

會。他與清廷官員有極密切的關係。他於光緒二十二年(一八九六年)奉旨授江蘇省按察使。他到任後，即與各省督撫建立關係。他與張之洞、李鴻章、翁同龢、劉坤一、王文韶等均有往來。他與各省督撫建立關係，是為了維護清廷的統治。他與各省督撫建立關係，是為了維護清廷的統治。他與各省督撫建立關係，是為了維護清廷的統治。

AGRA UNIVERSITY

EXTENSION LECTURES

DELIVERED BY

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SIR JADUNATH SARKAR GOLD MEDALLIST
OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY.

AT

SRI SAKET MAHAVIDYALAYA DEGREE COLLEGE, FAIZABAD

ON

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THE HINDU KINGS OF AFGHANISTAN* (C. 430-870 A. D.)

There were three Hindu Kingdoms on the North-Western borderland of India in the 7th century A. D., when the Arabs, inspired by the teachings of Muhammad, the prophet of Islam and conscious of their new unity and strength, were embarking on a career of world conquest. These were the kingdoms of Kabul or Kia-pi-shi (Kapisha), Zabol (Jabala) or Zabulistan, and Sindh. On account of their geographical situation they were the first among the Indian powers to face the brunt of the Arab aggression and onslaught. The kingdom of Kabul was situated in and comprised the valley of the river Kabul (Kubha) and extended as far North as the Hindukush (Upari-syena or Paraponissus) mountains. A Hindu dynasty known as Shahi (Turki-Shahi) held sway over this region from about the middle of the fifth century A. D. In 630 A. D. the famous Chinese pilgrim Yuan Chwang (Hiun Tsang) found an able and shrewd king of Kashtriya caste ruling over this extensive kingdom which was more than 4000 Li in circuit¹ and included in the East Laghman (Lamghan), Jalalabad district (Nagarhara), Peshawar, Charsadda and Und on the Indus (Gandhara region); and in the South the territory on both the banks of the river Gomāl or ancient Gomati (Varana), the district of Bannu and probably the principality of Ghazna (Hosi-na) also. In the North-East it touched the boundary of Kashmir and in the West that of Iran. The Kashtriya king belonged to a dynasty founded by Barhatakin² who had established his authority in the Kabul valley about 430 A. D. Yuan Chwang's contemporary on the throne of Kabul was powerful enough to bring under his control ten independent principalities prominent among which were Laghman, Jalalabad and Peshawar. The King was a Buddhist and the people were Hindus, Jains and Buddhists. The country was full of Buddhist monasteries³.

The Kingdom of Zabol (Jabala) lay South of that of Kabul

*Afghanistan was originally called *Asvakayana* (Sanskrit), *Assakenoi* (Greek).

1. Thomas Watters: *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, Vol. I, p. 122.

2. *Kitab-ul-Hind* of Al-Biruni, Eng. Trans. by Sachau, Vol. II, pp. 10-15.

3. *Life of Hiuen Tsang* by S. Beal, pp. 54-72, and 192-195;

Thomas Watters: *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, Vol. I, pp. 122-123, and 180-285; Vol. II, pp. 264-266.

and just North of modern Baluchistan (Pardayane or Gedrosia), and comprised the upper valley of the Helmand, (Setumant or Haetumanet) river, including an extensive territory to the East and West of that valley. Most probably Seistan (Sijistan = Sakasthan) with its capital Zarang, which lay on the lake Zarah, formed part of this kingdom. Its king was Hindu and bore the title of Shah or Shahya. "In the seventh century A.D these two kingdoms formed parts of India both politically and culturally being Indian in language, literature and religion, and ruled over by kings who bore Indian names".⁴

The Arabs had conquered and occupied Iran by 643 A.D., and pushed the frontier of the Caliphate to the western border of the Hindu kingdoms of Kabul and Zabul⁵. Fired as they were by a resolute ambition for world conquest and for uprooting idolatry in the neighbouring land, it is likely that they must have launched an attack on the Kabul territory as early as 643 A.D. Certain it is that in 650 A.D. (30 A.H.) the Arabs made a determined attempt to conquer the Kabul valley. That year ar-Rabi ibn Ziyad was directed by the Arab general Abdulla bin Amir, governor of Basra, to subdue Seistan, which was then a province of the Hindu Kingdom⁶ and was administered by an officer of the Indian ruler. Ar-Rabi appeared before Zarang the capital of Seistan, which lay on Lake Zarah. He met with a fierce resistance and many Arabs were badly wounded. But he managed to inflict a defeat on the governor of Seistan and to proceed as far as Bust. He was, however, soon driven out, losing everything he had gained.⁷ In 653 A. D. Ibn Amir appointed Abdar Rahman as governor of Seistan which had yet to be conquered. This officer occupied a part of Seistan, though not without resistance, and forced a contribution of twenty lakhs of dirhams from the Satrap (governor of Seistan). "He went into the temple of the Zur, an idol of gold with two rubies for eyes, and cut off a hand and took out the rubies. Then he said to the *Satrap*, "Keep the gold and gems. I only wanted to show you that it had no power to harm or help."⁸ After this success Abdar Rahman obtained control over Bust on the Helmand, and proceeded to Kabul. But his

4. R. C. Majumdar: The Classical Age, p. 165.

5. Philip K. Hitti: The Arabs (1948), p. 50.

6. Seistan or Sijistan which lay to the south-west of the country now known as Afghanistan was a province either of Kabul or of Zabul.

