



# THE LOWER BUREAUCRACY OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

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BY

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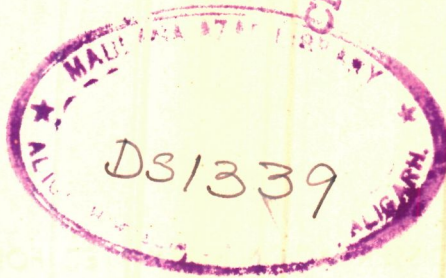


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I N T R O D U C T I O N

In a strict and traditional sense, the word bureaucracy implies a body of officials invested with the exercise of power, delegated to them or possessed by them in their own right; it is a collective designation for officials organized on a more or less systematic basis and discharging executive functions. In so far as power based directly on land control often required direct use of force rather than detailed literate administration, the feudal system (in its classic West European form) had little scope for true bureaucracy. Bureaucracy began to develop in West Europe as the growth of royal power accompanied the disintegration of feudalism. A complex apparatus of administration now tended to take shape. The rise of this bureaucracy synchronised with the rise of the Middle class; and this term too, therefore, needs attention.<sup>1</sup>

The concept of middle class itself emerged in the fourteenth century England with the rise of a trading community which monopolized certain spheres of trade and gradually organized itself into associations and groups. This urban based class represented the antithesis of the old regime which was based upon fief and personal service.<sup>2</sup> The new

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1. For the various definitions of the term Bureaucracy and its conceptual development in the West, see B.B. Misra, The Bureaucracy in India: An Historical Analysis of Development upto 1947, O.U.P., 1977, pp.1-37.
  2. For the growth of the middle classes in England see B.B. Misra, The Indian Middle Class - Their growth in Modern Times, O.U.P., 1961, pp. 4-7.

class going by the name "middle classes" comprised not only merchants, but also professional persons (lawyers, physicians, printers, master, artists-ans, etc.) who as individuals appeared to be independent of the feudal nobility. The social and political vacuum created by feudal decline was being steadily filled by the rising middle class and the monarchy which was the initial support behind its development, Thus in the words of Lewis and Maude :

"The trading, travelling, money-making middle class is presented to us as the antithesis of feudalism, that stable pyramid of society in which each man owed allegiance to his overlord, paying him with services in kind in return for his rule and protection".<sup>1</sup>

But till the advent of the Industrial revolution in the eighteenth century, these social strata were contained to an extent on account of the technological backwardness. It was only with the advent of machine and growth of Industries that the Middle classes could create a new social order, incorporating the rising Industrial entrepreneurs.<sup>2</sup>

One of <sup>the</sup> peculiar features of the Middle classes in Europe was that as a class it was independent of the State

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1. Lewis and Maude, The English Middle Classes, 1949, p.13.

2. See for example K.M. Raj, 'Politics and Economies of Intermediate Regimes', Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. VIII, no. 27, July 7, 1973, p. 1191.



control : though as individuals, its members were quite often in the pay of either a noble or the state itself. The basic element which distinguished these members of the Middle class was their professionalism.

Having its origin in the thinking of the French physiocrats, the concept of Bureaucracy also developed with the rise of machines and industries in the 18th century. The European bureaucracy became increasingly to be recruited from the middle classes. This was the case with the royal bureaucracy even in the Ancient Regime in France.

The question which arises at this point is that, is this linkage between any strata of the bureaucracy with the Middle Classes true for the Mughal Empire ? It is sometimes assumed that a <sup>strong bureaucracy</sup> precludes or excludes the growth of the Middle classes. Is this true ? One of the purposes of the present dissertation is to seek an answer to this question through presenting biographical sketches of some low-and medium level Mughal bureaucrats.

François Bernier, a french traveller who came to India in the 17th century, claimed that:

".....There is no middle state in Delhi (India). A man must be either of the highest rank or live miserably.....".<sup>1</sup>

But the difficulty with Bernier was that coming from France, he tried to look at everything in India with a European bias. He went so far as to consider the King as the proprietor of the land apparently because the large size of revenue looked to him as the proprietor's rent.<sup>2</sup> Having being conditioned by emerging modern Europe, Bernier could never imagine that the peasant could ever own the land. By witnessing the frequent transfers of the Jagirdars, he knew the land could not belong to him. It is, therefore, not certain if Bernier was accurately reporting when he spoke as if the middle class did not exist.

Moreland accepted this view of Bernier on Middle class and denied the presence of this class in the Mughal Empire. The only exception he made was regarding the mercantile class; he also admitted the existence of "something like a middle class" in Bengal.<sup>3</sup> S.B. Misra also

1. F. Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire AD 1656 - 1668, tr. A. Constable, 2nd ed. & revised by V.A. Smith, New Delhi, 1983, p. 252.
2. Bernier, Travels, op. cit., pp. 234 & 226.
3. W.H. Moreland, India at the Death of Akbar - an economic Study, London, 1925, pp. 26-27.

believes that this "intermediate group" did not enjoy an independent position of its own or social prestige in the Mughal empire.<sup>1</sup>

Marx and later on Max Weber had also held the view of a static Indian Society, without any real proto-capitalist or middle class.<sup>2</sup> But recent studies have seriously challenged this view.<sup>3</sup>

It was Wilfred Cantwell Smith who raised the issue of Middle class in Mughal Empire in one of his early articles.<sup>4</sup> Middle classes, he said, were inextricable from the Mughal Empire. He hypothesised that the rise and florescence of the Mughal Empire as a political, economic and cultural process was connected with the florescence from early 16th century of a prosperous merchant middle class. He further suggested that the widespread prevalence of money-economy greatly helped in the growth of a class

1. B.B. Misra, The Indian Middle Classes, op. cit., p. 28.

2. For Karl Marx see New York Herald Tribune, June 25, 1853, Reprinted in Articles on India, Bombay, 1943. See also Irfan Habib, 'Marx's perceptions of India', Trier, 1983 and for Weber's ideas see Morris D. Morris, 'Values as an obstacle to Economic growth in South Asia: An historical Survey', Journal of Economic History, XXVII, Dec. 1967, no. 4, pp. 588-607.

3. For a detailed analysis on Social change in India, see Irfan Habib, "Society and Economic Change - 1200-1500", Cyclostyled copy of paper read in Seminar on Social and Economic change in North India, University of Kurukshetra, 1981.

4. W.C. Smith, "The Mughal Empire and the Middle Classes", Islamic Culture, Vol. XVIII, no.4, 1944.

which based itself on a non-feudal income.

Smith reasoned that the large size of the Empire greatly helped in the growth of this class, as it facilitated unhindered long distance trade by the merchants. Secondly, he argued that the Mansabdāri system, virtually meant an abolition of a purely landed upper class and its transformation into a class of 'salaried government officials.' Thirdly, he pointed out that with the politico-administrative unification, there was a spurt in the construction of roads and sarāis. It must have been the merchants "who would have applauded the most" when the roads were constructed. Fourthly, Smith drew attention to the seventh regulation of the Twelve Ordinances proclaimed in 1605 when Jahangir ascended the throne which is a pointer to the importance of the mercantile and middle classes in the Mughal Empire. For in this ordinance, Jahangir had tried to conciliate the merchants by announcing the abolition of practices harmful to their vocation. Lastly Smith held that the systematization of the currency all over the Empire was an indicator to the growth of this middle class. All this and much more, says Smith, points towards a growing money-economy and the conversion of land-revenue into cash, which in turn would lead to a cash nexus benefitting and promoting the Middle classes as such. Thus to W.C. Smith, the prosperity and importance of the Middle class in the Mughal Empire was no mere speculation.

W.H. Moreland, Chicherov, Pavlov and Satish Chandra have supported the same view.<sup>1</sup> All of them discern a widespread prevalence of money-economy resulting from a growing trend of production for the market in agricultural as well as non-agricultural sectors. They also say that the introduction of world commerce by various European companies and the subsequent creation of merchant capital, which was further helped by the 'Putting-out System' testify to the prosperity of merchants, bankers and people belonging to other professions. Irfan Habib also suggests a 'rural-monetisation' which created surplus agricultural produce which aided urban growth.<sup>2</sup>

Iqtidar Alam Khan took up the issue in 1975 and enumerated the various components of the middle class, which he defined with E.M.S. Namboodiripad as a class consisting of all those who do not belong to either of the two main antagonistic classes<sup>3</sup>. He has tried to make a functional

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1. Moreland, India from Akbar to Aurangzeb, London, 1923; A.I. Chicherov, Indian Economic Development in Sixteenth-Eighteenth Centuries, Moscow, 1971, V.I, Pavlov, The Indian Capitalist Class: A Historical Study, English ed. Delhi, 1964; Satish Chandra, Presidential Address, Medieval India Section, Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 1968 and "Some aspects of the Growth of money economy in India during the Seventeenth Century", The Indian Economic and Social History Review, Vol. III, no.4, Dec. 1966.
  2. Irfan Habib, "Potentialities of Capitalistic Development in the Economy of Mughal India", Enquiry, New Series, Vol. III, no. 3, 1971, p. 55.
  3. Iqtidar Alam Khan, "The Middle Classes in the Mughal Empire", Presidential Address, Medieval India Section, PIHC, 1975; E.M.S. Namboodiripad, "More on Intermediate Regimes", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. VIII, no.45, Dec.1, 1973, p. 2136. see also Satish Chandra, Medieval India: Society the Jagirdari crisis and the Village, Delhi, 1982, p. 83-86.

as well as structural study of the various components of this middle class like the commercial and financial sections, the lesser official functionaries and the professional classes (eg. physicians, scholars, artists, architects etc.).

Tapan Raychaudhuri appears to sum up the leading trend among recent historians when he states the conclusion that there existed a 'sizeable middle-income group' in Mughal India.<sup>1</sup>

If such an intermediary class existed, then what was its relationship to the Mughal bureaucracy? A.J. Qaisar has tried to assess the influx of middle classes (professionals and merchants) in the Mughal administration as Mutasaddis of Surat and their status in society.<sup>2</sup> He has come to the conclusion that this middle class had started being recruited to such influential offices as that of the Port-Customer.<sup>3</sup>

A study of the administrative structure of the Mughal Empire and the Mansabdāri system in fact suggests a kind of

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1. See Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol. I: c.1200-c. 1750, ed. Tapan Raychaudhuri & Irfan Habib, Delhi, 1983, p. 264.
  2. A.J. Qaisar, "Recruitment of merchants in the Mughal Feudal Bureaucracy", (unpublished).
  3. See also my article "The Mutasaddis of the Port of Surat in the Seventeenth Century", PIHC, Burdwan, 1983.

bureaucratic apparatus whose roots did not lie in local customary control over land. As a salary was fixed against their specified and effective sawār rank and the duties assigned against it, the Mansabdārs qualify in a sense to be termed bureaucrats. An extensive study of this Mughal official class has been carried out in considerable depth by M. Athar Ali and other historians.<sup>1</sup> It is to test this thesis of the existence of a sizeable middle class and the extent of its links with the Mughal Empire, that I have tried to assess the position of the Lower Bureaucracy in the Mughal empire.

By the term 'Lower bureaucracy' I have meant the lesser official functionaries having a rank of 500 zāt or below. What was their social background, inter-relations, social mores and attitudes, their problems are a few questions which have to be answered before a clear picture of this group can be formed.

In this dissertation I have tried to study the origin of individual bureaucrats (their class-roots, as it were) and such further questions as whether they were

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1. M. Athar Ali has made an extensive study of the Mansabdāri and Jāgirdāri Systems in his two works, viz. The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb, Bombay, 1966 and The Apparatus of an Empire - Awards of Ranks, Offices and titles to the Mughal Nobility :1574-1658, Delhi, 1985.

bound to one master or not ? What was their commercial interest, their education and training, and political and social outlook ?

To facilitate such a study of the lower ranks of the official class I have chosen for close biographical scrutiny three Muslim and four Hindu bureaucrats of low-medium level who have left behind their own accounts in the shape of histories, memoirs and even letters. Amongst the Hindu bureaucrats whom I have chosen, Sūrat Singh was a Kambhoj, Bālkrishan Brahman and Īsardās Nāgar were Brahmins and Bhīmsen was a Kāyasth. As far as the three Muslim bureaucrats are concerned, two were of foreign origin (Bāyazīd Bayāt a Tūrānī and Ītimād 'Alī Khān an Īrānī) and one, Shaikh Farīd Bhakkari was an Indian Muslim.

My choice of these seven officials was also guided by a time consideration. Dispersed in time and space these officials represent the various categories of the petty official functionaries, starting from the reign of Humāyūn down to the later Mughal Emperors like Jahāndār Shāh and Muhammad Shāh. Bāyazīd Bayāt in the reigns of Humāyūn and Akbar, Shaikh Farīd Bhakkari under Jahāngīr and Shāhjahān, Īsardās and Bhīmsen under Aurangzeb, were all low-medium level mansabdārs having attained ranks not exceeding 500 zāt. Sūrat Singh and Bālkrishan Brahman were officials who



could not even claim Mansabs, both being local revenue officials.

The biographies of Bāyazīd Bayāt and Bhīmsen are also important as they reflect the lives of those petty officials or bureaucrats who were employed in the Mughal army in such departments as Dāgh-wa Tasīha and Topkhāna.

The seventh Mughal bureaucrat whom I have dealt with is Itimād 'Ali Khān, who strictly speaking is a little different from the others. Recruited for the first time under Aurangzeb as a Port-Officer and promoted to his father's office of Diwān, Itimād 'Ali Khān ultimately attained a mansab of 1000/800 under Bahādur Shāh I. Thus apparently he exceeds the rank of 500 zāt which we have fixed to qualify for the term 'lower-bureaucrat', but he lost his rank, and thus became an unemployed official, whose subsequent fleeting petty assignments make him fall into the class we are dealing with.

These seven bureaucrats represent a fairly wide spectrum of low ranking officialdom in the Mughal Empire. Not only do they span the long period of the Mughal Empire, but also belonged to, or lived in different

parts of the Empire. It may, therefore, be expected that their biographical sketches may have something to tell us what it was like to be a low or low-medium ranking Mughal bureaucrat.

Chapter I

BAYAZID BAYAT

One of the most interesting examples of the lower-medium level bureaucrats of the early Mughal period is Bāyazīd Bayāt, an official of some influence who served under Humāyūn from the time of his exile in Persia, and then under Akbar down to, at least 1595-6. Though in his book Tazkira-i-Humāyūn wa Akbar<sup>1</sup>, he gives his name as Bāyazīd Bayāt, Abūl Faḍl, calls him Bāyazīd Beg Turkmān, indicating the race to which he belonged.<sup>2</sup>

As far as his family background is concerned, not much is known. Born in a Tūrānī family, Bāyazīd appears to have passed his childhood at Tabrīz, where he was a resident of Āwā Mohalla (neighbourhood)<sup>3</sup>.

Amongst his relatives Bāyazīd names only one of his elder brothers, Shāh Burdī Bayāt, who at some time had held the charge of Gurdez, Naḡhr and Bangash near Kābul. Later, we are told, he gave up every thing and became a durwēsh and water-carrier popularly known as Bahrām Saqqa.<sup>4</sup> Bāyazīd writes that Bahrām Saqqa was a durwēsh of some repute and

1. Bāyazīd himself describes his work only as Mukhtasar (see M. Hidayat Hosain's edition Calcutta, 1941, pp. 2, 11, 68, 148, 235, 273, 310, 311, 312, 333, 336, 371, 373, 374, & 377) and Tazkira (Ibid, pp. 136, 220 & 269). Ethe's India Office Cat. No. 223 calls it Tārikh-i-Humānyūn.
2. A'īn-i-Akbari ed. Saiyid Ahmad Khan, Delhi, 1878, Vol. I, p. 229; see also Akbar nāma ed. Abdur Rahim, Calcutta, 1877, Vol. II pp. 188 & 200.
3. Tazkira-i Humāyūn wa Akbar, pp. 187 & 244.
4. Ibid, p.54. see also p. 47; Akbar nāma, op. cit., I, p.244.

had collected around him many disciples.<sup>1</sup> He had many spiritual experiences to his credit and being a man of letters had written two Dīwāns : one in Turkish and the other in Persian.<sup>2</sup> These dīwāns were very popular amongst the common people. The Persian dīwān was produced (taba') by Shah Qāsim Anwar and that in Turkish by Shāh Nasīmī<sup>3</sup>. Bāyazīd quotes one sample each from Saqqa's Persian Ghazal, Rubāī and Qata'.<sup>4</sup> The only other information regarding Bahrām Saqqa is that in 1561 he had a house in Delhi, near the gate of the Fort from where, true to his nom de plume, he used to serve drinking water to the common people.<sup>5</sup> One of Bāyazīd's other brother was Muḥammad Sharīf, who held some post in the Mughal army.<sup>6</sup> No further particulars regarding him are known.

Bayazid tells us that he joined Humayun's service while he was a fugitive in Iran, in 1543-4.<sup>7</sup> Thereafter in Humāyūn's wanderings to Mashhad, Zangān (a city situated between Sultāniya and Tabrīz), Tabrīz and Āzarbāijān etc. Bāyazīd duly accompanied him.<sup>8</sup>

1. Ibid, p.235.
2. Ibid, pp. 55 & 235.
3. Ibid, p.55.
4. Ibid, p. 235.
5. Ibid, p.237.
6. Ibid, p. 279.
7. Ibid, p. 254.
8. Ibid, pp. 2, 3, 32, 36 etc.

: 5 :

In 1544-45, when Shah Tahmasp, appointed his Imam, Saiyid Muhammad Arab to collect the nazr (religious donations) from the Holy Tomb of Imam Ali Raza, and distribute it amongst the people, Bayazid accompanied him and utilized his time in pursuit of learning (talab-i ilmi)<sup>1</sup>. But this 'studious' interlude was brief. In the next year (1545-46) when Humayun despatched his forces from Qandhar, under the command of Ali Sultan Bashi Bayuk to capture the Fort of Bist, Bayazid says, he participated in this expedition.<sup>2</sup>

In this very year, Bayazid went to Gurdez to meet his brother Bahram Saqqa and then he joined the royal forces at Kabul, when Humayun had turned his attention to that fort after the conquest of Qandhar.<sup>3</sup>

In March 1546, when it became clear that Mirza Sulaiman was bent upon rebellion, Humayun marched into Badakhshan with a force of five to six thousand soldiers. In the battle which ensued the Mirza's forces were worsted and much booty was captured. Bayazid says, that, when the booty and the captured horses were distributed amongst the

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1. Ibid., p. 37.

2. Ibid., p. 39.

3. Ibid., pp. 47-55. There is much controversy regarding the exact date of the conquest of Kabul. Bayazid gives the year 953/1546 (Ibid). Whereas Abul. Fazl gives the date as 18th November 1545 (A.N., op. cit., I, p. 244). For details regarding the controversy see Akbarnama, tr. Beveridge, Delhi, 1972, I, p. 480, n.2.

soldiers by Humāyūn, he was also given a string of camels laden with booty. Bāyazīd despatched the same to Kābul.<sup>1</sup>

Around this time Bāyazīd joined the service of Husain Qūli Sultān, Muhrdār of Humāyūn, who was present in this army.<sup>2</sup> Bāyazīd says that when Humāyūn reached Warsak (?) from Khost, he had the honour of serving food to the Emperor personally for which the Emperor was so much pleased as to grant him a robe of honour.<sup>3</sup> When they were stationed near the fort of Arrack, Humāyūn asked Bāyazīd why he had not joined his service. Bāyazīd then informed him that since passing Zangān (a place between Qazwīn and Tabrīz) he had infact been serving in the Imperial army.<sup>4</sup>

Thus it appears that till this meeting with Humāyūn Bāyazīd held some very inferior posts in the Mughal army. But now, when introduced to Humāyūn, he seems to have risen in status. For in this very year when Humāyūn went out hunting in Badakhshān, Bāyazīd was also present with him.<sup>5</sup> In 1548 when Humayun besieged the fort of Kābul, which had previously been captured by Mirza Kāmran, Bāyazīd

1. Tazkira-i Humāyūn wa Akbar, p. 70. For details of this expedition see Akbarnama, op. cit. I, pp.251-53.
2. Tazkira-i Humayun wa Akbar, p. 71. A reference on p. 121 points out that Bayazid was the secretary of the Muhrdar.
3. Ibid, p. 71.
4. Ibid, p.76.
5. Ibid, p.77. Bayazid says he captured a deer in this hunt.

was deputed by Husain Qūli Sultān Muhrdār to keep vigil on Darwāza-i Āhnī (Iron Gate) of the fort.<sup>1</sup> And thus when Muḥammad Qāsim (who later on built the Agra fort) and Muḥammad Husain, who were the sister's sons of Pahalwān Dost, the Mīr Bars (Superintendent of the Imperial Forests) came down from the fort through the bastion situated between the Iron Gate and the bastion of Qāsim Bartās, it was Bāyazīd who then took them to the royal presence.<sup>2</sup> This was, says Bāyazīd, his first proper assignment.<sup>3</sup>

Subsequently in May 1548, when Humāyūn was once again heading towards Badakhshān, Bāyazīd was appointed to the Vanguard (harāwal dasta) which engaged in a skirmish with the vanguard of Mirza Kāmran near Tāliqān.<sup>4</sup>

In 1549 when Humāyūn started for Balkh, but due to disloyalty and cowardice of his nobles, had to turn back towards Kabul from the pass of Sūq, Bāyazīd alongwith his master Husain Quli Sultan was in the advance guard;<sup>5</sup> and on the banks of the river Gaz, a stream of river Bārān near Kābul, he shielded Humāyūn from the arrows of Uzbegs who had surrounded them.<sup>6</sup>

1. Ibid, p. 81.

2. Ibid,

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. p. 91; It is a town in Khurāsān, East of Balkh.

5. Ibid, p. 113.

6. Ibid, p. 114.



Bāyazīd narrates a few interesting incidents which occurred during this expedition. Humāyūn and his men at this juncture had lost the way and at one place the Emperor had to order Haider Muhammad Akhta Bēgī to arrange a guide to lead them back to Kabul. Thus a one eyed man named Khuda Bakhshi Lolhi, who knew the route well was employed. Bāyazīd was given a spear on which a flag was tied and he was ordered to ride behind the guide so that Humayun and his retinue may follow it.<sup>1</sup>

Prior to their departure from this place, Bāyazīd says that at one place Humāyūn had come across a well where two soldiers were drawing water. On Humāyūn's demand for water, they ignored him. At that moment Bāyazīd also arrived. When he came to know about the attitude of the two soldiers, he beheaded them both and offered the required water to the Emperor.<sup>2</sup>

Then again, one night prior to their departure towards Kabul alongwith the guide, a horse of Husain Qūli Sultan that had been stolen, was found and its rider caught; the animal was bestowed upon Bāyazīd, whose own horse was quite tired.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Ibid, p. 118. This incident presumably occurred in 1550.

2. Ibid, p. 116.

3. Ibid, p. 117.

During the retreat Humāyūn's condition became so pitiable that he had to borrow dried bread and a container of cherry jam from Bāyazīd.<sup>1</sup>

Sometime in June-July 1550, Humāyūn, then at Kābul was informed of Mirza Kāmṛān's revolt. He came out of Kabul and headed towards the pass of Qipchāq<sup>2</sup>, where a battle ensued in which Humāyūn's forces were worsted.<sup>3</sup> Bāyazīd's master, Husain Qūli Sulṭān Muhrdār was captured by the forces of Kāmṛān and ultimately beheaded.<sup>4</sup> After being defeated, Humāyūn's troops fled through three different ways. Bāyazīd Bayāt fled along with the group comprising Khwāja Qāsim Bayūtāt, Ibrāhīm Īshak Āghā, Imām Qūli Qurchi and others. On the way the Hazārās attacked and captured their horses and arms. Bāyazīd and others now had to move on foot and the former had to don sorrel leaves in place of clothes, which were sewn with thorns to make a dress.<sup>5</sup> On reaching Astālīf, Bāyazīd says he was given some clothes and shoes by Rais Pīr Muhammad Astālīfī.<sup>6</sup>

Again after some time at the Battle of Ashtaygrām Mirza Kāmṛān's forces again engaged those of Humāyūn. Bāyazīd had to hide himself in the house of an acquaintance till Mirza Kāmṛān's troops were defeated.<sup>7</sup> In this battle

1. Ibid, p.119.

2. Ibid, pp. 126-127.

3. Ibid, p.129.

4. Ibid, p.130.

5. Ibid,

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid, p. 133.

Mirza 'Askari was captured. Bāyazīd was assigned the job of escorting the Prince to Kishm when the latter was sent towards Badakhshān to be handed over to Mirza Sulaimān.<sup>1</sup> Bāyazīd was now made Mīr-i Sāmān of Khwāja Jalāuddīn Mahmūd<sup>2</sup> and remained at Kishm along with him for more than two months, and acted as the courier of the Khwāja to Mirza Sulaimān.<sup>3</sup>

During the winters of 1551-52, when Humāyūn decided to move towards Hindūstān, a contingent comprising Khwāja Jalāuddīn Mahmūd, Shāh Ab-ul Ma'ālī, 'Alī Qūli, the son of Haidar Sultān Shaibāni and other nobles was sent ahead with the aim of clearing the passage and collecting provisions for the army. Bāyazīd was present in this expedition.<sup>4</sup> On their return from this expedition, Khwāja Jalāuddīn Mahmūd was appointed as the Hākīm of Kabul, and he started for that place. Bāyazīd Bayāt was ordered to reach Kabul before hand to inform the people of the city about the Khwāja's arrival and to have Burj Qāsim Barlās, the residence for the Hākīm vacated for him.<sup>5</sup>

In 1552 when Humāyūn decided to visit Kabul, Bāyazīd was sent to Jalālābād where the Emperor was encamped

1. Ibid, pp.135-6.

2. Ibid, pp.164-5.

3. Ibid, pp.139-45.

4. Ibid, pp.149-50.

5. Ibid, p.152.

at that time, in order to deliver a letter from the Khwāja to the Emperor enquiring as to where the latter would like to stay in Kabul. When Bāyazīd reached Jalālābād, he had along with him two ponies , one laden with ice and the other with lemon-juice, sugar and other ingredients with which he prepared Sherbet on meeting the Emperor.<sup>1</sup> The Emperor accepted these presents and distributed some of the ice amongst his nobles.<sup>2</sup> Humāyūn also ordered Bāyazīd to be by his side with the pony laden with ice-box so that he may enquire about the state of affairs at Kabul, Balkh, Ghazni, Qandhar and the news of Bairam Khan and others.<sup>3</sup> When Bāyazīd took leave from the Emperor, he was given a robe of honour and a horse.<sup>4</sup> When Humāyūn reached Kabul, Bāyazīd was again honoured with the grant of a saropa (robe).<sup>5</sup>

It appears that some time in 1552-3<sup>6</sup> Bāyazīd had gone to Ghaznīn. On his return, Prince Akbar sent the Emperor some apples and grapes, which Bāyazīd promptly delivered to Humāyūn at Naghr<sup>7</sup>. From there Bāyazīd was

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1. Ibid, p.162.

