CHAPTER XVIII

THE CLIMAX OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

SECTION I

JAHANGIR

Succession

Akbar died on October 17, 1605. Before his death he invested Prince Salim with turban and robes and girded him with his own dagger, thus clearly intimating his desire that he should succeed inspite of his delinquencies. He was the only surviving son of Akbar, Princes Daniyal and Murad having predeceased their father. Salim's position in the later years of Akbar was indeed an intriguing one. Between 1601-1605 he gave Akbar much trouble. Taking advantage of Akbar's absence in the South he assumed practical independence at Allahabad in 1601, setting up an independent court, issuing mansans and granting jagirs. He induced Bir Singh Bundela, who was in open revolt against Akbar, to waylay and murder Abul Fazl, then proceeding from the Deccan to Agra, where Akbar had returned. The Prince suspected this friend and companion of his father of poisoning his ears against him. Akbar's grief knew no bounds, but though Bir Singh Bundela was relentlessly pursued, the Prince, who was the arch-culprit, was not punished, and paternal weakness was responsible for Akbar's reconciliation with his son in April, 1603. Referring to this reconciliation Jahangir writes with a curious naiveté in his celebrated autobiography, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri: "I know what sort of endurance a Kingdom would have, the foundations of which were laid on hostility to a father". But when he was commanded by his father to lead the campaign in Mewar he showed the greatest reluctance, and he was permitted to return to Allahabad where he again set up an independent court. About this time there was a plot to supersede Salim and secure the succession of Salim's eldest son, Khusrau. He was Man
Singh's nephew and Aziz Koka's son-in-law. These two prominent nobles wanted his succession to the exclusion of that of his father. Salim sought reconciliation with his father, was reprimanded, imprisoned for full ten days, but was then treated as if nothing had taken place. This happened in November, 1604. But when Akbar fell ill next year plotting and counter-plotting were rampant. It is said that there was actually a conference on succession, the majority of the nobles supporting Salim. Even Aziz Koka had, therefore, to yield and after the investiture by the dying monarch Salim had no difficulty in the matter of succession. He was solemnly enthroned at Agra on October 24, 1605, and assumed the title 'Nuruddin Muhammad Jahangir Padishah Ghazi'.

REVOLT OF KHUSRAU

The first important incident of his reign was the rebellion of Khusrau. Man Singh, who had actively supported the cause of his nephew, was absent in distant Bengal. Khusrau was in a state of semi-confinement, but he escaped from the Agra fort and marched towards the Punjab. His army swelled to 12,000. The Dewan of Lahore joined him but the governor of the city defended it. In the meantime the Imperial army arrived. A battle was fought at Bhairowal. Khusrau, completely defeated, escaped; he wanted to go to Kabul but ran aground in the Chenab and was captured. His prominent supporters were barbarously put to death. The Sikh Guru Arjan is said to have become one of Khusrau's partisans and to have offered up prayers for his cause. He was imprisoned and his death (1606) is said to have been hastened by the rigours of his imprisonment. Khusrau was blinded but later on he partially recovered the use of one of his eyes.

SUBMISSION OF MEWAR (1615)

Jahangir's reign is said to be a continuation of that of Akbar. He adopted his father's foreign policy both in Northern and in Southern India. The complete subjugation of Mewar was his first concern. Mewar was then under the rule of Rana Amar Singh, who had succeeded his father, Pratap, in 1597. In the very first year of his reign Jahangir sent against Mewar
an army of 20,000 under the nominal command of his second son Parvez. An indecisive battle was fought. In view of Khursrua’s revolt a truce was made at Mandalgarh. In 1608 the campaign was again begun with energy. Mahabat Khan was the leader of the Imperialists. The Mughal cavalry could not penetrate into the forest-covered hills and the wild retreats of the Rajputs. Mahabat Khan was replaced by Abdulla Khan, who managed the campaign very well but had to be transferred to Gujarat and thence to the Deccan. After this the campaign languished for sometime.

In 1613 Jahangir established his court at Ajmer and appointed his third son, Prince Khurram, in command. He was reinforced by Abdulla Khan and other officers from the Deccan. The Mughal plan was to burn, plunder and demolish, to starve the Rajputs out of the mountain retreats, and to establish numerous military stations with a view to maintain a persistent attack in all directions. Rana Amar Singh, less tough and stubborn than his father, was reduced by famine and pestilence to ask for terms. Jahangir was studiously conciliatory. According to the terms of the treaty of 1615, the Rana was to supply a contingent of 1,000 horse; his son, Prince Karan, was to become a mansabdar of 5,000. The Rana was not to attend the Imperial court in person and no bride from Mewar was to enter the Imperial harem. The presents given to Prince Karan were so lavish that Sir Thomas Roe, the British envoy, formed an impression that the submission was bought with presents. Jahangir’s treatment of the Prince of Mewar was a remarkable contrast to the treatment accorded by Aurangzeb to Shivaji when Jai Singh persuaded this arch-enemy of the Mughals to submit and attend the Darbar. The ease-loving and pleasure-seeking Jahangir knew the art of empire-building much better than his unsympathetic, thorough-going grandson.

SURJUGATION OF AFGHANS OF BENGAL

The same conciliatory policy was adopted with regard to the Afghan rebels in Bengal. This easternmost Mughal province was in constant ferment. After Daud’s failure Qutlu Khan, Isa Khan and Sulaiman in succession maintained the tradition of Afghan opposition to Mughal consolidation in this
part of India. Successive Imperialist Governors—Man Singh, Qutb-ud-din and Jahangir Quli—found the Afghan rebels almost irrepressible. Islam Khan, who was the next Mughal Governor of Bengal, transferred the capital from Rajmahal to Dacca. Usman, a son of Isa Khan who had defeated the Imperialists at Bhadrak in 1600, was defeated in the battle of Nekujyal (100 kos distant from Dacca) on March 12, 1612. Usman died of his wounds. He was the last chief of the independent Afghans in Bengal. The conciliatory policy of the Mughals paved the way for the complete submission of the leaderless Afghans.

ANNEXATION OF KANGRA (1620)

Another notable achievement of Jahangir's reign was the annexation of Kangra. The almost impregnable hill fort of Nagarkot or Kangra dominated the hill country between the Ravi and the Sutlej. The hill chiefs in the country between Jammu and Nagarkot (Jhelum and Ravi) were brought under the control of the Mughals by Todar Mal. There is a current saying in the hills that Todar Mal explained his arrangements to Akbar by a happy metaphor that "he had cut off the meat and left the bones." But Kangra was not yet annexed. Rai Rayan Vikramjit succeeded in taking this fort in 1620 after a long siege. Jahangir describes the fort as having 23 bastions and seven gates. He was fascinated with the beauty of the valley.

DECCAN AFFAIRS—AHMADNAGAR

Affairs in the Deccan during the reign of Jahangir were dominated by the celebrated Malik Ambar, an Abyssinian by birth and a Deccani by adoption. With great administrative capacity, an excellent judgment and considerable military skill, he was the central figure in Deccan history for two decades. He wanted to save what remained of Ahmadnagar from being absorbed by the Mughals. He transferred the capital to Kharka, raised a scion of the reigning family to the throne under the title of Murtaza Nizam Shah II, and organising guerilla Maratha bands in large numbers continued to offer opposition to Mughal
expansion. His one notable success was achieved in 1611. The Mughals formed a grand plan of a concerted attack from different directions, but they failed to harmonise their actions. Malik Ambar concluded an alliance with Bijapur and Golkonda as the best means of foiling the Mughals. Mughal gold and Mughal diplomacy were incessantly at work with a view to separate the confederates. But the Mughal generals were also quarrelling among themselves until Prince Khurram was placed in charge of Deccan affairs in 1616 after the transfer of Parvez to Allahabad. He succeeded in detaching Adil Shah of Bijapur from the Deccan confederacy. The entire Balaghat territory seized by Malik Ambar was ceded back to the Mughals and the kevs of the fort of Ahmadnagar and other strongholds were formally delivered in 1617. Khurram got the title of 'Shah Jahan', but Mughal dominion did not extend a mile beyond the boundary of 1605.

Chaos and confusion continued to weaken the Mughals in the Deccan. Abdur Rahim Khan Khanan with his son Shah Nawaz Khan was in charge of the Deccan affairs; they could not control the quarrelling Mughal generals. Malik Ambar renewed his alliance with Bijapur and Golkonda and in 1620 broke the treaty of 1617. The Mughals gained victories but to no purpose. The Maratha guerilla horse organised by Malik Ambar swept over a considerable portion of Mughal Deccan. Malik Ambar even besieged Burhanpur. Shah Jahan was re-appointed. His advent was succeeded by a vigorous offensive. The siege of Burhanpur was raised by Malik Ambar. Kharki was taken and demolished by the Mughals. Malik Ambar submitted; he ceded all the Imperial territory he had taken, together with some adjoining districts. It was arranged that nazrana would be paid by all the Deccan Sultanates—18 lakhs by Bijapur, 12 by Ahmadnagar and 20 by Golkonda.

In 1623 the Mughals concluded a separate treaty with Adil Shah of Bijapur who became allied with the Mughals. Malik Ambar as a reply drew closer to Golkonda, concluded an alliance with its ruler Qutb-ul-Mulk, routed the Bijapur forces in Bidar, and even besieged Bijapur. The Mughals hurried to the help of the Bijapur Sultan. Shah Jahan, now a rebel against his father, joined Malik Ambar and besieged Burhanpur.
Jahangir sent Parvez with Mahabat Khan to the South. Shah Jahan submitted and Malik Ambar had to fall back, but Mahabat Khan was at this stage recalled. The Mughal campaign in the South languished.

Malik Ambar died in 1626. "History records no other instance of an Abyssinian slave arriving at such eminence." This minister-in-chief of the Nizam Shahi dynasty is deservedly famous not merely for his successful resistance to Mughal advance in the South but also for his measures for public benefit—survey of village lands, registration of property, and revised assessments. He also unconsciously nourished the Maratha power into strength. Jahangir could do no more than re-occupy the previous conquests of the Mughal Empire in the Deccan.

RELATIONS WITH PERSIA

Shah Abbas (1587-1629), the greatest of the Safavi monarchs of Persia, was the contemporary of Jahangir. He was certainly more able and more vigorous than his predecessors—Shah Tahmasp, the contemporary of Humayun and Akbar, and Shah Ismail, the founder of the Safavi line who had once helped Babur. Shah Abbas wanted to regain Qandahar, in view of its commercial and strategic importance. The Persian attempt to take Qandahar in 1606 was not successful. The Persians next adopted the policy of lulling the suspicions of Jahangir. A Persian embassy arrived at the Mughal court in 1611, and the ambassador stayed there for two years. In 1613 a Mughal embassy was sent in return and in 1615 a second Persian embassy arrived at Delhi. In 1616-1617 the third and the most magnificent of the Persian embassies arrived at Delhi. A fourth embassy with presents arrived in 1620. The Mughals believed in the peaceful professions of the Persians and perhaps neglected the defences of Qandahar. Shah Abbas suddenly besieged the great fort in 1622. There were at that time factions wrangling at Delhi. After a siege of 45 days Shah Abbas succeeded in taking Qandahar. Jahangir planned a great expedition for its recovery. But Shah Jahan, who was asked to take the command, could not go to such a distance and endanger his succession. He chose, instead, to rebel against his father.
NUR JAHAN’S ASCENDANCY

The most dominating personality in the Imperial court during the years 1611-1627 was Nur Jahan, whom Jahangir married in 1611. Tradition envelopes Nur Jahan’s career in a systematic romance. Meher-un-nisa (as Nur Jahan was called before her marriage with the Emperor) was born of Persian parents who had emigrated from Persia to India under very indigent circumstances. Her father entered the service of Akbar. Jahangir is said to have conceived a violent passion for her, but Akbar disapproved of the alliance, caused her to be married to Ali Quli Istajlu (who had the title of Sher Afkun or tiger thrower) and posted him to Bengal. Shortly after the accession of Jahangir, Sher Afkun stabbed Qutb-ud-din, Governor of Bengal, on the occasion of a visit to him and was killed by the attendants. The widow of Sher Afkun was sent to Agra, and some years later her marriage with the Emperor took place. An attempt has been made to knock the bottom out of this romantic story and to show that she actually caught the eye of Jahangir for the first time in a fancy bazar in 1611.

Charming and dominating, with her beauty and her abilities, she became not only the head of the female society of the capital but was openly recognised as a powerful political force. A new comage was struck in her name with the following inscription: “By order of King Jahangir, gold has a hundred splendours added to it by receiving the name of Nur Jahan, the queen Began.” Her father, with the title Itimad-ud-daula, became practically the chief minister, and her brother Itiqad Khan, later styled Asaf Khan, was appointed master of the household and began a brilliant official career in 1611. In 1612 her niece, Mumtaz Mahal, daughter of Asaf Khan, was married to Khurram, who was likely to be the successor of Jahangir, as the ablest of his sons. The clique composed of Nur Jahan, Itimad-ud-daula, Asaf Khan and Prince Khurram dominated the court for the next ten years, although Jahangir was always a factor to reckon with. But by the year 1622, we find Itimad-ud-daula dead, and the masterful Empress and the ambitious Prince (Shah Jahan) open enemies of each other. The older nobility, of whom Mahabat Khan was the ablest, helpless up to now, ought to be more assertive. Politics became faction.
REBELLION OF SHAH JAHAN

In view of the failing health of Jahangir, factious intrigues and manoeuvres characterised the last years of his reign. Ladila Begam, Nur Jahan’s daughter by Sher Afkun, was married to Shahriyar, the youngest of Jahangir’s sons. This worthless Prince served as Nur Jahan’s instrument: she wanted to put him on the throne in place of masterful Shah Jahan.