7. Biladuri: Kitab Futuh-al-Buldān (Eng. Trans. by Hitti and Murgotten) Part II, pp. 141-143.

8. Ibid. II, p. 144.

successor Umair was driven out and the country as far as Zarang reverted to the Hindu rule. In the reign of Muāwiyā (661-680 A.D.) Abdar Rahman was again appointed governor of Seistan, and he defeated the king of Kabul and captured the city. He also wrested Bust and Rukhkhaj from Zabul. But after his recall the rulers of Kabul and Zabul again drove away the Arabs from their countries and the new Arab governor had to conclude a treaty by which a sum of money was paid to him probably in return for a promise not to invade the Indian territories again. In 683 A. D. the people of Kabul broke the agreement and imprisoned Abu Ubaida ibn Ziyad. Yazid ibn Ziyad, the governor of Seistan, who attempted retribution was defeated and killed in the battle of Junzah and his army was completely routed and put to flight with great slaughter. The result was that the Arabs once again lost Seistan, and had to pay to the Hindus five lakhs of *dirhams* as ransom for the release of Abu Ubaida. But there was no abatement in the Arab zeal for conquest, and soon after 683 A.D. they recovered ground in Seistan. The Hindu ruler of Zabul who offered a valiant resistance to the Arab expansion was killed in a battle. Nevertheless, the war continued, for his son refused to give up the struggle. In 692 A.D. Abdullah, the new governor of Seistan, penetrated into the interior of the country. The Hindu resistance, however, obliged him to bind himself in writing not to raid, burn or lay waste the Ratbil's country as long as he was governor. The Caliph Abdal Malik (685-705 A.D.) did not approve of the treaty and dismissed Abdullah⁹.

During Al-Hajjaj's governorship of Iraq (696-713 A. D.) Ubaidullah, who was sent to Seistan, advanced to a mountainous path in the neighbourhood of Kabul, but his passage was blocked by the Hindus of the land, and he had to retreat, leaving his three sons as hostages in the hands of the king of Kabul. This humiliating treaty caused a split among the Arabs and one of their commanders, named Shuraih, renewed the war. But he was badly defeated and killed and his troops had to beat a retreat to Bust, many perishing of thirst and hunger. Ubaidullah died of grief. To wipe off this disgrace a very powerful force was raised and a special war-tax was levied from Basra and Kufa to equip it. In 699 A.D. it was despatched under Abdur Rahman to take the field against the king of Kabul. But even Abdur Rahman failed to conquer the Hindu kingdom, and the fiery Hajjaj was now obliged to make peace with the king of Kabul, agreeing not to make war for seven (according to another authority for nine) years on the condition

9. Biladuri, op. cit, pp. 143-150

of being paid a tribute of nine lakhs of dirhams in kind. An unsuccessful attempt was made in 710 A.D. to compel the king of Kabul by force of arms to pay the subsidy in coined money. On Hajjaj's death in 714 A.D. the Hindu king refused to pay the tribute. During the reign of Caliph Sulaiman (715-717 A.D.) the ruler of Kabul paid no tribute whatever. The Abbasids who replaced the Umayyid dynasty in 749 A.D. tried to revive the glory of the Caliphate and to conquer Kabul and Zabul. Caliph al-Mansur (754-75 A.D.), the second ruler of this dynasty, conquered Kandahar and made a serious attempt to realise the tribute from Zabul, but although the Arabs recovered control over Ar-Rakhhaj, they failed to establish their firm hold even on Seistan¹⁰. The Arabs continued making attempts periodically to subdue Kabul and Zabul and to compel their rulers to pay them tribute, but these attempts did not achieve any great measure of success. Thus the Hindus of Afghanistan defied the arms of the mighty Caliphate for two hundred and twenty years and retained their practical independence in spite of the repeated onslaughts of the conquerors of the world.

What the greatest empire of the medieval world failed to do was achieved by the ruler of a petty principality, Yaqub ibn Layth, who started his career as a brigand in Seistan and rose to be the founder of the Saffarid dynasty of Persia and the neighbouring territories that lay to the West and South-West of the Hindu kingdoms of Kabul and Zabul, thanks to the internal dissension among the ruling party in Kabul and the successful use of down-right treachery by the invader against his unsuspecting Hindu neighbour. In 870 A.D. Lagaturman, destined to be the last Kashtriya ruler of Kabul, was overthrown by his Brahman minister, Lallya alias Kallar, who, though credited by Kalhan, the author of *Rajtarangini* with ability and strength, was defeated and driven out of Kabul by Yaqub ibn Layth within a year of his usurpation. During an invasion of the Zabul territory Yaqub sent a message that he would submit to the Hindu king and should be permitted to do him homage along with his troops, for otherwise the latter would disperse and prove dangerous to both of them. Yaqub's troops "carried their lances concealed behind their horses and wearing coats of mail under their garments. The Almighty made the army of Rusal (Ratbil?) blind, so that they did not see the lances. When Yaqub drew

