also in conformity with the principles of Dhamma that he ruled for the remaining part of his life.

It is curious that nothing distinctively Buddhist has been found in his Dhamma. Similarly, we are led to believe that there is very little which is non-Buddhist. It consisted of²⁷ (i) *sādhave* or *bahu kayāne*, much good (ii) *ap-āsinave*, freedom from depravity, (iii) *dayā*, mercy, (iv) *dāna*, liberality, (v) *sache*, truthfulness, (vi) *sachaye*, purity and (vii) *mādave*, gentleness. Dr. Bhandarkar points out that most of these virtues occur in the *Lakkhaṇa suttanta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*²⁸. Resemblance in the contents of R.E. IX and *Sigālovada Sutta* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya* has also been noted²⁹. Besides, Aśoka's edicts are not only full of Buddhist terms and phrases, but at times they have borrowed facts verbatim. In the R. E. XIII Aśoka says that there is no such country where do not live communities like the *Brāhmaṇas* and *śramaṇas* except that of the *yavanas*. This is rather a literal restatement of what has already been said in early Buddhist literature³⁰. Aśoka, at one place, clearly mentions that his zeal for Dhamma was a direct outcome of his association with the *Samgha*³¹. The process of the spread of Buddhism, in and outside India, suddenly gets momentum in the

24. J.S. Negi, *Ground Work of Anct. Indian Hist.* p. 236.

25. A. S. Altekar, *State & Govt. In Anct. India*, 1950, p. 332—33.

26. *Samyutta-Nikāya*, P.T.S. Vol. I. pp. 145—46.

27. P.E. II and VII.

28. Bhandarkar, *op. cit.* p. 110.

29. R. Thapar, *op. cit.* p. 160 (foot-note).

30. *Majjhima-Nikāya*, P.T.S. Vol. II. p. 341.

31. M.R.E.I.

3rd century B.C., which has to be associated readily with Aśoka. Besides, if the Dhamma of the edicts was something other than Buddhism why was it that Aśoka received repeated and lofty applause in the Buddhist works ?

Distant-most find-spots of Aśokan inscriptions have yielded the set of edicts known as Minor Rock Edict. The same edicts occur elsewhere but not in so many versions as in the south. It is significant to note that contrary to the spirit of the Major Rock Edicts the Minor Rock Edict starts with his confession of Buddhist faith in unequivocal terms. It is then followed by the reference to Dhamma and the concluding half has been devoted to the introduction of the idea of Dhamma and the practical ways in which it could be put into practice.³² Compared to the Major Rock Edicts, this edict expresses a certain amount of uneasiness, as to whether the readers and listeners will fully understand what the author wants of them.³³ It tempts us to deduce that while the people living in regions close to Magadha were presupposed to know the Buddhist faith of Aśoka and the mission behind the spread of Buddhism implied in the propagation of Dhamma, the people in the south and far—south required certain amount of plain mention and explanation before they could be instructed about his Dhamma. Had it not been intended we would have come across in south also some more copies of Major Rock Edicts and not a fresh set of it. It is sufficiently cogent indication to the effect that Buddhism and Dhamma of Aśoka were not different but fundamentally one, and it was considered unnecessary to inscribe it on those edicts which were meant for the people living in places which were not very far from the Mauryan capital. Besides, he must have been conscious of the danger enjoined in an open declaration that the Dhamma and Buddhism are one and the same. Aśoka appears to have chosen mostly the way of slow and silent propaganda for his religious faith.

Those who have held the view that Dhamma was the essence of all religions and obviously secular in nature³⁴ have mainly contended two arguments. Their negative argument is that there is nothing in the Dhamma of Aśoka which is not to be found in the religions existing in that age. In the light of the above remark, it

32. M.R.E I; op. cit.

33. R. Thapar op. cit. p. 172.

34. Ibid, p. 163.

is difficult to explain, as to why Aśoka lays down excessive emphasis on Ahimsā, which was conspicuous by its absence in the Hindu religion of the time. It is forgotten here that Dhamma was not taught by an enthusiastic diplomat like Akbar but by an illustrious Aśoka, whose heart was filled with the fragrance of idealism and the glow of moral earnestness. By way of positive argument, these scholars have been able to find out the concept of *ap-āsinava*, which is wanting in the Buddhist literature but available in the Jain thought,³⁵ though not in the same form. Second point of borrowing from the Jain thought has been cited in the mention of the terms like *jīva*, *paṇa*, *bhūta* and *jāta*.³⁶ Their own analysis, however does not rule out the possibility that it might have been another point of convenience for Aśoka to simplify the concept in question by pouring into it some outer content. It was nothing new on the part of Aśoka, since Buddha's own source in some of his ethical ideas appears to be Jainism. 'Four restrictions in use of water, a specially Jainist austerity, was imposed to avoid injuring the *sattas* or living souls there might be in it. For these the Buddha substituted a four-fold watch of the four precepts against taking life, stealing, in chastity and lying.³⁷ Besides, Jain and Buddhist thoughts had stemmed out of the same original source i.e. Śramana stream.³⁸ It also needs to be mentioned here that Aśoka maintained strictly a catholic attitude towards other religions; for he considered it necessary for the growth of his own.³⁹

It has not been possible to reconcile the Buddhist faith of Aśoka with the very universal Dhamma of his edicts on account of the fact that the problem has been approached through certain preconceived notions. The most common and at the same time the most erroneous of these lies in an attempt to discover the crystallized doctrines of an institutionalised Buddhist thought in the Dhamma of Aśoka. The enigma can be unravelled only if the latter is to be studied in the context of the original teaching of Buddha, since the Dhamma is devoid of much later Buddhist content.

35. Bhandarkar, op. cit. pp. 117-18.

36. Ibid, p. 119.

37. *Saṃyutta-Nikāya* P.T.S. Vol. I, p. 91 (foot note).

38. G.C. Pande, *Studies in the origins of Buddhism* p. 317.

39. R.E. XII,.

Buddha deviates and distinguishes himself from his forerunners as well as contemporary thinkers in so far as his teachings do not encourage the metaphysical hankering for the conceptualization of the transcendent nor the fear of some supernatural being, who may be supposed to be the cause and controller of all things. Buddha intended to inspire men with enthusiasm and fervour to seek that, which may be held as the ideal which places before him the highest idea of perfection and lifts him above the level of ordinary goodness and produces a yearning after a higher and better life.⁴⁰ The gospel of Buddha avoids all hypothesis regarding the unknown and concerns itself only with the facts of life in the present work-a-day world, and seeks to transmute it by a moral and spiritual alchemy. Buddhism has always been marked by its intensely practical attitude. 'It is clear, however, that the Lord, brushing aside ritualism, theology and metaphysics, shifted emphasis in religion once for all to man's inner life and that he had a system of thought as to the means by which this inner life could be purified and its powers cultivated so that it would be immune from all Dukkha, from all sorrows that outer life, the life of flesh and the world, inflict upon it.'⁴¹

Buddha repeatedly expressed himself against dogma or belief. He holds that dogma does not make men pure nor does it end the ill existing in the world. It is the Path that brings purity.⁴² He declares in the *Aṭṭhaka Vagga* of the *Sutta-Nipāta* : 'I preach no dogmas drawn from all the divers views'.⁴³ He is reported to have once told a *Brāhmaṇa*, 'There are, O *Brāhmaṇa*, many *Śramaṇas* and *Brāhmaṇas* that maintain that night is day and day is night. But I maintain that night is night and day is day.' Theories, he supposed, bring controversies and strife amongst the saints and thinkers but it does not harm those who have withdrawn from the world and have been cleansed'.⁴⁴ Buddha's aversion for and aloofness from theories is asserted in clear terms in the *Majjhima-Nikāya*. *Vacchagotta* is said to have asked him : 'But has Gotama any theory of his own?' The Lord answered : "The *Tathāgata*, O *Vaccha*, is free from all

40. P.L. Narasu, *The Essence of Buddhism*, 1948, p. 23.

41. S. Dutt, *The Buddha And Five After Centuries*, 1957, p. 95.

42. L. Chalmers, *Buddha's Teaching* (Ed. & Tr. of *Sutta Nipata*, 1932, pp. (191, 201).

43. इदं वदामी ति न तस्स होति, धम्मेषु निच्छेय्य सुमग्गहीतं (Chalmers, op cit. pp. 200—1).

44. Chalmers, op. cit. pp. 199-201.

theories⁴⁵ There are other similar references in the Nikāyas to show that Buddha vehemently condemned speculative views i.e. dogmatism, for instance, in the S. Nikāya while dealing with indeterminate questions, he said, the Tathāgata does not indulge in such unwarranted extensions; he does not spin speculative theories.^{46a} Buddha's disapproval and distaste for dogma and theory appear to have been caused by the clear perception of the fact that the Truth is essentially one and surpasses the intellect. Besides, dogmas and theories are bound to be accompanied by wrangles and strife. The wise, therefore, do not engage themselves in vulgar theories.^{46b}

There is a group of questions on which Buddha expressed no opinion viz. the ten *avyākātāni* i.e., points not determined⁴⁷. When he was asked to explain the cause of his silence over those questions, he pointed out that they were not only non-conducive to enlightenment⁴⁸, but, on the contrary, they were potent with the possibilities of anguish and misery⁴⁹. Speculation on matters irrelevant to salvation is discouraged throughout the discourses of Buddha. The starting point of Buddha is the universal suffering i.e., not merely the suffering of the poor and wretched but also of those who live in the lap of luxury. If a man were struck by an arrow, he would not refuse to have it extricated before he knew who shot the arrow, whether that man was married or not, tall or small, fair or dark. All he would want, would be, to be rid of the arrow⁵⁰.

The Dhamma which flashed upon the mind of Buddha at the time of his enlightenment (Sambodhi), consisted of *Pratītyasamutpāda* and *Nirvāṇa*⁵¹. The principle of *Pratītyasamutpāda* has been called the 'Middle Way' and its discovery has been likened to that of an ancient city⁵². In the *Jātakas* also, the Dhamma has been characterised as the 'good old rule' (*charito purāṇo, dhammo sanātano, chirakālappavatto sabhāvo, poraniyāpakati*)⁵³. The

45. अस्थि पन भो तो गोतमस्स किंचि दिट्ठिगतं ति ? दिट्ठिगतं ति खो वच्छ अपनीतं तथागतस्स (M. Nikaya, Nal. Ed. II, p. 179.)

46(a) Samyutta Nikaya, P.T.S. IV, pp. 395-9.

46(b) L. Chalmers, op. cit. p. 215, 219.

47. Beside being often mentioned in the Dialogues they form the subject matter of the *Avyākta Saṃyutta* of the S. Nikāya.

48. *Digha-Nikāya*, S.B.B. Vol. I, pp. 254-5.

49. *Majjhima Nikāya*, P.T.S. II, p. 63.

50. *Majjhima-Nikāya* (Nalanda Edition) II, p. 107-13.

51. *Samyutta-Nikāya*, Vol. II, pp. 105-6

52. G.C. Pande, *Studies In The Origins of Buddhism*, p. 414.

53. B.M. Barua, *Aśoka and His Inscriptions*, pp. 228-9.

comparison is remarkable, since it points out Buddha's objective and impersonal attitude towards his Dhamma. Unlike the Vedic seers, Christianity and Islam, Buddha did not consider the Dhamma to have been revealed to him by some supermundane power, rather he took it as an ancient highway of higher life continuing from the hoary past. That there was nothing obscurantist in the gospel of Buddha is amply clear from one of his statements made in his last moments. He is said to have told Ananda: 'I have preached the Truth without making any distinction between exoteric and esoteric doctrine, for in respect of Dhamma, Tathāgata has no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher who holds something back'⁵⁴.

Centuries later, the Mādhyamikas are said to preserve exquisitely the basic concept and essential features of the original gospel of Buddha, although a subtle and sophisticated philosophical tinge has been added. The Mādhyamika standpoint of criticism and rejection of all theory as constituting the highest wisdom is in fullest accord with Buddha's rejection of all speculative philosophies as dogmatism (*diṭṭhi* or *diṭṭhigatānīmani*). The rejection of theories is itself the means by which Buddha is led to the non-conceptual knowledge of the absolute⁵⁵. Buddha is supposed to have specified four possible 'siddhāntas' i.e., standpoints for knowing anything, viz. (i) *laukika siddhānta*, (ii) *pratipauriṣika siddhānta*, (iii) *pratipāksika siddhānta* and (iv) *paramārthika siddhānta*⁵⁶. While explaining the *Paramārthika siddhānta* i.e., transcendental standpoint, comparison has been drawn in three verses of the *Arthavargīya sūtra* and five verses of the *Aṭṭhaka vagga* of the *Sutta-Nipāta* (i.e., 878-882, chalmers, Buddha's Teachings, pp. 210-1)⁵⁷. The central idea of these verses is, that a view is plausible because we prize it, we are enamoured of its externals. We hold fast to it as the truth and consider others as fools. This is actually the start of dogmatism and Mādhyamikas make it a point to give a severe blow to all such dogmatization and theorising tendency on the basis of their dialectic. The Mādhyamikas use only one weapon. By drawing out the implications of any view they show, its self-contradictory character. The dialectic removes the constrictions which our concepts, with

54. *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*, ii, 25.

55. T.R.V. Murti, *Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, pp. 49-52.

56. Étienne Lamotte, *Le Traité De La Grande Vertu De Sagesse De Nāgārjuna*, Ed. 1946, I. p., 27.

