

# WAR OF SUCCESSION

*BETWEEN THE*

## Sons of Shah Jahan

**1657-1658**

BY

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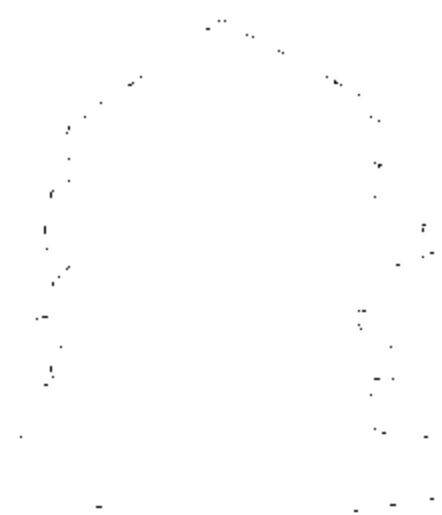


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SHAH JAHAN



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## Foreword

FOR most modern historians of the Mughal empire, and indeed, of the fate of the Muslim community in the sub-continent, the War of Succession of 1657-58, following the illness of Shah Jahan, has appeared in retrospect, to have been of decisive consequence. In the political sphere, the memory of the behaviour of the Mughal princes towards each other during this fateful period, undoubtedly influenced Aurangzeb's attitude towards his own sons and led him to deny them his confidence with possibly disastrous effects upon their competence as rulers. In the religious sphere, the victory of the orthodox Aurangzeb over the more latitudinarian Dara Shikoh has seemed in retrospect to have portended a change in the whole bias of the Mughal empire with consequences for the acceptability and therefore, for the stability of Mughal rule about which historians are still in hot disagreement.

In offering an analysis of the alignments among the Mansabdars (who provided the bulk of the fighting forces engaged on the different sides), Dr. Ghauri has chosen to put under the microscope actions and decisions around which emotions still rage. For this reason, if for no other, his conclusions are themselves likely to be the subject of controversy, but they will, indeed, be all the more valuable for that. It is not to be expected that all historians will agree with Dr. Ghauri's view of the role of religion in the War of Succession, but in tackling such a live subject Dr. Ghauri has shown commendable determination not to be deterred from his own point of view by the certain prospect of criticism. It is to be hoped that others will follow his lead in the fresh discussion of strategic themes in the history of the sub-continent. At the time of Dr. Ghauri's statistical analysis of the supporters of the various princes among the *Mansabdars*, (the analysis was

undertaken in 1957-58), that analysis was thought to be a pioneering effort; since then, it has come to notice that Mr. Athar 'Ali of the University of Aligarh has performed a somewhat similar analysis.<sup>1</sup> It will be interesting to compare his findings with those of Dr. Ghauri.

Dr. Ghauri prepared this work as a thesis for the M.A. degree of the University of London. He showed great interest in and enthusiasm for his work and it is a real pleasure to know his labours will achieve their proper and merited fruition in publication. The publishers are to be congratulated on their enterprise in making it possible for such scholarly work to come before a wider public.

P. Hardy

*Reader in the History of Islam in South Asia  
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1. Strangely enough, it does not at all give the names but simply the ranks of the Mansabdars as the supporters of the various princes. It also gives no clue whatsoever of its sources for its assertions. Hence in my humble opinion, it merits no serious consideration. For my detailed discussion of the princes' supporters see chapter 5. Also see my foot notes on pp. 70, 76 and 78—(Author).

## Introduction

**T**HE object of the present work is to study the War of Succession between the sons of Shah Jahan with a particular reference to the part of the nobles therein—a field of study which has not been made the object of a research monograph so far. The Mughal nobility was a nobility of office and not of hereditary status, and still it formed the very backbone of the machinery of the Government. Every contestant of the peacock throne had a group of followers around him, with whose support he wanted to achieve his object.

The material for this subject is varied. The greatest setback, however, is that it deals mainly with the role of the princes as the main actors in the drama and does not sufficiently bring into the limelight the contribution of the nobles to the cause of their respective masters. For example, it is difficult to find out clear-cut evidence on the role of the nobles as the advisers of the princes or the particular occasions when any of them swayed his hero by his superior counsel and as a consequence, an alternative programme of work was chalked out. The contemporary writers are almost reticent on their roles as such, but give ample details on their conduct as fighters, negotiators or as emissaries entrusted with delicate missions.

Another aspect of the War of Succession examined in this thesis is the influence of the ideological factors, which added to the bitterness of the struggle. The moral degradation of some Muslims as admirably described in *Dabistan-i-Mazahib* (BM MS Add 16670), a work written in Shah Jahan's reign, was very noticeable. Akbar's hostility to Orthodox Islam and Dara Shikoh's coquetry with Hinduism had contaminated even the upper strata of Muslim society, the most conspicuous examples being 'Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan, one of the most refined



men of the age, performing *Sijdah* to the Hindu *Yogi* Trilochan Gosain (vide folio 193b) and Zafar Khan Ahsan, a highly talented noble of Shah Jahan, performing obsequiously immoral services to the same *Yogi* (vide folio 198b) in order to earn a blessing from him. The two princes Dara Shikoh and Aurangzeb had acute differences as far as their religious outlook was concerned. Aurangzeb's role of a crusader against the alleged heresies of Dara Shikoh and its influence on the Sunnis has been examined and particularly the nature of followers of the princes has been scrutinised to see how far they were influenced by religious considerations to side with the particular princes.

The chapter on the parties and personalities in this struggle has analysed the nature of followers of the princes—Dara Shikoh's mostly non-Sunni and non-Muslim followers and Aurangzeb's bulk of the followers—chiefly the sunnis. The role of the Rajputs as the partisans of the princes has shown beyond any doubt that Dara Shikoh and none else was their idol. The question of collusion between the Muslims on both sides has been examined with interesting details which so far have not been brought to light.

The view-points of the princes Shuja' and Murad have been advocated by their loyal employees, Ma'sum and Bihishti in their respective works, but unfortunately, nobody has come forward to defend the view-point of Dara Shikoh. The lack of a defence is to a smaller extent, made up by '*Amal-i-Salih* and *Tarikh-i-Shah Jahani* of Muhammad Sadiq.

The observations of the foreign travellers, e.g., Manucci, Bernier and Tavernier, though possessing a freshness and weight of their own, are sometimes misleading because of lack of a proper understanding of local problems. In this work, an attempt has been made to rectify the various misleading assertions of several writers on this subject, particularly the canard advanced by Khafi Khan that Dara Shikoh was executed under a legal decree, has been exposed and shown not at all in accordance with the evidence.

For the pursuit of the fugitive Dara Shikoh, the Despatches of Jai Singh to Aurangzeb fill many gaps in our knowledge. For this I am grateful to the University of London for having borne my expenses incurred for their study at the Bibliotheque

Nationale, Paris.

I should also place on record my heartfelt thanks to the talented librarian J. D. Pearson of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, who was ever ready to help me to gain the material which otherwise would have been impossible for me to procure.

Last but not least, I must express my deep sense of gratitude to Dr. P. Hardy, whose guidance has throughout been a source of inspiration to me and I dedicate this dissertation to him.

Lahore:

25th August 1964

**IFTIKHAR AHMAD GHOURI**



## Chapter 1

# Problems of Succession

THE historical development of the Muslim world had created problems not dealt with by the classical Muslim theory and there had been no clear traditions, particularly on the question of hereditary succession and the legitimacy of the principle of primogeniture. Orthodox Islam in its elective theories of the Caliphate and the eminent jurists had mainly concerned themselves with the elective character of the Khalifah and had not discussed the question of succession to the *de facto* authority at all where it was different from the Khilafat. It nowhere clearly recognised any system other than the elective Caliphate. These facts could not solve the knotty problems of succession of the Mughals in India, who had also inherited an ambiguous legacy in this context from their forefathers in Central Asia.

In order to have a clear idea of the gravity of these problems created by the absence of healthy traditions, the discussion in this chapter has been divided into two parts, firstly, influence of the Sunni theory of the Caliphate on the Muslims of India and, secondly, the inheritance of the Mughals from their forefathers in Central Asia, which had aggravated their difficulties over the succession.

*The Sunni Theory of the Caliphate.*—Orthodox Islam preached that Allah was the sovereign of the Islamic State, who had appointed Muhammad as the communicator of His Will to mankind. After the Hijrah (622 A.C.), the Prophet had exercised all powers, religious, judicial, administrative, supreme command of the armies, etc., in the Islamic State. The death of Muhammad (632 A.C.) deprived the Muslims of a direct channel of Divine Revelation and also of a temporal ruler. They were confronted

with a serious threat to their solidarity as he had left no will in regard to his succession.<sup>1</sup> It was, however, tacitly understood by the orthodox Muslims that the temporal powers previously exercised by the Prophet had then been inherited by them. Since the members of the community could not exercise the governing powers individually, therefore, to avoid lawlessness, their notables elected the choicest person in their judgement for the office of the Caliph and immediately referred the matter to the Congregation for confirmation. In this way, Abu Bakr was the first elected Caliph, (632-34 A.C.). The Caliphate of Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman and 'Ali was known later as the Pious Caliphate (632-661 A.C.).

*Some Features of the Pious Caliphate.*—The Pious Caliphs, by their words and deeds, exerted themselves to be the greatest exponents of the Qur'an and the Sunnah.<sup>2</sup> In the day-to-day administration, they were assisted by a group of prominent persons (under 'Umar, such persons came to be known as the members of *al-Shura*), though their advice was not binding on the Caliph.<sup>3</sup> According to the later Sunni theories, the reported actions of the Pious Caliphs indicated their accountability for

1. The reasons for the absence of a Will are not far to seek. Since Prophethood (i.e. being an accredited messenger of God) could not be passed on to anyone else, therefore, the question of his succession did not arise. As for a deputy for the Prophet's temporal powers, none was nominated, because, had the Caliphate been really considered important as an integral part of the faith, e.g. like prayers, Muhammad would have certainly incorporated it in the tenets of Islam. The Muslims had never been enjoined to love worldly wealth, hence the absence of instructions on the Caliphate which, in a way, did possess temptations to lead the incumbent astray. Whosoever was considered the most pious and deserving in the infallible judgement of the *Ijma'*, was appointed to it. Ibn Khaldun, *Muqqadimah-i-Tarikh*, Urdu Tr. 'Abdul Rahman, Part II, p. 95.

2. Sunnah means the words, deeds and unspoken approval of the Prophet in all matters, spiritual and secular alike.

3. But still the Caliph very rarely rejected the advice of such persons. Only two known instances are on record when Abu Bakr rejected their almost unanimous advice: firstly, on the death of the Prophet, the infant Muslim State was in danger from within and without and even then he refused to exempt Zakat to a body of Muslims who were threatening to rebel if their demands were not granted and, secondly, he despatched an expedition under Zaid bin Usama to Syria not at all caring for any eventualities—only with a view of carrying out the Sunnah. Muir, *Caliphate*, pp. 11-14; Muhammad Ali, *Early Caliphate*, pp. 27, 38.

all actions to the community. It was in this regime that the Qur'an was collected, the Muslim community organised politically and guidance from the Qur'an and the Sunnah exhaustively utilised to solve the growing problems of the Islamic Empire. Owing to the ever-increasing number of such problems, sometimes they failed to trace out precedents from the Qur'an and the Sunnah and they removed such difficulties by means of *Qiyas*.<sup>1</sup> These decisions have also been incorporated in the Sunnah. Abu Bakr was never known as *Khalifat-Ullah*, because he considered this designation a sheer sinful one, but was usually addressed as *Khalifat-Rasul-Ullah*. The rest of the Pious Caliphs also followed him in the footsteps. Under 'Umar (Caliph from 634 to 644 A.C.), the title *Amirul-Mu'minin* was added to the office of the Caliph as well.

