

HISTORY OF  
MEDIÆVAL INDIA  
FROM 647 A.D. TO THE  
MUGHAL CONQUEST



Council Chamber, Vijayanagar.

# HISTORY OF MEDIÆVAL INDIA

By

ISHWARI PRASAD, M.A., LL.B., D. LITT.

READER IN HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD  
AND SOMETIME PROFESSOR OF HISTORY  
AGRA COLLEGE

WITH A FOREWORD

By

L. F. RUSHBROOK-WILLIAMS

M.A., B. LITT., O.B.E., ETC.

FORMERLY PROFESSOR OF HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY  
OF ALLAHABAD

THIRD EDITION

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## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THIS volume is an attempt to present to the reader a general view of the history of Mediæval India during the years 647—1526 A.D. (The history of Mediæval India, writes Dr. Stanley Lane-Poole, is merely a chronicle of kings, courts and conquests and not a history of organic or national growth. The remark is quite appropriate, if we restrict the scope of history merely to the growth of popular institutions as they are understood in modern times. But broadly speaking, history deals with the life of man in its varied aspects, and in this sense the *History of Mediæval India* is not merely a story of court intrigues and palace conspiracies, but a record of brilliant achievements in the field of conquest and administration, and of great social and religious movements.)

Elphinstone's *History of India* is rightly treated as a classic and generations of students in this country have profited by it. But historical research has considerably advanced since Elphinstone's day, and the modern student no longer finds it adequate for his purposes. It was largely based upon Firishta, but during the last fifty years, thanks to the ceaseless labours of European and Indian antiquarians and researchists, plenty of new material has come to light, which has effected considerable improvement upon Firishta not merely by correcting his errors, but also by adding vastly to our knowledge. Dr. Lane-Poole's brilliant outline of Mediæval India based upon Elliot's *Historians*, written in limpid and elegant English, is still read with delight by students of Indian history. But specialisation has advanced by such rapid strides that we

can no longer rest satisfied with Elliot's priceless treasures, although it is impossible to express adequately the debt which students of Indian history owe to that veteran scholar and indefatigable antiquarian who by his ceaseless labours unearthed documents which would have remained unknown to the English-knowing public but for him. The scholar of to-day must consult for himself the valuable material in Persian and Arabic which has been placed within his reach by modern research. I have tried to indicate in the footnotes appended to this volume the vastness of the original material which may be profitably utilised by any one who undertakes seriously the study of mediæval history.

In preparing this volume I have relied mainly upon original authorities. I am not so presumptuous as to think that I have improved upon Elphinstone and Lane-Poole, to whom I must gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness, but I may claim to have thrown a fresh light upon many an important problem, to have suggested fresh view-points and to have supplied information which has hitherto been inaccessible to the general reader. In order to achieve this end, I have consulted, as the footnotes will show, numerous MSS. and printed texts in Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit. I have attempted to correct the common errors of history and to make the presentation of the subject as attractive as possible. Some of my conclusions are certainly at variance with those of my predecessors, but without laying claim to infallibility—a claim which no scholar can put forward—I may add that I have carefully investigated the evidence before me and have based my opinions on actual facts. On reading Mommsen's idealisation of Cæsar, Strauss remarked: 'An historian may blame, but not scold; praise, but not lose his balance.' The illustrious author of the History of Rome cared nothing for

the charge, for he believed that history could neither be written nor made without love or hate. It is true that history cannot be made without love or hate, but surely it is possible to write history without love or hate, and a true historian ought to bring to bear upon his task the passionless curiosity of the man of science. It is not for the historian to take sides in a controversy. He is not a party politician or a political propagandist. His function is to state and interpret the facts as he finds them without allowing his own prejudices to influence the discussion of his theme or warp his judgment. I have attempted to follow this principle. In judging men and things, I have not allowed ethics to go before dogma, politics and nationality, but have tried to relate facts to circumstances before apportioning praise or blame. I hope I have extenuated nothing, nor set down aught in malice, and as far as possible I have consistently placed before me the high ideal of historical truth irrespective of every other consideration.

As the book was printed at a time when I was busily engaged in University work, I could not do full justice to the reading of proofs, and hence some errors have crept into the text. The absence of diacritical marks and the disparity in the spelling of certain words such as Muhamamadans, Brahmans, Khan-i-Jahan and Jahangir will no doubt cause inconvenience to the general reader, but I hope to remove all these blemishes in the next edition.

My thanks are due to Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. Ganga Natha Jha, M.A., D.Litt., Vice-Chancellor of our University, who has always assisted me in procuring MSS. and to Dr. Shafaat Ahmad Khan, M.A., Litt. D., M.L.C., and Dr. Tara-chand, M.A., D.Phil., and my colleagues of the History Department, who have helped me by their many suggestions

and criticisms. I must also express my gratefulness to Professor Jadunath Sarkar, M.A., I.E.S., of the Patna College, for lending me his MS. of the *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi* and to Pandit Amara Natha Jha, M.A., Secretary, Public Library, Allahabad, and the Librarians of the Bankipore Oriental Library, the Imperial Library, Calcutta, and the Library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, for affording me facilities for consulting MSS. and books in their possession. I must thank Mr. Sarju Prasad, Deputy Librarian of our University, for the help he has given me.

Among those to whom I am especially indebted I must not omit to mention the names of Messrs. G. V. Rao, M.A., LL.B., and Gauri Shankar Chatterjee, M.A., from whom I have derived much useful information about the kingdom of Vijayanagar and the development of the Bhakti cult. To Messrs. Visheshwar Prasad, M.A., and Hari Krishna Mathur, B.A., both pupils of mine, and Mr. A. K. Sen of the Public Library, Allahabad, I am obliged for the help they have given in the reading of proofs and the preparation of the Bibliography and the Index.

Lastly, I am thankful to my publishers who have grudged no expenditure in making the book as attractive and useful as possible.

The completion of this volume in the midst of multifarious distractions is a matter of sincere satisfaction and thankfulness to me. I must publicly acknowledge the generous encouragement I have always received from Professor Rushbrook-Williams to whom I owe the opportunities of carrying on historical research. Scholars will no doubt find many defects and shortcomings in these pages, but even these will be useful, for by stimulating research they will serve to advance our knowledge of the subject. ]For my



PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

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part, I may humbly add that I shall always value the reasoned criticism of competent scholars more than the unqualified praise of kind friends.

ISHWARI PRASAD

UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD

*May 27, 1925*

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

A new edition of this book being called for I have taken all possible care to remove the blemishes that existed in the first edition. The favourable reception accorded to the first edition, notwithstanding its many imperfections, encourages me to hope that the revised and enlarged edition will commend itself to all students of Indian history. I have confined myself to such changes and enlargements as seemed most needed; where important events had been slurred over, additions have been made to enable the reader to grasp their full significance. The footnotes have been made more illustrative, and a fairly full chronological table has been appended, presenting a connected view of the important events and changes in the political history of Mediæval India. I have added a few new illustrations indicative of the growth and development of the early Muslim art in India.