The first portentous event was the death or murder of Khusrau. The tragic end of this unfortunate Prince occurred in 1622. He had been made over to the custody of Shah Jahan, who reported from the Deccan that he died of colic pain. Contemporary public opinion regarded his death as a case of murder.

Shah Jahan, who was responsible for this crime, if it was a murder, himself soon after felt the ground rocking beneath his feet. Asked to lead the Qandahar campaign, he thought it unwise to go to such a distance with his father in failing health and with Nur Jahan dominating the court and poisoning his ears. He proposed impossible conditions and then rebelled. Jahangir’s opinion of him at this stage is thus recorded by the scribe, “Shah Jahan is unworthy of all the favour and cherishing I bestowed on him.” Parvez was recognised practically as the heir-apparent and Shahriyar was put in command of the Qandahar expedition, which could not, however, be organised in view of Shah Jahan’s rebellion. Shah Jahan was defeated in the battle of Billochpur in March, 1623. He fled to Mandu and then to the Deccan, the Imperial army under Parvez and Mahabat Khan hunting him from place to place. From the Deccan he escaped via Orissa to Bengal, seized Rajmahal, entered Patna and took possession of Bihar. The pursuing Imperial army under Parvez and Mahabat Khan compelled him to raise the siege of Allahabad, and defeated him. He fled again to the Deccan, joined Malik Ambar, and besieged Buxar. As Parvez and Mahabat again approached he raised the siege. He now asked for pardon, surrendered Rohtas and Asirgarh, the two forts he still held, and sent his sons Dara and Aurangzeb as hostages. He was pardoned and given the government of Balaghath. This civil
and lasted three years, and besides involving the loss of the lives of some of the best Mughal officers, postponed the recovery of Quandahar. In the language of Jahangir, Shah Jahan's rebellion struck with an axe the foot of his own dominion and became a stumbling block in the path of the enterprise."

REBELLION OF MAHABAT KHAN

Mahabat Khan, the man primarily responsible for the defeat of Shah Jahan, was regarded by Nur Jahan with suspicion. He was separated from Parvez and ordered to go to Bengal. He was asked to furnish an escheat account; his son-in-law was brutally treated. It appeared to him that his ruin was imminent. Jahangir and Nur Jahan were at that time on their way to Kabul. On the banks of the Jhelum Mahabat Khan surrounded the Imperial camp with his Rajput horsemen and captured the Emperor, intending to secure his own terms. Nur Jahan tried to lead an attack on Mahabat Khan's men, but she failed and decided to join her husband in his captivity. So Mahabat Khan's coup-de-main was successful, but success was short-lived. The Imperial army, now commanded by him, proceeded to Kabul with the Emperor and the Empress. At Kabul Nur Jahan succeeded in releasing her husband by a stratagem. It was now Mahabat Khan's turn to fly. He joined Shah Jahan in the Deccan. Shah Jahan in his distress was thinking of escaping to Persia, but events took a very favourable turn for him. Parvez died in October, 1626, and Jahangir himself died in October, 1627. Shah Jahan hurried up from the Deccan to secure his inheritance.

CHARACTER OF JAHANGIR

Terry observes about Jahangir, "Now for the disposition of that King it ever seemed unto me to be composed of extremes: for sometimes he was cruel and at other times he would seem to be exceedingly fair and gentle". He was cruel enough to be able to stand by and see men flayed alive; at the same time he was gifted with a fine aesthetic taste and a real love of nature. His literary attainments are clearly expressed in his memoirs, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri. Probably intemperance blunted his qualities. In religion he was not a bigot, but he did not inherit his father's eclecticism.
SECTION II

SHAH JAHAN

SUCCESSION

Shah Jahan ascended the throne in February, 1628. Between the death of Jahangir in October, 1627, and the accession of Shah Jahan the attempt of Shahriyar to occupy the throne was frustrated by Shah Jahan’s father-in-law, Asaf Khan. While Shah Jahan was hurrying up from the Deccan, Asaf Khan set up Khusrau’s son Dawar Baksh as a stop-gap Emperor, defeated Shahriyar and blinded him. On the approach of Shah Jahan, Dawar Baksh was allowed to escape to Persia where he became a pensioner of the Shah.

CAPTURE OF HUGHLI (1632)

The Portuguese established themselves in Bengal towards the close of the sixteenth century. They established their chief station at Hughli (near Calcutta), which gradually became an important commercial centre. But they offended the Mughal authorities by exacting heavy duties from the local merchants, and they created consternation by kidnapping children whom they converted to Christianity. Under Shah Jahan’s orders Qasim Ali Khan, Governor of Bengal, captured Hughli after three months’ siege. Many Portuguese were killed and a large number of them were sent as captives to Agra.

DECCAN AFFAIRS: EXTINCTION OF AHMADNAGAR (1633)

Shah Jahan, securely seated on the throne, was free to pursue a vigorous policy in the Deccan. Malik Ambar was dead and his son, Fath Khan, was not trusted by the Nizam Shahi monarch Murtaza II. I’ve imprisoned Fath Khan and formed an alliance with Khan Jahan Lodi, an Afghan noble who was in rebellion against Shah Jahan. Shah Jahan decided to attack the various strategic points of Ahmadnagar simultaneously. At the same time the Maratha chiefs received great support and encouragement from the Mughals. Murtaza II in his distress released Fath Khan, who murdered him and set up a boy King named Husain Shah (1630). Fath Khan agreed to recite the
and to strike coins in the Emperor's name. The rebellion of Khan Jahan Lodi was suppressed. Mahabat Khan was appointed Governor of the Deccan. The new Nizam Shahi capital, Daulatabad, was captured with Husain Shah, the last king of the dynasty, in 1633. Thus the Nizam Shahi Sultanate came to an inglorious end.

Deccan Affairs: Bijapur and Golkonda

A fresh complication now arose. The Sultans of Bijapur and Golkonda tried to take advantage of the collapse of Ahmadnagar and seize their adjoining territories. Shahji, father of the celebrated Shivaji, set up a puppet Nizam Shahi monarch and governed in his name a portion of the Nizam Shahi dominions. He was encouraged and assisted by Adil Shah of Bijapur. Parenda, a very strong fort which was formerly in the hands of the Nizam Shahi Sultans, was now seized by the Sultan of Bijapur. Mahabat Khan attempted to take it but failed. He was censured by Shah Jahan and died of a broken heart in 1634.

The Emperor made a supreme effort to consolidate his position in the Deccan. He himself came to the Deccan to direct the operations in February, 1636. Three Mughal armies totalling 50,000 were to attack Bijapur and Golkonda and another numbering 8,000 was to seize Junnar, Poona, Chakan and Konkan territories which were being administered by Shahji. Abdulla Qutb Shah of Golkonda was too timid to think of a stiff resistance. He promised to pay an annual tribute of 8 lakhs and recognised the Mughal Emperor as his suzerain. The Sultan of Bijapur, however, offered opposition. The Mughal armies entered into his territory and advanced, burning and devasting. Internal disturbances also distracted the Bijapur State. In May, 1636, the Sultan of Bijapur agreed to a compromise. By the terms of the treaty then concluded Adil Shah recognised Mughal overlordship, and promised to respect the boundary of the State of Golkonda and to pay an indemnity of 20 lakhs of rupees; but no annual tribute was to be paid. He got a portion of Ahmadnagar territory including the Poona district and North Konkan, yielding a revenue of 80 lakhs of rupees. The rest of Ahmadnagar territory was annexed
to the Mughal Empire. Shahji was hemmed in by the Mughals and their allies—the Bijapuris, and at Mahuli in North Konkan he had to make a complete surrender. He gave up the puppet Nizam Shah and all the forts and territories occupied by him. He was allowed to retain a small jagir in the Poona district which he held as a vassal of Bijapur.

DECCAN AFFAIRS: AURANGZEB AS VICEROY (1636-44, 1652-57)

The affairs of the Deccan were thus settled; the Mughal boundary as also the boundary of the Sultanates of Bijapur and Golkonda were clearly demarcated. In July, 1636, Shah Jahan returned to Northern India, leaving his third son Aurangzeb as the viceroy of the Deccan with the seat of his government at Aurangabad. This town, originally founded by Malik Ambar at the village of Kharki, was named after Aurangzeb, who from his seat there administered the four provinces of which the Mughal portion of the Deccan was then composed. In 1638 the young viceroy sent an army to conquer Baglana, a small kingdom on the main route from the Deccan to Gujarat, which was easily taken. Aurangzeb's first viceroyalty ended very suddenly in his disgrace and dismissal in 1644. Restored to power in 1645, he was sent to Gujarat and thence to Balkh and Badakshan. In the Deccan there was a succession of short and incompetent viceroys. Aurangzeb was re-appointed in 1652. Fortunately for the Mughals, nothing happened to disturb peace in the Deccan during the period 1644-52.

When Aurangzeb came to the Deccan for the second time in 1652 as its Subahdar, he found that the country had been very badly administered, the revenue had fallen off and the cultivated area had decreased. With the unsubdued States of Bijapur and Golkonda across the frontier, it was necessary to keep a large force in the Deccan. The income did not balance the expenditure and the young viceroy had to ask his father frequently for a subvention. This often led to a financial wrangle between the father and the son. Aurangzeb, however, fortunately found a revenue officer of rare ability in Murshid

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1 At this time Mughal Deccan consisted of four provinces: (1) Khandesh, (2) Berar, (3) Telingana, (4) Ahmadnagar.
Quli Khan who made his administration memorable in the land revenue history of the Deccan. Murshid Quli Khan was an emigrant from Khurasan. As Aurangzeb's Dewan in the Deccan he was responsible for extending Todar Mal's revenue system to the South. But he modified Todar Mal's system to suit local conditions; in backward areas he did not insist on survey and assessment but recognised the old usage of fixed lump payment per plough or the method of sharing the actual produce. Murshid Quli's assessment was lenient. He re-peopled deserted villages and restored normal life. To reorganise ruined villages, capital was advanced when required.

Not content with success as an administrator in the Deccan, Aurangzeb was also eager to pursue a policy of aggression against the Sultanates of Bijapur and Golkonda. He wanted to secure for himself and his supporters the immense riches and resources of these two States. Golkonda was very fertile, its capital Hyderabad was the centre of the world's diamond trade, and its monarch Qutb Shah was rich, weak and worthless. The Bijapur monarch, Muhammad Adil Shah (1626-56), ruled over a Kingdom that stretched from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal across the entire Indian Peninsula. He died in 1656 and the succession of Adil Shah II, a young man of eighteen, was followed by disorder, of which the ambitious Mughal viceroy was anxious to take full advantage.

AURANGZEB AS VICEROY: WAR WITH GOLKONDA (1656)

With Golkonda Aurangzeb had frequent causes of quarrel. The annual tribute was in terms of hun, a gold coin of South India whose exchange value rose from Rs. 4/- to Rs. 5/-. But Qutb Shah wanted to pay tribute at the old rate. He made extensive conquests in Karnataka (i.e., country south of the Krishna). The Mughal viceroy complained that this was done without the permission of his suzerain, the Mughal Emperor. Finally, the affair of Mir Jumla precipitated a war in 1656.

Muhammad Said, famous in history as 'Mir Jumla' (an official title of the Golkonda State), was a Sayyid of Ardistan in Persia. The son of an oil merchant of Isfahan, this Shia adventurer sought a career as a merchant in the Shia State of Golkonda and rose to be the prime minister of the State.
He became perhaps the richest man in the South, the owner of twenty maunds of diamonds. With an excellent park of artillery manned by European gunners and effective—almost independent—authority over the Golkonda portion of Karnataka where he had secured an extensive domain, he overshadowed his own very incompetent sovereign Abdulla Qutb Shah. A rupture between the two was inevitable, and Mir Jumla's son, Muhammad Amin, by his defiant conduct at the Darbar precipitated it. He was thrown into prison in November, 1655.

This was Aurangzeb's opportunity. Mir Jumla was already negotiating to join the Mughals. He and his son were appointed in Mughal service. On hearing of the captivity of Muhammad Amin, Shah Jahan issued a peremptory order for his release, and in case of his continued detention, the Emperor sanctioned the invasion of Golkonda. Already intent upon declaring war, Aurangzeb very adroitly used this conditional permission to achieve his purpose. He did not give Qutb Shah any opportunity to obey this peremptory order and treated his non-compliance as a sufficient cause of war. Golkonda was invaded in February, 1656. Thus this war was not so much due to Shah Jahan as to Aurangzeb, and it would be wrong to regard this as the culmination of the policy pursued by Shah Jahan. It was pre-eminently the outcome of viceregal rather than imperial aggression, a forerunner of the policy to be pursued if the viceroy of the Deccan succeeded in becoming the Emperor of India.

The Golkonda campaign was short and swift. Prince Muhammad Sultan, Aurangzeb's eldest son, entered Hyderabad. Qutb Shah fled to Golkonda, which was besieged by Aurangzeb in person. The siege progressed slowly. Aurangzeb refused to make terms, arguing in his letters to his father in favour of annexation. But Qutb Shah's agent at Delhi succeeded in winning over Dara Shukoh, the eldest son of Shah Jahan, from whom the Emperor learnt the story of Aurangzeb's manoeuvre. The Emperor was indignant and issued peremptory orders to raise the siege. Peace was concluded on 30th March, 1656. The Sultan of Golkonda paid a war indemnity as also arrears of tribute amounting to a crore of rupees, and ceded a district. Mir Jumla came to Aurangzeb's camp and was thence summoned to Delhi, where he was appointed prime minister in the place
of Sadulla Khan who had died recently. There was still one subject of discord with Golkonda. Qutb Shah regarded what was known as Hyderabadic Karnatak as his own. The Mughals considered it as Mir Jumla’s jagir.

