

SOURCES OF INDIAN HISTORY

K.A. Nilakanta Sastri

ISSUED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
HERAS INSTITUTE OF INDIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

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**SOURCES OF
INDIAN HISTORY
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
SOUTH INDIA**

K. A. NILAKANTA SASTRI

*Under the auspices of the
Heras Institute of Indian History and Culture*



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The Heras Memorial Lectures honour the memory of an eminent historian and archaeologist, the Rev. Henry Heras, S.J. Father Heras came to India from Spain in 1922 at the young age of 32 to be Professor of Indian History at St. Xavier's College, Bombay. He died there in 1955 after spending more than half of his life in digging up India's past to display to the world the glorious traditions and culture of the land he made his own and whose citizen he became.

Sponsored by the Fr. Heras Memorial Fund and by St. Xavier's College, the Memorial Lectures, which deal with themes pertaining to Indian History and Culture, were held for the first time in 1960. They were delivered by Dr. H. D. Sankalia, one of the most distinguished students of the Indian Historical Research Institute which Father Heras founded, and which is now named the Heras Institute of Indian History and Culture. Dr. Sankalia's lectures have been published under the title *Indian Archaeology Today* (Asia Publishing House). The present volume contains the second series of Heras Memorial Lectures.

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PREFACE

This little book contains the substance of three lectures delivered in Bombay under the Heras Memorial Fund during the last three days of November 1961. I take the opportunity to express my grateful thanks to Rev. Fr. Correia Afonso for the invitation he extended to me to deliver these lectures, for suggesting the subject for them and for undertaking the publication also.

Much to my regret, some printing errors have escaped uncorrected and the reader may please refer to p. 108.

K. A. NILAKANTA SASTRI

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SOURCES OF INDIAN HISTORY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SOUTH INDIA

I APPRECIATE very much the honour of being invited to deliver the second course of the Heras Memorial Lectures and would convey my sincere thanks to the authorities of the Heras Institute of Indian History and Culture for this invitation. My acquaintance with Father Heras began in 1924 when he attended a session of the All-India Oriental Conference in Madras; at that time I was principal of the Sri Meenakshi College (now the core of the Annamalai University) and invited Father Heras to visit Chidambaram and talk to the students of the College; he very kindly accepted my invitation and came and spent a few days in the then new campus of the College as its guest. Needless to say the talks of Father Heras and the opportunity the students had of meeting him in small groups were a source of inspiration to them. Since then, we were good friends till the end of his life. The learned Father had a hand in my appointment to the Chair of Indian History and Archaeology (as it then was) in the University of Madras in the year 1929. Even at my first meeting with him, Father Heras showed me some of the draft chapters of the Aravidu Dynasty; I was greatly surprised and told him: 'Here I am, an Indian and a professional teacher of history, with a fair equipment in history and the Indian languages, who has taught the subject for nearly a dozen years, but without a single line of historical writing to my credit; and you, a Spaniard with no prior knowledge of Indian History or languages, have taken less than two years not only to become a good teacher of India's history and culture, but an excellent worker in the field of original historical research. How do you manage this?' His reply, which I still recall vividly, gave in a nutshell his entire attitude to life and work. 'Look here! Sastri', he said, 'I am a Jesuit bound by vows to obedience, poverty and service of God. I have no domestic cares or economic ambitions. I have now been ordered by my

superiors to go and teach Indian History in Xavier's College, Bombay, and that is the method prescribed for me in which to serve God. Unless I devote all my time and energy to this work, I shall not be fulfilling my duty. If you found yourself in a similar situation', he added encouragingly, 'you will perhaps do much better'. We all know that he made his word good and served Indian History and culture with all his strength and ability to the last moment of his life. I had many meetings with him in different places and contexts in later years, and every time my admiration for him increased, though he knew that I had one regret that he did not feel free to accept my suggestion that he should explore and publish the Portuguese archives in Goa for which I thought he was preeminently qualified.

I have accepted the kind suggestion of Father Correia-Afonso that in these lectures I should discuss the sources of Indian History with special reference to South India. Accordingly, I propose to devote the first lecture to a discussion of the problems relating to sources of India's history and culture in general, and then in the two succeeding lectures to go in some detail into the sources of South Indian History, meaning by South India the whole of peninsular India south of the Vindhya. The range of Indian History is very vast; it covers a period of well over five thousand years. The sources of our knowledge of it are also exceptionally varied and far-flung, and they are found written in a large number of languages, Asian and European, ancient and modern. Obviously no one can claim equal mastery over all this vast material, and its treatment in detail by any writer is bound to be intimate and authoritative in the parts in which he is at home and of which he has direct knowledge, and rather remote and derivative in the other parts. There is also another point. Our sources do not cover the entire range of the subject with any approach to evenness; for some periods we have good and abundant material, for others we have only vague traditions and literary works of varying degrees of trustworthiness, and for yet others we have no aids at all from any quarter. Indian History may be aptly compared to a large mansion of many rooms and halls, some of which

are steeped in darkness while the rest are lit up in different degrees of intensity, none of them, however, being so completely illuminated as to enable us to make a complete inventory of its contents.

The modern and scientific study of Indian History and culture was initiated by the English administrators of the country late in the eighteenth century. Some Christian missionaries, particularly of the Society of Jesus working in South India, had at an earlier time mastered Sanskrit and some South Indian languages, and even written books in them, but their aim was to spread the gospel among Indians rather than elucidate their history, and a modern critical historian has observed that 'the Jesuits for all their studies, gained no real understanding of India's past'. Sir William Jones and Charles Wilkins were the pioneers in the field. Jones came to Calcutta as Judge of the Supreme Court during the Governorship of Warren Hastings who was himself very sympathetic to both Hindu and Muslim cultures. Jones was a linguistic genius who had learnt many languages including Chinese and Hebrew before he came to India, and had recognized the kinship of European languages with Persian; and rejecting the orthodox eighteenth century view that all these languages were derived from Hebrew, had suggested another common ancestor for them. This hint was worked up early in the nineteenth century (1816) by the Bavarian Franz Bopp who laid the foundations of comparative philology. Jones began to learn Sanskrit with the aid of Charles Wilkins and some friendly Indian pandits, and founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal on the first day of 1784 with himself as President. Wilkins' translation of the *Bhagavadgītā* (Nov. 1784), and of the *Hitopadeśa* (1787); and Jones's translation of *Śākuntala* (1789), the *Gīta Govinda* (1792), and of the *Manu-Smṛiti* (published posthumously in 1794 under the title *Institutes of Hindu Law*), were landmarks in the unravelling of India's past. About the same time, Europe's interest in India was stimulated in another way by the publication in 1786 by the Frenchman Anquetil Duperron of a translation of four Upanishads from a 17th Century Persian version, the translation

of the whole manuscript, containing 50 Upanishads, appearing in 1801. Jones and Wilkins were followed by Colebroke and Wilson. The initiative in another direction was taken by Alexander Cunningham and James Prinsep. Cunningham became a young officer of the Royal Engineers in India in 1831; he devoted all his spare time to the study of the material remains of ancient India, and in 1862 he was appointed to the new post of Archaeological Surveyor, the idea then being that the survey could be completed and done with once and for all in a few years. Cunningham worked with single-heartedness until his retirement in 1885 and produced a number of reports which are still worth perusal; he made no startling discoveries and his technique left much to be desired by modern standards; still Indology owes more to him than to any other worker in the archaeological field. He collaborated with James Prinsep, an official of Calcutta Mint and Secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, in deciphering the earliest Brāhmī Script with the aid of bilingual coins from Western India, and then reading the edicts of Aśoka. Such were the beginnings of the critical study of the history and civilization of ancient India. But I must resist the temptation to linger on the details of their fascinating subject of the history of Indian historical studies which would form by itself a separate course of several lectures. I shall note only the broad outlines of the entire development, and offer a few general remarks on the present position before I enter the proper subject-matter of these lectures viz. the Sources of our knowledge of Indian History and Culture.

Once the West was roused to take an interest in the academic study of Indian civilization—I must not omit to mention in passing that not only Indian culture and languages thereof, but other Asian countries like China, and the Near Eastern countries attracted equal attention—that study was organized on a permanent basis in many Western countries such as France, Germany, England, Russia and the U.S.A. to mention only the most prominent ones; Chairs in Sanskrit were founded, learned societies organized and periodicals issued in several European languages and devoted to Indolo-

gy and other oriental studies; much striking work on ancient Indian History and philology was done by successive holders of Chairs in Sanskrit in the different universities. Much good work was done in India also by Bühler, Burgess, Fleet, Hultzsch, Kielhorn and others, and some Indian scholars like Rajendra Lala Mitra, Bhagavanlal Indraji and Sir R. G. Bhandarkar attained eminence in the application of modern methods of research to Indian subjects. Burnouf and Max Müller, Lassen and Weber, Fergusson and Macdonell, Rhys Davids, Lanman, and Bloomfield are just a few of the great names in the Western scholarship of the last century on the Indian section of Oriental studies. The results achieved along different lines in the nineteenth century were succinctly summed up in the first scientific treatise published in 1904 on the *Early History of India* by Vincent A. Smith, of the Indian Civil Service, who wrote other equally important works later and gained a foremost place among the modern historians of India. Though Smith claimed that his was the first attempt to present a narrative of the events of the Hindu period, we should recall the gigantic work which Christian Lassen completed (in German) over forty years before the publication of the *Early History*, besides which, as Prof. Basham puts it, 'the *Early History* appears almost trivial in its narrow scope and lack of detail'. (*Historians of I.P. & C.* p. 261). Lassen (1800-76) was a Norwegian, who spent his working life as Professor of Indian Languages and Literature at the University of Bonn. His history of ancient India, *Indische Alterthumskunde*, comprising four volumes of a thousand large pages each and published between 1847 and 1861, has been described as 'one of the world's greatest monuments of untiring industry and critical scholarship'. For all its marvellous learning, it is a work of great simplicity. Though the emphasis is on political history, long chapters are devoted in each section to religion, social life, literature, language, science, industry and commerce. Though further research and new material have proved his chronology to be almost completely false, the work of Lassen is a milestone in the progress of Indology. It gives much attention to India's

culture and political relations with South East Asia and China, and Lassen is not dazzled by the triumphs of Alexander, as was Vincent Smith. He held that Hinduism, for all its faults, was a rock on which the fury of Islam broke. Indeed neither Greek culture nor the destructive power of Islam could conquer Hindu culture. Lassen's individual estimate of British rule in India is remarkably precise and shrewd for its time: 'We see that English industry has destroyed the old Indian handicrafts, plunged the land into poverty, and brought with it the necessity for its rulers to convert India into an immense agricultural country, profitable on account of its riches in natural products!'

Mediaeval and modern Indian History engaged the attention of other British Indian scholars and administrators. Mountstuart Elphinstone's *History of India* (1841) is a monumental work based on the Muslim historians like Firishta and Khāfi Khān, and for the Marātha part of the account, on some Marāthi records and more on his own personal knowledge of the country and the people, and in spite of the progress of research for well over a century, it can still be read with pleasure and profit. A comprehensive general view of the Muslim period of Indian History was provided by the translations and summaries in the eight volumes of the *History of India as told by its own Historians*, (1867-77) by Sir Henry Elliot and Professor John Dowson, supplemented by S. H. Hodivala's *Studies in Indo-Muslim History* (1939)—a valuable critical commentary on Elliot and Dowson. Lane-Poole based his readable and popular account of *Mediaeval India*, in the *Story of the Nations* series, on Elliot and Dowson. Sir Edward Bayley's incomplete work, the *History of Gujarat* is a supplement to the sources collected by Elliot and Dowson. Tod's *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, 2 Vols. 2nd edn. Madras 1873, not very dependable as history, is a magnificent work which suitably enshrines the annals of Rajput chivalry and has exerted a notable influence on literature and drama. Grant Duff's *History of the Marathas*, Calcutta 1912, in three volumes was the first full dress account of the rise and fall of the Marāthas and long remained a standard authority until

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the work of Sardesai and Sarkar effected the revision rendered necessary by the discovery of many new records since Duff wrote his *History*.

Robert Orme's *History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan* (1803) remains a basic authority for the period of the Carnatic Wars and the rise of British Dominion in India, along with R.O. Cambridge's *Account of the War in India*. 'James Mill's *History of British India* (1817) completed by H.H. Wilson by 1835 (1840) remains outstanding among the old general histories, for all its one-sidedness and occasional wrong headedness, though it has not lived up to Macaulay's comparison with Gibbon. Smaller works of this class are the histories by E. Thornton, J. C. Marshman, and W. Beveridge.'¹

The twentieth century has been marked by notable progress in Indian historical studies in which Indian scholars have taken an increasing part. Indian Archaeology was put on a strong basis by the establishment of the distinguished archaeologist Sir John Marshall as the first Director-General. Cunningham had collected some enigmatic seals covered with a mysterious writing from the Punjab, and the discovery of more seals of the kind by R. D. Banerjee led to the most sensational discovery of the Indus Valley civilization in the twenties which carried back the ancient history of India by nearly three thousand years before the age of the Rig Veda with which the civilization of India had been supposed to begin. Since then increasing attention has been given to pre-history, and attempts are in progress to bridge the gap between the Indus Culture and that of the Vedic Age. The contribution of pre-Aryan India to the historic Indo-Aryan civilization has received particular emphasis, and the strength of the new reaction is such that some writers even tend to under-rate the value of the Aryan contribution. Important historical sites like Taxila, Sāñchī, Sārnāth and Nālandā have been systematically explored and excavated and much new and precise knowledge gained in chronology and history. The

¹ *Oxford History of India*, p. 454.

technique of excavation has been vastly improved in the last decade or so, thanks to Sir Mortimer Wheeler, and this has led to improved interpretation of the data obtained. The publication of source books of all periods and in different languages has proceeded apace in India and abroad, though in some cases the critical standard attained is not as high as may be desired. We cannot attempt a detailed account of all such publications, though we may have occasion to mention some of the most important series in due course. The critical edition of the *Mahābhārata* undertaken by the Bhandarkar Institute of Poona is nearing completion, and an even vaster enterprise, a historical and etymological dictionary of Sanskrit, has been set on foot also in Poona in the Deccan College Research Institute, and the *Rāmāyaṇa* text is being critically edited in Baroda, and new and improved editions of the *Vedas*, the *Dharmaśāstras* and *Purāṇas* are in progress under the auspices of different learned societies in India.

Several one volume histories of India have been written by different authors, Indian and English, and Smith's *Oxford History of India*, which has recently gone into a third edition with the whole of the British period rewritten by Spear, continues to be leading example of this type. Special mention must be made of three volumes of the brilliant Belgian writer Louis de la Vallée Poussin; these volumes are in French and form part of a comprehensive history of the world; they were published between the years 1924 and 1935 and are entitled *Indo-Européens et Indo-Iraniens*; *L'Inde Jusque Vers 300 ar. J.C.*; (2nd Ed.; Paris, 1936), *L'Inde aux Temps des Mauryas* (Paris 1930), and *Dynasties et Histoire de L'Inde* (1935), the last volume covering the period from Kanishka to the Muslim invasions. The books are remarkable for their precise and critical scholarship, their excellent bibliography, and balanced discussion of many vexed questions relating to foreign invasions, the origin of the Buddha image, the dates of Buddha, Pāṇini, Patañjali, Kanishka and so on. Poussin emphasizes the provisional character of even widely accepted theories and says that 'great scholars have reared on bases which are more than fragile, scaf-foldings which we climb

with our eyes closed'. He protests also against pseudo-scientific methods of averaging evidence followed by some scholars. 'We must admit that we do not understand, we do not understand at all, the classical method of Purāṇic exegesis, and the vain hope of extracting the true from the false by arbitrary methods. For example the *Vāyu* gives a certain king a reign of 24 years; the *Matsya* gives the same king a reign of 36 years. V. Smith gives this king 32 years, solemnly writing "duration adjusted". In the same way he adjusts to 40 years the reign of a prince whom the *Vāyu* mentions without giving the length of his reign and to whom the *Matsya* gives 56 years. Isn't this childish?'² The brief notes on religion, literature and art are also very pointed and suggestive.

There seems to be some kind of a curse working against the multi-volume projects of Indian History in English. Even the great University of Cambridge which has successfully put through many large multi-volume histories of ancient, mediaeval and modern Europe, not to speak of the histories of literature, foreign policy etc. and of the new Cambridge modern history, has not completed its six-volume Indian History according to plan; the second volume is still to see light, (but we now learn from Spear that Basham is preparing the volume which may come out soon) and volumes V and VI form part of another series and suffer considerably in the point of view adopted; the first volume was published in 1922, and four decades have not sufficed for the completion of the project. The *Comprehensive History of India* in twelve volumes, planned initially by the Indian History Congress and merged subsequently in another twenty-volume project of the Bhāratīya Itihās Parishad after two volumes out of the twenty had been published, has apparently received a premature interment after one volume, the second in the plan, was published in 1957. Yet another project that of the Bhāratīya Vidyā Bhavan in ten volumes, which cannot bear comparison with those named above, is making a slow progress and has succeeded in issuing six volumes out of the

² *Historians, etc.* pp. 276-7.

ten. Let us hope that this scheme will be carried to completion in a reasonable time.

The study of Indian History and culture must in future become increasingly the concern of Indians. There has been a perceptible increase in the volume of research in Indian History undertaken by Indian scholars and the publication of its results in recent years. But considering the vastness of the field and the amount of work that remains to be done, the pace of development cannot be considered adequate. I think it may be useful to indicate what, on a broad view, appear to be the shortcomings in the present situation which require to be remedied if substantial progress is to be achieved. The most notable feature here is the absence of a permanent professional all-India organization devoted to the furtherance of the study of our subject. We have, indeed, a number of organizations each seeking to cultivate a part of the field in its own way. We may mention for instance the Indian Historical Records Commission, the Indian History Congress and the All India Oriental Conference. They hold periodical sessions in different parts of the country at which papers are read which are published either all together or in selections in the report of the sessions which appear sometimes long after the sessions. But the quality of the papers often leaves much to be desired, there seems to be no kind of standard aimed at; there is no rule that each paper should make some tangible contribution to knowledge before it can qualify for admission to the conference. There is no permanent membership except in the case of the I.H.R.C., and attendance at the periodical sessions in all cases is largely a matter of accident. Above all, none of these organizations has a definite programme of integrating the work done in different centres like universities and research institutes by means of consolidated annual bibliographies, or the resources for working such a programme. We become painfully conscious in this context of the attempts which were started with such aims and given up after some time e.g. *The Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology* by the Kern Institute of Leyden, and the *Bibliography of Indian History* issued for some years

by this very Institute. Even attempts to collect and publish information on the studies and theses in progress in different centres of work have been foiled by lack of willing co-operation. Our deficiency in this respect becomes clear if we think of the regular and long standing record of high achievement of such bodies as the Royal Historical Society of England or the American Historical Association. I do not wish to dwell on the reasons for this major defect in our equipment which each one among us may be able to identify by a moment's earnest thought about them, but would put in a plea for active steps being taken by all the workers in the field, each to the best of his capacity and opportunities, to see this defect removed by setting up a new organization, or better by developing one of the existing bodies on lines calculated to meet the purpose I have indicated. I do not forget that this will involve considerable expenditure; but our experience with long term planning has shown that the problem of personnel is often more fundamental than that of material resources, and I have every hope that if we have found a group of historians determined to build up a strong Indian Historical Association, they will soon be able to command the material resources for the starting and furtherance of their work.

I am afraid that as a subject of study history is not as popular in our universities as it once was and as it should be. In the first two decades of this century, in Madras which I know best, the number of undergraduates who opted for history out-weighed the numbers, who opted for all the other subjects in the degree courses put together. But now the history courses are the least popular, probably because economics and politics which at that time formed integral parts of the history degree course, have now become separate courses which offer relatively easier paths to a degree. This is probably the case also in the rest of India, though so far as I know, in other countries the study of history holds its own even if it is not expanding. Another notable difference between us and other countries like England and the U.S.A. is that while in those countries there are faculties of varying strength organized for the study of the history and civi-

zation of foreign countries, our centres of learning take no interest in our neighbours and their histories, and even the history of South East Asia, which formed part of India during the first millennium of the Christian era and was included in that name by Ptolemy and the Arab geographers is receiving very scant attention at our hands. Again, the study of Indian History at the sources cannot be undertaken without a comprehensive and well formed linguistic equipment. Sanskrit, Pāli and Tamil for the ancient period; Persian, Marāthi and Portuguese for the mediaeval; Dutch and French besides English for the modern period as also for the study of South East Asian history, are the desirable minima. Most of the modern researches on the history and archaeology of Indo-China are presented in the French language and those of Indonesia in Dutch. I may recall here that soon after my appointment as Professor of Indian History and Archaeology in the University of Madras in 1929, Mr. F. J. Richards, I.C.S. in the course of a friendly review of my *Pāṇḍyan Kingdom*, drew attention to a serious omission on my part and pointed out that I had not properly elucidated the episode of Candrabhānu's invasion of Ceylon in the twelfth century as I had apparently no knowledge of the history of Śrī Vijaya and of South East Asia, in general. To tell the truth, that was in fact the first time I became aware of this big gap in my equipment, and I soon found out that without a knowledge of the Dutch and French languages, I could make no progress worth the name in South East Asian history. Books in English on the subject were practically unknown then, the position is much better today, and I set myself the task of learning these two languages on my own with the aid of Hugo's excellent readers in the self-taught series. I discovered thereby a whole new continent of Indian studies and soon began to make my own small contribution to knowledge in the subject. But this is not all. If you want to work on the yet unsettled problems connected with the Aryan immigration into India and with those of the Indus Valley civilization, you may be called upon to take up the ancient languages and scripts of Mesopotamia and Western Asia. Many

questions of the historical period would require a knowledge of Chinese and Tibetan on the part of any one who wants to evaluate precisely the original evidence bearing on them; and without a knowledge of Arabic you may not be able to judge for yourself the precise implications of the geographical and historical works on India written in this language. There are indeed accessible translations of much of this far-flung material which will serve the ordinary readers, but minute critical work is seldom possible without a well developed capacity to handle the originals with confidence. The mere enumeration of these desiderata is sufficient to show the weakness in our present position and indicate the lines of action for the immediate future. I may mention that the Union Government has got plans for setting up two Institutes for the study of ancient and medieval Indian History which, without duplicating work already being done in the existing learned institutions of the country, will make decided advances along complementary lines and add tangibly to our academic equipment in a relatively short time. But for these Institutes to succeed, there must be a regular supply of high grade talent; this can come about only if each year a number of graduates with good degrees, a score or so, will make up their minds to choose the study and teaching of history as their career, and resist the temptation to be drawn into the administrative, banking and other perhaps more lucrative services. I have spoken to you of the spirit in which Father Heras went to the study of Indian History. A stranger to things Indian when he reached the country, he soon learnt a vast deal about its peoples, mastered its languages, and made signal contributions to the knowledge of its history and culture. Even those who may not be free from domestic cares as he was, may well seek to capture some of his earnest and passionate devotion to the subject. History is after all one of the most fascinating fields of work; it provides scope for many skills and many opportunities for the joy of discovery and achievement; it is a pity that this is not recognized as widely as it deserves to be.

