

"PAKISTAN'S ONLY INDEPENDENT ENGLISH JOURNAL OF  
QUALITY, STANDARD AND SCHOLARSHIP"

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*Contributors in this Issue:—*

- (1) **Tirathdas Hotchand Wadhvani** was a government servant, a pleader, a scholar, a singer, a musician and a Sufi.
- (2) **M.A. Panhwar** is an engineer with profound interest in Sindhology. He has one of the finest private collections of books in this country.
- (3) **John Andrew Boyle** is an eminent British orientalist.
- (4) **Dr. Mohammad Abdul Rauf** is Professor and Chairman of the department of Anthropology at the Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad.
- (5) **Dr. Abdul Qader Ansari** is Vice Chancellor of the Sind Agriculture University Tando Jam.
- (6) **T. L. Vaswani** is a Hindu sufi and a famous social worker and reformer.
- (7) **Ahmad Nabi Khan** is superintendent of archaeology.

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Editor and Publisher  
**Sayid Ghulam Mustafa Shah**

Assistant Editor  
**Prof. Ayaz Qadri**

ADDRESS  
SIND QUARTERLY  
36-D, Karachi Administration,  
Cooperative Housing Society,  
off Shahid-e-Millat Road,  
Karachi-8

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## URDU

### PAKISTAN VERNACULAR LANGUAGES A History of Tragedy of Education and Language Failure Thirty Years Accountability

Sayid Ghulam Mustafa Shah

#### III

Having declared Pakistan vernaculars as poor men's and slave people's languages deserving no support and effort and expected to disappear in the process of neglect and inferiority, we equally failed during these thirty years to establish, revitalise and acclimatise Urdu in Pakistan. All schemes and programmes of government to make it a national language of Pakistan in spirit and content proved an eye-wash and a hoax. Dominance of elements which had no affinity or commitment to Pakistan destroyed all hopes and expectations of its usefulness and blessings. Many a times it looked as if a ruse was played to strengthen English and more seriously to keep Pakistan's indigenous society and Pakistan national language not only apart but antagonistic. The whip of Islam was used to lash the vernaculars of Pakistan. Today we know what this lashing of our mother tongues has brought on us, the scars are leaving nothing but bitterness in our country and its polity. We in our sincerity but myopia never thought Urdu will be used as a lashing rod for our anguish and humiliation. Best of our men and minds had warned us of the consequences of having Urdu as a national language—the Agha Khan, Dr. Daudpota, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Moulana Obedullah Ghulam Rasool Mahar, Shaikh Abdul Majeed, Professor Khayat, Dr. Baqar, Moulana Abdul Qader last but not the least Dr. Iqbal himself.

Urdu has become a trick of politicians and economic aggressors. A language of superficial liaison was expected to inspire allegiance of the indigenous masses of Pakistan—an impossibility and an unnatural attempt. We launched it with gusto but Urdu has literally aborted in our society. In Pakistan except by the Punjab bureaucracy, printers and publishers and other vested interests Urdu has been rejected by all the provinces as the final and ultimate aim of their Socio-educational policy. In the Punjab

also it is the bureaucracy which is holding Urdu as an instrument of its aggrandisement. In actual fact Urdu is the best means of keeping the masses of the Punjab ignorant and isolated from its soil and infusing an inferiority complex in its populace and obtaining their obedience and exploiting them politically.

For the bureaucrats of the Punjab the English man has always been the vice-regent of God on earth. They must hate their own history, culture, traditions, land, dress and language. They must corrupt their names to give the impression of English. Colonial English standards of life, manners and governance were absolute norms and examples for them. They wanted and pursued English language to rule Punjab and Pakistan—Urdu to exploit both and Punjabi to cheat their own people, and in turn the rest of the people of Pakistan.

We hardly come across a more glaring instance of sociological contradictions and confusion anywhere else in the world. We wish the Punjab bureaucracy could forego and forget hypocrisy and ideas of economic aggrandisement and switch over to Punjabi to harmonise the life, the spirit and the future of the Punjab society, already so eaten perforated and hollowed by its socio-cultural and economic disparities and infirmities. Even today in the Punjab in general, and in the secretariats at Lahore and Islamabad it is not Urdu but Punjabi which is the common language of conversation and in colloquial use—then why this hypocrisy of the national language.

It is a rude and painful realisation of Pakistan's national tragedy of last thirty years that we have made our vernaculars poor men's and slave peoples' languages and imported and accepted a tongue foreign to the genius of the people of Pakistan and declared it a national language, and worse still equated it with patriotism and nationalism but used it as an instrument of oppression, subjection and fooling of the indigenous people of Pakistan. We have been cowardly in our approach to our mother tongues and slovenly in our approach to our national language and the result is illiteracy, deterioration in educational process and standards and intellectual stultification of the whole nation. It is an insidious and an unfortunate falling of men and moral standards which all our noise about Nizam-e-Mustafa cannot avert or improve. All our national educational policies from 1949 to 1979 have been undisguised hypocrisy and the latest educational policy is nothing but a national tragedy. What have we got and what have they achieved during the last two years we have trumpeted the so-called educational policy?

The first casualty of our new Jamaat-e-Islami propitiated educational policy is that our educational institutions have remained closed or in coma with its announcement for nearly three quarters of a year. We have very nearly mortally wounded the habit and tradition of learning, teaching reading and writing in our country. Instruction has been completely eliminated from our system of education and we are passing and promoting

students on inadequate completion of courses, insufficient laboratory experimentation, non-existent student guidance and mad scrambling for certificates and degrees in a way and in a manner of which we have no precedent in our history.

Had the infallible bloated and atrocious Punjab bureaucracy served its own mother tongue, Urdu would never have been declared our national language and we could not have gone through the sociological pangs of pain and perversion and stood in such early and imperative need for reassessment of our decision. Even after thirty years let us have the honesty and courage to confess and declare that we have failed in the principle, in the effort and the processes of establishing socio-educational balances and harmony through our national language. In these thirty years we have paid a heavy price in terms of our polity, and if we pursue it as a medium of instruction we shall have prescribed permanent degradation of Pakistan's indigenous society and rendered it aimless and stagnant and putrescent.

When we prescribed Urdu as a National language it was merely meant to be a language of liaison between the peoples of Pakistan's provinces and as a means of interprovincial contact. In fact Urdu had fallen in our estimation and reckoning after we accepted Bangla as a national language. We had thus given national status to a provincial language and it would have been in the fitness of things to have declared all the West Pakistan languages as national languages alongwith Bangla. Here we became victims of the highhandedness of the Punjab bureaucracy and other vested interests in Urdu in which we need not go at present. The cruel wrongs which flowed from and followed this decision have their own pathetic history.

Most certainly it was never conceived that under our socio-cultural conditions Urdu as a national language could be anything but a temporary expediency. Under our present conditions it was never conceived that Urdu would be a medium of instruction at all the stages of education. Urdu was meant to be only a simple language of study. It would have sounded so ridiculous and preposterous to give it a status other than this. Even during the last thirty years we have not made Urdu grow into a language of science, philosophy, technology, economics and commerce. Urdu has only helped its protagonists to fill their pockets and coffers. It has been maintained only as a language of incendiary journalism, abject romance, political invective, social poison and economic aggrandisement.

Urdu had its beginnings in degenerating Mughal imperialism, its development, recognition and advance in the days of British imperialism, and has had spasmodic ascendancy in abnormal and unfortunate political conditions in Pakistan. It is amazing how far and distant the people of Pakistan and the governments of Pakistan have been.

It is an injustice to Pakistan to find Dr. Ishtiaque Husain Qureshi put in charge of the ordering and regulation of Pakistan's educational, economic and language problems and policies. A more unwelcome and ominous decision could not have been taken. We have known Dr. Qureshi for the last thirty years so closely and intimately and worked with him as colleagues. We know the working of his mind and the methods of his approach, His intellectual and ideological obtuseness is proverbial. We recognise his scholarship as a historian but we have also before us his performance as a Minister and as an educationist. We are afraid in this regard we are being directly put in line of the hazardous and deadly policies of Liaquat Ali Khan which were the foundation of Pakistan's misfortunes. Dr. Qureshi we hold responsible for the failure of all the efforts of government to make Urdu a real national language of Pakistan. He is responsible for the ignominious progress of these programmes and for the proliferation of pseudo-literary bodies in the name of Urdu which have done us all the socio-political and educational harm we have seen. He has enjoyed a position of privilege, preferment and patronage in every unrepresentative government of Pakistan. He is the one man who has been an agency for the injection of everything un-Pakistani in Pakistan's socio-cultural and political life. His dominance and interference will set the clock back in Pakistan's socio-cultural policy by thirty years.

Let the Martial Law administration beware before it is too late. We have still to come across a scholar and an educationist of indigenous Pakistan, or one from amongst the immigrants from India with permanent attachment and commitment to Pakistan's soil, who holds Dr. Qureshi in any esteem in education and language policies. He is perhaps the most distrusted and suspected man and scholar of this country. The seriousness of Dr. Qureshi's phenomenon can be judged from the fact that he is a member of Tahrike-Istiqal, and a disciple of Maudoodi, a progeny of Muslim League a friend of The United States, and now an adviser to Martial Administration.

He belongs to that section of our people who most assiduously engaged in surreptitiously sapping and insidiously gnawing the foundation of the institutions, traditions and languages of the indigenous people of Pakistan.

We are positive he is going to preside on the liquidation of the last hopes of education and of our socio-logical harmony health and vigour. A more unfortunate decision could not have been taken. He is going to leave nothing but ill-will suspicion and bad blood behind. Those of us who are aware of his connections in and outside Pakistan see diabolical forebodings and shudder to think what hot-bed of intrigue contradictions, controversies and confusion he is going to leave in his trail. Dr. Qureshi being put in charge of the educational and language problems of Pakistan does not augur well for the government and the indigenous people of

Pakistan. He is a real person—a non grata among the teachers, educationists and scholars of indigenous Pakistan and among immigrant scholars who have no intention of abandoning and scuttling Pakistan. Dr. Qureshi will manage to undo what governments of Pakistan are committed to do, and so he will advise on and introduce measures which will affect and shake the foundations of this country. Let us beware of such men before it is too late. (1)

In earlier articles we had explained what kinds of intellectual and literary tendencies we have noticed in Pakistan during the last thirty years. We had proved and demonstrated that in the literature of our national language there was everything silly and foreign except the land and the people of Pakistan. We had proved why in Pakistan we had no stalwart writers scholars and writers in Urdu. Let us not forget that one has to belong and to love the soil and the surroundings of one's country before one could produce national literature. There is no national literature without national knowledge and information and without commitment and affinity to the soil.

Agriculture is the base of our culture and national economy and the foundation of all our socio-economic policies. Soil, agriculture and the indigenous people form the foundation of national culture, patriotic emotions and basic nobility. There is no national literature without its being literature of the soil and the indigenous people.

But what do we see and get in Pakistan—tremendous bias for poetry, romance, invective and amorous filth. Barring a few astray instances of religious poetry and taranas there is no national poetry in Urdu. Except for few writings of such a nature, including religious recketeering the whole Urdu writing smells and sounds pornography and obscenity. What we get are followers of D.H. Lawrence, Hemmingway, Sommerset Maugham, Maupassant, Freud and erotic and exhibitionist portrayal and piquant

(1) I am reminded of a very interesting incident in my life. Shamsul Ullema Dr. U.M. Daudpotta and I went to see Mr. Fazlur Rehman, the first Education Minister of Pakistan. During the course of our conversation Mr. Fazlur Rehman with a certain amount of pride and gusto said "I have brought a man who was my teacher as the first educational advisor of Pakistan." Dr. Daudpotta in his proverbial candour and forthrightness, opened his eyes and held the Minister in his gaze, smiled sarcastically and said "Mr. Minister, Pir Illahi Baksh our Education Minister brought his teacher from Aligarh as Vice-Chancellor of Sind University and he ruined that institution; now you have brought your teacher and I am certain he is going to ruin the education of Pakistan. What else can we expect from pupils like you and teachers like them." Mr. Fazlur Rehman collapsed and looked bewildered. I was stunned, whereas Dr. Daudpotta sat in perfect ease, peace and equanimity. There was not much to talk about now and we left.

parade. For God's sake is this the stuff and calibre with which we want to jump for medium of instruction. Ignorant men in charge of our destinies in huff and in blunderbuss can never see beyond the tips of their noses. We wonder how long we shall continue to put premium on ignorance propaganda and fear. It is a fact of history that till the beginning of the eighteenth century Urdu was regarded as a mean barberous and an uneducated tongue of harlots, panderers and soldiers unfit for respectable and standard use in society.

In the field of science, technology and high academic endeavours and research even in humanities the place of English today is recognised all over the world. Even Holland, France, Germany, Japan and the Soviet Union, China and Saudi Arabia have not only accepted English as a desirable optional language of study but also as a compulsory language requiring a certain advanced proficiency.

In the Indo-Pakistan society English has not only been a spoken and written language and a useful subject of intellectual effort, study and application but also a socio-cultural and economic phenomenon and a great need. It not only permeates but pervades our entire daily life and social relations. Its words have acquired permanent place in all the indigenous languages needing no translation or extra effort to explain their meaning. Transliterated English words and phrases have literally become part and parcel of the vocabulary of our vernaculars and thus become a bond of affinity and easy acquisition of knowledge and proficiency in work. Extravagant emphasis on purity of Urdu and absurd and ridiculous insistence on translations is only to create hurdles and impediments in the way of indigenous people and their vernaculars to equally grow to maturity, strength and effectiveness. Here positive hypocrisy is leading us to intellectual ruin, sociological confusion and to political nihilism and obfuscation.

In Sind we can accept Urdu as a compulsory subject of study only from class IV to class VIII or to class X and no more. Urdu is no use to us after that. We would rather carry through Sindhi as a medium of instruction to the highest level in humanities and with English as a compulsory subject of study upto class XII. We should continue to use English as a medium of instruction in all the subjects of science and technology and in some subjects of humanities like Mathematics, economics, geography and political science. In the course and process of time, we can move more easily than Urdu, accept, incorporate and use English words in Sindhi to enrich our own vocabulary in the direction of science, technology and affinity with other indigenous languages. For Sind to accept Urdu as a medium of instruction is to tie boulders in its neck and to put fetters to our literary and intellectual growth. We are now convinced of the conspiracy of Urdu as medium of instruction in equally developed indigenous languages of Pakistan. Misfortunes of Sindhi began in 1955 till then Sindhi was one of the languages of recognition and status in the world.

It is today spoken and written by more people than the Danes, the Icelanders, the Norwegians, the Finns, the Singhalese and the Burmese. It has a solid base of thousands of years and a literary base of centuries.

If we are honest to ourselves Urdu lost its status and significance and meaning as a national language with the creation of Bangladesh. Having destroyed Quaid-e-Azam's Pakistan and having satisfied ourselves with Yahya Khan's Pakistan, even the utilitarian base for Urdu was knocked out. In this new Pakistan we should have done some rethinking about our national language. Bhutto failed in his political expediency and Punjab pressure of vested interests. We should have done some rethinking on the socio-cultural ordering and design of Pakistan with indigenous institutions deserving our most serious thought, effort and application. Today we should have all our four indigenous languages, and our four nationalities and provinces individually and independently deciding the policies principles and processes of educational and socio-cultural change.

A generality of our immigrant population seems to be entirely conditioned by inveterate agitational and fissiparous politics and economic aggr- andisement. They have no interest in any other aspect of national and indigenous life of Pakistan. They are better informed of India and the world than of Pakistan. Their knowledge of and interest in Pakistan is only skin deep—they carry dual nationality and double pass ports, entirely, emotionally and economically aloof.

Pakistan is the only unfortunate country of the world in which have been admitted and imported for citizenship and allowed settlement people who are proving perhaps the most unassimilable lot and who are thwarting the development, growth and consolidation of nationalism.

They are given to rumour mongering to carrying tales, and publishing fabrications and lies All these years they have specialised only in producing rank commotionists, confabulators, clowns and courtiers. In peace, harmony and democracy they see the citadels of their vested interests and monopolies shaking, tottering and crumbling. They cannot countenance and bear the peaceful and natural harmonious socio-cultural development of Pakistan. To fish in troubled waters is part of their life in Pakistan. Their Indian association and nostalgia makes them unreliable citizens of Pakistan, completely lacking affinity and commitment to Pakistan its soil, its indigenous people and their traditions. Dr. Qureshi is a serviceable and handy agency in this regard.

Any amount of harm was done to us by making education a concurrent subject in the constitution of 1973. This is an intrigue against the people of Pakistan without meaning any health and strength of the nation. Islam and Urdu have been favourite and ubiquitous lashing rods of unrepresentative governments against us. We are afraid. the social and poli-

tical nostrums of unrepresentative governments and injustices to minority nationalities have exposed Pakistan to the imputation of untenability.

Education and court language have never been within the scope of definition and prescription regulation and enforcement by the central government of India through out history. The British were always cautious, hesitant and perspicacious in interfering with the cultural patterns of solid and historical foundations and of wide and deep recognition. In no constitution of Pakistan before 1973 the central government was allowed to put its fingers into the educational pie. Socio-cultural, economic and political strength and destinies of Pakistan's geographical nationalities were intrinsically involved and at stake in our policies and programmes of language and education. We cannot eliminate nationalities. We shall merely harm ourselves and obliterate ourselves. We shall merely introduce aggravate and advance national uncertainties. By pursuing new bigotted language policies and educational programmes we are deliberately sapping and weakening Pakistan society and polity.

