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The Shahbandar in the Eastern Seas

By W. H. MORELAND

THE personages described by the term Shahbandar, with such variations in orthography as Savendar, Sabinder, Xabendar, and the like, appear so frequently in the literature of the Eastern seas that it is desirable to arrive at a definite idea of the position which they occupied, and the functions which they discharged. The task is not, however, easy, for the ordinary Persian and Portuguese dictionaries are not very enlightening on this particular topic, while the discussion of the term in *Hobson-Jobson* is by no means exhaustive. The definition given in that work (new edition, p. 816) is as follows :—

“*Shabunder*. Pers. Shāh-bandar, lit. ‘King of the Haven’, Harbour-Master. This was the title of an officer at native ports all over the Indian seas, who was the chief authority with whom foreign traders and ship-masters had to transact. He was often also head of the Customs.”

This definition appears to be generally applicable, so far as I have tested it, from about the middle of the seventeenth century onwards, but it is certainly too narrow for the literature of the period 1500–1625, when Europeans were learning the institutions of these seas, but had as yet done little to modify them. In this period we meet Shahbandars who may be described as harbour-masters, but they are in the minority, and a student who tries to interpret the Portuguese historians by this definition soon finds himself in difficulties. Castanheda, for instance, defines a Shahbandar as an official like a *patrão da ribeira* (III, 47), a term which is more or less equivalent to harbour-master; but Barros says (II, ii, 44) that a Shahbandar is “like one of our Consuls”, and whatever a consul may have been like he was essentially

different from a harbour-master.¹ As one goes on reading, one is forced to the conclusion that in these writers the word has a wide range of meaning, and that its significance in any particular passage must be inferred either from the context or from some parallel record. The literature of the period is voluminous, and imperfectly indexed, so that it would be rash for any individual to claim that he had collected all the references to a Shahbandar which it contains ; no such claim is made in this paper, which is based on the references noted in reading the standard English and Portuguese authorities. I have found Shahbandars mentioned or indicated before the year 1625 in about twenty-five localities, several being occasionally found in one locality ; in six localities indications of meaning are wanting, while in one (Surat) they are obscure ; of the remainder, it may be said that in seven or eight localities Shahbandars appear as Ministers of State, in one (where they were numerous) and possibly in a second they appear as Presidents of Republics, in five they appear as Consuls in the contemporary sense of the term to be explained below, and in four they appear as harbour-masters or something of the kind. Thus, if the Portuguese historians were to come to life and were to discuss the affairs of the France of 1919, one or other of them might apply the word Shahbandar to (1) M. Clemenceau, (2) President Poincaré, (3) the British Consul at Bordeaux, or (4) the harbour-master at Marseilles. The range of meaning is sufficiently extensive to justify an examination of the subject in some little detail.

The Shahbandar as Minister of State.—All the instances which I have found of this use of the term relate to Sumatra or further east. Achin is a clear case ; John Davis says (*Purchas*, I, iii, 123) that the State was governed by five

¹ The references given are to the following editions : Barros & Couto, Lisbon, 1778 ff. ; Castanheda, Lisbon, 1833 ; Correa, Lisbon, 1858 ff. ; Purchas, the original edition, the figures being taken from the margin of MacLehose's reprint ; *Commentarios* of Alboquerque, Lisbon, 1774. The two series of India Office Records edited by Mr. W. Foster are quoted as *Letters Received* and *English Factories*.

principal men, the Secretary and four called Sabandars; "with these resteth all authority," and other references in his narrative are consistent with this statement. The case of Pacem (also in Sumatra) is not so clear, but I read the narrative of Barros (III, i, 524, 534, and III, ii, 246 ff.) as relating to a minister, and not to a localized official in charge only of the harbour. At Bantam in Java, Barros speaks (IV, i, 83) of the "Xabandar da Terra", a phrase which would indicate a minister rather than a harbour-master; Lancaster (*Purchas*, I, iii, 161) refers to the "Savendar, or Governour of the Citie"; and the general tenor of Scott's *Discourse*, a few pages further on, is to show the Shahbandar as one of the chief men in the State, subordinate only to the Regent, or "Protector" of the minor King. In Borneo we find a Shahbandar in the city of that name, and Barros says (IV, ii, 111) that the King had a Governor who ruled the kingdom for him, and who was called Shahbandar; Castanheda (VIII, 48) makes the same statement, with the qualification that the Shahbandar ruled most of the kingdom (*pola mayor parte*).

