

**LIBRARIES & LIBRARIANSHIP
OF
ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL INDIA**

By

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1960

ATMA RAM & SONS

DELHI . NEW DELHI . CHANDIGARH . JAIPUR . LUCKNOW

Published by
Ram Lal Pury
of
ATMA RAM & SONS
Kashmere Gate, Delhi-6

Branches

Hauz Khas,
University Enclave,
Chawra Rasta,
17, Ashok Marg,

NEW DELHI
CHANDIGARH
JAIPUR
LUCKNOW

Printed by
S. P. Dhawan
at The Central Electric Press
80-D, Kamla Nagar, Delhi-7

*To
My Wife
Sieuli Datta*

Contents

CHAP.	PAGE
Introduction	1
I. Early Monastic and Other Institutional Libraries	12
II(a). Libraries of Western and Southern India	36
II(b). Archives of Ancient India	48
III. Royal and Important Private Libraries of the Sultanate Period	50
IV. Libraries of the Mughals, The Minor Muslim Kingdoms, The Marathas and the Contemporary Hindu Centres of Learning	60
V. The Libraries of the Early European Settlers of South India and Bengal and the Library of Tipu Sultan	88
VI. Writing Materials Through the Ages and Introduction of Paper	104
VII. Binding of Manuscripts and Books Through the Ages	133
VIII. Illumination and Illustration of Manuscript and Books	144
IX. Library Techniques and Administration	166
X. History of Printing in India	197
<i>Bibliography</i>	225
<i>Index</i>	237
<i>Errata</i>	248

Introduction

1. OLD AND MODERN DEFINITION OF A LIBRARY.
2. SCOPE OF THE PRESENT WORK.
3. SOURCES AND SOURCE MATERIALS.

1. OLD AND MODERN DEFINITION OF A LIBRARY

THE phenomenal spread of literacy and formal education through books in Europe from about the middle of the nineteenth century and social changes brought about by the industrial revolution have changed the entire conception, organisation and administration of libraries, whether institutional or public, all over the western world. Even in countries that were for centuries economically backward, social, political and economic changes have been taking place in a quickened tempo from about the beginning of the century, and with the spread of literacy and formal education through books libraries in the oriental world too have come to mean quite a different institution than they had been through centuries. Through a process of evolution libraries of the contemporary world have reached a stage where they have more or less a common attitude and approach, common aims and objectives and more or less uniform systems of organisation and administration.

It is perhaps necessary to know what libraries in the ancient and medieval world were like, what were their aims and objects and how they were organised and administered, so as to enable us to get a clearer perspective of the library situation in the contemporary world. It is with a view to this as well as to satisfy modern man's curiosity in respect of human achievements of the past that serious studies have been made in the field of the libraries of ancient civilizations, for example, of Egypt and Babylon, of Greece and Rome and of the medieval Christian world. These studies have revealed that some of the tools, techniques and methods of ancient and medieval libraries, borne by tradition and practice, have

continued in those of modern libraries and they have profited by them. Besides, enquiries into the methods, practices and organisation of ancient and medieval libraries of the Western world have given us a better insight into the social and cultural life of the people of those days.

It is common knowledge that in ancient and medieval India, indeed right upto the end of the eighteenth century, libraries were considered as important centres of learning and a most significant medium of education and wisdom. Emperors, kings and nobles therefore reared up and maintained libraries of their own and so did the various religious and monastic organisations. In recent years, with growing interest in modern libraries and librarianship, we are increasingly becoming interested to know what these libraries were like, how they were organised and administered and what were their aims and purposes. Our interest has naturally resulted in stray excursions into the field of ancient and medieval libraries and here and there a few papers have been published or incidental references have also been creeping into chapters of books on libraries and librarianship or history of Indian education. But, unfortunately, no serious and systematic attempts have so far been made to give a more or less integrated picture of libraries of ancient and medieval India. This volume purports to be an attempt in this direction and it aims at serving the same purpose in India as similar attempts have done in respect of libraries and librarianship of the Western world.

The modern definition of "a library (from Latin "Liber" *i. e.* book) is a collection of printed or written material arranged and organised for the purpose of study and research or of general reading or both. The organisation ranges from a system of great complexity with catalogues and indexes and other records, a binding department, a secretariat and a large staff, to the simple arrangement with perhaps a list of books, which suffice for the owner of the smaller private library."*

Generally, modern libraries include many books, a whole separate building and librarian but even if the books are few and even it is only the owner who is at the same time the

keeper, it is still recognised to be a library, if the books are kept for use and not for sale.

In the western world the two terms "Library" and "Bibliotheka" are used to denote the place where books and manuscripts are kept. The former is derived from the Latin root "Liber", *i. e.* book whence the term "Librarium" *i. e.* a place where to keep manuscripts and books. The word "Bibliotheka" is derived from the Greek word "Biblos" or "Byblos" whence the word "Biblion", *i. e.* a book and "Theka" means a case or cabinet; hence "Bibliotheka" is literally a book-case or a collection of books.

In ancient and medieval India the following terms were generally used to denote a collection of granthas or Pustakas (manuscripts generally, and since the introduction of printing, also books).

Nibandha-Pustaka-Sthāna¹

Dharma-gaṅja²

Grantha-Kuthī³

Jñāna Bhāndār⁴

Pustaka Bhāndār⁵

Saraswatī Bhāndār⁶

Bhāratī Bhāndagāras⁷

Saraswatī Mahal⁸

Kitāb Khānā⁹

Punthi Khānā¹⁰

Vidyāśālā¹¹

Gātā Ghar¹²

1. Arthaśāstra. Ed. Śhāmaśāstry, p. 62.
2. History of Indian Logic, Vidyā Bhūsan, p. 516.
3. Trikānda : (Viśva-Koṣha, p. 603).
4. Jain Chitra Kalpadrum : Sarabhi Nawab.
5. Annual Report of the South Indian Epigraphy, 1936-37, pp. 81-82.
6. Annual Report of the South Indian Epigraphy, 1938-39 No. 139 and Hyderabad Archaeological Series No. 8.
7. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 93.
8. A descriptive catalogue of the Sanskrit Mss. in the Tanjore Maharaja Serfoji's Saraswatī Mahal Library. Tanjore, P.P.S. Sastry, Vol. I.
9. Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi, I.H. Qureshi.
10. J.O.R. Vol. XXVII, p. 143.
11. Studies in Indian Literary History, Vol. II, p. 122-36.
12. Chitipatre Samāj Chitra, Viśva-Bhāratī, Vol. 2, p. 483.

The Arthaśāstra mentions among others a public institution named Akṣapatala which included the officers of accounts (Gānaniky-adhikāra) and in which an officer (Adhyakṣha) held the charge of a depository of chief books (Nibandha Pustaka-sthāna).

The terms "Dharma-gaṅja" means a "mart of religion" and it was used to denote the library-quarter of Nālandā University. "Dharma-gaṅja" consisted of three splendid buildings by the names of Ratna-sāgara, Ratna-dadhi and Ratna-raṅjaka.

"Grantha-Kuthi" literally means "the book house". The Sanskrit root "Grantha" means to keep things together binding through a chord. In India the term was used for manuscripts as the leaves of the manuscripts were usually kept tied by stringing them with a chord. In South and Western India Jñāna, Pustaka and Saraswatī Bhāndār or Mahal were used to denote a library. "Jñāna" means "knowledge" and "Saraswatī" means "the goddess of learning" and when these terms are combined with "Bhāndār" or "Mahal" *i.e.* "Store-house", they stand as the store-house of knowledge or the abode of the goddess of learning. The other term "Pustaka" is derived from Avestan. It is derived from "Post" which stands for things piled up one upon another and sewn and bound together. In India "Pustaka" means "Book" and "Pustaka-Bhāndār" or "Pustaka Sthāna" means "Store-house of books". The other name used for library is Bhāratī-Bhānda-gāras, which means Treasury (Bhānda-gāras) of the goddess of speech (Bhāratī).

During the time of the Delhi Sultānate and the Imperial Mughals central administration was organised into several departments and each department was known as Kārkhānā (workshop). Among the various departments "Kitāb-khānā" was one. Kitāb-khānā literally means the department (Khānā) of books (Kitāb). Hindu rulers of the late medieval period did not like the Arabic word 'Kitāb' and in its place used "Punthi" *i.e.* manuscripts. Punthi-Khānā therefore means the department of manuscripts.

The Ākāśabhairava Kalpa manuscript which depicts an account of the Vijayanagar dynasty is housed in the Saraswatī Mahal manuscript library of Tanjore and may be dated in the

fifteenth century.

In Paṭala 32 of the said manuscript, we find detailed description regarding construction of the inner apartments of the royal palace. One of these apartments was known as Vidyā-śālā or manuscript-room which generally housed the royal collection of manuscripts and books.

During eighteenth and nineteenth centuries libraries of Bengal were known as Gātā Ghar. The term "Gātā" comes from "Grantha" and "Ghar" from "Gṛha" or room.

2. SCOPE OF THE PRESENT WORK

In ancient and medieval India literacy or formal education through books was the privilege of the very few. It was confined strictly to the uppermost social strata of the population—the Brahmins and Kshatriyas and within the confines of the monastic organisations. At a later period the boundary was extended so as to include the upper strata of the bureaucratic officials and account-clerks maintained by the trading and commercial communities. Though exceptions are known—women were practically excluded as well as the lower social and economic classes. It follows, therefore, that the libraries were few and far between and were almost an exclusive possession of royal and feudal courts and scholarly individuals of the priestly classes and the various religious and monastic organisations. Besides, printing did not take root and flourish in India before the sixteenth century. Hence books in the modern sense were unknown and all that these libraries possessed were therefore manuscripts which had to be copied with infinite care and patient labour and often at considerable expense. Copying of manuscripts was, therefore, considered as a work of religious merit, a kind of ritual, so to say. Thus there grew up a class of literates whose profession seems to be copying of manuscripts. These were the people who were recruited by emperors, kings and feudal lords for writing and multiplying of manuscripts for the court libraries.

The situation in India was the same as what obtained in medieval Europe before the invention of printing. Such individual and institutional libraries were the only centres of educa-

tion of ancient and medieval India. It was round these libraries that there grew up what came to be known as Pāthśālās, Tols and Chatuspāthis (Schools and Colleges) or even larger colleges and universities (Vihāras and Mahā-Vihāras) maintained by the temples and monastic orders. There in the secluded corners of the houses of individual gurus or of the institutional and feudal libraries or of monastic organisations—knowledge was imparted from generation to generation, manuscripts were written and copied, multiplied and preserved. Scholars, priests and monks were almost exclusively the preservers and custodians of these treasures, and were thus the sole authority of interpretation, multiplication and preservation of manuscripts.

There is a Sanskrit saying KOŚAVĀN ĀCHĀRYAH¹³ which means that to have a library is to be an educator. This certainly gives us an idea of the prestige, privilege and responsibility of one who possessed a library.

Ancient India touched excellence in most of the branches of knowledge, created great religious systems and developed independent schools of philosophy. Thus, she became the light of the East and an important centre of knowledge and wisdom. Her attainment was not the product of one day or one generation but a cumulation of experiences of many centuries. Books and manuscripts, being the social mechanism for preserving the racial memory, were accumulated and in course of time there must have grown all over the country innumerable store-houses of knowledge.

The purpose of the present volume is to trace the historical growth and development of libraries and librarianship of ancient and medieval India (upto 1850 A.D.). This work, as no comprehensive and scientific investigation were made on this line, is intended to fill up an important gap and enlighten an important aspect of the cultural history of India.

From the archaeological and literary evidences it is evidently clear that nature, vandalism, sectarian and communal feuds or jealousies as well as migration of large collections and manuscripts and books to sister countries account for the destruction and acute dearth of direct evidences about libraries of ancient

13. The Library Movement, Madras Library Association, 1929, p. 130.

and medieval India.

Besides these, loss of precious collections due to wanton negligence has been appalling. How the libraries of ancient and medieval India were damaged and destroyed will be discussed in detail in the following chapters.

An account of the historical evolution of Indian libraries and librarianship will naturally include the different expressions of the subjects like writing materials, binding, illustration as well as technical and administrative aspects like classification, cataloguing, preservation and management. The introduction of printing which ushered a new age and pushed up the book-production and library development in this country also comes within the scope of this work. In this volume I have attempted to present all these topics so that their inter-relationship will become apparent and the history of libraries and librarianship of ancient and medieval India will appear in perspective as an important factor in the history of Indian culture.

It will not be out of place to say a few words on the limitations of the different topics which will be mainly discussed with a view to substantiating the main theme. It is very natural that in presenting such a vast and diverse material there should appear some deficiencies particularly in matters where there is dearth of evidence and where highly specialized knowledge is required.

For the convenience of readers, I summarize here the different chapters of this volume.

The first chapter, Early Monastic and Other Institutional Libraries of India, portrays the history and characters of monastic, university and imperial libraries with brief outline of the educational background of the country. The travel diaries of Chinese travellers—Fa-Hsien, Hiuen-Tsang and I-Tsing have been utilised.

In the second chapter an attempt has been made to describe the growth and development of Jain Jñān Bhāndārs of western India as well as Saraswatī Bhāndārs of South India.

The third chapter deals with the history of royal and important private libraries of the Sultānate period with special emphasis on the then educational and cultural activities.

The fourth chapter describes the royal and important private

libraries of the Mughal period. This chapter also includes the story of the library activities of contemporary Hindu centres of learning, libraries of the Deccani Sultāns as well as of the Marāthas.

In the next chapter I have discussed the educational activities of the Christian missionaries of South India and Bengal and their contributions towards the development of libraries in India. Here an attempt was made to complete the story by narrating the continuity of the theme upto A.D. 1903 when Lord Curzon converted the Calcutta Public Library into a national institution. An account of the library of Tipu Sultān who died in A.D. 1799 is also included in this chapter.

On the writing materials through the ages and introduction of paper there exists a bulk of literature. I have rearranged the whole thing and added some fresh facts.

The next two chapters deal with : (a) Making of books and binding through the ages and (b) Illustration of manuscripts and books.

The ninth chapter relates the systems of knowledge as well as book classifications, cataloguing and methods of manuscript preservation. It also includes an account of library personnel, their pay and status as well as of the existing remains of old library buildings.

Introduction of printing made revolutionary changes in the field of libraries and librarianship. In the tenth or last chapter an attempt was made to complete the survey by discussing the story of the history of printing in India. I have fully utilized the valuable researches done by Mr. Priolkar on this subject.

3. SOURCES AND SOURCE MATERIALS

The sources and materials available for the writing of a history of ancient and medieval libraries of India, may be broadly divided under two broad heads—literary and archaeological. Literary sources include both foreign and indigenous material. From the accounts of Nearchos, who as a general of Alexandar, accompanied him in the Indian invasion; Strabo, an Asiatic Greek, who wrote his geography in the first quarter of the first century A. D. and of Curtius, another Greek writer,

we get, though brief, valuable information regarding writing and writing materials. The Chinese pilgrims Fa-Hsien (399 A.D.), Hiuen-Tsang (630 A.D.) and I-Tsing (671-675 A.D.) as well as many other Buddhist pilgrims from neighbouring countries visited India in search of piety and religious literature. These pilgrims visited many educational centres and the accounts left by them contain valuable information regarding ancient libraries and their administration. Among the Arab writers Abu Riham (known as Alberuni) depicted in the official records and imperial biographies authentic account of contemporary India. In *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsari* Minhāj-ud-din has left a detailed account of the Muslim rule in India and its cultural pattern.

Lastly, the records of the European travellers and Jesuit priests who visited the country since the middle of seventeenth century contain valuable information on India's cultural and religious history. Among them Bernier's *Travels in the Moghul Empire*, Maclagan's *The Jesuits and the Great Moghuls*; Niccolus Manucci's *Storia Do Mogor* and Jean Baptist Taverniers as well Thevenot Careri, Ovington, Mandeslo's travel diaries recorded vivid description of contemporary Indian libraries, writing materials and other activities centering round manuscripts and books.

Indigenous literary sources may be divided into three groups according to periods—(a) early Brahminical, Jain and Buddhist literatures, (b) medieval court chronicles, biographies as well as autobiographical sketches, official records and (c) modern pioneer works.

In the early literatures of India reference to writing and other allied topics is very meagre and widely scattered.

The early Brahminical literatures—the Rg-veda, Atharva-veda, Upaniṣads and the Rāmāyana furnish us with scanty references to writing and the various schemes of knowledge classification. The Mahābhārata contains a vivid picture of using Granthas or manuscript by Mahārāja Janaka.

The Purāṇas tell us of distribution of sacred literature and also indirectly refer to a crude idea of block printing. To Kautilya's Arthaśāstra we owe the first direct reference to a collection of manuscripts (Nibandha Pustaka sthāna) and also

reference to writing materials and forms of writing. Trikānda furnishes us with another reference to "Grantha-Kuthī" or the "house of the manuscripts".

Court epics and dramas like *Mudrā Rākṣhasa*, *Mālatī Mādhava*, *Sakuntalā*, *Vāsavadattā* etc. contain important portions with some accounts of contemporary writing and writing materials.

Among the Buddhist literatures the Jātakas furnish us with a large number of references to writing, varied types of writing materials and the use of manuscripts for daily reading.

The cultural history of the Sultānate period is revealed through works like *Tabaqāti-i-Nāsari* by Minhājus Sirāj, *Tārikhi-Firūz Shāhi* and *Wāqī'āti-Mustaqī*. Here we find some vivid pictures how the Sultāns patronised learning and promoted the cause of writing as well as established libraries.

Bābur-Nāmā refers to the imperial library founded by Bābur. The story of the imperial library of Akbar and its varied activities are faithfully depicted in *Akbar-Nāmā* and *Āin-i-Akbari*. For the reconstruction of the history of the libraries of nobles and high officers of the court, *Tārikhi-Badauni* is highly useful.

I have utilized *Tūzuki-Jahāngiri* and *Waqi'ati-Jahāngiri* for reconstructing the history of Jahāngir's library and the then library activities. To supplement the account contemporary records left by Jesuits proved very useful.

Another helpful author is Ferista whose work is full of facts about the country around him. From his account I have gathered many useful information and events regarding the libraries of Deccani Sultāns. *Siyarul Mutakharin* mentions briefly the account of the library of Ālivardi-khān, Nawāb of Bengal.

Of the important modern works which deal with the varied aspects of library history and account of writing materials used in ancient India we must mention the name of Buhler's *Indian Paleography*. This piece of pioneer work, inspite of the recent researches made on this line, carries the stamp of authenticity and scholarship. Dr. R. K. Mukherjee's *Ancient Indian Education*, which contains useful passages on the history of ancient Indian libraries, considerably helped me.

To trace the historical evolution of medieval and modern

libraries, Frank Penny's *Church in Madras*; Jadunath Sircar's *Mughal Administration* as well as *Anecdotes of Aurangzib and Historical Essays*; N.N. Law's *Promotion of Learning in Muslim India* and *Promotion of Learning in India by early European Settlers upto about 1800 A.D.*, *Jain Chitra Kalpadrum* and A.K. Priolkar's *The Printing Press in India* proved very useful.

The archaeological finds which serve as the most direct and authentic records may broadly be divided into : Inscriptions and Monuments. The inscriptions, both official and private documents, are invaluable for the elucidation of facts. These documents refer to the grant of land and villages for construction and maintenance of temple libraries; to donations made for the purchase of manuscripts and also for the extension of monastic libraries as well as for their maintenance.

The remains of ancient library buildings which survived cruel onslaught of time and nature are living testimonials to history. The archaeological department explored the ruins of Nālandā university which was famous for its library. The present Kamālmaulā mosque of Dhāra once housed the college and library of King Bhoja. The existing Nilkantheśwar temple at Udayapur was partly used as the library built in 1059 A.D. by Udayāditya. Sher Mandal, the library building of Humāyun, the college of Muhammad Gawan in the city of Bidar, Ādil Shāhi library of Bijapur, the Tanjore Saraswatī Mahal library are the other important landmarks.

CHAPTER 1

Early Monastic and Other Institutional Libraries

1. THE BACKGROUND.
2. LIBRARIES IN THE FIFTH CENTURY A.D.
(ACCOUNT OF FA-HSIEN).
3. LIBRARIES IN THE SEVENTH CENTURY A.D.
(ACCOUNT OF HIUEN-TSANG).
4. I-TSING'S ACCOUNT OF LIBRARIES OF SEVENTH CENTURY A.D.
5. LIBRARIES ATTACHED TO IMPORTANT CENTRES OF EDUCATION IN EASTERN AND CENTRAL INDIA :—
 - (a) NĀLANDĀ
 - (b) VIKRAMŚILĀ
 - (c) ODANTAPURI
 - (d) SOMĀPURI
 - (e) JAGGADAL
 - (f) MITHILĀ
6. LIBRARIES ATTACHED TO IMPORTANT CENTRES OF EDUCATION IN WESTERN INDIA.
 - (a) VALLABHI
 - (b) KANHERI
7. THE IMPERIAL COLLECTIONS OF MANUSCRIPTS.

1. THE BACKGROUND

THE history of the evolution of libraries is an essential chapter in the history of the intellectual development of civilization and there is always an intimate relation between the development of libraries and the spread of knowledge through recorded communication. Use of writing and education through written records naturally stimulated the practice of their collection and preservation which ultimately made ground for the formation of libraries.

Since the development of libraries in the sense of collections of manuscripts and books as repositories of recorded knowledge has everywhere been largely dependent on the evolution of the educational process, it is necessary to refer briefly to the educational system of this country from the earliest times to the introduction of the printing press later in the sixteenth century and the beginning of modern education in the nineteenth.

The generally accepted and practised method of communication in India was by word of mouth and learning by rote through repetition of the spoken words. Whether it was in the Brahminical or Buddhist, the Jain or Islamic system the usual practice was the same as referred to above. It is, however, necessary to mention that the discovery of chalcolithic civilization in the Sind Valley and elsewhere in India has revealed to us two inkpots, one from Mohenjo Daro and the other from Chahnu Daro and a very large number of seals bearing pictographs which presuppose that writing must have been well-known in pre-historic India. But we have not been able to find a key to the reading of the pictographic writings which must have been obsolete by the time India came to witness the rise and spread of Indo-Aryan civilization. The Vedas and the Vedāngas *i.e.* the Upaniṣads, Brāhmaṇas and the Āraṇyakas are certainly records of the earliest phases of the Indo-Aryan civilization, but we have as yet no evidence to prove that they were written down contemporaneously *i.e.* during the time C. 2000 B.C. to 600 B.C.—to which they are generally ascribed. We have no evidence to show that they are actually written down on any kind of writing material though it can be presumed that they may have been written down in some script or other.

There are some inscriptions which carry the date of writing back to Pre-Asokan times.¹ But factually speaking, from the point of view of archaeology the positive evidence of writing in

1. (a) The Eran coin legend.
- (b) Baṭṭiprolu relic casket.
- (c) Taxila coin Bramhi legend.
- (d) Mahāsthān Stone pillar Inscriptions.
- (e) Sohgaura Copper plate.
- (f) Piprahwa Buddhist vase.
- (i) Baḍli Inscriptions of Ajmer.

large scale in India does not antedate the Mauryan period. The inscriptions of Asoka are distributed over a wide area in India. The script and the method of writing of these very records, seem to suggest that writing in India could not have reached such an advanced state without the previous practice of several centuries. The list of various subjects and treatises which seem to have been taught to the Upaniṣadic Āśhramas or in the Buddhist vihāras or in the days of Pāṇini lead one to assume that a considerable amount of manuscripts must have been in existence and they were used at any rate by the priestly intellectuals and there must have been collections of such manuscripts at important centres of study.

“When we remember the vast mass of literature, even in the fourth or fifth century B.C. and the extensive use of writing for administrative purposes in the time of Aśoka, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that books were much more extensively in use than is now commonly believed or was admitted by priestly writers and monks.”²

In the Bairat rock edict which is preserved in the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, King Asoka addressed the monks and nuns of the Saṃgha in the following words :

I desire, Sirs, that most of the monks and nuns should constantly listen to and reflect on the following Dharma texts—the Vinaya-Samutkarṣhah, Ārya-Vāśah, Anāgatbhayāni, Munigātha, Mauneyasūtram, Upatishyapraśnah and the Rāhul-āvavādaḥ which was spoken by the Blessed Buddha concerning false speech. Likewise, the lay followers of the Buddha, both male and female should listen to and reflect on these Sacred texts.

This record very clearly suggests that already in his time a considerable body of Buddha's sayings had been reduced to writing and they were prescribed for daily perusal and recital of both monks and laity.

Since the days of Pāṇini (4th cy. B.C.) production of literary works in the forms of manuscripts was in vogue. Pāṇini mentions granthas or composed works (iv. 3. 87 ; iv. 3. 116) ; the

2. The History and Culture of Indian People Ed. R.C. Mazumdar, Vol. 2, p. 585.

different kinds of authors as Mantrakāra, Padakāra, Sūtrakāra, Gāthākara, Śloka-kāra and Śabda-kāra (iii. 2.23) ; principles for naming books as Kṛita Grantha (iv. 3.116) and Adhikṛitya Kṛite Granthe (iv. 3.87) as well as method of planning treatises or Tantra-yukti (iv. 3.87). The method of planning treatises was also known to Kautilya, Charka and Suśruta.

In the Epic age manuscript reading was prevalent in spite of patronising oral teaching. In the Śānti-Parva of Mahābhārata Vasiṣṭha said to Mahārāja Janak : "Your Majesty (Janaka), you have studied Vedas and other śāstras but you failed to understand the proper significance of them. Your study of the Vedas and other Śāstras will bear no fruit. Those who are able to study the Books (Granthas) and cannot understand the significance and inner meaning of them, study uselessly. They only can carry the burdens of the books. But this study becomes fruitful for those who really understand the meaning of the books and can answer proper the related questions from the books."³ This passage is a concrete evidence of the practice of reading of manuscripts and also indicates why it was discouraged in ancient India.

Writing was extensively used in Buddhist India and reading of manuscripts was widely practised as is evidenced from ampler references to various types of writing and writing materials as well as frequent use of the words "Sippam Vācheti", *i. e.* getting the sciences read in the Jātakas. In the Tundila-Jātaka the Bodhisattva caused a book of judgment to be written and said : "by observing this book you should settle suits" (iii. 292). The Śetaketu-Jātaka furnishes us with a more concrete case which positively indicates the existence of manuscripts and their use. It also incidently mentions how a manuscript is to be wrapped in coloured cloth and kept on a painted stand (iii. 235).

From these archaeological as well as literary evidences it is clear that writing and reading of manuscripts were regularly practised in ancient India since the fourth century B.C. and it is very natural to presume that there grew and developed collections of manuscripts at important centres of learning as well as in private collections.

3. Mahābhārata, Śānti Parva, 305.

To these important centres of learning richly endowed with royal grants, scholars from all parts of India and abroad used to come to receive instructions at the feet of profound savants of the day. The Jātakas constantly refer to two such important centres—Takkaśilā and Benaras, where students from different parts of India used to come for higher studies. It is very natural that all these institutions maintained their respective manuscript collections, and many original works and commentaries were written there.

So far an attempt was made to survey the accounts of writing, composing new texts and their uses from the archaeological as well as Buddhist and Brahminical texts.

To reconstruct the history of early Indian libraries we now turn to the descriptions left by the Chinese pilgrims, who visited the Buddhist holy places and monasteries, studied there and copied manuscripts. The accounts left by Fa-Hsien, Hiuen-Tsang and I-Tsing, being first hand evidences will be authentic and will help us to corroborate the textual and archaeological evidences as described.

2. LIBRARIES IN THE 5TH CY. A. D. (Account of Fa-Hsien)

The first anchorage in the history of ancient Indian libraries is furnished by the travel diary of the famous Chinese traveller Fa-Hsien, who visited India in 399 A.D. and stayed in this country upto 414 A.D. The chief purpose of his visit was to pay homage to the holy Buddhist places as well as to collect the Vinaya texts for the restoration of practices of the Buddhist churches of China⁴.

As a devout Buddhist, Fa-Hsien visited important Buddhist holy places and institutions of North India. Thus his travel diary depicts a faithful picture of a part of Buddhist India and furnishes us with fractional but valuable data.

Fa-Hsien came to India by land-route. He reached India via Khotan and Kaslgar. In the following lines he testifies that the Buddhists of those places used to study Indian manu-

4. The Travels of Fa-Hsien, Giles, p. 1.

scripts :—

“From this point travelling westwards, the nations that one passes through are all similar in this respect, except that the Tartar dialects spoken by them differ one from the other. At the same time, all those who have ‘left the family’ (priests and novices) study Indian books and Indian spoken languages.”⁵

Entering India from north-western part through Punjab and Mathura he reached the middle kingdom. In his diary he described the socio-religious traditions of the people of the middle kingdom with special reference to the maintenance of monasteries and the use of written documents as follows :—

“From the date of Buddha’s disappearance from the world, the kings, elders and gentry of the countries round about built shrines for making offerings to the priests and gave them land, houses, gardens with men and bullocks for cultivation. Binding title-deeds were written out and subsequent kings have handed these down one to another without daring to disregard them in unbroken succession to this day.”

Further we get some interesting features of the then monastic life from the following account :—

“In places where priests reside, pagodas are built in honour of Sāriputra, Mugalan and Ānanda (Buddhas to come) and also in honour of the ~~Abhidharma~~, the Vinaya and the Sūtras (Divisions of the Buddhist canons).”⁷ Buddhist texts were held in great esteem and stupas were erected at monasteries in honour of teachers as well as of important texts. The teachers and students of these subjects—the Abhidharma, the Vinaya and the Sūtras used to make offerings to these stupas.

In spite of all these, the oral tradition was still in force in many parts of Northern India and when Fa-Hsien visited those places, he failed to obtain written records of the Disciplines.⁸

From Benaras the pilgrim came to Pātaliputra. At the Pātaliputra monastery he stayed for three years “learning to write and speak Sanskrit (or Pali) and copying out the Discip-

5. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

lines".⁹ The Vinaya text found here was the most comprehensive and complete. He also obtained at the library of the Pātaliputra monastery extracts from the Abhidharma (the philosophical portion of the Canon) in about 6000 stanzas, a complete copy of the Yen (?) sūtra in 2500 stanzas as well as a roll of the Vaipulya Parinirvana in 5000 stanzas.

On his way back he stayed at Tamruk, the famous sea-port at the mouth of the Hooghly for a period of two years. He found there 24 monasteries with resident priests and spent his time copying out Sūtras and drawing pictures of images.¹⁰

From the account left by Fa-Hsien it is evidently clear that writing and copying of texts were not unknown in India in the 5th century A.D. The important Mahāyāna monasteries maintained their respective libraries. Fa-Hsien worked in the libraries of Pātaliputra and Tamruk monasteries and thus fulfilled his mission of collecting religious texts for the Buddhist Samghas of China.

3. LIBRARIES IN THE 7TH CENTURY A. D. (Account of Hiuen-Tsang)

After Fa-Hsien the next important Chinese traveller who visited this country in 629-645 A. D. was Hiuen-Tsang. He stayed in for sixteen years and the purpose of his visit was "to see its far famed shrines and all visible evidences of Lord Buddha's ministrations . . . to procure these books in original language and to learn the true meaning of their obtruse doctrines from orthodox Pundits in India".¹¹

The narrative left by him is highly interesting and depicts an authentic picture of the socio-religious condition and monastic library developments of Northern India in between 629—645 A.D.

In the narrative he first stated a general description of India. While describing the written language and official records of the Hindus he proceeds to tell—"Their system of writing was

9. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66.

11. Yuan Chwang : Watters : p. 11.

invented, as is known, by the deva Brahma who at the beginning instituted as patterns forty seven (written) words. These were combined and applied as objects arose and circumstances occurred; ramifying like streams they spread far and wide becoming modified a little by place and people."¹² These statements corroborate the fact that Sanskrit writing was prevalent at that time and the people were used to preserve and maintain the official annals and state papers. The following lines will testify that not only they maintained the records and state papers but necessary provisions were made for systematic preservation. The description runs—

“As to their archives and records there are separate custodians of these. The official annals and state papers are called collectively ni-lo-pi-tu (or ch'n); in these good and bad are recorded and instances of public calamity and good fortune are set forth in detail.”¹³

Further, we get a glimpse from his account of the then Brahminical education system and a very important fact regarding writing of the Vedas in manuscript form by the Buddhists who were converted Brahmins.¹⁴

The Chinese pilgrim in course of his journey reached Gandhāra and there he found nearly 1000 Buddhist monasteries in bad state of preservation. The great vihāra of Puruṣapura or Peswar built by Kaniṣka was a famous seat of learning. “From the time it was built it had yielded occasionally extraordinary men and the Arhats and Śāstra makers by their pure conduct and perfect virtue were and still are active influence.”¹⁵ Here in this monastery Abhidharma-Koṣa-Śāstra and Vibhāṣā-lun were composed by Vasubandhu and Manoratha and the chambers where they lived and composed the famous works were specially marked.

After visiting Udayana, Bolar and Taxila Hieun-Tsang reached Kashmir. We come to know from his life that on arrival there he spent one night at the Jayendra monastery.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 152.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 154.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 160.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 205.

The next day he went to the palace on royal invitation and stayed there for two years. The king of Kashmir appointed some scores of Brethren with the illustrious Bhadanta at their head to wait on him. He also invited the pilgrim to read and expound the scriptures, gave him twenty clerks to copy out manuscripts and five men to act as attendants.¹⁶ These lines amply prove the existence of a splendid palace library of Kashmir. Reading of manuscripts was a regular feature and there was provision for copying them.

With reference to Kaniska's love for learning and regular reading habit he says—"This king of Gandhara . . . was a great and powerful sovereign whose sway extended to many peoples. In his leisure hours he studied the Buddhist scriptures, having a monk every day in the palace to give him instruction."¹⁷

King Kaniṣka was moved by the contradictory interpretations of the Buddhist texts. To make a true commentary he ordered collection of all available Tripitaka texts and invited all the important Buddhist scholars to a council. "This council composed 100,000 stanzas of Upadeśa śāstras explanatory of the canonical sūtras, 100,000 stanzas of Vinaya-Vibhāṣhā-śāstras, explanatory of the Vinaya, 100,000 stanzas of Abhidharma-Vibhāṣhā śāstras explanatory to the Abhidharma. For this exposition of the Tripitaka all learning from remote antiquity was thoroughly examined, the general sense and the true language (of the scriptures) were again made clear and distinct, and the learning was widely diffused for safe-guiding of disciples. King Kaniṣka had the treatises, when finished, written out on copper plates and enclosed these in stone boxes, which he deposited in a tope made for the purpose."¹⁸

We thus find that there were important monasteries around the region known as Gandhāra. These monasteries were centres of learning where scholars used to teach and compose new works and they invariably maintained their respective libraries. Besides these, the kings and nobles also had their personal libraries. Hiuen-Tsang worked for two years in the

16. *Ibid.*, p. 259.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 270.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 271.

royal library of Kashmir and the king graciously appointed twenty scribes to copy the manuscripts. Further reading of manuscripts was a practice in those days and even the kings like the medieval and modern aristocrats used to study the scriptures with the help of a reader. The reference to Kaniṣka's council and the collection of the texts of Tripitaka for compilation of a distinct commentary strengthen the authenticity of the above facts.

It is to be noted that manuscript writing, their collections and presentation was a long continued practice and we read the accounts in the story of the past existences of an arhat when as an elephant he carried sacred books from East India to Kashmir.¹⁹

The pilgrim proceeding with his descriptions relates the history of the Jetavana monastery which was then in desolate ruin. Watters recovered the following account from the Chinese texts :—

“The original Jetavana monastery, which was probably neither very large nor substantial and was not well protected, was destroyed by fire in Buddha's life time. After the death of Sudatta, the place was neglected as there was no one to look after the grounds and buildings. A new vihara was afterwards built on a greater scale but this also was burnt to the ground. At one time, we read, the place was utterly abandoned by the Buddhist Brethren and was used as the king's stables, but the buildings were again rebuilt and reoccupied by Buddhist monks. In its palmy days, before its final destruction and abandonment the Jetavana monastery must have been a very large and magnificent establishment...There were chapels for preaching and halls for meditation, mess-rooms and chambers for the monks, bathhouses, a hospital, libraries and reading rooms with pleasant shady tank and a great wall encompassing all. The libraries were richly furnished, not only with orthodox literature but also with Vedic and other non-Buddhistic works, and with treatises on the arts and sciences taught in India at the time.”²⁰

19. *Ibid.*, p. 281.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 385-86.

The monastic libraries, as is evidenced from the above description, usually maintained reading rooms attached to them and collection of manuscripts on all branches of knowledge both religious and secular, arts and sciences. This liberal attitude of a monastery glorifies the aims and objects of the ancient libraries of India of which Jetavana monastic library was one.

The pilgrim then visited the Śvetapur Monastery in the Vaiśāli country. In this monastery which had "bright coloured halls of two storeys" he obtained a copy of the Mahāyāna treatise—Bodhisattva-piṭaka."²¹

During his tour the Chinese pilgrim visited Southern Kośala (Vidharbha or Berar). There he found about one hundred monasteries. Among them the Pigeon monastery of Fa-Hsien "had cloisters and lofty halls...In the topmost hall Nāgārjuna deposited the scriptures of Śākyamuni Buddha and the writings of the Pusas..."²²

After sixteen years Hiuen-Tsang returned home and brought with him besides many other things a large number of manuscripts which numbered 657 distinct texts in 520 cases.²³ The texts are as follows :—

Sthaviravāda Sūtras and		
Śāstras and Vinaya	...	14 treatises
Mahāsaṅghika	...	15 "
Mahiśāsaka	...	22 "
Samitiya	...	15 "
Kāśyapiya	...	17 "
Sarvāstivāda	...	67 "
Mahāyāna Sūtra	...	224 "
Mahāyāna Śāstra	...	192 "
Dharma Gupta	...	42 "
Hetu Vidyā	...	36 "
Śabda Vidyā	...	23 "

On returning back, Hiuen-Tsang maintained contact with the authorities of Nālandā and they used to exchange letters. The Chinese pilgrim lost a bundle of manuscripts while ship-

21. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 80.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 201.

23. *The Life of Hiuen-Tsang*, Peking 1959, pp. 208-9.

wrecked in the Indus. In one of his letters to Sthavira Prajñādeva he enclosed a list of lost manuscripts and requested him to send them.²⁴

Not only from China but Buddhist pilgrims also from Japan and Korea visited India for further study as well as for copying and collecting Buddhist texts. About fifty seven pilgrims from China, Japan and Korea visited India in between 629 A.D. and 671 A.D. with the same mission.²⁵

Immediately after Hiuen-Tsang, a Korean monk by the name of Āryavarman came to India. He was well versed in the Vinaya and Abhidharma doctrines and copied many Sūtras at Nālandā. Two other Korean monks—Hwui Nich and Taou Hi came to Nālandā at the same time. The former studied there and wrote many Sanskrit works.²⁶ I-Tsing while living at Nālandā one day came across the library of this monk scholar which consisted of Chinese and Sanskrit works.²⁷ Taou Hi also lived some years at Nālandā where he studied the books on the Great Vehicle and wrote (or copied) about 400 chapters on Sūtras.²⁸

In 655 A.D. during the reign of the T'ang emperor Nadi, a Śramana of Central India reached China with a rich collection of more than 1500 Mahāyāna and Hinayāna texts.²⁹

4. I-TSING'S ACCOUNT OF LIBRARIES IN THE 7TH CY. A. D.

Stirred up by the great personalities of Fa-Hsien and Hiuen-Tsang the next important Chinese traveller who visited India with the purpose of studying the authentic Vinaya rules and to collect Buddhist manuscripts was I-Tsing. He reached India by the sea route in 672 A.D. and stayed thirteen years in India.

24. These letters possibly written in Sanskrit are now preserved in Chinese translations in the annals of the Tang dynasty.

25. India's Diplomatic relations with East, Saletore, p. 319.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 309.

27. Indian Literature in China and Far East, Mukherjee, p. 279.

28. India's Diplomatic relations with the East, Saletore, pp. 309-10.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 313.

The travel diary of I-Tsing furnishes us with valuable information to supplement the account³⁰ of the monastic libraries as derived from the previous records left by Fa-Hsien and Hiuen-Tsang.

As he came from China by sea route he reached the port of Tāmralipta and stayed there for four months where he minutely observed the daily lives of the monks. During his time a Bhikṣu named A-ra-hu-la-mi-ta-ra (Rāhulamitra) was living in the monastery and he used to read Ratnākuta-sūtra every day, which contained 700 verses. The Bhikṣu was not only a master of the three collections of the scriptures but also thoroughly versed in the secular literature of the four.

With reference to the rules of ordination and behaviours between teacher and the taught, I-Tsing informs us that a student after knowing the larger Vinaya-pitaka reads the Sūtras and Śāstras.³¹ Thus reading was largely practised in the monasteries during the time of I-Tsing and there were regular text books both for primary as well as specialized education.

Regarding the common properties of the Saṅgha and how the properties should be used he narrates as follows :—

Medical substances are to be kept in a consecrated store, to be supplied to sick persons when needed. Precious stones, gems and the like are divided into two portions, one being devoted to pious objects (Dharmika), the other to the priests own use (Saṅghika). The former portion is spent in copying the scriptures and in building or decorating the "Lion-Seat". The other portion is distributed to the priests who are present.

Wooden chairs are to be made common property. But the scriptures and their commentaries should not be parted with but be kept in the library to be read by the members of the order. Non-Buddhist books are to be sold and (the money acquired) should be distributed among the resident priests.³²

We can conclude from the above narration that monks at that time used to maintain their private libraries and besides

30. A record of the Buddhist religion as preached in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671-695) by I-Tsing, p. 63.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 104.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 192.

these, each monastery for the use of members of the order used to maintain a general library.

After I-Tsing many Chinese pilgrims also visited India and among them Taou-Lin, a native of Kingchau (in Hupeh) studied Sanskrit three years at Tāmralipta and he stayed a few years at Nālandā for the study of Koṣa.³³

Tan-Kwang, the next pilgrim came by sea-route and reached Arakan. He received the patronage of the king, who had a Buddhist temple built, books written and images of Buddha made. After him Hiuen-Ta reached Tāmralipta. He came to Nālandā for further study and on his way back home he carried all his books and translations about 1000 volumes.³⁴

In 759 A.D. U—K'ong (Dharmadhatu), a Chinese pilgrim reached Kashmir via Central Asia. He stayed at Nālandā for ten years. He returned to China in 790 A.D. and brought with him the Sanskrit texts of the Daśabhūmi and Daśabala Sutras and other works.³⁵

Between 964 and 976 A.D. the Chinese emperor sent a body of three hundred monks under the leadership of Ki-ne to India in search of Buddhist relics and Indian palm leaf manuscripts.³⁶

In about 969 A.D. a Buddhist priest of India brought some Sanskrit books and envoys continued to bring them from thence.³⁷ In 996 A.D. a batch of Indian priests who arrived in ships as far as the mouth of the river (che-gan) bringing to the emperor a brass bell, a copper bell, a statue of Buddha and some Fan (Indian) books written upon leaves of the pei-to tree (palm leaf).³⁸ The next group from West:rn Yin-too came to China between 1025 and 1031 A.D. and brought Fan books as presents.³⁹

The last year in which a Hindu monk came from India was 1053. Che-Kisiang, a śraman of West India came in that year

33. India's Diplomatic relations with the East, Saletore, p. 319.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 319.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 322.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 336.

37. J. A. S. B. Vol. VI, p. 72.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

39. *Ibid.*

with his companions bringing probably the last book to China.⁴⁰

5. LIBRARIES ATTACHED TO IMPORTANT CENTRES OF EDUCATION IN EASTERN AND CENTRAL INDIA

The Buddhists of India like the Benedictines of Europe placed special emphasis on writing manuscripts and their collections. The Jains and Hindus also made their respective contributions in the field of learning. They patronised education and literary activities, established innumerable upāśrayas and temple colleges. From the archaeological as well as literary evidences it is clear that all these institutions maintained their respective libraries.

Buddhist monastic institutions of Nālandā, Vallabhī, Vikramaśilā, Odantapurī etc. attained great reputation and became important centres of advanced learning in India. These institutions, besides teaching, encouraged writing, editing and translating manuscripts as well as propagated Indian culture in far off countries. All these institutions maintained suitable libraries to facilitate the studies of thousands of students both Indian and foreign.

Besides the Buddhist institutions, Hindu rulers like Bhoja and Udayāditya of Malwa and centres of Brahminical culture like Mithilā took great initiative in establishing libraries.

Here we shall discuss about the libraries attached to important centres of education in Eastern and Central India as Nālandā, Odantipurī, Vikramśilā, Somāpurī, Jagaddal and Mithila as well as libraries of Western Indian as Vallabhi, Kanhera and Bhoja's imperial library.

NĀLANDĀ

Among the reputed centres of Buddhist learning and teaching of Central and Eastern India, Nālandā occupied a unique place and played a dynamic part in the field of ancient Indian education. Nālandā, which is about 40 miles to south-

40. Indian Literature in China and Far East, Mukherjee, p. 324.

west of Patna was an unimportant village in the beginning of fifth century A.D. The continuous patronage by the Gupta emperors as well as by the Pāla and Sena rulers of Eastern India largely contributed to the growth and development of this university.

* During the time when Hiuen-Tsang visited the place the establishment was in its full glory and there were about 5000 students studying there. I-Tsing also lived at Nālandā (675 A.D.) and during his time the university was a reputed centre of learning and there were more than 3000 monks residing in the establishment.

Students from all parts of India as well as from foreign countries like China, Korea, Tibet etc. used to get admitted and the standard of admission test was very high.

According to the Tibetan accounts Nālandā was equipped with a well maintained and huge library called Dharmagañja or Piety Mart.⁴¹ It consisted of three huge buildings called (1) Ratnasāgara (2) Ratnadadhi and (3) Ratnarañjaka. Among them Ratnadadhi was a nine-storeyed building which housed the sacred manuscripts—Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra and Tantric works such as Samāyguhya etc.

The University was at its highest reputation and international glory in the ninth century A.D. From the Nālandā copper-plate grant⁴² of Devapāla Deva we come to know that Devapāla Deva in compliance with the request of Bālaputra Deva the ruler of Suvarṇadīpa (Java) which was made through an ambassador granted five villages, four of which lay in the Rājagriha (Rājgir) and one in the Gaya District of Śrī Nagar Bhukti (Patna Division) for the increase of merit and fame of his parents and himself and for the sake of income toward the blessed Lord Buddha, for various comforts of the revered Bhiksus of the four quarters and for writing the Dharma ratnas or Buddhist texts, for the three jewels and for the upkeep of the monastery built at Nālandā at the instance of the said king of Suvarṇadīpa.

41. Pag-Samjon-Zang edited in the original Tibetan by Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Dās, p. 92.

42. E. I. Vol. 17, p. 310.

From the above evidence it is clear that the king of Java and Sumātra, being attracted by the magnificence of the university, erected a monastery there and induced the king of Bengal—Devapāla—to grant five villages towards it maintenance. It is interesting to note that there was the regular practice of copying manuscripts as a portion of the said gift was made reserved for copying manuscripts of the university library (Dharma-ratnasya lekhanārtham).

Towards the close of the 12th century A.D. the university and its magnificent library were destroyed by the Muslim invaders. According to the Tibetan sources the temples and monasteries of Nālandā were repaired by a sage called Mudita-bhadra after the Turushka invasion had passed off. But the final destruction was brought about by living embers thrown into the establishment by two very indignant Tirthaka mendicants, who were insulted by some young novices at Nālandā. This conflagration consumed Ratnadadhi.⁴³

VIKRAMŚILĀ

King Dharmapāla founded the Vikramśilā monastery in the eighth century A.D. which was a reputed centre of learning for more than four centuries. It was situated 24 miles to the east of Bhāgalpur, Bihar.⁴⁴

The fame of the university attracted students from all parts of India and a large number of scholars from Tibet. From the Tibetan sources we come to know that Buddha-Jñānapāda, Vairochana-Rakshita, Jetāri, Ratnākara Śānti, Jñāna-Śrī-mitra, Ratnavajra, Abhayankaragupta, Tathāgata-Rakshita and other scholars of this university wrote number of manuscripts in Sanskrit and translated many of them into Tibetan.⁴⁵ The most famous scholar of Vikramāśilā Dipankar Śrī-Jñāna wrote nearly 200 volumes and went to Tibet on the invitation of Tibetan king Chan Chub to reform Buddhism of that country.⁴⁶

43. *Medieval School of Indian Logic* by Dr. S.C. Vidyābhusan, p. 146.

44. J. A. S. B. VI. 7.

45. *Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow*, Dās, p. 58.

46. *Indian Teachers of the Buddhist Universities*, Bose, Madras, 1923, pp. 32-105.

From the same sources we further know that in the twelfth century A.D. there were 3000 scholars residing at Vikramśilā and there was a splendid library attached to it.

Like many other libraries and educational centres of India, Vikramśilā university and its library were destroyed by the Moslems under Bakhtiyār Khilji who seemed to have mistaken it for a fort.

Regarding the library of the university we gather the following information from *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsari*—

“There were great number of books on the religion of Hindu (Buddhists) there ; and when all these books came under the observation of the Mussalmans, they summoned a number of Hindus that they might give them information respecting the import of these books ; but the whole of the Hindus had been killed. On becoming (with the contents of these books) it was found that the whole of that fortress and city was a college and in the Hindu tongue, they call a college Bihāra or Vihāra.”⁴⁷

ODANTAPURI

The Odantapurī university probably near the town of Biharshariff, existed long before the Pāla kings came to power in Magadh. This university was also a reputed centre of learning and it served as a model for the first Tibetan monastery Bsam-ye which was built in 749 A.D. under the supervision of the great Buddhist author Śāntarakṣhita.⁴⁸

The possession of Magadha by Mahīpāla I, gave the Pālas mastery over the Mahāvihāra Odantapurī and these kings expanded the university by endowing it with a good library of Buddhist and Brahminical works.⁴⁹

The destructive fury of the conquests of Muhammad Bakhtiyār Khilji destroyed this monastic university and the Turko-Afgans raised a fortress on the site of the university.⁵⁰

47. *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsari*, Raverty I, p. 552

48. *Medieval School of Indian Logic*, Vidyābhusan, pp. 124-125.

49. *Ancient Indian Education*, Mukherjee, p. 596.

50. *The Socio Economic History of Northern India (11th & 12th Cy.)*, B.P. Majumdar, p. 164.

SOMĀPURI

The university of Somāpurī (Pāhārpur in North Bengal) occupied a position like Vikramaśilā since the days of Dharmapāla (769-827 A.D.). Atiśa Dipankar lived here and translated into Tibetan in collaboration with other scholars the *Madhyamakaratnapradīpa* of *Bhāvaviveka*. This university like Vikramaśilā and Nālandā maintained its own library. In the middle of the eleventh century A.D. this university was destroyed by fire. It was renovated by monk Vipulśrīmitra but it failed to regain its former glory.⁵¹

JAGGADAL

King Rāmapāla, who reigned between 1084 to 1130 A.D., established the Jaggadal monastery in Varendra, North Bengal in the city of Ramāvati. This university produced many reputed scholars and authors like Mahāpandita Vibhūtiçhandra, author and translator of a large number of Vajrayāna and Kālaçharayāna works; Dānaśīla, the famous author of Tantric Buddhism; Mokshākara Gupta, the logician, Śubhankara Gupta, Dharmakara Gupta etc. According to the then pattern of educational institutions, this university, a centre of great scriptural activity, possessed a magnificent collection of manuscripts.

It is interesting to note here that Pandita Dānaśīla composed the original works—"Pustakapāthopāya" *ie.* the means of reading a book. The original Sanskrit text is lost but the author himself translated it into Tibetan which is known as—Glegs blam bklug pahi thabs.⁵²

Among the many other less known Vihāras of Bengal of the eleventh and twelfth century A.D., Devikata in North Bengal and Pandita vihāra in the Chittagong district of East Bengal deserve special mention as seats of Buddhist learning and culture.⁵³

51. E.I.CCI, p. 97.

52. Tanjur, Mdo, Ze, 267, 7-268; Cordier, Vol. 3, p. 452 & I. H. Qly. V. 3, p. 856.

53. I. C., p. 231.

Besides teaching, there were regular provisions in these institutions for writing, editing and translating manuscripts and this necessarily involved the existence of libraries in line with the tradition of other contemporary universities.⁵⁴

•MITHILĀ

Mithilā, a centre of Brahminical culture of high antiquity flourished again during the rule of Karnāṭaka dynasty (1150-1395) and Kāmeśvara dynasty which ruled between c. A.D. 1350-1515. This centre of learning produced remarkable scholars like Jagaddhara, Gaṅgeśha, Vardhamāna, Śankara Miśra, Vāchaṣpati Miśrā etc. Jagaddhara wrote commentaries on a variety of texts : the *Gitā*, *Devī Māhātmya*, *Meghadūta*, *Gīta Govinda*, *Mālatī Mādhava* etc. and original treatises on erotics, such as *Rasika-Sarvasva* and *Sangīta-Sarvasva* ; Gangesha, the founder of the Navya Nyāya school wrote the monumental work *Tattava-Chintāmani*, Śankara Miśra added to the list several learned works on Nyāya and Ethics and Miśaru Miśra wrote an original book on Vaiśeṣika known as *Padārtha Chandri*.⁵⁵

Thus, Mithilā developed in keeping with the then tradition, a very important library and it rigidly guarded all the manuscripts with special love and care. They were so passionately in love with the manuscripts that they did not allow the students to take back their class notes and copies of manuscripts done with them after completion of their study. Later, Nadīā maintained this tradition.

Vāsudeva, the founder of the New school of Logic of Nadīā after completion of his study at Mithilā committed to memory the entire books—*Tattva Chintāmani* and *Kusumānjali* (the metrical part) as he was not permitted to take back with him the copies he made during his study period at Mithilā. Thus by enforcing the practice of preserving manuscripts, for some reasons or other, Mithilā developed a very good library.

Further, manuscripts formed an important feature of the final examination of Mithilā. They introduced a process of

54. Bāngaleer Itihāsa, N.R. Ray, p. 726.

55. Ancient Indian Education, Mukherjee, pp. 596-97.

examination known as Śalākḥā Parīkṣhā by which an examinee had to explain any page of manuscript which was pierced last by a needle.⁵⁶

Mithilā maintained its all India importance till the end of fifteenth century A.D.

6. LIBRARIES OF IMPORTANT EDUCATIONAL CENTRES OF WESTERN INDIA

Like Northern and Eastern India there were innumerable monasteries and Maths all over Western India. Among them, the Mahāvihāra of Vallabhī which was situated on the western coast of India, near modern Wala in Kathiwar, and the Kanheri monastery deserve special mention.

VALLABHĪ

The Mahāvihāra of Vallabhī, which flourished under the royal patronage of the Maitraka kings during 475 to 775 A.D. attracted scholars from all parts of India.⁵⁷ As Nālandā specialised in Mahāyāna, this university was famous for its Hīnayāna courses of studies. Besides religious training and education, it also provided for secular subjects like Śilpavidyā (art), Abhidharmakośa (Methaphysics), Cikitsāvidyā (Medicine), Hetuvidyā (Logic) and probably Gaṇitam (Arithmetic). From the statement of Hiuen-Tsang, we come to know that Sthirmatī and Gunamatī were once in-charge of the monastery which consisted of "some hundred Sanghārāmas with about 6000 priests".⁵⁸ Each of these Sayghārāmas was like a separate college.

This reputed centre of learning had a well-equipped library and this is corroborated by the grant of Guhasena dated A.D. 559, where we find a provision is made out of the royal grant for the purchase of books for the library (Sadharamasya Pustakopakra...).⁵⁹

The university was paralysed for some time due to Arab

56. History of Indian Logic, Vidyābhusan, p. 523.

57. I.A. IV, p. 174.

58. Watters, II, p. 266.

59. I.A. VII, p. 67.

attack, but the successors of the Maitrakas continued their support. Thus, this university maintained its reputation, and attracted students from distant Bengal down to the twelfth century A.D.⁶⁰

KANHERY

Kanhery monastery, the other important centre of learning on the west coast flourished in the ninth century A.D. during the reign of Amoghavarsha.