By accepting Urdu as our National language we should have vaticinated the horrors of the ascendancy of un-Pakistan traditions institutions manners and ideals of etiquette. By creating horrendous gulf in our indigenous socio-cultural order we have only weakened the foundations of nationalism in Pakistan and made it a fertile ground for intellectual subordination, indoctrination, inquisition and slavery. We have merely made indigenous people of Pakistan helpless and second grade citizens if not exactly an ignorable and forgotten rubble. We have not only wasted precious thirty years but insulted our own people and their tongues and declared our incapacity to think about, to plan and to order our socio-cultural future.

Every unrepresentative government in Pakistan had recourse to fiddling with education writing and books. In the name of religion everything of value interest attachment and allegiance to our indigenous masses was assiduously interpolated disfigured or scissored. In the name of nationalism we have tried to destroy the memories of men. Pruning, amputation, mutilation and blackmail ruined the sanctity of books, traditions and facts of history, sociology and geography.

Text books have always been the first victims of pseudo-pious and myopic measures. All text books stand disfigured, marred and mutilated in thought and in diction—without harmony rampant with rank discursiveness, a hodge-podge of ideas and writing. What a cruelty to our generations of youth. What effort to keep them ill-informed ill-educated and ignorant. We have lived false history of thirty years and now we want to gloat and braggart in writing false history. Please spare our generations of this cruelty, mischief and poison. We are inculcating propagating and publishing intolerance, hatred and lies—we are very much mistaken if in our imagination and hope we shall be elevated. Intellectual and literary

inquisition in history has murdered series of generations of youth and communities of the world. Let us not draw a sadistic satisfaction from the murder of truth, intellect and soul. Literary and intellectual inquisition is intrinsically not only a poison for our nationalism and humanity but the real danger to our very socio-political existence. Let the mullah and the myopic beware. We are afraid we see thoroughly vile and peurile attempts being made at the expurgation of text books of truth, history and facts of life, provoked and propelled by pure ignorance, positive prejudice and plagiarism.

Pakistan is the only country of the world in which the indigenous languages and their literatures are considered and declared lowly and foreign in their own soil when actually they should be taken as their strength and solid foundation of growth. They are dubbed useless and relegated to the limbo of oblivion and neglect and abused and called folk literature and folk languages. The music and the traditions of the indigenous people are termed as folk music and folk traditions. Any thing connected with and associated with our people is parochialism and provincialism. What an irony of fate, that which should be the pride of our people is now called the trait of their degradation. Let it be proclaimed and known that if in Pakistan Pushto, Punjabi, Baluchi and Sindhi are not National there is nothing else national left in this country. We should like to take away from renegates the right to condemn us and destroy what is the noblest the sweetest and the most loveable in our land. We are fade up of this folkism in our native land, of the mean status to our traditions, tongues institutions and emotions. Any thing belonging to the people and the soil of Pakistan is parochial and fissiperous, but everything foreign and exotic is patriotic and Islamic!

This folkism is nothing but slow poison to our indigenous people and their traditions. What an arrogance what an affrontry. What belongs to us is lowly and forgettable folkism, which is taken in common parlance to be tantamount to rusticism barbarism, hill-billyism crudism, medievalism, anti-deluvianism, absoletism, redundant and ignorable—needing no effort, love and respect. What a shame that we stand all this with not only impudicity but with impunity.

Strange are the orders of fate that which we should love and develop and make a part of our existence and permanent pride we are expected to hate and forget. There is no folkism about Pathans, Punjabis, Sindhi and Baluchis. They are nationalism pure and par-excellent.

After a laps of thirty years and having seen what we have gone through we are beginning to see Urdu as a conspirisy against the indigenous people of Pakistan. Urdu has made intellectual, social and moral and political adventurism in Pakistan not only possible but a fact and tragedy of life. Urdu has made the intrusion of Indian ideas and

dominance possible. We have allowed free field for the uncommitted and the volatile to prosper and galore. We have unwittingly ignored indigenous ideas, standards, traditions and institutions and subjected our indigenous people to ridicule, and allowed everything of indigenous Pakistan to ossify and disappear. Somehow the two aspects of our national life to which we should have given a profound prolonged and serious thought but followed them in an emotional huff, were the issues of education and national language in the context of the socio-cultural milieu which we had inherited and we wanted to shape and advance. Our thoughtlessness has landed us in this obnoxious quagmire. Education in the sub-continent has had a history and development of its own. Without going at great length into the course of this development in the nineteenth century we shall briefly confine ourselves to the twentieth.

The British by 1909 had realised the tenderness and the delicacy of the issue of education and language in India. They wanted to spare headache to themselves and keep away from being involved in basic sociological problems. They wanted minimum financial commitment and administrative involvement in education. In the name of self-help and self-reliance they wanted to be free from all encumbrances on their imperial ideas and principles of government. Education became a transferred subject in 1919 and a provincial subject in 1935. In 1947 we were at once taken by a jolt and a shock. In the multiplicity of the problems of the partition of India, in our indifference and in our characteristic foolishness and short-sightedness to our basic sociological issues, like education and language, we applied the least amount of thought and effort, as if things will take care of themselves once Pakistan was established. All the problems and matters will automatically and peacefully grow, move and advance and develop to our choice and to our satisfaction and advantage. The dominance of politics and the expediency and urgency of administrative and financial problems and the ill-intentions of the new bureaucracy relegated education, language and social problems and their thinking in the far background and even in total limbo of neglect. Our society and Education became victims of drift and carefree thought and application resulting in the present chaos in education.

The life at the time of independence began to be governed by principles of utility, immediate economic benefit, less strenuous mental and moral application, intoxicated exuberance, and dishonest ideology. We allowed every aspect of life to float and swing without bothering to give our socio-cultural needs and imperatives any attention or direction. We allowed free play to immigrant population to exploit initial uncertainties, deficiencies and advantages and we acquiesced in our neglect of our indigenous needs and requirements. Our gaze never went beyond today and we ruined every tomorrow. Political disharmony chicanery and tom-fooling of the nation increased and began to bring abundant temporary gain and frofit without any idea and realisation and consciousness of the future repercus-

sions and the resultant tragedy. Those who governed us were either intellectual pygmies and perverts and morally dishonest imbeciles or heartless men who only knew how to cheat with slogans.

We often come across specious arguments from the ignorant and the prejudiced presenting us with untenable analysis of various countries of the world forgetting that Pakistan was a peculiar phenomenon. In no country of the world a non-indigenous language and its traditions have been accepted and prescribed as national and exclusive. It is always one of the indigenous languages or all the indigenous languages which have been given national status. Switzerland, Canada, Finland, China, Union Soviet and India are moot countries to help.

Let us face our issues and problems honestly and squarely. Any amount of closing of our eyes to realities and running away from truth is not going to help us. We have lost thirty years and more we cannot afford to lose. Realistic and tangible thinking has to be done. By pursuing our present policies we could predict worse in store. What dreams we started, with what destination we are heading for and we wonder what destiny awaits us. Our past does not leave much scope for hope. It is a tragedy that in Pakistan from its very inception, in our simplicity, honesty and generosity, we have permitted, tolerated and accepted unnatural elements and foreign anitbodies which have given us nothing but sociological abberation, usupernatural and devilish complications the very delimma of our existence, and the problems of our very survival as a nation.

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“As long as it is controlled by the people, we have never been afraid of government but we have never wanted to see it control us. We think that our government should be open, competent and sensitive to our needs, ideals and aspirations.”

President Carter.

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You look wise. Pray correct that error.

Charles Ramb

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## MUSIC COMPOSITIONS OF SHAH LATIF\*

Tirathdas Hotchand Wadhvani

In the development of man and art, tradition, inheritance, environment, association play a very important part. The same piece of art when taken in a different country takes a somewhat different shape. It is more so in the case of music. Genius may be the same but the species are different. The same piece of music is sung differently in different places. Rhythm or time measure is the soul of music. Time in music signifies the measure by which it is regulated. The time of Sindhi music resembles more or less the rhythm of Greece, Rome, and Iran, Rhythm is no other than the poetical feet which forms the basis of musical measure. The time relations of music are affected both by the structure of the language and by the method of versification which ultimately derives from it. In Sind, words are set to music rather than music is set to words. Hebrew, Arabic, Turkish and Afghan languages are considered to be harsh languages and unfavourable to music because of the paucity of the vowels and more abundance of consonants. Sindhi like Sanskrit has more of vowels and therefore is sonorous beyond any doubt and is particularly adopted to music. Sind has all along been a land of synthesis and the Sindhi language having quite a different genius from that of Hebrew, Arabic, Turkish, Afghan and other European languages, has not assimilated their music to its musical system. The languages of the invaders enriched no doubt our vocabulary, but they exercised a very negligible influence on the poetry and music of Sind. The influence of geographical contiguity is always there, more so when the languages of the contiguous countries are derived from the same stock from which also the Sindhi language is derived. Therefore the Hindi, Punjabi, Gujrati, Kachchi, Marwari, Kathiawari, and Brohi systems of music have left their impact on our system. The powerful rhythm of Arabic language and the practice of musical intoning of the mosque has done very little to mould the form of poetical and musical compositions of Sind. For example *Sur Khambat* is of Gujrat and *Sur Sorath* of Kathiawar.

The Indian scale of music divides its octave into 22 srutis, intervals or semitones. The Greeks who adopted their octave from Egypt divided it into 24 semitones. This is illustrated as under:-

|        | Ni | Sa | Re | Ga | Ma | Pa | Dha |    |           |
|--------|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|-----------|
| Indian | 2  | 4  | 3  | 2  | 4  | 4  | 3   | 22 | semitones |
| Greek  | 2  | 4  | 4  | 2  | 4  | 4  | 4   | 24 | semitones |

\*By the Courtesy of his sister Mrs Lila Harchandani

The human voice has a tendency to ascend by leaps and descend by steps. The Greek system has one more leap than the Indian in *Re* and *Dha*. An experiment of Sindhi *Kafi* made with Indian *Thumri* showed that the Sindhi intervals are 24 like those of the Greek Eastern music. This experiment requires to be confirmed scientifically in a well equipped laboratory. A line or verse of *Duha* has also 24 instants. A *duha* composition is therefore best adopted to Sindhi music. If the experiment is scientifically correct then the old theory that Sindhi music is a part of the heritage of Indian system of music is exploded. When Orientalists like Colonel Todd and others are of the view that the Indian octave was invented on the banks of the Indus, it is for the researchs to find out whether or not we have influenced the Indian system or the latter has influenced us. Dr. Nabi Bux Baloch's research that Shah Abdul Latif made his new *Tamboor* a five-stringed instrument appears to suggest that it was made to make up the deficiency of two semitones in the Sindhi octave. A line of 24 *matras* can be divided into 4 feet of *matras*, 3 feet of 8 *matras*, two feet of 12 *matras* and these can lend a variety of rhythm.

### Chant Music

*Duhas* are sung in chant music. In investigating the chant music of Shah Abdul Latif we should not lose sight of the fact that the *Vedas*, the oldest literature of the world, were composed and chanted on the banks of our river Indus. We should also keep in view the powerful rhythm of Arabic language and the musical intoning of the mosque that is carried out even upto to-day—the chant music of the mosque. The result of this integration is the *Tuppa* which is still sung in a rude style by the camel-drivers of Punjab. The *Tuppa* is also the favourite measure with Rajputs. Its chief character is plaintive simplicity. It is analogous to the Scotch or perhaps still more to the Normans. It is indigenous form. Its origin is the land of five rivers. The folklore of Hir Ranjha is still sung in the Punjab in Punjabi in the *Tuppa* style which is also prevalent in Rajputana, Cutch and Kathiawar. The peculiarity of the Punjabi *Tuppa* is that it is intoned in one stereotyped musical mode whereas the chants of the Sindhi *Duha* are sung in the variety of musical modes of the various *Surs*. If the *Sur* is, say *Kalyan*, then the *duhas* under the chapter of *Kalyan* are chanted within the same scale of *Sur Kalyan*. The celebrated musician Shoree perfected the *Tuppa* style in *Kalyan* by giving it elegance and excellence. Shah in Sind brought it within the ambit of the melody of each *Sur*. He did not allow it to remain in one stereotyped form but lent to it its variety and charm. Such a chant music is sung in more than two parts, sometimes three and sometimes four parts. For such music the instruments required are those for the purpose of droning such as the *Ektaro*, *Tambur* (Chautar), *Rabab*, *Guitar* etc. In *Duha* the music is subordinated to words and is monophonic in character.

### Choral Character

A *Vai* is folk music and is choral in character. It is a peculiar mode

of poetic composition in Sind in which after every one or two verses one line runs as a chorus or a refrain which is repeated after every couplet, and the last word of the verse thymes with the last word of the chorus. The choral repetition adds pleasantness to the piece. It is a choir singing—a church music like *Bhjaan*. It is *sam-Kirtan* i.e., united praise. It is congregational music. It denotes a large gathering of the audience. The crowd itself serves as a stimulus that keeps everyone rollicking, dancing sometimes howling in emulation. One gives the song the others follow it by repeating the same lines once again. All join together when the lines lead to the burden of the song. In such music all are performers and there is no audience so to say. The music of the Hindu saints of India took the form of *Bhajan*; amongst the Muslims it took the form of *Kawali* and in Sind it took the form of *Vai*. In *Vai* the music is still subservient to its poetic theme. Its melody is gross because the notes are often cramped or extended a little away from the true notes. The *Vai* as it is sung still by the Fakirs at the shrine of Shah Latif makes this quite clear. A *Vai* is lyrical and its theme is love and prayer but it is congregational in essence. No finer instruments are needed for this form of folk-music.

#### Latif's Kafis

Besides the *Duhas* and *Vais*, there are many many *Kafis* of Shah Abdul Latif still on the lips of almost every Sindhi. They have not so far been collected and compiled in a book form. It is not known why the *Kafis* were not included in the *Risalo*. Were they excluded because of their lower poetic value, or because of the lightness of its music or for any other cause? These are the questions which have not been answered so far.

Music occupies an integral part in the life of every nation but in our country music specially was discouraged, disapproved and denounced as profane and sacrilegious by the *Mulla*, *Akhund* and *Kazi*. An anecdote of Shah Latif which appears in the present compilation would illustrate this fact. Music therefore was confined to the minstrel class. It was for this reason our music still remained in the state of folk music and made no progress towards the formation of classical music. The music in Sind did not grow into a science as in the Indian counterpart. We have no *Tarana*, no *Solfa*-music, no *Khayal*, no *Dhrupad*, no *Nataka*. The times of Sindh history were turbulent, there were foreign invasions one after the other. But bellicosity is not the constant quality of man's mind. The intervals of peace and pursuits of art always come, though in Sind they have been very few and far between. Heterodoxy will always make itself felt and reflected at least in the ordinary common man. Out of these omissions and commissions there grew out a musical form which is called the *Sindhi Kafi*. *Kafi* is the veritable music of Sind. It is lyrical in essence. Its theme is love. Love songs have always had a wider field of appeal. Every nation is possessed of its love songs and

Sind is not a bit far behind them. The old sing them as acts of devotion, the young derive pleasure out of their contents; the pious consider them as sacred, while the profane will find in them many things which they glory either to have themselves performed or should have been glad to have had it in their power to achieve. These songs are the sacred hymns of Sind and are the lays of the Lord. It has become a musical form rather than a musical mode as it is in India. Our *Kafis* can be sung in any musical mode. The *Kafi* are more simple, short, and lucid than *Vais* in their texture and form. The *Kafi* is an individualised form of *Vai*. It is the solo music of Sind. When *Aieen-e-Akbari* talks of Sindhi music as *Kami* or amatory it talks of the *Sindhi Kafi*. *Sindhi Kafi* is not manly and solemn. It is light and graceful, womanly and voluptuous like *Khayal* of the Indian counterpart. It does not possess the hard and deafening rhythm of *Kawali*. *Sindhi Kafi* is half way between classical and light music for it is a product of *Tappa*, *Khayal* and *Thumri*. It is lively and well adapted to pantomime or dancing. They are simply little melodies which keep the audience enraptured. It is divided into two parts: *asthai*, the main part of the musical mode and *Antra* the second half of the musical mode which includes notes of higher tetra-chord. It admits of graces and *Alap* intonation. Its melody is simple yet sure. It needs no previous thought or special effort. It is elegant, bright and gay. It embodies small number of *matras* ranging from 8 to 16. Judging this musical form in the light of the entire output of the *Risalo*, the possibility of the view that it had no yet taken its form in the days of Shah Abdul Latif is excluded. To its formation Shah Latif has contributed considerably. The most important thing for which Shah Latif cannot be forgotten is the fact that he wrested the music from the minstrel class and gave it to his people as a path leading to religion. Any effort on the part of any musical institution to merge the *Sindhi Kafi* in the *Ghazal* is bound to fail and will fail miserably due to the different set-ups of the two languages. But any attempt to align it with Punjabi *Dholki* music will succeed sonorously, for *Dholki* like *Pakwaz* is the instrument of percussion still prevalent with the women folk of our country. The *Sindhi Kafi* has taken centuries in its formation which the posterity of Sind will not willingly let die or forget.

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Fortunately for themselves and the world, nearly all men are cowards and dare not act on what they believe. Nearly all our disasters come of a few fools having the 'courage of their convictions'.

Coventry Patmore

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## SIND ITS FOOD RESOURCES SINCE ANTIQUITY

### A pre-neolithic socio-anthropological study

Animals, Birds, Fishes and wild horticultural products.