AURANGZEB AS VICEROY: WAR WITH BIJAPUR (1657)

With Mir Jumla at Delhi the policy of aggression was triumphant there. Muhammad Adil Shah of Bijapur died in November, 1656, and was succeeded by his young son, Ali Adil Shah II. Aurangzeb falsely represented to his father that Ali Adil Shah II was not really a son of the deceased Bijapur monarch but a lad of obscure parentage, brought up in the royal harem. Shah Jahan sanctioned invasion, granting Aurangzeb permission to ‘settle the affairs of Bijapur as he thought fit’. Bidar fell, Kalyani capitulated, and the way to Bijapur was open. The Sultan opened negotiations at the Imperial court, and Dara intervened on his behalf. Shah Jahan ordered Aurangzeb to make peace on the cession of the forts of Bidar, Kalyani and Parenda and the payment of a war indemnity of one crore of rupees. Soon afterwards Shah Jahan fell ill, and in anticipation of an impending chaos in Mughal affairs the Bijapuris refused to surrender Parenda.

CENTRAL ASIAN POLICY

Balkh and Badakhshan were regarded as the heritage of Babur, and lay on the way to Samarkand, the capital of Timur and the scene of Babur’s early triumphs and vicissitudes. The Mughal Emperors were so long preoccupied with their wars and conquests in Northern India and the Deccan. After the settlement of affairs in the Deccan in 1636, Shah Jahan felt that he was free to try to win the heritage of Babur.

Nazar Muhammad, the incompetent ruler of Balkh and Badakhshan, mismanaged the affairs of his state; rebellions broke out everywhere. Even his son Abdul Aziz was up in arms against him. Fearful of his security, he invited Shah

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1 In Russian chronicles there is reference to an envoy sent by Babur to Moscow. During the years 1613-1645 Indian traders settled on the Volga. In 1625 an Indian scrai was built in Astrakhan. In 1695 a Russian trade agent visited India. (Nehru, Discovery of India, p. 308).
Jahan to help him. A Mughal army advanced under Prince Murad in 1646 to take advantage of this turmoil. Badakhshan and Bakh were occupied. Nazar Muhammad in consternation started for Isfahan. But Murad, anxious to leave the dull and uncongenial land of Central Asia, returned to India, leaving his army leaderless there. Aurangzeb was then sent with Ali Mardan Khan, the Persian who had surrendered Qandahar. Meanwhile, Abdul Aziz continued opposition to Mughal conquest and consolidation. The Mughals found it impossible to control the elusive Uzbegs who crossed the vulnerable line of the Oxus and attacked or sacked Mughal outposts. The Emperor at last decided to abandon Balkh; the fort was handed over to Nazar Muhammad’s agents in October, 1647.

The main reasons for the failure of the Balkh expedition were that the Mughal nobles did not like the idea of serving in that distant and inhospitable region. They had become too much accustomed to a life of luxurious dalliance to find grim Central Asia suitable to their taste. They have been described as “pale persons in muslin petticoats.” Moreover, they could not secure the sympathies of the local people. The expedition cost the Indian treasury 4 crores of rupees, but not an inch of territory was gained.

RELATIONS WITH PERSIA

In 1629 Shah Abbas I of Persia died and Shah Safi succeeded Safdar Khan, the Mughal envoy to Persia, informed his master that Persia was exposed to Turkish attacks as also to the incursions of the Uzbegs and the Astrakhsans. Another envoy was sent to Persia to ascertain the truth of these reports, ostensibly to assure the Shah of the friendly attitude of the Delhi Empire. Ali Mardan Khan, the Persian governor of Qandahar, had his differences with his sovereign. He was persuaded to surrender Qandahar to the Mughals, and was given a very high rank in the Mughal peerage. The Persians tried to recover it, but were repulsed. Fortunately for the Mughals, Shah Safi was busy campaigning against Murad IV, “the fighting Sultan of Turkey”, and when peace was concluded between Persia and Turkey, the Mughal position in Qandahar was already consolidated.
Shah Safi died in 1642. Abbas II, who succeeded, was a mere boy and there were troubles almost inevitable during a minority. The Mughal failure in the Balkh-Badakhshan campaign, however, lowered Mughal prestige and encouraged Persia. When Shah Abbas II came of age he made his preparations in great secrecy. Qandahar was invested by the Persians in December, 1648, and occupied in February, 1649. The failure of the Mughals was due to lack of vigilance as also delay in sending a relieving force.

But Mughal prestige demanded that Qandahar must be taken back. The first expedition under Aurangzeb and Sadulla Khan with 50,000 troops arrived in May, 1649. The fort was completely invested, but the lack of large cannon made it impossible to make any impression on the fort. Though in a pitched battle 24 miles south-west of Qandahar the Mughals essentially defeated a Persian army, they had to raise the siege. The Persian artillery was much better than that of the Mughals and the Persian commander, Mihrab Khan, was an exceptionally able man.

A second attempt was made in 1652 by Aurangzeb and Sadulla Khan. The incidents of the first siege were repeated. The Indian gunners could make no impression on the fort walls. The siege had again to be abandoned. A third attempt was made in April, 1653, under the leadership of Dara Shukoh. He had some success in the preliminary operations, but in the end he had to confess his failure. Mughal inferiority in fire arms was mainly responsible for this humiliating failure to re-occupy Qandahar. These three sieges cost more than 10 crores of rupees; their failure ruined Mughal prestige and enhanced proportionately the military prestige of Persia. “For years afterwards the Persian peril hung like a dark cloud on the western frontier of India”.

WAR OF SUCCESSION (1657-1660)

On September 6, 1657, Shah Jahan suddenly fell ill. A struggle for succession was a rule rather than an exception in Timurid history. But the war that now began was more sanguinary than the succession troubles in the previous reigns because the contestants were now almost equally poised, ‘each
of them having a princely train. Dara, the eldest of Shah Jahan's sons, held the viceroyalties of Allahabad, the Punjab, and Multan, which he governed through deputies. He was a commander of 40,000 horse and held an almost royal position as his father's chosen successor. Because of Shah Jahan's excessive fondness for him "he never acquired experience in the arts of war and government; he never learnt to judge men by the crucial test of danger and difficulty; and he lost touch with the active army". Shuja, the second son of Shah Jahan, was for seventeen years Governor of Bengal. Indolent by nature, but capable of great energy on occasions, he was incapable of any sustained effort. The third son, Aurangzeb, was the fittest of the brothers in this struggle for survival. Cold, calculating, adept in intrigue and trained in the school of experience, he was recognised by the courtiers as the ablest of Shah Jahan's sons, as the man most likely to emerge triumphant. The impetuous, pleasure-seeking, foolish Murad, the youngest of the brothers, was the Governor of Gujarat; with all his recklessness he was no match for the deep artifice of Aurangzeb, with whom he formed an alliance at the very beginning of the contest.

At the beginning, on receiving the news of Shah Jahan's illness, the three brothers combined against Dara. With Murad Aurangzeb was in a position to act in concert. Shuja was at a great distance and it was not possible to co-operate with him directly. There was an agreement to meet near Agra. The ostensible object of this understanding among the three brothers was to free the Emperor from the yoke of Dara. Meanwhile Dara had begun to strengthen his position. He transacted all public business in the Emperor's name. Orders were issued to Mir Jumla and other nobles who were in the Deccan to return to North India. A reshuffling of the provinces was projected.

Shah Jahan sufficiently recovered by the middle of November, 1657. Events, however, moved very fast. Murad crowned himself at Ahmadabad in December; Shuja also proclaimed himself Emperor in Bengal. Aurangzeb, having completed his preparations and being joined by Mir Jumla with his excellent park of artillery, set out from Burhanpur in March, 1658. He
crossed the Narbada in April and was joined by Murad near Ujjain. Aurangzeb had already entered into a solemn treaty with Murad that, in case of success, the latter would get the Punjab, Afghanistan, Kashmir and Sind and reign over this region as an independent King.

The first battle of this civil war was fought at Bahadurpur, near Benares, on February 14, 1658. Here Shuja was defeated by Dara’s army, led by his son, Sulaiman Shukoh, and Raja Jai Singh of Ambar. Raja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur and Qasim Khan were sent to oppose the advance of Aurangzeb and Murad. The hostile armies met at Dharmat, near Ujjain, on April 15, 1658. The Imperial army numbered over 35,000, exactly equaling in strength the army under the two brothers. But there was no unity in the Imperial camp—Qasim Khan rendered no assistance to Jaswant Singh—and the valiant Raja of Marwar was not a good leader. Aurangzeb secured a decisive victory, which was naturally regarded as a good omen by his supporters. “At one blow he had brought Dara from a position of immense superiority to one of equality with his own or even lower.”

The most decisive battle of the war was, however, fought at Samugarh, near Agra. After his victory at Dharmat Aurangzeb crossed the Chambal and met an Imperial army under Dara himself. In the battle (29th May, 1658) the Imperialists numbered 50,000. But excepting the Rajput contingent and Dara’s own troops the rest were unreliable, and Khalilullah Khan, one of the leading Amirs, had already been corrupted by Aurangzeb. No victory was perhaps more complete and no defeat was perhaps more disastrous. Ten thousand supporters of Dara fell in this fight and among the slain were Imperial commandants of highest rank—nine Rajputs and nineteen Muslim chiefs are mentioned by name. This battle really decided the war of succession.

The rest of the story is soon told. After the battle of Samugarh Dara fled to the Punjab. Aurangzeb entered Agra and the long captivity of Shah Jahan began in June, 1658. In the same month Murad was imprisoned by Aurangzeb; he lingered in the fort at Gwalior until December, 1661, when he was beheaded. After Murad’s imprisonment Aurangzeb pro-
ceeded to crush Dara. Dara for sometime tried to hold the
of the Beas, but Aurangzeb successfully sowed dissension in his
army. The unfortunate Prince abandoned Lahore, fled to
Multan and thence to Sind, and then entered Gujarat. He
wanted to make a dash towards Agra on learning that Shuja
had advanced beyond Allahabad. On the way he received an
invitation from Jaswant Singh who promised to join him with
the Rathors. But Aurangzeb completely defeated Shuja at
Khajwa on January 5, 1659, and by means of mingled threats
of invasion and hopes of promotion won over Jaswant Singh
with the help of Mirza Raja Jai Singh of Ambar. Deserted by
the Rajputs, Dara decided to hold the pass of Deorai. It was
a hotly contested engagement, and Aurangzeb owed his success
largely to Raja Rajrup of the Jammu hills and his people who
were expert in mountaineering and who by a secret movement
turned Dara’s left rear (March, 1659). After this defeat Dara
fled to Ahmadabad and then retreated to Sind with a view to
fly to Persia by way of Qandahar. Malik Jiwan, a Baluchi
chief of Dara (near the Bolan Pass), whose life he had once
saved, was approached for shelter, for Dara counted on his
fidelity. But the ungrateful chief treacherously arrested Dara
and handed him over to the imperialists. Dara was put to death
on the 30th August, 1659.

Shuja, defeated at the very beginning of the civil war by
Dara’s army at Bahadurpur, was defeated again by Aurangzeb
at Khajwa. He was then closely pursued by Muhammad
Sultan, Aurangzeb’s eldest son, and Mir Jumla. Shuja, how-
ever, secretly won the Prince over, and offered him the hand
of his daughter Gulrukh Begam. The war continued in
Bengal, Mir Jumla leading the Delhi army. Mir Jumla’s
strength continued to increase. Tanda, Shuja’s head-quarters,
was threatened. Shuja had to abandon Bengal; in May, 1660,
he fled to Arakan with only 40 followers. According to a
Dutch report, he was slain there by the Maghs in 1661.

Prince Muhammad Sultan had in course of the Bengal
campaign rejoined the Imperial side. He was destined to pass
the rest of his life in prison. Dara’s eldest son, Prince Sulaiman
Shukoh, had fled to the Raja of Srinagar in Garhwal in 1658.
He was captured in 1660 and killed by slow poisoning in the
out of Gwalior in 1662. Shah Jahan remained closely confined at the Agra fort until January 22, 1666, when he died a natural death. Aurangzeb's treatment of his father 'outraged not only in moral sense but also the social decorum of the age'.

NAHIMATE OF SHAH JEHAN

Shah Jahan was neither a great man nor a great ruler, but the whole he had a successful career which was brought to an ignominious end by the civil war of 1657-60. As an administrator he enjoyed a well-deserved reputation for justice and clemency. He did much to alleviate the sufferings of the people during the terrible famines which devastated the Deccan and Gujerat in 1630-32. He was, however, probably unconscious of the fundamental defects in the administration and economic systems of his empire. Bernier says that the oppression of the Provincial Governor 'often deprived the peasant and artisan of the necessaries of life'. The costly bureaucracy and the army imposed a heavy burden on the people, which was further increased by the splendid monuments erected by Shah Jahan. While the resources of the tax-payer were being systematically drained, the army was steadily losing its efficiency and prestige. The failure of the Mughal army in Central Asia and in Quadahar revealed disquieting symptoms of weakness which came into prominence in the eighteenth century.

