INTRODUCTION

THE ESTABLISHMENT

The tiny village which is the home of the Shaiva establishment from which the documents that form the theme of this volume come, bears a very descriptive name: it is called Jakhbar Jogian, "Jakhbar of the Jogis". The first part of the name is explained locally with reference to the small temple of a celebrated and bountiful Jakh (Sanskrit, yaksha), which is topped by an enormous tree, bar, and stands at the eastern edge of the village; the second part refers to the Natha Jogis around whose monastery or dera the village has apparently grown. The significance that the village possesses it owes wholly to the Jogis, and neither to its size which is negligible nor to its situation which is obscure. Jakhbar in fact occupies a remote corner at the north western end of the Gurdaspur district of the Punjab which touches on the one hand the state of Jammu and Kashmir and on the other the country of Pakistan. It is approached with a little difficulty, either from the road which connects Gurdaspur with Pathankot or alternatively from that which forms the crude link between Pathankot and the border town of Narot Jaimal Singh. From either direction one has to cover some distance on foot to get to the village.

Around the village of Jakhbar are several villages which share its comparative obscurity but find frequent mention in the papers belonging to the establishment and possess names suggestive sometimes of historical association.
Towards the north is Sherpur on the Pathankot-Narot Jaimal Singh road; in the north-east is Muradpur with which the Jogis of Jakhbar had a persistent boundary dispute; in the south-east lies the sizeable village of Narot, locally referred to as Narot Mehra which name serves to distinguish it from the other Narot, of Jaimal Singh, and to keep the local population reminded of its connection with Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who is said to have given this name to the village after a not very edifying episode; towards the south-west lies Bhoa, still spoken of with reverence at Jakhbar as the original place of this gaddi of the Nathas and once almost totally destroyed by the floods, but now a sizeable village; towards the west is Bhagwansar; and towards the north-west are the villages of Sunderchak and Bani Lodi. Not very far from Jakhbar are villages like Aima Mughlan, Kotli Mughlan, Aima Changan and Aima Gujran, the names of which acquire some significance in the context of the Mughal documents of which we treat here. At a distance of a bare two miles, starts the bet, old bed, of that indecisive river, the Ravi, made so broad by the river’s tendency to inundation and changing its course ever so often.

The village of Jakhbar itself has little of interest outside of the Jogi establishment and the shrine of the jakh; it is an overgrown hamlet which clusters around the considerable complex of buildings that house the Jogis. It is dominated by the dera of the Jogis much in the same manner, one might think, as the local population is by the Mahant who occupies the Jakhbar gaddi. The dera is enclosed on its eastern side by an enormous wall of masonry which lends it an air of grandeur not wholly possessed even by the foremost Jogi monasteries elsewhere. The huge gate at one end of the wall is overlooked by a stucco dvarapala, stern if somewhat lonely guardian of the establishment,
holding rigidly, and appropriately, an English musket, for the date of this part of the construction is said to be the middle of the nineteenth century.

The wall has several extremely interesting designs in what might be called brick-inlay, the elephants and peacocks and chess-players being formed to look like silhouettes with thin black bricks against the usual red ones. Above the gateway and the passage is a set of rooms, now occupied by the junior mahant, from which a balcony projects on the vacant space below on what is the tiny square of the village. On the inside one emerges through the passage into an open space at the left of which is a large masonry platform overgrown with flowers: this is the samadhi of Baba Udant Nath, the founder of the Jakhbar gaddi, and the unusual fact of there being no structure above the rather austere platform is explained by the tradition preserved at Jakhbar that Udant Nath chose the time to "surrender his life" himself and did not die in the normal manner. A little further down in this open space is a covered shed which now houses some cattle but did once serve as the 'chamber' of the wazirs of the establishment. The present use to which the structure is being put is appropriately indicative of the low opinion now held at the dera of the wazirs, for the story is that one of the wazirs proved disloyal enough to induce the then Mahant to abolish the very institution of the wazirs completely. The samadhi and the wazirs' chamber are features which, among others, proclaim the true character of a Jogi monastic establishment of some magnitude; and what the Jakhbar gaddi has by way of structures in the inner courtyard confirms emphatically the nature of this considerable dera. At one end is the large kitchen, bhandarkhana, with an inscription which dates the present construction to A.D. 1879, in the period of Mahant Madho
Nath. The *gaddi ghar* or the seat of the ruling Mahant is a spacious but austere double-storeyed structure and next to it is a part of the building now in a dilapidated condition which had a painted ceiling with an inscription dating it back to the period of Mahant Dhaja Nath in the early years of the nineteenth century. One part of the structure appears to be the oldest in the establishment and is said to belong to the sixteenth century; in this is the small shrine in which the *dhuni*, constant smouldering fire which distinguishes every Jogi establishment, slowly burns. In this part of the structure also are little temples of Shiva, the Devi and Bhairava, holy deities of the Jogis, and at one end are several sets of rooms to accommodate the pilgrims and the resident Jogis alike.

To the west of the complex of buildings just described, is another open space with a number of *samadhis* of former mahants and in one corner the lonely *samadhi* of the wazirs with faint traces of frescoes still lingering on the ceiling of its dome. All the *samadhis* are regularly worshipped as a part of the daily ritual at the *dera*, their presence so close to the living quarters realizing partly the Jogi ideal of living in a cremation ground.

The Jogis of Jakhbar belong to the Kanphata sect: the very appearance of the present *mahant*, the venerable, octogenarian Baba Brahm Nath, and his enlightened and genial disciple, Shankar Nath, proclaiming emphatically their religious affiliation. In the manner of the strictest of the Kanphatas they wear large *mudras* in their ears and carry on their persons the sacred symbols of the faith: the *seli*, consisting of a string of black woollen thread, a bead, and the *nād*, a little whistle made of horn; and the *rudraksha mala*, the rosary made of the fruit of the *elaeocarpus ganitrus*. The texts read and recited at the *dera*
The main entrance to the Jakhbar establishment
Baba Brahm Nath, the present *mahant* of Jakhbar
include hand-written copies of the works sacred to the Jogis, many of them inscribed at Jodhpur for Mahant Chanchal Nath, according to their colophons. The names of Gorakhnath and Machhandarnath are hallowed names at the dera; the legend brings in profuse references to Raja Gopichand and Bhartrihari, to Puran Bhagat and Raja Rasalu.

The strong impression that one receives at Jakhbar, however, is that this gaddi of the Jogis has come to be a little isolated from the general organization of the Kanphatas over the years. This may have been due to the general indifference of the mahants to outside matters, which is a point that often emerges from any discussion with Baba Brahm Nath, or again to the relative lack of importance of the sub-sect to which this gaddi belongs. The only organizational fact prominently mentioned at Jakhbar is that this gaddi belongs to the Ganganathi panth. The Ganganathis do not happen to be the most prominent of the twelve sub-sects in which the Kanphatas are according to tradition divided: the Jakhbar gaddi has consequently gone almost completely unnoticed so far. In his study of the Kanphatas, Briggs makes the briefest of mention of the Ganganathis and then makes no reference at all to any gaddi associated with them. In the scores of names of sacred places and monasteries of the Jogis, the Jakhbar gaddi is not mentioned even once. This, however, is less a measure of the insignificance of the Jakhbar gaddi in the Kanphata scheme of things than of the special circumstances which have forced a degree of obscurity on it. Even in the fuller and brilliant study of the Nathas by Dr Hazari Prasad Dwivedi, the Jakhbar gaddi finds but a brief mention, on the authority of a Bengali Jogi, as the principal seat of the Ganganathis. The principal Jogi monasteries in the popular mind thus remain Tilla
and Gorakhpur and Dhinodhar and the like, even though at least in the Punjab, Jakhbar remains probably the oldest after that at Tilla in the Jhelum District, now in Pakistan, and once the premier Jogi establishment in the whole of India.\textsuperscript{12}

Rather unexpectedly, one should think, however, no attempt is made at Jakhbar to push the antiquity of the place any further into the past than is warranted by verifiable historical evidence. Every tradition preserved at the place and every material object that could lend substance to the legend, points to the fact that the gaddi was founded by Udart Nath, also referred to as Pir Bhour Nath,\textsuperscript{13} "Pir" being an epithet which inspite of its strongly Muslim association is always used for the heads of Jogi monastic establishments. The date of Udart Nath is not specifically mentioned, except on a nineteenth century ‘portrait’ in oils of the ascetic where it is given as A.H. 989, possibly following tradition preserved at Jakhbar; but he is referred to always in association with the Emperor Akbar. The contemporaneity of the two is sought to be proven in several ways and a number of stories are to be heard at Jakhbar that tell of the deep reverence in which Udart Nath was held by the Mughal Emperor