M. H. PANHWAR

#### I

Hunters in most of the parts of the world had to spend most of their time in gathering food for bare subsistence. The storage of meat, fish or fruits could be done only for a very short time. They had thus to live on the edge of starvation and fear of extinction. The Sind hunters must have maintained a relatively high standard due to abundance of big game in the riverine forests, fresh water fish and game birds. They did not lack the supply of flint tools, for which factories existed in the Upper Sind at Rohri, in the Lower Sind at mile 101 and in the whole of Hilly track of Kohistan in South Western Sind. The mastery over chipping and shaping of crystalline rocks had already been achieved by paleolithic man between 30,000—10,000 B.C. and the art must have come to Sind from Soan valley as well as from Decan soon after 15,000 B.C. when sea started receding from the alluvial planes of Sind near present Kashmore. They most probably made artificial shelters in the alluvial planes and used rock over hangs as well as caves in the Western Sind. For shelter they must have made use of animal skin, by hanging them from trees or fixing them on poles like a tent. The skins must also have been used for bed, mattresses and etc. Straw from various grasses, feathers and fibres must have been used as cushion material. Rice straw is still in common use in temporary farm dwellings for thrashing season in Upper Sind. It is erroneous to think that the Sind hunter worked around the clock to feed himself. The hunter must have been as efficient as great apes and lions, who enjoy long periods of grooming, playing, resting, napping and relaxing after an intense activity of food hunting or gathering. Even today hunting adult bushmen on the average spend only 3 hours a day to collect food for themselves and their off spring or the elderly and the sick.

The food gathered by them was rich in proteins and other essentials. As against this today's Sindhi farmer has to work about 53 hours a week or 7-1/2 hours a day yet to live from hand to mouth. Before the world war-II, a Sindhi farmer was getting animal protein twice or thrice a week,

but today it is only seldom in months. The Western Europeans and northern Americans of today probably are to get slightly better food than Sind's hunter, that by putting in weekly, 40 hours at work another 20 hour at home, but they have little time left or leisure and pleasure.

Sind Hunters must have maintained almost a constant population for many milleniums. The birth rate among the hunting tribes is always low. The density of population in most of stone-age world was about one to two persons per square mile, but in the Sind's thick forests which must have occupied approximately 25000 to 30,000 sq. miles, the availability of Pala Hilsa) and other fishes in rivers Indus big game animals and birds, the density could have been at least 4 to 8 persons per square mile and this must have continued well upto Amrian times, when new settlers started clearing forests land for agriculture. It took at least half a millenium for the agricultural tribes to penetrate deep into the riverine forests and clear them for agriculture. Since a unit of land can absorb more agriculture labour and also sustain it than it can support hunting and food collecting; in the process lasting these 500 years or more, the population of food-gatherers must have reduced and been replaced by agricultural population. It must have amounted to a change of occupation by some portion of hunting population and the rest of agricultural labour and the poineers may have migrated from the South West Iran.

Agriculture also needed more labour force as man hours required to produce a unit of food calories from agriculture is more than man hours required in hunting-food gathering. The agricultural economy therefore is strongly motivated to increase the population and the hunting economy on other hand is motivated to keep their population low in relation to their available animals for hunting. The hunting and food gathering population of Sind which may have been constant upto approximately middle of 4th millenium B.C. started reducing due to immigration from South West Iran of people who first seem to have come to the surroundings of Karachi and then moved east as well as north-west encroaching upon the Shikarghas of hunter-food-gatherers, who in turn seem to have moved more and more to the Indus planes, vacating the whole of hilly tract. In a century or two or possibly more the new immigrants reached the Indus planes at Amri and established agricultural economy. This must have threatened the hunter-food-gatherers, who either may have adopted to new economy or reduced their population. It is un-true that the rate of mortality among the hunters was high. The death caused by infectious diseases like cholera, tuberculosis, pneumonia, typhoid, small pox, pleague and etc is strongly influenced by the food and general health, and therefore hunter-food-gatherers who get better diet, certainly must have high recovery rate, besides the above are the diseases of high density populated societies, poverty, under nourishment, over crowding and un-hyegenic conditions. Disease like malaria reached its zenith only after the forests were cleared for agricultural. doing away with natural drainage and creat-

ing swampy conditions for mosquito breeding. Thus the agricultural economy caused general depression of human health.

From the skeletal remains of past thousands of years it is proved that with the advent of agricultural economy the general health of people deteriorated for example in 30,000 B.C. adults died with 2.2 teeth missing, in 6500 B.C. it rose to 3.5 missing and around 2000 B.C. with 6.6 teeth missing I.

The birth rate among the hunter-food-gatherers is always lower than in agricultural population. The reason being that after the birth of a child, a woman does not ovulate and thus get pregnant unless she has accumulated more than 20-25% of her total body weight as fats. Since a nursing mother also supplies about 1000 calories to her suckling child, a woman in hunting societies dependent on proteins, takes longer for the accumulation of fats to the required level, whereas in agricultural economy the carbohydrates from grains and yellow vegetables quickly provide the desired level of fats for ovulation. Thus so long as the hunting society women suckled their children, they rarely got pregnant. Not only this but higher the ratio of body fats to body weight, earlier is the age of menarche. Thus in well fed societies taking diet rich in fats the girls can ovulate as early as at twelve years of age.

The life expectancy among the hunting tribes of Sind like others may have been 28-32 years and the hunting tribe women may have produced maximum 3 to 4 children in their life-time at age of 18, 22, 26 and 30 years, unlike agricultural population of the Indus Culture times, when they may have produced possibly 8-9 children during the same life expectancy. Accounting for high child mortality rate the population growth among the hunting tribes may have been a maximum of one percent and even as low as half percent as against about 1-1/2 to 2% for agricultural population in spite of high mortality. The agricultural population would therefore double in 35-52 years, whereas the hunting tribes would take 70 to 139 years for doubling their population. With better food, rich in proteins, the population increase would be low and with poor diet stuffed with carbohydrates like rice, potato the population would rise quickly.

The hunting tribes had another method of population control, by eliminating the girl babies by neglect. This was and still is common practice in all under-developed countries; rural areas of Sind as well as whole of Pakistan being no exception.

The tools produced by Early Stone Age people in general show stagnancy. It is only between 30,000 B.C. and 10,000 B.C. that the man per-

1—Angel, J. Lawrence *Paleocology, Pales der morgraphy and health*. In Polgar(ed), pp 167-190

ected techniques for making tools from stone. The earlier man had no means or know how, to kill large animals, and he most probably was a scavenger, living on animals which met a natural death, or wounded by his non-human hunters. With evolution of new tools the man was able to kill large animals regularly.

Whereas in most of the world by about 11000 B.C. large animals like mammoth, rhinoceros, bison, wild goats had started becoming extinct due to the end of last phase of ice, age, which caused change of climate and the encroachment of forests on grass lands on which these animals lived. In Sind the same period marks receding of sea and opening up of new lands covered with grass as well as forests, it became a new haven for animal world as well as for man. So much was the dearth of big animals, that in Europe the people started getting their protein from fish, shellfish, small forest species like deer etc, and in the Middle East (Iran and Turkey included), man was preying on smaller animals like sheep, goats, antelope and birds and gathering wild grains, wild nuts and even wild legumes. In Sind no such dearth could be expected as the forests and grass land would have a minimum width of fifty miles and in some areas more than 100 miles. The fish and migratory birds of Siberian origin would always be at hand in the river, the lakes of Mancher, Chotiari, Makhui Hamal Kalri and a large number of other lakes formed by changing courses of river Indus.

If man in Sind lived on mamalian animal protein only, he would need, about 12 medium size animals to keep him alive for a year. The Thar desert of Sanghar and Mirpurkhas district is able to sustain 400,000 animals in its depleted condition even today. It would have supported twice as many animals, when conditions, were better. The Thar and Pat both together possibly could have supported 1,000,000 animals which would be ready for slaughter after they became 5 years old.

This would make available 200,000 animals annually and support a population of 16,600 people. Wild food gathering, from horticultural plants, roots, creepers etc, trapping of birds like peacock etc would have supported another 3,333 people making it a total of 20,000 people for whole Thar of Sind.

The hilly track of Sind would have support another 20,000 people on the same analogy.

The Indus planes in Sind with its forests and grass lands would be capable of supporting at least 10 times the population of Thar or Kohisan per square mile. But the whole plane was not available as hunting fields as by about 10,000 B.C. sea level was near Ruck and by about 6000 B.C. it may have receded to the south of Hyderabad. Thus the full colonization of Sind by hunting tribes must have been delayed to about 5000 B.C.

when the sea level may have been near present Matli or Talhar. By that time the planes may have supported minimum 4 person per square mile making population of planes around 80,000 persons, though it could easily support upto 200,000 people. Thus the total population of Sind may have been of the order of 100,000 to 120,000 people. This definitely is much higher than average figures of about 1 person per square mile for the rest of the world as supposed by authropoligists, but Sind must have been capable of supporting this population, due to the Indus Hakra forests and grass lands.

The process of switching over from animal hunting to collection of food from plants and finally domestication of plants did not start in Sind, as there were enough animals around to support a population the optimum figure of which was never achieved. Elsewhere in the world this switchover was out of sheer necessity. In most of ancient world the percentage calorie contribution from the domesticated plants slowly rose until a time came when this source provided a major portion of human requirement. In the initial stages of this process the plant food must have been mainly horticultural, but later on domesticated grains and ultimately irrigated agricultural carbohydrates and proteins must have been substitutes for animal protein and fats. In most of the old world agriculture came much after colonization of area and at least 2000 years before domestication of wild plants, whose seedlings they were collecting for centuries. This is proved from excavations in Middle East. In Sind the hunters must have fully known the cycle of plant growth, but due to adequate supply of animal proteins never started growing the plant, though they must have collected specially the horticultural, products like Ber (پیر) Peroon, (سنگرون) Moth, (نموریون) Singhariyoon, (ڈیلها) Delha, (پیرون) Gedoora, (گیلوڑا) Keerya, (کیریا) Paban, (پہٹ) Ghanghbeti, (چپڑا) Chibhir, (کھٹی) Kuni, (میترا) Mitera, (جھنگ بوٹی) Kohir, (کوہیر) and root products like Lorh, (لوڑہ) Bih, (بہ) Pharsir, (قرسیر) and Kuma, (کم) etc., for many a millenii before some outside tribes were to start agriculture. These new immigrants too first built villages to provide alongwith shelter for themselves and their cattle, storage space for the grains they were to produce, grinding it to flour, and baking or cooking it to meal or porridge. These accessories were the capital investments which could not easily be abandoned. This information is already available from Mount Carmel (Israel), Mallaha (Jordan River valley site, 10,000 B.C.), Karim Shahr (Iraq at the foot of Zagros Mountains, 10,000-8000 B.C.), and Tel Mureybat (on Euphrates river in Syria, 8000 B.C.) At the last site clay walled houses, roasting pits, grinding stones and 18 different types of wild seeds including the ancestors of wheat

and barley have been unearthed besides peas and tentils. There is also an evidence of domesticated sheep and goats.

In Sind the hunter-food-collectors did not start agriculture, not for the lack of know-how but due to abundant supply of meat, wild fruits and vegetables, which were gathered by a few hours work in a week instead of devoting long hours of the day spent in agricultural food production. The hunting tribes may have had domesticated animals to whom they were attracted (by the human intelligence) to the fields of concentrated food stuff (wild grasses, edible tree leaves etc) and in return he had no longer to go to animals, but latter voluntarily came to him. Sheep and goats were first to be domesticated followed by pigs, cattle, camels, donkeys and horses. Loads were handled possibly first on the back of animals, later on by sledges, then on rollers and finally by the use of the wheel. The use of wheel in pulleys, gears cogs, etc for lifting hacking, milling and etc was a development, consequent upon demestication of draft animals. So much was utility of this type of animals that they were fed even on fo od-grain, which was completely denied to the meat and milk animals and is the practice in Sind even to this day.

The process of domestication must have started in Kohistan and Thar areas first, where animals to survive must move from one grass land to other in different months or seasons of year and must move to some watering point, a spring, stream or tarai, and in years of draught must move to adjoining planes. Without human help this would be difficult, specially when aridity invaded those regions.

Agriculture in Sind came not from within but from without. In the Kohistan and Indus planes, it came from South West Iran and in South Eastern Tehsils of Thar desert it probably came from South India, but the contribution of the later must have been limited in extent and insignificant in influence.

The hunting tribes must have had un-written but mutually agreed extra-territorial rights to exploit an area. A band of hunters as all over the world may have consisted of 30-40 people, living together and occupying a stretch of the area capable of supporting its numbers. In case of disputes there may have been wars, but lacking bureaucratic apparatus of governing the other lands, territories or taking prisoners and making slaves of them was not practical, specially as the land would have to feed extra mouths. These wars therefore invariably were a compromise on territorial rights. Besides this they sometimes needed coordinated effort to hunt a flock of animals passing through their territories to the other areas. If and when a war did take place the victors had no gain, except to boast about how bravely they fought the battle. In case of war they however did damage to the enemy, by raids, destruction of settlements, causing flight of animals and there by reducing the population density of the area.

The population growth was considered a serious problem by the hunter-food collectors, to which they too had an answer. They knew that fertility of group is determined by the number of adult women rather than men. The data available from the Harams of some super rich Middle Easterns show that one man is capable of producing 500 children in his life time if supply of adult female wives and concubines is adequate. This being understood by the Hunter-food-collector, they would not kill the enemy males accept their women and children as slaves and create population explosion. Even in their own groups they resorted to female infanticide by neglect, abuse, or outright murder, though from experience they knew that as horticultural food gatherers, a woman collected more calories of food per head than a man did as hunter in a working day.

The population control assured the Stone Age man of Sind a decent subsistence living, without risk of depleting his food source. In terms of food value, meat has twenty amino-acids, which is protein. These are available in plants but not all of them in one plant and mostly only a few in each plant. To get daily balanced supply of protein one has to take a number of plants as food, including quantity of beans, nuts, root crops and grains, some of which cost more than meat. The hunter therefore was more healthy and vigorous. To maintain this standard of health, he had to have population control so as not to deplete the Shikarghas or the hunting grounds.

With the rise of agriculture, there and the necessity for greater co-operation specially to combat resistance of hunting tribes, who must have fought against encroachments. Such cooperation was known and practised by the immigrants from South West Iran. State control was developed alongwith agriculture in Turkey, Israel, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. The hunting tribes of Sind must have been hopelessly divided on Shikarghas and were unaware of proper weapons and techniques of war, as well the organised aggression. They must have yielded very easily though gradually, as their Shikargahs were converted into agricultural land. Then they must either have migrated elsewhere, or accepted new profession, first as labourers and later on as peasant-cultivators, doing away with their own hunting grounds. Some hunter-food-gatherers may have switched over to mere fishing birds catching, horticultural food gathering and occasional animal hunting, and made way for intruders, who had a bureaucratic machinery to govern lands they vacated.

Thus for the first time he accepted kings, dictators, priests, police, taxes, legal punishments and slave labour. The agricultural revolution thus ended the freedom of Sind's hunter-food gatherer and imposed on him despotic slavery. The beginning of this despotic rule of state must have started in the Indus valley with Amri around 3500 B.C. and must have been fully established very soon; though it had taken roots in Mesopotamia and Egypt around 3300 and 3100. B.C. respectively. It moved to

yellow River basin of northern China soonafter 2000 B.C. Americas had to wait for its first state government until about 100 A.D.

Agricultural diets rich in carbohydrates would increase birth rate and population growth. To relieve them selves of reproductive pressures, the agricultural communities, intensified agricultural production, first by extensive and later by intensive cultivation. Forest clearance, and alluvial soils of Sind, would have yielded both results quick enough for population growth.

The state must have been interested in the process and must have nominated agricultural production intensifiers, who later on became known as Waderas or bigmen. The Indus state was interested in collecting agricultural products and re-distributing them among the non-agriculturists. It also supplied seed if and where needed. For collection and re-distribution in deficit areas they had to depend upon the Waderas, who thus kept getting more and more powerful at the cost of both the grower and the consumer.

The other impact of agricultural revolution was the population increase. The land was able to support more population per unit area than the hunting grounds. Most of population of Sind must have concentrated in the alluvial planes. The population increase must have been very slow since Amrian times, it must have gained some momentum by Kot Dijian times, but the real boost was to come with Indus culture. The population of Egypt had doubled between 4000 to 3000 B.C. It is safe to assume that population of Sind doubled between 3500 B.C. to 2500 B.C. and became 250,000 people. In next 500 years it must have become 500,000 for Sind's alluvial planes alone.

With the rise of state in Sind various functionaries of government needed strict discipline, which women could not undergo due to pregnancy and post-child-birth care. The state functions became man's monopoly and the status which hunting-food gathering women had enjoyed was lost. She became inferior, which next 5,500 years struggle has not been able to restore to her again inspite of support from socio-religious organisations.

The initial form of agriculture in the Amrian and Indus times must have been slush and burn system, which meant that forest was cut down, allowed to dry and then burnt. On this agricultural crop is grown for a few years, then land is left fallow, for trees to grow again attain good height, when they are cut again. Burning is to be carried out just before the inundation season, for silt and water of rising river to bury the organic material. On this porous soil crops could be grown without further seed bed preparation. Occasional harrowing would be sufficient, and thus the Indus people had a harrow. The weeds too would be low for a few years, when a new plot is to be found. The slush and burn soil gives high returns, provided there is enough time interval for trees to grow and provide enough organic material for new seed bed. This system, is still in practice on small scale for rice nurseries and in Katcha areas of Sind.

The slash and burn system may have come to an end by about 2000 B.C. When to continue the system must have proved inefficient. By that time Sind Population must have reached 500,000. The irrigation system then must have been only rudimentary. The cycle of slush and burn on some plot must have become too frequent, the fertility may have gone and so the yields. The population in search of new land must have moved out of Sind a century or two earlier, first in the Sarswati-Hakra basin and later to kutch and Kathiawar. A similar migration must have started during last phases of Kot Diji times, when people migrated to the Punjab and established Harappa as the centre of that province. The slush and burn system had another advantage for the South-West Iranian settlers. They could have destroyed the Shikargahs of hunting tribes in quick succession that would otherwise have been difficult in view of counter-measures by the latter.