As already stated, Muhammad was the spiritual and secular head of the Islamic State and, by his example and precept, had made it clear that, for Islam, State activities could not be divorced from the influence of religion, as political security could be obtained only by orthodoxy.<sup>2</sup> The Pious Caliphs, keeping this precedent in view, also performed religious, judicial, administrative and military functions. The Caliph was, therefore, the executive of the *Shar'*, commander-in-chief of the Muslim army and the head of the formal religious observances prescribed by the faith.<sup>3</sup>

By refusing to make a change in the law of Zakat in favour of those Muslims who were threatening to rebel, Abu Bakr vigorously asserted the indivisibility of religion and politics in Islam. He thus established it beyond any doubt (among the Sunnis) that the duty of the Caliph was to protect and enforce the sacred Law and not to make any change in it. The rest of the Pious Caliphs also did the same. The Caliph could only interpret the Law if it was not intelligible on any point, but even

1. *Qiyas*, a term of Islamic jurisprudence, signifying the concept that a cause or situation not provided by the injunctions of Qur'an and Hadith are to be judged by analogical reasoning on the ground of their comparability with others that are dealt with in the laws of Shari'ah. *Concise Encyclopaedia of Arabic Civilization*, Amsterdam, 1959, p. 440.

2. A.K.S. Lambton, "The Persian Theory of Government," *Studia Islamica*, Paris, 1956.

3. *Ibid.*

while doing so, he was not to lose sight of the spirit of the *Shar'*. Another precedent established in this regime was that a Caliph was either to be elected by the Muslims (e.g. Abu Bakr) or nominated by his predecessor if the latter was morally convinced of the piety, sagacity and suitability of the former, but even then the nomination was subject to the confirmation of the masses (e.g. 'Umar and 'Uthman).

In this way, the Pious Caliphs had earned solid achievements to their credit, for example, stabilising and protecting the faith and organising the machinery of government. It was owing to these reasons that the Sunnis considered the indispensability of the Khilafat for the realisation of their hopes and aspirations and, in the subsequent history of Islam, it became an article of faith with them. The Sunni theory of Khilafat, as later formulated by the jurists, for example, Mawardi, prominently displays the professions and actions of the Pious Caliphs and was adapted to suit the circumstances of the times.

With the advent of the Umayyads (661-750 A.C.), there were good many departures from the orthodox practices and the innovation of confining the Caliphate within their kith and kin was one of them. They made the hereditary succession to the Caliphate an order of the day.<sup>1</sup> Clannish-mindedness became a living force. Had Mu'awiyah not nominated Yazid as his successor, he would have faced a rebellion of his tribesmen.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the 'Abbasids (750-1258 A.C.) continued this legacy of hereditary succession. When Mamun (786-833 A.C., Caliph from 813 A.C.) nominated Imam 'Ali Raza as his successor, he was threatened with disorder<sup>3</sup> and he had to drop the very idea. The 'Abbasids, (750-1258 A.C.) in utter disregard of the existing practices, assumed the title of *Khilafat-Ullah*—much to the disgust of the 'Ulama of the age.<sup>4</sup>

1. As for the question whether hereditary succession is illegal in Islam, the answer depends upon the intentions of the Caliph; if the aim is to localise the Khilafat within one's own family, then obviously it is foreign to the sense of the orthodox theory, because Caliphate is not a property but a trust reposed in a person by the community. *Muqqadima-i-Tarikh*, p. 94.

2. Ibid., p. 93.

3. Ibid.

4. There were two objections to this title: it clashed with the Sunni belief of God's omnipresence, which left no scope for a Deputy, and it also violated the traditions set by the Pious Caliphate.

From the second quarter of the tenth century (A.C.) onwards, the Caliphate was tottering and was almost shorn of all executive powers, as its provincial governors were assuming independence. Such a state of affairs could easily convey the impression that the Khalifah had ceased to be an effective political head of the Muslim world. This very idea was repugnant to an orthodox Muslim who regarded the community without a Khalifah as one steeped in sin. It was at this stage that the eminent Sunni jurists formulated the theory of Caliphate to find a way out of the quagmire.

The exposition of the Sunni theory of Khilafat by Mawardi (972-1058 A.C.) in his *al-Ahkamus-Sultaniyah* has generally been accepted as the most authoritative one. He forcefully advanced the view that only a Khalifah could be a legal sovereign of the Muslims, but he could delegate the powers of government to his "Governors." These "Governors," though politically independent in their realms, were subject to the Caliph's legal supremacy. Even those individuals who had captured the government by sheer force could have their power legitimated by submitting (in theory) to the *de jure* authority of the Khalifah. This theory aimed at preserving the (theoretical) unity of the Muslim world and the legal supremacy of the office of the Caliph.

The Caliphate was essentially elective in character, but hereditary succession had become an order of the day. In order to bridge the gulf between the two systems, Mawardi asserted that the Caliph could be elected or nominated by his predecessor, but the elective character of the Caliphate should remain intact. He narrowed down the circle of voters even to one,<sup>1</sup> because the subsequent acceptance by the Congregation of the candidate virtually amounted to his election as a Caliph. He also stated that a captive Khalifah was not at all competent to hold his office, but the captor could not get it unless confirmed by the electors.

By the time of Ghazali (1058-1111 A.C.), the Caliphate was reduced to a mere symbol for legitimation of rights acquired by force. Since kingship had become established, therefore, Ghazali, in order to avoid lawlessness, did not condemn it as wholly

1. H.A.R. Gibb, "Al-Mawardi's Theory of Caliphate," *Islamic Culture*, July 1937.



un-Islamic, but he laid more and more emphasis on its functions, i.e. the enforcement of the *Shari'ah*, commander of the faithful and a leader of the formal religious observances rather than on its constitutional position and the problem of its succession.<sup>1</sup> In this way, every ruler who governed in accordance with the *Shar'* could, without outraging the feelings of the Sunnis, call himself a Khalifah. Thus to all intents and purposes, Khalifat and kingship were becoming one.<sup>2</sup>

By the thirteenth century (A.C.), the practices of the Pious Caliphate had been considerably changed. In 1258, when the Caliphate was destroyed by the Mongols, it had already lost its political power and the various Muslim rulers took upon themselves the prerogatives of the Khalifah.

By the time of Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406 A.C.), kingship had become an effective ruling institution and, therefore, he did not condemn it but drew a distinction between a secular king and a Khalifah. The *de facto* military ruler was virtually a Caliph, if he was ruling in accordance with the *Shari'ah*.<sup>3</sup> Ibn Khaldun nowhere defended kingship or the system of hereditary succession.

The discussion in these pages comes down to the following conclusions:

The practices of the Pious Caliphate had degenerated with the passage of time; originally the Caliphate was meant to be elective and virtually a trust reposed in the Caliph and not at all to be localised in his family or tribe, but exactly the opposite had taken place.

Instead of being known as a deputy of the Prophet, the Caliph styled himself as a deputy of God.

In spite of these changes, the very basis of the Sunni theory remained intact, i.e. Khalifah was the one who protected and enforced the *Shari'ah*, no matter whether he was elected or not and arrogated to himself titles, (e.g. *Khalifat-Ullah*) not approved by the orthodox theory.

1. Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, chapter on the Caliphate and Sultanate, p. 31, and J.N.D. Anderson, "Law as a Social Force in Islamic Culture and History," *Bulletin SOAS*, Vol. XX, 1957.

2. Gibb and Bowen, op. cit., p. 34.

3. H.A.R. Gibb, "Some Considerations on the Sunni Theory of the Caliphate," *Archives D'Histoire Du Droit Oriental*, Tome iii, Paris, 1947.

*Practical Application of this Theory.*—From the second quarter of the tenth century (A.C.), the political power of the Caliph had declined but his legal supremacy over the Sunnis of the world remained unchallenged. The Muslim rulers found it expedient to pay a lip service to the Caliph's legal powers so as to keep the orthodox Muslims contented. Even the mighty Saljuqs, holding the largest empire of the day, had to acknowledge the Khalifah's legal supremacy.<sup>1</sup> The great Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna (971-1030 A.C., king from 997) deemed it an honour when he was conferred the titles of *Yamin-i-Khilafat* and *Aminul-Millat* in 999 A.C. by the Caliph Qadir and had the name of the Khalifah inscribed on his coins along with the new titles. Similarly, the Sultans of Delhi followed the convention of paying homage to the Caliph of Baghdad to confer a sort of legality on their rule. Iltutmish (Sultan from 1211-1236 A.C.) was the first king of Delhi to be honoured with the title of Sultan by the Caliph Mustansir Billah in 1229 A.C., in whose name the coins were also struck. The destruction of the Khilafat at the hands of Halaku Khan in 1258 confronted the Sultans of Delhi with a difficulty. To whom should they pay the conventional homage? Till 1296, they continued inscribing the name of Musta'sim (the last Caliph murdered in 1258) on their coins. 'Ala-ud-din Khalji (Sultan from 1296-1316) styled himself as *Yamin-i-Khilafat* on his coins, thereby doing away with the ambiguity of inscribing the name of the Caliph dead long ago. His son Qutb-ud-din Mubarak Shah Khalji was the first, however, to call himself a Khalifah of the age.<sup>2</sup> The Sayyids (1414-1451) and Lodis (1451-1526) simply called themselves *Naib Amirul-Mu'minin*.<sup>3</sup>

The Mughals, probably under the Persian influence, dissociated themselves from paying any theoretical homage to the institu-

1. I. H. Qureshi, *Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi*, p. 23. The Saljuqs, though politically very powerful, could not claim to be Khalifahs themselves. Obviously, they could not consent to be styled as the *Wuzara* of the Caliph, as they were having their own ministers. Therefore, they agreed to be called Sultans—officers holding powers delegated by the Caliph. They were the first to employ the title of Sultan as independent sovereigns.

2. Wright H. Nelson, *The Coinage and Metrology of the Sultans of Delhi*, pp. 96-102.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 243-56.

tion of Khilafat.<sup>1</sup> Akbar and his successors assumed the lofty title of *Khalifat-Ullah* but even they had to profess their loyalty to the ideals and objectives of the Khilafat (See Chapter 4).

Thus the Sunni theory of Khilafat, with election as its basis, could offer no help to the problems of hereditary succession to the *de facto* authority. It was only concerned with the ideal functions of a Muslim ruler and not at all with the constitution of his kingship. The absence of a clear law on this context was one of the reasons to arouse the ambitions of the princes to claim the throne as a matter of right and to refer the decision to the arbitrament of party backings and even the sword.

*Legacy of the Mughals from their Ancestors.* —The Mongols and the Timurids had customary laws of their own to settle the problems of succession. Nomination of the eldest son as heir apparent by the reigning king was the general practice and the leading nobles were persuaded to agree to it. Sometimes the kingdom was divided among the sons and certain tribes attached to support each prince in the administration of the assigned territories, but the throne itself was meant only for the eldest son. The following are the conspicuous instances.