The book has been thoroughly revised. The criticisms and suggestions from various quarters, from competent scholars as well as others, have been of great help to me. Statements which seemed to have been exaggerated or vague have been modified, and an attempt has been made to bring the book into line with the latest researches. The diacritical marks have been placed where necessary, and a uniform method of spelling has been followed, though it is not strictly in accordance with the method of transliteration suggested by the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain, for this would have considerably embarrassed the students in Indian Colleges for whom the book is primarily intended. Important but

less familiar names have been accented to enable the reader to pronounce them with accuracy. A very exhaustive index has been added for which my thanks are due to my pupil Mr. Kunwar Bahadur, B.A., of the University of Allahabad, who has grudged no labour in making it full, scientific and accurate.

I shall deem my labours amply rewarded if this book leads students to original authorities and teaches them to recognise the fact that we can never grasp or appreciate the real significance of historical events, unless we transport ourselves to those times in which they occurred, and unless we enter into the hearts and minds of those contemporaries who have described great men and affairs from personal observation. To be able to see things through their eyes is the first postulate of real, scientific, historical scholarship. In this direction the present volume represents an aspiration and not an achievement.

ISHWARI PRASAD

UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD

*December 24, 1927*

## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

It is a matter of great satisfaction that this book has been found useful by students of Indian history not only in India but also in Europe. It has been translated into French and forms a part of the *Histoire du Monde* edited by Professor E. Cavaignac. I have tried to meet in this edition the criticisms that have been offered from time to time by competent scholars, and have added new information wherever possible. The field of scholarship is vast enough to induce humility in the proudest of men, and I beg of my readers to continue to make suggestions for improvement, which will always receive my best attention.

ISHWARI PRASAD

UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD

May 25, 1933

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## Names of Muhammadan Months

1. محرم Muharram, 30 days.
2. صفر Safar, 29 days.
3. ربيع الاول Rabi'ul awwal, 30 days.
4. ربيع الاخر Rabi'ul akhir, 29 days.
5. جمادى الاول Jamad'l awwal, 30 days.
6. جمادى الاخر Jamad'l akhir, 29 days.
7. رجب Rajab, 30 days.
8. شعبان Sh'abān, 29 days.
9. رمضان Ramzan, 30 days.
10. شوال Shawwal, 29 days.
11. ذوالقعدة Zulq'adah, 30 days.
12. ذي الحجة Zi'lhijjah, 29 days.

These months have thirty and twenty-nine days alternately, except in the Embolismic years when the last month has thirty days.

## The Hijra Era

The word 'hijrah' literally means departure from one's country and separation from friends. The era derives its name from the flight of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina. It is a mistake to think that the era began from the date on which the flight of the Prophet occurred. The date of the flight is different from the date of the commencement of the Hijra era. The era was introduced seven years after the death of the Prophet by the Khalifa Omar and its commencement was not coincident with the day of the flight or with the day on which the Prophet arrived at Medina. The era was made to commence two months prior to the flight that is with the first day of the month of Muharram, the first day of the year on which the flight took place. This day corresponds to 16th July 622 A.D.

## FOREWORD

I HAVE read with great interest the first volume of Mr. Ishwari Prasad's "History of Mediæval India." My interest proceeds not merely from the merits of the work itself, but from the fact that the author is an old friend. When I came from All Souls to organise the department of Modern Indian History in the University of Allahabad, I took an early opportunity of visiting and inspecting the history teaching in the numerous colleges which then owed allegiance to the University. I was particularly impressed, when I visited Agra, with the zeal and enthusiasm of a certain Mr. Ishwari Prasad, then a Professor at Agra College. So much so, indeed, that I took an early opportunity of recruiting him for the Research Staff of the department I was then organising. Most unfortunately circumstances over which I had no control took me from Allahabad soon afterwards, so that I was obliged to bid farewell to my colleagues, old and new. But I had seen sufficient of the work of Mr. Ishwari Prasad to realise that the favourable opinion which I had formed of his keenness and capacity was fully justified by more intimate acquaintance. Indeed, I may perhaps be allowed to say that it was in some measure as the result of our association, that he was encouraged to persevere in those laborious and exacting studies which are given to the public in this volume.

It has long been a commonplace with teachers of Indian History that there is a serious shortage of books suitable for

undergraduate study. Particularly is this the case where the study of Mediæval India is in question. Apart from such brilliant outlines as those which have been given us by Dr. Lane-Poole there has hitherto been a great unfilled gap between the elementary text-book and the weighty monograph. Neither the one nor the other category is very suitable for the student who desires to abandon the school book, but is not yet ready for the detailed researches of the specialist. Now, in my judgment the main strength of the present work is its suitability to fill this gap; to provide the young student with a general treatment more detailed than he has hitherto encountered; and to constitute a bridge by which he may advance to the goal of specialisation. Successfully to achieve such a desideratum is a task of great difficulty; and I must not be understood to anticipate in any manner the verdict of those who are best qualified to pronounce upon Mr. Ishwari Prasad's success or failure—the practising teachers of Indian History. They and they alone will discover whether the book is too advanced for their students; whether the apparatus criticus employed by the author and in my judgment as a whole soundly employed is beyond the grasp of the young scholar. I will content myself by saying that Mr. Ishwari Prasad shows a commendable grasp of the canons of historical criticism; that he uses his own judgment with courage and conviction; that he departs from accepted conclusions only after a careful evaluation of the evidence available to him. If he criticises his predecessors somewhat freely, it must at least be admitted that he has introduced a breath of life into some of the arid wastes of historical controversy. Without attempting to endorse or justify certain of his conclusions—concerning which every qualified scholar will claim, as I claim myself the right of private

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judgment—I will content myself with commending this book in the most cordial terms to the attention of all who are interested in the teaching and study of Indian History.

L. F. RUSHBROOK-WILLIAMS

SIMLA

*May 4, 1925*

## INTRODUCTION

IT was the illustrious Freeman who laid a considerable emphasis on the essential unity of history. No one can deny that there is a certain continuity in human affairs and that one period of history is almost inseparably connected with another. Violent changes seldom occur, and one age imperceptibly shades off into another. It often happens that during a period of transition the actual authors of important events, the very actors in the historical drama, fail to perceive the significance of the part played by them. They are so completely immersed in affairs, so busy with acting and doing that they become utterly oblivious of the changes which are wrought by their own efforts. A revolution takes place; our political and social conditions are altered; autocracy gives way to freedom; orthodoxy yields place to a liberal cosmopolitanism; our ideas and ideals are thrown into the crucible to be recast and refashioned, and, yet, we do not see that the surface of the earth on which we stand is being changed perhaps through our own instrumentality. We become the unconscious agents and creators of mighty revolutions, and seldom realise the magnitude of the influence which we exert upon the epoch in which we live and which, in turn, it exerts upon us. Not unoften do we enter upon our grand human inheritance and reap and enjoy the fruits of social conquests without thinking of the great mass of men and women, who with infinite toil and patience have striven to accomplish the mighty task of political and social regeneration, and who have contributed in a