Epigraphical sources inform us that Gomin Avighṇakara, a devout worshipper of the Sugata, came there from the Gauda country, and made suitable endowments as follows for the development of this institution—"Out of the great kindness twenty (Drammas) to please the illustrious holy one; three (Drammas) for the repair of what may be damaged or ruined here in this monastery. For clothes of a worshipful community five (Drammas) shall be expended—for books one Drama. The perpetual endowment amounts to forty Drammas."⁶¹

The inscription records the erection of some buildings at Kanhery and the grant of certain sums of money to be expended for the benefit of the resident monks of the monastery. Library had an important position within the establishment, and the donor did not forget to allocate some money for the purchase of books for the library.

7. THE IMPERIAL COLLECTIONS OF MANUSCRIPTS:

From the earliest times the kings and nobles of India patronised education, and encouraged writing manuscripts and their preservation. The tradition continued uninterrupted till the nineteenth century, when the princes of native states like Alwar, Bikaner, Jammu, Mysore, Tanjore etc. maintained their respective manuscript libraries.

KASHMIR

We have previously discussed about the royal library of

60. I.H.Q., 1949, p. 134.

61. I.A. Vol 13, p. 137.

Kashmir, where Hiuen-Tsang worked for two years. The king of Kashmir appointed twenty scribes to copy manuscripts of the royal library for the Chinese pilgrim.

KĀMRŪPA (ASSAM)

In the seventh century A.D. Kāmrūpa (Modern Assam) produced a very ambitious king Bhāskaravarman who was a great patron of learning. Bhāskaravarman's close association with Harṣavardhana of Kānauj, and the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen-Tsang, led to his association with the famous Buddhist university—Nālandā.

From the Harṣa-Charita of Bāna we find a list of presents, which Bhāskaravarman sent to Harṣavardhana through his trusted envoy Hangshavega. The list included among many other precious things volumes of fine writing with leaves made of Sāchi bark and of the hue of the ripe pink cucumber. (Agaru valkala Kalpita Sancayāni cha subhāsita bhāñji pustakāni parinata pātala patolatimsi). The above evidence tells us that in ancient India gifts of manuscripts were commonly used as token of friendship between two states.

MALWA

The history of the Paramāra kings of Malwa (tenth and eleventh century A.D.) furnishes us with another distinguished case of royal patronage to education. Paramāra kings were great bibliophiles, and during this time Malwa became famous for her literary and cultural activities.

Special mention should be made of king Bhoja, who ruled from 1018 to 1060 A.D. He was himself an author of great reputation,⁶² and encouraged learned men and seekers after knowledge.⁶³

During this time many educational institutions were established in Malwa. King Bhoja founded a college (modern Kamālmaulā Mosque) at Dhāra, the capital city, and caused

62. History of Paramāra Dynasty, D.C. Ganguly, pp. 278-79.

63. Āin-i Akbari (Jarrett) Vol. II, p. 226.

the image of Vāgdevī to be erected in 1033 A.D.⁶⁴ Even to-day the Kamālmaulā mosque is known to the public as Bhojaśāla or Bhoja's school, which contains charts depicting alphabets and rules of grammar. In the same building the king established his famous library which contained the works of kings, poets and scholars of Malwa. In 1160 A.D. king Siddarāja Jayasimha conquered Malwa, and transferred the royal library to Anhilvad.⁶⁵

In keeping with the tradition, Udayādita built the beautiful Nīlkantheśvara temple at Udayapur in 1059 A.D.

Udayāditya built, besides the main temple, four smaller temples on the four corners of the courtyard and four square vedis for reading "Vedas", one on each side of the courtyard. "Each hall for reading Vedas is a square building, the roof of which is supported by four massive pillars. The ceiling is, as usual, built of overlapping stones. There are four balconies, one on each side of the hall, two of which are closed with massive trellises. Each of these balconies is provided with a raised slab of stone which served as a seat for the reader."⁶⁶

The corner temples and reading halls were partly destroyed by Muhammad Tugluq, who erected a mosque on these ruined structures.

64. History of Paramāra Dynasy, D.C. Ganguly, p. 85

65. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 93.

66. History of Paramāta Dynasty, D.C. Ganguly, p. 262.

CHAPTER II(a)

Libraries of Western and Southern India

1. LIBRARIES OF WESTERN INDIA (Jñān Bhāndārs)
2. LIBRARIES OF SOUTH INDIA (Saraswatī Bhāndārs)

1. LIBRARIES OF WESTERN INDIA (Jñān Bhāndārs)

THE foregoing accounts show that Western India was an important centre of learning and there were many reputed monastic-cum-educational institutions.

During the Maitraka rule (from fifth to eighth century A.D.), Western India became a stronghold of the Jains, and a scene of great scriptural activities. The period extending from the ninth to the thirteenth century of the Christian era was marked by a vigorous outburst of literary activities on the part of the Jaina writers. Works in various branches of literature, both religious and secular were written by a host of authors, and as a result innumerable libraries were established at Jasalmer, Pattan, Surat, Cambay, Ahmedabad, Dholkar, Karnavati, Vijapur etc. These libraries were known as Jñāna Bhāndārs or Store-houses of knowledge.

It is stated in the Jaina Chitra Kalpadruma that as a result of a terrible famine which occurred in the fifth century A.D. Jain libraries grew up in order to fulfil the void caused by the death of a large number of Jaina monks, who were the custodians of the Jaina sacred literature. A council of the Jaina monks was called in Vira Samvat 920 (*i.e.* 453 or 513 A.D.) at Vallabhīpur in Kathiwar to arrange the writings of the Jaina sacred lores and other literature. The council was presided by Devardhigani-Kṣhma-Śramaṇa.¹

1. Jaina Chitra Kalpadruma, pp. 14-15.

This event is known as "Pustakārohana of the Jaina Āgamas" or reduction of the Jaina canon.² The canonical and other literature of the Jains were put into writing, where Śramaṇa Devardhigani stands like a lighthouse to end darkness of the unrecorded period, and ushered a new age of library development all over Western India.

Thus, the Jaina scholars gave up the practice of transmitting knowledge orally, when it was realised that manuscript writing of the canonical and other literatures was absolutely necessary. It is why we find that during the Maitraka rule Western India was pulsating with scriptural activities. Scholars like Dhaneśvarasūrī, the author of *Śatrunjaya-Mahātmya*; Jitāyasa, the author of the commentary on *Viśrānta-Viśyādharavara*; Yakṣha, the author of *Nimittaśṅga Bodhini*; Malla, the author of *Nāyachakra* and many others composed, edited and translated innumerable Jaina manuscripts. Further, to encourage reading habit it was made compulsory in the Jaina monasteries that the monk should read Jaina scriptures at least three hours a day.³

The eulogies of the ancient Jaina manuscripts and historical biographies such as *Dharmabhyudayamahākāvya*, *Prabhavaka*, *Kumārpāla-prabandha*, *Sukratsamgraha Kāvya*, *Upadeśha Tarangini*, *Kumārpālarasa*, *Vāstupāla Tejapālarasa* etc. corroborate the fact that Jaina Śramaṇas accepted the all pervading convention of preaching for the development of their libraries, and all the people of the society, who craved for fame, were also attracted towards this activity. Moreover, to strengthen the movement, Ujamānu and Jñānpujā festivals were introduced. Thus, the infusion of a spirit of piety and religiousness largely contributed to the educational and cultural development of Western India.

In the history of the Jaina library movement the names of two monarchs Siddharāja Jayasimhadeva (1094-1143 A.D.) and Śrī Kumārpāladeva (1143-1174 A.D.) will remain ever famous. During this time Pattan, the capital city, became a great centre of library activities, and it continued its tradition till the end of

2. Ancient History of Saurashtra, K. J. Virji., p. 180.
and History of Jaina Monachism from Inscriptions and Literature :
Deo., pp. 315, 424-25, 452.
3. Jaina System of Education : Das Gupta, p. 3.

the sixteenth century A.D.

Śrī Siddharāja appointed three hundred scribes who were engaged in writing manuscripts on each branch of philosophy. It was this king, who ordered for 1,25,000 copies of *Siddhahema Vyākaraṇa* to be presented to the students. *The Prabhaka Charita* and *Kumārpāla Prabandha* abound with such references.

In the Tapāgachha Jain library of Pattan only one illustrated manuscript of *Siddhahema Vyākaraṇa Laghuvṛitti* written on palm leaves was found. The illustrations of the said manuscript corroborate the facts stated in the *Prabhaka Charita*. One of them has a sentence reading—"A teacher teaches the grammar to the students" with a pictorial representation of the same.

Moreover, Siddharāja-Jayasimha on the conquest of Malwa (about 1140 A.D.) transferred to Anhilvad the royal library of king Bhoja of Dhara and there it was amalgamated with the court library of the Chalukyas. The Bhārati-Bhāndagāras of the Chalukya Viśāldeva or Viśvamalla (1242-1262 A. D.) furnished, according to an unpublished Praśasti, the copy of the *Naiṣadhiya*, on which Vidyādhara wrote the first commentary of the poem, and the manuscript of *Kāma Sūtra*, according to which Jaśodhara composed his *Jayamangalatikā*. One of the manuscripts of the Rāmāyana in the library of the university of Bonn has been derived from a copy of Viśāldeva's collection.⁴

It is said that king Śrī Kumārpāla Deva established 21 big libraries or treasure houses of knowledge and ordered to write golden lettered manuscripts of which there are references in *Kumārpāla Prabandha* and *Upadeśha Tarangini*.

Among the Jain ministers interested in the activity of writing books—the name of Śrī Vāstupāla-Tajpāla, Pathadashah and Madanmantrī are famous. Besides them, the other ministers, who also inspired manuscript writing activities, and establishment of Jain treasure houses of knowledge, are Vimalashah, Amar Bhatta, Vāg Bhatta and Karamashah.⁵ Vāstupāla established three big libraries at the cost of eighteen crores.⁶

The passionate zeal and active interest of kings and princes

4. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 93.

5. Jaina Chitra Kalpadruma, pp. 90-94.

6. G.O.S. Vol. LXXVI, p. 33.

stimulated the elite of the society and they also vigorously helped the cause of establishing libraries all over Western India. But the saddest part of this chapter tells us how religious fanaticism and sectarian jealousy played diabolical part in the destruction of the valuable intellectual wealth of the Jains.

• Ajayapāla, the successor of Kumārpāla, being a hater of Jainism, tried to destroy all traces of the religion. Apprehending the danger, Udayana, the minister and others transferred a major portion of manuscripts from Pattan to Jasalmir and other places. Whatever is preserved to-day at Jasalmir are the remnants of the palmleaf manuscripts transferred from Pattan.

Many of the Jain libraries founded by Vāstupāla were ruthlessly destroyed by the Muhamadans. At the end of the thirteenth century, when Gujarat passed into the hands of the Moslems, many valuable collections of manuscripts were burnt as a result of the devastations caused by them.⁸ Hindu fanatics also joined hands and burnt Jain collection of manuscripts.⁹

Last but not the least, since the time of Col. Tod Gujarat particularly Pattan became the centre of attraction for manuscript hunters. Being lured by money, the keepers of the libraries sold their collections. As a result, many of the Jain manuscripts have gone to the foreign countries and to other provinces of India.¹⁰

But inspite of so many vicissitudes, even today there are many important private collections in Gujarat, Rajputana and also in Pattan.

A list of the existing Pattan libraries based on the information as supplied by Śrī Lālchānd Bhagavāndās Gāndhī in his descriptive catalogue of manuscripts in the Jain Bhāndārs of Pattan is given below :—

1. The Sanghavi's Pādā collection which belongs to the Laghupośālika branch of the Tapāgaccha. The collection contains 413 palm-leaf Mss.
2. The collection of 2688 paper Mss. and 137 palm-leaf

7. Ibid.

8. Naiṣadhacharita of Śrīharṣa : K.K. Hindi (Ed.), Deccan College, Poona, p. XIX.

9. G.O.S. Vol. LXXVI, p. 37.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

Mss. are deposited in Vakhataji's Seri, Fofaliā Vādā. It is the largest collection at Pattan.

3. The collection of 744 paper Mss. and 4 plam-leaf Mss. preserved in Vādi Pārśhanāth's temple. The paper Mss. are copies of the old palm-leaf Mss. and they are translated about 1480-1490 Samvat under the orders of the then existing pontiff of Kharatara Gaccha.
4. 3035 paper Mss., 22 palm-leaf Mss. and 1 cloth Ms. in the collection of Āgaliśeri. The collection contains the sacred books of the Jainas and many Mss. of Jaina Rasas in old Gujarati.
5. The Sāgar's Upāśraya collection and the Bhāva Sāgar collection contain 1309 and 108 Mss. respectively.
6. The Makā Modī collection consists of 230 paper and 2 palm-leaf Mss. Dr. Kilhorn purchased in the year 1880-91 A. D. 75 palm leaf Mss. for the Bombay Government which previously belonged to the above collection. Now the collection is amalgamated with that of Sāgar's Upāśraya.
7. The library at Bhābha's Pādā contains 522 and 1814=2336 paper Mss.
8. The Vastā Manek collection at present amalgamated with Sāgar's Upāśraya contains 521 Mss.
9. The Khetarvasi collection contains 76 palm-leaf Mss.
10. The Mahāluxmī's Pādā collection contains 8 palm-leaf Mss. and few paper Mss. One of them is a copy of an anthology by Laksmana.
11. The Advasi's Pādā collection contains 2 palm-leaf Mss. and some paper Mss.
12. The private collection of Himmatvijayajī.
13. The paper Mss. of Lāvanyavijayajī.¹¹

A critical study of the Jain Bhāndārs shows that they not only contained religious literature but also manuscripts of other faiths and of varied subjects. The detailed study of the library system of the Jainas regarding problems of administration, methods of preservation and the materials used for writing will be discussed in the following chapters.

11. *Ibid.*

The manuscripts of Jain Bhāndārs, which vary from $36'' \times 2\frac{1}{2}''$ to $4\frac{1}{2}'' \times 1\frac{1}{2}''$ in sizes, were mostly written during the reigns of Siddharāja, Kumārpāla, Viśāldeva and Sarangadeva. The oldest dated manuscript so far found belongs to 1062 A.D. but earlier undated manuscripts were also found. The latest palm-leaf manuscript is dated 1497 A.D.

Thus, it can be safely said that like Buddhism, Jainism also largely contributed to the growth and development of libraries of Western India, and passionately encouraged writing and reading of manuscripts on a large scale. History of Indian library development would remain incomplete without reference to the renowned Jain Bhāndārs of which Prof. Peterson says—"I know of no town in India and only a few in the world which can boast of so great a store of documents of such venerable antiquity. They would be the pride and jealously guarded treasure of any university in Europe."

2. LIBRARIES OF SOUTH INDIA (Saraswatī Bhāndārs)

South India has been one of the most dynamic historical regions of the past but from the earliest times she maintained the fundamental unity of Indian culture. In the field of education and learning she also followed the characteristic Indian spirit and pattern, and produced innumerable centres of learning.

All these centres attached to Buddhist Vihāras, Jain Pallis and Hindu Maths played important part in propagating knowledge and culture, and all these institutions had their "libraries of books in all branches of learning which were being copied from time to time."¹

It is however from the tenth century onward the Hindu Maths or temple colleges became the chief centres of higher education. The innumerable temple colleges which flourished during this time were financially aided by property grants made by the kings, nobles and other public benefactions.² The heads of the Maths (Mathādipatis, Mudaliyārs or Jiyārs) were used to supervise the properties and were responsible for their proper

1. History of South India : Nilkantha Śāstrī, p. 310.

2. Education in Ancient India : A.S. Altekar, pp. 282-94.

functioning.

Both epigraphical and literary evidences amply furnish us with detailed information about the administrative set-up, hospital and library arrangements of these temple colleges as well as of other educational institutions like Ghatikā, Agrahār and Bramhapūri.

The existence of libraries known as Saraswatī Bhāndārs, Saraswatī Mahals or Pustaka-Bhāndārs is an established fact, and they became indispensable parts of educational centres of South India.

South Indian inscriptions Nos. 277 of 1913 as well as 604, 671 and 695 of 1916 record various grants in temple colleges. Inscription No. 277 of 1913 recorded that an endowment was made for 108 learned Brahmin families with a provision for a library while inscription No. 679 of 1916 referred to a donation for a library of temple college at Tinnevali district.

The copper plate grant of king Trailokyamalla, a western Chalukyan ruler (1058 A.D.) furnishes us with detailed information regarding the educational institution founded and maintained at Nagai with the help of royal patronage.³ It was a residential institution with provision for boarding and lodging of teachers and the students, and was equipped with a library in charge of six librarians (Saraswatī Bhāndārikas). The inscription further furnishes us with the following details regarding distribution of land as it should be :—

“35 mattar of land under the dam at Aratura and Diggavige (lower Cave) at Nāgavāvi to the expounder of Bhaṭṭadarśana, 30 mattar of land to the expounder of Nyāya, 45 mattar to the expounder of Prabhākara and 30 mattar to each librarian”. This piece of information is a valuable data regarding the pay and status of the librarian and his place in a centre of learning. They also shouldered the responsibilities of the institutions along with the teaching staff, and their pay was not much less than those of teachers. These are the facts which prove that librarians of the Saraswatī-Bhāndārs occupied a dignified and honoured position in the temple colleges and other cultural and educational institutions.

3. Inscription of Nagai : Hyderabad Archaeological Series No. 8.

The inscription in the Ranganātha temple at Śrīrangam describes the instalment of three images of Saraswatī, Veda Vyāsa Bhagavān and Hayagrīva in the Mandapa by the side of the library.⁴ It further states that Nīlakantha Nāyaka of Pālappalli was responsible for the installation. This Nīlakantha was a contemporary of Vīra Rāmanātha (1269 A.C.).⁵

The inscription in the Arutala Perumal temple at Little Conjeevaram dated Vikari, Meṣha Sudi Prathama (29th March, 1359)⁶ where we find that one Vaiṣṇava Dāsa who was invested with the title Brahmatantra Svatantra-Jiyar by God, was directed to establish a Matha with necessary provision for a library. To meet the expenses necessary lands were granted. The following expression “eva teḍina postakangalum veṇḍum upakaraṇaṅgalum”⁷ shows that arrangements were made for proper upkeep of the library. Here “Postakangalum” means manuscript bundles and “Upakaraṇaṅgalum” stands for other requirements for making a library.

The following extract from the Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy, 1936-37 will show the keen interest that was taken by the kings for the renovation and proper upkeep of a library belonging to a matha at Śringeri.

“A record from Vantyaāla, a hamlet of Perduru in South Kanara District, belongs to Buḷka, son of Harihara II, and is dated in Śaka 1328, Vyaya (1406 A.D. August). The king is stated to have been ruling from Vijayanagara, while his governor at Bārakūru was Bāchappa of Goa. This Bāchappa or Bāchanna-Odiya was a governor of Mangalūru and Bārakūru rājyas for three years under Devarāya I (Inscription No. 609 of 1929-30). The present inscription records a gift of the village Bramhāra in Bārakūrunadu and certain incomes from other villages including Kanyāna, Pentama and Belamji to Purnāṅika Kavi Kṛiṣṇna-Bhaṭṭa of Śringeri, for the renovation and maintenance of a library (Pustaka Bhāndāra) belonging to the Śringeri matha, when Narasimha-Bhārati Vodeya of Śringeri who probably succeeded Vidyāranya-tīrtha, was its pontiff. This guru referred

4. Annual Report of the South Indian Epigraphy, 1938-39, No. 139, p. 95.

5. Ibid.

6. J.I.H., VI. 33, p. 197.

7. Ibid.

to as the donee in another record (No. 369 of 1927) from the Kundapur taluk dated in the same year. Kavi Kṛishna-Bhaṭṭa's son named Kavi Śankara-Bhaṭṭa figures in another record (No. 284) from the same village dated in Śaka 1354, Virodhikrit (A. D. 1431) which registers of gift of land made by Chandapa, governor of Bārakūru and Tulu rājyas, under the order of the king Devarāya-Mahārāya ruling from Vijayanagara. This governor is already known from other records copied in this locality. It is learnt that the descendants of this Kavi Kṛishna-Bhaṭṭa have been in charge of the Pūjā of Śivalinga installed at the place where Vidyātirtha, the guru of Vidyāranya, attained Samādhi."

The above extract clearly says that king Bukka Mahārāja in the Śaka 1328, Vyaya, (1406 A.D. August) gave some villages to Purānika Kavi Kṛishna Bhaṭṭa for the renovation and maintenance of the library attached to Śringeri matha. The above information further furnishes us with the names of the librarians. One is Kavi Kṛishna Bhaṭṭa and other is his son by the name of Kavi Śankara Bhaṭṭa referred to in another inscription from the same village dated Śaka 1354, Virodhikrit (1431 A.D.).

Dr. Burnell described the Tanjore Mahārāja Sarabhoji's Saraswatī Mahal Library as one of the largest and most important in the world.⁸ The unique and rich library was till recently the private property of the Rājās of Tanjore (Plate 1).

The Telegu Nāyakas who ruled Tanjore in the sixteenth century were great patrons of learning, and they started the library by collecting the Sanskrit manuscripts written in Telegu character. The library increased in volume during the time of the Marathas, who conquered the country in the eighteenth century. Tanjore Mahārāja Sarabhoji, though deprived of his sovereignty in 1799, made his court the centre of cultural activities, and greatly patronized the library. He added valuable collections

8. (a) Proceedings and Transactions of the 3rd Oriental Conference 1924, p. 713.

A Descriptive catalogue of Sanskrit Mss. in the Tanjore Maharaja Serfoji's Saraswati Mahal Library, Tanjore by P.S.P. Sastri, Vol. 1.

during a visit to Benaras in 1820 to 1830. The valuable collection of Jambunāth Bhaṭṭ, a Maratha Brahmin of Tanjore and his scholarly family was added to it in 1921.

From the Annual Report on Epigraphy for 1898-99, I quote the following details about Jambunāth's collection :—

“He is the eldest of the three brothers and is descended from a family whose influence is reported to have been very great when the Maratha kingdom of Tanjore was in existence. When manuscripts were obtained for the Palace library from Benaras and other places in Northern India, the ancestors of Jambunātha Bhaṭṭa appear to have systematically used their influence to make their collection 'of Sanskrit works. This accounts for the existence in this collection of a large number of ancient manuscripts evidently copied in Northern India. The texts were transcribed by the members of the family, who appear to have been learned men. This, according to the present owner of this library, was how this collection came into existence. The manuscripts are all written in Nagari characters and on loose sheets of paper.”

Regarding the rich collection of the Saraswatī Mahal library greatly patronized by Sarabhoji, we gather the following records from the writings of Mr. Robinson who accompanied Bishop Heber to Tanjore.

“The Rajah received us in his library; a noble room with three rows of pillars and handsomely furnished. On the side there are portraits of the Maratha dynasty from Shahji to Sivaji, ten book cases containing a fair collection of French, English, German, Greek and Latin books and two others of Maratha and Sanskrit manuscripts. In the adjoining room is an air pump, an electrifying machine, an ivory skeleton, astronomical instruments, and several other cases of books, many of which are on the subject of medicine, which for some years was his favourite study.”⁹

In 1922 the collection was further supplemented by very rare additions known as “Kagalkar” and the “Patanga Avadhuta” collections made by Kagalkar and Patanga Avadhuta families of Tanjore.

9. Tanjore Maratha rule in the Carnatic, Hickey, p. 330.

“The former is about 150 and the latter, about 100 years old. The collection made by the Kagalkar family of learned Sanskrit Scholars of Tanjore especially versed in Sanskrit Grammar contains the autograph copies made by some of them of the works composed by themselves and others. Its prominent feature is the collection of works on Sanskrit Grammar. The collection made by Patanga Avadhuta whose descendant settled at Tiruvadamarudur in Tanjore District contains a large number of works on Vedants and Bhakti. Both these collections comprise several Manuscripts which do not already exist in this library.

The attention of the Government of India and through it of the Government of Madras was directed in 1868 to the importance of the examination, purchase or transcription of Sanskrit Manuscripts in Indian Libraries and the framing of printed lists or catalogues of the same. (Proceedings of the Government of India in the Home Department (Public), No. 4338-48, dated Simla, 3rd November, 1868).

In respect of magnitude as well as the range of subjects dealt with, not to speak of the diversity of languages employed, the Tanjore Library is probably second to none among Oriental Libraries in India.”¹⁰

Through untiring efforts made by learned scholar Dr. Burnell, “A classified index to the Sanskrit Mss. in the palace at Tanjore” was published (3 parts) in between 1878-80 in London. Previously Mr. Pickford, Professor of Sanskrit started cataloguing the manuscripts but due to ill health he left this country in 1870. Dr. Burnell’s catalogue is now the only guide of the Tanjore Library yet it is not complete. He omitted entering in his catalogue about 4,000 manuscripts.

The total number of manuscripts of this library is likely to be 25,000. Besides, there are also books in European languages. The manuscripts of this collection are written in about eleven alphabets and are either on palm leaf or on paper.

Regarding the importance of the library Dr. Burnell wrote the following to the Government of Madras in 1873 :—

“It may perhaps be asked if the library is worth the labour

10. Reports on Sanskrit Manuscripts in Southern India. Edited by Hultzsch, 1905.

spent on it. I can answer unhesitatingly that it is. It is now a recognised fact that nearly all Sanskrit works of importance exist in different recensions. The Tanjore library is unrivalled in this respect; it contains several good manuscripts of all the most important ones known as yet, including a few that are new . . . The Tanjore Library, however, contains additional manuscripts of most of the works which I had discovered elsewhere, and this is a matter of great importance.

I believe that this library must, sooner or later escheat to the Government. The preparation of this catalogue will therefore protect property of enormous value. Sanskrit Manuscripts have long been very dear and the cost of making proper transcripts is now very heavy. As far as I can judge, it would not be possible to form a collection like that at Tanjore at a less cost than £ 50,000 but many manuscripts are unquestionably unique.”¹¹

11. Proceedings and Transactions of the 3rd Oriental Conference, Madras, 1924, p. 714.

CHAPTER II(b)

Archives of Ancient India

ARCHIVES or Collection of state papers simultaneously grew and developed with the libraries in ancient India.

We find the earliest reference to archives in Arthaśāstra which mentions the term—Ākshapaṭala.¹ Śhāmaśāstry translated the term as “office of accountants” which is not accepted by Monahan² and R. Dikshitar.³ According to them the term means a “general record room”. From the classification of records and other descriptions the latter meaning is acceptable.

The official or state records which were preserved in the Mauryan archives were broadly divided into two groups - Lekha, *i.e.* letters and Śāsana *i.e.* state writs. Further the former was classified into (a) Nindā (blame), (b) Praśamsā (praise), (c) Priccha (inquiry), (d) Ākhyāna (narration), (e) Prārthanā (prayer), (f) Pratyākhayāna (refusal), (g) Upālambha (censure), (h) Pratisodha (prohibition), (i) Ājñā (orders), (j) Sāntvam (conciliation), (k) Abhyavapattih (promise of help), (l) Bhartsanam (threat) and (m) Anunaya (persuasion). State writs were classified into—(a) Prajñāpana (notice), (b) Ajñā (orders), (c) Paridāna (gift), (d) Parihāra (remission), (e) Nisṛhti (licence), (f) Pravṛttilekha (instruction), (g) Pratilekha (reply), and (h) Sarvatra (proclamation).⁴

Besides these, records of public expenditure as well as “copies of ultimatum issued to hostile monarchs and of treatises of peace made by them” were also preserved in the archives.⁵

We have discussed in previous chapter about the Buddhist archival developments which was noticed by Hiuen Tsang and described as Nilapita or a collection of annals and royal edicts,

1. Arthaśāstra. Śhāmaśāstry, Book I, Ch. VII, pp. 61

2. Early History of Bengal, Monahan p.45

3. Hindu Administrative Institutions, V.R.R. Dikshitar, pp.203-4

4. Arthaśāstra, Śhāmaśāstry, Book II, Ch. X, pp. 71-75.

5. Archives in India, Sailen Ghosh, p.9.

Another important literary source Sukranīti furnishes us with valuable information regarding the record office, types of record and the officers in charge of these sections.⁶

The tradition of preserving state documents continued in the Gupta and post-Gupta periods. From epigraphical sources we come to know that Gupta and post-Gupta emperors and kings appointed keeper of state records and called them Āksapaṭaladhikṛta, Āksapaṭalīkas or Mahāksapaṭalīkas.⁷ The Kadi grant of Bhimadeva II of Vikrama Sambat 1283 shows that this department of the Govt. was in force in 1226 A.D.⁸ In North India Kalachuris, Gahadavalas and Senas also maintained such organisations and keepers of records were termed as Ākshapaṭalīka and Mahākshapaṭalīka.⁹

The Satraps of the upper Deccan and of Western India (2nd century A.D.) maintained the tradition of registering all their documents and copies of these documents were preserved in the state record office known as Phalaka-Vāra.¹⁰

In South India Chola emperors had well organised office for palm leaf records (olai) and the officers were known as Tirumandira Olai and Olai nayagam.¹¹ The latter class were superior officers and were responsible for scrutinising and approving of orders (olai) which were then termed as Titte. This office, besides royal orders, used to maintain land records, records of land surveys, balance statements etc.

In 1442 Abdur Razzaq visited Vijaynagar kingdom and from the records left by him it is evidently clear that the record rooms, which was thirty yards long and six yards broad, where records are kept and scribes are seated, was situated in front of the minister's office.¹² Kingdom of Kaladi, a state under Vijaynagar maintained a similar office containing copper plates, palm leaf mss. Kaditas and paper books.¹³

Peter Mundi visited this office in 1637 A.D. which was possibly destroyed by Haidar Ali of Mysore in 1763.¹⁴

6. Sukranīti, Tr. by B.K. Sircar, Ch. IV, Sec. V, No. 362-3.

7. Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum. V. III, pp. 190 (No. 39 Plate XXV).

8. Ibid. pp. 190, note 2.

9. Indian Antiquary, Vol. VI, pp. 200.

10. E.I. Vol. 8, p. 82.

11. The Struggle for Empire, R.C. Mazumdar (Ed). Vol. 5, pp. 274 & 276-77.

12. History of India, Elliot, V. IV. pp. 107-8.

13. Indian Archives, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 7-15

14. Travels in Europe and Asia, Peter Mundy, Vol. III, pp. 98-99-

CHAPTER III

Royal and Important Private Libraries of the Sultanate Period

LIBRARIES OF THE INDEPENDENT SULTANS OF GUJARAT

WE shall now narrate the history of Indian libraries after the advent and conquests of the Musalmans.

We begin first with the history of the Turko-Afghan period (1206 to 1526 A.D.) when the Sultān was the ruler, protector and benefactor of the people. "The Sultān controls affairs, maintains rights, enforces the criminal code; he is the Pole Star round whom revolve the affairs of the world and the Faith; he is the protection of God in his realm; his shadow extends its canopy over His servants, for he forbids the forbidden, helps the oppressed, uproots the oppressor and gives security to the timid."¹ From the above saying of Ahmad bin Muhammad bin 'Abd Rabb, the eminent jurist, it is evidently clear that the Sultān was the mainspring of the entire administrative machinery, religious and cultural activities. He was the supreme head and his literary tastes and encouragement for the cause of education gave impetus to the general support of the poets, philosophers and scientists as well as to the establishment of schools, colleges and libraries all over the domain. On the contrary, his dislike did considerable harm to the learned men and institutions. In those days royal help and encouragement could only help the growth and development of the cultural activities and institutions

1. Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi : I.H. Qureshi, p. 47.

and as the Sultān was the state personified, the part played by him was of immense value.

Sultāns of Delhi, minor Muslim rulers and nobles generally encouraged Islamic learning and established maktabas (primary schools), madrasa (schools of higher learning), libraries and mosques. The capitals of the early Muslim rulers transferred from Ghazni to Lahore and from Lahore to Delhi became the centres of learning in the traditions and patterns of Ghazni. Scholars from different parts of the Muslim world assembled in Delhi, Jullandhar, Firozabad and other places which became famous educational and cultural centres. In course of time "the capital of Delhi by the presence of these unrivalled men of great talents had become the envy of Bagdad, the rival of Cairo and the equal of Constantinople".²

The Khilji Sultāns being great patrons of learning founded the Imperial Library of Delhi. Among the Tughluq and Lodi rulers Muhammad bin Tughluq, Firūz Shāh and Sultān Sikandar Lodi being men of great accomplishments freely helped scholars and poets, and established colleges with mosques attached to them. The inscription of Alāi Darwāzah describes Sultān 'Alāuddin Khilji as "Upholder of the pulpits of learning and religions and strengthener of the rules of colleges and places of worship."³ Like the churches and monasteries of medieval Europe, these mosques and Khanqahs provided for education in medieval India.

During the period under discussion great progress was made in all fields of knowledge. Muslim rulers naturally encouraged Arabic and Persian literatures in all branches of learning. Persian writings on history, literature and religion influenced the Indian thoughts and introduced systematic historical writings. Several Sanskrit works on music, dancing, astronomy and romantic poetry were translated into Persian. The rulers of Vijaynagar, Warrangal and Gujarat patronised Sanskrit writings, and the Jains also made substantial literary contribution during this age. As a result of these cultural activities innumerable manuscripts were

2. Advanced History of India : Mazumdar, Roychoudhury and Datta, p. 409.
3. Archaeology of Delhi : Car Stephen, p. 56.

written, and collection of these records were accumulated in different parts of the country.⁴

The reign Turko-Afghan rulers thus marks a period of literary and education efflorescence but it also became the occasion for the destruction of many Hindu and Buddhist libraries in existence as in Europe the Reformation movement in its fight against Church of Rome inflicted heavy loss on the monastic libraries.

Minor ruling dynasties of Bengal, Jaunpur, Malwa, Golkunda, Ahmednagar and Bijapur followed passionately the footsteps of the Delhi Sultāns. Of the important men of letters of this period special mention should be made of the great Persian scholar, Amir Khusrav, the librarian of the Imperial library; Minhāj-ud-din and Ziā-ud-din Barni, the famous historians; Moulana Muaiyyan-ud-din Umrani, the author of the commentaries on the Husaini Talkhis and Mufti etc.

Muhammad Ghorī and some of the earlier Sultāns like Qutub-ud-din and Bakhtiyār out of fanatic zeal caused considerable harm to the Hindu and Buddhist educational centres by destroying the temples, monasteries, universities and libraries and killing all the monks and students. But they also tried to compensate these destructive acts by erecting mosques, colleges and libraries to spread Islamic religion and learning.⁵

During the so-called Slave dynasty the reigns of Sultān Firūz Shāh, Iltutmish, Sultān Raziyya, Nasir-ud-din and Balban were important for their patronage and zeal for learning. Sultān Nasir-ud-din is said to have earned his personal expenses through the sale proceeds of penmanship. Balban's reign was noted for extraordinary literary activities when sixteen fugitive princes of Iran and Khorasan, who were illustrious men of letters took shelter in Delhi due to the onrush of the infidel Mongols. Innumerable literary societies grew up due to the patronage of Prince Muhammad, the eldest son of Ghiyās-ud-din, who used to hear recitations from Shāh-Nāmā, the Diwāni-Sanāi, Diwāni Khāqāni etc. It is evidently clear that during the Slave dynasty through the direct patronage of the Sultāns, Delhi became a

4. The History and Culture of the Indian People : Mazumdar, Vol. 6, Ch. XV.

5. Tabaqāti-Nāsiri by Minhājus Sirāj : Raverty, p. 552.

place of learning. Penmanship had a very important place in the society and as a result innumerable books were copied and preserved in the libraries with due care.

A peep into the administration of the royal households will give us an idea of the regular patterns of their lives and their likes and dislikes. They used to maintain a large establishment for the maintenance of the Imperial household which was divided into various sections or departments. Each of these departments were known as the Kārkhānā and distinguished men of rank and file of the court were generally appointed as officers-in-charge of each Kārkhānā.

During the time of Firūz Shāh the number of these Kārkhānās maintained within the Imperial household was thirty-six but from time to time the numbers varied. Among the Kārkhānās mentioned by "Afif", Kitābkhāna was under a Kitābdār or Librarian who was also known as Mushafbardār.⁶

We can conclude from the above two paragraphs that the Sultāns regularly maintained libraries in the palace under the direct charge of a full-time librarian.

The Sultāns of Dehli, thus, maintained the great tradition of the Gaznavid dynasty for keeping up the traditional glory and brilliance of the court and the growth and development of Islamic learning.

The name of Jalāl-ud-din Khilji deserves special mention who himself being an author and poet remained surrounded by eminent men like Amir Khusrav, Tāj-ud-din Iraqī, Khwājah Hasan, Muyyid Diwānah, Amir Arslān Quli, Ikhtikhār-ud-din Yāghi and Bāqī Khatir.⁷

Jalāl-ud-din established the Imperial library at Delhi and appointed Amir Khusrav as the librarian. The Sultān gave great importance to the post and selected the right person in the right place. Not only he appointed him the librarian of the Imperial library but he also made him the keeper of the holy Koran.

Amir Khusrav, the librarian was regarded as a great scholar and poet, and was held in high esteem by the Sultān who raised

6. Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi : I.H. Qureshi, p. 67.

7. Promotion of Learning in India During the Muhammadan Rule : N.N. Law, p. 30.

him to the peerage and allowed him to have a royal distinction of wearing the white garment. Even as a prince, during the reign of Kaiqubad the Sultān sanctioned a pension and rewarded Amir Khusrav with princely awards. It is evidently clear from the above lines that the librarian of the Imperial library carried much prestige and was considered a valuable and very responsible post.⁸

Alā-ud-din, the next Sultān in the first stage of his career did not encourage education but later he sincerely helped the cause,⁹

Among the many poets and philosophers who flourished in this time, the name of learned saint Nizām-ud-din Auliya is very important. His tomb at Delhi is even today considered as a very sacred place by Muhammedans. He had a library which was the property of the waqf and was open to every man of learning. The library was housed in his Khanqah in Ghiyathpur in Delhi which is known today as Nizām-ul-Auliya.

Shaikh 'Abdul-Haq, the Muhaddith of Delhi while writing of Siraj 'Uthman says, "After this, he acquired proficiency in Kafiyah, Mufassal, Qaduri, Majma-'ul-Bahrain under Maulana Rukr-ud-din's supervision. And after Shaikh Nizām-ud-din's death he acquired other kinds of education for three years and carried with him some books from the Shaikh's library which was a waqf, and the clothes and Khilafat-Nāmā which he had obtained from the Shaikh.¹⁰ Shaikh Sirāj 'Uthman known as Maq-dum Sirāj-ud-din was the first disciple of the saint and when he removed to Lucknow he carried along with other things some valuable books from the library of his Master.¹¹

The Tughluq dynasty opened a new chapter. The first Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din brought peace and order and was fond of men of letters. He extended his sympathy to the learned institutions and persons but for his short period of reign he failed to do something of permanent value.

Muhammad Tughluq, the second Sultān of the dynasty was

8. Tarikhi-Firūj-Shāhi, Elliot III, p. 144.
9. Archaeology of Delhi : Car Stephen, p. 56.
10. Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, p. 81, Printed at Meerut 1178 A.H. as quoted in Islamic Culture, Vol. 19, No. 4, 1945.
11. Promotion of Learning in India During the Muhammadan Rule : N.N. Law, p. 37.

famous for his learning and mastery over caligraphy.

“The versatility of his genius surprised those who came in contact with him. A lover of the fine arts, a cultured scholar and an accomplished poet, he was equally at home in logic, astronomy, philosophy, mathematics and the physical sciences. He was thoroughly acquainted with literary works like Sikandar-nāmāh and the Tārikhi-i-Mahmude. No one could excel the Sultān in composition. He had at his ready command a good deal of Persian poetry of which he made a large use in his writings and speeches”.¹² Khān Azam Qutlugh Khān was the Kharitadār, keeper of Sultān’s pen and paper and Amir Nukbah the Dawatdār or the custodian of king’s inkpot.¹³

Delhi could have been, under the patronage of this Sultān, an important cultural centre of Asia but his whimsical nature and bad temper stood in the way. His idea of transferring his capital from Delhi to Deoigiri brought ruin upon this city as well as upon all the learned institutions. Ibn-Batūtah who visited India in 1341 saw Delhi like a desert.

Firūz Shāh, built a new city at Firūzābād near Delhi where he established his power on a strong footing. He was a patron of learning and himself wrote *Fatuhāt-i-Firūz Shāhi*. Historians like Mazhar and scholar like Tatar Khān gathered round him. The Sultān built mosques and Maḍrasas and created trusts for them. He also repaired and revived the old public institutions and made necessary arrangements for their maintenance.

The Sultān educated even his slaves and “some of the slaves were to spend their time in reading and committing to memory the holy book, others in religious studies or in copying books.”¹⁴

During this time like the Muslim rulers and the nobles, the Hindu chiefs had also maintained libraries. Most of the libraries were housed within the temples. Similarly, the early Muslim rulers of India made no separate buildings as libraries but the valuable and rich collection of books and manuscripts were preserved in the mosques, educational institutions or Khanqahs.

In the temple of Jawālamukhi at Nagarkot there was a fine

12. History of the Qarannah Turks in India : Iswari Prasad, p. 311.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 276.

14. Promotion of Learning in India During the Muhammadan Rule : N.N. Law, pp. 54-55.

library consisting of 1,300 volumes. Firūz, after conquering Nagarkot invited scholars and ordered them to translate some of the books. One of the translators was Izz-ud-din Khalid Khāni, the poet who translated one of these books dealing with physical sciences into Persian and the Sultān named the book as *Dala'il-i-Firūz Shāhi*.¹⁵

One of the learned courtiers of Firūz was Tatar Khān, the scholar and commentator of Koran. "It is said that when he intended to write this book, he collected various commentaries and called for a group of learned scholars. And he gleaned the differences which the various commentators had in some verse or sentence, and incorporated them in his book. He has also given references to every commentator in case of variance. One will thus find all the various commentaries in this one book. He has prepared the commentary with great labour and pains . . . He collected all the books on Fatawa and recorded all the controversy which the jurists had on various matters in his book . . . In this way the Fatawa was completed in thirty volumes."^{15a} From the above description there can be no doubt that Tatar Khān had his own personal library which consisted of a valuable collection of the books on Fatawa.

The death of Firūz Shāh in Sept. 1388 was followed by bloodshed and unrest. Badāuni says—"Day by day battles were fought between these two kings" and all over Hindustan there arose parus each with its own Malik (king)".¹⁶ At the end of 1398 Amir Timur invaded India sweeping the greater part of the country with the bitter whirlwind of rapine and pillage. But he did not stay for longer and after his departure, "such a famine and pestilence fell upon the capital that the city was utterly ruined, and those of inhabitants who left died, while for two whole months not a bird moved a wing in Delhi."¹⁷

The above picture narrates a graphic account how times without number the Imperial cities which vied with Bagdad and

15. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

15a. *Tārikh-i-Firishta*, Vol. I, p. 148. Lucknow Ed. As quoted in *Islamic Culture*, Oct. 1945.

16. *Oxford Students History of India* : V. Smith, p. 119.

17. *Advanced History of India*, p. 337.

Cairo were utterly ruined and as a result all its academic institutions and libraries faced destruction.

The Saiyid Sultāns ruled from 1414 to 1451 A.D. followed by the Lodi dynasty under which writing, works of translations and compilation received fresh impetus and the Hindus applied themselves more to the study of Muhammedan literature.

Sultān Sikandar Lodi, himself a poet and a man of great literary acquirements, greatly encouraged learning. Many foreign scholars were attracted to his court.

During his reign a treatise on Indian medicine called *Tibb-i-Sikandari* was compiled and translated from Sanskrit works by Miān Bhawa. "He got together fine calligraphists and learned men, and employed them in writing books on every science. He brought books from Khursan and gave them to learned and good men. Writers were continually engaged in this work."¹⁸

In 1510 A.D. Mahmud bin Shaikh Ziyā wrote a Persian dictionary called the *Tuhfat-us-Sa'adat* or *Farhang-i-Sikandari* and dedicated the volume to Sikandar. Besides these, the period saw further development of the Muslim sciences, including philosophy and several Sanskrit works were translated into Persian. Thus, due to Sikandar's favours and encouragement innumerable libraries grew up all over his kingdom.

The nobles and courtiers similarly patronised the cause of education and established their personal libraries. Gāzi Khān, a courtier of Ibrahim had a personal library which Bābur took into his possession in 1525 A.D. The following line from *Tūzuk-i-Bāburi* will corroborate the fact—"On Monday, while walking in the fort, I reached the Ghāzi Khān library." The library was housed within the Delhi Fort.

Shāikh Su'dullah, father of Shaikh Rizqullah Mustāqi, a historian who lived under the Lodis was a saintly scholar and a great lover of books. He possessed a large and valuable library.²¹

18. The *Wāqi'ati-Mushtāqi* : Rizqullah Muštāqi. Elliot IV, p. 451.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Tūzuki-Bāburi*, Persian Mss., Shib Academy Azamgarh. As quoted in *Islamic Culture*, Oct. 1945, p. 331.

21. E. W., Vol. 12, No. 1 : *Indian Culture in the Late Sultān period.*

The Sultāns of Kashmir emulated the ideas of Delhi and became great patrons of learning. Zainu'l Abidin (1420-70), the Sultān of Kashmir, established many educational institutions and libraries. He considerably encouraged the art of book-making and mainly for this purpose he established technical schools where people were taught paper-making, book-binding and other allied arts.²²

2. LIBRARIES OF THE INDEPENDENT SULTANS OF GUJARAT

After the disruption of the Tughluq empire Muzaffar Khān established his sway as the first independent Sultān of Gujarat in 1407 A.D. and the independent Sultāns of Gujarat ruled for a period of one hundred and eighty years. The rulers of this line were not only great administrators and builders but bibliophiles and patrons of learning. In 1411 Ahmad Shāh, grandson of Muzaffar Khān founded the historical city of Ahmedabad. Under the patronage of the Sultāns of Gujarat, large number of books were written and scholars from Yaman, Hijaz, Egypt and Persia adorned their courts. These foreign scholars dedicated their works to the rulers.

Sultān Mahmūd Begda (1458-1511 A.D.) built many mosques and madrasas. He was a great bibliophile and had placed his own library under the control of Sayyid Ushmān, known as Shami Burhāni. The library was housed at the madrasa of Osmanpur near Ahmedabad.²³

The next ruler Muzaffar II (1511-26) greatly encouraged writings, and rewarded the authors profusely. He was so fond of good works that when Sayyid Āli Khān Bara Nahar of Mandu presented the king with the first available copy of the commentary of Fath-al-Bari compiled by Ibn Hajar Asqalani, the king made the Sayyid governor of Broach. The king presented two copies of the Quran to the cities of Mecca and Medina written with his own hand in gold water.²⁴

22. Kashmir under the Sultāns. Mohibbul Hasan, p. 261.

23. Literary and Cultural Activities in Guzarat under the Khaljis and the Sultanate : Muhammad Ibrahim Dar, p. 45.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

Nobles and statesmen of Gujarat followed the tradition set up by the Sultāns. Sultān Mahmūd Shah III (1538-1554 A.D.), recalled Āsaf Khān, the scholar statesman from Mecca to take charge of the chief ministership of the troubled state. Āsaf Khān had left behind him a high reputation for administrative capacity, and he was a great lover of books. On his way back from Mecca he was carrying a good collection of selected books with him. Unfortunately, due to a shipwreck on the coast of India he lost his collection of books,²⁵ and the most precious among them was an autographed copy of Mishkat, a reputed collection of traditions.²⁶

Sidi Said, the famous architect, who built the Sidi Said Masjid at Ahmedabad in 1572-73 A.D. had collected a fine library.²⁷ He sent his own ship to Egypt for bringing the books he wanted for his library. But the ship on her return journey landed at Cambay where many of the books were lost.²⁸

During this age, Gujarat produced many scholars, saints, authors and compilers. Al Muattaqi was one of them. Being a great lover of learning and a reputed teacher, he used to supply books to the students and prepare ink for them. He did re-arrange Suyuti's Jamma' 'Jawani' for the help of the students and thus achieved an immense service for further study of Fiqh.²⁹

25. A History of Gujarat, M.S. Commisariat, p. 426.

26. Literary and Cultural Activities in Gujarat, p. 49.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

CHAPTER IV

Libraries of the Mughals, The Minor Muslim Kingdoms, The Marathas and the Contemporary Hindu Centres of Learning

2. MUGHAL ARCHIVES
3. LIBRARIES OF THE MINOR MUSLIM KINGDOMS
 - (a) THE BAHAMANI KINGDOM
 - (b) BIJAPUR
 - (c) BENGAL
 - (d) GUJARAT
 - (e) JAUNPUR
 - (f) KHANDESH
 - (g) OUDH
4. LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES OF THE MARATHA RULERS
5. LIBRARIES ATTACHED TO HINDU CENTRES OF LEARNING

THE cultural history of the Timurid dynasty is the culmination of the tradition started in the Turko-Afghan period. Emperors of Timuride dynasty were great builders and sincere patrons of learning. With the exception of Aurangzeb all the early Mughal rulers extended their help graciously to the growth and development of art, literature and music. Book-making and library development also made remarkable progress in this age.

Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Bābur was a scholar, man of literary taste and author of several volumes both on Jurisprudence

and Prosody.¹ He encouraged calligraphy and himself invented a new type of writing known as Bābari hand.²

Bābur was very fond of books and took keen interest in the development of his library. In 1525 he took possession of the personal library of Ghāzi Khān and expected to find many good books there. But he was disappointed and this is evidently clear from his following saying:—

“I did not on the whole find so many books of value as, from their appearance, I had expected.” He distributed some of the selected titles to Humāyūn and Kāmran.³

Bābur was always accompanied by learned and literary men who received considerable encouragement from the emperor. Among them the name of Khwandamir deserves special mention. Khwandamir who was a librarian in Hirat accompanied the king in his expedition to Bengal.⁴

During his reign one of the duties of the Shuhrat-i-Ām or the Public Works Department was the building of Maktabs (schools) and Madrasas⁵ (Colleges). Every Madrasa usually had its own library.⁶

Bābur was also keen in building up the Imperial library⁷ as well as his own personal library,⁸ where he kept selected and well-illustrated books of his choice. Here within his personal library he used to take rest and to relax. The ruler is also credited for having introduced the art of book-illustration which considerably developed during the reign of his son and grandson.⁹

Humāyūn, the eldest son of Bābur ascended the throne in 1530 A.D.

1. Ferishta, Vol. II, pp. 61 and 65 ; also Muntakhabul-Tawarikh. V. I. (Ranking), p. 449.
2. Talbot's Memoirs of Babur, p. 97.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 176.
4. Elliot's History of India (as told by its own historians) iv. pp. 141 and 143.
5. Tawarikh of Sayyid Maqbar 'Ali as stated in advanced History of India, p. 578.
6. Society and Culture in Moghul Age, Chopra, p. 162.
7. Bābur Nāmā (Beveridge), p. 460.
8. I.C. Oct. 1945, p. 331.
9. Promotion of Learning in India During the Muhammadan Rule: Law, p. 126.

He imbibed some of the best traits and traditions of his family and like his father he was highly educated and was passionately interested in Arts and Sciences. Moreover while he, as an exiled monarch, was living in Persia, he was strongly influenced by the literary and artistic activities of Shāh Tahmāspas court. He wrote a few volumes on the nature of elements and loved to study Geography and Astronomy.¹⁰ The other favourite subjects of the emperor were literature and poetry and like his predecessors he used to hold discussions with the poets and philosophers.¹¹ Ferishta writes that the emperor built seven halls and named them after seven planets. In the halls named after Saturn and Jupiter he used to receive men of letters like Khwandamir, the historian and ex-librarian of Hirat; Jauhar, the reputed author, Admiral Sidi Ali Rais, the Turkish scholar, poet and astronomer. In his travel diary Admiral Rais wrote—“I started work and finished my astronomical observations, working day and night without taking any rest.....There is much enthusiasm for poetry and political contests in those days and for this reason I had to remain in the king’s presence.”¹²

Humāyūn was a great lover of books and he was encouraged to cultivate the hobby by his father who presented him with selected books from the collection of Gāzi Khān. The emperor’s fondness went so far that he used to carry a library of selected works when he was engaged in battle-fields. During the time of his expeditions to Bengal and Gujarat he carried such libraries with him.¹³ Even being defeated by Sher Khān, when he encamped at Cambay, he had several books and a librarian with him.¹⁴ One night during the fugitive period a body of forest tribes known as Kolis made a night attack on his camp, and plundered it and decamped with the booty of which was a copy of the History of Tamerlaine.¹⁵ This is further corroborated by the following writing of Abul-Fazl—“Many rare books which were his real companions and were always kept in His Majesty’s per-

10. *Ibid.*, p. 127.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 128.

12. I. C. Oct. 1945, p. 332.

13. *Ibid.*

14. Noer’s Akbar (Beveridge), p. 136.

15. Akbar Nāmā (Beveridge) Vol. I. pp. 309-310.

sonal possession were lost. Among these was *Timur-Namā* translated by Mullā Sultān Ali and illustrated by Ustād Bihzād which is now in the Shāhenshāh's library."¹⁶

The emperor's encouragement in establishing libraries is further emphasised by the fact that he converted a pleasure-house in Purānā Qila of Delhi into a library shortly before his death. This house in Purānā Qilā was built by Sher Shāh in 1541 as a pleasure-house and was named as Sher Mandal.¹⁷ Nizām, father of Lāla Beg or Bāz Bahādur was a librarian of the king.¹⁸

The magnificent buildings erected by Humāyūn at Agra was known as Khāna-i-Tilism. Its main portion contained three buildings of which Khana-i-Sa'dat is one in the middle and octagonal in shape. In its upper room was the library where there was a prayer carpet (jai nimaz), books, gilded pen cases (qalamdān), portfolios (juzdān), picture books and beautiful specimens of calligraphy.¹⁹

The emperor fell down from the stairs of his library situated in Purānā Qilā, Delhi and expired on Sunday, January 25, 1556 at about sun set.²⁰ His contribution, within such a short and disturbed period, to the establishment of libraries and encouragement for the love of books is a praiseworthy and notable achievement.

Akbar, the greatest of the Mughal emperors succeeded Humāyūn. The second battle of Panipat (November 5, 1556) closed the chapter of the Afghans and heralded the real beginning of the Mughal empire in India.

The young emperor at first ruled under the shadows of his guardian Bairām Khān and the court ladies. The death of Bairām in 1561 and his mother in 1562 made Akbar free to rule by himself till his death in 1605. With the fearless energy of Alexander, he conquered the entire northern India and brought peace and prosperity to this war-torn land. This socio-economic change contributed largely to the progress and development of the cultural life in all its branches especially in painting, writing.

16. *Ibid.*

17. Cambridge History of India, Vol. IV, p. 309.

18. Tūzuki-Jahāngiri (Rogers and Beveridge), p. 21.

19. I. C. Vol. 33, p. 55.

20. Cambridge History of India, Vol. IV, p. 69.

illustrating and translating books from other languages as well as in establishing libraries. As a result, besides the Imperial library "to which probably no parallel then existed or even existed in the world" innumerable private libraries and libraries attached to educational institutions flourished during this period.

Akbar though unlettered was a very cultured man with a strong desire for learning. He had refined and very tolerant taste and genuine intellectual curiosity. "My father (Akbar) used to hold discourse with learned men of all persuasion, particularly the Pandits and the intelligent persons of Hindusthan. Though he was illiterate, yet from constantly conversing with learned and clever persons, his language was so polished that no one could discover from his conversation that he was entirely uneducated. He understood even the elegance of poetry and prose so well that it is impossible to conceive of any more proficient."²¹ The above lines from the pen of his son and successor aptly proves his (Akbar's) cultural trend of mind and passionate genuine interest for knowledge. Not only he made himself fit through discussions and conversations but he maintained a very rich library and appointed experienced and learned people to read aloud books to him every day. In this connection Abul-Fazal writes :- "His Majesty's library is divided into several parts; some of the books are kept within, and some without, the Harem.....Experienced people bring them daily and read them before His Majesty, who hears every book from the beginning to the end. At whatever page the readers daily stop, His Majesty makes with his own pen a sign, according to the number of pages; and rewards the readers with presents of cash either in gold or silver, according to number of leaves read out by them. Among books of renown, there are no historical facts of the past ages or curiosities of science, or interesting points of philosophy with which His Majesty, a leader of important sages, is acquainted. He does not get tired of learning a book over again but listens to the reading of it with more interest."²² Thus Akbar became conversant with the different philosophical ideas, literary trends and historical facts."