The hunting food gatherers must have domesticated some animals did not resort to animal husbandry. The tribes that migrated to Sind before and during Amrian times were essentially animal husbandry people interested in pasture and initially took to agriculture not as main profession but as side food source, but seen they found that, as food producing economy, animal husbandry needed more man-hours, than grain production, per unit production of a calorie of food. Of the photosynthetically sunlight falling on the plant only 0.5% is converted into edible matter. If grain is fed to the cattle, only 5% calories in it are converted into meat. With this poor efficiency of animal system, the switch over from pastoral to agricultural economy specially in the riverine areas of Indus was quick, but the pastoral grazing on large scale survived, right into the 20th century; the animals thriving on wild grass, agricultural bye-products and stubles, not consuming the grain and thus not competing with human being for food.

The animals so raised were primarily not for meat but to support agriculture as well as to provide human food and other utility bye-products. Some of them like cows and buffaloes provided continuous supply of proteins, carbohydrates and fats in the form of milk, and if its bye-products. The bulls were the draft animals. Sheep and goat provided fibre before they were killed for meat. Once domesticated, camel, horse and ass were pack and riding animals. Their slaughter was only done, when they could not be utilised otherwise due to old age or physical deformity. As a draft animal, bull attained the highest place of almost a god among the domesticated animals of Indus culture. He was worth much more when alive than if killed. This process of conserving domestic animals and eliminating the undomesticable (pig an exception) was to continue through out the Indus culture and after until many species became extinct. Thanks to the efforts of the British to protect wild life, which had survived 5,500 years of human butchery. The increase in population, decrease in forest and grass lands, domestication of animals for utility other than meat, the meat slowly started disappearing from daily food and finally in the sub-continent, eating of meat became a religious taboo, and living on the plant food a virtue to be rewarded by God.

Pig was an animal very well suited to the forests and river banks of Sind, where it is found to this day. As it cannot sweat, it regulates its body temperature by remaining in shade, and water. As food it lives on tubers, grains, fruit, roots and nuts (which fall on the ground) all of which are human food. It can gain about 20% of this rich feed, into fat and meat, as compared to 5-7% for other animals, but when compelled to eat grasses it cannot gain even a small percentage of feed which other animals do. Like human beings it cannot digest (or even eat) straw, stalks, husks and fibrous leaves. In brief it is direct competitor of human beings for food. During the Amrian, Kot Dijian and early Harappan time it was probably domesticated, but as soon as food difficulties for human being appeared, it was quickly removed from the list of domesticals and the wild pig was hunted down. The Israelis faced the same problem around 1200 B.C. and made eating of pig a taboo. In Sind it was not a taboo, eliminating of wild pig and eating it continued well for many centuries, even during the Buddhist hay-day in Pakistan, when catching and eating of pig by the lower castes (chusras and others) was tolerated and so it continued throughout Muslim rule, main purpose being to eliminate it, to save the crops. As late as sixties of this century a programme was launched by the agricultural department in the Punjab awarding reasonable reward for killing of wild boar. The Israelis eliminated the temptations of raising of pig by declaring it as unclean, whereas the Indus and Post-Indus people declared it as harmful to crop and called for eliminating it, thereby encouraged raising of grains, three crops (for human and animal feed) and other animals at cheaper rates. Egypt faced the same problem as Sind. Though they allowed raising of Pigs, but the Swineherds were a despised caste according to Herodotus. As early as 2000 B.C. Egyptians had identified pig with god of evil. Pig was eaten in Mesopotamia upto 2400 B.C. but disappeared soon after due to depletion of agriculture. Cats and dogs were domesticated as the former helped in eliminating rodents from houses and grain stores. Dogs were used as hunters and watch dogs. Hunting tribes of Sind had domesticated the dog for the same purpose. The use of dog as pet animal alone as it is today must have been limited or unknown.

In all probability the Indus hunters did not catch lions, wild cats, foxes, and wolves in general as they are difficult to kill, skinny, scarce and would return a very small quantity of meat as compared to the trouble of capturing them. The hunters of Sind must have captured all kinds of fishes specially Hilsa or Pala, shell fish, whales and etc and also tortoises, which are still captured and eaten by Balas (بلاس) a nomadic aboriginal tribe wandering in Sind. The same people catch and eat jackals and foxes. Tortoise and other reptiles, Egg collection for food must have been done too. Among the insects most probably the locusts (when they visited) were killed, dried, stored and eaten, as protein supply, but this must have been only in desert and Kohistan and may have been introduced in alluvial planes during and after the later Indus Period when

meat crisis occurred. Among small animals rabbit may have been captured and eaten as today. The pack animals too were eaten when no longer in use as such. Milk of camel must have been utilised as is common among Jats of Sind even today. It is conjectured that Jats are descendents of Harappan people.

The decline of Indus civilisation was due to increase in population and reduction in the fertility of soil. The forests had been cleared, slush and burn could no longer be practiced, yields fell, with corresponding decrease in nutritional standards and consequently ill health, diseases, demoralisation, and fell in population, which in turn further reduced areas under cultivation as well as yields per acre. Soon after the fall of Indus Empire at the hands of . . . . . people the population of Sind must have declined fact to about 250,000 or even less. The Cemetery-H people were not urban people, lacking bureaucratic machinery to co-ordinate the agriculture production, which may further have been reduced. The process must have continued for 7-50-800 years or so when the agriculture may again have gained momentum.

The Rig Vedic Aryan who reached the Sub-continent, after 1050 B.C. and the border of Sind by about 850 B.C., were not able to penetrate Sind, primarily due to difficult geographical terrain, below Kinkot, where Indus bifurcated into two branches and flooded most of the country in the Summer months. Aryans were primarily pastoral people, and Sindhis agricultural. The two people belonged to the same race, had come from Iran, spoke languages which were closely related and appeared to have accepted co-existence.

Aryans were meat eaters principally of cow, goat, sheep and buffalo eaters. Beef must have been readily available in Sind due to large pastures caused by encroachment of riverine forests and grass land on the agricultural land since fall of Indus civilization.

The hunting food gathering tribes may have had easy time during the period.

It is not certain whether Aryans occupied Sind, but their cultural and economic influence must have been tremendous. They also borrowed a great deal from remnants of Indus culture including the religion. Since they possessed bureaucratic machinery, very soon agriculture expanded in all the territories under their influence including Sind, resulting in clearing of forests, grass lands, and pastures. This resulted in increase of population, which intensified the process of land reclamation for agriculture and further increase in population which finally made meat scarce and increased use of carbohydrates and vegetable proteins. The population of Sind at the beginning of 7th century A.D. must have been 500,000.

Around 600 B.C. requirement of animal flesh could not be met in

most of the Sub-continent and meat eating was made a privilege of Brahmans and high caste Aryans. The resentment against this privilege, among the poor was challenged by Buddhism and Jainism both founded in 6th century B.C. outlawing caste distinctions abolishing of hereditary priesthood, and discouraging the use of meat. Buddhists tolerated eating of animals flesh, provided eater himself did not participate in the killing, but Jains outlawed both killing and eating. This is probably one reason why Jainism failed to get ground in Sind. Under Buddhism the butchers and fishermen became low cast killers, but rest of the community ate as much flesh as they could afford and if it was available. In Sind—Kohistan and Thar economy was pastoral and so was forest areas near the river. Hunting-food gathering must have dis-appeared in the alluvial planes the exception being fishing, bird shooting and catching or trapping. In Kohistan and Thar pasturing may have co-existed with some hunting food gathering.

The meat shortage was to continue in most of the sub-continent, though not in Sind, where pastures of Thar and Kohistan kept the supply of meat steady. After about 350 A.D. and definitely by 465 A.D. under Chandragupta II eating of beef was banned by an official decree, making killing of a cow a crime equivalent to killing of Brahman. This did not apply to Sind which he did not control and where Buddhism flourished. The modern Hindu concept of protection of cow is out-come of a political symbol of Hindu resentment against beef eating Muslim invaders of 11th century and later, though in their daily treatment, bulls are still fed, given grain oil-cake, and even vegetable oil, whereas cows do scavenging of the village streets, and in the town markets.

By the time Alexander entered Sind hunting-food-gatherers must have disappeared from alluvial areas of Sind and population may well have reached, 100,000 limit of which 80,000 were killed in wars with the invader. The total population of the Sub-continent must have been between 50 to 100 million of which major portion must have been in Indus valley and Gangetic planes. This population figure levelled off, for Sind, until about 15th century when carefully planned irrigation networks by Sammas increased the area under cultivation. The population may have reached about 1250,000 to 1,500,000 by about 1508. A.D. but subsequent turmoil and state of civil war for next two centuries must have reduced the population 800,000. Under Kaloras who were master canal builders area under cultivation rose to all time higher pre-Barrage figures 3000,000 acres and population around 1775 must have been about 2000,000.

An interesting description of hunting food gathering communities of Manchar Lake comes to us from Mazahar Shah Jehani (1644 A.D.), which states that fishermen of the lake lived in water, fed on fish, ducks and swans, and lake products like Bih, . . . . ., Moth, Lorah, . . . . . Kuma, . . . . . Pabann. . . . . etc. They did not know how to walk on land and could not stand erect.



## JALAL AL-DIN KHWARAZM-SHAH IN THE INDUS VALLEY

by

JOHN ANDREW BOYLE

Of the activities of Sultan Jalal al-Din Khwarazm-Shah during the two years (1221—1223) which he passed in what is to-day Pakistan we have two independent accounts, both of them based on the testimony of eyewitnesses. The better known of these accounts, that given by Juvaini in *Ta'rikhi-i Jahan-Gusha*, has been available for more than a century in the version of Elliot and Dowson. The account given by Nasawi in his biography of the Sultan did not become generally accessible until the publication of Houdas' edition (1891) and translation (1895), though Nasawi's work had been previously consulted by d'Ohsson and by de Guignes, d'Herbelot and Petit de la Croix before him, all of them consulting the unique manuscript of the Arabic text preserved in the Bibliotheque Royale, the present-day Bibliotheque Nationale. The work is now also available in a 14th century Persian translation published in 1965 by Professor Minovi. It is proposed in the present paper to examine the narratives of Juvaini and Nasawi with a view to reconciling the topographical and chronological data and so obtaining a clearer picture of Jalal al-Din's movements to and fro in the Punjab and afterwards in Sind.

According to Juvaini's version the chain of events was as follows. Within a short period of his crossing the Indus the Sultan had at his disposal a force of 500 horsemen, with which he defeated and destroyed an army of 5-6,000 cavalry advancing against him from "the mountains of Balala and Nikala", a region which lay, according to the 16th-century historian Firishta, in the vicinity of Lahore. After this victory Jalal al-Din was joined by "isolated individual forces" until he had under his command an army of 3-4,000 men. This evidence of his powers of resilience was reported to Genghis Khan at Ghazna, where he then was, and he despatched a detachment under Torbei Toqshin i.e. Dorbei Doqshin of the Dorbet tribe, to put an end to him. The Mongols crossed the river in his pursuit and he fled in the direction of Delhi; after a while they gave up the chase and turned back, laying waste as they went the district around Malikfur, which according to Raverty was a town on the Jhelum in the Rawalpindi region. Arrived "within two or three days' journey", i.e. some sixty to a hundred miles, from Delhi, Jalal al-Din dispatched an ambassador to Sultan Shams al-Din El-Tutmish to seek an alliance and temporary asylum. The request was politely re-

buffed and the ambassador was assassinated, possibly with Shams al-Din's connivance; and the Sultan turned back and made his way to the region of Balala and Nikala, where he was joined by further remnants of his defeated armies so that the size of his forces had now risen to a total of 10,000 men. From this mountain base he sent a Khalaj *mlik* called Taj al-Din to ravage and plunder in the Salt Range area; he likewise entered into an alliance with the raja of the Khokars. Apparently in order to please this new ally he sent a force to attack Qubacha, with whom the raja had some quarrel. Surprised by night in an encampment on the banks of the Indus some three miles from Uch (which at that time, it should be remembered lay to the west of the Panjnad), Qubacha escaped by boat and made his way downstream to the island of Bhakkar; from thence he proceeded to Multan, which he apparently reached by sailing back upstream, for Multan like Uch was then immediately accessible from the Indus. At Multan he received an envoy from Jalal al-Din demanding the return of Amin Malik's son and daughter who had fallen into his hands after the Battle of the Indus; Jalal al-Din also asked for money. Qubacha acceded to his demands and, the hot season being at hand, the Sultan left Uch with the intention of passing the summer in the Salt Range and the mountains of Balala and Nikala. En route he laid siege to the castle of Parasravar, apparently the modern Pasrur in the Sialkot district. In the course of the fighting the Sultan received an arrow wound in his hand; he avenged this injury, when the castle had been captured, by ordering a general massacre. It was apparently here, in the Sialkot area, that he received news of the approach of another Mongol army in his pursuit. He turned back in the direction from which he had come, engaged in a brief encounter, lasting only a single hour, with Qubacha as he passed by Multan and set fire to Uch, whose inhabitants had apparently refused him admittance to the town. From Uch he continued in the direction Sadusan, of which we know only that it lay somewhere near Sehwan. The Sultan remained here for a month, having received the submission of Qubacha's governor and reinstated him in his office. He then advanced on the famous seaport of Debul and the mysterious Damsila, which apparently lay in its immediate vicinity. The ruler of these regions, the Sumra chieftain Sinan al-Din Chanisar, escaped capture by putting out to sea in a boat. Jalal al-Din pitched his camp near Debul. Juvaini does not mention the length of his stay in the Indus delta but he remained there long enough to send a raiding party into Gujerat and to build a mosque in Debul. Here he received news that his brother Ghiyath al-Din had made himself master of 'Iraq-i-Ajam' but that the greater part of the military favoured Jalal al-Din and were demanding his presence there. This news must have been conveyed by certain of Ghiyath al-Din's emirs, who according to Nasawi's account had reached the Sultan some considerable time previously. He heard also—presumably from the same informants—that Baraq Hajib was laying siege to Guvashir, the modern Kerman. At the same time there came once again the report of Mongol army approaching in his pursuit. He accordingly set out for Kerman by way of Makran, "numbers of his men perishing on account of the

unhealthy climate."

At first glance Nasawi's account of these same events bears little resemblance to Juvaini's version. Jalal al-Din is joined, immediately after crossing the Indus, by some 4,000 of his men; they are reinforced three days later by a body of 300 horsemen who had been carried downstream by the force of the current. There arrives, simultaneously with these horsemen, an armourer called Jamal, who had gone off before the battle with a sum of money and who now returns with a boatload of food and clothing, having crossed a river called the Sudra to reach the Sultan. Sudra, i.e. Sudhara, is an old name of the Chenab, but if in fact the man had penetrated beyond the Chenab to procure the supplies he would have needed to re-cross not only this river but also the Jhelum in order to get back to the Sultan. Hearing of Jalal al-Din's arrival in his territory, the "ruler of the Salt Range" (sahib al-Judi), whose name is given as Rana Shatra, launches an attack on the fugitives; he is killed by Jalal al-Din in person and his army put to flight. Qubacha, who was then at Nandana, i.e. fairly close at hand, learns of this victory and seeks to enter into friendly relations with the Sultan. Jalal al-Din, hearing apparently at this time that Amin Malik's daughter had found refuge in Uch, a town belonging to Qubacha, sends an ambassador to ask that she be sent to him with a suitable escort. This Qubacha does, providing her with "a cortege worthy of a bride being conducted to a prince of high rank"; he also sends presents for the Sultan, including elephants. But soon the "scorpions of discord" insinuate themselves into the friendship between Qubacha and Jalal al-Din. One of the causes of their estrangement was the death of Amin Malik's son, who had sought refuge in the town of Kalur, apparently the present day Kalurkot in the Mianwali district, where he had been killed by the populace and robbed of his possessions. One of these was a pearl ear-ring, which was brought to Qubacha, who not only accepted it but rewarded the donor with a fief. Jalal al-Din conceals his resentment until he is encouraged by the arrival from Persia of the emirs who had seceded from his brother Ghiyath al-Din. He then marches on Kalur and lays siege to it. Receiving an arrow wound in the hand he fights on day and night until the town is taken, when he orders a general massacre of the inhabitants. From Kalur he proceeds to the castle of a place which Houdas calls Bernouzedj, though he admits that the corrupt word can be read in other ways. Again he receives an arrow wound in the fighting and the inhabitants are subjected to the same fate as those of Kalur. Qubacha now gathers together an army including troops supplied by El-Tutmish and engages Jalal al-Din in a pitched battle in which he is decisively defeated. The site of the battle is unfortunately not mentioned; it was perhaps in the vicinity of Lahore, where Jalal al-Din now camps outside the town and comes to terms with the commander, a rebellious son of Qubacha. There follows an account of the siege of Sadusan and the submission of the commander or rather second-in-command, and then Jalal al-Din proceeds from Sadusan to Uch, not in the opposite direction as in Juvaini's account;

and in this version he does not set the town on fire but is bought off by the inhabitants after a few days' siege. From Uch he makes his way to a place which Houdas transliterates as Khaniser but which is undoubtedly to be read Janisar, i.e. Chanisar, and is mistakenly applied not to the ruler, or raja as Nawasi calls him, but to the territory over which he ruled, i.e. Debul and the whole Indus delta region. Whilst resting in this region Jalal al-Din receives the news of the advance of El-Tutmish at the head of a great army. There is a minor clash between the two forces, and then El-Tutmish has recourse to diplomacy and negotiations are in progress. Jalal al-Din now hears of a grand coalition consisting of El-Tutmish, Qubacha and all the rulers of Northern India the purpose of which is to engage him in battle and bar his route to a river which Houdas writes Khandjir but which, whatever its identity, is certainly not, as he suggests, the Ganges. In the light of this development the Sultan consults his officers as to his course of action and is urged by the emirs who had deserted his brother to make his way to 'Iraq-i Ahjam' and siege power there. Accordingly he leaves Jahan-Pahlavan in charge of his Indian provinces, delegates to Hasan Qarluq the authority over those parts of Afghanistan that were not occupied by the Mongols and returns to Persia by way of Makran. Nasawi, vividly describes the sufferings of Jalal al-Din's troops in these waterless wastes and adds the detail, absent from Juvaini's account, that only 4,000 men, mounted on oxen and donkeys, emerged from the desert on the eastern confines of Kerman.