Chingiz Khan (1162-1227 A.C.) distributed his empire among his sons and grandsons and attached some tribes to each prince to help him in the running of the government.<sup>2</sup> Timur (1306-1405) nominated Jahangir Mirza, his eldest son, as the next successor, but the latter died during the lifetime of the former. As yet, the two younger sons of Timur were alive, but he ignored them and instead nominated Pir Muhammad, the eldest son of Jahangir Mirza, and also prevailed upon the grandees to support his nominee.<sup>3</sup> After the death of Timur, the nobles went back on their word and raised Khalil Sultan, another grandson of Timur, to the throne.<sup>4</sup> Abu Sa'id, the grandfather of Babur, also divided his kingdom among his sons.<sup>5</sup> The history of the Timurids shows that they generally nominated the eldest

1. *Travels and Adventures of Sidi 'Ali Rais*, p. 38. Humayun made fun of this theory in so far as it meant his subordination to any outside power.

2. *Babur Nama*, Vol. I, p. 14.

3. *Zafar Nama*, Vol. II, p. 657.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 657, 679-712.

5. *Babur Nama*, Vol. I, p. 52.

son as heir apparent and the nobles swore fealty to the nominee, but on the death of the reigning sovereign, the will was often disregarded and any son other than the eldest succeeded with the help of the nobles who had gone back on their word of honour. The division of the kingdom among the sons by the reigning king and leaving the throne for the eldest son was not a bad plan but it could not work owing to the growing ambitions of the partisans of the princes.

Such was the legacy of the Mughals in India, which was not an enviable one and degenerated further in their times. They appear to have revived the practice of nominating the eldest son as an heir apparent and there is nothing on record to show that they ever preferred a younger son in this respect. Babur nominated Humayun as his successor and exhorted the nobles to support him.<sup>1</sup> Still the intrigues of some nobles, headed by Mahdi Khwajah, had taken place to have this will ignored while Babur was on his death-bed. The Mongol principle of the division of the empire put into practice after the death of Babur did not work successfully and was disowned by his successors. Even the humane Humayun, during the last days of his rule, had blinded his brother Kamran to remove any possible danger of a disputed succession.<sup>2</sup> On Humayun's death, Akbar had not attained his majority and he owed his throne to the unstinted support of Bairam Khan.

Rebellion of a son against the reigning Emperor was also not an uncommon thing. Salim took a lead in this matter. This rebellion (1600-1603) might have sealed his fate altogether, but the timely deaths of the other sons of Akbar, viz. Daniyal and Murad, facilitated the reconciliation between the father and the son—Salim being the only survivor. Salim (later, the Emperor Jahangir) was paid back in his own coin when both of his sons tried successively to oust him from the throne (Khusrau's rebellion in 1606 and Shah Jahan's rebellion from 1622 to 1625).

Salim's accession to the throne was managed with great difficulties.<sup>3</sup> His father-in-law Khan-i-'Azam 'Aziz Khan Koka

1. Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 708-709.

2. *Humayun Nama*, BM MS Or 166, ff. 82a-82b.

3. The discussion is based on *Waqa'i Asad Beg*, BM MS Or 1996, ff. 29a-29b.

and Man Singh (Salim's mother was Man Singh's sister) wanted instead the installation of Khusrau (the eldest son of Salim). In a meeting of the grandees, these two nobles strained every nerve to have Salim ignored, but the strenuous opposition of Sayyid Khan Chaghatai (related to the royal family), supported by Qulij Khan, won the battle for Salim. Sayyid Khan Chaghatai loudly protested that the suggestion allowing Khusrau to supersede his father Salim was contrary to the traditions of the Mughals. Civil war appeared imminent. Murtaza Khan gathered the Sayyids of Barah and other supporters of Salim. Muhammad Sharif (bin 'Abdus Samad, the famous painter and calligraphist), Mu'tamid Khan and Rukn-ud-din Rohilla approached Salim and elicited from him the promise of defending Islam in order to gather more supporters.<sup>1</sup> In this way, the storm died away and Salim became the Emperor Jahangir (1605-1627).

Shah Jahan's accession to the throne was managed by Asaf Khan (his father-in-law) and also by Mahabat Khan, another grandee of the Empire. Khan-i-Jahan Lodi, the premier noble of Jahangir, opposed him tooth and nail but in vain (vide Chapter 2). Shah Jahan on his<sup>2</sup> assumption of kingship (1627-1658), out in his zeal to weed out his rivals, took the rather unusual step of issuing an order<sup>2</sup> commanding the death of both the sons of Khusrau, namely, Dawar Bakhsh alias Bulaqi and Mirza Bandi alias Garhasp; Shahriyar, his own brother (also the son-in-law of Nur Jahan) and the sons of Mirza Daniyal, viz. Tahmurath (his brother-in-law through his sister Sultan Bahar Begum) and Hoshang. Shah Jahan, while he was a prince, considering his elder brother Khusrau likely to block his path, had already got him murdered<sup>3</sup> (1622 A.C.).

1. Dr. Irfan M. Habib in his paper, "The Political Role of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi and Shah Waliullah" read at the Aligarh Session of the Indian History Congress in 1960 stated that *Waq'a'i Asad Beg* does not at all mention any kind of pledge to protect Islam. The attention of the learned Doctor is drawn to ff. 29a-b of the BM MS Or 1996.

2. *Padshah Nama* of 'Abdul Hamid Lahori, BM MS Add 6556, f. 32a. It is also stated by another contemporary official historian (*Tarikh-i-Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shahi*, BM MS Add 6542, f. 228a) that Shah Jahan, after his accession, had eight of his kith and kin murdered. Out of these eight, five are quite clear, the remaining three may have been distant relatives or infants, whom the local historians did not deem it necessary to mention.

3. *'Amal-i-Salih*, BM MS Add 26221, ff. 75b-76b.

These ominous precedents in Mughal history and particularly his own conduct appears to have cautioned Shah Jahan that a bloody war of succession among his four mature sons was not unlikely. He aimed at strengthening his Empire by avoiding the threatened fratricidal war and also to follow scrupulously the Mughal precedent of nominating the eldest son as the successor. This aim could be secured only by the support of the nobility. That is why the nobles inclining towards his eldest son were highly favoured (*vide* Chapters 5 and 6). The grandees, who were in fact a key to such a situation, decided their course of action not only by personal motives, but the religious considerations also were not lost sight of (*vide* Chapters 4 and 6).

## Chapter 2

# The Mughal Ruling Elite

THE Mughal Mansabdars were the pillars of the Mughal Empire; indeed the empire owed its very life to them. The Mughal ruling elite was unique in itself, as it was essentially official in character. It was not a nobility because of birth; rather it was just a favour conferred upon the incumbent by the Emperor and could be retained only during the pleasure of the latter. Whosoever won the favours of the sovereign could become a noble and remain so, so long as he was considered useful by the State. Therefore, it would not be an exaggeration to state that the Mughal nobility was a child of authority. It would be more appropriate to call its members the Emperor's favourites rather than his nobles. In spite of these limitations, its importance cannot be underestimated. Its prominence can be gauged from the fact that its members not only manned an efficient bureaucratic machinery for the executive work of the government, but, undoubtedly, all higher administrative appointments, civil and military alike, were filled by them. It was owing to their multifarious functions that Abul-Fazl had considered them the "eyes of sovereignty" and "pillars of the empire."<sup>1</sup> During the struggles for succession, it was mostly their role which determined the succession to the throne (already discussed in Chapter 1, pp. 9-11). In the War of Succession (under review) the various contestants tried to win them over by making tempting monetary offers or by appealing to their religious sense.

In order to understand the nature of the Mughal ruling elite in

1. *Akbar Nama*, Vol. II, p. 9.

more detail, it is necessary to analyse the Mansabdari system, which formed the *raison d'être* of the very existence of that class.

*The Mansabdari System.*—The system of numerical organisation of public services under the Mughals was known as the Mansabdari system. Appointments were conferred upon the aspirants keeping only their merit in view, regardless of their caste, creed or race. They were expected to have an aptitude for warlike activities, to possess military traditions and also to command some followers. Such an aspirant to State service, on acceptance by the Emperor, was awarded a *Mansab*, which signified an appointment qualifying for a clearly defined grade of pay and which also determined his status and seniority in service. This did not at all mean his fixation at a certain office, which could be either civil or military depending on the will of the authorities. It only meant that he was an employee of the State with rank and grade of pay clearly fixed. In return, he was required to raise a cavalry contingent and to maintain some transport. These formalities having been over, the question of his appointment to a post was taken up.

Some historians (Moreland being conspicuous among them) have traced the origins of this system from the days of Chingiz Khan.<sup>1</sup> The Central Asian ancestors of the Indian Mughals were mainly a race of horsemen and the infantry never constituted an important force under them.<sup>2</sup> The legacy of Chingiz Khan was continued in the administration of Timur only with minor changes, e.g. the strength of the highest commander was raised from 10,000 to 12,000, but the minimum rank of ten remained the same. Their army was divided into the contingents of tens, hundreds and thousands, until the historic *tuman* was reached. This system of numerical rank in the precise form was introduced into India by the Mughals under Babur, but a less sophisticated decimal system of military ranks can be found in embryo under

1. W. H. Moreland, "Rank (*Mansab*) in the Mughal State Service," *JRAS*, October 1936, and *The Life of Chingiz Khan* by Vladimirov, Tr. D.S. Mirsky, pp. 58, 69.

2. C.K.S. Rao Sahib, "Some Notes on the Mughal Mansabs," *JIH*, Madras, Vol. XVI, 1937.



the Khaljis and Tughluqs.<sup>1</sup> The continuity of the Mongol legacy in India is established by the survival of such titles<sup>2</sup> as *Yuzbashi* for 100 rank and the *Amirul-Umara* for the highest rank and also the lowest unit of ten and the highest of 10,000 under the Mughals<sup>3</sup> was a conspicuous legacy of their Central Asian ancestors.

Babur and subsequently Humayun, owing to their preoccupation with conquest and defending their conquests, could not adapt their military organisation or amend it to suit their needs in India. It was, however, cast in the lot of Akbar to devote his talents to this most important task. He found the Mughals a microscopic minority called upon to rule a vast population of the hostile Hindus, indomitable Rajput Rajahs and sullen and dazed Afghans. In order to control these centrifugal forces, there was an imperative necessity of a big army. By the introduction and systematisation of the Mansabdari system in the eleventh year of his reign<sup>4</sup> (1567 A.C.), Akbar assured himself of a vast army to cope with any emergency. The originality of Akbar lay in the fact that he adopted this essentially military form of organisation for civil needs as well—in fact, amalgamating both the bureaucratic and military hierarchy in one State service. For example, the Governor of a province, though holding a civil post, could at any time be commanded to lead a military expedition; similarly, other officials performed various types of duties, all of which were not military in character and did not involve the maintenance of troops, though the very designation of every officer showed him to be a military man.<sup>5</sup> By no stretch of imagination can we call Abul-Fazl—a prodigious scholar—a commander of 2500, Rajah Bir Bar—a court wit and Hindi poet-laureate—a commander of 1000, and Sayyid Muhammad, Mir-i-'Adal—a commander of 900, warriors. The Mansabdars were also employed in other branches of government, viz. police,

1. Shihab-ud-din al-'Umari, *Masalikul-Absar fi Mumalikul-Amsar* Eng. Tr. by Dr. Otto Spies, Shaikh 'Abdur Rashid and S. Moinul-Haq, *Muslim University Journal*, Aligarh, Vol. I, March 1943.

2. W.H. Moreland, *op. cit.*

3. C.K.S. Rao Sahib, *op. cit.*

4. *Akbar Nama*, Vol. II, p. 270.

5. S.R. Sharma, "Organization of Public Services under the Mughals," *JBORS*, Part II, Vol. XXIII, 1937.

justice and revenue.