21. Tūzuki-Jahāngiri (Rogers and Beveridge), p. 33.

22. Āin-i-Akbari (Blochman) Vol. I, pp. 109-110.

He inherited an Imperial library from his father and out of his love for collection of books he enriched the library to a large extent (Plate. 111). These collections came mostly from some of the private libraries and also from the libraries of Gujarat, Jaunpur, Kashmir, Bihar, Bengal and Deccan.²³ Further additions were made by the writings and translations done at his court and also from presentations from the nobles and high officers.

Faizi had a good collection consisting of 4,300 Mss. in his library. After his death the collection was transferred to the Imperial library,²⁴ and it was entered and numbered along with the Imperial collection. Faizi's collection was divided into three different sections and there were several copies of the same title. For example there were 101 copies of *Nala Damana*.²⁵

During the conquest of Gujarat the library of I'timād Khān Gujarati was acquired by the emperor and it was transferred to form a part of the Imperial library.²⁶ When Gujarat was finally conquered, Mirza Khān Khānān rejoined the court and in the 34th year he presented to the emperor a copy of his Persian translation of Bābur's Chegta-i-memoirs (*Wāqī'at-i-Bābari*).²⁷

By order of the emperor many important works originally written in Sanskrit and other languages were translated into Persian. The Mahābhārata was translated by Persian scholars like Naquib Khān, Maulanā Adul Qadir of Badāun and Shaikh Sultān of Thāneswar and it contained nearly one thousand verses and was named as *Ruzm-Nūmā* or the book of wars. In 1589 A.D. Badāūni translated Rāmāyana after working hard for four years. Hāzi Ibrāhim Sirhind translated Atharvaveda; Faizi the Lilābati, Hindu mathematical work; Mokammal Khān of Gujarat translated *Tajak*, a well-known work on Astronomy; Mirzā Abdur Rahim Khān translated the memoirs of Bābur from Turkish into Persian and Maulanā Shāh Māhammad of Shāhbād translated the History of Kashmir from Kashmirian.

23. I. C. Oct. 1945, p. 332.

24. Āin-i-Akbari (Blochman), Vol. I, p. 550.

25. Tārikhi-Badāuni (Elliot), p. 548.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 519.

27. Āin-i-Akbari (Blochman), p. 355.

Mujam'l-Buldan, a treatise on towns and countries was translated by several scholars from Arabic. Besides these, translation of *Nala Damana*, *Kāliyā Damana* and *Tārikh-i-Alfi*, history of one thousand years were done by learned scholars.²⁸

It is evidently clear from the above that during the time of Akbar there was a regular translation bureau and many important volumes were added to the Imperial library.²⁹

Both the Imperial as well as the emperor's personal library were enriched by many original literary works. Among the important verse writers special mention should be made of Ghazali, Faizi, Muhammad Husain Naziri of Nishapur, Sayyid Jamaluddin, Urfi of Shiraj etc. Jerome Xavier, an outstanding Jesuit wrote several Persian works on Christian religion and philosophy and presented them to Akbar and Jahāngir.³⁰

In order to enhance the production of beautiful volumes Akbar encouraged calligraphy and painting. He loved well illustrated books written with a fine handwriting. The author of *Āin-i-Akbari* writes that during the time of Akbar there existed eight modes of writing as Suls, Tauqī, Muhaqqaq, Naskh, Raihān, Riqā, G̃hubār and Talīq.³¹ Akbar was very fond of Nasta'liq handwriting and the famous master of said writing, Muhammad Hussain of Kashmir was honoured by the title "Zarrin-Kalam" or "Gold pen"³². Akbar, being fond of good handwriting did not care for the choicest printed books presented by the 1st Jesuit Mission.³³ But he was not so hostile to printed books like the Duke Federigo of Urbino who would neither own them nor allow them in their collections.³⁴

The first Jesuit mission presented to Akbar a huge and well bound Bible in four languages, (Hebrew, Chaldee, Latin and Greek) in seven volumes. This Royal Polyglot was edited by Montanus and printed at Antwerp by Plantyn in 1569-1572 for

28. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

29. *Tārikhi-Badāuni* (Elliot), p. 374.

30. I.C. Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 170-176.

31. *Āin-i-Akbari* (Blochman), p. 106-107.

32. Akbar the Great Moghul, Smith, p. 426.

33. *Ibid.*

34. History of the book, Svend Dahl, p. 109.

King Philip II. This volume, which was returned by Akbar to the Fathers was in the Catholic library of Lucknow till 1857. Thus Akbar possessed many European books and he showed his European book collection to the Fathers of the Third Mission in 1595. He also requested them to take some of the books as they required. The Fathers received from Akbar's library the Royal Bible and concordances, the Summa and other works of St. Thomas Aquinas, the works of the scholastic writer Domingo de Soto, of S. Antonino of Forciglione, of Pope Sylvester (d. 1003) and Cardinal Cajetan (1470-1534), the Chronica of St. Francis, the History of the Popes, the Laws of Portugal, the Commentaries of Alfonso Albuquerque, the writings of the Brazil missionary of Juan Espeleta of Navarre (a relative of Jerome Xavier, who died in 1555), the Exercitia Spiritualia of S. Ignatius, the Constitutions of the Society, and a Latin Grammar written by the Jesuit Emmanuel Alvarez (1526-1582), Of several of these Akbar had duplicates.³⁵

The Jesuit Fathers, besides the European books presented to him Persian translations of Christ's life and Christian religious books. Akbar greatly admired the books and he used to read them often.

"While Fr. Pigneiro was in the town of Agra (1602), Fr. Xavier, who was also there, presented to the king a treatise in Persian on the life, miracles, and doctrines of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which the king had himself asked, and which he longed to see. Hence, he showed that he esteemed it much and he had it often read by his great Captain Agiscoa (Aziz Koka), who took so much pleasure in it that he asked the Father for another copy, and it was already so much talked of among the Grandees that there was hope God would by this means make known to those infidels and unbelievers His only Son our Lord. After this, the King asked the Father for another book on the life of the Apostles".³⁶

Mr. George Ranking of Oxford, ex-secretary to the Board of Examiners in Calcutta possessed a copy of Xavier's Persian translation of Lives of the Apostles. The book in several places

35. *The Jesuits and the Great Mogul*, MacLagan, pp. 191-192.

36. *J.A.S.B.* Vol. X, 1914, p. 65.

bears the seal-Muhammad Akbar, Padishāh-i-Ghāzi, 1013 (*i.e.* 1604) which shows that it belonged to the Royal library of Akbar.³⁷

The emperor loved beautifully written and profusely illustrated Mss. For his Imperial library Akbar secured a richly illustrated Ms. of *Razm-Nāmā* which costed him about £ 40,000. One such copy is now in the Jaipur Durbar Library. Due to royal patronage innumerable able and master calligraphists and artists devoted their lives for perfection of this art.

Abul-Fazl described in detail their names and activities in *Āin-i-Akbari*.³⁸ More than hundred painters during this time became famous masters.³⁹ His libraries contained innumerable books ornamented with delicate paintings. The twelve volumes of the story of Hamzah contained not less than one thousand and four hundred illustrations. Volumes of his library like *Chingiz-Nāmā*, the *Zafar-Nāmā*, the *Razm-Nāmā*, the *Rāmāyana*, *Nala Damana*, *Kāliyā Damana* etc. were all illustrated.⁴⁰ In order to encourage the art of painting the emperor established a royal studio.⁴¹

Akbar died in October 1605. After his death an inventory of the Imperial properties housed in the fort of Agra was taken. Two European authors Manrique and De Lact copied the inventory from official records when we find that the Imperial library contained 24,000 illustrated and well bound volumes. The approximate price of the collection was Rs. 6,463,131. The average price of each volume should be £ 27 to £ 30 and similarly according to the rate of exchange total valuation should be £ 737,169.⁴²

Mullā Pir Muhammad who was one of the tutors of the King served as the superintendent of the library.⁴³

37. *Ibid.*, p. 71.

38. *Āin-i-Akbari* (Blochman), pp. 107-109.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 114.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 115.

41. Promotion of Learning in India During the Muhammadan Rule, Law, p. 154.

42. J.R.A.S. (The Treasures of Akbar) April, 1915.

43. *Tārikhi-Akbari*. Ms. in the Asiatic Society of Bengal, leaf 42 as quoted by Law in Promotion of Learning in Muslim India, p. 141.

Besides the Imperial collections, innumerable libraries did flourish during this time and they were maintained by the nobles, important citizens and also by some queens of the emperor. One of his queen Salimā Sultānā Begam who was a very accomplished lady maintained a library of her own.⁴⁴ She wrote many Persian poems under the non-de-plume of Makfi.⁴⁵ Badāuni became embarrassed as he or somebody else lost the book—the original “Thirty two thrones” or Badāuni’s translation which Sailmā Begam had been studying at that time.⁴⁶ Gul Badan Begam, the daughter of Bābur and authoress of *Humāyūn Nāmā* was also a very learned lady and she collected books for her personal library.⁴⁷

Among the libraries maintained by the nobles, the library of Abdur Rahim Khān-i-Khānān, who was the governor of Ahmedabad in the first stage of his career and also a scholar, and the library of Shaikh Faizi deserve special mention.

Khān-i-Khānān possessed a big personal library which was maintained by a staff of 95 men. The personnel included the librarian, book-binder, scribe, translator etc. and most of the books of the library were written and presented by their respective authors. Many seekers of wisdom used to visit the library for “study and self-improvement”.⁴⁸ Maulanā Ibrahim Naqqash, who was a scholar, writer, book-binder and gilder served as Kitābdār of Khān-i-Khānān’s library. Mir Baqi was the Nizām or the highest officer of the library.⁴⁹ Niamatullah, the author of *Makhzan-i-Afghani* sometimes acted as the librarian of Khān Khānān Abdur Rahim and then as a historiographer at Emperor Jahāngir’s court.⁵⁰

Shaikhs of the Mughal period were great lovers of books. Shaikh Faizi had his own private library which contained 4300 books. After his death in 1595 his collection was transferred to the Imperial library at Agra⁵¹. (Plate IV)

44. J.I.H. Vol. 31, p. 162.

45. *Āin-i Akbari* (Blochman), p. 322.

46. Lowe’ Badauni, p. 186, 389.

47. *Humāyūn Nāmāh*, Mrs. Beveridge, p. 76.

48. *Society and Culture in the Moghul Age*, Chopra, p. 165.

49. I.C. Oct. 1945, p. 333.

50. *Niamatullah’s History of the Afgans*, N.B. Roy, p. V.

51. *Ain-i-Akbari* (Blochman) Vol. I, p. 550.

Sipha Salar Munim Khān, Khān Khānān, the governor of Jaunpur during the time of Akbar was a great patron of learning and he built a bridge over the Gumti near Jaunpur. He had also a hobby of collecting books for his library. Bahādur Khān Uzbek his friend presented him with a copy of Kulliyah Sa'di. He also purchased books like Diwan of Mirzā Kamrān for his library.⁵²

Salim, after seven days of his father Akbar's death, ascended the throne at Agra and assumed the title—Nurud-din Muhammad Jahāngir Pādshāh Ghāzi. Though fond of pleasures, Jahāngir was a man of refined tastes and inherited some of the good qualities of his father and great grandfather Bābur. His Tuzuk amply testifies his literary tastes and love of books.

Jahāngir was also a patron of learning and promoter of the cause of education. He ordered that the properties of a rich heirless man should be utilised for building and repairing Madrasas, monasteries and libraries and "repaired even those Madrasas that had for thirty years been the dwelling places of birds and beasts and filled with students and professors."⁵³ Thus through imperial patronage Agra maintained her tradition of being a centre of learning and abode of scholars.

The emperor not only inherited a rich Imperial library but considerably enriched the collection and added a picture gallery to it. During his time Maktub Khān was the superintendent of both the Imperial library and Picture gallery.⁵⁴

Besides the Imperial library, the emperor had a personal library and his love of books was so great that when he went to Gujarat, his personal library moved along with him. At Gujarat he presented books to the Ulemas from the library. Jahāngir describes the presentation as follows :—

"On the 16th, Tuesday, the elite of Gujarat came to me for the second time. I again gave them *Khil'ha*, travelling expenses and land and then allowed to go. I gave every one of

52. I.C. Oct. 1945, p. 337.

53. *Tārikhi-Jān-Jahān* by Jan Jahan Khan Ms. in the Asiatic Society of Bengal as quoted by Law in *Promotion of Learning in Muslim India*, p. 175.

54. *Tūzuki-Jahāngiri*, Rogers and Beveridge, p. 12.

them from my personal library a book like Tafsiri Kashshaf, Tafsiri Husaini, Rauza-tul-Ahbab and on the back of each book wrote the date of the arrival in Gujarat and the bestowing of books.”⁵⁵

To enrich his library as well as to satisfy his craving for love of books Jahāngir used to purchase Mss. at a very high price. Martin writes—“The manuscript for which Jahāngir paid 3000 gold rupees—a sum equivalent to £ 10,000—would not fetch £ 2000 at a sale in Paris today. Through the following centuries, the same love for old books prevailed and ridiculous prices were paid for them, as high in proportion as Americans now pay for Rembrandts and Van Dycks.”⁵⁶

Jahāngir enriched and patronised the art of book illustration to a considerable degree. As Akbar had a great fascination for life like portrait paintings, Jahāngir with the idea that “actual likeness might afford a great surprise to the reader than mere description, “appointed artists to illustrate his “*Jahāngir-Nāmā*” with life-like pictures of animals that were brought to him by Muqarrb Khān from the sea port of Goa.⁵⁷

In order to maintain the huge Imperial library he had a large staff including copyists. When he completed writing Tuzuk, he ordered the scribes of his library to copy the same volume and distribute them to the grandees of the country. Shāh-Jahān received the first copy. Jahāngir also patronised the art of calligraphy, and honoured the eminent calligraphists of the age. The emperor presented the eminent calligraphist Shaikh Farid Bakhari with a robe of honour, a jewelled sword, a pen and ink-stand, and conferred the title “Mir Bakshi” on him. He said “I regard thee as Lord of the sword and the Pen” (*Sahibu-s-Saif-wa-l-qalam*).⁵⁸

Nūr Jahān, the highly cultured consort of the emperor was also a lover of books. She maintained her private library and purchased a copy of the *Diwān* of Kāmran for three mohurs. The copy is now preserved in the Khuda Bux Library, Patna

55. I.C. Oct. 1945, p. 338.

56. *Miniature Paintings and Painters of Persia, India and Turkey*, Vol. I, p. 58.

57. *Wāq'ati-Jahāngiri*, Elliot, V.I, p. 331.

58. *Tūzuki-Jahāngiri*, Rogers and Beveridge, V. I, p. 13.

and the following lines occur on the first page of the *Diwān*—“Three Muhar the price of this treasure. Nawab Nur-un-Nisa Begam.”⁵⁹

Shaikh Farid Bakhari was one of the grandees of Jahāngir's court and was for a long time the governor of Lahore and Ahmedabad. He maintained a personal library and bought—*Diwān* of Hasan Dehlavi for the same. The volume is now in possession of Khuda Bux Library, Patna.⁶⁰

Shāh Jahān also like his predecessors patronised learning and education.

He encouraged learned men with gifts and presents and many poets, theologians and historians flourished in his time. Among them special mention should be made of Abdul Hamid Lahori, author of *Pādshāh-Nāmā*; Aminai Qazwini, author of another *Pādshāh-Nāmā*; Muhammad Salih, author of '*Amal-i-Salih*'; Inayat Khān, author of *Shāh Jahān-Nāmā*. Under the patronage of Dārā Shukōh, the eldest son of the emperor many important books were written and translated into Persian.

Besides these translations and original works on various field of knowledge, four voluminous dictionaries were compiled and dedicated to Shāh Jahān—(a) *Farhang-i-Rāshidi* and (b) *Muntakhab-ul-Lughat-i-Shahjahāni* by Abdur Rashid-al-Tatvi; *chahar Ansar Danish* by Amanullah and *Shahid-i-Sadiq* by Md. Sadiq. The last one deals with religious, philosophical, political, ethical and cosmographical matters.⁶¹

The emperor founded the Imperial 'college at Delhi and repaired the college named as Dār-ul-Baqā. It is very natural that these educational institutions had their respective libraries. The emperor though was not very particular about book-collection and library development still he used to listen regularly books read to him in the late night. Sir J. Sarcar writes—“At about 8-30 P.M. he returned to harem. Two and sometimes three hours were here spent in listening to songs by women. Then His Majesty retired to bed and was read to sleep. Good readers sat behind a Purdah which separated them from the royal

59. Ms. of *Diwan-i-Kamran*. Khuda Bux Library, Patna.

60. Catalogue of the Mss of Khuda Bux Library, V.I, p. 248.

61. History of Shah Jahan, B.P. Saksena, pp. 252-57.

bed chamber and read aloud books on travel, lives of saints and prophets and histories of former kings—all rich in instruction. Among them, the life of Timur and autobiography of Babur were his special favourites.”⁶²

Johann Albert Von Mandelslo, a young German arrived at Surat in April 1638. Later in the same year he made tour of Ahmadabad, Bombay, Agra and Lahore. He wrote in his travel diary that the Imperial library of Shāh Jahān had 24,000 books nicely bound.⁶³ The chief librarian was known as Dārogha-Kitāb-Khānā.⁶⁴ The names of ‘Abdur Rahman, Rashid-ali, the calligraphist; Mir Salish, Mir Sayyid Ali, I’tirmad Khān; ‘Inayet Khān, son of Zafar Khān are mentioned in connection with the post.⁶⁵

During this time there were good libraries manned by the Jesuit Fathers both at Agra and Delhi. The libraries contained books written in oriental languages by Fathers as well as oriental documents of religious character. The Agra college library was partly looted and burnt on the advice of Shāh Jahān while Ahmad Shāh Abdali looted in 1759 the Delhi library except the books—*Exceptis Libris Persicis and Arabicis et Europeis*.⁶⁶

Father Henry Busi first went to Delhi in 1650. His mission was to revive the cause of the Christian missionaries at the Mughal court. In order to have his purpose fulfilled he contacted Prince Dārā and some important nobles of the court. Some of the Muslim nobles maintained libraries of Christian literature. Father Busi had a discussion with a “master of the Muslims” who had a large library—‘like an Arabic Escorial’ containing books on the different aspects of Christianity.⁶⁷

In June 1656 Aurangzeb assumed the Imperial dignity. He was a man of high intellectual powers, a brilliant writer, a skilled administrator, undaunted soldier and a pious Moslem king.

He encouraged Islamic learning, founded a number of schools and colleges, repaired the old Madrasas but at the same time

62. Anecdotes of Aurangzib and Historical Essays, J. Sarkar, p. 174.

63. Mandelslo—Harris Travels, Vol. II, p. 118.

64. History of Shah Jahan, B.P. Saksena, p. 277.

65. *Ibid.*

66. The Jesuits and the Great Moghul, MacLagna, p. 139.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 116.

ordered his governors to destroy Hindu schools and temples and put down their religious practices.⁶⁸

Aurangzeb was highly religious. Every day after prayer at 2 P.M. he used either to read Qurān, copying it, hunting through Arabic jurisprudence or read the books and pamphlets of the Islamic religion.⁶⁹ It is evidently clear from his last will that he saved a sum of Rs. 305 which he earned by selling the copies of Qurān written or copied by him.⁷⁰

He, being passionately devoted to Islamic law and theology, ordered eminent jurists to compile the *Fatāwa-i-Ālamgiri* under the direction of Mullā Nizām and collected books on Tafsirs, works on Hadis, Fiqh etc. These volumes enriched the collection of the Imperial library.⁷¹ He also added a new collection to the Imperial library by transferring the library of Muhammad Gawan from Bidar.⁷²

Like his predecessors Aurangzeb entertained and honoured a group of expert calligraphists in his court. Prince Dārā Shukoh and princess Zib-un-nisā were trained in the art of calligraphy by the famous calligraphist Aqa Abdur Rashid while the emperor had his own training under the guidance of Syed Ali Tabrizi, the librarian of the Imperial library.⁷³

Muhammad Salih, was the Nāzim of the Imperial library and Muhammad Mansur and Sāyyid Ali-al-Husaini were the Muhatmims. The former Muhatmim was honoured with the title of Makramat Khān.⁷⁴

Emperor's daughter Zib-un-nisa was a very cultured lady. She was a poet, and at her request Mullā Safiuddin translated Imām Razi's—*Tafsire Kabir* into Persian and named it *Zebut Tafasire*. She was a "sedulous collector of books and had a large library (Ma'asiri 'Alamgiri) for the use of scholars."⁷⁵

The death of Aurangzeb on the 3rd March 1707 heralded the

68. Anecdotes of Aurangzib and Historical, Essays, J. Sarkar p. 11.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 131.

70. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

71. Promotion of Learning in Muslim India, Law, p. 193.

72. J.I.H. Vol. 31, p. 165.

73. I.A. Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 44.

74. I.C. Oct. 1945, p. 339.

75. Medieval Indian Culture, Yussuf Hussain, p. 91.

disintegration of the Mughal empire and his sons in order to get hold of the throne started the bloody feud. Among his successors Bahādur Shāh (1707-1712), Muhammad Shāh (1719-48) and Shāh Ālam II (1759-1806) being cultured and men of literary tastes tried to continue the Mughal tradition inspite of the vassitude of fortune and the invasion of Nādir Shāh in 1733 A.D.

Bahādur Shāh founded some more colleges and encouraged the learned men of the society.

Nādir Shāh invaded India during the time of the next ruler and ordered a general massacre of the Delhi city. The conqueror carried away with him all the crown jewels, the famous Kohinoor diamond, the peacock throne and many valuable and illustrated Persian manuscripts from the Imperial library.

Shāh Ālam II tried to revive the old glory of the Imperial library and he sincerely started to collect books for the same. "It is mentioned in the 'Ibrat-Nama that Ghulam Qadir, the fiend in human shape, who had most cruelly deprived the monarch of his eyes only three days before, went into the jewel house and took out a chest and a box of jewels, several copies of the Qurān and eight large baskets of books out of the Imperial library."⁷⁶

Among the contemporary library the valuable collections of Mahārāja Chikka Deva Raya (1672-1704 A.D.) of Mysore and of Mahārāja Sawai Jai Singh II (1699-1743 A.D.) of Jaipur deserve special mention. Chikka Deva's library of rarest Sanskrit, philosophical and historical works was destroyed by Tipu Sultān. Jai Singh, being highly interested in Astronomy collected books on Astronomy even from Europe. The library of Jai Singh contained volumes like Euclid's Elements, books on plains and spherical trigonometry, La Hire's Tabulee Astonomical, Flamsteed's Historia etc.⁷⁷ After his death "Jai Singh's son Jagat Singh gave this valuable library to a courtesan and it was thus destroyed and its books distributed among its base relations."⁷⁸

76. Promotion of Learning in India During the Muhammadan Rule, Law, pp. 198-99.
77. Society and Culture in Mughal Age, Chopra, p. 165.
78. Astronomical Observatories of Jai Singh, Kaye, p. 2.

It will be interesting to note that during the days of the later Mughals the Jesuit Fathers carried with them many Indian books to France mainly for the library of Louis the XV (1692-1735).⁷⁹

2. MUGHAL ARCHIVES

In the tradition of Bagdad and Cairo, the Imperial Mughals used to maintain and preserve the important government documents and state papers. The Mughal Government was known as the Kāghazi-Rāj or paper government as most of the official records and transactions were written on paper.⁸⁰

The Mughal courts maintained many news writers and clerks to record every official transactions and orders in detail. There were 14 such news writers in the court of Akbar.⁸¹ Du Jarrie and Abul Fazl's writings corroborate the truth.

Regarding the duties of the News-writers (Wa'qia-Navīs) Abul-Fazl writes—"Their's duty is to write down the orders and doings of His Majesty and whatever the heads of the Department report".⁸² While Du Jarrie informs us the following :—

"The king is . . . attended by a number of secretaries whose duty is to record every word that he speaks".⁸³ During the time of Aurangzeb the weekly reports of the news-writers and secretaries were read to His Majesty regularly at 9 P.M. by the lady officials in order to keep him abreast to the happenings of his kingdom.⁸⁴ Manuchi, the Venetian tells us that Aurangzeb, when sending an embassy to Persia sent with it the usual officials, a Wāqia-navīs and a Khufiyah-navīs.⁸⁵

Mughal archives mainly maintained the following state documents :—⁸⁶

- (1) Wa'qia or daily reports of the Imperial court.

79. J.B.H.S. Vol. VI. pp. 68-93.

80. Mughal Administration, Sarkar, p. 10.

81. I.A. Vol. 8, p. 46.

82. *Ibid.*

83. Akbar and the Jesuits : De Jarrie Pierre (Tr. by Payne), p. 11.

84. Storia Do Mogor II (Tr. Irvin), p. 331.

85. *Ibid.*, p. 331.

86. I.A. Vol. 8, p. 51.

- (2) Royal orders (Akham).
- (3) Official correspondence includes the Imperial letters, letters of the royal family, letters of the grandees amongst themselves and addressed to the Emperor; officer's correspondence and field despatches (Fateh Nāmā, Tūmār).
- (4) Government orders issued from the various departments.
- (5) Miscellaneous records like—will (Wasiat Nāmā) statistical accounts, official annals, news letters.
- (6) Court chronicles include also the letter books of the Munshis.

All these above named documents and records were generally preserved both at the capitals of the central as well as provincial governments during the time of the Mughals. The Imperial chancery or *Daftar-Khānā* was under a *Dārogā* or officer-in-charge of the records. The provincial *Daftar Khānās* were under the Chief Ministers or *Dewāns* of the respective provinces.

Even during the time of the Mughals important records and documents of sister states were preserved in the *Daftar-Khānās*. This is amply corroborated by the presence of a copy of a *farman* of Shāh Tahmās of Persia in the *Daftar-Khānā* of Akbar at Agra and an undated Shāh Jahāni *farman* either possibly of Bijapur or Golkonda sultanates in the provincial *Daftar Khānā* at Baganagar, Hyderabad.⁸⁷

The building which was used as the *Daftar-Khānā* of Akbar still exists at Fatehpur Sikri. "It is a big hall 48½ feet long and 28½ feet wide with an enclosed varandah and frontal court. It is built on a platform to the south of Akbar's bedroom."⁸⁸ (Plate 11.)

William Finch (1611), Joannes de Lact (1593-1649) and Sebastien Manrique (1640), the European travellers visited the *Daftar-Khānā* at Agra.⁸⁹ Similar Record rooms were maintained in the Delhi fort and it existed during the time of Aurangzeb and Bāhādur Shāh.

87. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

88. *Ibid.*, p.

89. *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

3. LIBRARIES OF THE MINOR MUSLIM KINGDOMS

So far we have dwelt upon the contributions made by the Turko-Afghan and Mughal rulers towards the development of Indian libraries. But, besides them, many small Muslim kingdoms sprang up all over India and they also made valuable contributions in this field.

In order to complete the survey of the history of medieval Indian libraries we shall present here the achievements of those smaller kingdoms.

THE BAHAMANI KINGDOM

The Bahamani kingdom which was founded by Afghan Hassan Gangu in 1347 A. D. deserves special mention. The Bahamani kings, who continued their rule upto 1526 A.D. and stretched their empire from sea to sea, were great patrons of learning, and founded many colleges and libraries. Mujahid Shāh Bahamani founded in 1378 a college for the education of the orphans.⁹⁰ Ahmad Shāh built a magnificent college near Gulbarga.⁹¹ Muhammad Shāh Bahamani II built another imposing college at Bidar which is one of the many beautiful remains of the grandeur of the Bahamanis.⁹² All these colleges had their respective libraries along with them. The Bidar college library contained 3,000 volumes for the use of the staff and students.⁹³

Besides the college libraries, the kings and nobles used to maintain their personal libraries.

Mahmud Gāwān who served the Bahamani kingdom as minister in three successive reigns was a very simple man and fond of learning. The military record of Muhamad Shāh III's (1463-82) reign, due to wise and honest policy of Mahmud Gāwān, is indeed one of triumphs. On the return of Mahmud Gāwān's victorious expedition he was promoted to high rank,

90. Promotion of Learning in India During the Muhammadan Rule, Law, p. 82.

91. Ferishta, Vol. II (Brigg), p. 402.

92. *Ibid.*, p. 510.

93. *Ibid.*, p. 514.

the Queen-mother called him her brother, and the king gave him a suit of his own robes, and honoured him by a visit of three weeks.

Ferishta tells the story of his response to the royal honours showered on him which shows his attitude to the library :—

“On Mahmud Shāh’s leaving the house of the minister Mahmud Gāwān, retiring to his chamber, desrobed himself of his splendid dress, threw himself on the ground and wept plentifully; after which he came out, put on the habit of a dervish, and calling together all the most deserving holy and learned men, and syeds of Bidar, distributing among them most of his money, jewels, and other wealth, reserving, only his elephants, horses and library, saying: “Praise be to God, I have escaped temptation, and am now free from danger.”

Mullā Shamsuddin asked him why he had given away everything but his library, his elephants, and horses. He replied: “When the king honoured me with a visit, and the Queen-mother called me brother, my evil passions began to prevail against my reason; and the struggle between vice and virtue was so great in my mind. that I became distressed even in the presence of His Majesty, who kindly enquired the cause of my concern. I was obliged to feign illness in excuse of my conduct; on which the king, advising me to take some repose, returned to his palace. “I have, therefore,” said the minister, “parted with wealth, the cause of this temptation to evil”. His library, he said, he had retained for the use of students, and his elephants and horses he regarded as the king’s, lent him only for a season. After this day, the minister always wore plain apparel; when at leisure from State affairs he retired to his own mosque and college, where he spent his time in the society of the learned and persons eminent for piety and virtue.”⁹⁴

Thus Mahmud Gāwān retained his personal library which contained about 35,000 manuscripts till his death (*i.e.* April 1481) and kept it open for the use of the students and learned men.⁹⁵

94. Ferishta (Brigg) II, pp. 486-87.

95. Hadiqatul Aqalim. Ms. in A.S.B. leaf 39; also Promotion of Learning in India during the Muhammadan rule, Law, p. 89.

BIJAPUR

Bijapur and Golconda had the credit of producing some learned kings who patronised men of letters and established educational institutions and libraries.

Bijapur in its pre-Muslim days had the reputation as a seat of learning and the magnificent three storied college made of granite stands as a living example of the past. It was converted into a mosque.

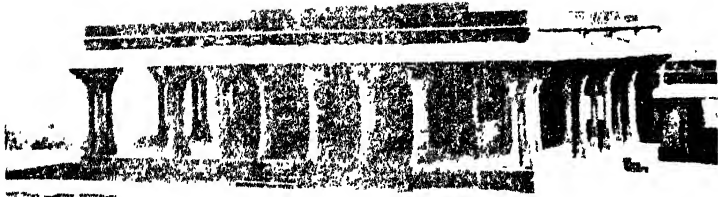
The Ādil Shāhi rulers were great patrons of learning and lover of books. Rafi-ud-Din, a close associate and an high officer Āli Ādil Shāh I (1558-1580) described in his Tazkirat-ul-muluk the love of reading and books of Āli Ādil Shāh I. The Sultān "had a great inclination towards the study of books and he had procured many books connected with every kind of knowledge, so that a coloured library had become full. Nearly sixty men, calligraphists, gilders of book, book-binders and illuminators were busy doing their work whole day in the library."⁹⁶ The Sultān was so fond of books that even during the time of tour or military campaign he used to carry books with him. Once it happened that "He (Āli Ādil Shāh I) had selected books which filled four boxes which he kept with him in journey as well as in his palace. By chance in a journey when he reached the destination at the end of the day it began to rain heavily and the streams became so flooded that it became impossible to cross some of their passages (*i.e.* fordable places). In these circumstances the army became dispersed. When His Majesty reached the destination he was reminded of the boxes of books. After some investigation it was found that the boxes had gone with the Royal Treasury by some other road and people (accompanying them) had stayed (at some other) place. At this he became very angry and said, "I have told you thousand times that the boxes of books should not be separated from me in any case, but it has been of no avail." At that very moment one of the nobles was sent to fetch the library and so long as the boxes did not arrive he remained much restless."⁹⁷

96. Sārdha Śatābdhī Special volume of the J.A.S. Bombay, Vols. 31 and 32, p. 97.

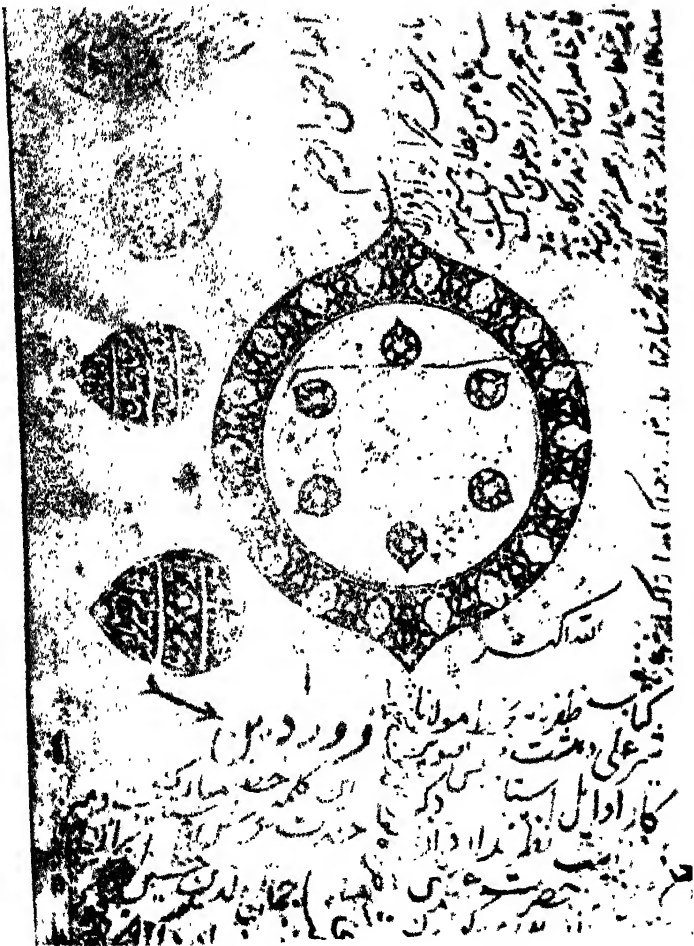
97. *Ibid.*, p. 98.



1. Section of the Saraswatī Mahal Library, Tanjore.

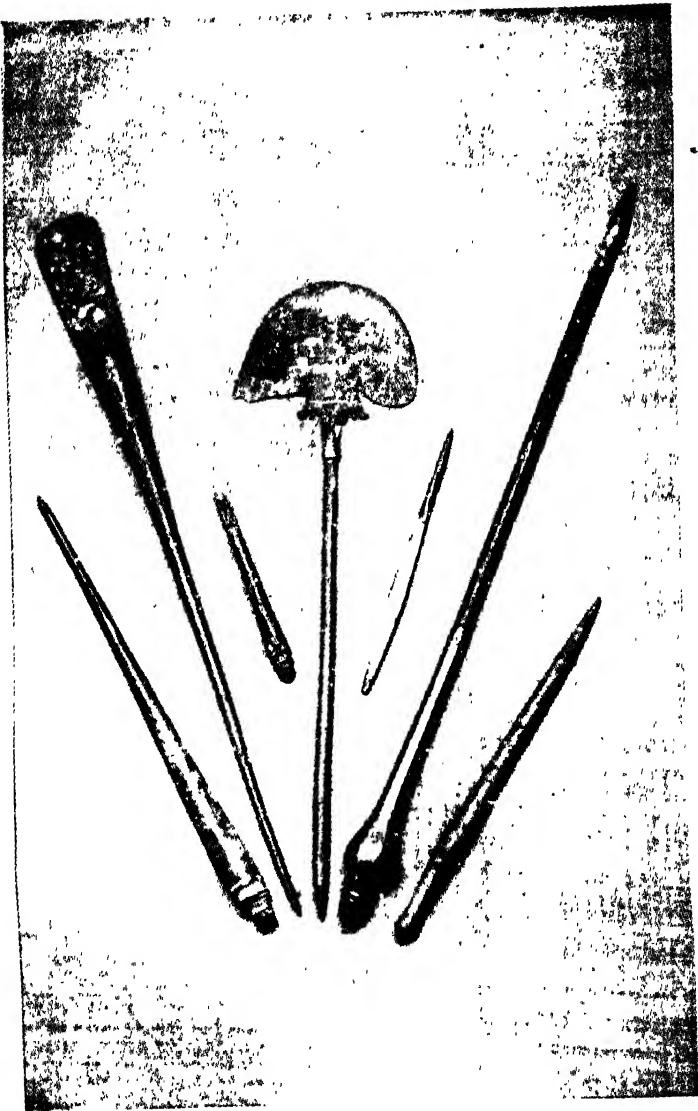


2. Daftar Khānā of Akbar, Fatehpur Sikri.

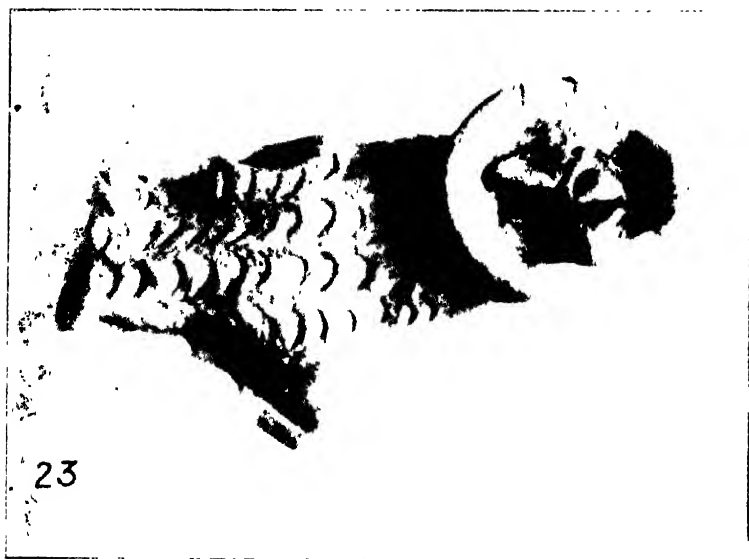




4. Use of books by the Shaikhs of the Mughal period.



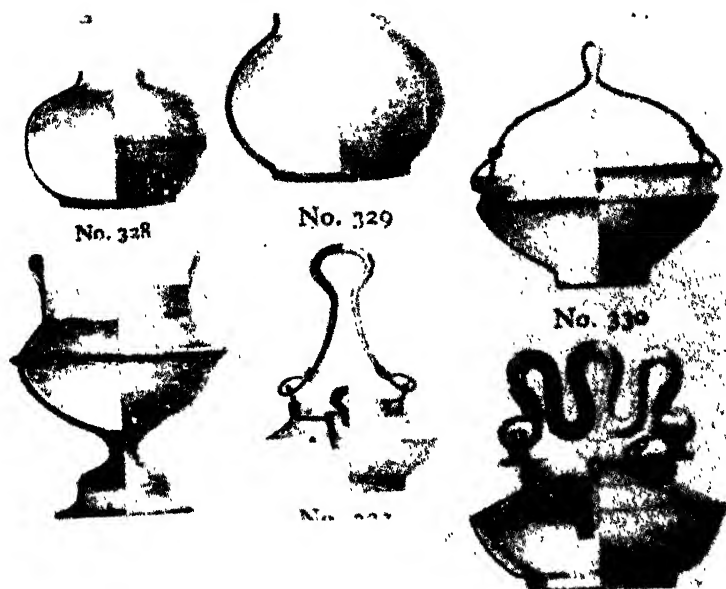
5. Types of pens used to inscribe letters on palm leaves.



6 Ink-pot Mohenjo Daro



7. Inkpots Harinarayanpur, 24 Paraganas, W. Bengal.



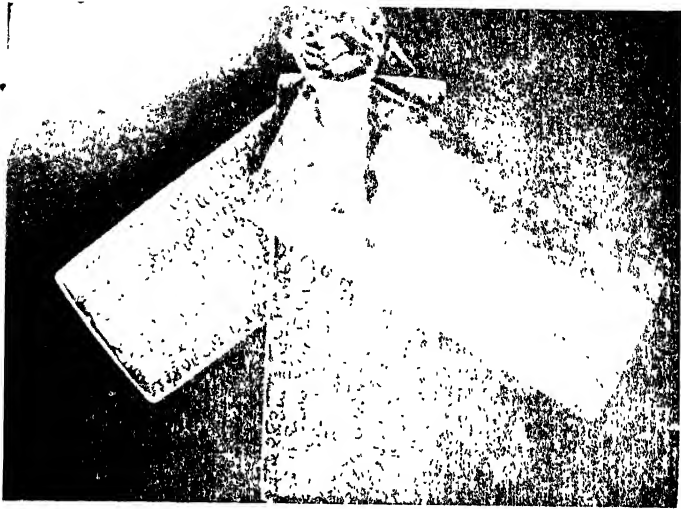
8. Ink-pots -Taxila.



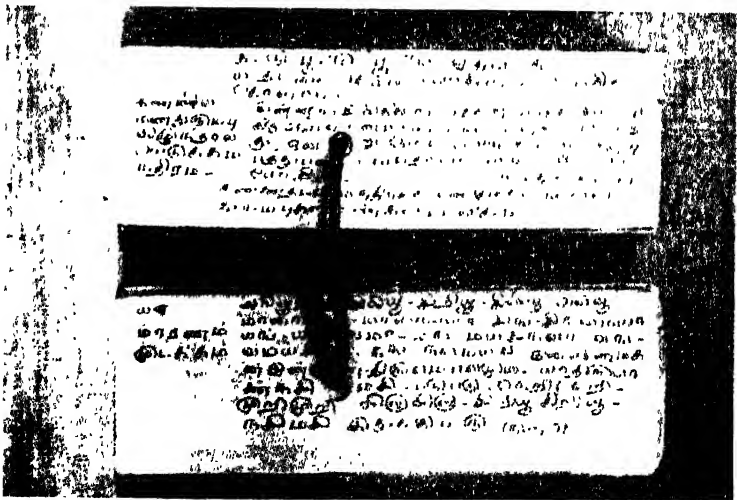
SILVER SCROLL

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ २ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ४ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ५ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ६ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ७ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ८ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ९ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १० ॥

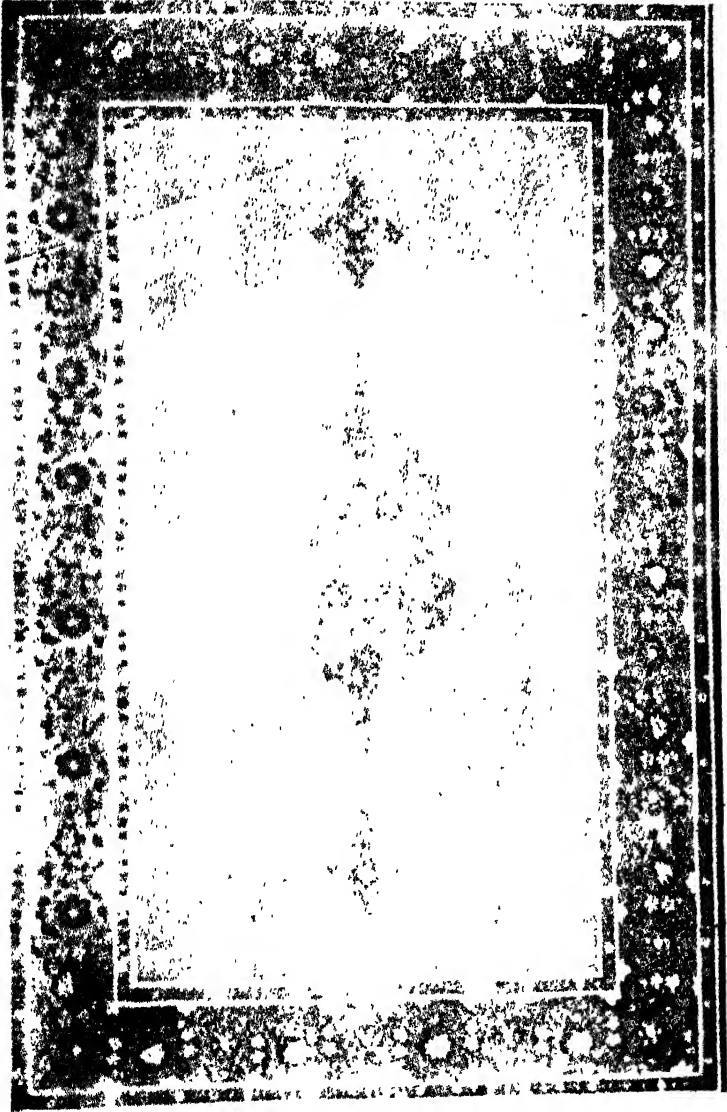
9. Silver Scroll—Taxila.



10. Copper plates strung together : Chicacole, Srikakulam, Madras.



11. Stitched palm leaf manuscript.



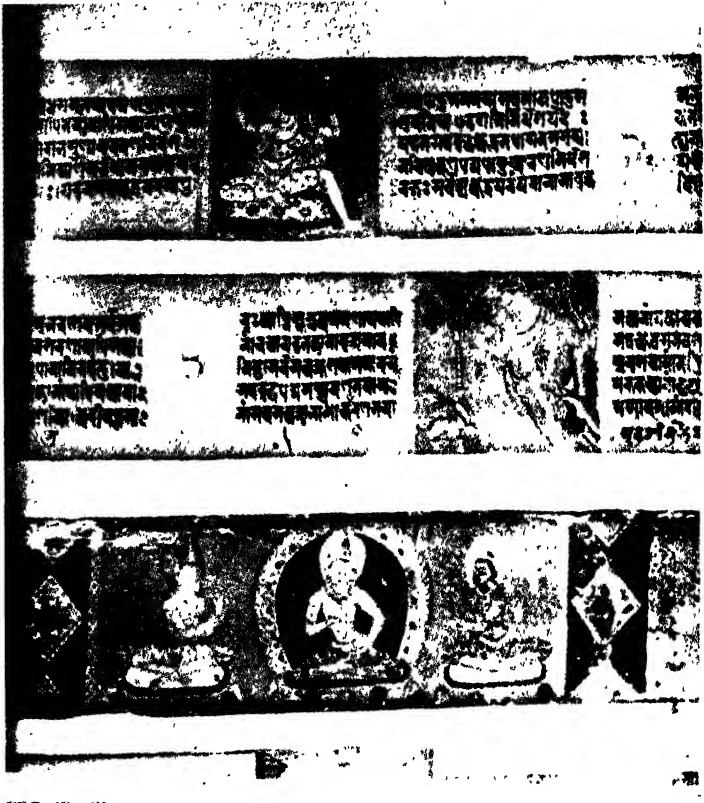
12. Illuminated cover of Shah Jahān Nāmā.

در مقام قدم پادشاه کرامی کس نمی
 در تعریف چو چنگش شکر خواتین
 کوه جهان بیک کار و ارم باز
 در بندگش بشنو او را حکم باز
 کوه پیم که مرده و سفسر باز
 کوه پیم که مرده و سفسر باز



از رخ شاه چو ماهم خط
 هستی تا سلامت ز درم باز
 از رخ شاه چو ماهم خط
 هستی تا سلامت ز درم باز

14. Illustrated manuscript in book form.



15. Illustrated Palm leaf manuscript.



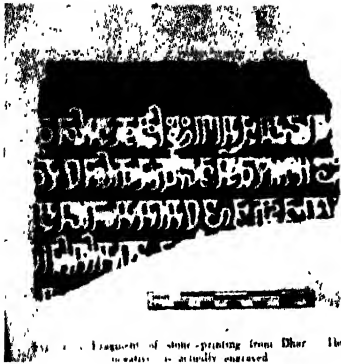


Fig. 1. - Fragment of stone-printing from Dhār. The negative is actually engraved.

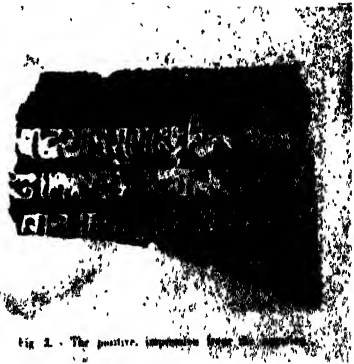


Fig. 2. - The positive impression from the reverse.

17. Stone block – Kamālmaula Mosque, Dhāra.

**Começa o alegre⁹
TE E MANVAL DE DO
ctrina christã, necessário aos
que se querem salvar
& aproueitar.**

**Cap. I. que trata do estado do pec-
cador mortal, e suas condições.**



**Qui uult ueni-
re post me,
denegat se-
ipsum, to-
llat crucem
sua, et sequa-
tur me. Luce cap. nono.**

**O q̃ quer vir a pos mim, negue a si
mesmo, tome sua cruz, e siga me.
q̃ Estas palavras, filho charíssimo
pregou a mesma verdade Christo
I E S V nosso senhor a todo o po-
uo, como a todos necessarias: porq̃
nellas cõsiste toda a vida christã.
Da boca do senhor as tomei, e da**

. A v

প্রথম প্রকাশ শকাব্দ ১৮০০
১২৫১ খ্রিষ্টাব্দে
শ্রীগোবিন্দ হালদে কর্তৃক

A
GRAMMAR
OF THE
BENGAL LANGUAGE

BY
NATHANIEL BRASSEY HALHED.

ইন্দ্রাদয়োপি যদ্যাত্ত° নয়্যুঃ শত্রবারিষেঃ
পুষ্কিয়ান্তস্য রুৎ সম্য ক্রমোবজু° নরঃ কথ°॥

PRINTED
AT
HOOGLY IN BENGAL

MCCCLXXXVIII

PLATE 22. *A Grammar of the Bengal Language,*
Hoogly (Bengal) 1778. (No. D 521. . . .)

20. Halhed's Grammar of Bengali language, 1778

Ferishta, the great historian and author of *Tārīkh-i-Ferishta* was permitted by Ibrahim Ādil Shāh II to work in the royal library.

From the recently discovered pair of Ruq'as or registered government documents it is evidently clear that one Hindu scholar Waman Pandit bin Anant of the Shesh family of Bijapur was the royal librarian. The documents further state that as a measure of security for the valuable royal manuscript collection Naro bin Gangādhār and Hussain Khān in 1567 and Manjan Khān in 1575 each with high position in the Ādilshāhi hierarchy stood guarantee for the safety and careful preservation of the important charge entrusted to Waman Pandit, the librarian. The annual salary of the librarian was one thousand Hun or about Rs. 3,500. It is believed that Waman Pandit, a grandson of Anant, the librarian left Bijapur as Muhammad Ādil Shāh (1627-1656) wanted him to embrace Islam.⁹⁸

Mr. Fergusson with regard to the Imperial Library writes in his book :—

“Some of its books are curious and interesting to any one acquainted with Arabic and Persian literature. All the most valuable manuscripts were, it is said, taken away by Aurangzeb in cart loads and what remains are literally only a remnant, but a precious one to the persons in charge of the building who show them with mournful pride and regret.”⁹⁹

The remnants of the royal library can be found in the Asari Mahal at Bijapur.

BENGAL

Murshid Quli Ja'far Khān, Nawāb of Bengal (1704 to 1725) “possessed very extensive learning who paid great respect to men who were eminent for their piety or erudition. He wrote with great elegance and was a remarkable fine penman.”¹⁰⁰ It is very natural that a very cultured Nawāb who used to copy Qurān a few hours everyday and who “maintained above

98. *Ibid.*, pp. 106-107.

99. *Architecture of Bi'apur* Ferguson,, p. 75.

100. *Stewarts' History of Bengal*, p. 463.

two thousand readers, bards and chanters, who were constantly employed in reading the Qurān and the other acts of devotion,¹⁰¹ had a magnificent library of his own.

Ālivardi Khān occupied the Masnad of Bengal from 1740 to 1751. He also encouraged learning and his court at Murshidabad became the home of learned men. One of them Mīr Muhammad 'Āli had a library which contained 2000 volumes.¹⁰²

GUJARAT

Sultān Āhmad, the independent ruler of Gujarat (1554-1561 A.D.) was a lover of education and established schools, colleges and libraries. Regarding the royal library of Sultān Ahmad it is written in Tārikh-i-Badāuni that after his death, his son Muzaffar Shāh taking out books from this same royal library, entrusted them to the students of Madrasa Shami-Burhani.¹⁰³ When Akbar conquered Gujarat he distributed some of the books from the same library to the nobles.

Besides the royal library, there were many other personal libraries. Sayyid Muhammad Shāh Ālam (died in 1475 A.D.) the great saint of Gujarat had a personal library.¹⁰⁴ The library improved during the time of his successor Sayyid Jaffar Badr'Ālam. The former collected rare books for his library from Arabia and Persia. The latter founded a Madrasa and the library was a part of the college.¹⁰⁵

JAUNPUR

During the fifteenth century the Sharqi kingdom of Jaunpur became an important centre of learning. Its claim to the intellectual leadership of the contemporary India is borne out by the fact that Jaunpur produced a number of scholars and religious reformers who led men and movements. It was known

101. *Ibid.*, p. 406.

102. *Siyarūl-Mutakhkhirin* : Tr. Sayyid G.H. Khan, Vol. 2, p. 63 n.

103. *I.C.* Oct. 1945, p. 341.

104. *Ibid.*, p. 341.

105. *Ibid.*, p. 343.

as Shiraz of India. There at that time developed twenty schools of thought, each having on its roll several hundred scholars.¹⁰⁶

The Sharqi kings were enlightened rulers and they truly patronized authors and scholars. Jaunpur thus became a centre of many good libraries. The cultural eminence and fame of good libraries attracted many scholars from different parts of India. Among them the libraries of Maulavi Maashuq Āli and of the Mufti Syed Abul-Baqa were well known. The former had a collection of 5,000 volumes.¹⁰⁷

KHANDESH

The Deccani Sultāns failed to defend themselves against the onrush of the powerful Mughals. Akbar conquered Khandesh and the kingdom was finally annexed to the Empire in 1601.

The Sultāns of Khandesh respected scholars, poets and Sufis, and they also had a fine library. Ferishta visited this library and used some of its books. From one of the books he copied the history of the Faruqi rulers.¹⁰⁸ The British Museum has in its possession a letter written to Raja Āli Khān, Sultan of Khandesh by Malik-ush-Shuna Faizi where he requested the king to send with copies of some pages of *Tughluq Nāmā* of the said library.¹⁰⁹

LOUDHIANA

During the decaying days of the Mughal empire the inevitable centrifugal tendency was manifest in different parts of the empire and the provincial viceroys made themselves independent of the titular Delhi emperor. The important of them were the Subāhdārs of the Deccan, Oudh and Bengal.

The founder of the kingdom of Oudh was Sa'adat Khān who was appointed governor in 1724. The successors of Sa'adat Khān ruled Oudh for eight generations with their capital at Lucknow.

106. Humayun Badshah, S.K. Banerjee, pp. 179-180.

107. I.C. Vol. XX, p. 15.

108. Ferishta II, p. 277.

109. I.C. Vol. XX, p. 6.

The generosity and love of wisdom of Nawāb Āsaf-ud-Dawla (1775-1795 A. D.) encouraged establishment of Madrasas, libraries as well as arts and crafts schools at Lucknow. Thus Lucknow became a very important centre of Islamic culture and began to challenge the cultural dominance of Delhi.