One's impression upon comparing these two accounts is that Juvaini's version is the more accurate and presents the events in what appears to be their correct sequence, while the chronology of Nasawi's account is somewhat confused; he seems also to attribute to El-Tutmish a far too active role in the military operations against Jalal al-Din. On the other hand he supplies us with details, absent from Juvaini's account, which may well be authentic; the appearance of Amin Malik's daughter in Uch and his son in Kalur; the murder of the latter by the people of Kalur; and the sacking of Kalur and a neighbouring place whose name we may yet hope to decipher. Both historians labour under the disadvantage of being unfamiliar with the topography of Northern India, as is particularly evident in Nasawi's account: their authorities, Persian and Turkish soldiers in the service of Sultan Jalal al-Din, laboured of course under the same disadvantage. There was one historian who was almost ideally placed to provide a detailed and accurate record of these events, "which happened during his own lifetime, in the country in which he was residing, and at Court, where all these matters were perfectly well known. He came first into Sindh in 624 H. (122 A.D.) not long after they happened." In fact Juzjani, to whom Raverty is here referring, disposes of the Sultan's Indian career in two sentences, in which he tells us that El-Tutmish sent an army against him and that he turned aside, made for Uch and Multan and proceeded from thence to Kerman and Fars. We have here, as Raverty comments in his usual imperate language, "a good specimen of our author's wilful concealment and distortion of facts": it is certainly re-

gretable that a historian who could have told us so much has in effect told us nothing. A careful study of Juzjani's own work and that of the latter historians of the Delhi Sultanate may throw some light on the topographical problems in Juvaini's and Nasawi's narratives; but we shall continue to be dependent on these two accounts as the sole records of a short but interesting episode in the long and often obscure history of the Indus Valley.

(To be Continued)

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The old believes everything; the middle aged suspect everything; the young know everything.

Oscar Wilde

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"I hate women, with all their make-up and machinery." "A French Philosopher.

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"It is much easier to be a Hero than a Gentlemen."

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"Puritanism is the haunting fear that some one some where may be happy and contented."

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Who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image, but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself he kills the image of God.

John Milton (1608-1674)

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## SHAH ABDUL LATIF BHITTAI AS A SOURCE OF PAKISTANI CULTURE

DR. MOHAMMAD A. RAUF

To a simple observer of history who normally confines himself to the romanticism of unique events and the uncommon happenings it may appear a simple coincidence or a chanced occurrence that Shah Latif was born and he lived in a period which covers a critical phase of the process of socio-cultural development among muslims of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. There is no unanimity of views among scholars on the exact date of birth of Shah Latif. But there are more evidences supporting the view that he was born in or around 1689 and lived until 1752. If this is accepted as a reliable historical data on his life span he lived during the period which witnessed the change from Mughal to Kalhora rule in Sind. His youth was spent during the rise of the early Kalhora to power. At the death of Aurangzeb, Shah Latif was 18 years of age. When he was nearly 50 Nadir Shah ransacked Delhi (1737) and made the geographical area which now constitutes the present province of Sind a tributary to Persia. Eight years later when Shah Latif was 58 years of age Ahmad Shah Durrani dealt a serious blow to Delhi Empire and made Sind a part of Afghanistan. And it was only 6 years before the Second East India Company established itself at Thatta that Shah Latif died in 1752. Thus Shah Latif's life corresponds to the period when the central power of the Mughals witnessed its decline through a series of incidents and the germinating seeds of the oncoming British rule were sown on the soil of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. The historical consequences of the above mentioned events are indeed beyond measure. No matter how simplistic, as indeed they are, may be the observations of the anecdotal hixtrians it is hard to believe that the events of such far reaching consequences have had very little or no impact upon the intellectual sensitivities of a person like Shah Latif. It is stated that "He (Shah Latif) was interested not in the transient phenomena of his age but in eternal varities, which formed a much better subject for immortal verse than the petty wars and intrigues of the Kalhora (SORLEY: 1940).

Indeed such expressions are intended to show profound feelings and deep respect for the person for his poetic excellence and imagination. Nevertheless in this mode of evaluation what is subjected to indifference, is the intellectual sublimity of the man and the nobler exposition of his thought about the social conflicts and cultural contradictions that he was bound to have observed around his socio-cultural environment. The extravagant admiration articulated in the form of "superstitious respect" makes him more of a mystic than a social philosopher. I am reluctant to believe that Shah Latif was not interested in the transient phenomena of

his age. On the contrary I believe that Shah Latif was a participant of the society of his own time and his poetic exposition was the result of his uniquely personal response to a crisis in human experience. And what was the nature and the dimension of this crisis? Let the facts of history speak for themselves. As stated earlier he lived through the days of political turmoil and observed the impact of the so-called transient period on the social and cultural life of the common people all through his life time. He was born at a time when the last member in the chain of successful emperors—Aurangzeb was facing problems of unsettlement and commotion within the empire and the pressures of an alien power longing to break up the internal economic consistencies in order to draw the subcontinent into the economic unity of 18th century world.

The giant Aurangzeb succeeded in keeping the Empire in best repairs as long as he lived. But as soon as he died the inevitable could no longer be postponed. The Delhi Empire plunged into a chaos of unparalleled magnitude. The decline of the Mughals in India corresponded with the rise of Kalhoras in Sind. Thus the life of Shah Latif stood at the intersection of two historical events which are of major consequence for the people who now belong to Pakistan. It needs no further documentation that has already been done by historians that Aurangzeb was one of the greatest adherents to the purist school of Islamic philosophy. His passing away from the seat of power in Delhi not only caused a strain on the continuous flow of Islamic stream of thought in the subcontinent but also give a favourable opportunity to the forces that ran counter to Islamic thinking. Let us see what was the consequence of this event in Sind. I will deal more with the social history than with the political happenings. Kalhoras were then the rulers of Sind for the last half a century and the state religion was based on Quran and Sunnah. Although the administrative machinery was held under the formal control of Kalhoras the actual power was exercised by the privileged classes of landed aristocracy and religious hierarchy. The landed aristocracy was comprised mostly of the Baluchi Chiefs who held land as Jagirs and were called Jagirdars. Next to them were Afghan pattidars and other zamindars etc. The religious hierarchy was made up of Syeds, Pirs, Faqirs and holy men who exercised tremendous influence over the common man.

The Zamindar and Jagirdar enjoyed almost absolute dictatorial powers over their husbandries. They reigned supreme within their own domain. Their word was the law of the land held under them.

Next in line of power and authority came the Sydes, the Pirs, the Pirzadas, the Kalanders and the Sufi's. They were venerated because of their spiritual attributes. Their influence was so deep seated in the hearts of the people that according to Burton 'there is no country in Asia or rather on earth that is so perfectly priestridden.' According to another author 'there is no zeal but for the propagation of faith, no spirit but in celebrating the Id, no liberty but in feeding Syeds and no taste but in ornabrating the Id, no liberty but in menting old tombs (Crowe).

Under the Kalhoras these groups of landed aristocracy and religious hierarchy continued to hold power uncontrolled and unabated by any Social and political institution. The power and privilege became their exclusive monopoly.

Obviously both the groups are to be characterised as 'interest groups' in the sociological sense. They operated upon the political and social system of Sind with reference only to their localized interests. The intention. What should invite our attention under these conditions were beyond description. Society retained its integration within this situation is to see how society retained its integration within the conflicting situation of social differentiation. It is well established that the fundamental pre-requisite for the continuity of society is the presence of collective consciousness among its members about the meaning of life and essence of its existence. According to Durkheim the collective consciousness is the body of beliefs and sentiments common to the average of the members of society. The system of these beliefs and sentiments has a life of its own. In the absence of collective consciousness a society can only have a form of mechanical solidarity instead of having organic solidarity which alone can generate a level of organismic solidarity.

The purpose of presenting this social theory with reference to social history of Sind, is to identify the role of Shah Latif in the development of social process in the area of Sind which, in my opinion, represents the microcosm of the larger macrocosm of Pakistani society. I had stated earlier that the observations of an anecdotal historian suggesting that Shah Latif was not interested in the transient phenomena of his age is unconceivable to a social scientist. In fact, it undermines the intellectual sensitivity of the man and the nobler exposition of his thought about the social conflicts and cultural contradiction that he observed around his immediate socio-cultural environment. If the naive observations of the anecdotal historians are accepted as true, allow me to raise certain searching questions. In the presence of extreme level of social differentiation when all the privileges were distributed among the two classes of landed aristocracy and the so called pious collectivity of Pirs, Faqirs, Pirzadas who sang for the forgotten people of the rural countryside? Who sang for the downtrodden Muslim peasants? Who sang for the lovely fishermen? Who praised for the beauty of NOORI and who acknowledged the bounties of the other. Above everything else in the midst of popular and incredible fantacism who conveyed the real form and meaning of Islam through his rhythmic poetry. To put it differently, during the most depressing and gloomy period of Muslim history in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent who provided a sound basis for the collective consciousness functioning as a fundamental principle of organismic solidarity among common Muslims. The answer to these questions is obviously one: long before the poets, the politicians and the philosophers of the 20th century it was a man from the rustic deserts of Sind Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai.

## THE THAR DESERT

### Its resources potentials and expence

DR. Abdul Qadir Ansari

There is a great concern in the country today on account of disparities in living standards and levels of development between the rich and the poor living in different geographic divisions of the country. It needs a wide range of measures to bridge the gap. The common cry of the people inhabiting the less favoured regions and belonging to the deprived sections of society is that they and their children should be given an equal right and opportunity for development and permitted canal amenities of civilized life.

Thar, the cradle of a great and flourishing civilization has languished in deprivation vicissitudes of time, a highly exploitative use of resources and persistent neglect in ..... development. The potentials of the desert for development are very great. It has land, climate and rainfall. It holds considerable reserves of minerals, forest wealth, range lands, livestock, people and highly disciplined and hardworking labour force.

Undoubtedly culture and geographic divisions influence human life to a greater extent, human behaviour is limited by these social handicaps. Physical and environmental conditions influence social and economic life of people every where. Every man whether he belongs to a primitive and simple society or the advanced and the complex, has to adopt to prevailing conditions and surroundings. He has to live for necessities of life on his physical surroundings. Thus, differences in personality and culture become an improvised phenomenon, geographic boundaries control has destiny.

It is therefore, pertinent to know and assess the chief characteristics of Thar Desert elaborating its physical, social and economic handicaps which have a direct bearing on the society as a whole and on individual inhabitants to suggest a more equitable, self-reliant and self-sustaining style of development focusing on the efficient management of resources

agricultural, industrial, human and social. The participation and uplift of all the people including the farmers, artisans, labourers and others organized for a collective action to provide the benefit of improved management and on a self-reliant basis through increased production, investment and re-investment.

#### Physiographic Conditions

The Thar desert area starts from the south-eastern border of irrigated

zone of Sind province. It lies between 24°-13 and 25°-22 north latitude and 69°-40 and 71°-11 east longitude.<sup>1</sup> The desert area is bounded by Jesalmir and Marwar districts of India in the east, Runn of Kutch in the south and the north-west and the rest adjoins the irrigated tract of Sind. It stretches over 11262 square miles.<sup>2</sup> It comprises administratively, Mithi, Diplo, Nagarparker and Chachro talukas in full and part of Umerkot forming the Thar sub-division of Tharparkar district.

The Thar is deeply furrowed in almost parallel sand dunes of 50 to 450 feet,<sup>3</sup> in East-west direction with tortuously meandering geologic formations at dune heads and warping to cut up the soil leaving many intricate patterns of gullies here and there, thus could not form a long flat plain. Between sand dunes are valleys with depressions and oppressions representing ridge and trough topography. The sediment is mainly sandy transformed into huge dunes, consisting of greyish sand derived from quartz, felspar and horn blend. The top soil is comparatively black due to the presence of humus, and in interdunal valleys, favourable climatic conditions encourage natural vegetation which stabilizes the sand dunes. Adjacent to the dunes are sandy and loamy soils with uneven topography. Areas further away from the sand hills and lower parts of the slopes comprise deep clay soils and are almost flat. It is the unique desert in the world which becomes lush-green after rains though part of famous Rajistan desert which is not compatible in this respect. A Karunjahar mountains rising to 1169 feet above sea level and detached rocky hills are found in Nagarparkar taluka at the north-eastern edge of the Runn of Kutch which represent the Aravalli system of the peninsular sub-continent but their age is un-certain.<sup>4</sup> These hills store in their cavities a large amount of rain water which gives rise to a permanent stream in the shape of big gully (Nain) flows towards east of Nagarparkar town. The soil composition in Thar is indicated in the following table.

Table 1: Composition of Soils of Thar Desert as Compared to Irrigated Area in Sind.

| Soil Ingredients. | Percentage Composition |             |
|-------------------|------------------------|-------------|
|                   | Irrigated Sind         | Thar Desert |
| Clay              | 24.19                  | 5.97        |
| Silt              | 56.11                  | 2.33        |
| Fine Sand         | 19.52                  | 30.41       |
| Coarse Sand       | 00.18                  | 61.29       |
| Total             | 100                    | 100         |

Source: Sorley, H.T. Dr., The Former Province of Sind (Lahore: Government of West Pakistan, Board of Revenue, August 1968), p. 96

The activity of the earliest man has been evidenced in this desert zone. The sturdier population continued to live in the area and maintained its supremacy by hard work. There the archaeological remain go back to ancient history. A number of ruins and Jain temples which are said to be 2000 years old are found particularly in the rocky hills of Nagarparkar and other parts of the desert which reveal that the area was well populated during the old civilization.

The climate of the tract is well suited to the production of side crops, varieties of grass and forests. Low amount of precipitation in summer is a limiting factor. The region experience great extremes of temperature both daily and seasonal with cold winter and hot summer with the highest in May-June before the start of the monsoon season. Like other sub-tropical deserts, Thar due to extreme climate provides healthy population. Summer is of longer duration and lasts for about six months. Summer nights remain always pleasant. The harshness of summer becomes conspicuous with western winds eroding soils at the wind speed of 20-25 miles per hour shifting rolling sand and convective phenomenon charging the atmosphere with dust. The highest temperature at time may rise to 115°F. The winters are comparatively of shorter in duration. Cold waves from north last for about three months with severeness of about 40 days from twentieth December to the end of January. Winter temperature never touches freezing point and seldom rises 70°F and it is absolutely rainless.<sup>5</sup> The rains in the area are characterized by monsoonic showers. These are mostly exigous, uncertain and unevenly distributed in the season. Last 3-4 years were exceptionally good rainy years, which encouraged all economic activities of the area depending mostly on rain. The dunes and valleys retain moisture after sufficient precipitation to keep perennials alive and for agricultural crops. The following table represents temperature and rainfall in Thar desert.

Table 2: Mean Maximum and Minimum Temperature of Thar Desert During Various Seasons and Rainfall from 1968 to 1978.

| Year | Temperature in Centigrade |               |              |              |              |              | Average Rain Falls |
|------|---------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|
|      | Winter                    |               | Summer       |              | Monsoon      |              |                    |
|      | Nov. to Feb.              | March to Oct. | July to Oct. | July to Oct. | July to Oct. | July to Oct. |                    |
|      | Maximum                   | Minimum       | Maximum      | Minimum      | Maximum      | Minimum      |                    |
| 1968 | 30                        | 11            | 44           | 23           | 39           | 27           | 215                |
| 1969 | 35                        | 16            | 43           | 27           | 42           | 27           | 55                 |
| 1970 | 31                        | 13            | 46           | 28           | 41           | 28           | 217                |
| 1971 | 34                        | 14            | 46           | 26           | 40           | 29           | 90                 |

|      |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
|------|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| 1972 | 33 | 14 | 44 | 23 | 42 | 27 | 174 |
| 1973 | 33 | 11 | 43 | 27 | 42 | 29 | 210 |
| 1974 | 31 | 14 | 46 | 28 | 39 | 29 | 37  |
| 1975 | 32 | 15 | 46 | 27 | 38 | 29 | 345 |
| 1976 | 30 | 15 | 45 | 26 | 42 | 27 | 414 |
| 1977 | 33 | 14 | 43 | 27 | 41 | 29 | 309 |
| 1978 | 32 | 13 | 44 | 27 | 40 | 28 | 345 |

Source: Meteorological Laboratory Umerkot and Office of the Deputy Commissioner Tharparkar, Mirpurkhas.