thousand ways to the glory of the epoch in which we live. The history of European civilisation affords numerous illustrations of the principle enunciated by the historian of the Norman Conquest. The French Revolution of the eighteenth century with all its clash of ideals, its tears, agonies, death-pangs and the tragic phases, which disfigured the Reign of Terror, had its roots deep in the policy of Richelieu and Louis XIV. So great was the wrong done in the past that the benevolent efforts of Turgot to infuse a fresh life into the decadent system; the robust commonsense and self-effacement of Danton, who had to go to the scaffold with the words—Better be a fisherman than meddle with the governing of men!—on his lips, the immaculate purity of the famous lawyer of Arras, and the political speculations of Abbé Siéyes failed to save the existing society in France from ruin. Similarly, the glorious rebellion of the English people against Stuart tyranny, organised by the Puritans, derived its inspiration from the charters of Henry and John and the political practice of the patriarchs of the Anglo-Saxon Witan. The German Kultur, which lately menaced the peace of Europe, was the result of the statecraft of Bismarck and of the teachings of Nietzsche and Treitschke and a galaxy of eminent writers like Dahlmann, Haüsser, Droysen and Sybel. So is the case with the history of Russia, which has not yet come out of the agonies of a new birth. The self-governing countries of Europe have consciously or unconsciously followed the traditions of their past in working out their political evolution. There is a certain continuity in their affairs. But the history of India has moved along different lines. The conquest of India by foreigners has led to serious breaks from the past at times, and not (unoften her indigenous institutions have perished under the

deadening effect of foreign domination. Her people have been forced to abandon their political institutions for exotic systems. Their political advance has been rudely interrupted and foreign subjection has seriously interfered with the growth of healthy ideals of national and public duty. But while all this is true, the thread of the cultural history of India has remained unbroken through the ages, and the fundamental aspects of the social and religious life of her people have always possessed a unity, a sameness, which no historian can fail to notice. According to the fashion of the day, the history of India is also divided into three periods—the ancient, mediæval and modern, and it is a very convenient and necessary division. “To think history is certainly to divide it into periods, because thought is organism, dialectic, drama and as such has its periods, its beginning, its middle, and its end, and all the other ideal pauses that a drama implies and demands,” writes Benedetto Croce, and his view is supported by the philosopher-statesman Turgot, who in his Discourse at the Sorbonne on the Successive Advances of the Human Mind declared that History was the life of humanity, ever progressing through decay and revival, each age linked equally to those which have gone before and those that are to come. The divisions must be observed in European as in Indian history, for in the one as in the other the three periods are in such marked contrast with one another. So, without destroying the fundamental unity of history, which is the bed-rock of our knowledge, we can separately deal with and explain the significance of the events of each period. In the vast panorama of history that stretches out before us, the landscapes may vary; the figures treading upon the earth may flit like shadows into the vast unknown, but the operation of the law of evolution never ceases. Behind the

multiplicity of detail and the manifold diversities that history reveals to us we have to discover the essential unities and the working of the principle of progress, which after all is the real subject of the historian. An attempt will be made in these pages to point out the contribution of the mediæval period to the sum of ages, to find out the decisive influences which have formed the basis of the civilisation under which we live to-day.

Much has been written about the greatness of our ancient civilisation. Modern research has exploded the old shibboleths of the political stagnation and backwardness of our forefathers. Our scholars have proved that the Hindus of ancient times possessed a highly developed form of polity, which in its palmyest days fulfilled the ends of the Greek philosopher's '*polis*.' The state was based upon *Dharma*; the sovereign's duty was to promote the highest well-being of the people, and the *raison d'être* of all political institutions was the satisfaction of material wants and the moral elevation of the entire community. Popular institutions were not unknown to them. Even in the Vedic times we obtain glimpses of the *Samiti* and the *Sabhā*, the two daughters of *Prajāpati* transacting public business in a spirit of harmony and co-operation. In the Buddhist literature there are evidences of a republican form of government, which, though not so well-organised and systematic as republics in the western world, was controlled by public opinion. The *Jātaka*<sup>1</sup> calls the Buddhist rulers '*gana rulers*' or republican rulers and Professor Rhys Davids has referred to the *Attha-Kathā* which makes mention of the highest officers of the self-governing body, the President, the Vice-President and the generalissimo

<sup>1</sup> *Jātaka*, IV, 148.

of the forces of the community. We hear of the councils and *parisads* of the Lichchhavis and their frequent deliberation in meetings, and regular rules are laid down for the orderly conduct of business by means of discussion.<sup>2</sup> A highly developed code of procedure is preserved in the *Vinaya Pitaka* according to which meetings of the Buddhist congregations were held and business was done. The little Buddhist communities were virtual republics, managing their own affairs after proper deliberation and discussion. The Hindu monarch had to take a prescribed oath<sup>3</sup> by which he promised to govern the people so as to promote their highest happiness. "The Hindu theory of kingship," writes Mr. Jayaswal, "was never permitted to degenerate into a divine imposture and profane autocracy. Jugglery in the divine name of the Creator was not possible for the Hindu king, as the race never allowed the craft of the priest to be united with the office of the ruler."<sup>4</sup> The king had his ministers and councils and the various departments of law and justice—an elaborate machinery which worked without friction and conflict, because politics were saturated with

<sup>2</sup> Bhandarkar, Carmichael Lectures, p. 180.

<sup>3</sup> The following oath is given in the *Mahābhārata* (*Sānti Parva*), Chapter 59, verses 115, 116:—

प्रतिज्ञाञ्चाधिरोहस्व मनसा कर्मणा गिरा ।  
पालयिष्याम्यहं भौमं ब्रह्म इत्येव चालकृत् ॥  
यश्चात्र धर्मो नोत्पुक्तो दण्डनीतिल्यपाश्रयः ।  
तमदाहुः करिष्यामि स्ववशो न कदाचन ॥

Mount in mind, deed and word the vow—I will protect the earth and the Brahmans (or the Vedas) again and again. Whatever Dharma is laid down in ethics and approval in politics—I will act according to that without hesitation and I will never be arbitrary.

<sup>4</sup> Jayaswal, *Ancient Hindu Polity*, pp. 58-59.

spiritual influences. The Hindu monarch taxed his people, but to use a poetic metaphor, the money taken from the people was to be given back to them even as the sun dries up the waters of the earth in order to give them back in the shape of refreshing and fertilising showers. The ancient law-giver laid down the maxim:—

स्वभागभृता दास्यत्वे प्रजानां च नृपः कृतः ।

ब्रह्मणा स्वामिरूपस्तु पालनार्थं हि सर्वदा ॥

“God has made the king, though master in form, the servant of the people, earning his wages in the shape of taxes for promoting their prosperity.”