Among the many important libraries in and around Lucknow, the Imperial library deserves special mention. From the description of Sprenger, an Englishman, who visited Lucknow in 1848 we collect the following information of the library which was situated in the old Daulat Khānā near Gomti. Sprenger writes as follows :—

“I visited the library along with ‘Allami Tafaddul Khan.’ It has books to the number of approximately three lacs and a servant is deputed for every hundred books.

“Books of different languages like Arabic, Persian and English, both prose and poetry, were there. Besides Qat’at of penman, there were fine specimens of Indian, European and Turkish paintings, in such large numbers that it would require Noah’s life to see them all. I had the opportunity of seeing literary books in countless numbers books like Madarik, Masalik, Mafatih, Kashkul, Bahrul-Anwar, etc.

“It has numerous books written in the hand of the authors themselves. On enquiry the Muhtamim told me that it contained some seven hundred such books. When Delhi was ruined, the greater part of that library came to the Royal Library of Lucknow.

“The truth is that this library is rare and valuable to such an extent that even the precious stones of the Royal Library can hardly equal it.”¹¹⁰

Mr. S. A. Zafar Nadir stated that he had seen many books bearing the seal of the Royal Library of Oudh in various libraries of India which corroborates the statement of Sprenger.¹¹¹

In about 1789 Mirzā Sulaiman Shikoh, third son of Shāh Ālam, fled to Lucknow where he was warmly received by Nawāb Āsaf-ud-Dawla. He was a poet and great patron of poets and authors. In his library there were several copies of

110. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

111. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

Diwān of Shaikh Ghulam Hamdani Musbafi. The Rampur library has copies of Diwān bearing the seal of Mirzā Sulaiman Shikoh.¹¹²

4. LIBRARIES AND ARCHIEVS OF THE MARĀTHA RULERS

In keeping with the traditions of the time, Marāthas encouraged learning and patronized the scholars by Dākshana grants. They used to spend a considerable amount under this head. As a result of this money reward the important cities of Marātha kingdom and the capital city Poona became centres of Sanskrit learning and home of scholars from different parts of India. The last Peshwā Bāji Rāo II spent every year about four lakhs of rupees in Dakshana grant.¹¹³

It is very natural that as a result of all these cultural activities there grew up libraries and archives all over Marātha country. The Peshwās also maintained their own libraries. In 1747-48 Bālāji Bāji Rāo for his own library collected about thirty-six manuscripts from Udaipur and in 1755-56 he also purchased fifteen manuscripts. The Peshwās not only procured manuscripts but got other rare and old manuscripts copied. In 1765-66 the first Mādhava Rāo used to spend every month a sum of Rs. 31.00 for copying manuscripts of his library.¹¹⁴

Like the Mughals, Marāthas also maintained a big establishment, the imperial secretariat or Huzur Daftar to preserve all state papers, documents and account books with utmost care and order, employing more than two hundred Karkuns or clerks.¹¹⁵ Besides these each village used to maintain their own records under the care of the Pātil. The village record keepers were known as Kulkarni. The records of the Peshwās from the points of view of authenticity and reliability were ideal. The Daftar-Khānā maintained a high tradition till the time of Bāji Rāo II when "The Daftar was not only much neglected but its establishment was almost entirely done away

112. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

113. Administrative System of the Marathas, S.N. Sen, p. 471.

114. *Ibid.*, p. 472.

115. *Ibid.*, p. 267.

and people were even permitted to carry away the records or do with them what they pleased."¹¹⁶

5. LIBRARIES ATTACHED TO HINDU CENTRES OF LEARNING

Benaras, Tirhut, Mithilā, Nadīā and other important centres of Hindu learning played important parts in the history of library development of medieval India. The libraries of these centres contained huge collections of manuscripts on religion, and philosophy as well as on other subjects like medicine, science and history. Dr. Fryer, who travelled in India in the 17th century visited such libraries which were filled with Sanskrit manuscripts—"unfolding the mysteries of their religion."¹¹⁷ During his travel in India Bernier (A.D. 1656-1668) visited Benaras. His letter to Monsieur Chapelain despatched from Chiras in Persia on 4th October, 1667 is important as it describes the history of Sanskrit learning at Benaras in the 17th century Benaras was then a celebrated seat of learning and home of many reputed scholars. A list of about 69 pundits can be found from Kavīndra-chandrodaya.¹¹⁸ Kavīndracārya was then leader and all these Pandits of Benaras were held in high esteem by Shāh Jahān and his son Dārā.

Kavīndracārya, a renowned Vedic scholar and well versed in all branches of Sanskrit learning, was born on the banks of the Godāvarī. But he made Benaras his abode. He led the deputation of Hindu Pandits to Agra against the pilgrim tax levied by Shāh Jahān on pilgrims of Allahabad and Banaras. He exercised his influence and made the Mughal emperor abolish the tax. Shāh Jahān conferred on him the title Sarvavidyānidāna and also gave him a pension of Rs. 2,000/- which was stopped by Aurangzeb. Kavīndra had a fine collection of manuscripts. The library was catalogued in a classified way. The catalogue was obtained from a certain math of

116. *Ibid.*, p. 271.

117. *Travels in India in the 17th Cy.*, p. 392.

118. *Kavīndra-candrodaya*, Ed. H.D. Sharma and Mr. M.M. Patkar, Poona, 1939.

Benaras and it (Kavīndrachārya Sūchī Patra) was published in the Gaekwad's Oriental series. (No. XVII). The library was dispersed after the death of the owner and many of the manuscripts of the said library can be identified as they contain the endorsement "Sarvavidyānidāna Kavīndrachārya Saraswatīnām Pustakam."

When Bernier reached Benaras he was warmly received by Kavīndra in the "University library"¹¹⁹ where he invited six eminent scholars for discussion with Bernier. He wrote "..... it has its authors on philosophy, works on medicine written in verse and many other kinds of books with which a large hall at Benaras is entirely filled."¹²⁰ These libraries were preserved with passionate zeal and love and it was a difficult task to procure such manuscripts. Bernier wrote "... those books being of great bulk, at least if they were Bets which were shown to me at Benaras. They are so scarce that my Agah, notwithstanding all his deligence, has not succeeded in purchasing a copy. The gentiles indeed conceal them with much care, lest they should fall into the hands of the Mahomedans, and be burnt, as frequently has happened."¹²¹ The above statement is further corroborated by another traveller Thevenot who writes - "They have many ancient books of their Religion and the Bramens are the keepers of them."¹²²

These collections of manuscripts were preserved with passionate care by the learned Hindu scholars during their life time but after their death the collections were decentralized and some of them were destroyed by the then foreign rulers.

119. Bernier and Kavīndracārya Saraswatī at the Mughal Court. (Studies in Indian Literary History Vol. II by P.K. Gode, Singhi Jain Series, pp. 364-379).
120. Bernier, F. Travels, in the Moghul Empire (A.D. 1656-1668) Eng. Ed. Constable, A., p. 335.
121. *Ibid.*, pp. 335-36.
122. Travels of Mr. de Thevenot, Book III ; ch. I, p. 90.

CHAPTER V

The Libraries of the Early European Settlers of South India and Bengal and the Library of Tipu Sultan

1. LIBRARIES OF THE EARLY EUROPEAN SETTLERS OF SOUTH INDIA
2. THE LIBRARY OF TIPU SULTAN
3. LIBRARIES OF THE EARLY EUROPEAN SETTLERS OF BENGAL
4. BIRTH OF THE MODERN LIBRARY MOVEMENT

1. LIBRARIES OF THE EARLY EUROPEAN SETTLERS OF SOUTH INDIA

WITH the rise of European settlements in India in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Indian library activities received new impetus. The Christian missionaries with a view to propagate religion made endeavour to promote learning, introduce printing and establish libraries. Thus, this era was the meeting ground of two different sets of cultural forces, a link between the old and the new. It was marked by changes of far reaching consequences and in the midst of these changes which was destined to broaden into a new horizon, the medieval age saw its burial and the modern age its birth.

From sixteenth century onwards the Christian missionaries of South India studied the various Indian languages and written numerous books not only on religion and philosophy but on many secular subjects.¹ They patronised compiling and publishing of South Indian lexicography² and it was through their efforts

1. M. U. Sec. A. Vol. 22, No. 2 1951. Jan., pp. 138-139.
2. I. L. Vol. 14, No. 1, 1959, Jan. pp. 15-22.

Tamil journalism was born in South India.³ But the English colony at Madras had no library till 1661. Through the energetic efforts of Captain William Whitefield the first library of the English colony of Madras was started. He had no heavy pressure of work so he with the help and co-operation of local merchants and government officers collected a sum of money. The collected amount was invested in a bale of calico cloth and the bale was despatched in a home bound ship to be sold in London. The sale proceeds were utilised in purchase of books.⁴ The court minute book of the Company records the following resolution under date 20.2.1662-63.

“It was ordered that the remainder of the proceeds of the Calicoes sold by the Governor, which was given (to) the Minister at the Fort (of Madras) by the Factors and sent home to buy him books; should be sent (to) him in realls of 8 (a then current coin) after the books are paid for.”⁵

The cloth was sold for £ 85 sterling. Books were purchased out of it and remainder of 23½ pieces of gold were returned to Whitefield. Next year the Directors purchased books worth £ 20/- and sent them to Madras for the use of the official library of Madras. Thus started the Company's library at the Fort.⁶

Since then the Directors at intervals used to send books for the libraries of the Company. In 1669 they sanctioned a sum of £ 5/- for the purchase of books for the minister Mr. Thomas Bill. The collection was added to Fort St. George library. Walter Hooke, another minister, died at Musulipatam and his collection of books was purchased for the same library in 1671. The new Chaplin, Mr. Portman, requested in 1675 for further addition of books. The Directors sanctioned the prayer but requested the Governor of Fort St. George to send them a perfect catalogue of all the collections. The above request runs as follows :

3. J. M. U. Sec. A. Vol. 22, No. 2, 1951. Jan., p. 137.
4. Church in Madras : Rev. Frank Penny, Vol. I, pp. 38-39. And also Promotion of Learning in India by Early European Settlers upto 1800 A.D., Law, p. 87.
5. The Library Movement : Diverse Hands, Madras Library Association, p. 133.
6. Church in Madras : Rev Frank Penny, Vol. 1, pp. 38-39.

“Hérewith you have a catalogue of such books as were desired by Mr. Portman to be provided, which we send as an addition to our library; and in regard we find every Chaplin we send as desirous of an addition; you to send us by the return of these ships a perfect catalogue of all your books both with you at Metchlepatam and the Bay.”⁷

From the above note it is very clear that the Director apprehended some danger in the form of spreading Non-conformity and Calvinism among the servants, became suspicious of their own Chaplins and also suspected that their influence will change the ideas and living standards of the natives. As a check, the Chaplin had “to keep a list of the persons to whom they (the books) are lent; who are to subscribe their names in the list under title obliging them to return . . . the books when demanded, under the penalty of paying one pagoda each.”⁸ The information as given above is historically important as it shows the first record of lending English books on Indian soil.

In 1695 the Directors sent 300 copies of Portuguese liturgies for free distribution among the natives of English settlements. But spoken Portuguese being different the books failed to serve the purpose and they were kept in the Church library of Fort St. George.⁹

Thus the library at Fort St. George was enriched and from the account left by traveller Lockyer, who visited the library in 1703 we come to know that the books on Divinity only of the said library were worth £ 438.¹⁰

With the publication of Lockyer’s—“Account of Madras” the Directors became fully aware of the importance of the library which had been in the meanwhile increased by gifts of books received from many kind persons and also from society for Promotion of Christian knowledge. About 1714 they wrote to the officers of the Fort as follows :—

“We understand that the library in Fort St. George is worthy of our notice as consisting not only of a great number of books

7. *Ibid.*, p. 52-53.

8. *The Library Movement, and also Church in Madras, Vol. I, 113.*

9. *Promotion of Learning in India by Early European Settlers upto 1800 A.D., Law, p. 90.*

10. *Church in Madras, Vol. I. p. 132.*

but of a great many that are choice and valuable, John Dolben, Esquire, and Master Richard Elliot and others having made a present of their books (which were considerable) to the library, besides other augmentations it hath lately received from the Society for Promotion of Christian knowledge. We, therefore, recommend the care of the library to our President and Ministers etc. We order our ministers to sort the said books into proper classes and to take a catalogue of them to be kept in the library, of which they shall deliver a copy to our President and send a copy home to us; and we desire our President to order two of our servants together with our Ministers to examine the books by the catalogue once a year, that is to say, some few days before the Vestry is held and to make this report at the Vestry. It would be proper also to put our Chops (stamps) on the said books etc.”¹¹

The above note is also historically important where we find for the first time an arrangement is made for stock-taking of the English library on Indian soil as well as the first instruction to stamp each book for proper identification.

According to the wishes of the Directors a catalogue was sent in 1716. The Directors became dissatisfied with the incomplete catalogue which shows as the “Library appears to be a confused irregular heap”. But in 1719 a new Chaplin Mr. Thomas Wendy prepared a satisfactory catalogue for which he was promptly rewarded by the Governor and the Council with a palanquin allowance.¹²

Mr. Landon, the Chaplin of Fort St. David which is a later possession of the Company had a collection of books. He left in 1707. The Company purchased the collection and started the new Company’s library at Fort St. David.¹³ The library was not well managed and many books were stolen.¹⁴

Henceforward the Directors became more liberal and used to send books for free distribution and allowed free passage. They showed the same kindness in 1714 to Ziegenbalg,¹⁵ and from

11. Church in Madras, Vol. I, pp. 146-151.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 146-151.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 126.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 146-147

15. *Ibid.*, p. 187.

1726 to 1741 to the Society for Promotion of Christian knowledge.¹⁶

Mr. H. Dodwell informs us that at Madras Clive was shown with generous act and he was admitted into the Governor's excellent library. The collection was made received by the French occupation and in 1754 the Directors were requested to send periodic consignment of books but the request was not heeded.¹⁷

In between 1782 to 1799 the Chaplin repeatedly complained against this illiberal attitude towards indent of books and made applications requesting the Directors to send books as the Chaplins were unable to meet the demand of the soldiers of Wallajbad, Arcot etc. as well as to comply with the many applications that were made to from every quarter. The changed condition of the then situation compelled the Directors to be unsympathetic.

Due to growing demand, the important monasteries of South India were furnished with libraries of their own. The English surgeon Dr. John Fryer who arrived at Goa during the Christmas week of 1675 says :—

“The Paulistines (*i.e.* Jesuits) enjoy the biggest of all the monasteries at St. Roch : in it is a library, an hospital and an apothecary's shop well furnished with medicines.”¹⁸

The political situation changed with the defeat of Tipu Sultān and the Directory asserted their former liberality towards indent of books at regular intervals.¹⁹

2. THE LIBRARY OF TIPU SULTĀN

In 1782 Tipu Sultān on the death of his father Haidar Āli assumed the sovereignty of Mysore.

The Sultān was a great patron of learning and founded a University with various faculties and a good library. Tipu was

16. *Ibid.*, p. 190.

17. Nabobs of Madras, 1926, p. 188.

18. Mandelslo's Travels in Western India (1638-39) : M. S. Commisariat, Appendix, p. 103.

19. Promotion of Learning in India by Early European Settlers upto 1800 A.D., Law, pp. 94-95.

a great lover and collector of books. "After the first sieze of Seringapatam Tipu always slept on coarse canvas instead of on a bed and at his repasts listened to some religious books which was read out to him."²⁰ The Sultān had his own personal library within the castle. "In the library of the castle is a copy of the Koran, formerly belonging to Emperor Aurangzeb. It is said to have cost 9,000 rupees and is beautifully written in the Naskh character with elegant ornamentatiol."²¹ The said copy is now preserved in the Windsor Castle library.

With the heroic death of Sultān in 1799, Seringapatam fell into the hands of the British. They captured the entire royal treasury along with its valuable library.²² The valuable manuscripts of the royal library remained uncared for a long time and later on some of the manuscripts were transferred to London and others to Fort Williams College Library and to the library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta. "Among the papers found in his library was a register of his dreams."²³ Major Stuart prepared in 1809 a catalogue of the remaining books and it was published by the Cambridge university. A summary of the contents of the library is given below :—

Qurān—44 volumes ; commentaries on Qurān—41 volumes ; Prayirs—35 volumes ; Traditions—46 volumes ; Theology—46 volumes ; Sufyism (Mystic writings)—115 volumes ; Ethics—24 volumes ; Jurisprudence—95 volumes ; Arts and Sciences—19 volumes ; Philosophy—62 volumes ; Philology—45 volumes ; Lexicography—29 volumes ; Hindi and Deccani poetry—23 volumes . . . and Deccani prose—4 volumes ; Turkish prose—2 volumes ; Tables—18 volumes. Some of these books belonged to the kings of Bijapur and Golconda but the majority were plundered at Chittur, Savanur and Kadapa.²⁴

Major Stuart in his descriptive Catalogue writes :—

"The library consisted of nearly 2,000 volumes of Arabic, Persian and Hindi manuscripts in all the various branches of Mohammadan literature. . . . Theology or Sufism was his

20. Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan (Rulers of India) ; L. B. Bowring, p. 224.

21. *Ibid.*

22. I. C. Vol. XX, p. 3.

23. Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan, p. 226.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 202 fn.

(Sultan's) favourite study. But the Sultan was ambitious of being an author; and although we have not discovered any complete work of his composition, no less than forty-five books, on different subjects, were either composed, or translated from other languages under his immediate patronage or inspection." Thus the Sultān patronised writing and translating manuscripts for his library.

The Sultān loved nicely leather-bound volumes for his castle library and Seringapatam thus became a centre of good leather binding. "All the volumes that had been rebound in Seringapatam have the names of God, Mohammad, his daughter Fatima and her sons, Hassan and Hussain, stamped in the medallion on the middle of the cover, and the names of the first four Khalifs on the four corners. At top is Sirokare Khodabad (Govt given by God) ; and at the bottom Allah Kafy (God is sufficient). A few were impressed with the private signet of the Tipu Sultan."²⁵

3. LIBRARIES OF THE EARLY EUROPEAN SETTLERS OF BENGAL

It is difficult task to reconstruct the library activities of the early European settlers of Bengal due to total disappearance of the East India Company's records relating to Bengal partly due to the great cyclone of 1737 and partly to the sack of Calcutta by Siraj-ud-daula in 1756.

But it is evidently clear from an account given by Mr. Hyde in his book "Parish of Bengal" that there existed already a library since 170). Mr. Benjamin Adams, the Chaplin of the Bay arrived in Calcutta on the 16th June, 1709 and on his arrival made an addition to the library. It is highly interesting and historically important that the Society for Promotion of Christian Knowledge sent out a circulating library in 1709 to Calcutta. This is the first circulating library in India. The society for Promotion of Christian Knowledge's governors continued their help and sent parcels of books to Briercliffe,

25. Stewart's Catalogue of Tipu Sultan's Library, Preface.

which were allowed by the Company to be carried free of charge in their ships.²⁶

Thus started the Fort William College Library. The actual opening of the college dates from Monday the 24th November 1800 on which date lectures commenced in Arabic, Persian and Hindusthani languages. But in its very infant stage, the college had to struggle for its existence.

Due to shortage of space and other factors Lord Wellesly selected Garden Reach as the suitable site and he made the following suggestions for the development of the college library.

“As it will require a considerable time before the new building in Garden Reach can be completed, it is intended in the meanwhile to continue to occupy the Writers’ Buildings, and to hire such additional buildings in the neighbourhood as may be required for the temporary accommodation of the students and officers of the College, for the library, the dining hall, the lecture rooms and other purposes. It will be necessary to make some considerable purchases of books for the foundation of the library the Governor-General will effect whatever purchases can be made with economy and advantage in India: lists of books will be transferred to England by an early opportunity with a view to such purchases as it may be necessary to make in Europe: and the Governor-General entertains no doubt that the Court of Directors will contribute liberally towards such purchases. That part of the library of the late Tipoo Sultan which was presented by the army to the Court of Directors is lately arrived in Bengal, the Governor-General strongly recommends that the Oriental manuscripts composing this collection should be deposited in the library of the College at Fort William, and it is his intention to retain the manuscripts accordingly until he shall receive the order of the Court upon the subject: he will transmit lists of the collection by the first opportunity. It is obvious that these manuscripts may be rendered highly useful to the purposes of the new institution, and that much more public advantage can be derived from them in the library of the College at Fort

26. Promotion of Learning in India by Early European Settlers upto 1800 A.D., Law, p. 98.

William, than can possibly be expected from depositing them in London. Such of the manuscripts as may appear merely valuable as curiosities may be transmitted in England by an early opportunity". Every scholar will sympathise with these liberal views, and it is an unailing source of regret that Lord Wellesley's original intentions were defeated by the Court of Directors in whom he had such confidence, with the result that this unique collection of manuscripts was broken up and scattered to the four winds of heaven, instead of being preserved intact as a memorial of the famous victory of 4th May 1799. If it was deemed inexpedient to leave the collection in the possession of the College of Fort William, surely it would have fitly found a resting place as a whole in one library, the British Museum for example, rather than in fragmentary deposits in several libraries."²⁷ But the Court of Directors, for some reasons or other, refused to accept the suggestions. As a result the existence of the College was at stake.

The library of the college so long remained open to all responsible persons for reference use. But as a result of this, the library sustained a loss of 1284 books in 1824 and the price of the same was about Rs. 28,355. Out of these 875 volumes had been restored or paid while the prices of 409 volumes were written off. The Secretary of the library was making best efforts to prevent recurrence of such loss.

In 1825 the question of throwing open the College library to the public again came before the College Council. Captain Ruddell, the Secretary being aware of the past experiences, strongly opposed the move and a catalogue Raisonee was prepared. On 12th September 1825 a collection of books was presented to the Asiatic Society. On 22nd November 1825 Capt. Ruddell applied for permission to join the regiment but the Government declined to permit.

In 1827 Lt. Todd was asked to take charge of the library but he refused the offer. Previously Mr. Hodges of Nepal Residency collected 127 Mss for the library and now Lt. J. A. Ayton offered to prepare a catalogue of the same. The matter was referred to Captain Price and Dr. Carry for their opinion

27. *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. VII, 1911, pp. 12-13.

but both of them considered Mr. Ayton not competent for the job. The offer was declined.

On 4th February, 1828 a collection of oriental works was sent to the University of Copenhagen, and on 6th February, a complete Catalogue of Arabic, Persian and Hindustani books of the college library in four folio volumes was submitted to the Government.

In February 1829 the Secretary of the College Council applied to the Government for a further grant of Rs. 3000 towards the cost of Napalese and Tibetan Mss. collected by Mr. Hodgson and at the same time recommended that no further purchase of Mss. should be made. In July 1829 it was decided to transfer the "Hodgson" collection of books and Mss. in the language of Central Asia to Asiatic Society. In 1831 a further supply of Bhotan books collected by Mr. Hodgson from Nepal was transferred to the Asiatic Society. In the same year the Secretary of the College library Mr. Ruddell recommended the sale of surplus books. The Government approved the recommendation and decided that the sale would be conducted by Messrs. Tulloh & Co. of Calcutta.

Captain Onseley was appointed Secretary and librarian of the college in 1832. During this time the library had 5224 European books, 11,718 printed oriental books and 4253 oriental Mss. Several of these Mss. were highly illuminated. About this collection Mr. Onseley writes—"The oriental portion of this library is probably unequalled in point of value and extent throughout Asia, the European part is less extensive but contains a choice collection of History, Travels, Jurisprudence, Ethics, Divinity, Metaphysics, Grammar, Lexicography, Greek and Latin classics besides numerous works on the modern European Languages particularly in French, Italian and Danish."

Due to shortage of space, the question of transferring the college library collection to the Asiatic Society was under consideration. But Asiatic Society had also no sufficient place and this irritated Capt. Onseley. With reference to this proposal of transfer he writes—"The vaults and Lobbies are in truth the only places in that house at present available for such a purpose, and these are incapable of containing about half the books of the college library but even if this were not the case I feel assured

that His Honour in Council would never consign materials constituting so noble a foundation for the formation of a National Library to perish in the vaults and passages of the Asiatic Society's house. Viewing the question in a different light it might be doubted whether that economy be sound which would be valued even in the Honourable company's dead stock account at 40 or £50,000 to the risk of being lost or injured, for the sake of saving a sum in house rent that could never exceed Rs. 300 or 400 rupees a month."²⁸ These lines proved beyond doubt that Capt. Onseley realized the true merit and importance of the collection and strongly opposed the scheme of transferring the same to the Asiatic Society but the authorities paid no heed to these arguments. Further, there was another proposal at that time about the transfer of European works of the college library to the Public library which was then about to be established in Calcutta.

The Public library was established on the 31st October, 1835 by a general meeting held at Town hall, Calcutta. On 19th November Mr. Stocqueler, Hony. Secretary of the Calcutta Public Library requested the Government to give necessary instructions to the Secretary, Fort William College to hand over the European books to the Calcutta Public Library and also informed that—"Commodious premises forming the lower apartment of Dr. Strong's house in Esplanade Row have been selected for the present reception of all works that may be purchased or presented." The curators of the Public Library also asked for loan of the college bookcases till their own were ready. Both these requests were sanctioned by the Government under the following conditions :—

- (1) The permanent establishment of the library Society.
- (2) The approbation of the Hon. Court of Directors of the transfer of books.
- (3) The proper care and custody of books.

On 24th February, 1836 the Secretary to Government wrote that the Governor of Bengal had resolved to make over the oriental books of the college library to the Asiatic Society on condition that the society shall provide fit accommodation for them and

held them open to the public for reference and perusal as proposed in the letter of the Secretary of that Society.

The European works were transferred on 27th February 1836 and the transfer records were signed by W.H. Stacy, Librarian, W.P. Grant, A.R. Jackson and John Bell, curators.

On 14th August, 1939 the Hon. Court of Directors sanctioned the transfer of books and Mss. which had taken place in 1836. Thus ended the story of the Fort William College Library.

The Asiatic Society of Bengal was founded in 1784 by Sir William Jones, a distinguished scholar and linguist who came to Calcutta in October 1783 as a Puisne Judge of the late Supreme Court at Fort William in Bengal. The object of the Society was "enquiry into the history and antiquities, arts, Sciences and literature of Asia." In its early days the society had no building of its own, and its meetings were held in the Grand Jury room of the Supreme Court. The Court house was not always available and books, papers, records and specimen of various kinds had accumulated. Hence there was natural desire for a separate habitation of the Society. In 1805 Government sanctioned a free grant of land at the Park Street, Calcutta, and the Society's building, designed by Captain Lock of the Bengal Engineers, was completed in 1808. One of the main objects for which the house was built was to provide accommodation for a library and a museum.

The library of the Society was started with donations and gifts from early members. The books that had been received upto the time formed the nucleus of a library and funds were sanctioned every year, and also on special occasions, for the purchase of new books. In 1817 Mr. H.T. Colebrooke was appointed as agent in London to select and purchase books for the Society. A small but very valuable collection was donated by Mr. Home and a larger collection was received from Government on the abolition of the Fort William College library.

The first accession of any importance of the Oriental books was a gift from the Seringapatam Prize Committee (February 3, 1803). It included many old and rare illuminated Mss of Qurān, Gulistān, Padshanāmā etc. taken in loot from the palace of Tipu Sultān. A large number of Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and Urdu works, mostly in Mss. of the Fort William

College library collected by Gladwin, Carey, Gilchrist and other distinguished scholars were placed under the custody of the society. Before the sanction of the Court of Directors, the Government defrayed the cost of the establishment, amounting to Rs. 78 per month. The sanction was obtained in 1870 when the monthly grant was stopped and the books and Mss. became the property of the society, subject only to the two following conditions—(1) safe and careful preservation and (2) unrestricted accessibility to the public at all reasonable hours.

The catalogue of the Mss was prepared and printed under the able guidance of Mr. Prinsep, the Secretary. The Persian catalogue bears date 1837 and contains a total of 2742 titles of which 1013 were Arabic, 1418 Persian and 311 Urdu. The Sanskrit catalogue was published in 1838 containing list of 1800 titles. There were also palm leaf Mss. of Burmese, Siamese, Javanese and Ceylonese to the extent of 125 bundles but no inventory of any kind for the same was made. The Society has also in the collection several Chinese and Tibetan Xylographs. Thus, the library became a very important centre of oriental studies and research and had the society done nothing else in the course of its career, this collection would suffice to secure its unique position.

To facilitate the use of the library by members, a set of rules was framed in January 1920. A catalogue of the library was first published in 1833 containing a list of about one thousand volumes. After the accession of the college of Fort William library's collection, a second catalogue of the European books was made by late Dr. E. Rock and that shows a total of 4315 volumes.

4. BIRTH OF THE MODERN LIBRARY MOVEMENT

The beginning of the modern library movement can be traced in the first half of the nineteenth century when with the active support of the Europeans, public libraries were established at Calcutta, Madras and Bombay.

The year 1808 is significant for the history of Indian public libraries when the Bombay Government initiated a proposal to register libraries which would receive free copies of books published from the "Funds for the Encouragement of Literature".

Calcutta public library owes its origin to Mr. J. H. Stocqueler, the Editor of "Englishman". Being encouraged by the success of the Bombay Public Library Mr. Stocqueler took great initiative in framing a project for Calcutta Public Library. The citizens of Calcutta assembled at a meeting in the Town Hall on October 31, 1835, and unanimously passed the following resolution :—

"That it is expedient and necessary to establish in Calcutta a Public Library of reference and circulation, that shall be open to all ranks and classes without distinction and sufficiently extensive to supply the wants of the entire community in every department of literature."

To pilot the project a committee of 24 men was formed (22 members of the European community and 2 Bengali gentlemen). The important members were—Rasik Krishna Mallik, editor "Jñānaneṣhan"; Rasamay Datta, Secretary Hindu College; Sir John Peter Grant; Capt. D. L. Richardson, Professor of Hindu College; J. C. Marshman, editor "Samāchār Darpan"; Sir Edward Ryan; W. H. Macnagten; C. W. Smith; Col. Dunlop; Rev. H. Fisher; Mr. Dickens; Dr. Ranken; Rev. James Charles; John Bell; W. P. Grant; Rev. Dr. St. Leger and James Kyd. In order to create a fund it was decided that any person would be considered a proprietor on payment of a subscription of Rs. 300 either in one or three instalments. Prince Dwarkanath Tagore, in response to this call, subscribed Rs. 300 at a time and became the first proprietor of the library. Besides there were three classes of subscribers on payment of admission and subscription fees.

Thus the nucleus of the library was formed by a collection of Rs. 45,000 as donations from the proprietors as well as private persons and by shifting a collection of 4675 volumes of the Fort William College Library in the residence of Dr. F. P. Strong, civil surgeon of 24-Paraganas in 1836. The library was made open to the public on the 21st March, 1836 with Mr. Stacy as librarian and Sri Peary Chand Mitra as sub-librarian. It had a governing body of seven curators with Mr. Stocqueler as Secretary. In 1841 the library was temporarily shifted to Fort William but finally was housed on the first floor of Metcalfe Hall on payment of a sum of Rs. 1,64,000 in 1844.

In 1848 Sri Peary Chand Mitra took charge of the library and turned it into a real centre of cultural activities. The governing committee was composed of three curators of which the librarian was the ex-officio Secretary. Besides the general body, there were two other committees namely, the House Committee responsible for the building and other properties and the Selection Committee responsible for the selection of books and journals. A meeting of the members of the library held on 12th May, 1873 abolished the committee of proprietors and set up a Council of 14 members elected from the proprietors as well as the subscribers. In 1877 Mahārāja Narendra Krishna became the first Indian president of the council and Dr. Mahendralāl Sircar was the Vice-President.

The sources of income of the library *i.e.* subscription and donation, not being sufficient, in 1880 the library authorities requested the Government for grant-in-aid of Rs. 200 per month. But considering the character of the library which is not purely public, Government failed to comply with the request. In 1885 Mr Mackenzie submitted a plan to convert the library into a purely Municipal Library free to the public. This plan was approved by the Council and accepted by the Government who donated a sum of Rs. 5,000/- in the first year.

In order to infuse new life and shape to the changed character of this institution Śrī Bipin Chandra Pāl was appointed Librarian on 20th August, 1890, in the scale of pay of Rs. 100-10-200 and he started to compile a dictionary catalogue on the advice of Mr. H. Beveridge, the famous historian. But due to the lack of support and sympathy of the municipal authorities the condition of the library did not improve rather it deteriorated. Śrī Pāl resigned after one year and six months service. Śrī Rādhā Raman Mitra was the next Librarian.

In order to save the dying institution, Lord Curzon purchased the shares of the proprietors in 1899. In 1902 the Imperial Library (Indenture Validation) Act was passed and on 30th January, 1903, the Calcutta Public Library was combined with Secretariat Library and the two together was converted into a National Institution.

The following notification in the Gazette of India describes the hopes and ambitions of this new born Imperial Library—

“The need of an Imperial Library in India which should be open to the use of the public has, for some time past, engaged the attention of the Governor-General-in-Council, who has been impressed by the limited character of the facilities for research which are available to the student in this country. The Imperial library in the Civil Secretariat Buildings at Calcutta, formed a few years ago from the different Departmental Libraries, has proved of some service in this direction, and the marked increase in recent years in the number of persons making use of it affords satisfactory evidence of the appreciation which would be extended to an institution worthy of the name of an Imperial Library. With the approval of the Secretary of State, the Governor-General-in-Council has accordingly decided to establish such a library at Calcutta, a suitable building has recently been acquired for its accommodation, and the books and shelves of the Calcutta Public Library, which has long ceased to fulfil the intentions of its founders, have been purchased from the proprietors. These arrangements were confirmed and validated by the Imperial Library Act 1902 (I of 1902). The existing Imperial Library will form the nucleus of the new institution, which will be provided with Reading Rooms, public and private, as at the British Museum and Bodleian Libraries. It is intended that it should be a library of reference, a working place for students, and a repository of material for the future historians of India, in which, so far as possible, every work written about India at any time can be seen and read.”

There was thus a streak of light upon the horizon, which was destined to broaden into a new movement for India's culture and learning.

CHAPTER VI

Writing Materials Through the Ages and Introduction of Paper

INDIA passed through stages of speaking, drawing and painting, each extending hundreds or even thousand of years, and thus, it was by a series of natural steps that writing grew out of drawing. In the earlier ages writing was used by a special class and the earliest written documents were letters, accounts, recipes, itineraries etc. Then, gradually, the art of writing and reading developed and spread.

With the gradual enlargement of its range of use, different types of writing materials such as leaves, bark, stone, metal, wood etc. were discovered and they, according to their availability as well as nature and purpose changed from time to time.

Paper making was not unknown in ancient India but it was a rare commodity. The Mughals in mediaeval age introduced large scale manufacture of paper in India and thus ushered a new age.

During the period under review the following writing materials and implements were mainly used in India ;—

1. Leaves of (a) *Borassus flabellifer* : Palm (Tāla or Tāda)
(b) *Musa sapientum* : Banana (Kalā or Kadālī)
(c) *Nelumbo nucifera* : Lotus (Padma)
(d) *Pandanus odoratissimus* : (Ketakī)
(e) *Ficus bengalensis* (Bata)
(f) *Calotropis gigantia* (Mārtanda)
2. Barks of (a) *Bactula Bhojapatr* : Birch (Bhūrja)
(b) *Aquilaria agallocha* : (Sāchi or Agar)
(c) *Morus Indica* : Mulberry (Tunt)
(d) *Melia azadirachta* : (Neem)
3. Wooden board
4. Terracotta board
5. Slate

6. Bamboo Chips
7. Cotton and Silk cloth
8. Leather
9. Stone
10. Brick
11. Earthen Seal
12. Metals—

(a) Gold	(b) Silver
(c) Copper	(d) Bronze
(e) Brass	(f) Tin
13. Tortoise Shell
14. Dust or sand
15. Chalk stick
16. Ink—Ordinary, Coloured and Invisible
17. Pens of metals, bamboo, twig, straw or reed
18. Ink pot
19. Compass, rulers etc.

Tala patra, Tada patra or Palm leaf

Palm leaves known as Tāda patra, Tāla patra or Panna (parna) were the most common writing material of ancient India. These were leaves of Palmyra tree which grows in abundance in South India and on the sea-sides. These leaves are easily available, cheap as well as lasting.

The leaves are generally very big in size. The length varied from 1' to 3' and the breadth from $\frac{3}{4}$ " to 4". On separating each leaf from the joints they can be fitted into proper length according to the needs. The leaves should be dried up in the sun, next boiled in hot water and then dried again. Now, when they are completely dried up, they should be made polished by rubbing polished stone or conch shells. After this they are cut to the proper sizes.

Two kinds of palm leaves are generally used for writing. One is known as Śrītāla while the other as Tāla only. Śrītāla is grown only in South India specially in Malabar and the leaves are thin and crisp and can be used as paper which can absorb ink. Ordinary Tāla is grown all over India and the leaves are coarse and thick.

The process of seasoning Śrītāla leaves is somewhat different.

The leaves are buried in the mud for three months after they are dried. For smoking, the leaves which have already acquired brownish colour, are kept in the kitchen. From the kitchen they are taken as when needed for writing.¹

There are two ways of writing on the palm leaves. In South India and Orissa letters were made incised with a pointed pen or stylus and afterwards, in order to make the incised letters coloured, the leaves were besmeared with soot or charcoal. People in North India wrote with ink.

Palm leaf Mss. do not last long in the hot and humid climate of South India but they proved to be very lasting in cold countries of North India, Nepal and Kashmir. It is why all the early palm leaf Mss. are found in Northern India.

We find early references to writing on palm leaves in Jātakas. After the death of Buddha the Tripitaka was first written on palm leaves.² In the Arthaśāstra Kautilya mentions in his list of forest products birch (Bhūrja) and palm yielding leaves which were used as writing materials.³ Hiuen-Tsang visited India in 629-645 A.D. In the life of his teacher, HWUI LI refers to the Indian use of palm leaf as writing material as follows :

“We come to Kongkanapura...To the north of the city is a forest of Talas trees about 30 li in circuit. The leaves of this tree are long and of shining appearance. The people of this country use them for writing on and they are highly valued.”⁴

During the Mughal age along with Birch Bark these leaves were “dressed, dried and then used as paper”. Abul Fazl,⁵ Pyrard⁶ and Thevenot⁷ corroborate the above fact.

In the 18th and 19th centuries the village school children were taught writing in four successive stages—on ground, palm leaf, plaintain leaf and paper. On the palm leaf they used to write with ink and then clean it with a piece of wet cloth. The

1. I. A. Vol. I, 1947, p. 234.

2. Si-yu-ki (Tr. by Beal) V. 2, pp. 164-65.

3. Arthaśāstra (Tr. by S. Sastry), p. 122.

4. Life of Hieun-Tsang, Trubner, 1911, p. 146.

5. Āin-i-Akbari (Jarrett), II, pp. 126 and 351.

6. The Voyages of, to the East Indies, the Maldives etc. (Tr. by Albert Gray) Vol. II, p. 408.

7. Indian travels by Thevenot and Careri, pt. III, ch. I, p. 90.

practice is still continued in far off village primary schools and in some of the South Indian temples.

Among the early palm leaf Mss. the following few requires special mention :—

1. A portion of the drama by Aśvaghosa of the 2nd cy. A.D. discovered by the Royal Prussian expedition from Turfan in C. Asia.⁸
2. Portion of a Mss. sent by Mr. Macartna from Kasgar of about 4th cy. A.D.⁹
3. The Prajñā pāramitā—hṛdayasūtra and Usnisa Vijaya dhāriṇi Mss. of Hori-uzie temple, Japan. These Mss. were taken from India and may be dated in the 6th cy. A.D.¹⁰ The size of the leaves is $11\frac{1}{2}'' \times 1\frac{1}{2}''$.
4. Ms. of Skanda Purāṇa from Nepal Durbar library of the 7th cy. A.D.¹¹
5. Ms. of the Parameśwar Tantra (of the Harsha Era 252 i.e. 858 A.D.) in the Cambridge collection.¹²
6. Ms. of Lankāvatara, a Buddhist work (Newar Era 28, i.e. 906—907 A.D.) from Nepal.¹³

Banana Leaves

In the medieval Bengal students of the primary schools having finished writing with straw or reed on sand or dust were promoted to the rank where they used to write on Banana or palmyra leaves. Thus, we see that Banana leaves were used for practising handwriting by the school students and the practice is still continuing in the remotest parts of Bengal.¹⁴

Lotus Leaves

Lotus leaves were also used for writing letters. The following

8. Kleimere Sanskrit Texte. p. 1. (Pub. by Dr. Luders).
9. J. A. S. B. Vol. 66, p. 218, plate 7.
10. Indian Paleography, R. B. Pandey, p. 70.
11. Catalogue of Palm leaf and selected paper Mss. belonging to the Darbar Library, Nepal, Edited by Haraprasad Sastry, p. 52 (Introduction).
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*, p. 140.
14. Aspects of Bengali Society from old Bengali literature, T.C. Dasgupta, pp. 167-68.

lines from Kālidāsa's Śakuntalā where king Duṣhayanta says : "Here is the folded love letters committed to the lotus leaf with her (Śakuntalā's) nails", will prove that writing of temporary nature was done on lotus leaves.¹⁵

Other kinds of leaves

There is a passage in Yoginī Tantra which prescribes that if possible books will be written also on Ketakī (Pandanus-odoratissimus), Mārtanda (Calotrópis-gigantia) or Bata (Ficus bengalensis) leaves but whoever shall write on Basudal (other leaves) will face innumerable troubles.¹⁶ Rājaśekhara refers to letters written on Ketakī flower leaves (Ketakīdalalekha) in Karpūrmanjarī (II 7). In Naiṣadha-Charita we find also letters were written on the leaves of golden Ketakī flowers with nails (vi. 63).

Bhuraj patra or Birch Bark

The inside bark of the Bhurja Tree (Baetula Bhojpatr) which grows abundantly in the Himalayan region was used as another important writing material in ancient and medieval India. In order to make it fit for use, barks were taken out and then pieces were made of it of various sizes. According to Alberuni the average size of the cut pieces were one yard in length and one span in breadth.¹⁷ Next those pieces were prepared lasting and polished by spreading oil over them and then they are rubbed with. Like palm leaf Mss. a number of such birch bark leaves were placed one after another and were pierced in the middle or on the two sides of each leaf in order to pass strings through them. Finally, wooden planks according to the size of leaves were placed on both the sides as covers. Alberuni gives us a detailed description as follows :—

"In central and Northern India people use this bark of the Tuz tree, one kind of which is used as a cover for bow. It is called Bhurja. They take a piece one yard long and as broad as 'outstretched fingers of the hand, or somewhat less and prepare it

15. Abhijnāna-Sakuntalā, Canto 3rd.

16. Yoginī Tantra as Quoted in Visva-Kosha, v. 12, p. 27.

17. Alberuni's India : Sachau, 1, p. 171.

in various ways. They oil and polish it so as to make it hard and smooth and then they write on it. The proper order of the single leaves is marked by numbers. The whole book is wrapped up in a piece of cloth and fastened between two tablets of the same size. Such a book is called Punthi. Their letters and whatever else they have to write, they write on the bark of Tuz-tree."¹⁸

From the account left by Greek historian, Q. Curtius we find the earliest reference to the use of birch bark as writing material. Curtius writes that the Hindus at the time of Alexandar's invasion used the bark of Bhurja-tree as writing material.¹⁹ While other Greek writers like Nearchos allude to the use of paper made of cotton,²⁰ Kumār Sambhava (Canto I.7) contains the following description of Birch bark used as writing material :—

“Where (in the Himalayas) in the birch barks, spotted like the skin of an elephant, were used by the celestial damsels for writing love letters, on which letters were written with the solution of metals.”

The practice of using birch bark as writing material continued till the Mughal period (as is evidenced from the description of Alberuni), and even today we find the use of writing on birch bark for very sacred books as well as for writing sacred hymns which are kept folded within amulets or locketts of neck chain. These amulets are known as Tābijs.

The material is widely used in Kashmir and a large number of birch bark manuscripts are found in the collection of Kashmiri Pandits.

The earliest specimen was discovered from Khotan by a French traveller, M. Duthe Vit De-Rhines in 1892. It is a portion of Dhammapada in Prakrit language and written in Kharoṣṭhi script.²¹ The approximate date of the Ms. is 2nd or 3rd cy. A.D. Another Ms. of Samyuktāgama sūtra written in Sanskrit was found from Khotan which belongs to 4th cy. A.D.²²

18. *Ibid.*

19. Bothlingk and Roth-Sanskrit Worterbuch see under “Bhurja”.

20. Strabo. XV. 117.

21. Indian Paleography, Pandey, p. 69.

22. *Ibid.*

Next comes the inscribed "twists" which were discovered by Masson from Afganisthan.²³

Other important early birch bark Mss. are the Bower and Godfrey collections of about 5th cy. A.D., the Gilgit Mss. of Vinayapitaka of Sarvāstivāda school of Buddhism of about 6th cy. A. D. and the Bānshali (near Mardan) Mss. containing a mathematical treatise in the script of about 7th cy. A.D.²⁴

Sachi (*Acquilaria agallocha*)

In Assam barks of Sāchi tree or aloes were used for writing.²⁵

Sāchi tree is known in Bengal as Agar which is specially utilised for perfumed chips.

The detailed process of preparing the leaves for writing is given below :—

"A tree is selected of about 15 or 16 years growth and 30 to 35 inches in girth, measured about 4 feet from the ground. From this the bark is removed in strips, from 6th to 18 feet long and from 3 to 27 inches in breadth. These strips are rolled up separately with the inner or white part of the bark outwards, and the outer or green part inside, and are dried in the sun for several days. They are then rubbed by hand on a board or some other hard substance, so as to facilitate the removal of the outer or scaly portion of the bark. After this they are exposed to the dew for night, and next morning the outer layer of the bark (Nikari) is carefully removed, and the bark proper is cut into pieces of a convenient size, 9 to 27 inches long and 3 to 18 inches broad. These are put into cold water for about an hour and the alkali is extracted, after which the surface is scraped smooth with a knife. They are then dried in the sun for half an hour, and when perfectly dry are rubbed with a pair of burnt brick. A paste prepared from matimah (*Phaseolus aconitifolius*) is next rubbed in, and the bark is dyed yellow by means of yellow arsenic. This is followed again by sun-drying,

23. *Ariana Antiqua.*, H. H. Wilson, pl. 3 at p. 54. No. 11. And also *Indian Paleography*, Pandey, p. 69.

24. *J.A.S.B.* 65, 225 ff.

25. *Descriptive Catalogue of Assamese Mss*; H. C. Goswami, p. XV. (Introduction).

after which the strips are rubbed as smooth as a marble. The process is now complete and the strips are ready for use.”²⁶

Big sized leaves were used for writing of classics and scriptures and also for writing Mss. specially for the kings and nobles.²⁷

Banks of Tunt, Bata, Neem

Besides Birch and Sāchi barks, several other types of barks were used for writing in India.

The barks of Tunt or Mulbery (*Morus indica*), of Bata (*Ficus bengalensis*) and Neem (*Malia azadirachta*) were also used for writing special religious sayings and Mantras.²⁸

Wooden Boards

The practice of writing on wooden boards was in vogue in India from the earliest time and even today in some parts of India shop-keepers make the rough accounts and calculations on wooden boards, students use them in the class, the astrologers use them for their calculations as well as some poor people of North West Frontier province copy sacred books on wooden planks with chalk.²⁹

The earliest reference is to be found in a passage of Vinaya-pitaka which shows that Buddhist monks in the Pre-Christian Era used to write precepts on wooden boards.³⁰ The Jātakas furnish us with further materials. The wooden boards used by the primary school students as writing material was known as “Phalaka” in Jātakas.³¹ Sandal-wood boards were used as slates by the beginners is to be found in the Lalita vistara.³² An inscription of the Śaka king Nahapana refers to the use of wooden boards as writing material. The epigraphical record further informs that those Phalakas or wooden boards

26. J.A.S.B. Vol. LXIII, part I (1894) p. 109.

27. Descriptive Catalogue of Assamese Mss. p. XV (Introduction).

28. Yoginī Tantrā, 2.7.

29. J.A.H.R.S. Vol. 8, pt. 4, p. 206.

30. Buddhist India, Rhys Davies, pp. 108-9.

31. Kāṭhaka Jātaka (No. 125).

32. Lalitavistara (Eng. Tr.) p. 181-85.

were used by the guild-halls for writing agreements regarding loans.³³

Kāṭayāyana in his work on legal procedure prescribes that plaints should be written on boards with chalk or Pandulekha.³⁴ Writing on varnished wooden planks was also in practice as we know from the Sanskrit fiction "Daśakumārcharita" which tells us of a royal declaration written on varnished board.³⁵ Mss. were written on wooden boards and such a Ms. was found in Assam which is now housed in the Bodelian library, Oxford.³⁶ In medieval India black boards were used as described in Naiṣadha charita (XXII. 52). In the 18th cy. students of South India used a common oblong board for writing. They were about a foot in width and three feet in length. These boards were smoothed first and then smeared with a little rice and pulverized charcoal. They also used other kind of boards made of cloth and stiffened with rice water. Then the stiffened cloth was covered with a composition of charcoal and several gums. These boards when doubled into folds, looked like books.³⁷

Besides boards, bamboo chips were used in ancient India for writing passports.³⁸

Śrīharṣa in Naiṣadha-charita (XIX.61) stated that people of medieval India used slates for writing.

Cloth

Pieces of cloth made of well-beaten cotton known as Pata, Patika, Kārpāsika Pata or Kaditam were also used as writing material in ancient India. But they were not so widely used like palm leaves or Birch barks.

In order to make it suitable for writing as well as smooth and non-porous, a thick layer of wheat or rice pulp was applied

33. Report of the Archaeological Survey, West India, 4.102, (Nasik No. 7, 1.4 in B) : Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 88.
34. South Indian Paleography, Burnell, p. 87.
35. Daśakumār Charita, Ucchvasa 2.
36. Indian Paleography, Pandey, p. 74.
37. Survey of India's Social Life and Economic condition in the Eighteenth Century, K. K. Datta, pp. 20-21.
38. Indian Paleography, Ojha, p. 72.

first. Then, when it became dried, the surface was rubbed with conches or polished stones and thus they became glossy and suitable for writing. In Mysore people paste the glue of the tamarind seeds over them and then make them black coloured. They used to keep their accounts on books made of these sheets and write with chalk on them. They are known as Kaditam. Such a record has been found from the Śringeri-Math and the record is nearly 300 hundred years old.³⁹

These pieces known as Kaditam were used for writing down the accounts of the Mathas, for maintaining list of the copies of Śilā lekhas or Tāmrapaṭṭas and the list of the Gurus etc. Mss. written on such sheets were found at Jesalmir, Anhilvadpattan and other places.⁴⁰

The earliest mention of cotton cloth as writing material is found in the writings of Nearchos⁴¹ and also in some of the matrical Smritis.⁴² Yajñavalkya Samhitā (1.319) as well as Nasik inscription of the Andhra period furnish us with the information that documents both official and private were written on Pata, Patikā or Kārpāsika.⁴³

Besides these, two more Mss. on cloth are preserved in the Pattan Bhāndars. One of which is written in 1418 Samvat and consists of 92 leaves measuring 25"×3". In the Jain Bhāndār at Baroda there is a transcript of Jayaprabhrata written on tracing cloth. The cloth leaves are generally made by pasting two thick khādi cloth pieces together.⁴⁴

A book containing such cloth leaves was found from a Jain temple of Pattan. It is Dharmavidhi and is written by Śrī Prabhusūri. It contains a commentary by Udaysimha. It covers 93 leaves and each leaf is 13"×5" and is dated 1418 V.E. i.e. 1361-62 A.D.⁴⁵

In Assam tulā-pat was used as writing material. The leaves

39. Mysore Archaeological Survey Report, 1926.

40. J.A.H.R.S. Vol. 8, p. 206.

41. *Ibid.*

42. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 88.

43. Archaeological Survey Report. West India, 4.104 ff. Nasik Ins. No. 11A. B in B.

44. Gaekwad's Oriental Series, VI. LXXVI.

45. Peterson's Report, p. 113.

of which were made by pressing cotton.⁴⁶

The Jains during the festive occasions used to make Toranas before the temples and prepare coloured maps by pasting coloured grams and rice on cotton clothes.

Silken cloth

Like cotton cloth, silk also served as a medium for writing but being costly they were not used for ordinary purposes. Alberuni informs us that he had been told that the pedigree of royal family written on silk existed in the fortress of Nagarkot.⁴⁷ Dr. Buhler found a list of Jaina Sūtras written with ink on silk in a Jain library of Jesalmir.⁴⁸

Leather

Socrates, on being asked why he did not compose books on hides, replied as follows :—

“I do not transfer knowledge from the living hearts of men to the dead hides of sheep.”

The above statement and actual remains prove that Greeks and Muslims used to write on hides but the Indians, as they had enough of natural writing materials, rarely used leather. In ancient India, except tiger and deer skins, all other hides were considered as impure.

It is why we find very few references to hides being used as writing material.

In Subandhu's Vāsavadattā there is a clear reference to hide used as writing material.⁴⁹ Buhler found one Ms. written on hide known as Bṛhajjñāna Koṣa in a Jain library at Jesalmir.⁵⁰

Stein discovered many ancient records, correspondence etc. written on leather and wood during the exploration of the Niya Site and some of which bear the date of the 3rd cy. A.D.⁵¹ As these documents contain Indian characters, it is possible that

46. A Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts at the D. H. A. S. : P. C. Chowdhury, p. VI.

47. Alberuni's India, Vol. II, p. 11.

48. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 88.

49. Vāsavadattā (Hall's Edt.) p. 182.

50. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 90.

51. Ancient Khotan, Stein, p. 345.

they migrated from India. "The finish given" Stein says, "to the leather of these ancient documents indicates extensive practice in the preparation of the materials." Leather when once prepared, was thus not objected to by the Buddhists of Khotan any more than are the leather straps of the sacred books used by the Orthodox Brahmana of today in Kashmir and India generally.⁵²

Stone

In order to make the official records which include mainly treaties, land grants, agreements, royal proclamations and orders as well as dedications and commemorations and sometimes religious and literary works more durable and lasting, stone was used as the medium of writing in ancient India and the practice is still continuing.

Writings were made inscribed on slabs of stone, rocks, pillars, walls of civil and religious buildings, caves, on the lower parts as well as on the back of stone images and also on stone vessels and pots.

The great Indian emperor Aśoka (3rd cy. B.C.) who issued innumerable edicts all over India clearly stated the purpose of engraving them on stone. The chief purpose as stated in the edicts is to make them last long. (Asokan P.E. 11, Topera Version).

The inscribed writings on stone are known generally as Śilā-lekhas. And those Śilā-lekhas which contain the description of the good deeds in terms of praise of the kings and the grandees are known as Praśasti.

To make the material fit for writing, first of all the slabs are chiselled according to the sizes required and then by rubbing with iron or stone slabs they are made polished. Next, if the slabs are too big then with the help of a thread mixed with coloured dust or chalk, if not with a wooden rule, the lines are clearly made marked on it. A good calligraphist then writes the subject matter neatly and decently with ink on the slabs when it gets ready to be chiselled.

Sometimes slabs of stone after writing done on them are made

52. The Commercial Products of India, G. Watts, p. 636.

fixed on the facade of religious or civil buildings and in cases where several slabs are required they are made fixed one after another maintaining the continuity of the subject and uniformity of the sizes. Margins are kept on four sides and sometimes the margins are marked with lines. In some cases the sides are made slanting upto $\frac{1}{4}$ " and the area to be engraved was made lower than the rims on the four sides.

If through carelessness during the time of chiselling some portion was chipped off, it is made filled up with metals of the same colour and then writing or engraving done on it. Similar cases of filling were found in the stone recordings of Harikelinātaka of Chahumana king Vighraha IV and Lalita Vighraharājanātaka of his court poet Somadeva. The records are at present housed in the museum of Rajputana.