Nothing is known of the guru of Udart Nath and no names come to us to bridge the long period of five or six centuries that must have elapsed between Gorakhnath and the Jakhbar ascetic. The history of the Jakhbar gaddi begins suddenly with the second half of the sixteenth century. The apparent insistence of the tradition at proving the connection between the Emperor Akbar and Udart Nath - the name seems to spring from his miraculous power to fly through space, the legend says, for his own guru whom he was fond of bathing everyday with a
pitcher full of water brought from the Ganga - receives firm support from the documents that are being presented here. The first grant appears to have been made in this Jogi’s name by the Emperor Akbar in A.H. 979 (A.D. 1571). Whether this was done by the Emperor after a personal witnessing of the occult powers of Udant Nath who miraculously transferred a ber tree from Mecca to this place to satisfy the Emperor’s sudden craving, or after a little less spectacular event than this legend suggests, it is not possible to determine. The documents only mention the sober fact of a grant.

The time of the death of Udant Nath is not known to the tradition at Jakhbar, but the documents indicate that he was alive in A.D. 1597 and had been succeeded by A.D. 1606. One important event took place before Udant Nath’s death, the settlement at Jakhbar. He is said originally to have lived at the small village of Bhoa where the documents clearly indicate the first grant of land to the Jogis was made by the Mughal Emperor. The Bhoa grant, however, was ill-fated, for it happened to be on the bank of the wayward Ravi, and seems to have been submerged under water soon after the Jogis received it. The popular legend - it is curious how most of the legends cloak a near historical fact - gives a more engaging explanation of the destruction of Bhoa. It is associated with the curse of Dhuni Nath, another Jogi ascetic who was not connected with the dera at Bhoa but happened to wander in its direction in the absence of Udant Nath. He appears not to have been allowed to settle down, light his own dhuni, at Bhoa at which in great anger he picked up his smouldering fire, wrapped it in his gudri, and moved away, invoking a disaster upon the village which he said shall be submerged the very same night under the waters
of the Ravi. The flood, of course, did come\textsuperscript{14}, as we know from the documents, and the Jogis moved out of Bhoa.

We are tempted to speculate a little on the events that followed. The Jogis must have decided to shift to a place not very distant from Bhoa, being interested only in moving away from the bed of the river. It is perhaps reasonable to assume that their choice of a place for settling down fell on a spot close to the nearby shrine of the \textit{Jakh}, which must have then stood in a field as so many \textit{Jakh} shrines still do, because of the sanctity of the site and the large number of people who must have resorted to the \textit{Jakh} for gaining boons and favours. The shrine was not far from the rather large village of Narot from which, at a later time, an area of land equivalent to that held by the Jogis at Bhoa was carved out to be given to them following imperial orders. Gradually, we are led to believe, the new home of the Jogis became the nucleus of a settlement which kept on growing, though not very much, with the years and is the Jakhbar Jogian of today.

The Jogis of Jakhbar do not marry and it is a spiritual not a natural heir who succeeds to the \textit{gaddi}. It is not clear as to who succeeded Udant Nath who must have had several disciples. The names of a very large number of \textit{mahants} who came after Udant Nath are listed in a genealogical table of the \textit{gaddi} which was compiled at the time of the preparation of the British record of rights in A.D. 1865 by the then \textit{mahant}, Chanchal Nath\textsuperscript{15}. But the accuracy of this table is a little open to question. The tree of succession according to the present tradition at Jakhbar differs from it in material respects\textsuperscript{16} and there is obvious confusion in this matter. There are several names which are common to both the lists and there is complete identity between them as far as the last four generations.
that preceded Mahant Chanchal Nath are concerned, but it is the order in the earlier part of the lists which is very uncertain.

It is possible to ascribe this confusion to several factors among which must be the reliance by the compilers of these tables on memory rather than on document, and to the fact that some of the prominent gurubhāis\textsuperscript{17} of the mahants may have been confused with their successors.

The \textit{shijrā-nasb} of the 1865 settlement has the following list:

- Udant Nath
- Bhau Nath
- Anant Nath
- Surat Nath
- Kanchan Nath
- Dridh Nath
- Rattan Nath
- Pancham Nath
- Hira Nath
- Shraddha Nath
- Lal Nath
- Subudh Nath
Mayya Nath
| Gomti Nath
| Dhaja Nath
| Chanchal Nath

This table, understandably, comes down only to Chanchal Nath who was the *mahant* at the time of the Settlement. The list is brought down to date by the present *mahant* of the establishment in this manner:

| Chanchal Nath
| Madho Nath
| Tani Nath
| Sohan Nath
| Brahm Nath (present *mahant*)

It would be reasonable to accept the authenticity of these lists only from Mahant Subuddha Nath onwards, not only because of the agreement between the two lists mentioned earlier, but also because Mahant Chanchal Nath should be taken to have been familiar at least with the names of the three generations that preceded him. What followed after 1865 is recent history and the accuracy of the table can be ascertained beyond any doubt.

The possibility of the *gurubhāis* finding mention as successors in the tables is both likely and interesting in the extreme, for the *gurubhāis* of the *mahant* must always have been held in high esteem by the followers and at several places in these documents, in the context of grants of land, we come upon expressions like "Than Nath, Bhau
Nath and others" which can perhaps be taken to mean that the entire *jamāat* or at least the principal ones among the Jogis living at the establishment were technically regarded as jointly enjoying the grant.

The certainty about the correctness of the table from the middle onwards has unfortunately been of no help to us in the editing of these documents. We have consequently carefully collected and tabulated the evidence about the names of the *mahants* of the *gaddi* from these documents ourselves and are of the belief that between the first of the *mahants*, Udant Nath, and Subuddha Nath, the last *mahant* to be mentioned in these documents, at least five generations must have intervened. A number of the *mahants* referred to in the documents, we feel, must have lived contemporaneously with each other and must have been closely related either as *gurubhāis* or as senior and junior *mahants*. The fact that they are mentioned as "grantees" in the documents owes itself possibly to the practice of one of the principal Jogis of the establishment personally representing the *gaddi* before the Mughal authority at the time of the confirmation of the grant and thus being named in the document as a grantee together with others.

In this context it is of deep interest to find the names of as many as ten Jogis listed in the appendix on the reverse of the document II which is a grant in the name of Udant Nath. Among these occur the names of Tan Nath, Ban Nath, Surat Nath, Chandar Nath, Balak Nath, and Bhairon Nath, who must have been either the *gurubhāis* or the immediate disciples of Udant Nath. The first four of these again find mention in separate documents of somewhat later dates but so close to each other in point of time that they cannot possibly have belonged to a vertical line in succession.
On this reckoning, it is likely that Udant Nath was succeeded by one of the group of Jogis among which certainly were Tan Nath, Ban Nath, and Surat Nath, another Jogi from the above list, Chandar Nath, receiving a small grant from the Emperor Jahangir at a different place and founding there what must have been regarded as a branch of the Jakhbar gadḍi. The documents lead us to believe that, of these three, it was Surat Nath who became the direct successor of Udant Nath. In the next generation we get the names first of Than Nath, disciple of Surat Nath, and then of Than Nath in association with Bhau Nath who might possibly have been a gurubhaṭi Their successor appears to have been Mahant Anand Nath with whom we find the Emperor Aurangzeb in a relationship of great closeness, even warmth. A document of the 4th year of Aurangzeb’s reign (A.D. 1661), mentions him by name, but he appears to have lived not beyond the 16th year (A.D. 1674) when Hira Nath succeeded him. The period of the gadḍi of Mahant Hira Nath seems to have been long—tradition ascribes to him a life of 101 years—and eventful. The death of Hira Nath in A.D. 1740 made the succession devolve upon Subuddha Nath who finds mention in these documents as Subodh Nath. Our information is far from complete and it is not possible to state with certainty that the gadḍi passed to these mahants in this order of direct succession. There is every likelihood that other mahants intervened, although it is possible to see that if they did, the period of their occupation of the gadḍi must have been rather short.