2. Ibid, pp.162-3.

3. Ibid,p. 163.

4. Ibid, p. 164.

5. Ibid, p.165.

6. Abul Fazl gives the date as 961 A.H./1553-54. See Akbarnāma, Text, vol. I, pp. 332 & 334.

7. Tazkira-i Humāyūn wa Akbar, p171.

assigned the duty of delivering a book on astronomy to Bairam Khān who was at Qandhar. Humāyūn sent some fruits also along with the book.<sup>1</sup>

Bāyazīd says that when he reached Bairam Khān's camp, his horse was much tired and Bairam Khān also wanted him to remain with him till they reached Qandahār.<sup>2</sup> But instead, Bāyazīd had to accompany the Persian Ambassador, who had reached Bairam Khān's camp, to escort him to the Emperor at Ghazni.<sup>3</sup> When Humāyūn came to know that Bāyazīd had not gone to Qandahār nor had he received any horse or saropā from Bairam Khān, he himself bestowed upon Bāyazīd a horse and a robe.<sup>4</sup>

In 1554 Bayazid left the service of Khwāja Jalāluddīn Mahmūd since, he was not on good terms with the Khwāja's brother.<sup>5</sup> Now he headed towards Bangash where his childhood acquaintance 'Alī Qūli Shaibāni resided.<sup>6</sup> In March they reached Kabul where Bāyazīd had a house near Burj Qāsim Bartas which was the residence of the new hākīm,

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1. Ibid, p. 172.

2. Ibid, p. 173.

3. Ibid, p. 175.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid, p. 187.

6. Ibid.

Mun'im Beg (who later became Mun'im Khān)<sup>1</sup>. On the day of departure, when Bāyazīd sought Mun'im Bēg's permission for leave, the latter would not permit him and he asked him to stay for a day more as it was an inauspicious day to start a journey. The next day when Bayazid again sought permission, Mu'im Beg replied:

"My actual intētion is to keep you in my company. Since the time that you were in the service of Husain Quli Sultan to this day that you are with Khwāja Jalāluddin Maḥmūd but are dissatisfied with your job, I have wanted you to be with me ....."<sup>2</sup>

Bāyazīd says that Mun'im Bēg took the precaution of ordering that an eye should be kept on the gates of the Fort so that Bāyazīd may not pass through them. When 'Ali Qūli's servants ultimately came to pick up Bāyazīd, Mun'im Bēg gave them in writing that as he was much attached to Bāyazīd, he would not part with him. Thus 'Alī Qūli Shaibāni had to go without Bāyazīd towards Hindūstān.<sup>3</sup>

Sometime in 1556 news of the death of Humāyūn reached Kabul. Akbar ascended the throne at Kalanaur and

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1. Ibid, p. 187.

2. Ibid, p. 188.

3. Ibid.

the first person on whom Akbar bestowed his munificence was Munim Beg, upon whom Kabul was re-conferred. He was also sent a robe of honour, an elephant, the title of khān, a Kettle drum etc.<sup>1</sup> As the news of the demise of Humāyūn at Delhi reached Kabul, Mirza Sulaimān decided to have the Khutba recited and coin struck in his own name at that Fort. With this intention, in 1556, along with his son Mirza Ibrāhīm and 10,000 soldiers, he marched for Badakhshān to Kabul and besieged that fort.<sup>2</sup> At that time Munim khān had with him only around 150 soldiers - there being no treasury in the fort.<sup>3</sup> Munim khān handed over the keys of the Gates of the Fort to Bāyazīd Bayāt and ordered him not to allow any horse or foot or women to go out.<sup>4</sup> These keys, says Bāyazīd remained in his charge till Muḥammad Qulij Khān Barlās came for succour and took charge of Kabul from Munim Khan.<sup>5</sup>

During this siege, Bayazid says, he caught people trying to scale the wall of the Fort, for which Munim Khan promised him bounties.<sup>6</sup> One day he says, that some foot

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1. Ibid, pp. 195-6.

2. Ibid, p. 196.

3. Ibid, p. 197.

4. Ibid, p. 200.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid, p. 201.

soldiers had been sent out of the fort to collect fodder. When they were attacked by the enemy, Bāyazīd, in spite of contrary orders, took along a group of 10 or 12 people and chased them. During this skirmish Bayazid was struck in the stomach by an arrow. He says that Munim khān witnessed all this and censured him for going out of the Gate in spite of his having been forbidden to do so.<sup>1</sup>

The siege continued for four months. Ultimately Mirza Sulaimān sent Qāzi Nizām as his messenger to Munim khān with the suggestion that if the khutba was read in the Mirza's name, the Mirza would withdraw to Badakhshān.<sup>2</sup> The messenger was handed over to Bāyazīd for the night.<sup>3</sup>

Munim khān, after consulting his confidants agreed and a Friday was fixed for the Mirza's Imām to come at the Madarsa of Mulla 'Abdul khāliq, situated in the middle of the Fort, and to deliver the khutba.<sup>4</sup> On the appointed day Bāyazīd opened the Gate of the Fort and thus the khutba was read in the name of Mirza Sulaimān.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Ibid, p. 203.

2. Ibid, p. 206.

3. Ibid, p. 205.

4. Ibid, p. 206.

5. Ibid, p. 209.



Soon after re-inforcements arrived from Hindūstān and now Bāyazīd says that he was assigned the charge of Topkhāna. Bayazid says that he had been charged to visit each morchal of the fort a number of times in the night along with men beating drums [naggāra,] trumpets etc so that the soldiers might not fall asleep. Especially the Friday nights were in his charge for these rounds. The distribution of ration was also assigned to him.<sup>1</sup>

In November 1556 Akbar gained victory over Hemu and his severed head was sent to Kabul. Muṅim khān handed it over to Bāyazīd along with orders to hang it immediately on the Iron Gate of the Fort of Kabul and to have the drums beaten in celebration.<sup>2</sup> Bāyazīd complied with the orders. When he went to inform the Begums-Mahām Bega, Mariam Makāni and others at Bālā Hissār, he was presented with a robe of honour and a horse.<sup>3</sup>

At this time Muṅim khān was not at Kabul but had gone to Naṅnihār. An interesting incident occurred during this period. One day the slaves of Qāsim Barlās came to Bāyazīd and asked him to vacate the Havelī (house) and the Burj where Muṅim khān lived, as it belonged to the daughter of Qāsim Barlās and wife of Muḥammad Qūli

1. Ibid, p. 210.

2. Ibid, pp. 213-14.

3. Ibid, p. 214.

Barlās, who now wanted to live in it.<sup>1</sup> Bāyazīd declined to do so, as he said that he had heard Munīm Khān say that he had bought this Havelī of Sultān Qūli Dalla.<sup>2</sup> Initially Mariam Makāni was very angry at his refusal. But when, he informed her of the truth, she relented and promised that when she met Emperor Akbar, she would tell him about the good services rendered by Bāyazīd.<sup>3</sup>

At a time when Munīm Khān was at the Fort of Jū Shāhī - later renamed as Jalālabād - he wrote to Bāyazīd to escort Bega Begum and Salīma Sultān Begum to Hindūstan. When he reached Jalālabād, Munīm Khān gave him the work of Tahsīl (revenue-collection) of the tomāns of Alingār and Qabīla Hazār Meshi to him.<sup>4</sup> After reaching there Bāyazīd busied himself in the job and says that he finished the work of revenue collection in this area within forty days.<sup>5</sup> After accomplishing this, he again went to

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1. Ibid, p. 214.

2. Ibid, p. 215.

3. Ibid, p. 216.

4. Ibid, p. 218.

5. Ibid, p. 219.

the Fort of Jalālabād to meet Muṅim Khān who had summoned him back in order to start for India. But the day Bāyazīd reached Jalālabād, news reached Muṅim Khān regarding the execution of Tārdi Beg by Bairam Khān, through an Imperial Farmān and Bairam Khān's letter.<sup>1</sup> The news greatly depressed Muṅim Khān and his company and forced them to abandon the idea of coming to India.<sup>2</sup> Muṅim Khān now ordered Bāyazīd to go to Kabul and help Muhammad Qūli Khān in dealing with the people. Bāyazīd says, he remonstrated that he would not go without the Khan. But Muṅim Khān insisted that if Bāyazīd went, the people of Kabul will be convinced of his (Muṅim Khān's) imminent arrival subsequently.<sup>3</sup> On Muṅim Khān's insistence Bāyazīd accompanied him till Hindālpur from where he headed towards Kabul along with a letter in the name of Moḥammad Qūli Khān and a parwānā for the people of Kabul.<sup>4</sup>

Subsequently, when Bāyazīd and Bābā Dost Bakshi reached the gates of Kabul, the soldiers guarding the Delhi gate would not allow Bābā Dost to enter. The latter took out his sword and it seems that the matters would have got out of hand, but for Bāyazīd's intervention.<sup>5</sup> It was only three months after their arrival, that Muṅim Khān came to

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1. Ibid, pp. 220-21.

2. Ibid, p.221.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid, p. 222.

Kabul<sup>1</sup>, and took charge of that fort and remained there till some time in 1560.<sup>2</sup> During this time, Bāyazīd says, numerous Farmān were received by Muṅim Khān summoning him to Hindūstan.<sup>3</sup> All this while Bāyazīd remained at Kabul along with his master. Only once in the winters of 1557 did he leave Kabul on the orders of Muṅim Khān and went to Badakhshān escorting the wife of Mirza Sulaimān who had come to Kabul after querrelling with her husband.<sup>4</sup>

Ultimately on 15th May, 1560, along with 500 soldiers Muṅim Khān started for Hindūstān.<sup>5</sup> On reaching the court, Akbar deputed him to pursue Bairam Khān, who had rebelled. Thus at a time when Bairam Khān had taken shelter at Qilā-i Kāfirān, a place amidst the bamboo forest in the Siwālik hills, Muṅim Khān received a letter from him expressing the desire that if Muṅim Khān himself came he would surrender.<sup>6</sup> Bāyazīd accompanied Muṅim Khān to the meeting place and was present at the time of surrender. He was then ordered to deliver the news to Akbar who was stationed at a distance.<sup>7</sup> Pleased with the news, the Emperor bestowed upon Bāyazīd a horse and a saropa. Maham

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1. Ibid, p. 222.

2. Ibid, p. 224.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid, pp. 223-224.

5. Ibid, p. 224.

6. Ibid, p. 229.

7. Ibid, p. 231.

Bega and other ladies who were present also promised rewards for him.<sup>1</sup>

On being presented before Akbar, Bairam Khan gained Imperial pardon and permission to go for Haj, Bayazid was deputed to accompany him for a distance and hand over some goods and expense which Munim Khan had sent to Bairam Khan's Wakil. In return Bayazid says that Bairam Khan gave him a letter in which he wrote that all his property in Hindustan be given to Munim Khan. Bayazid delivered this letter to the latter at Delhi.<sup>2</sup> Thus Bairam Khan's house at Delhi which was situated on the banks of Jamuna was handed over to Munim Khan. Bayazid says that Maham Bega gave him (Bayazid) her own haveli which was situated between the house of Munim Khan and that of Mehdi Khan.<sup>3</sup>

Around September 1561 Bayazid along with Munim Khan, who by now had gained the title of Khan-i Khanan, accompanied the Emperor in his journey by boat to Agra.<sup>4</sup> On their arrival to the capital city, Munim Khan was allotted the Haveli of Bairam Khan, situated on the banks of the river. Near this haveli was the house of Bairam Khan's Pakawals (Superintendents of Kitchen), which was under the charge of Maham Bega who again ...

1. Ibid, p. 232.

2. Ibid, p. 233.

3. Ibid, p. 234.

4. Ibid, p. 240.

showed much kindness to Bāyazīd and handed it over to him.<sup>1</sup> Bāyazīd shifted into this Bakāwal Havēlī. In this house, he says, upon his brother Bahrām Saqqa's wish, a Saqqa Khāna (water house) was established.<sup>2</sup>

From here Akbar had deputed Bāyazīd to go to Jaunpur to reason with Bahādur Khān Shaibānī, from whom the jāgīr of Etāwā had been resumed and who had due to paucity of jāgīr (be-jāgīrī) gone to that city to his brother 'Ali Qūli.<sup>3</sup>

By now Bāyazīd Bayāt seems to have gained the confidence of the Emperor as well. Akbar decided to resume Hisār Firoza to the Khālisa from the jāgīr of Munim Khan granting him Qasba Alwar in lieu of it, as he had been displeased with the conduct of Khwāja Kalān, nāib of Khān-i Khānān. Akbar told Munim Khān that if the Khwāja was removed, the transfer would be annulled.<sup>4</sup> Munim Khān thereupon appointed Bāyazīd to that charge for one year. To please Bāyazīd who was hesistant, Munim Khān also granted a saropa, and a horse which he had kept for the Emperor himself.<sup>5</sup> On hearing that Munim Khān Khān-i Khānān had given the charge of Hisār to Bāyazīd, Akbar had expressed

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1. Ibid, p. 242.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid, p. 244.

4. Ibid, p. 248.

5. Ibid, p. 249.

his satisfaction and had also bestowed upon him the title of "Sultānī", through which title, Bāyazīd says, he became known at His-ār, Banāras and Jaunpūr.<sup>1</sup>

Some time in 1562-63 Muḥim Khān wrote to Bāyazīd asking him to muster the army at Hisār Firoza and proceed in pursuit of a certain Rāja Matsū. In a few days time Bāyazīd joined Muḥim Khān at Agra and started in pursuit of that Rāja.<sup>2</sup> But soon, when they reached Etāwā, an Imperial Farmān informed them that Fazāil, the brother of Muḥim Khān and his son Abūl Fath had in collusion with Mirza Muḥammad Hākīm (who had been set up at Kabul) stopped Ghani Khān, the son of Muḥim Khān from entering the Fort of Kabul.<sup>3</sup> On receiving this information Muḥim Khān hurried towards the Imperial Court. Akbar despatched him forthwith to Kabul. Along with the other servants of Muḥim Khān, Bāyazīd was also given a robe of honour by the Emperor. The Emperor also ordered Bāyazīd to keep in touch with him through letters from Kabul.<sup>4</sup>

When they crossed the River Chenāb. Bāyazīd advised Muḥim Khān to halt and wait for re-inforcements as they were still in their own territory and every thing would be

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1. Ibid, p. 250.

2. Ibid, p. 253.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid, p. 254.

easily available.<sup>1</sup> But Ḥaider Muḥammad Akḥta Begī opposed this view and advised that they should halt directly at Peshawar. Then again Bāyazīd advised that Ḥamza 'Arab, who was acquainted with peshāwar and its vicinity should enter the Fort of Jalālabād before they themselves reached it. Again Muḥim Kḥān did not listen.<sup>2</sup> Bāyazīd says that his repeated warnings and counsel failed to make any impact on Muḥim Kḥān.<sup>3</sup> Consequently due to his precipitate conduct Muḥim Kḥān had to face humiliation and defeat.<sup>4</sup> On the day of the battle, Bāyazīd says, the right wing of the army did not help the Kḥān-i Kḥānān.<sup>5</sup> Bāyazīd along with elephants and a small force attacked the enemy but Muḥim Kḥān had been so disillusioned that he fled.<sup>6</sup> Bāyazīd claims he tried his best to stop the Kḥān but to no avail.<sup>7</sup> Bāyazīd also had to retire and follow Muḥim Kḥān. When he reached the Kḥān's presence, Bāyazīd asked him the reason for his standing on a spot. He replied that there were two reasons for it. Firstly it was heard that Bāyazīd's sons had mounted and would soon provide succour and secondly

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1. Ibid, p.256.

2. Ibid,

3. Ibid, pp.257-60.

4. Ibid, p. 261.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid, p. 262.

7. Ibid.



Wali khān, Tankar Qūli and some others were advising him to make a second attack on the Mirza.<sup>1</sup> Bāyazīd says that as he was well aware of the real intentions of these persons, he again advised the khān not to commit this blunder.<sup>2</sup> Muḥim khān again did not listen. On the contrary Muḥim khān started suspecting the fidelity of Bāyazīd, thinking that he too had joined the enemy, and deputed a few people to collect information about him.<sup>3</sup> When Bāyazīd came to know of this, he hurried to Muḥim khān and clarified his position. After meeting him, Bāyazīd says, the khān was satisfied and enquired about the future line of action.<sup>4</sup> Bāyazīd advised him to return by the same way through which they had come. Muḥim khān at last agreed.<sup>5</sup>

During this battle Bāyazīd had slipped from his horse and injured his hands. He says he was also much perturbed due to the material loss he had suffered and that his sons were not with him.<sup>6</sup> During this time, Bāyazīd says, Mirza Hakīm's Nishān came in which he wrote to him:

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1. Ibid, pp. 262-63.

2. Ibid, p. 263.

3. Ibid, p. 264.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid, p. 267.

"Do not be perturbed about your sons. For you the Jāgīr of Ghūrband has been laid aside. When you reach my side, you will be given a mansab of your choice..... I hope that amongst the servants of Khān-i Khānān you will be the first to come to me after receiving this farmān...."<sup>1</sup>

Bāyazīd says that as soon as he read it, he tore it up.<sup>2</sup> When Mun'im Khān came to know about this, he sent a message to him, telling him, "you who had been a brother and a son to me are abandoning me at this juncture". Bāyazīd says that he was much pained and made a very loyal reply, threatening to go to Mecca.<sup>3</sup>

Mun'im Khān relented and summoned Bāyazīd, who advised him to move out of Peshawar as soon as possible as the enemy knew his location and could make an attack.<sup>4</sup> Mun'im Khān was so much disillusioned by his condition after defeat that, inspite of Bāyazīd imploring him he would not agree to return to the Imperial court at Agra. Ultimately Bāyazīd had to warn him that if he did not go to Agra, he would be taken as a rebel. On this, Bāyazīd says, Mun'im Khān was shocked and readily agreed to go to Agra.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Ibid, p. 267.

2. Ibid, .. . .

3. Ibid, p. 268.

4. Ibid, .. . .

5. Ibid, pp. 269-276.

When they reached Kalānore, Munim Khān asked Bāyazīd to proceed towards Hisār Firoza. When Bāyazīd enquired of the reason, Khān-i Khānān replied that only Bāyazīd could collect taxes there.<sup>1</sup> Thus sometime in late 1562 Bāyazīd reached that town, which he says was once in his jāgīr.<sup>2</sup> Now, we are informed, Bāyazīd was appointed as the Shiqdār of Hisār Firoza.<sup>3</sup>

In this very year (or early 1663) information reached Bāyazīd that Shāh 'Abdul Mā'ālī, the rebel was heading towards Hisār Firoza along with 700 mounted soldiers.<sup>4</sup> Immediately, he had the ramparts of the Fort mended and strengthened. He also appointed chosen soldiers and gunners to defend the fort. The Delhi Gate of the Fort was under the charge of his brother, Muḥammad Sharīf.<sup>5</sup> That full night Bāyazīd says, he remained awake. Early in the morning, before dawn, Abū'l Mā'ālī arrived. The initial attack was made at the Nāgore Gate but the enemy was repulsed.<sup>6</sup> Bāyazīd says that when Abū'l Mā'ālī was informed that the defender of the Fort was Bāyazīd himself, he became convinced that to capture the Fort would not be possible.<sup>7</sup> It was after Abū'l Mā'ālī's departure from Hisār

1. Ibid, p. 277.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid. p. 279.

6. Ibid. p. 280.

7. Ibid.

Firoza, that Shujā'at Khān and Lashkar Khān reached Hisār along with re-inforcements.<sup>1</sup>

Sometime in 1565-66 Bāyazīd received an Imperial Farmān and a parwānā of Muṇim Khān that he should, after checking and verifying the weapons and horses of the Jāgīrdārs of Sarkar Hisār, bring them along with him to the army at Jaunpur.<sup>2</sup> Thus Bāyazīd along with seven to eight hundred persons started for Jaunpur. When they reached Delhi, orders were given to them to march towards Qannauj, where a battle was fought between the Imperial forces and Iskandar Khān. Bāyazīd informs that the Emperor was much pleased at the well equipped forces bought by him from Sarkar Hisār.<sup>3</sup>

Around this time, Bāyazīd says, the route of Hisār was given in his charge by Akbar. According to him this happened as he had bought a few horses from that place from the Afghan merchants who otherwise used to sell them in Gujarat.<sup>4</sup>

In June 1567, after the defeat of khān-i Zamān 'Ali Qūli Shaibāni and his brother Bahādur Khān, and their

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1. Ibid, pp. 282-83.

2. Ibid, p. 285.

3. Ibid, p. 286.

4. Ibid, p. 289.

subsequent death, the Emperor conferred upon Mun'im Khān the Sarkārs of Jaunpur, Banaras and Ghazipur which were previously in the jāgīr of 'Ali Qūli Shaibānī.<sup>1</sup> Mun'im Khān recalled Bāyazīd from Hisār Firoza and conferred upon him the charge of Banaras.<sup>2</sup>

In this very year during the time when an expedition against the Fort of Chittore was undertaken by Emperor Akbar, Sulaimān Afghān (Kararānī), the ruler of Bengal wrote to Mun'im Khān, that he should intervene to bring about a rapprochement between him and the Emperor. He invited Mun'im Khān to come to Patna, where he said they would hold the talks.<sup>3</sup> Mun'im Khān agreed and wrote to Bāyazīd to come to Patna on the appointed day. Bāyazīd wrote to Mun'im Khān at a time when Akbar was besieging the Fort of Chittor, it would not be advisable for Mun'im Khān to go to Patna to meet the Aghans.<sup>4</sup> But when Mun'im Khān forced him, Bāyazīd started for Patna. Since he arrived two days later than the fixed date, his enemies were able to poison the ears of the Khan, who thus imprisoned him for 29 days.<sup>5</sup>

Soon Mun'im Khān repented and ordered Bāyazīd to go back to his jāgīr at Banaras. Bāyazīd says that he declined

1. Ibid, p. 299.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid, p. 300.

4. Ibid, p. 301.

5. Ibid, p. 302.

saying that he had taken an oath not to return to Banaras in his service. He on the contrary suggested that if Muṇim Khān declared Banaras as Khālisa and appointed him as its Shiqdār, he would go<sup>1</sup>. Muṇim Khān agreed and thus Bāyazīd came back to Banaras in his new capacity as an Imperial tax-collector. Bāyazīd further says that whenever Muṇim Khān would go to the Imperial court, he would leave Jaunpur in his (Bāyazīd's) charge.<sup>2</sup>

But certain unfortunate incidents forced Bāyazīd to take an oath not to remain at Banaras.<sup>3</sup> His enemies had tried to fill the ears of Muṇim Khān and the Emperor against him. All the same, he says, Muṇim Khān did not get disillusioned with him and kept on trying hard to send Bāyazīd back to his charge of Banaras.<sup>4</sup>

Bāyazīd says, he was offered Ghāzipur, Zamāniya, Sasaram, Chunar etc, but he did not accept any of them. Bāyazīd thus passed a few years in "durwēshī" or unemployment.<sup>5</sup> After four years Muṇim Khān forced him to accept the office of Mīr-i Māl and he was posted in the Imperial

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1. Ibid, p. 303.

2. Ibid, p. 306.

3. Ibid, pp. 310-312. For details regarding this, see Infra.

4. Ibid, p. 312.

5. Ibid.

Court as Khān-i Khānān's Wakīl<sup>1</sup>. Bāyazīd says that he remained on this post for a few years. After sometimes Muṇim Khān offered him the charge of Sarkār Chunar, but he declined the offer.<sup>2</sup> His son Sa'ādat Yār was assigned a pargana in Jaunpur.<sup>3</sup>

Bāyazīd says that as during his tenure as Mīr-i māl and Wakīl, he witnessed the duplicity and deceitfulness of the people around Muṇim Khān, he tried to resign from his job and go to Mecca. But he did <sup>not</sup> get permission to do so. Still, he says, he again became a dervish.<sup>4</sup> But in 1568 when Lodi Afghān, the minister of Sulaimān Kararāni attacked Zamāniya (a Fort of Banaras), Muṇim Khān again compelled him to resume his office of Mīr-i Māl and join his troops.<sup>5</sup> Bāyazīd says that it was due to his strategy that Sulaimān Afghān and Lodhi Afghān petitioned for peace.<sup>6</sup>

When in 1571, Emperor Akbar went to Jaunpur while returning from Patna, Bāyazīd who was suffering from a

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1. Ibid, p. 312-313.

2. Ibid, p. 313.

3. Ibid, p. 312.

4. Ibid, p. 318.

5. Ibid, p. 319.

6. Ibid, p. 331.

fractured leg, waited upon him and presented the Emperor<sup>e</sup> an elephant, which he had bought from Iskandar Khān Uzbek for Rs. 2000/-. Bāyazīd also prayed the Emperor to be allowed to go to Mecca. The Emperor granted the permission.<sup>1</sup> Muṣ'īm Khān at that time was at Munger. When he came to know about the Emperor's permission to Bāyazīd, he wrote to the latter to postpone the departure for sometime, as he also was planning to go to Mecca.<sup>2</sup>

In 1572-73 when Akbar bestowed upon Muṣ'īm Khān the jāgīr of Chunar, Muṣ'īm Khān gave the same to the charge of Bāyazīd Bayāt.<sup>3</sup>

On 3rd November, 1575 Muṣ'īm Khān died.<sup>4</sup> On getting this news, Bāyazīd had the kārkhānās (establishments) of the late Khān sealed and all the tahwīldārs (officers-in-charge) detained.<sup>5</sup> Bāyazīd justifies this act by alleging that the tahwīldārs had misappropriated some of the wealth of Muṣ'īm Khān.<sup>6</sup> He says that he did not allow even a minor sum to be taken out of the late Khān's treasury. Instead

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1. Ibid, p. 340.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid, p. 342.

4. Ibid, p. 348.

5. Ibid, p. 349.

6. Ibid, p. 350.



Bāyazīd gave out Rs. 6000/- as loan to the family of Mun'im Khān for funeral expenses.<sup>1</sup>

After Mun'im Khān's death Bāyazīd was so greatly saddened that he started thinking to become the care-taker of his mentor's grave.<sup>2</sup> He handed over the Fort of Chunar to Mirza Mīrak. But the Emperor ordered him to go back to Chunar.<sup>3</sup>

Sometime in 1576-77, along with his sons and brothers, Bāyazīd, as per the Imperial Farmān reached Fatehpūr Sīkrī. The Emperor granted him Dipālpur, a pargana in Sarkār Ujjain. All the duties relating to Jareeb, Jama' bandī, nasq etc were in the hands of Bāyazīd.<sup>4</sup>

After the transfer of Shahābuddīn Ahmad, the Emperor appointed Bāyazīd to Sarkār Sārangpūr, which was a khālisa territory. On 6th December 1577, he reached Sārangpur and wrote from there to the Emperor that Sārangpur was not suited for khālisa. Instead it should be given in jāgīr to Shujāat Khān.<sup>5</sup> Soon, Bāyazīd says, he

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1. Ibid, p. 351.