10. Biladuri. *op. cit.*, II, pp. 139-155 ; Appendix: Note A. entitled 'The Hindu Kings of Kabul' in Elliot and Downson, Vol. II (2nd edition), pp. 401-428.

near Rusal, he bowed his head as if to do homage, but he raised the lance and thrust it into the back of Rusal, so that he died on the spot. His people also fell like lightning upon the enemy, cutting them down with their swords and staining the earth with the blood of the enemies of religion. The infidels, when they saw the head of Rusal upon the point of a spear, took to flight and great bloodshed ensued..... This victory which he achieved was the result of treachery and deception, such as no one had ever committed."¹¹ Lallya's position seems to have become untenable after the above disaster, and he abandoned Kabul and shifted his capital to Udbhand (the modern village of Und) on the right bank of the Indus, 15 miles above Attock in Rawalpindi district. This happened¹² in 256 A. H.=870 A. D., and the Hindu rule ended in Afghanistan once for all¹³.

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11. *Jami-ul-Hikayat of Nur-ud-din Muhammad Ufi* in Elliot and Dowson, Vol. II (2nd Edition), pp. 176-177.
 12. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. II (2nd Edition), p. 419: *The Arab Conquests in Central Asia* by M. A. B. Gibb, p. 15.
 13. Dr. H. C. Ray was the first Indian scholar to attempt a systematic account of the Hindu rule in Afghanistan (vide : *Dynastic History of India*, Vol. I. Chapter II). But historical research has made rapid progress since the publication of his book necessitating a fresh study of the subject.

LECTURE—II

THE KINGDOM OF SINDH

The eighth century Hindu Kingdom of Sindh was larger in area than the modern province of that name and extended to Kashmir in the north, Kanauj in the east and the sea in the south. In the north-west it included a large portion of modern Baluchistan and the Makran coast. Its capital was at Alor (modern Rohri), and the Kingdom was divided into four provinces, each of which was in charge of a semi-independent governor. The King's direct jurisdiction extended over the central part of his kingdom, while the governors were the real masters of the provinces and were described as tributary rulers. The king was Shudra by caste and Buddhist by religion.¹ At the beginning of the seventh century A. D. the reigning sovereign Sahiras fell in a battle with Nimruz of Persia who had invaded Sindh and entered Kirman. He was succeeded by his son, Rai Sahasi II, who was overthrown by his Brahman minister Chach who put his royal master to death and seized the throne. The usurper married the widowed queen of his predecessor and suppressed the rebellious governors who had refused to acknowledge his authority. He also conquered a part of Makran in modern Baluchistan and imposed his authority on Kandabil in that country. Chach was succeeded by his brother Chandar. But the latter died soon after, and there was a dispute for the throne between his son Duraj and the eldest son of Chach, named Dahar. Eventually Duraj was defeated and ousted, and Chach's two sons Dahar and Daharsiah (both of whom were born of the widowed queen of Sahasi Rai II) divided the Kingdom. On Daharsiah's death Dahar became the sole ruler of Sindh. On the eve of the Arab conquest the country was very much weakened on account of political changes and internal strife. Its heterogeneous population was sparse and lacked social solidarity owing to the oppression of the lower orders of the society by the ruling hierarchy. Its resources too were small. Above all King Dahar was unpopular, as he was a usurper's son. It was this ruler who had to face a large scale invasion of his country by the greatest and most mighty empire of the age.

1. Yuan Chuang, Vol. II, p. 252;
Elliot and Dowson, Vol. I, 410-11.

Ever since their rise to power brought about by the socio-religious-cum-political revolution owing to the teachings of Islam, the Arabs cast their covetous eyes on the rich ports of our Western coast and made continuous attempts to conquer Sindh. Their first expedition which aimed at the conquest of Thana near Bombay was undertaken as early as 636 A. D. (15 A. H.) during the Caliphate of Umar, but it was repulsed.² This was followed by successive expeditions to Broach,³ to the Gulf of Debal in Sindh and to Baluchistan (Makran), then a part of the Kingdom of Sindh⁴. In spite of difficulties and defeats the Arabs continued raiding the frontier of Sindh both by land and sea. They concentrated their attacks on Kikān (Kikānan), a hilly region round the Bolan pass which was peopled by hardy Jats who led pastoral lives and who bravely defended their country from the Arab invaders. In 659 A. D. (39 A. H.) al-Haris gained some initial success, but was defeated and killed in 662. A. D.⁵ Another fruitless expedition was that of al-Muhallab in 664 A. D.⁶ He was followed by Abdullah who was defeated and slain. Sinan bin Salamah seems to have been fortunate in gaining a short-lived triumph in Makran, but Rashid bin Amir lost his life in an expedition in that very region.⁷ The same fate overtook another Arab adventurer named al-Mudhir. Notwithstanding these successive failures the Arabs persevered on and captured Makran, that is modern Baluchistan, most of which then formed a part of Sindh "after a fierce and successful campaign" under Ibn al-Harri al-Bahitti in the first decade of the eighth century A. D. The way to the conquest of Sindh proper now lay open and the ambitious Al-Hajjaj, the Arab governor of Iraq, secured the Caliph's support to his forward policy. He despatched one after another two well-planned expeditions against Dahar; but both these expeditions were beaten and their commanders Ubaidullah and Budail were slain on the fields of battle.⁸ Stung by these successive reverses and humiliation, Hajjaj selected his own cousin and son-in-law Imad-ud-din Muhammad bin Qasim, an ambitious and daring youth of seventeen, and despatched him to Sindh at the head of a powerful force. Starting from Shiraz, he reached Makran which now belonged to the Arabs, and passing via Panj-gur, Armbil and Qaubati, he arrived at Debal