There is evidence to prove that some of the Jogis who never ascended the gadḍi in succession to their guru received lands in their own right and enjoyed them at places other than where the principal grant was located. They passed such grants to their own successors and the Jogi
INTRODUCTION

Chandar Nath mentioned above was succeeded in the Naroli Sanga grant by Bhandar Nath (document III) who had presumably little to do with the Jakhbar gaddi.

Tradition associates each fresh grant of land to the Jogis with some miraculous deed performed by a mahant and if this is to be believed then the Jakhbar mahants must have been an unusually gifted group indeed, for their vast possessions were at one time spread over a considerable area from Jwalamukhi in the Kangra district to Parol in Jammu. Stories are told at Jakhbar not about Udant Nath alone but also of several other mahants and their miraculous powers. There is one that connects the Jogis of Jakhbar with the prosperous householder mahant family of Gurdaspur through the blessing of Mahant Subuddha Nath who granted to a childless Gurdaspur mahant the boon of a son to perpetuate the name of the family. This boon, however, was granted on the important condition that the child should be given a name ending in “Nātha” which strongly suggests that the story may only signify the conversion of the Gurdaspur mahants to Shaivism by the Jogis of Jakhbar. The Jakhbar mahants do not go out on visits to the homes of their disciples outside Jakhbar, the visits that in the terminology of monastic establishments are called going on sewakai, and this appears to have been a rule enforced by Mahant Chanchal Nath who, it is said, was once tested for his miraculous powers by a disciple during one of his visits and who, after performing the required miracle, decided, rather wisely, that the institution of going on sewakai should be abolished lest another mahant, less endowed with powers, should not be able to perform an equal deed and thus bring disgrace to himself and the gaddi. The occult powers of the mahants did not apparently decline, however, and the gifts of his own guru, Sohan
Nath, are stressed by the present mahant although he claims none for himself.

Whether it was for reasons of the practice of hathayoga by the Jogis or their personal piety, the Jakhar gaddi seems always to have wielded great influence. The antiquity of a gaddi is always a factor with the people paying it homage, and in this matter the Jakhar dera has been looked upon with deep reverence. Apart from the gaddi of Tilla which is associated with Gorakhnath himself or with Lakshman Nath, his disciple,18 this appears to have been the most ancient of the Jogi monasteries in the Punjab. The heavily endowed Kirana monastery near Sargodha, now in Pakistan, dated back possibly only to the time of the Sikh chief, Maharaja Ranjit Singh,19 and the Asthal Bohar establishment near Rohtak20 is said to have been founded only as late as the second half of the eighteenth century.

The antiquity of the place must necessarily have been a strong reason for the position of pre-eminence to which it appears to have attained even among the religious establishments in this region. This area is unusually rich in religious houses and in the districts of Gurdaspur and Kangra, within a radius of not more than twenty five miles from Pathankot, are as many as three major Vaishnava establishments at Pandori,21 Damthal22 and Bathu,23 the first of these having an enormous following even to this day in these parts. The gaddi of Jakhar has a strangely intimate relationship with all these shrines, inspite of the fact that they are dedicated to the Vaishnava sect which at least at one time stood in direct opposition to the Shaivas, especially the Jogis. Even to this day, the accession or tilak ceremony of a mahant of any of these establishments is not deemed to be complete till a repre-
sentative of the Jakhbar Jogis is present to bless the event. He, in fact, puts the seli or black woollen thread, and the topi, a conical cap which is to be seen in so many of the paintings of the Pandori mahant, on the new mahant as tokens of his spiritual authority. This custom of the Jakharj mahants virtually installing the mahants of the Vaishnava shrines is explained by Baba Brahm Nath with the aid of a popular tradition according to which Pandori itself was at one time in the hands of a Jogi, Mahesh Nath, who, at the time of his death, bequeathed the land on which he worshipped to a greatly devoted Vaishnava disciple. This, in later years, became the nucleus of a gaddi. The story of the Gurdaspur mahants, noticed above, is only another illustration of the great respect paid to the Jogis of Jakhbar and their gaddi.

This reverence the gaddi of Jakhbar appears to have claimed from the people of this region over a long period of time as is evidenced by the grants held by this house of the Jogis in far spread areas, from the Mughal rulers and the Hindu Rajas alike. In one of the documents mention is made of thousands of persons visiting with regularity the Jakhbar gaddi—the Shivaratri festival is still celebrated there on a considerable scale—and the bestowing of favours upon the mahants of Jakhbar by the Mughal rulers may have been on their part an act alike of piety and prudence. There seems to have been little doubt on the part of the Mughals about the Jakhbar mahants deserving their munificence: in document after document a particular mahant is called mard-i-mustahiq, the entire body of Jogis is described as ahl-i-qanā‘at; and the piety of these Jogis must almost certainly have been a factor in the situation. The fact of the mahants wielding enormous local influence must undoubtedly have been yet another consideration with the Mughals when they con-
ferred these grants on this establishment, for by these gifts they were creating what could easily be called a vested interest. An interesting and additional reason for the attachment of the Mughals to the Jogis of Jakhbar is suggested by the document which is a letter from the emperor Aurangzeb to Mahant Anand Nath and in which he obviously refers to a medicinal preparation that he is eager to obtain from the mahant. Baba Brahm Nath, the present mahant, still practises his own kind of medicine for charitable purposes.

An extremely interesting document not reproduced here but also coming from the Jakhbar dera illustrates the nature and the extent of the influence exercised by the mahants among the people: it speaks of a painter of Nurpur having come to Jakhbar and finding his personal belongings stolen, appealing to the mahants who got the belongings restored and asked the painter to declare in the presence of the local Qazi discharging the thieves of any further responsibility.

One gets the feeling that the mahants of Jakhbar had almost a controlling power over the local population. Their spiritual supremacy combined with their humility, if the attitude of the present mahant is any indication, and the extent of their material possessions must have given them a position of unquestioned eminence in the area, a considerable part of which they undoubtedly enjoy to this day. The tenants and the agricultural labourers who cultivate the land belonging to the mahants stand somewhat naturally in a position of loyalty to the gaddi, but the area of their influence is much wider than the neighbourhood of the village. It is quite an experience to move out of the dera with the junior Mahant, Shankar Nath, for at nearly every step he is detained by men and women and
INTRODUCTION

children who bend low to touch his feet out of reverence. His election as the sarpanch of the panchayat of nearby Sherpur is an accurate index to his influence and popularity. The mahants and their officials exercise undoubted influence and command great respect in the town of Pathankot, and a general measure of their importance in the area is demonstrated by an event like the general elections in which the support of the mahants to a candidate becomes for him a factor of great confidence.

THE CONTEXT

Most of the historical problems turn out in the last analysis to be the problems of methodology in its widest sense, for the approximation of our knowledge to the actual past depends on the availability and interpretation of evidence on the past. Therefore, all 'traces' from the past become naturally important to the historian.

In the present state of our knowledge of Mughal India, official documents form one of the most important sources of concrete information on that age. How such documents can be used for elucidating specific issues was demonstrated in the early years of the present century by J. J. Modi in the Parsees at the Court of Akbar and Dastur Meherjee Rana (Bombay, 1903); and, later on, by H. S. Hodivala in his Studies in Parsi History (Bombay, 1920). Subsequently, the appearance of K. M. Jhaveri's Imperial Farmans has been followed by the publication of a considerable number of documents relating to medieval India. All this work has been done on the obviously sound assumption that official documents provide the student of medieval India with a most useful source-material. That a fruitful use of such material can be made
by the historian of medieval India is evident, for example, from Dr Irfan Habib's *Agrarian System of Mughal India*. The importance of the documents which are here being presented to the student of Mughal India is taken for granted. They are not meant to solve any specific issues but they have already proved to be of immense help in our attempt at describing the Jakhbar establishment. It is now being widely recognized that the historian cannot adopt a passive attitude towards his sources on the ambiguous assumption that his 'facts' would speak for themselves. To make the best use of his evidence, a serious historian has to ask a number of questions relevant to the issues raised by himself, and he has very often to 'extract' answers from his evidence. The value of these documents will depend ultimately on the kind of relevant questions which are put to them by the student of Mughal India. We do not presume to know all the significance of this evidence for the future historian. However, a few points may be made in this brief introduction to the present group of documents for the consideration of the student of Mughal history.