2. Ibid, p. 352.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. p. 353.

5. Ibid.

returned to Fatehpur Sikri where in 1578, he was appointed as Dārogha-i Khazānā.<sup>1</sup>

Soon in the month of March (1578) Bāyazīd was finally permitted to go to Mecca, and along with his sons he started on the journey.<sup>2</sup> His enemies at the court filled the Emperor's ears that he was taking along with him much wealth in the shape of money and ornaments.<sup>3</sup> Bāyazīd says that for two years he was detained at the port of Surat and prevented from proceeding forward in his journey.<sup>4</sup> He further says that Qilich Khān and his brothers were ordered to enquire into the matter and check Bāyazīd's luggage and not to allow him to go till the enquiry was completed.<sup>5</sup>

But the enquiry revealed that Bāyazīd had "only one lakh rupees in cash and a few articles which had been bought in the markets of towns and ports on the way".<sup>6</sup> When the Emperor was informed about Bāyazīd's innocence, he was pleased and said:

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1. Ibid, p. 353.

2. Ibid,

3. Ibid, p. 354.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid,

"For two generations (qarn) Bāyazīd has been serving our family. And when he is going to circumambulate the Khāna-i Kāba along with rupees one lakh only, the people are claiming that he is going out with huge sum and jewellery- although this sum does not amount to anything".<sup>1</sup>

Even an year after this enquiry was over, the Emperor did not allow Bāyazīd to leave.<sup>2</sup> He says that the Emperor also despatched a few farmāns in his name that if he can not come to the court, he might reside<sup>at</sup> any place in Gujrat, which then would be assigned to him and his sons as jāgīr.<sup>3</sup> Subsequently the Emperor realised that Bāyazīd had no wish but to go to Mecca, and thus granted him permission for the same. Ultimately on 21st February 1580 Bāyazīd boarded a ship and left the port of Surat for Daman.<sup>4</sup> The Portuguese Officers of Daman demanded the Ushur (1/10th levy) for the Port of Dieu.<sup>5</sup> They also demanded that the eldest son of Bāyazīd, Saādat Yār, to be left as hostage, for without this condition being fulfilled, they would not board the ship and fix the levy

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1. Tazkira-i Humāyūn wa Akbar, p. 354.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.,

4. Ibid., pp. 308 and 354.

5. Ibid., p. 355.

on the vessel.<sup>1</sup> Bāyazīd offered them the custody of any of his other two sons, Iftikhār or Zulfiqār, for Saādat Yār was needed by him, being the one acquainted with European and Hindi languages.<sup>2</sup> The Portuguese took hold of Iftikhār and kept him in their custody till the evening of that day, when ultimately 10,000 Mahmūdīs was agreed upon as the required levy.<sup>3</sup> Bāyazīd says that he himself had to dole out the full amount, "as garz-i hasana" (interest-free loan), as the other travellers on the ship "did not have a single mahmūdī".<sup>4</sup>

At the Holy city of Mecca, Bāyazīd says, he distributed all the money he had amongst the needy people. He further says that with his own hands and labour, he had the floor of the Kaaba renovated. Whenever there was a need to clean the Kaaba, Bāyazīd used to perform that duty.<sup>5</sup> In this fashion, he says, he passed three years in that city.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Ibid, p. 355.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid,

5. Ibid, p. 356.

6. Ibid.

In 1581, just before he left Mecca for India, Bāyazīd's youngest son Zulfiqār passed away.<sup>1</sup> Within a few days, another tragedy struck his family. His wife fell ill and, after a brief illness, died.<sup>2</sup> Bāyazīd says that he bought land for 3000 Ibrāhīmīs at Mecca, and here he had his son and wife buried.<sup>3</sup> Bāyazīd had also bought land besides these graves for himself in the hope that he could be buried in it.<sup>4</sup>

In the same year he sent his other sons (Sa'ādāt Yār and Iftikhār) back to India to the court of Emperor Akbar, and decided to spend his own remaining life at Mecca.<sup>5</sup>

But in 1582 when he heard the news that his sons had been captured by the firangīs at the Port of Daman, he decided to return<sup>to</sup> India.<sup>6</sup> Due to bad weather and frequent storms, he could reach Gujrat in 8 months time.<sup>7</sup>

During this time there was much political turmoil in Gujrat. Muzaffar Gujrati had revolted and then driven

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1. Ibid. p. 357.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., p. 358.

7. Ibid., p. 360.

out by Shahāb Khān from Ahmadabad.<sup>1</sup> When Bāyazīd's ship reached the Port of Goa, a group of defeated soldiers arrested them.<sup>2</sup> The others were gradually released, but Bāyazīd was detained till Muzaffar Gujrāti personally ordered his release.<sup>3</sup> Bāyazīd went to Surat, thence to Broach to meet Qilich Khān, the brothers of Muzaffar Gujrāti's wife.<sup>4</sup>

At Surat Bāyazīd stayed for a period of one year. By this time his sons had reached Fatehpur Sikri.<sup>5</sup> Saādāt Yār and Iftikhār wrote to Bāyazīd from the court that the Emperor was aware of Bāyazīd's arrival from Mecca, and should hurry to the royal presence.<sup>6</sup> Thus in 1584 Bāyazīd reached Fatehpur, where the Emperor granted him and his sons the pargana of Sa'nām and 29 lakh dāms.<sup>7</sup> Bāyazīd says that the Emperor further ordered that if the actual revenues (hāsil) increased, the increase should also

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1. Ibid, p. 358.

2. Ibid, p. 361.

3. Ibid, p. 362.

4. Ibid, p. 362.

5. Ibid, p. 363.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

be kept by Bāyazīd Bayāt.<sup>1</sup> On his arrival, the Emperor bestowed upon him a horse from his own stable and a Pargana in Fatehpur Sikri.<sup>2</sup> That very night for 100 bar-āwardī men (nafar) of Bāyazīd and 100 dāghi men of his sons, 14½ lakh tankās were sanctioned in pay. But he says that sadly the balance due upon the dāgh (tafāwat-i dāgh) of 100 bar-āwardī men was not assigned to him.<sup>3</sup>

The year 1584 appears to have been an year of mixed fortune for Bayazid, for his eldest son Saādāt Yār died.<sup>4</sup>

In 1585 Bāyazīd was made the Dārogha of the Imperial mines (Kānāt-i mamālik-i Mahrūsā) and the Imperial mint at Fatehpur.<sup>5</sup> In this very year

he was also granted the office of Dārogha of the Daftar Khān-i 'ālī (Superintendent of Imperial Secretariat). Bāyazīd says that for five years he had worked on these posts but had received no remuneration till date.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Ibid, p. 363.

2. Ibid, p. 372.

3. Ibid, p. 373. For details regarding this payment see Irfan Habib, "The Mansab System: 1595-1637" PIHC, Patiala, 1967; Shireen Moosvi, "The Evolution of the Mansab System under Akbar until 1596-97", JRAS, no.2. 1981.

4. Tazkira-i Humāyūn wa Akbar, p. 383.

5. Ibid. p. 373.

6. Ibid.

In 1585 itself Bāyazīd accompanied Emperor Akbar to Kabul, when the latter went there on getting the news of Mirza Hakīm's death.<sup>1</sup>

In 1586 Bāyazīd was granted the mansab of 200.<sup>2</sup> In 1587 he was also given the posts of Bakāwal Bēgī (Kitchen Superintendent) and īshak Āghā-i darbār Haram (

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But in 1590 he was again made the īshak Āghā and in 1591 appointed to the offices of Dārogha and Amīn of the Imperial Treasury. He prepared the dastūr-ul Āmal of the Treasury and sent it to the Emperor.<sup>6</sup> The Emperor also gave him 3 bīghas of land to construct a havēlī at Lahore near the Fort. He was also given 8 to 9000 rupees for the construction of the house, Ghusalkhāna and the well.<sup>7</sup>

1. Ibid, p. 364.

2. Ibid, p. 373.

3. Ibid,

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid, p. 374.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid,



Here Bāyazīd had a bridge constructed on a nullah, near his house and had a neighbouring mosque repaired.<sup>1</sup> Near the Gate of the Lahore Fort, Bāyazīd says he also constructed a Sagga Khāna (water-house) and a mosque.<sup>2</sup> By 1595 his mansab is given as 300 in the A'in-i Akbarī.<sup>3</sup>

While he was at Lahore, Bāyazīd was also privileged to be allowed to sit in company of the Emperor. To pass his time he started compiling his book of which he says he had nine copies prepared, of which one copy was kept in the Imperial Library.<sup>4</sup>

Apart from being an able administrator, Bāyazīd claims such varied skills as playing cards - he having taught Akbar to play the game<sup>5</sup>, and to singing songs which could lull the emperor to sleep.<sup>6</sup>

His zealous attitude as far as religion is concerned can be gauged by the fact that when he was posted at Banaras, he had a ruined temple converted into a mosque, which caused

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1. Ibid, pp. 375-6.

2. Ibid, p. 377. See also pp. 2 & 68 etc.

3. A'in-i Akbarī, tr & ed Blochmann, Vol. I, 1977, p. 563.

4. Tazkira-i Humāyūn wa Akbar, p. 377.

5. Ibid, p. 241.

6. Ibid., p. 124.

much ill will between him and Rājā Todarmal.<sup>1</sup>

He was also well gifted to cook delicious food from the very beginning. Humānyūn had been so pleased with his cooking that he often used to praise him for the same.<sup>2</sup>

As far as his literary acumen is concerned, it appears that Bāyazīd was not much given to the art of writing. He does not possess the formal literary skills, though he does provide colophons for certain events in his work.<sup>3</sup> He often uses colloquial expressions and his style is conventional.

Whether Bāyazīd Bayāt died at Lahore itself or later migrated to Mecca as he had often wished, we do not know.

Two of his sons having died, in his life time, only Iftikhār survived him. Of him nothing whatever is known after Bāyazīd's life time. The family apparently goes of history.

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1. Ibid, pp. 310-12. In 1584 when Bāyazīd had been granted Pargana Sanām for which 14½ lakh dams were sanctioned as pay, Rājā Todarmal had insisted that the jama' of the same had been fixed at 16 lakh for the previous incumbent. Bāyazīd had declined to agree saying that the Emperor had granted it for 14½ lakh and he would not pay a single extra dām. When the case was put before the Emperor, he upheld Bāyazīd's contention. See Ibid. p. 363.

2. Ibid, p. 123.

3. Ibid. For example see Ibid, pp. 374, 375 & 376.

## Chapter II

Shaikh Farid Bhakkari

Shaikh Farīd Bhakkari, a contemporary of Jahāngīr and Shāhjahān, was the author of the Zakhīrat-ul Khawānīn<sup>1</sup>, a biographical dictionary of Mughal Mansabdārs. He held a large number of posts of a low-medium status.

Claiming descent from Caliph Umar (Fāruqī)<sup>2</sup>, Shaikh Farīd belonged to a respected family of Bhakkar (Sind).<sup>3</sup> His father, Shaikh Marūf Bhakkari was appointed the Sadr of Sarkār Bhakkar<sup>4</sup>, soon after its fall to the Mughal forces sometime after 978 A.H./1570-1.

Though not much information is available regarding Shaikh Marūf, it appears from a few references provided by Shaikh Farīd, that he was quite influential and enjoyed the confidence of his superiors. When Rāi Lakhmidās Kāith, the karōri of the Mahāls of Sarkār Bhakkar, which was under the jāgīr of Shaikh Farīd Murtuza Khān Bukhārī (d. 1612 AD), stopped the payments to the Aimadārs holding big madad-i ma'ash grants, till they produced fresh sanads for the same, Shaikh Marūf along with his son Shaikh Farīd Bhakkari, interceded on behalf of the imāms. Shaikh Marūf's influence paid off and Murtuza Khān reprimanded the erring karōri;

1. Shāh Nawāz Khān, though erroneously gives the name of the Author as Shaikh Marūf Bhakkari. see Maāsirul 'Umara Shāh Nawāz Khān, ed. Nadir Ashraf Ali, Vol. I, pt. I, pp.8,260.
2. Zakhīratul Khawānīn ed. Moinul Haq, Vol.II, Karachi 1970, p. 339.
3. Ibid, I, 1961, p. 191; II, p. 409.
4. Ibid, I, pp. 2, 170, 198.

he also set aside four thousand bīghas of land under the charge of Shaikh Farīd and his father Shaikh Marūf and left it to the latter's option to allot lands to deserving people.<sup>1</sup> Shaikh Farīd claims that his father was a man of sound judgement. When in 1595-96 A.D. the populace of Bhakkar became disillusioned by the atrocities committed against them by the jāgīrdār of Bhakkar, Mīr 'Abūl Qāsim, and lodged a complaint at the Imperial court, the jagīrdār went to consult Shaikh Marūf, who advised him to buy off complainants. And thus Ab-ul Qāsim escaped the Imperial wrath.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Marūf, we are told, was also a man moral courage and sound character, and would not hesitate to speak a fact or make a prompt reply.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh Farīd's uncle, Miān Shaikh Ishāq Fārūqī Bhakkari was the Dīwān and Wakīl of Khwāja Nizāmuddin Harvī, the author of the Tabaqāt-i Akbarī, while posted to Gujrat. Shaikh Ishāq was a friend of Mīr Muḥammad Maṣūm Bhakkari, the famous historian of Sind. Both of them had studied together at Bhakkar and thus when Nizāmuddin had gone to Gujrat, Shaikh Ishāq introduced him to Nizāmuddin Harvī and helped him secure a mansab.<sup>4</sup>

1. Ibid. I, p. 139.

2. Ibid. I, p. 198.

3. Ibid. II, p. 292.

4. Ibid. I, p. 201.

Due to his reputation as a man of letters, Shaikh Ishāq was also employed for some time by Mirza Jāni Beg as the tutor of his son Ghāzi Beg.<sup>1</sup> Shaikh Farīd says that his uncle Shaikh Ishāq along with Mir Masūm Bhakkari assisted Khwāja Nizāmuddīn Harvī in the compilation of his Tarikh-i Nizāmi.<sup>2</sup>

Amongst his other relatives, mention may be made of Saiyyid Abul Fath Dakhani, a noble of Jahāngīr holding a mansab of 5000. Shaikh Farīd claims that he was a close relative.<sup>3</sup> The famous Mirzā Isā Beg Tarkhān of Thatta was another relative of Shaikh Farīd.<sup>4</sup> The exact relationship is not specified.

From the fragmentary and stray references that Shaikh Farīd makes about himself, it appears, that he married at least twice. Sometime before 1608-9, he married the daughter of a nephew of Akbar's famous noble, Shāhbāz Khan Kānboh.<sup>5</sup> Then in 1626-27 he married once again with the help of money that Shaikh Farīd Murtaza Khān (former governor of Gujarat) had left behind for financing such marriages.<sup>6</sup>

1. Jani, Mir Ali Sher, Tuhfat-al Kirām, Karachi, 1959, p. 395.

2. Zakhiratu-l Khwānīn, I, pp. 208-9.

3. Ibid, II, p. 187.

4. Ibid, II, p. 212.

5. Ibid, I, p. 158.

6. Ibid, I, p. 137.

Inspite of the absence of detailed information regarding the early education and training of Shaikh Farīd Bhakkari, he tells us a few things pertaining to his teachers. When Mir Abul Qasim Namkīn was the Jagīrdār of Bhakkar, Shaikh Farīd learnt the art of verse and penmanship (nazm wa khat) from him.<sup>1</sup> Mulla Mustafa Jaunpuri is named as one of Shaikh Farīd's early teachers.<sup>2</sup> For a week he had also sat in the company of Mulla Muḥammad Thattawi, a man of some repute, but who, Farīd Bhakkari says was weak in Figh (jurisprudence).<sup>3</sup>

The literary acumen of Shaikh Farīd Bhakkari is reflected in his simple and straightforward style, as well as the presence of the chronograms pertaining to the death of important persons, which he himself had composed.<sup>4</sup> Apart from having compiled the Zakhīrat-ul Khwānīn, Shaikh Farīd had also authored a book Tarīkh-i Hazrat Shāhjahāni wa Tuhfa-i Sarandāz Khān<sup>5</sup>, which was an account of the family of I'timād-ud Daula.<sup>6</sup> Shaikh Farīd was also given to composing

1. Ibid, I, p. 200.

2. Ibid, II, p. 286.

3. Ibid.

4. For example see Ibid, I, p.18; II, p.46,172,173 etc.

5. It is not clear whether this was a long title of one book or two viz. Tarīkh-i Hazrat Shāhjahāni and Tuhfa-i Sarandāz Khān.

6. Ibid, II, p. 14.

poetry. When a noble, Rāshid Khān, the grandson of Pīr Rūshanāī, fell from a horse, Shaikh Farīd wrote a tazmīn on a rubāī of Anwārī.<sup>1</sup> Another of his couplet refers to Muḥammad Khān Niyāzī a courtier of Jahāngīr.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from his knowledge of Persian, Shaikh Farīd was well versed in Arabic. He also seems to have been fluent in pushto and 'Hindavi' (Hindi). Zakhirātul khawānīn is full of indigenous terms and sometimes even Hindi proverbs have been quoted.<sup>3</sup>

We do not know the exact year in which Shaikh Farīd Bhakkari joined the Mughal service. His initial appointment as the Wakīl of Abul Fath Dakkhani seems to have taken place before 1592.<sup>4</sup> The Emperor (Akbar), at this time, had given mansabs to him, his sons and relatives. He himself was granted a rank of sixty five sawārs. Shaikh Farīd was not happy at this low mansab and he went back to his native place.<sup>5</sup> Soon afterwards, we find him as the nāib (deputy) of Abul Fath Dakkhani<sup>6</sup>, and it seems he remained

1. Ibid, II, p. 228.

2. Ibid, II, p.260.

3. Ibid, III, 1974, p. 15.

4. Ibid, II, pp. 174, 284-5, & 378.

5. Ibid, II, p. 285.

6. Ibid, II, p. 378.



in the Deccan for a very short time. In 1592-3 Shaikh Farīd became the Diwān of 'Sūba' Bīr in Deccan<sup>1</sup> when he was instrumental in getting the wife of Khilūji Bhonsle Maratha released by delivering the required sum of one lakh huns to the Sūbedār Mahābat Khān.<sup>2</sup>

In 1605 when Shaikh Farīd Murtuza Khān Bukhāri was the Sūbedār, Shaikh Farīd Bhakkāri was holding the office of the Diwan of the Sūba Gujrat.<sup>3</sup> At this post he did not remain for more than a year.

In 1606-7, Shaikh Farīd mentions himself as the Faujdār of Lucknow under Khawāja Baqa, the nephew of 'Abdullah Khān and a sister's son of Mahābat Khān.<sup>4</sup>

Soon, in 1608-9, he joined the service of Khān-i Daurān Khawāja Sābir 'Ali Nāsirī Khān, the Sūbadār of Deccan, who treated him very kindly. Shaikh Farīd writes:

"(He) ... cared so much for the author of this book, Shaikh Farīd Bhakkari, that this servant was protected from transfers and paucity of Jāgirs and mansabs.....".<sup>5</sup>

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1. Ibid, I, p. 173; III, pp.12,132 Bīr was not a sūba, but only a Sarkār.

2. Ibid, III, p. 132.

3. Ibid, I, p. 137.

4. Ibid, II, p. 352, also I, p. 238. ☺

5. Ibid, III, p. 23..

On the very first day of his joining the service of Khān-i Daurān, Shaikh Farīd was made the Amin of 32 parganās in Bijagarh. That very year, he was shifted to the Mahāls of Sūba Berar where also he was made the Amin.<sup>1</sup> It seems, that the post did not remain with Shaikh Farīd for long, as Muhammad Husain Gilānī, the Dīwān of Berar, confirmed Sundardās Gujrāti to this post.<sup>2</sup>

Some time in 1610, Shaikh Farīd joined the army of Khān Jahān Lodi and was present in his expedition to the Deccan.<sup>3</sup> The Khān appears to have treated him very kindly for Shaikh Farīd calls him his benefactor.<sup>4</sup>

In 1614, Shaikh Farīd was appointed by Emperor Jahāngīr, as Dīwān of the Jāgīr of Nūrjahān<sup>5</sup>, a post which he held for a long period. After a gap of five years, that is in 1619, when Jahāngīr made his first visit to Kashmir, Shaikh Farīd was at Baba Hasan Abdāl.<sup>6</sup> Whether he had accompanied the Emperor to that place or was present from before is not clear.

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1. Ibid, I, p.158; II, p. 337-8, III, p. 23.

2. Ibid, II, p. 337-8.

3. Ibid, II, p. 85.

4. Ibid, II, p. 166.

5. Ibid, I, p.122. Though in vol. II, p. 392, he mentions that in 1022 A.H./1613 A.D. he was the Dīwān of Nūrjahān. See also, Ibid, II, pp. 216, 300 & 382.

6. Ibid, II, p. 23.

In 1628 we find him again in the service of Khān Jahān Lodi as his Bakhshī-i kul.<sup>1</sup> During his tenure, Shaikh Farīd says, Rs 30 lakhs were collected per annum from Khān-i Jahān's jāgīr, while the annual expenditure was Rs. 24 lakhs. The balance of 6 lakhs, <sup>was</sup> reserved for other contingencies.<sup>2</sup> At another place he says that a sum of Rs 3 lakhs per month was spent on Khan Jahan's establishment. The Khān, Shaikh Farīd says, put so much trust in him, that he never checked the monthly account pertaining to the expenses on cavalry, establishment, and treasury, or to the assessed and the realized revenue from the mahāls of the jāgīrs. He never endorsed them himself and left them to Shaikh Farīd, his Bakhshī.<sup>3</sup> Shaikh Farīd narrates at great length the factors for the dissatisfaction of Khān Jahān Lodi with Shāhjahān.<sup>4</sup> He tells us how the Imperial court enticed the servants of Khān Jahān to abandon him by conferring mansabs on them.<sup>5</sup>

In 1630, after the rebellion of Khān Jahān Lodi was crushed, Shaikh Farīd took the service of Asaf Khān.<sup>6</sup> Afterwards he joined Mahābat Khān's service. Initially

1. Ibid, II, pp. 174, 264 & 307.

2. Ibid, II, p. 166.

3. Ibid, II, p. 115.

4. Ibid, II, pp. 88, 89, 98 & 99 etc.

5. Ibid, II, p. 93.

6. Ibid, II, p. 307.

Shaikh Farīd was given the mansab of 100 zāt and 30 sawār, which within a short time of three years was enhanced to 300/100. He writes:

"Every year he kept on enhancing my rank, so that within a period of three years, my original and enhanced rank became 300/100. He wrote the parwāna (for this) with his own hand, so that the enemies became very jealous"....<sup>1</sup>

Mahābat Khān also granted him the posts of Dīwān, Bakhshī, Amīn and wāqīa Nawīs of 'Sūba' Bīr in Deccan.<sup>2</sup>

In 1632 when Mahābat Khān was appointed the Subedar of Deccan and Shāhjahān honoured him with the bestowal of a khilāt and advanced him a sum of Rs 5 lakhs at Bāgh-i Dehra, Shaikh Farīd was in the company of the Khān.<sup>3</sup> On taking charge, Mahābat Khān had warned the merchants to sell the grain at the fixed rate of ten sers per rupee. Shaikh Farīd collected grain worth Rs 4 lakhs on the same rate at Bīr.<sup>4</sup> With the help of 5000 Rajput sawārs, he says, he also collected fodder worth 50 lakh copper coins.<sup>5</sup> In 1634-35 when the news of the death of Mahābat Khān reached the court, his son, Khān-i Zamān was appointed as the

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1. Ibid, II, p. 169.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid, II, pp. 144, 145.

4. Ibid, II, pp. 146, 154.

5. Ibid, II, p. 146.

Sūbedār of Deccan. Till his arrival, khān-i Daurān, who was at Mālwā, was asked to officiate as the Sūbedār. Shaikh Farīd, who held the charge of Dīwān, Bakhshī, Waqīā Nawīs and Amīn at Bīr, along with Saf Shikan Khān, the son of Saiyid Yūsuf khān Rizvi, who was the thānadār of that place, went to meet khān Daurān and gained his confidence.<sup>1</sup> It seems that Shaikh Farīd held these posts till 1642 as he says:

"The author of this book, Shaikh Farīd Bhakkari, was the Dīwān, Bakhshī, Amīn, and Waqīā Nigār of Bīr. He remained there under Saf Shikan Khān for a period of eight years".<sup>2</sup>

In 1642, Shaikh Farīd joined the service of Sarandāz Khān Qalmaq, the jāgīrdār of Dalmau. He was appointed to the office of wakīl-i Mutlaq al-Inān (agent with absolute authority) of this noble. Shaikh Farīd boasts that this was done so to bring prosperity to the former's sarkār. Further he was extended a salary of Rs. 1000/- per month with no deductions, as well as Rs. 2 daily for food. He was given unrestricted powers and full

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1. Ibid, II, p. 166.

2. Ibid, II, p.306.

responsibility of the Sarkār of Sarandāz Khān Qalmaq.<sup>1</sup> Though Shaikh Farīd says, he performed his duties well, still he complains of the Khān's unkindly attitude towards him, which he held to have been due to the complaints of the Khān's former servants who were jealous of him.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from the above mentioned positions Shaikh Farīd Bhakkari had also held for some time the office of Amīn of the twelve parganas of Pāthri, in the vicinity of Nandir.<sup>3</sup> At another place, he says, that for a few years he held the post of Amīn of Pargana Dewi in Fathpur "half of which was in the jāgīr of Jān Bāz Khān Turkman, and the other half in the jāgīr of Saiyyid Nūrul Āyān".<sup>4</sup> Shaikh Farīd had also been appointed on some revenue assignment in the Khālisa parganas of Muhammad Sharīf Mutamid Khān, the Bakhshi, in the Faujdārī of Lucknow.<sup>5</sup> While dealing with the biography of Jaswant Rāi Khatri, Shaikh Farīd also mentions his assignment at the Imperial Court at Agra to assess the accounts of Sūba Bir.<sup>6</sup> After the transfer of Bābā Mīrak, the son-in-law of Lashkar Khān, Shaikh Farīd

1. Ibid, III, p. 56.

2. Ibid, III, p. 49.

3. Ibid, II, pp. 228, 348.

4. Ibid, III, p. 84.

5. Ibid, II, p. 253.

6. Ibid, III, p. 86.

says, he had been appointed the Qilédār of the Fort of Anki Banki (Ankai Tankai ?).<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately for these appointments, he does not provide any dates.

Finally in January 1649, Shaikh Farīd was appointed to the post of Amīn and Waqiā nawīs of a dozen fortresses in the Deccan, where till the completion of his book i.e. 1651, he remained posted.<sup>2</sup> These fortresses are specified as Kalna (Galna), Dharab, Jaulāhar, Ākwant, Ajlāgarh (Jaula), Chandaur, Rājdhār, Anhrāi (Ajlāra), Ankai Tankai, Tarnklawari, Tarbaink, Harpas and Karank.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh Farīd Bhakkari concludes his Zakhīra in the year 1651 and thus we are not informed as to his further appointments or date of retirement.