2. Biladuri, K. F. B. Part II, 209.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. p. 210

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid. p. 211-12.

8. Ibid. p. 216

near Karachi.⁹ This attempt proved a success, and Sindh and Multan were conquered in 712-13 A. D. Sindh thus lost its independence after more than seventy five years' brave resistance against the mightiest empire of the medieval age.

Some modern scholars, notably, Wolseley Haig, seem to hold that the main cause of the conflict between the Arabs and Sindh was the provocation given by the latter owing to its ruler's failure to make a reparation for certain Arab ships plundered by some pirates off the coast of Sindh. The details given above from contemporary sources, however, reveal the fact that ever since their rise to power the Arabs had cast their eyes on our rich ports and had before their final success in 712 A. D. made many unsuccessful attempts to capture Sindh and the kingdoms of Kabul and Zabul by force of arms. The story of the provocation caused by the Sindhi pirates is variously related and seems to be apocryphal. The political and territorial ambition of the Arabs (who had within a hundred years of Muhammad's death conquered many countries embracing three continents of the world), their economic urge to become rich by quick and easy means, and their religious zeal were the most powerful causes of Muhammad bin Qasim's invasion.

Muhammed bin Qasim besieged the sea-port of Debal, situated near the site of the modern town of Thattah (according to another authority at Bhambor), with a very powerful army which included 6,000 select Syrian troops from the Caliph's best corps and a park of heavy siege materials consisting of *balistas* or *majniqs* (catapults) that threw stone balls and were transported by sea. From fear or ignorance, lethargy or complacency Dahar did not move to the assistance of his 4,000-man garrison in Debal which had thus to face an enemy five to six times its numerical strength and immeasurably superior in equipment, and when a priest from the chief temple of the town went over to join the enemy its fate was sealed. After capitulation the inhabitants were mercilessly slaughtered for three days, and the conqueror "settled 4,000 Muslim colonists in the city and built a mosque for them". Muhammad now advanced to Nerun (modern Haidrabad) and captured it without difficulty as the Buddhists there, being in treacherous collusion with the enemy, gave him active assistance. Sehwan and other towns fell in the same manner owing to the treachery of the Buddhist inhabitants in particular and others in general. Proceeding along the western bank of the Indus, the invader reached opposite Raor, the headquarters of Dahar, and lay

9. Biladuri: K. F. B. Part II, p. 216.

encamped there for nearly two months, hesitating to cross the river and fight the Hindu ruler of Sindh in spite of his superior army which had been further strengthened by the adhesion of Mokah, an important vassal of Dahar. It was only after Hajjaj had despatched a reinforcement of 2,000 picked cavalry and the arrival of a powerful Jat contingent, four thousand strong from Scistan, that Muhammed ventured to cross over to the eastern bank. Here he was joined by the traitor, Mokah's brother, and with the assistance and advice of these two renegades he crossed the lake that intervened between his and Dahar's army and fought a two-day battle with the latter near Raor. "The infidels", writes the Chach-nama, "made a rush on the Arabs from all sides and fought so steadily and bravely that the army of Islam became irresolute and their lines were broken up in great confusion." But as luck would have it, Dahar's elephant in the vanguard of his army became a target of enemy arrows and one of these struck the king in the heart. Dahar's fall led to a rout of his army and the prospects of a victory vanished in the air. His son Jayasinha prudently retreated to Brahmanabad, but his mother, the widowed queen of Dahar, fought the enemy as bravely as she could. The spirited resistance of the queen of Sindh, however, failed to be of much avail, and seeing that all was going to be lost, she prepared to save her honour by performing *jauhar* along with other ladies in the fort. After occupying Raor, the Arab general advanced to Bramhanabad which under Jayasinha defied his victorious arms for six months. But the treachery of Jayasinha's chief minister and that of some leading citizens betrayed the fort. Jayasinha now retreated to his capital Alor which too surrendered, though not without fighting. Muhamnad next besieged the fort of Multan which also fell owing to treachery. The Arab conquest of Sindh was now complete (713 A.D.).