The number of these documents is not very large - some detail follows in section III. They are only seventeen, consisting of four imperial *farmāns*, four *parwānchahs*, three *sanads*, a *mahzar*, a *muchalkah*, a *yād-dāsht*, a *chaknāmah*, a personal letter and, what may be called, a *hukmnāmah*. But they all belong to one establishment and cover a span of two centuries. The only set of such documents published so far is to be found in Jhaveri's *Imperial Farmans*. Such 'family papers' of Mughal times are not wholly unknown; but they are not very common. Even when their existence might be known, they are not easy to procure for publication or consultation. That the
present set of documents is as important as Jhaveri's may be readily conceded; but we may venture to claim that it is more important.

These documents are in a sense unique. Jhaveri's documents belong to the reigns of Akbar, Shah Jahan and Shah Alam; and relate, among other things, to remission in perpetuity of fiscal demands, on lands purchased by Gosain Vithal Rai of Gokul, probably for the maintenance of the thākurdwāra. Unlike his documents, the present collection is quite evenly spread over the two centuries it covers—the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan, Aurangzeh, Bahadur Shah, Muhammad Shah and the early years of Sikh sovereignty in the Punjab. Furthermore, whereas Jhaveri's documents are not madad-i-ma'āsh documents in the strict sense of the term, eleven documents in the present collection pertain directly to madad-i-ma'āsh land. And that makes this collection quite unique.

To understand the significance of these documents we may briefly consider them, first, in relation to the institution of madad-i-ma'āsh. The states of medieval India were not welfare states in the present-day sense of that term. But the medieval rulers did extend their patronage to individuals and institutions as an act of charity. Several terms referring to their 'charity' have been preserved in the literary documents of the Mughal times. The terms milk, which was current already in the days of Ziauddin Barani, and in'ām, which was certainly in use in sixteenth-century Gujarat, were not completely discarded by the Mughals who had imported a new term, suyūrghāl, from central Asia. Both in'ām and suyūrghāl appear to be more comprehensive than the more commonly used madad-i-ma'āsh or a'imma, each of which refers to land and not to cash awards. What was granted through the conferment of
madad-i-ma‘āsh was the right to collect the revenue and to keep it.

"Grants by which the king alienated his right to collect the land-revenue and other taxes from a given area of land, for the life-time of the grantee or in perpetuity, have an ancient history in India." Grants of land to temples are known to have been very common in India before the advent of the Turks; and a few instances of temples, or of non-Muslims, receiving the patronage of the pre-Mughal Muslim rulers are definitely known. The grandfather of the Parsi Dastur Mahrji Rana, for example, was holding an in‘ām land near Navsari, fifty years before the conquest of Gujarat by Akbar. In Dr Yusuf Husain's Farmāns and Sanads of the Deccan Sultan, there is a farmān of the last of the Qutb Shahs, Abu-ul-Hasan Tana Shah, granting land-revenues for the maintenance of the temple of ‘mara ‘alishwar sami’ (Muralishvara? Mahabaleshwar?). It is quite likely that patronage of non-Muslim institutions was adopted by several Muslim rulers in the various regions of the Indian sub-continent. That some of the grantees, non-Muslim as well as Muslim, of earlier time were confirmed in their positions by the Mughal rulers is evident from a few known cases: an old grant of madad-i-ma‘āsh to the descendants of the Suhrāwardī Shaikh Majdūdīn, for example, was confirmed by Akbar in A.D. 1580; Dastur Mahrji Rana was already holding a grant of one hundred bigahs when in the late 1570's an additional grant of two hundred bigahs was conferred on him by Akbar; and an old grant to the Nāthas at Tilla Gorakhnath in the Jhelum District was confirmed by Akbar.

Not content with the confirmation of old grants, Akbar was bold or considerate enough to confer madad-i-ma‘āsh
on non-Muslims of known sanctity, even when they could not put forth any old claims. As it would be evident from the present collection of documents, the Jogi Udant Nath was given two hundred bigahs of madad-i-ma‘āsh land for the first time in A.D. 1571, seven or eight years earlier than Mahrji Rana received his additional two hundred bigals. In A.D. 1578, another Shaiva, Chandar Nath, was patronized for the first time by Akbar. The patronage of a new Jogi establishment by Akbar makes it highly probable that he extended his patronage to the Sikhs and the Shāktas also: there is a strong Sikh tradition that he had conferred land on Guru Rāmdās; and a known farmān of Shah Jahan conferring land on the Guru’s descendants at Kartarpur, appears to confirm the tradition regarding Guru Rāmdās himself.35 Similarly, according to a long tradition at Jwalamukhi, the Shāktas of that place were patronized by Akbar for the first time. In giving fresh grants to non-Muslims; Akbar was followed by some of his successors. Jahangir, for instance, gave a fresh grant of madad-i-ma‘āsh land to the Vaishnava gosāins in the Punjab.36

It is generally believed, however, that madad-i-ma‘āsh was meant only for the Muslims. Horace Hayman Wilson, whose Glossary is still regarded as a standard work for reference, had defined a‘imma as land granted by the Mughal Government “to learned and religious persons of the Mohammedan faith, or for religious and charitable uses in relation to Mohammedanism”.37 Wilson probably did not know any exceptions. Dr Irfan Habib has noticed the extension of Mughal patronage to non-Muslim divines and institutions.38 But he tends nonetheless to identify madad-i-ma‘āsh with a‘imma which, in his view too, was meant only for the Muslims. “Learning and religious devotion”, he says with reference to the bulk of the madad-i-
ma‘āsh grants, “were then the monopoly of a single class among Muslims and it was the current belief, entertained by this class, that the madad-i-ma‘āsh grants were meant solely for its benefit.” That the belief was not really far from the fact, adds Dr Irfan Habib, “is shown by the use of the words a’imma and makhādim, both meaning religious leaders, as general names for the grantees even in official documents”.

In the official documents belonging to the Jogis of Jakhbar establishment, however, the term a’imma is applied to their madad-i-ma‘āsh lands also. That would, no doubt, identify madad-i-ma‘āsh with a’imma; but then, neither of these terms would remain confined to the revenue-free lands of the Muslim grantees.

Dr Irfan Habib’s view, though amply justified on a quantitative basis, ignores the qualitative aspect of the institution of madad-i-ma‘āsh. Abul-Fazl’s men of learning and his religious devotees formed, indeed, the bulk of the recipients of suyūrghāl land, but it is doubtful if for him they were all necessarily Muslim. At any rate, by the time he was writing about suyūrghāl, non-Muslims too were holding madad-i-ma‘āsh lands and Abul-Fazl was certainly aware of this fact.

The imperial farmāns in this collection, granting madad-i-ma‘āsh to the Nāthas, are not different in form from the other madad-i-ma‘āsh farmāns of the time. The well-known imperial seals of Akbar and Jahangir appear on these farmāns; and the red ink of the sar-nāmah and the tughra of Jahangir’s farmāns indicates the importance attached to them. On the reverse are the usual endorsements, besides the ta’līqah. The rights and favours conferred on the grantees are set out in a manner which would be adopted as a more or less set text for the
madad-i-ma'āsh jarmāns; the Jogis were entitled to the revenue (hāsilāt) from the given area and they were exempted from all obligations to pay the land-revenue (māl-o-jihāt) and the petty burdens imposed by officials (ikhrā-jāt) which were specified in detail; and, significantly, the grantees were expected to 'remain occupied with praying for the permanence of the Conquering Dynasty'. Thus, there is no essential difference between the madad-i-ma'āsh granted to the Jogis and to the 'ulemā or the mashāikh. They all belonged to, what Jahangir called, 'the army of prayer' which, from the political point of view, was equally important with the imperial army. If the Mughal arms were the basis of Mughal power, the 'army of prayer' contributed in its own way towards the acceptance of Mughal authority by a considerable number of people; and, like the imperial army, it consisted of both the Muslims and non-Muslims. The non-Muslim grantees would as much be the 'natural apologists and propagandists' of the Empire as the Muslim grantees. They both belonged to the vested interests astutely created by the Mughal Emperors.