57. *Ibid*, p. 39-41.

their practical or sentimental bias, put on reality. The Mādhyamika dialectic, however, was vigorously criticized and it was pointed out that Śūnyatā which criticizes all theories is but another theory. Equally prompt reply came from the Mādhyamikas and they observed, 'Śūnyatā (the awareness of the hollowness) of all views is preached by the Jinas (Buddhas) as the way of deliverance; incurable indeed are they who take Śūnyatā itself as a view'⁵⁸.

Aśoka's Dhamma is remarkably in keeping with the basic notes of the maiden gospel of Buddha. Characterising features of the Dhamma of Asoka are its non-credal stress and non-sectarian spirit. Aśoka in consonance with Buddha's tone has eschewed all matters of theology and speculative philosophy and has nowhere intended to thrust his religious conviction on others. He is concerned with the same practical aspects of life which had once struck Buddha i.e, what is proper for man to do, ⁵⁹ which leads to much good, ⁶⁰ and ultimately brings about unbounded joy and happiness and elevation of human nature. ⁶¹ Obviously, Aśoka's ordinances inscribed on rocks and pillars have more an ethical than doctrinal air and the ideas contained in them are far more concerned with the promotion of civic life, its virtues and values, than the publication of tenets, which had been dogmatized to a considerable extent. Nevertheless, contemporaneous state of affairs in the Buddhist order appears to have bewildered and disgruntled him utterly. Besides reiterating Buddha's instruction for active co-operation (samavāya) among all sects for their growth in essential matters, ⁶² he undertook practical measures and active interest for the repression of schism in the order. ⁶³ He wanted the different sects and their exponents to come together for frank and free interchange of their thoughts and ideas in a mutually helping spirit. He desired the initial concord of the Buddhist Order to be re-established. Aśoka's activities represent beyond doubt that he was a devout exponent of strenuous life for wholesome deeds. Imbued with remarkable practical sense and dynamism, Aśoka displayed in his personal life the spirit of Buddha's teachings at its best.

58. 'शून्यता सर्वदृष्टीनां प्रोक्त' निस्सरणं जिनैः', Madhyamaka Karika XIII. 8.

59. P.E. XIII.

60. Ibid.

61. P.E. VII.

62. R E. XIII.

63. Sarnath and Sanchi Edicts.

It has, however, been pointed out that Aśoka's concern about the purgation of heresies from the Saṃgha, described in the legends of the 3rd council, does not seem to fit in well with this popular and non-scholastic conception of his Dhamma.⁶⁴ This observation necessitates a short survey of the Third Buddhist council, the facts of which, instead of demonstrating any contradiction, appear to be attesting the foregone discussion on the subject.

The Aṭṭhakathās (i.e. Sāmantapāsādikā and Kathāvatthu) and the Ceylonese chronicles (i.e. Dīpavaṃsa and Mahāvaṃsa) discuss the third council in a closely resembling perspective. Its omission in the northern texts combined with the absence of any clear reference in the edicts of Aśoka has led some scholars to doubt its occurrence.⁶⁵ It has also been suggested that the council might have met only after Aśoka had published the last set of 'Seven Pillar Edicts', that is to say, in between B.C. 242 and 231.^{66a} This appears to be a far fetched conclusion, for, though there is no clear mention of the 3rd council in the Aśokan inscriptions, allusions to some council certainly peep through the Sarnath, Bairāt and some other inscriptions.^{66b} In the light of the subsequent researches the historicity of this council has been rendered rather undoubtful, although an impartial historical account still remains a desideratum.⁶⁷

Besides the above mentioned sources, Vasumitra also accounts for a council, which, according to him, was held at Pāṭaliputra in the time of Aśoka and where five points of Mahādeva were discussed. It is, however, clear that Vasumitra has mixed the details of the second and the third councils. According to Hiuen Tsang, Aśoka organised a council which was represented by five hundred Thereas and five hundred opponent monks under Mahādeva.⁶⁸ At another place, he informs us about the 'Mahasaṃgha' i.e. the greater council conducted by ten thousand monks who had been expelled from the council of Kāśyapa.⁶⁹ The Dīpavaṃsa also alludes to a similar council. The points controverted by Mahādeva conceive the possibility

64. S. Dutt, op. cit. P. 157.

65. V.A. Smith, Early Hist. of India (3rd ed.) p. 161, E.J. Thomas, Hist. of Buddhist thought, p. 35. etc.

66(a) A.H. Keane, E.R.E. (ii), p. 126.

66(b) Bhandarkar, op. cit. p. 90.

67. G.C. Pande, Bauddha Dharma Ke Vikāsa Kā Itihāsa, p. 197; See also, Poussin, E.R.E. (iv) p. 184 and N. Dutt. Early Monastic Buddhism Vol. II p. 266.

68. G.C. Pandey, Bauddha Dharma Ke Vikāsa Kā Itihāsa. p. 174.

69. Beal, Hiuen Tsang, 190, 380-81.

of the fallibility of Arahants. The nature of this controversy was obviously doctrinal and it gave rise to the first historical schism in the order. Sthiramati, the disciple of Mahādeva, is supposed to have propagated it further. It has been pointed out that Mahādeva raised his points about half a century after the second council.⁷⁰ In view of the Vinaya evidence, the rise of the first schism as well as the emergence of the Mahāsāṃghikas has to be ascribed to a period after the 2nd council, for the reason that the Vinaya texts, which inform us about the occasion and occupation of the first two councils, have nothing to say either about any schism as such or the division of Buddhist order on sectarian basis.⁷¹ In the light of the above, the occurrence of the so-called Mahāsāṃgha, some fifty years after the council of Vaiśālī, should not be discounted as pure fiction. It may be added here that five points of Mahādeva have been recorded and discussed in the *Kathāvatthu*.⁷² If, as is taken for granted, these points had caused the second synod, they ought to have been discussed and decided in that council itself and not left over for another. It strengthens the supposition, therefore, that the controversy of Mahādeva sprang after the second council held at Vaiśālī and an official verdict over those points was given only in the third council.

It is indicated by the account of the second council that the eastern monks especially that of Vaiśālī had started maintaining a liberal attitude with regard to the Vinaya rules, the recognition for which was categorically refused. Discomfited thus, the liberal section was likely to start drifting apart from the conservative group and their orthodox tradition. In Mahādeva they seem to have found an able champion of their view-point, which had by now comprehended the doctrinal realm also. Their unorthodox views could not have been acceptable to the conservative majority of the order and they must have been severally impeached as heretics for their alien views. As a rebuff, the liberal section appears to have started its campaign by calling in question the authority of the Arahants. In order to assert their independence, it is not unlikely that they should have called a Mahāsāṃgīti at Pāṭaliputra, where they appear to have upheld their innovations with regard to the Vinaya and Dhamma. According to *Dīpavaṃsa*, they also rearranged, altered and at times substituted the *Tripiṭaka* as they liked. The name Mahāsāṃgitikas,

70. N. Dutt, op cit. p. 42.

71. G.C. Pande, *Bauddha Dharma Ke Vikāsa Kā Itihāsa*, p. 174.

72. *Kathāvatthu*, P.T.S., pp. 64-70.

sometimes given to them, looks like pointing to the same proposition. The facts, mentioned above, warrant the hypothesis of a council in between the second and the third. And if the council was at all held, the division of the Buddhist order in Mahāsaṃgītikas, and Theravāda schools should be taken as the most outstanding outcome.

Once the process of dissension was set moving, it could not be redeemed unless the original Unity of Buddhism was reduced into eighteen units, as is recorded by the Dīpavaṃsa, which alludes to the rise of similar number of sects between the second and third councils. It would be fairly sound to assume that the immediate background of the third council was rather unwholesome for the progress of Buddhism; for its arena seems to have been rampant with a chaos of ideas bubbling through the rise of various sects. In the account of the council and, to a certain extent, in the edicts of Aśoka, we have corroborative evidence for this assumption.⁷³ To the lot of the contending adherents of various views, putting up perhaps together, appear to have been added considerably good number of non and pseudo-Buddhists. The regular life of the order seems to have been dislocated, as the recurrent important ceremony of uposatha was put into abeyance.⁷⁴ The difference of opinion over the Vinaya rules was far more manifest, since their interpretation is supposed to be the basic imperative for this council.

A close and critical analysis of evidences of the third council would show that there were two aspects of the deliberations that took place in its meeting. The primary section was devoted to resolve the Vinaya trouble and retrieve the uposatha ceremony by purging the order of the non-Buddhists, who had joined it only for the sake of gain. But the second phase of the council seems to have been utilized purely for sectarian activities i.e., for assertion of supremacy of the Theravāda-Vibhajjavādins over other sects by claiming orthodoxy on their part and awarding heterodoxy to others. Doctrinal preoccupation of the council is also attested by its final outcome i.e., the Kathāvatthu. In spite of Asoka's comparative silence, the account of the council holds him substantially responsible in its organisation. Besides, the hypothesis, that the Vibhajjavādins only were aware of its proceedings, does not appear to hold good any more.⁷⁵

73. Sarnath and Sanchi edicts.

74. Manavaṃsa, (Bombay) 1959, p. 43.

75. G.C. Pande, Buddha Dharma Ke Vikāsa Kā Itihāsa, p. 197.

These facts about the third council point towards a general and non-sectarian start. Asoka's earnest desire for the repression of schismatic tendencies and unification of the order must have prompted him to grant formal recognition and support for its commission. It is also possible that he might have graced the meeting by visiting and addressing it, which is indicated by one of the edicts⁷⁶. He had to give his introduction possibly on account of the fact that there were monks from far off places. But no sooner than the main mission was completed, the members became once again absorbed in sectarian warfare. The Vibhajjavādins, having been in the majority, became predominant and their views appear to have prevailed during the subsequent course of events. It was rather a historical necessity from their standpoint to raise the morale of their followers by affirming the doctrines to which they adhered. The memory of the intermediate council of the Mahāsaṃghikas, held between the second and the third councils, must have been still fresh; for a reciprocal note permeates the proceedings of this council. It has been noted above that the Kathāvatthu records the five points controverted by Mahādeva⁷⁷. Failing to check the degeneration of the council from the original stand, Aśoka appears to have dissociated himself, which is the only explanation possible for his silence. In fact, it was against his conviction to participate in the activities which implied narrow sectarian developments, and hence, he would have been rather forced to restrict his interest lest a particular sect make political capital out of his associations.

Recently a touch of *mens rea*, by attaching political motives, has been sought to be discovered in the formulation of Dhamma and its propaganda by Aśoka, and analogies for that have readily been cited in the activities of Charlemagne and Constantine⁷⁸. It would be an unfortunate day in the history of India if this myth turns to be true some day, by way of further research. In the present state of our knowledge, it is completely undoing what the greatest ruler of India did and stood for. The fundamental reason behind the Dhamma's propagation was his main concern for the welfare and happiness of his subjects. 'Following the example of Buddha himself, Aśoka preached to the millions of houseman in his

76 Ibid, pp. 196-97.

77. See above.;

78. R. Thapar, *op. cit.* pp. 144-45.;

empire and outside a simple religion of morality, love and philanthropy seeking to bring about a moral revolution in the world through its diffusion'.⁷⁹ If there was any diplomatic move in the propaganda of Dhamma, why was it that the Mauryan empire collapsed soon after the exit of Aśoka from its scene? Moreover, in that case Aśoka, like Akbar, should have continued to hold the reigns of his empire upto the last days of his life but evidence suggests otherwise⁸⁰. Besides, the examples of Charlemagne and Constantine, instead of providing any analogy, are unanalogous in strict sense of the term.

Viewed thus, from almost all relevant angles, the Dhamma of Aśoka appears inseparable from Buddhism. In all its vigil and vigour Aśoka's Dhamma is firmly grounded in the teaching of Buddha which was his religious conviction, a conviction he cherished and espoused to the last days of his life. It has been said that in the history of Buddhism Aśoka's importance is second only to that of the founder of that religion⁸¹. There is certainly no doubt that Buddha's sublime Gospel inspired the greatest of monarchs whose own efforts helped the spread of Buddhist doctrine. Aśoka's Dhamma and the original Dhamma, preached by Buddha, must be held basically identical. This suggestion made earlier⁸², and found defective in the light of Buddhism as then understood, will bear resuscitation if we only reinterpret the nature of original Buddhism as brought out by recent researches⁸³. We have to remember that the absence of metaphysical doctrines in original Buddhist Dhamma was due to a very metaphysical realization of the inadequacy of all metaphysics, and the acceptance of this insight may be held to be the reason of Aśoka's exclusive emphasis on practical and ethical attitudes. Aśoka's Dhamma is non-sectarian and universal, because original Buddhism was non-sectarian and universal.

79. J. S. Negi, op. cit, p. 236.

80. Takakusu, Trans. of I-tsing, A Record of Buddhist Activities, p. 73.

(a) I-tsing reports to have witnessed a statue of Aśoka wearing monk's robe.

(b) Divyavadana has it that Asoka died, divested of all power renouncing the world and becoming a Buddhist monk. (J.R.A.S., 1913, p. 657).