Military conquest was one thing, but an effective occupation of the country was quite another. The task became even more difficult after Muhammed bin Qasim's recall and death in 715 A.D. Jayasinha wrested Brahmanabad and Alor from his successor and these and other places had to be reconquered by an Arab general, named Habib. Caliph Umar II (717-720 A.D.) was obliged to offer to the Hindu chiefs of Sindh autonomy under his suzerainty, if they embraced Islam. The offer was accepted by some of the chiefs who, including Jayasinha, turned Muslims. Within a few years Jayasinha again revolted and reverted to his ancestral religion, but he was defeated and imprisoned by the

new Arab governor, Junaid. With Jayasinha's fall the Arab domination over Sindh was complete.

Being an ambitious and enterprising commander Junaid, planned to conquer the interior of India and during fourteen years' intrepid campaigning carried his arms to Ujjain, Broach and Navasari. But the Arabs were defeated by the Pratihara king Nagabhata and the Chalukya monarch of South Gujerat and driven away from all these places. Soon their position even in Sindh became precarious. As the Indian princes from the 8th to the 10th century were politically and militarily superior to the Arabs of that age, they beat back all Arab attempts to expand beyond Sindh. Even in Sindh the Arab territory after three hundred years' vain struggle became confined to two petty states of Mansura and Multan¹⁰.

10. This account is based on Chach-nama, Per. Text, edited by Dr. Daud-Pota, Karachi.

See also H.C.Ray: *Dynastic History of India*, Vol. I, Chapter I; R.C.Majumdar: *The Arab Invasion of Sindh*; R.C.Majumdar: *The Classical Age*, pp. 169-174; and the author's: *The Sultanate of Delhi*, Chapter II.

LECTURE—III

CAUSES OF THE FALL OF THE HINDU STATES IN EARLY MEDIEVAL AGE

The history of the resistance offered by the Hindu States of North-Western India against the mighty Arab and Turkish invaders from Central Asia and of the causes of their eventual fall has not yet been studied in correct perspective. No modern writer has made a scientific study to analyse on a comprehensive basis the causes of our final defeat and loss of independence at the hands of the Islamic races from the North-West. Owing to our eventual failure to stem the tide of Islamic invasions, it has been presumed, that our political, social and military organisations must have been rotten to crumble at the touch of the virile invading forces. Modern European writers have sedulously built up the theory that as a race the Hindus were and are inferior in fighting qualities to the Central Asian Arabs, Turks and other Islamic peoples, and this in their opinion was the principal cause of the down fall of the Hindu States in medieval age. Lane-Poole, for example, remarks, "To the contrast of union and disunion, North and South, race and climate, was added the zeal of the Moslem and the greed of the robber."¹ Vincent A. Smith, an equally acknowledged authority, writes that the invaders were superior fighters, as they came from the cold climate of the North, were eaters of meat and were inured to warfare². This theory is based on an uncritical acceptance of the palpably biased accounts of medieval Muslim writers, so prone to magnify the exploits of their compatriots and minimise those of their adversaries, and seems to give an undue consideration to the later debacle of the times of Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad of Ghur utterly ignoring the earlier three and a half centuries' magnificent resistance offered by the Hindus of Sindh, Afghanistan and the Panjab. And a debacle, it must not be forgotten, was inevitable in the wake of demoralisation that set in as a result of three hundred and fifty years' (636 A.D.-

1. Stanley Lane-Poole : Medieval India.
2. V.A. Smith : The Oxford History of India.

997 A.D.) warfare and confusion against a succession of ever-recurring fresh waves of invaders. How fallacious the theory is can be seen from the fact that the Arabs, who were the first among the Islamic races to conquer an Indian province Sindh, were the conquerors of many countries of Asia, Africa and Europe which included Egypt and other countries of North Africa and Portugal, Spain and the Southern half of France—countries situated in the colder regions far North of Arabia, the inhabitants of which were as much, if not more eaters of meat and accustomed to warfare. It is also worthy of note that the Arabs completely vanquished the most ferocious races of Central Asia, such as the Mongols, the Uzbeks and the Turks—the ancestors of heaven-born generals like Changiz Khan and Timur—races that were reckoned for centuries the best fighters in the whole of Asia and far superior to the Arabs in military qualities, horse-manship and ferocity. It was these Turks who after their conversion to Islam succeeded in conquering the Hindu kingdoms of Kabul and Zabul in Afghanistan and the kingdom of the Panjab which the Arabs had failed to subdue. A section of these very Turks, known as the Ottoman Turks, conquered in the fifteenth century the Eastern Roman Empire with its capital Constantinople and all the countries of the Balkan peninsula in Eastern Europe and threatened Vienna, the capital of Austria. These Eastern people dominated South-Eastern Europe for over two hundred years, and in spite of more than three centuries' best efforts on the part of some of the powerful European nations, they could not be driven out of Europe. And today the descendants of the world conquerors of the 7th and 8th centuries A.D., are at the mercy of a less virile race, a handful of Jews of the tiny Israel, surrounded though it is by the very people who carried the message of Prophet Muhammad to three continents of the world. In this country the short-sized Marathas, who were despised in northern India in the time of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb (17th century) became an object of terror to the proud, tall and well-built Muslims and ferocious Pathans so much so that Muslim chroniclers of the 18th and 19th centuries like Ghulam Ali, Murtaza Husain and others not only paid tribute to Maratha daring but also openly avowed that ten Maratha soldiers were more than a match for twenty Pathan stalwarts. Examples can be multiplied, but these are enough to demolish the theory of race superiority and the belief that military talent is measured in terms of size and bulk. Moreover, the Indian soldier has been superb through the ages. In the World War I and II he fought in many theatres in