I think it probable that the Shahbandars in Macassar, Ceram, and Amboina come in this class, though the descriptions I have found contain too little detail for a final judgment. In regard to Macassar, we are told (*Purchas*, I, v, 608) that the King was very angry with the Dutch for having carried away "a principal Sabander". I infer that this was one of several ministers, not one of several harbour-masters, which would imply the existence of several harbours. In regard to Ceram and Amboina, the account given by Jourdain (*Journal*, edited by W. Foster, pp. 253, 257 ff.) seems to me to suggest a ministerial position, especially the phrase on p. 258, "the Sabendour with four more of the chief Arancayes" (see for this last word *Hobson-Jobson*, p. 644). The constitutional position in Amboina at this time is not, however, clear to me, and it is possible that the Shahbandars there had no official superior, in which case they would be classed more properly with those of the Banda Islands,

described in the next paragraph. Under Minister-Shahbandars may also be mentioned Mendez Pinto's Shahbandar in the second illustration given in *Hobson-Jobson*. Pinto was, so far as I can judge, careful and accurate in the use of "local colour", and his Shahbandar is a Minister of War and not a harbour-master.

The Shahbandar as President.—These are found in the Banda Islands, where they were numerous, and, as suggested above, may have existed also in Amboina. Our authorities were struck by the fact that there were no kings in the Banda Islands. Castanheda writes (VI, 8) that the people were uncivilized and had no king, but each place (*povoação*) had a ruler (*regedor*) called Shahbandar, who ruled only by consent. Saris gives a similar account (*Purchas*, I, iv, 392), and when some of the islands placed themselves under English rule, the documents of surrender (*Purchas*, I, v, 701) were signed by Shahbandars. These Shahbandars are distinguished from those enumerated in the preceding paragraph by having no king over them; they act as representatives of the people, not as agents of higher authority.

The Shahbandar as Consul.—In the sixteenth century Consuls were not appointed by the government of their country as officials, but were chosen by or among the merchants whom they represented, and the contemporary meaning of the word is, I think, accurately given by the definition in the *New English Dictionary*, "the appointed or elected head of the body of merchants of any nation resident in a foreign seaport or town, to settle disputes among them and be their channel of communication with the local government." In this sense the term must have been familiar to merchants and travellers of the period, and I have noticed references in *Purchas* to the French Consul at Alexandria, the "consul for the English nation" at Aleppo, a French Consul at the same place, and a Venetian Consul at Cairo; while Jourdain records (*Journal*, p. 241) that the English at Bantam elected one of their number as "Consul or Governor".

When, therefore, writers of the period speak of a Shahbandar as Consul, it is clear that they did not mean a harbour-master or other local official, but a foreigner representing the merchants of his nation.

Barros tells (II, ii, 44) of one such Shahbandar in Malacca. He says that among the Guzarates in that city was one who served as Shahbandar, a position similar to that of Consuls among the Portuguese (" *officio como entre nos os Consules da nação* "). There is more to be said about the position in Malacca, but for the present it is sufficient to note this very definite phrase. An equally clear case is that of the Shahbandar at Mocha, who played such a prominent part during Sir Henry Middleton's visit to that port in 1611 (*Purchas*, I, ii, 251 ff.). His name was Shermall, and he is described sometimes as "Shahbandar of Mocha", sometimes as "Shahbandar of the Baneans", and sometimes as "Consul of the Baneans". Apart from this description the whole story shows him acting as Consul and not as a local official. He opposed the local Governor's policy, and took a tedious journey to impress his views on that Governor's superior, the Pasha at Sana; and later, when Middleton had blockaded the port in order to recover damages due from the Governor, it was Shermall who arranged with the captains of the Indian ships to advance the amount of the damages and thus "save their monsoon". Throughout we see him acting independently and courageously in the interests of the Indian merchants, precisely as a Consul should do.