*Appointments to the Mansabdari System.*—The right of making appointments to the State services was a prerogative of the Emperor. Every candidate for State service had first of all to seek a patron,<sup>1</sup> either his own kith and kin or a member of his own caste or tribe, who would introduce him to the *Bakhshi* and thus be placed on the waiting list. In the meantime, the *Bakhshi* submitted to the Emperor the *Haqiqat*<sup>2</sup> prepared in his office about the various candidates. After having gone through the *Haqiqat*, the Emperor used to summon the candidates in the Audience Hall and interview them. The status, qualifications, reputation and the number of followers of the candidates, if any, were taken into consideration while awarding them a *Mansab*. The great tribal leaders, who possessed a large backing, stood every chance of being awarded a high *Mansab*. That is why the Sayyids of Barah were accorded preferential treatment by the Mughals (*vide* p. 31). The Rajputs also became commanders of higher ranks, because they could bring into the battlefield, even at a short notice, a very large number of soldiers.<sup>3</sup> An aspirant to State service, on acceptance by the Emperor, received a certificate to the effect (called *Tasdiq*) issued by the *Bakhshi's* office and a copy thereof sent to the *Waqi'ah-Nawis* for record, containing the particulars of his salary.<sup>4</sup> If he was to be paid in cash, he was called a *Naqdi* and the *Tasdiq* contained the details of his pay. If he was to be paid in the form of revenue assignments, the *Tasdiq* mentioned the location of his *jagir* in the particular village of a certain *Parganah* in the *Sarkar* of that province. The *Mansab* having been granted, the incumbent would endeavour as much as he could to enlist the requisite number of soldiers from his own caste or clan. Very rarely he would accept "outsiders" (though small in number) under his command if he failed to get a quota of men from amongst his own

1. Here lay the crux of the problem. Tribalism and clannish mindedness were thus generally at the root of this system.

2. *Haqiqat* was a written statement mentioning in detail the particulars and references of the candidate and also the suggestion as to what *Mansab* he deserved.

3. Bernier, *Travels*, p. 210.

4. The discussion is based on Dr. Yusuf Hussain. (Ed.), *Selected Documents of Shah Jahan's Reign*.

people.<sup>1</sup> The followers of the Mansabdars were thus generally bound to their masters on tribal and racial grounds and also because he was their paymaster or, in other words, they were more loyal to their tribe than to the Emperor, but such exigencies occurred very rarely (*vide* p. 30).

*Mansabs*.—According to *A'in-i-Akbari*,<sup>2</sup> the Emperor made the number of *Mansabs* sixty-six, which is the same as the value of letters in the name of Allah, but the list of Mansabdars actually supplied by the author in the work mentioned just half of this, i.e. thirty-three *Mansabs* in fact occupied by the various officers of the State. The three *Mansabs* from 7000 to 10,000 were monopolised by the princes of the royal blood and the remaining thirty *Mansabs* from 5000 down to ten were conferred on others. The *Mansab* was merely a yardstick to measure the worth and status of the incumbent among the officers of the State and it was known as *Mansab-i-zat*. The *zat* salary paid to the officer was meant to enable him to maintain his position at the court or in the provinces, his harem, his transport and such horsemen as he might require for his personal use.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes a Mansabdar was also required to maintain out of his *zat* salary some horses, elephants, etc., belonging to the State and this was called *Khorak-i-Dowab*. At times, the officials were exempted from *Khorak-i-Dowab* and were allowed to maintain a modicum of transport.<sup>4</sup>

In this way, all State officials, civil or military, used to have their position defined in terms of *zat* rank, whereas from their very designation, it appeared as if they were cavalry commanders. An officer was a cavalry commander only if it was specifically mentioned in his warrant of appointment, e.g. an *Imam* of a mosque, a *Mutawalli* or a *Mufti*, though Mansabdars, yet could not be cavalry commander.

*Suwar Rank*.—Before Akbar's time, cavalry commanders were

1. For example, Mahabat Khan's contingent of Rajputs.

2. *A'in-i-Akbari*, BM MS Add 7652, f. 90a; Persian text, ed. Blochmann (1872). p. 179.

3. T.W. Haig, "Military Organization of the Mughal Empire," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. III, pp. 626-29.

4. Under Shah Jahan, Mir Salih—a writer of royal orders, rank 500—kept only four horses, Muhammad Muqim—rank 500—only three horses and Shaikh Fazl Din had no burden to bear, *vide* 'Amal-i-Salih, list of Mansabdars given at the end (Bid. Ind.).

expected to maintain the exact number of horsemen as indicated by their numerical ranks, but Babur complained in his *Tuzuk* that the Khans were not maintaining the exact strength of the *tuman*, but only one-tenth of it,<sup>1</sup> and thus making a fortune out of it at the cost of the State. Since the duration of his rule was hardly four years—spent mostly in curbing the hostile forces—therefore, he failed to affect improvements on this context, which were bound to displease his nobles, the very supporters. Humayun also let matters drift. Akbar found to his disgust that the commanders were not maintaining the contingents corresponding to their ranks. That is why in the eleventh year of his reign, while promulgating the Mansabdari system, in addition to the *zat* rank, he also conceived the *suwar* rank,<sup>2</sup> the object being that a Mansabdar was not bound to maintain the strength of his contingent as shown by his *zat* rank, but he was to fulfil the responsibilities of a new rank—the *suwar*—which was usually lower than the former. The *suwar* rank stated the number of soldiers, horses, etc., to be maintained by the Mansabdar, who was authorised to draw separate allowance for this additional charge. Or, in other words, the *Mansabdar* received two kinds of salaries, *zat* salary for the maintenance of his self alone and the *suwar* salary for maintaining the troops, etc., actually maintained by him. Thus the State did not suffer any loss as hitherto. In order to give an incentive to the Mansabdars, Akbar offered them further attractions.<sup>3</sup> If the *zat* and *suwar* ranks of the Mansabdar were equal, then he was designated as a first-class officer. If the *suwar* rank was more than half of the *zat* rank, he was called a second-class officer. If the *suwar* rank was less than half of the *zat* rank or no *suwar* rank at all, then he was a third-class officer. Under Shah Jahan, all commanders from 60,000 down to 6000 were designated as first-class officers regardless of their *suwar* ranks; from 5000 down to the lowest (20), all officers were subject to this classification in accordance with their respective *suwar* ranks.<sup>4</sup>

1. Eng. tr. by Beveridge, p. 170.

2. *Akbar Nama*, Vol. III, pp. 1031, 1069, 1077 and *A'in-i-Akbari* Vol. II, p. 179 (Bib. Ind.).

3. *Akbar Nama*, Vol. III, p. 671 and, *A'in-i-Akbari* Vol. II, p. 179. (Bib. Ind.)

4. *Risala-i-Mansab*, BM MS Or 1906, f. 11a.

The *zat* rank was usually accompanied by the *suwar* rank; very rarely was it found alone. It was either equal to or more than the *suwar* rank, but the latter was never more than the former. If, however, the Government wanted to raise the *suwar* rank higher than the *zat* rank, it used to do so by conferring the status of *do aspah seh aspah* on the incumbent and still on paper the *zat* rank remained higher than the *suwar* rank.<sup>1</sup>

*Two-Three Horse Trooper Rank.*—A trooper was called *do aspah*, if he had two horses and *seh aspah* if he had three horses in order to change them during the forced marches. This rank was an emblem of great honour and was awarded only to a very senior officer and that too sparingly. It was an innovation by Jahangir<sup>2</sup> and, by virtue of this, an officer's pay and allowances were doubled.<sup>3</sup>

By the creation of *suwar* rank, Akbar had endeavoured to put the Mansabdari system on a sound basis. In order to see that the *suwar* obligations were being honoured by the officers faithfully, he revived the department charged with branding the horses and recording the muster rolls of the soldiers<sup>4</sup> (1574 A.C.)

*Department of Branding and Muster Rolls.*—This department aimed at branding all horses paid for by the State so as to distinguish them from privately owned horses. Before Akbar, the usual practice was to display the privately owned horses and fictitious soldiers on the occasions of official parades or whenever any checking was ordered by the State—such devices enabled the commanders to draw allowances fraudulently from the State. It was to prevent the fraud that the Emperor had revived this department.<sup>5</sup> All essential details about the commander, i.e.

1. Anand Ram Mukhlis, *Miratul-Istilah* BM MS Or 1813, f. 26b.

2. *Tuzuk*, p. 147.

3. I.H. Qureshi, *Administration of the Sultanate of Dehli*, pp. 141, 250, 251, 252 and 253. The author also mentions the prevalence of this rank in the Sultanate period but in a vague way. In his opinion, then it meant no increase in the number of soldiers, but a definite increase in pay and also some more privileges.

4. According to I.H. Qureshi, p. 138, the origins of *Dagh* can be traced back to the days of the Umayyads. In India, 'Ala-ud-din Khalji is credited with the introduction of the branding of horses. Later on, it was revived by Sher Shah Suri.

5. 'Abbas Sarwani, *Tohfah-i-Akbar Shahi*, BM MS Or 164, f. 68b.

his name, his father's name, his tribe or caste, place of birth, complexion, features, any identification marks, stature, age, etc., were recorded. In regard to his horses, their breed, colour, any marks on the body and also the imperial brand was placed on the right thigh of these animals.<sup>1</sup> The particulars of his soldiers were also taken. All these things were subject to periodic checkings and the issue of pay made subject to their satisfactory inspection. These regulations were not popular and to check a demoralisation among the officers, Shah Jahan had granted them some concessions,<sup>2</sup> i.e. if a Mansabdar was holding a *jagir* in the very province of his posting, then he was required to produce one-third of the force indicated by his *suwar* rank for branding, otherwise only one-fourth. When the campaign against Balkh and Badakhshan was launched, the officers were favoured to have only one-fifth of the *Suwar* rank mustered.

In theory, all Mansabdars were the active soldiers of the State, but, in practice, they performed functions which today would be described both military and civil.<sup>3</sup> That is why an officer was often attached to any civil or military department, the nature of his duties depending upon the relative importance of his *Mansab*. Unlike the present times, then there used to be only one list of State officers performing civil or military functions as is clear from the lists given in the *A'in-i-Akbari*, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* and *Padshah Nama* of 'Abdul Hamid Lahori. Under Akbar, 'Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan was not only a warrior but also an administrator. Under Jahangir, Khan-i-Jahan Lodi performed both the functions. Under Shah Jahan, Diwan Sa'd-Ullah Khan was also directed to lead a military expedition against Rana Raj Singh of Mewar (*vide* Chapter 4).

Transfer from the civil to the military department was a practice of the day. Promotion depended upon a frequent display of valour and heroism during battles; in peace times an officer was expected to be a successful administrator. Promotion also depended upon the pleasure of the Emperor, who could, out of his discretion, increase any of the *zat*, *suwar* or *do aspah seh aspah* ranks separately or upgrade all the three ranks at the same time.

1. Manucci, *Storia*, Vol. II, p. 376.

2. 'Abdul Hamid Lahori, *Padshah Nama*, Vol. II, pp. 506-07.

3. T. W. Haig: "Military organisation of the Mughal Empire" *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. III, pp. 626-29.

*Number of Mansabdars.*—The number of the Mansabdars had vastly increased from reign to reign and this was due to the expansion of the Empire, increase in the staffs of the princes and the recruitment of a large number of Rajahs, chiefs and their dependants who had joined as Mansabdars. Under Akbar, there were 1658 ranked Mansabdars in 1590, but under Shah Jahan, the number had touched 8000 in 1637.<sup>1</sup>

It was, however, from the ranks of the Mansabdars that the nobility of the Empire—the *Umara*—was drawn; those who monopolised higher administrative posts, were leaders of the armies and also had the ear of the Emperor.

