PREFACE

The purpose of this book is to present to the readers a collection of Mughal documents that belong to the Jogi gaddi of Jakhbar in the Punjab, and to share with them the excitement of their discovery. In a sense we retain to this day, nearly a year after having come upon these documents, a measure of that excitement, for a detailed examination of these has only deepened our belief in their significance. Discussions with kind and learned friends like Professor Nurul Hasan have persuaded us to believe also in the value of their publication. This publication owes itself then to the encouragement that we have received in the idea of bringing them to wider notice, on the one hand from several friends, especially Dr Niharranjan Ray, Director of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study at Simla, and on the other hand from the enlightened and generous attitude of the Mahant of Jakhbar, Baba Brahmu Nath, and his learned disciple and our friend, Mahant Shankar Nath.

The Jakhbar collection is not the only collection of Mughal documents on the subject of endowments of one kind or the other to non-Muslim establishments and individuals; but it is a collection distinguished from the others by its size and range and character. The seventeen documents presented here form a homogeneous group spread evenly over a period of more than two centuries and belonging to the reign of every major Mughal ruler; they also refer to the same madad-i-ma'ash grant, enjoyed, almost undisturbed, over this long period, and in fact to
this day by the Jogis. We thought therefore of publishing these documents in their entirety. And if we appear to have been a little pretentious and tiresome in our presentation of these with a photograph and transcription and translation and annotation of each document, with a generous measure of appendices added, we have, we believe some justification for the weary detail that we inflict upon the reader in the fact that these are offered here essentially as sources for the student of Mughal India. We have drawn relatively few conclusions ourselves, throwing out only some suggestions at places, and have aimed generally at publishing these in as full a manner as possible so that they can be put to more learned use by other scholars.

The only conscious effort we have made to save the reader, especially the general reader, from unbearable tedium, is by providing a short and, we hope, readable introduction, and by reducing to the very minimum such learned things as diacritical marks, retaining them only for unfamiliar words and names, and then following simply the easily accessible scheme that Steingass uses in his Persian-English Dictionary.

The deciphering of these documents was easily the most difficult part of our work on them, and the transcriptions given in this volume find their justification, we hope, in the rather unfriendly script of many of the documents. A few minor lacunae are still there and our deciphering may not always be acceptable, but a comparison with the originals is likely to give the reader some idea of the long and anxious hours that we had to devote to the task.

In the preparation of this volume we have received generous help, and our debts are many and deep. The foremost of these we owe of course to the mahants of Jakhbar whose magnanimity made it possible for us to
obtain and publish these documents, and whose help in the collection of oral traditions, during our field work at Jakhbar and its neighbourhood, enabled us to piece together even the fragmented picture that we present here of the history of the gaddi. Dr Niharranjan Ray associated himself with this project from the very beginning and we have gratefully received consistent support from him, both personally and as the Director of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study. We have had several occasions to consult our friends, Dr Irfan Habib, Mr. I. A. Tirmizi and Mr. B. R. Grover; and they gave us generously of their time and attention. We have also received a great deal of help from Mr. Rashpal Malhotra, Mrs. Swaranjit Mehta, Mrs. Karuna Goswamy, Miss Tripta Wahi, Mr. Gurtej Singh, Miss Indu Banga, Mr. Dharam Paul and Mr. Kewal Anand, to all of whom we owe much gratitude.

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