In religion Shah Jahan's reign marks the beginning of that reaction which reached its climax under Aurangzeb. He revived the pilgrim tax, stopped the construction of temples, and encouraged conversion to Islam. Probably his intolerance was curbed to some extent by the liberalism of his favourite son Dara. He was a devoted husband and a loving father, and the aspersions cast on his character by some European travellers are probably baseless.

ADMINISTRATION OF JAHANGIR AND SHAH JAHAN

Smith gives the following estimate of Jahangir's administration: "The administration was not good. Every Governor could do much as he pleased and ruthless severity was relied on for the repression of crime". He also dismisses the evidence of Manucci, the Italian traveller, that Shah Jahan governed his
Empire 'most perfectly' and relies upon Bernier's testimony to assert that the country was misgoverned. There is little doubt that Jahangir's laxity was responsible for considerable inefficiency in the Mansabdari organisation, but Shah Jahan, capable and masterful, was responsible for a drastic reorganisation.¹ In the words of Moreland, though the quality of administration varied from place to place, its framework was substantially identical and there was uniformity rather than diversity.

In one respect, however, a departure from Akbar's system is visible. In the matter of land revenue 'orders issued in the eighth year of Aurangzeb's reign show that the assessors proposed each year a lump sum and applied Akbar's method of land revenue collection only when a village or a larger area refused. The village as a whole became more directly subject to the assessors and the individual peasants to the stronger men among them. There was increase of pressure on the assessors and land-revenue met the increased demand of the State... his successors insisted on the largest possible area of cultivation and raised the standard of the State's demand from one-third of the gross produce to one-half."

The greatest check on officials and assignees was the fear of the displeasure of the Emperor, and every body was anxious to avoid a scandal at the court. In the days of Jahangir, and more emphatically in the days of Shah Jahan, monarchical supervision was a factor to reckon with in administration. Shah Jahan was a kind and wise master, with a very respectable number of able officers around him. There are several instances in which he dismissed harsh and exacting governors on the complaint of the people. There was another check on official tyranny. What is forgotten is that in those days it was not so much the individual as the community that counted. Communal pressure on the revenue officers is still a part of the traditions of the country. "In 1616, an officer employed in the customs house at Surat did some violence to a leading Hindu merchant whereupon the whole multitude assembled, shut up their shops and after a general complaint to the Governor left the city, pretending to go to the court for justice but with

¹ See pp. 356-357.
such fair usage and fairer promises were fetched back". There are many such instances. Besides the strong communal pressure we should also keep in mind the fact that there was a system of credit extending over a wide area which was independent of political limits and which served as a check on individual whims and caprices.

The great bulk of the revenue continued to be assigned to officers in the Mughal State service. William Hawkins, the first Englishman who held an assignment, gives us an idea that the assignments were characterised by instability. A new practice was introduced in the reign of Jahangir—the practice of making an Illamgha grant, which could be annulled only by the authority of the Emperor and could not be resumed or varied like other assignments in the ordinary course of administration. When Shah Jahan reorganised the finances of the empire he made arrangements that sufficient areas should be reserved for the treasury. The practice of assignment continued throughout the reign of Aurangzeb but towards the end the practice of naming the land revenue replaced assignments, when the Emperor could no longer guarantee the peaceful enjoyment of the assignment.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Bem Prasad, *Jahangir*.
B. P. Saksena, *Shah Jahan*.
Ibn Hasan, *The Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*.
P. Saran, *Provincial Government of the Mughals*.
Moreland, *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*. 
CHAPTER XIX

AURANGZEB

SECTION 1

THE FIRST HALF OF THE REIGN

The victor of Dharmat, Samugarh, Deorai and Khajwa was formally enthroned in June, 1659, and assumed the title of 'Alamgir'. His reign is divided into two almost equal parts, the first (1658-1681) of which was passed in Northern India and the second (1682-1707) in the Deccan. During the first half of the reign the centre of interest was in the North where the most important events happened. The north-eastern frontier, the north-western frontier and Rajputana were the scenes of Mughal military activity in Northern India. In the South Shivaji was during this period welding the Marathas into a nation in defiance of Mughal authority, though he was not formally crowned as an independent monarch until 1674. He kept the Mughals busy in the South during this period. During the second half Northern India was so much neglected that it became a place of secondary importance and the Emperor with his court, soldiers and best officers lived in the South where momentous events happened.

THE NORTH-EASTERN FRONTIER

Mir Jumla was appointed viceroy of Bengal with orders to "punish the lawless zamindars of the province, especially those of Assam and Magh (Arracan)." The Mughal frontier had been pushed in 1612 to Goalpara and Kamrup in western Assam, a Mughal Faujda, being stationed at Gauhati; but the Ahoms had violated this frontier, and the Raja of Cooch Bihar had also defied Mughal authority. Starting from Dacca in 1661 Mir Jumla annexed Cooch Bihar and entered Assam. In March, 1662, the invading army reached Garhgaon, the Ahom capital; the spoils taken were enormous. The Ahom King, Jayadhwaj Singh, being put to flight, the Mughal fleet completely anni-
AURANGZEB'S CONQUESTS

mediated Ahom naval power. But the rainy season enabled the
Ahoms to attack the isolated Mughal outposts. Supplies failed,
communications between the army and the navy were cut off by
Ahoms, and an epidemic broke out in the Mughal camps.
When the rainy season was over, Mir Jumla resumed the
offensive and successfully won over some of the lieutenants of
the Ahom King; but he fell seriously ill, the Mughal army
itself now got almost out of control. A treaty was concluded
on nominally favourable terms, the Ahom King agreeing to
pay a heavy war indemnity and an annual tribute and to cede
some districts. Mir Jumla died on his way to Dacca in March,
1663. The districts ceded by the Ahom King were soon after
lost to the Mughals, and even Gauhati was wrested from them
four years after Mir Jumla's death. A long desultory warfare
began between the Mughals and the Ahoms, which was, how-
ever, fruitless for the Mughals. The ruler of Cooch Bihar, who
had recovered his dominion, was, however, compelled to cede
Rangpur and western Kamrup.

Shaiesta Khan, Mir Jumla's successor in the Viceroyalty of
Bengal, conquered Chatgaon (Chittagong) from the King of
Arakan in 1666. The Arakanese were worsted in naval combats
and Chatgaon was made the seat of a Mughal Faujdar. Shaiesta
Khan also captured the island of Sandwip in the Bay of
Bengal.

THE NORTH-WESTERN FRONTIER

The Pathan clans living in the villages leading from India
to Afghanistan and in the hills around rendered unwilling
allegiance to the Mughals and were always ready to take
advantage of a weak governor or a foreign war to raise commo-
tions. The Mughal Government practically recognised the right
of these hillmen,—the Afridis, the Yusufzais, the Khattaks and
others,—to levy toll on the traffic between India and Kabul;
but tribal risings were nonetheless quite frequent.

In 1667 the Yusufzais suddenly revolted, rushed down in
large numbers, devastated Chuch and cut off communications
between Delhi and Kabul, as also between Kabul and Kashmir.
The Mughal general Muhammad Amin Khan, however, suc-
ceded in quieting them by hard blows. In 1671 Jaswant Singh
of Jodhpur was placed in charge of the important output of Jamrud.

There was a rising of the Afridis and the Khattaks in 1672. The Afridi leader Acmal Khan defeated Muhammad Amin Khan, Governor of Kabul, at Ali Masjid. Muhammad Amin Khan escaped to Peshawar, but ten thousand Mughal soldiers were killed and twenty thousand made captive and the Afridis secured immense booty. The news of the victory resounded far and wide. The Khattak clan, led by the poet chief Khushal Khan, joined the Afridis and the movement was fast becoming a Pathan national uprising against the Mughals. Shujaet Khan was appointed by the Emperor to quell the rebels. Jaswant Singh was to co-operate with him. Shujaet Khan, who had risen from humble origin to high rank through the Emperor's favour, despised the advice of Jaswant Singh and was slain at the Karapa pass. To restore imperial prestige Aurangzeb himself came to Hasan Abdal in June, 1674, and stayed there for more than a year directing operations. Now Imperial diplomacy became as active as Imperial arms. Inspired of reverses the situation was sufficiently retrieved by the end of the year 1675 and the Emperor returned to Delhi. He found a very able and astute Governor in Amir Khan, who conciliated the Afghan chiefs, set clan against clan, broke up the confederacy under Acmal, bribed profusely and kept the passes open to traffic. But Khushal Khan Khattak, the warrior, poet and patriot, kept the flag of Pathan freedom flying until his own son betrayed him and he was imprisoned in the fort of Gwalior.

The Afghan war had far-reaching consequences on Aurangzeb's policy. It was ruinous to Imperial finances. Its political effect was even more harmful. It "made the employment of Afghans in the ensuing Rajput war impossible. Moreover, it relieved the pressure on Shivaji by draining the Deccan of the best Mughal troops for service on the North-Western frontier." Thus the Afghans indirectly contributed to the success of the Rajputs and the Marathas.

RELIGIOUS POLICY

Aurangzeb changed completely the character of the Mughal State as it existed under his predecessors. He wanted to make
At an orthodox Sunni State, although the vast majority of its population consisted of Hindus. He deliberately pursued the policy of converting dar-ul-harb (non-Muslim country) into dar-ul-Islam (realm of Islam). The administrative measures adopted by him in pursuance of this policy were well calculated to attenuate the sympathies of his Hindu subjects all over India. In 1665 an ordinance was issued fixing the customs duty at 25 per cent. on the Muslim and 5 per cent. on the Hindu traders. In 1667 the customs duty on the Muslims was abolished while that on the Hindus remained. In 1669 he issued a general order to Provincial Governors 'to demolish all the schools and temples of infidels'. In 1671 an ordinance was issued that clerks and accountants must be Muslims, but as it was found impossible to run the administration without Hindu assistance, it was ordered that half the peshkars should be Hindu and half Muslim. The Jeziyah, abolished by Akbar, was re-imposed in all parts of the empire in April, 1679, 'to spread Islam and put down the practice of infidelity'. This tax yielded a very large sum. In the province of Gujarat it yielded five lakhs of rupees a year. In 1695 all Hindus, with the exception of the Rajputs, were forbidden to ride palkis, elephants and thoroughbred horses and to carry arms.

Religious orthodoxy is seldom statesmanship. The re-imposition of the Jeziyah must be considered as more disastrous to the Mughal State than was the revocation of the Edict of Nantes to the Monarchy of Louis XIV. Shivaji's protest against the Jeziyah was recorded in a well-reasoned and spirited letter. Raj Singh's protest shaped into a Rathor-Guhilot coalition against the Mughal Empire. The Jeziyah was abolished by Farrukh Siyar in 1713, but it was re-imposed again in 1717; it was, however, not continued by Muhammad Shah, who considered it impolitic to offend his Hindu supporters. Thus this phase of intolerance did not long outlive the Emperor with whose name it remains associated. But Jat, Bundela, Maratha, Rajput and Sikh opposition could not have been so vigorous—and in some cases there would have been support instead of opposition—but for this abandonment of a policy which Akbar had embodied in the Mughal tradition.

The Hindus were not the only victims of Aurangzeb's orthodoxy. The Shias were alienated by his Sunni intolerance,
and the Bohras and the Khojas were persecuted. They could not, however, attempt the foundation of anti-polity as did the Jats, the Bundelas, the Marathas, the Rajputs and the Sikhs.

HINDU RISINGS

In 1669 the Jats of the Mathura region rose under the leadership of a zamindar named Gokla and killed the Mughal Faujdar. They were cruelly suppressed; Gokla was put to death and his family was converted to Islam. The Jats rose again in 1686 under the leadership of Raja Ram, who was defeated and killed some years later. Then the Jats found an able leader named Churaman, who organised a formidable rebellion after Aurangzeb's death.

Aurangzeb's policy of temple destruction led to a Bundel rising. The Bundelas were a Rajput clan settled in the tract which derived its name (i.e., Bundelkhand) from them. Brij Singh Bundela revolted against Akbar towards the close of his reign. Champa Rai rose against Aurangzeb in the early part of his reign; he escaped capture by committing suicide. His son, Chhatrasal, entered the Emperor's service and served under Jai Singh in the Deccan, where he found inspiration in Shivaji's heroic struggle for liberty and faith. In 1671 he became the leader of the discontented Hindu population of Bundelkhand. The opposition of the Bundelas to Mughal authority became a feature of local history for half a century till the Bundelas and the Marathas became allies. Before his death in 1731 Chhatrasal was able to carve out an independent principality for himself in Malwa.

The Satnamis, a peaceful Hindu sect living in the modern Patiala and Alwar States, rose in 1672. They were easily crushed by a large Mughal force.

Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Guru of the Sikhs, was executed on a warrant from the Emperor in 1675 and Guru Gobind Singh, son and successor of Tegh Bahadur, brought into existence the militant Khalsa, stamping on the hearts of his disciples an intense longing to be liberated from Mughal rule. A reign of repression and revenge became as a consequence a feature of Sikh history.
WAR IN RAJPUTANA (1679-1708)

Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Marwar died at Jamrud in December, 1678. Aurangzeb decided to seize his Kingdom, though two of Jaswant’s widows gave birth to two posthumous sons at Lahore in February, 1679. Mughal troops poured into Marwar, and as that State was without a head, no organised resistance could be offered to the policy of annexation. Indra Singh Rathor of Nagor, a grand-nephew of Jaswant Singh, was recognised as the dependent Raja of Jodhpur; but the Mughal administrators and Mughal troops remained in possession of the country.

Marwar is a desert land, but through it lay the best trade route from the Imperial capital to the rich city of Ahmadabad and the busy port of Cambay. Its possession would drive a wedge between two halves of Rajputana and the Rana of Mewar would be taken in the flank. If it became a quiet dependency, Hindu resistance to the policy of persecution which Aurangzeb henceforth intended to pursue would be weakened.