The Nātha Jogis of Jakhbar group (jamā'at) were granted lands in madad-i-ma'āsh at several places, and their possessions had become quite considerable in the early part of the eighteenth century. Indeed, the Jakhbar establishment had considerably proliferated; and it may not be an unsafe assumption that they had come to wield a good deal of unobtrusive influence over the local populace. In the words of a document, "thousands of men flocked to the place"; and there is at least one document in the collection which directly reveals the consideration given to the Nāthas by the "whole panchāyat" of a neighbouring qasbah. It has been suggested recently that the holders of a'imma lands, who are assumed to be all Mus-
linds, were conservative to the point of being reactionary. It may safely be added that the non-Muslim holders of madad-i-ma'āsh lands were equally conservative, providing a strong support to the contemporary powers.

The madad i-ma'āsh to non-Muslims, an expression of Akbar's new outlook on their religion and piety, was likely to introduce an element of stability in the contemporary social order. The Shaiva establishment of Jakhar survived the changing policies of Mughal administration as well as the changing fortunes of Mughal authority. The claims of the Jakhar Jogis and, one may suspect, the stabilizing character of their conservative establishment appear to have been recognized by the Sikh Chiefs who supplanted the Mughals (and the Afghans) in the Punjab during the third quarter of the eighteenth century. What was apparently an innovation in Akbar's days had become an established tradition by now; and it is interesting in this connection to find the newly established Sikh Chief Bhag Singh giving a general instruction that "deviation from an old practice was not to be commended". The madad-i-ma'āsh was no longer simply a Muslim institution. It had been 'Indianized' by Akbar two hundred years earlier. At least the conservative among the early British rulers of India were quick to recognize the value as well as the fact of its existence.

THE DOCUMENTS

Ideally, to interpret a single document most satisfactorily, one should be conversant with the whole range of that particular kind of documents. We cannot claim to have gone through the whole range of Mughal madad-i-ma'āsh, or any other, documents. We feel, however, that
a few observations on each of the documents in this collection may be made on the basis of some familiarity with the relevant published work.

I

This is a copy of a farmān issued by Akbar towards the close of A.D. 1581. Being a copy, it does not bear any seal; and the date also appears to have been placed at the top by the copyist, and that is why it is missing at the end. In the light of the whole range of documents in this collection, we feel there is no reason to doubt that this is a true copy of an authentic farmān. It refers also to an earlier one, which was issued by Akbar under his personal seal in October, A.D. 1571, granting two hundred bigahs of land "by way of in‘ām" to Udant Nath. That would make it one of the earliest known grants by Akbar to a non-Muslim.

As it appears from the farmān Udant Nath saw the Emperor personally in early November, A.D. 1581, and got the earlier grant confirmed. The occasion for this confirmation is evident: a part of the land granted in the village Bhoa in A.D. 1571 had been submerged under water and in lieu of that, fifty bigahs of land were given through this confirmation.

A few minor points are worth noting in this farmān. It refers to the well-known principle of giving the cultivated land and culturable waste in equal part; there is no mention as yet of the Ilāhī-gaz; and two hundred bigahs by the measure of the hemp-rope are equal to one hundred and seventy bigahs by the bamboo-measure, that is to say, the decrease in the number of bigahs is fifteen per cent.
II

In the Jakhbar collection as it stands now, this is the first original farman of Akbar under his imperial seal. The date on the farman is torn; but, from the ta’liqah on the reverse, it is evident that the farman was issued in the forty-first year of Akbar’s reign. It refers to the earlier grant of two hundred bigahs of land by the measure of the hemp-rope, “in the name of Udant Nath”.

The occasion for this new farman is clear from its text: an investigation into the grants of madad-i-ma’ash land had been ordered by Akbar, and hence, the case of the Jakhbar Jogis was reconsidered. Inspite of Abul-Fazl’s proposal of seventy-eight bigahs. “Udant Nath and others” were granted one hundred bigahs “by way of madad-i-ma’ash”, on Miran Sadr Jahan’s recommendation. The grant, obviously, was reduced.

However, the grant was not actually halved. This new grant being by the measure of the Ilahi-gaz, the Jogis lost less than eighty bigahs by the old measure.

A few minor points may be noted in connection with the farman. It repeats “the principle of equal part” and, from the figures given on the reverse, it is quite certain that two hundred bigahs by the measure of the hemp-rope were reduced to one hundred and seventy bigahs by the bamboo-measure; it contains the term “jaribanah” as one of the sa’ir-jihat taxes, which is not to be found in the rest of the documents in this collection; and, as already pointed out, this farman refers to the Gaz-Ilahe and has the more or less standard form of text for the madad-i-ma’ash farmans.

It may be noted, however, that this farman does not
contain the usual phrase about prayers for the Conquering Dynasty or the Everlasting Dominion.

II

This is an original farmān of Jahangir issued in July,A.D. 1606, under his imperial seal, with the sar-nāmah "Allahu Akbar" and the tughrā in red ink. It grants ten bigahs of land to "Bhandar Nath and others" in Naroli Sāngā, a village in the parganah Kathūah (not in the parganah Pathān in which lay Bhoa).

The occasion for this grant is evident from the farmān. In October, A.D. 1578, Akbar had granted ten bigahs of land "by way of madad-i-maʾāsh" to the Jogi Chandar Nath who by now had died. His disciples, notably Bhandar Nath, approached Jahangir with a view to getting the madad-i-maʾāsh confirmed on them, and their request was granted.

This is a different grant from the one given to Udant Nath in Bhoa. However, Chandar Nath, as a disciple, was one of the co-sharers of the grant given to Udant Nath. Here one may notice the beginning of a kind of proliferation in the Jakhbar establishment.

A few minor points may be noted in connection with this farmān. So far as the present collection is concerned, the Turkish calendar is used for the first time in this farmān; the non-fiscal imposts are covered under ikhrājāt-o-ʿiwārẓāt and not under sāʾir-jihāt (as it was done in document II); in this, as in Akbar's farmān, the term sāwarī as a non-fiscal impost is clearly written; gao-shumārī is included among the ikhrājāt-o-ʿiwārẓāt; and there are two imposts which appear to be peculiar to this farmān: jalkar and bankar.
From the reverse of the *farmān*, it appears that the grant to Chandar Nath in A.D. 1578 had been given by the measure of the bamboo; but now the *bigah-i-Ilāḥi* is introduced, and the reduction due to the *Gaz-i-Ilāḥi* is eleven per cent.

IV

This is an original *farmān* of Jahangir issued in November, A.D. 1606. The *sar-nāmah*, the seal and the *ṭughrā* are exactly the same as in the preceding *farmān* which was issued only a month earlier. This document confirms a *madad-i-maʿāsh* of two hundred *bigahs* by the measure of the *Gaz-i-Ilāḥi* to the Jogis Surat Nath in the *parganah* Pathān.

The *madad-i-maʿāsh* was not a hereditary grant until after A.D. 1690, and the grantee generally obtained the renewal of his grant after the accession of a new ruler to the throne. *A priori*, one would expect the Jogis also to get their grants confirmed on Jahangir's accession; and this, as well as the previous *farmān*, was issued in the beginning of the second year of Jahangir's reign. We notice, however, that in this *farmān*, as in the preceding one, the occasion for the grant is stated differently. Surat Nath had approached the Emperor to represent that the land which he had been holding "by way of *madad-i-maʿāsh* had been submerged under water due to an excessive flooding (of the Ravi). Jahangir issued the order that two hundred *bigahs* of revenue-free land, on the familiar principle of equal-part, should be allocated to Surat Nath, preferably in the old *mahāl*, but if that were not possible, somewhere in the neighbourhood.

The *farmān* is naturally silent about the exact place of
the land to be handed over to the grantee, “duly measured and demarcated”; but the document is silent also about the village in which Surat Nath was previously holding his madad-i-ma‘āsh land of two hundred Ilāhī-bigahs.

We have noticed already (documentI) that Udant Nath and his disciples were to be given fifty bigahs of wasteland somewhere. It is quite likely that those fifty bigahs were given to them in Narot (probably near the Jakh shrine). At any rate, the document which immediately follows this one strongly suggests that the present grant was given to Surat Nath in Narot. Furthermore, what we notice in this farmān is that not only had the original grant of two hundred bigahs been fully restored before the close of Akbar’s reign, it was also given by the measure of the Gaz-i-Ilāhī, which actually meant some increase in the grant.