Thar desert remains covered with natural vegetation usually from July to October in good rainy years. The common plants of the area include *Acacia arabica*, *Euphorbia condicipholia*, *penium turgidum*, *Commiphora mukul*, *Leptadenia spartium*, *Crotalaria burhia*, *Grewia populifolia*, *Calligonum polygonoides* Linn., *Forestia jaequemontii*, *Gymnosporia Mountana*, *Gitrullus colocynthis*, *Boerheavia diffusa*, *Cyperus areanarius* and *indigofera species*.<sup>6</sup> These are classified into trees, shrubs, herbs and grass. *Tecomelle undulata* (.....) is a good quality timber plant exhibiting a beautiful show of red flowers in dense crowns, but is on the verge of extinction. *Capparis decidua* (.....) a deciduous, much branched thorny shrub is another red brown flowered with long-beaked edible fruit contains medicinal properties and serves as fuel wood. Other popular trees locally known as *Kanderi* (.....), *Kandi* (.....), *Chilkatrio* (.....) and *Khabar* (.....) form the economic means which provide animal feed, human subsistence (.....) in the form of edible fruits, and wood for household use and timber. Among the shrubs, *kip* (.....), *Ak* (.....), *Thuhar* (.....), *Bavari* (.....), *Guglan* (.....), *Morari* (.....), *Phog* (.....), *Ber* (.....), *Tnakaro* (.....); *Khip* provides glabrous long twigs used as fibre for ropes and shanti roof covers, *ak* and *thuhar* are goat grazes as well as medicinal plants, *bavari*, *morari*, *phog* and *tankaro* serve as goat and camel feed in addition to wood plant where *guglan* provides gum like enzyme. Whereas,

1. Government of Pakistan, District Census Report-Tharparkar, (Karachi: Census Commissionery, Ministry of Home and Kashmir Affairs, 1961) p. 1-8
2. *Ibid*, p. 1-10-12.
3. Government of West Pakistan, (Gazetteer of Sind), (Lahore; Board of Revenue, 1968), p. 4.
4. Government of West Pakistan, Gazetteer of Sind, (Lahore: Board of Revenue, 1968), p. 4.
5. District Census Report, *Op. cit*, p. 16-17
6. C.I. Illahi and C.M. Sharif. The vegetation and Range Flora of Thar Desert. (Hyderabad: The West Pakistan Forest Department, 1966, p. 19)

Thar mostly joint family system is practiced, the people are stotus, hardy and simple while women faithfully participate in economic activities at and work from dawn to dusk.

#### Problems and Remedies

The development of a country should mean the uplift of all the geographic parts, productive as well as those less attractive. The development programmæs must entail uniform approach with equal opportunities for all the sections of population without time and space gap between rich and poor causing mental disparities and regional disturbances, and unsatisfaction ending at unbalanced discipline doubtful faith and challenging state of unity which demand coordinated efforts for the development of country on sound lines.

The people of Thar receive a little and share almost nothing in national prosperity and economic development. It means no effort has been made nor realized for the uplift of the area and to elevate the standard of living of those inhabiting the desert. They deserve attention to share all advantages associated with the life of other parts of Pakistan being the inherent rights of a human being, while the nation must seek the participation of these people in the national developmet. The well being of these people who are tax payers, producers, consumers, voters, fair labour force and above all integrated part of our economic mechanism is a matter of great concern. It must be realized that the benefits of development must also be made available in the depressed strata of society in backward areas wherein the short run returns are less.

The desert community is under relentless pressure from numerous of modernization and change. It has been stratified but cohesive unit is structured to preserve oligarchy of the privileged classes and function on the basis of custom and usage in isolation. The welfare of the community inevitably means that a few influential well connected and affluent people appropriate the lion's share of the benefits from development, if some, creating islands of wealth in a sea of poverty and the consequential tensions and conflicts. There must be collective endeavour for distributive just benefits for all. It is possible to alter these trends, to establish economic stability sustainable for future, provided a clear understanding is achieved at various levels of decision making that a transition must take place. There is, however, no room for complacency and no time to waste. The barani tract of Thar is too big a resource to be ignored rather deserves the creation of a new socio-economic order for its people who are depressed strata of society.

8. Sharif Ahmed Siddiqui, *Role of Migratory Farm Labour in Agricultural Production in Sind*, (Tandohjam, : Sind Agriculture University 1977) p.81
9. *Development Statistics of Sind*, Op. cit. p. 18-20.

The implementation of such policies is not an easy task as there has existed for centuries a stratified, unjust and exploitative socio-economic order. There existed sharp dichotomy with abysmally low level of literacy and income for politically enslaved masses. These form source of cheap labour and raw material. The development programmes consciously or unconsciously continue to be highly discriminatory against the poor people of the region. The tract has been entirely left out of the development, feeling risk areas, causing explosive widening of regional income disparities. The people suffer the greatest inequity to crop deep sense of deprivation. Social justice to promote education and economic interests of this area, enable education, training, agricultural and industrial development and to allow participation in national activities by serving the common people rather than urban elite and the rural feudal classes. There should be a link in the chain of events which would hopefully transform life and living in backward areas to improve the quality of life.

Pakistan, inspite of its continued endeavour, is facing deficiency in food supplies. We rely on agro-based economy, but much of our hard earned foreign exchange costs on the import of foodgrains. Due to limitations of physical land resources in irrigated plains we are stressing on yield take-off and intensive cultivation, but it also requires exploitation of land and water resources of backward regions of the country of which Thar desert offers a great scope of supplementing 5-6 lac acres of land for cultivation.

There is continuous mass exodus of people from the desert to irrigated areas resulting in poverty and under employment or no employment. The national economic problems could only be solved by the eradication of poverty, regional planning, and development of backward areas. It lies in increasing opportunities through farming, small scale de-centralised industries, labour intensive works to create better physical infra-structure, land development and development of villages to stagger concentration of people in urban centres. Migration should be reduced and staggered in both time and areas. The tract is not properly utilizing its human resources. What is needed is the growth of employment policies from an overall strategy of resource utilization by integrated approach linking employment with increased production, and the overall development and utilization of resources would succeed. Wealth must be generated within the area, employment linked with production to generate savings to re-invest, such a dynamic growth pattern can sustain full employment providing basic needs. The productivity per person is a measure of the prosperity of people.

Complete or partial drought conditions, non-availability of work, low income and depletion of means of earning, compel desert population to migrate to the adjacent irrigated areas for 4 to 6 months every year. Severe conditions prevail from March to July, un-employment and difficult survival of livestock become problems leaving no alternative but to migrate.

Miserable living conditions, travelling to distant places in search of employment and indebtedness constitute socio-economic problems. Thus, there is an increasing number of people willing to work who are unable to find jobs on which they can manage an adequate living. The landless and the jobless are living without dignity and security due to social injustice and exploitative order leading at urban centres, such migration takes away the more enterprising and talented persons out of communities and the hiatus so created in leadership inevitably leads to slow progress and absence of innovation and creative purposeful change rather abject poverty of the people. The labour migration from Thar to irrigated areas mostly seek employment in agriculture particularly do harvesting of winter crops at lower rates inducing growers to rely on these people every year, but rains check mobility for certain years which cause shortage of labour as well as the hope of such cheap labour does not allow farm mechanization.

The area is being self-managed at extremely primitive levels of technology, but there are bright possibilities of securing manifold increases in agricultural production manufacturing and industries by the use of appropriate technologies. Resources development is a function of technology and enterprise. The social institutions, customs and simplicity when added with poverty further limit the endeavours of the inhabitants. Major portion of their limited financial resources is diverted to the celebration of festivals, gifts, ceremonies, marriages, births and deaths, and receiving guests which maintain social values. The disturbed man-land ratio is resulting in a stagnant, un-progressive and exploitative system of the land use.

The inhabitants of Thar desert live wretchedly and face economic disasters due to lack of amenities of life. Scanty and uncertain employment opportunities are striking realities. They are subjected to unhygienic conditions living in thatched dwellings and remain stagnant to cope with time. The inherent adverse conditions give rise to deprivations of children's education. The basic rights of education, health, transport, marketing, sanitation, electricity and housing are not worth any mention. Though people are hard working, honest, simple and energetic yet have no means to mitigate problems. They are cut of the rest of the world. The roads, even un-metalled paths, are not provided. Animals are the only source of communication. Only taluka headquarters are linked with passenger truck services with high transport charges. Rail and road facilities could be made available and proportional revenue earned, but the initial investment has to be made. These may cost three times more than irrigated areas. Stone is available in Nagarparkar and should get start from there in respect to the construction of roads and from Badin or Naukot for railway link with all possible areas. A hospital for every 200 families, a high school for 500 families and a science college for 10,000 families be provided along with well established telecommunication, electricity and markets.

It is strange to note that nobody in Thar knows about public activities in agriculture. Very primitive seed is being used in twentieth century and

plant protection measures are not known there. Agriculture demands yield increase, introduction of high yielding varieties, fertilizers, pesticides, erosion control and moisture conservation practices. The traditional farming system is no longer relevant. A fundamental re-orientation of land use practice and cropping pattern would have to be achieved to harmonize with the natural environment of the area. Such adjustments must base on scientific arid zone studies and technologies improved. Production of crops needs increased as well as new crops introduced and the farmers aided with necessary inputs.

The man has indeed aggravated the problems of range lands and forests by deforestation, overgrazing and cultivation of slopes and marginal lands, leaving soil bare and exposed to wind and water erosion disturbing balanced eco-systems. It is said that there exist 56 per cent of the area under forests and pastures in Thar, but practically nothing has been done to preserve the national wealth on scientific lines. It was further known that about 2,052,000 acres of land were transferred to forest department under the Thar and soil conservation scheme and was claimed to have put 3000 acres under afforestation,<sup>10</sup> but one can authentically say that nothing has so far been done in this regard in the area. Without taking care of forest wealth, regeneration of forest is incapable of keeping pace with men's destruction through uncontrolled grazing and cutting of too much wood. Pasture and forest resources could well be enriched by aerial seeding of the region adding local and adoptive plants which will not only serve forestry but will also check wind erosion.

The huge range lands are the natural locale for raising livestock and are a major source of the supply of draught animals and foods of animal origin. The best bullocks are being produced in the desert which still need genetic quality. Livestock wealth of Thar desert needs be safeguarded and developed on scientific lines to make it really a national product. Measures to improve pastures, establishing veterinary and animal husbandry centres, marketing and breeding centres are of immediate interest.

Water resource development is a gigantic problem encountering the desert tract of Thar. Silting up of river beds to spare water for the tract and erosion control be reduced to the minimum not only to improve the local conditions but also for the continued prosperity of the nation as a whole. Great difficulties arise from the variability and irregularity of the rainy season causing uncertain water supplies for crops. Besides, much of the rainfall is lost through run-offs especially in Nagarparkar area. During rainy season, water in streams, gullies and hill torrents become a bane causing flash floods, devastation of crops and washing of top soil. Water so lost could irrigate all the land of the desert if properly harnessed. This water is collected in earth dams and ponds, used optimally,

10. *District Census Report, Op. cit., p. 1-8.*



Murt (.....), Gambol (.....), Gandheer (.....), and other annuals and perennials provide cattle, grazing.

The wild life is fast disappearing. Fox, wild cat, and other small animals are found in the area. The deer known to be in abundance in the past has almost disappeared. While among economic value birds, only partridges and sand grouse are self-managed. The abundant rodents and snakes in plenty are the enemies of life in the area. Rat is the enemy of agriculture and pastures while snakes menace men and animals. The dangerous species of snakes rampant in the area mostly in hot rainy season include Khapur (.....) Cobra, (.....) Lundi (.....), and Peehan (.....) all of these are highly poisonous. About peehan it is said that it visits its victim while asleep poisoning by spitting into the mouth or so. It is symptomized by the blindness of the patient visualized on light. Swallowing and choking of throat cause death. To keep the throat open, the local treatment method provides alum mixed with milk taken orally to make continuous vomit. If alum is not available, terminal leaves of ak are provided supplemented by milk. The alkaloidal effect is not felt by the patient. Eating raw onions and floor lighting during nights repel the attack.

Agriculture is the main occupation of Thar desert. It possesses vast potentials of crop production if sufficient rain falls in the area. The presence of alluvial soils and considerable flat areas mostly in Nagarparkar and Chachro talukas and rich clay fields in Mithi and Diplo talukas invite agricultural endeavours. Major portion of this desert is quite productive for local crops like millet (bajra), Gobar, Moong, Moth, Cow-peas, Till and cucurbits. Out of 5726,720 acres of desert area, 20 per cent land is fit for cultivation.<sup>7</sup> Only summer crops are possibly grown. When seasonal rainfall exceeds 150 mm., it brings five to six lac acres of land under crops. A few acres of land particularly in Nagarparkar and Diplo talukas are cultivated on well irrigation in winter. Sorghum is also grown mostly on conserved moisture on late rains particularly in Diplo and part of Mithi taluka. Millet and gobar are the main crops of the area which provide food, fodder and concentrates. Local varieties of crops are grown without the use of fertilizers, and cultural practices mostly do not bother farmers except for hard clay soils of Diplo where presowing plowing is done. Traditional implements are used, a plow and pora drill are common, drawn mostly behind a camel or a pair of donkeys, rarely after bullocks in Nagarparkar. The crop yields depend on the intensity and intervals of rains. No one else bothered to collect statistics of the area pertaining to actual area cultivated, yields and production. The agricultural lands are surveyed in number and area, and mapped. Revenue department charges land tax at fixed rates of Re. 1/- for less than two acres and the maximum of Rs. 8/- for 40 acres varying with field sizes of 5, 10, 15, 25, 40, acres, mostly below 10 acres. The area and production pattern of crops are given in the following table.

Table 3: Production of Different crops in Thar Desert During 1974-75 to 1977-78.

| Crop Year   | C R O P S     |         |           |          |             |
|---|---------------|---------|-----------|----------|-------------|
|   | Millet        | Sorghum | Guar      | Seasamum | Caster seed |
| Average area Cultivated from 1974-75 to 1977-78 * | (in Acres)    |         |           |          |             |
|   | 335486.25     | 3315.25 | 126336.25 | 14567    | 28373.25    |
|   | (In Quintals) |         |           |          |             |
| 1974-75   | 190108        | 7471    | 8063      | 5        | 18175       |
| 1975-76   | 234665        | 8844    | 252699    | 10925    | 13309       |
| 1976-77   | 378034        | 7383    | 302785    | 11607    | 18857       |
| 1977-78   | 399108        | 7745    | 425585    | 12137    | 22879       |

Source: Directorate of Agriculture Sind (Statistics Wing) Hyderabad.

7. Government of Pakistan. District Census Report Tharparkar Census 1961, p. 140 (Karachi: Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home and Kashmir Affairs, 1961), p. 1-8.

The desert offers excellent opportunities for raising livestock. Major-uncultivable and adjoining village areas (Gauchar) come under natural pastures which grow on rains. Under thick growth of grass, the green and dry fodders last for the entire year. After agriculture the livestock constitutes the main-stay of the people. Land and livestock wealth are considered a criterion of ascribing social status. Thar maintains about 15 per cent of livestock wealth of Sind province. It includes quite big herds of cows, scattered camels, donkeys and buffalows and flocks of goat and sheep. The livestock fluctuates within the desert with rains. They migrate to irrigated areas in Sind in less rain years. Likewise, Thar provides grazing to cattle from irrigated areas of Sind in rich rainy years. A Thar family, on an average owned 11 cattle in 1975-76.<sup>8</sup> There would hardly be a family without cattle wealth in the area.

Thar desert is comparatively less populated because of poor economic conditions and water scarcity. It comprises 5.72 million acres of land and accommodates 0.52 million people in its 283 permanent villages established on wells. The population in desert constitutes 3.72 percent of the total population of Sind province. The demographic trend showed an increase of 17.76 per cent in population from 1961 to 1972 with the latest recorded density of 53 persons per square mile with population growth rate of 2.75 percent for the last 20 years. It divides into 54.37 per cent of male and 45.63 per cent female.<sup>9</sup> Social stratification is common and active. Social values for the area are remarkable and majority of people possesses ascribed status. They love and live for their environment and neighbourhood. In

could provide a valuable alternative. For this purpose site specific technologies could be developed.

Hydrological surveys to identify possibilities of tapping water resources, both surface and underground, through tubewells and wells need to vigorously pursued. Systematic studies, surveys and planning should be undertaken for the construction of medium and small dams and ponds. The shallow water reserves available in almost all talukas of the desert particularly Diplo, Nagarparkar and Chachro at the depths of 25 to 50 feet or so could be developed for general use and irrigating small fields. The local population lacks technical know-how and have no financial resources to install even Egyptian wheels or small engines to pump water. No efforts have ever been made to finance these farmers or to exploit water resources.

Rains fall in cyclical fashion, three years of famine experiences in ten years and a year of rain scarcity occurs once in three years. Sometimes, at places, water is not even available for drinking purpose. Wells dry down, recharge becomes insufficient to feed wells particularly during summer. The existing inadequate number of wells mostly belong to poor people of the area. This number could be increased if this problems given due thought. Some experts claim that deep seated sweet water occur at about 600 to 1000 feet and perched water at 100 to 300 feet.<sup>11</sup>

Ancient history reveals that two rivers; Sutlej and Saraswati used to pass through Thar desert ending in the Gulf of Kutch at parinager, an ancient sea port. Later the Saraswati dried up, now Ghaghar flowing to the east of Bhawalpur. The Sutlej shifted its course, the bed turned into natural channel, presently Nara, and joined the Indus.<sup>12</sup> The old river beds should be surveyed which must provide stream of underground sweet water for tubewell installation in the area. Also the old river bed could again be opened and fed from some barrage or flood waters which otherwise go waste devastating the country.

There is a precious reserve of building stones of good quality in Nahgarparkar hills. Many other minerals and crockery clay as well as cement stone could be derived from these rocks. Also a well known natural common salt reserve in Diplo (Saran) be developed on commercial lines. However, extensive survey is required to explore the hidden treasures of the sand and hills. Most possibly, the desert could yield petroleum.