One of the posthumous sons of Jaswant Singh survived. He was named Ajit Singh. He was brought to Delhi and his claims were urged before the Emperor, who, however, ordered that the boy should be brought up in the Mughal harem and, when grown up, given a rank in the Mughal peerage. Faced with danger of extinction, Rathor chivalry found its leader in Durgadas, who became the champion of an almost hopeless cause and led Rathor opposition to Mughal injustice to a triumphant success. The Emperor sent a strong force to seize Ajit Singh and Jaswant Singh’s widows. The Rathors desperately resisted, and taking advantage of the confusion Durgadas slipped out with Ajit and the RANIS in male attire. While the Rathors at Delhi continued the fight Durgadas rode fast haste. Another band of Rathors maintained a desperate rear-guard action; the worn out Mughals gave up the pursuit and Durgadas with Ajit Singh reached Jodhpur (July, 1679).

Aurangzeb now declared a milkman’s son as Ajit Singh, de-throned Indra Singh and determined to reconquer Marwar. He himself came to Ajmer and sent his son Muhammad Akbar ahead with the Mughal army. The Rathors, after fighting one
pitched battle in which they were overwhelmed, carried on a
guerilla warfare from the hills and desert. The whole country
of Marwar was occupied by the Mughals and placed under
Faujdars stationed at convenient places. "The emblems of
religion were trampled under foot, the temples thrown down,
and mosques erected on their sites".

On the 2nd April, 1679, the Jeziyah, abolished by Akbar,
was reimposed on the Hindus. Maharana Raj Singh of Mewar
was asked to enforce it; naturally he felt offended. The mother
of Ajit Singh was a Mewar princess; she sent an appeal to
the Maharana for help against the Mughals. Raj Singh prepared
for war. The Emperor anticipated him and invaded Mewar.
The Maharana abandoned the plains and even Udaipur, the
capital, and retired with all his people to the hills. Udaipur
and Chitor were occupied by the Mughals and more than
200 temples were destroyed. But the Mughal positions in Mewar
and Marwar were isolated from each other by the Aravalhi
Range whose crest was occupied by the Rana, and he descended
cast or west as he pleased and dealt his blows. Prince Akbar
was more than once defeated in surprise attacks. The Mughal
army practically became motionless through fear. The Emperor
in anger removed him to Marwar and placed Prince Azam in
charge of the Mewar campaign. The Rathors troubled the
Emperor no less than the Udaipur clansmen.

Akbar now joined the rebel Rajputs; he deposed his
father by proclamation and crowned himself Emperor in
January, 1681. The diplomacy of Maharana Raj Singh was
responsible for this defection of Akbar. But the Maharana him-
self had died in October, 1680. His successor, Jai Singh, was
for sometime inactive and this was responsible for the delay in
proclaiming Akbar's decision. However, in January, 1681,
Akbar began his march on Ajmer where the Emperor was then
staying. If he had made a dash Akbar might have realised
his ambition. But he galloped and tarried on the way and the
strength of the Emperor was in the interval more than doubled.
Tahawwar Khan, Akbar's right hand man, was murdered.
Then a false letter prepared by Aurangzeb, praising Akbar for
bringing the unsuspecting Rajputs for slaughter by the Impe-
rialists, fell as designed into the hands of Durgadas; the Rajput
suspected treachery on the part of Akbar, and galloped off
A confederacy was thus dissolved and Akbar had to fly as madly as he could for dear life. Durgadas discovering the king took Akbar under his protection and escorted him to the court of the Maratha King Sambhuji, successor of Shivaji. Taking advantage of the dislocation of the Mughal plan of war caused by the rebellion of Akbar, the troops of Jai Singh ravaged Gujarat and Malwa. But the Maharana was already worn out. In June, 1681, he concluded peace by ceding three parganas in lieu of Jeziyah. The Mughals withdrew from Mewar and the Rana was restored to his position.

With Marwar, however, the fight continued, the Rathors anticipating the Maratha method of fighting, their hovering and harassing tactics. This truceless war went on until a year after Aurangzeb’s death, when Bahadur Shah recognised Ajit Singh as the ruler of Marwar. Sir J. N. Sarkar comments, “In the height of political unwisdom, Aurangzeb wantonly provoked rebellion in Rajputana, while the Afghans on the frontier were still far from being pacified. With the two leading Rajput clans openly hostile to him, the army lost its finest and most loyal recruits. Nor was the trouble confined to Marwar and Mewar. It spread by sympathy among the Hada and Gaur clans. The elements of lawlessness thus set moving overflowed fitfully into Malwa and endangered the vitally important Mughal road through Malwa to the Deccan.”

SECTION II

SHIVAJI AND THE RISE OF THE MARATHAS

Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha power which was more than any other responsible for the dismemberment of the Mughal Empire, was the second son of Shahji Bhonsle who had sought like Malik Ambar to stem the tide of Mughal advance in the Deccan but failed. The father worked as the champion of a decadent Monarchy. The son, a born leader, drew the best elements of the country to his side, welded the Marathas into a nation and breathed a new spirit into his people; so what he built lasted long. His success was due to
his constructive genius and the new spirit which he brought into existence. It was not due merely to the incompetence of his enemies.

THE MARATHA COUNTRY AND PEOPLE

The Maratha country, the home of the Maratha people, is almost locked among hills. Great mountain ranges enclose it on two sides—the Sahyadri Range running from north to south and the Satpura and Vindhya Ranges from east to west. Minor ranges creep out from these parent chains. The country comprises three regional divisions—Konkan, a narrow strip of land between the Western Ghats (Sahyadri) and the sea; Maval, a belt of land 20 miles in breadth, to the east of the Ghats, extremely rugged; Desh, further to the east, a vast rolling black-soil plain. The hilltops constituted natural fortresses, well provided with water. The people were simple, active, self-reliant.

After the Muslim conquest of the Deccan many Maratha chiefs rose to distinction as leaders of mercenary troops in the service of the Sultans of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkonda. "A remarkable community of language, creed and life was attained in Maharashtra in the seventeenth century even before political unity was conferred by Shivaji." A great religious and social movement, tolerant and Catholic, associated with the names of Tukaram, Ramdas and other saints and prophets, prepared the ground for the political upheaval under Shivaji.

EARLY LIFE OF SHIVAJI

Shivaji was born in the hill fort of Shivner near Junnar on 6th April, 1627, or, as some say, on 19th February, 1630. His mother, Jija Bai, was the neglected wife of Shahji. Her deeply religious, almost ascetic, character exercised great influence on her son. Shahji entered Bijapur service in 1636 and was sent away to the Tungabhadra region in Mysore, and later to the Madras coast, to conquer new lands for Bijapur. He took with him his favourite wife Tuka Bai and her son Vyankoji; Shivaji was left with his mother to live at Poona in charge of Dadaji Kond Dev. The weight of evidence is in favour of the view that Shivaji grew up unlettered, though he
mastered the contents of the two great Hindu 'Epics'. Dadaji Kond Dev died in 1647 and Shivaji became his own master.

SHIVAJI AND BIJAPUR

Shivaji had already embarked upon his career of adventure and peril. He took Torna from Bijapur in 1646, built a new fort at Rajgarh, and took Kondana from a Bijapur agent. Shahji was imprisoned in consequence of all this activity of Shivaji, or according to another view, for his own insubordination.

Shivaji is said to have approached Murad, the Mughal prince, on his father's behalf, but Shahji's release was actually due to the mediation of two leading nobles of Bijapur. Shivaji quieted for some years (1650-55) but acquired during this period the strong fort of Purandar. In 1656 he annexed Jawli, which had barred the path of his ambition in the south. The conquest of Jawli was facilitated and completed by a series of premeditated murders committed with Shivaji's previous approval by his trusted agents. Like Sher Shah using treachery in seizing the forts of South Bihar, Shivaji also paved his way by fraud intermixed with force. His recruiting ground was doubled and his door to the South opened.

When Aurangzeb, the Mughal viceroy of the Deccan, opened his campaign against Bijapur in 1657, an attempt was made to win over Shivaji. But this rebel against Bijapur authority had perhaps already decided to pursue a line of his own and made a diversion in favour of Bijapur by raiding the south-western corner of Mughal Deccan, while Aurangzeb was busy besieging Kalyani. Aurangzeb was furious when he heard of the disturbances created by Shivaji. A Mughal army sent against him defeated him but could not do much as the rains set in. Then came the news of the illness of Shah Jahan. Before leaving the Deccan Aurangzeb received Shivaji's offer of submission with outward pleasure but without granting formal pardon.

Between 1657-59 Shivaji conquered the Northern Konkan from Mahuli to near Mahad. The Bijapur State, relieved from the pressure of the Mughal invasion, was now free to plan the subjugation of Shivaji. Afzal Khan, one of the leading generals of Bijapur, was sent against him. He was instructed to effect the capture or murder of Shivaji by pretending friendship. But
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Shivaji killed him at an interview (November 10, 1659). The weight of recorded evidence is in favour of the view that it was a case of "preventive murder." The Bijapur camp was plundered. The Marathas now poured into the South Konkan and the Kolhapur district. In July, 1660, Shivaji was, however, compelled to evacuate the Panhala fort by a Bijapur force.

SHIVAJI AND THE MUGHALS

Under instructions from Aurangzeb his maternal uncle Shaista Khan, the Mughal viceroy of the Deccan, began his campaign against Shivaji early in 1660, occupied Poona, and captured the fort of Chakan and the Kalyan district in the North Konkan. Shivaji patched up a truce with Bijapur and made himself free to face the Mughals. One night in April, 1663, Shivaji surprised and wounded the Mughal viceroy in the heart of his camp, in his very bed chamber within the inner ring of his bodyguard, slew one of his sons, wounded two others, and escaped. This successful night attack immensely increased the prestige of Shivaji. In January, 1664, he sacked and plundered the rich port of Surat and carried off an immense booty.

The Emperor transferred Shaista Khan for his negligence and incapacity to Bengal and sent his ablest Hindu and Muhammadan generals, Jai Singh and Dilir Khan, against Shivaji (1665). Jai Singh managed the Bijapur Sultan very carefully, playing upon his hopes and fears in order to induce him to remain neutral in the war against Shivaji. With money and promises of high rank he sought to win over Shivaji's partisans. Having prepared the ground by his diplomacy he laid siege to the fort of Purandar. Flying columns ravaged Shivaji's villages. Maratha efforts to raise the siege were frustrated. Such a steady pressure was maintained that the fall of Purandar became only a question of time. But the families of Shivaji's officers were sheltered there. The fall of Purandar would mean their captivity and dishonour. Shivaji had to yield. He interviewed Jai Singh and concluded the treaty of Purandar in June, 1665. Shivaji ceded 23 of his forts and lands yielding annually 4 lakhs of hun (1 hun = 4 rupees). He retained 12 forts (including Rajgarh) and territory yielding one lakh of hun or
ation of service and loyalty to the Mughal throne. He
ed to be excused from attending the Darbar but proposed to send his son with a contingent of 5,000 horse for service under the Emperor.

After this triumph over Shivaji, Jai Singh began his campaign against Bijapur. He thought it expedient to induce Shrivaji with the most solemn oath and promises of high reward to go to the Imperial court. In view of the fact that Adil Shah and Qutb Shah united against the Mughals, Jai Singh was anxious to prevent a possible combination of the Deccani sultans with Shrivaji. Shrivaji accepted Jai Singh's assurances, left his mother as regent during his absence and reached Agra in May, 1666. He was not treated with the honour and consideration which Jai Singh had promised and which Shrivaji thought he had a right to expect. He protested in the open court and later charged the Emperor with breach of faith. He was forbidden the court and placed under restraint. The letters written by Ram Singh, son of Jai Singh, to his father, preserved at Jaipur, prove that there was a Mughal plan to send him on Mughal service to the north-western frontier and it was even arranged that he would be killed there. Shrivaji, however, escaped by a stratagem from Agra and marched with a rapidity that could not be surpassed by the shortest route to the Deccan, where he reached in November, 1666. So rapid was his march that it told upon his health and he fell seriously ill at Raigarh immediately after his return. In his last will Aurangzeb is said to have written, "Negligence for a single moment becomes the cause of disgrace for long years. The escape of the wretch Shiva took place through my carelessness and I have to labour hard [against the Marathas] to the end of my life [as the result of it]." The great Emperor was only conscious of his negligence. He was incapable of feeling that generosity and sympathy might have converted this foe into a friend. Cunning statecraft is not statesmanship.

For three years after his return from Agra Shrivaji lived very quietly at home and made his peace with the Mughals in 1668. The Emperor recognised his title of 'Raja' but did not restore his forts. The Yusufzai rising in Peshawar kept the Mughal army busy. During these years of peace Shrivaji laid the foundations of his governmental organisation. In 1670 he
renewed his war with the Mughals, recovered several of his forts and looted the rich port of Surat for the second time, his first sack of Surat having taught him that this place would supply him the means of war. Prince Muazzam, the Mughal Governor of the Deccan, quarrelled with his associate Iftikhar Khan. The Prince himself was inactive and Shivaji was almost free to do what he liked. Shivaji defeated the Mughal general Daud Khan and made raids into Berar and Baglana. His campaigns against the Mughals in 1671-73 were very successful. He crowned himself with the greatest pomp and ceremony at Raigarh on 6th June, 1674, and assumed the title of 'Chhatrapati'.