As we proceed onwards, we come to the imperial organisation of the Mauryas of which we get a glimpse in Kautalya's *Arthasāstra*. Here the constitution of the government is laid down by the political philosopher in all its details, and though there is plenty of Machiavelianism at times, we find much genuine guidance for the ruler and the statesman to regulate his conduct so as to promote the highest public well-being. The state was not merely a centralised despotism, an incubus or a nightmare, which crushed the race of mortals in the dust. As Professor Radha Kumud Mukerjee observes, it did not aim at legislating for and controlling the life of every part of the vast country under its sway, but it aimed only at an elastic system of federalism or confederations in which were incorporated, along with the central government at the metropolis, as parts of the same system, the indigenous local administrations.<sup>5</sup> The village was a self-contained and self-sufficing unit. It worked with

<sup>5</sup> Local Government in Ancient India, p. 10.

an admirable system of domestic economy, which prevented clash and strife and which placed an assured subsistence within the reach of all. The division of labour, the sense of co-operation produced by prolonged residence in a small place, cut off from the wide world, and the feeling of confidence and equality fostered by a mutual exchange of service were valuable elements of strength in the village system. The isolation from the outer world was at once a source of weakness and of strength. It cramped the intellectual horizon of the village community; it rendered it unprogressive by making it impossible for life to move in other than the prescribed groove; it intensified its conservatism and generated an unreasoning suspicion of all extraneous influences, healthy or otherwise. But it checked strife and social warfare which is a common feature of modern town life in the west and also to a limited extent in the east. Its conservatism helped to preserve an important feature of Hindu social organisation and in times of revolution it preserved peace and order and saved our civilisation from total decay. Of these village communities a distinguished English statesman writes thus:—

“The village communities are little republics, having nearly everything they can want within themselves; and almost independent of any foreign relations. They seem to last where nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down; revolution succeeds to revolution; but the village community remains the same. This union of village communities, each one forming a separate little state in itself, has, I conceive, contributed more than any other cause to the preservation of the peoples of India, through all the revolutions, and changes which they have suffered, and is in a high degree conducive to

their happiness, and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence.”<sup>6</sup>

Obviously, the vastness of the country made it difficult for the central government to control every aspect of human life, and therefore much was left to local agencies. The social and cultural life of the people continued as ever, and political changes did not interfere with the normal intellectual and moral progress of the race. The Imperial Guptas fully maintained the traditions of Hindu greatness and liberally extended their patronage to art and letters. Their age was marked by the revival of Hindu religion and Sanskrit learning and beneficent activity in the domain of administration. The Hindu polity retained its healthy character down to the days of Harṣa of Kanauj. Hiuen Tsiang, the Chinese pilgrim who visited India during his reign, bears testimony to the highly developed administration—though it was not free from defects—and zeal of the king to promote the happiness of the subjects. The pilgrim observes:—

“As the administration of the country is conducted on benign principles, the execution is simple. The private demesnes of the Crown are divided into four principal parts; the first for carrying out the affairs of state and providing sacrificial offerings; the second is for providing substitutes for the ministers and chief officers of state; the third is for rewarding men of distinguished ability. The taxes on the people are light, and the personal service required of them is moderate. Each one keeps his worldly goods in peace and all till the ground for their subsistence. Those who cultivate

<sup>6</sup>Report of the Select Committee of House of Commons, 1832, Vol. III, 84, p. 331.

the royal estates pay a sixth part of the produce as tribute."

Education was widely diffused, and we glean from Hiuen Tsiang's records that with a great many Buddhist and Brahman monks discussion was the very breath of their nostrils. It was an age of disputations.) Sometimes scholars posted their challenges at the doors of monasteries asking their opponents to have a discussion with them. (Once, a heretic of the Lokātiya sect hung up forty theses at the temple gate at Nālanda with the words, "if any one can refute these principles, I will then give him my head as a proof of his victory." The challenge was meant for Hiuen Tsiang who asked his servant to tear it,<sup>7</sup> and in the discussion that followed, the Brahman was defeated.<sup>8</sup>) The Buddhist monks, living in quiet places, far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife, devoted themselves to study and discussion. Again and again, we read of assemblies where the exponents of rival doctrines met together for debate and Hiuen Tsiang writes:—

"The brethren are often assembled for discussion to test intellectual capacity and bring moral character into prominence. Those who bring forward or estimate aright fine points in philosophy and give subtle principles their proper place, who are ornate in diction and acute in refined distinctions ride richly caparisoned elephants."

The University of Nālanda contained ten thousand scholars who studied the various branches of learning, and within the temple every day about one hundred pulpits were raised from which discourses were delivered and were attended

<sup>7</sup> Beal, *The Life of Hiuen Tsiang*, p. 161.

<sup>8</sup> Beal, *The Life of Hiuen Tsiang*, pp. 161—65.



by students 'without any fail, even for a minute.' The priests lived in harmony and the pilgrim writes that during the seven hundred years since its establishment not a single case of rebellion against the rules had occurred in the University. The state liberally endowed the institution and took a great interest in its welfare.\*

(Harṣa himself was an accomplished man of letters. He was the author, in some measure, of the famous plays—the *Nāgānanda*, the *Ratnāvalī* or 'Necklace' and the *Priyadarśikā* or 'Gracious Lady,' which are admirable for their 'simplicity of thought and elegance of expression.' Like the great Aśoka before him, he devoted himself to the practice of piety. He developed an earnest religious outlook and gave his allegiance to Buddhism first in its Hīnayāna and then in its Mahāyāna forms and 'sought to plant the tree of religious merit to such an extent that he forgot to sleep and eat' and prohibited the use of animal food throughout the 'Five Indies.' Later he developed an eclectic attitude towards all religions, and though a convinced Buddhist he offered worship to Śiva, the Sun, and Buddha, and built temples in their honour. The religion of the bulk of the people was Purānic Hinduism, but in practice considerable latitudinarianism was observed by them. The Brahmans resented the king's liberality towards the Buddhists and hatched a plot to take his life.

\* Beal, *The Life of Huen Tsiang*, pp. 112-13.

✓ The king granted to the University the revenue of 100 villages. Two hundred householders in these villages, day by day, contributed several hundred *piculs* of ordinary rice and several hundred *catties*, in weight of butter and milk. Hence the students being so abundantly supplied, did not require to ask for the four requisites. This was the source of the perfection of their studies to which they had attained.

One picul was equal to 133¼ lbs.

One catty was equal to 160 lbs.

During the session of the historic assembly, consisting of about twenty princes, four thousand learned Buddhists and about three thousand Jains and Brahmans, held at Kanauj to proclaim the Master's teachings, an attempt was made on the king's life by a fanatic, which resulted in the arrest of five hundred Brahmans. The accused confessed their guilt and escaped with the light penalty of exile.

The most remarkable thing about Harṣa is the distribution of his vast treasures every four years at Prayāg. The king proceeded thither accompanied by his sister and a number of princes and scholars. Hiuen Tsiang who followed his royal host to Prayāg gives a detailed account of this quinquennial assemblage and the distribution of charities:<sup>10</sup>

"By this time, the accumulation of five years was exhausted. Except the horses, elephants, and military accoutrements which were necessary for maintaining order and protecting the royal estate, nothing remained. Besides these the King freely gave away his gems and goods, his clothing and necklaces, ear-rings, bracelets, chaplets, neck-jewel and bright head-jewel, all these he freely gave without stint.