Many of the stone inscriptions at the beginning as well as at the end contain the signs of Swastika, Chakra, Trident, Om and the words as—Siddham, Swasti, Hari Om, Swasti Śree etc. The calligraphists did not maintain a strict rule of punctuation and continued writing lines after lines without a stop. But sometimes some of the words were made separated. To denote a stop the calligraphists used one straight line and two such lines side by side at the end. In some cases they indicated a stop by introducing a figure as is evidenced from the Allahabad inscription of Samudragupta. It was also found that at the end of a chapter or a subject the signs of lotus, flower, circle etc. were used as punctuation marks.

On precious stones like marble etc., writing was done generally with small letters in order to accommodate more words on comparatively smaller slabs.

Bricks

Though less used, bricks like stone also served as a medium of writing of religious texts, dedications etc. Inscribed bricks of varied sizes and shapes were discovered in different parts of India. The letters were chiselled or scratched on wet clay and then they were baked.

Some intact bricks with writings of Buddhist sūtras were found in the Gopālpur village of the Gorakhpur Dist. U.P. The length of the bricks are $11\frac{1}{2}$ " \times $9\frac{1}{2}$ ". Some of them contain 12 to 10 lines

while others 12 to 9 lines and they can be assigned to 3rd or 4th cy. A.D.⁵³ There are some earlier specimens in Mathura Museum which can be dated in the 1st Cy. B.C.⁵⁴ In the province of Bengali nnumerable brick temples contain inscriptions which record the date, name of the donor, the name of the architect as well as the purpose of erection.⁵⁵ Some other specimens of writings on bricks were found from the old fort of Ujjain near Kasipur in the Tarrai area of Nainital Dist. U.P.

Besides bricks, earthen seals as well as pots and wares also served the purpose.⁵⁶ The writing on the seals is generally protruding like the press-types.

In ancient India, like wooden boards, terracotta boards were also used for writing. Two similar boards were identified by Mr. Mackay from the finds of Mohenjo Daro. The size of one of them is 7 inches long by 3 inches wide with a thickness of 0.4". They have no slips. There is a hole through the handle for suspension.

These boards are first prepared with a thick white coating which is washed off when finished with.⁵⁷

Metal Sheets

Writing on metal sheets was very popular in ancient India as they were lasting as well as handy. There were two ways of writing on metal sheets—either the sheets were cast into a mould of sand into which letters have been previously engraved or the letters were inscribed on them with the help of chisel and hammer. The rims of the plates were thickened and were made raised in order to protect the writing. The following metals, so far found, used for writing are gold, silver, copper, brass, bronze, iron and tin.

Gold

There are references to writing edicts, literary works, letters,

53. Proceedings of the A.S.B. 1896, pp. 100-103.

54. Indian Paleography, Pandey, p. 77.

55. V. B. Quarterly, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 45-46.

56. Archaeological Survey Report, 1903-4 (Plate 60-62)+I.A. Vol. 14, p. 75; Indian Paleography, Pandey, p. 77.

57. Further Excavations at Mohenjodaro, Mackay, Vol. I.

land grants and moral maxims on gold in Ruru, Kurudhamma and Tesakun Jātakas.⁵⁸ Burnell in his elements of South Indian Paleography further substantiates the truth.⁵⁹ Either they are written in incised letter or with vermilion.

From a stupa named Gangu near Taxila General Cunningham discovered a piece of writing on gold in Kharosthi Script.⁶⁰

As it is a costly metal, writing on gold was very rare.

Silver

Like gold, writing on silver was also very rare. Ms. writing on silver plaques or plates were found at Bhaṭṭiprolu⁶¹ and official documents were traced at Taxila.⁶² (Plate IX).

The Jain temples generally contain round silver plaques with Mantras incised on them. In the temples of Śvetāmbar sects of Jains in Ajmer four such Navapāda plaques with Mantras and one plaque measuring 1" × 11" with Ṛiṣhi Mandala Yantra were preserved.⁶³ In the British Museum there are Mss. written on gilded and silver plated palm leaves.⁶⁴

Copper

Copper plates were also widely used as writing material.

The kings, governors and nobles used to make gifts of land and money to the temples, to learned Brahmins and devout worshippers for patronising learning and religion and the transactions were made on copper plates. These plates were known as Tāmraśāsana, Tāmraphali, Tāmrapatta, Tāmraphalika, Śāsana patra and Dāna patra.⁶⁵ There were special officers appointed by the king to supervise that these grants were properly executed and made permanent. The man who carries the orders of the kings or the governors regarding execution of the grant were known as Dutakas. Sometimes the names of the "Dutakas"

58. Indian Studies, Buhler, III, 10 f.

59. Elements of South Indian Paleography, p. 90-93.

60. Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum V. II, p. I; p. 83, Plate XVII.

61. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 90.

62. Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum Vol. II, p. 1, pp. 70 and 81.

63. Prāchin Lipimālā, Ojha, p. 152 ff.

64. J.A.H.R.S. Vol. 8, p. 207.

65. I.A., Vol. V, No. 1.

were included on the copper plate grants. According to Kalhaṇa, the Kashmirian kings maintained a special class of official known as "Pattopādhyāya", who were charged with the preparation of title deeds.⁶⁶

Writing on copper plates was done mainly either by a cast in a mould of sand into which letters were previously engraved or the letters were inscribed on them by a chisel and hammer. The Sohgaura copper-plate, the earliest find so far discovered was a cast in mould of sand after the letters, architectural designs and emblems were scratched with a pointed stylus.

First of all some expert calligraphists write the subject matter on copper plates with ink and then the engraver engraves the letters on the plates. Some of the writings were made by dots in lieu of lines.⁶⁷

Writing on some of the South India copper plates is not deeply incised. Probably they were first of all pasted with clay then were written with some iron pen and finally engraved with some sharp instruments.

In South India sometimes the copper plate grants contain many leaves while in North India they do not exceed more than two. The copper plate grant of Venkatapatideva of Vijayanagar found at Madura dated Śaka Era 1508 *i.e.* 1586 A.D. contains nine pages⁶⁸ while the Dānapatra of Rājendra Chola issued in the 13th year of his reign and housed in the museum of London University contains twenty one leaves.⁶⁹

The copper plates vary in thickness and size. Page marks were given either on the left side of the margin or on the top of each page. The required size and thickness of the plates were made by hammering on a piece of copper. If there was any mistake done, then the engraver marks the portion plain by hammering again and re-write the part. Some of the plates which contain no writing served as covers. In order to protect the writing the rims are raised high.⁷⁰

66. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 95.

67. E. I. Vol. 9, p. 136.

68. *Ibid.*, 12, pp. 172-185.

69. Tamil and Sanskrit Inscriptions, Burgese, pp. 206-16.

70. J.A.H.R.S. Vol. 8, p. 203.

The use of copper plates was prevalent from the Mauryan period.⁷¹ The Sohgaura copper plate belonging to Mauryan period amply corroborates the truth.⁷² Fa-Hsien, the noted Chinese traveller informed us in his travel diary that Buddhist monasteries possessed copper grants, some of which were as old as the time of Lord Buddha.⁷³

Hiuen-Tsang visited India in the 7th Cy. A.D. and he informed us that Kaniška after the first meeting of Buddhist Council wrote the entire Vinaya on copper plates. The king placed them in a stone box and erected a stupa over it⁷⁴ Maxmuller informed us that the entire commentary of the Vedas by Sāyana was written on copper plates,⁷⁵ but Burnell disagreed over this point.⁷⁶ There are evidences to prove that even valuable literary and religious works were engraved on copper plates. Works of the Tallapaka family, engraved on copper plates are now housed in the Tirupati temple.⁷⁷ We find similar specimens in Burma and Ceylon and they are now preserved in the British Museum.⁷⁸

The engravers of the Śāsanas were mentioned as Pitalhāra, Lohakāra or Ayaskāra (copper smith) ; Sūtradhara (Stone masons) ; Hemakāra or Sunāra (goldsmith) ; a śilpin or Vijñanika (artisan).⁷⁹ The Kalinga Śāsanas mentioned them as Akhaṣālika, Akhasālin or Akhasāle (goldsmith caste).⁸⁰

It follows from Smrtis of Yajñavalkya (1.318.20) that the secular grants were written on perishable material. Brhatkathākoṣa (IX. 21-23) corroborates the above statement and furnishes us with the information that these assignments or grants on perishable material were known as Patrikā. The use

71. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 90.

72. Proceedings of the A.S.B., p. 1894, p. 1.

73. Si-yu-ki (Beal) : I. XXXVIII.

74. Young-Chawang, Watters I, p. 271.

75. Rig Veda, Vol. I, p. XVII.

76. South Indian Paleography, p. 86.

77. J.A.H.R.S. Vol. VIII, p. 207.

78. Journal of the Pali Text Society, 1883, 137 ff.

79. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 95.

80. *Ibid.*

of the word Patrikā is contrasted with Śāsana which is generally known to have been on copper plate.

Bronze, Brass and Tin

The metals— bronze, brass and tin were rarely used as medium of writing. The specimens so far found all belong to a very late age. Usually the bronze bells of the temples contain the name of the donor as well as the date inscribed on them. Bronze inscriptions as found belong to late period.⁸¹

Brass images beginning from the 7th cy. A.D. contain inscriptions on the pedestals. Brass inscriptions are found in the Jain temples, and the temple at Achalgadha at Mount Abu had many examples of writing on brass statues.⁸²

Tin was rarely used and there is only one example in the British Museum where a Buddhist Ms. was inscribed on tin.⁸³

Iron

As a writing material iron was also used but due to rusting its use was not very common.

There is an inscription written on the iron pillar of Mihrauli, Delhi near Kutab Minar. The date of the writing is 5th cy. A.D. and is done by King Chandra.⁸⁴

In the Achelswar temple at Abu there is a huge trident with incised writing on it. The Trident is made of iron and is dated 1468, Falgoon.⁸⁵

Tortoise Shell

Writing was also done occasionally on tortoise shells. Two such shells are preserved in the Dacca Museum.⁸⁶

Dust or Sand

In ancient India students of the primary schools used to

81. Indian Paleography, Pandey, p. 82.

82. *Ibid.*, p. 82 ff.

83. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

84. Corpus Ins. Ep. Vol. 3, 139.

85. Indian Paleography, Ojha, p. 154.

86. Year book of the Royal A.S.B. 1949 p. 57, Vol. XVI, 1960.

practise writing on the floor of the class strewn over with dust or sand with a piece of straw as the pen. The tradition continued all over India till the Mughal age.⁸⁷

But in Bengal the above said process of writing continued till late. A vivid picture can be traced in Dayārāma's "Sārādā-Mangala" where we find that due to great stress a prince had to supply dust and straw to the students. The prince for his very humble work was known as Dhūla-Kuṭyā *i.e.* supplier of sand straw.⁸⁸

The practice continued in South India till the end of the 18th cy. when the young students first obtained knowledge of letters by writing them with his finger on the ground in the sand.⁸⁹

Chalk-stick

In order to write on slates or black-boards chalk-sticks (Kathini or Khatika) were used. In Naiṣadha charita (X. 86, XVI. 101 and VI. 19) we find the mention of chalk-sticks. They were hard and circular in shape (XVI.101).

Letter-Weaving

Among the ancient crafts, figure and letter weaving occupy important place and they are found in the Chinese, Byzantine, Venetian and Indian arts.

In India both letter and figure weaving were in practice among the Jains and specimens of such works were published by Coomarswamy in his "Catalogue of Indian collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Part 4". One of them is dated Samvat 1766 or 1710 A.D. These narrow cotton bands with designs and mantras on them were used as manuscript binders. Generally they are blue in colour and have brownish red borders.

We find Jain as well as Brahminical mantras wooven on them with designs of trident, sword, fan, swastika, temple, tree, flower, boat, palanquin, lamp etc. Baroda Museum has a fine

87. Travels in India in the 17th cy. (1873) : Frayer John and Sir Thomas Roe, p. 312.

88. Same as No. 14, pp. 167-69.

89. Survey of India's Social Life and Economic condition in the Eighteenth Century, K. K. Datta, p. 20.

collection of these braids. They differ in sizes from 4' × 7" to 11.6' × 7'.

One of such cotton braid from Palanpur, North Gujrat is interesting as "the style of putting mantra on the left side of the letter, instead of the top mostly found in Mss. copied in Jain style and known as Pratimantra or Pṛsthamantra is adopted in the present instance. This piece is further remarkable because it furnished information about the c lligraphic artist who wove the braid on the 5th of the dark half of Bhadrāpadra in the Samvat year 1739 *i.e.* 1683 A.D. The name of the Jain clergy is (R̥ṣi) Monohar".

There are two more specimens with large scale woven-writing in the Baroda Museum. The first one is a bag for keeping the rosary in the shape of a right angle and a cow-mouth,⁹⁰ while the second one is a cap to cover the heads and ears of the saints.⁹¹

The writings on the former are salutations to Siva, Pārvati and Ganesh. The designs in the lettering are the Linga-Yoni devise sometimes with a trident. The latter (Cap) appears to have been prepared out of a piece of silk and a four verse stotra or hymn composed by Vallabhīchārya woven on it.

The tradition to have a wrapper either made of cotton or silk with names of the favourite God and goddess woven on it, is widely practised among the Vaishnavas. Such a piece of cloth or silk wrapper is generally known as Nāmābali. The names of Kṛṣṇa and Rāma are written on them.

Pen and Stylus

Pen in general was known as "Lekhanī"⁹² or "Kalam".⁹³ Beside these, the other terms used to denote a pen were as—Vaṛṇaka or maker of letters,⁹⁴ Vaṛṇikā,⁹⁵ Vaṛṇavartikā,⁹⁶ and Śālākā⁹⁷ (mainly used in South India) and Salaī. (Used in

90. New Indian Antiquary, Vol. I, Sept., 1938, Plate VI.

91. *Ibid.*, Plate V.

92. Indian Paleography, Pandey, p. 85.

93. Commercial Products of India, Watt, p. 863.

94. Lalitavistara, ch. x, pp. 181-85.

95. Amarkosha, III, 5, 38.

96. Daśakumār Charita, Ucchavasa II (Coloured pencil).

97. Mālati Mādhava 1.2.

Marāthi language.⁹⁸) The reed pen is usually known as *Kalama* and the rare Indian name for the same is "Isīkā".⁹⁹

Two kinds of pen were generally used—one to inscribe letters on leaves and the other is to write with ink on leaves, barks and paper.

The *Salākā* or stylus made of iron or steel with pointed top was used to inscribe letters on palm leaves. The stylus was widely used all over India specially in South India from very ancient time. But the earlier specimens were made of bone. (Plate V).

From the finds of the archaeological explorations made in Rugar, 60 miles north of Ambala on the Sutlej, stylus was unearthed and they were made of bone.¹⁰⁰ The drawing of the same was published in *Ancient India*, No. 9 1953. The stylus is pointed on both the ends. Similar stylus made of bone was discovered by Sri Kalidas Datta at Harinarayanpur, 4 miles south of Diamond Harbour, West Bengal. It may be dated 3rd to 2nd century B.C.

Innumerable specimens of ivory and bone stili have been discovered at Taxila. Two copper pens with point divided by a cut as in the modern nib have been also recovered from Taxila and these specimens are referable to the period 1st century A.D.

Abd-er-Razzak, ambassador from Shah Rukh visited India and went to Vijaynagar. Abd-er-Razzak writes: "The writing of this people is of two kinds, in one they write their letters with a *Kalam* of iron upon a leaf. In the second kind of writing they blacken a white surface; they then take a soft stone which they cut into a *Kalam* and which they use to form the letters; this stone leaves on the black surface a white colour, which lasts a very long time and this kind of writing is held in high esteem."¹⁰¹

The other kinds of pen for writing with ink were made of wood, bamboo, vulture or goose quill and reed. The end of the pen was made pointed by cutting with sharp knife. During

98. *Indian Paleography*, Buhler, p. 92.

99. *Ibid.*

100. *Ancient India*, No. 9, 1953, Fig. 4.

101. *The Commercial Products of India*, Watt, 1908, p. 863.

the time of Mughals—as Ovington writes—pen was as thick as a large goose quill.¹⁰² In order to encourage calligraphy Muslim rulers specially Mughal kings rewarded expert writers with bejewelled ink stands and pen. Prince Aurangzeb presented calligraphist Shaikh Farid Bukhari with a robe of honour, a jewelled sword, ink stand and pen. Emperor Jahāngir conferred on him the title “Sahibu-S-Saif-wa-l-qulam” or Lord of the sword and the pen.¹⁰³

During the Mughal age generally the calligraphists used a piece of reed mended like a quill and it was known as “Persian qulam”.¹⁰⁴

It is prescribed in the Yoginī Tantra that stylus made of copper, brass, gold and a kind of large reed (Brihanall) should be used but stylus made of bell metal of white brass should never be used. If used, it will bring disaster to the user.¹⁰⁵ During the medieval India golden pen (Kānchana Lekhanī) was not uncommon as described in the Naiṣadha charita (X. 96).

Ink

Long before the Christian Era ink was used in India for writing and it was known by the names of Maṣī and Melā.¹⁰⁶

From the writings of Nearchos and Q. Curtius we find the earliest suggestions for the use of ink¹⁰⁷ These Greek writers referred to paper and cotton cloth as writing materials of Indians and thus suggested that ink was used. Direct specimen of writing with ink on a relic vase is found at the stupa of Andher which can be dated to the 2nd cy. B.C.¹⁰⁸ Before engraving some of the Asokan edicts, ink dots were used in place of loops in the formation of certain letters.¹⁰⁹ Sanskrit term “Maṣī” was frequently used in Gyaḥṣūtras which is undoubtedly a pre-Christian work.¹¹⁰ In the early Christian

102. A Voyage to Surat in the year 1706 : J. A. Ovington, pp. 249-60.

103. Tūzak-i-Jahāngiri (Rogers and Beveridge) Vol. I, p. 13.

104. A Voyage to Surat in the year 1696, p. 249.

105. Yoginī Tantara, 2.7.

106. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 91.

107. Strabo, L.C. XV., 117, Hist. Alex. VIII. 6.

108. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 91.

109. *Ibid.*

110. Indian Paleography, Pandey, p. 82.

era several Bramhi and Kharosthi Mss. written with ink were discovered from Khotan and India.¹¹¹ At Ajanta we also find some inscriptions written with ink.¹¹²

Ink of different colours was used of which black coloured ink was the common type. The other kinds include red, gold and silver colours. Carbon ink was used in the Kuşhan period.¹¹³

In ancient India red ink was used to mark vowels in the handwritten Vedas and to mark the marginal lines. The astrologers used to draw the Kundalas or circles of the horoscope with red ink. Sometimes at the end of a chapter the stops and the words as "Bhagavān Ubāch or Ṛṣhi Ubāch" were written with red ink.

Nobles and rich people used gold and silver coloured ink for writing sacred and literary works for their own use. Traces of such writings were amply found in the Jain libraries of West India as well as in Mss. of the Mughal period.

The process of making different coloured ink is given below :—

The ordinary (washable) ink was prepared by mixture of collyrium, katha (a kind of vegetable extract) and gum.

Ink for writing on Birch Bark usually was prepared by mixing ashes of the burnt shells of almonds and cow's urin. When such writing, in course of time, becomes indistinct, it can be washed with water. As a result, the dirt will be washed off and writing will become more glittering.

The permanent ink was prepared as follows:— The lamp-suits of Sesamum oil should be collected and mixed with the gum of *Vachelia farnesiana* and a little water and then rubbed in an iron mortar with a wooden pestle for several hours. This paste was afterwards treated with an infusion of gallnut in water and the whole mass was ground again in the same iron mortar for a few hours. This paste was finally dried in the sun and made into lumps.

In Assam, ink was prepared by mixing distillation of *Silikha*, *Terminalia citerina* and the urin of bulls.

111. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 92.

112. Archaeological Survey Report, West India, 4 plate 59 (Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 92).

113. Archaeological Report, 1929, 30, 209.

In Bengal it was prepared by mixing Haritakī (*Terminalia Chebula*) Bahedā (*Terminalia belerica*) and the soot of country made lamp. The ink used to last for a very long time.¹¹⁴ Besides these, many other local processes were described in the 1st and 2nd volumes of *Punthi Parichaya* published by the *Viśva-Bhāratī*.¹¹⁵

There were mainly two ways of preparing the red ink. Red ink known as *Alaktaka* or *Āltā* is prepared by boiling the glue of the *Pepul* tree in an earthen pot and then mixing the same with *Sohāgā* and *Lodhra*. The other process is by mixing vermilion with a kind of gum and water.

Gold and silver coloured ink was prepared by mixing gold and silver pages with gum. The paper on which gold or silver coloured ink will be used should be rubbed with polished stone or shells till the letters become glittering.

We have a very interesting example of invisible ink used by the King of Cooch-Bihar. It was used for writing an epistle which was sent to the Ahom monarch *Sukhampa Khora Rājā* (1552-1611 A.D.). The Ahom court failed with all the ingenuity to read the epistle. An intelligent man and scholar deciphered the document by reading it in darkness when the letters appeared in their unexpected brightness as they were written with the sap of earthworms.¹¹⁶

In the Mughal age the pigment like Indian ink was perfected. This ink was used for the purpose of documentation. Lead pencils known as *qalm-i-surb* was also used in the Mughal age.

Ink-pot

Writing was not unknown in ancient India even in pre-historic days. The discovery of ink-pots from sites like *Chanhu Daro* and *Mohenjo Daro* corroborates the above truth. (Plate VI).

Among the many finds of *Chanhu Daro* an ink-pot, resembling exactly the pots for carrying ink used in Indian villages

114. *Aspects of Bengali Society from old Bengali literature* : T. C. Dasgupta, pp. 167-169.

115. *Punthi-Parichaya*, *Viśva-Bhāratī*, V. 1, p. 190, V. 2, p. 35.

116. *Descriptive Catalogue of Assamese Mss.*, Barua.

today, is found. "This little object, which has been badly knocked about measures 1.89 inches in height and although no stains or marks of its former contents appear inside, could have been used as an ink-pot. It is hand-made, without a slip and of very careful workmanship a roll-down each of its four corners giving it distinction. The well inside which is not perfectly round, averages 1.0 inches in diameter and 1.52 inches deep.¹⁷

Another ink-pot was discovered at Mohenjo Daro. Both Marshall and Sir Arthur Evans¹⁸ identified the vessel which is in the form of a couchant rum. "The modelling of the head is good but the fore and hind legs are very roughly fashioned. The body is hollow and there is a slightly rimmed aperture, 0.62 inches in diameter, in the middle of the back."

"It would have held plenty of ink and there may have been a pad inside to prevent undue evaporation, as in the many of the modern ink-pots of the East. True, there are no ink stains to be seen in this vessel, but ancient ink had not the staining proportions of modern ink and readily soluble even when it had dried. We should expect ink to have been used by the people of Mohenjo Daro; the material on which they wrote these documents and letters, whether, bark or wood, was perishable and would probably not have taken the impress of a stylus". (Plate VI)

Three early inkpots with ink stains were found at Harinara-yanpur, 24 Parganas, W. Bengal (Plate VII). The one at the extreme right is predominantly grey with a greyish chalky slip. Other two came from layers which yielded pre-Christian terracottas, coins, beads etc. and they can be safely ascribable to the 2nd Cy. B.C. or the end of the 1st Cy. B.C.

Several Earthenware as well as copper inkpots of varied sizes and shapes were found at Taxila. Among them the copper inkpots with serpentine handle with the stopper attached to the handle by means of a short chain deserves special mention (Plate VIII). Sir John Marshall in his report—Taxila, Vol. II,

117. Chanu Daro Excavations, Mackay, p. 220, plate XCI,2.

118. Palace of Mines, Sir A. Evans, Vol. III, pp. 422-6.

119. Further excavations of Mohenjodaro. Mackay, Vol. I, p. 188, (No. 23 in plate LXVI).

elaborately described all these types which are to be dated in 1st Century A.D. Contents of an inkpot recovered at Taxila were found to contain black carbon with earth.¹²⁰

In latter period the ink-stands were known as Maṣībhaj-anam,¹²¹ maṣīpātra, maṣībhānda, maṣīkūpika, maṣīmani and malāmanda, melāndhu and melāndhuka.¹²²

During the Sultanate period the ink-pot was known as 'Dawāt' and the custodian of Muhammad Tuglaq's ink-pot was known as 'Dawātdār'.¹²³

Compass, Rulers etc.

In order to draw the kundalas or circles on the horoscope and lotuses at the end of chapters, compass made of iron was used. Sometimes the other end of a stylus was flattened in the form of a semi-circle to draw cross-circle and half-circles (Plate V).¹²⁴

Ruler or Rekhāpati or Samāsapati¹²⁴ was used for drawing straight and parallel lines. It was made of wood or card board with strings fixed at equal distance. Two photographs of similar specimens were given in-Aneedola Oxoniensia Aryan series. 1,3,66 and Anzieger d.w. Akademik, 1897, No. VIII.

"According to a letter from C. Klemm (dated April 21, 1897) the Ethnological Museum of Berlin possesses two specimens, one from Calcutta with the inscription Nivedana pattra and one from Madras called Kidugu."¹²⁵

Paper

It has been a common theory that paper was first manufactured by China in 105 A.D.

But it is also a fact established that Indians had the knowledge of using and manufacturing paper out of cotton in the pre-Christian age as is evidenced from the writings of the Greek

120. Taxila, Marshall, Vol. 2. Pp. 422-3 and 597.

121. Mudrā-Rāksasa. Canto I.

122. Indian Paleography, Buler, p. 91.

123. A History of the Qaraunah Turks in India : Iswari Prasad, s. 276.

124. Prāchin Lipimālā, Ojha, p. 157.

125. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 92.

writer Nearchos who visited India in 327 B. C.¹²⁶

I-Tsing, the Chinese traveller who visited India in latter part of the Seventh century A.D. narrates in his record "the priests and laymen in India make caityas or images with earth, or impress the Buddha's image on silk or paper and worship it with offerings whenever they go."¹²⁷ From the above statement it is evidently clear that paper was used as a rare commodity for some special and religious purposes in India in the seventh century.

Due to its scarcity I-Tsing ordered some paper from China as will be clear from the following lines of his records :

"At the mouth of the river Bhoga I went on board the ship to send a letter (through the merchant) as a credential to Kwang-chou (Kwang-tung) in order to meet (my friends) and ask for paper and cakes of ink which are to be used as copying the Sutras in the Brahma language and also for the means (cost) of hiring scribes."¹²⁸

Though the preparation of paper was known to this country as early as third century B.C. it seems that the material was not widely used as writing material as it cannot survive long under the tropical climatic condition and also for the easy availability of other writing materials like palm leaf, birch bark, etc.

The earliest paper Mss. were discovered at Kashgar and Kugier, Central Asia and they were written in Gupta script of the fifth century A.D.¹²⁹ It is difficult to say that the paper used there was made in India.

From the following facts it will be clear that paper was regularly used in India since 1000 A.D.

M.A. Stein mentions in his catalogue of Jammu Mss. (1894) a paper Ms. of Śatapatha Brāmhāṇa dated 1089 A.D.¹³⁰

Buhler in his Indian Paleography records the oldest dated paper Ms. of Gujrat dated 1223-24 A.D.¹³¹ A paper Ms. of Bhāgavat dated 1310 A.D. is referred to by Gough in his

126. Strabo. (L. C. XV, 117).

127. I-Tsing's records (Takakusu) p. 150.

128. *Ibid.*, p. XXXIV.

129. Indian Paleography, Pandey, p. 70.

130. Catalogue Jammu Mss. 1894, p. 8.

131. Indian Paleography, Pandey, p. 70.

paper.¹³² Baroda Research Institute, Poona has a paper manuscript on medicine named Vangadatta Vaidaya. It is written by Vangasena and is dated 1320 A.D.¹³³ In 1345-50 A.D. Mohammad Tugluq introduced paper money in India. We find the word "Kāgad" used for paper in a Marāthi document dated 1395¹³⁴ and also in a Jain Ms. of Rṣabhadeva-Charita dated 1396.¹³⁵

Prof. Kapadia writes, "For, it seems that it was used perhaps for the first time in Guzrat during the time of Kumārpāla (1143-74 A.D.) and Vāstupāla as can be seen from Jinamandanagani's Kumārpāla-Prabhanda and Ratnamandiragani's Upadeśa tarangini.¹³⁶

Paper was manufactured in Bengal and other parts of India before 1406 A.D.¹³⁷ The Sultāns of Kashmir in the 15th cy. established technical school for teaching paper-making.¹³⁸ But since ancient times there were indigenous paper producing centres and they are still continuing in some parts of the country where they cover the sheets with thin layer of rice or wheat pulp and finally polish with a conch shell or polished stone.¹³⁹

In spite of the fact that paper was not durable like other Indian writing materials, the Mughals introduced paper for writing in the tradition of Bagdad and Cairo.¹⁴⁰ The encouragement of using paper reached a high peak and as a result the Mughal Government was known as "Kāghazi Rāj."¹⁴¹

During the time of the Mughals, paper of good quality was manufactured at Kashmir, Sialkot, Lahore, Rajgir Aurangabad and Ahmedabad.¹⁴² Sialkot was famous for paper like Mān

132. Gaugh's papers, p. 74.

133. Baroda Oriental Research Institute, Poona; (Govt. Mss. Library, No. 352 of 1879-80).

134. Śhiva Charita Mānasa, Khanda 7 (Poona, 1938).

135. Prasasti Samgraha, A. M. Shah, Ahmedabad, 1937.

136. B.U.J. May, 1938, p. 105.

137. J.R.A.S.B. 1895, pp. 529-33.

138. Kashmir under the Sultans, Mohibhul Hasan, p. 241.

139. Prāchīna Lipimālā, p. 144.

140. Memoirs of Babur (Erksine) 1826, p. 52.

141. Mughal Administration, J. N. Sarkar (4 ed), p. 10.

142. I. A., Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 43.

Singhi and silk paper which were good texture and durability.¹⁴³ Mughal emperors had a fascination for quality paper produced in Kashmir. It was made of rags and hemp fibre sized with rice water. The finest paper was manufactured at Shāh-zādpur which was imported to other countries.¹⁴⁴ For ordinary use coarse paper was used and there were many centres known as "Kāghazipura" around the Mughal capitals.¹⁴⁵

The materials used were the bark of certain trees and shrubs, old clothes etc. These were beaten with a wooden hammer or Dhenki and soaked in water for several days. The pulp was mixed with a little water in a lime lined reservoir where the beating operation was continued. Gum arabic obtained from Bābla tree and alum were dissolved in both the reservoirs.

The workmen dip their moulds made of bamboo and the mixture when lifted out become paper. Each sheet is then hung up to dry.

The Mughal practice of using paper considerably influenced the Marāthas. From the stock-taking report of Shivāji's treasures we come to know that there was 11,000 quires of Zar-āfsen paper (sprinkled with gold dust) 20,000 of Balapuri make, 2,000 of Daulatābādi variety and 35,000 quires of white paper" in the store of Shivāji. The stock-taking was done on the order of his son Sambhuji.¹⁴⁶

Ovington in his book—A Voyage to Surat in the year 1689 writes that the ordinary Indian paper was smooth, slick and glossy. But paper ornamented with "gilt on all the surface... with small flowers interspersed here and there" was used for addressing Emperors, nobles and grandees.¹⁴⁷ The paper was made glossy by application of a mixture of "gum arabic and Indian ink".

The manufacture of paper by indigenous methods was carried on in many parts of Bengal presidency including Calcutta, Dinajpur, Patna, Gaya and Shahdbad in between 1793 and 1833. Arwal in the Gaya district was a famous centre for production of

143. India of Aurongzeb, J.N. Sarkar, 1901, p. 95.

144. Travels, in Europe and Asia, Petumundy, V. II, p. 98.

145. I. A., Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 43.

146. *Ibid.*

147. *Ibid.*

quality paper. Each manufacturer at Arwal used to produce about hundred reams a year, which was sold at three to four rupees per ream. San and Pât *i.e.* jute were used as chief materials for paper making.¹⁴⁸

But we find a different picture altogether regarding paper production in South India. In the early days of the 18th cy. the missionaries in order to propagate their religion found it very difficult to publish books and thus to encourage printing due to scarcity of paper. The above statement will be further corroborated by the following passage, an extract from a letter of Bartholemew Ziegenbalg, a Danish missionary who reached India in 1706 A.D. The letter is dated June 14th, 1709 which runs as follows :—

“There is neither paper nor leather, neither ink nor pen used by the natives at all but the characters are by Iron tools impressed on a Sort of Leaves of a certain tree, which is much like a Palm tree”.¹⁴⁹ He writes again on January 3rd, 1714—The scarcity of paper has hindered us from pursuing the Impression to the End of the Epistles.”

In order to solve the problem of paper-scarcity Ziegenbalg's letter dated January 16, 1716 informs us :—

“We are now very busy in building a paper mill, for the benefit of the mission. Our honourable Governor defrays half the expenses and I, on the mission's account the other half. The Timber work belonging to this Fabrick is finished and a few days after we begin the edifice itself. If this Design under God meets with success, it will be very advantageous both to the mission and to all India”.¹⁵⁰

In conclusion, we can summarise that paper production was known to Indians long before the invention by the Chinese but in ancient India due to several important factors it was not widely used. Since 1000 A.D. the use of paper received encouragement and the industry reached its climax during the Mughal age. Paper-manufacture continued all over Northern India till the middle of the 19th cy. but owing to the introduc-

148. *Economic Transition in the Bengal Presidency (1793-1833)*, Hari R. Ghosal, Patna University 1950, p. 16 ff.

149. *Propagation of the Gospel in the East*, 3rd Ed. 1718, Part II, p.17.

150. *Ibid.*, p. 184.

tion of paper mills by Europeans the indigenous manufacturers were obliged to wind up their business. Thus the introduction of paper mills adds a fresh chapter to the history of paper in India.

Paper Stencils

Paper-stencils were used in medieval India and we find some specimens in the Vaishnava temples of the Vallabhāchārya sect in the north and west of India. One of such specimen is preserved in the Oriental Institute collections of Baroda (No. 1305). The stencil contains 10 paper folios and the subject matter is the sanskrit text of Gīta Govinda. The size of each of the folios is $9\frac{1}{2}'' \times 4''$. Out of it $7\frac{3}{4}'' \times 2\frac{1}{4}''$ was the writing space the rest being the margin on four sides. The paper folios are to be read on one side only like perforated designs and paintings.

We are fortunate to have the name and address of the calligraphic artist of these stencils. The name of the artist was Devakrishna and he was a Brahmin resident of Natapadra. The place Natapadra is the modern Nadriad in Kaira district of Central Gujrat.

Regarding the preparation of the stencils, Mr. M.R. Mazumdar informs us that these stencils are made in the preparation of temporary pictures upon smooth horizontal surface by means of coloured powders or they are utilized just to transfer a design on cloth or on paper or on smooth walls, by pouncing through a pricked or perforated original.

CHAPTER VII

Binding of Manuscripts and Books Through the Ages

THE history of the art of binding is an interesting chapter in the process of making manuscripts or books. Binding or covering is essential to protect manuscript or a book, which has taken several months or years to write and illustrate, to make it complete and ready for use. The story of the development of binding varies from age to age and differs from country to country.

In ancient times people realized the utility of covering, and as a result, the clay tablets of the Assyrians were cased within clay-envelopes, and the papyrus rolled manuscripts were kept within wooden cases.

In ancient India, prior to the introduction of paper, books were written generally on palm leaves, birch barks or on copper plates.

Palm-leaf manuscripts of India are pierced either with one hole in the middle or with two, on the left and other on the right of each leaf. Two holes are done only in cases of long leaves of the manuscripts. (Plate XI) The leaves are placed generally tight between two wooden boards, and strings are passed through the holes to keep the leaves together. The manuscripts are then wapped over with pieces of cloth or silk. The largest manuscript measures $36'' \times 2\frac{1}{2}''$ in size while the smallest measures $4\frac{1}{2}'' \times 1\frac{1}{2}''$ in size.¹ Some of the wooden covers were decorated either with carved floral and geometric patterns or with coloured paintings and drawings with a varnish applied on them. Similar process was prevalent in Europe before the Crusade.

1. I.A., Vol. I, p. 233.

The author has in his private collection a palm-leaf manuscript containing twelve leaves with illustrations of ten incarnations and verses related to them. For convenient use, the leaves were stitched through the lower and upper parts of first and second leaves and the same process is repeated all through. Thus, it has become very portable one and can be easily carried in one's pocket.

To keep the manuscripts safe from the atmospheric effect the leaves were tied with the string or strings air-tight. There is a proverb in Bengali "পুঁথিকে পুত্রের মতো পালবে আর শত্রুর মতো বাঁধবে"² which means that one should preserve a manuscript with the care of a son and should bind it hard like an enemy. In South India and also in some other parts the covers were pierced by holes to let the strings pass through them. In the Jaina libraries of West India some of the manuscripts were kept in cotton-cloth sacks and these sacks were placed in metal boxes. Only in Nepal the covers used for valuable manuscripts were made of embossed metal.

Generally manuscript covers were made of seasoned wooden-boards of Śāl (*Shorea robusta*) or Seguna (*Tectona grandis*) trees. Boards made of Jackfruit trees (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) are also found. Besides these, covers were also made of cane-weaving and skin. But skin or hide covers are very rare.³

In Assam manuscripts dealing with the story of the goddesses of snakes or with the adventures of Behulā were wrapped up in Cobra skin.⁴

Bark of Sāchi tree or Aloes wood were used as material for writing in Assam. Leaves thicker than those used in the body of the manuscripts were used as covers⁵.

The birch bark manuscripts were rolled in a fashion of a volume of classical antiquity. Generally long strips of birch barks have been used for manuscript writing and for the practical point of view of preservation, they have been kept in rolls, as folding will break the bark ultimately.

The earliest rolled birch-bark manuscript was found in Central

2. Punthi Parichaya, Visva-Bharati. Vol. I, p. 8.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

4. Descriptive Catalogue of Assamese manuscripts, Barua, p. XV.

5. *Ibid.*

Asia, Khotan. The man who found it—split it upto into two parts and sold them to the French Mission of Dutriuil de Rhines in 1892,⁶ and to the Russian Consul at Kashgar, Petrovsky.⁷ This manuscript was composed of long stripes of birch bark, held together at the two sides by a thread stitched with one centimetre of the edge.

The other important example of rolled birch bark manuscript is preserved in the Bibliotheque Nationale of Paris.⁸ This is a Ms. of Bhāgavatgītā and the size is 1760 mm. in length and 45 mm. in width.

Birch bark manuscript sheets trimmed to the size of palm leaves are not very rare. The Bower Ms. published by Rudolf Hoernle, the Buddhist manuscripts discovered in Bamiyan (1930) and Gilgit (1931) are important examples of this imitation type.

The middle portion of these palm-leaf shaped barks were left unwritten. The unwritten space provide place to punch the centre of the leaves and to get a string pass through them. Like the palm leaf Mss. they were placed between two wooden boards.

The recent birch bark manuscripts of Kashmir are written in Sarada script. The sheets are no longer oblong with the lines running parallel to the wider side, but rectangular with the lines parallel to the narrower side. They have no hole for passing the thread and are often bound in the manner of Persian books and Kashmiri books on paper. The sheets are folded in two and placed one within the other in small bundles. The hinges of each bundles are pierced by thread and attached by them to a rigid back of leather. But the bark, when folded, often breaks, and the majority of the ancient bound volumes have come us in loose sheets.⁹

But like the books of paper their format varies. The formats of the manuscript of Vānaparvan of the Mahābhārata which was collected by Foucher Mission in North Western India is housed in the Bibliotheque Nationale as well as of the manuscript of the Paippalada recension of the Atharva-veda, housed

6. I. A., Vol. I, p. 103.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*, p. 104.

9. *Ibid.*

in the university of Tubingen vary. The size of the former is 25 cm. by 30 cm. while of the latter is 20 mm. by 25 mm.¹⁰

Copper plates were also widely used in this country as writing material. Sometimes more than one plates were used for one document and they were fastened together by a copper ring passed through round holes made on the plates. Generally the hole was made on the left central part and the diameter of the hole is $\frac{3}{8}$ " while the average diameter of the ring is 4". For a document containing several plates sometimes two rings were used. The rings which served the purpose of the threads or strings went through the lower and upper parts of the first and second plate and it goes in the same way. This process was introduced for the convenient use of the readers.¹¹ (Plate X)

Sometimes one complete book contains five or six plates and the ring whose two ends are soldered and which passes through a hole holds them together. The outer sides of the 1st and last plates remained blank and thus served the purpose of covers. The rims of the plates which contain writing were generally raised to protect the embossed letters. For example the following three descriptions are given below of three separate copper-plate inscription sets :—

- (1) The set of copper-plates of Ananta Varman Choda Gangadeva (C.P.No. 6 of 1918-19) contain three plates strung in a circular ring. Here except the front side of the 1st plate which served as front cover all other plates on all sides contain writing.¹²
- (2) The copper-plates of the time of Eastern Ganga King Madhukamarnava Deva (C.P.No. 5 of 1918-19), contain 3 plates of which the 1st and 3rd plates contain no writing and therefore acted as covers.¹³
- (3) The Copper plates of Rāja Rāja I (C. P. No. 4 of 1918-19) and of Vajrahasta, E. Ganga King (C.P. No. 3 of 1918-19) contain respectively five and six plates. In the former the 1st plate has no writing on its front side

10. *Ibid.*

11. E.I. Vol. I, p. 1.

12. J.A.H.R.S. Vol. VIII, p. 191.

13. J.B.O.R.S. Vol. XVIII, pt. 3, pp. 272-295.

and the last or fifth plate with writing erased served as covers¹⁴ while in the latter as usual the first side of the first plate has no writing. The last plate or the sixth plate is a defaced plate and being rejected was used as cover.¹⁵

The Tiruvalangadu Charter of Rājendra Chola I (1012-1044) consists of 31 large sheets while the Karandi (near Tanjore) charter of Rājendra Chola I consists of 55 large sheets. Both of them were strung on massive rings.¹⁶

With the introduction of paper in India the book was made up of gathered sheets. The sheets arranged or gathered together were stitched to hold them together. These quires were sewn with threads passed around two or more thongs of leather at the back of the book.

Previously, the manuscripts were mainly placed between two wooden covers. But to make it more convenient, it was found to join book and boards together by fixing to the boards the ends of the bands, holding together the sections. Accordingly, leather covering was introduced to cover the boards.

Early books in India were composed of single sheets gathered together or folded and collected into gatherings or sections. The gathered sheets were held together by chain-stitch and in passing blue linen on the boards. The sections were held by sewing them on the flexible bands on thongs at right angles to the back. The leaves of the books were sewn together before putting on the boards.

During the Muslim age in India we find manuscripts written on paper were sized in imitation of palm leaves. Codex or bound books were in use simultaneously. But with the increasing power of the Muslim Emperors during the Mughal age the splendour of the bindings and their decorations developed considerably.

The art of book binding made a prosperous development during the time of the Mughals. Humāyun, the son and successor of Bābur, while living in Persia as an exiled monarch during the time of Shāh Tahmasp, was strongly influenced by the artistic

14. J.A.H.R.S., Vol. VIII, pp. 164-167.

15. *Ibid.*

16. I.A., Vol. V, No. 1.

activities of Tahmasp's court. On recovering the throne he extended his royal patronage to the encouragement of the arts and crafts and appointed Persian painters and book binders.

The story of the migration of the art of book binding from Ethopia to India is highly interesting. Moreover, it is important to note that with the increasing power of the Muslim empire the art flourished as it was they who built tanneries and produced excellent raw materials.

"The learned Arab philologist Al-Jah says in one of his works that the Abyssinians claimed the credit of having introduced to the Arabs, along with other things, the codex or bound book (Mushaf), the form in which its contents are most easily, most strongly and most beautifully kept. We have no reason to doubt the truth of this statement, all the less as the Arabic word Mushaf or Mishaf is actually borrowed from the Ethiopic."¹⁷

The art of book binding thrived considerably in South Arabia as from an early period the leather industry was highly developed in S. Arabia. About 570 A.D. Persia liberated S. Arabia from the Abyssinians and contributed to a great extent to the development of the leather industry.

In India during the time of the Mughals, the nobles and the emperors employed Persian binders who were master artists in handling material like paper and leather.

Leather was used for book-binding in Kashmir long before the Muhamedan conquest,¹⁸ but it was not in common use in the Pre-Islam age.

Since the days of the Mughals., leather was widely introduced in India as book binding material.

Under the royal patronage of the Mughals the decorative side of the art of book-binding, art of calligraphy and book-illustration made remarkable progress. The text of the books were written on fine Zar-afsan paper mounted on Dawalatābādi frames which are also richly sprinkled with gold and each page presenting a different shade of colour. The Mughal emperors used to love and admire the art passionately and pay high prices for them.

17. The Islamic Book, T.W. Arnold and A. Grohmann, p. 30.

18. The Commercial Products of India, Sir George Watt, p. 636.

Humāyūn paid for a copy of *Tuhfat-us-Salatine* by Mir Ali Rs. 2500/-. This statement is written on the title page of the book. Nurjahān purchased for 3 Muhurs a Diwan of Mirzā Kāmran. Munim Khān presented Bahadur Khān a sum of Rs. 500/- as reward for a richly bound copy of *Kulliyat of Hazrat Shaikh Sādi* in 976 A.H. A copy of *Yussuf-Zulaikha* was purchased by Jahāngir for 100 Muhurs.¹⁹ Aurangzeb purchased the beautifully written and bound manuscript of *Koran* for Rs. 9000/-. It was written by Harun Ben Bayazid in A.D. 1613-14 and is now housed in the Royal Library of England.²⁰

The manuscript of *Shāh Jahān Nāmā* was written by Mohammed Amin of Meshad in 1685 and it was fully ornamented and illustrated. The Nawāb of Lucknow purchased the same for £ 1500. In 1779 the British Minister of Lucknow sent the volume to George the 3rd through Lord Teignmouth, the then Governor General of India. A coloured reproduction of the splendid front cover of the manuscript is published in the *Journal of the Indian Art and Industry*, Vol. 5, No. 43 (Plate No. 69).

In Muslim India, book-binding was recognised as an art, and book-binding department was an essential part of the library work. Almost in all big libraries the filders, margin-drawers and book-binders were appointed along with the other officers of the library. The able binders were highly paid officers.

The Muslim binders introduced a new method of decorating the leather covers. First, they used to enrich the cover with stamped designs and the sunken parts were filled with gold print. Later, a new process was introduced when the colour was permanently fixed by re-impressing the heated tool through gold leaf. (Plate XII)

The following four types of leather binding developed during the Muslim days and these designs with minor changes found their way in European workshop.²¹

- (1) Delicate floral and arabesques designs were executed by making an infinite number of impressions.

19. *Society and Culture in Mughal Age*, R.N. Chopra, pp. 160-161.

20. *J.I.A.I.*, Vol. 5, No. 43 (illus).

21. *The Legacy of Islam*, Thomas Arnold, p. 146.

- (2) A central device stamped and enriched with gold. Above and beneath it and in each corner are shaped panels sunk below the surface and decorated with lace like ornaments.
- (3) At the centre there is one pointed oval panel which is quartered in each corner.
- (4) A similar design with central and corner devices is tooled in gold.

Coloured illustrations of some of the above specimens were beautifully reproduced in the *Journal of Indian Art and Industry*, No. 43, Vol. 5.

Ulwar was an important centre where some of the best specimens of book-binding were done.

The chief artist Kari Ahmed and his two sons Kari Abdul Rahman and Abdul Khalik were employed by the chief of Ulwar. Kari Ahmed who was previously in the service of the emperors of Delhi came to Ulwar in 1820 on the invitation of the Maharaja Banni Singh to bind a celebrated copy of *Gulistan of Shekh Sādi*. His eldest son who had his training in Persia assisted his father in painting the borders. After the death of Kari Ahmed the art degenerated. "In their hands (Abdul Rahman and Abdul Gaffar) the art is likely to become a mere trade and degenerate. Already defects are seen which were never noticed in Abdul Rahman's work. It is in this way that so many beautiful arts are lost in India. A man of real genius develops an art from some hints he receives from strangers or it may discover it himself, but from jealousy or from fear of destroying his monopoly, teaches only the members of his own family, who may not share his skill but too often are without genius and thus in the course of a generation or two nothing remains but a shadow or parody of perhaps, an exquisite production."²²

In the art of decorative book-binding the Ulwar artists maintained a tradition for a fairly long time. Like the traditional artists the son and grandson of Kari Ahmed used the same brass-blocks handed down from father and grand-father.

The Ulwar artists generally ornamented the book covers after the Grolier style in which colours are painted on the

boards and are not inlaid. "In most of the designs the pattern is produced by the use of brass-blocks. The colours are then painted with the brush. The Ulwar artist sometimes colours the whole of the ground and at others only part of it, so as to produce very different effects by the use of same blocks.

"The edge of (the leaves) the books are frequently painted with designs in colours; for example, the Gullistan has a pretty border in coloured outlines. The outside of this work are done in gold on a blue ground, the back is a painted gold pattern on a black ground and the insides also have a different fold design on a blue base."²³

The pigments used by Ulwar artists were generally minerals and were very lasting.

During the end of the 17th century Europeans introduced new technique in binding of books. This is corroborated by the following statement of Rev. Ovington, who visited India about 1689—

"They (Indians) can imitate a little the English manner of binding books."²⁴

With the introduction of printing in India and gradual growth of book production, a new situation confronted the binders who failed to cope with the amount of work. As a result a new class of professional binders grew up and the art was turned into a trade. Thus the art of binding books was transferred from a group of traditional craftsmen to the house of professional binders and they started to print their names, initials or device stamped on book covers.

23. *Ibid.*

24. A Voyage to Surat in 1689, Rev. J. Ovington, pp. 251-52.

CHAPTER VIII

Illumination and Illustration of Manuscripts and Books

1. ILLUMINATION AND ILLUSTRATION OF MANUSCRIPTS AND BOOKS
2. ILLUSTRATED MANUSCRIPTS OF EASTERN INDIA
3. ILLUSTRATED MANUSCRIPTS OF WESTERN INDIA
4. MUGHAL PATRONAGE TO THE ART OF MANUSCRIPT ILLUSTRATION
5. WOOD AND METAL ENGRAVINGS

1. ILLUMINATION AND ILLUSTRATION OF MANUSCRIPTS AND BOOKS

IT was not long after man had learned the art of manuscript or book making that he gave thought to their embellishment and beautification. There are two ways in which manuscripts or books could be more attractive and interesting to their readers—one, by illumination or ornamentation; the other, by illustration.

Illumination of manuscripts and book is the art of embellishing them by ornamented letters, floral and geometric designs and by painted pictures on the border of the pages. The purpose of illumination is thus to decorate the book or manuscript, as the English term is derived from Latin and Italian verb—"illuminare", which means—"to throw light upon", "light up" or "brighten". Thus, its purpose is to beautify the object of devotion rather than to clarify its contents.

Book-illustration in general is the art of representing pictorially some ideas or incidents which have been expressed in words. The illustrator's work is the compliment of expression in some other medium.

The earliest illustrated book in papyrus belonging to the early 20th cy B.C. contains about thirty figures depicting a ceremonial dramatic play written for Pharaoh Sesostris I of the 12th

dynasty. Next in antiquity, several copies of illustrated "Book of the Dead" were found where within a broad rectangular framework of horizontally oblong leaves, the texts confined by well marked borders is skilfully matched on the top by a running band of illustrations. The copies are preserved in the British Museum, Louvre and in the University Library of Princeton. According to Professor K. Weitzmann, the great authority on the "Book of the Dead" we find here the earliest examples of the cycle method of illustration.

The earliest illustrated Greek and Roman classical books were influenced by the Egyptian pattern. S. Runciman writes that Alexandrian models went out and were copied all over the Greco-Roman world.

The Egyptian and Greco Roman papyrus rolls contained simple illustrations depicting events described in the texts. "Once a picture or a cycle of pictures, illustrating a literary or religious or scientific text, was created, it usually became the pictorial archetype of later illustrators of the same text." As a result the illustrations of the Bible, Homer or of any scientific or religious texts were confined to few archetypes and the types of illustrations were sometimes used from one text to another.

In the 3rd cy. A.D. European books instead of being continuous rolls, were folded and stitched and bound together in wooden boards. The two early illustrated Latin codices—the copies of Virgil preserved in the Vatican library are the earliest illustrated examples. They cannot be earlier than the 4th cy. A.D. and later than 6th cy.

Thus the art of book-illustration was widely practised during the beginning of the Christian Era at Alexandria, in the Byzantine empire and in the middle ages of Europe.

In India we find the first trace of illustrative records on the rectangular seals and amulets of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa where we see a harmonious combination of animal and human figures with pictographs arranged in parallel horizontal compartments. These illustrative records may be dated in the 3rd millennium B.C.

India has the art of painting in a fairly developed state from Pre-historic days and the history can be traced both from the actual remains as well as from literary sources. Due to

perishable nature of the materials on which the Pre-Christian Indian paintings were done, most of the traces were lost, and we have to infer references from early literary sources. It is evident from Kāmasūtra of Vātsyāyana that there were guilds of painters, painted halls in royal palaces, and painting occupied an important place among sixty four kalās. Even the ladies of the aristocrats were proficient in the art. The Viṣṇu-dharma-Mahā-Purāna which may be dated in the 3rd or 4th cy. A.D. elaborately discussed the rules for making *Chitras* or paintings. These evidences corroborate the truth that painting was largely cultivated and used in ancient India.

After the discoveries of innumerable illustrated manuscripts from different parts of India, particularly from Eastern and Western India, it is now established beyond doubt that the art of book-illustration developed in India and was extensively used.

As for the early reference to illustrations of Sanskrit manuscripts we can name the Srauta, Sulva-Sūtras,¹ Charaka Samhitā and a number of early treatises of Śilpa Sāstras,² where the sacrificial tools, altars and diagrams of surgical instruments etc. were depicted through pictorial representations and the diagrams and illustrations were done in context to the related texts. Some of the treatises on ancient warfare were illustrated with sketches of Chakras, Vyuhās etc. Rājābhallaḥ of Mandana will furnish us with further references³.

Like Dṛśya-Kāvya or drama, Chitrakāvya or book-illustration was used to present things in visible form. Chitrakāvya was popular in Sanskrit literature where poems and parts of the texts were arranged within "Bandhas" or forms. The commonly used Bandhas are Ratha (Chariot), Padma (lotus), Khadga (sword) or Sarpa (snake) etc. The manuscript "Chitra-Kāvya Bandhodaya" written by the Oriyyā poet Upendra

1. History of Indian Literature : Weber, p. 256.
2. Special Number of Trubners American and Oriental Library Record, 1874, pp. 27-28.
3. Gaekwad's Archaeological Series, No. 1, p. 2.

Bhanja contains the possible forms of Bandhas with illustrations. The manuscript is preserved in the Oriyā Seminar library of Viśva-Bhārati. Rhetorical work like Sāhitya Darpana of Viśvanāth will further clarify the point⁴.

The stone inscriptions on pillars of the Bhoja Śālā in Kamāl Maulā Mosque at Dhāra and other at Un in the Indore State are engraved within Sarpa Bandha, *i.e.* in the form of intertwining serpent.

Besides Bandhas, Akṣhara-Nyāsa or distribution of letters within a pictorial or geometrical form is also prevalent in Tantra literature from very early days.

Strictly speaking, these Chitra-Kāvya as represented by various Bandhas cannot be classed as book-illustrations. Here the Bandhas were particular forms and the texts were written within the limited space permitted by outline of the form. These forms had no organic relationship with the text concerned. Hence the Bandhas cannot be called book-illustrations.

The early available illustrated manuscripts of India contained miniature paintings of gods and goddesses having very little organic relationship with the texts. On this ground Dr. A.K. Coomarswamy wrote, "Indian art has never developed book-illustration as such and the illustrations take the form of square panels applied to the page without organic relation to the text."⁵ The statement of Dr. Coomarswamy may be partly true but it cannot be accepted as a whole. Dr. Coomarswamy perhaps overlooked some of the important illustrated Sanskrit manuscripts. He did not consider the illustrated manuscripts so far found of Rāmāyana, Mahābhārata, Bhāgavat Gītā and the Buddhist and Jain religious texts.