With rare and belated exceptions, India failed to develop a written history in the past. We come across no figure corresponding to Herodotus or Thucydides in Greece, Livy and Tacitus in Rome, or Sou-ma-chin of China. Though it is true that history in the modern sense of the term is a growth of the nineteenth century, still while many of the other countries produced chronicles and semi-histories, India as a rule manifested a pronounced indifference to the recording of historical events. The Arab and Persian historians of the Muslim world, many of whom lived and did their work in India and wrote on her history, are the most notable exceptions to this rule, and their example was followed by Kalhana of Kashmir whose *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, written in the twelfth century, seeks to be a genuine historical chronicle whose author even lays down some correct principles of historiography which will do credit to a modern historian. The normal Hindu attitude to history was, however, different. It was not, as is sometimes affirmed, an attitude of indifference to events in time born of a concentration upon eternity or of a disgust with the misery of mundane life, but the expression of a desire to view human affairs against the universal background of nature and of divinity. There is a Greek tradition that an Indian sage who visited Socrates in Athens asked the Greek philosopher what he was engaged on; Socrates replied that he was interested in the study of men and their ways; the Indian philosopher then asked Socrates what he knew of the ways of the gods, and when he confessed his ignorance on that subject, the Indian just smiled and said that men could not be understood without a correct knowledge of Gods and superman. This story may or may not be true; but it forms a correct representation of the Indian attitude to human events and goes far to explain the scope and content of our vast *Purāṇa* literature at many levels—all conceived as narratives of Universal evolution meant for the edification of the people and all giving many more details of wars of *devas* and *asuras* than of the wars among earthly Kings whose annals occupy a much smaller place in the *Purāṇas* if they refer to them at all. This tendency to link up the human

with superhuman and sub-human is a constant trait of the ancient Indian mode of thought which stressed the unity and continuity of life at different levels from the smallest ant to the Supreme Soul of the Universe. It accounts for the inextricable blending of man and nature found in the different scenes of the epics and the poems and dramas of a superb poet like Kālidāsa. It accounts also for the anxiety of our royal dynasties, to trace their descent from the sun and the moon, for the form of our two great national epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, which doubtless bury a core of history under many sheaths of imaginative embellishment, and for the fact that even professedly historical works like Bāṇa's *Harṣacarita* and Bilhana's *Vikramāṅkadevacharita*, and the *Kaliṅgattupparaṇi* of Jayagoṇḍār, the *Mūvar-ulā* of Oṭṭak-kūttan, and the *Periyapurāṇam* of Śēkkiḷār, to mention only a few well known instances, often move on the borderland between fact and fable.

On the other hand, professedly mythological works like Pampa's *Bhārata* and Ranna's *Gadāyuddha*—both in Kannaḍa—often contain the most valuable references to contemporary historical events which often admirably supplement our meagre gleanings from the inscriptions. There are many stray references to historical facts in works where you least expect them—in the devotional hymns of the *nāyanārs* and *ālvārs* of the Tamil country for instance and in the commentaries on them. But when all is said, we must frankly recognize the fact that Indian literature as a whole lacks the historical sense, and we are left in the dark on many questions of crucial importance to the story of our country and civilization. Vālmīki and Vyāsa are but shadowy names, and even Kālidāsa is very largely so. While we can see and admire the glory of the Kailāsa temple at Ellora, or the superb excellence of the paintings at Ajanṭā, Bāgh and Tanjore, we do not know anything of the names and lives of the painters, architects and sculptors who created these wonders. But this anonymity prevails in some measure in other countries and times, and we may recall the great cathedrals of mediaeval Europe which provide a fair parallel. The people of India did not

differ in any fundamental way from their contemporaries in other lands and were in no way behind them in the creation and enjoyment of the amenities of a complex civilization, or even in their desire to be remembered by posterity for what they were and what they did. The hundreds of votive inscriptions recording the names, purposes and objects of the gifts, the many longer inscriptions recording the genealogies and achievements of long lines of rulers before coming to the actual business of the record, among which those of the Deccan and South India are both numerous and precise, the musical inscription of the royal disciple of Rudrācārya at Kuḍumiyāmalai (former Pudukkoṭṭai state, now part of the Trichinopoly District), the numerous signed sculptures on the walls of the Hoysala Temples in Mysore State, the several temple chronicles of which some have survived though many have perished, the *praśastis* at the beginning and the colophons at the end of many literary works giving authentic details of the lives of the authors and their patrons, go far to repudiate the notion that, to the Indian, life was a 'nightmare' which he wanted to shake off and be done with, an experience not worth remembering or recording.

To sum up the position in a few words: Indian sources are defective in professedly historical writings, but they are by no means lacking in the basic data for the reconstruction of the past, though the lacunae are perhaps much bigger than elsewhere. But 'history' as we understand it today is a creation of the nineteenth century, and almost all earlier attempts with rare exceptions like Gibbon's are in a different category everywhere, and the Indian writings from which we have to cull our material are perhaps farthest from history, and perhaps farthest even from secular literature.

The sources of Indian History fall under two broad heads: indigenous and foreign. The indigenous sources again fall into two divisions—the evidence from archaeology in a broad sense including epigraphy and numismatics, and that from literature. In general the former class is more concrete and more dependable than the latter. A systematic and complete study of the sources will not be possible in the time

at our disposal; the treatment must necessarily be selective and illustrative, and seek to invite attention to the salient problems and perhaps indicate the scope for further work along different lines.

Naturally we begin with pre-historic archaeology. This branch of archaeology has become very important since the discovery of the Indus Valley civilization in the twenties of this century, and the publication of voluminous primary report on the excavations at Mohenjo-daro, Harappa and Chanhudaro and elsewhere, and on explorations conducted in the neighbouring territories, of Baluchistan, Iran and Afghanistan. There is little definite knowledge of the earlier stages of pre-history, though artifacts of the paleolithic age have been found in the neighbourhood of Madras, whence the name 'Madras Industry' sometimes applied to this culture, but also widely distributed in the north e.g. the Sohan Valley and the terraces of the Sabarmati river in Gujarat. But human skeletons of this age are yet unknown, and their recovery 'is one of the major needs of Indian archaeology'. Microliths are somewhat ubiquitous in India and quite obviously they belong to widely different stages and cultures, as they are found sometimes with pottery and a little copper or bronze, and sometimes without pottery but with semifossilised human skeletons of modern types; it is therefore not easy to decide if there was a distinct neolithic period in India. Likewise the neolithic stage has not yet been isolated from the so-called chalcolithic phase 'in which the use of stone was supplemented by that of copper or its alloy, bronze. In this phase there was considerable development of village life, and recent work has brought up convincing evidence of a coherent culture complex originating in the Iranian plateau and spreading towards the Indus Valley through the glens and passes of Baluchistan by the end of the fourth millennium B.C. if not earlier.' The details of this fairly settled village economy which has so far been studied mainly from surface finds await elucidation by the spade. But the area is now part of Pakistan and we have to await the results of excavations by Pakistani or foreign scholars. Out of this background arose the more advanced urban

civilization of the Indus Valley whose broad alluvial plains rendered larger concentrations of population at once possible and necessary, and increased the possibilities of traffic and trade with other lands. The Indus civilization is now dated provisionally from about 2500 B.C. to 1500 B.C. or a little earlier. Harappa in the Punjab and Mohenjo-daro in Sind were its main metropolitan centres and there is no means of knowing if they formed parts of a consolidated empire or separate states. In spite of many efforts and diverse theories put forward by different scholars, the best opinion still holds that the Indus script has not yet been satisfactorily deciphered. The area of the spread of this civilization and the different phases through which it passed in its rise and decline are still subjects of active study. Attempts have been to interpret the Indus culture as Vedic and as pre-Aryan Dravidian; but these views have not gained acceptance and the best view still seems to be that this culture stood in rather closer relation to the contemporary cultures of Western Asia and Eastern Mediterranean than to those of the rest of India. The problem of the chronological relations between this culture and that of the Aryan invaders is one of the most outstanding questions relating to this period and is being discussed actively with the aid of new techniques which are being improved rapidly. There is at present a pronounced tendency to confirm in the light of archaeology the old and shrewd guess of Max Müller regarding the date of the Rig Veda and the culture it represents viz. round about 1200 B.C.³ The best general accounts of the whole subject are: Stuart Piggott, *Prehistoric India down to 1000 B.C.*, (Pelican series, 1950), and Wheeler, *The Indus Civilization*, Cambridge, (1953), D. H. Gordon, *The Prehistoric background of Indian Culture*, Bombay, (1958) is also very useful. The specific problems of prehistoric South India may be reserved for later consideration.

³ See e.g. Walter A. Fairservis, Jr. 'The chronology of the Harappa civilisation and the Aryan Invasions, recent Archaeological research', in *Man* Nov. 1958 No. 173.

The period 1500-500 B.C. is sometimes described as the Dark millennium. There must have been much confusion as a result of the Aryan invasions and archaeology has not yet gone very far in elucidating this. The present state of knowledge is thus summed up by Wheeler: 'Village mounds such as Ranā Ghundai in the Zhob regim of northern Baluchistan or Nāl, farther south, show evidence of conflagrations at an appropriate level; so much so that the Nāl mound is known locally as the Sohr Damb or Red Mound from its fire-reddened soil. At Chanhudaro, a town of the Indus Civilization eighty miles south of Mohenjo-daro, the Indus population deserted their homes and were succeeded by a poorer folk (known to archaeologists as representatives of the 'Jhukar' culture) who re-used some of the derelict houses and supplemented them with rectangular hovels of matting paved with broken brick. The new comers had circular uninscribed seals or seal-amulets of pottery or faience bearing a crude decoration lacking all the delicate realism of the Indus series. Similar seals, but of copper, were found at Shahi-tump in southern Baluchistan, in cemetery perhaps of the second millennium B.C. inserted into a derelict village that had been in contact with the Indus peoples. And at Harappa itself, after the abandonment of the city, a strange folk of unknown origin arrived and built shoddy houses among the ruins. Their burial rite was at first inhumation, but later the custom was introduced of exposing the dead and subsequently interring selected bones in urns. These cemetery people, as they are called, have been tentatively recognized as Aryans, but little is known about them, nor is it easy to guess how long after the departure or subjugation of the Indus people their arrival should be placed!'⁴ I have permitted myself this somewhat longish citation of one view of the outstanding problems, there are other views held by other writers, just to show how fragmentary and tentative have so far been the results of archaeology in bridging the transition from the Indus culture to the Indo-Aryan. Very much more systematic work is necessary in this sphere before tangible improvement of our knowledge can result.

⁴ *Oxford History of India*, p. 33.

The literary evidence on this period is voluminous, but not all of it equally explicit or authentic. The Vedas themselves, particularly the *Rgveda*, long transmitted by oral tradition before it was committed to writing, and protected against corruption and mistake by many devices of which the *Pada* (word) text is the simplest and perhaps the earliest, may be taken to constitute an unassailably authentic text, unlike much of later literature. But obviously a considerable interval must be postulated between the composition of the hymns and their redaction in the *Samhitā* form in which we find them now. Vedic scholarship is a special and recondite branch of Indology, and the editions of the texts involved and the modern critical literature on it would easily fill a good sized library. The historian of ancient India as a rule has neither the capacity nor the time to read and master this vast literature directly and has necessarily to depend on handy secondary sources. Winternitz: *History of Indian literature*, 3 volumes in German, of which two have been translated into English and published by the Calcutta University, forms an indispensable guide to all our literary sources in Sanskrit, Pāli and Prakrit and some of the modern Indian languages also, and after this general indication of the wide field covered by the book, it should not be necessary to refer to it repeatedly in several contexts. The *Vedic Index* by Macdonell and Keith (2 volumes) and the *Reallexikon der Indo-Germanischen Alterthumskunde* by O. Schrader and Negelein (2 volumes 1917-23; 1929) are excellent works of reference, the latter not being so well known as it deserves to be. Some general works which bring together results of many lines and years of study are: Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads* (2 volumes) (Cambridge, Mass, 1925); Adolf Kaegi, *Rig Veda* (1886) and Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben* (1879) are among the authoritative accounts of Vedic civilization. There are many others, but at every stage my aim would be to provide a few guiding hints to best studies, by no means a complete bibliography.

The study and interpretation of later Vedic literature the *Brāhmanas*, *Upaniṣads* and the *Kalpa Sūtras* have gone far

already, and thrown much welcome light on the interaction between Aryan and the pre-Aryan and the resultant changes in Indo-Aryan civilization. But we are still far from having come near the end of the task of recovering and publishing texts, and perhaps still farther from having reached a consensus on the actual course of development. And as already indicated a correlation has still to be attained between the literary and archaeological sides of the work. Such early texts as Vedic and later Vedic literature have more or less the same value for the imaginative and sensitive historian as stratigraphic evidence in archaeology and in studying the early developments of civilization they should so far as possible be handled together; but unfortunately few archaeologists are linguists, and linguists have generally kept clear of the results of field studies. Until we establish the means of bringing the two disciplines nearer, tangible progress may not be easy of achievement.

When we consider the archaeology of historical times, we recognize with gratitude that since the reorganization of the time of Curzon, much good work has gone on and valuable studies on important sites and monuments have been issued in the reports, memoirs and monographs of the department. However, one notes that while at the beginning of the century India set the model for archaeological work in the Dutch East Indies and Indo-China, in the course of a few decades the achievements of the French and Dutch archaeologists in the East apparently left the Indian department a little behind. Of course there is no comparison between the problems of small countries like Java and those of the vast Indian subcontinent; and on the whole the Indian archaeological budget has been proportionately less liberal. But the Indian department has steadily set its face against the tasks of brilliant restorations successfully accomplished in monuments like Angkor Vat, Īśvarapura, Būro Budur, and Prambanam, or the stone Buddha of Bukit Seguntang near Palembang. This process of restoration known as 'anastylose' avails itself of nothing but authentic relics and adopts no form that is not known to have been historically true. Of course it means both

shrewd research and hard work, but is well worth it. It cannot be said that the Indian department is an utter stranger to the method, for it has been followed though not systematically in some work in places like Sāñchī, Taxila, Sārnāth and Nālandā and in the repairs to the Taj or the Gol Gumbaz. But on the other hand we have also hideous instances of P.W. repairs with cement and concrete like those in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñchīpuram. In fact the department can hardly be said to have a considered policy for conservation and will do well to consider the whole problem afresh instead of prolonging indefinitely a hand to mouth existence so to say.

Temples of one kind or another dominate the ancient monuments of the country belonging to different regions and periods. They enable the student to gain a good idea of the evolution of architecture and sculpture, and in some instances of painting also. The general outlines of this history are now fairly well settled and among standard works dealing with the subject may be mentioned those of Fergusson, Coomaraswami, Percy Brown, and Benjamin Rowland. The archaeological department has undertaken a systematic survey of the temples of the north and south with a view to determine more precisely the course of architectural evolution; some good results of the survey have begun to come in, and the completion of the survey and the resulting publications may well be expected to add considerably to knowledge. But there would still be scope for detailed studies on the sculptures and paintings calculated to elucidate the social side of life—the costumes, ornaments, musical instruments, dance poses and so on. This is eminently a work for local archaeological societies which are numerous in countries outside India but singularly lacking here. The Universities of our country which have been rapidly multiplying in numbers of late can help a lot here by addressing themselves steadily to the close study of local monuments and the collection and sifting of traditions and documents and thereby add precision and local colour to historical knowledge.

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Epigraphy and numismatics are perhaps the most precise and trustworthy sources of history everywhere and particularly in India where the indigenous literary sources are so very defective. Indian paleography is a rather difficult and complicated matter of several scripts, each with a long evolution of its own. Stone and copper are the chief materials on which inscriptions occur, though other bases like clay seals, precious stones, silver and gold are also occasionally met with. The Aśoka inscriptions which still form the earliest known epigraphs are found written generally in Brahmi, but also in the Northwest in Kharoṭhi, and Greek and Aramic, as in the recently discovered bilingual inscriptions from near Kandahar. The language of the records is generally Prākṛit or Sanskrit in the North, and usually Sanskrit or/and a Dravidian language in the South. Most of the important inscriptions have been edited with elaborate commentaries by competent scholars in the thirty odd volumes of *Epigraphia Indica*, though one cannot afford to neglect the other periodicals bearing on Indology in different countries. Burgess, Bühler, Kielhorn, Hultzsch and Fleet are the great names in this field, whose work may be said to cover almost the entire field in one way or other. The student will find useful aids in bibliographical compilations like Lüders' *List of early Brāhmī inscriptions* (Appendix to Vol. X of *Epigraphia Indica*), D. R. Bhandarkar's *List of North Indian Brāhmī inscriptions after A.D. 400*, and the now hopelessly out of date Kielhorn's *List of South Indian Inscriptions* which deserves to be revised and brought upto date as Bhandarkar did the North Indian list. The *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, which has recently received an additional volume in V. V. Mirashi's *Kalachuri Inscriptions*, is also indispensable. Fleet's *Gupta Inscriptions* (Vol. III in the series), we heard, was ready for the press long ago though D. R. Bhandarkar passed away without completing his work on it, and scholars are eagerly awaiting the publication of the new edition incorporating the vast amount of new material discovered since Fleet's time. It is disheartening to note that the Yerragudi version of the Aśoka edicts has not yet found its definitive edition in *Epigraphia*

Indica so many years after their discovery in the twenties. South India is much richer in its epigraphy than North India and will be considered later. We have a number of Persian inscriptions relating to the Muslim period from different parts of the country and these which used to form the series *Epigraphia-Indo-Moslemica* are now being published as Arabic and Persian supplement to *Epigraphia Indica*.

Coins are an interesting and sometimes intriguing sources of history. The history of Indian coinage is not yet quite definitively settled, and there are problems relating to the symbols and marks on the earliest coins of India, the punch-marked ones, that are still subjects of discussion. Though the Veda speaks of *niṣka*, sometimes interpreted as coin, no actual coin of the Vedic period in any metal is known. And there is good reason to think that coins proper began to be made in India under the influence of foreign example, particularly Greek, Roman and Iranian. What we knew of Bactrian, Indo-Greek and Indo-Parthian dynasties of north-western India is very largely derived from a group of coins which are among the most artistic productions of the world, and the series of dates born on the coins of the Western Satraps of Saurāṣṭra and Gujarat have helped settled many doubtful questions of succession and chronology. Studies of Indian coins are scattered over many learned periodicals, and it is only recently that a regular journal for Indian Numismatics, that of the Indian Numismatic Society, has come up. Prinsep and Cunningham were pioneers in the field and Cunningham in his *Indian Coins* evinced an uncanny capacity for placing them properly. The catalogues of coins issued by the important museums particularly the British Museum, the Indian Museum, and the Lahore Museum are of inestimable value.

Before leaving archaeology, we must say something on the subject of chronology and the eras. Indian dates are generally given in the order-month, *pakṣa*, *tithi* the abbreviations, *s'udī* and *ba.dī* being used for the bright and dark halves of the month. A lunar month makes about 29½ solar days, and twelve lunar months make only 354 days; the problem of the discrepancy between the lunar and solar years was

solved very early. Sixty-two lunar months are approximately equal to sixty solar months, and so every thirty months an extra month was added to the year generally after *Aṣāḍha* or *Śrāvaṇa*. Thus every second or third year contains thirteen months, and is some twenty-nine days longer than the others. The Hindu calendar, though efficient, is also very cumbersome. The solar calendar, imported with Western astronomy, was also known from Gupta times.

The system of reckoning dates with the aid of eras starting from definite points in time was perhaps introduced into India by foreign invaders from the north-west. The Aśoka inscriptions are dated in regnal years counted from the coronation of the King. We have an amazing confusion of eras occurring in Indian inscriptions, and sometimes we get only the number of the year without the name of the era. The era of the Kaliyuga 3102 B.C., supposed to mark the epoch of the Mahābhārata War, was obviously the result of astronomical calculations of the Gupta period. More reasonable is another *Purāṇic* tradition pointing to the fifteenth or fourteenth century, though even this date is several centuries too early in the light of archaeological evidence. In the Buddhist countries a Buddha era from 544 B.C., is in use, but there is evidence also of an earlier reckoning from 483 B.C. or 486 according to some. The Jainas use the era of Mahāvīra reckoned from 528 B.C. The Vikrama era (58 B.C.) was according to tradition founded by a Vikramāditya Śākari (enemy of the Śakas) who reigned at Ujjayinī. But the only King who fits the description and known to history is Candragupta II of the Gupta dynasty who lived over 400 years later than the beginning of the era. In the earliest inscriptions using this era, all from Western India, it is called simply *Kṛta* (established) or 'handed down by the Mālava tribe'. Some scholars hold that many inscriptions of the Śakas and Pahlavas of North-Western India are to be read in this era, and that it was founded by Azes, one of their early kings; but this has been questioned. The era was most popular in North India. Its year began originally with the month of *Kārttika*, but by mediaeval times the Vikrama year began in the bright

half of *Caitra* in the North and in the dark half of the same month in the South.

The Śaka era (A.D. 78) was, according to tradition, founded by a Śaka King who occupied Ujjayinī 137 years after Vikramāditya. This era may in fact have been founded by Kaniṣka (or Wema Kadphesis as some would have it) and was certainly used early in the second century A.D. by the Western Satraps ruling in Malwa, Kathiawar and Gujarat. Thence it spread through the Deccan and to South-East Asia. In South India it got the name *Śālivāhana Śakābda* which it still retains. The determination by Fleet of the epoch of the Gupta era (A.D. 319-20) was an important landmark in the development of Indian historical studies and resulted in a well knit system of chronology where chaos had prevailed before. There have been some rather misplaced attempts to unsettle the epoch. The Gupta era was continued by the Maitrakas of Valaghī (Gujarat) for some centuries after the Gupta empire fell. Other notable eras are: the Harṣa era A.D. 606, the Traikūṭaka era A.D. 248 taken over by the Kalacuris and better known by their name and current in Central India down to the Muslim invasion, the Lakṣmaṇa era A.D. 1119 of Bengal which was, however, nothing to do with King Lakṣmaṇa Sena; the Saptarṣi or Laukika era of Kashmir current in the middle ages and recorded in cycles of one hundred years, each cycle commencing seventy-six years after the Christian Century; the Licchavi and Nevar eras of Napal (A.D. 110 and 878) the Kollam era of Malabar (A.D. 825) and the Cālukya Vikrama era (A.D. 1075) which had only a short vogue.⁵

We may now pass to a consideration of literary sources. Their volume is enormous, and they fall into different classes of varying value. A detailed discussion of this class in all its variety is impossible here, and the treatment has necessarily to be selective and illustrative. One obvious line of distinction is between literature that is contemporary with the events depicted or studied, and later literature. But this distinction is not always as easy to observe as it looks, and

⁵ See Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, App. III.

with the possible exception of Vedic literature, conserved with great care as sacred scripture, and the annals, travel diaries, and so on known to have been written up then and there are few writings which can be strictly called contemporary. But the distinction indicated suggests the need for our considering in every case how far removed the source at our disposal is from the events it purports to deal with. And in a country where the climate is highly inimical to the preservation of manuscripts, books have had to be copied over and over again, every transcription perhaps giving rise to fresh errors, inaccuracies and interpolations. The critical study of the epics, the *Purāṇas*, and the Buddhist and Jain texts is a very trying business, and their value even for a study of social life and economic institutions has been much impaired by the conditions briefly indicated above. We can reconstruct an outline of Aryan tribal history from the Vedic hymns and other texts, but much of the history is disconnected, uncertain and unsupported by archaeology, and is therefore largely hypothetical. The efforts of Pargiter, Kirfel, and recently of R. Morton Smith⁶ to recover history from the *Purāṇas* cannot be held to be successful. At the same time, it must be pointed out that most of our literature still awaits systematic study and exploitation from a historical standpoint by trained historians; the field has been held generally by linguists and philologists whose work is very welcome in its own way, but needs to be supplemented from the view point of the historian proper. Pāṇini and Patañjali have been studied respectively by V. S. Agarwal and B. N. Puri, not to speak of earlier studies of casual and piece-meal character. More studies like Agarwal's on the *Harṣa Carita* in Hindi and Handiqui's on *Yas'astilaka campū* are required for literary works not only in Sanskrit but in all Indian languages.