"All being given away, he begged from his sister an ordinary secondhand garment, and having put it on, he paid worship to the Buddhas of the ten regions, and as he exalted with joy with his hands closed in adoration, he said: 'In amassing all this wealth and treasure I ever feared that it was not safely stored in a strong place; but now having bestowed this treasure in the field of religious merit, I can safely say it is well bestowed. Oh that I may in all my future births ever thus religiously give

<sup>10</sup> Beal, *The Life of Hiuen Tsiang*, pp. 186-187.

in charity to mankind my stores of wealth, and thus complete in myself the ten independent powers (daśabalas) [of a Buddha].<sup>11</sup>

The pilgrim's account throws much light upon the social and religious condition of the time. Widow marriage was forbidden, and it appears from Bāṇa's *Harṣacharita* that Rājyaśrī's marriage was not publicly performed. Child marriages were then unknown. Satī was prevalent and Bāṇa writes that Harṣa's mother had burnt herself even before her husband's actual death. But women were held in honour, and Bāṇa describes Rājyaśrī as a lady well-versed in the various *Kalās* and *Sāstras*, who assisted her brother in performing his public duties. The people were upright and honourable. In money matters they were without craft and in administering justice they were considerate. They believed in the law of *karma* and dreaded the retribution of another state of existence—a belief which compelled them to follow the right path. They were not deceitful or treacherous in their conduct and faithfully kept their oaths and promises.<sup>11</sup>

Harṣa's death in 647 A.D. was an irreparable disaster. It marked the evident close of a system which had governed India for at least four centuries. The fall of the empire removed the visible symbol of unity and led to the dislocation of the long-received ideas and assumptions of mankind, their habits and modes of life and the established conclusions of experience. The Rajputs developed their peculiar system of petty feudal states, of which a detailed account will be given in the first chapter, but among the numerous clans that rose to the surface during the five centuries that followed the

<sup>11</sup> Beal, *Life of Hiuen Tsiang*, pp. 186-87.

death of Harṣa, there was not a single ruler of the calibre of Chandragupta, Aśoka, or Harṣa, who could weld together the conflicting elements into an organic whole and establish a homogeneous empire in the country. The Rajputs idealised chivalry which led to fierce wars among themselves. They could never rise to the lofty conception of national organisation or unity. Perhaps, the idea of a national patriotism was foreign to the age. A singular dearth of capable Brahman ministers is clearly noticeable at the courts of Delhi and Kanauj and other Rajput capitals. The Rajput made war his vocation and neglected the nobler and higher duties of government and administration, which have immortalised Aśoka and Harṣa in the history of India. No documentary evidence exists to point out their achievements in the field of civil administration, and their whole history is a long series of wars and battles between the rival clans. The Brahman class, characterised in the past by disinterested devotion to public duty and the fulfilment of the highest *Dharma*, forgot its old ideals and its degeneration was followed by the decline of the entire Hindu social system.

The weakness of the political system had its effect on other aspects of life. Religion underwent a change. The cosmopolitanism of Harṣa had fostered a spirit of tolerance and created an atmosphere of peace and quiet. The people had worshipped Śiva, the Sun, or Viṣṇu and another god according to their individual predilections. But the result of individual freedom was the growth of a spirit of sectarianism which on the eve of Śankara's entry into the arena of religious controversy was rampant throughout the land. Anandagiri in his *Śankaradigvijaya* has drawn a graphic picture of the religious condition of India in the eighth century. He mentions the numerous sects that sprang into existence and

inculcated the worship of all kinds of gods from the noblest and highest to the most repulsive deities, taking delight in drunken orgies and grotesque rites.<sup>12</sup> The leaders of rival sects cited the authority of the Vedas in support of their doctrines and practices and wished to overpower one another. Some worshipped Śiva, while others worshipped the fire, Gaṇeśa, the Sun, Bhairava and Mattāri, Kārtika, the god of love, Yama, the god of death, Varuṇa, sky, water, snakes, the ghosts, etc., and acted according to their own inclinations. Udayana by his relentless crusades against Buddhism had prepared the way for Śankara's vigorous onslaughts. With a boldness and vigour which is unrivalled in the history of religion, the great Master made his triumphal progress from city to city, worsting his opponents in debate by means of his almost superhuman powers of expression and argument. The *advaita* doctrine was firmly established, and the Buddhist monks and scholars, chased by Śankara's incisive logic, sought refuge in the secluded regions of Magadha and certain other parts of Northern India. A great reform was accomplished, and the land was purged of the grosser forms of worship.

<sup>12</sup> Ānandagiri, Śankaradigvijaya, pp. 3—7.

Here is Ānandagiri's description of the religious condition of India on the eve of Śankara's entry into the arena of controversy:

केचिच्चन्द्रपराः परे कुजपराः केचित्तु मन्दाश्रिताः ।

केचित्कालपराः परे पितृपराः केचित्तु नागेशगाः

केचित्ताक्षरपराश्च सिद्धनिश्चयं सेवन्ति केचिद्धिया ॥

केचिद्गन्धर्वसाध्यादीन् भूतवेतालगाः परे ।

एवं नाना प्रभेदानां नृणां वृत्तिर्यथेप्सिता ॥

केचित् स्ववृत्तिं वेदायैः प्रतिपाद्यां समुच्चरे ।

केचिद्गमैरिव मुक्तिरिति जलं समास्थिताः ॥

अन्योन्यमत्सरग्रस्ताः परस्परजयैषिणः ।

निजेच्छाकृतिमङ्गेषु धारयन्ति रूपान्विताः ॥

The bulk of the people reverted to Purānic Hinduism, while the intellectual section accorded its adhesion to the advaita doctrine. But Śankara's conquest did not produce lasting effects. The ninth century, religiously speaking, was an age of controversy and like all ages of controversy, though it clarified ideas and imparted a fresh stimulus to the debating power of communities and faiths, it failed to put forward a constructive programme of worship for the masses of the population. The result was a relapse into superstitious and unwholesome rites which encumbered religion for centuries, and which called forth the attacks of such practical reformers as Rāmānand, Kabīr and Nānak. (The tenth century opened in the usual manner with a system of rival states fighting against one another for supremacy.) There was no bitter antagonism between Hinduism and Buddhism, for the latter was now a spent force in the country. There were no caste-feuds; in the first place because caste was not so rigid as it is now, and in the second place, because caste was universally accepted as an economic and social organisation for the benefit of the community. The later *Smritis* allow much freedom of social intercourse, and the *Vyāsa Smṛiti* and *Parāśara Smṛiti* both enjoin the association on terms of equality of men belonging to the different castes. The system of administration in the small Rajput states was generally of a benevolent character. The taxes were light; rent was low, because there was no dearth of cultivable land, and the people lived in security under the protection of the Rajput kings who deemed it a sacred duty to guard the persons and property of the common people. There is much truth in what a modern writer says about the political condition of India during this period. He writes:

"There was no foreign domination (except in Sindh)

either external or internal. The three great empires of Kanauj, Mālkhed, and Monghyr were ruled by entirely local ruling dynasties. There was no domination of either the Maratha over the Bengali or of the Bengali over the Assamese. The Kanauj rule in Kathiawar and north Gujarat might have partaken of the evils of foreign domination and it actually led to the establishment of the local Chavda Kingdom in Gujarat. But elsewhere the Kanauj empire must not have been felt as foreign. Similarly the Rāṣtrakūṭas properly ruled in the Deccan and South Maratha Country. They were overlords, no doubt, of kingdoms further south; but, as often stated before, such overlordship was never felt where local kings were allowed to rule almost independently in their own lands. In fact, an Arab traveller has in effect recorded that in India people were ruled everywhere by their own kings."<sup>13</sup> The Arab traveller Al-Masudi who wrote in the tenth century dwells with appreciation on the power and possessions of the kings of India and Sindh, and his remarks are in substance corroborated by Al-Istkhari and Ibn Haukal who speak of the prosperity and busy trade of the great cities of India.