81. E.R.E. (ii) p. 127.

82. For Senart's observations see, I.A., 1891, pp. 264-5. Hultzsch also is in partial agreement with Senart. For details see the 'Inscriptions of Aśoka', Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum Vol. I

83. G. C. Pande, (i) Studies In The Origins of Buddhism.
(ii) Bauddha Dharma Ke Vikāsa Kā Itihāsa.

MEDICAL DATA IN THE VINAYA PITAKA

By

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In a later text *Lalitavistara* 'Vaidyārāja' is an oft-repeated epithet for the Buddha and some scholars have pointed to borrowings by Buddhism from contemporary medical science.¹ The *Mahāvagga* contains a full chapter entitled *Bhesajjakandhaka* (Section on Medicines) from which we are in a position to form a picture of the medicinal knowledge of the people which seems to be good and considerably advanced. The *Jīvaka-vatthu* in the *Mahāvagga* mentions a renowned 'vejja' (physician) residing in *Takkasilā* (*Takṣaśilā*) under whose training *Jīvaka*, the famous contemporary physician of Buddha, learned this art.² The story also throws light on the education in medicine and surgery. *Jīvaka* approaches a famous physician living at *Takkasilā* to learn this *sippa*. After he had studied there for seven years, he was put to practical test by his teacher only after which he was relieved to earn his livelihood as a physician. This must have been the usual practice. His story also shows that the physicians earned a lot and had a wide range of practice.

Persons suffering from the following five diseases namely *kuṭṭha* (leprosy), *gaṇḍa* (goitre), *kailāsa* (a skin-disease), *sosa* (a disease entailing swelling in the body) and *apamāra* (epilepsy) were not to be initiated in the order,³ probably because of the grave nature of these diseases. *Madhumeha* (diabetes) has also been mentioned.⁴

Ordinarily, ghee, butter, oil, honey, and treacle had also their medicinal usages which alone in the beginning were allowed to the

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1. Kern. *Manual of India Buddhism*, Strassburg, 1896, pp. 46-47; Poussin *J R A.S.*, 1903, pp. 578-80.
 2. *Mahāvagga*, p. 287.
 3. *Mahāvagga*, p. 77.
 4. *Pācittiya*, p. 11.

monks.⁵ Certain medicines were prepared with fat (*vasaṃ*) of different animals like bear, fish, 'susuka', pig, and ass.⁶ *Haliddi* (turmeric), *siṇigivera* (ginger), *vaca* (orris), *vacattha* (white orris), *ativisa* (garlic), *usīra* (andropogon muricatum), *kaṭukarohinī* (the black hellebore), and *bhaddamuttaka* (cyperus rotundus) were some of the plants whose roots served the purpose of medicines.⁷ Kasāya or decoction (*kasāvu*) holds an important place in the Indian medical science and the *Vinaya* refers to decoctions of *nimba* (the Nimba tree, *Azadirachta Indica*), *Kuṭaja* (*Wrightia antidysenterica* or *Nerium antidysentericum*), *paṭola* (*Trichoranthus Dioeca*), *paggava* (a creeper with bitter fruits), and *nattamala* (Skt. *naktamala*).⁸ The leaves of *nimba*, *kuṭaja*, *paṭola sulasi* (tulsi) and *kappāsa* were also used for medicinal purposes. Fruits of different trees, or plants, many of which still continue to be used in Ayurveda, are those of *Vilāṅga* (the plant *Erycibe paniculata*), *pippali* (pepper), *marica* (chilly), *harītaka* (*Terminalia belerica*, modern baharra), *āmalaka* (myrobalan, *Phyllanthus Emblica*) and *goṭṭhaphala* (Skt. *goṣṭhaphala*).⁹ Gums of different plants were also used as medicines. In some diseases different varieties of salt viz. *sāmudda*, *kālalona*, *sindhava*, *ubbhida* and *bila* were considered beneficial.

The Bhesajjakkhandhaka gives names of some skin-diseases which are as follows : *thullakaccha* (ringworm), *kaṇḍu* (itch), *pilaka* (boils), *assāva* (āsrāva), and bad smell from the body. For the cure of these powder-medicines have been prescribed but the name or method of preparations are missing.¹⁰

For the eye-diseases, ointments named *Kālañjana*, *rasañjana*, *solañjana*, *geruka* (yellow-ochre), and *kapalla* (collyrium) were used with which, if necessary, *candana* (sandal wood), *tagara* (the shrub *Tabernaemontana coronaria*), *kālānusāri* (a kind of dark fragrant sandal-wood), *tālisa* (the shrub *Flacourtia Cataphractan*) and *bhaddamuttaka* (cyperus rotundus) were mixed.¹¹ *Natthukamma* (snuffs) was applied in headache.¹²

5. *Mahāvagga*, p. 55.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 219.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*, p. 220.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 220.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 220-21.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 221.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 222; also *Ibid.*, p. 289.

In rheumatism (*vātaroga*), beside the use of oil cooked independently or with liquor, there have been recommended many artificial measures to cause perspiration to the patient (*sedakamma*). The different *sedakammas* prescribed for the cure of *aṅgvāta* are *sambharasēda*, *mahāsēda*, *bhaṅgodaka*, and *udakakoṣṭhaka*. According to *Aṭṭhakathā* the *sambhārasēda* method consisted in lying amidst such leaves which caused sweating. In the *mahāsēda* method the ground was dug and, after putting fire there, the place was covered with earth and sand; the patient, with his body smeared with oil, lay down there amidst certain specific types of leaves. *Bhaṅgodaka* meant causing sweat to the patient by sprinkling decoction of certain medicinal leaves on his body. The *udakakoṣṭhaka* type of artificial perspiration implied the patient to sit in a room where vessels containing hot water are kept. The *pabbavāta* (probably a grave type of rheumatism) of Pilindavaccha was cured by extracting blood from the affected limb.¹³

In jaundice the juice of *muttāharītaka* (?) was given to the patient while *Chavidosa* (a skin disease) was cured by smearing sulphur on the body. In case the body was stupefied one was given purgative to drink.¹⁴ Elsewhere it is recorded that Jīvaka cured the jaundice of King Pajjota by giving him to drink ghee cooked alongwith certain medicines. It caused vomit to the king and with that the disease disappeared.¹⁵

Surgery :

Satthakamma or surgery was also practised. In operation of *gaṇḍa* the required materials recorded are *kasāvodaka* to wash the wound, *tilakakka* (oil-cake) probably to dry it, *kabalikā* i.e. cotton or cloth drenched with the medicine or ointment, and *vaṇabaudhana cola* or bandage. If there was itching in the wound, it was to be itched not by hands, but with the help of mustard oil-cake.¹⁶ Some major operations are also recorded in the *Vinaya*. A physician named Ākāśagotta is recorded as doing operation of *bhagandala* (fistula in the anus).¹⁷ A chronic headache as old as seven years (*sattavassiko*

13. *Mahāvagga*, pp. 223-24.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 225.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 294-95.

16. *Mahāvagga*, p. 224.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 233; Jīvaka, however, is said to have cured king Bimbisāra from the same by a single smear, *Ibid.*, p. 290.

sīsābādho) which was declared incurable by other physicians, is said to have been cured by Jivaka by performing an operation of the head.¹³ There is a description of another major and adventurous operation by Jivaka of the Setṭhiputta of Vārāṇasī. While playing *mokkhaṇikā*, he had acquired an intestinal trouble (*antagaṇṭhābādho*) for him owing to which he could not digest any thing and felt pain in urinating or voiding faeces. Jivaka understood the trouble, made the operation, sewed the skin again, and smeared it with some ointment and the operation was successful.¹⁹ It appears to be an operation of hernia.

Vulgar Treatments :

Notwithstanding such a developed state of medicinal knowledge and surgical efficiency, people were not absolute free from primitive beliefs and in certain cases applied treatment which had no scientific basis and was based purely on blind faith. For example, in the case of snake-biting four *mahāvikaṭas* i. e. excrement, urine, ash, and clay were recommended to take.²⁰ Likewise, the first of the four was again prescribed to avert the effect of poison,²¹ Ununderstandable diseases were related to malignant spirits (*amanussikābādho*, *gharadinnakābādho*) and strange treatments like raw pig-flesh or clay from the furrow (*sītālolim*) are said to have been used.²²

Incantation against Serpent-danger : Serpent Families :

Failure in getting a sure scientific knowledge to cure certain diseases naturally leaves room for incantations and spells or other measures of the same nature. There is a passage in the *Cullavagga* which is nothing but a spell said to be exercised with a mind full of love in order to ensure protection against snakes and other harmful creatures. The measure is apparently a psychological apprehension of safety. The passage names four lineages of snakes (*cattāri ahirāja kulāni*) namely *ahirājakula* (lineage) of *Virūpakkha*, of *Erāpatha*, of *Chhavyāputta*, and of *Kaṇhāgotama*. For one's safety and protection (*attaḡuttiyā attrakkhāya attaparittam kātum*) one should remember these serpent families with love (*mettena cittena*) and recite the spell given there.²³

18. *Ibid.*, pp 291-92.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 293.

20. *Mahāvagga*, p. 224.

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*, p. 221, p. 225.

23. *Cullavagga*, pp. 198-99.

ORIGIN OF THE RAJPUTS

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The Rise of the Rājputs.

The most conspicuous phenomenon of the early mediaeval period was the rising into political prominence of new kingly families which are commonly termed as Rājputs - the corrupted form of the Sanskrit denomination Rājputra, a scion of the royal blood. About the time the Rājputs entered upon the stage of Indian history, the leading Kṣatriya families were gradually disappearing. Though it is dull and tedious to trace the connecting link between the outgoing Kṣatriyas and the newly emergant Rājputs, it is interesting to note that the Rājputs traced their pedigree back in a continuous line to the seventh or eighth centuries. This kind of the supposed continuity at least suggests, if not proves, that the Rājputs were the representatives of the Kṣatriyas.

The claims of the closer affinity of the Rājputs with the Kṣatriyas have also been strengthened by assigning a lofty pedigree to them. Legendry accounts, preserved in the Brahmanical literature, make us believe that the ancient Kṣatriyas were destroyed by Parashurāma and the Rājputs emerged out of the ashes of the Kṣatriyas. The purpose of this view is to bring them near to the Kṣatriyas of Vedic times. This tradition, absurd as it is, seems to have been propounded to establish that the Rājputs enjoyed a long standing in this country. However, opinions regarding the origin of the Rājputs cluster round numerous view points which may be classed as the Agnikula myth, the myths of origin from the Moon and the Sun, the theories of priestly or Gurjara origin and the theory of foreign descent.

The Agnikula myth :

The purity of the Rājput race is further emphasised by the association of the name of Agnikula—born of fire with the Rājputs.

The first exponent of this view was Chanda-Bardāi¹, the celebrated writer of the *Prthvirāja Rāso*. He writes that the four warrior clans Parihārs, Parmārs, Chālukyas and Chauhāns were created out of fire by Vasiṣṭha in order to destroy the *Rākshasas* who were polluting the sacrifice by showering down flesh, bones, blood, urine and other impure things. This story of Chand gained credence and was given wide currency by the bards of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, who added and altered details to the story to suit their own purpose. Neṃsi and Suryamalla Misra in their respective works of the *Naiṃsi's Khyāt*² and the *Vaṃśabhāskara*³ added more details to the original story. The four Rājput clans also eventually accepted the new *vaṃśa* assigned to them by their poets with a sense of dignity and pride. Thus the myth of Agnikula which was originally propounded in the 12th century was taken as undeniable truth by the 18th century A. D. Col. Tod found the myth most suitable to be appropriated to his view of establishing the theory of foreign origin of the Rājputs. The editor⁵ of the *Annals and Antiquities of Rājasthān* thinks that the *Agnikula* myth represents a rite of purification by fire, the scene of which was the southern Rajputānā whereby the impurity of the foreigners was removed and they became fitted to enter the Hindu caste system.

However, the sober history and the critical examination of the Agnikula view leads us to believe that it was merely the outcome of poetical fancies. No serious student of history is prepared to believe that fire can actually create warriors. It seems that Chanda Bardāi by recording the story of the warriors created by Vasiṣṭha simply intended to convey that the heroes of these four clans girded their loins to fight against the Muslims who were pouring in this country in swarms. If Chanda Bardāi by quoting this story would have seriously meant to assign *Agnikula* to these clans he would not have referred the lineages—the solar, the lunar and the yādavas for the thirty-six Rājput families in his work.⁶ In fact, several epigraphic and literary evidences, ranging between the 6th to the 16th

1. *Prthvirājraṣo*, Part I, pp. 45-51.

2. *Naiṃsi's Khyāt*, I, p. 119, Nāgari Prachārini Sabhā edition.

3. *Vaṃśabhāskara*, p. 515.

4. Tod : *Annals and Antiquities of Rājasthān*, Vol. I, Chapters 2 and 3.

5. Crooke : *Tod's Annals*, Vol. I. Introduction.

6. Sārda's paper on *Prthvirāja*, R.A.S. 1903.

centuries, lead us to believe that at least three out of the four of these clans were the descendants of the Suryavamśa and Chandravamśa. The Pratihāraś, as for example, who established their empire at Kanouj, according to the *Gwalior, Stone inscription* of 843 A.D.,⁷ belonged to the solar race. It states that the imperial Pratihāras of Kanouj traced their descent from Lakṣmaṇa, the Pratihāra or door-keeper of Rāma. Rajshekhar in the *Viddhashashakmanjka* introduced his pupil Mahendrapāla as *Raghukula tilaka*. Similarly, several copper-plate grants and inscriptions belonging to the period between 6th century to 16th century prove that the Solankis were of the lunar line and were the descendants of the Pāndawas. The *Bihari stone inscription*⁸ of the beginning of the 11th century A.D. mentions that the first ancestor of the Chālukyas was created by Droṇa for killing Drupada. Droṇa being of lunar race, the origin of the Chālukyas has also been assigned to the lunar line.