As far as his religious views are concerned, we find Shaikh Farīd a conservative Sunni. He was much influenced by the contemporary Sūfi saints, and writes that he was the disciple of Mīr 'Abdullah Mishkīn raqm.<sup>4</sup> When Qāzi 'Imād, the son of a Tūrānī noble, built a big house near that of 'Abdullah, whose privacy was thus shattered, Mishkīn raqm sent Shaikh Farīd to ask the Qāzī

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1. Ibid, III, p. 100.

2. Ibid, III, p. 39.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid, II, pp. 400-401.

to make some changes in the building. But the latter misbehaved. Shaikh Farīd then says that the saint prophesied:

"After a year neither I shall be living in my house nor you in your splendid mansion".<sup>1</sup>

The prophecy, says Farid, came true and both Mishkīn Raqm and Qāzī 'Imād died within six months.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Farīd's regard for the Suhrawardi saints can be discerned from his wish to carry on repairs and extensions of Shaikh Bahāuddin Zakariya's tomb at Multān. While writing about the construction carried out by Nawāb Qulij Khān Tūrānī at that tomb, he laments:

"The author Shaikh Farīd Bhakkari, had always wished that this honour of the repairs of the Rauza, which is so near the native town of this servant, should have fallen to his lot because he is so closely connected with that great family (Khānwāda) through faith and devotion. But this servant could not get that privilege".<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh Farīd was also deeply influenced by Shaikh Junaid of pattan, the chief disciple of Shāh Wajīhuddin of Gujrat. He speaks with much reverence about one of the

1. Ibid, II, pp 400 - 401

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid, III, p. 67.



'Miracles' of Shaikh Junaid. He says that when Mirza Fathpuri the son of Mirza Shāhrukh threatened to kill the Shaikh after returning from a hunting expedition, the Shaikh had coolly replied that the Mirza would not be able to return safely, and if he did, he would not survive even for one night. True to the saint's words, the very night that the Mirza returned, he was killed by thieves. Shaikh Farīd says that Shaikh Junaid then attended the funeral.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Farīd also mentions the humane attitude of the Chishti saints and lauds them for it.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Farīd shows a typical orthodox character. At the time when he was the Bakhshī-i kul of the Sarkār of Khān Jahān Lodi, he was told by 'Abdullah khān he had beheaded more than two lakh Hindus and the heads had been pinned atop spears "as to make a double rowed pillared way stretching from Agra to patna". Shaikh Farīd was perturbed that in such a wholesale massacre many Muslims too might have been killed.<sup>3</sup> Likewise whenever he writes about the death of some Hindu noble, he always ends with a description of the horrors of hell. In case the deceased Hindu had done some good to him he prays for the reduction in

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1. Ibid, II, pp. 319-23.

2. Ibid, II, pp. 326-27.

3. Ibid, II, p. 174.

his sins and punishment (‘azāb).<sup>1</sup> At the time of the death of Rājā Rāmdās Kachhwaha, when Shaikh Farīd witnessed the ceremony of Sati of fifteen women and twenty servants, he says, he became convinced that the hindus surely go to hell.<sup>2</sup>

True to his Sunni leanings, Shaikh Farīd mentions with obvious disapproval the conversions of Mahābat Khān and his sister's son Khwāja Baqa to Shiism.<sup>3</sup> Regarding Mahābat Khan he says:

"Mahābat Khān was not stable as far as religion was concerned".<sup>4</sup>

Apart from having served under such grand nobles as Khān Jahān Lodi, Khān Daurān, Mahābat Khān and Abū Fath Dakkhani, Shaikh Farīd supplies us with a list of his friends. They were, he says, Qāzī Muḥammad Sharīf Jaunpūrī Rāji Saiyyid Mubāarak, Rāji Saiyyid ‘Abdul Qādir Mānikpūrī, Khwāja Hāji Muḥammad Mīr, the Āriz Muharrir, Maulana ‘Atāi Jaunpuri and Shaikh Mubāarak Muḥīuddin. He also mentions Sher Khān Turbati who was inclined favourably towards him.

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1. Ibid, III, p. 86.

2. Ibid, I, p. 241.

3. Ibid, II, pp. 171 & 352.

4. Ibid, II, p. 171.

It would appear that Shaikh Farīd had already served Mughal government and its nobles continuously for some fifty years when he completed his biographical dictionary of Mughal nobles in 1651. That work is a testimony of the large number of officials he met and the enormous information he was able to collect about them during his long period of service.

Chapter III

Surat Singh

Sūrat Singh, the author of Tazkira-tul Shaikh-ul Khadam<sup>1</sup>, or Tazkira-i Pīr Hassū Tailī and his brother Gaṅgā Rām make an interesting subject of study of the lower bureaucracy in the 17th century India.

Sūrat Singh a petty revenue official in the punjāb during Shāhjahān's reign, not only gives us a glimpse of the religious atmosphere prevalent during his time but also provides us with an excellent view of the working and behaviour of the petty officialdom.<sup>2</sup>

Sūrat Singh (real name Shān Sarang) was born at Naṭsar<sup>3</sup> in the pargana of Patti Haibat pūr in the Punjab.<sup>4</sup> His father's name was Dūni Chand and his grand father was Jogīdās.<sup>5</sup> His family, as most of the people in that town, belonged to the Kamboj sept (firqa).<sup>6</sup> Gaṅgā Rām was his

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1. Tazkira-i Pīr Hassū Tailī, MS. Department of History, AMU, f. 181 (b).

2. Ibid, ff. 68a-b, 89(a)-(b).

3. 31+, 74+; see Irfan Habib, An Atlas of Mughal Empire, 4A, B.

4. Now Patti in Amritsar district.

5. TPHT, ff. 181(a) - 182(b).

6. Ibid f. 181 (b). Though M. Athar Ali, "Sidelights into Ideological and Religious attitudes in the Punjab during the 17th century", Proceedings IHC, Varanasi session 1969 & pub. in Medieval India - a miscellany, Vol. II, Aligarh 1972, pp. 187-94 categorizes Kamboj as a Brahmin sect, W. Crooke in The Tribes and Castes of North-Western India, Vol. III, p. 120 thinks them to be synonymous to Kamboh. Thus calling them Kshatriya.

elder brother.<sup>1</sup>

It was through his brother Ganga Rām that Sūrāt Singh was introduced to Shaikh Kamāl, the Chief disciple of Pīr Hassū Talli.<sup>2</sup> Sūrāt Singh, whose real name was Shān Sarang<sup>3</sup>, was passing through difficult times after his father's death when Ganga Rām pleaded with Shaikh Kamāl to enrol the former among his disciples. The Shaikh accepted him and handed over Sūrāt Singh to 'Abdul Karīm.<sup>4</sup> It was under his guidance that Sūrāt Singh was trained in the art of versification. We are informed that with 'Abdul Karīm as tutor, Sūrāt Singh was made to study the works of Yūsufi, Jāmi', Anwarī, and Khāqānī, and read such books as Tuhfat-ul Ahrār Sabha-tul Abrār various Maktūbāts, Akhlāq-i Nāsiri and works in prose and poetry.<sup>5</sup> 'Abdul Karīm would make him memorize his lessons and only when they had been learnt by heart would he allow his pupil to proceed further. Gradually his pupil became disposed towards poetry and asked his tutor about his nom de plume. 'Abdul Karīm thus gave him the title of Sūrāt Singh.<sup>6</sup>

1. TPHT f. 54(b). Sūrāt Singh uses the term "my brother" for Sadānand as well.

2. Ibid, ff. 120(a)-(b). See also ff. 54(a), 55(a)-(b) & 118(b).

3. Ibid f. 181 (b).

4. Ibid f. 120 (a) - (b).

5. Ibid 120 (a)

6. Ibid f. 120 (b).

Soon, Sūrāt Singh started composing gasīdas<sup>1</sup> and became quite popular. Even Shaida is said to have praised Sūrāt Singh as a poet. In a poetical session held at Agra, Sūrāt Singh made a mark, before poets like Khwāja Sādiq, Shaida, Munīr, Jāfarī, Dehlawī, Burhānyār, Mīr Hashmatī, Sozī, Jalālī, Tālib, Qudsī, Mīr Ilāhī, Dayāl, Chandra Bhān Brahman and the famous Hindu poet Nand Rāi.<sup>2</sup> At the time of the commencement of the Mushā'ira, Mīr Hashmatī asked Shaida to recite the opening verses. The later is said to have replied that this should be done by Sūrāt Singh who was known for his gasīdas. Thus Sūrāt Singh inaugurated the session by reciting a gasīda comprising 150 baits. It was a eulogy of the Shaikh. Shaida and others, says Sūrāt Singh, praised him a lot.<sup>3</sup> Sūrāt Singh also composed gasīdas in the praise of the Prophet and Hazrat 'Ali.<sup>4</sup>

The greatest proof for his versifying acumen is his present Metrical work, Tazkira-i Pīr Hassū Taili, comprising of 7000 verses, all in the same metre. Surat Singh himself refers to this fact with some pride.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Ibid f. 120 (b).

2. Ibid f. 86 (b).

3. Ibid f. 87 (a).

4. Ibid, f. 65 (a).

5. Ibid f. 181 (a).

As for his administrative acumen, it seems, he could not gain as much glory. For time and again we find him wandering from place to place hunting for jobs. It appears that Ganga Rām secured a job much earlier than Sūrāt Singh. Initially Ganga Rām got the job of a Waḡāya Nigār of the Darbār.<sup>1</sup> But soon he left his job and headed for Gujrat where he remained posted in some pargana for one year. But soon on the recommendations of Shaikh Kamāl, the wakīl of Sikandar Muīn took Ganga Rām to Jahāngīrpūr where he worked as Āmil for quite some time.<sup>2</sup> For some unknown reason Ganga Rām left that job and alongwith Sūrāt Singh moved on to Kalānore.<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately not much is known about Sūrāt Singh's early career, though he tells us that initially he was assigned Kalānore by his pīr in the 15 RY of Shāhjahān i.e. 1640 A.D.<sup>4</sup> Whether this assignment was administrative or purely mystic, it is not clear. However, the first clear reference of his administrative posting is when he describes his adverse experience as a Karori.<sup>5</sup> Surat Singh informs us that as a karori, he collected a large sum of money

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1. Ibid f. 121 (a)-(b).

2. Ibid f. 122 (a).

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid ff. 148 (a)-(b).

5. Ibid f. 151 (b)



and deposited it in the State treasury. In his eagerness to be fair, Sūrāt Singh left nothing with the revenue-payers (mālguzārs) of that place. This stric<sup>t</sup>ness irked the mālguzārs who levelled a charge of embezzlement against him. As a consequence, he had to leave his job and seek shelter with his Shaikh in a village near Batāla. But soon an Amīn of that area helped him and managed to secure for him the office of Amīn at Lahore.<sup>1</sup> The consequent paucity of income is lamented by him.

At Lahore, too, Sūrāt Singh could not settle down at ease. For he keeps on lamenting over the uncertainty of a job and appears wary of the Hākīm of Batāla, Todar Mal and lastly of the service of the Emperor or prince.<sup>2</sup> Thus we find him wandering again along with his brother Ganga Rām. For some time they took up some petty job in a Pargana. Ultimately the brothers settled again, Ganga Rām as a Dīwān of Todar Mal and Sūrāt Singh as the Kārkun of Bhatinda.<sup>3</sup> Here also the two brothers could not remain

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1. Ibid f. 152 (a). Iqtedar Alam Khan in his Presidential Address, Medieval India Section, "The Middle classes in the Mughal Empire", op.cit. p. 11, confuses the text when he writes: "A pargana amin helped the author to e<sup>y</sup>ade enquiry into his conduct after he had come to be suspected by the karori and malguzar (amil) of having embezzled the revenues".

2. TPMT, f. 154 (b).

3. Ibid f. 155 (a).

settled for long, for now we find them in Kabul under Saf Shikan Khān, the Hākīm (Governor) of Qandhar.<sup>1</sup> Ganga Rām was given the post of Khān-i Sāmān in the Sarkār of Saf Shikan Khān. Sūrāt Singh himself got the post of Mushrif of the Khazāna.<sup>2</sup> Sūrāt Singh, it appears desperately tried to please his mentor by reciting gasīdas in praise of the latter. But unfortunately during the floods, which caused a sharp hike in the prices of food grains, one of the Mushrif made some wrong entries and Ganga Rām began to be suspected of embezzlement. Sūrāt Singh was deputed to check the records but many of the documents were misplaced.<sup>3</sup> Thereupon he lost his job.

But this time the brothers' agony was a short one. When Āqil Khān came to know of their plight, he called them to his Sarkār and bestowed the office of Khān-i Sāmān upon Ganga Rām and of Daftar-i Taujīh upon Sūrāt Singh. Sūrāt Singh was further given the charge of buying and selling of foodgrains; and the Kharch-i Dawwāb (expenses on horses) was also handed over to him.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Ibid f. 162 (a).

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid ff. 162 (a) - 163 (b).

4. Ibid f. 163 (b)

But here too, Sūrāt Singh was not destined to live in peace. Soon he and Ganga Ram was embroiled in a scuffle with a petty official in which Ganga Ram suffered dagger wounds.<sup>1</sup>

After this, we do not get any further reference for his assignments. But not with-standing the fact that Sūrāt Singh is frequently lamenting over uncertainties of jobs and shortage of money, he appears to have led a comfortable life. For when Saf Shikan Khān offered him some money in return for his gasīda in his praise, Sūrāt Singh refused it. Further, he tells us that he had bought a house for himself for Rs 700/- a sizeable amount by the standard of 17th century, in one of the respectable localities of Lahore.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from the personal glimpses, the author of Tazkira-i Pīr Hassū Tailī also throws much light on the position, conduct and thinking of the petty officialdom under the Mughal Empire. Thus we find that a pargana level official named Khwāja Hari Chand is said to have distributed money and cows among the Brahmins. He reportedly ate with Brahmins each morning and offered meal to the members of all the thirtysix castes.<sup>3</sup> Another petty official, Muḥammad

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1. Ibid, ff. 164 (a)-(b).

2. Ibid f. 181 (b).

3. Ibid ff. 175 (a)-(b).

Shafi Bayūtāt, built a mosque in Mohalla Tilla (where Sūrāt Singh lived) some time before 1644.<sup>1</sup> Ganga Rām, when he himself was the āmil of Jahāngīr pūr, grew fabulously rich.<sup>2</sup> 'Abdul Karīm, a scholar of some repute, is reported to have owned a house near Sūrāt Singh's.<sup>3</sup> We are also informed by Sūrāt Singh that the Tomb of Pīr Hassū Tailī was built of contributions and donations made by the disciples of the Shaikh - most of whom belonged to the petty officialdom and trading communities.<sup>4</sup>

As for the cheatings and bunglings by the revenue officials, Sūrāt Singh speaks of the cheatings by the qānūngos, who along with the patwārīs would sometimes fake the village records. It is ironic to note that a mystic like Shaikh Kamāl once is alleged of giving "moral" support to a qānūngo's forging the village records with the object of frustrating an enquiry into the conduct of a Shiqdār.<sup>5</sup> The alleged bungling by a mushrif in the Sarkār of Saf Shikan Khān while the author was posted there also points to the prevalence of such practices.<sup>6</sup> The stuffle in which Sūrāt

1. Ibid, f. 181 (b).

2. Ibid f. 122 (a).

3. Ibid f. 181 (b).

4. Ibid f. 176 (a). Iqtadar Alam Khan, op.cit., though confuses Khwaja Udai Singh, a rich and famous man of the city, with a petty official.

5. TPHT ff. 112 (a)-(b). This passage concerning the revenue collector of Jahangirpur also mentions that the Amin used to check the records of the Amil by a direct examination of the village patwari's papers.

6. Ibid, ff. 162a-163 b.

Singh got involved in the Sarkār of Āqil Khān, was also due to an attempt made by some petty revenue official to hood-wink the State treasury.<sup>1</sup>

Now the religious attitude and philosophy of Sūrāt Singh. As has been pointed above Sūrāt Singh's allegiance was to Shaikh Kamāl and through him to Hassū Tailī.<sup>2</sup> Hassū Tailī was born sometime in the 15th century around A.D.1483/891 A.H.<sup>2b</sup> at a place called Mākhīwāl on the bank of River Chenab. His father's name was Shaikh Chandū Tailī and his mother was Mailī. He had an elder brother Shaikh Taru, and a sister named piyārī.<sup>3</sup> Belonging to the Tailī or oilmen's caste<sup>4</sup>, Hassū was attracted towards one of the Goraknāths, who soon recognized in him his 61st disciple.<sup>5</sup>

Commenting on the Maslak (tradition) of Hassū, Shaikh Kamāl, we are told, designated it as Malāmātiya.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Ibid, f. 164a-164b.

2. Ibid, ff. 54(a), 55a-b, 118(b), 173(a)-174(b).

2b. This date can be very simply worked out as the age at the time of death and the year has been supplied by the author. TPHT, f. 100 (b). S. Mohd Latif in his Lahore - its history, architectural remains and antiquity, with an account of its Modern Institutions, Inhabitants, their trade, customs etc. Lahore, 1892, p. 202-3 is definitely wrong when he says that the saint died in 1002 A.H./1593 A.D.

3. TPHT, ff. 68 a-b, 89a-b.

4. Iffetson, panjab Castes, Lahore, 1916, p. 324. Tailis were a wholly Muslim Caste.

5. TPHT, ff. 89(a)-90(b).

6. Ibid, f. 102(a).

Apart from his connection with Islamic traditions, Hassu was endowed with a liberal mind. Though a formal Muslim, the saint never followed any of the basic observances and rituals prescribed by Islam. He never prayed in public nor paid the Zakāt: for was he not praying all the time ? He never had anything stored up, so where was the question of paying the religious tax ? In every breath he circumvented the Kaaba of his heart, so where was the need of the formal ceremony of Haj.<sup>1</sup> All this was in consonance with what the Malamāliya taught: that in order to appear pious, the observable attributes of piety were avoidable.

Sūrat Singh was naturally influenced by this philosophy. As a Hindu, he had also imbibed many of the inhibitions of his community. Thus he would never touch meat and applauds Akbar and Jahāngīr for prohibiting cow slaughter.<sup>2</sup> He even goes to the extent of claiming that a famine resulted when an Afghan disciple of Hassu served the saint some meat.<sup>3</sup> He is happy when someone feeds Brahmans and gives them money and cows. But, on an intellectual plain, he stands for Hindu-Muslim unity and applauds the Mughal Emperors for acts of tolerance.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Ibid.

2. Ibid, f. 36 (b).

3. Ibid, ff. 36a-b.

4. Ibid, f. 101 (a).

The saint's training seems to have mellowed him as far as caste restrictions are concerned. He takes pride in telling of the lowly origins of his fellow disciples.<sup>1</sup>

Sūrat Singh's traditional Persian education and Hassū's and Shaikh Kamāl's affinity to Islam seems to have had familiarized him to the Islamic tradition. Thus he begins his work with the praise of God, the Prophet and his Companions, as naturally as an orthodox Muslim would.

Sūrat Singh ascribes to himself many mystical and spiritual experiences. Thus once he informs us that he performed Haj and while doing so met the Prophet himself. He says, that when he approached the Prophet, he saw Imām 'Ali standing next to him. 'Ali beckoned Sūrat Singh to come nearer and heard a gasīda from him. Sūrat Singh also claims to have met numerous saints like Khwāja Moīnuddīn Chishtī, Muḥīuddīn (Ibn 'Arabi ?), Bābā Kapar, Bābā Farīd Ganj Shaḳar and many others in heaven.<sup>2</sup>

In one other such experience, Sūrat Singh met Pīr Hassū Taill.<sup>3</sup> While performing a well-known mystical ritual, against the advice of his seniors, Sūrat Singh fell ill and remained bed ridden for three years. No

1. Ibid. ff. 173(a)-174(b).

2. Ibid. ff. 65(a)-67(b).

3. Ibid. ff. 78(b)-80(b).

medicine, he says, would cure him. Ultimately he says, while crossing the Jamuna near Agra, he fell in the river. His spiritual mentor, through a miracle, raised him out of water, and he was cured.<sup>1</sup> He was even given the Wilāyat (territory where he could enrol disciples) of Batala by Shaikh Kamāl due to his spiritual accomplishments.<sup>2</sup>

At the same, it appears, that Sūrāt Singh's elder brother, was more religiously inclined as compared to his brother, for he left the comforts of his home to join the Bairāgīs. He grew a beard and left his hair to grow. He even started to saunter from jungle to jungle, eating only what was provided by the forests.<sup>3</sup> Sūrāt Singh, even went looking for him and met him in a jungle.<sup>4</sup> But soon Ganga Rām was fed up with a mendicant's life and returned to the fold of Shaikh Kamāl.<sup>5</sup>

A versifier of 7000 verses, all of the same metre, and a poet of some standing, whom even the poet-critic like Shaida is alleged to have appreciated, a petty Mughal

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1. Ibid, ff. 85(b)-86(a).

2. Ibid, ff.148(a)-(b).

3. Ibid, ff.122(b)-124(a).

4. Ibid, ff.124(a)-125(b).

5. Ibid.



bureaucrat, a disciple of famous saint of oilmen, Pīr Hassu Taili and the author of Tazkira-i Pīr Hassū Tailī, Sūrāt Singh is thus a man whose life-sketch throws much light on the social status and religious outlook of the Lower bureaucracy during the Mughal period.

Chapter IV

Balkrishan Brahman

Bālkrishan Brahman was a petty Mughal bureaucrat. Surviving in a British Library manuscript (add. 16859) which otherwise contains texts of petitions to the court on behalf of Khān-i Jahān Bārha, an official of Shāhjahān, and two works of Shaikh Jalāl Hisārī, viz. Waqā-i Jojhār Singh and Gwālīor nāma, there are a number of Bālkrishan Brahman's letters.<sup>1</sup> These letters seem to have been collected for the use of those who might be interested in the art of Inshā. It is through these letters that it is possible to draw a life sketch of Bālkrishan Brahman. But since the compiler did not have the needs of future historians in mind, these letters lack dates, and at times even the names of the addressee are missing. However, there is some internal evidence to suggest that at least some of these are arranged in<sup>a</sup> chronological sequence.<sup>2</sup>

Bālkrishan, a contemporary of Shāhjahān and Aurangzeb,<sup>was born</sup> in a Brahmin family of the town of Hisār Firoza.<sup>3</sup> It seems that accountancy was his family profession and quite a number of his family members appear to be engaged in

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1. These letters of Balkrishan Brahman, however, are not noticed by Rieu. Rieu, British Museum Catalogue of Persian MS. ii, 837(a). The MS. was written in the 34th Regnal year of Aurangzeb 1102 AH/1690 AD. The Seminar Library, Department of History has a rotographed copy of the same.
  2. In a number of letters he says that he is ill, eg. Add. 16859 ff. 72(a) & 88(b) and then follows a letter where he writes, "I was bedridden for the last three months" Ibid. ff. 85(a)-86(b).
  3. Ibid. f. 97(a).

Persian learning and accountacy, and earned their livelihood by this means.<sup>1</sup> Bālkrishan writes that his father was an expert in Siyāq (accountacy) and his elder brothers too had the requisite expertise in it.<sup>2</sup>

As for his other family members, reference is found of atleast six brothers, two of whom, Khwāja Dwārkadās and Khwāja Chajjumal, were elder to him, while Khwāja Sidhmal, Fateh Chand, Sītaldās and Munirām were younger.<sup>3</sup> Besides his father and brothers, Bālkrishan also makes mention of his sons, grandsons and other relatives. He refers to Rudra Dās, his son who was his nāib (deputy) in Pargana Bhatinda.<sup>4</sup> Another letter refers to Uday Rām, munshī at some nobles' court as his other son, with whom he doesnot seem to be well pleased.<sup>5</sup> There are atleast two letters of Bālkrishan in which he invites people to attend the marriage of one of his sons.<sup>6</sup> The way he mentions

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1. Ibid. f 97(a)

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. f. 62(b).

5. Ibid. f. 94(a).

6. Ibid. ff. 89(b) & 90(a).

Dīnchand, Nunit Rāi and Nathmal, make them appear to be his grand children.<sup>1</sup> Frequent references to Lachchi Rām, Khwāja Pratāp Singh<sup>2</sup> and Lakhmi Dās<sup>3</sup> suggest that they were his close relative,<sup>4</sup> though their actual relationship with him is not sufficiently clear.

Bālkrishan also refers to some of his female relations, without mentioning their names. In one of his letters, he conveys his regards to his mother, sister-in-law, aunts and some other young women - presumably daughters and grand daughters.<sup>5</sup>

As for his education, we are informed that, as per tradition of his family, Bālkrishan Brahman, was first sent to study in the Maktab of 'Abdul Mājid, a scholar of some repute. Bālkrishan says, that, he had no equal as a teacher in the city of Hisfār.<sup>6</sup> It was under the guidance of 'Abdul Mājid, that he gained a knowledge of Persian and expertise in its idioms and metaphors. He adds:

"I became very much interested in the art of writing and composition; and daily without break I copied (from

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1. Ibid. f. 60(a). Nathmal is mentioned as the son of Dayārām Patwāri.

2. Khwāja Pratāp is mentioned as a Wāqia' navīs, ff.65(a)-67(b).

3. Ibid. ff. 27(a)-(b).

4. Ibid. ff. 99(b) -101(a).

5. Ibid. f. 61(b).

6. Ibid. f. 97(a). See also ff. 65(a)-67(b) wherein he states: "It was he who taught me how to write".

various books) the words and drafts of great Munshīs and dabīrs and used them at their proper place".<sup>1</sup>

It is evident that he strove hard to learn the art of Inshā and received guidance from a capable teacher. He was perhaps very much fascinated by the knowledge and position of the Munshīs. It appears that Bālkrishan's father was suitably well-placed in his own right, to gain access for his son in the Maktab of 'Abdul Mājīd. Bālkrishan claims to have achieved competence in composing Inshā at the early stages while he was still at the Maktab, elaborating his achievements Bālkrishan says that all the elders who perused his writing and language could not help praising it, while the children of the Madarsa and the streets nicknamed him "Munshī".<sup>2</sup>

However his education at the Maktab was soon discontinued as his brothers had him recalled from this Maktab and made him join the office of one of the Āmils and Hākims (official) of the city and forced him to learn arithmetic and Siyāq (accountancy).<sup>3</sup> Bālkrishan could not disobey the orders of his brothers but still tried to continue with his interest and hanker after the art of Inshā.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Ibid, ff. 97(a)-(b).