In the numerous states that existed all over India we do not find a single ruler capable of organising them into an imperial union for purposes of common defence. The separatist and particularist tendencies were still too powerful to be suppressed. From Al-Beruni's India, a book of surpassing interest, we learn a great deal about the Hindu society as it then was. The Hindu mind still retained its virility—and

<sup>13</sup> Vaidya, History of Medieval Hindu India, II, p. 255.

Mālkhed is identified with Mānyakheta, the capital of the Rāṣtrakūṭas of the Deccan. Vaidya, Medieval India, II, Appendix VI, p. 354.

vigour and its mastery over the rugged realms of philosophy, so much so, indeed, that the Arabian *savant* was astonished at the profound culture and learning of the Hindus. The India of Al-Beruni was Brahmanical not Buddhistic. Buddhism had well nigh disappeared from the country, and that is probably the reason why the Arab scholar never found a Buddhist book and never came across a Buddhist monk from whom he might have learned the theories of his faith.<sup>14</sup> The worship of Viṣṇu was prominent, and Śiva had receded into the background. But happily class conflicts and religious antagonisms were not much in evidence. The law was severe; ordeal was frequently resorted to in order to test the guilt or innocence of an accused person. The manners and customs of the Hindus, writes Al-Beruni, were based upon the principles of virtue and abstinence, free from wickedness. Privileges of certain classes were recognised and the Brahmans were treated with great consideration. The government of the country was carried on by independent states, some of which were quite efficiently governed. The remarks of Al-Beruni about the high character of the Hindus are corroborated by another Arab traveller, Al-Idrisi who wrote in the beginning of the twelfth century.<sup>15</sup> But an India, immersed in philosophy and bent upon a separatist policy, was sure to fall an easy prey to foreign invaders, however high the character of her people and however deep their scholarship. Mahmud found nothing to check his advance into the country. To the hermit who bade Alaric return from the mistress of the world when he advanced upon Rome he replied that it was God's will and call that drove him on. It was

<sup>14</sup> Sachau, I, p. 249.

<sup>15</sup> Sachau, II, p. 161.



God's will and call that drove the *Ghāzī* of the faith to desecrate the most sublime fanes of worship, some of them, the very homes of piety and spiritual culture, venerated for centuries by the highest and the lowliest in the land. Even the repeated raids of Mahmud and the untold losses of wealth in which they resulted did not force our Rajput masters into a solid and well-organised union for the defence of their hearths and homes. Their continued dissensions only served to accelerate their ruin. When the empire of Ghazni fell, the role of conquest devolved upon a man with definite political aims. Fortune favoured him, and he succeeded in establishing the dominion of Islām on Indian soil. The Islamic conquest did not prove an unmixed evil. It established imperial unity in place of the system of hostile states and taught the people to respect a single authority in the country. It added a new element of youthful vigour to our national stock and introduced a new culture which deserves to be appreciated. The Muslim manners and customs leavened the habits of the upper class Hindus and much of the polish and refinement that we find in modern society is due to them. The Muslims introduced a new language into the country with a wonderful literature of its own, and by constructing noble edifices they brought about the renaissance of the Indian Art.

Though the Hindus lost their political power, the culture of the race, as Professor Radha Kumud Mukerjee observes, kept up its uninterrupted flow as is shown by the many intellectual and religious movements which were organised by men who were great alike in the realm of thought and action.<sup>19</sup> Away from the great cities which

<sup>19</sup> Local Government in Ancient India, p. 12.

became the centres of Muslim power, life in the country was not outwardly much disturbed by the conquest. Yet, a great revolution was effected, and it must be admitted that when the hard-headed and heavy-handed Turkish warrior supplanted the pious Buddhist monk and the Brahman philosopher, the history of India entered upon a new epoch.

Thus a new order replaced the old. The struggle between the two races was in reality a duel between two conflicting social systems. The old Aryan civilisation with its splendid ideals of life in all its varied aspects, enfeebled by its too much emphasis on the spiritual than on the material side, was overpowered by its belligerent rival which did not disdain the love of worldly pursuits and enjoyments. The heterogeneous population of India with well-marked social, religious and ethnological differences was easily conquered by a religious brotherhood which was organised on a military basis. The theocracy of Islam, backed by the entire force of the Muslim community, overbore the opposition offered by the small military monarchies, which were notoriously hostile to each other. Amid the tumult of the hour, in the din of battle and the clash of arms on the historic field of Tarain in 1192 A.D., when the Muslim cavalry leaders pierced through the serried ranks of the Rajput hosts, little did Muhammad of Ghor realise that his conquest was to give an altogether new direction to India's history and to make her problems ever so much more complicated and elusive.) The Islamic conquest was a momentous event in our history. There are no records left by the Hindus of those days to show that they gauged fully the importance of this mighty event. The numerous Rajput princes, hopelessly blinded by petty jealousies, failed to visualise the future that lay in store for them. A great many, perhaps, felt consciously or uncon-

ciously that the Musalmans would be absorbed into their society by the same process of silent unification which had brought about the fusion of the Greeks, Huns, Scythians and other invading hordes. But this was not to be. The Muslim conquerors refused to be absorbed. Yet, their conquest profoundly influenced the course of our history and created fresh problems of exceptional difficulty. The Mughals only partially succeeded in solving these problems. The wave of reaction that swept over the empire under Alamgir—who would have been an ideal king, if he had only the faithful to govern—undid the noble work which his great-grandfather, the most gifted ruler and statesman of mediæval times, had accomplished. Unfortunately, those problems exist today as they did in mediæval India, though in modified forms owing to the presence of a European power amongst us. May we hope that the combined genius of the Hindu and the Musalman assisted by the practical talent of the Anglo-Saxon race, which rightly boasts of championing the cause of freedom in Europe, will find a solution of the perplexing problem that besets us today—the problem of a united nation with common hopes and aspirations? The roots of the present lie buried deep in the past, and it is only a correct understanding of what has been that will enable us to adjust the present conditions to our future advantage.

Only, then, will the various communities of India reach the goal of national unity. History knows of no magic wand by which such miraculous transformations can be brought about. The process must be gradual, slow, and at times painfully slow, indeed. ~~Burke~~ uttered forth a profound truth when he said that it is an extremely difficult thing to create a political personality out of a great mass.