The *Harsha stone inscription*⁹ traces the line of the Chauhāns from one Gūvaka belonging to the line of Raghu. The *Prthvirāja-vijaya-kāvya*¹⁰ written by the contemporary poet Jayanaka shows that Prthvirāja was born of the solar dynasty. The *Hammiramahākāvya*¹¹ of Nyayachandra Suri mentions that the Chauhāns belonged to the solar line of the Kṣatriyas.

As regards the Parmārs the *Udepur Praśasti*¹² states that they were of Vaśiṣṭha Gotra. The *Pingal Sutra Vratti*¹³ of Halāuddha assigns to the Parmārs the epithet of *Brahma Kṣatra* used for the rulers devoted to warlike activities. The *Tejapāla temple inscription*¹⁴ of V. S. 1287 indicates that the first ancestor of the Parmāra was Dhumrapala who was not known Agnivamśi.

The fact is that it is in vain to lay much credence on the Agnikula theory regarding the origin of the Rajputs. The entire story of the Agnikula was either concocted or misinterpreted. It suffers from

7. *Gwalior Bhoja inscription*, EI, Vol. 28, p. 112.

8. Ep. Ind. I, pp. 253-259.

9. Ep. Ind. II, p. 119.

10. *Prthvirājavijaya-kāvya*, I and II.

11. *Hammiramahākāvya*, I, 14-17.

12. Ep. Ind. I.

13. *Pingal Sutra Vratti* states, 'Brahma-ksatrankulinah'

14. Ep. Ind. Vol. VIII, pp. 210-211.

bombast and hiperboly, the chief characteristic features of the *dingal* literature of the early mediaeval period. As the *Rāso* itself contains many interpolation it is just likely that the story of Vaśiṣṭha's sacrifice is a forgery. Mr. Vaidya¹⁵ has rightly remarked, "Such is in short the story of this Agnikula myth, a story begun in a poet's brain and being misconstrued by another poet finally commanding acceptance even from the deluded Rājputs themselves". Dr Dashratha Sharmā¹⁶ too reaches to the same conclusion regarding the Agnikula myth. He says, "In fact, it appears to be nothing more than the creation of the poetic or imitative brains of bards who, in their hunt for a fine pedigree for their patrons, happened to light on the story of the fire-origin.....". Dr. Ishwariprasād¹⁷ also writes in the same strain. He states, "The fictitious character of the story is obvious and it is unnecessary to adduce evidence to prove it. It represents only a Brahmanical effort at finding a lofty origin for the race that stood very high in the social order and whose munificence flowed in an unstinted measure to the priestly class, which reciprocated that generosity with great enthusiasm".

Myths of origin from the Sun and the Moon :

While examining the evidence which was supposed to prove that some of the Rājputs were Agnikulas, we had referred to the inscriptional as well as literary evidences that the Rājputs were the descendants of the solar or the lunar branches of the Ksatriyas. The *Nath inscription*¹⁸ of V. S. 1028, the *Atapur inscription*¹⁹ of V. S. 1035, and the *Abu inscription*²⁰ V. S. 1342 and the *Śringirishi inscription*²¹ of 1485 as well as the *Kyāts* of the 17th and 18th centuries show that the Guhilots were the descendants of Raghu. Similarly, *Prthvirājavijaya*²², a *chauhān prasasti*²³, the *Bedlā inscription*²⁴, the *Hamira-mahākāya*²⁵ and the *Surjānacharitra*²⁶ describe the Chauhāns

15. Vaidya : *History of Mediaeval Hindu Indra*, Vol. II, p. 17.

16. Dashrath Sharma : *Early Chauhān Dynasties*, p. 4.

17. Ishwari Prasad : *History of Mediaeval India*, p. 25.

18. BASJ, Vol. 22, pp. 166-167.

19. Ep. Ind. Vol. 39, p. 191.

20. Ep. Ind, Vol. 16. p. 347.

21. *Śringirishi inscription*, vol. 5.

22. *Prthvirājavijaya*, I and II.

23. *Praśāsti* (probably of Vighararāja IV's reign), vv. 35-37.

24. *Bedlā inscription* of Prthvirāja III,

25. *Hammiramahākāvya*, I, 14-17.

26. *Surjānacharitra*, VIII, 151-62.

belonging to the line of solar Kṣatriyas. To the Rāthor rulers of Jodhpur and Bikāner also the solar line has been assigned by their chroniclers,²⁷ though Ojhā feels that they belonged to the lunar line.²⁸

Turning to the inscriptions and several works of the Kalachuris, the Haihayas, the Sens and the Yadavas we find that they speak of these dynasties as the Kṣatriyas of the lunar family.²⁹ The Chauhāns³⁰ of Chandrāvati and Cutch and the Bhatīs of Jaisalmer³¹ deduce their pedigree from the lunar branch. Of modern writers, Dr. G. H. Ojhā³² with his pronounced pro-Rājput bias believes that the Rājputs were either the lunar or solar Kṣatriyas.

The aforesaid origins of the Rājputs do not go beyond the 11th century and as such it is very difficult to connect the pedigree of the Rājputs of that period to Ikṣvāku, the first solar king of India. Certainly a wide gulf lies between the Kṣatriyas of the solar line and the Rājputs of mediaeval times which it is impossible to bridge. Moreover, the bards, chronicles and the writers of literary works have traced the relations of their masters not only from Ikṣvāku but also from Indra, Padmanābha, Viṣṇu and in a way, refuting each other. Their contradictory statements go to prove that these writers themselves failed to settle satisfactorily the question of the real origin of their patrons. Thus all these evidences cited in support of the solar and lunar descendants of the Rājputs do not prove that they belonged to a pure Kṣatriya stock. The only value of the myths lies in the fact that it was probably late in the beginning of the 11th century that the various Rājput families gained recognition as Kṣatriyas when they fought against the *Mlechhas* for Hinduism. In course of time, it seems that the myths assumed a form of popularity, and since then they were eventually accepted as undeniable truths.

27. *Rāstroudhavamsha Mahākāvya* (V. S. 1518), Canto I, vv. 12-29, Dayāldās Khyāt, I, pp. 2-3.

28. Ojhā : *Jodhapurrajya-ka-Itihās*, Vol. I, p. 86,

29. *Bilhauri stone inscription* and Banaras Copper plate inscription, Ep. Ind. Vol. I, P. 255 and II, p. 305.

30. *Duntigdeva Abu inscription*, V. S. 1377, v. 8.

31. *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. 6, P. 55; *Tawārikh-Jaisalmer* by Nathmal, p. 11.

32. Ojhā, *History of Rājputānā*, I, p. 78.

Theory of Foreign Descent :

Besides these views some scholars maintain that the Rājputs were the descendants of the foreign settlers who began to figure on the stage of Indian history from the 6th century A. D. Tod³³, the famous hissonian of Rājasthān, held the Rājputs to be the descendants of the scythians or Sākas who poured into India about the sixth century A. D. In support of his view he tries to compare several customs and practices of the Rājputs and the foreign settlers. He believes that in the observances of certain manners and customs such as *Aśvamedha* sacrifice, horse worship, martial rites, worship of arms, association with bards, etc. there lie some similarities between the Rājputs and the foreign settlers of India. European scholars like Dr. Vincent Smith³⁴ has also accepted Tod's view of the origin of the Rājputs and adds that the ruling families of both the Sākas and the Kushāns who were Hinduised were admitted to rank as Kṣatriyas. The invasion of the Huns disturbed Hindu institutions and the polity deeply. Thus according to him the invasions of foreign tribes in the fifth and sixth centuries shook Indian society in Northern India to its core with the result that there was a new arrangement of both castes and ruling families. Mr. William Crook,³⁵ editor of the *Tod's Annals* also seeks to support the same theory by writing that as a wide gulf lies between the Vedic Kṣatriya and the Rājput of mediaeval times, it is certain that the origin of many clans dates from the invasions of the Sākas or Kushans and the Huns which began about the middle of the second century B. C. and about 480 A. D. respectively. He further adds that when these new claimants to princely honours accepted the faith and institutions of Brahmanism, attempts were made by bards to affiliate them to the mythical heroes of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa* or ascribe to them a fabulous origin from the Sun or Moon.

But this view of foreign descent has been exploded by many Indian antiquarians on the basis of their researches on traditions and anthropometry. Dr. Gorishankar Hirāchand Ojha³⁶ in his *History of Rājputānā* has tried to refute many of the arguments of

33. Tod : *Annals and Antiquities, Rajasthan*, edited by Crooke, Vol. I, pp. 73-97.

34. Smith : *History of India*, pp. 172-173.

35. *Annals and Antiquities*, Crooke Introduction p. XXXI.

36. Ojha : *The History of Rājputānā*, Vol. I, pp. 41-76,

the European scholars. As regards various rites and customs of the horse worship, the Aśvamedha Yagna and the worship of arms he contends that these rites and customs prevailed in India from Vedic and epic ages and as such their association with Sākas or Huns bears no relevance. He further makes mentions that there are literary and epigraphic evidences which go to prove that in the second century of the Christian era there were Kṣatriyas of Kusamba and there existed Kṣatriya rulers after the extinction of the Nanda and Mauryan dynasties.

Although Dr. Ojha's conclusions of the Kṣatriya descent contain elements of pro-Rājput bias they certainly prove with success that Tod's arguments for the similarities in the manners and customs between the foreigners and the Rājputs are misleading. But however, Dr. Ojha fails to give some conclusive proves to establish the vaunted claims of the Rājputs to Aryan descent. Similarly, he ignores a significant fact that after the appearance of these foreign invaders a fresh re-arrangement of Hindu society was inevitable.

The theory of Gujar descent :

The theory of foreign descent has been further strengthened by Dr. D. R. Bhandārkar³⁷ who is of opinion that the so-called four Agnikula clans viz., Pratihāra, Paramāra, Chālukya and Chauhān are Gujars. In support of his view he states that as Huns and Gujars have been mentioned along with other foreign tribes in the Purāṇas, the Gujars like Huns are also foreigners. Taking this as his basis he further adduces that a minor Pratihāra dynasty ruling in the south-east of modern Jaipur territory, according to the *Rājor inscription*, was known as Gurjara Pratihāra. He further argues that these Pratihāras of Kanauj were called Gujars by the Rāṣtrakutas in their inscriptions and also by the Arabs in their accounts of travel. In the case of the Chālukyas he finds no epigraphic evidence but believes that as Chālukyas who were Gujars occupied the country south-west of Rājasthān, the part of land under their heels was better known as Gujarat. As regards Parmārs, he is led to believe on moral grounds that they were also Gujars. While considering the Chauhāns he takes the help of some Sassanian coins³⁸ on which is read the

37. Dr. Bhandārkar : *Foreign Elements in Hindu population, Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XL (1911).

38. Rapson's *Indian Coins*, pp. 30-31.

legend Śrī Vāsudeva Vahman in Nāgari characters and in Pehlvi 'Taukān, zaulistān and Sapardalakshan'. He reads Vahaman as Chahman and associates Vasudeva as the founder of the Chauhān dynasty.

All these arguments which Dr. Bhandārkar adduces are ineffectual in the sense that Gujṛara Pratihāra were not Gujaras because they were a community, but because they occupied the land which was called Gujaratrā. Similarly the Pratihāras have been referred to as Gujaras either in the Rāṣṭrkuta grants or Arab accounts simply because they were the rulers of the area known to them as Gujaratra. The view regarding Vāsudeva of Khazar dynasty which later on came to be known as Gujara is not convincing when we know that the Khazar Vāsudeva and Vāsudeva of Chauhān dynasty are not contemporaries. The former could not have flourished before 627 A. D., while the latter lived in V. S. 608. Thus the varying dates are a serious difficulty in establishing the identity of these two Vāsudevas.³⁹

The theory of Brahman descent :

Along with the view of the foreign descent of the Rājputs Dr. Bhandārkar⁴⁰ also thinks that some of the clans of the Rājputs belonged to priestly section of some foreign tribes. In support of his view he quotes the *Bijolia inscription* where it has been mentioned that Sāmanta who followed Vāsudeva has been called in there a Brāhmaṇ of the Vatsa gotra. He further says that the fact of Rājashekhara's marriage, who was a Brahman, with Avantisundari, a Chauhān lady is self explanatory in regard to assigning Brahmanical origin to the Chauhāns. Jān, the writer of the *Kyām Khān Rāso*⁴¹ makes Chauhāns the descendants of Vatsa of the Jamadagnya gotra. The *Sundha inscription*⁴² of Jālor and the *Achaleshvara inscription*⁴³ of Ābu also support this view.

39. Vaidya : *History of Mediaeval Hindn India*, Vol. II, pp. 27-38;
Dr. Dashrath Sharmā ; *Early Chauhān Dynasties*, pp. 7-8.

40. Dr. Bhandarkar's article in IA, XLI, pp. 25-49.

41. *Kyām Khān Rāso*, vv. 45-48, *Rājasthān Puratatva Granthmāla*, No. 13, Jaipur.