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

This training in Siyāq and arithmetic continued for sometime and Bālkrishan kept on striving hard to acquaint himself with these subjects. Meanwhile, Shaikh Jalāl Hisārī, the Secretary of Khān-i Jahān Sayyid Muẓaffar Khān Bārha, after his master's death returned to Hisṣār.<sup>1</sup> Soon after, Bālkrishan left the Amīn's office, where he was employed at that time and decided to become the pupil (Shāgird) of Shaikh Jalāl Hisārī. But again he was compelled by his brothers and forced to take up another job. His brother's advice and reasoning was that there was much more profit in accountancy, while the art of Inshā was a tough job which needed a life-time endeavour before one could become acceptable amongst its experts. They further urged him not to forgo the monetary gains provided by learning accountancy.<sup>2</sup> But Bālkrishan was not so easily persuaded. He started visiting the Shaikh every four or five days, After continuing in this fashion, he ultimately freed himself from the hold of his brothers and enrolled himself amongst the pupils and followers of Shaikh Jalāl.<sup>3</sup> Gradually he attached himself to the Shaikh and kept on studying under him, keeping his notes before him to be checked and improved and contemplating and learning Persian.<sup>4</sup> Thus he remained attached to Shaikh Jalāl for atleast nine years.

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1. Ibid, ff. 97(b)-98(a).

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid f. 98(b).

4. Ibid.

Wherever the Shaikh would go, he would accompany him and hold his staff and shoes, not caring what the others would say.<sup>1</sup> The Shaikh too seems to have developed a liking for him and Bālkrishan proudly tells us that in his letters, the Shaikh addressed him as his son (farzand).<sup>2</sup>

The nine years' company with Jalāl Hisāri deepened his taste in learning further and Bālkrishan started collecting a personal library and copied forty books which were in Shikast (cursive) writing.<sup>3</sup> His library contained more than hundred books and was situated in an attic above his room. One of his prized books was the Makātibāt of Abū'l Fazl.<sup>4</sup> He also kept on learning the subtleties of the knowledge of Fan-i 'Inshā.<sup>5</sup>

Bālkrishan Brahman soon appears to have turned into quite a prolific writer and composer. He mentions a prose work of his entitled Chahār Bahār.<sup>6</sup> Besides this he seems to have written many more, since while offering an excuse for not replying to a letter written to him by some

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1. Ibid. f. 98 (b)

2. Ibid. f. 99(a).

3. Ibid. f. 98(b). In one of his letters to some scholar, Shaikh Jalal Hisari writes that he had asked Balkrishan to copy the gasida Bahr-al-Abrar verse by verse. see f. 37(b).

4. Ibid. f. 125(a).

5. Ibid. f. 98 (b).

6. Ibid. f. 89(b). But what topic or theme this work dealt with, we are kept in the dark.



person of high status, he claims he had written a reply, which seems to have been lost either among his musawwadāt (notes) or else some 'admirer' of his writings might have taken it away.<sup>1</sup> This mention of the admirers allegedly taking away his compositions to treasure is an interesting testimony to his vanity.

Most of his letters contain, atleast a few of his couplets and verses. But his exercise in poetry does not seem to have been confined to these stray couplets alone. He claims to have composed a collection of Ghazals, entitled Risāla-i Ishqiya.<sup>2</sup> He claims that this work had won general acclaim and was sought after by a lot of people. It is interesting to note that while his prose is so verbose, he claims that his poetry was appreciated for its precision.<sup>3</sup>

The numerous letters written by him are a further <sup>fact</sup> evidence of his copious writings. An interesting <sup>fact</sup> is that in spite of his claims of self-importance and poetic acclaim very few people seem to reply to his letters.

It appears that the closeness of Bālkrishan with Jalāl Hisāri subsequently paid dividends and upon the latter's recommendations Bālkrishan secured employment

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1. Ibid. ff 88 (b).

2. Ibid. ff. 72(a)-(b) & ff. 73(b)-74(a). On ff.75(b)-76(a). Bālkrishan calls it as Nuskha-i Ishqiya. Was it about the Brahmin girl with whom Bālkrishan had fallen in love ? ff. 76(b)-77(b).

3. Ibid. f. 72(b).

in the Sarkār (establishment) of one of the Hākims (jāgīrdārs) of Chakla Hisṣār,<sup>1</sup> where his superiors were impressed by his proficiency. But in this very year Shaikh Jalāl Hisāri died. Soon after, Bālkrishan resigned his job and left Hisṣār. But inspite of this tragedy, he informs us, that he did not leave the company of his books and thus he reports with such pride, that his admirers continued to surround him.<sup>2</sup>

It seems that after leaving Hisṣār, he wandered from place to place, not settling permanently at any one job. For some time he stayed with his friend Dīwān Ugar Sen.<sup>3</sup> Subsequently he took up a job as some sort of a revenue official under some noble at Bareilly. The job was perhaps handsomely paid and important enough because he was able to send a sum of Rs. 100/- in the form of hundi from Bareilly to Shāhjahānbād through a messenger named Bhūriā.<sup>4</sup>

While directing the disbursement of the money sent, he complains against the non-availability of good and permanent jobs, and thus cautions against an extravagant expenditure on the part of the women of his family.<sup>5</sup> While

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1. Ibid. f. 99 (b).

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. f. 75 (a).

4. Ibid. f. 60(b). Though the total amount sent was Rs.116/- out of which Rs 16 was contributed by Daya Rām & Bajrām - his close relatives.

5. Ibid. f. 61 (a).

writing this he shows his contempt for the women representing perhaps the general attitude of his time.

It seems that he had to leave this job after some time, for in one of the Hasb-ul Hukm<sup>1</sup> transcribed subsequently, Bālkrishan is mentioned as the qānūngo of Pargana Pūnia.<sup>2</sup> But again, he seems to be on the move, for in yet another letter written by him to some noble, he mentions his employment somewhere in or near Kaithal as a revenue official where he is finding difficulty due to a paucity of money.<sup>3</sup>

After some passage of time, he appears to have started his wanderings again which continued for three months before he secured another job at Sirhind.<sup>4</sup> He mentions a certain Khidmat Guzār Khān under whom he was employed for an emolument of Rs. 50/- Vasūli (cash) per month. But his tone seems to suggest that he still is not happy with his new job.<sup>5</sup>

After wandering from place to place and still pining to fulfill his childhood fantasy of becoming a Munshī, Bālkrishan ultimately comes back to Hisār. He informs us that the Faujdāri and Amīn-ship of Chakla Hisār and Pargana Bhatnir and Bhatinda was conferred upon him.<sup>6</sup> His son Rudra

1. The Hasbul Hukm granted to some noble was written by Mīr 'Azīz, Dārogha of Dārul 'Adālatul 'Āliya to a few zamīndārs of Pargana Pūnia.

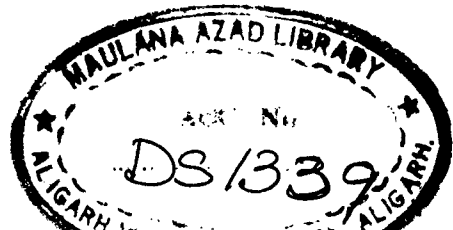
2. Ibid, f. 64(a).

3. Ibid, f. 66(b).

4. Ibid, f. 86(a).

5. Ibid, f. 86(b).

6. Ibid, f. 62(b).



Das was deputed as his nāib at Pargana Bhatinda.

We do not hear more from him about his subsequent career. It is clear that Bālkrishan never achieved his long cherished desire of becoming a Munshī: though, as noted above, his son succeeded in attaining that position.<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to note that though he complains against the non-availability of good and permanent jobs, still we find him manipulating to get jobs for his relatives. Thus he was instrumental in preparing the description roll of Bajrām and Jauhar Mal who were employed on a salary of Rs. 2/- per month including food.<sup>2</sup> Daya Rām, another of his relatives was appointed on his recommendation as a Muharrir (Clerk) on a payment of Rs. 10/- vasūli.<sup>3</sup> Bālkri- shan also invited his brothers to come over, when he was stationed at Bareilly, so that he might find some job for them, "though (as he says) conditions of employment depends upon time".<sup>4</sup> At one place, he is even found recommending a physician (tabīb) to some noble for employment.<sup>5</sup> The mere fact that he kept on profusely writing letters to people

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1. Ibid, f. 94 (a).

2. Ibid, ff. 61(a)-(b).

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.f. 61 (a).

5. Ibid, f. 31(a)-(b).

well-placed in administrative jobs or to influential officials undeterred, inspite of not getting a reply in return, shows not only his literary urge or a social courtesy, but a strong material motivation to gain favour from their good offices.

Thus many letters are written by him to people whom he appears to have neither met nor seen but are understandably placed in positions such as to help him financially or could be of use in enhancing his position or procuring a job for his relatives. Intelligently enough, while writing letters to those who did not know him, he takes care of mentioning a mutually known friend. Thus, for example, in a letter he says:

"Though I have never seen you, but I have heard about your good qualities from Bhaiya Gopāl Rāi...."<sup>1</sup>

The text of the letter makes it clear that it is addressed to a person of importance, associated with a financially important office. Even though Bālkrishan has never met him, but still, he seeks his favours, wisely refering to Bhaiya Gopāl Rāi who is apparently close to the addressee.

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1. Ibid, f. 88 (a).

However, he too seems lax in replying to at least some people, though, he was quite good at finding excuses for it. Sometimes the reply was supposed to have been lost or allegedly taken away by some admirer<sup>1</sup> or he was not well, or on another occasion, the trusted messenger (gāsīd) was not available.<sup>2</sup>

It seems that Bālkrishan Brahman spent the last years of his life in his native place Hisṣār.<sup>3</sup> from where he despatched the Wagāya of Chakla Hisṣār<sup>4</sup> and sent an arzdāsht to a noble close to the Emperor.

During these days Bālkrishan fell ill and was confined to bed for three months and could not even move.<sup>5</sup> In one of his letters he informs us that he was suffering from high fever and Phlegm<sup>6</sup>. A few of his friends and relatives did give him courtesy call<sup>7</sup> and even sent him

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1. op. cit. f. 88 (b).

2. Ibid. f. 72 (a).

3. Ibid. ff. 93(b)-94(a).

4. Ibid. 101 (a). He was probably still the Faujdār and Amīn of Chakla Hisṣār, as cited above f. 62 (b).

5. Ibid ff. 85 (a)-86(b).

6. Ibid. ff. 124 (b)-125(a).

7. See ff. 123 (a)-123(b), 124(a), 124(b) etc.

sweets<sup>1</sup> but he was in such a condition that he could not even come out to meet them. But even in this situation Bālkrishan did not leave his hobby of writing letters.

By now he appears a lonely and dejected man. His friends and relatives like Khwāja Lakhmi Das had left him.<sup>2</sup> Even his son, Uday Rām, the munshī had stopped communicating with him.<sup>3</sup> While he complains against all close ones not caring for him. It is only Chandrabhān, a trusted friend and perhaps a relation, who, Bālkrishan says is the only <sup>one</sup> caring for him.

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1. Ibid. ff. 124(a)-(b).

2. Ibid. ff. 27(a)-(b).

3. Ibid. f. 94(a).

Chapter V

Isardas Nagar



Mehta Īsardās Chuni<sup>1</sup>, the author of Futūhāt-i Ālamgīrī, was a contemporary of Aurangzeb. A native of Pāk Pattan (which he calls Taiyabah Pattan), and popularly known as Īsardās Nāgar, he belonged to the respectable family of Nāgar Brahmans of Gujrat.<sup>2</sup> During the first stage of his youth, he joined the service of Qāzi-ul-Quzzāt Shaikh-ul Islām.<sup>3</sup> and remained attached to him till the age of thirty, when the Shaikh for pilgrimage at Mecca.<sup>4</sup> Now Īsardās joined

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1. Futūhāt-i Ālamgīrī, B.M. MS, add. 23884 (Rotograph in Research Library, Department of History AMU), f.168(b). Dr J.S. Bird, in History of Gujrat: its Politics & statistical History, 1980, p.89, calls him 'Shridas' where as Tasneem Ahmad in "Ishwardas: a hindu chroniclar of Aurangzeb's reign" Islamic Culture, Vol. XLIX, no. 4, Oct. 1975, pp. 223-31 and in published text of Futūhāt-i Ālamgīrī, tr. & ed. by him, in 1978 tends to call him Ishwardās. See also Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Studies in Aurangzeb's reign, Calcutta, 1933, pp. 262-67. B.M.MS. add. 23884, however clearly spells the name Īsardas.

2. B.M.MS. add. 23884, f. 6(a) & f. 168(b).

3. Shaikhul Islām, the son of Qāzi 'Abdul Wahāb Qāzi-ul Quzzāt, was the Qāzi of Delhi. See Māāsir-i Ālamgīrī, Sāqi Mustāid Khān, Karachi, 1962, p. 148. B.M.MS. op. cit., f. 6(a).

4. Ibid. ff. 166(b)-167(a). Sāqi Mustāid Khān, op. cit., pp. 239 & 394, tells us that Shaikhul Islām resigned from his post in 1682-83 and set out for pilgrimage to Mecca in December 1684. If one works back from this date, Īsardās Nāgar's year of birth comes to be 1654. Tasneem Ahmad in his article in Islamic Culture, op.cit. works out the same date by presuming that Īsardās joined the Qāzi at the age of 14 years. Sir Jadunath Sarkar's calculations come to 1655. see Sarkar, op. cit. p. 263.

the service of Shujāāt Khān<sup>1</sup>, the Nāzim of Ahmadabad, who appointed him Amīn and Shiqdār of the Mahāls of pargana Jodhpur, which had come under Imperial control after the Rajput Rebellion. Īsardās claims to have established cordial relations with the Rajputs.<sup>2</sup> In his capacity as Amīn and Shiqdār of the Mahāls of pargana Jodhpur, Īsardās Nāgar, seems to have earned Shujāāt Khān's confidence to the point that he began to act as an intermediary between his mentor Shujāāt Khān, and the Rathore Chief Durgadās who had been fighting tenaciously against the Imperial forces.

In 1698, when Durgadās was worn out by recurring wars with the Mughals and decided to submit to the authority of the Emperor, he wrote a letter to Īsardār Nāgar stating that if Shujāāt Khān gave him a safe passage and spared his home from harm, he would send Sultān Buland Akhtar and princess Saif-un-nisa Begum, the son and daughter of Prince Muḥammad Akbar, to the Royal Court.<sup>3</sup> On getting the Emperor's approval, Īsardās was ordered by Shujāāt Khān to go to meet Durgadās Rathore. Īsardās says that he persuaded

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1. His real name was Muḥammad Beg, and he was a Turkomān. He was in the service of Prince Murād Bakhsh during the latter's Subedārī of Gujrat. Aurangzeb initially conferred upon him the title of Kārtalab Khān. Later he obtained the title of Shujāāt Khān and was appointed the Governor of Gujrat in 1687-88. See Māāsir-i 'Ālamgīrī, op. cit., p.441, and Māāsir-ul Umara, Shah Nawaz Khan, ed. Molvi Ashraf Ali, Calcutta, 1891, Vol. II, p.706. Shujāāt Khan was Subedār of Gujrat from 1684 to 1701.

2. B.M.MS, op. cit., f. 167(a).

Durgadās in his wise and good resolution to hand over the Prince and the Princess to Aurangzeb. Soon Īsardās safely conducted Princess Saifun Nisān to Shujāat Khān.<sup>1</sup> As an appreciation for this well-conducted job, the Khān conferred upon him a robe of honour (khilāt), a horse, and an inām of Rs. 3,000 in cash.<sup>2</sup> From there, on the orders of Shujāat Khān and the wishes of <sup>the</sup> Princess, Īsardās Nāgar accompanied her to the Royal Court.<sup>3</sup>

When the Emperor was convinced of the good conduct of Durgadās Rāthore, he ordered Īsardās Nāgar to present himself in the private chamber, and asked him regarding the wishes of the Rathore Chieftain. Thus Īsardār says, he pleaded successfully with the Emperor for the grant of a mansab and a cash assistance (Musā'ida) for Durgadās Rāthore.<sup>4</sup> Aurangzeb then granted Īsardās Nāgar a mansab of 200 zat, and

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f.n. from prev. page

3. Ibid, ff. 166(6)-167(a). When after his rebellion in 1681, prince Akbar had fled to the Maratha Court, and then to Persia, he had left his son and daughter in the hands of Rajputs, and they were tenderly brought up by Durgadās Rathore.

1. Ibid. f. 167(a). See also Mīrāt-i Ahmadi, 'Ali Mohd. Khān, ed. Syed Nawab Ali, Baroda, 1927-8 p. 333.

2. B.M. MS, op. cit, f. 167(a).

3. Ibid, ff. 167(a)-(b).

4. Ibid, f. 167(b).

after investing him with a Khil'at asked him to perform the duty of bringing Sultān Buland Akhtar and Durgadās Rathōre to the Royal presence.<sup>1</sup>

When Īsardās Nāgar returned to Ahmadabad, Shujāat Khān exalted him with the grant of a Khil'at and inām and sent him to Sultān Buland Akhtar and Durgadās Rāthore.<sup>2</sup> Īsardās Nāgar says that he repeatedly visited Durgadās and took solemn oaths on behalf of the Khān and re-assured his mind with promises.<sup>3</sup> Soon the two were brought before Shujāat Khān at Ahmadabad by Īsardās.

After a brief halt at that place, the Prince and Durgadās were conducted by Īsardās to Surat, where many officers like Saiyid Hasan 'Ali Khān, Shāh Beg and others deputed by the Emperor, welcomed the party. On the conclusion of this mission, the Emperor again bestowed upon Īsardās Nāgar a Khil'at and increased his mansab by 50 zat and 10 sawār (enhancing his rank to 250 zāt). He was also granted a jāgīr at Merta and was stationed at Ahmadabad.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Ibid. f. 167 (b)

2. Ibid. ff. 167(b)-168(a).

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. f. 168(b).

Apart from this, no mention is made by Īsardās Nāgar as to his other administrative positions or the rank held. His account stops in the year 1698 when presumably he was 44 years old.<sup>1</sup>

Though born a Hindu and brought up in a traditional family of orthodox Nāgar Brahmans, Īsardās was a man free from religious fanaticism. Like any devout Muslim, he starts his book with the name of Allāh and his Prophet. As he came in contact with Shaikh-ul Islām, quite early in age, and must have been impressed by his ideology and way of thinking, Īsardās developed great regard and tolerance for Islam. So much so that differences of sects and castes disappeared from his vision. At one place he says:

"The differences of religions and sects, which in reality affirm the being of God, should not be seen in sectarian and communal light."<sup>2</sup>

Thus while writing about the imposition of jizya, Īsardās Nāgar takes almost an orthodox Muslim position.

He observes:

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1. Sir Jadunath Sarkar (op. cit. pp. 263 & 266) holds that the book was completed in 1730, when Isardas was 76 years old. He bases this observation on a colophon provided at the end of the MS which reads: "...The date of the preparation of the manuscript for Lāla khushhāl is 21st Rabi I, 1143/17th February 23rd Sept. 1730...". But this appears to be the date when a copy was transcribed for Lala Khushhal, and not the date of its compilation. Most probably Isardas compiled his book in 1699-1700. See also Futūhāt-i 'Ālamgīrī, tr. & ed. Tasneem Ahmad op.cit., p. xviii.

Ibid, ff. 4(b)-5(a).

"The theologians and the 'Ulemā, keeping an eye on the religiosity of the Emperor, submitted that according to the Shari'at, the jizya should be collected from the zimmīs. The Emperor, recognising it as one of his duties, appointed Ināyat Ullāh Khān to supervise the collection of jizya. He also ordered that the servants of the state should be exempted from it. With this exception, it was to be collected from the zimmīs, according to the strict rule of the Shari'at .....(it) was not to be levied from the blind, lame and the indigent".<sup>1</sup>

Nowhere in this passage does he show any kind of hostility towards the religious policy of Aurangzeb nor does he hint at any resentment by the Hindus.

Like-wise his statements about the destruction of the temples of Mathura and Udaipur do not show the Emperor's hostility and fanaticism towards Hinduism. He treats these incidents as law and order problems. "The state of affairs", he writes, necessitated the demolition of a Mathura temple and construction of a mosque on that site.<sup>2</sup> Similarly he writes very casually of the destruction of the temples at Udaipur.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Ibid, ff. 74(a)-(b).

2. Ibid, ff. 52(a)-(b).

3. Ibid. f. 78 (b).

On the other hand, Īsardās Nāgar seems to have resented Aurangzeb's action in Bijapur, wherein the Emperor ordered the destruction of rare and unique paintings in the Bijapur Palace.<sup>1</sup> Similarly he does not seem to appreciate Aurangzeb's frequent visits to the sepulchres of the saints of Gulbarga.<sup>2</sup> These views of Īsardās certainly give credit to his honest and strongly rooted religious and political convictions.

Īsardās does not discuss much about the administration nor does he mention any Pargana and Sarkār officials. Neither does he throw any light on his family members or their professions and fortunes.

As far as his literary style of writing is concerned, Isardas uses verbose terms which are high in praise or abuse. Quite frequently in his book he has made use of Hindi words and Persians verses making his work more lucid and interesting. But the most important thing describable in his writing is the absence of any intellectual bias or distorted facts.

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1. See ff. 100 (b) - 102(a).

2. Ibid. ff. 108(b) - 109(a).

Chapter VI

Bhimsen



Bhīmsen is the author of the Nuskha-i Dilkusha a well known chronicle of the Mughal Empire, whose account provides us with a very important source of information in the Deccan during 'Aurangzeb's reign. The account is partly in the form of personal memoirs and provides us with interesting information about Bhīmsen himself and his relations, belonging to a family of medium and low-ranking Mughal bureaucrats.<sup>1</sup>

Bhīmsen's family was from Saksēna sept of the Kāyastha caste and his own real name appears to be Lāla Kalyān.<sup>2</sup> His grandfather, Jomal<sup>3</sup> probably held some official position of which unfortunately we are not informed.<sup>4</sup>

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1. For the details of Bhīmsen's family see Jadunath Sarkar, "A great Hindu-Memoir writer", Studies in Aurangzeb's reign, Calcutta, 1933, pp. 251-61; also Majīda Khan, "A Kayastha family of Mughal Officials in the Reign of Aurangzeb" Aligarh Proceedings of IHC (Cyclostyled), Bombay session, 1980.
  2. Nuskha-i Dilkusha, MS, BM, OR, 23 (Rotograph in Department of History, AMU) f. 174 (a).
  3. Sarkar, op. cit., reads the name as Jiv Mal or Jinmal.
  4. The only specific reference to Jomal, made by Bhīmsen is that he died in the 4th RY of Aurangzeb, i.e. 1661-62., soon after the death of his son Bhūkandās. See Nuskha-i Dilkusha, f. 25(a).

The father, Raghunandan Dās, had four brothers, of whom Bhūkandās (Bhagwāndās ?) entitled Diānat Rāi was the eldest. Bhīmsen's other paternal uncles were Shyām Dās, Gokul Dās (both elder to his father) and a younger brother Dharam Dās.

Bhīmsen's eldest uncle, Bhūkandās, appears to have been the most successful member of his family. At a time when Aurangzeb as Prince held the Sūba Deccan under his charge, Bhūkandas was elevated to the respectable posts of the Mushrif of the Topkhāna (artillery) and Peshdast (Clerk) of the Dīwān of Deccan Provinces, by orders of the Emperor (Shāhjahān). He came with Prince Aurangzeb to the Deccan and built an imposing Havēli some where in between Chhelipura and Mandwidāl (near the fort of Deogīr alias Daulatābād).<sup>1</sup> Bhīmsen says that his uncle Bhūkandās was "quite intimate and friendly with the Royal Authority".<sup>2</sup>

When Multafit khān, the dīwān, was killed at the battle of Dharmat, the same post was conferred upon Bhūkandas, who was given the title of Diānat Rāi. His mansab was also considerably enhanced.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Ibid, f. 9 (a).

2. Ibid, f. 13 (b).

3. Ibid, f. 14 (b).

With the accession of Aurangzeb to the throne, Bhūkandās was ordered to attend court<sup>1</sup> and soon was given the title of Rājā.<sup>2</sup> Bhīmsen says that Bhūkandas had so much influence at this time, that he became instrumental in getting Todarmal, the Diwān of Murād Baksh, the post of Bayūtāt in the Deccan, and an increase in the rank.<sup>3</sup>

Bhūkandās died suddenly in 1661-62 (4th Regnal year of Aurangzeb) in Delhi.<sup>4</sup> His death gave such a shock to the family that the patriarch, Jomal, and Jogrāj, the elder son of Bhūkandas too expired soon after.<sup>5</sup> On his father's death Jogrāj had been exalted in mansab and appointed Mushrif in the department of Filkhāna.<sup>6</sup>

In 1661-62 (4th RY), following the death of Jogrāj, Sukhrāj, the second son of Bhūkandas, was made Mushrif of Ābdār Khāna and Tambul Khāna and was granted a mansab.<sup>7</sup>

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1. Ibid, f. 16 (b).

2. Ibid, f. 20 (a).

3. Ibid,

4. Ibid. f. 24 (b).

5. Ibid. ff. 24(b)-25(a).

6. Ibid. f. 24 (b).

7. Ibid. f. 25 (a).

He lived till 1695-96 (ie the 39th RY), when he died of excessive drinking.<sup>1</sup> One year later, i.e. in 1696-97, his only son Dayal Das too died.<sup>2</sup>

Bhīmsen's second uncle was Gokuldās. He was the Gumāshta (agent) in the Topkhāna of Maharāja Jaswant Singh at Poona.<sup>3</sup> He died at 'Aurangābād in 1671.<sup>4</sup>

The third son of Jomal was Shyām Dās, who in 1659-60 (ie 2nd RY) was given the post of peshdast-i Bakhshī of sūba Deccan.<sup>5</sup> In 1681-82 ie. the 25th RY of 'Aurangzeb, he fell ill and despite every treatment, failed to respond.<sup>6</sup> Eventually, after being bedridden for a few months, he expired at 'Aurangabad.<sup>7</sup> The post of peshdast-i Bakhshi of Sūba Deccan was now handed over to the only son of the deceased, Lāla Har Rāi.<sup>8</sup> At the time of his death, sometime in 1701-2 (45th RY), Har Rāi held the office of Mushrif-i Topkhāna in the Deccan.<sup>9</sup> His post and mansab were now

1. Ibid. f. 121 (b).

2. Ibid. f. 99 (a).

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. f. 52 (b).

5. Ibid. ff. 21 (a) - (b).

6. Ibid. f. 83(a).

7. Ibid. f. 84 (a).

8. Ibid. f. 83 (a).

9. Ibid. f. 143 (a).

conferred upon his grandson whose name is not mentioned.<sup>1</sup> Har Rāi's son Makārand Rāo was born in the 5th RY of Aurangzeb, i.e. 1662-3, but nothing is known about his rank or position.<sup>2</sup> Deepak Rāi is mentioned as the son of Makārand, whose son Janūn (Jīwan ?) Rāi was born in the 48th RY i.e. 1704.<sup>3</sup>

Dharamdās, the third uncle of Bhīmsen, was the youngest son of Jomāl. Initially he was attached to some Kārkhāna (workshop) in Burhānpūr. In 1661-62, says Bhīmsen, he was elevated to the office of Mustaufi (accountant) of Sūba Khāndesh.<sup>4</sup> His other relatives were also holding some official positions.

Bhīmsen it appears had two younger brothers, viz. Sītaldās and Hamīr Sen.