## THE LEADING DATES

636-37	A.D.	The first expedition of the Arabs to the coast of India.
647	"	Death of Harṣa.
712	"	Muhammad Bin Qasim's invasion of Sindh.
986-7	"	Subuktagin's first raid into Indian territory.
991	"	Subuktagin's second invasion and battle with Jayapala.
1000	"	Mahmud of Ghazni's first expedition.
1004-05	"	Third expedition of Mahmud of Ghazni against Bhīra.
1008-09	"	His sixth expedition against Lahore.
1008-09	"	Conquest of Nagarkot.
1014	"	Expedition against Thaneshwar.
1019	"	Do. Do. Kanauj.
1025	"	Do. Do. Somnath.
1026	"	The last expedition of Mahmud of Ghazni against the Jats.
1030	"	Death of Mahmud of Ghazni.
1031	"	Mas'ūd became Sultan of Ghazni.
1040	"	Battle of Merv. Defeat of Sultan Mas'ūd by the Turks.
1186	"	Sultan Muhammad's expedition against Lahore.
1191	"	First battle of Tarain.
1192	"	Second battle of Tarain. Defeat of Prithviraj.
1194	"	Sultan Muhammad marches against Kanauj.
1197	"	Conquest of Bihar by Muhammad Bin Bakhtiyar Khilji.
1202	"	Conquest of Kalinjar by Qutb-ud-din.
1210	"	Death of Qutb-ud-din Aibek.
1210	"	Accession of İltutmish to the throne of Delhi.
1215	"	Defeat of Yaloz at Tarain.
1221	"	The invasion of Chingiz Khan.
1225	"	Submission of Ghiyas-ud-din Khilji, ruler of Bengal.
1226	"	Conquest of Ranthambhor.
1228	"	İltutmish receives investiture from the Khalifa.
1230	"	Conquest of Bengal and Gwalior.

1235	A.D.	Death of İltutmish.
1236	"	Death of Rukn-ud-din and accession of Sultan Reziyā to the throne.
1239	"	Malik Ikhtiyar-ud-din Altunia's revolt.
1240	"	Reziyā is put to death.
1241	"	The invasion of the Mongols.
1245	"	Another invasion of the Mongols.
1246	"	Nasiruddin's accession to the throne.
1246-52	"	Various chieftains of North India were defeated and reduced to submission.
1255	"	Revolt of Qutlugh Khan.
1257	"	Invasion of the Mongols.
1259	"	Expedition against Mewat.
1266	"	Balban becomes king.
1279	"	Tughril's rebellion in Bengal.
1285	"	Death of Prince Muhammad, son of Balban.
1286	"	Death of Balban.
1290	"	Jalaluddin Khilji's assumption of Royal power.
1294	"	Alauddin's expedition to Devagir.
1296	"	Accession of Alauddin to the throne of Delhi.
1297	"	Conquest of Gujarat.
1299	"	The invasion of Qutlugh Khwaja.
1301	"	Final conquest of Ranthambhor.
1303	"	Conquest of Chittor.
1309	"	Expedition against Warangal.
1311	"	Conquest of Mabar.
1312	"	Defeat of Śankaradeva, son of Rama Deva of Devagir.
1316	"	Death of Alauddin Khilji.
1318	"	Rebellion of Raja Har Pal Deva of Devagir.
1320	"	Accession of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq.
1323	"	Subjugation of Warangal.
1325	"	Death of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq and accession of his son Muhammad Tughluq.
1326-27	"	Transfer of the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad.
1330	"	Introduction of the Token Currency.
1333	"	Arrival of Ibn Batūtā in India.
1334-35	"	Rebellion of Jalal-ud-din Ahsan Shah in Mabar.

1336	A.D.	Foundation of the kingdom of Vijayanagar.
1337	"	Rebellion of Fakhr-ud-din in Bengal.
1340-41	"	Revolt of Ain-ul-Mulk Multani.
1344	"	Revolt of Kriṣṇa Nāyak.
1347	"	Foundation of the Bahmani Kingdom.
1351	"	Death of Muhammad Tughluq and accession of Firuz Tughluq.
1353-54	"	Firuz's first expedition to Bengal.
1359-60	"	Firuz's second expedition to Bengal.
1360-61	"	Conquest of Nagarkot.
1371-72	"	The conquest of Thatta.
1388	"	Death of Firuz Tughluq.
1394	"	Accession of Nāsir-ud-din Mahmūd Tughluq.
1398	"	Timur's invasion.
1401	"	Gujarat and Malwa became independent.
1412	"	Death of Sultan Mahmūd, the last ruler of the Tughluq dynasty.
1414	"	Khizr Khan acquires possession of Delhi.
1417	"	The Rebellion of Tughan Raīs and the Turk Bācchas.
1420-21	"	Nicolo Conti's visit to Vijayanagar.
1421	"	Death of Tāj-ul-Mulk, Wazir of Khizr Khan.
1421	"	Death of Khizr Khan. Accession of Mubarak Shah.
1428	"	Jasrath Khokhar's siege of Kalanaor.
1429-30	"	Rebellion of Paulād.
1433	"	Defeat and death of Paulād.
1434	"	Murder of Mubarak Khan.
1437	"	Expedition of Ahmad Shah against Mahmud Khilji of Malwa.
1440	"	Mahmud Khilji of Malwa proceeds against Delhi and Chittor.
1442	"	Visit of Abdur-Razzāq to Vijayanagar.
1445	"	Accession of Alauddin Alam Shah.
1447	"	Bahlol Lodi seizes the throne of Delhi.
1470	"	Athanasius Nikitin's visit to Bidar.
1479	"	Birth of Vallabhāchārya. Bahlol Lodi seizes the throne of Delhi.
1489	"	Accession of Sikandar Lodi.

LEADING DATES

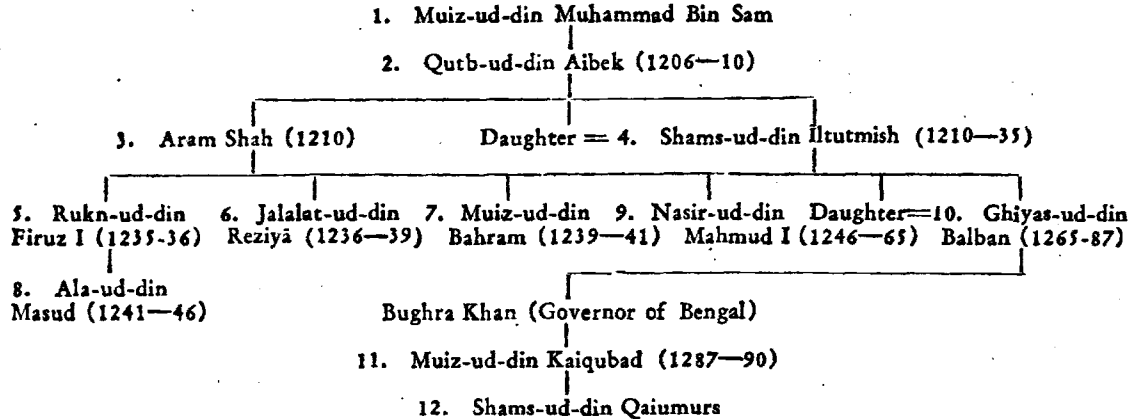
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- 1493 A.D. Accession of Husain Shah of Bengal.
- 1504 „ Foundation of Agra.
- 1505 „ A violent earthquake at Agra.
- 1507 „ An expedition against the Portuguese by Mahmud Bigaraha.
- 1509 „ Accession of Kriṣṇa Deva Raya to the throne of Vijayanagar.
- 1517 „ Death of Sikandar and the accession to the throne of Ibrahim Lodi.
- 1526 „ First battle of Panipat and defeat of Ibrahim Lodi by Babar.