Asia, Africa and Europe and not only covered himself with glory but elicited unstinted praise from European commanders and statesmen who saw his exploits. His ancestors of the medieval age, who were free and fought for a national cause, could not have been inferior.

In the second place, if seen in the context of the contemporary world history, it would be realised that no people in any part of the world offered such a prolonged and tough and successful resistance to the aggression of the Arabs and the Turks as did the Hindus of the medieval age. Whereas many countries of Asia, Africa and Europe succumbed to the Arab onslaught, each after a few years' resistance, Sindh yielded only after nearly seventy five years' struggle, Hindu Afghanistan fought for two hundred and twenty years and the Panjab for one hundred and fifty six years. For example, Syria which was the first country to face the Arab aggression, fell within a year (635-36 A.D.) and after the surrender of Damascus, its capital, "other towns fell like ninepins before the conquerors"³. Iraq fell without fighting⁴ in 637 A. D. The whole of the mighty Persian Empire was annexed within five years of the famous battle of Cadesia fought in 637 A.D., that is, it was conquered in "about a decade"⁵ in all. The year 643 brought the Arabs to the borders of India⁶. A whirl-wind campaign led to the conquest of the entire Central Asia, inhabited by the ferocious Turks, Turkomans, Uzbeks and Mongols, in eight years (642-650 A.D.). All the countries of North Africa were conquered and occupied between 639 and 709 A.D. In the ancient land of Egypt the story was the same as elsewhere—a rout, a siege and the city of victory. Babylon was taken in this manner, and Alexandria was captured within a year⁷. In 711 A.D. Tariq, the Berber general of Musa landed at Gibraltar and on July 19 of the same year defeated Roderick, king of Spain, who disappeared altogether. "After this decisive victory the march of the Moslems through Spain almost amounted to a promenade"⁸. Within the short space of seven years the conquest of the (Iberian) peninsula, one of the fairest and largest provinces of medieval Europe was effected. "The conquerors were there to stay—for centuries at least"⁹. In about a dozen years' spasmodic operations the

3. Philip K. Hitti: *The Arabs*, p. 49.

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.* p. 50.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.* p. 52.

8. *Ibid.* p. 65.

9. *Ibid.* p. 67.

Southern half of France was subdued. The Arab expansion in Europe received its first check at the battle of Tours and Poitiers where the Muslim leader Abdar Rahman was defeated by Charles the Martel in October 732 A.D.

Thirdly, the value and extent of the success of the Indian resistance against the Muslim invaders can be appreciated from the fact that whereas the Arabs and to a lesser degree the Turks, completely exterminated the religion, the culture and the way of life of the peoples whom they subjugated, they failed in absorbing us and blotting out our religion and culture or even in bringing about a break between us and our hallowed ancestors. In fact, we influenced the Muslim invaders more than they influenced us. Titus is right when he says, "Hinduism has wrought a far greater change in Islam than Islam has wrought in Hinduism which still continues to pursue the even tenor of its way with a complacency and confidence that are amazing".¹¹

Fourthly, even after the fall of Sindh and Hindu Afghanistan which opened the flood gates of, first, the Arabs and then the Turkish invasions, the Arabs failed to conquer permanently an inch of our territory beyond Sindh and Multan and the Turks had to put up one hundred and fifty years' (870-1026 A.D) fighting before they could conquer and occupy the Panjab. Counting from 1175, the year of the first invasion of Muhammad of Ghur to the death of Ala-ud-din Khalji (1316), it took the Turks another century and a half to conquer Northern India minus Kashmir, and Assam and Orissa, and even then the conquest was not effective, many patches of extensive territories remaining interspersed here and there. It is a matter of common knowledge that Rajasthan was never effectually conquered in the medieval age, and that throughout the Sultanate period (1206-1526) annual expeditions had to be undertaken into the Doab, the region between the Ganga and the Yamuna, to collect tribute from the zamindars¹².

The causes of our defeat must, therefore, be sought somewhere else. A nation's greatest enemy, says Sir Jadunath Sarkar, the doyen of Indian historians, is within, not without. Internal factors consequently take the first place. Unfortunately North-Western India, including Hindu Afghanistan and part of Sindh, was even before the 7th century A.D.