These two cases suffice to establish the statement that at this period Shahbandar may mean Consul. There are various other cases where the same interpretation appears to fit the facts better than any other, but where the facts are not on record in sufficient detail to justify a final verdict. The position at Calicut at the beginning of the sixteenth century is particularly interesting from this point of view. Barbosa wrote (Portuguese text, p. 341) that the foreign Moslems in Calicut had a governor of their own religion, and that the

king did not meddle with them ; in other words, they were extra-territorial, and subject to personal, not local law. Barros is rather vague ; he says (I, i, 424) that there were in Calicut two Moslems, one of whom (Coje Cemeceerij) had the governance (*tinha o governo*) of all maritime affairs, the other (Coje Bequij) of affairs on land, and since he also shows us a complete Hindu bureaucracy at work it is fair to assume that the "affairs" in question were those of the Moslems and not those of the State as a whole. Castanheda makes the position clearer when he explains (I, 111) that there was a division of interest between the local Moslems (headed by Coje Bequim), and the men from Cairo and the Red Sea, whose chief (Coje Çamecerim) controlled maritime affairs ; while Correa (I, 189) gives a somewhat similar account, but says that the chief of the foreign Moslems, whom he calls Coje Cacemo, had "much power" in maritime affairs. From these accounts it appears reasonable to conclude that the merchants from the Red Sea lived in Calicut extra-territorially under a chief or headman of their own, who would, in fact, come under the contemporary definition of the word Consul. None of the authorities call this chief a Shahbandar ; I suggest that this was his actual position, but that the Portuguese did not learn the use of the word at Calicut, and that consequently it was not employed by the writers. Barbosa, the earliest writer, does not, I think, use the word at all. Correa and Castanheda first use it in regard to affairs of 1510 or 1511, when I suspect it was learned at Goa or Malacca. Barros applies it to one earlier incident (that of Anjediva, to be discussed below), but he wrote many years later, and, as I shall show, his use in this instance is almost certainly erroneous. The historians relied on contemporary accounts of the earliest transactions at Calicut, and I suggest that they do not use the term Shahbandar because these accounts did not contain the word. There is, however, a possible trace of it. It will be noticed that two names are given for the chief of the foreign or Red Sea merchants. I am diffident of explaining Portuguese

transliterations, but applying Dalgado's canon that they tried to reproduce sound while giving a Portuguese form,¹ I read the names as (1) Shāh-misri, (2) Kāsim, and suggest that while the second was his proper name, the first may possibly be a perversion of his title of Egyptian Shahbandar, the Portuguese having (so to speak) caught the *Shāh* and dropped the *Bandar*.² Apart from this conjecture, we have in Calicut a foreigner holding a position similar to that of a Consul-Shahbandar, though the word Shahbandar is not applied to him.

The Shahbandar at Quilon, mentioned in the first illustration in *Hobson-Jobson*, may also be regarded as a Consul. Ibn Batuta says that the chief of all the Moslems in that town was Muhammad Shahbandar; that is to say, the point to note about him was that he was chief of a foreign element in the population, and the phrase might be rendered "Muhammad the Consul". The editor of *Hobson-Jobson* has noted Burton's remark that in modern Persian use Shahbandar means Consul, and the passage in the *Arabian Nights* to which this note relates shows that the institution of Consul-Shahbandar was known in Cairo, where (as the illustration quoted from Lane's *Modern Egyptians* shows) the Shahbandar even in the nineteenth century was still a representative of merchants, not an official. With this last case may be noticed the quotation from Tavernier regarding the Shahbandar at Golconda, who falls outside the period under investigation. Tavernier compares this Shahbandar to the *Prévost des Marchands*, a term which would convey to him as definite an idea as "The Lord Mayor" does to modern Englishmen. The *Prévost des Marchands* was

¹ *Glossario Luzo-Asiatico*, xxv.