42. *Sundha inscription*, v. 4.

43. *Achaleshvara inscription*, v. 7.

Dr. Bhandārkar⁴⁴ similarly holds that the Guhilots were originally Nāgar Brahman. But however some of the modern writers like Dr. G. H. Ojhā,⁴⁵ C. V. Vaidya⁴⁶ and Dr. M. L. Māthur⁴⁷ reject this view and establish on the interpretation of the words 'Vipra,' *Dviṣa*, *Brahma Kṣatri*, and *Kṣatri*, used in various epigraphs, that Guhilots are the Kṣatriyas of the Solar race.

Though the view advanced by Dr. Bhandārkar as regards the Brahmanical origin of some of the Rājputs is no less boldly speculative, has a far greater force behind it. My recent discovery of a transcription 2nd slab of the *Kumbhalgarh inscription*⁴⁸ helps us in deciding these controversies raised on the interpretation of words. It informs us that Bāpā was a Brāhmaṇ of Anandpur, who left his home and came to Nagdā and served Harita who being pleased with him conferred upon him the dignity of a ruler. If in some of the epigraphs Bappa or his successors have been referred to as Kṣatrias it is that Kṣatriyaship which he had acquired through Hārta's favour. This is why for Bhartri Bhatta, the successor of Bāpā, the *Chātsu inscription*⁴⁹ of the 10th century A. D. used the word 'Brahma Kṣatri—A Brahman admitted to the orders of Kṣatriya. In epic times the function of a Brāhmaṇ was of both learning and war. Hence the word *dwija* according to Sanskrit etymology, may mean Kṣatriya; or *vipra* may mean one who sows virtue, though it usually means Brāhmaṇ and is generally used as such. History of the later age and early mediaeval times is full of examples of many ruling Kṣatriya dynasties which trace their origin from Brāhmaṇs. Thus Bāpā's Brahmanic origin is in accord with the tradition of our country.

The fact of Bāpā's Brahmanic origin was so commonly believed that even Mahārānā Kumbhā in his commentary of the *Gita Govinda*⁵⁰ has not hesitated to call Bāpā a Brāhmaṇ. Right from the 7th century A. D. to our own days Bapa's Brahmanic origin has been a

44. *Indian Antiquary*, vol. XVI, pp. 347-378, IA, 1910, Vol. 39, p. 191.

45. Ojhā : *Mewār Rājyā-kā-Itihās*, Vol I, pp. 65-89.

46. C. V. Vaidya : *History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, Vol. II, pp. 330-33.

47. *Indian Historical quarterly*, December, 1950, pp. 263-276.

48. My article, 'The fragmentary Second Slab of Kumbhalgarh inscription, V. S. 1517, *Proceedings of Indian History Congress*, 1951, pp. 367-372.

49. *Epig. Ind.* Vol. XII, p. 13.

50. M. S. Saraswati Bhandara.

popular fact. The *Sāmoli inscription*⁵¹ of 646 A. D., the *Aitpur inscription*⁵² of 977 A.D., the *Chātsu inscription*⁵³ of the 10th century A. D., the *Rasiyākichhatrī*⁵⁴ inscription of V. S. 1331, the *Rāimal*⁵⁵ inscription of V.S. 1545 and many others⁵⁶ have repeatedly declared the Guhilots as of Brāhmaṇ origin. The same fact has also been mentioned by mediaeval writers like Neṇṣi⁵⁷ and Raṇachhoda Bhatta.⁵⁸ The Brahmanic origin of Bāpā was not forgotten as late as the reigning period of Rana Fateh Singh of the 20th century A.D. During his period Maulvi Abdul Farhati in his *Tofai Rājasthān* mentioned in clear terms that the Rānās of Mewār were originally Brāhmaṇs. Unfortunately the book was proscribed by the then Government of Mewār. Thus from the above discussion I reach to the conclusion that the fact of the Brāhmaṇ origin recorded in the slab referred to above may not be taken as a last word until some other contemporary evidence is made available; but it at least keeps little space for the interpretation of the words *dwija* or *vipra* as attempted by Dr. Ojhā. It seems reasonable to conclude that like Pallavas, Kadambas the Guhilots and Chauhāns were either forced or induced by the prevailing circumstances to give up their priestly calling and enter the Kṣatriya fold.

The sum and substance of the foregoing discussion leads us to believe that during the periods proceeding and following the supremacy of the early and later Guptas, many foreign races like the Sākas, the Pahlavas and the Hunas had come to India, settled in the northern parts of the country and adopted manners and customs of the HIndus and merged in the Kṣatriya or other warlike people. By virtue of their valour and devotion to Hinduism the priestly class conferred upon them the status of the Kṣatriyas. In order to add vigour to their new social order the Brāhmaṇs also identified themselves with the Kṣatriyas. As they enjoyed a regal position they termed themselves as Rājputs (*Rājputras* or princes of royal blood). In course of time the Kṣatriyas and the Rajputs became identical terms.

51. *Devadwijaguruṇando Śrī Śilāditya.*

52. *Anandapurvinirgataviprakulanando.*

53. *Brahmaksatravito.*

54. *Vipra Bāpākhajo.*

55. *Bāshpodwijoh.*

56. *Eklingamahatmya*, Canto 10, vv. 12-13.

57. *Brahmpaina Kṣatri Jāṇā.*

58. *Agasthyasastyam Bappa.*

MEDIAEVAL HISTORY OF TONK

by

DR. B D. SHARMA, TONK.

The modern town of Tonk was originally founded by Ram Singh, a vassal of the Delhi ruler, on Krishna 13, Magh Samvat 1003 (24th December, 946 A.D.). But it was known in those days by a slightly different name viz. Tonkra. It acquired this name by the fact of its being located immediately below the hillock Rasya-ki-Taikri. Ram Singh undertook to build the town in the memory of Tanan pal Tanwar, brother of the ruler of Delhi. It so transpired that the latter having quarrelled with his ruler brother, left Delhi and for a short period stayed around the area adjoining Rasya-Ki-Taikri and returned to Delhi after reapproachment. The town thus got its present name from the word 'Tok' which in local dialect connotes the sharp edge of a hillock. During its existence of more than a thousand years, the town has had a chequered history having changed its masters very frequently.

In the beginning Tonkra was under the sway of the Tanwars but with their decline it fell into the hands of the Chohans. The Solankis from Gujrat came in Samvat 1135 (1078 A.D.) to Ajmer, where Bohar Pal Solanki married the daughter of its ruler. One of his descendants Govind Raj Solanki fought against Satoji Chohan, killing the latter, and annexed Tora and Tonkra. Mahesh Dass Ahir laid the foundation of the village Mehandwas and also extended the populated area of Tonkra in Samvat 1356 (1299 A.D.) by the command of Sultan Alau-ud-Din Khilji. Satal Dev Solanki in Samvat 1474 (1417 A.D.) constructed the Satu tank, which now-a-days, is called the Chaturbhuj tank. Rao Joga Solanki constructed the fort known as the Bhom Garh afterwards.

Rao Rattan, the eldest son of the Hakim of Tora took possession of Tonkra in Samvat 1575 (1518 A.D.). When the last Solaoki died heirless, his Amil Manak, to perpetuate his own name, constructed the Manak Chowk.

During the reign of Emperor Akbar, the great, Maharaja Man Singh of Amer attacked and annexed Tora and Tonkra in Samvat 1652 (1595 A.D.). Emperor Jahangir halted at Kabra, a village in the district of Tonk, in 1615 A.D. when he was on his way to the fort of Runthambore from Ajmer. The successors of Maharaja Man Singh were not capable with the result that only three parganas Amer, Dausa and Baswa were left under their sceptre. Consequently Rai Singh Sisodia in 1642 A.D. snatched Tora and Tonkra. Bhola Nath, a Gaur Brahmin, who received the grant of twelve deserted villages from the Sisodia, changed the name of Tonkra to Tonk in Samvat 1700 (1643 A.D.). The villages granted in "Bhom" were Tonk, Chironj, Sheopuri, Sakna, Dhakia, Chand Sonwa, Mohwa, Narmana, Pirana, Bhamor and Mindawar.

Maharaja Budh Singh Hada grabbed Tonk in Samvat 1753 (1696 A.D.) but it was recovered by Sawai Jai Singh of Amer in Samvat 1764 (1707 A.D.). He granted the pargana in jagir to Bhao Singh Solanki whose daughter he married. It was Bhao Singh who for the first time constructed the rampart of the town. The Jagir was resumed in 1729 A.D. by the Jaipur ruler.

When Malhar Rao Holkar came to help the installation of Madho Singh as the ruler of Amer in 1750 A.D., Karam Chand Bhomia of Tonk, offered some resistance and was eventually killed on his return from Jaipur and the citadel of Bhom Garh was razed to the ground. Maharaja Madho Singh handed over the parganas of Tonk and Rampura alongwith a sum of Rs. 44,00,000 to Malhar Rao Holkar for his valuable assistance in the struggle for the throne of Jaipur. They, however, were taken back after one year, resulting in the constant struggle for possession between Jaipur, Holkar and Sindhia.

Tukoji Holkar took possession of Tonk in Samvat 1821 (1764 A.D.) but it was regained by Jaipur in Samvat 1855 (1799 A.D.). It was recaptured by Jaswant Rao Holkar. Peron, an European military adventurer and a partisan of Sindhia, conquered Tonk in Samvat 1858 (1801 A.D.) but it was recovered by Kanshi Rao Holkar. The town of Tonk continued under the suzerainty of the Marathas till samvat 1860 (1803 A.D.) but it was seized by Lord Lake in 1804 A.D. and given to Jaipur. But Holkar did not take long to recover

it. After quickly changing hands during the various attacks between 1803 and 1806, Tonk came finally into the hands of Nawab Amir Khan, the comrade-in-arms of Jaswant Rao Holkar.

MODERN HISTORY

Amir Khan who became the first Nawab of Tonk was an Afghan of the Buner Tribe known as Salarzai. Taleh Khan, his grand father, left his home in the tribal country early in the 17th century and took service in Rohil-Khand with Ali Mohammed Khan, a Rohila of distinction. Hayat Khan, his father, acquired land at Sambhal in Moradabad district. Nawab Amir Khan was born in 1182 El Hijri (1767 A.D.) at Sambhal in the Mohallah Serai Tereina to the tiller-father. When he was twenty, he left his home to seek his fortune elsewhere. At first he tried to get himself recruited in Sindhia's army but its commander De Boigne did not consider him suitable due to his young age and lack of experience. For the next few years he served as a mercenary where-ever he could find a lucrative employment. Thus in the early period Amir Khan and his companions were employed as Sebundies or local militia. His golden opportunity came with the troubles at the Court of Bhopal on the death of its minister Chotey Khan. Amir Khan was engaged by Hayat Mohammed Khan, the ruler of Bhopal, to support his cause. He was with him for about a year and then fought for the Rajput Chiefs Durjan Sal and Jai Singh who had been expelled from Raghu Garh by Daulat Rao Sindhia. Amir Khan proved his worth and was subsequently raised to the command of 500 men. Next he entered into the service of Bala Rao Ingolia, who made him the Commander of 1500 men and handed over to him the fort of Fateh Garh, which he (Amir Khan) could not keep for long. But mysterious are the ways of God and by a strange stroke of fate he was turned into a staunch adherent of Jaswant Rao Holkar in 1798 A.D. Their comradeship lasted till the later's death in 1811. Amir Khan was upgraded by Jaswant Rao Holkar and he fought gallantly against Sindhia, the Peshwa and the British. Consequently in order to have Amir Khan as his permanent companion, Jaswant Rao agreed to share the conquered territories with him. Accordingly Sironj was made over to him in 1798, Tonk and Pirawa fell into his share in 1806, Nimbahera was added to his territories in 1809 and lastly Chhabra in 1816. Moreover in recognition of his meritorious services Holkar bestowed upon him the

title of Nawab. Out of gratitude and regard for Holkar, Amir Khan styled himself on his seal as "Fidvi Jaswant Rao Holkar". It is a unique example of Hindu Muslim harmony in the History of this country ill reputed for communal strife.

The policy of non-intervention adopted by the East India Company after the departure of Lord Wellesley in 1805 A.D. proved a blessing in disguise for the predatory hordes and the Pindaris. Nawab Amir Khan with his artillery became the terror of Central India and Rajputana. The force of his arms, was acknowledged in every nook and corner of India and he was regarded invincible. Jaipur, Jodhpur and Udaipur suffered most heavily at his hands. He, as per 'Amir Nama', had planned to drive the British out of the country with the collusion of Maharaja Ranjit Singh of the Punjab or with the help of Shah Shuja of Kabul and ultimately with the support of his clansmen from the tribal areas of the North-west Frontier, but some-how, his schemes did not materialise.

In this period of 'Ghadar' or anarchy (1805—1816 A.D.) Nawab Amir Khan developed intimate friendship with the Rajput Chief Jhala Zalam Singh of Kota and kept his family at the fort of Sher Garh until he was installed as the Nawab of Tonk by the British Government in 1817. Of all the states of Rajputana Kota suffered the least at the hands of the Pindaris due to his diplomatic skill and fore-sight. The East India Company was forced in the long run to combat and suppress the Pindari menace only when its own territories were ravaged. It was during the Anti-Pindari drive that the British Government opened negotiations with Nawab Amir Khan and other rulers of Central India and Rajputana to enlist their co-operation in the campaign. When the British entered Malwa the Nawab too, made overtures to them through Lala Niranjan Lal. But the conditions he proposed, were considered too extravagant and were rejected. The talks lingered on but the matter came to a head when the Nawab besieged the fort of Madhoraj Pura under the state of Jaipur. He appears to have realised at that critical moment that he had no prospect of successful resistance against the forces of Generals Donkin and Ochterlony, specially when he was left alone and that the terms offered to him by the East India Company were the most liberal. He, therefore, accepted them thankfully.