Meanwhile the Mughals were finding the greatest difficulty in holding their own against the Afghans in the north-west. Ali Adil Shah II was dead and quarrels had broken out in Bijapur between the Deccani and Afghan parties. Bahadur Khan, Mughal Governor of the Deccan, tried to fish in the troubled waters. He came to terms with Shivaji. With Golkonda Shivaji entered into an alliance, its powerful was Madanna Pandit being anxious to co-operate with him. The Sultan of Golkonda was to pay Shivaji 4½ lakhs a month and help him with 5,000 men under one of his generals. Shivaji promised to give his ally those parts of the Carnatic which had not belonged to his father Shahji. The defensive alliance against the Mughals was strengthened. For this Golkonda agreed to pay an annual subsidy of one lakh of mua. In 1677 Shivaji took Gingi, Vellore and other important places, advancing as far as Cuddalore. His half-brother, Ekoji, was the ruler of Tanjore. Shivaji seized some portions of Tanjore territory. The operations of 1677 and 1678 brought him territory in the Carnatic worth 20 lakhs of mua a year and included a hundred forts. Ekoji was also weaned away from his subordination to Bijapur. Shivaji returned to Panhala in April, 1678, and Mysore, whose northern, eastern and central parts he conquered, leaving an army of occupation in the newly conquered territory. He died on April 3, 1680.

EXTENT OF TERRITORY

"At the time of his death Shivaji's kingdom included all the country (except the Portuguese possessions) stretching from
Ranlagar (modern Dharampur State in the Surat Agency) in the north to Karwar or the Gangavati river in the Bombay district of Kanara in the south. Its eastern boundary included Bangalore in the north, then ran southward along an irregular shifting line through the middle of the Nasik and Poona districts and encircled the whole of the Satara and much of the Kolhapur districts. A recent but permanent acquisition was the western Karnataka or the Kanarese-speaking country extending from Belgaum to the bank of the Tungabhadra opposite the Bellary district of the Madras Presidency”. Besides this he was also in possession of the northern, central and eastern portions of Mysore as also some Madras districts—Bellary, Chittur and

CIVIL ADMINISTRATION

Shivaji governed with the assistance of a council of eight Ministers (Aśhta Pradhāna) composed of the Ṛṣṭhva or the Asthva Pradhāna, the Mazumdar or the Amātya, the Wakia or the Mantri, the Dābir or the Sāmanta, the Surnis or the Sachīva, the Senāpati, the Pandit Rāo and the Nyāyādhīsa. The Peshwā was the Prime Minister; the other Ministers held departmental charges such as finance, record-keeping, correspondence, foreign affairs, army, religious questions and charities, and justice. All the eight Ministers, with the exception of Nyāyādhīsa and Pandit Rāo, were also actually employed on military business; during their absence on military duty their work at the capital was performed by deputies. These Pradhānas could not select their own subordinates, who were selected by the head of the State. During the Peshwa period these officers became hereditary but in Shivaji’s time they were not appointed even for life. They were liable to be dismissed at the King’s pleasure. The King was the pivot on which rested the whole administration. Everything depended on his personal ability. The Ministers formed an advisory body and carried out the King’s instructions and supervised the work of the departments.

Shivaji’s Kingdom was divided into several provinces (prānt), each of which was subdivided into parganas and tarafs. The village was the lowest unit. Shivaji left village commu-
nities undisturbed in their internal organisation. Over a half of these units there were hereditary Deshmukhs and Deshpandes. Shivaji tried to put an end to this state of things without revolutionising the existing arrangements. He appointed his own revenue officers but the Deshmukhs and Deshpandes were left in enjoyment of their perquisites. He prohibited their building of castles and demolished some of their strongholds.
Shivaji abolished the intermediate revenue agency and adopted\n\nMulk Ambar's revenue system with modifications to suit his\nterritory. His officer Annaji Datto was responsible for an\nelaborate survey and fixed the rent at 33 per cent. of the\ngross produce. Shivaji later on demanded a consolidated rent\nof 40 per cent.\n
Shivaji also realised military contributions termed *Chauth*\nand *Sardeshmukhi* from regions not recognising his sovereignty;\nthese contributions amounted to one-fourth and one-tenth of\nthe standard assessment of the place. "The payment of the\n*Chauth* merely saved a place from the unwelcome presence of\nthe Maratha soldiers and civil underlings, but did not impose\non Shivaji any corresponding obligation to guard the district\nfrom foreign invasion or internal disorder." The realisation of\nsuch contribution was justified by the exigencies of the situation.\nShivaji could not realise a large revenue from the hilly lands of\nthe Maratha country. He had to fight with the Mughals,\nBhopur, the Sidis of Janjira, the Portuguese of Goa and petty\nsemi-independent chiefs like the Koli Rajas. He had to organise\nan army, to build forts, to defend the newly acquired territories,\nequip a fleet and to put down pirates. He had to make war\npay for war.

**MILITARY SYSTEM**

Shivaji's Mawalis and Hetkaris have become famous in the\nmilitary annals of India. Shivaji selected them after a personal\nexamination and each man was trained in the school of\nexperience. His army was mostly composed of light infantry\nand light cavalry admirably well adapted to guerilla warfare\nand hill campaign. The cavalry was divided into two classes:\n*Bargis* and *Silahdars*. The *Bargir* was equipped with horse\nand arms by the State while the *Silahdar* brought his own\nhorse. He never allowed his army to be encumbered with heavy\narms or costly camp equipage. No one was allowed to keep a\nwoman in the camp. A breach of this rule was punished\nequitably. The booty of every soldier was to be handed over\nto the State. Shivaji paid his soldiers either in cash or by\navignment in the district governments. He did not pay by\nannuities. He enforced strict discipline in his army and it was\neminently efficient.
Forts played a very important part in Shivaji's military system. Every fort was under three officers of equal status—the Havaldar, the Sabnis, the Sarnobat—each of whom served as a check on the others. At the time of Shivaji's death there were 240 forts in his possession. Every important pass in the territory directly under his possession was commanded by forts.

It has been said that after the conquest of the Konkan Shivaji 'put the saddle on the ocean'. 400 vessels of various sizes and classes—ghurabs, gallivats, river crafts—were formed into two squadrons commanded by two admirals. With the Sikhs of Janjira Shivaji's navy maintained a continuous fight. His fleet was manned by the Kolis and other sea-faring tribes of Malabar. His principal port was Malwan. The naval spirit roused by Shivaji did not die with him. The Angrias maintained the naval reputation of the Marathas till the middle of the eighteenth century.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF SHIVAJI

Shivaji's career and achievement and the subsequent success of the Maratha power cannot be explained by the standard theory of adventure and freebooting or the illustration of a sudden conflagration. Warren Hastings and Sir Charles Metcalfe noted later that the Marathas were differentiated from the rest of the Indian people by the persistence of patriotism under all vicissitudes. It would not, therefore, be wrong to say that the impulse given by Shivaji endured in a sense for about a century and a half. The imperishable achievement of his life was the welding of the Marathas into a nation and the new spirit which he breathed into his people. In the words of a contemporary, he elevated the Maratha nation consisting of 96 clans to an unheard of dignity. He created a compact military State with an excellent administration. Himself a devout Hindu, he observed toleration of all creeds, a chivalry to women and a strict enforcement of morality in the camp which even hostile critics admired. But in the eighteenth century we come across not a compact military State but a loose confederacy, not an admirably well-disciplined army but a disreputable rabble. If many of his institutions failed to
urvive him we must seek an explanation for that in the subsequent history of the Marathas. But it was the spirit created by Shivaji that was responsible for the fact that the “Marathas bore the brunt of the attack of the Mughal Empire at the zenith of its splendour” and surprised the British statesmen even in the second half of the eighteenth and the opening years of the nineteenth century by their persistent “reluctance to be connected with them.”

SECTION III

AURANGZEB IN THE DECCAN

DECCAN POLICY OF THE FIRST HALF OF THE REIGN

During the period 1658-1681 Aurangzeb achieved no decisive result in the Deccan except in 1665, when Jai Singh compelled Shivaji to conclude the treaty of Purandar. The reasons that can be assigned for this lack of achievement in the South during the first half of the reign are the following: Prince Shah Alam, who was Governor of the Deccan for eleven years, was timid and unenterprising. His chief lieutenant Dilir Khan was openly opposed to him, and so inveterate was their hostility that Mughal Deccan seemed to be torn by civil war. Moreover, the Emperor was much too preoccupied with his wars with the north-western frontier tribes and the Rajput States to be able to send a sufficient supply of men and money and to devote sufficient attention to the affairs of the Deccan. The three Deccani powers—Bijapur, Golkonda and the Marathas—could no longer be pitted against one another. After 1662 there was some sort of understanding between Shivaji and the Government of Bijapur, and Shivaji did not molest the heart of the Bijapur Kingdom. The Sultan of Golkonda was Shivaji’s ally.

But events brought a complete change in Imperial policy after Shivaji’s death. The rebel Prince Akbar fled to the court of Sambhuji, son and successor of Shivaji. Aurangzeb decided to go to the Deccan himself to crush Sambhuji and overpower Akbar. He arrived at Aurangabad on 22nd March, 1682. With him came three of his sons and all his best generals; the
resources of the Mughal Empire were concentrated in the South. Extensive operations were planned against the Maratha King and the rebel Mughal Prince; but the Emperor, with his faith in his family shaken, was "hesitating, suspicious, watchful and seemingly capricious and self-contradictory."

SAMHUJI (1680-1689)

Shivaji was succeeded by his brave but pleasure-loving son Sambhuji, who did not fully realise the gravity of the Mughal menace. Instead of concentrating his strength against the Emperor he frittered it away in desultory campaigns against smaller enemies like the Portuguese and the Sidis of Janjira. Prince Akbar, estranged from the violent and capricious Maratha King, embarked for Persia in 1687. While Sambhuji was sunk in pleasure, his administration was hopelessly disorganised by internal rebellions and court intrigues. When Aurangzeb directed the full strength of the Empire against Bijapur and Golkonda, Sambhuji made no attempt to avert their fall, although he must have known that it was a danger common to all the Deccani powers. For the time being his sporadic raids were rightly ignored by the Emperor, who turned his attention seriously to the Marathas after the fall of Bijapur and Golkonda. Sambhuji himself was captured by a Mughal general while enjoying an "unguarded life of debauchery" at Sangameswar. He was put to death with horrible torture in March, 1689. Many of the Maratha forts, including Raigarh, Shivaji's capital, were captured, and Sambhuji's entire family, including his minor son Shahu, fell into Aurangzeb's hands.

ANNEXATION OF BIJAPUR (1686) AND GOLKONDA (1687)

After his arrival in the Deccan Aurangzeb wasted about four years in fruitless attempts to capture Prince Akbar and in half-hearted operations against the Marathas. Then he decided to conquer Bijapur and Golkonda. Bijapur was besieged in April, 1685, and captured in September, 1686. Golkonda was besieged in January, 1687, and captured through bribery in September, 1687. The last Adil Shahi and Qutb Shahi Sultans passed their remaining years in the State-prison of Daulatabad; their territories were annexed to the Mughal Empire.
Aurangzeb has been blamed for the absorption of Bijapur and Golkonda; it has been argued that these Muslim Kingdoms might have helped him in crushing the Marathas. It is very doubtful, however, whether these decadent Sultanates could have stood successfully against the new-born Maratha people. Moreover, it is necessary to remember that, from the day when Akbar embarked on his policy of expansion south of the Vindhyas to the day when Aurangzeb entered Golkonda, the complete subjugation of the Deccan was the consummation which Mughal policy aspired to achieve. The rulers of Bijapur had an annual revenue of 7 crores and 84 lakhs of rupees, besides 5½ crores of tribute from vassal Rajas and zamindars. Golkonda, when conquered, had a revenue of 2 crores and 87 lakhs of rupees. These two Shia powers in India were in touch with the Shia Monarchy of Persia, the traditional enemy of the Mughal Empire. They were also in an advanced stage of decline, torn by faction, governed by “political Bedouins,” unable to check the triumphant and exultant Marathas. An advancing aggressive power cannot put limits to its advance unless a natural frontier checks it or some other power as strong or stronger stops it. It is significant that Aurangzeb, who had failed as a Prince to conquer Balkh and Badakhshan and to reconquer Qandahar, made no attempt as Emperor to restore the prestige of Mughal arms in these regions and to secure the heritage of Babur and the strategic fort of Qandahar; he sought the easier and perhaps more profitable line of advance in the South. He underestimated the Marathas, but greater men than he have made such mistakes and have been ruined as a consequence. Napoleon’s failure was largely caused by his inability to estimate the toughness of national opposition in Spain.

In conquering Bijapur and Golkonda and in trying to conquer the Maratha State Aurangzeb pursued what was the natural trend of Mughal foreign policy, but he did this in a manner peculiar to himself. “The Mughal crescent rounded in fullness,” but the decline was visible in the last eighteen years of his life. He could not treat Shivaji with the statesmanlike generosity that characterised Akbar’s treatment of the Rajput chiefs or Jahangir’s treatment of the Mewar Prince, and he had not the soft corner for a sovereign in distress as Shah Jahan had shown for the rulers of Bijapur and Golkonda in
1656 and 1657. He was pitiless, unsympathetic, and in his later years out of touch with reality. He could only crush, he could not conciliate. Even his reconciliation with Durgadass was very short-lived and the war-weary Rathors, who have been easily placated, continued to be enemies of the Mughals. He could have made an honourable peace with Rajaram, recognising him as King of the Western Deccan and Konkan, and returned to Delhi. A senile obstinacy made him oblivious of the risk he was incurring by continuing his fatiguing campaign against the Marathas. Aurangzeb lacked one great gift—a very fine and rare gift of high statesmanship, the sense of limits.