10. Philip, K. Hitti: The Arabs, p 71.

11. Titus: Indian Islam.

12. See Minhaj-us-Siraj: Tabqat-i-Nasiri: Barani, Tarikh-i-Firozshahi; Elliot & Dowson, Vols 2-4.

isolated from the rest of the country, as the parts beyond the Indus were looked upon by the conservative elements of our society as 'border-lands' inhabited by "barbarians"¹³. There was in those regions, particularly in Afghanistan, a great inter-mixture of races, and Indo-Greeks, Indo-Parthians, Kushans and Huns, who in course of time, embraced Hinduism and had become one with the native Hindu population. This being repugnant to the rising conservatism in the country, the rest of India took little interest in the affairs of these people who could expect no help or sympathy from their countrymen and had to depend upon themselves and face the enemy single-handed. Secondly, after the extinction of the Mauriyan Empire there was no such thing as the defence of the frontiers of India by the united might and resources of the Indian people, because our North-West frontiers and all other frontiers, were the frontiers of small independent kingdoms. There was no central government for the whole of India or even for the whole of Northern India, which could think and act for the country as a whole. The kingdoms of Sindh, Kabul and Zabul, though ruled by brave monarchs and inhabited by warlike people, encountered superior forces backed by the might and resources of the biggest and most powerful empire of the age, with their slender man power and financial strength. The other Indian States were interested in these wars as their neighbours' wars and not their own. Obviously Hindu Afghanistan or Sindh could not under these circumstances carry on an unequal contest for an indefinitely long period.

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Thirdly, the country during the period experienced a Brahmanical reaction that produced three-fold effects on its fortune. In the first place, under the stress of this movement Brahman ministers overthrew their Kshatriya and Sūdra masters, usurped their thrones and set themselves up as rulers, which brought about a kind of political revolution and instability. Lallya (also known as Kallar), the Brahman minister of the Kshatriya King Lagaturman of Kabul, deposed and imprisoned his sovereign and seized his kingdom in 870 A. D. (256 A. H.) at a time when his country was faced with a first class external crisis on account of the aggressions of Saṣārid Yaqub ibn Layth¹⁴. Within a year of his usurpation Lallya was driven out of Kabul by Yaqub and Afghanistan which had for centuries been the North-Western part of India was lost once for all. In Sindh, while the Arab raids were in progress, the Brahman minister

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13. Thomas Watters: On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India, Vol. I, p. 180.

14. Kitab-ul-Hind of Al-Beruni, (Eng. Trans. by Sachau) Vol. II, pp. 10-13.

Chach deposed and slew his Sudra master Sahasi Rai II, married his widowed queen and set himself up as ruler¹⁵ about 700 A. D. Chach's son Dahar had to pay the price of his father's usurpation. In 712 A. D. he was defeated and killed by the Arab general Muhammad bin Qasim and Sindh was forever lost to Hindu India. In the second place, the rise of orthodox Hinduism alienated the Buddhist population in the country and quite a large number of them, at least in Sindh, not only became indifferent towards the ruling family but even went over to the side of the Arab invaders and rendered them material assistance against their king and country¹⁶.

Moreover, in as much as religious orthodoxy and ritualism run counter to the simplicity of the poor, the lower orders of our society felt a widening gulf between them and their new rulers who pursued a suicidal policy of social and religious exclusion. The Jats and Meds in Sindh felt so much oppressed that like Buddhists they joined Muhammad bin Qasim against Dahar. The political result, therefore, of the Brahmanical orthodoxy was the destruction of that social solidarity the presence of which is reckoned as the best guarantee of the preservation of political independence.

Fourthly, in the latter days of their struggle with the foreign invaders, the Hindus of Afghanistan and Sindh had the ill-luck to have to fight simultaneously on two fronts. In the early days of Kia-pi-shi's clash with the Arabs, Kashmir was on friendly terms with the Shahis of Kabul. Lalitaditya Muktapida (c. 713-750 A.D.) of Kashmir had an alliance with the Shahi ruler, because his frontier too was subjected to Arab raids. This wise policy was given up by Lalitaditya's successors, Shankarvarmana especially, which compelled the rulers of Kabul to denude their troops from their Western front for the defence of their dominion from the grasping ruler of Kashmir, and minimised their power of resistance against the Muslims.

Finally, the mistakes of policy and strategy and those of detail committed in the course of fighting cannot be lightly brushed aside, as they contributed greatly to deciding the fate

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15. Chach-nama; also R. C. Majumdar: The Classical Age, p. 165.
 16. The movement seems to have been wide spread and begun earlier than the period. Gohilya or Guhil who was of Nagar Brahman parentage had seized Chittor from King Man Mori and set himself up as King in the 6th century A.D.

of the country. For example, the ignorance of the governments of Afghanistan and Sindh about the warlike ambition and activities of the Arabs and their failure to take adequate steps in time for the defence of the country cannot be easily accounted for. Dahar foolishly sent no reinforcement to Debal and other towns of Sindh and allowed these to be individually isolated and conquered. He made no attempt to attack Muhammad bin Qasim, while the latter lay encamped for two months on the bank of the Indus, paralysed by sickness among his horses, and pinned his faith on a single pitched battle.