² Shah appears in Portuguese as Xa, not Ça or Ce, but the suggestion is that the Portuguese at Calicut did not get the title exactly: not all Indians can pronounce Shibboleth correctly. In the *Commentarios* (iv, 70) we are told that Albuquerque obtained the surrender of a ship on the ground that it belonged to "Meceris" of Cairo, and I think that Meceris in this passage must mean Egyptians.

originally and essentially a representative chosen by the merchants, but in the course of his long history he became bureaucratized, and by the time Tavernier wrote his election had become a formal matter (*La Grande Encyclopédie*, s.v.). I shall suggest later on that in India some of the Consul-Shahbandars may gradually have become bureaucratized, and Tavernier's comparison is striking from this point of view.

The Shahbandar as Harbour-master.—The only clear statement of the Portuguese writers under this head is Castanheda's definition, already quoted, equating the term to *patrão da ribeira*. That post is not infrequently mentioned at this period, but it belonged ordinarily to the Portuguese bureaucracy, and I understand Castanheda to mean that the Shahbandar among "Moors and gentios" was like the Portuguese official familiar to his readers. The only possible Portuguese records of a Shahbandar in this sense are at Goa and Ormus, but we have also English records of such Shahbandars on the east coast of India. The cases of Goa and Ormus must be examined at some little length, for the accounts are obscure, and some of them throw more light on the growth of legends than on the concrete facts to which they relate.

The earliest Portuguese reference to a Shahbandar which I have noticed relates to the time when Vasco da Gama was at Anjediva on his first voyage, waiting for the monsoon for Africa. All three historians tell us that he was visited by a Polish Jew on behalf of the Sabayo of Goa, that the Jew was arrested, and under torture, or threat of torture, turned Christian and served for some time as Gaspar the interpreter. Barros says (I, i, 364) that this Jew served the Sabayo as Shahbandar. From the circumstances he narrates the authority for that statement could only be the Jew himself, and as a witness to fact the Jew is worthless, but Barros' whole account is obscure and, so to speak, lacking in motive, and I think his sources were probably in this instance defective.

Castanheda (III, 47) is more intelligible, but he tells various stories, indicating that conflicting legends had grown up; he does not give the Jew any particular rank or position. Correa tells (I, 125) a perfectly intelligible story, in the light of which the other accounts fall into line, and I think his version will be generally accepted as the most probable. According to him the Jew had risen to be the Sabayo's naval commander (*Capitão mor da armada*), a very different thing from Shahbandar; he had brought the fleet to attack the Portuguese, but came on by himself to spy out the position; some friendly fishermen warned the Portuguese of his treachery; he was therefore seized, and, under threat of torture, led the Portuguese to where his fleet was waiting, assisted in its destruction, and subsequently remained with his captors, becoming a Christian and serving as interpreter. Taking these stories together, I think there can be no doubt that the Jew was a naval officer and not a Shahbandar of any sort.

Ten years later, during the first siege of Goa, another incident occurred, in regard to which Correa and Castanheda tell very different stories. It is clear that a man known as Shahbandar was killed by the governor's guards, but apart from this almost every incident varies. Correa (II, 80) describes the man as a boat-owner (*barqueiro*), who was called *macadão*, and who also called himself Shahbandar,¹ and says that the trouble began between this man and the Portuguese *patrão da ribeira*, named Dinis Fernandes. Castanheda (III, 47) says that the Shahbandar (who is like a *patrão da ribeira*) was summarily executed for aiding the enemy. The incident is described also in the *Commentarios* (II, 169), and this version is probably based on official documents; it agrees closely with Castanheda's account, and shows that Dinis Fernandes, who discovered the Shahbandar's treachery,

¹ The passage is one of those, so familiar in Correa, where several alternative phrases occur in succession, the author having apparently hesitated which phrase to keep.

was *patrão mor da armada* (not *da ribeira*), thus disposing of the difficulty of having a Portuguese *patrão da ribeira* alongside of a Shahbandar. The *Commentarios* also explain (II, 195) the position of this Shahbandar; he is described as resembling an *Almoxarife da ribeira*, or Collector of Customs, but he also had charge of the merchants' horses while in the import-stables, and Alboquerque at first maintained him in this position, requiring him "to provide for the horses and for all the other business of the *ribeira*". Apparently the post lapsed when this man was executed, as I have found no later mention of a Shahbandar at Goa, and none is shown in the lists of establishment given by Botelho and Falcao. According to this account the Shahbandar at Goa was not exactly a harbour-master, but he was a localized official, and thus comes under this class.