The *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya is a unique work of its kind. After long and, as it now seems, needless controversies the work has come to be generally accepted as substantially what it purports to be viz., a composition of the Chancellor of

⁶ *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vols. 77 & 78.

Candragupta Maurya, though, like all texts, modified in some ways, by later additions and alterations. The text is not easy and has often been misunderstood; I should mention here the new edition of the work by Prof. Kangle brought out by the Bombay University which is a decided improvement on all the earlier editions; two more volumes of translation and notes and critical studies have been promised and these will be awaited with interest.

Kauṭilya's work in its *adhyakṣapracāra* is a manual of practical administration such as is not known in any other work on Indian polity, with the possible exception of the *Śukranītisāra*, which is now suspected to be an early nineteenth century hoax calculated to satisfy the comprehensive curiosity of Col. Mackenzie. According to Kauṭilya a *gopa*, an official in charge of five or ten villages, was required to keep a record of everything concerning a village, its population, their occupations, income and expenditure, cultivation, manufacture, and trade; these registers were regularly checked by superior officers with information collected through spies. Centuries later, Hiuen Tsang observed that each province in India had its own official to write down a regular record of events mentioning good and evil events, calamities and fortunate occurrences. Is it not a tragedy that not one of these village records or provincial chronicles has survived? Similar records of much more recent times have survived in South India as we shall see.

There are some quasi-historical biographies like the *Harṣa Carita* in prose of Bāṇa, the *Gauḍa-Vaho*, the *Navasāhasāṅka Carita*, *Vikramāṅkadeva Carita*, *Kumārapāla Carita*, *Rāmapāla Carita*, *Prithivīrājaviṣaya* and many others. They contain at times valuable material for history, but are more works of general literature than historical works proper. To the same category belong collections of traditional tales like *Prabandha Cintāmaṇi* of Meruttunga (1306) and hagiologies like Hemacandra's *Parīśiṣṭaparvan* (twelfth century).

Bardic literature is in a class by itself and conserves traditions of more or less historical value. The bards of more advanced communities as in Rājasthān and Gujarat relied

largely on written records, and the institutions of family bards flourished in Rajputana from about A.D. 1400 to 1800. Neither Forbes nor Tod undertook a critical analysis of their sources. Tessitori has shown the need for a distinction being made between bardic poetry and the prose chronicles of Rājasthān, the latter comprising chronicles proper and genealogies. But when all is said, the value of these materials for chronology and political history is perhaps negligible, though they may 'constitute a valuable repository of information on the culture history of feudal families'.⁷

The chronicles of Rājasthān, Nepal and Assam are comparatively recent in the form in which we have them, and Kalhana's *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, is the only historical work based on a continuous tradition of pre-Muslim historical writing. It has been suggested that contact with other peoples possessing a stronger sense of history than had India may have encouraged the growth of historical writing in Kashmir.⁸ Kalhana recognizes the merit of historical impartiality and is seen to record fair judgements on the more recent kings. He was a pious brahman and his attitude to history was largely that of orthodoxy conditioned by belief in *Karma*, fate (*daiva*) and so on.

The advent of Islam begins a fine series of Indian chronicles, and the Muslim chronicles are far superior to the mediaeval chronicles of Europe. 'They were written for the most part not by monks but by men of affairs, often by contemporaries who had seen and taken part in the events they recount.' (Dodwell).⁹ From this point the volume of sources increases progressively and the historian is troubled not by dearth of material but by its plethora, and also by the partisan character, the theological bias, or the didactic aims of particular writers. But the historians apart, we must give particular attention to the illustrious Alberuni (the foreigner) whose real name was Abu-Rihan Muhammad, a native of the Khiva territory, who was born in 973 and became the most

⁷ *Historians*, etc. p. 92.

⁸ *Historians*, etc. p. 57.

⁹ Cited by P. Hardy. *Historians*, etc. p. 115.

distinguished ornament of the court of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni who brought him to Ghazni as a prisoner or a hostage. When the Punjab was conquered by Mahmud, Alberuni took up his residence there and developed an amazing interest in the study of Hindu religion, literature and philosophy. He mastered the Sanskrit language and read the *Purāṇas* and was fascinated by the philosophy of the *Bhagavadgīta*. He was one of the most gifted scientific men known to history and was adept in astronomy, mathematics, chronology, mathematical geography, physics, chemistry and mineralogy. He criticized Mahmud's destructive raids on India and deplored their effects on the Indian mind and on the relations between Hinduism and Islam. His wonderful book on India, conveniently known as *Alberuni's India* (tr. by Sachau) is unique in its numerous and accurate observations on the history, character, manners and customs of the Hindus; it is 'like a magic island of quiet impartial research in the midst of a world of clashing swords, burning towns, and plundered temples'. The student will find it instructive to compare its data with those found in the *Ain-i-Akbari* of Abūl Fazl written more than five centuries later, and so far as possible with those from the *Arthaśāstra* which preceded Alberuni's book by nearly thirteen centuries. Alberuni died in 1048.

To turn to the historians proper, P. Hardy has pointed out,¹⁰ that before the Ghoriad conquest of India, Muslim historiography had developed four categories of writing, and that the Persian histories written in India between 1206 and 1440 all fall within these categories. The categories are: (a) General history from Adam; a subform is the history of the Muslim community in one region; (b) the prose eulogy (*manaqib* or *faza'il* type) usually but not necessarily of a ruler; (c) the *fürstenspiegel* or didactic history, and (d) artistic forms of historical writing. We shall now briefly review some of the most important of these. First, the *Tabaqāt-i-Nasiri* (1259-60) of Minhaj-al-Siraj JūzJāni, a migrant to India who was qazi in Sindh and Delhi. This work

¹⁰ *Historians*, etc. p. 10.

belongs to the class of general history, as also the *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi* (1428-34) of Yahya ibn Ahmad Sarhindi, and the *Tarikh-i-Muhammadi* (1438-39) of Muhammad Bihamad Khāni. These are histories written from authorities rather uncritically relied on and treat history as the doing of powerful members of the Muslim community or their infidel enemies. There is a definite falling off from the critical standards of the earlier writers of Persia like Ṭabari and al-Dinawari. Sarhindi avers that he wrote the *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi* as an offering to the Sayyid Sultan after whom it is named in the expectation of a reward for the effort. The *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* of Shams al-din Siraj Afif, written not long after Timur's inroad, is a good example of the eulogy type which apparently seeks to portray a golden age of the Delhi sultanate before the calamity of Timur's invasion. Here history becomes panegyric, a story of what must have happened under an ideal ruler. Ziya-ud-din Barni's *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* (1357) is the one notable didactic writing of the period seeking to propagate the author's philosophy of history and teach the Sultan his duties and the necessity of fulfilling them by examples from history. 'As each reign is presented as a one-act morality play, Barni disregards detailed chronology and is sparing with his dates.'¹¹ The works of Amir Khusrau (d. 1325), the famous Indo-Persian poet, and the *Futuh-al-Salatin* (1349-50) of Isami are good examples of artistic historical writing. What all these writers provide in their narratives is certainly not history in the true modern sense of the word, but their views of events in the light of their theocratic and moral prepossessions.

The volume of historical writing increases many fold when we reach the Mughal period and it becomes impossible to deal with individual works within the limits of these lectures. The sources at our disposal may be grouped into broad classes and each class illustrated by naming its leading examples. First come the official histories, generally written under the auspices and with the financial support of the State, of which

¹¹ *Historians, etc.* p. 123.

the *Akbar Namah* of Abul Fazl is the leading example. His official position, the confidence he enjoyed of his master, his literary ability and critical mind have made his work the most complete and authentic history of Akbar's reign. Besides this official narrative, we have other contemporary accounts which serve as a corrective to the unalloyed eulogy of Abul Fazl. The two most important of these are *Muntakhib-ut-Tawarikh* of Mulla Abdul Qadir Badāyūnī and the *Tabakat-i-Akbari* of Nizamuddin Bakhshi. Badāyūnī was born in 1540 and enjoyed Akbar's patronage from 1574. But after the advent of Abul Fazl at the Court, he had to take a second place, and this irritated him. As an orthodox Muslim he also developed hostility to Akbar's religious eclecticism strongly supported by Abul Fazl and his elder brother Faizi. The result is fully reflected in Badāyūnī's writing; its publication was suppressed by Jahangir according to Khāfi Khān. He owns that his inducement to write 'has been nothing but sorrow for the faith and heart-burning for the deceased Religion of Islam'. Nizamuddin held high office and earned Badāyūnī's approval. His *Tabakat-i-Akbari* written in 1592-3 is a general history beginning with the Ghaznavids and coming down to the thirty-eighth year of Akbar's reign.

The period from Jahangir to Aurangzeb is rich in historical writings both official and independent. They must be consulted in Elliot and Dowson's volumes and elsewhere. We should, however, mention the *Muntakhab-al-Lubab* of Khāfi Khān, a history of India from the Muhammadan conquest to the beginning of Muhammad Shah's 14th year (1731). Khāfi Khān describes himself as having been successively attached to the train of three or four sovereigns, and says that he had spent sixteen or seventeen years of his life on the composition of the book, especially on the last forty years of Aurangzeb's reign. Of that period, owing to Aurangzeb's prohibition of historical writing, he had found no previous record except Musta'idd Khān's account of the Deccan conquests, but he had tried to compile a truthful narrative from the official records, the reports of trustworthy persons, and

his personal experiences. There is in existence, however, a prefaceless history of Aurangzeb's reign which agrees closely with the corresponding part of Khāfī Khān's history; it speaks of Shah 'Alam (Bahadur Shah) as the reigning sovereign and must therefore have been written about twenty years earlier than the *Muntakhab-al-Lubab*; its author was Abul-Fazl Mamuri, according to Shri Ram Sharma. This, if correct, casts a doubt on Khāfī Khān's claim that he found no earlier account of the last years of Aurangzeb. Rieu, however, thought that it was the first draft of Khāfī Khān himself. In any case Khāfī Khān was a historian of high quality who could be fair to the Marāthas whom he detested. The idea that the name Khāfī Khān contains an allusion to the 'clandestine' composition of the work in the period when historical writing was forbidden by Aurangzeb deserves no credit and contradicts Khāfī Khān's own statements on the composition of the book.¹² The history of India in the eighteenth century after the death of Aurangzeb and the beginnings of British rule in Bengal formed the subject of an extremely interesting work *Siyar al-mutakhirin* (1780-81) of Ghulam Husain Khan Tabatabai, who recorded the opinion that the British were too much occupied with wars and personal quarrels to have any time to spare for the affairs of Indians — an opinion perhaps on two or three futile interviews on a personal matter with Warren Hastings whom he had known for a considerable time.

Besides regular histories, official and unofficial, the Mughal period teems with other kinds of historical records. There are government records which have survived in some measure and include the valuable class of *Akhbarats* or news letters from the different camps to the headquarters and other letters like those of Abul Fazl, Aurangzeb and others; biographies and memoirs like those of Babar, the biography of Humayun by Gulbadan Begum, the memoirs of Jahangir and so on; local and provincial histories; and other literary works. Each of these classes has its own value to the histo-

¹² Storey, p. 460 n and p. 594.

rian and it is generally difficult to be sure that all the data relevant to an issue have been focussed and considered.

Though we cannot stop to consider details, we must also mention the large volume of Marāthi records of which only a small selection have found publication, the rest being conserved in archives, daftars and collections of learned societies. As many of the original records used by Grant Duff for his *History of the Marāthas* are known to have perished, that book must continue to enjoy the status of an original authority.

The records of the British Government in India, most of which have their counter-parts in the files of what was the India Office and now forms part of the Commonwealth Relations Office, occupy a dubious position between indigenous and foreign sources. They form a vast and important source of modern Indian history, and comprise not only the day to day correspondence, proceedings, resolutions and so on of different authorities of the Company and the Crown in India and England, but reports of enquiries, commissions and other *ad hoc* documents of even greater value than the regular papers. Guides and hand-books of reasonable size are generally available for most of these official collections, and a good part of these records have been press listed, calendered and published in selections both in India and England. It is worth noting that much of the Indian correspondence continued to be in Persian far into the eighteenth century and the *Calendar of Persian Correspondence* in many volumes being issued by the National Archives is quite important. Some crucial documents like the famous Fifth Report of 1812 have received special attention and been commented on, and the critical literature on some facets of modern history and the documents relating to them such as the administration of Warren Hastings, or the Sepoy Mutiny is amazingly large in volume and uneven in quality. There are also valuable collections of private papers in the custody of English families or learned institutions which, if access can be gained to them, can give valuable hints on the real course of events not to be gathered from formal public papers. The National Archi-

ves and the Madras Record Office are among the best organized archival collections in India, but one gets the general impression that the detailed bibliographical aids for the guidance of the young scholar to these rich stores are not as readily available as they should be, and also that the number of scholars entering on their study is by no means anywhere near what it should be.

From the archives of British India, it is a natural transition to those of other European powers that held sway in India for a time, and something may be said of these here before we consider the other foreign sources for the history of India. We need not spend much time or effort on the short-lived and nightmarish rule of the Portuguese in India. The archives in Goa and Lisbon doubtless hold much valuable material and have been occasionally drawn upon by some historians of India; but the general rule has been, as J. B. Harrison has pointed out, to depend on three general histories in English on Portuguese activities in India and the Indian Ocean, viz., the works of Danvers, Jayne and Whiteway, themselves based on the works of five Portuguese historians of the Renaissance period viz., Barros, Couto, Bocarro, Castanheda and Correa. The merits and defects of these historians are succinctly set forth by Mr. Harrison in his paper on Five Portuguese Historians in *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceulon*.

The Dutch played an important part in the sea-borne trade of India in the seventeenth century, and they were careful to note many things which the English were apt to take for granted. The extant Dutch accounts of the working of markets in Agra, in Golconda or Gujarat are far superior to anything found in English Records and so too their data on contemporary Indian standards of consumption. Not only in economic matters, but on administrative questions also the Dutch records have much to tell. The details of everyday working of institutions omitted in indigenous records are described fully—procedure, punishments, levy and collection of taxes and so on. Even on social life and political history we get

valuable information, as for instance, on the conduct and character of Nur Jahan or Mir Jumla. For the greater part of the seventeenth century the Dutch and English were actuated by the same motives in India, and the former were usually some way ahead doing most of the effective pioneering. The trading voyage, the factory and the fort preceded the beginnings of territorial acquisition, and both factory and fort arose out of Dutch initiative. The history of British India really begins, says Moreland, 'not with Hawkins negotiating at Agra, but with Houtman chaffering for pepper with the Chinese merchants at Bantam'.¹³ Fort Geldria in Pulicat, not Fort St. George in Madras, was the first to set the new fashion.

The first important Dutch source is the travel account of Linschoten (Hakluyt Society) which is the account of an eyewitness only for the coast between Goa and Cochin, the rest being just valuable hearsay. An immense storehouse of early documents is provided by J. K. J. de Jonge—*De Opkomst van het Nederlandsche Gezag in Oost-Indie* (1862) though only some of them relate directly to India. The same observation holds true of the *Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlandico-Indicum* being published in several volumes of the *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsche-Indie* by Heeres and Stapel, which preserves texts of several treaties between the Dutch and Indian powers, otherwise unknown. Documents of importance relating to the arrival of the Dutch in India are given in two books of Dr. H. Terpstra—*De Vestiging van de Nederlanders aan de Kust van Koromandel* (Groningen, 1911), and *De Opkomst der Westerkwartieren van de Oost-Indische Compagnie* (Suratte, Arabie, Perzie (The Hague, 1918)). The account goes upto 1610 for the east coast; and 1624 for the west. From 1624 starts the official diary *Dagh Register*, an extremely valuable record of the Dutch headquarters at Bataviā written up from day to day by or under the eye of one of the members of council, and purporting to record everything that happened

¹³ *Journal of Indian History*, ii. 224.

in Asia of interest to the Dutch. From 1641 the diary was maintained in sections, and this renders easy the separate handling of the Indian section. But this arrangement did not last long, and in later years, the compilers omitted the summaries of letters received, only referring to the letter-books which are not traceable always and may, at least in part, have been lost. Also the journal is incomplete or missing for some early years. With all its gaps, the journal gives an extraordinary variety of information, not merely on commercial topics, but on political and administrative questions of the moment. We have also another class of documents which may be called Commercial Reports. They arose out of the Dutch practice of forwarding to Holland a formal description of each region after some years spent in it giving an account of its resources and potentialities. Each writer had from five to seven years' experience of the locality he described; all of them were writing, not for the public, but for the information of their employers; their prospects depended, not on brilliance of narrative, but on the practical value of their work; and it is safe to infer that their efforts were open to the criticism of their superior officers in India' (Moreland). The reports thus stand very much higher than narratives such as those of Terry or della Valle, in which there are traces of the tendency of hasty generalization familiar in modern works of travel. The Masulipatam report of A. Schorer has been translated into English and published for the Hakluyt Society by Moreland together with Methwold's *Relations of Golkonda*. De Laet, *De Imperio Magni Magolis* (Leyden 1631) obviously drew largely on the Gujarat and Agra reports and Van Twist, *Generale Beschrijvinge van Indien* (Amsterdam 1648), seems also to have consulted the Gujarat reports though he had to make careful use of it as the famine of 1630 had intervened and vastly altered conditions.

Begin ande voortganch van de Vereenigde Nederlandsche Geoctroyeerd Oost-Indische Compagnie, edited by I. Comeline, (Amsterdam, 1646) was a compilation in some chronological order of various journals, diaries, reports and other

such documents, and providing at times, some connecting links between one document and another. It was rather a crude attempt, and Baldaeus and more particularly Valentyn, were to carry this method to higher levels of perfection. Philip-pus Baldaeus, a clergyman who knew Ceylon and Malabar at first hand for over a decade, produced (1672) the *Naauw-kurige Beschrijvinge van Malabar en Coromandel* etc. a voluminous work of the best type of seventeenth and eighteenth century historical works on Asia. He appears to have used Portuguese sources and local historical traditions, written and oral. He did not confine himself to Dutch activities, but showed an interest in the history of indigenous peoples even in the period following the advent of Europeans. Though stressing political history, he noted matters relating to social, religious, and economic life for their curiosity interest. A Dutch physician, Daniel Hawart, spent some thirteen years on the Coromandel Coast serving sometimes as cashier or storekeeper. His *Op- en Ondergang van Coromandel* (1693) gives an almost eyewitness account of conditions in Dutch factories, the last Kings of Golkonda and sundry points of native life. He had a cultured and critical mind, and his work is valuable both as a source and as a historical contribution. François Valentyn's *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien* (1724-6) carries the story further than Baldaeus and is in some respects fuller, including Bengal which Baldaeus ignored. He too uses diverse sources — Dutch, Portuguese and indigenous — and quotes extensively from them or even reproduces them. He borrows without acknowledgment from Baldaeus among others and is not always accurate in the use of his sources. He spent most of his time in the East Indies, not in India proper. Certain Dutch documents of the period are known only through the extracts he gives, being no longer traceable in the Dutch archives. He has a valuable glossary of South Asian words and phrases. He and Baldaeus 'are indispensable for a study of the matters dealt with by them'.¹⁴ Completed in 1701-3, but being published only since 1927 at the Hague, is Peter Van Dam's *Beschrijving van de Oost Indische Compagnie*.

¹⁴ *Historians, etc.* p. 172.

an official history written by the chief legal and administrative official of the Company at the request of the Directors, 'It was to be kept as a secret document for private reference by the Directors of the Company alone; there was no idea of publication.' But several writers were allowed to consult it in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Van Dam says much of interest relating to the Mughal empire and other states, though he is best when he deals with the activities of the Company with whose central administration he was associated for about half a century. He is not free from inaccuracies and did not always digest his material properly; and he borrows freely from his predecessors without acknowledgment. All the same, like Baldaeus and Valentyn, he is indispensable, and is a primary authority where the original material is lost. These works taken together give a definitely pro-Dutch view of affairs in the seventeenth century South Asia with the main emphasis on Malabar, Coromandal and Ceylon. There is no lack of criticism of the Company's policy, but in spite of wide interest in various matters relating to the peoples of South Asia, there was no attempt at synthetic historical writing.

The French records of Pondicherry and Paris are, as may be expected, of great value for the study of Anglo-French Wars in India, but as the struggle was carried on mainly in the South we may postpone the consideration of this material till we take up South Indian history in particular.

We shall now go back to the beginning of Indian History to see what help the historian may get from foreign sources. The description of any country and its people by foreign observers is always valuable, for it is apt to give a vivid idea of many things which indigenous writers may take for granted and pass over lightly. And where, as in the case of ancient India, the native sources fail the historian partly or altogether at some points, the writings of foreigners gain additional value. Yet it is easy to exaggerate the value of the Greek writings on India. These writers did evince a commendable interest in observing and recording facts. But they were also credulous purveyors of fable and gossip. The few who wrote be-

fore the invasion of Alexander did so mostly from hearsay and had little direct knowledge of India. The scientists and men of action who accompanied Alexander must have found most of their time taken up with planning, marching and fighting in a hostile and unknown country; the wonder is that they succeeded in doing what they did to make India known to their countrymen; and the lands they traversed were but the fringe of Hindustan, far from the genuine centres of Hindu culture in the heart of the country. The ambassadors of the Hellenistic Kings who came after Alexander, in particular Megasthenes, had better opportunities as their missions took them far into the country. Being ignorant, however, of the language of the country, they must have depended on interpreters and felt much difficulty in understanding correctly what they saw and heard. The Chinese pilgrims of a later age who had command of the Sanskrit idiom were much better placed in this respect, but their interests were not so wide. With very few exceptions, Herodotus being the most notable⁷ of them, all the original writings have perished, and we have to depend on excerpts preserved by later writers and compilers who, in turn, had access, at times, only at second hand to the matter they quoted. Still, it is useful to study these excerpts with care, for much can be learnt thus of the geography, physical and human, of the fauna and flora, and of the society, religion and economy of ancient India. Most of the relevant passages from the classical writers can now be read in the recent compilation of Prof. R. C. Majumdar who is quite critical of the value of the sources he has collected, and holds that some passages have been attributed to Megasthenes without sufficient warrant. McCrindle first translated most of these texts into English in the last century.

The Alexanderine geographer Ptolemy, middle of the second century A.D., represents an important stage in the increasing acquaintance of the Romans with the East. His geographical account of India is based mostly on secondary sources and is full of errors; even his general conception of the shape of India is faulty in the extreme. Long after Ptolemy,

in the early Byzantine period came Marcian of Heraclea whose work has survived only in fragments. 'If it had been preserved to us in its complete form', says Schöff, 'it might indeed have been a more useful compilation of Roman geography for general reference than the highly technical work of Ptolemy.'