Coming to the minor points, we notice that the nonfiscal imposts in this farmān, as in the preceding one, fall under ikhrājāt-o-‘iwārzāt; and in both of these farmāns it is laid down that the land in question was the only revenue-free grant to be given to its recipients.

V

This is an undated parwānchah; and the seal in the margin is undecipherable, except one word which is very probably Jamīl. The date 1011 (A.D. 1602), however, is quite clear. But this date does not necessarily mean that the sanad was issued in that year; for, even in this collection of documents, there are several instances of seals remaining in use long after the dates they bear.

This sanad refers to two hundred bigahs of land in the use of “the Jogis Tan Nath, Ban Nath and others” in the village Narot.
The document, thus, takes a good deal for granted; and in the context of the other documents in this collection, a few points emerge for consideration. The Jogis "Tan Nath, Ban Nath and others" raised no problem. They were named on the reverse of Akbar's farmsan of the forty-first year as the co-sharers of the grant to Udant Nath; in the farmsan itself, they were referred to as "others." In this sanad, their names are mentioned, while the rest of the co-sharers are referred to as "others." There is hardly any doubt that this document relates to the madad-i-ma'ash originally given to Udant Nath.

However, the village mentioned in this document is Narot and not Bhoja where the land was originally granted. It appears that the transfer of the original grant in Bhoja to Narot was an accomplished fact by the time of this sanad which, therefore, is silent about the transfer and the reason for it. Furthermore, it is being stated here that the Jogis held "two hundred bigahs of land" but it is not mentioned by which measure; and, it may be inferred that it was by the measure of the Gaz-i-Ilahi as in the previous farmsan.

This sanad, which appears only to confirm the preceding farmsan, mentions only Tan Nath and Ban Nath by name. But that does not necessarily exclude Surat Nath, because he could easily be covered under the "others." Tan Nath and Ban Nath, in all probability, had represented the Jogis in this case and, therefore, they are being mentioned by name.

VI

This is a parwanchah issued by I'tmad-ud-daulah in the 9th year of Jahangir's reign. It refers to a farmsan,
issued by Jahangir in the same year, by which two hundred bigahs of land were conferred on the disciples of Surat Nath who, by now, had died. Only one disciple, Than Nath, is mentioned by name.

The farmān which is here referred to is not to be found in the Jakhbar collection as it now stands; but the occasion for that farmān is clear enough. A new mahant had succeeded to the gaddi of Jakhbar and he, as well as his gurubhās, needed a confirmation of the old grant.

The occasion for this parwānchah, however, may only be guessed. This is the first document in this collection in which the gumāshīhā-i jāgīrdārān (the agents of the jāgīrdārs) are mentioned, and they are mentioned at the outset. It appears that the Jogis had suffered some inconvenience at the hands of the gumāshīhs of the jāgīrdārs and they approached the authorities at the Court. This impression is confirmed by another phrase which has been used for the first time, in this collection, in the present document: it is suggested (almost as an argument) that the land in question was a khud-kāshtah land of the Jogis.

On the reverse of this document, besides the mention of "two hundred bigahs of land in the old mahal", there is a statement to the effect that the zimm was specified in the imperial farmān. It may be inferred from this, that no other detail was called for, because the farmān was already in the possession of the Jogis and contained all the necessary detail.

VII

This is a parwānchah issued by Musawi Khan in A.D. 1642. It refers to a farmān, in all probability of
Shah Jahan, issued in the twelfth regnal year by which Than Nath, Bhaub Nath and “the other” were confirmed in their madad-i-ma‘ūsh at Narot. They had presented themselves at the Court and had been found to be “deserving”.

As in the preceding document so in this, the Jogis appear to have been harassed in some way by the agents of the jāgīrdārs, and they might have felt obliged to approach the Emperor. At any rate, Musawi Khan is sending strict orders that nothing whatever should be effected contrary to the imperial farmān.

Very similar to the preceding document, this parwān-chah is a little more interesting. Musawi Khan’s is the only seal, in this collection of documents, to have an āyat inscribed on it. This might be suggestive of his piety or of his orthodoxy. All the same, he has no hesitation in enabling the Jogis to pray for the permanence of the Eternity-allied Dominion. Even if he was using a stock expression, it would indicate the willing acceptance of the tradition by Musawi Khan.

**VIII**

This perhaps may be regarded as the most interesting document in the collection. On a paper with beautiful floral designs, it bears the seal of “Shah ‘Ālam-gīr”. There is no date on the document itself but the seal bears the date 1072 (A.D. 1661-62) as well as the fourth year of the reign. A Persian couplet is inscribed on the seal. The sar-nāmah, “Hū-al-Ghani”, appears for the first time here in this collection.

The document appears to be a personal letter to Mahant Anand Nath, written by Aurangzeb in the early
part of his reign. It is written in a most reverential tone and contains the Emperor’s request for some well-treated quicksilver. The letter also suggests that a meeting had taken place between the Emperor and the Jogi.

From another document (not being published here), Aurangzeb’s consideration for Anand Nath in the early 1660s is as clear as from this one. In the village Thār, Anand Nath was holding fifteen ghumāos of land by way of madad-i-ma‘āsh and Aurangzeb increased that grant to twenty ghumāos. That document, incidentally, bears the same seal. We have no reason at all to doubt the genuineness of this letter which, we believe, presents Aurangzeb in altogether a new light.

IX

This is a parwānchah issued by Mukarram Khan in the thirty-ninth year of Aurangzeb’s reign. It refers to the resumption of the madad-i-ma‘āsh land which had remained earlier in conferment upon “Than Nath, Bhau Nath and the other Jogis” in the village Narot. This is a reference, no doubt, to the grant of two hundred bigahs coming from the days of Udant Nath and Akbar.

Aurangzeb is known to have passed a general order in A.D. 1672-73 that the madad-i-ma‘āsh grants given earlier to the non-Muslims should be resumed. His general order appears to have been obeyed here; and, as it would be obvious from another document (No. XII), the madad-i-ma‘āsh land of the Jogis at Narot was resumed towards the close of the fifteenth year of Aurangzeb’s reign.

This apparently would go against our suggestion in connection with the preceding document that Aurangzeb
showed a good deal of consideration for Anand Nath. It is certainly possible that Aurangzeb’s attitude towards Anand Nath could undergo a change during the ten years between the time of the preceding document and this. It may be pointed out, nevertheless, that Anand Nath died at about this time and his death must have militated against the possibility of his having the grant restored by the Emperor. The Jogis, however, do not appear to have suffered very much, because when they made a representation to the authorities, the land was left in their possession on the basis of a stipulated fixed revenue (jama‘-i-istimrār). The present document simply confirms the arrangements then made, and by which due regard had been paid to the welfare of the Jogis, without injuring the financial interests of the Government. From the Emperor’s point of view, the jama‘-i-istimrār was a concession made in favour of the Jogis; and the total result of this entire transaction was some financial gain to the treasury of the State.

X

This is a muchalkah drawn up in the 47th year of Aurangzeb’s reign. There was a dispute, regarding boundaries, between the Jogi Hira Nath, the disciple of Anand Nath, and the muqaddams of the village murād-pur. All the parties accepted the muqaddams of two other villages as arbitrators and legally bound themselves to abide by their decision.

It may be of some interest to note that though the document was not signed in the court of any qāzī, it refers to the Sacred Law (Shara‘-i-Sharīf) as the law of the land.
XI

This is a *sanad* issued by Faiz, probably in the early years of Bahadur Shah’s reign. The date at the end is partially torn and the exact year, therefore, is unknown. The seal bears the date 1122 (A.D. 1710) and the *sanad* itself was issued perhaps in, or soon after, that year.

By this time, the *madad-i-ma‘āsh* to the Jogis at Narot appears to have been completely restored. It is stated in the document that “Than Nath, Bhau Nath, Hira Nath and the other Jogis” had this grant of two hundred *bigahs* in conferment upon them “by way of *madad-i-ma‘āsh*” from olden times. The order forbids the ‘āmils to levy any *abwāb* from the Jogis, so that they may contentedly pray for the Everlasting Dominion. The restoration of the *madad-i-ma‘āsh* (which would actually mean the remission of the annual *maḥsūl-i-istimrār* of one hundred and seven rupees), in our view, is implied in this order.