The first reference to a Shahbandar at Ormus is Correa's statement (II, 50) that Alboquerque intended to appoint Coje Bequi (the Calicut Moslem already mentioned, who had suffered—and was to suffer more—for his friendship with the Portuguese) to some post at Ormus, in recognition of his services. Correa says he was to be either "Xabandar or Zogyl, which are the principal positions in the city". Accepting the editor's suggestion that Zogyl is a careless attempt to write Gozil (= *guazil*, *vazir*), it seems probable that Correa was thinking of the Minister-Shahbandar when he wrote this sentence; you would not offer a man employment as "harbour-master, or Prime Minister, or something of that sort". The appointment did not, however, take place, and the sentence throws no light on the nature of the position at Ormus. We meet the real Shahbandar of Ormus a little later, in the revolt of 1521. Barros (III, ii, 126, 151) and Castanheda (V, 298) both say that he was employed to burn the Portuguese shipping, and the former says, incidentally, that he has "charge of maritime affairs". I think this account justifies us in classing the Shahbandar of Ormus as a harbour-master or something of the sort. In this case the position

was maintained by the Portuguese. Botelho (*Tombo*, p. 103) shows under the Customs establishment an allowance to the Shahbandar; he does not show a salary, but there is a blank page in his list, and it is possible either that the Shahbandar would have found a place if this page had been filled, or that he had not then been brought on the Portuguese establishment, though he received an allowance for specified services. By 1584, however, the Shahbandar was definitely a Portuguese official (*Couto*, X, ii, 68), and Falcao (p. 126) describes him as chief warden of the beach and custom house ("goarda mor da Praya e Alfandega"), and enters him as appointed by the King of Portugal, not the King of Ormus. It may be added that neither Botelho nor Falcao shows a Shahbandar at any Portuguese settlement other than Ormus.

Of the English records I think we are justified in classifying the Shahbandars at Pulicat (*Purchas*, I, iii, 320) and Masulipatam (*idem*, 326) as harbour-masters or something of the kind; at the latter port the Shahbandar had in 1623 "continued in this office (by report) thirty-two years, and now, in the vacance of the Governor, rules as Governor" (*English Factories*, 1622-3, p. 233), so that he was, so to speak, in the regular bureaucratic line. The Shahbandar at Surat also appears to come in this class from the year 1616 onwards. His position prior to that year is somewhat obscure; he is mentioned frequently in various narratives in *Purchas* and in *Letters Received*, but the notices are fragmentary, and their interpretation would involve detailed examination of the administrative arrangements in force in Gujarat and the Deccan during the reign of Jahangir, a subject too intricate for discussion on the present occasion.

Geographical Distribution of Shahbandars.—Apart from those hitherto mentioned, I have noted references to Shahbandars at Aden, Bagdad, Petepoli, Patani, Bangkok, and Jacatra (Java),¹ but have found nothing to indicate their

¹ For Aden, see *Journal of John Jourdain*, p. 59; for Bagdad, *Purchas*, I, iv, 524; for Petepoli, *Purchas*, I, iii, 315; for Patani and Bangkok, *Purchas*, I, iii, 321; and for Jacatra, *Purchas*, I, iii, 197.

exact position at any of these places. I have found no Shahbandar on the east coast of Africa, and the Portuguese accounts of affairs on this coast are so detailed that they would probably have mentioned one had he existed ; nor have I found any in Bengal, Pegu, or Tenasserim, where the accounts are so superficial that no inference can be drawn from their silence. The Shahbandars whose position can be known or guessed thus fall into two distinct groups ; if for the moment we neglect Malacca, all Shahbandars in the Malayan area, that is from Achin eastwards, are either Ministers or Presidents ; while from Masulipatam to Mocha there is no trace of Minister or President, but we have Consuls and Harbour-masters or other localized officials. This grouping is suggestive, and might perhaps be used as a guide to the literature merely on the evidence so far considered ; it derives additional significance from the facts stated in the next paragraph.