Dr. Hirānand Śāstrī, ex-director of archaeology, Baroda and Epigraphist, Govt. of India very ably refuted the theory of Dr. Coomarswamy. He said, "To me a view of this nature appears to be far from reality. Book-illustration of various ages and a number of illustrated manuscripts found in different parts of India vitiate it."⁶ In support of his statement Dr.

4. *Ibid.*

5. Catalogue of Indian collections in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

6. Gaekwad's Archaeological Series, No. 1, p. 2.

Śāstrī published the small book—"Indian Pictorial Art as Developed in Book-illustration", where he proved his theory with many examples⁷. Dr. V. Rāghavan in his article published in the Journal of Oriental Research, Madras (Vol. 27, p. L-iv) furnished us with a list of illustrated manuscripts available at present in Indian museums and libraries.

In the light of recent discoveries of innumerable illustrated manuscripts from all over India and the development of the art under the patronage of Muslim emperors specially under the Mughals, the statement of Dr. Coomarswamy regarding total non-availability of book-illustration in India requires modification. The statement does not depict a true and correct picture.

From the early medieval period we find a good number of illustrated manuscripts preserved in a fairly good condition. Miniature paintings generally used to illustrate religious texts, and the script was harmoniously and aesthetically integrated with the paintings. The arrangement of painting and calligraphy on the palm leaf manuscripts was done either by dividing the oblong surface into three sections with the picture at the centre flanked by horizontal rows of writing on both the sides. The other arrangement was done by placing the two rectangular miniatures, on both the sides of the central space kept reserved for writing. But this was not strictly followed. The oblong shape of the leaves and the method of binding determined the layout, illustrations and writing. In the case where the holes are made at the centre for binding, the oblong space is divided into three quarters—the central one being the smallest and kept reserved for making the hole while painting and writing are done on the two sides. In case of manuscripts where no hole is made at the centre for binding, writing was done on the two sides with illustration at the middle. (Plate XV)

The introduction of paper enabled the artists and calligraphist to use wider space and thus changed the character of illustrations. The artist having the privilege of using wider space introduced elaborate scenes, bigger composition with various types of border designs. The artist also had the scope

7. *Ibid.*

of using more colours like gold, silver, uranium blue, uranium and orange yellow. In the palm leaf manuscripts the space had the greater dimension horizontally while on the paper it had vertical scope. (Plate XIV)

"The folios of the paper manuscripts become larger running to a size of 11 by 4½ inches in the 15th cy. scripts and reaching still greater dimensions in the 17th cy. when Mughal influence in painting crowds out old western style, showing there a size of as much as 16 by 6 inches and possibly larger."⁸

The traditional spacing or layout of Indian manuscripts underwent a radical change in Mughal and Rajput works between 1550-1800 A.D. From horizontal the emphasis was placed on vertical. Greatest care was taken to embellish the miniature. A complicated system of finishing the illustrations developed. The panel forming the central portion of the scheme with picture proper was done by a superior artist while an artist who specialised in handicrafts looked after the border and mounting-enriched by flowers, foliage and figures or ornamented by sprinkled gold effect. At the junction of the "Taswir" (picture) and "Hashia" (border) invariably occurred a narrow decorated band called "Phulkari" and the two lines of colour usually made in gold.

Contact with the Islamic world and the introduction of Arabic calligraphy changed the style and pattern of Indian manuscript illustration. The following characteristics became prominent :—

- (1) Illustration became independent of the text, and
- (2) The rhythmic flowing lines of Persian and Urdu characters replaced the old Indian scripts.

But in spite of the Muslim influence some of the Rajput and regional manuscripts of 17th to 19th cy. maintained the orthodox style through harmony of painting and script⁹.

In the orthodox Indian style generally the copist used to keep some space (ālekhyasthāna) reserved for illustrator. The copist after finishing his writing used to pass it over to the painter. Sometimes the calligraphists wrote on the margin

8. A.I. Vol. V, No. 2, 1955, p. 7.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

hints for the guidance of the artists. With regard to this Prof. Brown writes :—

“Two persons were employed, the copist of the text and the artist of the paintings. On the manuscript folios the copist marked off rectangular spaces for the illustrations before he wrote down the text ; this fact is clear from the minute examination of pages which show the writings running over the lines that bound the panels for the pictures.”¹⁰

But the case was not always true as depicted above. When the copist knew the art of painting he used to do both the work. Dr. Hirānand Śāstrī confirmed the above fact saying :—

“I do not know if general assertions like this could be made (as stated by Prof. Brown)... In some cases Prof. Brown’s statement might hold good for some manuscripts do show lines running over the panels which were set apart for pictures. But it is not always the case even with Jain Manuscripts. I have seen Indian and Tibetan painters writing manuscripts and adding pictures simultaneously. As I have already stated, Kashmiri pandits do so very often even now a-days.”¹¹ Dr. Śāstrī also referred to the name of a illustrated book “Jain Chitra Kalpadrum” which supplies several examples in his favour. What Dr. Śāstrī tried to establish is no doubt true but such cases are very rare. Considering the volume and variety of Indian book-illustration we can conclude that such cases where the artist and the calligrapher is the same person are very rare and exceptional.

2. ILLUSTRATED MANUSCRIPTS OF EASTERN INDIA

During the reign of Pāla kings (750-1155 A.D.) Eastern India made remarkable contribution in the fields of art, literature, philosophy and education. Under the patronage of the benevolent rulers, eminent authors and poets produced many important works. As a result manuscript writing and illustration received special encouragement.

Due to Nature and iconoclastic zeal of the foreigners the majority of the manuscripts were destroyed. We have very

10. The Story of Kalaka ; Prof. N. Brown, p. 15.

11. Gaekwad’s Archaeological Series, No. 1, p. 14.

few remains and even from them we can see that illustration on palm-leaf manuscripts was widely prevalent at that time.

Among the illustrated palm leaf manuscripts of this age the following are important¹². One thing we should point out here that some of the illustrations had no direct relationship with the text.

(1-2) Two *Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā* Manuscripts dated in the 5th and 6th year of Mahīpāla. One of them is in the Cambridge collection (Add. 1464) while the other is in the Collection of Asiatic Society of Bengal. The Asiatic Society manuscript has 12 illustrated panels, three in each folio depicting the events of Buddha's life and other Mahāyāna Buddhist divinities.

(3) *Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā* manuscript dated in the 39th year of Rāmapāla. (Formerly in the Vrendenburg collection).

(4-5) Two *Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā* manuscripts, one dated in the 19th year of King Hari Varman and another belongs to about 12th cy. A.D. Both of them are in the collection of Varendra Research Society, Rajshahi, East Pakistan.

(6) *Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñā pāramitā* manuscript in the collection of Asiatic Society of Bengal and dated in the Newari Era 191 *i.e.* .071 A.D. It contains 35 miniature illustrations of gods and goddesses and important temples of Buddhist pantheon.

The illustrations are like Cambridge manuscripts and bear descriptive labels.

(7-8) Two manuscripts, one of *Kārandavyuha* and the other of *Bodhicharyāvatāra* both belonging to about 12 cy. A.D. and belong to the V.R S. collection.

(9) The manuscript No 20589 of the Boston Museum dated in the 4th year of Gopāla. (The reproductions of the illustrations were published in the portfolio of India Art by Coomarswamy).

(10) The Swamura manuscript (Illustrations were published in *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, Berlin 1926, plates 9-10).

(11) *Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā* manuscript of the British Museum dated in the 15th year of Gopāla.

12. History of Bengal, Dacca University, Vol. 1, p. 549.

(12-13) The Pañcaṅkashā manuscript of the 14th year of Nayapāla and another manuscript (Add. No. 1643) dated in 1015 A.D. are now in the Cambridge collection.

(14) Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā manuscript of the Asiatic Society of Bengal dated in the Newari Era 268 *i.e.* 1148 A.D. depicting illustrations of Buddha in the different episode of life (No. 4203).

(15) Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā manuscript of the A.S. of Bengal dated in the 18th year of the reign of Govindapāla *i.e.* latter half of the 12th cy. A.D. It contains illustrations of Buddhist divinities only on the last folio.

(16) Illustrated palm leaf manuscript of the Gandavyuha. 11th—12th cy. A.D., in the collection of Cleveland Museum of Art, U.S.A. (Plate XV).

(17) Two Pañcaṅkashā manuscripts in the collection of A.S. of Bengal. One is dated in Newari Samvat 385 *i.e.* 1265 A.D. and the other in Saka Era 1211, *i.e.* 1289 A.D. Each contains illustrations of five Pañcaṅkashā goddesses.

The above mentioned manuscripts with illustrations come from Bengal (including East Pakistan), Bihar and Nepal and they belong to the same group when viewed from the stylistic point of view. It is why they are considered as one group.

The illustrations are referred to above cannot very strictly be classed as "Book illustrations" as they are not directly related with the text. The illustrations represent pictorial representations of gods and goddesses as Tārā, Lokanāth, Mahākāla, Amitābha, Maitreya, Vajrapāni etc. The miniature illustrations considerably help to identify the images of Vajrayāna and Tantrayāna cults iconographically.

The colour composition of all these illustrated divinities were determined by the iconographic rules. Generally green, white, Indian ink—black, yellow, indigo blue and red colours were used. The outline is sketched out first either marked with black or red and later filled in with colour.

The tradition of this art of painting can be traced from Ajanta and Ellora and they can be broadly divided into two classes as Classical and Medieval. Dr. Kramrish in the article published in the Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art

(Vol. 1, No. 2) fully discussed the point and showed that the classical type is plastic whereas medieval is linear. Dr. Nihār Ranjan Ray also supported the view and said—“The classical type is of a thoroughly plastic conception whereas medieval is linear. Both the types, as we have seen above, appear simultaneously and side by side but sometimes they are also fused together as in some of the Ellora paintings as well as in good number of East Indian illuminations.”¹³ The tradition of linear treatment also found its expression in the drawings on copper plates of Bengal. Three such copper plate engravings were so far discovered and they are as follows¹⁴ :—

- (1) An 11th cy. copper plate with engraving of a bull and a tail piece.
- (2) The engravings on the Sunderban copper plate of Dharmapāla.
- (3) The Mehar copper plate housed in the Ashutosh Museum, Calcutta University.

“The technique of East Indian Book illustration is mainly calligraphic. The draughtmanship is unusually strong and having regard to the material—fragile and soft palm-leaf on which the drawing is made, the beauty of line and colour cannot but evoke one’s admiration.”¹⁵

3. ILLUSTRATED MANUSCRIPTS OF WESTERN INDIA

Like the East Indian Buddhist palm-leaf illustrated manuscripts, manuscripts of Gujarat and Western India, mainly Jain are remarkable for their coloured illustrations, brilliant decorations and skillful draughtmanship. The Western Indian illustrated manuscripts can be broadly divided into two periods, the earlier consisting of palm-leaf and later paper manuscripts. They were found with the Jain Bhāndārs and they may be dated from 12th cy. and onward.

Gujarat was fortunate to have illustrious rulers like Siddharāja Jayasimha (1094-1143 A.D.) and Kumārpāla (1143-1174

13. *Ibid.*, p. 555.

14. *Ibid.*

15. Rupam, April-July 1928.

A.D.) who were great patrons of learning. During their time innumerable libraries grew up all over the land. Writing, copying, and illustration received great encouragement from the kings, nobles and average people

The earlier Western Indian manuscript illustrations not being organically related to the text may be called "illuminations". Scholars like Dr. Moti Chand had termed them as illustrated palm-leaf manuscripts not considering the sharp difference between illustration and illumination. The illustrations, if they are so called, of the palm leaf West Indian manuscripts mostly contain decorative designs as well as figures of gods and goddesses of iconographic importance. Besides these, illustrations of donors, monks, Tirthankara etc. were also found.

Dr. Moti Chand in his book—Jain Miniature Paintings from Western India has divided the illuminated palm-leaf manuscripts into two groups on stylistic grounds. The first group comes within the years 1100-1350 A.D. and the second group between 1350-1450 A.D.

The second group of illuminations are stylistically more refined with finer details and improvement of colour compositions. From the view point of subject matter, events from the lives of Jinas were introduced in harmony with the text. As a result "illumination" gradually changed towards the characters of "illustrations".

The important finds of the first group are listed below¹⁶ :—

- (1) A manuscript of Niśithachurni which mainly contains decorative floral and geometrical designs. It was written by Deva Prasāda at Bhṛgukachchha (Modern Broach) during the period of Jayasimha who ruled Gujarat from 1094 to 1143 A.D. The manuscript is dated 1157 Vikramasamvat, *i.e.* 1100 A.D.
- (2) The palm-leaf manuscript of Shaṭkhaṇḍāgama with Dhavalā Tikā, an important religious text of the Digambar Jains and was written between 1113—1120 A.D. It contains miniature illuminations of goddess Chakṣvari, monks, Jinas and decorative designs.

16. Jain Miniature Paintings from Western India : Dr. Motichand, pp. 28-31.

- (3) Next comes the palm-leaf manuscript of the *Jñāta Sūtra* dated 1127 A.D. It contains two illuminations—one of the seated Śrī Mahāvīr Swāmī and the other of the goddess of learning.
- (4) The manuscript of *Daśavaikālika Laghuvṛtti* dated 1143 A.D. It contains (possibly) the portraits of Śrī Hemchandrā-chārya and disciple Mahendra Sūrī and Kumārpāla.
- (5) The manuscript *Ogha Nirukti* and six other books dated in 1116 A.D. The manuscript contains 15 figures of goddesses of important iconographic value.
- (6) The manuscript of the *Mahāvīra Charita*, the 10th Parvan of the *Trishashaṭśalākāpurusha Charita* by Hemchandra. It contains three miniatures depicting possibly the portraits of Kumārpāla and of his preceptor Hemchandra and also a representative of Śrī Devi.
- (7) Then comes the manuscript of the *Naminātha Charita* dated 1241 A.D. It contains miniature paintings of goddess Ambikā and Tirthankar Nemināth.
- (8) The manuscript of *Kathāratnasāgara* dated 1256 A.D. contains illustrations of Pārsavanāth and Jain monks and nuns.
- (9) The manuscript of the *Srāvaka pratikramana chūrni*. It is dated 1260 A.D. and comes from Udaipur, Mewar. It contains six miniatures.
- (10) Next we find 5 miniatures representing Jain monks and nuns in the manuscript of the *Kalpasūtra* dated 1260 A.D.
- (11) According to chronological order next follows :—

The manuscript of *Kalpasūtra* and a version of the *Kālakāchrāya Kathā* is dated 1273 A.D. It contains iconographic illustrations of Brahma-Śānti, Yaksha and Luxmī.

And the manuscript of the *Subahukathā* and seven other *kathās* contain 33 miniatures depicting the story of Nemināth's life, dated 1288 A.D.

Many undated palm-leaf manuscripts with illustrations belonging stylistically to the 1st period are in the collections of Sarabhai Nawab, in the *Sanghavina Padana Bhāndār*, *Pattan* and also in the *Jesalmir Jñāna Bhāndār*.

The illustrated (?) manuscripts of the 2nd period are given below according to chronological order :—

- (1) The manuscript of the Kalpasūtra and Kālakāchārya Kathā contains six illustrations depicting the different scenes from the life of Mahāvīra. The date of the manuscript is 1370 A.D.
- (2) The manuscript of Kalpasūtra (collection of Seth Anandji Mangaljini Pedhina Jñāna Bhāndār at Idar) contains 34 miniatures depicting some sacred symbols and scenes from the life of Mahāvīra. Prof. Norman Brown has dated the manuscript in the last part of the 14th cy. A.D.
- (3) The Manuscript of the Siddhahema-Vyākaraṇa belong to the same period and contains four illustrations depicting the following scenes—
 - (a) Jaisimha Deva requesting Hemchandra for writing the Vyākaraṇa.
 - (b) The book after completion is taken to the temple of Pārśhanāth in a procession.
 - (c) The Karman, the minister of Ānandaprabha Upādhyāya requesting for making a copy of the same.
- (4) The illustrated manuscript of the Rati Rahasya dated in the early 15th cy. A.D.
- (5) The illustrated manuscript of the Vasantara Vilāsa dated in the 15th cy. A.D.

In Western India paper was introduced extensively by the end of the 13th and beginning of the 14th cy. A.D. The introduction of paper considerably encouraged book production and widely extended the scope of the artists' work. During this period innumerable manuscripts were copied on paper. Along with the increased use of paper, book illustration received greater impetus. The artists freely used gold and silver colours and decorated the manuscripts with rich border of animal, floral and geometric designs.

The most prolific sources of materials for the Western Indian school of painting are the numerous palm and paper manuscripts of two Śvetāmbar Jain works, the Kalpasūtra and Kālakāchārya Kathā with miniature illustrations from the lives of Jinas.

Gujarat has been a centre of Vaishnavism. It is why Vaishnava miniature comprising the "Bhāgavat", the "Gita Govinda" and the "Bāla Gopāla Stuti" were profusely produced. Besides, Sakta miniatures from "Devi Māhātmya" and the secular miniatures from "Rati Rahasya" were also found.

The arrival of alien rulers unnerved the peace-loving Jainas. The new conditions made it urgently necessary to preserve their scriptures. The pious and wealthy donors specially the merchant class achieved religious merit by commissioning copies of the most important texts. This is other important factor which encouraged production of illustrated manuscripts in large numbers.

The earliest illustrated manuscripts of the paper period (1400-1600 A.D.) of Western India are the Kalpasūtra manuscripts dated in 1415 A.D. One of them is housed in the Bombay Asiatic Society library while the other is with Ānandaji Kalāyanji Pedhina Jñāna Bhāndār, Limbdi.

The next illustrated Kalpasūtra manuscript dated 1427 A.D. is in the collection of India House, London which contains 113 leaves (31 for Kalpasūtra and the rest for Kālakāchārya) and 46 illustrations.

15 other illustrated Kalpasūtra manuscripts belonging to the 15th cy. were found. The majority of them are housed in the Jñāna Bhāndārs of Pattan and Baroda. A complete list with respective detailed descriptions are given by Moti Chand in his book—Jain Miniature Paintings from Western India.

The other important illustrated paper manuscripts so far found are :—

1. The Uttaradhyayana Sūtra (dated 1472 A.D.).
2. The Devi Māhatmya¹⁷ containing 13 miniatures (1400 A.D.).
3. The Bhāgavata Daśamskanda dated 1610 A.D.
4. The Bāla Gopāl Stuti.¹⁸ One manuscript is in the Boston Museum while the other is in Baroda Museum.¹⁹
5. The Gīta Govinda²⁰ with 7 miniature housed in the Kalkamata temple, East Gujarat.

17. J.I.S.O.A. 1938, p. 128.

18. E.A.; Vol. II, 1930, pp. 167-206.

19. J.I.S.O.A. 1942, p. 26.

20. J.U.B. Vol. VI, May 1938, p. 124.

6. The *Gīta Govinda*²¹ in the collection of Sri N.C. Mehta belonging to the later period of 15th cy.
7. The *Rati Rahasaya* (15th cy. A.D.) in the collection of Mr. Sarabhai Nawab.

4. MUGHAL PATRONAGE TO THE ART OF MANUSCRIPT ILLUSTRATION

Mughal emperors from Bābur to Shāh Jahan encouraged the art of painting.

Bābur (1483-1530) who conquered Hindustan in 1520 extended his patronage to the art of painting and manuscript illustration. The great conqueror in his memories (Persian Version) which is housed in the collection of the Maharājā of Alwar mentioned the name of the painters Bihzad and Shāh Muzzaffar. Like the Timurid princes Bābur passionately loved painting and preserved finely illuminated and illustrated manuscripts. His acute love for these possessions is proved by the fact that when he fled to Kabul he carried with him manuscripts which had been illustrated by the famous painters of Hirat.

Humāyūm (1508-56) the son and successor of Bābur due to lack of military genius passed 15 years in exile in Persia and there he came in contact with the court artist of Shāh Tahmasp. The Tirmurid tradition in Humāyūn received further encouragement by his contact with the great painters of Tahmasp's court and on returning back to Delhi he brought a band of Persian painters.

The marvellously illustrated manuscript of the romance of Amir Hamza is the most important example of book illustration of this period. The greater part of it is preserved in Vienna while twenty-five pages of the same are housed in the Indian Museum, South Kensington, London. The pages of the manuscript were of the size 22" × 28½" which allowed the artists to use larger method of presentation in the style of the Persian Frescoes done on the palaces of Persian Kings of the 15th to 16th centuries.

It consisted of twelve volumes and each volume contained

21. J.G.R.S., Vol. VIII, No. 4, 1915, pp. 139-146.

one hundred folios with a picture on each folio. These were painted on cotton.

For illustrating the romance of Amir Hamza fifty painters were employed who worked under the guidance of Mir Sayyid-Āli, a native of Tabriz and later by Abad-as-Samad, who hailed from Shiraz. Humāyun came in contact with the latter during his period of exile. When he regained the throne, he invited the artist to his court. The former artist was highly patronized by the emperor and he conferred the title—Nadir-al-Mulk or “The Marvel of the Realm” on him. As it was not possible to finish their great work within the short reign of Humāyun, Akbar took up this work and finished this noble undertaking.

Akbar (1542-1605) studied painting under Abad-as-Samad and had a great predilection for painting and book illustration.

Being firmly established on his throne in 1570 he devoted more attention towards the cultural pursuits. Abul-Fazl, the penegyrist of Akbar informed us that there were more than one hundred artists in his court who used to live in a separate building at Fatehpur Sikri and who used to work under the guidance of Persian artists Mir Sayyid-Āli and Khwajah Abdus-Samad. The emperor personally inspected their works consisting of mainly book illustrations and portraits and rewarded them according to their merits and excellence.

Akbar’s respectful love for painting is best expressed in his own words which run as follows :

“There are many that hate painting but such men I dislike. It appears to me as if a painter had quite peculiar means of recognizing God, for, a painter in sketching anything that has life, and is devising its limbs, one after another, must come to feel that he cannot bestow individuality upon his work, and is forced to think of God, the Giver of life and will thus increase in knowledge.”²²

“In the same manner as painters are encouraged, employment is held out to ornamental artists, gilders, line drawers and pagers.”²³

“The number of masterpieces of painting increased with encouragement given to the art. Persian books, both prose and

22. *Ain-i-Akbari* (Blochmann, 1857) Vol. 1, p. 115.

23. *Ibid.*

poetry were ornamented with pictures and a very large number of paintings was thus collected. The story of Hamzah was represented in twelve volumes and clever painters made the most astonishing illustrations for no less than one thousand and four hundred passages of the story. The Chingiznāma, the Zafarnāma, this book, the Razmnāma, the Ramāyana, the Nal Daman, the Kalilah Damnah, the Ayār Dānish were all illustrated.”²⁴

His intense love for book illustration can be seen best from the great series of paintings done to illustrate the romance of Amir Hamza. Humāyun started this huge work and it was continued by Akbar. From Ma’athiral Umara we come to know the following :—

“Each volume of Amir Hamza contained one hundred folios and each folio was a cubit (zira) long. Each folio contained two pictures and at the front of each picture there was a description delightfully written by Khwaja Ata Ullah Munshi of Qazwin . . . No one has seen another such gem nor was there anything equal to it in the establishment of any king. At present the book is in Imperial library.”²⁵ The Imperial Library of Akbar contained many such magnificently illustrated books. Akbar’s copy of the Persian Version of Mahābhārata contained 169 miniatures. The execution of this volume is said to cost £40,000.

Like the illustrations of the romance of Amir Hamzah a set of twenty four large paintings depicting scenes of war and blood-sheds are preserved in the Indian section of the Victoria and Albert Museum, S. Kensington. These paintings were done in Kashmir about the middle of the 16th cy. to illustrate a manuscript which has not yet been identified.

The illustrations of the manuscripts of Rasikapriyā, a book on rhetoric and literary analysis is another interesting example of this age. The author of this work is Kesava Dās and it was written in 1591 A.D. It is a purely Hindu work and is written in Hindi Nagri characters but lavishly illustrated by a Mughal artist. The Boston Museum possesses these leaves of

24. *Ibid.*

25. Catalogue of Indian collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Vol. VI, p. 5.

the manuscript with illustrations on both sides; the Metropolitan Museum, New York two complete leaves; the British Museum one leaf and the rest are partly in the possession of Dr. Coomarswamy and Ross collection.²⁶

Between 1560 and 1580 the Muslim court at Ahmednagar, Deccan, patronised art and painting and produced a group of pictures to illustrate love poems. The style with their sharp and stately curves was derived from the wall paintings of Vijay nagar.

For book illustration, the team work of the artists was the fashion of the day. A group of artists used to divide the varied types of works as marking the outlines, colouring, drawing the faces and the figures etc. amongst themselves and work collectively. The Clarke manuscript of Akbar-Nāmā preserved in the South Kensington Museum, London is beautifully illustrated with bright colours chiefly red, yellow and blue and in the audience scene the outlines of the picture were drawn by Miskin, the faces by an artist whose name is indistinct, the figures by Madho while the painting was done by Sarwan.²⁷ In another manuscript the Wāq'iat-i-Bābari or History of Bābur written and illustrated in 1600 A.D. towards the close of Akbar's reign (British Museum or 3714) Smith noted names of twenty two artists who worked on the different aspects of this project.²⁸

One of the illustrations of Durab-Nāmā, a book of stories from Shāh-Nāmā is supposed to have been done by Akbar's order. Previously this was in the Royal library of Lucknow and now preserved in the British Museum (B.M. or 4615; Suppl. Cat. p. 385). The painting (fol. 103. rev.) represents two men and a woman with a rocky scene and it contains the signature—"Amal Bihzād wa ishtah Khwājāh Abdul Samad" which means that the composition was done by Bihzad and was later corrected or touched up by Khwajah Abdal Samad, a favourite artist of Akbar.

Jahāngir (1606-1628) like his father was a great patron of art and many artists who worked for his father, remained in his service.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

27. A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon, V.A. Smith, p. 462.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 469.

Jahāngir patronised art of painting not much to illustrate manuscripts but to draw separate pictures for his art gallery. But he was not altogether devoid of his liking for this type of illustrations as we find that on the day of his accession he brought out the selected illustrated manuscripts from his father's library and with his own hand recorded dates on each of them. The lavishly illustrated manuscript of Kaliyā Damana completed in 1606 and housed in the British Museum (Ms. Add. 18579) is the most important example of this age.

During the time of Akbar and prominently during the time of Jahāngir western influence became very prominent. "An album of copies of European pictures, made by Kesava Dās was completed in 1588, Jahāngir displayed an even greater interest in European paintings and obtained numerous examples, both religious and secular, from the Jesuits, from Sir Thomas Roe (the English Ambassador) and from the Portuguese traders. Many of the European pictures were copied in miniature size".²⁹

Shāh Jahān who ruled from 1628-1659 was also a lover of painting but the patronage of the court was not sufficient to support the painters who flourished considerably under the reign of Akbar and Jahāngir. There developed a class of Bāzār painters only intermittently employed by the grandees. Thus started the decay of the art of painting and book illustration which received its death-blow from Aurangzeb.

But in spite of the lack of patronage and appreciation at the Imperial Court the art of book illustration continued in some of the states ruled by Hindu princes.

In the collection of the Mahārāja of Benaras there is a beautifully illustrated manuscript of Rām Charita Mānasa. This is complete in five volumes and it contains more than 500 illustrations. The volumes are nicely bound in Benarasī brocade. It was done in about 18th cy. and it costed Rs. 160,000/-.³⁰

The Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris has in its collection many illustrated manuscripts on Hindu Mythology. Amongst them a

29. Catalogue of Indian collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Vol. VI, p. 11.

30. A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon, V.A. Smith, p. 338.

copy of *Bhāgavat Purāṇa* which contains 76 illustrations deserve special mention.

5. WOOD AND METAL ENGRAVINGS

• With the growing popularity of printed books in Bengal, authors and publishers became eager to illustrate the publications. But there was very little opportunity of illustrating the books with steel or copper plate engravings. The artists of Bengal in the beginning of the 19th century just started the craft on less hard materials like wood or soft metals.³¹

The wood engravings as were produced on Bengali books were not very highly artistic but from historical point of view they are valuable.

Father Lawson was a famous wood-engraver of that time and some of the artists of Bengal had their training from him. Among them the names of Rāmchandra Roy and Rāmdhan Swarnakār deserve special mention. They were also masters of the art of the copper plate engravings. Most of the illustrations of Bengali almanacs are wood-engravings and even to-day, such illustrations of the almanacs remind us of the past traditions.

Further, the Bengali artists who made the steel engravings were also expert in wood-engravings and some of them were trained up by foreign experts. These artists attained considerable mark of proficiency as will be evidenced from the following lines of the 2nd annual report (1818-19) of the Calcutta Book Society :—

“Joyca’s Dialogues on Mechanics and Astronomy...The highly creditable execution of the plates by a native artist, Casheenath Mistree, deserves particular mention, as evincing the progress already made by the natives in the elegant and useful art of engraving on copper.”

The earliest printed book with engraved illustrations is *Annadā Mangal* by Bhārat Chandra. This book was published by late Gangā Kishore Bhattāchārya and was printed in 1816 at Calcutta. It contains six wood and copper plate engravings.

The following books contain wood-engravings :—

1. *Kāli Kaivalyadāinī* by Nandakumār Bhattācharjee

31. *Bangiya Sāhitya Parishad Patrikā*, 2nd Issue of 46th year.

- published in 1836.
2. **Bhāgavat Gītā.** Printed in 1836 at the press of Pitāambar Sen of Śivadaha.
 3. **Nutun Panjikā.** Published from Navadwip in 1242 and 1243 B.S.
 4. **Hara Pārvatī Mangal** by Rām Chandra Tarkalankār of Harināvi in 1857.
 5. **Anandā Mangal.** 2nd ed. Published from Purnā Chandrodaya press in 1264 B.S.
 6. **Panchadaśī** 2nd ed. Published in 1852 A.D.

The illustrations of the above titles were published in Sāhitya Parishad Patrikā. 2nd issue of 46th year, 1346 B.S.

A list of Bengali Books with both wood and metal engravings are given below :³²

1. **Sangēt Taranga** by Rādhā Mohan Dās. The volume was published in 1818 and it contains six engraved 'illustrations done by Rāmchandra Roy depicting "Rāg Bilāsh", "Deepak Rāg" etc.
2. **Gouri Bilāsh** by Rām Chandra Tarkalankār. The volume was published in 1824 and it contains four wood and copper engravings depicting the goddess Durgā with ten hands etc. The engravings were done by Biwambar Ācharya.
3. **Gangā Bhakti Tarāṅginī** by Durgā prosad Mukhopādhyā. The volume was published in 1824 and among the illustrations done by Biswambar Ācharya the most important is "Bhagirath Gangā".
4. **Bhāgavat Gītā** translated by Rām Ratna Nyāyapanchānan. The volume was published in 1824.
5. **Biddonmod Tarāṅginī** by Chiranjib Sharmā. It was published in 1825. Among the illustrations done by Mādhab Chandra Dās "The Court scene of Vikrama Sen" is famous.
6. **Batrisī Sinhāsana.** Published in the press of Biśwanāth Deb in 1824. It contains two illustrations done by Biswambar Ācharya depicting the court scene of Vikramāditya and "Batrisī Sinhāsana".

7. *Ānanda Lahari* by Rāmchandra Vidyānankār. It was published in 1824 and contains one copper plate engraving depicting—“Sri Rājarājeswari” by Rupchānd Ācharya.
8. *Anandā Mangal* was published in 1828 in the press of Pitāambar Sen. It contains 10 copper plate engravings done by Birchandra Datta, Rupchānda Ācharya, Rāmdhon Swarnakār and Rāmsāgar Chakravorty etc.

Some of these volumes (Nos. 6, 7 and 8) are preserved in the library of Bangiya Sāhitya Parishad, Calcutta.

CHAPTER IX

Library Techniques and Administration

1. CLASSIFICATION
2. CATALOGUING
3. BUILDING
4. ADMINISTRATIVE SET-UP
5. STAFF—STATUS AND PAY
6. PRESERVATION

WE will now resume and expand what has been said already in the preceding chapters about the growth and development of libraries and librarianship from the earliest time. What we have done so far is to draw a comprehensive map of the centres of knowledge of India, to define their aims and objects and to describe the materials and methods used. We come now to the other major aspect of the theme, which is to describe the technical methods and organisational systems of these institutions.

Only very slowly did the institution develop methods of techniques and system of organisation in a formal manner. As they grew and their scope extended, the methods of administration and control became more and more standardized. The office of the librarian evolved by differentiation of the function from other duties, special care was taken for upkeep and preservation and systematic arrangements were made for classification of written records. In this chapter a detailed study is made of the systems of knowledge as well as utilitarian classifications, process of cataloguing, administrative set—up including the buildings, staff—their pay and status as well as methods and techniques of preservation.

Further, scribes and calligraphists did play a vital role in propagating the cause of libraries particularly in the pre-printing age. To complete our story, we have attempted here

to evaluate their contribution as well as their social position and status.

1. CLASSIFICATION

It is true that from the beginning man tried to name and differentiate things. Though in a very crude form still classification actually started before man was a rational being. Thus, "the history of classification in its widest sense runs parallel with the history of human thought".

In course of centuries and through a process of evolution the power of human thinking developed and the early thinkers attempted to class or group things according to their imagination and perception. Ancient countries like Assyria and Egypt, long before the birth of Christ devised some crude systems for grouping their library materials.

But attempts to classify the whole field of knowledge were first made by Indian philosophers long before the time of Plato (428-347 B.C.). The early philosophers and thinkers of India endeavoured to make a complete survey of knowledge and substance and classify the compartments into branches and sub-branches taking consideration of their relation to one another.

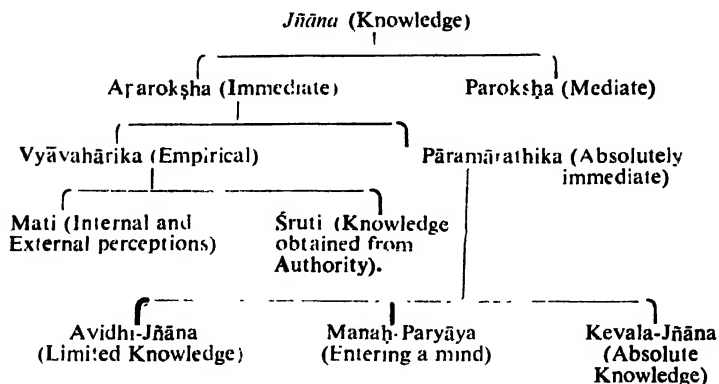
Since the time of Plato European scholars and philosophers made attempts on this line and nearly thirty schemes were devised before the time of Francis Bacon in 1605. Special mention should be made of Porphyry (305 A.D.), Capella (439 A.D.), Roger Bacon (1266 A.D.), Aldus Manutius (1498 A.D.), Conrad Gesner (1548 A.D.) etc.

CLASSIFICATION—PHILOSOPHICAL

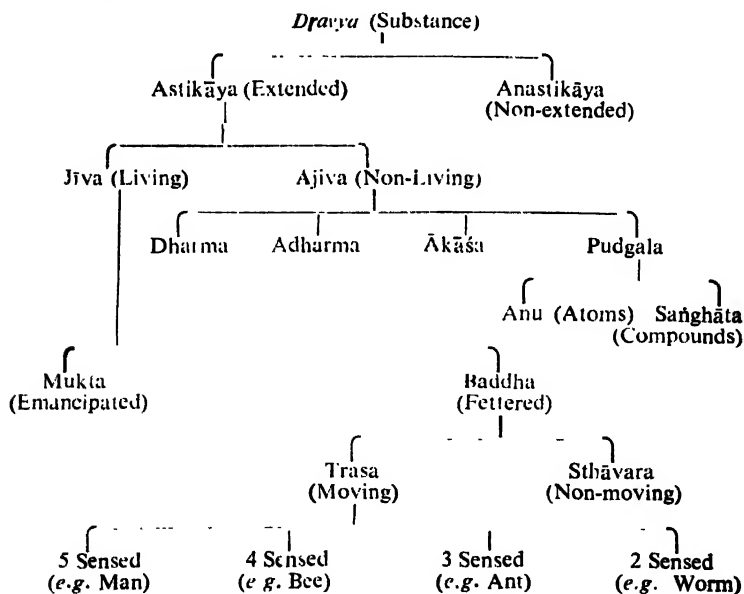
In order to show the bent of Indian mind towards rational grouping of things we shall describe here a few philosophical classifications as sample cases.

Jainism comes down from unknown antiquity. The first preacher of the system was Ṛsabhadeva and the last teacher was Mahāvīra who flourished in the 6th cy. B.C. Altogether there flourished twenty-four teachers who attained liberation.

The Jain philosophers classified knowledge as follows¹ :



The Jaina philosophers also classified “*Dṛavya*” or substance as follows² :—

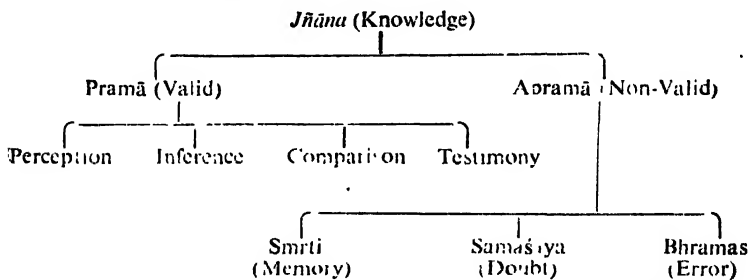


1. An Introduction to Indian Philosophy, Datta and Chatterjee, pp. 78-79.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 94.

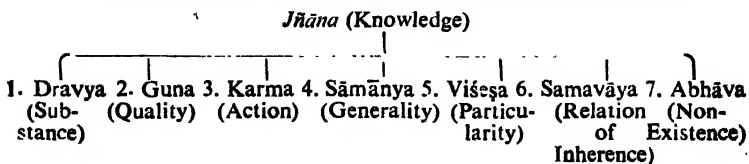
Here the *Dṛavya* or substance is a genus. To the genus 'Dṛavya', the difference—existence of body is added and thus 'Dṛavya' is divided into *Astikāya* or exists like a body and *Anastikāya* or not exists like a body. In the second stage the difference—Life is added and the two species are born—*Jīva* (Living) and *Ajīva* (Non-living). Up to this the principle of extension and intension bears close resemblance with the Tree of Porphyry. Both the systems continued the divisions until individuals. The Jains completed the division with more scientific basis and developed the negative subjects. Whereas the Tree of Porphyry is inadequate and failed to develop the negative subjects.

The Hindu *Nyāya* philosophy was founded by sage Gautama (*Akṣapāda*). This philosophy expounds the conditions of correct thinking and true knowledge of reality. According to *Nyāya* Philosophy knowledge which is manifestation of objects is divided as follows³ :—



Kanāda, the great sage who is also known as *Ulūka* was the founder of the *Vaiśeṣika* system of philosophy. It is a realistic system like the *Nyāya* and based on logical arguments and both of them have the same ultimate purpose *i.e.*, to liberate the individual self.

This system divides knowledge and substance as follows⁴ :



3. *Ibid.*, p. 173.

4. *Ibid.* pp. 227-252.

Dravya or substance is subdivided into nine branches :

(a) Prithvi or Earth, (b) Jala or Water, (c) Tejas or Fire, (d) Vāyu or Air, (e) Akāsa or Ether, (f) Kāla or Time, (g) Dik or Space, (h) Ātmā or Soul and (i) Manas or mind.

CLASSIFICATION—UTILITARIAN

We have discussed a few sample cases of ancient Indian philosophical classification systems. The aim of these systems is mainly to discover the relation of things.

But the purpose of utilitarian or bibliographical classification is to classify the whole field of existing literature into divisions and sub-divisions from the practical point of view.

Ancient Indian thinkers from the utilitarian point of view divided the whole field of knowledge into the following four classes :

1. Dharma ; 2. Artha ; 3. Kāma ; 4. Moksha.

The revealed wisdom of the Hindus is known as Śrutis and consists of the four Vedas. The Vedas divided knowledge into two main classes—Parā and Aparā. Parā Vidyā means the knowledge of Ultimate Reality whereas Aparā-vidyā consists of the Vedas and six Vedāngas—Śikshā, Kalpa, Vyākaraṇa, Nirukta, Chhandas and Jyotiṣa.

The Chhāndogya Upaniṣad (VII 1.4) furnishes us with a more detailed division of knowledge. They are as follows :

Ṛg-veda ; Yajur-veda ; Sāma-veda ; Atharva-veda ; Itihāsa-Purāṇa ; Vedānām veda (grammar) ; Pitrya ; Rāsi ; Daiva ; Nidhi ; Vākovākya ; Ekayana ; Deva-vidyā ; Brahma-vidyā ; Bhuto-vidyā ; Kshatra-vidyā ; Nakshatra-vidyā ; Sarpa and Devajanavidyā. The Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad (11.4 10) gives us a somewhat similar list.

Kautilya, the author of Artha-śāstra (i.ii) divided the entire circle of knowledge into four divisions—(1) Ānvikshakī, (2) Trayī, (3) Vārtā and (4) Dandanīti. Ānvikshakī comprises the philosophy of Sāṅkhya, Yoga and Lokāyata. Trayī consists only the triple vedas as well as Artharva-veda, Itihāsa veda and six Vedāngas. Agriculture, cattle-breeding and trade constitute Vārtā and Dandanīti is the science of government.

The Śukra-Nīti (iv.iii) divided knowledge into the following 32 classes :—

Rg-veda ; Sāma-veda ; Yajur-veda ; Atharva-veda ; Āyus ; Dhanus ; Gandharva ; Tantras ; Śīkshā ; Vyākaraṇa ; Kalpa ; Nirukta ; Jyotiṣa ; Chhandas ; Mimāṃsās ; Tarka ; Sāmkhya ; Vedānta ; Joga : Itihāsa ; Purāṇa ; Smṛiti ; Nāstika ; Artha-śāstra ; Kāma-śāstra ; Śilpa-śāstra ; Alankāra ; Kāvya ; Desa-bhāsa ; Avasarokti ; Yavana-Mata ; and Deśādidharma.

Further, we find account of sixty four Kalās (Arts and Sciences) in the Rāmāyana (*i.*95) Bhāgavata Purāṇa (*x.* 45,36), Mahābhāṣhya (*i.* 1.57) Daśakumāra Charita (*ii.* 21) ; Kāma-Śāstra, Lalita-Vistara etc.*

Like the Hindus, the Jains and Buddhists also divided their bulky religious and non-religious literature into several departments and sub-departments for practical purpose.

The Jains made the following divisions of their cononical literature :—

1. The 12 Angas ;
2. The 12 Upāngas ;
3. The 10 Painnas (Prakiras) ;
4. The 6 Cheya-sūttas or Cheda-sūttas ;
5. 2 individual texts ;
6. The 4 Mula Sūttas.

Classification of the Buddhist Literature :—

Before the cononical literature was compiled in its present form the Buddhists classified the then literature known as "Buddha vachanam" according to their form and contents into 9 or 12 Angas as given below :—

(a) According to Pāli Literature :—

1. Sutta, 2. Geyya, 3. Veyyākaraṇa, 4. Gāthā, 5. Udāna,
6. Itivuttakas, 7. Jātakas, 8. Abbhuta Dhamma, 9. Vedalla,

(b) According to the Northern Buddhists :—

1. Sūtta 2. Geyya 3. Veyyākaraṇa 4. Gāthā
5. Udāna 6. Nidāna, 7. Avadāna 8. Itivuttakas
9. Jātakas 10. Vaipulya 11. Abbhuta Dhamma
12. Upadeśa.

Later, the Buddhists divided the canonical literature as

* Sir Brojendranath Seal in his book "Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindus" described some of ancient utilitarian schemes in detail.

The collection of Faizi which was transferred to the Imperial Library was divided into three different sections as noted below :

- (1) Poetry, Music, Medicine and Astrology.
- (2) Philosophy, Philology, Suffism, Astronomy and Geometry,
- (3) Theology, Law, Commentaries.⁸

The Waray family Library of Poona which contains about 3000 manuscripts furnishes us with further interesting information. It was stored up and preserved with efforts by six generations of the family. The collection was started by Puruṣottama, who was well-versed in Mantraśāstra and a priest of Rango Nārāyan Rājabāhādura. For nineteen months he was in Vārānasi and himself copied many works as well as got copied some works by paying about Rs. 1,900/-. Some of the manuscripts of the collection are dated and belong to the period 1659 A.D. to 1935 A.D.

The collection consists of approximately 250 to 300 Vestanas or bundles of which 15 Vestanas consisting of 304 manuscripts were checked. The classified sections of the 15 Vestanas are as follows :—

1. Veda 2. Purāṇa, 3. Upaniṣad 4. Tantra
5. Mantra-śāstra 6. Yoga 7. Vedānta 8. Śrauta
9. Smārta 10. Dharmaśāstra 11. Vaidyaka. 12. Jyotiṣa
13. Sāhitya 14. Stotras 15. Vaidic Suktas.⁹

From the partial survey of the Waray collection it is evidently clear that even private libraries used to preserve manuscripts in a classified way and possibly they maintained a hand list for each Vestanas or sections.

The Jain Jñāna Bhāndārs used fixed location system for classification. The manuscripts and the boxes which contained the manuscripts had been given their respective numbers. For numbering, usually the figures 1, 2, 3, 4 etc. were used. But in some cases the numbers were replaced by the name of twenty-four Tirthankaras, twenty Viharamāna Tirthankaras and the eleven crown pupils or Gandarvas of Mahāvīra etc.

In such cases instead of the numbers the first box was given the name of Rṣabhadeva, the 2nd of Ajitnāth and in the same

8. *Ibid.*, p. 550.

9. P.O. No. 1 and 2 of 1959.

way the 24th box had the name of Mahāvīra. If required further, then the 20 names of Viharamāna Tirthankaras were also used. The names of the Tirthankaras, Viharamāna Tirthankaras and crown pupils of Mahāvīra were written on the boxes in place of numerical figures.¹⁰

The monastic libraries of Europe in the 16th and 17th cy. followed a similar process of classification known as collegiate press-marking system where the book cases, shelves and books were marked with symbols or numbers to form a press mark.¹¹

2. CATALOGUING

We have at present very little scope of knowing exactly the cataloguing systems of ancient Indian libraries. But from a few available catalogues which are two or three hundred years old we come to know that they mentioned in those catalogues only the box number, the manuscript number, the title of the manuscript, no. of pages and sometimes the author's name. *Brūthattīpanikā* edited by Śrīman Jinvijayaji is an example of such a catalogue. The Nirnaya Sāgar Press has published a number of publication like *Vṛttaratnākara*, *Chhandasāstra* etc. which contain unique editing in matter of cataloguing.

The personal library of Kavīndrachārya (16th cy. A.D.) was catalogued in a classified way. The catalogue was obtained from a certain Math of Benaras by Mahāmahopādhyāya V.P. Diwedi and it (Kavīndrachārya Sūchi Patram) was published in the Gaekwad's Oriental Series (No. XVII).

The catalogue contains lists of 2192 manuscripts and is classified as follows :—

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Serial No. of Mss.</i>
1. Ṛg. veda	1—4
2. Asvalayana Sūtra	5—24
3. Ṛg. Veda Śākhā or branches	25—31
4. Yajur veda, Sūtra etc.	32—64
5. Khil (Veda)	65—103
6. Vyākaraṇa	104—165
7. Nyāya	166—222

10. Jaina Chitra Kalpadruma, S. Nawab, p. 104.

11. An Introduction to Library Classification. Sayers, pp. 83-84

8. Vedānta	223—338
9. Sūtra	339—341
10. Yoga	342—354
11. Mimāṃsā	355—371
12. (a) Śrauta Baudhyāna	372—421
(b) Śrauta Āpasthamba	422—434
(c) Śrauta Hiranyakaśiya	435—458
(d) Śrauta Kātyānaya	459—553
(e) Śrauta Āsvaālna	554—571
(f) Śrauta Sāmsūtra	572—586
13. Smṛiti	587—656
14. Smārta Prakarana	657—798
15. Jyotiṣha	799—905
16. Baidya	906—1099
17. Mantra	1100—1184
18. Dharma	1185—1230
19. Puārana	1231—1465
20. Purānagama	1466—1629
21. Samhita	1630—1736
22. Tantra	1737—1820
23. Māhātma	1821—1870
24. Koṣha	1871—1898
25. (a) Kāvya	1899—1944
(b) Alamkāra	1945—1962
(c) Nātaka	1963—1990
(d) Sangīta	1991—1999
(e) Champu	2000—2010
(f) Bhan	2011—2016
(g) Chhanda	2017—2024
26. Nāstika	2025—2028
27. (a) Nīti	2029—2034
(b) Kathā	2035—2049
(c) Kautuk	2050—2066
28. Parikṣhā	2067—2080
29. Chatu Ṣaṣṭi kalā	2081—2144
30. Silpa	2145—2162
31. Sālihotra	2163—2173
32. Mata Grantha	2174—2192

3. PAGINATION

It was the practice among the Jains to count the number of verses after completion of a particular work. 32 words were to make one verse. The total number of words in the manuscripts thus, gave the idea of the number of verses. At the end of one hundred, five hundred or one thousand verses, they used the term "Granthāgram". At the end of the manuscript there was a note of authority by the use of the term "Sarva Granthāgram".¹²

The peculiar system of numbering the pages of the Jain manuscripts can also be noticed. The usual numerical figures are given on the left side while on the right letters or syllables like "Sva", "Sti" etc. were used to denote numbers. Thus No. 1 is indicated by "Sva", 2 by "Sti", 3 by "Śri", 100 by "Su", 200 by "Sū" etc.¹³

The Hindu manuscripts are generally numbered on the leaves (paṭṭra) and not on the pages (pṛṣṭha). In South India the figures stand on the first page of each leaf while in other parts on the second (Sāñkapṛṣṭha) and sometimes on both the corners—left up and right down. In all the manuscripts (except some Jain manuscripts) numerals from 1 to 300 are used.¹⁴

In the earlier Malabar manuscripts we see a novel method for numbering the pages. They used letters in place of numbers. The first folio begins with 'Sri' only and then by letters as follows:—

Na = 1, Nna = 2, Nya = 3, Škra = 4, jhra = 5, Hā = 6, Gra = 7, Pra = 8, Dre = 9, Ma = 10, Tha = 20, La = 30, Pta = 40, Ba = 50, Tra = 60, Tru = 70, Cha = 80, Na = 90, Ña = 100. For 11, 12 etc. Ma and Na, Ma and Nna etc. for 21, 31 etc. Tha and Na, La and Na are used jointly. Similarly for two or three hundred etc. two or three letters indicating hundred were used.

After fifteenth century Malabar numerals from one to nine were used on the right side.¹⁵

The copper plates bear the numbers on the obverse.¹⁶ But

12. Jaina Chitra Kalpadruma, p. 107.

13. Gaekwad Oriental Series, Vol. LXXVI, p. 40.

14. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 86.

15. J.O.I., Vol. 6, No. 2-3.

16. Epi. Ind., Vol. III, pp. 156, 300.

the first plate bears the number on the reverse.¹⁸ In some cases both the obverse and reverse of a plate are numbered.¹⁹

LIBRARY BUILDING

From literary and epigraphical evidences as well as from existing structural remains it is not difficult to prove that there were separate arrangements for housing the manuscript collections.

The Bhāskara Samhitā is the only existing literary text which prescribes that a library should be housed in a finely built stone building.²⁰

According to Tibetan sources, Nālandā university had a splendid library known as Dharmagañja or the Piety Mart. It consisted of three huge buildings by the names of Ratnasāgara, Ratnadadhi and Ratnarañjaka. Amongst them Ratnadhadi was a nine storied building which housed the famous manuscripts of Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra.

Innumerable monastic libraries flourished all over India during the Buddhist age. The Chinese travellers furnish us with valuable information regarding monastic libraries which were inseparable parts of the religious institutions. Hiuen-Tsang, while visiting Kośala, saw nearly 100 monasteries of which the Pigeon monastery founded by Nāgārjuna was one.²¹ The library of the pigeon monastery was located on the topmost hall which is ideal from the view points of security and safety.

Regarding the interior arrangements of the monastic libraries we can gather very few direct information. The existing monastic libraries of Nepal, Tibet and other Indian frontier states, which are maintaining faithfully the traditions of the past, were considerably influenced by the Indian monastic architecture. These existing libraries used to house the manuscripts on the wooden shelves. The wooden shelves with pigeon holes are arranged against walls of the rooms.

18. Epi. Ind., Vol. XXXI, Plates between pp. 4-5.

19. Epi. Ind., Vol. VI, pp. 86 ff. + plate.

20. J.A.H.R.S. Vol. 8, p. 217.

21. Yuan Chwang Watters, V. 2, p. 201.

‘ The following description of the library of Gyantse monastery of Lhasa will corroborate the above statement:

“In Pigeon-holes on either side of the entrance to the chapel of the high altar were ranged the sacred books, the Buddhist scriptures (the Kahgyur), translated from the Indian Sanskrit about a thousand years ago, and their commentaries (the Tangyur), the former in one hundred volumes and the latter in two hundred and fifty. Each volume forms a cumbersome, unwieldy, heavy package about $2\frac{3}{4}$ feet long and 8 inches broad, weighing 10 to 30 or more pounds, and containing several hundred loose leaves wrapped in cloth and strapped between heavy wooden boards with the label at one end.”²²

‘ We can safely presume that ancient Indian monastic libraries had similar interior arrangements and they also used wooden shelves with pigeon-holes. Besides the wooden shelves, there were wooden-boxes to preserve rare and valuable manuscripts.

‘ In South India most of the important temples maintained well-equipped libraries with them. The inscription discovered at Nagai corroborates the truth and furnishes us with some detailed information regarding administration and arrangement of temple libraries. It is interesting to note that among the ancient remains of the place there is a “big building with an outer courtyard with rooms on either side with a big doorway which leads into a spacious hall with a number of stone benches serving as pials and seven niches in the wall.”²³ The spacious hall was used as the library room and the manuscripts were shelved within the niches.

During the Pre-Mahommedan days Bijapur was known as Vidyāpura, and it was a famous seat of learning. From epigraphical evidences it is clear that the Western Chalukyan kings of Kalyan for the purpose of a library erected a building which is in a ruined state now.²⁴

‘ In Western India Pattan became a great centre of literary activity since the 11th cy. A.D., and she maintained the cultural standard and tradition nearly 500 years. The literary and

22. Lhasa and its Mysteries, Waddell, pp. 225-26.

23. Hyderabad Archaeological Series, No. 8, p. 1.

24. Architecture of Bijapur, Fergusson, p. 2.

cultural activities resulted in the formation of innumerable libraries. No special types of buildings were erected for housing the precious collections. The Bhāndārs were housed either in Upāśrayas or in ordinary houses.²⁵ Many of the great Jain temples of Western India are provided with basement repositories—where whole libraries of Mss. were preserved intact for centuries.

The Tanjore Saraswatī Mahal or library which dates from the 16th cy., when Tanjore was under the Telegu Naiks, is one of the most precious libraries of India. The library is housed in a peculiarly appropriate hall. It is situated in a very important site with the arsenal and watch towers on both the sides. The manuscripts and books were kept in huge wooden boxes. At the northern end of the library huge shelves contain the books (mainly English) collected by Mahārāja Serfoji.²⁶

The early Moslem rulers had no separate library buildings but the libraries or Kitābkhānās were housed in the palaces, educational institutions, the mosques and the Khanqahs. The personal library of Gāzi Khān, a courtier of Ibrahim Lodi was housed in the Delhi fort.²⁷

The Mughal Emperors were great patrons of learning and founders of libraries. We do not get sufficient information regarding the library building of Bābur. Humāyun converted the octagonal double storied building known as Sher Mandal of the Purānā Qilā of Delhi into a library. It was made of granite and red sandstone.²⁸ The library of Akbar was located within the Agra fort. In the Jahāngir Mahal, adjoining the rooms known as Akbar's apartments, there is a big room which was used as the library and decorated with wall paintings.²⁹

At Fatehpur Sikri the girls school is situated on the north-west angles of Khas Mahal. It consists of a school room 22' 11" by 13' 6" and a class room 8' 2" by 14' 10" with a verandah on the north.