In 1670 (13th RY), Raghunandan Dās had sent Sītaldās to the court (Delhi) along with Ghiyāsuddīn khān, the Bakhshī of the Deccan.<sup>5</sup> Soon afterwards when the khān was appointed mutasaddi of the port of Surat, Sītaldās went along with him and certain jobs were assigned to him.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Ibid. f. 143(a)

2. Ibid. f. 25(a).

3. Ibid. f. 155(a).

4. Ibid. f. 24(b).

5. Ibid. f. 44(a).

6. Ibid. f. 45(a).

Two years later, in 1672, he returned to Aurangabad where he fell ill and died.<sup>1</sup> He left behind him a son named Bīr Jhūkan (Brij Bhūshan?) who was born in 1667 and was adopted by Bhīmsen.<sup>2</sup>

As for Hamīr Sen, the youngest brother of Bhīmsen, though his exact post is not mentioned, we do know that in 1673 (16th RY) the Subedar of Deccan Malik Husain Koka Bahādur Khān Zafar Jung, sent him, along with Rustam Beg, to the various "subāhs" of the Deccan to enquire into matters relating to the affairs of the qiledārs and faujdārs of that area.<sup>3</sup> In 1679, Hamīrsen went to the court along with Aurangzeb's well-known Rajput noble Dalpat Rāi Bundela.<sup>4</sup> In 1681-82 he is mentioned at Junnar where he went along with Dalpat Rāi.<sup>5</sup> Two years later, i.e. in 1684-85 (28th RY) at the time of the conquest of the fort of Bijapur he acted as the nāib of Bhīmsen.<sup>6</sup> In the 33 RY i.e. 1689-90, Hamīr sen was given a mansab and some office.<sup>7</sup> His son, Himmat Rāi was born in 1695-96 (39th RY), but nothing regarding his career is known.<sup>8</sup>

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1. Ibid. f. 60(a).

2. Ibid. f. 37(a). For details regarding him see Infra.

3. Ibid. f. 62 (a).

4. Ibid. f. 78 (b).

5. Ibid. f. 83 (a).

6. Ibid. f. 91 (a).

7. Ibid. f. 101 (b).

8. Ibid. f. 121 (a).

Bhīmsen's family originally belonged to Etāwa.<sup>1</sup> At Agra, too they had some relatives for Bhīmsen mentions a house of his late uncle Bhūkandās Diānat Rāi at that place.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps it was Jomal, the grand father, who had migrated from that place in the North (now in Uttar Pradesh) to the Deccan, and settled in Burhānpur, the Capital of khāndesh, situated on the Tapti. It was here in Samvat 1705, (1649 A.D.), that Bhīmsen was born.<sup>3</sup>

In 1657, when Bhūkandās Diānat Rāi had joined the army of Prince 'Aurangzeb and the battle of Dharmat was imminent, Bhīmsen's father, on the orders of Muḥammad Tāhir alias Wazīr Khān, was despatched to bring the news regarding the result of the battle.<sup>4</sup> The job was accomplished by Raghunandan Dās and the news of the victory was conveyed by him to the Khān even before the official news could reach there.<sup>5</sup> What was the actual post of Raghunandan Dās at this time, we do not know. But upon the transfer of Diānat Rāi<sup>6</sup>, he was posted as the Mushrif-i Topkhāna at 'Aurangabad, under Prince Muḥammad Muazzam.<sup>7</sup> After sometime, he called

1. Ibid. f. 126(b).

2. Ibid. f. 126(a).

3. Ibid. f. 7 (b).

4. Ibid. f. 15(a).

5. Ibid.

6. See Supra

7. Ibid. f. 15(a).

his family from Burhānpūr. Thus, at the age of eight, says Bhīmsen, he left Burhanpur and arrived at Aurangabad.<sup>1</sup> In the 2nd RY (1659), when Prince Muazzam was recalled to the court, Raghunandan Dās was holding a Mansab of 150/10 and "led a very decent life with all the suitable luxury and prosperity, which none of the major nobles could have".<sup>2</sup>

It was during this tenure as the Mushrif of the Topkhāna that Raghunandan Dās came into contact with Saiyid Ahmad alias Amānat Khān, the Dīwān, who developed a great intimacy with the former.<sup>3</sup> Thus in 1660-61 (3rd RY) Raghunandan Dās alongwith Bhīmsen accompanied Amānat Khān to Nāsik and Trimbak for a pilgrimage.<sup>4</sup> They were accompanied by a large number of people and a huge force of soldiers and horsemen.

After fulfilling the religious formalities, Bhīmsen along with his father headed towards Pravara Sangam<sup>5</sup>, to have a dip in the sacred water.<sup>6</sup> A lot of money, says Bhimsen, was spent on these trips.

Soon afterwards, when royal orders were issued to mobilize a force of 10,000 infantry cavalry and artillery,

1. Ibid. f. 15 (b).

2. Ibid. f.21 (a).

3. Ibid. f. 21 (b).

4. Ibid. f. 21 (b)-22(b).

5. The confluence of pravara and Godavari at Toka in Ahmadanagar District.

6. Dilkusha, f. 23 (a).



in order to accompany the forces of Amīrul Umara Shāista Khān, Raghunandan Dās was asked to organise the required force from the Deccan.<sup>1</sup> Raghunandan Dās carried out his duties with such honesty and sincerety, that, says Bhīmsen, the officers of Sūba Deccan were pleased with him.<sup>2</sup>

In 1661-62 (4th RY) Raghunandan Dās got a house constructed with a beautiful garden laid at Aurangabad. He also caused the construction of a canal for the people of that city.<sup>3</sup> Bhīmsen as a child used to pass his time in this garden playing or hunting. Thus, says Bhīmsen, he spent seven years, i.e. <sup>completed</sup> 15 years of his life at Aurangabad.<sup>4</sup> It was here that Bhīmsen received his early education under the care of his father and other elderly people.<sup>5</sup> He gained the mastery over the art of archery and fighting under the guidance of Mīr 'Abdul Mābūd, the Dārogha-i Topkhāna and a friend of his father.<sup>6</sup>

In 1666-67 (9th RY) 'Abdul Mābūd was instrumental in getting Bhīmsen some kind <sup>of</sup> job in the army.<sup>7</sup> By this time

1. Ibid. f. 23 (a).

2. Ibid. f. 24 (b).

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. f. 38 (a).

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid. f. 32 (a).

Bhimsen appears to have already married — but with no off spring. For in this year, when Sītaldās's son, Bīr Jhūkan, was born, Bhīmsen adopted him as his son and celebrated the occasion with much gusto. He writes:

"I held a big feast which lasted for forty days. I invited my relatives and friends in these celebrations, and the preparations, including the dancing girls of every kind, were available to the satisfaction of one and all. A huge amount of money was spent on this occasion and my father did not object on the big expenditure that I had incurred....."<sup>1</sup>

The next year i.e. 1668-69 (11th RY) Bhīmsen's father took retirement from active service. Bhīmsen, now was appointed in the service of Mirza Rājā Jai Singh, Deputy Governor of the Deccan at Burhanpur to look after the stores and wealth of the jāgīr.<sup>2</sup> Within a short time, says Bhīmsen, the Raja became very happy with his service and increased his favours.<sup>3</sup> Apart from this, the entire responsibility pertaining to the Topkhāna also devolved on him, due to his fathers retirement from active work. But Bhīmsen's immature age hindered him from realizing the value of his position and rank vis-a-vis the paucity

1. Ibid. f. 37 (a).

2. Ibid. f. 38 (a).

3. Ibid. f. 38 (b).

of jobs. He utilized the money of his father in holding feasts and celebrations. He says:

"And not a single day passed when such celebrations were not held".<sup>1</sup>

Thus, in short, for seven years, from 4th RY to the 11th RY, Bhīmsen spent his life in meeting, contacting, and, serving people of prestige. Though responsibilities were entrusted to him, on no single occasion, he says, he was put to hardship.<sup>2</sup>

But with the retirement of his father, hardships began to come his way. Bhīmsen's erratic and squandering behaviour forced Raghunandan Dās to ask him to resign.<sup>3</sup> Now Bhīmsen approached Bangālidaś, the scribe of Prince Muḥammad Muazzam, for a job. But the attempt failed. He turned for help to Maharaja Jaswant Singh who recommended him to Ghiyāsuddīn Khān but to no avail.<sup>4</sup> But on the recommendation of the Mīr 'Abdul Mabūd, the Bakhshī and Wāqīā Nawīs of Dāūd Khān's force, Maharaja Jaswant Singh appointed him Mushrif of Dāgh-o Tasīha in the Deccan.<sup>5</sup> A mansab was also conferred upon him.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Ibid. f. 38 (b).

2. Ibid. f. 39 (a).

3. Ibid. f. 39 (a).

4. Ibid. f. 39 (b).

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid. f. 40 (a).

In 1670 (13th RY) when Dāūd Khān was despatched against Shivaji, Bhīmsen was made the Peshdast-i Bakhshī and the charge of Waqā'i (news reports) was also entrusted to him.<sup>1</sup> He appointed same harkārās (news reporters) who were so efficient that they used to bring news before the harkārās of Dāūd Khān.<sup>2</sup> At this juncture, says Bhīmsen, he and Mīr 'Abdul Mābūd were the only Imperial Officers in the force of Dāūd Khān. Thus when the Mīr was hurt, and was not in a position to look after his office, he handed over the official seal to Bhīmsen.<sup>3</sup> At this juncture, the situation was getting very difficult due to the non-payment of the salary in the absence of an accountant who could distribute it. With the Bakhshī of the forces injured, Dāūd Khān had to ask Bhīmsen, the peshdast to the Bakhshī, to disburse the salaries which the Khān said was meant for "the betterment of the condition of the nobles and to pay the salary of the mansabdārs and other officials".<sup>4</sup> But Bhīmsen had reservations in undertaking this job, for, he complained, scribes were needed to maintain the records, and they were not available. On this Dāūd Khān gave him a written declaration, duly signed, that Bhīmsen would not be held responsible by the department and no explanations

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1. Ibid. f. 41 (b).

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. f. 43 (a).

4. Ibid. f. 43 (b).

would be asked from him.<sup>1</sup> Thus the salaries were calculated and payments were made by Bhīmsen.<sup>2</sup> After some time when the accountants of the army arrived and demanded the departmental documents from Bhīmsen, Dāūd Khān, as per commitment, satisfied them.<sup>3</sup> At this point of time Mīr 'Abdul Mābūd was recalled to 'Aurangabad and Khwāja Muhammad Saiyid Naqshbandi replaced him as the bakshi. Relations between him and Bhīmsen became strained, whereupon Dāūd Khān admonished the Khwāja for this and degraded his rank.<sup>4</sup>

In December 1670, at a time when the Marathas had taken the road to Baglāna, and after plundering 'Aurang-gad alias Mulher<sup>5</sup>, had besieged Sultāngad alias Salher<sup>6</sup>, Bhīmsen along with Dāūd Khān decided to move towards Salher. Bhīmsen was left behind as he was late in mounting. At last he reached a ruined village situated between the forts of Mulher and Salher. Soon he was confronted by the army of the Marathas. He was saved from an imminent death by an acquaintance of his father, Nūr Khān (in the Maratha force).<sup>7</sup>

1. Ibid. f. 43(b)

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. f. 44 (a).

5. A fort in Nasik district, about 40 miles N.W. of Malegaon.

6. In District Nasik

7. Dilkusha, f. 48 (b).

Nūr Khān guided him to the Mughal army, and at the latter's persuasion accompanied him unarmed to the Mughal Camp, where he was entertained by the obviously thankful Bhīmsen.<sup>1</sup> Bhīmsen then proceed<sup>ed</sup> with the army towards Baglāna and was present in the battle near the fort of Hatgarh near Mulher.<sup>2</sup>

In January 1671, Bhīmsen was present at the siege of the Fort of Āhiwant<sup>3</sup> and its capture. At the time of the siege, he met the astrologer of Dāūd Khān and enquired about the result of the siege.<sup>4</sup> The astrologer, says Bhīmsen, after making diagrams predicted that the fort would be captured within six days. Surprisingly enough, says Bhīmsen, the same thing happened.<sup>5</sup>

That very month, Dāūd Khān was recalled to the Court and Mahābat Khān was sent to replace him. At the time of his departure, Dāūd Khān insisted upon Bhīmsen accompanying him and promised him a promotion upon arrival at the court. Bhīmsen declined the offer as, he says, he had dependants to look after. Thus he was forced by circumstances to leave the service of Dāūd Khān and remain in the army of Mahābat Khān.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Ibid. f. 49 (a).

2. Ibid. f. 49 (a).

3. In the Chandore range, about 15 m. N. of Dindori, in Nasik District.

4. Dilkusha, f. 50 (a).

5. Ibid. ff. 50 (a)-(b).

6. Ibid. f. 50 (b).

Within a month or so Mahābat Khān was recalled to the court. Now Maharaja Jaswant Singh and Prince Muazzam recommended the name of Bhīmsen for the post of Mushrif in the department of Dāgh-wa-Tasīha.<sup>1</sup> This was inspite of the fact, says Bhīmsen, that according to the practice in those days the names of Hindus were never recommended for such posts.<sup>2</sup> His name met with the Emperor's approval, and Gokuldās, his uncle, had the documents together with the seal of the Bakhshi, sent to Bhīmsen.<sup>3</sup>

Yet despite this, Brindāban, the son of Bahārāmal Bārha got his son appointed to this post.<sup>4</sup> Bhīmsen was advised to be patient. But as the days kept on passing and his poverty increasing due to joblessness, many of the old servants, in his private service became restless. He now decided to go to Gujrat with his servants and seek service under Jaswant Singh. But his friends advised him against this step.<sup>5</sup> Rāi Makārand, a high ranking noble of Aurangzeb, and Bhīmsen's close acquaintance, gave the latter some money to meet his expenses and promised to

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1. Ibid. f. 50 (b)

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. f. 51 (a).

5. Ibid.

meet the cost of maintenance of his establishment.<sup>1</sup>

Bhīmsen heeded this advice and stayed back. After a few months Rāi Makārand requested Bahādur Khān Kokaltāsh, who was appointed to the Deccan on the recall of Mahābat Khān, to appoint Bhīmsen as the Mushrif.<sup>2</sup> But the Khān overlooked the request, as, says Bhīmsen, a person had offered a large sum to the Khān for the same job.<sup>3</sup> The Dārogha of the Dāgh-wa-Tasīha department, Mīr Muhammad Razā also made efforts to get this job for Bhīmsen, but to no avail.<sup>4</sup> It was only with the coming of Bāgi Khān to the Deccan as the Bakhshi, that Bhīmsen could be appointed. Bāgi Khān had been an old acquaintance. On his arrival he recommended Bhīmsen's case to Bahādur Khān Kokaltāsh, who at last gave his approval. The very next day the appointment to the post of Mushrafi-i-Dāgh-wa-Tasīha, was given to Bhīmsen. Immediately Bhīmsen gave the dastak of the appointment to Rāi Makārand and started work.<sup>5</sup>

Soon after, on the recommendations of Ganga Rām Nāgar, a priest in the service of Rāi Makārand, Bhīmsen was elevated to the rank of Dīwān in the department of Dāgh-wa-tasīha.<sup>6</sup>

1. Ibid. f. 51 (b).

2. Ibid. f. 52 (a).

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. f. 52 (a).

5. Ibid. f. 52 (b).

6. Ibid.



In 1672, during Bahādur Khān's campaigns in the vicinity of the fort of Rāmgīr<sup>1</sup>, Bhīmsen was introduced to Subhkarān Bundelā, the father of Dalpat Bundelā, by Rāi Makārand.<sup>2</sup> Subhkarān was acquainted with Bhīmsen's father and uncle Diānat Rāi and so received him warmly and addressed him as "nephew".<sup>3</sup> From that day Bhīmsen came into contact with Subhkarān's son, Rao Dalpat Bundela, the Raja of Datia.<sup>4</sup>

While returning to the camp of Bahādur Khān, after this chance meeting, Bhīmsen lost his way in the jungles around Rāmgīr where after an encounter with a group of well-armed vagabonds, he had to seek the help of a Durwesh to reach his camp.<sup>5</sup> This seems to have been an exciting piece of adventure.

On the same journey at Bakapur Ghāt, 3 kurohs from that Aurangabad, the Bundela camp was attacked by seven to eight hundred Maratha horsemen. But the 10,000 strong cavalry under Subhkarān Bundela was able to repel them.<sup>6</sup> Shortly afterward, Bhīmsen reached Aurangabad and met his father.<sup>7</sup>

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1. In Karim Nagar District, AP., 18°35'N, 79°35'E.

2. Dilkusha, f. 55 (b).

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid. ff. 56(a)-57(a).

6. Ibid. f. 57 (b).

7. Ibid. f. 58 (a).

It was in March 1672 that Bhīmsen's post of Diwān was confirmed and he was made permanent. His affluence at this time can be gauged from the way he lavishly celebrated Holi. He writes:

"(I)... had collected sufficient money to indulge in luxuries. I treated both friends and strangers very kindly and showed them favours. The way I used to show my benevolence was extra-ordinary and superior to that of the high class nobles.<sup>1</sup>

His happiness and easy life was, however, marred in this very year, when his younger brother Sitaldas and father Raghunandān Dās died.<sup>2</sup>

In 1673 further responsibilities devolved upon Bhīmsen, Mīr Muhammad Bāqar, the Waqīā Nigār delegated his duties as the Dārogha-i Dāgh-wa Tasiha to him.<sup>3</sup>

The comfortable position which Bhīmsen enjoyed in this period can be discerned from the fact that in 1674 (17th RY) while on a campaign against the Marathas in the vicinity of Aurangabad, Bhīmsen says that apart from Khān Jahān Malik Husain Koka and Qutbuddin Khān, he was the only one enjoying the luxury of a personal tent, in which

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1. Ibid. f. 59 (a).

2. Ibid. ff. 60 (a)-(b).

3. Ibid. f. 62 (a).

he says, many of the nobles stayed.<sup>1</sup>

In 1676 (19th RY) we find him at the fort of Parendā, from where after taking leave he proceed<sup>ed</sup> to Aurangabad to celebrate the marriage of his adopted son Brij Bhūshan.<sup>2</sup>

Now Bhīmsen headed towards Parner where he joined Dilir Khān who had been deputed to suppress the Marathas. Thus he was present in the army which set out in late 1676 to Bidar to deal with the Maratha raids in that region.<sup>3</sup>

In 1677 (20th RY) when Asad Khān was appointed Subadār of the Deccan, the Afghāns of that region were causing much turbulence due to which the Emperor, says Bhīmsen, had become quite alarmed. In this situation many transfers were effected. Bhīmsen too was transferred, but, he says, by influence of Hamīr Sen, his brother, his transfer was abrogated.<sup>4</sup> Bhīmsen thus reinstated now went to Bahādurgarh where Dilir Khān was stationed.<sup>5</sup> He was employed to lure the nobles and soldiers of Bijapur and Hyderabad to the Mughal Camp. Bhīmsen says:

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1. Ibid. f. 65 (b).

2. Ibid. f. 76 (b).

3. Ibid. ff. 72 (a)-(b).

4. Ibid. f. 73 (a).

5. Ibid.

"In the light of the (Imperial) order (to lure the nobles), I and 'Abdul Zafar called the Dakhanis of Bijapur and Hyderabad and sought suitable jobs for them. Whoever got his horses checked at the brand, gained the daily allowance of the same too".<sup>1</sup>

Thus, he claims, 20,000 horsemen from Bijapur and Golconda joined the Mughals. They were paid salaries on the appointment and many among them were recommended for majesty's favour, titles and other privileges.<sup>2</sup>

After accomplishing his job, Bhīmsen returned to Aurangabad sometime in 1678 (21 RY).<sup>3</sup> At this time, Aurangabad was passing through a critical phase with the Marathas knocking at its doors and frequently plundering it.<sup>4</sup> Still he found time to repair his old haveli and build a new one.<sup>5</sup> For quite a few months he spent his time enjoying himself in his house and entertaining Dalpat Rao who had come there in the company of Dilāwar Khān.<sup>6</sup>

In 1680-81 (24th RY) when the Emperor himself went to the Deccan, Bhīmsen was at Nāsik.<sup>7</sup> In 1682-83

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1. Ibid. f. 73 (a).

2. Ibid. f. 73 (b).

3. Ibid. f. 77 (a).

4. Ibid. ff. 77 (b)-78(a).

5. Ibid. f. 78 (a).

6. Ibid. f. 81 (a).

7. Ibid. f. 85 (a)

(26th RY) he was made the Mushrif in the army of Prince Muḥammad Muazzam.<sup>1</sup>

After visiting Hyderabad in 1683-84 (27 RY) Bhīmsen proceeded to Naldurg, which he says was within his tāluqa in addition to that of Parinda".<sup>2</sup> (ie. they were in his jāgīr). Influx of the nobles and soldiers was taking its toll on the performance of his duties at Naldurg, as it was, he says, a costly proposition.<sup>3</sup> A huge sum was required which was not forthcoming. The situation, says Bhīmsen, was far beyond his control and there was no other way for him but "to take the corner of isolation and deprivation".<sup>4</sup> Bhīmsen decided not to air his anxieties and remain satisfied with the situation as it was.<sup>5</sup>

That very year Bhīmsen visited Hyderabad again, and through the agency of Muḥammad Murād Khān, who held the office of Hājib (chamberlain) of Hyderabad, was able to meet Qutbul Mulk Abūl Hasan alias Tānā Shāh who, he says, showed a great sense of kindness towards him, and made him sit at the back of his pillowed seat and chatted with him.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Ibid. f. 85 (a).

2. Ibid. f. 88 (b).

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid. f. 89 (a).

6. Ibid. f. 89 (b).

In 1684-85 (28th RY) we find him employed at Sholapur, in guarding the royal belongings and despatching food and other necessary articles regularly to the Royal forces besieging the fort of Bijapur.<sup>1</sup>

Two years later in 1686-87 (30th RY) Bhīmsen had a son, whom he named Shambhunāth.<sup>2</sup> Now life was not so smooth and comfortable for Bhīmsen as it previously was. He took voluntary retirement and started passing his time in Naldurg.<sup>3</sup> But his friends and well wishers advised him against this and asked him to go to the court and seek some employment. Bhīmsen went to the Imperial court, encamped near Parendā and waited upon Ruhullah Khan, the Mir Bakhshi and soon gained his favour.<sup>4</sup> The Mir Bakhshi interceded on behalf of Bhīmsen to the Emperor and succeeded in securing his former job and some villages and a mansab.<sup>5</sup>

Bhimsen did not hold this job for long, as the very next year of his re-appointment, i.e. 1689-90 (33rd RY) he left Imperial service and joined the service of Rao Dalpat Bundela as his secretary, Dalpat gave him a jaqir and fixed a salary of Rs. 12,000 per annum.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Ibid. f. 91 (a).

2. Ibid. f. 96 (a).

3. Ibid. f. 96 (a).

4. Ibid. ff. 96(b) & 97 (b)

5. Ibid. f. 98 (a).

6. Ibid. f. 101 (a).

When in 1690-91 (34th RY) Dalpat Bundela was ordered to join Prince Kām Bak<sup>h</sup>sh in the expedition to Wakinkheda, Bhīmsen duly accompanied him.<sup>1</sup> Again, in 1691-92 (35th RY) Bhīmsen was present in the siege of Jinji and took active part in it.<sup>2</sup>

Hearing of the Emperor's displeasure with the officers posted at Jinji, Dalpat Bundela deputed Bhīmsen in 1692-93 (36th RY) to the royal court to find out the real cause of Imperial displeasure.<sup>3</sup>

Rao Dalpat Bundela again in 1695-96 (39th RY) deputed Bhīmsen to the Imperial Court in order to secure a mansab for his son Bharti Chand.<sup>4</sup> On the way, at Tirupati he came to know of his son Shambhunath's marriage.<sup>5</sup> Passing through Sholapur, Karnul, Hyderabad and Naldurg, he reached the Imperial Court. But the desired mansab had already been bestowed by the Emperor on Dalpat Bundela's son. Bhimsen then returned to Hyderabad to attend the marriage of the

1. Ibid. ff. 102 (b)- 103(b).

2. Ibid. ff. 107 (a) - 108(a).

3. Ibid. ff. 111 (b).

4. Ibid. ff. 119(a) & 121 (a).

5. Ibid. f. 119(a).

elder son of Hamirsen who soon died.<sup>1</sup> Then passing through Naldurg, Jinji and Adoni, he reached Gooti where Dalpat was then stationed.<sup>2</sup>

In 1696-97 (40th RY) when Rao Dālpāt Bundela along with Zulfiqār Khan Bahādūr Nusrat Jung, Rām Singh Hada and Dāūd Khān Panni besieged the fort of Jinji, Bhīmsen was again present and took active part in the operation.<sup>3</sup> After accomplishing this feat, Rao Dalpat and others waited for the Imperial honours to be showered upon them. But unfortunately Chhatra Sāl the son of Champat Bundela, and Dalpat's own son Rāmchand, having conspired against them along with Khair Andesh Khān Kanboh, the Faujdār of Etāwa, filled the Imperial ears with the allegation that the Rāo had caused the death of Rāmchand's mother.<sup>4</sup> The Emperor in anger degraded Dalpat Bundela by reducing 500/300 from his mansab<sup>5</sup>. On the advice of Nusrat Jang, Bhīmsen was now (i.e. in 1697-98, 41st RY) ordered to go to the Court, to take an Imperial amīn to the Rao's house and make an enquiry into the matter. The Rao also entrusted him with a large sum for transacting this business.<sup>6</sup>

1. Ibid. ff. 121(a)-121(b).

2. Ibid. f. 121(b).

3. Ibid. ff. 123(a)-124(b).

4. Ibid. f. 125(b).

5. Ibid. f. 125(a).

6. Ibid. f. 125(b).



On reaching the court at Sholapur from Wandiwash, Bhīmsen petitioned the Emperor thrice to appoint an Amīn. But the Emperor issued orders to Ítiqād Khān to investigate and report to him. Ítiqād Khān at that time was the Nāzim of Agra.<sup>1</sup> Thus Bhīmsen had to proceed to that city. He crossed the river Narmada for the first time in his life and passing through Ujjain, reached Gwalior.<sup>2</sup> After staying there for sometime, Bhīmsen ultimately reached Agra.<sup>3</sup> Through one of his acquaintances he met Ítiqād Khān, who it appears did not treat him very sympathetically. Ultimately after bribing the peshkār of the Khān, Bhīmsen gained his object.<sup>4</sup> Soon through his tact, he influenced the amīn Āsaf Khān Jāfar as well and got the Rao exonerated of the charge.<sup>5</sup> Subsequently Dalpat Bundela had his original mansab restored.<sup>6</sup>

Monetarily 1699-1700 (42nd RY) appears to have been a bad year for Bhīmsen. At this time he says, owing to certain causes (which he leaves unspecified) little money came from his jāgirs and thus he suffered from financial troubles.<sup>7</sup>

1. Ibid. f. 125(b)
2. Ibid. f. 126(a).
3. Ibid. ff. 126(a)-(b).
4. Ibid. f. 126(b).
5. Ibid. f. 127(b).
6. Ibid. f. 128(a).
7. Ibid. f. 133(b).