The British Government offered to guarantee him all the

lands which had been granted by Holkar on the conditions that he forthwith gave up the predatory system he had adopted, disbanded his army of 52 battalions of infantry, and Pathan Cavalry and surrendered his artillery with the exception of 40 guns to the East India Company at a valuation. His request, however, to be confirmed in lands obtained from different Rajput states, was rejected. But the Pargana of Rampura, now known as Aligarh, was added by the British Government as a free grant to the five Parganas already handed over to him by Holkar alongwith a sum of Rs. three lakhs, initially paid to him as a loan but later on converted into a gift, to enable him to finance the newly born state which was to pay no tribute to the British Government. Nawab Amirud-Daula gladly agreed to these proposals which were embodied in a treaty of 1817. Thus the soldier of fortune carved out a state for himself, starting from a scratch, with an area of about 2,553 Square miles and population of 3,38,092.

It will not be out of place to mention here that the ancestors of Pandit Ram Karan, the author of *Tarikh-i-Gulzar*, had predicted the meteoric rise of Nawab Amirud-Daula, when he was merely a Jamadar under Thakur Bhag Singh ji, the ruler of Khetri, in Sheikhawati. It is to the credit of Nawab Amir Khan that on being raised to the high office of the ruler he at once summoned Pandits Ajit Mal and Sukh Dev and granted them in perpetuity the priesthood and income of the temple of Raghunathji in the Takhta, mainly populated by the Hindus in the proposed future capital of the state.

Since there was nothing in black and white regarding the agreement of the division of the jointly conquered territories between the late Jaswant Rao Holkar and Nawab Amir Khan, the British Government got the clause incorporated into the treaty of Mandsore which was effected between Malhar Rao Holkar and the British Government on January 16, 1818. The greatest betrayal felt by Amir-ud-Daula was on account of Nawab Mohammed Abdul Ghafoor Khan, who secretly negotiated with and obtained Jawara from the British Government. His behaviour proved once again that kingship knows no kinship. Nawab Abdul Ghafoor Khan was the brother-in-law of Amir-ud-Daula. He did not in the least hesitate to accept the Jagir previously granted to his nephew Sahibzada Mohammed Wazir Khan.

The fort of Bhom Garh was renamed Amir Garh, and the additions made to it in 1235 El Hijri (1819 A.D.). However to the old portion they gave the name Qila-i-Bala. Nur Mahal, Sheesh Mahal and Rang Mahal were added to it in 1236 El Hijri (1820 A.D.) The Dewan Khana was constructed in 1239 ElHijri (1823 A.D.). Double mud walls were erected round the fort. Daulat Khanā was added in 1240 ElHijri (1824 A.D.). Bhom Garh was thus entirely transferred into a new powerful fort of Amir Garh to be worthy of being the capital fort of the state.

Bapuji Sindhia, one of the lieutenants of Daulat Rao Sindhia, in his life time had engaged his daughter to Sahibzada Mohd. Wazir Khan. Her marriage was performed at Gwalior with the heir-apparent with great pomp and show in 1237 ElHijri (1821 A.D.) by Bapuji Sindhia's widow to fulfil her husband's wish. She was bestowed the title of Sultan-i-Jahan Begum by Amir-ud-Daula.

Rao Jawala Nath, the Vakil of Jaipur, presented a demand to the British Political Agent in 1819 A.D. for the restoration of twenty two villages, whose revenue amounting to Rupees 50,000 was alleged to have been illegally appropriated by Nawab Amir Khan of Tonk. These villages had been given away by the Jaipur rulers in charity to the local Brahmins who were thus legally entitled to their revenue. When the treaty of 1818 was negotiated an assurance was given to Jaipur that the villages would be taken from the ruler of Tonk and made over to Jaipur. The contentions of Jaipur were supported by the Vakil of Kota, who produced a treaty concluded between Jaipur and Amir Khan in 1808 to the effect that the Nawab acknowledged the sovereignty of Jaipur over those villages. The Governor-General, however did not intervene since he did not wish to displease the Nawab on such a small matter.

There was a border dispute between the Nawab of Tonk and the Rao Raja of Uniara over Bhumore which had been under Uniara for generations. The Nawab claimed the land and insisted on the payment of the revenue to him. When his claims were resisted, the Nawab seized the disputed lands in ElHijri 1245 (1829 A.D.) but the fortresses of Dhuan and Bhumore were retained by the Uniara Chief. The Nawab, thereupon approached the British Government to intervene. The Chief of Uniara produced many old sunnuds

proving his right over the Bhumore villages but the Resident Colebrooke did not support him. The Political Agent at Jaipur, Clark, was directed to see that the Jaipur Darbar did not interfere. Consequently Dhuan and Bhumore were handed over to the Nawab of Tonk despite protests from Uniara and Jaipur.

Amir-ud-Daula visited Ajmer in 1832 A.D. to attend the Darbar of the Governor-General Lord William Bentinck. The Nawab paid a courtesy call to His Excellency on January 30, 1832 and impressed him with his free and frank views. Such was the magnetic personality of Nawab Amir Khan that Mr. Henry T. Prinsep, the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, undertook to translate Munshi Basawan Lal's Amir Nama from Persian into English. Under the title of "The Pathan Soldier of fortune Amir-ud-daula Nawab Amir Khan."

A couple of miles to the south of old town of Tonk, a new township known as New Tonk gradually came up which forms the centre of the town of Tonk. The Cantonment (Chaoni) was founded in 1221 El-Hijri (1806 A.D.) by Mukhtar-ud-Daula Mahmud Khan near Annpoorana hillock and the Bahir in 1223 El-Hijri (1807 A.D.).

The constructions at the Nazar Bagh started in 1237 El-Hijri (1821 A.D.) and were completed in 1240 El-Hijri (1824 A.D.). When Syed Ahmed Brelvi of the Wahabbi movement came to Tonk in 1826 A.D., he was presented by the Nawab with this garden. It was gratefully handed back. The colony of Amir Ganj was established in 1244 El-Hijri (1828 A.D.) while the Jama Masjid, the Bara Kuan and the Wazir Ganj came into existence in 1246 El-Hijri (1830 A.D.). The new settlement grew up from the Bara Kuan to Obaidullah's Kahcheri during the period of Nawab Amir Khan.

Having reigned for seventeen years Nawab Amir Khan passed away in 1250 El Hijri (1834 A.D.) at the ripe age of sixty seven. During his reign he consolidated the new state, a strange conglomeration of six parganas-three in Rajputana and three in Cantral India, separated by a distance from twenty to two hundred and fifty miles, into a well governed compact unit. This was indeed a very remarkable achievement which speaks volumes for his political acumen and mature statesmanship.

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ARMY ORGANIZATION IN THE RAJPUT STATES

During the 18th Century (1700-50 A.D.)

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With the help of the contemporary papers preserved in the archives of the covenanting states of Rajasthan, we can form a fairly accurate idea of the Army organisation in these states during the first half of the 18th Century. We gather that every state had a small standing army, whose strength was augmented by the levies furnished by the *Thākurs* who were hereditary *jagīr* holders, and by temporary levies which were discharged when peace returned. In case of temporary levies, the military department of the State under the *Bakshi*, was only concerned with their recruitment and the payment of their salary during the period of their employment. These soldiers, called *bārgīrs*, brought their own weapons, and the *sawārs* among them rode their own horses. Here we are chiefly concerned with the standing army and the *Jagīr* army¹ of the States.

Standing Army :

Though the size of the standing army varied from State to State, it was usually small. The cost of maintenance of a large standing army was prohibitive for the Rajput States. But after Aurangzib's death, when the Central Power grew weak, the Rajput rulers had to increase the strength of their armed forces to defend themselves from aggression, either of their ambitious neighbours, or later from the raids and plunder of the Marathas. The standing army was paid in cash. Its personnel were recruited by the *Bakshī* of the state. The horses of the *Sawārs* were branded and muster roll of the soldiers was prepared. The standing army was kept ready to meet any emergency. For obvious reasons, the garrisons of the forts and fortresses formed a part of the standing army.²

Jagīr Army :

The *Jagīr Jamiyat* as it was called consisted of the quotas of men and horse brought by the *Thākurs* i. e. the hereditary *Jagīr*

holders.³ What factors determined the size of the contingent expected from a *Thākūr* cannot be precisely ascertained. Besides the value of the assignment, probably other considerations e. g. relationship with the ruling house, location of the *Jāgīr* etc. were also taken into consideration.⁴ The *huliyā* of the soldiers brought by the *Thākūrs* was not recorded in the *Bakshī's doftor* nor were their horses branded. The personnel of the contingent of a *Jāgīr* holder were directly responsible to him and fought under his immediate command though he himself was fully responsible to whosoever was chief in command, whether it was the ruler himself, or the *Diwān*, or the *Bakshī*, or some other officer. The *Jāgīr* holders paid their troops generally in kind and also supplied them with weapons.

Wings in the Army :

The branches in the armies of the Rajput States during the period under review were infantry (*paidal*), cavalry (*Sawār*), artillery (*Top Khānā*), Camel corps (*Shatur Khānā*) and elephant corps (*Phikhānā*).⁵

Infantry :

The personnel of the infantry were called *paidal* or *pyadās*. Those who used Matchlocks were called *bandūkchī* or *barkandāz*, and those who used bows and arrows were called *tīrandāz*. Besides these, the soldiers also used swords, daggers, lances, and *barchi* with head as well as shaft of steel, of various shapes and sizes. From the 18th Century a number of the Rajput states had begun to maintain *Nāgā* armies. Their size depended upon the resources of the state. The *Nagās* were followers of *Dādū*, a *nirguna* saint, but had become a militant creed as a reaction to the religious persecution of Aurangzeb. The *Nāgā* soldiers had low salaries, had a common mess and remained scantily clad. They received the arms from the State and were commanded by their own leader.⁶ Infantry had lost much of its importance on account of greater use of Cavalry which alone could deal with the swift Maratha horse.

The Cavalry :

The Cavalry was the most important wing of the army. It was the backbone of the army whose striking power chiefly depended on it. As in the Mughal system, the wages of a *Sawār* in the Rajput states depended on the class of the horse he rode. The cate-

gories of horses and the corresponding wages of the *sawārs* are given in the following table prepared from the papers concerning, Karoli campaign of Jaipur forces in S. 1786⁷

No.	Horse	Salary of the Sawār per month
1.	<i>Kalarā</i>	Rs. 20/-
2.	<i>Tāzī</i>	Rs. 16/-
3.	<i>Rasmī</i>	Rs. 14/-
4.	<i>Padīr</i>	Rs. 13/-
5.	<i>Janglī</i>	Rs. 10/-

Tāzī and *Janglī* categories of horse also occur in the Mughal classification⁸. A junior official of the department called *Tavāyachi* informed the *Bakshī* whether the assignment holder had brought his full quota and of the required quality. On default, the *Bakshī* imposed suitable penalty and sometimes even resumed the assignment.⁹

Artillery :

All the states maintained an artillery wing whose size depended on their financial resources and their needs. The important officials of the artillery deptt. mentioned in the papers are *Bakashī Topkhānā*, *Dārogāh Topkhānā*, and *Mushrif Topkhānā*. The gunners were called *golandāz*.¹⁰ We do not find mention of *digan-dāz* and *bākandāz*, as in the Mughal army. Perhaps the *golandāz* also threw *degs* (pots or grenades) and *bāns* (rockets). The personnel of the artillery wing were paid in cash.

Camel Corps :

All the premier Rajput States maintained Camel Corps which were extremely useful in the desert states of Jodhpur and Bikaner. In 1723 A. D., Maharaja Ajit Singh, then in revolt, had sent twelve thousand camels each carrying two matchlockmen towards Delhi and the raid was like a thunderbolt. Camels like horses were also branded and the riders invariably used matchlocks.

Elephant Corps :

Though almost all the states maintained an elephant corps, its strength was not considerable. The importance of elephants had lessened on account of the increasing use of guns and matchlocks.

Formerly they were used for breaking open the gates of the forts, but now, the fort wall could be breached by heavy guns or by mines. Moreover, a commander could be an easy target for a matchlock—a weapon with greater range. It was for this reason that Mahārājā Ajit Singh and Sawāi Jai Singh preferred to ride horses during the Rajput rising of 1707–10. Abhai Singh during his fight with Sarbuland Khan, and Jai Singh against the Marathas also rode horse. Yet elephants continued to be used in battles for carrying kettle-drums, flags, deities of the ruling house, and the light guns called *hathnāl*, for dragging heavy guns, for carrying heavy luggage as tents etc. They were sometime used by the commanders also. Thus in the battles of Jājau (18th June 1707) and Pandhār (19th June 1720) the Rajput rulers used elephants, and Jai Singh used one in the short but terrific battle with Bakht Singh in 1741 A. D.