25. Gaekwad Oriental Series, Vol. LXXVI, p. 39.

26. Peeps in Saraswati Mahal, S. Gopalam, pp. 5-6.

27. I.C Oct. 1945, p. 331.

28. Promotion of Learning in India During the Muhammadan Period, Law. p. 133.

29 Handbook to Agra and Taj, Havell, p. 66.

Here within the stone walls panelled bookshelves were made. "The walls are 1' 9½" in thickness, but they are not solid. They are composed of series of piers, some 5' 6" apart. The intervening spaces being filled on the outside with vertical slabs of stone ashlaring, projecting inwards from which, at right angles, are other slabs notched out on the front to receive an open panelled and arched screen, whilst horizontal bond stones knit the whole together and serve the purpose of bookshelves."³⁰

Ādilshāhi kingdom of Bijapur, which was one of the five sultanates that grew up after the downfall of the Bahamani kingdom, was a famous seat of learning. The Sultāna patronised innumerable private libraries and maintained a royal library. In the Asari Mahal at Bijapur, a part of the Royal Adil Shahi library is still to be found.

Muhammad Gawan laid the foundation of the great college at Bidar. It was completed in 1472 A.D. The building was a three storied imposing piece of architecture which housed the mosque, the library, lecture halls, teachers' rooms etc.

"The front of the building which was luxuriously adorned with encaustic tiles of various hues and shades, all arranged in different designs, had one stately minaret at each side, rising to a height of 100 ft. These minarets also were decorated with tiles arranged in zigzag lines, a pattern which lent the building a most attractive appearance. The building rises to three storeys in a most imposing position. Its entire length extends to 205 ft. with a width of 180 ft. which is divided up into apartments comprising the mosque, the library, the lecture halls, the professors' rooms and the students cubicles having a space of 100 ft. square in the middle as a courtyard. The building has excellent arrangement of light and air."³¹

As the library portion of the building has completely perished it is not possible to get a true picture of the interior arrangement. But as the oriental architects used to construct wings of a building in a uniform plan, it is possible that the library was designed after the interior arrangement of the other wings."³²

30. The Moghul Architecture of Fatehpur-Sikri, Smith, V.I, p. 8.

31. The Antiquities of Bidar, Yazdani, pp. 21-22.

32. Bidar : Its History and Monuments, Yazdani, p. 97.

The Indian princes of Alwar, Bikaner, Mysore, Tanjore, Jaipur, Jammu etc. maintained their respective state libraries and archives. Separate buildings or rooms were allocated for them within the royal palaces.

In Assam the Ahom kings used to preserve the collection of manuscripts, records, letters, maps etc. in a set of apartments attached to the palace.³³

ADMINISTRATIVE SET-UP

Generally, the rulers and nobles patronised libraries and archives, and encouraged copying of manuscripts. We have discussed in the previous chapters how Devapāladeva, the illustrious Pāla ruler ;³⁴ Guhasena I, the Vallabhi king³⁵ as well as Gurjara kings Jayasimha and Kumārpāladeva patronised the establishment of libraries as well as writing and purchasing of manuscripts.

Further, two records of Vijaynagar kings Bukka II and Devarāya discovered from South Kanara District distinctly mentioned that the library attached to Śringeri-Math received valuable landed properties and other grants for their renovation and maintenance.³⁶

The practice continued to the end of the 19th cy. A.D. The Nawābs of Rāmpur in Rohilkhand were very liberal in purchasing books for their libraries. Nawāb Sayyid Muhammad Said Khān purchased books for the library worth Rs. 1583-8 as. ; his successor Nawāb Yussuf Khān spent Rs. 2757-10-6 p. for books. After him Nawāb Kalb 'Ali Khan spent Rs. 43,608-13-9 p. for books. His successor Nawāb Hamid Ali Khān spent Rs. 40,000/- for the library building and Rs. 3,88,136 for purchase of books and maintenance of the staff.

The above sample cases were presented to prove that traditionally the rulers patronized the libraries and spent substantial amount as rewards to the calligraphists, illustrators

33. *Descriptive Catalogue of Assamese Mss.*, Goswami, p. xix.

34. *Epigraphia Indica*, V. 17, 310.

35. *I. An.* VII, p. 67 f.

36. *Annual Report of South Indian Epigraphy, 1936-37*, pp. 81-82.

and the authors.³⁷

Besides the kings, the ministers and generals followed their masters examples to further the cause of library development. Reference may be made in this connection to the record of the Western Chalukya king Tribhuvanamalla Somesvara from Nagai in the Hyderabad State. The record states that provision was made for six librarians (Saraswatī Bhāndārikas) for the library attached to a college endowed by a general of the king.³⁸ The names of the Jain ministers of Gujarat deserve special mention. Śrī Vāstupāla—Tejapāla, Śrī Pathadashah and Śrī Madanmantri are still famous in the history of Gujarat for directly encouraging book-making and library establishment. Other ministers, who also helped the same cause were Vimla shah, Amar Bhaṭṭa ; Vāg Bhaṭṭa and Karama shah.

Sometimes the devout worshippers also made endowments for maintenance of monasteries and the libraries. From Epigraphical records we find that one such devout worshipper by the name of Gomin Avighnakara from Gauda country made suitable grant for repair of some monasteries at Kanhery, West India; for the purpose of clothings for the community living there as well as some money for books of the libraries attached to the monasteries.³⁹

Thus, we see that both in ancient and medieval India the rulers, grandees of the states, high officials and religious people extended their patronage and help towards the library development. During the Sultanate and Mughal period the same story was repeated, and detailed accounts were described in previous chapters.

LIBRARY STAFF—THEIR STATUS AND PAY

The Nagai inscription dated 1058 A.D. furnishes us with useful information regarding the status and pay of the librarians during the time of later Chalukyas.⁴⁰ The allocation of land

37. I.C. Jan. 1946, p. 17.

38. Hyderabad Archaeological Series, No. 8 and also Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy, 1938-39, pp. 70, 95.

39. I. An. v. 13, p. 135.

40. Hyderabad Archaeological Series, No. 6.

towards the maintenance of the teachers and librarians of Nagai residential college as stated in the above inscription proves that the librarians used to have equal status with the teaching staff and they were paid the same pay as were given to the teachers.

During the early Sultanate period the kings used to maintain within their royal household a library or kitāb-khānā and the officer-in-charge was known as Kitābdār.

Sultān Jalāl-ud-dīn of the Khilji dynasty was a great patron of learning. He selected Amir Khusrav, a scholar and poet of reputation as the librarian of the Imperial library. The post of the librarian was held in great respect, and Amir Khusrav was raised to the rank of Peerage and was permitted to enjoy the privileges of a noble.⁴¹

During the Mughal period the Nizām was the highest officer of the library. Mullā Pir Muhammad and Shaikh Faizi in succession were the Nizāms of Akbar's Imperial library. Muktab Khān was the Nizām of Jahāngir, and all of them were very important persons within the court.

With the growth and development of this institution, there developed different categories of library staff. The different classes of staff and their respective nature of works of the Mughal and post-Mughal days are given below⁴²:—

- (1) The Nizām was the chief officer of the library. Like the present-day librarian of a big public or university library he was a man of scholarship and capable administrator.
- (2) The Dārogha or Muhtamim was the next man in-charge for administration and technical work. He was responsible for selection, classification and purchase.
- (3) The Sakhāf and warrāq used to work under the direction of Dārogha and their duty was to issue books and replace the books in its proper place after use.⁴³
- (4) Musahhiḥ was in-charge of correction and moderation of the manuscripts. When the manuscripts were

41. Tārikhi-Firūz-Shāhi (Elliot) *iii*, p. 144.

42. I.C. Jan. 1947, p. 18.

43. *Ibid.*

damaged by bookworms he used to restore the pieces in proper way. It was necessary for this class to be scholar-cum-technician. Otherwise it would have been difficult for them to replace the damaged portion. In the Library of Khān Khānān, Moulana Sufi was the Musahhah.⁴⁴

- (5) Translators.
- (6) Kātib or the ordinary scribe used to copy rare manuscripts.
- (7) Khus Navīs or Calligrapher.
- (8) Muqābila Navīs used to verify the works of Katib and Khus Navīs after comparing them with the original texts.
- (9) Binders.
- (10) Book-illustrators.
- (11) Jidwal Sāz used to draw the various types of margins on the papers.
- (12) Clerks for maintaining stock as well accounts.
- (13) Servants for dusting and cleaning. ✓

In the Jaina Jñāna Bhāndārs the learned pupils and Śramanas used to assist in writing manuscripts by selecting the various editions. Sometimes the learned Upāsakas also helped the work of writing manuscripts. The complete manuscripts were then sent to the learned and experienced Adharyas for their final remarks.

From the catalogue of the Rampur library it is clear that clerks maintained subject-wise list of books. In 1848 Sprenger, an Englishman visited Lucknow and left a description of royal library of the Oudh kings. During the time of Asaf-ud-Dawla the library had a collection of about three lacs of books and there were many servants for dusting and cleaning the collection.⁴⁵

It is clear from the above said accounts that big libraries of ancient and medieval India maintained a fairly good number of staff for their administration and maintenance. For example, we can cite one or two more examples here.

44. *Ibid*, Oct. 1945, p. 335 and also Jan. 1946, pp. 18-19.

45. *Ibid.*, Jan. 1946, p. 15.

The royal Ādil Shahi library of Bijapur had a total staff of sixty employees,⁴⁶ while the private library of Abdul Rahim Khān-i-Khānān had 95 employees of varied categories.⁴⁷ The librarian of the Royal Ādil Shahi library was a Hindu scholar Waman Pandit bin Anant who was well versed in Persian. His annual salary was one thousand Hun or about Rs. 3500/-.⁴⁸

From the records of the Bhuama-Karas of Orissa we come to know that there was an officer named as Pustapāla or Purtakapāla⁴⁹ who was in-charge of the royal library, and other officers known as Petapāla, Pettapāla, Pedapāla, *i.e.* keeper of manuscript boxes used to serve under Pustakapāla.⁵⁰

We wonder when we think about the number of employees who managed the big university libraries of Nālandā and Taxilā or the royal libraries of the Mughals which had Twenty Four thousand beautifully bound volumes during the time of Shāh Jehān.⁵¹

The Saraswatī Mahal of Tanjore was one of the biggest libraries of the Orient. This library was mainly patronized by Marātha rulers and specially by Serfoji. After his death in 1832 his son Shivāji became the ruler and continued his great interest and love for the library. In 1849 he spent Rs. 21,549 towards the maintenance of the library out of his total annual expenditure of Rs. 1,45,439.⁵²

SCRIBES

The scribes or the copyists maintained a distinct profession till the introduction of printing in this country.

The earliest name of these scribes as found in the Epics and Buddhist literature was Lekhaka.⁵³ The same name was used in the Arthasāstra.⁵⁴ But the term "Lipikara or Libikara was

46. *Ibid.*

47. Society and Culture in the Mughal Age, Chopra, p. 165.

48. Sārda Satābdī Special Volume of the J.A.S. of Bombay, V. 31-32, p. 107.

49. Ep. Ind. XXIX, p. 88.

50. Ep. Ind. XXVIII, p. 216 ; XV. p. 5 ; Bhandarkar's list, No. 2041.

51. Mandelos Travells, p. 118.

52. Peeps in Saraswati Mahal, p. 25.

53. Indian Paleography, Buhler, ch. 39, p. 94.

54. Artha Śāstra, Shamsastry, p. 94.

used in the 14th rock edict of Aśoka.⁵⁵ The writer of the Siddapur edicts described him as "Lipikara" and in the Sanchi inscription (Stupa No. 1, No. 143) we find the use of "Rājālipikara."⁵⁶ The term was known to Pānini (4th cy. B.C.).⁵⁷

The Persian word "Dcbir" or writer was domesticated in Western India as "Divira". "Divirapati" or the writer of documents was used in a number of Vallabhi Inscriptions of the 7th and 8th cy. A.D.

When Huien-Tsang visited Kashmir the king appointed twenty scribes to copy manuscripts for him. In Kashmir the scribes were known as "Divira" and we find reference in Rājtaranginī and in other Kashmirian works of the 11th and 12th cy. Ksemendra in "Lokaprakāsa" sub-divided the scribes or Diviras as Ganja divira (Bāzzar writer), Gram divira (Village writer), Nagara divira (Town writer), and Khavasa divira etc.⁵⁸

In north and eastern India since 8th cy. A.D. the writers were known as "Kāyastha." The term was first used in a yajñavalkya smṛiti (1.335). The other terms used for scribes are Karana, Karanika or Karanin; Śāsanika and Dharmalekhin.⁵⁹

The Kāyasthas used to enjoy a respectable position in the society. During the 11th cy. they gained a distinct prominence particularly in Central India as evidenced from Chandella inscriptions.⁶⁰ The following lines will illustrate their actual social status in the Chandella country in 11th cy. :—

"There were thirty six towns; purified by the fact that men of the writer caste dwelt in them (Karana-karma-nivasaputa) (and) more (than other towns) endowed with great comfort. Among them the most excellent, thought of as the abode of gods, was Takkarika, an object of envy...(and) in this (town) which by crowds (of students) was made to resound with the

55. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 94.

56. Epigraphia Indica, 2, p. 102.

57. India As Known to Panini, Agarwala, p. 311.

58. Indian Paleography, Buhler, p. 95.

59. *Ibid.*

60. History of the Chandellas, N.S. Bose, p. 153.

chants of the Vedas, there were born in Vastavya family those Kayasthas whose fame was filled (and rendered) white like swams all the worlds, illuminating the quarters."⁶¹

From the above epigraphical record it is clear that the Kāyaṣṭhas were regarded also as intellectuals.

The Jain king of Gujarat Śrī Siddharāja appointed three hundred scribes and ordered for 1,25,000 copies of Siddhahema Vyākaraṇa to be presented to the students. The Prabhavaka charita and Kumārpāla-Prabandha abound with references of books presented to the needy.

The Turko-Afgan sultans and nobles, being great patrons of learning, encouraged writing, copying and translating manuscripts. They used to maintain large number of scribes and sometimes trained the slaves, like the Roman emperors, in copying.

Due to large scale production and use of paper, the Mughal government was known as Kāghazi-Rāj. During this age innumerable copyists, clerks and news-writers were employed in the libraries, secretariat as well as in the archives.

Like the Mughals, the Marathas also maintained large number of clerks and copyists for their secretariats as well as for the libraries. For the imperial secretariat, the Marathas employed two hundred Karkuns or clerks. The Karkuns were paid Rs. 15 to Rs. 12 per head per month.⁶²

Besides them, there were scribes in each village attached to the office of Patila or village headman. These scribes were known as Kulkarni or Grāma-Lekhaka.⁶³ The status of Kulkarni was next to Patila. They used to be maintained from the income of the village taxes. Among many other things, they used to receive regularly oil for ink and a piece of cloth for keeping papers from the village.⁶⁴

The Ahom kings of Assam preserved libraries and archives within the palaces. The officer-in-charge of the royal Ahom library was known as Gandhin Barua who was a very high

61. Epigraphia Indica, V.I. p. 333, Vs. 2, 4.

62. Administrative System of the Marathas, S.N. Sen, p. 256.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 506.

64. *Ibid.*, p. 227.

official and the next officer was known as Likhakar Barua, who was the superintendent of an army of scribes and clerks.⁶⁵

Till the time of the East India Company innumerable writers used to earn their livelihoods by clerical work. From a survey of the English East India Company's Bengal, Madras and Bombay financial records—no less than thirteen hundred huge volumes—it is evident that large number of Indian clerks were employed by the Company.⁶⁶

Thus, the work of the copyist was a distinct profession. But besides the professional copyists, even ladies, monks and ordinary men being desirous of gaining religious merits took part in this.⁶⁷

The calligraphist was one of many types of scribes who devoted themselves for developing penmanship as an art. They used to copy not so much for reproducing as for writing it beautifully.

The art of calligraphy is essentially decorative. The diversity of scribes and the ingenuity displayed in their ornamentation, which are the essentials of this art, owe much to the Islamic injunction forbidding the practice of figurative or pictorial arts, particularly as to the representation of living.

During the Moslem period calligraphy became a prized profession and expert calligraphists were highly admired by kings, nobles and ordinary people.

Taqut Musta'sami (1203 A.D.) was a reputed calligraphist and one of the greatest Naskh writers. In 1324 A.D. he sent a copy of the Shafa of Aveenna to Muhammad Tuglaq. The king, being highly pleased, presented the calligraphist with a sum of two hundred million misquals of gold but the calligraphist considered it a meagre sum and refused the gift.⁶⁸

Mir Khalilullha Shāh, the famous calligraphist presented a copy of Nau-Ras to Ibrahim Ādil Shāh of Deccan. He was so pleased that not only he conferred the title. "The king of

65. Descriptive Catalogue of Assamese Mss., Goswami, p. xix.

66. I.A., V, VII, No. 1, p. 100.

67. Praśasti Samgraha, 1, pp. 19, 27, 31, 36, 43, 46 and 71.

68. Les Calligraphes et les Miniaturistes, Huart, p. 85.

69. Moslem Calligraphy, Ziauddin, p. 38.

the pen" on him but arranged a ceremony where he made the calligraphist sit on his throne for the time being.⁶⁹

Like other Islamic countries calligraphic art developed in India from the beginning of Moslem rule but few early specimens, except inscriptions, have survived.

During the Mughal period a new vista opens for calligraphy when India came to possess a host of eminent calligraphists, whose accounts were discussed in previous chapter, and whose works adorn the museums and libraries of India.

Expert calligraphists were honoured according to their respective calibres and skill. The following titles were conferred on them—⁷⁰ :

Zarrin-raqam (golden writer), Shirin-raqam (sweet writer), Raushan-raqam (Bright writer) and Muskin raqam (Perfumed writer).

✓ Shāh Jahān used to confer the title Yak-suti (centurian) to all whoever presented him with his writings.⁷¹

Some forgers and students of the reputed calligraphists exploited the names of well-known artists and their teachers. From Ziauddin's book "Moslem Calligraphy" we come to know that Moulanā Khawāja Muhammad used to forge the name of his reputed teacher Mullah Mir 'Āli. The following writing of Mullah Mir 'Āli expressed his state of mind and his way of complain against his student :—

"Khawāja Muhammad was my disciple for sometime and I tried my best to instruct him, till his handwriting developed a feature. I have done him no wrong, nor does he do me any, save that he writes good or bad as best he can and signs the lot in my name"⁷²

The calligraphists were very conscious of their performances and sometimes they became martyrs for their pride and vanity. The following lines from the pen of Mullah Mir 'Āli who was highly admired by Jahāngir will prove that how dearly they loved and admired the art :—

"My pen works miracles, and rightly enough in the form of

70. Promotion of Learning in India by Early European Settlers, Law, ch. V, p. 99.

71. Moslem Calligraphy, Ziauddin, p. 40.

72. *Ibid.*

my words proud of its superiority over its meaning. To teach of the curves of my letters the heavenly vault confesses its bondage in slavery, and the value of each of my strokes is eternity itself.”⁷³

During the late Mughal period the art was greatly encouraged. Bahādur Shāh was profoundly interested in this art and the Daccani Sultans faithfully tried to maintain the tradition which continued till the time of the Nizams of Hyderabad.

The art is fast dying out yet expert calligraphists are available at Delhi, Lucknow, Rampur, Hyderabad etc. It is a fact that painting types are not yet popular with the Urdu writing public of India.

The history of the manuscripts and books as well as of the scribes and the calligraphers is an interesting chapter in the record of human endeavour. How great is our indebtedness to the generations of nameless scribes and calligraphers who copied and recopied through-out the centuries so that we might have the immortal works of ancient and medieval Indian sages and saints, poets and philosophers, thinkers and scholars.

We sometimes wonder whether all these writings were done purely from the point of view of preservation and dissemination of knowledge. But a historical analysis will show that besides pure academic interests, there are other factors which encouraged writing, copying and decorating manuscripts

In ancient and medieval India academic interest was mainly responsible for manuscript and book production, and the history has been dealt with in preceding chapters. But there were other active socio-religious factors and it seems useful to note down, summarily a few facts which will substantiate the above statement.

(1) *Religious factor* : From the literary evidences it is clear that presentation and multiplication of religious manuscripts and books were considered as acts of great religious merit. It is said that people who distribute manuscripts of Gītā, Purānas or

Vedas get their wishes fulfilled and never born again.⁷⁴ The Purāna Dāna and Vidyā Dāna sections of Dānasāgar abound with such references.

(2) *Political factor* : Gift of manuscripts and library intercourse were commonly used as tokens of friendship between political parties and states. The king of Kāmrup Bhāskaravarman presented Harṣavardhana, king of Kanauj with precious volumes of the fine writings, and Jahāngir presented books liberally to the nobles of Gujarat in order to make the political friendship stronger as well as to earn their sympathy and love.

(3) *Economic factor* : The copyists and calligraphers maintained a distinct profession and a large number of people used to earn their living through their pen. During the Mughal period "there is no street or market (in the Imperial capital) in which the book-sellers do not stand at road side selling copies of the Diwans of these two poets (Urfi or Sheraj and Hussain Sanai) and both Persians and Indians buy them."⁷⁵

The professional scribes used to be paid decently in ancient time.⁷⁶ In Western India during the medieval days the cost of copying was comparatively higher.⁷⁷ The work of the scribes was very hard and painstaking as they had to copy the manuscripts, "with the back, waist and neck bent and with head leaning downward (Bhagna Pṛstha—Kati grīva-adhomukha)"⁷⁸.

Printing was not readily accepted in India as it would do considerable harm to the profession and would make a good number of copyists unemployed. Ovington, who visited India in about 1689 corroborated the above statement as follows :—

"Neither have they (Indians) endeavoured to transcribe the act of printing, that would diminish the repute and livelihood of scribes who maintain numerous families by their pen"⁷⁹.

During the early part of 19th cy. the scribes were paid

74. Nandi Purana, 1, 2, 12.

75. Badauni, III, p. 285.

76. Praśasti Samgraha, 1, 32, and 63.

77. Gaekwad's Oriental Series, V. LXXVI, p. 40.

78. *Ibid.*, p. 71.

79. A voyage to Surat in 1689 by J. Ovington, pp. 251-52.

nominally. The following cases will state the usual rate of remuneration used to be paid to the then scribes:—

1. Bengali version of the Rāmāyana by Kṛttivāsa dated 1817 A.D. was copied for Rs. 5/- only.
2. Bengali version of the Mahābhārata (Virāt Parvan) was copied for Re. 1/- only in 1110 B.S. *i.e.* 1703 A.D.
3. Bengali version of the Mahābhārata (Śānti Parvan) was copied for only -/13/- annas in 1253 B.S. *i.e.* 1846 A.D.⁸⁰

Further, Ward informs us that a sum of Re. 1/- or -/12/- annas was paid for copying every 32,000 letters in the beginning of the 19th cy. In his opinion even the rate was very high as the charges for copying big works like the Mahābhārata would be exorbitant. R.L. Mitra puts it at Rupees four for 1,000 slokas in the sixties of the last century.⁸¹

PRESERVATION

From the ancient times manuscripts were held in high esteem and they were worshipped on the Saraswatī Pujā or Vasanta Panchami day. The Jains attached too much sanctity towards them and introduced Ujamāna and Jñānapujā festivals with a view to educate the people in the knowledge of sacred books.⁸² It is evidently clear from the literary evidences that the people in those days passionately loved and respected them, and possession of manuscripts was considered a proud privilege and distinction. It is why they took every possible care for their well being and preservation.

Tenali Rāmkrishna, the famous medieval Telegu poet mentioned that Fire, Rotting (due to insects or weather), Mislaying and Thieves are the four major sources of dangers to a library.⁸³ The ancient people were fully conscious of the above factors and it is why they at the end of the manuscripts added verses

80. J.R.A.S.B. V. XVI, "Value and importance of Mss. in olden times."

81. *Ibid.*

82. Jaina Chitra Kalpadruma.

83. J.A.H.R.S. V. VIII, pt. 4, p. 222.

84. J.R.A.S.B., V. XVI, pp. 257-60.

cursing those who will steal them, praying for the long life of the manuscripts as well as requesting others to preserve them with care.⁸⁴ The common Indian saying—"Lekhani Pustikā Kāntā Parahastāgatā Gatā, *i.e.* pen, book and wife if transferred to some one else is lost" is very significant. Sometimes fanatics used to attach too much sanctity and reverence to these manuscripts, and at their old age used to throw them into sacred rivers with the apprehension that after their death they will be defiled.⁸⁵

Regarding preservation and housing of the ancient Indian libraries we have very little information. But from the age-old monastic libraries of Nepal and Tibet we can safely presume that shelves and boxes were used for their housing. A description of the Superintendent of Accounts Office as given in the Kautilya's Arthaśāstra corroborates that wooden shelves were used to house manuscripts in ancient India as early as 4th cy. B.C.⁸⁶

But from the medieval days we get sufficient information on these points and the Jaina Chitra Kalpadruma furnishes us with valuable information.

The manuscripts of most of the medieval libraries were kept either in wooden boxes or wooden shelves. Besides these, in latter period the manuscripts were kept also within wall niches or closed wall almirahs.⁸⁷

For keeping the precious collections, the Jaina Jñāna Bhāndārs used boxes made of either wood, cardboard, leather or ivory. In order to protect them from worms and moisture, the wooden boxes were made polished on the exterior surface. The manuscripts which were kept in boxes (Dabhadas) were devoid of covers as the box itself was enveloped by a cloth.

In the Saraswatī Mahal library of Tanjore "the huge wooden almirahs in which the books and manuscripts are kept, have been in existence for some centuries. At the northern end of the library, huge wooden shelves of ancient make contain the

85. Papers relating to the collection and preservation of ancient Sanskrit literature in India, Gaugh, p. 48.

86. Artha Śāstra, Shamsastri, B. 11., Ch. VII.

87. I.C. Jan. 1946, pp. 7, 10, 11.

printed English books collected by Mahārāja Serfoji.”⁸⁸

MANUSCRIPT BOXES

Cardboard boxes : Nice cardboard boxes were made by a mixture of waste-paper and Methi. A silk or a cotton cloth was utilised for enveloping them. But such cover cloth was not used always, and in place of them the boxes were painted with mixed colours. The Pattan Bhāndārs contain many tube shaped cardboard boxes to preserve small sized palm leaf manuscripts.

Leather boxes : A leather piece was also utilised to envelope boxes. Thus, the boxes enveloped with leather piece are known as leather boxes. Sometimes the leather chips were utilised as covers. To-day some people may object such leather covers on the grounds of purity and sanctity but Jain Jñāna Bhāndārs of medieval India had many such specimens

Wooden and Ivory boxes : Generally the wooden boxes were made of Saga wood. But manuscripts like Kalpasūtra written in golden or silver letters were usually kept in boxes of Cedar wood or ivory with beautiful and delicate carvings on the outer surface.

Big boxes or Trunks : For further safety the smaller boxes were kept into big wooden trunks (Patara) made stronger by iron or brass-chips. At some places the strong cup-boards or wall planks (Bhāndakiyā) were made for the purpose. At Pattan both Patara or Petara and Bhāndakiyā were in use but for constant use the latter was more convenient. The Petaras were also known as “Majoo”. The Bhāndakiyās carved out of the walls protected the manuscripts from moisture.

Thus we see that in medieval India wooden boxes, wooden shelves and wall niches were mainly used for keeping manuscripts. The medieval libraries of Europe followed similar practices and there “books, except those of habitual and constant use, were inclosed in chests, cup-boards or presses, or perhaps in an angle of a carver.”⁸⁹

Book-stand : To keep the manuscripts free from dust and damp during the time of reading, a book-stand known as

88. Peeps into the Saraswati Mahal, p. 6.

89. The Medieval Library, James W. Thompson, p. 619.

Sāmpadā or Sāmpadī was used. This type of book-stand was used even in the days of Jātakas where it was known as "Adharake" (III, 235). The use of this stand was widely introduced by the Mughals who call it by names of Riāla, Reel, Sāmpadā, Sāmpadī, Chāpadā etc.

Folded stand was known as Chāpadā whereas the unfolded thing was known as Sāmpadā.

We find the stands were termed as Samputaka or Samputika and Sāmpadā or Sāmpadī in the manuscripts Ārādhānā and Atichāra dated Vikrama year 1313 and 1369 respectively and also in Rājsekhar's Kāvya-Mimānsā.

The rich people used to make these stands made of Sandal wood and beautify them with designs and colours.

Surface cover : Kabāli or the surfacc cover is made of bamboo-chips and covered with silk or cotton cloth. It is made after the style of the Chinese bamboo calendars and used for the purpose of keeping the loose pages intact when reading is stopped temporarily. The name is derived from the Sanskrit word Kambikāvali or Kambāli.

Pointer : Kāmbī or pointer is derived from Sanskrit word "Kāmbikā". It is as flat as the chip of a bamboo. To protect the ink, colour and paper from the touch of the fingers and their perspiration, the pointer generally made of ivory, sandal, Sisam or Saga wood was used.

Manuscript covers : They are generally made of Saga or Sisama wood and are used to protect the leaves from undue bent, friction or breakage and also from atmospheric effect. Sometimes, the covers had a polish and are beautifully designed with colours or decorated with paintings. Sometimes, a designed leather piece covered the manuscripts, and in some cases a piece of Khaddar cloth or piece of cotton served the purpose. The covers are known as Pātā or Pānthā.

Knot : A knot is tied up to all the manuscripts so that they may be protected from dry or moist atmosphere, kept away from the dust and saved from fluttering due to strong breeze. Usually these knots are made up of cotton threads. But for valuable manuscripts the silk thread is used. Sometimes double Khādi and rarely valvet threads are also used.

The following appeals which were made by the author to the

readers and public will speak for the amount of care taken for their safety. Such appeals or requests were generally parts of the colophon.

(1) He, who steals manuscript, becomes unhappy and blind. He goes to hell after death.

(2) The sinner, who will try to steal or damage my hard earned manuscript, will perish and his family will be ruined.⁹⁰

There are several other verses which contain appeals for their proper preservation. In some of them the persons who damage, destroy or steal manuscripts are attacked and cursed in a very rude and vulgar language.⁹¹

The Jain philosophers believe that the books alone can help mankind to realize the truth.⁹² They used to take special care of the manuscripts even during the time of reading them. To protect them from dirt and splitting, a Jain reader should cover his mouth and palm with piece of cloth.

PRESERVATION OF COPPER PLATE GRANTS

Copper plate grants, like manuscripts and books, were also preserved with special care.

Sometimes these valuable documents were preserved in a covered earthen pot and placed underground for safety. Recently four sets of copper plates preserved in earthen pots were discovered at Andhavaram, Srikakulam district, Andhra Pradesh.⁹³ In some cases, these plates were kept inside a specially made stone casket consisted of two pieces, firmly joined together to form something like a safe. The upper stone measures 1' 10" × 1' 3.5" × 7" and has a hollow (4.5" in depth) carved in it while the lower measures 2' × 1' .45" × 7" with a smaller hollow 1.5" deep. This casket containing three massive plates measure 1.3' × 11" × .25" each was found at Kaligaon, about 16 miles east of Nevasā in the Ahmednagar District, Bombay Presidency.⁹⁴ Besides, the donors also preserved them by engraving the text on

90. J.R.A.S.B., Vol. XVI, 1950, pp. 257-260.

91. J.R.A.S.B., V, XVI, 1950, pp. 257-260.

92. Jaina Chitra Kalpadruma, p. 110 ff.

93. Ep. Ind. Vol. XXVIII, p. 175 ff.

94. *Ibid.* Vol. XXXII, pp. 31-32,

the walls of the caves or by keeping them hidden within the walls of the houses or in some other distant places.

ATMOSPHERIC EFFECT ON MANUSCRIPTS AND BOOKS

The keepers of the Jaina Jñāna Bhāndārs took special care against the tropical heat and dampness. Being aware of the facts that the direct heat of the sun is harmful to them, they very rarely³ exposed them under the sun. Only under special circumstances, when the pages are stuck with one another, they were aired and sunned but never exposed directly to the sun.

The ink, used for writing contain gum as one of its ingredients. On account of the damp, the gum becomes wet and pages stick with each other. To protect them from such effect the pages were kept tied very tightly in compliance with the saying "the book should be caged by iron bars like the enemy".

To keep the manuscripts safe from atmospheric effect Jaina Jñāna Bhāndārs were not accessible during extreme heat or damp weathers. As a measure against sticking of the pages they used to spread "Gulal" on the pages.

Sometimes the pages were stuck in such a way as to give an idea of a cake. Such paper manuscripts were generally placed upon water stand in dry place; or within a damp pot without water. When the pages are completely affected by cold, they are made separated with patience.

The other process followed by them was to keep them during the monsoon without any cover so that the damp will be absorbed and they will become wet. With great patience the pages were separated and afterwards Gulal was spread.

When the pages of palm leaf manuscripts are stuck, a wet piece of cloth was wrapped temporarily round about it. As a result of keeping them for sometime in this way, the leaves become wet and they were made separated. The palm leaf manuscripts were written generally with fast ink so there was less fear of being spoiled or spread. During the operation they used to take special care to save the upper layer on the leaves.

These types of treatments make the life of the palm leaves short, and from their experience they found that such wet

manuscripts hardly lasted more than 50 years.⁹⁵

In the tropical countries innumerable book worms grow and cause damage to them. As a measure of protection against such worms, bundles of Ugra gandha (Ghodā Vaca) or Acoras Calamus or Champhor were kept within the boxes or on the shelves.⁹⁶

The cup-boards and boxes used to protect the manuscripts from the attack of mice and rats. Besides these, cleaning and dusting were routine work of the libraries. Thus, in ancient and medieval India manuscripts and books were held in high esteem and every precaution was taken for proper preservation of these objects.

The imprecatory verses of the manuscripts throw considerable light on the value and importance of these objects, and we conclude the chapter by quoting below the verse where a passionate appeal was made for their careful preservation :—

“Bhagnapṛista Katigriva Stabdhadṛisti Adhomukha
Kaṣṭen Likhitam Grantham Jatnen Pratipālaya”.⁹⁷

95. *Ibid.*

96. Gaekwad's Oriental Series, V. LXXVI, p. 39.

97. Praśastimārga I, Ms. No. 111 (dated 1306 V.S.).

CHAPTER X

History of Printing in India

THE introduction of printing from movable types in the sixteenth century is a landmark in the history of Indian libraries. Prior to this, knowledge was confined to a limited circle, and the written records were the precious possessions of the few. But the inauguration and gradual development of printing on Indian soil furthered considerably the rate of book production, and thus heralded the dawn of the modern age.

It is a common belief that printed books were first produced in China, and the earliest printed book from wooden blocks is Diamond Sūtra dated 868 A.D. But recent investigations and discoveries have suggested that since ancient times the art of reduplication and block printing was also known to India, and Indians jointly worked with the Chinese for publication of important Buddhist works from wooden blocks.

The discovery of innumerable seals from Mohenjo Daro, Harappa, Lothal and other places confirm the fact that since the pre-historic days Indians had the conception of reduplication on the basis of printing technique¹ (Plate XVI). The word "Mudrā" meaning a seal appears in Kautilya's Arthaśāstra.² We find references to having imprints of God's missiles on human body in Yajur Veda, Atharva Veda, Garuda Purāna, Padma Purāna, Gotamiya Tantra and in other early religious literature.³ Further, the word "Mudrā" was used in the Sanskrit drama "Mudrā-Rākshasa" to denote printing from blocks.⁴

1. Mohenjo Daro and the Indus Civilization, Sir John Marshall, London, 1931.
2. Artha Śāstra of Kautilya : Edited by R. Sham Sastri, 1919, p. 110.
3. I.L. VI, 6, No. 2, p. 35.
4. (a) Anya Mudraya Mudhainam (Seal this with the signet ring).
(b) Agrihita Mudrah Katakānnish Krāmasi (who are you going out of the camp without taking a self impression).

The Chinese pilgrim I-Tsing visited India in the 7th cy. A.D. and from his writings we know the following:—

“The priests and laymen in India impress the Buddha images on silk or paper and worship them wherever they go.”⁶

Moreover, Indian scholars worked jointly with the Chinese for publication of one of the monumental works, the Chinese edition of Tripitaka in 5048 volumes which was translated from Sanskrit during 973-83 A.D. 1,30,000 wood-blocks were cut for this publication, and they were “stored in another newly constructed unit put hard by the court of Translation, where Indian monks and their colleagues were at work.”⁶

The discovery of a fragment of stone inscription from the Kamālmaulā mosque of Dhāra throws interesting light on the practice of stone block printing as was prevalent in India in the 11th century.⁷ Similar practice of printing roll books or single sheets from specially prepared blocks of stone was in vogue in ancient China.⁸

The fragment of the stone inscription is preserved in the local museum and measures 23 cm. at its broadest by 16 cm. at its highest. It is an unique piece which bears an inscription written in Devanāgrī script and engraved in its negative. This piece, a part of a large size stone inscription, was originally used as a printing block for producing any number of copies of the text engraved in the negative (Plate XVII).

All the evidences as well as the innumerable wood cuts and block prints discovered from the ruins of Central Asia,⁹ a region strongly influenced by cultural traditions of India, go to form the mozaic which India contributed to the growth and

development of early printing.

It can now be accepted, on the basis of evidences as stated above, that the art of reduplication and block-printing was known and practised in ancient India. During the medieval days, the Mughals and the Marathas came in close contact with the Europeans. European Jesuits brought printed books and presented them to the then rulers. In spite of their close contacts with the Europeans and their knowledge of printed books as well as printing press, Indians did not favour the idea of introducing the art.

An intimate study of the cultural history of ancient and medieval India enables us to have a closer understanding of the socio-economic and religious factors at work against introduction of the art of printing. Generally, it can be stated that due to profound reverence for religious literatures, passionate care and love for penmanship and calligraphy as well as for maintaining the social structure by not diminishing the repute and livelihood of scribes and calligraphers, as discussed in the previous chapter, the art of printing did not take root and flourish in India earlier than the sixteenth century.

INTRODUCTION OF PRINTING PRESS IN INDIA

Now an attempt will be made to trace the growth and development of printing on Indian soil which mainly flourished on the coast line of the country. On the west coast Goa, Quilon, Ambalakkadu, Tranqueber as well as Bombay and Poona while on the east coast Vapery, Fort St. George, Madras as well as Fort William, Calcutta and Sreerampore share the honour of producing the cradle books of India.

GOA

The first printing press arrived at Goa from Portugal on September 6th 1556.¹⁰ From a letter published in the tenth volume of Jesuit letters edited by Father Beccari and which is written by Father Gasper Calaze to St. Ignatus on 30th April, 1556, it is evidently clear that a printing press was sent to

Abyssinia from Portugal under the care of Father J. Nunes, the Patriarch designate of Ethiopia on the repeated requests of the Abyssinian emperor. In the same party there was Brother Juan De Bustamante, who knew the art of printing, and an Indian who did help Bustamante in setting up the press.¹¹

The ship carrying the party and the press reached Goa on way to Abyssinia. The Governor of Goa requested Fr. John Nunes to stay, when he was actually intending to move from Goa to Abyssinia. The patriarch complied with the request of the Governor and stayed there.¹²

The press actually started functioning since October 1556 when John printed loose sheets of theses (Conclusoes) on Logic and Philosophy which were the summaries of public discussions made by a large gathering of priests and people.¹³

In 1557 the first known book St. Xavier's "Doutrina Christa" was printed at Goa in Portuguese language. Unfortunately no copies of the said title are available at present.¹⁴ But the first known copy of the Tamil translation of "Doutrina Christa" was printed in Lisbon in 1554 and this is preserved in the Muse Etonologies da Belem, Lisbon.

John Quinquencio and John of Endem, the printers who possibly came to Goa with the Archbishop from Portugal, printed "Compendio Spiritual da vida Christaa" written by Gaspar de Leao dated 2nd July 1501. "It is a small fat derodecimo and a copy is preserved in the New York Public Library"¹⁵ (Plate XIX).

John of Endem printed "Garcia da Orta's Coloquios dos simples, e drogas he cousas medicinaes da India or conversations on Indian plants and drugs referring to the medicine of India" in 1563. It is difficult to ascertain the number of volumes printed by John of Endem. But according to Rev. Primrose six volumes survive, and of the six, five were in quarto

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-9.

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

15. Proceedings of the All India Library Conference, 1942, p. 226.

and one in folio.¹⁶

In 1578 a Tamil translation of *Doutrina Christa* by Harique Henriques was published (Plate XX). As it was printed in Malabar Tamil character, Fr. Souza writes, "This is the first printed book which India saw born in its own land."¹⁷ But St. Xavier's *Doutrina Christa* was published in 1557. Here by the term "first printed book" Fr. Souza wants to mean that the Tamil translation was the first book printed in Indian language.

In between 1577 and 1578 India types were prepared by Joan Gonsalves, a Spaniard who came with Bustamante to Goa and by Rev. Jeao da Faria. "He (Joan Gonsalves) was the first who made in India types of Malabar letters with which the first books were printed."¹⁸ Rev. Faria casted the alphabets of Tamil language. From a contemporary record it is evidently clear that a Bramhin convert—Pero Luis by name was sent to Goa to help Gonsalves in understanding and arranging the Indian alphabets.¹⁹

Now the question comes—what the Malabar letters actually signify? There was much controversy over this problem which was ended by the discovery of a copy of *Doutrina Christa* printed in 1578. Schurhammer in his article—"The first printing in Indic characters" published in the *Harvard Library Bulletin*, Vol. VI, No. 2, reproduced a few pages of the book which was published at Quilon in *Lingua Malabar Tamil*. An examination of the pages prove that the types prepared by Gonsalves (Malabar) and the types prepared by Faria (Tamil) are identical.

QUILON

The translation of "*Doutrina Christa*" was printed with both the above said types. The types of the first eight lines

16. *Ibid.*, p. 227.

17. *Oriente conquistado a Jesus Christo*. Francis de Souza. Con. 1-2-12, p. 67.

18. *Ibid* Con. 1-2-33, p. 81.

19. *The Printing Press in India*, p. 11.

were prepared by Gonsalves at Goa in 1577 while the other type used for printing the rest of the book were prepared by Faria in Quilon in 1578.²⁰ This volume contains only 16 pages and is now a possession of the Harvard College library.

AMBALAKKADU

Ambalakkadu in Cochin was also a centre of early Indian printing. But no books can be found printed in this place. Another altogether separate volume on Doutrina Christa was printed at Cochin in 1579.²¹ "This is not a second edition of Doutrina Christa printed in 1578 but an independent work, which is a translation extending over 120 pages of a Portuguese work by Marcos George published in 1566."²² This is preserved in the library of Sorbonne and the photo of the title page of the said volume was published in Sivaraman's article on the evolution of early title page. The title is translated as Christya Vannakanam.²³ Flos Sanetorum, another Tamil book by H. Henriques was printed in 1586 and is available at the Vatican library.

Printing activity continued unabated in Goa till 1674 but gradually it declined due to demoralisation of the missionaries and their apathy to learn Indian languages.²⁴ The decree of 1684 replaced Portuguese abandoning local languages in Goa and thus discouraged the growth and development of Indian printing.²⁵

Like the Catholic missionaries the Danish protestant mission's work to introduce printing in India is very important. The Danish Protestant missionaries in order to propagate their faith, learned the language of the natives; made acquaintances with their social customs and religious faiths and tried to introduce printing. The name of Bartholemow Ziegenbalg stands foremost in the rank. He reached India

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

21. H.L.B. Vol. VI, No. 2, 1952, p. 148.

22. The Printing Press in India, p. 11.

23. M.M.L.A. 1941, pp. 54-65.

24. Propagation of the Gospel in the East, Part III, p. 50.

25. The Printing Press in India, pp. 25-26.

somewhere in 1706 and was utterly shocked to notice the corrupt condition of the Catholics. In 1706 he writes in one of the letters dated 1st October as follows:

“Their conversion is also very much obstructed by the conduct of the Roman-Catholics, who use to decoy 'em into Christianity (so called), by all manner of sinister Practices and Underhand Dealings.²⁶ With fervent religious zeal the Danish missionaries tried to change the situation to further the cause of the propagation of Christian faith. They also visualised that their purpose will be served better, if they can print Christian literature in the native language, and distribute them widely among the people.

With this aim in view, Ziegenbalg demanded on Aug. 22nd, 1708 for a “Malabar and Portuguese Press” and in 1709 appealed to all Protestant European countries to help them in their work. Ziegenbalg and his collaborator F.E. Grundlar appealed again and again for the printing press, a founder and also for paper.²⁷

The appeals became fruitful in 1711 through the efforts of Rev. A.W. Boehme, the German chaplain to Prince George of Denmark, when the “Society for Promotion of Christian Knowledge” of England sent to the Danish missionaries of India a printing press, 100 reams of paper and 213 copies of New Testament in Portuguese along with the Printer—Jones Finck.²⁸

TRANQUEBAR

All these things except the printer arrived next year. Finck, on his way to India died of fever near Cape of Good Hope. The Press started functioning at Tranquebar (Madras) on June 11th, 1713 with the assistance of a German printer who was already working with a Danish Company.²⁹ They started vigorously to make Malabar types and they were able too soon to establish the foundry. From an extract of a letter

26. Propagation of the Gospel in the East, Part I, p. 35.

27. *Ibid.*, Part II, p. 15.

28. *Ibid.*, Part III, pp. 1-17.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

dated December 11th, 1713 we come to know that within these six months the press and the Foundry made good progress. They printed a copy of "The Abomination of Paganism and the way for the Pagans to be saved" and with the types made for the first time as experimental measure.³⁰

In 1714 the New Testament and then—The Four Evangelists and Acts of the Apostles were printed in Tamil. A copy of the former is preserved in the Sreerampur College Library.

In order to make the press, which was working in full swing, known all over India, they devised to print "A sheet Almanack which will not be vended on the coast of Coromondal but also on that of Malabar and in Bengal."³¹ Soon after an attempt was made in building a paper mill "for the benefit of the Mission."³²

Another Danish missionary Christian Frederick Schwartz, who acted as a teacher of the enlightened Tanjore ruler Sarfoji Bhonsle (1799-1833), impressed the ruler to establish a press in order to publish Sanskrit and Marathi books. We do not know the detailed history of the press but we know that the following Marathi and Sanskrit books were printed in the same press during the first part of the 19th cy. A.D. :—

1. Yuddha Kānda by Yekanātha (1809).
2. Śiśupāla Vadha by Māgha (1812).
3. Karikāvalī and
4. Muktvāvalī.

These volumes are preserved in the Saraswati Mahal Library of Tanjore,³³ while another book printed in the same press-- "Bālbodha—Muktvāvalī" is preserved in the British Museum Library. "The Devnāgrī types used in the press were cast by Charles Wilkins."³⁴

MADRAS

The first printing press of Madras was started at Vapery and

30. *Ibid.*, p. 68.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 184.

33. J.T.S.M.L. Vol. I, No. 2, 1939-40, p. 46.

34. *The Printing Press in India*, p. 46.

later this press became famous as the Diocesan Press. The Tamil types were first cast in Madras and used at Vapery till 1870. The press at Vapery started under the following circumstances :—

“In 1761 Sir Eyre Coote captured Pondichery from French and in the Governor’s house was found a printing press and some types. These were brought back to Madras as part of the loot, but the Fort St. George Authorities were unable to make use of them as they had no printer. Fabricus, the great Tamil scholar, was then living at Vapery, and the equipment was handed over to him on condition that if at any future time the company should require any printing done, he would do it for them.....It was at Vapery that Fabricus printed his hymn book and also his Tamil-English Dictionary” and English-Tamil Dictionary in 1799 and 1786 respectively.³⁵

FORT ST. GEORGE

The College of Fort St. George, Madras was established in 1812 and the press attached to the college took the responsibility of publishing books in Telegu and Kanada languages. The college was modelled after the Fort William College of Calcutta and one of its aim was “to produce the same favourable results as regards to the languages of South India.”

The following volumes were published from the press attached to the Colleges of Fort St. George :—

1. A Grammar of the Telooگو Language
by A.D. Campbell (1816)³⁶
2. A Grammar of the Telooگو Language
by A.D. Campbell—2nd ed. (1820)³⁷
3. A Grammar of the Carnatic Language
by J.M.M. 'Kerrel (1820)
4. An English-Kannada Dictionary
by Rev. William Reeve (1824)³⁸

Grierson informed us that the book—“A Grammar of the Gentoo language as it is understood and spoken by the Gentoo

35. M.M. L.A. 1941, pp. 37-43.

36. Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. IV, p. 582.

37. In the Private Collection of Mr. A.K. Priolkar.

38. Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. IV, p. 367.

people residing north and north-westwards of Madras" was published in 1807 in Madras.³⁹ We do not know the press where it was printed.

The Kannada printing developed with the help of the Christian Missionaries of Bellery, Bangalore and Mangalore, and a blacksmith of Mangalore Anantachārya improved the types to the present state of perfection.⁴⁰ "A Grammar of Kurnata Language" by W. Carey was published in 1817 in the Śreerāmpur Mission Press.

BOMBAY

The first attempt to introduce printing in Bombay was started in 1674-75. Bhīmji Parekh, a merchant of Gujarat was the pioneer of the move. He took the initiative purely from the commercial view point with the idea of printing Hindu religious books as there was a ready market for them. Accordingly, he imported a press⁴¹ and requested the East India Company in 1670 "to send out an able printer to Bombay" for which "he is willing to allow him £ 50 sterling a year for three years."⁴² East India Company considered the request of Bhīmji favourably with the consideration that it will also be helpful to print Christian literature which will help to propagate the religion of Christ.⁴³ From a letter written by the Company to Surat dated 3rd April, 1674 it is evidently clear that a printer by the name of Mr. Henry Hills was sent to Bombay along with a press, types and other necessary materials like paper etc.⁴⁴ Mr. Hills was a good printer and as he was not an expert cutter of types, a further request for a founder was made by Mr. Parekh. We do not know exactly whether the founder actually reached Bombay or not.

But printing was gradually encouraged by the efforts of General Aungier, Governor of Bombay⁴⁵, and some of the state papers started getting printed as seen by Captain Alexander

39. Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. IV, p. 582.

40. The Printing Press in India, pp. 49-50.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

42. English Records of Shivaji, Poona, Vol. 1, p. 187.

43. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 83.

44. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 327.

45. The Gazetteer of Bombay City and Island, Vol. II.

Hamilton who visited India in 1688-1723 A.D.⁴⁶

We do not know whether the Marathas encouraged printing or not? If the answer was in the affirmative then printed records of the period would have been available. The complete absence of documentary evidences tells us the other story. But Nānā Fadnavies "Conceived the idea of printing the Bhagavad-Gītā by getting moulds of Marathi letters prepared by a copper-smith student. He therefore started the attempt to get moulds of letters prepared by skilled technicians at Poona."⁴⁷

The researches of Mr. Priolkar throw considerable light on the attempts made by the Maratha statesman to make uniform copper-plates with letters fixed on them for printing. But he failed to push forward the idea. Due to changed fortune of the Peswas, the skilled artists, in search of fortune, took service under Gangādhār Rao Govind, the chief of Miraj, and they became successful in publishing a block print copy of Bhagavad-Gītā in 1805. Nearly 175 copper plates with copper letters fixed on them and a copy of Bhagavad Gītā are in the possession of Bhārat Itihāsa Samshodhaka Mandala, Poona and Pandit Raghunāth Śāstri Patankar of Ratnagiri respectively.⁴⁸

In Bombay printing actually started in the last phase of the 18th cy. and the types used in the press were imported from overseas.

Mr. George Buist, editor of the Bombay Times, informed us in one of his articles published in "The Bombay Times and Journal of Commerce" dated 4th December 1855 that the book—Calendar for the year of our land 1780, printed by Rustom Caresajee in the Buzar" is the first book printed in Bombay. The book contains thirty four pages but is not available at present.

Next the following three periodicals were published in Bombay :—

1. Bombay Herald in 1789.⁴⁹

46. Account of the East Indies, Vol. I, p. 61.

47. Navayuga, Bombay, 1915, Vol. I, No. 8, pp. 569-70.

48. The Printing Press in India, pp. 33-35.

49. The Bombay City Gazetteer, Vol. III, p. 140.

2. Bombay Courier in 1790.⁵⁰

3. Bombay Gazette in 1791.⁵¹

At that time the Courier press occupied the premier position and it was actually having a trade all over Bombay.⁵²

The Book "Remarks and Occurrences of Mr. Henry Becher, during his imprisonment of two years and a half in the Dominion of Tippu Sultān, from whence he made his escape" was published in Bombay in 1793. "It is the first book ever printed in Bombay" as is given on the introduction of the said title and the volume is preserved in the Heras Institute of Indian History and Culture, Bombay.

Now it stands that the two volumes - Calendar for the year of our Lord 1780 and the title as mentioned in the above paragraph vie each other for the credit of being the first printed book of Bombay. The former title is not available and the fact that Caresajee's press is the first printing press of Bombay is baseless, while the latter book is available and the introduction of the volume claimed in black and white that this was the first printed volume. Considering the merit of the second case, we accept its claims.

The Courier Press was then the premier printing house in Bombay and the owner of the press for further extension of business felt the need of having Gujarati and Maratha types. An employee of the press, Mr. Jijibhai Chhapghar, casted the types for the Courier Press⁵³ and Gujarati types were first used for printing an advertisement on 29th January, 1799.⁵⁴ With the help of Mr. Chhapghar, Mr. Fardunji Marzaban established the first Gujarati press in Bombay in 1812⁵⁵ and published the following volumes :—

1. An almanac for the Hindu Samvat year 1871 in 1814.
2. Gujarati translation of Debestana in 1815.
3. Gujarati translation of Khorde Avestā in 1817.

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Ibid.*

52. *The Printing Press in India*, pp. 72-73.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

54. *Ibid.*

55. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

4. **Bombay Samāchār (periodical) in 1822 (continued up to 1832).**

Mr. Marzaban died on 23rd March 1847. The crude types prepared by Marzaban was improved to a considerable degree by Ganapat Kṛishnajī and Javji Dadji.)

The first advertisement in Marathi was published in Bombay Courier on the 17th July, 1802. The Gujarati and Marathi scripts used in Courier were known as Mahājan and Modi scripts. These scripts were used for folk use and speedy writing while the classical or court scripts used for Gujarati and Marathi were known as Śhāstrī and Bālabodh. In 1808 the book—Illustrations of the Grammatical parts of the Guzerattee, Maratta and English language—was printed with Modi script in the Courier press. The volume was written by Rev. Robert Drummond.

In pursuance of the policy laid down by the Bombay Native School Book and school Society (established in 1822) Devanāgrī script was introduced for printing text books in 1825-26 but due to popularity of Mahājan and Modi scripts—Devanagrī script failed to achieve the desired effect.

At the beginning of the 19th cy. the Europeans came to power in Bombay, and simultaneously the American missionaries established themselves in the same island. The printing activities of Bombay considerably enlarged and expanded its scope in this country due to patronage and help received from the Government level as well as from the missionary zeal of the Americans.

(To publish Christian literature the American missionaries started a printing press in 1816, and in 1817 they published the first book in Marathi character—a translation of the Gospel of St. Matthew,⁵⁶ but the earliest printed matter in Marathi script appeared in a Latin Book—"Hortus Indicas Malabaricus"..... published in 1678.⁵⁷)

(The Mission Press contained one single wooden press and one single fount of Marathi types obtained from Calcutta. The press which was successively piloted by nine superintendents from

56. M.P.A.M.M. p. 77.

57. Proceedings of the All India Library Conference, 1942, p. 233.

1817 to 1856 was mainly utilised for publishing Christian literature in Marathi. Rev. H. Bardwell was the first superintendent of the press from 1817—1820 and he knew the art of printing and was, well versed in Marāthi language.)