THE MUGHAL EMPIRE AT ITS ZENITH

In the last years of Aurangzeb the Mughal Empire extended from Ghazni to Chittagong and from Kashmir to the Carnatic. “In Maharastra, Kanara, Mysore and the Eastern Karnatak his rule was, however, disputed and this region has been described as do-amli or as obeying a double set of masters”. This vast Empire was divided into 21 Subahs: (1) Agra, (2) Ajmer, (3) Allahabad, (4) Bihar, (5) Bengal, (6) Delhi, (7) Kashmir, (8) Lahore, (9) Gujarat, (10) Malwa, (11) Multan, (12) Thatta (Sind), (13) Orissa, (14) Khandesh, (15) Berar, (16) Aurangabad, (17) Bidar, (18) Bijapur, (19) Hyderabad, (20) Kabul, (21) Oudh Excluding Afghanistan, which had a revenue of 20 lakhs in Akbar’s time and 40 lakhs under Aurangzeb, the Mughal Empire under the last Great Mughal had a revenue of 33 crores and 25 lakhs, as contrasted with 13 crores and 21 lakhs under Akbar. This was the yield of the land revenue. The proportion of assignment (jagir) to Crownlands (khalsa) in the last years of Aurangzeb may be guessed from the fact that the sum of 27 64 crores was assessed on jagirs and 5 81 crores on khalsa.

LONG WAR WITH THE MARATHAS

By 1689 Aurangzeb reached the zenith of his power. Northern India as well the Peninsula lay at his feet. “All seemed to have been gained by Aurangzeb now; but in reality all was lost. It was the beginning of his end. The saddest
and most hopeless chapter of his life now opened. The Mughal Empire had become too large to be ruled by one man or from one centre . . . . His enemies rose on all sides; he could defeat but not crush them for ever . . . . The endless war in the Deccan exhausted his treasury; the Government turned bankrupt; the soldiers, starving from arrears of pay, mutinied . . . . Napoleon I used to say, 'It was the Spanish ulcer which ruined me'. The Deccan ulcer ruined Aurangzeb.'
After Sambluji’s death the Marathas began what was really a people’s war. Rajaram, his younger brother, became the acknowledged head of the Maratha State; but there was no Maratha Central Government. Rajaram took shelter in the strong fort of Gingi in the Carnatic, which became the centre of Maratha enterprise in the east coast. Every Maratha captain with his own retainers harassed the Mughals. Aurangzeb was confronted with an all-pervasive enemy ‘from Bombay to Madras across the Indian peninsula, elusive as the wind, without any headman or stronghold whose capture would result in the exhaustion of its power’.

The tide turned against Aurangzeb in May, 1690, when Rustam Khan, a top-ranking Mughal general, was defeated and taken captive by the Marathas. The attempt to capture Panhalala from the Marathas ended in failure. Two enterprising Maratha generals, Santaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadhav, made incessant raids. So great was the terror of the name of Santaji that “there was no Imperial Amir bold enough to resist him, and every loss he inflicted made the Imperial forces quake.” He was murdered in a domestic feud. The Mughals captured Gingi in 1698; but Rajaram escaped and returned to Satara, where he organised a new army. The Emperor now devoted his attention to the sieges of successive Maratha forts. A fatuous campaign now began which is best described in the following words: “A hill fort captured by him after a vast expenditure of time, men and money, the fort recovered by the Marathas from the weak Mughal garrison after a few months and its siege begun again by the Mughals a year or two later. The siege of eight forts—Satara, Parli, Panhalala, Khelna, Kondana (Singhgarh), Rajgarh, Torna and Wagingera occupied five years and a half.”

Rajaram died in 1700. He was succeeded by his minor son, Shivaji III. The Regency was taken up by Rajaram’s masterful widow, Tara Bai, who continued to lead the counter-offensive against the Mughals. The Marathas began to plunder the Mughal territories not only in the Deccan but also in Malwa and Gujarat. In 1706 a large Maratha army threatened the Emperor’s camp at Ahmadnagar.

Worn out by the indecisive Maratha war, the Emperor fell seriously ill; he retreated, closely pursued by the Marathas. In the midst of universal disorder, desolation, misery and
AURANGZEB

1705. The Maratha counter-offensive gathering momentum became completely dominant. At his journey’s end, the great Emperor was fully conscious of the failure of the Deccan campaign. He died on February 20, 1707, at Ahmadnagar.

CHARACTER AND POLICY OF AURANGZEB

Aurangzeb wrote in his last letter to his favourite son Kam Baksh, “Worldly men are deceivers (literally, they show wheat as sample and deliver barley). Do not do any work in reliance on their fidelity.” In his lonely eminence, suspicious of all men, this last Great Mughal in his last days saw in the political disorder around him that his officials were really unfit for positions of trust and responsibility, lacked initiative, made his administration ineffective, his arms unprosperous. Sadulla, famous in the days of Shah Jahan as a very wise administrator, once remarked to a pessimist, “No age is without men of ability. What is needed is a wise master to find them out, cherish them, get his work done by them and never lend his ears to the whispers of selfish men against such officers.” In spite of Aurangzeb’s minute supervision, checks and counter-checks, there was an atmosphere of mere self-interested compliance in the higher ranks of Mughal State service as contrasted with the manly tradition of personal responsibility and personal devotion of the days of Akbar and Shah Jahan.

When Muhammad Akbar rebelled, Aurangzeb in his letter sought to dissuade him from following the path of “ill-luck”. The rebel Prince wrote in reply, “How can the path which your Majesty himself has trod be the path of ill-luck?” Aurangzeb’s breach of allegiance to his own father, and the fate to which he consigned his brothers, had its nemesis. His eldest son Muhammad Sultan joined Shuja and had to be thrown into prison at the very beginning of the reign. Then came the rebellion of Muhammad Akbar and he had to be hounded out of India. Prince Shah Alam, the eldest of his sons living in 1677, was found negotiating with the ruler of Golconda, perhaps to save that Monarch’s throne and dynasty. This was regarded as treason. He was arrested and thrown into prison.
from which he did not emerge until seven years later. He said that after the arrest of the Prince "the Emperor hurriedly broke up his court, ran to his wife Aurangabadi Mahal, kept slapping his knees and moaning, 'Alas! Alas! I'

to the ground what I had been rearing up for the last forty years'." In his operations against the Marathas reliance could not be placed on Azam and Kam Bakhsh who were anxious to secure Maratha aid in the impending war of succession. In his death bed Aurangzeb expressed an anxious desire to partition the empire among his sons to avoid fighting between armies and slaughter of mankind. But his own example was too indelibly impressed on the political mind of Mughal India to make such a thing possible.

Austere in morals, never swayed by favourites, his strength of will amounting almost to obstinacy, this great Monarch furnishes an example of the familiar lesson that countries may be overgoverned. With less of pomp than his European contemporary Louis XIV, he had not less of the lust of conquest and of over-centralisation. Foreign travellers as also Muslim chroniclers describe with admiration his marvellous industry in administration. Besides holding daily courts and Wednesday trials he wrote orders on letters and petitions with his own hands and dictated the very language of official replies. The Italian physician Gemelli Careri thus describes the Emperor's public audience of March 21, 1695, "I admired to see him endorse the petitions (of those who had business) with his own hand without spectacles and by his cheerful, smiling countenance he seemed to be pleased with the employment." A very learned and competent scholar, he was largely responsible for that great digest of Muslim Law made in India bearing his name, Fatawa-i-Alangiri, which has regulated Islamic justice in India ever afterwards. But such a ruler could not be a success as an administrator. He could not quicken human energies by his example and he belongs as an administrator to the tamer race of toilers.

Aurangzeb has been described as "the greatest of the Great Mughals save one" inspite of his failure which was prodigiously. He failed as an administrator, he failed also as a statesman. For this we must seek an explanation in his character as also in the policy that he pursued. It has been pointed out above
in his policy of conquest he had no sense of limits. The
breaching consequences of his religious policy can hardly be
emphasized.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Sir J. N. Sarkar, *Short History of Aurangzib.*
Sir J. N. Sarkar, *Shivaji.*
CHAPTER XX

THE MUGHAL EMPIRE: A GENERAL SURVEY

SECTION I

LITERATURE

A glorious and victorious reign stimulates the activities of the human mind. "The wealth of Ind dazzled even eyes accustomed to the pomp of Versailles". A long period of peace, a strong and wise government, a rich heritage of culture, and sympathetic sovereigns created exactly those conditions that lead to a brilliant revival of letters and fine arts. This glorious epoch in the realm of Indian art and letters is marked by the enlightened patronage of three remarkable members of the reigning family—Akbar with his genius of epic grandeur, Shah Jahan with his excellent taste and his magnificence, and Dara, the mystic, emotional, eclectic philosopher. Jahangir, though a dilettante, was also a skilled connoisseur and a generous patron.

INDO-PERSIAN LITERATURE UNDER AKBAR

The Indo-Persian literature of Akbar's reign had one of its ablest authors in Abul Fazl, an intimate friend of Akbar. He must be regarded as the greatest historian of India writing in Persian. His two famous works are Akbarnama and Aina-Akbari. The former, written in praise of his hero, gives us political and military history; the latter is an administrative and statistical return. Abul Fazl has been described as a great flatterer; his style is full of circumlocution, turgid and obscure. Blochman, however, emphasises his love of truth as well as his correctness of information and rightly says that "the total absence of personal grievances and of expressions of ill-will towards encompassing enemies show that the expanse of his large heart stretched to the clear offering of sterling wisdom". The charge of affectation of style is not applicable to his Aina-Akbari. This administrative and statistical survey represents a half-fluid condition but there is no denying the fact that hi
which official position gave him access to any document he wanted to consult and his long career and training in various departments and his undoubted ability make this laborious record of contemporaneous history of the highest historical value.

Other important historians of the "Age of Akbar" were Badauni, author of Muntakhab-ul-Tawarikh, and Nizam-ud-din, author of Tabaqat-i-Akbari. Badauni was a hostile critic of Akbar; Nizam-ud-din is perfunctory. Among the poets writing in Persian Faizi, Abul Fazl's brother, must be considered as the best. Blochman says that "after Amir Khusrau of Delhi Muhammadan India has seen no greater poet than Faizi". Though illiterate, Akbar had a very liberal culture and he showed an active interest in Persian translations of famous Sanskrit works like the Mahābhārata, the Rāmāyana and the Ṭilaka Veda. He also encouraged calligraphy and music. The famous musician Tansen was a performer at his court. The Mémoirs of Babur was translated by Abdur Rahim Khan Kahan into Persian. The Khan Khanan wrote under the pen name Rahim in Arabic, Persian, Turki, Sanskrit and Hindi.

HINDI LITERATURE UNDER AKBAR

Tulsidas (circa 1532-1623), the greatest of the Hindi poets, flourished during the "Age of Akbar". He lived a quiet life in Benares and, although perhaps unknown to Akbar, numbered Raja Man Singh and Abdur Rahim Khan Kahan among his admirers. He wrote more than a dozen books of which the most famous is the great Rāma-charita-mānas. This immortal work, composed in eastern Hindi, was written with a sympathy with human nature and knowledge of the human heart which have won the loving admiration of the masses as well as the intelligentsia. It is no mere translation of Valmiki's Sanskrit Rāmāyana but is quite independent in its treatment. "Tulsidas was a poet of the greatest merit with amazing fluency, richness and depth and a sensitive ear for the harmony and melody of words. His poetry, inspite of its essentially spiritual tone, flows with colour and beauty and occasionally grows even sensuous, though the poet always seems to be apologetic about it. Tulsi made the countryside ring with the simple name of Kam". Sir George Grierson writes, "Looking back along the
vista of centuries we see his noble figure unapproached and solitary in its niche in the temple of Fame, shining in its own pure radiance."

The famous Hindi bard, the blind poet Surdas of Agra, graced the court of Akbar. He wrote in western Hindi. He celebrated the life and career of Krishna in his elaborate song-sequence *Surasāgara*, said to extend to 60,000 lines. "Surdas revels in beauty and does not hold himself back. Tulsi was a simple devotee and almost puritanical". Sir George Grierson writes that the language of Surdas is the purest form of western Hindi speech but he prefers, as do many others, "the nobility of character inherent in all that Tulsi Das wrote to the pleasing but gentler muse of his great contemporary".

LITERATURE UNDER JAHANGIR AND SHAH JAHAN

The impulse given by the great Akbar continued throughout the reign of Jahangir and Shah Jahan. Jahangir was himself an author of considerable merit and besides composing celebrated *Memoirs* he encouraged the completion of a valuable dictionary, the *Farhang-i-Jahangiri*. The Indo-Persian historical literature of Shah Jahan's reign was enriched by Abdul Hamid Lahori, author of the *Badshahnama*, and by Khasi Khan, author of *Muntakhab-ul-lubab*. The Hindi poet Biharilal of Jaipur, author of *Satsaiya* or collection of 700 detached verses, lived in the days of Shah Jahan. His work is regarded as "one of the daintiest pieces of art in any Indian language". Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Marwar was also a notable writer on Hindi poetics. Dara, a Sufi, a disciple of the Muslim saint Mian Mis, continued the philosophical traditions of his great-grand-father. He was no apostate from Islam,—he himself compiled a biography of Muslim saints—but he studied the *Talmud* and the *New Testament*, the writings of the Muslim Sufis and the Hindu works on Vedanta. He associated with eminent Sufis like Mulla Shah Budakhshe, Shaikh Muhribullah Allahabadi, Shah Dib-Ruba, Muhsin Fani and Sarmad. He wanted to interpret to each community the highest truths of the religion of the other in accordance with his cardinal doctrine *Sulh-i-Kul*.