# THE SULTANS OF DELHI

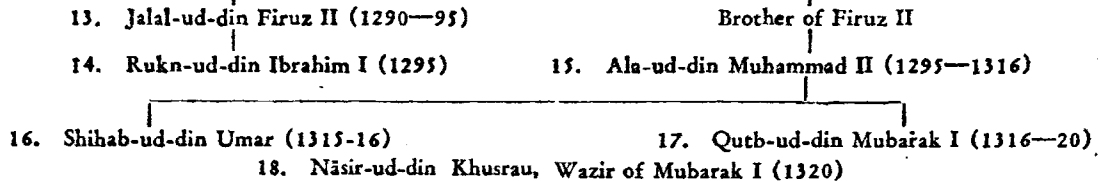
## Slave Dynasty

1206-1290



## Khilji Dynasty

1290-1320







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## OPINIONS AND REVIEWS

From the Private Secretary to His Excellency Sir William Marris, Governor of U. P. and Chancellor of the Allahabad University:

I am directed by Sir William Marris to thank you for so kindly sending him a copy of your book on the History of Medieval India, which seems to him to do great credit both to the author and to the department of History in the Allahabad University. The Chancellor has no doubt that the book will do valuable work in spreading a knowledge of the intermediate period of Indian History with which it deals.

2. Prof. A. B. Keith, M.A., D.C.L., D.Litt., of the University of Edinburgh:

The work appears to me to be excellently adapted for the purpose which it is intended to fulfil. It covers adequately the period chosen, by giving a sound foundation of knowledge on which students may proceed to further research, and I am not aware of any other work which achieves the same end in equal measure. There are, of course, points in which the views adopted by you seem open to criticism, but this is inevitable in any history, and the general soundness of your opinions is patent and commendable.

3. Prof. Margoliouth, M.A., D.Litt., of the Oxford University:

. . . . Your magnificent volume on Medieval India. The period which it covers is of the greatest interest.—. . . I expect to derive great pleasure and profit from the study of your work.

4. Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. Ganga Nath Jha, M.A., D.Litt., LL.D. Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University:

I am not historian enough to be able to judge of the merits of the work; but I know enough of the work of handling old texts to be able to appreciate the industry and—what is more—honesty displayed by you in collecting your materials and using them judiciously and to the best advantage. I hope this volume is going to be only the precursor to many more from your facile pen.

**5. Prof. Jadu Nath Sarkar, M.A., C.I.E., Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University:**

I have received with thanks your well-written and beautifully produced *History of Medieval India*. It emphasises aspects of the subject not touched,—or only lightly brushed,—in ordinary histories. . . .

**6. Prof. Radha Kumud Mookerjee, M.A., Ph.D., Lucknow University:**

. . . . Your monumental work on Medieval India. A scholarly work on that obscure period of Indian History was long called for and I am glad it was left to an Indian scholar to supply the need. . . . A close study of the book has only confirmed my opinion about your complete competence for original and advanced work within the field of Indian History.

**7. The Leader:**

Prof. Ishwari Prasad's book is the product of a critical study of materials not generally utilised by writers of Indian History, and serves the double purpose of a text-book for college students, and a guide for those who desire to pursue special studies in the subject.

**8. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain:**

Mr. Ishwari Prasad, who carries the Middle Ages in India down to the first battle of Panipat, has treated his subject in detail, and has given us a valuable account of the Muhammadan dynasties which bore sway in India from the time of the Arab conquest of Sind in the early days of the eighth century until the overthrow of the Lodi dynasty by Babar the Timurid. His work is characterised, on the whole, by the critical acumen and sound judgment which we associate with the School of History in the University of Allahabad, where history is studied and written in a spirit very different from that of the uncritical chroniclers in whose pages the historian must delve for most of his facts.

The most valuable part of the book consists, perhaps, in the description of the condition of India at the time of the earlier conquests and of the achievements and character of the conquerors and of nearly all the greater figures on the stage of early Muslim history in India. The account and estimate of Mahmud of Ghazni are judicious and singularly free from bias.

### 9. The American Historical Review:

The author has made extensive use of both original and secondary sources, and handles his material independently and judiciously. It will do reasonably well as a reference book for undergraduates in Indian Colleges, which is its professed purpose.

### 10. The History:

A good survey of the History of Medieval India is a much needed work. Elphinstone is out of date; Lane-Poole is too slight; so that there is ample room for a work like Mr. Ishwari Prasad's Medieval India and we think that many will find it useful. The narrative is fairly full of detail and the general attitude of the author not unreasonable.

### 11. The Journal of Indian History:

. . . Mr. Prasad has certainly utilised far more fully than his predecessors Sir Henry Elliot's translations and appears to have consulted even the originals in Persian and Arabic. He has brought before the general reader information hitherto scattered and has attempted to make the book fairly up-to-date. He has appended a fairly full bibliography which would be of help to scholars who are inclined to dive deeper into the subject. The merit of the work is enhanced by his learned and elaborate footnotes as well as suitable maps and illustrations.

The book bids fair on the whole to supersede, if not to supplant, altogether the works of the earlier scholars on the subject and we heartily congratulate the author on the production of such an excellent work.

### 12. The Modern Review:

Elphinstone's survey in spite of its substantial quality is out of date in many respects and Lane-Poole's sketch, splendid as it is, appears insufficient to-day. Mr. Prasad has come forward to illumine the dark recesses of the pre-Mughal period. He has spared no pains to make his survey as comprehensive as possible and his book would be welcomed as a very useful and up-to-date hand-book by the teachers and students of our Colleges.

. . . There is another good point which recommends the book to our attention. The History of Medieval India is generally considered to be synonymous with the History of Muslim India. The positive distortion of historical notions is due simply to the fact that very few historians of Muslim India were competent to handle or even conscious of the

existence of the Hindu sources of contemporary Indian History. Mr. Prasad may legitimately take pride in the fact that he has broken through that unhistorical self-complacency of the Islamists and to unfold before our eyes the tableaux of Indo-Muslim History in which the vanquished Hindus play as important a part as the victorious Muslims. It may be recorded to the credit of the author that he renders full justice to the Islamic conquerors of Hindu India.

### 13. The New India:

. . . A scholarly work on which the author is to be congratulated. It is a decided improvement upon existing works. The fullness of the narrative, the unbiassed interpretation of historical facts, the critical acumen and the power of balanced judgment which the author brings to bear upon his task commend the work to the acceptance of all lovers of Indian History.

### 14. The Hindustan Review:

No other book, so far as is known to us, gives a detailed account of the political institutions and social and literary advancement of the Indian people during the middle ages. The author's sympathetic appreciation of Muslim culture is a striking contribution to the history of the Indo-Is-lamic civilisation and its merit is considerably enhanced by the fact that it is based on first-rate authorities. . . . All things considered this volume of 650 pages is an admirable contribution to Indian history and it is gratifying to think that an Indian scholar has been able to fill a most important gap in our historical literature.