*The Umara.*—*Umara* is the plural of *Amir*. Under the Mughals, an Amir was a high-ranking Mansabdar. The contemporary writers do not help us in drawing a clear line of demarcation between a Mansabdar and an Amir. The increase in the number of Mansabdars from Akbar onwards must have also raised the level of a Mansab so that the incumbent could be called an Amir. For example,<sup>2</sup> a commander of 500 was considered an Amir in the reigns of Akbar and Jahangir, but under Shah Jahan, several acquisitions in the Deccan territory and a large increase in the staffs of the princes, etc., necessitated a new definition of an Amir. Mulla 'Abdul Hamid Lahori<sup>3</sup> described the list of officers under these headings: (a) *Nawinan-i-wala-shan*, (b) *Umara-i-'Ali-shan*, (c) and other Mansabdars. This list did not mention officers below the rank of 500 and also included the Mansabadars within itself. This clearly means that a Mansabdar of 500 could not have been an Amir under Shah Jahan, though he was as such under Akbar and Jahangir. Manucci<sup>4</sup> and Bernier<sup>5</sup> considered an Amir a rank holder of 1000 and upwards. The evidence of these foreign travellers is confirmed when we study the pay scales of the

1. S. R. Sharma, op. cit.

2. List of Mansabdars in the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* considering an officer of 500 as an Amir.

Abul-Fazl in the *A'in-i-Akbari* divided the Mansabdars into three categories, the highest from 5000 to 500 and our inference is that he considered such commanders as *Umara*.

3. *Padshah Nama*, Vol. II, p. 292.

4. *Storia*, Vol. II, pp. 369, 372 and 377.

5. *Travels*, p. :

officers sanctioned in the reign of Shah Jahan<sup>1</sup> and find that a special importance was attached to the promotion from the rank of 900 to 1000, because it meant an excessive rise in pay, not at all in accord with the pay scale of the immediately lower ranks—i.e. a sudden rise of five lakhs of *dams*. *Zawabit-i-Alamgiri*, an invaluable document on this subject, also confirms us in our conclusions.<sup>2</sup> A commander on his promotion to the rank of 1000 not only gained an abnormal increase in pay (already discussed), but was also awarded the flag—a rare distinction never conferred on an officer below the rank of 1000.<sup>3</sup> It is in fact with these high-ranking officers called the Umara that we are concerned throughout.

The Mughal Umara also present a different spectacle. The Mughal nobility was neither the possessor of superior State services as a matter of right nor the hereditary owner of lands. It was preferred and degraded by the Emperor in his discretion. Most of its members were, in fact, not coming from any old established families and had been raised to the heights by the kindness of the sovereign. They were generally a band of foreign adventurers, who had been forced to leave their homes because they were not satisfied with their existing circumstances. Very few of them (like Najabat Khan, the third son of Mirza Shah Rukh, the ruler of Badakhshan) could boast of a descent from a renowned family. The Mughal Government, in order to maintain its military occupation of the country, thought it expedient to employ these adventurers in large numbers and accorded a fitting reception to their worth, and they included among themselves warriors, poets, architects, engineers, etc. Being generally Muslims and hence akin in faith to the Mughal sovereign, they were expected to be his strong supporters against the vast population of the Hindus. Their promotion depended only on the quality of service and devotion to the Mughal Government. In this way, their nobility was purely self-

1. Dr. Yusuf Hussain (Ed.) op. cit., document 37, p. 79.

2. BM MS Or 1641, f. 52. R.P. Khosla's assertion in his *Mughal Kingship and Nobility*, p. 230, that in the reign of Shah Jahan, a Mansabdar of 500 was an Amir, is definitely wrong.

3. op. cit., Anand Ram Mukhlis, f. 27b. (Forty *dams* were equal to one rupee—a standard Mughal coin.)



made and strictly official in character. They could retain the favours of the Emperor only so long as they were considered useful and their loyalty beyond any reproach. Even these setbacks could not minimise their importance as they were the integral organs of the Government.

It has become a fashion after Bernier to condemn the Mughal nobility as a gang of self-seeking careerists not at all loyal to the country of their adoption or to the Emperor. On the very surface, this assertion seems sweeping. It was only in recognition of their devotion to duty and loyalty to the sovereign that they could be allowed to retain their ranks and be promoted to still higher ranks. Barring few exceptions (*vide* p. 30), they were, on the whole, loyal to their master. Selfishness is a human nature and the Mughal nobles were no exception to this universal rule when they deserted Shah Jahan in large numbers after the battle of Samugarh and joined the victorious Aurangzeb. Their conduct during the period under review showed (*vide* Chapter 4) that, apart from personal motives, many of them were not forgetful altogether of the ideological factors as well. The Mughal nobles also possessed among themselves a good many highly refined and cultured persons (e.g. 'Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan and 'Ali Mardan Khan), who had, undoubtedly, made a substantial contribution to the social and cultural values of the country.<sup>1</sup> By their ostentatious living, they had ushered in an era of grandeur, everybody trying to outdo others in this respect.

*Economic Position of the Umara.*—The Umara were paid very high salaries, when we take into consideration the high purchasing power of money in those days. According to Moreland,<sup>2</sup> a commander of 5000, after defraying his monthly expenses of maintaining troops and other incidental expenses, received a surplus of Rs. 18,000, an Amir of 1000 easily pocketed Rs. 5000 after having met all the requisite needs and the Mansabdar of 500 thus received at least Rs. 1000 p.m.

As already stated, the commanders in the reign of Shah Jahan were required to maintain only one-third or one-fourth of the total strength of their *savar* ranks and, at a time, it was reduced

1. They had certainly made a solid contribution in improving the standards of gardening, architecture, modes of dress, food, etc.

2. *India at the Death of Akbar*, p. 66.

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to one-fifth even (*vide* p. 19). This clearly meant that they, easily and with the connivance of the State, misappropriated the pay of two troopers out of every three or three out of every four and, at a particular time, swallowed the salary of four troopers out of every five. In this way, the Mansabdari became a very paying proposition under Shah Jahan and his successors.

Another fact<sup>1</sup> worth mentioning is that the officer was paid a separate allowance for the *suwar* rank, but this did not mean that he was bound to pay his soldiers in accordance with the rates given in the official records. What he actually paid to his men was his affair and not that of the State. There is a possibility that he might be saving some money out of his *suwar* salary as well. The money thus saved could be spent in two ways only, either in living more ostentatiously or in spending it to increase the efficiency of his contingent so as to gain a favour of the Emperor by achieving a military success anywhere.

Thus the Umara were very wealthy officers<sup>2</sup> of the State and they were expected to live according to their status. If ever they were in financial difficulties, the State readily granted them *musa'adat* and *dast gardan* recoverable from their pay in small instalments.<sup>3</sup>

Some of the Umara received their salaries in cash and were called *Naqdis*, but a majority of them were paid in the form of revenue assignments called *jagirs*.

*Jagirs*.—*Jagir* was a grant of land made to a State official in return for his services.<sup>4</sup> This grant was, in fact, a revenue area

1. Moreland, "Rank in the Mughal State Service." JRAS, Oct. 1936.

2. A high-sounding designation of a particular *Mansab* must not be assumed to represent the pay of an officer in rupees, standard unit of the Mughal currency, rather it was expressed in *dams*, copper coins. It was just to give the *Mansab* an air of superiority that this method was devised upon. *A'in-i-Akbari* and *Padshah Nama* contain so many references to prove that the officers were in fact designated in terms of *dams*.

3. *Musaadat* was a loan to the officers who may occasionally fall into financial difficulties—subject to usual deductions when paid to the official by the treasury. *Dast gardan* was a loan without voucher, paid in full without any deductions, *vide*, Yusuf Hussain (Ed.), *op. cit.*

4. The *jagir* system was also a legacy from Timur. The early history of Muslim India shows that it was well known to the Sultans. Under Iltutmish, 'Ala-ud-din Khalji and Ghiath-ud-din Tughluq, innumerable cases of Jagirdars' dealings with the State are on record. Under Firuz Tughluq, it was prevalent on an extensive scale. Under the Lodis, we also hear of it.

whose assessed income was equal to the total *zat* and *suwar* salaries of the incumbent. Sometimes the theologians and those well versed in various sciences and literature were also the recipients of such grants of land in recognition of their merit. The Jagirdars, as we have seen, were government officers in receipt of their salaries in the form of revenue assignments. There was no element of heredity in it. The *jagirs* were granted only for the period the Mansabdar was in the employ of the State, but could be retained even afterwards during the pleasure of the Emperor. Just as a *Mansabdar* could be transferred to any part of the Empire, similarly his *jagir* was liable for a transfer anywhere. The same *jagir* now held by one may, on his transfer, be possessed by another. On his death or dismissal, the *jagir* automatically lapsed to the State. The Mughal Government, as a policy, did not post any Jagirdar at a particular place for a long time. The only exception to this rule was made by Jahangir, when he conferred the *jagirs* on some nobles as "*el-damga*" and thus they were secured from any more transfers.<sup>1</sup> But this order appears to have remained in force only for a short while, because the *el-damga* cases are very rare and not heard of subsequently.

The Mughal Empire consisted of three classes of lands. The first category was of the hereditary Rajput Rajahs who accepted the suzerainty of the Mughal Emperor and became Mansabdars. They were allowed to retain the hereditary lands as a gift from the Emperor on payment of a fixed tribute. Their *zamindari* was always subject to the approval of the Emperor, he being, in theory and practice, the supreme owner of all lands. There is nothing on record to show that the imperial Government ever interfered with their methods of revenue assessment and the British, following the legacy of the Mughals, also did not tamper with their records.

The second and third categories, *Khasah Sharifah* (or the crown-lands) and the *jagirs* were, in fact, one and the same thing. A *Khasah* land of today might become a *jagir* of tomorrow and *vice versa*. The Rajput nobles were more independent as far as their *jagirs* were concerned, but the Jagirdars of the third

1. A. Rogers (Tr.), *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, p. 23. *El-damga* meant a grant under special seal. It was an innovation by Jahangir.

category were the mere creatures of the Mughal Government. They were not allowed to extort more money from their tenants than that fixed by the Government. In 1583, Todar Mal issued a comprehensive order to all revenue collectors in the crownlands and *jagirs* to collect only the authorised amount from the cultivators and to endeavour to improve their lot, otherwise heavy penalties would be imposed upon them.<sup>1</sup> Not only that, under Shah Jahan, the Jagirdars were required to sign bonds that they would hold themselves responsible for the people and would not exact more than the stipulated amount.<sup>2</sup> In this way, a Jagirdar could not, with impunity, exact more than his due share.

*Relations between a Jagirdar and the Provincial Administration.*—The Jagirdar did not possess any independent entity in the provincial administration. He was just a State official holding a *jagir* because of his post. If he was posted in the very province where his *jagir* was located, then his relation with the provincial government was determined keeping in view the nature of post he was occupying. In any case, he was subject to the discipline of the Governor of the province.<sup>3</sup> He did not at all possess any proprietary rights over the people in his *jagir*. He was neither a policeman nor a judge, but a mere collector of land revenue in his *jagir*. A Jagirdar was often posted far off from his *jagir* and, in such cases, one encounters many references in the contemporary literature that he was sending his agents for the collection of land revenue<sup>4</sup> and there is hardly a mention that he ever sent as *Faujdar*, *Qadi*, or *Kotwal* for the maintenance of law and order in his *jagir*.