As regards the general causes, one must admit that, though in no way braver than the Indian troops, the Arab and Turkish armies were better fighting forces on account of their complete equality and social solidarity. Islam had swept away all distinctions of caste and race and given a cohesion to the various races of Central Asia and knit them together into a homogeneous unit. They were, moreover, free from the evil of drink, as the early Muslims religiously obeyed the Quranic injunction which forbade wine. The result was that the invading forces displayed an unexampled unity of purpose and effort, which were not possible for Indian troops, divided as they were by caste, religion and diverse social practices.

Secondly, the invaders were mostly well-mounted archers and their horses and arms gave them indisputable military superiority over our troops. The Arabian horses were proverbial in history, and Turkoman horses were even better. "The Turkoman horse is the noblest in the whole of Central Asia," says the Cambridge Medieval History, "and surpasses all other breeds in speed, endurance, intelligence, faithfulness and a marvellous sense of locality. The Turkoman horse is tall with a long narrow body, long thin legs and neck.....On their predatory expeditions the Turkomans often cover 650 miles in the waterless desert in five days... ..They owe their power to the training of thousands of years in the endless steppes and deserts, and to the continual plundering raids which demanded the utmost endurance and privation of which horse and rider were capable¹⁷". The Turks, whose homeland lay just south of that of the Turkomans, were only a little less hardy and were mounted on fleet Turkoman and Arab horses. "The Turks were so famous for the speed and vigour of their cavalry charges", writes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "that in the Asiatic world the phrase Turk-sawar (i. e. Turkish horseman) became a general name for the richly accoutred, superbly

17. Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. I, p. 331.

mounted dashing cavarly of any race¹⁸". The weapons of the rank and file of the invaders were a composite bow of two pieces joined together by a metal band which discharged deadly arrows to a range of 80 to 100 paces and "which pierced cuirass and shield with ease", and long spears. The Turkish nobles and their horses were clad in armour and fought with bows and arrows and spears. Both were also equipped with long sharp swords.

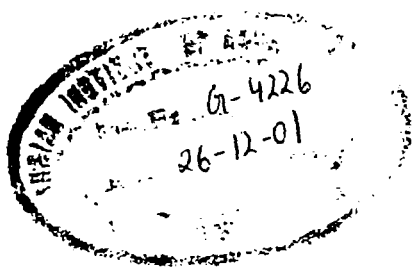
Thirdly, leaving individual cases apart, there was perhaps generally speaking better generalship on the enemy side in as much as larger forces always call for greater skill in leadership and organisational capacity of a higher order than smaller armies which were at the disposal of the rulers of Sindh, Kabul Zabul and the Punjab. In fact they could not afford to maintain larger armies on account of their limited resources in men and money and had, therefore, fewer opportunities of developing generalship of a high order.

Fourthly, our leaders and commanders had failed to keep pace with the development of tactics that had been taking place in Asia even before the birth of Islam and were perfected by Arab and Turkish converts to Islam. These tactics consisted in employing mounted archers as light troopers for harassing and bewildering the enemy and causing confusion in his ranks by archery fire. and then charging him with armoured heavy cavalry. The squadrons of the invading army were divided into five divisions, namely, right wing, centre, left wing, advance guard and reserve, and used to be drawn up in the form of a crescent. The enemy would not attempt to come close or make a general or frontal attack: but large bodies of the enemy mounted archers would hover round and ply their arrows against the Indian army that was posted in a long formation and divided only into three parts, right wing, centre and left wing. The enemy would late in the day steal round the wings and would molest the fighting Indian army from round behind. In the moment of its confusion the Turkish horses would pour a cloud of arrows and the horns of the crescent would enclose the Indian rear.

Fifthly, whereas the Rajputs prided themselves on their swordsmanship and looked upon the battle as a tournament in which to display their skill and chivalry, the Arabs and the Turks fought to win and believed that everything was fair in war. The former were also averse to taking advantage of the enemy's weakness and to resort to feints and manoeuvres in which the Arabs and Turks were adepts.

18. Hindustan Standard (Sunday Edition), 7th March, 1954.

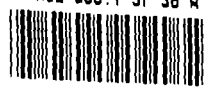
Sixthly, both Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad of Ghur, the former on a much larger scale than the latter, made use of shock tactics to dishearten and demoralise the Indian troops and people. With lightning rapidity they would swoop down upon our fair cities and devastate the land with fire and sword. These tactics were repeated times out of number and so much frightened the people that they began thinking that Mahmud's troops were invincible. Therefore, political and military demoralisation set in, and people wrongly began believing that resistance against the Turkish hordes was useless. It was this feeling that paralysed our society in that age. Finally, the Arabs and the Turks were inspired by a great religious enthusiasm which made them feel and believe that God had made them His instrument in purging the world of idolatry and making it safe for Islam. Our people had no such inspiring ideology to sustain them, except the defence of their country and religion which gave them power to resist and not to carry war into the enemy's country. Mere physical strength and military weapons do not constitute the total equipment of an army. An inspiring ideology is as essential as military training and equipment.



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