A retrogression in Indian culture is clearly visible in the days of Aurangzeb and Indian literature steadily fell back to a lower level.
SECTION II

ART

ARCHITECTURE UNDER AKBAR

Akbar built very largely. The most famous monuments of his reign are Humayun's tomb at Delhi, fortress palaces at Agra and Lahore and the buildings at Fathpur Sikri. The structure of Humayun's tomb at Delhi was the conception of Humayun's wife, Haji Begam, who had been her husband's companion in his forced exile in Persia. She gave to the building art of the Mughal period a Persian incentive and introduced the innovation of placing the building in the centre of a park enclosure. The palace fort of Akbar at Agra has walls about 70 ft. high, 'the first conception of dressed stone on such a large scale'. Its main entrance, the Delhi gate, must be considered as the most imposing and impressive gateway in India. The fort at Agra shows that the Rajput citadels must have exercised considerable influence on the architect. Fathpur Sikri, 26 miles distant from Agra, was converted by Akbar with magical speed from a hill full of wild beasts into a city with gardens and elegant edifices. He occupied it during the period 1569-85. The tolerant policy of Akbar is evident even in his monuments and other works of art. In many buildings the indigenous artists were permitted to leave features characteristic of Jain and Hindu temples. This Hindu influence is particularly evident in Jodh Bai's palace at Fathpur Sikri. The most impressive thing at Fathpur Sikri is the Buland Darwaza which commemorates Akbar's conquest of Gujarat. 'Each art culture has usually one form of utterance in which it finds the readiest means of expression and with the Mughals it was the entrance gateway'. His building activities influenced indigenous schools of art, 'Mughal foundation breaking out into Hindu exuberance' is illustrated at Ambar and at Jodhpur. Abul Fazl thus describes Akbar's style of architecture: 'His Majesty plans splendid edifices and dresses the work of his mind and heart in the garment of stone and clay'.

PAINTING UNDER AKBAR

Painting was used extensively as an architectural decoration by Akbar. The paintings of the Mughal period are com-
monly frescoes. Akbar collected numerous artists around him at Fatehpur Sikri, the most famous of them being Khwaja Abdus Samad, a Persian, and the Indian artists, Daswanath and Basawan. The eminent art of Indian painting revived and received a new direction under his patronage. "A new school began to flourish, a school entirely of portraiture and illustration, delighting in animated and crowded scenes in dramatic motives. The atmosphere resembled that of Imperial Rome rather than that of Florence in the time of Lorenzo the Magnificent. His patronage would have resulted in less of value had it not been for the example and opportunity it gave for the revival of indigenous schools of Indian art".

ART UNDER JAHANGIR

Jahangir was a dilettante, with a trained eye for a picture but unable to understand 'the largeness and breadth required for architectural effect'. The tomb of Akbar at Sikandara near Agra and Jahangir's own tomb at Shahdara are unimpressive structures, but in Akbar's tomb at Sikandara minarets rising from the four corners mark a new step in the progress of Mughal architecture. Jahangir was a lover of miniature painting and his reign is remarkable for the perfection of the laying out of the celebrated Mughal gardens, with squares in the form of terraces, with artificial pools and numerous fountains. He constructed the lovely Shalamar Bagh in Kashmir. A new departure in Mughal style of art is noticeable in the tomb of Itimad-ud-daula at Agra, due to the 'refined feminism' of the cultured consort of Jahangir. Besides its high aesthetic taste, it is important because it marks the transition from the simple sandstone construction of Akbar and Jahangir to the white marble structures of Shah Jahan.

ART UNDER SHAH JAHAN

Shah Jahan did not so much encourage literature or miniature painting as did his predecessors, his entire attention being devoted to architecture. His constructions are remarkable for their elegance and grace. He built magnificent and most exquisitely beautiful palaces at Agra and Delhi. In the words
the author of the Badshahnama, "Lovely things reached the
depth of perfection". In the Agra fort his marble edifices—the
Diwan-i-Am, the Diwan-i-Khas, the Khas Mahal, the Shish
Mahal, the Mussaman Burj, the Moti Masjid—are gems of the
Mughal style at its zenith. The new construction for which
he was responsible at Delhi—the magnificent royal residence
which he erected there—perhaps justifies his famous claim:
"If there is a paradise on earth it is this, it is this". The Jami
Masjid at Delhi was constructed by him on a majestic scale,
but at Agra with a 'definitely intimate appeal'.

The finest flower of Mughal art was, however, the Tajmahal,
a combination of the finest art and the most expert construc-
tion, evincing at the same time the highest artistic merit, re-
markable scientific thought and technical skill, a perfect layout
and the most sensuous charm. Shah Jahan planned on the
opposite side of the Jumna his own tomb which would be a
chapel of the Taj in black marble, the two monuments to be
connected by a bridge. The war of succession interrupted his
plan and his unfilial successor abandoned the project.

DECLINE OF MUGHAL ART

With the reign of Aurangzeb Mughal artistic activity comes
to an abrupt end. With all his religious zeal he did not erect
a single tomb or a single mosque that can be regarded as a
splendid monument. There is a decline in style. Aurangzeb's
personality was to a large extent responsible for this artistic
decadence, but, as Percy Brown says, "Under Shah Jahan the
country had experienced a period of unrestrained production,
during which its exponents had reached the summit of achieve-
ment. The usual sequence to such a condition is a marked
reaction, of which art history provides several notable instances,
including among others that of the great schools of painting in
Europe of the seventeenth century, whose finest efforts were
followed by an interval of profound exhaustion. And so it was
with the architecture of the Mughals". In connection with
Mughal art it has been pointed out that "anonymity was the
practice of the country and it is thus impossible to trace the
reaction between genius and environment which is such a promi-
nent topic in the history of European art."
SECTION III

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AS DESCRIBED BY EUROPEAN TRAVELLERS

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

"The population of India consisted of a small but extremely wealthy and extravagant upper class, a small and frugal middle class, a very numerous lower class, living generally on the same plane of poverty as now."

The land was cultivated in small holdings by peasants who contributed the largest share of the revenues of the State. Mining and manufacture were also organised in small units. In view of the fact that the Mughal Government was not a strong naval power and there was no big merchant marine, Indian merchants could not seek new markets; but the European traders found that the commercial aptitudes of the Indian merchants were not inferior to those of the foreigners.

In agriculture one remarkable change was the introduction of tobacco. Its consumption developed with great rapidity. Jahangir prohibited smoking in 1617, but Manucci wrote in the early years of Aurangzeb’s reign that the farmer of taxes paid 5,000 rupees a day for tobacco duty at Delhi. The demand for indigo, cotton and silk also increased during this period. The peasants were not so conservative as is thought generally. They were shrewd enough to follow the market.

Saltpetre production in Bihar and iron production in Golkonda were important manufactures in the Mughal period, and the most notable thing during this period was the increased production of calico to meet the demand of Western Europe. According to Bernier, there was such a quantity of cotton and silk in Bengal that it might be regarded as the common storehouse for these two kinds of merchandise for the Mughal Empire, the neighbouring Kingdoms and even the countries of Europe. The new factor in commerce was the large consumption of Indian silk in Japan and of Indian indigo, calico and saltpetre in Western Europe. The chief ports of India were Lahori Bandar in Sind, Surat, Goa, Calicut, Cochin, Masulipatam, and Satgaon, Sripur, Chittagong and Sonargaon in Bengal.
Bengal’s export trade rapidly developed during this period. In 1681 the total value of Indian products exported from Bengal by the English East India Company amounted to 18½ lakhs of rupees at a time when the rupee had more than twenty times its present purchasing power. The English, French and Dutch annual investment in Bengal effected a great change in her economy. For many years the Mughal Emperors used to get from Bengal only elephants and art objects as tribute. Shaista Khan began paying 5 lakhs annually. During the later years of Aurangzeb’s reign and the first four decades of the eighteenth century the surplus revenue from Bengal became the mainstay of the Imperial family.

The ordinary course of production was at times interrupted by famines that were not certainly more frequent than they are now. In those days, however, a local shortage of food could not be quickly met by importation, and in India the tradition existed that ‘aimless wandering in search of food’ was the indication of the existence of famine conditions. The economic life of a village, a town or a district would break up by migration, disease, death. One of the greatest famines occurred in 1630-32 in the Deccan and Gujarat, dislocating agriculture, industry and commerce for many years.

Almost all contemporary foreign visitors refer to the cheapness of food in Indian towns and they usually attribute it to the fertility of the country. Tavernier says that even in the smallest villages flour, sugar and sweetmeats could be procured in abundance. Manucci wrote about Bengal, “All things are in great plenty here, fruits, pulse, grain, muslin, cloths of gold and silk.” But Moreland, a modern writer, tries to explain this in a different way: “The economic system . . . may be regarded as operating to provide the urban population with subsistence below cost. The harvest glut is still a familiar fact in India . . . at the period we are considering this recurring glut must have been much more acute than now because the proportion of produce to be sold was much larger while the penalties attaching to default were much more severe. At each harvest there was an urgent demand for coin and the merchants who held coin in stock would practically make their own terms. They had, however, to turn over the stock of produce in time
to be in funds for the next harvest and since the urban population was proportionately small, this condition secured to them supplies of food and other produce at less cost than if the markets had been free." Moreland is at some pains to prove the poverty of the mass of the population in the seventeenth century against the cumulative evidence of almost all European travellers. There was a much wider area of well-being than we can find in the twentieth century.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

The European travellers who came to India in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have left valuable evidence with respect to Indian social institutions and economic conditions besides giving us useful information concerning Mughal camp and camp.

The Sebastian Friar Manrique in his Itinerario refers to his experience in Bengal in 1612. He describes the fertility of the Ganges plain, the magnificence of its cotton fabrics, reverence for the Ganges and the cow, and the self-immolation practised at Juggernath and Saugar. Pietro della Valle, the Italian traveller, came to Surat in 1623. He refers to the absolute freedom of religion extended to all in Gujarat. If this Italian traveller is to be believed, the practice of "Suttee" seems to have decreased by the Mughal discouragement of the rite. Della Valle refers to the scarcity of "Suttee" near Surat and Cambay. Akbar's regulations against "Suttee" probably produced some temporary effect. Nicolo Conti in the fifteenth century and Della Valle in the seventeenth century travelled in India with their womenfolk. It has been asserted with some truth that nothing shows the high state of Indian civilization as the immunity with which strangers in India could take their womenfolk with them. "Had the positions been reversed and an Indian traveller attempted to travel with his family through any of the more civilised countries of Europe between the beginning of the fifteenth and the close of the sixteenth century, it is doubtful whether the treatment he would have received would have been in any way comparable to that which the natives of India, Hindu and Muhammadan alike, meted out to their 'Feringhi' visitors."
ENGLISH TRAVELLERS

Hawkins, the "Inglis Khan", gives us very valuable information relating to the economic aspect of the Mansabdan system in the lax days of Jahangir. Roe gives us an excellent picture of the royal camp, 'one of the wonders of my little existence'. We learn from Purchas—his Pilgrims that Hawkins had to introduce two English sailors into the presence of Jahangir 'as is the custom and manner of the country for no person may stay above twenty-four hours before the King to know what he is and whence he cometh'.

Bruton and Cartwright, two English merchants, came to Bengal in 1632. They stayed at Cuttack. Bruton went to Patna. He says that the temple of Juggernath enjoyed freedom from taxation until Akbar's time. This shows that while Akbar did not allow any religious persecution, he would not grant any indulgence. Bruton writes thus about the people of Bengal: 'They are notable, ingenious men let it be in what art or science sever and will imitate any workmanship that shall be brought before them.'

FRENCH TRAVELLERS

In 1666 three Frenchmen were in India—Bernier, Tavernier and Thevenot. Bernier was a physician, Tavernier a jeweller, Thevenot the companion of a French merchant. Bernier's History and his letters, Tavernier's Six Voyages and Thevenot's Narrative do not cover the same ground, Tavernier's account being the most important of the three. We are told by many Western writers that human life in India was held cheap and punishments were sudden, arbitrary and severe; but referring to the administration of Surat, Thevenot tells us that death sentence could not be inflicted by even the highest officials without referring to the Mughal Emperor. We know that in 1670, when Dr. Graff and another Dutchman were sent from Hughli to assist the recovery of the Dutch governor at Patna, they were arrested at Monghyr, sketching plans of the city and the fort. But the Faujdar had to refer the matter to the provincial governor. "He had to consult the Emperor before daring to execute a foreigner caught in the act of flagrant espionage." Mughal administration in its best days was not inefficient, at least in certain matters that it regarded as vital.
Bernier is regarded as a leading authority for the reign of Aurangzeb. After his remark that France before the Revolution was 'held without the violation of any right', it would not be unreasonable to conclude that he did not possess the faculty of judgment. But this adverse critic of Mughal rule, who gives us a glowing picture of good government in France before the French Revolution, thinks it necessary to draw the attention of his Government to the abundance of rice, corn and other necessaries of life in Bengal, its well-populated and well-cultivated condition, its tapestries, its embroideries and its silk and other manufactures. He explains why India always had a favourable balance of trade swallowing up gold and silver from other parts of the world.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Moreland, *India at the death of Akbar.*
Moreland, *From Akbar to Aurangzeb.*
*Cambridge History of India, Vol. IV.*
V. A. Smith, *A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*
E. F. Oaten, *Foreign Travellers in India.*