In spite of these drawbacks, this system was very popular in those days. The extent of its popularity can be gauged from the fact that, under Shah Jahan, seven-eighth of the whole Empire was in the hands of the Jagirdars and, in 1647, the annual income from the crownlands was just three crores of rupees

1. *A'in-i-Akbari*, Vol. III, p. 381.

2. Yusuf Hussain, op. cit., documents number 5 and 6, on pp. 21-23.

3. For example, Rao Karan of Bikanir (3000/2000) was attached to the auxiliary force of the Governor of the Deccan—Aurangzeb—and on the struggle under review, shirked his duty and was subsequently penalised, *vide* Chapter 5.

4. Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, Eng. Tr. W. H. Moreland, p. 54.

and the lands yielding a revenue of twenty two crores of rupees were given over to the Jagirdars.<sup>1</sup> It relieved the Mughal Government of the onerous duty of the collection of land revenue and the disbursement of salaries. It satisfied the Mansabdar's vanity, as it conferred on him an air of superiority and a feeling of self-importance. It also meant a flow of regular income to him unlike the *Naqdis*, who had to undergo the ordeal of red tape at the treasury's office. He could secure transfer even to a more productive *jagir* on the basis of some achievement of his. Sometimes a Jagirdar could collect one or more instalments of revenue in advance as a sort of insurance against loss in the event of sudden transfer, but the *Naqdi* system offered no such attractions.<sup>2</sup> The father Sayyid 'Abdul Jalil Bilgrami (*Bakhshi* and *Waqi'ah-Nawis* of Gujrat under Aurangzeb—1111/1701) on the importance of *jagir*, advised his son: "A *jagir* is the insignia of one's employment. An employee without a *jagir* is no employee at all."<sup>3</sup>

*A Grave Misunderstanding concerning the Escheat System.*—On the death of every Mughal noble, his assets were immediately confiscated by the *Diwan-i-Bayutat* in order to clear the outstanding debts incurred on account of *musa'adat* and *dast gardan* and other advances. Moreover, an Amir was entitled to his full pay and allowances only if he maintained the *suwar* rank as prescribed. On frequent checkings, the nobles were often short of it and, therefore, had to refund the excess amount of pay received by them, which was shown in the official records as a loan against them. Such loans complicated the accounts and it was found feasible only to clear them on the death of the noble. This simple fact has been grossly misunderstood by the contemporary European writers (Bernier and Manucci being conspicuous among them). They have lamented over this circumstance and have drawn a very pathetic picture of the dependants of the dead nobles. Bernier's sweeping statement<sup>4</sup> that had the Mughal nobility been hereditary, it would not have deserted Shah Jahan (after the battle of Samugarh) and joined

1. *Padshah Nama*, Vol. II, p. 713.

2. T. W. Haig, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, op. cit.

3. *Oriental Miscellany*, Calcutta, 1798.

4. *Travels*, p. 65.

the "rebel" Aurangzeb, is challengeable. These views are based on a superficial knowledge of the nature of the Mughal nobility. It is difficult to show that a hereditary nobility is more faithful to the throne than a nobility of office. Moreover, the qualities of nobility, if at all, cannot be passed on a hereditary basis; a great man rarely produces a great son and, by the passage of time, the hereditary nobility loses its characteristics and is reduced to a mere symbol of invidious distinctions. It was in fact the efficient Mughal nobility which was an important cause of the long life of the Mughal Empire—though the sagacity of the Emperors was also responsible for it, but the nobles' contribution on this context was not at all a negligible one. The assertion that a hereditary nobility afforded a guarantee for peace, is ridiculous, when we study the behaviour of Man Singh (already discussed) and that of Sattar Sal (*vide* Chapter 6), who, for the sake of selfish interests, had been responsible for great tension. Mughal nobility generally possessed efficient persons; mediocre men or idiots had no place in it, they were automatically weeded out.

As already explained, the escheat system was a necessity from the government point of view to clear the outstanding arrears of debt. Had such confiscations been really arbitrary, the Mughals would have lost the sympathies of the nobles—the very life of the Empire. That there was no protest, explicit or implicit, against it, showed that it was not unjust, because the balance, if any, was returned to the rightful heir after having settled the accounts.

The conclusion that on the death of the noble, his dependants were reduced to beggary,<sup>1</sup> seems untrue, as the contemporary literature is replete with evidence that the Emperor, though not at all bound by law or custom, out of sheer regard for the services of the deceased noble and purely on compassionate grounds, usually granted a preferential treatment to them. A mere perusal of the list of Mansabdars under the various Emperors brings home the fact that most of them were descendants of the Mansabdars themselves. Monserrate mentioned that Akbar maintained and gave liberal education to the sons of the dead nobles.<sup>2</sup>

1. *Ibid.*, p. 212.

2. *Commentary of Monserrate* by Father Monserrate, p. 207.

Sir Thomas Roe, a keen observer in the court of Jahangir stated that the Emperor always "left the widows and children their horses, stuff and other stock."<sup>1</sup> It is stated by Muhammad Sadiq that, after the death of a noble, his son was usually given some *Mansab*, e.g., on the death of the *Divan* Sa'd-Ullah Khan, his elder son Lutf-Ullah Khan (a lad of twelve years) was appointed to the rank of 700/100 and the dependants granted a daily allowance.<sup>2</sup> After the death of Shah Nawaz Khan Safavi, his dependants were favoured thus: his elder son Ma'sum Khan was promoted to 2000/1000, the second son Sayadat Khan was raised to 1500/700 and the third son Muhammad Ahsan was granted the rank of 700/300.<sup>3</sup>

As for the wives of the Mughal nobles, their dower money could not be confiscated by the State, as it was a legitimate property of the Muslim women. Similarly, the wives of the Hindu nobles could not be forced to part with their personal effects including the ornaments; this was applicable to the Muslim widows as well.<sup>4</sup>

Bernier was particularly very vehement in condemning the escheat system and his motives give rise to suspicions. His *Travels* were written in letter-form, one of them addressed to Colbert, who, considering the French nobility as the champion of disorders, was going to curtail their powers and privileges. This particular letter contained a very dark picture of the ultimate lot of the Mughal nobility. It seems that Bernier, by drawing an over-pessimistic and an exaggerated picture of the fate of the Mughal nobles, wished to dissuade Colbert from drastically surveying the privileges of the French nobility, which had hitherto been responsible for disorders in his country.

Taken all in all, one can sum up by concluding that the escheat system was a necessity, as otherwise the outstanding arrears of debt could not be cleared. It meant no injustice to anybody.

1. William Foster (Ed.), *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe*, Hakulyt Society, London, Vol. I, p. 110.

2. *Tarikh-i-Shah Jahani*, BM MS Or 174, f. 187b.

3. *Tadhkira-i-Salatin-i-Chaghata'i*, Vol. II, f. 80a, Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, Persian Supplement 742.

4. Tavernier, *Travels*, Ed. V. Ball, vol I, p. 18.

*Composition of the Mughal nobility.*—The Mughal nobility was a heterogeneous collection of various nationalities brought together under the Mughal Emperor.<sup>1</sup> It consisted of the Turks, Persians, Tartars, Uzbeks, Africans, Europeans, Afghans and Indian Muslims and Hindus as well. They had immigrated to India because of the highly attractive terms of service offered to them by the Mughal Government. Their promotion to higher ranks depended on wholehearted devotion to the State and the performance of heroic deeds. In this way, their nobility was self-made.

They were not only racially different from one another, but even the fundamental religious differences were also found amongst them. Mutual jealousy, intensified by religious hatred was their essential feature. They were ever ready to undo one another for the sake of personal considerations. They were united only in their professions of loyalty to the Emperor. The following were the most conspicuous classes of nobility.

Timurids or Turks were those who had migrated from the north of Oxus, which was the original home of the Mughal rulers. They were Sunnis. It was owing to this community of native land and religious beliefs that they were kindly treated by the Government. Originally, they were the pastoral tribes of Central Asia. They were more warlike and not well refined, but still they were given higher posts in the State services. They were generally with Aurangzeb in the struggle of 1657-58 and those with Dara Shikoh were having a lukewarm loyalty towards him, e.g. Nasiri Khan and Qasim Khan (*vide* Chapter 6).

The Persians have been known as the Frenchmen of Asia. Compared with the bulk of the nobility they were more refined and cultured. They were more peace-loving than the Timurids. They were Shi'ah and that is why they had an intense rivalry with the Timurids. Though smaller in number, they were often in possession of key posts. They were generally the followers of Dara Shikoh or Shuja' in the struggle under review (Chapters 5 and 7).

*Afghans.* The loyalty of the Afghans had often been open to serious doubts by the Mughals and hence they were regarded as the

1. Bernier, *Travels*, p. 209.



step-children of the State. Babur<sup>1</sup> and Humayun had followed a policy of appeasement towards them, but that had resulted in the expulsion of Humayun and his substitution by Sher Shah Suri. That is why Akbar had often expressed his distrust of them.<sup>2</sup> Only under Jahangir, the hey-day of the Afghans came. His greatest favourite was Khan-i-Jahan Lodi, 7000/7000.<sup>3</sup> The hostile attitude of Khan-i-Jahan Lodi towards the succession of Shah Jahan, his subsequent attempt to revive the Afghan rule<sup>4</sup> and, as a consequence, desertion of so many nobles from the Emperor<sup>5</sup> shook his faith in them and he never trusted them with responsible posts.<sup>6</sup> Under Shah Jahan, the Afghans were generally assistants to the Mughal generals and were rarely given an independent charge. Apart from these political considerations, the Mughals despised the Afghans for their rusticity, brutishness and lack of comprehension. Most of them were very zealous supporters of Aurangzeb in the struggle under review, e.g. Fath Rohilla along with his kith and kin fought heroically for the sake of his master (Chapter 5).

*Indian Nobles.*—They were Hindus and Muslims alike, the latter were those whose ancestors had settled in India for generations and they took pride in calling themselves Indians, conspicuous among them were the Sayyids of Barah. They claim their descent from Sayyid Abul-Farrah of Wasit, who is presumed to have come to India somewhere in the days of Iltutmish after the sack of Baghdad and the overthrow of the Caliphate.

The etymology of "Barah" is uncertain. Some people think that as they were all Shi'ah and claimed their descent from the Twelve Imams, and, therefore, they were called the Sayyids of Barah. Others are of the view that since they were all settled in the twelve villages of the Doab, therefore, they were called the

1. Babur had married Bibi Mubarika, the daughter of a Yusufzai chief Malik Mansur (*Waqi'at-i-Baburi*, Tr. Beveridge Vol. I, p. 375). Babur did not harshly treat the mother of Ibrahim Lodi, even when she attempted poisoning him (*Ibid.*, p. 542).

2. Akbar had reserved all higher appointments for Turks, Persians and the Hindus but not for Afghans (*A'in-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, p. 232).

3. *Padshah Nama*, Vol. I, p. 182. (Bib. Ind.).

4. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. I, pp. 730-31 (Bib. Ind.).

5. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 727-28.

6. Manucci, *Storia*, Vol. II, p. 257. They were often employed against Persia.

Sayyids of Barah. Some also think that "Barah" is a corruption of the Arabic word *Abrar*, which means pious. These different views do not help us to arrive at a definite conclusion, but they do give us an idea of the significance of the term.

These Sayyids were settled in the twelve villages of the Doab (modern Muzaffargarh district) between the Ganges and Jumna and near the *parganah* of Sambal. Owing to their bravery and steadfast loyalty to the Mughals, they had won from Akbar their right to fight in the van. In making Jahangir's accession to the throne a success, they had played a notable part (already discussed). Even Shah Jahan's accession to the throne was facilitated by the help they rendered to Asaf Khan. Under every Mughal Emperor, they were given higher civil and military posts. In the War of Succession under review, they were the staunchest supporters of Dara Shikoh and subsequently of Shuja' (with negligible exceptions).