Shahbandar and Bandara.—One is tempted to assume that identity of name denotes identity of origin, and that Ministers and Presidents, Consuls and Harbour-masters, must all spring from a common root, and since the common name is Persian, the inference naturally follows that the origin must be sought in the period when the trade of these seas was dominated by Moslem merchants. Before, however, we pursue this train of thought it is necessary to inquire whether the identity of name is an Eastern or a Portuguese phenomenon ; later European arrivals depended very largely on Portuguese interpreters, and if the Portuguese fused, or confused, two or more Eastern words in their Xabandar, the fusion, or confusion, might easily be perpetuated. Now, there is some positive evidence to show that some of the Portuguese writers did as a matter of fact interchange the Persian Shahbandar with the Malayan Bandara,¹ defined in *Hobson-Jobson* as one

¹ It seems safest to write this word without accents. Barros has Bendára, Correa gives Bendará and Bendara, Castanheda has Bendara, Couto has Bandarra, and there are other variants.

of the higher Ministers of State. The evidence appears in the accounts of Albuquerque's conquest and settlement of Malacca, where the constitutional arrangements were somewhat exceptional. The town consisted in a great measure of foreign communities, and while the King had a Bandara, or Prime Minister, of his own, each community seems to have lived extra-territorially under its own headman; as Correa says (II, 253), "cada nação tinha apartamento de seus costumes e justiça," and there were separate headmen for Chinese, Lequeos, Siamese, Peguans, Klings, etc., etc. Similarly, Barros tells us (II, ii, 52) that Javan visitors to the city went to the settlements maintained by two leading Javans, Utimutiraja and Tuam Colascar, and he compares the former's settlement to a consulate (*consulado da nação*), a phrase which recalls his definition of Shahbandar already quoted. The *Commentarios* (III, 96) carry this somewhat further, stating that the whole site of the town was divided up among four headmen, representing China, Java, Cambay, and Bengal. Albuquerque maintained this arrangement in part, appointing headmen for the principal communities, but placing them under the control of the Portuguese resident factor. Now Barros and the *Commentarios* call these headmen Shahbandars, while Correa calls them Bandaras. Barros writes (II, ii, 105) that Albuquerque appointed certain persons, whom he names, as "Shahbandar and Governor" (*Governador*). The *Commentarios* describe the original headmen as Shahbandars, and those appointed by Albuquerque as *Governadores* (III, 187). Correa (II, 253) says that there were Bendaras of the foreign merchants in separate groups, and, a few lines further on, that these ministers (*regedores*) are called bendaras; while in dealing with Albuquerque's appointments he speaks of *governadores* and *regedores*. As between these writers, then, the words *governador*, *regedor*, *bendara*, and *xabandar* are interchangeable. Further, Correa applies the two latter words to the same person in the narrative of the early negotiations (II, 220-3), in the course of which he speaks

of the great enemy of the Portuguese first as *Xabandar dos estrangeiros*, then as *Xabandar Cambaes*, and lastly as *Bendara dos estrangeiros*.

It is not necessary to conclude that these writers were careless; the truth seems to be that in this instance both the Persian and the Malayan title belonged properly to the same person. The "Guzerates" or "Cambayans" chose their own representative, and in their eyes he would be their Shahbandar, while the King of Malacca recognized his jurisdiction and regarded him in consequence as a Bandara. The narratives of all four historians (including Castanheda, who uses both words but throws no fresh light on the point under discussion) make it quite plain that the negotiations at Malacca were in effect a duel between Albuquerque and the Guzerates, whose Shahbandar was in Portuguese eyes the villain of the piece; if, as appears to be probable, they heard him spoken of indifferently as Shahbandar and Bandara, the fusion of the two words would follow naturally, and would be perpetuated by native interpreters anxious only to make their employers understand. To put it quite shortly, in Malacca the words Shahbandar and Bandara in fact meant in this instance the same man, and we need not wonder if they were interchanged.