Plenty of raw materials are produced in Thar, but the area lacks industrial effort. Skins and hides, wool, goat and camel hair, milk and milk

11. Goiffith A.L. *The vegenation of Thar Desert of Sind* (Department of Agriculture Government of India, 1946) p. 72.

12. Thomas Pennant, *View of Hindustan* (Oxford: University of Oxford 1798 p. 36.

products are plentifully available. It is a misfortune of the area that every side stands hopeless, neither processing nor marketing facilities are provided to fetch fair prices. Marginal traders exploit the situation. The Thar is famous for articles of oriental beauty manufactured in huts. The handicrafts, needle work, hand weaving and wooden decorating pieces are known in the world, but how marketed? is an amazing process. The poor people make these articles, get a few rupees for labour, while exporters sitting mostly in Karachi fetch handsome margins. Since no public credit facilities are available in the area, the local money lenders charge higher interest rate on loans. There are no banks in the area with the exception of one or two branches which too transact public money or capitalists business. Bank loans should be advanced in the area for economic development and prosperity of the poor.

Looking into the resource potentials of the area, the most neglected spheres ignored in the past for improvement may be brought under active national development programme. Before dealing with pressing points, it is to suggest that Thar Development Authority be established on long term basis with the objectives to identify special problems and natural and human resources, particularly agriculture, soil conservation, water, small scale industries, and basic infra-structure to ascertain development potentials and possibilities of technological and institutional improvements in livestock, forestry, range management and cooperatives. It will suggest technology, cropping pattern, cultural practices and better seed. For industrial development, it will suggest types of industrial projects to make maximum use of local raw materials and minerals. Whereas, for the development of physical infra-structure, it will survey appropriate sites for the construction of small dams, roads and rail. Due to ill development of social infra-structure, it will outline plans for introducing technical education and health facilities. Finally, it must assess financial requirements and financing and should suggest establishing an autonomous authority to plan, supervise and coordinate development activities.

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My candle burns at both ends,  
It will not last the night  
But ah my foes and oh my friends  
It gives a lovely light.

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Time, like an every rolling stream,  
Bears all its sons away.  
They fly forgotten as a dream  
Dies at the open day.

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'Isac Watts'

## SHAH ABDUL LATIF AND SHAKESPEARE

T. L. VASWANI

The Sindhi poet of the 18th century—Shah Abdul Latif,—is superior to Shakespeare,—the English poet of the 18th century.

Shakespeare, I know, has been idolised by his countrymen. We in Sind have not yet paid our debt of gratitude to our Poet: we never can pay it.

Shakespeare was, doubtless, a great poet. Shah Latif was not only a great poet but, also, a great mystic,—a saint. Shakespeare was a singer and an actor but he was not,—as Shah Latif was,—a man of self-realisation.

Alexander Pope being asked why Shakespeare wrote his plays, said:—“One must eat!” Shah Latif sang his lyrics and stories out of the fullness of his soul.

Shakespeare returned everyday from the stage to his home in Stratford, but did “mischief on the way,” says a modern critic; “for always he stopped at Mrs. Davenant’s inn at Oxford and finally left behind him there a son who never complained of his paternity!”

In Shakespeare you find colour, riot, excess, unrestrained passion, a mint of phrases,—yes, and energy, but not aspiration to the Eternal! Despair was in the heart of Shakespeare,—despair and melancholy. But in the heart of Shah Latif was the Hope that springs forever in the human heart, was the Faith of a Prophet, was the Vision of a Sage, was the Joy of a Saint!

*Sing ye the praise of Him who still doth heal;  
The True One He: and Him within you feel!*

What a note of hope in these words of Shah Latif! A higher note is in the following words:—

*In th’ stormy sea of life not one as yet  
With “I” as guide his feeble foot doth set....*

There sings a yet higher note in this great Poet of Sind: it is the note of the Beauty of the Beloved moving on the paths of men:—

*He walks,— the One Belove’d: His Name doth ring:  
“In Beauty’s Name”: So Earth itself doth sing:*

In reverence I bow down to the Poet-Saint and ask:—“He did so much for us: what have we done for him?”

### At Twenty four years of age

- (1) Attila was conquering, Europe and Asia
- (2) Alexander the great had started his world conquest from Macedonia,
- (3) Baber was entering India.
- (4) Clive started his career as an empire builder
- (5) Pitt the younger became the Prime Minister of England. In his consummate handling of British Finances he helped the British crush Napoleon. He proved a financial wizard for Industrial Revolution in Great Britain. He himself died in debt of £20,000 which was cleared by the vote of the British parliament.
- (6) Dalhousie became governor general of India and completed the conquest of India by guffawing with gusto “The Sikh nation has called for war and by God they shall have it”.

## THE DABGARAN MOSQUE, THATTA:

### ITS ARCHITECTURE AND ARCHITECTURAL DECORATION

Ahmad Nabi Khan

Thatta, the chief centre of the socio-political activities of Sind during the mediaeval times, had the distinction of possessing some of the outstanding specimens of the Islamic architecture in the subcontinent. The galaxy of grand and colourful mosques, tombs, madrasas, towers, palaces etc. once adorned the city and environs to prove that its people led a life of opulence and luxury. Few of these monumental buildings have however survived the ravages of time, except a few mosques and tombs standing in the city and on the neighbouring hill called the Makli Hill. These buildings, though now devoid of their original sheen and beauty, are the reminiscences of the glory that this metropolis once was.

Among these grand edifices was a Jame' Mosque now commonly known as the Dabgir Masjid (colour Plate I), Originally, the mosque stood in the midst of the old bazar of Dabgaran, then a thriving business centre, and was the chief congregational mosque of the city. It was therefore called 'Masjid Dabgaran'. Built in wellfired red bricks on stone foundation and clad with colourful tiles and tilemosaics, the mosque once crowned the city centre. The area has now formed the southern extremity of the town lying deserted and desolate. The mosque itself is now a shell of its by-gone glory; only the dilapidated prayer chamber exists and the main entrance the vestibule the cloisters and other usual architectural elements have fallen and disappeared. During its hey day, the mosque was visited by a multitude of people both the elite of the city as well as the common man, among whom was also the Moghul emperor Shahjahan who came to Thatta during the days of his princehood and offered prayer here.<sup>1</sup> Later on his accession, he ordered to build a bigger mosque here which was completed in 1054-57 A.H./1644-47 A.D. and named as Shahjahan Mosque.<sup>2</sup> It appears that since that date, the Dabgaran Mosque lost its importance.

\*The term 'mediaeval' is used rather loosely here. The article refers to late 16th and early 17th centuries. Although Thatta existed earlier and Muhammed Tughluq came here in 1350 A.D. its period of glory begins with Jam Nizamuddin Sama's reputed founding of the town in circa 1495 A.D. (ed.)

1. Mir 'Ali Sher Qane', *Tuhfat al-Kiram* (ed. Husam ud-Din Rashidi) (Hyderabad 1971). P.

2. Henry Cousen, *Antiquities of Sind* (Calcutta 1929) p. 121 sqq.

### THE FOUNDER :

The mosque was built by Khusrau Khan, Charkas<sup>3</sup>, a descendant of the famous Chengez Khan, who came to Sind in his early days and joined the service of Mulla Jani of Bunder as petty servant. After some time, he entered the service of 'Isa Khan Tarkhan I (962-74, A.H./ 1554-66 A.D.) as his cup-bearer. Gradually, he rose to prominence and gained the confidence of his master who appointed him the administrator of his possessions. He retained this position during the days of Mirza Baqi Beg (974-93 A.H./ 1566-85 A.D.). But, he achieved a real influence and eminence during the days of Mirza Jani Beg, the last independent ruler of the Tarkhan family of whom he was the grand vazir. During the hectic days of the encounter between Jani Beg and Khan Khanan, Khusru Charkas played a prominent role and showed his skill and competence both as a warrior as well as an administrator and diplomat. When the terms of reconciliation between Khan Khanan and Jani Beg were negotiated, Khusrau Khan advocated the case of his master. His performance impressed the Moghul general so much that he asked Jani Beg to include Charkas in his entourage for the imperial court. Later on, when Akbar bestowed the governorship of certain areas of lower Sind on Jani Beg, Khusrau Khan, Charkas was given the task of looking after the administration of these areas on behalf of Jani Beg.<sup>3</sup> On the death of Jani Beg, Charkas was appointed regent of Ghazi Beg who was a minor at the time of his accession.

In 1017 A.H./1608 A.D., Jahangir decided to send Ghazi Beg to Qandahar to suppress the revolt of Qazilbashs. In his absence, Khusrau Khan was to look after the affairs of Sind. During this period, he committed excesses and also misbehaved with Tarkhan nobles who complained to Ghazi Beg. Ghazi Beg decided to dismiss Charkas and appoint Hindu Khan in his place.

This perhaps occurred in 1019 A.H./1610 A.D. But the new arrangement were not to last long as hardly a year later Mirza Ghazi himself died suddenly. On this, Khusrau ousted Hindu Khan, declared Mirza 'Abd al-'Ali a descendent of Mirza Baqi, as successor of Ghazi Beg, and himself took the reigns of the government. Jahangir's stern action frustrated Charkas's plans who deposed the young 'Abd al-'Ali and ordered him to present himself to the Imperial Court. Khusrau Charkas was also to accom-

3. Bibliographical references to this personality are found in almost all the local histories of Sind. For a consolidated account, see Note in Sindhi by Sayyid Husam ud-Din Rashidi in *Mir Ali Sher Qane, Makli Nama* (Hyderabad, 1967) pp. 159-232; *idem* in *Tuhfat al Kiram*, pp. 214-17. The above narration is based on these notes.

pany the deposed prince. On their arrival at Ajmer, they were put to prison. Charkas died in prison.<sup>4</sup>

Thus came to end the eventful career of Khusrau Charkas who rose to the high power from a very low position and enjoyed virtually the rights and privileges of a ruler for well over twenty five years. The contemporary as well as later writers have portrayed him as a most capable administrator with decent taste and cultured habits. Generous and religious minded, he never disappointed these who came to him for favour. During the long period of this political and administrative influence, also tried to do as much good for the people as possible. According to Qane' he built as many as 360 grand edifices for the benefit of his people which included mosques, wells, bridges, tanks, pavilions etc. Among these, his two monumental works, the Dabgaran Mosque at Thatta and a grand building called Sat Charhni at Makli Hill still exist though in dilapidated condition, they speak of the resourcefulness and taste of the builder.

#### THE MOSQUE: ARCHITECTURE

The Dabgaran Mosque which at its prime served as the main congregational place in the city of Thatta, was built in 997, A.H./ 1588 A.D. It possesses characteristic features of the architecture and architectural decoration used in the historic buildings at Thatta and Makli Hill. Unfortunately, most of the grandeur of this mosque which it once had has gone now. The entrance Gateway and the cloisters which must have been grand and impressive, have fallen and disappeared. The most outstanding feature of its decoration is the faience and faience mosaics with which the interior of the prayer chamber is replete. Similarly, the exquisitely carved stone Mehrab is the one of the most beautiful specimen of the art of stone carving.

The courtyard of the mosque, a rectangle measuring 96 feet 7 inches in length and 61 inches in width, and the prayer chamber are now enclosed with a modern brick-wall with a five feet break in the centre on the east for entrance. The courtyard has lost its original brick pavement, while the surrounding area, specially on the east, outside the boundary wall, is filled with jungle growth (P. Ia).<sup>5</sup>

The one aisle-Prayer Chamber is to a great extent intact and is the only existing part of the mosque. Architecturally, it is an oblong structure

4. *Mir Muhammad Tarkhan Nama (Hyderabad 1965) p. 95. However, Qane' writes that Khusrau Khan defied the imperial orders and fled to Lahori Bander and from there went to Iran, where he died. But, it is evident that he spent his last days at Ajmer and died there in 1028 A.H./1618 A.D. He is lying buried in the compound of Khwaja Mu'in al-Din Chishti. c.f. Sayyed Husam al-Din, (ed.) Tuhfat al-Kiram p. 214 fn. 1.*

5. *Pl. Ib, shows the back view of the prayer chamber repaired in recent years.*

measuring, internally, 82 feet 11 inches from south to north and 38 feet 4-1/2 inches from east to west (Fig 1). It has three compartments divided by two heavy engaged arches supported by massive jambs and surmounted by domes placed on high octagonal drums, the recesses of which possess the projected exterior of the squinches (Fig. 2). The springing lines of the three square-shaped compartments have been converted into octagons with the help of squinches in order to have the 'zone of transition for placing the bases of the drums. The western wall of each compartment possesses the **Mehrab** in the shape of arched niches the central one being the grandest. Similarly, the north and south sides of the side compartments have arched niches.

The front opening of the prayer chamber, three in number, possess four centred arches, the central one facing the nave being the largest and the highest. Originally, it had a low facade of parapet, now fallen and disappeared. The two side openings still retain the projected horizontal frames. The exterior surface was originally treated with thick lime plaster creating decorative panels in low recess. The two piers on either side of the central opening leading to the nave had glazed tiles. Much of this surface decoration has decayed and fallen leaning the patches of brick masonry bare (Pl. Ia). At the extreme end of each corner is an arched opening of stair-case leading to the roof of the prayer chamber.

#### THE MEHRAB:

Inside the prayer chamber the main features of interest are the high and deep arched niches set in the centre of the three compartments to mark the formal Mehrab. The main Mehrab in the central compartment, has a special treatment of elaborate decoration. It is a big panel of yellow sand stone surmounted with another arched panel of glazed tile-mosaics (P. II a). The individuality of the stone panel has been emphasised by the use of yellow sand stone which adds advantageously and soberly to the light and shade of the polychrome faience revetment. The whole surface is divided into several horizontal and vertical panels on which are carved floral motifs. The two broad main panels, one horizontal and the other vertical running upward possess Quranic inscriptions. The horizontal panel has the date in numbers. On either side of these panels are running panels of intricate floral tracery in high relief. The floral decoration consists of interwind scrolls and the bands of full-blown multi-petalled lotuses carved in high relief, and placed one upon the other with tendrils arranged in between the lotuses, thus creating a highly ornamental chain of lotuses (Pl. IIa). Similarly, the central space of the spandrils has been decorated with full-blown multi-petalled lotuses carved in high relief, while the remaining space has been filled with scrolls and lentrils.

The arched recess sunk 3 feet 9 inches deep into the wall also possesses intricate decorative motifs. The surface has been arranged in five long

vertical panels each having beautifully carved medallions placed under a ornamental arch which is in turn, crowned with an arrowhead motif. The top and bottom of the medallions possess full-brown lotuses carved in high relief. Similarly, the blank space on either side of the medallion both at the top and the bottom as well as on the side of the arch, is filled with small lotuses. The inner border of the panel is decorated with tracery of intricate design, while the exterior has a row of lotuses placed within a chain of lozenges. The interior of the arch and the space at the back has been filled with interwind tendrils. The piers of the arched niches are provided with two decorative pilasters in high relief on the tops of which are placed two small crowns, while the lower surface has been divided into two parts separated with slightly projected miniature pavilions. The surface has vertical rows of circles interwind in the shape of a chain. On either side of the *Mehrab* are two small arched opening, 2 feet 4 inches wide, penetrating through the wall which provide light and air to the interior of the prayer chamber.

The two side compartments of the prayer chamber also possess *Mehrab*s in the shape of arched niches in order to create harmony. They are, however, less ornamental and do not possess stone facing. The niches has been divided into five vertical panels from top to bottom for the purpose of decoration (Pl. III b).

#### THE FAIENCE REVETMENT:

As usual with the brick architecture in Sind, the interior of the prayer chamber is covered with faience decoration arranged in panels of various shapes and sizes (Pls. II-IV). This colourful surface decoration has been achieved by adopting the following three different techniques at different places.

- I. Square brick tiles having floral designs in blue and white glaze. These tiles are fixed to obtain a full and continuous pattern of decoration. The joints of the tiles are laid together in such a way that there is hardly any thing visible outside. The device it may be noticed, has been used almost universally on brick buildings in Sind.
- II. Glazed-surface bricks are arranged to obtain geometric patterns like squares, lozenges, crosses, grids, triangles, etc. Sometime the bricks having different glazed colours are put together as alternate courses thus creating straight and continuous lines of different colours mostly red and blue. A yet another device of similar nature is to have the bricks with glazed edges in white or blue. When arranged, the glazed line of the bricks imitate the line of mortar in between the courses of bricks.

- III. Specially cut and glazed small pieces of terracotta tiles are arranged together to create intricate floral or inscriptional patterns. This device is called 'mosaics' and is effectively though sparingly used to cover the surface of the squinches the broad band on the drum as well as the stone panel of the central *Mehrab*.

The central compartment possess some beautiful tile decoration applied on square tiles to cover the soffits of the four grand arched opening (Plate II). The main motifs used here are the two big and two small medallions placed at the corners and near the apex. The remaining space is filled with scrolls of tendrils and flowers. The decorative scheme has been repeated on all the bigger or smaller soffits in other compartments. (Pl. IIb).

Besides, the side-compartments have two more decorative schemes in glazed tiles. They are applied on the inner spade of the *Mehrab*. The surface has been divided into two horizontal bands. The lower one possesses square tiles on which are designed a series of lozenges placed one upon the other, while the upper panels covering the area near the apex is decorated with tile mosaics representing a somewhat honeycombed pattern. (Pl. IIIb).