The *parganah* Pathān at this time was a part of the *jāgīr* of Prince Muhammad Ibrahim for whom the title “Sultan” is being used in the document. In the seal, the title of Emperor Bahadur Shah is “Shāh ‘A-lam”.

XII

This is now an incomplete document, coming from Bahadur Shah’s reign; and, from the qāzi’s seal and attestations of witnesses, it may be safely inferred that it is a *maḥzar*.

As it was mentioned in connection with document IX, there is the statement in this *maḥzar* that Akbar had granted two hundred *bigahs* to the Jogis at Narot (sic.) by way of *madad-i-ma‘āsh* and that this grant was resumed in the fifteenth year of Aurangzeb’s reign.
In the sixteenth year of Aurangzeb, Hira Nath and his followers went towards "Hindustan". For what purpose it cannot be known from this document, because it is torn. It may be suggested, however, that Hira Nath, who had succeeded Anand Nath by now, might have gone towards the Court to represent the case of the establishment after the grant had been resumed.

XIII

This is a yād-dāsht signed by the "panchas" of a qaşbah before a qāzī in the fourteenth year of Muhammad Shah's reign.

According to a decision of the Panchāyat of the bāzār of Muhiy-ud-dīn Pur, the shop-keepers of that place voluntarily undertake to pay one tunkah-ī-Ălamgīrī per shop to Hira Nath of Jakhbar by way of faślānah (as the "first-fruit").

XIV

This is a chaknamah, signed in the presence of a qāzī in the fourteenth year of Muhammad Shah's reign.

From this document it appears that twenty-five bigahs of madar-i-ma'āsh had remained in conferment upon the Jogis of Jakhbar from the times of Akbar and Jahangir in the parganah Domal of the doāb Bist-Jāllandhar. The detailed demarcation of that land is now made and it remains in conferment upon Mahant Hira Nath to enable him to pray for the permanence of the Conquering Dynasty.

If Muhammad Shah had issued any farmān to this effect, that is not to be found now in the Jakhbar collection.
INTRODUCTION

XV

This is a sanad issued by Zakariya Khan, the famous Governor of the Punjab, in the seventeenth year of Muhammad Shah’s reign.

This document refers to the lands and other possessions of Mahant Hira Nath not only at Narot but also at other places, all of which he was holding on the basis of authentic farmāns and sanads. Zakariya Khan’s order confirms him in all his possessions which, as the reverse of this document reveals, were to be found around Jakhbar, and elsewhere in the parganah Pathān, in and around Jwalamukhi, in the parganah Gumtal and in the parganah Shāhpur.

This document refers to “Hindwi” (Tākri) as well as to Persian sanads in Hira Nath’s possession. That would suggest that the mahants were holding grants not only from the Mughals but also from the vassal Chieftains in the Punjab hills. The document assumes in a sense the form of an inventory of all the possessions of the Jogis of Jakhbar, and serves to indicate the large extent of their possessions.

The increased consideration which now appears to have been given to the Jogis by the Mughal administration may be explained partly in terms of the value of their allegiance to the Mughal authority at a time when it was being thwarted by the “enemies” within this part of the Empire.

XVI

This is a sanad issued by Saʿīd Khān in April, A.D. 1741. It relates to the confirmation of twenty ghumāos of
madad-i-ma‘āsh land in the village Thār of the parganah Shāhpur upon Subodh Nath.

The document refers to the death of Hira Nath. Obviously, he was succeeded by Subodh Nath.

It must be pointed out that this was precisely the grant which had been increased by Aurangzeb from fifteen ghumāos to twenty in favour of Mahant Anand Nath (vide the document not reproduced here but referred to in our introductory note to VIII).

XVII

This is a rather informal order issued by an autonomous Sikh Chief to his dīwān. The order does not bear any date, and it could have been issued at any time between A.D. 1765 and A.D. 1808.

On a representation made by the Jogis of Jakbar, this order remits octroi duty on goods purchased at the nearby town of Sujānpur by the Nāthas of Jakbar where Mahant Subodh Nath was on the gaddi.

The consideration which the Sikh Chief in this document shows to the Nāthas impels us to infer that their revenue-free lands remained intact during the phase of political turmoil in the Punjab. That a newly established Sikh Chief paid a great regard to traditional usages is extremely significant.

It is interesting to note that the Sikh Chief Bhag Singh seems in this document to adopt as much the form of Mughal documents of this nature as the Mughal attitude towards the Jogis.
NOTES

1. The village, to be exact, lies at a distance of seven miles from Pathankot in the western direction which makes it about twenty miles to the north of Gurdaspur. Small and uneven paths lead to it from the roads indicated here, but one has to walk a distance of about two miles if one approaches from Sarna on the Pathankot-Gurdaspur road, or a little less than a mile if one takes the Sherpur approach from the Narot Jaimal Singh road. The mode of transport on the latter, which is preferred by the local people, is mostly the tanga for which one waits patiently for some time and which then takes more than an hour to get to Pathankot.

2. These directions have been indicated here on the basis of personal observation during prolonged field work in the area. Detailed maps of this region are not easily available for a variety of reasons, among which are security considerations, and we have had to be content with these descriptions which if not absolutely accurate are at least in a general sense correctly indicative.

3. The story relates to an incident when Maharaja Ranjit Singh, during a journey in these parts, was obliged to cross a channel of water. Some of the persons from this village, who happen mostly to be Rajputs, helped the Maharaja cross by carrying him on their shoulders. When the Maharaja got across, it is said, he praised the loyalty of these “Mehras”, or low-caste palanquin-bearers— which he took them to be—and said that the village Narot should bear their name also!

*The Gazetteer of the Gurdaspur District* (1891-92, p. 62) connects a similar story with the Emperor Jahangir who “is said to have been carried across the Ghag on the shoulders of the Rajputs of Narot, who thereby earned the name of maheb (sic) or kahars, which they have retained up to the present time.”

4. *The Gazetteer of the Gurdaspur District* (1891-92, p. 8) gives a detailed account of the vagaries of the Ravi which decided rather suddenly sometimes to flow partly into one of the several inundation canals. “For years a large volume of water had been passing down the Masto, and at last in about 1859 the whole Ravi deserted its former bed and adopted this channel.... The river runs about
two miles to the east of its former course which is still occupied by the Ujh." "As a rule" the Gazetteer continues, "the Ravi is not noted for very important changes by alluvion or diluvion, but it is subject to very sudden alterations in its course."

5. The dhūni is a necessary accessory of the Kanphata monastic centres, for the Jogi must light his fire wherever he takes up his abode. Beside the dhūni is sometimes a morchhal or fan of peacock’s tail (Ghurye, G.S. Indian Sadhus, Bombay 1953, 156). George Briggs mentioned the interesting fact of the Forest Department of the then Government supplying two hundred and fifty bullock carts of wood annually for the dhūni of Bhairon at the shrine of Devi Patan (Gorakhnath and the Kanphata Yogis, Calcutta 1938, 21).

6. The worship of this group of deities by the Gorakhnathi or Kanphata Jogs points to their being the true descendants of the much older sects called the Pās'upatas, the Kāpālikas and the Kālamukhas, a fact that emerges from any historical account of the faith.

7. The compound with Jogi samādhis or tumuli should in fact be likened to a burial-ground, for they bury, not cremate, their dead. Every Jogi establishment has these samādhis which proclaim at sight the monastic centre of the Nāthropanthis. The Kāpāliga associations of the Jogs, apart from this "living in a cremation ground", are also sometimes indicated in names like Masāna Nath. (Ghurye, Indian Sadhus, 156-57).

8. The Jogi insistence on the wearing of these symbols is almost obsessive, and an extremely serious view was taken, at least in earlier days, of the omission, even accidentally, to carry these. The minimum of punishment for a Jogi whose seli broke was that he could not take his meals till a new one was substituted. The ears of a Jogi getting completely split by the kundala or the mudrā was taken to be a disaster, and traditional accounts say that such a Jogi was sometimes buried alive (Ghurye, Indian Sadhus, 1952-58).

9. There are several views about which of the many sub-sects of the Nāthropanthis are the principal twelve. Briggs (Gorakhnath and the Kanphata Yogis, 68-69) lists the twelve sub-sects as Satnath, Ramnath, Dharamnath, Lakshmannath, Daryanath, Ganganath...
INTRODUCTION

Bairag, Rawal, Jalandharipa, Aipanth, Kaplani and Kanipa. There is a central organization of the twelve sects called the Bhek Barah Panth.