Still he writes:

"But I did not feel down cast, because formerly too I had no love of money, and now too I did not care for it. Men do not look at money, but at their name and honour . . . . As far as I have seen and experienced, courage looks all the more beautiful in the midst of poverty".<sup>1</sup>

At this time Bhīmsen was accompanying his patron Dalpat Bundela to Panhala, where he says he had no job, and thus engaged himself in the writing of his history Nuskha-i Dilkusha.<sup>2</sup>

In 1700-1701 (44th RY) while he was at Naldurg, Bhīmsen fell ill. In spite of his weak condition he was summoned by Dalpat Bundela to Panhāla.<sup>3</sup> Again in 1701-2 (45th RY). Bhīmsen suffered from illness for sometime and was kept under the treatment of Hakīm Muḥammad Taqī, a servant of Nusrat Jang and Bhīmsen's friend.<sup>4</sup>

In 1703 (47th RY) Bhīmsen says that the villages of his jāgīr which at some time in the past had been taken away, were restored to him.<sup>5</sup> This was a period when grain prices were very high in Deccan. Thus Bhīmsen had to shift

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1. Ibid. f. 133 (b)

2. Ibid. f. 134 (b).

3. Ibid. f. 135 (b).

4. Ibid. f. 143 (a)-(b).

5. Ibid. f. 149 (a).

his family, apart from his son Shambhūnāth, to Datia.<sup>1</sup>  
In this very year his son Shambhūnāth was given a mansab  
on condition of his taking the post of Mushrif in the  
department of Dāgh-wa Tasōha, by Nusrat Jang.<sup>2</sup>

In 1704 (48th RY) Nusrat Jang was ordered to attack  
the Marathās and Berads at Wakinkheda. Dalpat Bundela's  
elephant was hit by 21 bullets and one bānd and some of the  
bullets scrapped the armour of Bhīmsen who was also sitting  
on it. But not much damage was done.<sup>3</sup> Ultimately the  
Mughals were victorious.

In March 1707, after a brief illness 'Aurangzeb  
expired and the scramble for the throne started amongst his  
sons. Thus in June 1707 was fought the famous battle of  
Jājau between 'Azam Shāh and the forces of Bahādur Shāh under  
the command of Prince Muhammad 'Azīm. Bhīmsen, along with  
Rao Dalpat Bundela was present in this battle along with  
the forces of 'Azam Shāh. On the day of the battle Rao  
Dalpat was in the company of Prince Bidār Bakht and his  
general Zulfiqār Khān. When Bāz Khān Afghān, an officer in  
the service of Prince 'Azīm-ush-shān, aided by Rājā Budh  
Singh Hādā and others made an attack on the forces of

1. Ibid. f. 149 (a).

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. ff. 151(b)-152(a).

Zulfiqār Khān, Rao Dalpat was struck by a cannon ball which entered his chin and came out at his back. The fatal ball, thus after killing Rao Dalpat, then hit Bhīmsen on the arm.<sup>1</sup>

His mentor's death left Bhīmsen disillusioned and now he decided to retire from active service and instead devote his remaining life in the devotion of God.<sup>2</sup> Consequently <sup>he</sup> left for North India and settled down at Gwalior.<sup>3</sup> Through the agency of Rāi Rāyān Gujarmal, before his retirement, Bhīmsen got his sons, Shambhunāth and Brij Bhūshan employed in the service of Prince Jahānshāh Bahādur alias Khujista Akhtar.<sup>4</sup>

As is to be expected Bhīmsen was quite religious in his outlook. Whenever he mentions any of his battles he always re-iterates his faith in "Shrī Bhagwān".<sup>5</sup> He opens his book with the praise and benediction to God.<sup>6</sup>

As has been mentioned, as a child Bhīmsen had visited the holy shrines at Nāsik and Trimbak. But it is interesting

1. Ibid. f. 165 (a).

2. Ibid. f. 173(b) - 174 (a).

3. Ibid. ff. 173(b).

4. Ibid. f. 173 (b).

5. Ibid. f. 57 (b).

6. Ibid. f. 2 (a).

to note that regarding the sectarian clashes (of various Hindu groups) at these religious places, he has the following comment to make:

"Because of religious prejudices, battles break out between the rival groups and a huge number of person often killed, which shows that there is something wrong in the religion of both the groups".<sup>1</sup>

He speaks with scorn about the sanyāsīs who come to these religious places with elephants and forces of horsemen and armed soldiers.<sup>2</sup>

It was only in 1679-80 (23rd RY) that he says he started seriously following the rituals of the religion. To quote:

"Upto this time, I had not been strictly following the conventions expected of us indeed".<sup>3</sup>

This change infact had been brought about by his contact with a certain Māyā Rām, son of Sītāl Rām, who taught him ways of prayers and obedience.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Ibid. f. 21 (b).

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. f. 79(b).

4. Ibid.

While passing through Tirupati in 1695-96 he made a pilgrimage to the temples of Rāma and Lakshmana situated there<sup>1</sup> and demonstrates his blind faith and irrationality by believing such legends as these temples being visited by two tigers who sweep the ground with their tails before going away.<sup>2</sup>

Regarding the pilgrimage to Brindāban he says, that it is so enchanting that it leaves "no sense in the body".<sup>3</sup>

In 1701 he visited the shrine of Mahādeo at the hill of Khande Rāo but shows his abhorrence of the idea of dedicating one's own daughters to the temple which he says some fools do.<sup>4</sup>

Having been a servant of the Mughal Empire for such a long time, Bhīmsen saw his own fortunes bound up with the Empire itself. As a historian, thus, he saw most problems from the point of view of the interests of that of the Mughal Empire. His account is full of such observations as the prices of the grains in the different regions of the Empire - more so for the Deccan. In his Dilkusha he harks

1. Ibid. ff. 119(a)-120(a).

2. Ibid. f. 120(a).

3. Ibid. f. 127(a).

4. Ibid. ff. 142(b) & 143 (a).

back to the days when lower officials even with small salaries could allegedly live like big nobles and could afford to celebrate the marriages of their children quite lavishly. They could also build huge and massive havelis.<sup>1</sup> An official receiving a salary of Rs. 100 p.m., says Bhīmsen could match the life style of any noble.<sup>2</sup>

Bhīmsen is frank in his criticism of incompetent officials. Thus he very reprovngly mentions Khairandesh Khān, the faujdār, amīn and dīwān of Etāwa, who inspite of being a blind man, was continuing with the responsible duties that he was uncapable of fulfilling. Due to the Emperor's ill-placed favours this official appropriated large sums of money, without doing any work.<sup>3</sup>

Commenting on the official scribes, Bhīmsen says, that though the art of writing belongs to the professional scribes, still they have been displaced and their posts given to un-professional men. Condemning the tendency of bribery amongst them, he says:

"There is a great difference between (hereditary) professional (writers) and unprofessional. Those who are of this profession are not wanting in generosity; while

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1. Ibid. ff. 20 (b)-21(a).

2. Ibid. f. 21 (a).

3. Ibid. ff. 153 (a)-(b).

unprofessional (writers) disregarding the good and harm of the soldiers, extend their palms for bribes".<sup>1</sup>

In the present age, says Bhimsen, unprofessional men having learnt the art of arithmetic have become masters of authority, and are engaged in plundering the public.<sup>2</sup> Thus, he comments, the mansabdārs have been reduced to the extreme point of poverty, which as a natural corollary hinders the maintenance of their troops.<sup>3</sup> In extreme frustration Bhimsen exclaims:

"I wished to name in detail these scribes who have risen to the rank of nā'ib-Peshdast, to the dīwanī officers, bakhshī and others, who accumulate large sums and give improper bribes. But I do not consider this proper .....

The excesses committed by the Amīns in regard to the collection of Jiziya is also taken in the same vein - "They realise crores of Rupees (in Jiziya) and pay only a small portion of it into the treasury". Bhimsen does not

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1. Ibid. f. 140 (b).

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.



stress the injustice involved in a discriminatory tax upon the Hindus.<sup>1</sup>

Thus after serving the Mughal Empire since nearly childhood, Bhīmsen retired at the ripe age of 59. For how long he lived afterwards remains unknown.

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1. Ibid. f. 139 (b).

Chapter VII

Itimad Ali Khan

Much interesting light is thrown on the life of low-medium level bureaucrats in Mughal India, if one studies the life of Ítimād 'Ali Khān, who held around twenty administrative posts, spanning over a period of thirty years. The attempt becomes possible, because of the survival of a diary of the official preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, in the Fraser Collection, within a volume of mixed contents compiled by Ítimād 'Ali Khān himself under the title Mīrāt-ul Haqāiq.<sup>1</sup>

The MS is divided into two distinct parts: the first, sub-divided into eight chapters, each of which deals with a short history of the Mughal Emperors from 'Aurangzeb to the reign of Muḥammad Shāh.<sup>2</sup> It is to this portion of the volume, that the author, Ítimād 'Ali Khān, ascribes the name of Mīrāt-ul Haqāiq<sup>3</sup>. The second part of the manuscript includes the revenue statistics of the customs of Cambay, Surat and Broach,<sup>4</sup> the memoirs of the Surat Fort<sup>5</sup>,

1. Bodleian Library, Oxford, Fraser Collection no. 124.  
A microfilm copy of it is in Seminar Library, Deptt of History, AMU (M.F.No. 127).

2. MS Fraser 124, ff. 4(b)-5(a).

3. Ibid. f. 4(b).

4. Ibid. ff. 94(a)-101(b).

5. Ibid. ff. 105(b)-107(a).

list of Kārkhānas and Mahāls of Surat and Broach<sup>1</sup>, revenue statistics and taxes at Surat<sup>2</sup>, the janqnāma or the account of the struggle between Rustam 'Alī Khān and Hāmīd Khān to control Surat<sup>3</sup>, and lastly his own diary which constitutes the bulk of the volume.<sup>4</sup>

To both the parts, the author and compiler gives the title of Tasnīf-i Itimād 'Alī Khān wald Itimād Khān marhūm har do 'Ālamqīrī Iqbāl-nāma wa Akhbār-nāma<sup>5</sup>, which he says, he completed in 1139 AH/1727 AD.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Ibid. ff. 120(b)-123(b).

2. Ibid. ff. 97a-99a.

3. Ibid. ff. 269a-289(b) margins.

4. Ibid. ff. 129(a) to 589(b) where the MS abruptly ends, giving an impression that it was left incomplete at this point. It spans the period of eight years viz. from 1130 AH/Jan 1718 AD to 1139 AH/1726 AD.

5. Ibid. f. 1(a) top margin, M.P. Singh in his book, Town, Market, Mint and Port in the Mughal Empire, 1556-1707, New Delhi, 1985, takes this endorsement to imply that the whole MS is a part of a pair, viz. Iqbāl-nāma and Akhhār-nāma. But a reading of the introductory note (ie. ff. 4(b)-5(a) ) makes it clear that the part dealing with the reigns of eight Mughal Emperors, which the author calls Mīrātul Haqāiq, constitutes the Iqbāl-nāma whereas his diary is called by him Akhhār-nāma.

6. MS Fraser 124, f. 1 (a). Though the colophon he provides counts to 1138 AH.

Ítimād 'Ali Khān's father, Mulla Muḥammad Tāhir, an Irani, initially holding the title of Amānat Khān, was granted the title of Ítimād Khān by 'Aurangzeb in 1688.<sup>1</sup> He was also granted an increase in his mansab, which thus became 200 zāt<sup>2</sup>. He was then given the charge of the port of Surat as mutasaddi in addition to the Dīwān-ship of the Sūba Ahmadabad<sup>3</sup>. After a year he was also made the Dīwān and faujdār of the port of Surat.<sup>4</sup>

The family seems to have been serving in Gujarat for some time. Ítimād 'Ali Khān<sup>5</sup> <sup>mentions his</sup> paternal uncle Idrīs Khān and his son Saiyid Muḥsin who was the nāib Dīwān of Ahmadabad during Mulla Tāhir Ítimād Khān's Dīwān ship.<sup>6</sup> Ítimād 'Ali Khān had at least two sons viz. Muḥammad Hādi Khān and Muḥammad Durwesh. Muḥammad Hādi is mentioned in 1721 as the

- 
1. Mīrāt-i Ahmadi, 'Ali Mohd Khān, Pt. 1 op. cit. Baroda, 1928, p. 318. In 1687 he had been bestowed the former title. Ibid. p. 315. For his Irani origin, see I. Athar Ali, Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb, 1968, p. 248.
  2. Mīrāt-i Ahmadi, op. cit., i, p. 318. Isardas in Futūhāt-i 'Ālamgīri, no. 31, no. 23884 (Rotograph in Deptt of History) f. 164 (b) though gives his rank as 1000/900 in 1691 A.D.
  3. Mīrāt-i Ahmadi, op. cit. p. 318. & Futūhāt, f. 132 (b).
  4. 'Āqī Mustād Khān, Mā'sir-i 'Ālamgīri, op. cit. p. 331.
  5. Mīrāt-i Ahmadi, i, p. 318.
  6. Mīrāt-i Ahmadi, i, p. 318. Whereas Isardās calls Saiyid Muḥsin as the nephew of Idrīs Khān and son-in law of Ítimād Khān. Futūhāt, f. 138(b) see also Fraser f. 74 (a). In 1697 he became 'Āmil and Amīn of Pargana Dholka. Mīrāt, i, p. 333.

nāib of Nawāb Shujāāt Khān at the port of Gogha.<sup>1</sup> In the same year Muḥammad Durwesh is mentioned as the karorī of Koṭha Pārcha (cloth market) and Sāir.<sup>2</sup> For one of his sons, unfortunately whose name he doesn't specify, Ītimād 'Alī Khān mentions the rank of 200.<sup>3</sup> Ītimād 'Alī Khān mentions Mirza Sultān Muḥammad, a cousin, who resided at Shāhjahānābād, and his father Mirza Khalīl Khān.<sup>4</sup> Though our author does not mention any of his sisters by name, he informs us of his sister's son, Saiyid 'Abdullah (Saiyid Muḥsin's son ?) who was killed in one of the battles waged by Nawāb Hāmid Khān in October 1725.<sup>5</sup>

Named Muḥammad Muḥsin by his parents<sup>6</sup>, the author was given the title of Ītimād Khān after his father's death, by Emperor 'Aurangzeb in 1697.<sup>7</sup> In the reign of Jahāndār Shāh

1. MF Fraser 124, f. 202 (b). In February 1719 he is mentioned as Nāib Dāroghā at Ahmadabad mint. See Ibid. f. 145(b).
2. Ibid. ff. 198(b)-199(b).
3. MS Fraser, 124, f. 91(a).
4. Ibid. f. 139 (a).
5. Ibid. f. 358 (a).
6. Ibid. f. 74(a). also Mīrāt, I, p. 333, p. 348 & p. 353. Though in his diary (f. 145(a)) Ītimād 'Alī Khān ascribes his original name as Hasan Khan. But it appears to be erroneous and the transcribers fault.
7. MS Fraser 124, ff. 74 (b), 81(b) and 145(a). Ali Mohd. Khan, on the other hand gives the date as 1702. see Mīrāt, p. 348.

his title was changed to Muhsin khān<sup>1</sup> and finally under Farruḡh Siyār he was designated Ítimād 'Ali khān.<sup>2</sup>

It was in the 37th Regnal year of 'Aurangzeb (1693) that Ítimād 'Ali khān was given his first appointment as the Mutasaddi of the port of Cambay after the transfer of of Mīr Muḡammad Sādiq.<sup>3</sup> Shortly after this, when his father Ítimād khān fell ill at Surat, Ítimād 'Ali khān was ordered to deputize his father at that port.<sup>4</sup> When Ítimād khān died on 25th March 1695<sup>5</sup>, Ítimād 'Ali khān, in his place, was made the Dīwān of the Sūba.<sup>6</sup> A robe of honour was also conferred upon him. After giving over charge of Surat and the undertakings (Muchalka) filed by the English to Amānat khān, the new Bakhshi, who later came to condole him, Ítimād 'Ali khān started for Ahmadabad to take up his new assignment.<sup>7</sup> The important functionaries at Ahmadabad like Shujāat khān,

1. MS Fraser 124, ff. 81 (b) and 145 (a).

2. Ibid, f. 145 (a).

3. Ibid. f. 74 (a).

4. Ibid. f. 74 (a).

5. Ibid. f. 74(a); Mīrāt, i, p. 331, gives the date March 1696.

6. MS Fraser 124, f. 74 (a), also Mīrāt, i, p. 333.

7. MS Fraser 124, f. 74 (b).

the Sūbadār, Mirza Ghiyās, the Bakhshī, Shaikh Akram uddin the Sadr, Mīr Ishāq, the Kotwāl and others, we are informed, came to condole him.<sup>1</sup>

After a year, i.e. 1696-97 AD, he was transferred from the Dīwān ship of the Sūba and left for Islāmpur alias Behrāmpur, where the Emperor was then encamped.<sup>2</sup> There Ítimād 'Ali Khān made a peshkash (offering) of a copy of Qurān and three horses to the Emperor. In return the Emperor bestowed upon him the title of Ítimād Khān, and after increasing his mansab, appointed him to the service of Prince Muhammad Bedār Bakht.<sup>3</sup> There the posts of Bakhshi I, Waqiā Nigār, Sawānih nigār, Dārogha-i-Topkhāna and Dārogha-i Dāgh-wa Tasīhah were granted to him.<sup>4</sup> The Emperor also conferred upon him a robe of honour and ordered the Prince to grant him a robe of honour the day he joined his service.<sup>5</sup>

In 1699 Ítimād 'Ali Khān was ordered to take over as Dīwān and Bakhshi of the army of Prince Bedār Bakht.<sup>6</sup> Being reluctant to take the post of Dīwān, Ítimād 'Ali Khān

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1. Ibid. f. 74(b).

2. Ibid. f. 74(b) & Mīrāt, i, p. 336 where the date is given as "the end of 1109/1697".

3. MS Fraser 124, f. 74(b).

4. Ibid. f. 75(a). Also f. 145(a): "In 1697 AD I was made the Bakhshi of Prince Bedār Bakht".

5. Ibid. f. 75(a).

6. Ibid. f. 60(b).



pétitioned to the Prince to exempt him for the post. The Prince agreed and instead made him his nā'ib (Deputy).<sup>1</sup> During the time that Ítimād 'Ali Khān was with Prince Bedār Bakht at a place called 'But Patha', orders under the seal of Tarbiyat Khān reached him, beckoning him to the royal presence. Ítimād 'Ali Khān, along with three hundred mansabdārs, arrived at the Emperor's camp at Murtuzābād alias Mirkh.<sup>2</sup> A robe of honour was conferred upon him, and apart from his other assignments the post of the Dārogha of the Topkhāna of the Prince Bedār Bakht (upon the transfer of Darāyat Khān) was granted to him.<sup>3</sup> He was also given charge of 58 boats to help the Prince and his retinue to cross the River Krishna.<sup>4</sup> After rejoining the Prince at 'But Patha', Ítimād 'Ali Khān combined the posts of Dārogha-i Topkhāna with those of Bakhshi, Waqiā-nawīs and Sawānih-nawīs.<sup>5</sup>

In 1703, Ítimād 'Ali Khān was transferred from the service of the Prince, and, on the orders of Prince Muḥammad 'Āzam Shāh, was appointed the Mutasaddi of the Port of Cambay,<sup>6</sup>

1. Ibid. f. 61 (b).

2. Ibid. ff. 61 (b) - 62 (a).

3. Ibid. f. 61 (b).

4. Ibid. f. 61 (b).

5. Ibid. f. 62 (a).

6. Ibid. f. 75 (a) & Mīrāt, i, p. 348. In 1704 Khwāja 'Abdul Hāmid Khān, the Dīwān of the Sūba Ahmadabad was assigned to that post but on the interference of Prince Mohd Azam, his appointment was stayed. See Mīrāt, i, p. 355.

after the transfer of Muhammad Kāzim against whom complaints of tyranny had been preferred.<sup>1</sup> Itimād 'Ali Khān was summoned to the royal presence to test him about the knowledge of horses, presumably since the duty assigned to him involved selection of horses imported oversea for the royal stables.<sup>2</sup>

After a year of his taking charge of the Port of Cambay, i.e., in 1704 AD Itimād 'Ali Khān was again transferred. The port of Cambay was placed under the jurisdiction of the port of Surat.<sup>3</sup> Itimād 'Ali Khān himself says that the transfer was brought about because the two ports needed to be put under the same jurisdiction, and that Aurangzeb wrote on the order of his transfer the words Be-taqṣīr, 'without fault'. But 'Ali Muhammad Khān reports that after the transfer, Amānat Khān informed the Emperor that Itimād 'Ali Khān had kept Rs. 1345 from the revenues of Port Gogha (which was under Cambay)<sup>4</sup>. The Emperor thereupon ordered the Dīwān of the Sūba to recover the amount from him and deposit it in the treasury.<sup>5</sup> At the time of transfer there seems to have been no complaint against Itimād 'Ali Khān, and his mansab was raised by 100/100; his mansab now was 700/200.<sup>6</sup> Itimād 'Ali Khān further says:

1. MS Fraser 124, f. 75(a) & Mirat, i, p. 355.

2. Mirat, i, p. 353.

3. MS Fraser 124, f. 75(a).

4. Mirat, i, p. 382.

5. Ibid, p. 382.

6. MS Fraser 124, f. 75(a)-(b).

"By the Grace of God from the time I have been transferred, I am in the eyes of the Emperor who has enhanced my rank and thinks well of me ....."<sup>1</sup>

After the transfer from the Port of Cambay, Ítimād 'Ali Khān was made Dīwān of the army of Nawāb Ghāziuddīn Khān Firoz Jung, the Sūbadār of Gujrat.<sup>2</sup> A conditional (Mashrūt) enhancement of 100/40 was also granted, thus bringing his rank to 800/240.<sup>3</sup>

After a few months, in 1705, he was once again transferred, to be appointed as the Bakhshī I, Wagīā Nigār and Dārogha of the Topkhāna of Prince Bedār Bakht.<sup>4</sup> Ítimād 'Ali Khān proceeded to the Sūba of Ujjain and started performing his duties.<sup>5</sup> He remained at the same post till the 2nd RY of Bahādur Shāh when in 1708 on the recommendation of Prince Jahāndār Shāh, he was appointed the Faujdār of Baroda Bakhera and Sonkher<sup>6</sup>, here he remained for 16 months.<sup>7</sup> He says that

1. Ibid. f. 75 (b).

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. ff. 67(a) & 75(b)

5. Ibid. ff. 76(a).

6. Ibid. ff. 76(a), 166(a) & 208(a).

7. Ibid. f. 166(b).

the village of Sokher had a jama' (revenue-assessment) of 40,000 mahmūdīs, while at the time he was writing it was no more than 7,000 mahmūdīs.<sup>1</sup> At this time, his mansab was 1000/800. He was also awarded an inām of 80 lakh dāms by Prince Jahāndār Shāh, who also conferred upon him a robe of honour.<sup>2</sup>

Ītimād 'Ali Khān informs us that during his tenure two lac twenty thousand rupees were collected from Pargana Nadiād as revenue, which he constantly despatched through hundīs (bills) to the Dīwān of the Sarkār of Kokaltāsh Khān at Burhanpur and Hyderabad.<sup>3</sup> At this time the duty of maintenance of muster roll of servants of the gateway of the palace (Chehra Bāb Khāna-i 'Ālī) of Jahāndār Shāh was also assigned to him.<sup>4</sup>

In 1709 Ghāziuddin Khān Firoz Jung, proposed Ītimād 'Ali Khān's name, for the post of mutasaddi of the port of Cambay (vice Amānat Khān) and the thānadāri of Kajnah (vice Saiyid 'Ali Khān), and ordered him to take charge of the new posts.<sup>5</sup> He was also given the parganās of Sanwli and

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1. Ibid. f. 208(a).

2. Ibid. f. 76 (a).

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Mirat, i, p. 384.

Bahādurpūr.<sup>1</sup> During his tenure Ítimād 'Alī Khān collected two lac ten thousand mahmūdīs and Rs. thirty thousand respectively from the two parḡanas.<sup>2</sup> In 1710 AD he was once again transferred and the office of mutasaddi of Cambay was conferred upon Syed Aḡsanullah Khān.<sup>3</sup>

Ítimād 'Alī Khān informs us that when the news of the death of Ítibār Khān, the mutasaddi of Surat<sup>4</sup> reached Ghāziuddin Khān, the post was conferred upon him<sup>5</sup>. In November 1710, Ítimād 'Alī Khān says, he reached Surat and started performing his duties.<sup>6</sup>

At the beginning of Jahāndār Shāh's reign in 1712 Ítimād 'Alī Khān received the title of Muḡsin Khān and was appointed to the post of Bakhshi and Waḡiā Niḡār of the Port

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1. MS Fraser 124, f. 76(a), also f. 166(a).

2. Ibid.

3. Mirat, i, p. 387.

4. MS Fraser 124, f. 78(b). 'Alī Muhammad Khān say that Ítibār Khān remained only a few months in office and was transferred due to his inefficiency in 1703. See Mirāt, i, p. 350.

5. MS Fraser 124, f. 78 (b).

6. Ibid. On the other hand we know that Amānat Khān was appointed the Mutasaddi of Surat in 1705 AD (Mirāt, i, p. 358) and held the post down to 1711 when he was transferred from Surat having been appointed the Amīn and Faujḡār of Haveli Pargana Ahmadabad. Mirāt, i, p. 341. Or is it just an error of dating ?

of Surat.<sup>1</sup> Ítimād 'Ali Khān informs us that during his tenure as the Bakhshi and Waqiā Nigār of the Port of Surat, he did not appoint any other Bakhshi as his assistant. He also says that for this emolument, he used to take Rs.1000 for each lac of rupees collected from the forts of Kokan.<sup>2</sup> During his tenure, the Mahsūl of the customs (Farza) of the Port of Surat was 11,700 rupees which was deposited in the treasury.<sup>3</sup>

After 1713 AD not much information is available regarding Ítimād 'Ali Khān's further appointments. There is a gap in our information from 1712 AD to 1717 AD. We do not know whether Ítimād 'Ali Khān remained at the port of Surat as Bakhshi and Waqiā Nigār during this period. But in January 1718, he was at Ahmadabad from where he started for Delhi on 21 January 1718.<sup>4</sup> From one of his notings in his diary on 5th February 1719, regarding his son Muhammad Hādi, it appears that Ítimād 'Ali Khān, for some time, had held the office of the Dārogha of the Ahmadabad mint. He writes:

"Muhammad Hādi, the son of Ítimād 'Ali Khān, was appointed the nāib of Ahmadabad mint in place of Ítimād 'Ali Khān".<sup>5</sup>

1. MS Fraser 124, f. 81(b) & f. 100(b).

2. Ibid. ff. 81(b) & 100(b).

3. Ibid. f. 101(b).

4. Ibid. f. 129(a).

5. Ibid. f. 145(b).

Leaving his son in the post, Ítimād 'Ali Khān, after travelling for nearly two months, reached Agra on 10 March 1718, where he stayed till 24th March when he set out for Delhi.<sup>1</sup> At Delhi, he stayed in a Sarāi in Chāndni Chowk, where the Ambassador from the Sharīf of Mecca was also staying.<sup>2</sup> During this time he fell ill with Cholera<sup>3</sup> and shifted to the Haveli of Hakīm Muḥammad Rafī, his physician, on a rent of Rs 40 (per month).<sup>4</sup> He informs us that the wife of Nawāb Khuda Bakhsh Khān, the grandson of Amīr-ul 'Umārā, i.e. the mother of Muḥammad Khizr, gave out a Sadaqa (Charity) of Rs. 40. On the day Ítimād 'Ali Khān recovered from his illness.<sup>5</sup> It seems that he had many connections in the bureaucracy. During his stay at Delhi, functionaries like Mirza Jalīl Beg 'Azam Shāhi, Ghiyāsuddin Khān, the Dārogha of the city, Qūli Khān, the dīwān and Khān-i Sāmān of the daughter of 'Aurangzeb, and others entertained him.<sup>6</sup> Next month (May 1718), Ítimād 'Ali Khān took on rent, the Haveli of Muḥammad Amīn Khān, the Bakhshi-i tan<sup>7</sup>, and again in June he shifted to the house of Mirza Jalīl Beg, where he intended

1. Ibid. f. 132(b).

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. f. 133(a).