An examination of the language used by the Portuguese to denote Ministers of State indicates that this fusion was not confined to Malacca, but was spread over the Malayan area. The regular words for Minister are *regedor* and *governador*, often used together, and one or other of them may be equated to one or other of the exotic terms. We have seen above that Barros links Shahbandar to *governador*, and Correa equates *regedor* and Bandara. Castanheda (V, 8) defines Shahbandar as *regedor* in Banda; he makes the same equation (VIII, 48) in Borneo, where Barros says the Shahbandar was *governador*; Lemos (*History of the Sieges of Malacca*, p. 44 reverse) says that Bandara is the same as *regedor*, and speaking generally it appears that at this period any one, or any two, of these

four words may be used to designate Ministers of State in the monarchies of the Malayan area, while I have found no instance of either *governador* or *regedor* being applied to a Shahbandar on the Indian side of Sumatra.

The evidence appears to justify the suggestion that the Minister-Shahbandars mentioned at this period were probably really Bandaras, a name entirely appropriate to their recorded activities, and that the Dutch and English obtained the extended use of the term Shahbandar through interpreters trained in the Portuguese school. The position in Banda requires separate explanation, since Malayan was not spoken by the people (though it served as *lingua franca*), and it is improbable that they used the exotic term Bandara among themselves. It may, I think, be taken as certain that they did not intentionally assign a Persian name to the Presidents of their humble republics, and two theories of the use of the term Shahbandar may be suggested. One is that the native title of the Presidents was sufficiently near to Shahbandar to be identified with it by the interpreters. I have found no vocabulary of the original dialect of these islands, and cannot therefore test this theory. The other is that the first Portuguese interpreters, finding men in authority with no intelligible title, gave them the name which had become familiar, and that the name stuck; this is not in itself improbable, but it is merely conjecture.

Development of the true Shahbandar.—If we are justified in treating the Ministers and Presidents of the Malayan area as pseudo-Shahbandars, endowed with that title by the Portuguese, it remains to inquire whether any explanation can be offered of the application of the term to such different persons as consuls and harbour-masters in the Indian area with its offshoot in Malacca itself. Within this area it may be permissible to infer identity of origin from identity of name, and to class the Shahbandar as probably a Persian institution carried round the coast by merchants speaking that language. On this theory the question arises, what was the original

nature of the institution ; did harbour-masters develop into consuls or did consuls become harbour-masters ? The latter alternative seems to me to be the more probable. I cannot conjecture how a local official could develop into the representative of a body of foreign merchants, but the conditions known to have prevailed in Indian seaports make it not altogether improbable that a consul, having become domiciled, might slip gradually into the local bureaucracy, perhaps in the first instance as a farmer of the customs revenue. It is, however, also possible that some at least of the Indian Shahbandars of the seventeenth century are creations of Portuguese interpreters, and not developments from the indigenous consular system. The information at my disposal is not yet sufficient for a discussion of these theories, and for the present I state them merely as conjectures.

Conclusions.—1. The current definition of Shahbandar as harbour-master does not explain the literature of the period 1500–1625.

2. In that period the word may denote (1) a minister, (2) a president, (3) a consul, (4) a harbour-master or other localized official.

3. Ministers and presidents are found only in Sumatra and further east ; consuls are found at Malacca, but with this exception consuls and harbour-masters are confined to the area between Masulipatam and Mocha.

4. Portuguese writers interchange the Persian Shahbandar with Bandara, the Malayan word for a Minister of State.

5. The following theory will account for the recorded facts. (a) The Shahbandar was originally a consul chosen by a body of Moslem merchants to be their chief in a foreign port. (b) Some of these consuls may have become domiciled, and, from being farmers of the customs or associated with the authorities in other ways, slipped gradually into the local bureaucracy as harbour-masters or collectors of customs.

(c) The Portuguese applied the term Shahbandar to the Ministers of State known more properly as Bandaras, and also to the Presidents of the Republics which they found in some of the Eastern islands. It is possible that some of the Indian Shahbandars also may be the creation of Portuguese interpreters.

6. Apart from this theory students of the literature of the period 1500–1625 may assume, subject in each instance to the context, that in the Indian area Shahbandar means a consul or a harbour-master, or a man occupying some intermediate position, while in the Malayan area it denotes a minister where there was a king and a president where there was not.