A more typical Byzantine figure was the crotchety monk Cosmas, called Indikopleustes, the man who sailed to India. He was merchant who traded as far east as Ceylon; his book *Christian Topography*, written between A.D. 530 and 550 sets out to disprove the current theories of classical geography on the conformation of the earth and establish doctrines drawn from Holy Scripture. Yale called it 'a continent of mud from which we may extract, however, a few geographical fossils of considerable interest'.

The Chinese dynastic annals and travellers form another important source. The Chinese court historians had their own way of referring to all foreigners as barbarians and all trade missions as bearers of tribute to the Son of Heaven; but their record of embassies often made with precise dates does not lose its value on that account, and often comes in handy to prove the East Asian contacts of Indian states and even aids occasionally to settle points of chronology. The evidence from Chinese sources on the movements of peoples in Central Asia which resulted in the advent of Śakas and Kushānas in India is very valuable and has given rise to rival views which will be found discussed in works like Dé la Vallée Poussin's *L'Inde aux temps des Mauryas* etc. (1930) and J. E. van Lohuizen de Leeuw's *The Scythian Period* (1949, Leyden) besides the writings of Sten Konow. India's intercourse with China occurred along two routes — the land-route by the north-west and the sea-route round Indo-China. Buddhism furnished the chief stimulus to movement on either side and the nature and results of this religious exchange which continued over several centuries are best studied in the late Prof. P. C. Bakchi's book on *India and China* (Calcutta 1950). There is need for a similar handbook which gathers together all the scattered references to India and her affairs in the dynastic annals, encyclopaedias and other Chinese writings like

those of Chu K'u Fei (117), Chau Ju-Ku (1225), Wang Ta-Yuan (1350) etc. which are not easily accessible here. Many Chinese travellers visited India, the holy land of Buddhism, and of these three are very well known — Fa-hian, Hiuen Tsang and I-tsing — and there is no need to dwell on the value of their writings which are available in authoritative translations in English, though I-tsing's biographies of *Eminent Monks* who travelled to India is apparently available only in the French translation of Chavannes (1894). The primary interest of these travellers lay in Buddhism and Buddhist learning in India, and we should not forget this in interpreting their evidence on more general matters.

With the ninth century we enter the period of the great Arab travellers, geographers and historians. From very ancient times much of the trade of the Indian Ocean had been in the hands of the Arabs, and with the rise of Islam there came a sudden expansion which was not confined to religion and politics, but spread to commerce and science. The Prophet had himself started as a merchant, and Muslim merchants continued to enjoy great prestige throughout. In the sixteenth year of the Hegira (A.D. 637) an Arab fleet starting from the coast of Oman visited Sindh and the West Coast of India, where Muslim merchants were soon permitted by Hindu rulers to continue their old trade activities with facilities to practise their new religion unhindered. By 758 the Arabs and Persians settled in Canton were sufficiently numerous for them to be able to raise a tumult in the city and turn the resulting confusion to their own profit. But the empire was not so much Arab as Muslim, not a racial but a religious entity. 'Out of sixteen geographers of note (who wrote in Arabic)¹⁵ from the ninth to the thirteenth century,' says Oakeshott, 'four were natives of Persia, four of Baghdad and four of Spain'. One of the earliest of these writers was Ibn Khurdadbeh, descendant of a Magian who had embraced Islam. He occupied a high position in the official world and could gather much authentic information on the various

¹⁵ *Commerce and Society*, pp. 48-9.

parts of the empire and the countries with which it maintained relations of one kind or another. His *Book of Routes and Kingdoms* (A.D. 848-885) gives information of value on the intercommunications between Europe and Asia in the second half of the ninth century A.D. Abu Zaid Hasan of Siraf on the Persian Gulf was no great traveller himself, but had immense opportunities of meeting much travelled merchants and scholars, the celebrated Masūdī among them. He edited (c.910 A.D.) a compilation of notes made by an anonymous writer from his experience in at least two voyages he made to India at an interval of sixteen years and from what he had collected from others who had visited China, the merchant Suleiman among them. Yule did not put a high value on this vague and inaccurate narrative, but the fact remains that it was largely drawn upon by Masūdī who had travelled in India and Ceylon and wanted to devote particular attention to India. Ibn Al-Fakih (902) who preceded Abu Zaid and Masūdī also drew largely upon this anonymous writer. In fact it is a common trait of Arab writers to copy one another extensively. Abu Zaid added many interesting and precise particulars to the notes of his predecessors. There are many other Arab writers of the tenth century, travellers and geographers, like Ibn Rosteh (903), Ishtakrī (957), Ibn Hawkal (976) and others, but they have little that is new except exaggerated and apocryphal accounts like that of the temple of Mankir (Malkher) from the pen of Abu'l-Faradj (988).

The famous Moorish traveller of the fourteenth century Ibn Batuta (1304-78) deserves more than a passing mention. He was by profession a doctor of Muhammeden law and traditions, and an indefatigable explorer by inclination. He started on his travels in 1325 and during the next eight years visited Arabia and Persia, reaching India in 1333. Muhammad bin Tughlak appointed him Qazi of Delhi which office he held for about eight years. After having toured the different states of India he returned to Morocco in 1353. Here at the instance of Sultan Abu Inan, Ibn Batuta dictated the experiences of his journey to Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Muhammed commonly known as Ibn Juzai, who edited them as the *Rihla*

(Journal). Ibn Batuta died at the age of seventy-three. 'The adventures which befell Ibn Batuta during his long sojourn in India,' says R. H. Major,¹⁶ 'form one of the most curious and eventful chapters of his peregrinations; and this part of his narrative derives additional interest from the details which he introduces not only of the natural productions and agriculture of the country but of the manners, institutions, and history of Hindustan, under the Afghan dynasties, which preceded for nearly three hundred years the establishment of the Mughal power. He gives an historical retrospect, extending from the first conquest of Delhi by the Muhammadans under Kutbuddin Aibak to the accession of the reigning sovereign, Sultan Muhammad, the son of Tughlak, in 1325; which is specially valuable from the additional facts which it supplies, and the light thrown on many of the transactions recorded by Firishta. The preliminary sketch is continued by the personal narrative of Ibn Batuta himself, whose fortune led him to India at the crisis when the unity of the Pathan power (at all times rather an aristocracy of military leaders than a consolidated monarchy) was on the point of dissolution, from the mad tyranny of Sultan Muhammad, which drove all the governors of provinces into open revolt, and led to the erection of independent kingdoms in Bengal, the Dekhan etc. On the arrival of an embassy from the emperor of China, he gladly accepted an appointment as one of the envoys destined to convey the gifts sent in return by Sultan Muhammad; and receiving his outfit and credentials, quitted without delay the dangerous walls of Delhi early in the year of the Hejira 743 (A.D. 1342).'

The volume of evidence from European travellers and merchants who resided in India for considerable periods grows to great proportions in the seventeenth century when the splendour of the Mughal empire offered a great attraction. For the reigns of Akbar and Jahangir the Jesuit records occupy the first place in volume and importance. The Jesuit contact with Akbar began in A.D. 1580 and three missions went to his court from Goa. An account of the first mission

¹⁶ *India in the Fifteenth Century*, pp. liv-lv.

was written in 1582 by Father Jarrie Monserrate, a great scholar. Fr. Pierre du Jarrie, the French historian, published (1608-14) an account of the Jesuit missions upto 1609, including the three missions to the great Moghul. Based on the original Jesuit letters, du Jarrie's work is of a great value for elucidating the religious activities of Akbar. These Jesuit sources have been well studied by scholars like Hostens, Maclagan and V. A. Smith. Fr. John Correia-Afonso's *Jesuit Letters and Indian History* (Bombay 1950) is a recent and comprehensive study of the subject in so far as it relates to India. According to C. H. Payne, who translated and annotated a portion of du Jarrie's work, the chief interest of the narrative lies in 'the intimate light it sheds on the character and mind of Akbar, in the portraits it presents of the royal princes and other notable figures of the time, and in the insight it affords into the general conditions of life under Mogul rule'.¹⁷ We shall have to revert to Jesuit letters presently.

The Europeans who travelled in India in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries came from different countries and on diverse trade missions, career, diplomacy, diversion. Some of them received a warm reception in the Mughal court. The travellers were often men of learning and culture, keen, shrewd and sympathetic observers who sometimes occupied a privileged position at the court. The accounts of seven Englishmen¹⁸ who travelled in northern and western India during the reigns of Akbar and Jahangir, not designed by writers for publication, have the great merit of 'naturalness of the narrative'. William Foster has edited and annotated the most important among these travel books in his *Early Travels in India 1583-1619*, and the rest may be read in extenso in *Purchas, His Pilgrimages* (1625) or *Hakluytus Poshtumus or Purchas, His Pilgrimages* (Maclehose 1905). Foster observes: 'Most of the travellers are seen as it were in undress, and we

¹⁷ Cited by Correia-Afonso. p. 122.

¹⁸ Ralph Fitch (1583-91); John Mildenhall (1599-1606); William Hawkins (1608-13); William Finch (1603-11); Nicholas Withington (1612-16); Thomas Coryat (1612-17); and Edward Terry (1616-19).

learn more of their characters than we probably should, had they been conscious that they were addressing a wider audience. For the travellers themselves one feels a genuine admiration. One and all, the men who here write their adventures so soberly and so modestly with many a shrewd observation and occasionally a flash of humour, ran daily great risks; and in fact three of them found in the east their last resting place, while a fourth died on the voyage home. Sickness, robbery, threats of violence were incidents that did not shake their cheerfulness, and there is little reflection in their narrative of the danger and hardships which were constantly their lot.'

The *Journal* of Sir Thomas Roe, the ambassador of King James I to Jahangir, sheds valuable light, among others, on the splendours of the Mughal court. 'But he was too shrewd to allow the pomp and glitter to blind him to the real state of the country and he brings out clearly the darker shades of the picture. He saw clearly, too, the forces which were making for disintegration; and though "the time when all in these Kingdoms will be in combustion" was not so near as he imagined, yet it was only postponed by the force of character of Shah Jahan and his still more capable son.' Terry's *Voyage* (*Purchas*, Vol. IX 1-54 of the reprint of 1777) is a useful supplement to Roe's account of the life, character and policy of Jahangir. He also says something of the Jesuits and the Portuguese, and of the manners and customs of the people. The letters of Thomas Coryat also give a glimpse of the personality and character of Jahangir. The *Journal of John Jourdain* edited by Foster for the Hakluyt Society describes the commercial activities of the English traders on the west coast, their relations with the Portuguese, and their treatment by the local authorities, as also the cities and towns through which he passed in the second half of the seventeenth century.

We cannot discuss details relating to the many other travellers of the period like François Pelsaert, De Laet, Pietro Della Valle, Sir Thomas Herbert, Johann Albert Van Mandelsto, François Bernier, Tavernier, Manucci, Thavenof,

Carreri, and others. Their observations throw much light on different aspects of Mughal rule and the state of the country, the army, and so on. De Laet's *Description of India and Fragment of Indian History* (1625) has been described as a complete gazetteer of Jahangir's India, and the *Fragment* agrees substantially with the Persian histories. Bernier was a French doctor of great ability who became physician to Danishmand Khan and lived in the Mughal court for nine years. His reports to the French minister Colbert provided a vivid picture of Aurangzeb's court in the early years of his reign as also of the war of succession that preceded; his analysis of Mughal administration and description of Hindu society were valuable, and Europe's idea of the India of the 17th and 18th centuries was mainly based on his account. Manucci came to India as a boy of seventeen in 1653 and stayed till his death (about 1718) after serving for some time in Dara's artillery. The sparkle of his anecdotes must go far to excuse his rather slender attachment to facts. These foreign observers reported in detail on many things taken for granted by Indian writers and this constitutes their main contribution to our knowledge of society and culture at their time. Their evidence on political occurrences is nothing by the side of the Persian sources. They often merely reproduced bazar rumours and stories current among the populace; they did not know literary Persian enough and had few opportunities of visiting the makers of Indian History, and then more often as suppliants for favours than as equals capable of engaging in free and familiar intercourse.

One general observation may be made at the end of this general survey of the sources of our history. That history has too long been treated from the imperialist standpoint and dominated by the 'spirit of Vincent Smith' so to say. Stress has been laid on the absence of a state organization independent of or more lasting than a dynasty; every founder of a kingdom created an organization of his own which had little relation with what went before or came after, and the people were indifferent to the incidence of political rule in their absorption with the pursuit of other worldly interests. A few

European writers from other nations have, as it seems to us rightly, taken a more organic view of India's history and laid stress on its continuity and on Indians being essentially not very different from other nations in their outlook on life and affairs. In a work on *Nationalism in British India* (1920) for instance, the Dutch writer D. M. G. Koch writes: 'The strength of the tendencies towards natural development in that indigenous society, with its fine civilization, its strong traditions, its indestructibly powerful inner life, has not deserted it in the period of British rule also. However great the changes during the past one and a half centuries may have been, India remained in essence the same.'¹⁹ The shrewd Belgian Indologist Poussin, whom I have mentioned already, has said: 'Thanks to the gods and to Sarasvati we have sufficient proof that India—despite the horse sacrifice, the Upaniṣads, Buddhism, caste and the brahmans—was in many respects a country just like any other, very much alive and progressive, in love with arts, with festivals, with literature, by no means gloomy, but witty, at times even Voltairean, easily amused and very amusing.' Again: 'The India of the Rājās, the Kings, and the great feudal chiefs, is worthy of our attention. She is not, as is often said, a chaotic mass from time to time vainly shaken up by the ambition of potentates and the turbulence of princes. She is of truly historical interest. Not only does this India reveal at once the warlike spirit of dynasts and Rajputs and the solidity of complex administrative and commercial bodies, but she is also the scene of the conflict of a certain number of states pursuing precise economic and political ends.'²⁰ He then adds a note of considerable length calculated to develop the point more precisely and illustrate his own view that 'it is possible to show that these dynasties were defending the permanent interests of the country they ruled, interests which may truly be called "national".' We hope that future historians of India will shed the negative and apologetic attitude arising out of an inner feeling that the history of

¹⁹ Cited in *Historians*, etc. p. 177.

²⁰ Cited and translated by Basham in *Historians*, etc. p. 278.

our country is in many ways inferior to that of other countries like England or France, and adopt a more positive and constructive approach to the interpretation of evidence and show that the history of India has a continuity and ethos of its own not in any way lacking in interest or instruction. This would take more critical thinking than has so far been brought to bear on the subject.

II

SOUTH INDIA TO ABOUT A.D. 1300

SOUTH INDIA was the scene of amateurish studies in pre-history beginning with the notice of Pandoo Coolies (Pandukulis) by Marria Graham (1811) and Babington (1833). Other reports of graves from Congreve and Newbold followed, and much was written on the subject of stone, cist or circle graves. The geologist Newbold (1836) first recorded the mysterious mounds of Bellary and North Karnataka, and a host of collectors took the field from 1850; their collections of artifacts mostly from the surface found their way to the British or Indian museums, or disappeared. The name of Bruce Foote, however, stands out preeminent among them all.¹ He was a geologist familiar with developments in Europe and reached India in 1858. His discovery, five years later of stone implements in laterite deposits near Madras opened a new epoch in Indian pre-history. He continued his field work for thirty-three years, making important discoveries wherever he went; excavation played little part in his work and his method comprised topographical observation, surface collection on a large scale, and typological analysis. His *Notes on the ages and distribution of the antiquities* (Madras, 1916) based on years of study of his vast collections offers a monumental reconstruction of the various stages of pre-historic culture of India. Only in one aspect, the historical, does his work call for correction; many of the sites and objects he assigned to the later Iron Age are now seen to belong to the Early Historic or even Mediaeval periods. He also sometimes makes general statements based on observation in a limited region.

It is difficult to draw the line between pre-history and history in South India. The Aśoka inscriptions reach the north of the Mysore state by about 250 B.C., but tell us little

¹ *Historians, etc.*, pp. 250-1.

directly on the nature of the country's culture. We have only the Agastya legends and the descriptions of āśramas on the banks of the Godāvāri in the *Rāmāyaṇa* to guide our surmises on the progress of Aryanization in the South. Pāṇini and Megasthenes knew of the Pāṇḍya country in the extreme south, and this certainly helps to put back the penetration of Aryan influences to about two or three centuries before the period postulated by Wheeler on the results of excavations in Brahmagiri and Maski. The evidence of the Brahmi cave inscriptions from the second century B.C. and the state of Śaṅgam literature in the early centuries A.D. when Roman trade with the South flourished remarkably appear also to fit into the scheme suggested. We may accept Wheeler's statement: "The extent in time and space of the Brahmagiri-Bellary culture can only be proved by further excavation at widely separated points."² We may also note that his picture of the material culture of the period offers no more support to imaginary glories of pre-Aryan Dravidian culture than excavations in the North support the similar imaginings about *Puranic* and epic civilizations.

Some time in the later half of the first millennium B.C., if not earlier, there appeared in South India a new folk who followed the custom of burying the dead collectively after exposure and excoriation in megalithic cists with a round port hole or doorway at one end. They used iron implements and wheel turned pottery. They seemed to have imposed themselves as a dominant people on the pre-existing neolithic population. There are comparable tombs of a much earlier date in Western Asia, Northern Africa and Europe, and though the distances in time and space preclude certainty about it, it is difficult to treat the Indian megalithic culture as altogether unrelated to the Western. Suggestions have been made (by Haimendorf among others) that this megalithic folk were the Dravidian speakers who entered South India by sea from the West and introduced rice-cultivation with the aid of artificial irrigation. According to this view

² *Oxford History of India*, p. 36.

they occupied the South some time after the Aryans entered the North, and at no time did they spread themselves very much beyond the area of their present occupation, though they may have sent out colonies to the North at different times for different reasons. If further studies confirm these views, then it would become probable that the megalithic culture was carried from South India to South East Asia.

Some linguists like Prof. Thomas Burrow have put forward the view that Dravidian words entered Sanskrit in the late Vedic period not from contact with Dravidian speakers in South India which came about later, but from the influence of local Dravidian speeches of an earlier stratum which must have been current in some of the main areas of Aryan settlement and which we may perhaps give the name proto-Dravidian.³ At this point I may also refer to the new theory put forward by N. Lahovary that Dravidian ultimately links up with a widespread group of pre-Indo-European speeches of the Mediterranean basin of which Basque and Caucasian are the isolated representatives in Europe today, besides the Dravidian speeches of South India. Though these speculations on linguistic pre-history sound rather remote today, it may be that further research along the lines indicated may bring more light on very early developments of which we now know so little.

Contemporaneous with the megaliths, are the numerous urn-fields which cover about 100 acres or more indicating large or long settled populations. One of the best known is at Ādiccanallūr in lower Tāmraparṇi Valley in the Tirunelveli district, though others are known near Madras, Pondicherry and elsewhere. 'The dead are usually buried in large pear shaped urns associated with smaller urns, but sometimes in the Madras area a terra cotta sarcophagus on legs is substituted.' Though the actual dwelling places of the urn-field folk have not been identified with certainty, Wheeler thinks 'a very little research should reveal them'.⁴ Funeral furnishings at Ādiccanallūr include pottery of various shapes,

³ *The Indo-Asian Culture* viii, 4, pp. 336-9.

⁴ *Oxford History of India*, p. 37.

iron implements and weapons, gold diadems and mouth pieces embossed with geometrical designs and sometimes with holes cut at the ends, bronze ornaments and utensils besides beads and household articles in stone. This grouping of gold, bronze and iron articles finds more or less close parallels in the late bronze age tombs at Enkomi in Cyprus and in Gera and Gerar in Palestine. The whole problem calls for further investigation, as also the beads of stone, crude glass and semi-precious stones from all over South and South East Asia.

All over India the foundations of the historic culture of the country were laid by the fusion of Indo-Aryan and pre-Aryan elements in varying conditions and proportions, and South India is no exception. Tamil is certainly the oldest of the Dravidian languages and was spoken in early historical times over a much wider area than at present. The earlier Tamil literature which goes back to early centuries A.D. contains relatively few Sanskrit loan words, and these are generally adapted to the Tamil phonetic system, while the forms of literature are independent of Sanskrit models. But even in Tamil, Sanskrit influences grew stronger in course of time and large borrowings of ideas, words, literary forms, and metres became the rule. Telugu and Canarese spoken farther north are even more strongly influenced by Sanskrit. Malayālam very clearly akin to Tamil became a separate language in the eleventh century. But generally speaking in the languages, literatures and institutions of the South there has survived much more of pre-Aryan India than anywhere else. The Marāthas of Western Deccan are the southernmost of the Indo-Aryan speaking peoples of India. The rise of Hindu kingdoms in the eastern lands across the Bay of Bengal is but an extension and continuation of the process by which South India and Ceylon were colonized and Aryanized; and beyond doubt the Deccan and the far South formed the advanced bases from which this transmarine movement started in the early centuries before and after the Christian era. In Indonesia and Indo-China emigrants from India met the same problems as in India and solved them

in more or less the same manner. A detailed study of the many interesting analogies between the results of these early culture-contacts in these different lands has not yet been attempted. The history of India has been too long studied more or less exclusively in isolation and from the continental point of view, little regard being paid to the maritime side of the story.

The earliest evidence from the Tamil country after the Aśoka inscriptions include about thirty or so short Brāhmī inscriptions from natural caverns slightly improved by art so to become fit for human habitation; these inscriptions show us the Tamil language and script in their formative stages, and attest the presence of Buddhists and Jains in the country, which is not surprising in view of Aśoka's missions to the Tamil country. Then we have the excavation at Arikamedu near Pondicherry of a 'Roman factory' where textiles were processed for export, which confirms the trade contacts with the Roman empire, already known from numerous finds of Roman coins mainly of the first and second century A.D., and lastly, the earliest strata of Tamil literature known as the literature of the Śāṅgam and dating most probably from the second to the fourth century A.D. This literature has been assigned a fabulous antiquity by credulous scholars who have swallowed wholesale the tall story of three Tamil Śāṅgams functioning for thousands of years; this tale first appears in a prose commentary of the *Iṟaiyanār Ahapporūl* of indefinite date, but obviously not earlier than the eighth or ninth century A.D., to judge from the events mentioned in the illustrative stanzas cited in it. This literature comprises about 25,000 lines of poetry, now accessible to us only in schematic anthologies, some of which carry invocatory stanzas, at the beginning by a poet known as 'Perundēvanār who sang the Bhāratam'. Now, the larger Sinnamanūr plates of the Pāṇḍyas dated early in the tenth century A.D., record that the Pāṇḍyas established a Śāṅgam in Maḍurāi and had the *Mahābhārata* translated into Tamil. It is tempting to suppose that the invocatory stanzas I have just mentioned were the work of this translator of the Śāṅgam age. But this would be seen

to be clearly wrong if we recall that the anthologies include such late poems and collections as the *Tiru-murug-ārruppaḍai*, *Kalittogai* and *Paripāḍal* which are demonstrably later than the earlier poems. We do not know the name of the Śāṅgam translator of the *Mahābhārata*; on the other hand we know of a Perundēvanār who produced a mixed prose and verse rendering of the epic in the reign of the Pallava king Nandivarman, Victor at Tellāru, as this poem has survived in part. It may be tentatively postulated therefore that the editing of the anthologies as we have them now was the work of this Perundēvanār of the late Pallava period. But this has no bearing on the actual time of the composition of the poems themselves which, for good reasons, may well be assigned to the first four or five centuries A.D., perhaps more particularly to the second and third. A valuable foreign literary source for the Śāṅgam period is the anonymous Greek tract *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* which gives a compact and comprehensive account of the ports of South India and their trade with the Roman Empire. While these sources enable us to form a fair idea of the social and economic conditions prevalent at the time, their notices of kings and chieftains are too fragmentary for a continuous political history to be possible. There are also difficulties due to the vagueness or contradictions in the colophons to the different pieces in the anthologies which must have been added most probably by the editor who compiled the anthologies and which are our only source at present for elucidating the context of the poems. Only for the Chera monarchs do we get anything like a genealogy, and this again is not without its own problems. Much confusion has been imported into the picture we form of the Śāṅgam period by rather persistent attempts to treat the twin epics of the *Silappadikāram* and *Maṇimekalai*, and some of the relatively late anthologies and the group of 18 didactic works including the *Kuraḷ* as contemporary with the genuine Śāṅgam literature of the early centuries A.D. It is only of late that the two epics have come to be recognized for what they are viz., a literary hoax perhaps of the eighth century A.D. or thereabout by anonymous authors

who pretend to be contemporaries of the occurrences they describe. They are purely imaginary tales, though their setting in Śāṅgam age during the reigns of Śeṅguṭṭuvan Chera and Gajabāhu of Ceylon may be correct traditional history so far as the contemporaneity of the two kings is concerned; even this has been doubted.⁵

The earliest of the indigenous coins of South India are the square and oblong copper coins apparently of the early Pāṇdyas. These coins portray the elephant or the bull on the obverse and a stylistically drawn fish emblem on the reverse. By comparing these coins with similar issues of the Sātavāhanas as well as with the punch-marked silver *purāṇas*, the coins can be very approximately dated between 2nd century B.C. and 2nd century A.D. One curious feature, not easy to explain satisfactorily, is the occurrence of Buddhist symbols like the Bodhi tree within a railing, Chaitya etc. on these coins.