10. The only facts given about this sect by Briggs are that it was founded by Ganganath who followed Kapalmuni. From this some people trace the Kāyānāthis and there appears to be some connection between this and the Ratannath sub-division (Gorakhnath and the Kanphata Yogis, 65). There is no indication by Briggs of any gaddi of this sect anywhere in India.


12. There are numerous references to the Tilla establishment from very early times under its various names: it is called variously Tilla Gorakhnath, Tilla Balnath, Jogi Tilla, or simply Tilla. The Gazetteer of the Jhelum District (Pt. A, 1904, 35-36) refers to it as "undoubtedly one of the oldest religious establishments in Northern India," and states later that the Jogis of Tilla "claim, and apparently with correctness, that this is the original Jogi foundation from which all others have sprung." Briggs also states that the Pir of Tilla is the head of all the Gorakhnathis (Gorakhnath and the Kanphata Yogis, p. 102).

13. The Gazetteer of the Gurdaspur District (1891-92, p. 62), in the very brief reference it makes to the Jakhbar gaddi, names its founder as "Bhur Nath, the adversary of Farid Godar". It is likely that Bhaur Nath was the real name of Udant Nath who was given the latter name because of his occult powers. The style of "Pir" which the Jogi mahants adopted is common to all their monastic centres, and there are folk songs in the Shahpur District of West Punjab which involved the blessing of the "Pir of Kirana." Dr Ghurye (Indian Sadhus, 157) believes that the title was taken by the Jogi mahants possibly "to escape utter annihilation at the hands of the Muslims."

14. The documents would suggest that the flood which made the Jogis shift ultimately to the land in Narot came in A.D. 1605 when Surat Nath approached the Emperor Jahangir for compensation for the lands entirely submerged at Bhoa, but this would run counter
to the tradition at Jakhbar which emphatically says that the settlement at Jakhbar took place while Udant Nath was still alive. It is possible, in view of this, that the shift from Bhoa took place as early as A.D. 1591 when Udant Nath was alive and a flood had come, partially submerging the lands of the Jogis. The fifty bigahs of land that were conferred upon the Jogis, as compensation after that flood (see document I), they might have received near the Jakh where they might have settled then only, although still holding part of their grants in Bhoa. The event in A.D. 1605 (see document IV) might then have been the total transfer of their grant from Bhoa to Narot, following imperial orders.

15. The shijrā-nasb or "family tree" of the Jogis, as indeed of all the other landowners, was appended to the record of rights prepared in the first Regular Settlement which came soon after the British assumption of authority in the Punjab. This shijra was dictated by Mahant Chanchal Nath and, unlike most families which contented themselves with tracing their family-tree to three or four generations that immediately preceded, the Jakhbar mahant decided to trace the gaddi back to the founder. This 'feat of memory', we believe, was not performed with much accuracy.

16. The family tree as given to us, orally, by Mahant Brahm Nath at Jakhbar ran like this:


17. The disciples of the same guru are described as gurubhāṣis, and in this case one of the disciples of a senior mahant having succeeded him on the gaddi would ensure that his gurubhāṣis stayed with him in the monastery on terms almost of equality. They, being senior Jogis, are likely to have been trusted to handle certain important matters, one of which may have been representing the case of the gaddi before the Mughal authorities.

18. The date of the Tilla establishment is difficult to ascertain, and would naturally depend on what view we take of the date
of Gorakhnath himself; but it should be older by at least a few centuries than the Jakhbar gaddi.

19. This information is based on an interview with Shri Kundan Lal Gosain, former Judge of the Punjab High Court, who appeared in a civil lawsuit on behalf of the Kirana mahants, while an advocate at Shahpur several years ago. He says that several papers were produced in the court on that occasion and the oldest document from which the grant to the Tilla gaddi could be proved was an order of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. It has not been possible for us, for obvious reasons, to have any access to the records of Kirana which is now in West Pakistan.

20. There is a short and uncomplimentary reference to the Bohar establishment in the Gazetteer of the Rohtak District (1883-84, 53-54), but there is no mention there of the time from which it dates; the present information is based again therefore on an oral account of the gaddi that we were able to gather.

21. Situated at a distance of seven miles from Gurdaspur, and the most influential of the Vaishnava shrines in this region. There are scores of branches of this gaddi all over the Punjab and large gatherings of people assemble here to pay homage to the mahant on the Baisakhi day.

22. An important establishment of the Vaishnavas, situated at a distance of four miles from Pathankot on the Pathankot-Jullundur road. This gaddi stood in an intimate relationship with the ruling house of Nurpur in whose territory it formerly lay.

23. This is a small but important shrine that branched off from Pandori several generations ago. The place is approached from the Anur railway station on the Pathankot-Jogindernagar rail-link and once lay in the territory of the hill state of Guler.

24. In a recent civil lawsuit involving the succession to the Damthal gaddi, it was claimed by the present mahant, who won the case, that the Jakhbar mahants had sent, as always, a representative of theirs to complete the installation ceremony by bestowing upon him the traditional seli and topi.

26. Asia Publishing House 1963. On a much smaller scale, but nevertheless significant, is, for instance, B. R. Grover's "'Raqba-Bandi' Documents of Akbar's Reign", *IHRC*, XXXVI, 55-60. The author has been making a consistent use of such documents in his studies of Mughal India.

27. The last document in the present collection is an order issued by Bhag Singh to a *diwan*. Though this Sikh Chief cannot be supposed to have assumed all royal prerogatives, it is very probable that he was acting like an autonomous ruler. Also, the document appears to be rather informal, though its mandatory import is clear enough. The term *hukmnāmah*, which in the Punjabi language as well as in the Persian would mean literally a letter containing an order, seems to be appropriate for this document.

28. For instance, the permission to graze cows without paying the *gāo-shumāri* or the *kāh-chardī*; to collect the toll from a certain ferry; to have the weigher's charges in a certain *mandawi* appropriated exclusively by the men of this establishment.

30. Hodivala, H. S. *Studies in Parsi History*, 161. Incidentally, the words used in the document are *zamin-i-m'am* and *kisht-i-m'am*, 152.


33. For a copy of the relevant document, see Modi, J. J. *Paisees at the Court of Akbar*, and also page 40.

34. That would be evident from the following: “The old *jagir* held by the Jogis of the village of Naugiran is referred to in a *sanad* of Akbar as an ancient grant. It has recently been restored after over forty years resumption, due to the misconduct of the late *gaddi-nashin*, with whose connivance the murder of a *laqir* at Tilla was said to have been committed. There are numerous other *sanads* of later kings relating to this *jagir* in possession of the Jogis” (*Gazetteer of the Jhelum District*, Part A, 1904, 95); G. W. Briggs also states that the Jogis of Tilla Gorakhnath were “in possession of a deed granted by Akbar confirming earlier grants” (*Gorakhnath and the Kanphata Yogis*, 103).

35. A transcription of Shah Jahan’s *faimān* is given in Ganda Singh’s *Makhīz-i-Tawarikh-i-Sikhan*, Amritsar 1949.

36. We have seen a large number of documents belonging to the Vaishnava establishment of Pandori in the Gurdaspur District and there is no doubt about the patronage of these *gōsāins* by the Mughal Emperors.

37. *A Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Terms (etc.) of British India*, 18. Wilson defines *madad-i-ma‘ūsh* as a grant of “means of subsistence in general; also assignment of revenue for the support of learned or religious Mohammadans, or the benevolent institutions, by the government” (ibid., 346). It is not clear if non-Muslim institutions are covered in this definition. It is more likely that they are not.


40. It has been possible to publish, in this collection, the documents in which the term ā'imma is used for the revenue-free lands of the Nāthas. The term maḥṣūl-i-ā'imma and bāz-yāft-i-ā'imma are written in so clear a hand that there is no possibility of any mistake in reading. It may be pointed out that the term makhādīm also occurs in one of the unpublished documents belonging to this group.

41. Abul-Fazl's association with the administration of suyūrghāl is well-known; for example, in the *Ain-i-Akbari* (I, 199) he relates how it was decided that the Sadr, "with the concurrence of the writer of this work, should either increase or decrease the grants" (tr. I, 269-70). His association with the Ṣadr-us-Sudūr would be evident also from document II in this collection.