*Rajput Nobles.*—They were the only hereditary nobles of the Empire, but their nobility was always subject to the pleasure of the Emperor. Akbar, in order to counterbalance himself against the Afghans, had won them over by a master stroke of diplomacy. He also strengthened his relations with them by marrying their daughters into his House. Jahangir was born of a Rajput mother whose brother Man Singh was a grandee of Akbar. Shah Jahan was also born of a Rajput mother and that is why Jaswant Singh, a relative of Jodha Bai, was the premier noble of the Emperor. The Rajputs were often employed to serve at those places where the Emperor could not rely upon his Muslim commanders, particularly against Golconda, Bijapur or Persia. At home, they were employed against the Pathans or any rebellious Governor or an Amir. They were very useful to the Government as, even at a short notice, some of them could bring into the battlefield a large number of soldiers. In the struggle of 1657-58, the premier Rajput tribes, namely, Rathors, Kachhwahas, Hadas, Gaurs, Sissodias and Jhalas, were at the back of Dara Shikoh and on the whole, they served their master with an unflinching loyalty. The petty Rajput tribes, viz. Dhinderas and Bundelas, were with Aurangzeb in this struggle (*vide* Chapters 4, 5 and 6).

These classes formed the bulk of the Mughal nobility, with whose conduct this dissertation is concerned throughout. As

already stated, the Mughal nobles were dominated by the tribal feeling more than by anything else but, during the struggle under review, tribalism did not play an important part as far as the Muslim nobles were concerned. The Rajputs were dominated, no doubt, by such considerations, if they supported any particular prince; that was an *en bloc* support, no waverers whatsoever in their ranks. The Muslim nobles, however, were swayed by kinship, matrimonial alliances, domicile and personal devotion to the particular princes. They were also influenced by ideological factors, but this circumstance was equally applicable to the Rajputs as well (*vide* Chapter 4). These circumstances had influenced the nobles in casting their lot with the various contestants to the Peacock Throne.

### Chapter 3

## Personalities of the Contestants; Discriminative Treatment of Shah Jahan between Aurangzeb and His Brothers

**A**LL the four sons of Shah Jahan, on the eve of this struggle, were mature persons and ambitious to win the Peacock Throne. Every one of them considered himself the rightful heir and was not willing to resign his claim without striking a blow.

*Dara Shikoh.*<sup>1</sup>—Dara Shikoh was the eldest son of the Emperor born at Ajmer on 29th Safar, 1024/20th March 1615. He was born after three daughters and after incessant prayers by his father at the shrine of Khwajah Mu'in-ud-din Chishti; that is why he was the best loved child of Shah Jahan.<sup>2</sup> The contemporary records, unfortunately, are silent on his early education, but it can be reasonably assumed that it would have been the usual Sunni type of education. From the very outset he wanted to free himself from orthodoxy; he wanted to think independently even at the cost of antagonising his co-religionists. He possessed a less practical and more theoretical mind. The miracles of saints enchanted him more than the military achievements—a field specially meant for a prince. His deep interest in Sufism led him to consider kingship easier than

1. Literally, it means Majestic as Darius, the ancient king of Persia.

2. *Safinatul-Auliya*, BM MS Or 224, f. 87b. It appears, the scribe had erroneously written three daughters; in fact, the prince was born after two daughters. *Padshah Nama* is more reliable in this respect.

asceticism;<sup>1</sup> that is way, he studied more of the latter than of the former. His *Pir Mulla Shah Badakhshi* had amply praised him for such accomplishments.<sup>2</sup> His studies of Hinduism were viewed with grave suspicion by the Sunnis, who considered his very faith in Islam as equivocal (for details, see Chapter 4).

If on one hand, Dara Shikoh's literary pursuits had earned him an honourable place in the galaxy of enlightened persons of the age, his career as a soldier or as a statesman was indifferent. The over-indulgence of the Emperor towards him had contributed to this deficiency. Shah Jahan was too fond of him and rarely allowed him to depart from the capital; this was to facilitate the ultimate transfer of sovereignty to him. As an absentee Governor of the prosperous and well-settled provinces of Allahabad, Punjab, Multan and Kabul, he missed the opportunities of learning the complications of administration.<sup>3</sup> As a commander, he led three expeditions against Qandhar, of which two were merely holiday parades and the third one bluntly exposed his weakness in leadership, lack of military genius, gullibility, favouritism and his impetuous, emotional and easily excitable personality.<sup>4</sup> It would be far from exaggeration to state that the last campaign of Qandhar (28th April - 27th

1. His famous verse in this context is:

سلطنت سهل است خود را آشنائے فقر کن

قطره تا دریا تواند شد چرا گوهر شود

2. *Sakinatul-Auliya*, BM MS Or 223, f. 104a:

ملا شاه بدخشی

صاحب قرن اول و ثانی قرین حشمت آند

دارا شکوه ما شده صاحب قران دل

آخر ز کائنات متاع دوگون را

کرد او بدست خود زمتاع دوکان دل

3. He also held the additional charge of the forts of Rohtas and Chunar, where his deputies ran the administration.

4. These conclusions are based on *Lata'iful-Akhar*, BM MS Or 5327(2).

September 1653) destroyed the last shreds of any pretensions he might have had to military competence and even sealed his future as the likely ruler of India.

In order to convey the impression that Dara Shikoh was the heir-designate, the Emperor showered unprecedented favours on him. He was exalted by the title of *Shah-i-Buland Iqbal*. Contrary to the Mughal traditions, a small throne was placed for him near the Peacock Throne, he was granted the privilege of conducting the elephant fights, to display gold and silver maces even in the presence of the Emperor, the nobles were ordered to go first to Dara Shikoh to make their morning obeisances and then proceed to the imperial court for their routine duties, he often interceded on behalf of the nobles whenever they were in disfavour or they wished for promotions.<sup>1</sup> His powers and privileges were further enhanced when, in recognition of the tender nursing of the Emperor, he was raised to the rank of 60,000 *zat* and 40,000 *suwar*, out of which were 30,000 *do aspah seh aspah*.<sup>2</sup> Thus his rank was higher than the total commands of his brothers. Through a special favour, the rank of his son Sulaiman Shikoh was made almost equal to his uncle Murad's, i.e. 15,000/10,000 of the former and 15,000/12,000,8000 *do aspah seh aspah* of the latter. Nobles in his service stood to gain more rapid promotions than those in the service of his brothers (*vide* Chapter 6). His servants were sometimes raised to the rank of imperial officers and also made his deputy Governors of the provinces,<sup>3</sup> e.g. Bahadur Khan Baqi Beg. All such attractions were offered to the self-seekers to join his ranks. Sometimes his nobles received titles meant exclusively for members of the royal family, e.g. the title of *Mirza* was conferred on Jai Singh. The province of Bihar was also added to his governorship (December 1657).

His credulousness and love of flattery was such as to shake

1. (Allah Wardi Khan cleared of the charges of sedition *M. U.* Vol. I, 207-215), Khalil Ullah Khan raised to the rank of 5000 and Malik Jiwan saved from the gallows on his recommendations.

2. *'Amal-i-Salih*, BM MS Add 26221, ff. 640b-641a.

3. Muhammad Hadi surnamed Kamwar Khan, *Tadhkirah-i-Salatin-i-Chaghtai*, Persian Supplement 74<sup>2</sup>, f. 55b, B. N. Paris.

the morale of officers under him.<sup>1</sup> He had no intimate touch with the army and his relations with the nobles, on the whole, were not cordial, despite the favours he could confer. No doubt, he possessed personal virtues, but his deficiencies outweighed them. As stated by Manucci,<sup>2</sup> he was a "man of dignified manners, of comely countenance, joyous and polite in conversation, ready and gracious of speech, of most extraordinary liberality, kind and compassionate but over-confident in the opinion of himself; considered himself self-competent in all matters and having no need of advisers. He despised those who gave him counsel. Thus it was that his most intimate friends never ventured to inform him of the most essential things. He assumed that fortune would ultimately favour him and imagined that everybody loved him . . . he was fond of wine and dancing women."

As a contestant to the Peacock Throne, he commanded the resources of his five provinces and also those of the Empire (at the capital). Shah Jahan had directed all his loyal supporters to exert themselves for Dara Shikoh. Thus outwardly all seemed well for him. In power and prestige, he was far ahead of his brothers. If he possessed poor capabilities as a General, the deficiency appeared to be more than compensated by the size of his resources in comparison with those of his rivals.

*Muhammad Shuja'* (rank 20,000/15,000, *do aspah seh aspah*).— He was the second son of the Emperor born on 18th Jumadi-

1. Several such instances are on record: During the siege of Qandhar, a person pretended to be a great magician and assured the prince that the fort would be reduced in no time if his conditions were fulfilled, namely, some old wine should be supplied to him and also the company of a particular woman with whose blood a charm was to be written for the purpose. The prince readily provided both. This cheat enjoyed the company of that woman for some days, but when he found the fort far from being pregnable and his own fraud likely to be discovered, he sought safety in the realm of flight. Soon this trickery became a talk of the camp. Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, Vol. I, pp. 724-25.

The backbitings of Ja'far (later on Barq Andaz Khan) were an important cause of estrangement of Jai Singh, Rajah Rajrup and Najabat Khan—the famous generals, *vide Lata'iful Akhbar*, BM MS Or 5327(2), ff. 191a-b, 195b-196a, 135a, 138a-b, 139b and 205b.

2. Manucci, *Storia*, Vol. I, p. 221.

ul-Akhar 1025/23rd June 1616 at Ajmer. Details about his early education are not known, but we hear of Mulla Mahmud Jaunpuri, a learned man of the age as his teacher. In the absence of a fuller information, one may reasonably infer that he must have received a sound education so as to equip him well for his princely duties, but, unlike his elder brother, he had no interest in Sufism or in a comparative study of religions.

Shortly after his accession, Shah Jahan attached him to the various expeditions, e.g. in the Deccan, where he failed to take even the fort of Parendā<sup>1</sup> (1043/1632) and came back with an indifferent reputation as a warrior. In 1639, he was appointed the Governor of Bengal. Orissa was also added to his domains in 1642. He retained these positions for about two decades (April 1639 to April 1660) with breaks totalling one and a half years (March 1647 to March 1648 and from March to September 1652). He left the province twice to fight the War of Succession during the period from March 1658 to March 1659. Though placed in a subordinate position in regard to the Emperor, in internal affairs, he was virtually the uncrowned monarch of the province, because, unlike Aurangzeb, he was usually left alone in administrative matters. The Emperor also used to favour him with presents.

Himself full of ambitions for the Peacock Throne, he was jealous of Dara Shikoh's exalted position at the court and their relations were becoming strained day by day, because Shuja' considered his elder brother always to be intriguing against him.<sup>2</sup> For several years, Shuja' had been trying to have Bihar added to his domains, but Dara Shikoh had blocked the way, because the latter did not wish to see the former stronger than before and also probably he did not like to share a common frontier with him. Much fuel was added to the fire when Dara Shikoh succeeded in having Bihar added to his own governorship on 20th December 1658, when the War of Succession had well-nigh broken out; this greatly antagonised Shuja'.

Shuja' was having cordial relations with Aurangzeb, for they shared common hostility towards Dara Shikoh. They had formed

1. 'Abdul Hamid Lahori, *Padshah Nama* Vol. I, p. 35.