(But the small wooden press failed to satisfy the needs and as a result it started growing with "materials for printing to any extent required, in English, Sanskrit, Marāthi, Gujarathi, Hindustani, Persian, Arabic, Zend and Pelvhi."⁵⁸) Thus, the press enlarged physically and in 1854 it contained—"7 Head Presses, 1 Lithographic press, 1 Embossing Press, 2 Standing Presses, 2 Cutting Machines, 7 Furnaces and other Foundry apparatus. It possesses the moulds and matrices for casting these founts of English type, of the sizes called small Pica, Long Primer and Bourgeois; the moulds, punches and matrices for 7 Maratha founts, Balbodh character, 1 Marathi fount Modi character, 3 Guzrati founts and one Zend fount. It has two small founts for printing Hindusthani. The above founts enable us also to print Sindhi, Hindi, Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic. It has a fount of Music type. It has English type of various kinds, plain and fancy, sufficient for carrying on job printing to the extent that one proof-reader can manage."⁵⁹

Thus, it became the premier press in Bombay and a very profitable concern. But, besides the business side, the press made substantial contribution towards the development of Gujarathi and Marathi types by reducing their sizes as well as making them more distinct.

With the gradual expansion of the varied activities, the business character, which was against the ideal and purpose of the missionary press, became apparent. Considering this factor which is detrimental to the cause of the mission and also the growing administrative problem of the huge set-up, the mission in 1854 decided to close the chapter. Accordingly, within four years they wended up the press selling both the English and Indian sections.

The Westerners came to power in Bombay in 1818 and for promoting education of the Indians they established in 1820

58. *The Printing Press in India*, p. 82.

59. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

the Native School and School Book-committee with the then Bombay Governor Mount Stuart Elphinstone as its president. The aim of the committee was to publish suitable text-books in native languages.⁶⁰ Marathi types originally prepared by Sir Charles Wilkins were obtained from England⁶¹ and the first book in Marathi type Panchopākhyāna was published at the Courier Press in 1822. The next books—Vidura Nīti and Simhāsana-Battisi were published in 1823 and 1824 respectively. It was a slow process of publishing text books. "But this obstacle to the speedy and extensive circulation of books which is indispensable for promoting the objects of the Institution, has been in a great measure obviated by government having, with its wonted liberality, presented to the society, four Lithographic presses, and by two fonts of Types, which have been ordered from Bengal and are daily expected, besides ordering printing presses and Types (English and Balbodh) from England for its use. By these means the committee are persuaded that Printing Department of the Society will be conducted with cheapness and expedition."⁶²

The 2nd Annual Report of the Bombay School Book and School Society (1824-25) furnishes us with valuable information regarding the text books and other publications of 1823-24. During this time "there has been printed only the Gunnit or System of Arithmetic on European Plan, in Goojratee, and four hundred copies of each of the Folio Tables, for the use of the Schools, according to Lancaster's system, in Maratha. But there are now in the press the copies of Lancaster's Tables in Goojratee; the stories in Maratha for children; a translation into Maratha and Goojratee of Colonel Palsey's Practical Geometry and Hutton's Mensuration of Planes and Solids; and a treatise on Plane Trigonometry with Tables of Logarithms, Log; Sines etc. in Maratha; a translation into Marat'ha of Esop's Fables and Hindoostanee stories translated from the Jumool Hikayat."

Thus printing of text books and other publications increased

60. *Ibid.*, p. 87.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

62. Second Annual Report (1824-25) of the Bombay National School Book and School Society, pp. 13-44.

in number every year, and from the report of the Bombay Native Education Society for the year 1825-26 we get a comprehensive list of books in Marathi and Gujarati, Persian and Hinddosthānī already printed and ready for the press.

Both typographical as well as lithographical printing were done in the press of the Bombay Native Education Society. But the types being large in size the printing costed too much paper. To economise paper consumption smaller types were obtained from Calcutta.

For lithographical printing, ink and the stone were the essential materials needed. Lithographic stones were produced in India in 1826, and since then they replaced the stones imported from England.

BENGAL

The East India Company took the direct responsibility of running the administration of Bengal since 1765. As a result of this transfer of power, the civil servants of the Company, who were entrusted with the administration, started learning the language of the province. This zeal for learning Bengali was directly responsible for the growth and development of printing.

In 1778 Nathaniel Brassey Halhed (1751-1830), a civil servant of the Company and who attained much proficiency in Bengali, compiled and printed in English—A Grammar of the Bengali Language⁶³. (Plate XX). The volume was printed in the press of St. Andrew's at Hooghly and it was the earliest specimen of Bengali printing excluding the publications printed previously at Lisbon⁶⁴ and London⁶⁵. The types for the book printed at Hooghly were cast by Charles Wilkins.

Sir Charles Wilkins came to Bengal in 1770. He came here as a servant of the East India Company and learnt Sanskrit, Bengali and other oriental languages, and translated Sanskrit works like *Gitā*, *Hitopadesh*, *Śakuntalā* etc. into English. Sir Wilkins had the hobby of casting certain founts, and for the publication of Halhed's grammar he casted the Bengali types

63. Copies are available at National Library and Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta and also at Sreerampur College Library.

64. *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. IX, July-December Ser. No. 17-18.

65. *History of Bengali Literature*, De, p. 78.

at the request of the then Governor-General. The preface of Halhed's Grammar furnishes us with the following information :—

“That the Bengali letter is very difficult to be imitated in steel will readily be allowed by every person who shall examine the intricacies of the strokes, the unequal length and size of the characters, and the variety of their positions and combinations. It was no easy task to procure a writer accurate enough to prepare an alphabet of a similar and proportionate body throughout. and with that symmetrical exactness which is necessary to the regularity and neatness of a fount. Mr. Bolts (who is supposed to be well versed in this language) attempted to fabricate a set of types for it, with the assistance of the ablest artists in London. But as he was egregiously failed in executing even the easiest part, or primary alphabet, of which he has published a specimen, there is no reason to suppose that his project, when completed, would have advanced beyond the usual state of imperfection to which new inventions are constantly exposed.

The advice and even solicitation of the Governor-General prevailed upon Mr. Wilkins, a gentleman who has been some years in the India Company's civil service in Bengal, to undertake a set of Bengali types, he did, and his success has exceeded every expectation. In a country so remote from all connection with European artist he has been obliged to charge himself with all the various occupations of the Metallurgist, the Engraver, the Founder and the Printer. To the merit of invention he was compelled to add the application of personal labour. With a rapidity unknown in Europe, he surmounted all the obstacles which necessarily clog the first rudiments of a difficult art, as well as the disadvantages of solitary experiment ; and has thus singly on the first effort exhibited his work in a state of perfection which in every part of the world has appeared to require the united improvement of different projectors, and the gradual polish of successive ages.”⁶⁶

Thus, Sir Wilkins achieved something unique and his unique achievement paved the way for the establishment of the first

Bengali printing press.⁶⁷ Sir Wilkins also trained some Indian craftsmen which helped to domesticate the art. He employed Śrī Panchānan Karmakār, a blacksmith of Sreerampur as his assistant. Panchānan learnt the art of type cutting and casted Bengali types for the presses which started in Calcutta, and Sreerampur.

We do not know the details of the Press at Hooghly which published Halhed's Grammar. But from the following letter it is evidently clear that in 1779 the Governor-General and Council intended to establish a printing press under the care of Charles Wilkins.⁶⁸ The letter runs as follows :—

“To
J.P. Auriol, Esqr.,
Secretary to the General Dept.

Sir,

The Hon'ble the Governor-General and Council having thought proper to establish a Printing Office under the Superintendence of Mr. Charles Wilkins, I am directed to transmit you the enclosed copy of the Rates of Printing and to desire that you will prepare and furnish Mr. Wilkins with copies of all such papers in your office as will admit of being printed, whether in the Persian, Bengali or Roman character, leaving Blanks for Names, Dates and other occurrences as are liable to alter, and specifying the Number of each Form usually issued in the course of a year.

I am, Sir,

Revenue Department
Fort Williams
The 8th January, 1779

Your most obedient Servant,
Sd/-Geo. Hodgson
Secretary.

For every Quire of Folio Post, Paper included.

If Printed on One side...

Sa. Rs. 3

If Printed on both sides...

Rs. 5

67. Dr. Garnett's paper on the first introduction of printing in the East published in the Translation and Proceedings of the Second International Library Conference, London, 1898.
68. Banglā Sāhityer Itihasa : Gadyer Prathama Yugo. Sajan Kanta Dās, p. 26.

For Persian and Bengali

For every Quire of Folio Post Printed on one side... Rs. 5

For every Quire of Folio Post Printed on both sides... Rs. 7

Revenue Dept.

Sd/-W. Webber

A true copy

Sub-Secretary

But the plan did not materialise at that time. He devoted himself deeply into oriental studies and contributed valuable articles in the earlier volumes of the Asiatic Researches. In 1783 Sir William Jones came to Bengal as a judge of the Supreme Court. Wilkins co-operated with him in the foundation of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

Due to ill health he left India in 1786 and rejoined the Company's service as Librarian and custodian of Oriental Manuscripts of the India Office Library in 1800. The majority of the collection was taken at the fall of Seringapatam. He was also attached to Hailcybury College from its foundation in 1805. During this time he wrote and edited several volumes.⁶⁹

The great oriental scholar and Caxton of Bengal died in London, on May 13, 1836.⁷⁰

In 1780 Augustus Hicki established the first press in Calcutta for printing "Bengal Gazette". In 1784 Francis Gladwin established the "Calcutta Gazette Press", where all the Govt. papers were printed.⁷¹

As a result of the establishment of the Supreme Court and certain administrative changes the following publications were printed at the Company's press in the last decade of the 18th cy. :—

1. Jonathan Duncan's translation of "Impey Code", named as "Regulations for the Administration of Justice in the Courts of Dewanee Adaulat", was published in 1785.
2. Neil Benjamin Edmunstone's translation of Regulations for the administration of Justice in the Fouzdary Criminal Courts in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, passed by

69. Asiatic Journal 1836, pp. 165-171.

70. Transactions and Proceedings of the Second International Library Conference held in London, 1898.

71. Banglâ Sahityer Itihâs, S. Dâs, p. 27.

the Governor General in Council on the 3rd December, 1790; Calcutta 1791.⁷²

3. Bengali translation (by N.B. Edmonstone) of the Regulations for the guidance of the Magistrates passed by the Governor-General in Council in the Revenue Department on the 18th May, 1792, with supplementary enactments, Calcutta 1792.
4. Famous "Cornwallis Code" of 1793 translated by H.P. Forster.

Besides the above rules, regulations and codes, "A New Persian and English work after the method of Boyer and others" by Robert Jones was printed at the Company's Press in Calcutta 1792⁷³. Upjohn's *Ingarājī* and Bengali vocabulary was published in 1793 at the Chronicle Press, Calcutta⁷⁴. Gilchrist's Grammar of Hindusthanī language was published in 1796 at the Chronicle Press, Calcutta in Devanāgarī types and "A vocabulary in two parts, English and Bengali and *vice versa* by H. P. Forster, Senior Merchant on the Bengal Establishment" was published in two instalments in 1799 and 1802 from the Press of Ferris Company, Calcutta. In 1797 John Miller published "The Tutor" or a New English and Bengali work, well adapted to teach the Natives English (in three parts) probably from Calcutta⁷⁵.

In the history of Bengal printing the years 1799 and 1801 are memorable when a band of missionaries landed on the banks of the Ganges and the Fort William College was established for imparting knowledge of the vernacular to young civilians.

The Baptist Mission, being prevented by the East India Company from having a centre within the British territory, established themselves at Sreerampur, a Danish territory near Calcutta and started with new vigour and energy for preaching

72. Catalogue of Bengali Books in the British Museum, Blumhardt, p. 8.

73. In the private collection of Mr. A.K. Priolkar.

74. Available at Bangiya Sāhitya Pariṣhad and National Library, Calcutta.

75. *Banglā Sāhityer Itihās*, Dās, p. 37 (With Title page illus.)

the religion of Christ. The mission's chief aim was to translate Bible and other Christian literature into Bengali. But the Company did not favour the idea of the propagation of the religions and never encouraged such activities.⁷⁶

Dr. John Thomas, who came to Bengal in 1783, took the leading part in the establishment of the Mission at Sreerampur. He returned home in 1792, and the next year brought William Carey along with him. Dr. Thomas and Carey, being refused to be granted with a licence, sailed for Bengal in a Danish ship on June 13, and reached Bengal on November 11.

Carey's mission was to translate the Christian literature into Bengali, and accordingly, he had completed the translation of the greater portion of the Bible by the year 1798 while living at Madanbātī with the exception of the historical books from Joshua to Job⁷⁷. He was eager to publish them in Bengali. In 1778 he purchased a wooden press for £40 but it was a costly affair to import the necessary punches from England. In that case "Each punch would cost a guinea and the cost of printing the New Testament at Calcutta would be Rs. 43, 750/-for 10,000 copies". In the meanwhile, he came to know that a foundry had been started in Calcutta for casting vernacular types. He failed to locate the factory but utilised the local talents who had training under Sir Charles Wilkins. He accordingly, brought down the press to Sreerampur which was previously set up at Madanbātī.

In November 1799 Williams Ward and Joshua Marshman along with their families landed at Sreerampur. Being missionaries, they were refused permission and ordered to go home back by the British authorities. At that time the Danish governor of Sreerampur came to their rescue and protection. The Sreerampur Baptist Mission was founded in January 1800 by Thomas, Carey, Ward and Murshman and the press started functioning till then.

The Bengali technicians, who learnt the art of punch-cutting were Panchānan Karmakār, a blacksmith of Sreerampur and his son-in-law Monohar. Panchānan learnt the art of type-

76. Bengali literature in the 19th cy. De., pp. 98-99.

77. *Ibid.*, p. 107.

cutting from Sir Wilkins. Through a "pious fraud" Carey secured Panchānan from Colebrook and with their help extended the activities of the press and established a foundry to make types in all eastern languages. Regarding the assistance received from Panchānan we gather the following information from the "Memoir relative to the Translation of the Sacred Scriptures into the language of the East" :

"Soon after our setting at Sreerampur the providence of God brought to us the very artist who had wrought with Wilkins in that work, and in a great measure imbibed his ideas. By his assistance, we erected a letter-foundry ; although he is now dead he had so fully communicated his art to a number of others, that they carry forward the work of type-casting, and even of cutting the matrices, with a degree of accuracy which would not disgrace European artists." After Panchānan, Monohar served the mission for forty years, and then his son Kṛishna, who became very capable in punch-cutting took charge of the establishment and helped its continuous growth till 1850 when he died of cholera. After his death a faithful account of the contributions of Panchānan, Monohar and Kṛishna was published in the weekly "Satya-Pradeep" dated 25th May 1850.

Sreerampur continued down till 1860 to be the principal Oriental type foundry of the East and from 1800 to 1832 the Sreerampur Mission Press published nearly two hundred and twelve thousand volumes in forty different languages. Mr. George Smith in his book—The Life of William Carey D.D. gives us a list of various language publications of Sreerampur Press. Besides the publications, they prepared also movable metal types of Chinese characters and the achievement was something unique.

FORT WILLIAM COLLEGE AND THE SCHOOL BOOK " SOCIETY, CALCUTTA

The Fort William College, Calcutta was established in August, 1800 for imparting better instructions to the Junior Civil Servants of the Company. The College, besides its various other cultural activities, helped considerably the development of Bengal printing.

In April 1801, Carey was appointed the teacher of Bengali and Sanskrit in this College. Later, he was entrusted with the task of teaching Marathi and in 1807 he was raised to the rank of a professor. His pay as the teacher of Sanskrit and Bengali was Rs. 500/- per month but with the additional duty his pay was increased to Rs. 1000/-. The large sum of money helped Carey to extend his field of activity and fulfil his mission.

“The authorities of the college felt the need for Indian language publications without which instruction in these languages would be difficult. The college therefore encouraged printing presses in Calcutta to cut types and print books in Indian languages. But as these presses were in the hands of the Europeans or Anglo-Indians the founts for Indian language alphabets made by them were not satisfactory. The college authorities began to encourage the Pundits and Munshis to establish foundries for good standard founts of Indian alphabets. They offered to patronise presses using such improved founts. The teachers of Parsi, Hindi, Bengali and other departments of the college designed improved founts and new printing presses established in Calcutta used these founts for printing books written by the professors of the Fort William College. It is said that improved Bengali founts were modelled on the handwriting of Kalikumār Roy, a Bengali teacher of the College and they were cast by Panchānan Karmakār.”⁷⁸

For teaching Sanskrit, Carey wrote a grammar and for this he had to get Devnāgarī types prepared. The same types were used for printing Hindusthānī as well as Marathi books. Carey also compiled a Maratha grammar and this was printed at Sreerampur in 1805.

Before Carey’s attempt to get Devnāgarī types prepared, Devnāgarī printing was done both in India and Europe.⁷⁹

The Devanāgarī types introduced by Carey with the help of Panchānan were oversized and were un-economical from the point of consumption of paper. Smaller types were prepared

78. The Carey Exhibition of Early Printing and Fine Printing.

79. (a) One copy printed in Europe in 1743 in Devanagari character is in the private collection of Dr. Suniti Kr. Chatterjee.

(b) Grammar of the Hindustanee Language by John Gilchrist was printed at the Chronicle press, Calcutta.

with the assistance of Indian technicians, and the set consists of nearly 1000 different combinations of characters. But inspite of all these, Modi type replaced Devnāgarī when the 2nd editions of Maratha Grammar, Maratha Bible and Maratha dictionary were published.

The text books published under the auspices of Fort William College were costly. It was difficult for the average student to procure copies of those volumes. In order to make the volumes cheaper and easily available Calcutta School Book Society was established in July 1817. The members of the Society were Carey, Tārinī Chandra Mitra, Radhākanta Deva and Rāmkaṃal Sen. The Society published text books on literature, History, Geography, Grammar etc.

The three Indian members of the society compiled and translated—Nīti-Kathā and published the same in 1818. Tārā Chānd Datta published in 1819 in English Bengali bilingual book—Pleasing tales or Monoranjanetiḥās, Rāmkaṃal Sen translated Easop's Fables and Farma Kopia (Ousadsār Samgraha) in 1819. "Vyakaranasāra" written by Mādhava Chandra Bhattāchārjee was printed in 1824.

EARLY PRINTING PRESSES AND BOOK TRADE OF BENGAL

Thus, printed books became very common and several printing presses were started in Calcutta to feed the volume of the then demand.

In the first half of the 19th cy. (1825-26) the following presses were active in Calcutta⁸⁰ :—

- (1) Chandrikā Jantrālaya of Kalutolā
- (2) The Press of Levender of Bowbāzār
- (3) The Press of Harachandra Roy, Āarpulī
- (4) Sambad Timir Nāsak Press of Mirzāpur
- (5) Press of Munshi Hidayetullā of Mirzāpur
- (6) Press of Mahendralāll of Śānkāritolā
- (7) Press of Badan Pālīt of Śānkāritolā
- (8) Press of Bīśwanāth Deva of Śovabāzār
- (9) Press of Mr. Pier of Entally

80. Janasabhār Sāhityar Benoy Ghosh, p. 167.

(10) Samsul Akbar Press

(11) College Press.

Besides these, some other presses were also established in places around Calcutta.

The number of printing presses in and around Calcutta shows that the volume of demand for printed books increased to a degree.

The volume of demand for printed books thus paved the way for book-trade. In the history of the book-trade of Bengal of the early nineteenth century the name of Gangākiṣhore stands supreme.

Gangākiṣhore, who lived in village named Bahara near Sreerampur, started first the business of book-production cum selling. He learnt the art of book production at Sreerampur Mission Press.

Gangākiṣhore, formerly employed at the Sreerampur Press, first conceived the idea of printing works in the current language as a means of acquiring wealth. To ascertain the pulse of the Hindu public, he printed several works at the press of a European, for which having obtained a ready sale, he established an office of his own and opened a book-shop. He also used to appoint agents to sell his books in the important cities and towns of Bengal. He was himself an author of several volumes and established the Bangla Gazette Press in Calcutta possibly in 1818.

Bangla Gazette, the first Bengali newspaper was published from the press.⁸¹

Gangākiṣhore is the first Bengali who introduced organised book-trade, and published the first Bengali newspaper. He thus popularized a noble cause.

After Gangākiṣhore, the Bat Talā publishers of Calcutta maintained the tradition with new vigour, and published books of varied types. Still to-day the name of Bat-Talā publishers is historically famous who tried to fulfil the work started by Gangākiṣhore.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

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Index

- Abad-as-Samad, 159
Abdūl Hamid Lahori, 72
Abdur Rahman, 73
Abdur Razzak, 49, 124
Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan, 69
Abhayankaragupta, 28
Abhidharma, 17, 18, 20, 23
Abhidharma-Koṣa-Śāstra, 19, 32
Abhidharma-Vibhāsha Śāstra, 20
Abu Ribam (Albernui), 9
Abul-Faizl, 62, 64, 68, 76, 106, 153
Abyssinia, 140, 202
Achalgadha, 121
Adams, Benjamin, 94
Adil Shāhi, 11, 80, 180
Advasi's Pāda, 40
Afgan, 63
Afganisthān, 110
Āgaliṣeri, 40
Agiscoa, Capt., 67
Agra, 63, 67, 68, 69, 70, 73, 77, 86, 179
Agrahār, 42
Ahmad Shāh, 58, 78
Ahmad Shāh Abdali, 73
Ahmedabad, 36, 58, 59, 69, 73, 131
Ahmed nāgar, 52, 161
Ahom, 187
Āin-i-Akbari, 10, 66, 68
Ajanta, 152
Ajayapāla, 39
Ajmer, 118
Akbar, 10, 63, 64, 66, 67, 68, 70, 71, 76, 77, 82, 83, 159, 160, 161, 162, 172, 179, 183
Akbar-Nāmā, 10, 161
Akhasalika, 120
Akhasālin, 120
Aksapataladhikṛta, 49
Aksapatalika, 49
Aksapatala, 4, 48
Akshara-Nyāsa, 147
Alāi Darwāzah, 51
Ala-ud-din, 51, 54
Alberuni, 9, 108, 114
Albuquerque, Alfonso, 67
Alexandar, 8, 63, 109
Alexandria, 145
Āli Ādil Shāhi, 80
Ālivardi Khān, 10, 82
Allahabad, 80
Al Muattaqi, 59
Allami Taffadal Khan, 84
Amanullah, 72
Amar Bhatta, 38
Ambalakkadu, 201, 204
Amir Hamza, 158, 159, 160
Amir Khusrav; 52, 53, 54
Amoghavarsha, 33
Ānanda, 17
Anāgatbhayāni 14
Ananta Varman Choda Ganga, 138
Anhilvād, 35, 38, 113
Annadā Mangala, 163
Antonino, St., 67
Antwerp, 66
Aqa Abdur Rashid, 74
Arabia, 82, 140
A-ra-hu-la-mi-ta-ra. 24
Arakan, 25
Aranyakas. 13
Arthaśāstra, 4, 9, 106, 170, 185, 199
Arutala Perumal, 43
Asaf Khan, 59
Asaf-ud-Dawla, 84, 184
Asari Mahal, 81, 180
Asiatic Society of Bengal, 14, 93, 98, 99, 150

- Asiatic Society of Bombay, 157
 Assyria, 167
 Astasahasrika Prajñā-Pāramita, 151, 152
 Aṣvaghosa, 107
 Atisa Dipankar, 30
 Atharva-Veda, 9, 65, 137, 170, 199
 Aungier, General, 208
 Aurangabad, 60
 Aurangzeb, 60, 73, 76, 77, 81, 86, 93, 125, 131, 141, 162
 Ayaskara, 120
 Ayton, 97
 Aziz Koka, 67

 Babur, 57, 60, 61, 65, 69, 70, 73, 139, 158, 161, 179
 Bābur-Nāmā, 10
 Babylon, 1
 Bāchappa, 43
 Bācon, Francis, 167
 Bacon, Roger, 167
 Badāuni, 56, 65, 69
 Bagdad, 51, 76, 131
 Bahādūr Khān, 70, 141
 Bahādūr Shāh, 75, 77, 190
 Bahamani, 78
 Bairam Khān, 63
 Bāji Rao II, 85
 Bāl Gopāla Stuti, 157
 Bālaji Bāji Rao, 85
 Balaji Rāo II, 85
 Bālaputra Deva, 27
 Balban, 52
 Bamiyan, 137
 Bānā, 34
 Bānshālī, 110
 Bāra Kuru, 43, 44
 Baroda, 113, 134
 Baroda Museum, 123
 Basudal, 104, 108
 Bata, 104, 108, 111
 Battalā, 223
 Bāzbahādūr, 93
 Beccari, Fr., 201
 Behula, 136
 Benaras, 16, 17, 45, 86, 87
 Benedictines, 26
 Bengal, 33, 52, 61, 62, 65, 81, 82, 83, 94, 95, 107, 110, 117, 122, 127, 128, 131, 132, 214
 Bengal Gazette, 217
 Berar, 22
 Bernier, 9, 86, 87
 Beveridge, H. 102
 Bhāgavat Gitā, 157, 164, 209
 Bhāgavat Purāna, 163, 171
 Bhārati Bhāndāgāra, 3, 4, 38
 Bhārat Itihāsa Samsodhaka Mandala, 209
 Bhāskara Samhitā, 177
 Bhāskara Varman, 34, 191
 Bhattadarśana, 42
 Bhattiprolu, 118
 Bhimadeva, 49
 Bhoja, 11, 26, 34, 35, 38
 Bhoja Śāla, 147
 Bhurja (Birch), 104, 106, 108, 109
 Bibliotheque Nationale, 137, 162
 Bidar, 11, 74, 78, 180
 Bihar, 29, 65
 Bihzād, 63, 158
 Bijapur, 11, 52, 77, 80, 81, 93, 178, 180
 Bikaner, 33, 181
 Bill, Thomas, 89
 Bipin Ch. Pal, 102
 Bodelian Library, 112
 Bodhisattva, 15
 Bodhisattva-pitaka, 22
 Book of the Dead, 145
 Bolar, 19
 Bombay, 73, 100, 201, 208, 209, 212
 Bombay Courier, 210
 Bombay Gazette, 210
 Bombay Herald, 209
 Bombay Public library, 101
 Bombay School Book Society, 211, 213
 Boston, 122
 Bower, 110
 Bramha, 19
 Brāhmanas, 13
 Bramhāra, 43

- Bramhapuri 42
 Brhatkathā Koṣa, 120
 Brihajjñāna Koṣa, 114
 Brihadāranyaka, Upaniṣad, 170
 British Museum, 103, 118, 120, 121,
 145, 151
 Brown N., 150, 156
 Buddha, 14, 17, 18, 21, 25, 27, 106,
 120, 130
 Buhler, 10, 114, 130
 Buist, George, 209
 Bukka, 44, 181
 Burma, 120
 Burnell, 44, 46, 120
 Busi, H., 73
 Bustamante, 202, 203
 Byzantine empire, 145,
- Cairo, 51, 76, 131
 Calcutta, 94, 98, 100, 101, 103, 132
 Calcutta Book Society, 163, 222
 Calcutta Gazette Press, 217
 Calcutta Public Library, 8, 98, 102,
 103
 Cambay, 36, 59, 62
 Cambridge University, 93, 152
 Carey, W. 100, 208, 219, 220, 221
 Casheenath Mistri, 163
 Capella, 167
 Ceylon, 120
 Chahamana, 116
 Chandella, 186
 Chandra, 121
 Chanhu Daro, 13, 127
 Charaka, 15
 Charaka Samhita, 146
 Chhandogya Upaniṣad, 170
 Chikka Deva Raya, 75
 China, 16, 18, 24, 25, 26, 27, 129,
 130, 200
 Chitra Kāvya Bhandhadaya, 146
 Christ, 186
 Chola, 49
 Cikitsā Vidyā, 32
 Cingiz-Nāmā, 68, 160
 Clive, 92
 Colebrooke, H.T., 99
- Conjeevaram, 43
 Constantinople, 51
 Cooch Behar, 127
 Coomarswamy, A.K., 122, 147, 148,
 151, 161
 Coote, Eyre, 207
 Copenhagen, 97
 Cornwallis Code, 218
 Courier Press, 210, 211
 Cunningham, 118
 Curtius, 8, 109, 125
 Curzon, Lord, 8, 102
- Dacca Museum, 121
 Daftar Khānā, 77, 85
 Dakshana grant, 85
 Dala'it-i-Firuz Shahi, 56
 Dānasāgar, 191
 Dānasila, 30
 Dārā Shukoh, 72, 73, 74, 86
 Dār-gha Kitab-Khānā, 73, 77
 Dār-ul-Baqa, 72
 Daśabala Sūtra, 25
 Dasabhumi Sūtra, 25
 Dasakumār charita, 112, 171
 Dasavaikālika Laghuvritti, 155
 Daulat Khānā, 84
 Dawatdār, 55
 Dayārāma, 122
 Debir, 186
 Devgiri, 55
 De Lact, 68
 Delhi, 51, 52—56, 58, 72, 79, 84, 121,
 142, 158
 De-Rhines, M.D.V., 109
 Devapāla Deva, 27, 28, 181
 Devarāya I, 43, 44, 181
 Devardhigani-Kṣhama Sramana, 36,
 37
 Devikata, 30
 Devi māhatmya, 31, 157
 Dhāra, 11, 34, 38, 147
 Dhaneswarsuri, 37
 Dharma gañja, 3, 4, 27, 177
 Dharma Gupta, 22
 Dharmakara Gupta, 30
 Dharma-lekhin, 186

- Dharma nidhi, 113
 Dholkar, 36
 Diamond Harbour, 124
 Diamond Sūtra, 199
 Diocesan Press, 207
 Dipankar Śrī Jñāna, 28
 Diwān of Hassan Dehlavi, 72
 Diwān of Kamran, 71, 141
 Diwani Khāqāni, 52
 Diwani Sanai, 52
 Divira, 186
 Divirapati, 186
 Dodwell, H., 92
 Domingo de Soto, 67
 Dolben, John, 91
 Doutrina Christa, 201, 202, 203, 204
 Du Jarric, 76
 Dushantya, 108

 East India Company, 94, 188, 208, 214
 Egypt, 1, 58, 167
 Elliot, R. 91
 Ellora, 152
 Elphinstone, M.S., 213
 England, 141
 Espeleta, Juan, 67
 Euclid, 75
 Europe, 1, 5, 26, 41, 51, 52, 145
 Evans, Arthur, 128

 Fabricus, 207
 Fu-Hsien 7, 9, 16, 17, 18, 22-24, 120
 Faizi, 65, 66, 69, 173
 Farhang-i-Sikandari, 27
 Faria, Jeadao (Rev.), 203
 Faruqi rulers, 83
 Fatawa, 56
 Fatawa-i-Ālamgiri, 74
 Fath-ul-Bari, 58
 Fathepur Sikri, 77, 159, 179
 Faderigo, 66
 Fergusson, J., 81
 Ferista, 10, 62, 79, 81, 83
 Fink, 205
 Finch, W., 77
 Firnāz-Shāh, 51, 52, 53, 55, 56

 Firozabad, 51, 55
 Fisher, H., 101
 Fiqh, 57
 Fort St. David, 91
 Fort St. George, 89, 90, 201, 207, 220
 Fort St. George library, 89
 Fort William, 201
 Fort William College Library, 93, 95, 96, 98, 99, 100, 101, 207
 Foucher, 137
 France, 76
 Francis, St., 67
 Fryer, Dr., 86, 92

 Gahadavala, 49
 Gānaniky-adhikāra, 4
 Gandhin, Barua, 187
 Gandavyuha, 152
 Gangā Kishore Bhattacharjee, 223
 Gangesha, 31
 Gangū, 118
 Gasper, Calyze, Fr., 203
 Gāṭā Ghar, 3, 5
 Gāthā Kara, 15
 Garuda Purāna, 109
 Gauda, 33, 182
 Gayā, 132
 Gazi Khān, 57, 61, 62, 179
 Gesner, Conrad, 167
 Ghatika, 42
 Ghazali, 66
 Ghazni, 51
 Ghiyās-ud-Din 52, 54
 Gilchrist, 100
 Gilgit, 110, 137
 Gitā, 31, 190
 Gita Govinda, 31, 134, 157, 158
 Gladwin, F., 100, 217
 Goa, 71, 72, 201, 202, 204
 Godfrey, 110
 Golkonda, 52, 77, 80, 93
 Gomin Avighnakara, 33, 182
 Gonsalves, 203, 204
 Gopāla, 151
 Gorakhpur, 116
 Gotamiya Tantra, 199
 Grāma-Lekhaka, 187

- Gough, 130
 Grantha, 4, 5, 9
 Grantha-Kuthi, 3, 4, 9
 Greece, 1
 Guhasena, 32, 181
 Gul Badan Begam, 69
 Gulistan, 97
 Gulburga, 78
 Gunamati, 32
 Gujarata, 39, 51, 58-59, 62, 65, 70,
 71, 82, 123, 130, 131, 153, 157,
 191
 Gyantse monastery, 178

 Haidar Ali, 49, 92
 Halhed, N.B., 214, 216
 Hamilton, 209
 Hamzah, 68
 Hanshavega, 34
 Harappa, 145, 199
 Harihara II, 43
 Harikela nātaka, 116
 Harinārayanpur, 124, 128
 Hari Varman, 151
 Harṣa Charita, 34
 Harṣavardhana, 34, 191
 Harun Ben Bayazid, 141
 Hassan Gangu, 78
 Hayagriva, 43
 Hāzi Ibrahim Sirhind, 65
 Hem Chandra, 155, 156
 Hem kāra, 120
 Henrique, H., 203
 Hetu-Vidyā, 22, 32
 Hicky, A. 217
 Hijaz, 58
 Himmatvijayji, 40
 Hina-yāna, 23, 32
 Hindu College, 101
 Hirānanda Sāstri, 147, 148, 150
 Hirat, 61, 62, 158
 Hiuen-Ta, 25
 Hiuen-Tsang, 7, 9, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22-
 23, 24, 27, 32, 34, 48, 106, 177, 186
 Hodges, 96
 Homer, 145
 Hooghly, 18

 Hooke, Watter, 89
 Hori-Uzie Temple, 107
 Humāyun, 11, 61-63, 139, 141, 158-
 160, 178
 Humāyun-Nāmā, 69
 Hussain Khān, 81
 Huzur Daftar, 85
 Hyderabad, 77
 Hwui Li, 106
 Hwui Nich, 23

 Ibn Batutah, 55
 Ibn Hajar Asqalani, 58
 Ibrahim Adil Shāh II, 81, 188
 Ibrahim Lodi, 57, 179
 Ignatus, 67
 Ikhtikhār-ud-din Yāgchi, 53
 Iltutmish, 52
 Iman Razi, 24
 Impey Code, 217
 Imperial Library, 102, 103
 Imperial Library Act 1902, 103
 Inayet Khān, 72, 73
 Iran, 52
 I-Tsing, 7, 9, 16, 23-25, 27, 130, 200
 Itimad Khān Gujarati, 65
 Izz-ud-din Khalid Khāni, 56

 Jackson, A.R., 99
 Jagat Singh, 75
 Jagadhara, 31
 Jaggaddal, 26, 30
 Jahāngir, 10, 66, 69, 70-72, 125, 141,
 161, 162, 182
 Jahāngir-Nāmā, 71, 162
 Jain-Chitra Kalpadrum, 36, 150
 Jaipur, 181
 Jalāl-ud-din, 53, 183
 Jambunāth Bhatta, 45
 Jammu, 33, 181
 Jamma Jawani, 59
 Janaka, 9, 15
 Japan, 23, 107
 Jaśodhara, 38
 Jātaka, 10, 16, 106, 111
 Jauhar, 62
 Jaunpur, 52, 65, 70, 82, 83

- Jawalā Mukhi, 55
 Jayendra monastery, 19
 Jayaprabhara, 113
 Jesalmir, 36, 39, 113, 114
 Jetari, 20
 Jetavana monastery, 21
 Jidwal Sāz, 184
 Jijibhai Chhapghar, 210
 Jinamandanagani, 131
 Jiyars, 41
 Jñāna-Bhāndāra, 3, 4, 7, 36, 184, 193, 197
 Jñānapāda, 28
 Jñāna-puja, 37, 192
 Jñāna-Sri-Mitra, 21
 Jñānanneshan, 108
 Jñāta Sūtra, 155
 John of Emden, 202
 Jones, William, 99
 Jullandhar, 51

 Kabali, 195
 Kabul, 158
 Kadigrant, 49
 Kāghazi Rāj, 76
 Kagalkar, 45, 46
 Kaiqubad, 54
 Kaladi, 49
 Kālachākrayāna, 30
 Kālakachārya Kathā, 155-157
 Kāmal Maulic mosque, 11, 24, 147, 200
 Kalhana, 119
 Kālidāsa, 108
 Kaliya Damana, 66, 68, 120, 162
 Kalpa-Sūtra, 155—157, 194
 Kambi, 195
 Kambali, 195
 Kāma Sūtra, 38, 146, 171
 Kāmesvara, 31
 Kāmran, 61
 Kāmrupa, 34
 Kānauj, 34
 Kanhery, 26, 32, 33, 182
 Kaniska, 19, 20, 21, 120
 Kapadia, 131
 Karamashah, 38, 182

 Karana, 186
 Karanika, 186
 Karanin, 186
 Kārkhānā, 4, 53
 Kārkuns, 187
 Karnāta dynasty, 31
 Karpuramanjari, 108
 Kashgar, 16, 130, 137
 Kashmir, 19-21, 25, 33, 34, 58, 65, 106, 109, 115, 131, 132, 140, 160, 186
 Kashyapiya, 22
 Katib, 184
 Kathiwar, 32, 36
 Kātayana, 112
 Kautilya 9, 15, 100, 170
 Kavindrāchārya, 174
 Kāyastha, 186, 187
 Kesava Das, 160, 162
 Ketaki, 104, 108
 Khān Azam Qutlugh Khān, 55
 Khan-i-Tilisim, 63
 Khān-i-Sadat, 63
 Khotan, 16, 137
 Khusrav, 53, 183
 Khuda Bux Library, 71, 72
 Khwandamir, 61, 62
 Kilhorn, 40
 Kitābdār, 5, 69, 183
 Kitāb khānā, 3, 4, 53, 179, 183
 Koran, 53, 58, 93, 141
 Korea, 23, 27
 Kośala, 62
 Kramrish, S. 152
 Krishna, 220
 Krishna Bhatta, 43, 44
 Kugier, 130
 Kulkarni, 85, 187
 Kulliyah Sadi, 70
 Kumārpāla, 39, 40, 131, 155
 Kumārpāla Deva, 37, 38, 153, 181
 Kumārpāla-prabandha, 37, 38, 131, 187
 Kumārpāla rasa, 37
 Kumār Sambhava, 109
 Kusumānjali, 31
 Kutub Minar, 121

- Kyd, James, 101
 Laghupośālika, 39
 Lahore, 51, 72, 73, 131
 Lāla Beg, 63
 Lāla Chand Bhagavāndās Gandhi, 39
 Lalita Vistara, 111, 171
 Lalita Vighararajanātaka, 116
 Law, N.N., 11
 Lawson, 163
 Lekhaka, 185
 Likhakar Barua, 188
 Lilābati, 65
 Lipikara, 185, 186
 Lock, Capt, 99
 Lockey, 90
 Lodi rulers, 51, 57
 Lohakāra, 120
 London, 46, 89, 93, 96
 London University, 119
 Lothal, 199
 Lucknow, 54, 67, 83, 84, 141

 Macartna, 107
 Mackay, 117
 MacLagan, 9
 Mackenzie, 102
 Madan mantri, 38, 182
 Madho, 161
 Madhyamakaratna pradīpa, 30
 Madras, 46, 89, 92, 100, 129
 Madura, 119
 Mafatih, 84
 Magadha, 29
 Mahābhārata, 9, 15, 65, 137, 147, 192
 Mahāksapatalika, 49
 Mahasanghika, 22
 Mahāyāna, 23, 32
 Mahāyāna Sāstra, 22
 Mahāyāna Sūtra, 22
 Mahāvira, 155, 156, 167, 174
 Mahāvira Charita, 155
 Mahendra Lal Sircar, 102
 Mahendra Suri, 155
 Mahipāla, 29, 150
 Mahiśāsaka, 22
 Mahmud Begda, 58
 Mahmud Gawān, 78, 79
 Mahmud Shah II, 59
 Maitraka, 32, 33, 36
 Maka Modi, 40
 Makfi, 69
 Maktub Khān, 70
 Makramat Khān, 74
 Malabar, 105
 Malamanda, 129
 Mālati Mādhava, 10, 31
 Malla, 37
 Malwa, 26, 34, 35, 38
 Mandeslo, J.A., 9, 73
 Mangaluru, 43
 Manoratha, 19
 Manrique, S. 68, 77
 Manuchi, N. 9, 76
 Manutius, A, 167
 Mārtanda, 104, 108, 167
 Marsiall, J. 128
 Marshman, J.C. 101
 Marzaban, F., 210, 211
 Masibhānda, 129
 Masi bhajanam, 129
 Maṣi Kūpika, 129
 Maṣi mani, 129
 Maṣi pātra, 129
 Mathadipati, 41
 Mathura, 17
 Mathura Museum, 116
 Maxmuller, 120
 Mazhar, 55
 Mecca, 59
 Meghduta, 31
 Mehta, N.C., 158
 Melāndhu, 129
 Melāndhuka, 129
 Mian Bhawa, 57
 Mihrauli, 121
 Minhāj-ud-din, 9, 52
 Mir Āli, 141
 Mir Baqi, 69
 Mir Khalilullha Shah, 188
 Mir Muhammad Ali, 82
 Mir Sayyid Ali, 73, 159
 Mirzā Abdul Rahim Khān, 65

- Mirzā Kamran, 70
 Mirzā Khān Khānān, 65
 Mirzā Sulaiman Shikoh, 84, 85
 Miskin, 161
 Mithila, 26, 31, 32, 86
 Mohenjo Daro, 13, 117, 127, 128, 145, 199
 Mokshākara Guptā, 30
 Mokammal Khān, 65
 Manohar, 48, 123, 220
 Moti Chandra, 154, 157
 Mount Abu, 121
 Mudaliyārs, 41
 Mudita Bhadra, 28
 Mudrā Rākshasa, 10, 199
 Mughal, 4, 7, 63, 69, 75-78, 83, 85 104, 106, 109, 122, 125-127, 131-133, 139, 148, 149, 158, 160, 172, 182, 183, 185, 187, 191, 201
 Muhammad bin Tugluq, 35, 51, 54, 129, 131
 Muhammad Gawan, 11, 74, 180
 Muhammad Ghori, 52
 Muhammad Husain of Kashmir, 66
 Muhammad Husain of Naziri, 66
 Muhammad Mansur, 74
 Muhammad Shah Bahamāni II, 78
 " " " III, 78
 Muhatmin, 74, 84, 183
 Mujahid Shāh, 78
 Mukherjee, R.K., 10
 Mulla Nizām, 74
 Mulla Pir Muhammad, 68
 Mulla Safiuddin, 74
 Mulla Shamsuddin, 79
 Mulla Sullān Āli, 63
 Munim Khān, 141
 Murshid Quli Khān, 81
 Murshidabad, 82
 Musahhih, 183, 184
 Muskin-raqam, 189
 Mysore, 33, 49, 75, 113, 181
 Nadi, 23
 Nadia, 31, 86
 Nādir Shāh, 75
 Nagai, 42, 182, 183
 Nagarkot, 55, 56, 114
 Nāgārjuna, 22, 177
 Nāgavāvi, 42
 Nahapana, 111
 Naisadha Charitā, 38, 108, 112, 122, 125
 Nala Damana, 65, 66, 68, 160
 Nālandā, 4, 22, 23, 25-28, 30, 34, 185
 Nālandā University, 11, 177
 Nana Fadnavis, 209
 Naro bin Gangadhar, 81
 Nasir-ud-Din, 52
 National Library, 98
 Natopadra, 134
 Navya Nyāya, 31
 Nāzim, 74
 Nearchos, 8, 103, 113, 125, 130
 Nemināth, 155
 Nepal, 97, 106, 107, 136, 172, 177, 193
 Nepal Durbar Library, 107
 Niamatullah, 63
 Nibandha-Pustaka-Sthāna, 3, 4, 9
 Nihār Ranjan Ray, 153
 Nilakantha Nāyaka, 43
 Nilkantheswar, 11
 Nimitastānga Bodhini, 37
 Nisitha Churni, 154
 Nizām, 63, 69, 183
 Nizām-ud-Din Auliya, 54
 Nuncs, Fr, 202
 Nūrjāhān, 71, 141
 Nur-un-Nisa Begam, 72
 Nyāya, 31, 42
 Odantapuri, 26, 29
 Ogha Nirukti, 155
 Olai nayagam, 49
 Onseley, 97, 98
 Orissa, 106
 Osmanpur, 58
 Ovington, 9, 125, 132, 143, 191
 Oudh, 83, 84
 Padakāra, 15
 Padma, 104, 107

- Padma Purāna, 199
 Padārtha Chandra, 31
 Padshāh Nāmā, 72, 99
 Pāhārpura, 30
 Pāla, 27, 91, 150
 Pālapallj, 43
 Pañcakashā, 152
 Panchānan Karmakār, 219, 220, 221
 Pandīta Vihāra, 30
 Pandulekha, 112
 Panipat, 63
 Paramāra, 34
 Paris, 71, 137
 Pātaliputra, 17, 18
 Patba Dashah, 38, 182
 Patanga Avaduta, 45, 46
 Patil, 85
 Patna, 27, 132
 Pattan, 36-39, 113, 155, 178, 194
 Pattopādhyāya, 119
 Peary Chand Mitra, 101, 102
 Pedapāla, 185
 Penny, Frank, 11
 Persia, 58, 62, 82, 86, 139, 140
 Peswa Baji Rao II, 85
 Phalaka Vāra, 49
 Philip II, 66
 Pickford, 46
 Pigneiro, 67
 Pitalhāra, 120
 Plantyn, 66
 Plato, 167
 Poona, 85
 Parphyry, 167
 Portman, 89, 90
 Portugal, 201, 202
 Prabhavaka, 37, 38, 187
 Prabhāsuri, 113
 Prabhākara, 42
 Prajñādeva, 23
 Prajñāpāramita Sutra, 27, 177
 Primrose, Rev, 202
 Prinsep, 100
 Princeton Univ. library, 145
 Priolkar, A.K., 8, 11, 209
 Punjab, 17
 Pūnthikhānā, 3, 4
 Purāna, 9, 190
 Purāna Dāna, 191
 Purāna Qilā, 63, 179
 Pustaka-Bhāndāra, 3, 4, 42, 43
 Pustakapāthopāya, 30
 Pustapāla, 185
 Pustakapāla, 185
 Pustakārohand, 37
 Pyrard, 106

 Qiulon, 201, 203
 Quin qnencio, J., 202
 Quran, 58, 74, 75, 81, 82, 93, 99

 Rādhā Raman Mitra, 102
 Rafi-ud-Din, 80
 Rahulamitra, 24
 Raja Āli Khān, 83
 Rajaballav of Mandana, 146
 Rājagiri, 27, 131
 Rajputana, 39, 116
 Rājarāja, 138
 Rājendra chola, 119, 138
 Rāja śekhara, 108, 195
 Rāmanath, 43
 Ramāvati, 30
 Rāmāyana, 9, 38, 65, 68, 147, 160,
 171, 192
 Rāmchandra Roy, 163
 Ramdhan Swarnakar, 163
 Rāmpāla, 30, 151
 Ranking, George, 67
 Rasamay Datta, 101
 Rasik Krihna Mitra, 101
 Rasik priya, 160
 Rasik Sarvasva, 31
 Rati Rahasya, 156-158
 Ratna dadhi, 4, 27, 28, 177
 Ratna ranjaka, 4, 27, 177
 Ratna sāgara, 4, 27, 171
 Ratna Vajra, 28
 Ratnakuta Sūtra, 24
 Ratnamandiragani, 131
 Raushan raqam, 189
 Raziyya, 52
 Razm-Nāma, 65, 68, 160
 Rekhāpati, 129

- Rembrandts, 71
 Rg-Veda, 9, 170, 174
 Roe, Thomas, 162
 Rome, 1, 52
 Rsabhadeva, 167, 163
 Rsabhadeva Charita, 131
 Ruddell, 96, 97
 Rukr-ud-Din, 54
 Runciman, S, 145
 Rupar, 124
 Ruru Jātaka, 118
 Rustom Caresajee, 209, 210
 Ryan, Edward, 101

 Sabda-Kāra, 15
 Sabda-Vidyā, 22
 Sachi, 34, 104, 110, 130
 Sadat Knān, 83
 Sagar's Upasraya, 40
 Sāhitya Darpana, 147
 Sakuntalā, 10, 108
 Salākhā Parikshā, 32
 Saiim, 70
 Salima Sultāna Begam, 69
 Samāchār Darpana, 101
 Samaj-guhya, 27
 Sāma Veda, 170
 Sambhuji, 132
 Sampada, 195
 Sampadi, 195
 Samputaka, 195
 Samputika, 195
 Samudra Gupta, 116
 Sanghavis Pada, 39
 Sangita Sarvasa, 31
 Sankara Bhatta, 44
 Sankara Mishra, 31
 Santarakshita, 29
 Sarabhai Nawab, 155, 158
 Sarbhaji, 44
 Sārādā Mangala, 122
 Sarangadeva, 41
 Saraswati Bhāndāra, 3, 4, 7, 11, 41, 42
 Saraswati Bhāndārika, 42, 182
 Saraswati Mahāl, 3, 4, 42, 44, 45, 185, 195, 306

 Sāriputra, 17
 Sarkar, J., 72
 Sarvastivāda, 22, 110
 Sarvavidyānidān, 86, 87
 Satapatha Bramhana, 120
 Satrunjaya Mahatmya, 37
 Sāyana, 120
 Sayyid Ali Tabriji, 74
 Sayyid-Jamal-ud-Din, 66
 Sayyid Muhammad Shāh Alam, 82
 Sayyid Sultan, 57
 Schwartz, F., 206
 Serfoji, 179, 194
 Seringapatam, 93, 94
 Setaketu Jātaka, 15
 Shāh Alam II, 75
 Shāh Jahān, 71-73, 86, 158, 162, 189
 Shāh Jahān Nāmā, 72, 141
 Shāhji, 45
 Shāh Nāmā, 52, 161
 Shaikh Abdul Huq, 54
 Shaikh Farid Bukhari, 71, 72, 125
 Shaikh Nizam-ud-Din, 54
 Shāmasāstry, 48
 Sharqi, 82, 83
 Shirin-raqam, 189
 Shiraj, 83
 Siddharāja Jayasimha, 35, 37, 38, 41, 153, 181, 187
 Siddhahema Vyākaraṇa, 156, 157
 Sidi Āli Rais, 62
 Sidi Said, 59

 Trailokyamalla, 42
 Tranquebar, 205
 Tribhuvanamalla, 182
 Trikanda, 13
 Tripitaka, 20, 106, 200
 Trishasti, Salākāpurusha Charita, 155
 Tubingen University, 138
 Tughluq, 54, 58
 Tughlug Nāmā, 83
 Tuhfat-us-Sa'adat, 57
 Tuhfat-us-Salatine, 141
 Tulu, 44
 Tundila Jātaka, 15

- Turfan, 107
 Tuzuki-i-Bābari, 57
 Udaipur, 85, 155
 Udayāditya, 11, 26, 35
 Udayana, 19, 39
 Udayasimha, 113
 Ujjain, 117
 Un, 147
 Upadesha Tarangini, 38, 131
 Upanisad, 9, 13
 Upendra Bhanja, 146
 Urbino, 66
 Usnisa Vijayadhāri, 107
 Uttaradhyayana Sutra, 157
 Vāchaspati Misra, 31
 Vāg Bhatta, 38, 182
 Vaishnava Dās, 43
 Vaipulya Parinirvana, 18
 Vajra yāna, 30
 Vakhataji's Seri, 40
 Vallabhi, 26, 32
 Vallabhipurw, 36
 Vallabhāchārya, 123, 134
 Vann Dyeks, 71
 Vana parvan, 137
 Vanga sena, 131
 Vapery, 201, 207
 Vardhamāna, 31
 Varendra, 30
 Varendra Research Society, 151
 Vasantara Vilāsa, 156
 Vāsavadatta, 10, 114
 Vasistha, 15
 Vāsudeva, 31
 Vāstupāla, 38, 39, 131
 Vāstupāla-Tejapāla, 38, 182
 Vastupāla-Tejapāla rasa, 37
 Vasubandhu, 19
 Vatican library, 145
 Vedas, 13, 15, 19
 Vedāngas, 13
 Veda Vyāsa, 43
 Venkatapati deva, 119
 Vibhāsā-lun, 19
 Vidharba, 22
 Vidyāranya-tirtha, 43, 44
 Vidyā Dāna, 191
 Vidyādhara, 38
 Vidyā-Sālā, 5
 Vijayanagara, 4, 43, 118, 124
 Vikramasilā, 26, 28, 29, 30
 Vimalshah, 38, 182
 Vinaya, 16-18, 23, 24, 120
 Vinaya pitaka, 110, 111
 Vinaya Vibhasa Sāstra, 20
 Vipulsrimitra, 30
 Virgil, 145
 Virochana Rakshita, 28
 Visādeva, 38, 41
 Vishnudharma Mahā Purana, 146
 Visva-Bhārati, 127, 147
 Visvanāth, 147
 Waman Pandit bin Anant, 81, 185
 Waqia Navises, 76
 Wāqi'ati Bāburi, 65, 161
 Wāqi' · ti Jahāngiri, 10
 Wāqi' · ati Mustaqi, 10
 Ward, 192
 Warrangal, 51
 Weitzmann, K., 145
 Wellesly, 95, 96
 Wendy, Thomas, 91
 Whitefield, W., 89
 Wilkins, Charles, 206, 214-217, 219
 Windsor Castle library, 93
 Xavier, St., 66, 67, 202, 203
 Yajnavalkya Smriti, 120
 Yajnavalkya Samhitā, 113
 Yajur Veda, 170, 199
 Yaman, 58
 Yogini Tantra, 108, 125
 Yussuf-Zulaikha, 141
 Zafar Khān, 73
 Zafar Nadir, S.A., 84
 Zafar Nāmā, 62, 160
 Zahir-ud-Dīn Muhammad Bābur, 60
 Zainul Abidin, 58
 Zarrin-raḡam, 189
 Zebut Tafasir, 74
 Zia-ud-Din, 52
 Zib-un-nisa, 74
 Ziegenbulg, B., 91, 133, 205

ERRATA

<i>Page</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Read</i>
4 line 2	Aksapatala	Akshapatala
7 line 34	Jñān	Jñāna
9 line 11	Tabaqat-i-Nasari	Tabaqat-i-Nasiri
10 line 12	Do	Do.
10 line 25	Ferista	Ferishta
13 line 16	Chahnu Daro	Chanhu Daro
15 line 2	Gāthākara	Gāthākāra
28 line 25	Jñānapāda	Jñānapada
29 line 9	Tabaqat-i-Nasari	Tabaqat-i-Nasiri
29 line 21	Slagadh	Slagadha
29 line 30	Bakhatiyar Khilji	Bakhtiyār Khilji
30 line 15	Kāsa-Charayāna	Kāla-Chakrayāna
32 line 17	(Methaphysics)	(Metaphysics)
32 line 22	Sayghārāmas	Samghārāmas
32 Foot Note 57 & 59	I.A.	In. An.
33 Foot Note 61	I.A.	In. An.
35 line 6	Siddaraja	Siddharāja
35 line 21	Tugluq	Tughluq
36 Sub-1 head. 1	Jñān	Jñāna
36 line 11	Jasalmer	Jesalmir
37 line 27	Jñānpuja	Jñānapujā
39 lines 9 & 10	Jasalmir	Jesalmir
48 line 4	Shāmasastry	Śhamsāstry
48 { Foot Note 1	Book I Ch VII p. 61	Book I Ch VII
{ Foot Note 4	Book II Ch X pp. 71-75	Book II Ch X
50 Sub-head	Sultnans	Sultans
56 line 14	Gne	One
60 Heading	Centeres	Centres
67 line 18	and	had
117 line 4	Bengali nnumerable	Bengal innumerable
129 line 8	Tuglaq's	Tughluq's
132 line 1	Which were good	Which were in great demand for their good