In the early centuries B.C. the Deccan probably formed part of the empire of the Nandas of Magadha, and certainly of the Mauryan empire as the discovery of Aśoka inscriptions in Mysore, Maski and Gutti prove beyond doubt, and the memory of Aśoka's rule seems to be preserved in a late Pallava copper-plate inscription. It has become the fashion now to reject the *Matsya Purāṇa* list of thirty Andhra kings ruling for about four and a half centuries after the fall of the Mauryan empire and accept a shorter chronology beginning with the first century B.C. based on the list of nineteen kings given in the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, and the course is often defended on intangible epigraphical and artistic grounds. The sources of Andhra history are very meagre and consist of the inscriptions of the Sātavāhanas and Western Śāka Satraps, besides the *Sattasāi*, a Prakrit anthology attributed to Hāla, an Andhra king, but obviously rehandled by later authors, the *Periplus*

⁵ The late S. Vaiyapurai Pillai did good work on elucidating the chronology of early Tamil literature. He wrote several books and articles on the subject in Tamil, but his conclusions will be found briefly stated in English in *History of Tamil language and literature*. (Beginning to 1000 A.D. — a posthumous publication, Madras, Dec. 1956.)

and the *Purāṇic* lists. The Buddhist and Jaina monuments of the period in Western and Eastern Deccan also furnish evidence of value. The coins of the Sātavāhanas confirm the *Purāṇic* lists in some respects and otherwise eke out our knowledge of the period.

After the close of the Śāṅgam epoch, from about A.D. 300 to 600 there is an almost total lack of information regarding occurrences in the Tamil land. We hear of the foundation in A.D. 470 of a Draviḍa Śāṅgha of the Jainas in Madurai by Ācārya Vajranandi. Of its activities, however, we have no direct knowledge though it is well known that Jainas played a notable part in the civilization of South India where the early literary development of Tamil and Kannaḍa owed much to the labour of Jaina monks. Some scholars are inclined to believe that it is the Śāṅgha of Vajranandi that was the prototype of the Tamil Śāṅgam round which grew the legend that is first hinted at in the Śinnamannūr plates and perhaps developed into the elaborate and incredible legend embedded in the commentary of the *Iraiyanār Ahapporū*. We have also evidence of the growth, if not the dominance, of Buddhist influence in the Tamil country. During this dark period, the Vēlvikuḍi grant (A.D. 768) of the Pāṇḍyas states, 'A *kali* king named Kaḷabhraṇ took possession of the extensive earth driving away numberless great kings (*adhirājar*)', and tells us no more about it although later on it refers to the Kaḷabhraṇas in the plural and their brave, ocean like army. There has been much discussion about this revolution effected by the Kaḷabhraṇas and its duration, but no consensus has yet emerged. Their identity with a *Kali-kula* that ruled somewhere in the Mysore country, and with the Tamil *Kaḷvar* or *Kaḷavar* tribe to which, for instance, Pulli of Vēṅgaḍam belonged has been suggested, but has not gained acceptance. From some Buddhist books we hear of a certain Accutavik-kanta of the Kalabbakula during whose reign Buddhist monasteries and authors enjoyed much patronage in the Cōla country. Late literary tradition found in *Tamil Nāvalar caritai* avers that this king kept in confinement all the three Tamil kings, Chera, Cōla and Pāṇḍya—which agrees with the

statement in the Vēlvikuḍi grant about the overthrow of many great kings. Some songs about him are quoted by Amitā-sāgara, a Jaina grammarian of Tamil of the tenth century A.D. Possibly Accuta was himself a Buddhist, and the political revolution which the Kaḷabhras effected was provoked by religious antagonism. At any rate the Kaḷabhras seem to be roundly denounced as evil kings, *kali-araśar*, (unless we accept the existence of a *kali* dynasty) who upset the social order by dethroning legitimate kings and confiscating religious and charitable endowments. We have almost no contemporary record of this period apart from Buddhadatta's works referred to above; we have no means of estimating the duration or area of Kaḷabhra rule, but we find that all the powers that come up in the sixth century—Pāṇḍyas, Pallavas, and Cālukyas of Bādāmi—claim to have overthrown the Kaḷabhras as a preliminary to the establishment of their own rule. It is significant that no coins of this dark period seem to be known.

In the Deccan the dissolution of the Sātavāhana empire in the third century A.D. is also followed by a confused period of many small powers represented by some inscriptions and coins that have survived. The Ikṣvākus of Āndhradeśa and the Early Pallavas were the most considerable powers at first, and Prākṛit inscriptions on stone from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa and elsewhere tell us about the Ikṣvākus and three Prākṛit charters on copper-plates about the Pallavas. The monuments of the Ikṣvākus are another valuable source for their history. Intensive excavations over the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa region were undertaken some years ago as it was soon to be submerged on the completion of the Nāgārjunasāgar project; the excavations have been completed and their detailed report when available may be expected to bring much fresh knowledge. Tentative and tantalizing notices appear in the annual publication of the department entitled *Indian Archaeology*. The early Pallavas ruled from Kāñcīpuram over the territory south of the Kṛṣṇā from sea to sea for a time. But we know very little of this period, and the darkness is scar-

cely relieved by the lightning flash of the military raid of Samudragupta from the North in the middle of the fourth century A.D. Probably as a result of the raid and the resulting confusion, we see new states rising—the Vākātakas in Vidarbha, the Viṣṇukunḍins in Andhra, the Gaṅgas and Kadambas in the eastern and western halves of the present Mysore State and so on. The Pallavas continue their rule over more restricted territory than before. All these dynasties adopt Sanskrit as the official language of their charters and inscriptions, and the employment of local language in part or as a whole did not start till some centuries later. We have little trustworthy literary evidence, though there are legends galore, some of them making their way into inscriptions as well; and so inscriptions on stone and copper, and coins are our main sources for this period.

The baffling obscurity lifts, and a reasonably continuous history becomes possible again from the middle of the sixth century A.D. or a little later. The period of three centuries that follows saw the rise of relatively large states each with a notable record of its own in war and peace. The Cālukyas of Bādāmi united the whole of the Deccan in one state, but before they gave place to the Rāṣṭrakuṭas in the middle of the eighth century, they had installed two collateral lines in Lāṭa (Gujarat) and in the Andhra country where the Eastern Cālukyas of Vengi held sway till late in the eleventh century when they merged in the imperial Cōḷa dynasty of the Tamil country after several generations of close matrimonial alliances. The country south of the Tungabhadra was shared by the Pallavas and Pāṇḍyas, and the frontier between their territories was a shifting line following the course of the lower Kāvēri. The Pallavas who had to fight on two fronts most of the time had a strenuous time, but rose equal to their tasks and made the most important contributions to the development of Tamil civilization along many lines. The Cōḷas who were prominent in the Śāṅgam period, suffer an eclipse now and are virtually not heard of except in their offshoot, the Telugu-cōḷas in the Ceded District and their neighbourhood, who claimed descent from Karikālā. The Western Gangas of Mysore held an important place among powers of the second

line and joined their forces with the Cālukyas or Pallavas according to exigencies. The entire period was marked by striking developments in religion, literature and art.

From now on to the fall of Vijayanagar in the seventeenth century, inscriptions which progressively grow in numbers and interest become the most faithful and authentic source of the history of the South. The language of these inscriptions is either Sanskrit or the local speech—Kannaḍa, Telugu or Tamil,—or both. The later inscriptions are generally bilingual, employing Sanskrit generally at the beginning and the end, and popular speech in the body of the document, particularly when describing in detail the gifts made and the boundaries of the land given to temples, learned men, and others. The script undergoes change, and evolves, in the Deccan, into the ancestor of the modern Telugu and Kannaḍa scripts; farther south its evolution first assumes the early form of Grantha known from the Pallava inscriptions of the seventh and eighth centuries, and then undergoes modifications under the influence of Tamil in its two forms—Tamil properly so called and Vaṭṭeḷuttu or round hand; the origin of these two scripts is by no means definitely known, though Tamil proper stands in much closer relation to the Pallava Grantha. Bühler held the view that the Vaṭṭeḷuttu may be described as a cursive script, which bears the same relation to the Tamil as the modern northern alphabets of the clerks and merchants to their originals, e.g. Modi of the Marāthas to Bālbodh and the Takari of the Dogras to the Śāradā. The Vaṭṭeḷuttu went out of use in the Tamil country about the tenth century A.D. though it continued to be used on the west coast till very much later.

We may note in passing that the early Pallava Grantha script as yet little differentiated from the ancestor of Telugu-Kannaḍa was carried by Hindu colonists across the seas to west Java, Borneo and Indo-China, the earliest stone inscriptions in this script from these places dating from about A.D. 400 or a little earlier. The language of these early colonial inscriptions is Sanskrit which began to be employed in India itself by the Śaka satraps of western India in the second century A.D.

Stone inscriptions begin to increase in number steadily from the sixth century onwards, but copper-plate records continue to be the mainstay of the historian for some centuries more, and at no time can they be left out of the reckoning. The seals on many of these plates bear the *lāṅghana* (emblem) of the ruling line sometimes surrounded by a Sanskrit verse generally in *anuṣṭup* giving the name of the ruler issuing the charter. The history of the early Pāṇdyas from the seventh to the tenth century A.D. rests almost exclusively on two long copper-plate records—the Vēlvikūḍi grant and the larger Sīnnamannūr plates—which are both bilingual and employ the Grantha script for the Sanskrit and Vaṭṭeḷuttu for the Tamil parts; there are also other copper-plate records including one or two that have been recently discovered, but they are not nearly so important, though they make their contribution to administrative and social history. The history of the contemporary Pallava line of Simhaviṣṇu is also derived more from copper-plates than from stone inscriptions, which, however, are more valuable for Pallava history than the Pāṇḍya. Almost the whole of Eastern Cālukya history, and much of that of the Cālukyas of Bādāmi are also based on copper-plate charters.

The Pāṇḍya chronology of this period rests firmly on some definitely dated inscriptions which are indeed very rare. We have the Ānamalai inscription (from the neighbourhood of the Pāṇḍyan capital Madura) dated in the year 3871 (expired) of the Kaliyuga era, i.e. A.D. 770, which gives us a definite date in the reign of Parāntaka I, Varaguṇa Mahārāja. Another datum, equally definite, is derived from the Aivarmalai record dated in Śaka era 792, i.e. A.D. 870 which was the eighth regnal year of a king Varaguṇa, the second of that name and grandson of Varaguṇa I. These data when coordinated with known genealogies and probable synchronisms enable the historian to establish a dependable frame of chronology for South Indian history. We have another firm date in the Bādāmi rock inscription of Pulakeśin I which is dated in the Śaka year 465 corresponding to A.D. 543 and says that in that year he fortified the hill near Bādāmi into a strong fortress; this record was discovered only in 1941. A

copper-plate record of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa Dantiduga shows him in occupation of Ellora in A.D. 742 and thus throws welcome light on the early career of this founder of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa line of Mānyakheta (Malkhed).

In giving the regnal years of kings, the Pāṇḍyan inscriptions often mention one year opposite another; the exact significance of this still remains a mystery, but epigraphists are agreed in adding up the two or more figures and treating the total as the year of the reign in which the inscription was recorded.

Copper-plates, particularly those of small size, as in this period, can be forged, and this practice has often been resorted to form different motives; but the trained epigraphist has seldom much difficulty in detecting their true nature, and in one case, that of Western Ganga history, perhaps even some genuine documents were rejected in the first instance by Fleet as spurious. Later discoveries of really early records have necessitated a reconsideration of some of those rejected earlier, though in the vast majority of instances Fleet's judgement still holds the field. Instances are not altogether unknown of spurious plates sometimes recording in genuine history or tradition.

Closely allied to inscriptions is the evidence of the shorter legends on coins. But the coinage of South India, it has been said, 'presents greater difficulties to the student and offers less reward for his labours than that of the North'. This should not, however, become the excuse for neglecting this line of evidence which is, in fact, a little more rewarding than is generally thought. Really ancient coins are rare and contain no dates, and few intelligible legends, often only the ruler's name or title as in the *śrīnidhi* and *śrībhara* coins of the Pallavas; also the devices upon them are often crude and indistinct. The rectangular pieces of impure silver or sometimes copper bearing several punch-marks, the *purāṇas* (eldings) of the law books, were common to both North and South India and certainly belong to the centuries before Christ, though they may have continued in circulation till about A.D. 200. In later times the principal coinage of the South was struck in gold, rarely silver; copper was used for

smaller denominations. Of gold coins there were generally two denominations: the *varāha* perhaps getting its name from the Cālukya crest of a boar, also called *pon*, *hun*, *pagoda*, (from *bhagavati*?) and *aradoes* by the Portuguese usually weighing a *Kalañju* (Molucca bean) or 50 to 60 grains; and the *fanam* (*paṇam*) being a tenth of the *varāha*, its weight, 5 to 6 grains, conforming to the *mañjādi*. The earliest gold coins are spherules of plain gold bearing a minute punch-mark. A little later came the *padma-taṅkas* thin cup-shaped pieces stamped with punches, at first on one side only and then on both. Finally came the die-struck pieces of which the thick small Vijayanagar pagodas are the best surviving specimens. There was a general preference for small coins and the silver *taras* of Calicut, only one or two grains in weight, are some of the smallest specimens of coins known.

As already mentioned, during the early centuries of the Christian era Roman imperial coins of gold and silver were imported in considerable quantity in the course of trade and circulated freely in the country. The small copper coins bearing Roman devices and legends may have been locally produced by foreign settlers. The Sātavāhanas used lead for many of their issues, and their coins bear legends of the names of kings which confirm the Purāṇic lists of names in some measure. One of the most interesting types of these coins bears a two-masted ship on the obverse, an indication of the maritime power and activity of the Andhras; the same design is found on some copper coins of about the same date or a little later from farther south.

The earliest *padma-taṅkas* were perhaps struck by the Kadambas; but one of these coins that can be most satisfactorily dated is a base silver piece with a lion device and the title. Viṣṇumasiddhi on the obverse which clearly belongs to Viṣṇuvardhana (615-33), the founder of the Eastern Cālukya line. The practice of punch-marking on the gold coinage lingered long after its disuse on silver and copper, and a large board of coins struck by the Telugu-cōḍas of Nellore in the thirteenth century, found at Kodur in 1913, shows that the *padma-taṅka* type had a long history and wide ramifications.

The period has a rich record in architecture and sculpture. Aihole, Bādāmi, Paṭṭadakal, Ellora and Elephanta in Western India to mention only the most prominent centres, Māmalla-puram, Kāñcīpuram, Panamalai and Kalugumalai and other centres in the south are veritable treasure houses of rock architecture and structural temples. They have been studied off and on by students of architecture, sculpture and painting, and the light they throw on the state of religious belief, iconography and the fine arts like music, dancing and painting should, it seems to me, be reflected rather more than it is in the school and college books of history. The late Jouveau Dubreuil's *Archaeologie du sude l'Inde* (2 vols.) forms a fine introduction to the subject; its second part on iconography is available in an English translation, but not the more fundamental first volume of which only one chapter was adapted in English by Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar under the caption 'Dravidian Architecture'. We need a series of well-studied monographs on the more important temples written with care and discernment before an adequate and definitive account of the South Indian temple as a religious and social institution can be undertaken.

While contributing little directly to knowledge of political history, literature does make an indirect contribution which can easily be underestimated. First, it enables the historian to picture the social and religious milieu in which the characters of history lived and moved. Then the prologues, epilogues and colophons of different works often embody valuable data on the lineage and achievements of the authors of the works and their royal patrons, and these often supplement the inscriptions admirably. For the period we have in view, however, there is not much literary evidence except some Sanskrit works and a part of Tamil literature, particularly the devotional hymns of the *Ālvārs* and *Nāyanārs* of the Tamil country. We know from the Aihole inscription of Pulakeśin II (A.D. 634) that Bhāravi had attained great fame by that time; tradition connects him with the rhetorician Daṇḍin on the one hand and with Simhaviṣṇu of Kāñci and Viṣṇu-vardhana of Vengi. Some scholars believe that Bhāravi's *Kirātārjunīya*, a poem on the Pāṇḍava Arjuna wrestling with

Siva disguised as a hunter and getting the *Pāśupata* war-weapon from him, made the story popular, and that the great rock-sculpture of Mahābalipuram is in fact a representation of the poem, particularly of Arjuna's penance which preceded the fight. Others, however, are inclined to see in the sculpture a representation of Bhagīratha's penance to bring the Ganges from heaven to earth, a task in which he needed the assistance of Śiva and secured it by penance. There is a Sanskrit prose romance called *Avantisundarikathā* and a verse abstract of it, which retail the traditions about Bhāravi and Daṇḍin just mentioned, and which contains specific references to Māmallapuram and its sculpture of Viṣṇu sleeping on the cosmic Ananta near the sea. But the work has not been critically edited and only a part of it has survived, and some scholars have doubted its authenticity. The versatile Pallava ruler Mahendra Varman I was the author of the farce *Mattavilāsa*—also a title of the king—and perhaps also of another farce *Bhagaradajjukam*, which successively ridicule the monkish orders of the Bhikṣus and Kāpālikas and make oblique references to corruption in some branches of administration like the police and the judiciary. Kumārila and Śaṅkara wrote in this period, but their works belong more to the history of philosophy and have little to contribute to general history. In Tamil we may assign to this period most of the eighteen *kīlkkanaṅku*, the *kural* not excepted. These works afford valuable glimpses of the social life of the times, but in a more idealistic than realistic manner. But the devotional hymns of the *Ālvārs* and *Nāyanārs* constitute the *piece de resistance* of this period. Unfortunately their correct understanding has been much clouded by the orthodox hagiology of a later age which has been accepted as history without sufficient critical examination in the light of the hymns themselves. Even the hymns taken by themselves are not without difficulties for the secular historian who often finds it difficult to reconstruct the real history behind some of the hymns and the miracles they sometimes record. Their unbiased critical study may be expected to lead to more trustworthy conclusions on the chronology of the Hindu revival of the Pallava period and on the theory and practice of religion

at the time. The hagiology of the later period may well attest the beliefs prevalent at that period, but cannot be valid for the earlier period unless supported by contemporary evidence. Even the hymns we have only in the form in which they were edited by their respective redactors in the tenth century A.D., but we have now no means of going behind the editions to the original form or order of the hymns. In general literature, the *Silappadikāram*, the *Maṇimekalai* and the *Perungadai* belong to this period, but should be used with due caution by the historian. We have lastly, a semi-historical poem in the anonymous *Nandikkalambakam* of about eighty stanzas in various metres with many interpolations dealing with the events of the reign of Nandivarman III. The poem cannot, however, be said to add materially to the knowledge of the reign derived from its inscriptions including the overseas record at Takua-pa on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula.

Before we leave this period, we must notice two inscriptions—each unique in its way—one of them being the musical stone inscription of Kuḍumiyāmalai (in Pudukkōṭṭai territory), and the evidence of foreign sources. The Kuḍumiyāmalai inscription is an extremely valuable record of musical exercises to be practised on stringed instruments and purports to be the work of a Śaiva monarch who was the pupil of Rudrācārya. It is probable that there was another similar inscription, either a replica of this or a group of other exercises which was chiselled off by a later Pāṇḍya king to give room to his own humdrum record of a gift to the temple. The existing inscription is often ascribed to the versatile Mahendravarman I Pallava; there is really nothing to disprove this, though some scholars have held that the paleography of the inscription points to a somewhat later date. The other inscription from Tiruviḍaivāyil (Tanjore district) contains an otherwise unknown hymn of Sambandar.

In the Chinese records we come across embassies from South India to China mainly for purposes of trade, and occasionally for diplomatic reasons. The most noteworthy of such embassies were those from Narasimhavarman II Rājasimha of Kāñcī of the year A.D. 720, though others of earlier

dates are also known.⁶ Fa-hien did not visit the mainland of South India and so his statements on the Deccan and the pigeon monastery are just hearsay. Hieun Tsang, who was in South India in 641-2 when the Cālukyas of Badami under Pulakeśin II and the Pallavas under Narasimhavarmā I were at war, has left a record of his travels which though quite good and reliable so far as it goes, does not completely satisfy the curiosity of modern students. One of his translators, Watters, mildly censures him saying: 'He was not a good observer, a careful investigator or a satisfactory recorder, and consequently he left very much untold which he would have done well to tell'. I-tsing too did not visit South India (end of the seventh century) but his works are valuable for the itineraries they contain, for their notices of differences in doctrine and practice among the Buddhists of different countries in South and South-east Asia, and above all for the brief biographies of eminent monks who visited India in his time, of whom there were as many as sixty, though only five visited South India. Thin perforated copper coins from China have been found on the Coromandel Coast, but have not been systematically studied yet.

The next large division of South Indian history (850-1200) is marked by the rivalry of two great empires, the Cōla and the Cālukya, which held sway generally in the south and north of the Tungabhadra. As the Cōlas emerged from their obscurity in the middle of the ninth century, they seized Tanjore from the Muttaraiyar and made it their capital, suppressed the remnants of Pallava power in the north, subjugated the Pāṇḍyas in the south and Cēras in the west, and invaded and in due course conquered Ceylon. Rāṣṭrakūṭa hostility under Kṛṣṇa II and III threatened to wreck the empire at the start, but the Karnāṭaka power was operating too far from its base, and though they put a temporary curb on the rising empire, they did so at the cost of a revolution at home which led to the feudatory Cālukyas under Taila II overthrowing his Rāṣṭrakūṭa suzerain and seizing supremacy (973). Quickly recovering from its temporary discomfiture, the Cōla po-

⁶ *Foreign notices*, pp. 16, 116 etc.

wer swept on to its meridian in the first part of the eleventh century under Rājarāja I and his even greater son Rājendra I. The contrast between divided North India harried by Muslim inroads and the efflorescence of Tamil culture in the politically united South under the Cōlas is indeed striking. The Cōlas developed their sea-power to the extent of reducing the Bay of Bengal to a Cōla lake for a time and striking down the rival power of the maritime empire of Śrī Vijaya in Indonesia. They perfected a highly organized administrative system which admirably hit the mean between centralization and local autonomy, and erected the most magnificent monuments of South Indian architecture in Tanjore, Gangaikonda Cōlapuram and elsewhere. This was the silver age of the religious revival which had begun under the Pallavas; a fresh commentary on the R̥gveda was composed by Venkaṭa Mādhava on the banks of the Kāvērī early in this period in the reign of Parāntaka I. The Tamil hymns of the golden age of the Hindu Revival were collected and arranged in canonical books in the form they have retained to this day; the cosmic conception of the form of the dancing Lord Naṭarāja found embodiment, in many monumental bronze images which have few rivals in the history of the world's art for their technical skill and artistic perfection.