Recruitment, Pay Etc. :

The most important duty of the *Bakshī* was the recruitment of the army personnel. He also framed the rules regarding salary, kept list of personnel who were paid in cash (*Naqd*) and *Jāgīr*, maintained record of the postings of the officers, supervised branding of the horses and camels, and the preparation of the verification record of the army personnel¹¹. We do not know if like the *Bakshī* in the Mughal army¹², he also placed *haqīqat* (a written statement furnishing antecedents of a recruit) before the Ruler to obtain his formal approval of the selection. We also do not come across any fixed rules regarding pay, increments and allowances. No pension as of right could be claimed by any soldier. Though there were no fixed rules for the grant of compensation for an injury or hurt incurred in the battle, some compensation was usually granted in such cases. A record of the number of horses lost, by the assignment holder and of those who were paid in cash, was maintained by the *Bakshī*¹³.

Branding & Verification :

Muster rolls of the permanent army personnel, including garrisons in the forts, were prepared but not of those who formed the quotas brought by the *Thākurs*. The branding and verification records were regularly maintained to check fraudulent practices of the assignment holders¹⁴.

To the branding department were appointed *Amīn*, *Dārogāh* and *Mushrif*, as under the Mughals. They worked under the supervision

of the *Bakshī*. The *huliyā* (description of each soldier) was recorded in the following form :

“Gulab Singh son of Gordhan Singh grandson of Kanhiram, caste Chauhan; Vāsī (resident) of Vaghīnā; Skin fair, hair light; a few pock marks”¹⁵.

Forts & Garrisons :

All the states kept their forts and fortresses in a state of preparedness to meet any emergency. The following officials were usually appointed in the forts : *Dārogāh* who was incharge of the artillery, *Mushrif Zakhīra*—the Officer in charge of the fort stores, *Tahvildar Zakhīra*—the accountant of the stores, *Hazrinavīs*—the official who took attendance, *Bakshi Jamiyat* who was paymaster and recruitment Officer, and *Nishānbardār*¹⁶.

It will be noted that though we find some similarity in the Rajput and Mughal Army organization, specially in respect of the designations of the officers and their functions, we also find some fundamental differences. The basis of the army organization of the Mughals was the Mansabdārī System, which was entirely absent in the Rajput states. The hereditary *Jagirdār* whose levies formed the major part of the Rajput armies was also a peculiar feature of the Rajput army organization. But it will be generally agreed that the Army organisation of the Rajputs during this period was sufficiently developed to meet the defence needs of the States, though not storms of such unusual fury which heralded the phenomenal rise of the Maratha power in the eighteenth century.

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1. For Jagir Army, the term which frequently occurs in the contemporary papers is *Jagīr Fauj* or *Jagīr Jamiyat*.
2. See Papers—*Jamā Kharch Dāg Ghorā Mulāzim*, *Roznāmā Dhaftar Bakshī*, *Siāhā Bakshī*, *Jamā Kharch* of campaigns Kilejāt etc. Jaipur State Archives (hereafter abbreviated as *JSA*).
3. The hereditary *Jagīr* holders who rendered military service as a part of their duty, are referred to as *Thākurs* and not *Jagirdārs* in the contemporary papers.
4. See the list of *Thākurs*, the number of men they were expected to bring and the value of their *Jagīr* in, *Thākūrā-ro-nāmo* of S. 1761, Confidential Records, Commissioner's Office, Udaipur.

5. See copy of the agreement between Mahārānā Sangram Singh and Sawai Jai Singh dt. Asoj Vadi 13, S. 1789 JAS.
6. For the information about the Nāgās, the writer is grateful to Dr. M. L. Sharma, whose intimate knowledge of Rajput history and institutions is well known.
7. *Jamā Kharch Khajānāi*, Karolī Campaign, Bundle No. 233 S. 1786, *Shamlāt Record JSA*.
8. Irvine, *Army of the Indian Mughals*, P. 51. It is difficult to identify Padir though Kalra probably meant dark black horses, which were favourite in those times. Dr. G. N. Sharma, the Mewar historian, is of the view that Rasmī horses also called Gyārsī, had auspicious marks and were used for ceremonial purposes. As the rate of payment to a Rasmī Sawār was less, it seems that Rasmī horses were considered inferior to Kalara and Tāzī, for military purposes.
9. Thus we learn from a document of Bundle *Roznāmā Daftar Bakshī* S. 1783, that on the report of the *Tavāyachī* that one horse of Sher Singh Rajāwat was not present (at the time of inspection) his Jagir was resumed. Document of Bhadrapada Sudi 6, S. 1782, *Shamlat Record, JSA*.
10. Papers *Tankhādār Parganah*, S. 1756 JSA. The types of guns mentioned in the contemporary papers are *Ramchangī* (Probably large field pieces), *Rehkalā* (field piece including the cart on which it was carried, the driver is mentioned as Gadīwān), *Shaturnāl* and *Gajnal* or *Hathnal*.
11. Papers *Daftar Bakshī, Shāmlat Record, JSA*.
12. Irvine, *Opp. cit.*, P. 41.
13. This is evident from such papers as *Roznāmā Daftar Bakshī, Siyahā Bskshī* and stray references in other papers, *JSA*.
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15. Papers *Cheharān Va Dīl* of the garrison of fort Sudarshan garh, Jestha, Budi 10, S. 1829 JAS.
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ANGLO-NEPALESE RELATIONS, 1816-1858.

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SYNOPSIS

Dr. K. C. Chaudhuri's thesis in his "*Anglo-Nepalese Relations from the Earliest Times of the British Rule in India till the Gurkha War (1814-1816)*" that the Treaty of Sagauli, 5th March 1816, "ushered in an era of friendly relationship between India and Nepal" and "that the customary trade relations between the two States gradually revived" appears to have been based on erroneous assumptions. A critical perusal of the available original English and Nepalese sources reveals that the Anglo-Nepalese Relations after 1816 were considerably strained till the Kot massacre of 1846 which led to the usurpation of royal authority by the powerful Prime Minister Sir Jung Bahadur and his descendants for more than a century.

This paper throws light on the status of British Residents (at Kathmandu) who were kept under strict vigilance and also on the letters which Nepal exchanged with China, Burma, Afghanistan, Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Rajput States to seek assistance to expel the British from Nepal. A formidable anti-British co-alition was formed but the plan failed owing to the luke-warm response of the Indian rulers. In spite of the Extradition Treaty of 1855, the hospitable Nepalese extended political asylum to more than fifty principal leaders of the Indian national revolt of 1857, including Begum of Oudh and Nana Saheb.

"Customary trade relations" between the two States were extremely limited since the whole of Nepal remained *terra incognita* to the British even so late as 1877 owing to the lack of roads and poverty of the common people who had few wants. Beyond exporting musk and importing a few muslins for the rich Rana class, there was hardly any trade. Annexation of Nepal was impracticable for 'the game was not worth the candle', and as a buffer State she served the British interests in India.

Anglo-Nepalese Relations, 1816-1858

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Dr. K. C. Chaudhuri in his recent publication, '*Anglo-Nepalese Relations from the Earliest Times of the British Rule in India till the Gurkha War (1814-16)*' has emphatically asserted that the Treaty of Sagauli which was signed on the 2nd December 1815 and ratified on the 5th March 1816, "ushered in an era of friendly relationship between India and Nepal which continues till now,"¹ In his concluding remark he points out that : "Needless to say, customary trade relations between the two States gradually revived." A close and careful study of the available sources, both British and Nepalese, reveals however, that the above view is erroneous.

It may be recalled that by the Treaty of Sagauli, the proud Hindu ruler of Nepal, Maharaja Girban Juddha Vir Vikram Shah, had to surrender extensive territories, such as Naini Tal, Almora, Garhwal, Dehra Dun, Simla, Sikkim and a strip in the Tarai, to the East India Company.² Besides the King of Nepal, despite inconclusive military engagements, had to accept a British Resident at Kathmandu which was a severe blow to his prestige and dignity as an independent ruler.³ Even before the ink of the treaty was dry, the attitude of the Nepalese towards the British became positively hostile and antagonistic. It is indeed significant that the contemporary Nepali chronicles only record that "a war had broken out with the British in the Tarai in 1814 but the Raja deprived the enemies of their wisdom and saved the country from foreign aggression. He then called the British gentlemen and made an honourable peace with them."⁴ The Nepalese were, therefore, not yet convinced of the

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1. Dr. K. C. Chaudhuri : *Anglo-Nepalese Relations*, Modern Book Agency, Calcutta, 1960, p. 163.
2. C. U. Atchison : *Treaties, Engagement and Sunnud*, Calcutta, 1863, Vol II, No. XXV, pp. 110-112.
3. H. Prinsep : *A Narrative of the Political and Military Transactions in India*, London, 1820, Vol. I, p. 473.
4. Pandit Gunanand : *History of Nepal*, p. 265.

superiority of the strength of the British army and were really apprehensive of the presence of a British Resident at the Capital. To the intelligent few, it however, appeared that the British intention was to impose upon the freedom-loving Nepalese a *Subsidiary Alliance* which Lord Wellesley had forced upon Hyderabad, Oudh and Mysore a decade ago. No wonder, therefore, that Nepal made frantic efforts to repudiate this humiliating treaty.

Anti-British Coalition

Nepal left no stone unturned in forming a formidable anti-British coalition in close co-operation with the Chinese, the Marathas, the Sikhs and the Burmese and the Afghans. In 1816, the Nepalese Prime Minister Bhimsen Thapa sent the following letter to China through his personal emissaries, Colonel Ranbir Singh Thapa and Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey in Tibet :—

“The *Firangis* just enter a territory under some pretext and after entering they occupy it. In this manner they occupied the whole of Hindusthan and also have been controlling the *Padshahi* of Delhi. If at this time China does the favour of removing the *Firangis*, all the people of Hindusthan and Delhi will join and China will earn a great name.”¹

Pandit Bani Nidhi, the court poet of Bhimsen Thapa, appealed to the Indian rulers to make a united front for the expulsion of the ‘*mlecha Goras*’ i.e., unholy Englishmen.

In 1839, when the British were involved in the First Afghan War, the senior queen Samrajya Raj Laxmi and the Commander-in-chief, Ranajung Panday, raised a huge army of four lakhs and attacked the Tarai region in order to recover the lost territory. The Gurkha army succeeded in occupying 91 villages in the Champaran district of Bihar². Lord Aukland, then Governor-General of India, threatened to invade Nepal but the disastrous defeat of the British in Afghanistan forced the British to take all precautionary measures against the Nepalese intrigues in Rajput States.

H.H. Thomas, magistrate of Benares (Varanasi) wrote on 14 February 1839, to the Governor-General :—

1. Dr. G.C. Shastri : *Freedom Loving Nepal*, p. 4 (Quoted by).

2. Ramji Upadhyaya : *Nepal Ka Itihas* (Benares, 1950) pp. 228-232.

“Several accredited agents of the Nepal Darbar have been traversing the Company’s provinces with the notorious intention of intriguing at the Courts of our allies. Mr. B.H. Hodgson (The British Resident in Nepal) has brought to His Lordship’s notice. Bans Raj Bishan Nath Jamadar had been deputed on a secret mission to the Court of Udaipur, but heving been detected in some transaction-inconsistent with his ostensible mission, was recalled on the 28 Sept. last (1838). I found Bans Raj residing at Benares, but having strong suspicion that he was continuing his intrigues here by means of his spies, I wrote to Mr. Hodgson, who desired me to send him back to Nepal. I informed him accordingly but he showed a reluctance to move without an express order from his Government under the Red Seal. At lenght he was persuaded, stipulating only for ten days inorder to prepare for his journey. This was granted and on the 11 February (1839) he started under my Passport: but I was subsequently told that he despatched a messenger direct to Nepal to get this order for this recall countermanded. Hodgson thought that the messenger was proceeding from Udaipur with presents and that such an act being contrary to the Treaty, these men with the presents should be detained.....The said Bans Raj was discovered wandering about the city of Benares disguised as a fakir.....After the search, no presents were forthcoming, except a pair of gold bangles, presented to him at Udaipur; but most carefully concealed in his bedding and pillow were discovered sundry letters in silk and muslin bags, some with large red wax seals, addressed to the Nepal Darbar and to the Raj Guru Rangnath. The three large seals are of the Ranas, and the four other in red bags are likewise stated by Bans Raj to have been delivered to him at Udaipur. These seven letters being closed of course I cannoe inspect them, but I have tried to get a glimpse at other papers which are open. They are penned, however, in such a very mysterious and enigmatical style that though the character can be read, they may be safely submitted to the perusal of the most learned Pandit, without danger of his catching much of their meaning. There are allusions to some matter which is called ‘serious and important’, to the wisdom of looking for an auspicious hour; then to some favourable day of the month of Baishak (April); besides other limits more or less obscure. Bans Raj had in his possession a piece of blank paper, bearing the Royal Seal of Nepal, to be filled up wheresoever or by whomsoever occasion may require. Now his man must be verily the most trusted of servants, and the most

prudent of ambassadors when his sovereign thus commits his honour and safety to his charge. The main object of giving him the '*carte blanche*' (blank cheque) was to convince the power or powers to whom he was sent, that his sovereign placed the most implicit confidence in him, and they could safely treat with him, or entrust their written sentiments to his care, but what a dangerous experiment? When the papers were discovered in his bedding and placed on a table, Bans Raj laid hands on one particular document, and tore it to pieces, before he could be prevented. *The Nepal Darbar appears engaged in intrigue more busily than ever.* Goshains, Pundits and Hurakarahs, all have their task assigned them, and the natives of Nepal are pouring down to the plains in a continuous stream. Rai Guru is the most active plotter against our Government. Last month, some 500 Nepalese came to Benares on pretences of pilgrimage, trade or service and I suspect that a greater number visit Patna".¹

The Governor General directed the police and the magistrates of the border towns to apprehend and transport across the frontier every Gurkha found in British territory without a passport and to detain all deputies of native princes who may attempt clandestinely to pass the Nepal frontier for the purpose which the engagements of these princes precluded them from entering into without the knowledge and sanction of the British government.²

Such a policy strained the relations of the British with the Nepalese and soon forced them to recall their Resident Hodgson who had been interfering in the internal affairs of Nepal. Documentary evidence conclusively prove that Nepal had entered into secret communication with the Sikhs and the Indian Princes of Baroda, Gwalior, Jodhpur and Jaipur.³ To organize a revolt against the British not only letters were exchanged with the courts of Afghanistan and Burma but a sudden attack on the British Residency at Kathmandu had also been planned. Inspired by the Court, the Nepalese had insisted upon the demolition of the Residency which was prevented by the timely intervention by the King Rajendra Vir Vikram Shah. The valiant General Mathber Singh Thapa, the nephew of Bhimsen

1. *Foreign Secret Consultations* : 20th march, 1839, No. 15—16.