5. Ibid. f. 133(b).

6. Ibid. ff.133(b)-134(a).

7. Ibid. f. 134(a).

to stay for another two months.<sup>1</sup> But, the same month, on the invitation of Chhabīla Rām, Governor of Sūba Allahabad Ītimād 'Alī Khān started for Allahabad<sup>2</sup>. Passing through Hasanpur, Sambhal, Bāns Barreilly, Fatehpur and other places, he reached Allahabad on 7th July 1718, where he was very hospitably received by Mahārāja Chhabīla Rām, who presented him the sum of Rs. 500.<sup>3</sup> At the beginning of August 1718, Ītimād 'Alī Khān, again headed for Delhi. On the way back, apart from other places, he stayed at the house of Mirza Rukn Bedār, at Ghat Rasūlābād, near Firozabad.<sup>4</sup> In September he arrived at Delhi and took on rent a Haveli in the Ajmeri Gate area.<sup>5</sup> In October 1718, Ītimād 'Alī Khān mentions his appointment on some post with Nawāb Saifullah Khān, the Bakhshi III of Farrukh Siyar.<sup>6</sup> At this time, he was living in a rented Haveli of Ahmad Beg, which was situated in the Pahārganj quarter of Delhi.<sup>7</sup>

On 13 February, 1719 Ītimād 'Alī Khān left Delhi for Ahmadabad.<sup>8</sup> While nearing his destination in April 1719,

1. Ibid. f. 134 (a)

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. f. 135(a).

4. Ibid. f. 138(a).

5. Ibid. f. 139(a).

6. Ibid. f. 140(a).

7. Ibid. f. 141( b).

8. Ibid. f. 145(a).



Ítimād 'Ali Khān informs us that in the jungles at Sanjaur, in Raipur, there was such a paucity of sweet water, that it was being sold at one copper coin per bucket. Ítimād 'Ali Khān had to borrow Rs 500 from a banya who accompanied him to Ahmadabad.<sup>1</sup> The same month, he arrived at his house at Ahmadabad.<sup>2</sup> He was entertained at this city by the watandar of Māsūmābād, Kāzim Beg Khān and others, entertained him.

It is not clear for what purpose Ítimād 'Ali Khān made these long journeys. Perhaps, he was looking for a suitable job, but could not find it.

In June 1720, Ítimād 'Ali Khān started towards 'Aurangabād<sup>3</sup> Passing through Cambay<sup>4</sup> and Maqbulabad, etc, he reached 'Aurangabad on 25 October, 1720, and stayed at the Haveli of Sharafuddin 'Ali Khān (Mīr Muhammad Taqi), the Superintendent (Dārogha) of the Imperial Library and the Royal ammunitions.<sup>5</sup>

Within a few weeks, he was again on the move. On 13th January 1721, while he was suffering from fever, he started for Burhanpur<sup>6</sup>. On the way, as he passed through

1. Ibid. ff. 151(a)-(b).

2. Ibid. f. 152(b).

3. Ibid. f. 175(b).

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid. f.184(a).

6. Ibid. f.190(a).

their jurisdictions, officers such as 'Abdul Ma'ali Khān, the son of 'Abdul Haq, Bakhshi, Waqiā Niqār and Faujdār of Malkapur, Rustam Beg Khān, the Faujdār of Kharbol and others, came to meet him.<sup>1</sup> On 16 February, he was asked by the Rājā of Mohān to stay for sometime at Mohān.<sup>2</sup> Itimād 'Ali Khān presented the Rājā with a dagger studded with cornelian, and four hubble bubbles.<sup>3</sup> He also presented two hubble bubbles and one gun to the son of the Rāja.<sup>4</sup> The Rāja in return, bestowed upon him and his sons a village, the jamā of which was assessed at 700 mahmūdīs<sup>5</sup>, and a 'Kamīt' horse.<sup>6</sup>

On 13 November, 1721, Itimād 'Ali Khān entered the Port of Broach, where he met the nāib of Qamaruddin Khān, Bakhshi II, who offered him Rs 150.<sup>7</sup> In the beginning of December, Itimad Ali Khan started for Surat.<sup>8</sup> On the way, at Chaurand, near Haveli Baroda, a certain Daya Rām sent Rs.100

1. Ibid. ff. 190(b)-191(b).

2. Ibid. f. 192 (b).

3. Ibid. f. 209(a).

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid. f. 209 (b).

6. Ibid. f. 209 (a).

7. Ibid. f. 211 (a).

8. Ibid. f. 211 (b).

for him.<sup>1</sup> He also informs us that Nawab Shujā'āt Khān sent him Rs 1000 as expenses for his journey to Islām Nagar (Nāvānagar), where the Nawāb was staying.<sup>2</sup>

This offer Ítimād 'Ali Khān accepted, and on 21 August 1723, when he was at Islām Nagar, he was appointed Incharge of the horses.<sup>3</sup> But his tenure there was again very short. In the first week of November, 1723, he arrived at Surat, where, he says, the Mutasaddi, Momim Khān came to meet him.<sup>4</sup>

On 14 February, 1724, he writes that:

"On Sunday 19th Jamādi I, 6th RY, i.e. 1136 AH, the letter of Nawāb Rustam 'Ali Khān Bahādur Jiu, addressed to the Qilādār, came, that the servant has been appointed (Mutasaddi ?) on the transfer of Momim Khān".<sup>5</sup>

Momim Khān, we know, was the Mutasaddi of Surat till 1724<sup>6</sup> and soon after him Suhrāb Khān was appointed to that post.<sup>7</sup> This means that, if at all, Ítimād 'Ali Khān was

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1. Ibid. f. 212 (a).
  2. Ibid. f. 217 (b).
  3. Ibid. f. 253 (b).
  4. Ibid. f. 259 (b).
  5. Ibid. f. 268 (a).
  6. Ibid. ff. 263 (a)-(b).
  7. Ibid. ff. 363 (a)-(b).

was appointed only as an acting-mutasaddi till the arrival of Suhrāb Khān, the Mutasaddi-designate. At least this much is clear from yet another entry, on 2 Agusut 1726 in the diary, that Itimād 'Ali Khān was still hopeful of an official career.<sup>1</sup> He writes:

"I have started the nazr of Hazrat Pīr Dastgīr Ghaus Saqalain (Abdul Qādir Jīlānī) for my promotion (taraqqi). I started the nazr on 17th Ziqāda, thursday, on 11½ copper coins and every thursday I keep increasing it so that the nazr may be befitting and accepted."<sup>2</sup>

But life was not as generous to Itimād 'Ali Khān at Surat as he had hoped. He complains of a paucity of cash<sup>3</sup> and had live in the Haveli of a Ship-captain Muhammad Jafar, since his arrival in Surat on 14 November 1723. The good Captain did not charge any rent from him being a friend.<sup>4</sup> An official duty might still be assigned to him, delivered <sup>Itimād 'Ali Khān</sup> an amount of Rs 2000, in 1726, on the orders of Suhrāb Khan, the mutasaddi, to the agent of the Sharīf of Mecca, to whom the Emperor had granted an annual sum of rupees one lakh to be paid from Surat.<sup>5</sup>

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1. M.P. Singh, op. cit., p. 226: He is of the view that from 1723 onwards, Itimād 'Ali Khān was leading the life of a retired official at Surat.

2. MS Fraser 124, f. 431(a).

3. Ibid. f. 362(b).

4. Ibid. f. 259(b). He stayed there down to 1726, when the diary ends, without paying any rent. Ibid. f. 455(a).

5. Ibid. f. 385(b).

Whatever his post or rank at this time, a hint of frustration is apparent in his diary at this stage. When in April 1726 he claimed the amount deposited by his deceased slave with a banya (baqqāl) the case came before Gada Beg Khān and Tēgh Beg Khān (the mutasaddi) who directed their munshī to summon the merchant. But, according to Ītimād 'Alī Khān, the munshī took a bribe of Rs 500 and the claim remained unsatisfied. Our author mourns that the Khans, who had been his friends, preferred their munshī's interests to his. Obviously, by this time Ītimād 'Alī Khān had lost his influence in the official world.<sup>1</sup>

Like any other bureaucrat, Ītimād 'Alī Khān feels proud to narrate how he had mediated between important persons. In August 1711 AD, when a struggle between two feuding nobles, Shahāmat Khān and Muhammad Beg Khān, intensified in Gujrat, Ītimād 'Alī Khān, along with two others, intervened and effected a peace.<sup>2</sup> In 1718-19, he says, he mediated between Haidar Qūli Khān Bahādur Muizuddaula and Shujā'at Khān.<sup>3</sup> Again in June 1721, Ītimād 'Alī Khān mediated between Nāhir Khān and Shujā'at Khān and brought about peace between them.<sup>4</sup> While

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1. Ibid. f. 397(b).

2. Ibid. ff. 79(b)-80(a).

3. Ibid. f. 30 (a).

4. Ibid. ff. 198(b)-199(b).

dealing with the battle fought between Rustam 'Ali Khān, the mutasaddi-designate and Hāmid Khān, in 1724-25 at Surat.

Ītimād 'Ali Khān shows his closeness to the former, who, he says, asked him to deliver a hundi worth Rs 5000 to his deputy, Ibrāhīm Qūli Khān, to facilitate the latter in bringing succour.<sup>1</sup>

Ītimād 'Ali Khān, throughout shows a religious bent of mind. Where ever he would go, he would stop to pay respects at the tombs of Muslim saints. In July 1718, he visited the tombs of Maulana Shaikh Ismā'il, Shāh Taqi and Shāh 'Ali, on the bank of Ganges at Allahabad.<sup>2</sup> On first of June, 1719 at Sar Khair, near Ahmadabad, he made a pilgrimage to the tombs of two local saints, Bābā 'Ali Sher and Hazrat Ganj Ahmad.<sup>3</sup> At Surat, in November 1725, he became a disciple of a saint whom he calls Shāh Asadullah Durwesh.<sup>4</sup>

A perusal of his diary shows, that Ītimād 'Ali Khān, was not insensitive of the political turmoils of his age. He tells us though briefly about the disturbances created around around Agra in 1718 due to the rebellion of Chūraman Jāt.<sup>5</sup>

1. Ibid. ff. 337(a)-338(b).

2. Ibid. f. 135(a).

3. Ibid. ff. 158(b)-159(a).

4. Ibid. ff. 364(a)-(b).

5. Ibid. ff. 130(b) & 132(a).

Dealing with the political conditions prevailing in India during the reign of Rafi-ud-darjāt and Muḥammad Shāh, he says:

"How strange has become the fate of the Sultānate of Hindustan, that the prerogatives of the Monarchs are in the hands of the servants, and whatever they want, whatever wickedness they want to perpetuate, the Emperor does that".<sup>1</sup>

He adds rhetorically that unless Qutb-ul Mulk and Hasan 'Ali Khān will so, food cannot be served to the Emperor.<sup>2</sup> The King was a prisoner in the hands of these two brothers.<sup>3</sup>

Further:

"The clansmen of the two brothers think as if they themselves are the princes".<sup>4</sup>

The period covered by 'Itimād 'Ali Khān in his diary was a period when the Mughal officials, themselves hard pressed, tried to squeeze the merchants to the utmost.<sup>5</sup> 'Itimād 'Ali Khān describes many such instances in his diary from first

1. Ibid. f. 161 (a).

2. Ibid. f. 162 (a).

3. Ibid. f. 162 (b).

4. Ibid. f. 163 (b).

5. Cf. Ashin Das Gupta, "The crisis at Surat, 1730-32", Bengal Past and Present, 1967, p. 148. Also M.P. Singh, op. cit., pp. 266-7.

hand observation. He tells us about the merchants' agitation which occurred on 27 January, 1723.<sup>1</sup> He discusses the charter of demands put forward by the merchants, and its approval by Momin Khān, the Mutasaddi in 1723.<sup>2</sup> When even after the theoretical approval of the demands, matters remained unaltered, the merchants, says Ītimād Āli Khān, protested once again.<sup>3</sup>

Ītimād Āli Khān reveals in his diary, that, the Nāib Khufiyah Nawīs (Deputy Intelligencer) Gada's Beg Khān, who was also a nephew of Beglar Khān, the ilédar, had in one of his despatches in 1726, accused Ahmad Chalebi, a leading merchant, of being an oppressor of the people.<sup>4</sup>

Ītimād Āli Khān makes it clear that there was much social interaction between the Mughal officials and the merchants. On several occasions, he speaks of the gardens of Mulla Muhammad Tāhir and Ahmad Chalebi, as the meeting ground

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1. Events at Surat during this period have been described in detail by Ashin Das Gupta, who has extensively used the Dutch and English records. See Ashin Das Gupta, Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat, c. 1700-1750, Wiesbaden, 1979. For the details of this particular agitation, and the role played by Chalebi merchants like Ahmad Chalebi, see Muhammad Afzal Khan, "The Chalebi Merchants at Surat, 16th-17th Centuries", IHC Proceedings, Waltair, 1979, pp. 408-418.
  2. MS Fraser 124, ff. 235(b)-237(a).
  3. Ibid. ff. 263(a)-264(b).
  4. Ibid. f. 419(b).



where the mutasaddis and others were entertained.<sup>1</sup>

Ītimād Āli Khān's diary in the present manuscript, which is defective at end breaks off on 20 January 1727. Thereafter, we can not trace a reference to our author in any other source as well. This autobiography is of immense interest since we can see how a medium-level official fared as the Mughal Empire entered its period of crisis after Aurangzeb's death. All was not at once over; but the avenues of employment and promotion were being narrowed. Ītimād Āli Khān was one of the victims of that inexorable process.

C O N C L U S I O N

In the light of the preceding biographical sketches of seven Lower bureaucrats, we can perhaps draw certain tentative conclusions.

The seven individuals whom we have studied come from approximately two centuries of the Mughal Empire, yet practically all of them have one feature in common: membership of the bureaucracy came to them almost in inheritance. We do not, indeed, have explicit information about the professions of the fathers of Surat Singh and Isardas Nagar but the other five (Bayazid Bayat, Farid Bhakkari, Balkrishan Brahman, Bhimsen and Itimad Ali Khan) were sons of persons holding positions and posts in Mughal service. While Farid Bhakkari held such posts as Wakalat of nobles, Diwani, Amini and Qiledari of various parganas, officials and forts, his father Shaikh Maruf Bhakkari had been the Sadr of Sarkar Bhakkar. Balkrishan Brahman was an accountant, and we know that accountancy was his family profession. Whether Muslim or Hindu, then, an official was likely to have been the son of one. It is worth noting that in none of the cases do we discern a mercantile, zamindari or landed origin.

No information is forthcoming to show that any of these seven officials took part in trade and commerce. We know from the observations of Jahangir in his Tuzuk,

that people having a sound knowledge of good horses, antiques and jewels were preferred for the post of Mutasaddi of Port-towns such as Surat, Broach and Cambay; and Itimād Ali Khan also mentions that his abilities in these matters was tested prior to his appointment, yet we do not come to any indication that the latter, who was appointed mutasaddi of different ports to <sup>have</sup> engaged in trade or commerce in any form. Infact, as we have seen he was obliged in his last years to live in the house of a friend who was benevolent enough not to charge any rent from him. A person having interest in commerce would hardly have been reduced to such conditions. Bayazid had been deputed on the route of Hisar to buy good Arab horses for the Mughal Empire, and he was also made Superintendant of the Mint at Fatehpur Sikri, but still there is no direct reference to his engaging in trade. At the time of his going to Mecca in 1578 he had one lakh rupees in cash with him, but he does not appear to have invested the sum in trade.

Outside our sample, there are however some cases of officials engaging in trade and commerce. For instance, amongst the mutasaddis of Surat we find the names of such merchants as Khwaja Nizam, Mirza Ishaq Beg, Mirza Arab and Ali Akbar Isfahani, who were basically merchants.

Muqarrab Khan, Mir Musa and Hakim Sadra are also alleged to <sup>have</sup> had some interest in trade.<sup>1</sup> But it appears that the number of such officials was relatively small.

Similarly no mention is found of any of the officials studied forming matrimonial alliance with the mercantile classes. Nor do they refer to any of their son's or daughters married off to the merchants.

As far as their material and financial condition is concerned, it appears that inspite of their complaints most of them were well-off. Surat Singh who keeps on lamenting about the paucity of income, bought a house in a prosperous neighbourhood of Lahore for the sum of Rs.700. Balkrishan Brahman is found despatching large sums to his family at a time when he is bemoaning of paucity of good jobs. At no point does Farid Bhakkari complain of being short of money or resources. Bhimsen had his own house and gardens at Aurangabad which from time to time he kept on repairing. Even Itimad Ali Khan, while all the time complaining of his poverty, admits owning a house at Ahmadabad.

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1. See my "Mutasaddis of the Port of Surat during the Seventeenth Century", PIHC, Burdwan, 1984.

A perusal of the works of these seven lower bureaucrats provide us with some interesting information regarding the material conditions of this class. Thus Surat Singh informs us that a petty official, Khwaja Udai Singh spent Rs. 3000 in 1630-31 on the construction of a well attached to a dargah at Lahore.<sup>1</sup> Similarly Khwaja Hari Chand, a pargana level official is mentioned by Surat Singh, as was leading an ostentatious life.<sup>2</sup> Bhimsen mentions Shaikh Abdul Wahid, the munshi of Shaista Khan, who received only Rs. 100/p.m. led a life rivalling that of high nobles.<sup>3</sup> Itimad Ali Khan too provides similar examples. Abdus Samad, the Amin and Faujdar of Jahanabad, he says, had established a pura (small town) in the name of his son which brought considerable income to his descendants down to 1717-18. This property, we are informed included orchards, a sarai and Turkish baths.<sup>4</sup> These examples can be multiplied. But these are sufficient for us to contest the observations of Moreland that these functionaries were not monetarily satisfied or well off - though of course exceptions were there.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Tazkira-i pir Hassu Taili, op. cit., f. 176(a).

2. Ibid, ff. 75(a)-(b).

3. Nuskha-i Dilkusha, op. cit., f. 21(a).

4. Mirat-ul Haqaiq, op. cit., f. 139(a).

5. Moreland, India at the death of Akbar, op. cit., pp. 263-65. See also pp. 73, 77, 78.

As far as their mode of education and training is concerned, sufficient information is not available. But from stray references a rough picture may be formed. Balkrishan Brahman was initiated in the field of Persian literature in the Maktab of a certain Abdul Majid, who, he says, was a scholar of repute. From him he gained the expertise in Persian idioms and metaphors by daily copying, without any break, the words and drafts of the great munshis and dabirs. For nine long years he remained a student of Shaikh Jalal Hisari who made him by prepare rough drafts and then personally correcting them. For the knowledge of arithmetic and accountacy he had to get himself employed in the office of the hakims and amils. Farid Bhakkari mentions Mir Abul Qasim Namkin, Mulla Mustufa Jaunpuri and Mulla Muhammad Thattawi as his teachers. It was Abul Qasim who had trained him in the art of versification and penmanship. To learn military skills Bhimsen had to go to Mir Abdul Mabud, the Darogha-i Topkhana when he was between 7 and 14 years of age. In other words, education in the madarsas was not enough and the officials training could only be completed by getting enrolled under the tutorship of the various experts in different fields.

Apart from Itimad Ali Khan, all of the officials studied were assigned comparatively low offices at their first appointment, and only when they had gained expertise in their fields, were they assigned positions with higher responsibilities. Bayazid was given a very petty assignment in 1543-4 when he joined the service of the Mughals. Farid Bhakkari was much disappointed by his initial rank of 65 sawars when he enrolled in the Mughal service as the wakil of Abul Fath Dakhani, a relative of his in 1592; and he decided to go back to his native place. Bhimsen was similarly first given a petty job, which he does not define, in 1666-67, the initial year of his service. It is only in the case of Itimad Ali Khan, that a post of much responsibility was initially entrusted to him. His very first appointment in 1693 was as the Mutasaddi of the port of Cambay and soon in 1695 he was elevated to the prestigious office of the Diwan, Suba Gujrat on the death of his father.

Another aspect of importance relates to the officials mobility, promotions and transfers.

Interestingly enough, these low and low- medium ranking Mughal bureaucrats were not bound to one master, but kept on shifting from the service of one noble to the other. Thus Bayazid Bayat had been in the service of



three nobles before joining the Imperial service. He served Husain Quli Sultan Muhrdar for four years. On his death he joined the service of Khwaja Jalaluddin Mahmud, where he says, he was not satisfied as he was "not on good terms with the Khwaja's brother". Before he could complete four years with him, he was taken into his service by Munim Khan, with whom he remained for a period of 21 years, until the Khan's death. For the last twenty three years of his active service, Bayazid was employed by Emperor Akbar and was bestowed with Khalisa territories and Imperial offices. Farid Bhakkari's frequency of joining and leaving the service of various nobles was much greater. He changed his masters atleast eight times. Thus he worked at various times under such nobles and granders as Abul Fath Dakhani, Khwaja Baqa, Khan-i Dauran Khwaja Sabir Ali Nasiri Khan, Khan-i Jahan Lodhi, Nur Jahan Begum, Mahabat Khan, Saf Shikan Khan and Sarandaz Khan Qalmaq. Similar is the case of Bhimsen. Before joining Rao Dalpat Bundela, as his Secretary, Bhimsen had worked under five nobles.

This mobility was not confined to the frequent changing of master's alone. We have seen that none of the bureaucrats remained fixed to his post for more than a few years. Thus within a span of 55 to 56 years of his

career Bayazid Bayat held around twenty posts. Farid Bhakkari during 59 years of his career held twenty-one posts. Bhimsen on his part reports of having held fourteen posts in fortyone years. Itimad Ali Khan held around twenty administrative posts in a span of thirty years. As far as Surat Singh, Balkrishan Brahman and Isardas Nagar are concerned, we are not informed regarding their total tenure. Still we know that they had held at least, eight, nine and four posts respectively.

Another point which emerges from a perusal of the above biographies is that one person could hold more than one office simultaneously. Thus in 1556, Bayazid Bayat held the charge of the Gates of the Kabul Fort, the charge of the Topkhana and the responsibility of the distribution of rations in the army. Then in 1585 he was the Darogha of the Imperial mines and mint at Fatehpur, and the Darogha of Imperial Secretariat. Farid Bhakkari likewise held between 1630 and 1642 the offices of Diwan, Bakhshi, Amin and Waqia Nawis of Bir in Deccan. Finally, Itimad Ali Khan, in 1696-97 was the Bakhshi I as well as Waqia Nigar, Swanah Nigar, Darogha-i Topkhana and Darogha-i Dagh-wa Tasiha of the army of Prince Bedar Bakht in the Deccan.

It is also apparent that the members of the lower bureaucracy were not attached to particular localities or regions. Bhimsens family came all the way from the north to the Deccan in pursuit of jobs. Itimad Ali Khan traversed the major portion of Mughal territory in pursuit of a good job. Farid Bhakkari was recruited in Persia, remained at Kabul, and was posted in such far flung areas like Jaunpur and Hisar Firoza, Agra and Banaras. He was also posted for sometime in Sarkar Ujjain and Chunar, and later passed his retired life at Lahore. Surat Singh, Balkrishan Brahman and Isardas Nagar also kept moving from place to place in search of jobs and offices.

As far as their religious outlook is concerned, the officials seem to have been rather custom bound and faithful to their religion. But apart from Bayazid Bayat and Farid Bhakkari, none of them seem to have been blessed with excessive zeal. Even Farid Bhakkari's orthodoxy was confined to his firm belief in all the hindus going to the Fire of hell. He was a sympathiser of Suhrawardi order of Sufi'ism which gave no quarter to non-muslims. Being a conservative Sunni he appears to hold some grudge against the followers of Shi'i doctrines.

Bhimsen was a devout hindu who was inclined to visit the religious pilgrimage sites, but was free from ~~fanaticism~~. Not at a single spot does he directly criticized or even objects to the controversial jiziya. Infact he was against any sort of sectarian conflicts. The same is the case with Balkrishan Brahman and Isardas Nagar. Surat Singh, being a disciple of a disciple of Pir Hassu Taili, a malamatiya saint at Lahore, was of a liberal disposition, never followed any rituals and appears to furnish an ideal model for a Hindu-Muslim religious assimilation.

In their political views all the seven appear to have visualized their future as bound to the fortunes of the Mughal Empire. They saw most of the problems which they faced, from the point of view of the interests of the Empire. But this approach did not hinder them from criticizing what they saw as defective or unjust aspects of Mughal administration.

We have seen Bayazid's attitude towards the non-payment of the sanctioned pay due on his jagir. Surat Singh criticizes the bungling of the local officials. Yet at one place we find him justifying a similar act of his pir, Shaikh Kamal when he approved the act of a ganungo in forging the village records.

Another sort of mal-practice to earn larger profits by the lower officials: the profits from conversion of coins, from Shahjahani to Alamgiri, in the process of transmitting the collecting to the Central treasury are referred to by Balkrishan Brahman, who criticizes a Mahajan for indulging in it.<sup>1</sup>

Bhimsen too is quite frank in his criticism of incompetent officials. He was also critical of the fact that incompetent and un-professional men had been appointed to the position of official scribes, who then engaged in all sort of mal-practices including bribery.

Interestingly enough it appears that in contrast to the Middle classes in Europe, these bureaucrats had little or no interest in Science and Technology. All that concerned them was their personal employment and monetary gain being content with the traditional culture they had inherited.

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1. Letters of Balkrishan Brahman, op. cit., ff.27(a)-(b).

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