The Cālukyas of Kalyāṇī were the opponents of the Cōlas across the Tungabhadra. There were many wars, some fought with unusual bitterness if we may trust the Cālukya inscriptions. The Eastern Cālukya kingdom of Vengi was the bone of contention throughout; its rulers were allied to the Kalyāṇī Cālukyas by descent; but they were also beholden to the Cōlas who had restored them to their throne when they were exiled after a civil war at the end of the tenth century. Several dynastic alliances followed and brought the two dynasties close together, till at last in 1070 when succession failed in the male line of the Cōlas, the ruler of Vengi himself succeeded to the Cōla throne as Kulōttunga I. His great Cālukya rival was Vikramāditya VI. Their rivalry filled the annals of the South for about half a century and

made for the weakening of their respective empires under their less competent successors.

This period is relatively very well documented by the abundance of inscriptions in Sanskrit and Tamil for the Cōlas, and Sanskrit and Kannaḍa for the Calukyas, and by an increase in literary evidence. The Cōla emperor Rājarāja I (985-1014) introduced the system of having a set *praśasti* at the beginning of every official record of his reign, and of adding to the *praśasti* as the reign advanced and new events called for being recorded. This plan was kept up by his successors, and we have therefore an exceptionally reliable chronology for the events of Cōla imperial history. Some of the Cōla copper-plate charters attained prodigious length, being engraved on a number of good sized well turned out plates strung together on enormous rings with a big circular seal soldered on them. The most conspicuous examples are the Leyden grant of Rājarāja I (21st yr.)—so called because it happened to fall in the hands of the Dutch and pass into the custody of the Leyden Museum; even more, the Tiruvālangāḍu (6 yr.) and Karandai (8 yr.) plates of Rājendra I, and the Chārāla plates of Vīrarājēndra (7 yr.), the long Sanskrit *praśasti* of which is a copy of the Kanyākumārī stone inscription of the same king.

While copper-plate inscriptions number altogether only a few hundreds, stone inscriptions amount to several tens of thousands. Most of them are records of small gifts of lamps, sheep, land, and so on. Records of larger gifts especially those of a ruling king are sometimes of exceptional interest as they give details of taxes remitted in favour of donees and the privileges conferred on them, and furnish other details of administrative organization and policy. The Tamil inscriptions of Rājarāja I in the Tanjore temple deserve special mention for the technical perfection and artistry of their engraving, and the complete and detailed picture they give of the entire economy of the Great Temple—a creation of Rājarāja calculated to symbolize all the glory and grandeur of the empire he had built up. It is a matter of surprise and regret that even after nearly four decades from the discovery of the magnificent contemporary paintings round the

Garbhagrha in the twenties of this century, this great monument has not got a full dress description comparable to Krom's Archaeological Description of Boro Budur and similar accounts of other Javanese monuments by other Dutch archaeologists. Quite a number of other fairly long inscriptions give interesting information on the constitution and functions of village assemblies, the part played by craft and trade guilds in the economic and artistic life of the country, the courses of study and the number of pupils and teachers in important educational centres, the scale of daily offerings to deities in temples, and the menu for the feeding of learned brahmins and devotees in charitable eating houses attached to temples or *maṭhas* and so on. The long Tirumukkūḍal inscription of Vīrarājēndra is unique in its list of stock medicines maintained in the hospital in the temple of the place. Almost every inscription on stone or copper, unless it is a very brief record of a name or just a few lines, is seen to follow a definite order in the arrangement of its various sections—invocation and preamble, the *praśasti* giving the history and genealogy of the ruling line—often in a set form which does not vary in the records of one and the same reign, a description of the donor and his ancestry if he differs from the king, a similar but generally briefer description of the donee—individual or group, an account of the object of the gift—money, cattle, taxes, and so on, with a detailed specification of the boundaries in case of a land gift, the formula of gift with water poured out from the hand of the donor into that of the donee for his perpetual and undisturbed enjoyment, concluding with praise for those who protect the charity and help maintain it, and an imprecation on those who do the contrary.

Some of the longer inscriptions are dedicatory and commemorative and often contain valuable *praśastis* of long lines of kings. But few are so purely historical as the Tiruvēndipuram inscription of Rājarāja III which gives an unvarnished account of the troubles of this ruler and of the manner in which he got relief with the help of the Hoysalas. Some of the later inscriptions whether they bear Śaka dates or not, often contain astronomical details which do not always work

out satisfactorily, and in some cases there is no way of reconciling all the data given. Kielhorn worked out calculations for many of these, but published his results of only some which he considered trustworthy in the pages of *Epigraphia Indica* and they have been a great help to students. One inscription of Cōla Parāntaka I from Grāmanam in South Arcot is dated by counting the number of days since the beginning of Kaliyuga and the date arrived at satisfies the other details recorded. Inscriptions are by no means altogether free of legendary matter and the instances are not few in which both parties claim victory in a war and there is often some justification for the claim.

It is doubtful if the *pon* equated to *kaḷañju* in the Cōla inscriptions was only a piece of gold or an actual coin. Elliot, however, figures a lost gold coin of Uttama Cōlan apparently conforming to this standard. Exactly half the *pon* or *māḍai* was the *kāśu* which, though current from the reign of Āditya II if not earlier, came to be known as *Rājarājan kāśu* later. Though actual specimens of coins are not forthcoming, references in epigraphs imply that each of the Cōla kings issued a gold *māḍai* and *kāśu* of his own, and these were distinguished by the prefixing of the name of the king to the denomination of the coin; but they also imply variations in the standard of fineness of the coins. In 1946 a fine hoard of Cōla gold coins was discovered in Dhavaleśvaram (East Godavari); they are round pieces of fine gold—thin discs bearing a *lāñchana* in the middle, and letters round the margin, all punched on one side of the disc, the other side being left blank. The hoard, of which only 127 pieces were recovered, included 49 coins of the East Cālukya Rājarāja I with the regnal years 33, 34 and 35 (A.D. 1055-7). The rest of the coins are issues of Rājendra I and Rājādhirāja I bearing inscriptions *Kangai-koṇḍa* and *malanāḍukoṇḍa*.⁷ There is reason to think that in many places the older local currency standards survived, and their relation to the standard Cōla currency was a matter for *ad hoc* calculation. The Cōla currency standard seems to have been borrowed from Ceylon after Parān-

⁷ See *Cōlas*, pp. 614-5.

taka I's invasion of the island which had a long and continuous currency before the Cōla invasion. Nāgari legends replace Grantha in Cōla coins from the time of Rājarāja I, possibly as the result of North Indian Śaiva influences, and the practice seems to have spread to Ceylon also. Some silver coins of Rājādhirāja I with his name in Nāgari letters were found recently in South Kanara, and these have not yet been fully studied. The influence of Cōla currency standards seems to have spread outside the frontiers of the empire and the gold pieces of the Western Cālukya Jagadekamalla and of the Kadambas of Goa seem to conform to it. It is, however, not impossible that they got it directly from Ceylon, or that the standard was an ancient well-established tradition in the entire South including Ceylon. The Cōla coins and seals generally signify their suzerain position in the whole of South India by designs on them portraying a tiger seated under a canopy in the centre of the field, with the Pāṇḍya fish on one side and the Cēra bow at the bottom, the latter symbols being smaller and less prominent than the tiger.

The cultural and commercial intercourse between South India and the far North is attested by one numismatic datum to which Rapson drew attention; the *Ānaiṇarāhan* or *Gajapati* pagoda of the Kongu country was imitated in an issue of Harṣadeva of Kashmir (A.D. 1089)—a fact noticed also by Kalhaṇa who records that Harṣa issued a *tanka* of the Karnātaka type. Here we have the counterpart of Bilhana's migration from Kashmir to the Cālukya court of Kalyāṇi where he became *vidyāpati* and composed the *Vikramāṅkadeva caritra*, a quasi-historical *kāvya* setting forth Vikramāditya's case in the civil war against his brother.

Literary evidence in this period is somewhat richer in historical content than hitherto. Prominent among Tamil quasi-historical works are the *Kaliṅgattupparaṇi* of Jayanṇonḍār, treating of the Cōla invasion of Kalinga in the reign of Kulōttunga I, and three *ulās* of Oṭṭakkūttan on three successive Cōla monarchs—Vikarma-Cōla, Kulōttunga II and Rājarāja II. We have also a *Pillaittamil*, a poem describing the hero's childhood, on Kulōttunga II, by the same poet. We

know little of the author of *Kulōttungankōvai* on Kumāra Kulōttunga, afterwards Kulōttunga III—a poem of no conspicuous merit except that it has the last great Cōla monarch for its hero and contains passing allusions to some of his early achievements in war. The *Tiruttqṇḍarpurāṇam* or *Periyapurāṇam* of Śēkṇilār, composed in the reign of Kulōttunga II (1133-50), gathers all the legends bearing on the Nāyanārs of an earlier age, and there are corresponding prose hagiologies, the *Guruparamparais*, in different versions, on the *ālvārs* and their successors. In the same class fall temple chronicles like the *Śrīrangam Kōyil oḷugu*, the *Madurai-ttala-varalāru*, and a similar work on the Kālahasti temple said to be in the possession of the temple priest, and local chronicles like *Keralolpatti*. Written up from time to time by different hands, often rewritten and revised in their entirety, these works are usually found in different versions, none of them more authoritative than the others. The conscientious student will not venture to ignore them altogether, but the utmost he can expect from them is an occasional hint to the unravelling of a tangle or to the direction in which to seek a solution of his problem—in any case he will not find it easy to base any historical statement on the uncorroborated testimony of such chronicles. The *Kōyil oḷugu* of *Śrīrangam*, a conspicuous instance of this class, professes to have been revised last in 1803 under the supervision of John Wallace, a Company's servant in charge of Trichinopoly at the time; though its chronology and history are quite muddled, it gives, when properly interpreted, a fair idea of the benefactions made to the temple from time to time by different rulers of the land, the period of the construction of its different parts, and above all of the organization of the large temple staff and their duties as settled by the great Rāmānujācārya. In Kannada, Pampa's *Bhārata* or *Vikramārjuna-vijaya* and Ranna's *Gadāyuddha* or *Sāhasbhīmavijaya* though mainly devoted to themes from the great epic, shed much light on contemporary Rāṣṭrakuṭa and Cālukya history respectively because their authors have chosen to identify their patrons with some of the epic characters and found occasion to introduce into their narratives several contemporary historical occurrences very well known to

law known as the *Caturvarga cintāmaṇi*. In the last quarter of the thirteenth century the restless ambition and insatiable curiosity of Kublai Khan added to the unsettled conditions in the Pāṇḍyan kingdom, resulted in a very active exchange of embassies, more political than commercial, between the Chinese court and the South Indian powers which is recorded in the Yuan shih. Wassaf, the Muslim historian of Shiraz, has much to say on Pāṇḍyan politics at the close of the thirteenth century and on other subjects like the Muslim invasions of the South, the horse trade of South India and so on. Above all, the Venetian traveller Marco Polo, who has been called the 'prince of mediaeval travellers' and who had spent seventeen years at the court of Kublai Khan which he reached after a hazardous land journey of three and a half years across Asia, Marco Polo visited South India in 1292-3 on his way from China to Persia as escort to a princess of Kublai Khan's family, a bride for the ruler of Persia. Though Marco Polo's narration of his experiences in the East was received with great distrust for a long time in Europe, still now as Yule observes 'his veracity and justness of observation shine brighter under every recovery of lost or forgotten knowledge'. The amount of information Marco Polo was able to collect as he was passing through some parts of South India is indeed amazing. He has much to tell on the states of the south and the manners, beliefs and practices of the people of South India and on their maritime trade. 'The commerce of India', says R. H. Major, 'he found stretching like an immense chain, from the territories of Kublai Khan to the shores of the Persian Gulf and of the Red Sea. He found the shores and the islands of the Indian sea luxuriantly covered with nature's choicest products. He tells us of the topaz, the amethyst, and the emerald, of the sapphires of Ceylon and the diamonds of Colconda.' Marco Polo's description of the world in the translation by A. C. Moule and Paul Pelliot is the latest and most critical edition of the travels. Almost at the same time as Marco the Franciscan friar John of Monte Corvino was travelling in the reverse direction from India to China to preach the gospel there. This lonely monk was out of sympathy with much that he

saw in India, and with him may be said to begin the stream of Christian missionary criticism of Indian life and habits which has not always been intelligent or charitable. John's account of ships and navigation of the Indian seas has much in common with similar statements of other writers and may be usefully compared with them.

III

SOUTH INDIA FROM THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

THE KHILJI Sultans of Delhi after consolidating their power in North India began to cast their covetous eyes on the South, and they were followed in this by the Tughlaks. At first the motive was only plunder and spoil but soon the spread of Islam and territorial conquest became the objectives. Considerable parts of the country passed under the nominal sway of Delhi; and Madura, at first the seat of a Muslim governor from Delhi, grew by the rebellion of the governor into an independent sultanate. Colonies of Muslim soldiers and generals found lodgement in several parts of the country and began to control the administration of the land; temples were plundered and demolished and mosques erected in their places. Hindu society in South India faced a new crisis, but it was of short duration. The distance from Delhi, the inherent weakness of a far-flung military imperialism, the spirit of resistance developed under the influence of a strong Hindu revival under the *Līṅgāyats* and the *Ārādhyas*, together saved the Hindu faith and the political independence of the far south, the shortlived Sultanate of Madura being engulfed in the rising tide of the new Hindu imperialism of Vijayanagar, for, out of the numerous revolts that were provoked by the strong but enigmatic Muhammad bin Tughlak, there arose two kingdoms in the Deccan centred in Vijayanagar and Gulbarga in the first half of the fourteenth century.

The Bahmani kingdom of Gulbarga was a Muslim state which spread its sway from sea to sea in the northern Deccan, and was no less opposed to its Muslim neighbours in the north than to the Hindu empire in the south. In the sixteenth century it split into five separate sultanates which kept up the feud with Vijayanagar though they quarrelled not less among themselves. Bijapur and Golconda were the most prominent among them; all were absorbed in the Mughal empire at different dates in the seventeenth century. Starting on its career in 1336, a decade earlier than the Bah-

mani kingdom, Vijayanagar became the focus of resurgent Hindu culture and offered a more successful resistance to Islam in this part of the country than anywhere else. So it was a long military vigil. As there was no room for weak or incompetent rulers on the throne, there were revolutions resulting in a change of dynasty and renewal of strength. The empire is best looked upon as a military confederacy of many chieftains cooperating under the leadership of the biggest among them. Military exigencies necessitated the employment of the Portuguese in the artillery and even Muslims in the cavalry. Nevertheless, Vijayanagar kept up the fight for the best part of three centuries before it succumbed to the forces it had withstood so long. But by then, other and, in the long run, more decisive factors had put in their appearance in the form of European trading companies, and a new epoch began.

The Portuguese indeed had built up their short lived and predatory maritime empire much earlier from the first half of the sixteenth century; but their activities never became a serious menace to the Hindu empire with which they kept on friendly terms though they often quarrelled with its feudatories, especially on the west coast. Their plunder of rich Hindu temples and the conversions to Christianity procured by the Jesuits and other orders on the 'pearl fishery coast' were minor nuisances soon brought under control. The power of Vijayanagar was at first spread among different powerful viceroys who set up independent kingdoms each under a Nāyak family especially after the military disaster of Talikota (Rakṣasi-Taṅḍi) in 1565.

Inscriptions on stone and copper still continue to be our most important sources for the history of Vijayanagar, though we get Persian histories on the affairs of the Bahmani kingdom, and generally the volume of literary evidence, Indian and foreign, increases. The inscriptions of Vijayanagar occur in several languages; Sanskrit records on copper plates are written in characters known as Nandi Nāgari and stone inscriptions either combine Sanskrit and the local language, Telugu, Kannada or Tamil, or are often exclusively in the

local language. The same is true of the records of the different Nāyāk dynasties. The number of these inscriptions is very large and bibliographical guides to them are few and incomplete. The Topographical List of Inscriptions of the Madras Presidency compiled by V. Rangachari was useful in its day, but it stopped with the inscriptions recorded till 1915, and the number discovered since runs into several thousands. The break-up of the old Madras Presidency into a number of States has divided responsibility for bringing the work up-to-date, but there is no more urgent need than to make a comprehensive and up-to-date list which will combine in a suitable manner the topographical and dynastic distribution of the inscriptions. It will be good work for some years for a trained staff of workers, and it is much to be wished that either the Archaeological Survey of India or some of the South Indian Universities working on a co-operative basis took up the work and completed it in a reasonably short time. The revision of Kielhorn's South Indian list on the same lines as D. R. Bhandarkar's North Indian list would be more laborious and scholarly work which would call for an epigraphist with wide experience and knowledge; such a revision if properly carried out will be a great boon to students. The Bahmani inscriptions are generally in Persian.

Many of the inscriptions have been well studied and edited by a band of scholars in *Epigraphia Indica* and *Indo-Molemica*, the latter now being continued in the Arabic and Persian supplement to the former. And the coins of Vijayanagar, Bahmani and the Sultanate of Madura have also been listed and studied in periodicals and catalogues or coins by eminent numismatists like Lane Poole, Nelson Wright, Richard Burn, Hultzsch and others. But when all is said, the literary records for this period form a more fruitful source than epigraphs and coins, and demand a more detailed notice.

Apart from the general Persian histories of the sultanate mentioned earlier, we have other Persian histories of the Deccan kingdoms. The *Futuh-us-Salatin* by Isami is the only extant contemporary work on the Bahmani kingdom. The author who had to migrate in 1327 from Delhi to Daulata-

bad with his grandfather Sipah Salar Isami who died on the way, made his home in the Deccan and attached himself to the first Bahmani Sultan. He began to write his book in 1358 and completed it the next year. Modelled on the *Shah Nama* of Firdausi the work narrates in limpid verse the history of the Sultanate of Delhi to the time of Muhammad bin Tughlak. It then gives a vivid picture of the political turmoil in the Deccan which preceded the foundation of the Bahmani kingdom, besides much valuable and precise information on the Muslim conquest of the Deccan and South India and on the reign and character of the first Bahmani Sultan. Other works on the Bahmani kingdom were late compositions written long after the extinction of the sultanate and from the particular point of view of one or other of the succession states. Notable among them is the *Burhan-i-Maasir* of Ali bin Aziz-ullah Taba Tabai of Simmin (Iraq). He entered Qutb Shāhi service and was present at the siege of Naldrug (1580-81) in the suite of M. Quli Qutb Shah; apparently he changed over to Nizam Shāhi services for his work is written by order of Burhān Nizām Shāh (1591-95). The work is a history of the Bahmanis of Gulbarga, the Bahmanids of Bidar and the Nizam Shāhis of Ahmadnagar to the year 1596. There is an abridged translation of the work by J. S. King which appeared first in the *Indian Antiquary*, and later as a separate book (London, 1900). In some respects the statements of Taba Tabai seem to be more authentic and in better accord with the evidence from coins than those of his better known contemporary and sometime colleague in Ahmadnagar service, Firishta.

Beyond doubt Firishta is the prince of Muslim historians of the period. The wide range and sweep of his work which forms a general history of Muslim rule in India, the number of authorities he consulted, and the general sense of perspective that dominates the entire narration, impart a monumental character to his history. Covering wide ground, and much of it at second hand, he is often inaccurate in detail. Writing in the court of the Adil Shāhis of Bijapur at the instance of Ibrāhim II, he narrates Deccan affairs in a way that places his patrons in the most favourable light. There

is no doubt that this history, finished in 1606, is the most comprehensive and readable account of Indian Islam. A Persian by birth, Muhammad Khāsim Hindu Shāh Firishta came at the age of 12 to Ahmadnagar with his father in 1582. The father became tutor to the Nizām Shāhi prince, but died soon after. Young Firishta took to a military career, but a palace revolution deprived him of his position as captain of the king's guard. Being a Shiah and having few friends at Ahmadnagar, he migrated to Bijapur where he obtained an appointment in the army. Even while he was at Ahmadnagar, still in the prime of youth, he conceived the idea of writing a history of the Islamic kings and saints of India, but had to defer his project owing to paucity of the requisite books in that city. In Bijapur he was encouraged to take up the work by Sultan Ibrāhim and by Shāh Nawāz Khān. His work *Gulshān-i-Ibrāhīmī* better known as *Tāikh-i-Farīshta* exists in two slightly different versions dated 1606-7 and 1609-10; both contain later insertions. The text was first edited by Major General J. Briggs in 1832 and also somewhat abridged and translated into English (London 1829). There are other editions of the text and a reprint of the English translation Calcutta, 1908-10¹. Firishta's history agrees largely with that of Taba Tabai. He narrates the relations of the Deccan Muslim power with Vijayanagar from the beginning, sometimes confusing the names of the Vijayanagar rulers and confounding them with those of the generals and viceroys of the kingdom. The true greatness of Kṛṣṇadevarāya cannot be inferred from Firishta's history, and his account of the battle of Talikota is one-sided. He conceals the desertion of the Muslim generals and troops which caused the defeat of Vijayanagar, a point clearly stressed by Caesar Frederic and other foreign witnesses. Another work also written from the standpoint of Bijapur is the *Tazkirat-ul-muluk* by a Persian merchant from Shiraz known as Shirāzī on that account. His business brought him to Sagar on the Kṛṣṇā in 1560, and he entered Adil Shāhi service in 1574. He wrote his work between 1608 and 1611-12, apparently of not much value for

¹ Storey, No. 617, pp. 442-50.

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Bahmani affairs; it is a contemporary account of some aspects of Bijapur history giving many details not otherwise known. There are several other Persian works on the history of the Deccan Muslim States which we cannot stop to notice, but of which an account will be found in the pages of Storey's *Persian Literature*, a bibliographical survey.