2. *Ibid* , No. 18.

3. Dr. H: Oldfield ; *Sketches from Nepal* (1880); *Political Consultations* 1835—1845.

Thapa, was deputed to the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in order to enlist his active support against the British. But the British having suspected his conduct kept him under strict surveillance and granted him an allowance of one-thousand rupees a month ?¹

In 1843, British diplomacy finally triumphed in Nepal when the anti-British King Rajendra was forced to abdicate in favour of the pro-British queen Raj Laxmi who made General Mathber Singh the Prime Minister of Nepal. The latter entered into an understanding with the Sikh leaders to open a second front in the Tarai against the British during the first Sikh war. But the shrewd British Resident at Kathmandu, Sir Henry (then Major) Lawrence, by supporting a rising young soldier named Jung Bahadur, "an intelligent youngman profoundly versed in intrigue" as Lawrence mentions, brought about the cold blooded murder of Mathber Singh on the 18th May, 1845. "Next morning," writes the British Surgeon Daniel Wright, "Jung Bahadur reported the circumstance officially to the Resident, but for the time being, the King was said to have been the slayer of the Prime Minister, and the deed was acknowledged, and even boasted of, by the King. Subsequently, however, it appeared that Mathber Singh was killed by Jung Bahadur, at the instigation of the Queen; and the King, who was little better than an imbecile, was made to take the credit of the deed."²

Thus, the dream of forming an anti-British coalition disappeared with the emergence of the Anglophil Jung Bahadur. Various factors were responsible for the failure of the plan to oust the British in alliance with the discontented Indian Princes and Asiatic Powers. By 1818, two years after the Treaty of Sagauli, the Marathas had been finally defeated and liquidated. The Rajput States had been successfully isolated from one another and had been forced to accept the Subsidiary Alliance. The presence of the British Resident in the Princely States of India reduced them to the status of the Protected States. The Sikhs under Maharaja Ranjit Singh had entered into friendly alliance with the British. Geographical barriers prevented the Courts of China, Afghanistan and Burma to co-ordinate their foreign policies in mutual interest. Besides, these bordering States were decaying and seething with internal discord and dis-union. Each looked for its own security. Moreover, the expansion of the British

1. D. Wright ; *History of Nepal*, London, 1877, f. n. pp. 55.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 56.

power in India made them superior in resources, in military strength and in man power. In arms and ammunition, the British had a positive advantage of the latest weapons while the oriental Powers, like Nepal and Burma, lagged far behind their western rivals. Above all, the proverbial internal strife and internecine struggle among the rival factions in the Courts of the various Powers led to constant shifts in foreign policy which lacked continuity and prevented a determined concerted effort to overthrow the British. Nepal, after 1816, frequently faced minority regimes and rival regencies often headed by the queen which stimulated the ambition of the Thapas, the Pandays and the Chautraias to usurp the supreme power in the State. The consequence of this struggle for power was the rise of the hereditary Prime Ministership under Rana Jung Bahadur who played into the hands of the British and eliminated his rivals to become the undisputed ruler of the country.

The Kot Massacre

Perhaps the most astounding success of the British intrigue in the Nepal Durbar was the Kot Massacre of 14th September, 1846. Following the murder of Mathber Singh, General Gagan Singh became the Prime Minister enjoying the confidence of the queen who had become the Supreme Regent of the Kingdom. On the night of the 14th September, 1846, Gagan Singh was shot dead through a window in his own house while he was engaged in prayers. The queen at once suspected her enemies in the ministry and summoned all the ministers and nobles to her presence on the advice of Rana Jung Bahadur to trace out the assassin. By midnight all the nobles had assembled at the Kot in the palace courtyard in Hanuman Dhoka at Kathmandu. The partisans of the queen led by Jung Bahadur, his brothers and his loyal bodyguard were "carefully arranged and heavily armed" with rifles in accordance with the pre-meditated plan, whereas the courtiers summoned at night from their beds came in a hurry practically unarmed to profess loyalty to the queen. In this tense atmosphere, a stormy discussion ensued resulting in the ruthless massacre of 32 nobles and more than 100 sardars and military officers. Jung Bahadur, backed by the British Resident, emerged as the most powerful man in Nepal. He promptly liquidated the anti-British faction in the Court when 13 old sardars on a charge of conspiracy against his regime were killed. The terrified King had in vain

sought the help of the British Resident Major Outley at midnight of the 15th September, 1846. Shocked at the studied indifference of the British, the King returned to his palace only to find the gutters around the Kot filled with the blood of his ministers.

The Kot massacre had far reaching consequences in the history of the Anglo-Nepalese Relations. The year 1846 was a turning point in the internal history of Nepal. The Rani, who had depended upon the support of Jung Bahadur to secure the throne for her own son, found herself a prisoner in the hands of her own protegee Jung Bahadur. After the *Bhadrakhal Parva* episode in which 60 lives were sacrificed, the queen was forced to take refuge at Benares. King Rajendra Vir Vikram Shsh also escaped to Benares to make an unsuccessful attempt to regain his power. On 12th May, 1847, he was deposed and Prince Surendra was enthroned. King Rajendra in the meanwhile had entered the Tarai with a small force to recapture his throne but he was soon defeated and taken prisoner. Jung Bahadur then secured a *Sannad* from the insane King Surendra which invested him with all powers of a hereditary sovereign. From this time, Jung Bahadur became the *de facto* ruler of Nepal. An eye-witness wrote, "The present King is kept under the strictest surveillance, and not allowed to exercise any power whatever. The heir-apparent is also kept in a state of obscurity, being never permitted to take part in any public business, or even to appear at the Durbar, to which the British Resident is invited. In fact, one may live for years in Nepal without either seeing or hearing of the King."¹ Thus, the eclipse of the monarch resulted in the emergence of the Rana autocracy lasting for more than a century, 1846-1950. It was a spectacular triumph for the British diplomacy which enabled them to secure active support of the loyal Gurkha army in the subsequent British military operations in and outside India.

The Treatment of the British Residents

In spite of the provision in the Treaty of Sagauli for a British Resident at Kathmandu, the patriotic minded Nepalese despised the presence of an accredited foreigner in the secluded capital of the Himalayan Hindu Kingdom. Numerous obstacles and impediments were deliberately put forth to force the British to quit the diplomatic game in Nepal. But the perseverance and tenacity of the sea-faring

1. Ibid., p. 59.

British finally succeeded in winning over the friendship of the Nepalese aristocracy.

The first British Resident, Gardiner, to the Court of Nepal was allotted an area near Thambahil, where at present the Indian Embassy is located, for residence. This area lies about a mile to the north of Kathmandu city. This spot, situated on a high table-land, was deliberately assigned to the British Residency because owing to the deficient supply of water, "it was a barren patch supposed to be very unhealthy and to be the abode of demons."¹ In fact the area was unsuited for the stay of foreigners.

The status and function of the British Resident in Nepal was indeed peculiar even after fifty years of the Gurkha War of 1814 A. D. He had nothing to do with the government of the country. He merely acted as a consul at any European court. Unlike the protected States of India, the proud and independent Nepalese did not allow any foreign interference with their domestic policy. In fact, the intercourse was limited to ceremonial visits only. The Nepalese Prime Minister usually visited the British Residency twice a year and the British Resident returned the visit. Only on occasions of coronation or marriage in the royal family, the Resident was invited to witness the royal procession. The Nepalese were so suspicious of the activities of the British Resident that a guard of Nepalese soldiers on the road leading to the British Residency was placed and no Nepali was allowed to enter the area without permission of the Durbar and without being accompanied by a Vakil who was required to submit a daily report of every transaction at the Residency. Thus it was not only difficult but was also extremely risky to obtain any valuable information for the Resident was constantly under the observation of the spies. The practice of employing intelligent Nepali spies did not always prove useful since it was found that when "the Resident gave fifty rupees, the Durbar gave a hundred." Not infrequently the information obtained was not worthy of this expenditure incurred. Under these circumstances, the British had to patiently cultivate the friendship of the loyal Nepali influential officials. It was only with the usurpation of royal authority by the hereditary Prime Minister Jung Bahadur, who visited England in 1850 and was conferred the title of "Sir" by Queen Vic-

1. Ibid., f. n. on p. 15.

toria, that the status of the British Resident was elevated to that of a representative of the British Crown.

Asylum to the Political Leaders.

Another subject of temporary tension between the British and the Nepalese was the insistence of Nepal to extend the right of asylum to the British Indian subjects who frequently escaped from India and took shelter in this independent Hindu Kingdom. In April, 1849, Maharani Chand Kaur, the Mother of Dalip Singh, escaped to Nepal, from the fort of Chunar where she had been imprisoned by the British Government. Despite repeated demands for her extradition by the British, she was not surrendered by the Nepalese. In 1855, a treaty for the extradition of criminals was proposed by the British, and after prolonged negotiations, it was signed on 23rd February, 1855. This treaty covered only the criminal cases and made no provision for the surrender of political offenders.

During the outbreak of Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, Nepal gave active military assistance by supplying 8,000 Gurka troops under the personal command of Sir Jung Bahadur, then Prime Minister and C-in-C of Nepal. But this did not prevent the Nepalese to grant political asylum to the principal leaders of 1857 movement. About 50 important leaders which included the Begum of Oudh and her son, Brijis Qadr, Nana Sahib, Bala Rao, Mammu Khan, Beni Madho etc., entered the Nepalese Tarai in 1858. These fugitives suffered greatly from the malarious climate and lack of adequate provisions but the Nepalese government was magnanimous enough to provide them not only with money, food and shelter but even prevented the British to arrest them. In September, rumours were afloat that Nana Sahib had succumbed to an attack of malarious fever though he was actually granted land and a house close to Thapathali well-guarded by the residence of the ex-Premiers of Nepal. In February, 1860, Nana's wives also took shelter in Kathmandu. A temple of Vithaldev was built and is still extant bearing an inscription of this period.

Anglo-Nepalese Trade

As regards the Anglo-Nepalese trade, the phrase "customary trade relations", as mentioned by the learned author of the treatise Dr. K.C. Chaudhari, it must be borne in mind that there is a good deal of misconception about the nature and volume of this trade

either before or after the Gurkha war of 1814-1816 A.D. Generally speaking, the people of Nepal, in the past as well as in the present, are poor but contented, and then they have had few wants which could not be supplied by their own country. The export trade of Nepal even to-day is very insignificant and was definitely small a century ago. Their imports then consisted mainly of cloth and a few luxury articles used by the rich class—the Ranas. Owing to the lack of roads (the Tribhuvan Rajpath of 83 miles was built by India in 1954 linking Indian Raxaul with Kathmandu) and means of transport and rugged mountainous region spreading over two-third area of entire Nepal, trade could not and did not flourish. It is on record that the European tutors of the sons of Jung Bahadur had made fruitless efforts to develop trade, but “beyond exporting musk and dealing in a few muslins, etc. for the families of the higher classes, they were quite unsuccessful”.¹ In 1877, the British Residency surgeon frankly wrote: “If the British are prepared to force a commercial intercourse with Nepal and Tibet, they must first *annex Nepal*, *Of course this could be easily done*, if a few millions of money, and the lives of some thousands of soldiers, were ready to be expended; but *I doubt if the game would be worth the candle*.”² It may, therefore, be maintained that the revival of the customary trade relations between the British and the Nepalese was not a direct consequence of the Gurkha War. The British intention was to use Nepal as a buffer State between British India and Tibet by isolating the country completely and by employing the Gurkha soldiers, the main source of her military strength, in their own interest outside Nepal which would force the Nepalese to seek British assistance in case of emergency. Nepal was never thrown open to the Europeans and the country remained a *terra incognita* till 1950 when the century old Rana autocracy was overthrown and royal powers were restored, as it was when Colonel Kirkpatrick (1792) had visited the country at the head of a British diplomatic mission.

1. Ibid, p. 69.

2. Ibid.