#### CONCLUSION

The above description of the architecture and architectural decoration of the Dabgaran Mosque, the earliest existing mosque in Thatta, provides some interesting aspects of the evolution and development of the mosque architecture in Sind. The dilapidated and structurally devoid of essential elements of the mosque, it is still a fine specimen of traditional brick architecture and its ornamentation. Among the most interesting features is its *Mehrab* which decorates the nave of the prayer chamber. The *Mehrab* has been regarded as the principal architectural feature of a mosque and therefore special attention has been paid to create it as grand and ornamental as possible. Where, the high arched-niche has been encased with yellow stone, delight carved in decorative motifs as well as Quranic inscriptions. The art of stone carving in Sind it may be pointed out was a local ingenuity practised here since the olden days and was perhaps influenced with the art of Gujrat manifested in the monumental works 'like the Hilal Khan Qazi' mosque at Dholka, the Jama Mosque at Champaner or the tomb of Mubarak Shah at Mahmudabad. However, the personality of Sindhi artist is emphasized at every stage of his work.

But it was in the faience and faience mosaic decoration that this mosque made a significant contribution. The real glazed tile mosaics used here as surface decoration was the earliest experiments which the architect of this mosque carried out. The device was used, though sparingly in Sind, in later buildings the best example of which is the Shahjahan Mosque at Thatta and the Amir Khani Graveyard at Makli Hill. Similarly,

the mosque represents some beautiful designs used on glazed tiles. The decorative designs as well as the colour scheme of these tiles indicate that the artist was influenced by the examples of the Persian work. However, whatever the influences and borrowings might have been, the specimens of art available at the Dabgaran Mosque prove an experiment and capable handling of material at the disposal of the architect as well as the artists who were responsible for the creation of this beautiful specimen of the brick architecture of Sind.

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A little rebellion now and then is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

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Self-confidence is the first requisite to great undertakings.

S. JOHNSON

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An Ambassador is an honest man sent to lie abroad for his country.

WOTTON SIR HENRY

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What do we, as a nation, care about books? How much do you think we spend altogether on our libraries, public or private, as compared with what we spend on our horses?

JOHN RUSKIN

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No furniture is as charming as books, even if you never open them.

SYDNEY SMITH

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## A DARK PERIOD IN THE HISTORY OF SIND

The history of Sind presents a strange spectacle of barrenness and fertility. Upto 712 A.D., when Sind was conquered by Muhammad b. Qasim, it is almost a blank, but for the invasion of Alexander, the Great, when it came into lime-light, and but for the ruins of Mohan-jo-Daro and other ancient mounds, which in their sullen silence speak of the glory of its unknown past. Even after its conquest by the Arabs, it remained obscure, being an out-of-the-way province of the Caliphate, whose governors beyond their petty squabbles and local interests, have left us nothing, of which we could legitimately feel proud. While the mighty Indus flows on, though its waters have been harnessed, the vast solitudes of Sind scarcely unfold any tale of its glorious past.

Perhaps the most obscure period in Sind's history is what goes under the name of Sumira period, whose beginning is shrouded in mystery, though its end can be defined with some amount of certainty. The gap of nearly three centuries can hardly be bridged up, as we have no historical records beyond a few indubitable dates, which stand out prominently like little beacons, that shed their shimmering light over some of its vistas, leaving the rest in utter gloom. Could we ever hope that a daring scholar would arise in the near future, who would rend the dark pall of mystery and give a glimpse into this abyssmal darkness. Perhaps one day a chance manuscript in Arabic or Persian may be unearthed, which may throw an entirely new light on this most obscure period.

We know that Sind, after its conquest by Muhammad b. al-Qasim, was ruled by a succession of Umayyad and Abbasid governors till 258 A.H. (=871/72 A.D.), when its government was handed over by the Caliph al-Mu'tamid (256-279 A.H.) to Ya'qub, the Saffarid. It remained under the yoke of this dynasty until its downfall in 287 A.D. at the hands of the Samanids, who do not seem to have had any control over its destinies. The Saffarids who were mere adventurers contented themselves with a huge tribute, which they annually exacted from the feudatory Arab rulers, known as the Habbarids, who carried on their precarious government till a little after 375 A.D. (=985 A.D.), when al-Maqdisi visited their capital town al-Mansurah. Their principality, with the pomp and pelf, seems to have been snatched away by the redoubtable Mahmud of Ghazna, as asserted by the historian Ibn Khaldun (1). He is said to have despatched his general 'Abdu'r-Razzaq to expel the Arabs from Sind and annex it to the Sultanate of Ghazna, but there is no authority to warrant this assertion, as none of the generals or ministers of Mahmud bore this name.

(1) *History, Vol. II, p. 327*

Nevertheless, there is sufficient evidence that Sind was a tributary province to the Ghaznawids from the year 417 A.H. (=1026 A.D.) when the Abbasid Caliph al-Qadir bi'llah (381-422 A.H.) conferred a covenant and a banner on Mahmud, recognising his authority over Khurasan, Hindustan, Nimruz and Khwarizm,<sup>(1)</sup> right upto the overthrow of the last Ghaznawid King Khusraw Malik (535 A.H.=1160 A.D.) by Mu'izzu'd-Din Muhammad Ghuri, who used to look after its affairs on his behalf<sup>(2)</sup>. But who were those feudatory chiefs that actually governed Sind almost without much interference from Ghazna, Lahore and then lastly from Delhi?

We find that in 416 A.H. (=1025 A.D.) Mahmud, while returning from the sack of Somnath and crossing the perilous desert of Kacch, passed through Sind by way of Mansurah, which in those days was the capital of a Carmathian prince Khafif (3), who fled before his onslaught, crossed the river Indus and hid himself in a thicket of date-palms, where he was pursued by the relentless Mahmud, who beleaguered his camp and slew many of his people. Apparently this pusillanimous prince returned to his capital, after Mahmud had left the spot and continued his march through the Indus valley, via Bhatia and Multan, where his army was greatly harassed and molested by the Jats, who lived along the banks of the river, until he reached Ghazna. If Sind had been a province of Ghazna at this time, the Sindians would have done everything possible to facilitate his journey. The Sultan was so infuriated by this conduct of the Jats that he returned in 418 A.H. (=1027 A.D.) and inflicted a cruel punishment on them, destroying their river flotilla, capturing and killing their warriors and looting their goods<sup>(1)</sup>.

Who was this Khafif? Apparently a chief of the long line of the Sumira dynasty, which boasts of 19 monarchs, including two queens, who, according to the author of the Beglar-Nama, are said to have ruled over Sind for 505 years. They claim their descent from 'Ali through Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyyah and are said to have migrated to Sind in the wake of its conquest by the Arabs, gaining mastery over some portions of the Delta, during those troublous times of misrule and anarchy, paying nominal allegiance to the Caliphate, whose hold on its far-flung provinces was already loose. It seems that they had embraced the Carmathian tenets towards the end of the fourth century, A.H. and had very close relations

(1) *Zainu'l-Akhbar*, p. 87

(2) *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, ed. Chaghtai, p. 25.

(3) *Dr. Nazim's Mahmud of Ghazna*, p. 120. This fact is corroborated by *Gardizi's Zainu'l-Akhbar*, p. 87 and *Ibn'l-Athir*, vol. ix, p. 243, while the name of this native prince incurs in a *Qasida* by *Farrukhi* in praise of *Mahmud's exploit*.

(1) *Zainu'l -Akhbar*, pp. 88-89.

with the Carmathians of Multan, who had replaced the Banu Munabbih somewhere between 367 and 375 A.H., and who acknowledged the authority of the Fatimid Caliphs of Egypt. Sultan Mahmud and all the rulers that followed him down to the days of Radiyyah were the bitterest foes of the Carmathians and did their utmost to uproot them, presumably at the instigation of the puppet caliphs of Baghdad.

In pursuance of this policy, Mahmud fell with a heavy hand on Abu'l-Futuh Da'ud b. Nasr of Multan in 396 A.H., compelling him to recant his faith and pay an annual tribute of 20,000,000 dirhams to his coffers. In 401 A.H. again, when he had been informed of Da'ud's reversion to the Carmathian creed, he swooped upon Multan and annexed its remaining territory, capturing, killing and mutilating the Carmathians till they all died. He carried off Da'ud to Ghazna and confined him in the fortress of Ghurak, where he languished to death. His son, Da'ud the Younger, was subsequently let off by Mas'ud, without restoring him to parental authority.

Khafif was perhaps the last of those obscure Sumira chiefs, whose annals have not come down to us. For in 423 A.H. we find an unexpected reference to a strong ruler, by name Shaikh Ibn Sumar Raja Bal, presumably the man, whom the Sumira traditions regard as their first overlord. In that year the Druze propagandist, Baha'ud'-din al-Muqtana', addressed an epistle to this mighty ruler, extolling his virtues and faith and exhorting him in the following terms:

"Oh, illustrious Raja Bal, arouse your family the Unitarians, and bring back Da'ud, the Younger, into true religion, for Mas'ud delivered him from prison and bondage, that you might accomplish the ministry with which you were charged, against 'Abdulla'h, his nephew, and against all the inhabitants of Multan so that the disciples of the doctrines of holiness, and of the unity, might be distinguished from the party of bewilderment, contradiction, ingenuity, and rebellion." (See Elliot, vol. 1, p. 491)

Now this Ibn Sumar or Sumar is regarded by the Sumira tradition as the first ruler of the long line of Sumiras, and as he was in the full bloom of his power even before 423 A.H. (=1032 A.D.), the assertion of Mir Ma'sum that the Sumiras attained to power during the reign of Sultan 'Abdu'r-Rashid (440-444 A.H./ 1049-1052) or that of Farrukhzad (444-551) A.H./ 1052-1059 A.D.), as suggested by Haig, must be discounted. The accounts of the various monarchs given in the recent histories, which are generally based on the genealogical tables preserved with certain Sumira families, are, to say the least, absolutely fictitious, and so are their pompous soubriquets, which they are said to have received from the Abbasid or Fatimid Caliphs. The dates of their reigns are hopelessly incorrect and designedly fabricated; only a few of them can be fixed with certainty. We have already referred to Mahmud's entry into Sind in



616 A.H. We may mention here the memorable year of 621 A.H. (-1222 A.D.), when Jalalu'd-din Mangbarni of Khwarizm reached Daibal, and its ruler Chanesar (1) fled the capital in boats. It was presumably the same ruler, whom the author of the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* dubs as Malik Sinanu'd-din Chanesar, Wali-i-Sind was Daibal, who four years later (i.e. in 625 A.H. = 1228 A.D.) submitted to Nizamu'l-Mulk al-Junaidi\* and accompanied him to the court of Iltutmish at Delhi.

This Sumira ruler, however, should not be confounded with a later monarch of the same name, who, after an ignominious reign of 10 years, was dethroned by his tribesmen in favour of his younger step-brother, the valliant Dodo, and who appealed to 'Ala'u'd-din Khalji (695-715 A.H./1296-1315 A.D.), to restore him to his ancestral Gadi and thereby brought about the ruination of his dynasty, which became utterly weakened and exposed to the attacks of the Sammas, who were gradually coming to the fore and later on menaced the kingdom of Delhi by allying themselves with the predatory Mongol hordes. The deeds of Dodo in this unequal war of attrition are still sung in ballads and inspire the Sindians with legitimate pride. Although this event is not recorded in the Persian histories dealing with this period, it may be taken as substantially true.

About two decades before their extinction, we have the eye-witness account of the Moorish globe-trotter, Ibn Battuta, who visited Sind in 734 A.H. (=1333 A.D.), and who has left us a lurid description of their flourishing town Janani and of the gruesome massacre at Siwistan (Sehwan), where Wunnar Sumira (?), emboldened by an officer of Muhammad Tughlaq, viz. Qaisar ar-Rumi, decoyed and slew its Hindu governor, Malik Ratan, and then fearing the wrath of this eccentric monarch slunk away to seek refuge with his tribesmen, leaving the wretched Rumi to his inevitable doom. He is said to have died soon after as a result of a drunken orgy.

Whether Wunnar was a Sumira as maintained by my friend, Dr. Riazul-Islam, in which case he might be identified with the lascivious 'Umar Sumira, or a Samma, in which case he might be identified with Unnar Summa, is a question which still needs clarification. I am inclined to take the latter view, inasmuch as Ibn Battuta seems to have mistaken him for a Sumira, since at that time he was the combined chief of both the Sumiras and Sammas, having been chosen after the assassination of the last but one Sumira, ruler, Armil, and perhaps acted as the regent for Armil's minor son, Hamir. After his death he seems to have been succeeded by his doughty son, Bablna or Banhbina, who, growing very powerful usurped the throne, sending Hamir into wilderness to seek the protection of Firozshah Tughlaq.

(1) Spelt in the *Jahirgushi* (VI. II. pp-146-148) as *خنیسر* and *جنیسر* and in the *Tababat-i-Nasiri* (ed. Raverty, p. 123) as *جش*

It must be remembered that according to the Sumira traditional accounts it was 'Umar Sumira who had given asylum to Taghi, the rebel slave of Muhammad Tughlaq, who came to the vicinity of Thatta, in 752 A.H. (=1351 A.D.) in order to reclaim the fugitive, but died along with his son without achieving his object. Both Diya' Barani and Bakhshi (1), while narrating this pursuit by Muhammad Tughlaq, categorically state that the Sultan wanted to punish the Sumiras of Thatta and Damrila, without mentioning the name of Sammas (2).

When ten years later (i.e., 762 A.H.) Firuzshah once again came to Sind for avenging himself on the Sumiras for having sheltered Taghi and for having molested him in his retreat, the Sumiras had disappeared from the scene. He had to contend with the Sammas, whose ruler, however, submitted to him through the intercession of their spiritual guide, Sayyid Jalalud'din Bukhari. When the last Sumira ruler lost the remnant of his power cannot be ascertained with any exactitude. The epistle of 'Alinu'l-Mulk Mahru' who was the governor of Sind on behalf of Firuzshah, to the governor of Gujrat, written in the early years of his reign (1), indicates that Hamir Dodo, the last ruler of the Sumira dynasty, was already a displaced man and was receiving a handsome salary from the Tughlaq court. He was being pampered and buttered against the growing menace of Jam Babina, who seems to have stormed the capital of Muhammad Tur and extirpated Hamir, root and branch, somewhere between 752 and 762 A.H. without Firuzshah having come to his succour.

The Sumiras, who ruled over the Delta of Sind for nearly five centuries, and who sometimes extended their territory to Alor and Multan, disappeared from the arena of history without leaving any traces behind, except the debris of some of the towns built by them, which tell the sad tale of their past glory. The Department of Historical Records and Archives would do well to ransack the existing libraries in Sind and Multan, so that they might perchance stumble upon a hidden manuscript, which may enable us to reconstruct the history of this benighted period.

(1) See *Ta'rikh-i-Firuzshahi*, pp. 519, 523, 524, and *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, p. 223. On p. 523, however, Barani says that Taghi fled from Karnal and joined the Jam at Thatta, presumably Bauhbina, who was acting as Hamir's regent.

(1) A relevant extract from this epistle has been translated by Dr. Riazul-Islam in a paper contributed to the *Islamic Culture*.

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A room without books is as a body without a soul.

LORD AVEBURY

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A good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life.

JOHN MILTON

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One should always play fairly when one has the winning cards.

OSCAR WILDE

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The life given us by nature is short; but the memory of a well spent life is eternal.

CICERO

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No one has lived too short a life who has performed his duties with unblemished character.

CICERO

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Life is not dated merely by years. Events are sometimes the best calendars.

BENJAMIN DISRAELI

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If you live according to nature, you will never be poor; if according to the world's opinion, you will never be rich.

EPICURUS

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For laws are necessary that good manners may be preserved, so there is need of good manners that laws may be maintained.

MACHIAVELLI

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## WOMAN

### CLASSICAL ARAB CONCEPTION

#### PHYSICAL

With camel's slender and tapering neck, opalesque, bevine, buxom, bulbous, humptious of magnificent chest and abundant bosom, radiant eyes and devastating looks, of feline gestures, of serpentine hair, of creeping hands and nibbling fingers, of gorgeous cheeks, agile lips and voluptuous mouth that speaks, squeaks, mutters, thunders and threatens simultaneously, of exquisite waist when she approaches and of tremendous and eloquent buttocks when she recedes, of tender feet, of shapely form and unstable legs which bravely balance and laboriously carry the entire swinging edifice and oscillating upper encumbrance.

#### IDEALISTIC

This nature's superb and quaint essence of creation, this marvel of love and attachment, this ocean of nobility, feelings and emotions, this mountain of vanity frailty and caprice, this desert of cruelty terror and hate, this bundle of foolishness, this ruler of hearts, generator of sentiments, inspirer of adventure, valour and sacrifice, this begetter of humanity, this reward, this blessing, this misery of man, this complexity and beauty, vivacious, bellicose, boisterous, this talisman, this charm, this enigma, this abode of peace, this harbinger of disaster, this very entrance to and exist from heaven and hell.

## "SIND—LAND OF REGENDS"

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto

Laden with legend and ringing with history, SIND, The gateway of Islam, has a spell of its own. A land of deserts and rivers, green pastures and golden sand, Sind presents a unique picture of contrasts. Its people are hard working and pleasant, romantic and chivalrous.

While this has been a land of warriors and despots, it has also been prominent for its scholars and poets who have continuously lent serenity and softness to its rugged surface. Buried in its sand-dunes are remarkable stories of love, rivalries, braveries and betrayals.

A cradle of civilization, the cultural supremacy of Sind dates back to pre-historic times. The legends of Sind are, in fact, a treasure, embalmed in tales of splendour. About seven such legends have been immortalized by the celebrated poet of Sind, Shah Abdul Latif, who has left an indelible impression on the minds of all of us. His stories of valour, love and patriotism like Noori-Jam Tamachi, Sasui—Punhoon, Mumal-Rano, Leela—Chanesar, Umar-Marvi are a pride and delight for every Sindhi educated or uneducated, poor or rich, man and woman, old or young.

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*Extract form introduction to a book in 1970. In his death he had the honour of adding another legend to Sind history.*