The indigenous literary evidence on Vijayanagar can be divided into chronicles, works of general literature, administrative records commonly known as *Kaṣṣiyats* and so on. Among the chronicles the *Kāḷajñānas* occupy a primary place. Worthless as they seem, because they pretend to be prophecies of the future by inspired seers and exaggerate many things, they sometimes offer very striking clues to the real course of history. The *Vidyāraṇya Kāḷajñāna* composed before the close of the 15th century describes within a brief compass the history of Vijayanagar and lights up some of its dark corners. The *Vidyāraṇya vṛttānta* describes the circumstances under which the kingdom was founded. The mnemonic verse — *Habuhāvibuderāvi*, etc. — which occurs in almost all the *Kāḷajñānas* is very useful in elucidating the early history of the empire by indicating the order of succession of the kings. Working merely in the light of epigraphy without the aid of the clues given by this verse, scholars fell into a number of errors in tracing the history of the first dynasty which might have been avoided if they had heeded the traditional verse. It strings together the initial letters of the names of successive monarchs and enables us to arrange the epigraphical evidence in a cogent manner. More quasi-historical *Kāvya*s rather than chronicles are: the *Kamparāya Carita* or *Madhurā Vijaya* by Gangādevi, the wife of the hero, Kumāra Kampana, describing in epic fashion his conquest of Madura and the overthrow of the sultanate; the *Sāluvaḥhyudaya* of Rājanātha on the wars of the author's patron Sāluva Narasimha (latter half of the fifteenth century); the *Rāyavācaka*, *Kṛṣṇarājaviṣaya* on the reign of the great Kṛṣṇadevarāya; the *Acyutarāyāḥhyudaya* of Rājanātha II and the *Varadāmbikāpariṇaya* of Tirumalāmbā, a *campū* on the marriage of king Acyutarāya with queen Varadāmbā, and many other works of a like character pro-

duced in the courts of the Nāyak kings. We may also mention a prose romance of considerable length by Vāmana Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa, a pupil of Vidyāraṇya, and protégé of the Redḍi king Pedda Kōmaṭi Vema (1398-1415) whose life and achievements form the theme of the work. It was the author's aim to rival the celebrated Bāṇa as prose writer, and he achieved a measure of success in the endeavour. In all these works the historian has to search for the grain of fact in a vast heap of straw, but he cannot afford to neglect the labour.

At this point we may also for convenience notice some past Vijayanagar chronicles of the same nature as the foregoing. The Tamil chronicle *Kongudēśa rājākkalīn caritram* is of much less literary value and not more dependable; it has indeed been generally very much overrated, and its chronology pretending to be systematic cannot possibly accommodate many definitely established facts of South Indian history; but even this chronicle is useful in some parts. The *Keladinṛpa Vijaya* is a Kannada³ chronicle in prose and verse treating of the chiefs of Keladi. They were also known as the Nāyakas of Ikkeri or Bednur as they shifted their capital during the later years of their rule. It was probably the work of a Brahmin poet Linganna of about the middle of the eighteenth century. The work has not been translated into any other language. It offers much information not available elsewhere on the gradual expansion of Bijapur into Karnāṭaka and throws light on the rise of Marāṭha dominion in South India. There are still other chronicles, for instance, the *Kongudēśa rājākkal savistara caritai*, a longish account compiled by a certain Nārāyaṇan at the request of the enthusiastic antiquarian Col. Colin Mackenzie at the beginning of the last century; this is good on recent history, especially on the European companies and their struggle for supremacy in South India. We have also the *Veḷugōṭivāri vaṁśāvali* in Telugu, a chronicle of exceptional historical value as seen from Dr. N. Venkataramanayya's edition of it published by the Madras University.

Works of general literature written under the patronage of the Rāyas have also their contribution to make. The commentaries, *Kāvya*s, dramas, farces and so on contain valuable

historical data. Mādhava, his brother Sāyana, and Mādhava Mantrin and other commentators describe the origin of the Sangama family and the rule of the early Rāyas. The *Kumāra Ramaṇṇa kathe* is a poem of the sixteenth century giving the traditional view of the conditions of South India on the eve of the establishment of the Vijayanagar empire. The preface to the *Vaidyarājavallabham*, a treatise on *Ayurveda*, by Lakṣmaṇa Paṇḍita, the court physician of Bukka, gives a long account of the history of Bukka's family. Likewise the victories of the great Kṛṣṇadevarāya and the general history of the Tuluva dynasty are given in a work on music, the *Śaṅgītasūryōdaya* of Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa. And the Gajapati ruler Pratāparudra gives a short account of his family in his *Sarasvativilāsam*, a book on law.

It is, however, in Telugu that this kind of historical composition is fully developed. Though the practice began under the Cālukyas, it came into general vogue only much later. Tikkana, latter half of the thirteenth century, is the first Telugu poet to trace the history of his patron's family in the prologues to his poems. His *Nirvacanōttara Rāmāyaṇa* contains a succinct account of the Nellore branch of the Telugu-cōḍas. After this such an introduction became a normal feature of Telugu literary works whose authors followed the example set by Tikkana, and this makes them one of the principal sources of Vijayanagar history. Unfortunately this portion in the *Harivaṁśa* of Nachna Soma, the earliest Telugu writer under the Rāyas, seems to have been lost beyond recovery. Vallabharāya's *Kṛīḍābhirāmam* gives interesting information on Bukka I and Harihara II; Jakkana refers to the activities of Devarāya I in his *Vikramāṅka Caritra*. Śrīnātha, the *Vidyādhikāri* of Pedda Kōmaṭi Vema and author of many of Vema's inscriptions, gives an excellent account of the Redḍi kings in the introduction to his *Kāśikhāṇḍam* and *Bhīmakhaṇḍam*; besides, his *cāṭus* (stray verses) contain vignettes of the social life of the citizens of the empire and of the court under Devarāya II. Likewise the history of the Sāluvas, Tuluvas, and Araviḍu kings is described in the introductions to other poems by their respective authors who need not all be recounted here.

The *biruda gadya* recited every morning by the palace *vandis* and *māgadhas* form another type of historical composition standing midway between the *praśastis* in inscriptions and the chronicles. It is usually a string of phrases eulogizing the achievements of kings and nobles, similar to the bardic literature of the North already noticed. The *bhat* community held the monopoly of these recitals, and their language was often borrowed by the mediaeval *praśasti* writers of inscriptions. The *biruda gadya* grew in content and length as it passed from one generation to another, and the last king had all the achievements of his predecessors attributed to him. The *bhats* also composed verses which served as a metrical commentary on the *gadyas* to which they were tagged. The transition from the *biruda gadya* to the chronicle in a few generations is easily understood. But only a few of these have survived — the most important being: the *Rāmarājīyam* on the history of the Araviḍu dynasty from the time of the Cālukyas of Kalyāṇi to the middle of the seventeenth century when the empire of Vijayanagar disappeared finally; the *Araviṭivamśa caritram* on the Avuku branch of the Araviḍu family; and the *Cikkadevarāya vamśāvali*. The *Rāmarāyana Bakhair*, included in the Mackenzie collection, describes the events connected with the disastrous battle of Talikota (Rakṣasi-Tangdi) from the Hindu side and enables us to examine them afresh. Two versions of the chronicle are extant: one in Kannaḍa and the other in Marāṭhi; it is not easy to decide which is the original and which is the translation. It purports to be the account of an eyewitness, but this is a hoax as is seen from the inclusion of Akbar in the anti-Vijayanagar confederacy of the Muslim rulers and other features. Perhaps a genuine old account was tampered with by an unskilful redactor of a later date.

The village administrative records, called *kaviles* or *daṇḍa kaviles* contain information about the political, economic, religious and social conditions of the village. They remained with the village *Karṇam* who entered in them all the important occurrences of his time and passed them on to his successor in office. The agents of Col. Mackenzie collected several of these and copied or summarized others in digests known as

Kaifiyats. The *Kavile* and *Kaifiyat* show a large admixture of legend especially in the early periods, though the account of relatively recent times is generally free of this element. These works must of course be used with very great caution.

The Mackenzie manuscripts, whatever their value might have been when their collection was made early last century, have become by now more or less worthless rubbish. Most of the originals have perished by the action of time and insects, and we have only copies which are obviously faulty and full of lacunae. The University of Madras has, however, a scheme for the publication in English of summaries of the historical section of the Manuscripts. Wilson's catalogue is still the best; Taylor's more voluminous compilation in three volumes, being ill-arranged and not quite dependable. There is a good catalogue of the translations of the manuscript in European languages available from the British museum. The Madras University has published two books bringing together extracts from the literary sources—*Sources of Vijayanagar History* by Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar (Madras University, 1929) and the more extensive *Further Sources of Vijayanagar History* by K. A. N. Sastri and Dr. N. Venkataramanayya with an introductory volume by the latter (3 vols., Madras University, 1946).

Notices of India by foreign travellers for this period are both valuable and voluminous. The celebrated Moorish traveller Ibn Batuta (1304-78), whom we have already mentioned, comes first. He was a doctor of law and theology and had greater advantages than Barani for gathering accurate information. He has much to say of his experiences in South India, of its ports and trade, its people and their customs, its rulers, particularly the Sultans of Madura. The sections of his work relating to South India have been reproduced at length in my *Foreign Notices of South India*. The learned Abdur-Razzak of Herat was sent by Timur's son Sultan Shahrukh as ambassador to the Zamorin of Calicut (1443). The king of Vijayanagar sent for him, and the Zamorin though not subordinate to the Rāya's authority, yet readily acceded to the request, and the ambassador made his way to Vijayanagar by way of Mangalore and Belur and reached

Vijayanagar at the end of April 1443. 'The city', he says, 'is such that eye has not seen nor ear heard of any place resembling it upon the whole earth. It is so built that it has seven fortified walls, one within the other.' He witnessed the *Mahānavami* festival and noticed the king's absolute power and his high esteem for the Brahmans. His narrative supplies valuable information on the topography, administration, and social life of Vijayanagar at the time. Some jealous merchants from Ormuz cast doubts on his credentials and undermined his position at the court which resulted in his being treated with less consideration than before. He left Vijayanagar for Mangalore at the end of 1443 and Mangalore for Persia early in 1444. His account with that of some other travellers can be read in R. H. Major's *India in the fifteenth century* (Hakluyt Society).

Among the European travellers we have to notice some who came a little before the foundation of Vijayanagar. Friar Odoric of Pordenone reached India soon after 1321. He travelled along the west coast, visited Ceylon, and went up to the shrine of St. Thomas in 'Mailapore'. His account of some Hindu customs and practices is obviously that of an eyewitness. Another Friar, Jordanus, reached India a little before Odoric. Two of his letters are dated from India in 1321 and 1324; in them he holds out to his brother friars in Europe the prospect of extensive missionary work in the East. His mention of the Parsis and their mode of exposing the dead 'in the midst of a certain roofless tower' is among the earliest notices of this community in India. He was appointed Bishop of Columbum (Quilon) in 1328, but it is not known if he actually took charge of the office. Yet another monk, John of Marignolli, a native of Florence, who went out to China as Papal legate to the Great Khan by way of land like Marco Polo left that country to sail from Zayton in 1346 and reached Quilon where he spent some time before sailing for the Coromandal Coast to visit the shrine of St. Thomas. He also spent some time in Ceylon and gives an interesting account of the Buddhist monks of the island.

The rise of Vijayanagar and that of Portuguese power in the east a little later attracted many foreigners to India, and

foreign evidence on South India consequently increases vastly in volume, variety and interest. The earliest European visitor to Vijayanagar whose account has come down to us is the Italian Nicolo Conti who reached the city in 1420 or 1421 in the reign of Devarāya I. He was a Venetian of noble family, who, after residing as a merchant in Damascus for some time, traversed Persia, sailed along the coast of Malabar, and visited some parts of the interior of Hindustan, besides Ceylon, Sumatra and Java. He returned to Venice in 1444 after twenty-five years of absence. He wrote nothing himself, but narrated his experiences to a Papal secretary who wrote them down in Latin for his master's information; this was translated into Portuguese and from Portuguese into Italian. The original Latin version is lost. Conti describes Cambaya and its precious stones and sati, the Vijayanagar court, its festivals, currency and other matters, and also Mailapur, the burial place of St. Thomas. The Russian merchant Athanasius Nikitin spent some years in the Deccan round about 1470, and travelled in the Bahmani kingdom which he entered by way of Chaul. He resided in Bidar for a long-time. His observations give details of the court, the army and the condition of the people under Bahmani rule. A new edition of his text with facsimile and English and Hindi translations has been just published in Russia. *JAOS* 81 (2), pp. 126-30.

The Arab chronicle *Tuhfat-al-Mujahidin fi ba zi ahwal-al-Portukaliyyin* (a gratuitous gift to the holy warriors in respect of a brief account of the Portuguese) by Shaykh Zaynuddin was used by Firishta in his account of Islam on the Malabar coast. Very little is known of the author who had Ali Adil Shah (1558-80) for his patron. The book comprises an introduction and four chapters. The second chapter describes the coming of Islam to Malabar and the emergence of several flourishing ports on the west coast.* The story of the last Perumal ruler turning a Muslim and voyaging to Mecca is mentioned. The next chapter sketches the 'strange customs' of the 'unbelievers'—marriage, inheritance, untouchability etc. The last and fourth chapter is completely historical in content and covers a period of 85 years (1498-1583) and gives useful information on the advent of the Portuguese and its

effects on the commercial position of the Muslim on the coast. The work was first translated into English in 1833 by Lieut. M. J. Rowlandson, and again by Mhd. Husain Nainar (Madras University, 1942).

The sixteenth century witnessed some mighty rulers: Kṛṣṇadevarāya, Rāma Rāya, and Venkaṭapati Rāya; and the Portuguese established their commercial ascendancy at the same time. The volume of foreign evidences swells correspondingly. Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna, a gentleman and soldier eventually knighted by the Portuguese, travelled in India between 1502 and 1508, and left a vivid record of his experiences. His credibility was wrongly doubted for some time. His account of Goa and Calicut and other ports on the west coast, and his description of the city and empire of Vijayanagar contain much of interest and value. Friar Luis, sent to Vijayanagar by Albuquerque in 1510, elucidates the martial activities of Kṛṣṇadevarāya. The Portuguese Duarte Barbosa served the government of his country in India from 1500 to about 1516. He knew the Malayālam language and 'spoke it better than the natives of the country'. He was *feitor* (factor) in Cannanore in 1502, and acted as interpreter between the king of Cannanore and Francisco Albuquerque in 1503. He was valued as a writer by the historian Gaspar Correa, and was employed by Albuquerque for his ability, though he did not support the policy of developing Goa at the expense of Cochin and Cannanore. Barbosa returned to Portugal in 1517-18 and then gave the final touches to his narrative which covers much wider ground than the sphere of his official duties and includes a full description of Vijayanagar. The work of Duarte Barbosa has been rendered into English in two volumes by Longworth Dames under the title *The Book of Duarte Barbosa* and by Lord Stanley under the title *A Description of the coasts of East Africa and Malabar in the beginning of the sixteenth century by Duarte Barbosa*, both for the Hakluyt Society. Dames's estimate of Barbosa is worth reproduction: 'The value of Barbosa's work at the present day is principally geographical and ethnographical. Some of his historical references are of considerable importance, but, as he has distinctly stated

himself, his object was not to write a history, but to describe the people and the country and its products. In these respects he stands almost alone in his period, and his accounts are extremely accurate in many respects and show great powers of observation. This applies more especially to the South of India, where his long residence and knowledge of at least one of the languages (Malayālam) gave him an understanding of the people of which we find few traces among the writers of the period.'

The value of other Portuguese writers has been sufficiently recognized since Sewell emphasized it generally in *A Forgotten Empire* (1901), which included translations of the chronicles of Domingos Paes (1520-2) and of Fernas Nuniz, a horse dealer who spent three years in Vijayanagar (1535-37), besides part of the letter written from Cochin by Manuel Barradas (12th Dec. 1616) giving an account of the origin and course of the civil war then in progress in the kingdom of Vijayanagar. The Portuguese of Goa were the natural allies of Vijayanagar against the Muslim states and were well informed on the political situation and culture of the country. The chronicle of Nuniz incorporates the information he gathered about the rulers of Vijayanagar from the foundation of the city and has invested the most significant period of Vijayanagar history with flesh and blood. Thanks to these two Portuguese travellers and chroniclers, Kṛṣṇadevarāya lives in the pages of history as few rulers do. Caesar Frederic visited Vijayanagar a couple of years after Talikota and comments on the ruined splendour of the imperial city. Ralph Fitch who spent the years 1583-91 in India, Nicholas Pimenta, Visitor of the Jesuits in India at the close of the sixteenth century, the Dutch traveller Linschotten (1583) have their own contributions to make to our knowledge of South India in their time. We have already mentioned Moreland's edition of the writings of the Dutch factor Schorer (1615) and the English factor Methwold (1618-22) which elucidate the affairs and trade of the kingdom of Golconda and the port of Masulipatam.

Amongst the Portuguese sources the Jesuit letters are of special importance, and as you know Father John Correia-

Afonso has recently given us an excellent study on the subject which renders it needless for me to go into much detail on this important source. Here is Fr. Schurhammer's general estimate of these letters: 'Their authors were as a rule well educated persons and many of them well acquainted with the languages and customs of India, like De Nobli who studied Sanskrit at the Hindu University of Madura; Beschi, the great Tamil scholar and author of the classical *Tembāvaṇi*; Stephens, well known through his classical Christian Marāṭhi *Purāṇa*; and Jerome Xavier, author of quite a number of Persian works, written for the court of Akbar.'² These letters date from the time of Xavier's arrival in India in 1542 to the year 1773 when the decree for the suppression of the Society of Jesus throughout the world was issued. These letters were often published in Europe and Father Correia-Afonso offers the following helpful comments on the manner of such publications, their advantages and disadvantages: 'The correspondence of missionaries in India might never have attracted the historian's notice had they not been printed and widely circulated in contemporary Europe, especially in Portugal, Spain, France, Belgium Italy and Germany, through such famous collections as the *Letters Edifiantes* and the *Weltbott*. From the viewpoint of historical evidence it is particularly regrettable that the letters should have suffered in the process of translation and publication, being at times unskillfully censored and even considerably distorted and mutilated, while even forgeries were put on the market. Recently, however, the Jesuit Institute of History in Rome has begun to publish an authoritative edition of the Jesuit documents on India. The critical reproduction of the texts together with excellent introductions, critical apparatus, notes, bibliographies and indices give a superlative value to the volumes of *Epistolae S. Francisci Xavierui* and *Documenta Indica*, which are a great help to the scholar in forming a wellfounded and fair estimate of the historical value of the Jesuit letters from India.' It is worth while mentioning some works of particular interest from our point of view. The

² *Jesuit letters*, p. xxix.

chief among them are: J. Bertrand, *La Mission du Maduré* 4 vols. (Paris 1874-54); L. Bosse, *La Mission du Maduré* (Trichinopoly, 1914); J. Castets: *The Madura Mission* (Trichinopoly, 1924); and J. Houpert, *A South Indian Mission* (Trichinopoly, 1947). These authors have reproduced enough material from the missionary letters concerning the Nāyaks of Madura, Tanjore and Jinji, but do not provide us with a critical edition of the original sources and have sometimes unwittingly misled authors who have relied on them.³ Bertrand, for instance, avers that he combines at times several letters into one which obscures the original form of the evidence and its exact chronology. Even a careful student like Sir J. Sarkar is seen to have been misled on the subject of the Marātha invasion of South India. Attention may be drawn to the excellent use Father Heras made of the Jesuit sources in his *Aravīḍu Dynasty* and in several papers on diverse subjects he contributed to learned periodicals. Father Castets continued his studies and published his results under the title 'Sidelights on South Indian History from the Letters and Records of Contemporary Jesuit Missionaries 1542-1756' in the pages of the *Magazine* of St. Joseph's College Trichinopoly in the years 1929-30.⁴ Of these sidelights he says: 'Some are mere incidental references to actual political events and situations; others are descriptions or accounts of facts and occurrences involving such political events or social conditions, a good summing up, indeed, as Fr. Correia-Afonso puts it, of the nature of the historical information to be found in the Jesuit letters in general. Father Ferrol's *The Jesuits in Malabar*, of which two volumes have appeared so far (Bangalore 1939, 1951), is the most complete survey of the Jesuit activities in the 'Province of Malabar' which was constituted in 1605 and included at one time the Missions of the Fishery Coast, Travancore, Cochin, Madura, Ceylon, Bengal and Pegu, Malacca and the Moluccas.

There are four types of Jesuit letters—those meant for the superiors of the Order, those addressed to the members of the Society in general, those intended for the public at

³ *Jesuit letters*, pp. 52, 65, 87-8.

⁴ *Jesuit letters*, pp. 51-2.

large and those written to personal friends. Though they are all strictly contemporary and therefore primary sources with an occasional unrivalled vividness and realism of their own, the historical information they contain is generally incidental and just calculated to give the background to the rest of the communication relating to other matters in which the writers were interested. The habit of writing letters was encouraged from the first, and in 1552 Xavier insisted that all the brethren of the Society should be told to write a yearly report to the General of the Order at Rome.⁵ The first 'Annual' or 'General' letter from India was written at Goa in Dec. 1552, when the Indian Province of the Society extended up to Japan. In 1605 the Provinces of Goa and Malabar were constituted. The last Annual letter from Malabar is of 1745; from Goa the last letter preserved relates to 1750-53 though other evidence makes it probable that the letters continued to be written till 1759, the year of the expulsion of the Jesuits from Portuguese territory.⁶ The Annual letters, however, cannot claim to retain the value of direct evidence of the personal letters, but this shortcoming is compensated generally by the deliberation and sense of responsibility behind such considered compositions based on local reports, and sometimes these reports were textually reproduced as in the letters of Pimenta from 1600 to 1601. Andrew Freyre (1625-92) joined the Madura Mission in 1656 and held the office of Superior in the years 1666-70 and 1679-83, and Provincial of Malabar from 1688. He wielded a 'wonderful pen', and his annual letters, which were many, gave at the beginning a succinct account of the political conditions in the part of the country where he worked, together with some shrewd reflections. The celebrated Father Beschi who landed at Goa in 1710 and was soon despatched to Ambalakad and thence to the Madura Mission was perhaps the most famous of our group of letter writers. In his time the Mission was passing through troublous times as the Nāyaks of Tanjore and Madura had entered on a policy of persecuting their Christian subjects, and generally South India

⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 12-17.

⁶ *ibid.*, p. 130.

was the victim of the raids and ravages of the armies of rival chiefs. He was confined to his residence during such troubles and devoted his time to learning Tamil in which he became very proficient and took rank of Grammarian lexicographer, poet and prose writer. His great personal charm won him the favour of the Mughal general Chanda Sahib and the Nawab of Vellore. But he was equally at home with the poor and saw much of Indian life in the places where he worked—Trichinopoly, Tanjore, Madura, Ellakurichi and Ambalakad. 'Besides a few personal letters to the General of the Society', says Fr. Correia-Afonso, 'he has left us the Annual letter of the Madura Mission for the year 1731. In it he paints a dark picture of the Marātha invasion of Tanjore which throws light on the reactions of the southerners to the new power that was rising in W. India.'⁷

On the whole the Jesuit letters will enable the modern historian to add much local colour to his narrative by drawing upon them for interesting details of social life and about the men who played a part in history. The lack of other sources for certain areas and periods enhance the value of the Jesuit documents. In the last resort, however, each document has to be examined separately before final judgment can be passed on its value as a source. The majority of the Jesuit letters, are, however, but ancillary sources for a general history, for which they can provide evidence that corroborates and supplements the data derived from other sources.⁸

The Portuguese sources for Marātha history were long neglected by historians, and only recently (1938) Pissurlencar, custodian of the Archives of Portuguese India, drew pointed attention to a surprisingly large number of documents in private hands, especially, in religious houses, besides the Archives in his custody. He says: "The materials in this language are all absolutely contemporaneous, dated and full of exact details. They not merely throw light on the history of the Portuguese settlements in India but also supply invaluable information to an unimaginable extent on the events and personages of the Muslim monarchies of the Deccan (espe-

⁷ *ibid.*, p. 70.

⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 160-1.

cially Bijapur and the Nizam Shahi), the Vijayanagar empire, the house of Shivaji, the Peshwas, the Kanarese dynasties of Bednur etc. and even Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan. They are indispensable to the historian of the early career of the Shāhji (the father of the Great Shivaji) the Angrias, and the Marātha navy.⁹ Pissurlencar's *Portuguese e Maratas i, Sivaji* (reprinted from the *Boletim do Instituto Vasco da Gama*) is the fullest and most scholarly account on Portuguese relations with Shivaji and supersedes all earlier works on the subject.

Among the Persian historians of the Mughal empire, Khāfi Khān and Bhimsen are valuable for Shivaji; the latter calls him 'a soldier unequalled, skilled in the arts of government, and a friend to men of virtue and religion'. The records of the English factories on the Bombay (Maharashtra) coast and inland regarding Shivaji begin from 1659 and contain notices of events without any attempts to embellish them. Their spies from Rajapur and Karvar travelled in Shivaji's dominions and brought news of his doings and plans in so far as they concerned the English. Dr. Fryer who was in Surat in 1673 gives a vivid account of Shivaji's army, 'more splendid' than the Mughal forces. Among the travellers, Bernier, Tavernier, Thevenot Carré either knew Shivaji personally or heard of his activities in the South. Abbe Carré visited India twice during 1668 to 1671 and on the second occasion travelled overland from Surat to Fort St. George; he wrote a *History of Sivaji* which compares him with Caesar. The French *Memoire* of Francois Martin (of Pondicherry) is of the highest value for Shivaji's Karnatak expedition. In 1670 he was at Surat and learnt a report that Shivaji contemplated a second attack on that wealthy emporium. As an ally of Sher Khān Lodi of Valikandapuram Martin closely watched the political movements in the far south and was fully posted with occurrences in Western India. At the instance of the French East Indian Co., he wrote a daily journal and his notes on the Karnatak expedition admirably supplement the *Sabhasad Bakhar*. The more important foreign biographies of Shivaji

⁹ cited *ibid.*, p. 88.

can now be read conveniently in S. N. Sen's *Foreign Biographies of Sivaji*.

Some Kannaḍa works of the period have something to say on Shāhji and Śivaji and his successors. Among them we may note Lingaṇṇa's *Keladi Nṛipa Vijaya* (1703) already mentioned, Govinda Vaidya's *Kaṇṭhīrava Narasaraṅga Vijaya* (1648) and the anonymous *Hydernāmā* (1782), which is an excellent biography of Hyder Ali of Mysore. Lingaṇṇa's account covers a wide range of Marāṭha history, particularly the parentage and lineage of Śivaji, and the *Hydernāmā* is helpful for the later phase of Marāṭha history in the eighteenth century.

Śiva Bhārat by Paramānand is an authentic and accurate source on Shāhji's life in the Carnatic. It is incomplete but still its historical framework 'is found to be remarkably accurate, confirmed as it is at places by contemporary records, Marāṭha or English' (Patvardhan and Rawlinson: *A Source Book of Marāṭha History*, p. 2). Little confusion is noticed in the arrangements of facts, and on the whole the work may be said to embody a good account of Shāhji and Śivaji. There is little history to be gathered from the *Rādhā Mādhava Vilāsa campū* of Jayaram Pandit, a court poet of Shāhji, but there are useful references to Shāhji's expedition against Mir Jumla, the various chiefs of the Carnatic and the Firingis. The early nineteenth century chronicle by Nārāyaṇa kone called *Carnāṭaka Rājākkal Savistara Carita* deals among other things with the southern expedition of Śivaji, the Carnatic wars and the history of Jinji. Nārāyaṇa kone is of the opinion that Śivaji undertook the Carnatic expedition to South India from the depredations of the Muslims and make Dharma live again.

For the Peshwa period (1707-1818) the official records of the Peshwa's daftar are quite voluminous and form the chief primary source. There are also the Persian records and the English records of Poona known as the *Residency Correspondence*. A series of 45 handy volumes have been published by the Bombay Government under Sardesai's editorship under the title *Selections from the Peshwa's Daftar*. But these records come to an abrupt end, with the exception of a few

papers, about 1782, because all the papers of Nana Fadnis who died in 1800, were transferred to his country residence at Manvali whence they found their way to Satara and came to be partly published by Parasnis. They form the principal contents of the Satara Historical Museum. Moreover, Poona ceased to be centre of Marātha politics after the close of the First Marātha War in 1782; Mahadji Sindhia becoming thenceforth an equally important factor. We must mention also the *Gulgule Daftar of Kotah* largely dealing with Sindhia's dealings with Rajputana in the first two volumes edited by Phalke. The *Patwardhan Papers* (14 vols.) edited by V. V. Khare contain news letters from the Peshwa's court and echoes of great interest of North Indian affairs. There are also thirteen volumes of Marāthi extracts with English summaries issued under the title *Selections from the Satara Rāja's and Peshwā's diaries* issued by a Private agency with the aid of the Bombay Government. They comprise nine volumes of the so called *diaiges*, which are in fact extracts from the daily account books and some judicial decisions, and four supplementary volumes of *Sanads* and letters, *Kaifiyats*, *Treaties* and *Agreements*. These records also end with 1783 when the Treaty of Salbai closed the first Anglo-Marātha war; thereafter British Residents came to be posted at the Marātha Courts. The *Poona Residency Correspondence* comes down to the end of Peshwa rule in 1818 and includes the letters that passed between these Residents and the Governor-General, as well as duplicates of the more important letters written by one Resident to another or to the Governors of Bombay and Madras and British military chiefs. These records comprise a hundred files each containing some seven to eight hundred pages in manuscript and luckily saved from the fire set to the British Residency by Baji Rao II when he took up arms against the British in the last Marātha War. They relate to the political affairs of almost all parts of India covering a period of thirty-three years from the appointment of Malet in 1785 to the annexation of the Peshwa's dominions in 1818. Sarkar and Sardesai have edited these English records in fourteen volumes published under the authority of the Bombay Government. They form a necessary supple-

ment to the Marāthi series, and in many respects complementary to the English records preserved in the Bombay Secretariat, from which G. W. Forrest edited four volumes of selections (one relating to Marātha history and rest to British Indian) well over fifty years ago. The English records supply two elements wanting in the Marāthi. Their intelligence is far more accurate and widespread than that of the Marathas; and the despatches of the English residents give a broader survey of Indian politics and a deeper and more intelligent criticism of character and policy than is to be met with in the matter-of-fact Marāthi letters. Thus they enable us to reach the root causes of events and to trace the wider movements of Indian politics to a degree unattainable by the indigenous Persian and Marāthi sources. Some of the Residents like Colet and Elphinstone were men of high intellectual calibre, of extraordinary capacity; resourcefulness, and power of initiative, and their spy system was also perfect.

French activities in India in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were more centred in the Deccan and South India than anywhere else. The French archives in Pondicherry used to be a valuable source and an extensive and useful catalogue in eight volumes was published by Edmond Gaudart some decades back. It seems that the documents have all been transferred to Paris with the merger of the French possessions in India, but one hopes that this would not mean that Indian scholars can have no access to them. The National Archives has a plan of getting all documents in foreign archives bearing an Indian history micro-filmed gradually and this should also be a great help.

The failure of the French in India led to a loss of interest in France in Indo-French history; but with the success of the second colonial empire in the nineteenth century that interest revived and French activities in India claimed fresh attention. In the middle of the eighteenth century Dernis published an important collection of documents: *Receuil ou collection des titres, édits, déclarations, arrêts, réglemens et autres pièces concernant la compagnie des Indes Orientales, de 1664 à 1750* (4 vols. Paris 1751-6). Dernis was in charge of the Company's archives and published all the official papers on the constitu-

tion, privileges, regulations and trading operations of the company. The work was thus a collection of documents in print, but a short introduction at the beginning of each volume briefly reviewed the history of the period it covered.¹⁰ One of the principal sources of the early French activities in South India is the *Mémoires Sur l'établissement des colonies françaises aux Indes Orientales* of François Martin already mentioned in connection with Sivaji's Carnatic expedition. The book ends abruptly in 1694 though there are two fragments covering the period Feb. 1701 to January 1703. Written day to day as already noted the final copy was carefully revised later. Alfred Martineau, Governor of Pondicherry, published the *Memoires* in extenso (3 volumes, Paris, 1931-4) and made this valuable source accessible to students. 'Henri Froidevaux who had earlier published the *Mémoires de Bellanger de Lespinay* (1895) and *les Debuts de l'occupation Française à Pondichery* (1897) has written a very interesting biographical sketch of Martin and an able summary of the course of events narrated, divided into three parts and given as an Introduction to each of the three volumes of Martin's *Mémoires*!¹¹ Martineau's *Les Origines de Mahé de Malabar* (Paris 1917) has traced the history of that settlement from 1720 to 1738; it is a well documented book based on the *Mémoires du Chevalier de la Farelle sur la prise de Mahé 1725* (Paris 1889) and all relevant records in the archives of Paris, Pondicherry and Madras.¹² Martineau also wrote a monumental work on Dupleix in five big volumes published over more than a decade from 1920. The first four volumes deal with Dupleix in India, and the fifth with the last years of Dupleix in France and his proceedings against the Company. Martineau's work is based on unpublished records, little noticed by earlier biographers. He gives long extracts from the records on the principle that 'the role of the historian is not to impose his judgement, but to provide the public the means to pronounce it on the basis of the documents cited'. The book is not merely a biography of Dupleix, but in a real sense it is comprehensive history of

¹⁰ *Historians, etc.*, p. 185.

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 189.

¹² *ibid.*, p. 190.

the French in India from 1722 to 1754, which fully justifies the title he has chosen *Dupleix et l'Inde Française*. He indicated that he had moved away from the hero-worship of the past saying: 'It is the history of a man that we are writing, and not that of a demi-god.'¹³ After Martineau, the most interesting study, *Dupleix*, by G. Jonveau-Dubreuil published in 1941 in Pondicherry, was dedicated to the memory of the great man on the occasion of the bicentenary of his elevation to the dignity of a Mughal Nawab. The book was re-issued next year from Paris with minor changes. Jonveau-Dubreuil's work, the result of a very shrewd study of the relevant records, is not a complete biography and comes down only to 1750. The title of the Paris edition, *Dupleix ou l'Inde Conquis* gives the clue to his theory that Dupleix acted on a long premeditated plan of playing the role of a regular Nawab of the Mughal empire, and fight his 'wars not as an auxiliary but as principal, a Nawab fighting other Nawabs for increase of territory'. He tersely sums up his view of Dupleixian Nababism thus: 'Europeans have not conquered Persia or China or Japan, but they have conquered India? Why? Because in India there had been a Dupleix. India was conquered not at all by arms, but by "Nababism", that is to say, by the genius of one man. The conquest of India an event of world importance, may be explained by the study of a single character.'¹⁴ The first biography of Bussy was also by Martineau (1935) who rescued him from the place of secondary importance to which he had been consigned by earlier writers; he held him a greater diplomat than soldier, far above Dupleix in good sense and judgement, though not in boldness of conception. 'In a Hellenic pantheon', says Martineau, 'Pallas Athene, the goddess of Wisdom and of war, would have claimed him as one of her most perfect disciples'.¹⁵ It is perhaps worth noting also that the charge of bribery against La Bourdonnais asserted by Malleson to rest on papers in the India Office was exploded in 1905 by E. Herpin in his *Mahé de la Bourdonnais et la compagnie des Indes*

¹³ *ibid.*, pp. 197-8.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 198.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 199.

by reproducing the documents Malleson relied on and demonstrating that Malleson never scrutinized them properly. 'Along with these documents, Herpin reproduces all the relevant papers connected with the trial of La Bourdonnais and also a short analysis of the *Mémoires* of La Bourdonnais. Anyone who reads this well documented and ably written book will come away with the impression that Herpin has fully succeeded in vindicating the position of La Bourdonnais. But in making that attempt, Herpin had necessarily to focus attention on the intrigues and jealous manoeuvres of Dupleix, revealing all the weak traits of his character! (S. P. Sen).¹⁶

The later period of French activities in India 1765-1793 has been little studied though the sources for it are abundant. Malleson's *Final French Struggle in India and on the Indian Seas* (London 1878) is the nearest approach to a comprehensive work on the period, but it does not cover the whole period. Martineau's Introduction to the *Journal de Bussy, 1781-83* (Pondicherry, 1932) and one chapter in his *Bussy et l'Inde Française* covers the period from 1781-83, though always with Bussy as the centre. In 1888 was published the *Journal de Bord du Bailli de Suffren dans l'Inde 1781-84*, lying till then unknown in one of the small archives of France in the Department of Maritime Alps; it is the most truthful day to day account of Suffren's expedition. The period 1785-1793 has been treated in part by Edmon Gaudart in his *Correspondence des Agents à Pondichery de la nouvelle Compagnie des Indes avec les Administrateurs à Paris* (Pondicherry 1931); Gaudart's long introduction giving a detailed history of the new French Company founded by Calonne in 1785. Madame Labernadie's *La Révolution et les Etablissements Française dans L'Inde (1790-93)* (Pondicherry 1939) is a brilliantly written and comprehensive history of the French in India during the Revolution based almost entirely on the records in the Pondicherry Archives and showing what a wealth of material is available to the historian. She shows that the French attempts in India to establish

¹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 201.

liberty, equality and fraternity applied only to the French men, the Indian inhabitants being rigidly kept out of it. Another ably written book, Maurice Besson's *Les Aventuriers Français aux Indes (1775-1820)*, (Paris 1932) contains a collection of brief accounts of most of the French adventures in India based on original documents. Many other secondary works on Indo-French history have been mentioned and reviewed by S. P. Sen in his paper on 'French Historical writing on European Activities in India' in *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* ed. C. H. Philips (London 1961) which I have followed in the foregoing account on the French sources. There are, finally, hundreds of long memoirs by French Governors in India, diplomatic agents, military adventurers in the service of Indian princes and so on in the Archives at Paris, and perhaps still at Pondicherry also. A systematic study of these political and military documents would be a task of much interest. Moreover, Persian and Marāthi records have not yet been fully utilized in the study of French relations with Hyderabad, Mysore and the Marāthas.

We have reserved to the end the unique and monumental Tamil diary of Ananda Ranga Pillai which in the words of Sir Frederic Price reflects the inmost thoughts and reflections of an extremely able, level-headed oriental, and his criticisms—which at times are of the freest character—of his fellows and master. It is a strange mixture of things trivial and important; of family matters and affairs of state; of business transactions and social life of the day; interspersed with scraps of gossip, all evidently recorded as they came to the mind of the diarist, who might well be dubbed the 'Indian Pepys'. Homely as is the diction, there are in it descriptions of men and things which are vividly lifelike and passages which are startling—some in their pathos, others in their shrewdness. This unique contemporary diary throws welcome light on the troubled politics of South India in the fateful years that saw the disintegration of the Muhammadan power in the Carnatic and the growth and final settlement of the conflict for dominion between the English and the French. Ananda Ranga Pillai occupied a most influential position in the French service and retained his rank and importance even down to his

death only just a few days before the surrender of Pondicherry to General Coote in 1761. He was only 52 years of age when he died. His diary contains more authentic details of a political nature than that which any other Indian at Pondicherry could have kept. He is seen at his best when writing of Dupleix and of his defects of temper and character. His diary has run to twelve volumes in its English translation by J. F. Price and H. H. Dodwell, Madras 1904-28, in spite of the fact that there were several gaps in the narratives now available, some for months at a stretch. One of these gaps was filled by the discovery of some new pages relating to the assassination of Mazzaffar Jung and other matters by the present writer in Gallors Montbrun's house at Pondicherry, and an English translation of this fragment will be found in the *Madras University Journal* (Humanities), Vol. XIV 1942, Supplement pp. 1-49. The entire original Tamil text has been published in Pondicherry by Diagou.

There are Persian histories of the Nawabs of the Carnatic like the *Tuzak i Walajahi* of Burhan Ibn Hasan, the *Sawami hah-i-Mumtaz* of Mhd. Karim Mhayru'd-din Hasan Ghulam Zamin and *Bahr-i-Aszan Jahi* of Gulam Abdul Qadir Nazir which are relatively of less value for political history, though they contain much interesting detail on court life and social events; some of these works have been translated into English by the department of Arabic, Persian and Urdu of the University of Madras.

The manuscript materials for the study of British Indian history, preserved in the National Archives and other state departments of India as well as in England, are enormous. Sir William Foster's monumental work on *English Factories in India* and *Court Minutes of the East India Company* are a model of solid research. Besides the work of Foster, the historical researches of Yule and Hunter have made us familiar with the doings of the pioneers of trade and industry and we can follow the progress of Madras or of Bombay in the seventeenth century. Col. Love's *Vestiges of Old Madras* (3 vols.) is very useful. S. A. Khan's *The Sources for the History of the British in the 17th Century* lists the manuscript materials of the India Office Library, the National Archives and else-

where for the period. Talboys Wheeler's *Madras in the Olden Times* will be found very useful too.

The primary sources for the eighteenth century history consist mainly of contemporary state papers, supplemented by Marāthi and Persian records. The volume of correspondence with the servants of the E.I.C. in India reached enormous proportions. They had to keep very detailed records of their daily transactions for the perusal of their masters in England. Their discussions were entered at length upon the records of Council Meetings and were designated Consultations or Proceedings. This has led to the increase of the mass of documents which supply abundant historical material of first rate importance. Some of these records have been listed and calendered by Forrest, S. C. Hill, and others. We have also letters in different collections like the Cornwallis Correspondence edited by Denison Ross in two volumes, the Fort William correspondence, (publication in progress to be 21 volumes in all). The India Office Library, the National Archives of India, the Madras and Bombay record offices, the Admiralty and War office Records etc. contain much unpublished matter to which may be added such printed English records as the records of Fort. St. George, Military consultations, 1752-56, the Siege Diary 1757-9, The letters of Kirlpatrick and others. The available material is almost endless and is still increasing.

We have also a number of standard contemporary and later specialized works. Orme's *Military Transactions* (already mentioned) supplemented by Clement Downing, and R. O. Cambridge form the chief works on this period. For the Anglo-Mysore wars we have important authorities like Wilks's *History of Mysore* for the Mysore wars under Warren Hastings and Tipu; A. Dirom's *Narrative of the Campaign* for Cornwallis's campaign, and A. Beatson's *View of the origin and conduct of the war with Tipu Sultan* for the last campaign. The correspondence of most governors-general has been published by different editors. The materials for the first half of the nineteenth century have not been properly tapped and only a few full-length biographies of the leading actors have been published. H. T. Prinsep's *History of the Political and*

Military Transactions in India during the Administration of the Marquess of Hastings is a solid piece of work in which the achievements of Hastings are vividly described in a simple and direct style. Kaye's *Life of Metcalfe* is a good Victorian biography with plenty of letters and minutes quoted in full. We need detailed biographies of Amherst and Bentinck.

As the nineteenth century advanced, the political unity of the entire sub-continent became well established, communications developed and the influence of the three Universities started in the same year as the outbreak of 1857 which was the last kick of the old order began to be increasingly felt, and the movement towards Indian freedom and independence began though at first in a modest way with the assembling of the first Indian National Congress in 1885 in this very city. The Indian States and their relations with the paramount power add a new dimension to the story. It is suspected that some of the confidential records bearing on these relations and the national movement were destroyed before the transfer of Power. We do not know and perhaps will never know the exact truth of the matter. The Government of India and the state governments have been striving to collect material for a comprehensive history of the national movement; the results achieved so far cannot be pronounced either satisfactory or encouraging. But important aspects of the movement have been brilliantly illuminated by individual works like Banerjea's *A Nation in the Making*, Lajapat Rai's *Unhappy India* and Mrs. Besant's *How India Wrought for Freedom*. In a more purely historical view and making careful and full use of all available sources are Dr. Gopal's books on the Viceroyalties of Lords Ripon and Irwin. There is much scope for this more serious and scholarly kind of work at different levels which will make better use than has so far been done of the available archival material with the aid of Press Lists, Calendars, and hand-books giving excellent guidance to the enquiring student. But workers in the field are few and it is to be feared that this state of things will continue until the value of historical studies is realized better than at present and the history classes in our Universities become more attractive to their alumni.

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Errata

- Page 8, line 28: *for ar. read av*
Page 8, line 28: *for anx read aux*
Page 17, line 8: *for report read reports*
Page 17, line 25: *for neolithic read mesolithic*
Page 24, line 8: *for sources read source*
Page 24, line 21: *for born read borne*
Page 24, line 22: *for settled read settle*
Page 26, line 17: *for Valaghī read Valabhī*
Page 26, line 22: *for was read has*
Page 29, line 1: *for institutions read institution*
Page 30, line 25: *for Ghoriad read Ghorid*
Page 31, line 16: *for panegeric read panegyric*
Page 33, line 24: *for perhaps on read perhaps based on*
Page 34, line 23: *for calendered read calendared*
Page 40, line 33: *for Alexandrine read Alexandrine*
Page 43, line 26: *for Malkher read Malkhed*
Page 45, line 1: *delete Jarric*
Page 45, footnote line 3: *for Withvington read Withington*
Page 46, last line: *for Mandelsto read Mandelslo*
Page 46, last line: *for Thavenof read Thevenot*
Page 50, line 5: *for stone, cist read stone cist*
Page 52, line 14: *for and which read and to which*
Page 63, line 4: *for aradoes read pardaos*
Page 63, line 36: *for board read hoard*
Page 74, line 26: *for Benjamin of Tudala read Benjamin of Tudela*
Page 78, line 31: *for quarelled read quarrelled*
Page 79, line 26: *for spread read shared*
Page 92, line 33: *for Xavierui read Xaverii*
Page 95, line 4: *for of read as*
Page 97, line 29: *for to read to save*
Page 101, lines 6 and 10: *for Jonveau read Jouveau*
Page 104, line 13: *for Gallors read Gallois*
Page 104, line 14: *for calendered read calendared*
Page 105, line 15: *for Cornvallis read Cornwallis*
Page 105, line 23: *for Kirlpatrick read Kirkpatrick*

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INDIAN ARCHAEOLOGY TODAY

H. D. SANKALIA

DURING THE course of the last century, Indian Archaeology has undergone a considerable metamorphosis. Through explorations and excavations leading to discoveries of tools, tombs, and cities, it has pieced together evidence which is being sifted in the light of new scientific methods and from this emerges a picture of the conditions in which primitive men lived and worked.

It is this fascinating story which Professor Sankalia narrates in the course of the three Heras Memorial Lectures which he delivered under the auspices of the Heras Institute of Indian History and Culture in 1960. The first lecture deals with the changing aims and methods of Indian Archaeology, in which the author describes how the emphasis has shifted from a study of objects and artistic and aesthetic interest to a study of the evolution of primitive man and how this fruitful approach has led to a widening of frontiers of knowledge of primitive men in India. The author also describes the numerous methodological advances that have been made in the field of archaeology in countries other than India. The second and the third lectures deal with the contribution of archaeology to prehistory, protohistory and early history of India. It is the second lecture which forms the main core of the book for in it are described the various new discoveries and their significance pointed out.

Dr. Sankalia has brought archaeology out from the mystery which surrounded it, stripped it of the jargon which made it intelligible only to the trained specialist and put it within the grasp of the layman. For the specialist who wants to delve deeper into the subject the author has provided numerous references by way of footnotes.

The value of the book is enhanced by a number of illustrations and plates.

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