2. Muhammad Ma'sum, *Tarikh-i-Shah Shuja'i*, I. O. MS 533, f. 32b.



a secret "alliance" of mutual help (verbal only) against Dara Shikoh as early as 1652 and sought to strengthen it by matrimonial ties between their children.<sup>1</sup> Dara Shikoh's attempt to have these matrimonial proposals withdrawn by the help of Shah Jahan was meant to throw a wedge between the two brothers, but he failed.<sup>2</sup> Shuja, in order to strengthen himself further, jumped to the conclusion that a religious appeal could damage his opponent seriously, and he, therefore, publicly called him a heretic. He also became a champion of the Shi'ahs. According to Bernier,<sup>3</sup> his change-over to Shiahism was a political move. This assertion seems to be correct, as his army consisted mostly of the Shi'ahs and an attempt at strengthening their loyalty by such an appeal was quite in spirit with the age. Several Shi'ah nobles were holding key-posts in the Empire and they were influenced by such actions. Though the Shi'ah nobles fought desperately for his sake, yet the cowardice of the Bengali soldiers was responsible for his frequent defeats (*vide* Chapter 6).

Like Dara Shikoh, he was majestic and imposing in appearance with a pleasant countenance and possessed no reputation as a commander of expeditions. He was, however, very subtle and intriguing and, unlike his elder brother, had the knack of winning friends. He was overfond of wine, women and music and would sometimes pass days together in the pursuit of sensual pleasure. His reputation was that of a licentious person with indolence as his second nature. He was no administrator either. Thus he was a contestant to the Peacock Throne with a second-rate personality. By claiming for himself the sovereignty of the whole of India, he was the first to violate the "triple entente" between his brothers and the earlier solemn undertakings with Aurangzab (*vide* Chapter 6).

*Muhammad Aurangzeb* (rank 20,000/15,000, *do aspah seh aspah*).—The prince was the third son of Shah Jahan, born on 15th Zilqa'dah 1027/24th October 1618 at Dohad.<sup>4</sup> The news of

1. For details, see Chapter 6.

2. *Vide* p. 54.

3. *Travels*, p. 8.

4. Dohad was a small village situated on the junction of the provinces of Gujerat and Malwa and hence called Dohad (modern Panch Mahal District of the Bombay Presidency).

his birth almost coincided with the reduction of the strong fort of Kangra at the hands of prince Khurram. The propinquity of these two happy incidents led Jahangir to name this baby Aurangzeb (ornament of the throne).

Contemporary writers have shed but a flickering light on his early education, but the stray references gathered together do solve our difficulties to some extent. According to Mulla 'Abdul Hamid Lahori, Mir Muhammad Hashim (bin Mir Muhammad Qasim Gilani), a scholar well-versed in medicine, mathematics and Muslim theology, was appointed the tutor of the prince.<sup>1</sup> Afzal Khan, an eminent scholar holding the rank of 7000 under Shah Jahan, was the tutor of both. Khurram and Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb also read at the feet of such scholars as Mohy-ud-din alias Mulla Mohan Bihari, Mulla Jiwan and Mulla 'Abdul Qawwi, one of the most orthodox men of the age. The prince, in the *Ahkam-i-'Alamgiri*, gratefully acknowledges his deep sense of gratitude to the *Wazir* Sa'd-Ullah Khan for imparting wisdom to him.<sup>2</sup> The training imparted to him by such persons had lasting effects on him. He became not only an orthodox man of the age but also a learned person. His extensive correspondence (contained mostly in *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, *Ruq'at*, and also in *Fayyazul-Qawanin*) displays that he must have put in great labours as a student to command such a firm grasp over the Persian and Arabic languages and a thorough study of the Qur'an and the Hadith. The apt quotations in Arabic also show his mastery over this language.<sup>3</sup> He was on good relations with the Sunni 'Ulama of the age. He was also a devotee of such leading mystics<sup>4</sup> as Shaikh Ma'sum Sirhindi and Shaikh 'Abdul Latif of Burhanpur (*vide* Chapter 6).

The young prince was not only an aspiring scholar but also

1. *Padshah Nama*, BM MS Add 6556, f. 223a; text, Bib. Ind. Vol. I, p. 345.

2. Jadu Nath Sarkar, *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*, p. 3.

3. In *Fayyaz-ul-Qawanin*, BM MS Or 9617, Vol. I, there are two letters of Aurangzeb written in Arabic, one for his teacher Sayyid Muhammad Qannauji, f. 141, and the other to Zebun-Nissa, f. 139.

4. He, as a mark of devotional respect, often used to visit the shrines of Sayyid Muhammad Gesu Daraz in the Deccan and that of Khwajah' Mu'in-ud-din Chishti at Ajmer.

possessed the budding talents of a great soldier. When hardly a boy of fifteen, he startled the imperial court by his dauntless encounter with an infuriated elephant<sup>1</sup> (28th May 1633). At the age of seventeen, he was conferred the rank of 10,000/4000 and commanded to lead an expedition against the rebellious Rajah Jhujjar Singh of Bundhelkhand (1635). He astonished his followers by his astute tactics during the campaign and also by his bravery. The Rajah was forced to flee and his territory was annexed to the Mughal Empire.

Since its annexation, the Deccan had been a headache for the Mughal Government. Only experienced and well-tryed persons were appointed as its Governors, e.g. Khan-i-Dauran Khwajah Sabir. But the worth of the young prince was duly recognised when Shah Jahan, for the sake of administrative convenience and owing to strategic importance,<sup>2</sup> had divided the Deccan into four provinces, viz., Khandesh, Berar, Daulatabad and Telingana (instead of the previous two) and made Aurangzeb (aged eighteen years and rank increased to 12,000/7000) its first Governor (1636). During his first governorship (lasting over seven years), he cleared the province of all robbers, improved its administration and conquered Baglana (1638), which yielded a yearly income of fifteen lakhs of rupees. It was in view of these achievements that he was promoted to 15,000/10,000, out of which 6000 were *do aspah, seh aspah*.<sup>3</sup> It is interesting to observe that Shah Jahan had over-burdened the young Aurangzeb—barely eighteen—with the governorship of a problem province like the Deccan and he was successful, whereas Shuja'—also eighteen—failed to conquer the fort of Parendia, and Murad, even at the age of twenty-four, was not ripe enough to administer successfully the Deccan (see pp. 42-43).

Owing to court intrigues, Aurangzeb was dismissed from his office in 1645<sup>4</sup> and then transferred to Gujerat, which was a highly turbulent province. The prince improved its administration and the Emperor was pleased to raise him to the rank of

1. *Padshah Nama*, text, Bib Ind. Vol. I, p. 490.

2. In the Mughal Deccan, there were sixty-four forts, of which fifty-three were on the mountains.

3. *Padshah Nama*, text, Bib. Ind., Vol. II, p. 277.

4. See details on pp. 46-74.

15,000/10,000, of which 7000 were *do aspah seh aspah*.<sup>1</sup> In 1647, he led an expedition against Nazr Muhammad Khan of Balkh and earned a fame for his bravery and steadfastness (see Chapter 4). From 1648 to 1652, he was the Governor of Multan, and he greatly improved its administration. In 1649, he was promoted to the rank of 15,000/12,000, of which 8000 were *do aspah seh aspah* and towards the end of the same year, Sind was also added to his governorship. In 1652, he accompanied the expedition against Qandhar sharing powers of command with the *Wazir* Sa'd-Ullah Khan. It was ironical that he was held solely responsible for the failure of this campaign and, in spite of his protests, the battle was abruptly stopped, and he was appointed Governor of the Deccan for the second time (1653-58) and as a punishment granted less productive *jagirs*.<sup>2</sup> In the Déccan, he earned a name for his masterly handling of the neighbouring States and his skill as a diplomat and a tactician of the first order became visible, but, unfortunately, it was during this period that his relations with Shah Jahan and Dara Shikoh became highly strained.

Thus it would not be an exaggeration to state that more than half of Shah Jahan's reign (i.e. from 1635, the year of Aurangzeb's entry into State service, till the deposition of Shah Jahan in 1658) is generally a record of the achievements of the prince. In emergencies, Aurangzeb was often summoned to action; for example, in the campaigns against Balkh and Badakhshan, Qandhar, Deccan wars and improvement in the administration of the three provinces of Deccan, Gujerat and Multan, his was indeed a prominent part.

Thus he enjoyed a high reputation not only as a soldier but also as an administrator, as a statesman and as a man of letters. His relations with the nobles were cordial and sometimes even intimate<sup>3</sup>. It was, in fact, this reputation of Aurangzeb, that had earned him the jealousy of Dara Shikoh, who considered him a more dangerous rival than his other brothers. All

1. *Padshah Nama*, BM MS Add 6556, f, 336a, text, Bib. Ind. Vol. II pp. 510-11.

2. See details on pp. 52-53.

3. On learning this, Shah Jahan had admonished him, *vide Ahkam-i Alamgiri*, edited by Sarkar, p. 36. (*Anecdotes of Aurangzeb*).

contemporary writers including the foreign travellers have unanimously admitted Dara Shikoh's enmity for Aurangzeb and have also mentioned their fundamental religious differences, which had accentuated the bitterness of their feelings. Excepting Dara Shikoh, Aurangzeb's relations with his brothers were cordial. During the fateful days on the eve of the War of Succession, he was having a secret correspondence with them using a confidential code for conducting it.

In the struggle under review, Aurangzeb claimed to be a champion of orthodoxy against the forces of heresy led by Dara Shikoh; his followers were mostly orthodox Muslims (Sunnis) who fervently prayed and exerted themselves for his success.

*Muhammad Murad Bakhsh.*—He was the fourth and the youngest son of Shah Jahan, born on 25th Zilhaj 1033/28th September 1624, at the fort of Rohtas. The contemporary writers have hardly mentioned anything about his early education. Mulla Mirak<sup>1</sup> was mentioned as the first teacher of the prince. The Mulla was a well-known traditionist and had been the tutor of Dara Shikoh as well.<sup>2</sup> It seems, this teacher had no lasting effects on either of the princes. From early childhood, Murad was indifferent to theological matters. In his youth, he became addicted to heavy drinking and over-indulgence in sensual pleasures. It was, in fact, the war affairs that interested him the most.

In 1646, the Emperor decided upon the conquest of Balkh and Badakhshan and commissioned Murad to proceed against Nazr Muhammad Khan, the ruler of that territory. Murad proved his valour by soon defeating the enemy, expelled him from the country, the whole of which was annexed to the Mughal Empire. Murad was also appointed its first Governor. He did not like Balkh and Badakhshan and wanted to return. Even the persistent warnings of the Emperor had no effect on him and he left the country without even properly handing over its charge. Such a grave dereliction of duty earned him the displeasure of the Emperor; who dismissed him from the rank. Thus his victories were in vain, instead he gained censures.

Soon, however, the old affections of the father revived;

1. *Padshah Nama*, BM MS Add 6556, f. 223a, text, Bib. Ind. Vol. I, p. 345.

the prince was pardoned and appointed Governor of the Deccan (July 1648). It seems, Shah Jahan had a poor opinion about the prince as an administrator. That is why, during his short governorship of the Deccan, the father-in-law Shah Nawaz Khan Safavi was appointed as counsellor—actually, the guardian—of the prince. Murad, owing to his violent temper, soon fell out with him and was recalled<sup>1</sup> (September 1649).

Again, the prince was pardoned and, in 1651, he was appointed the Governor of Gujerat. The Emperor, fully conscious of the deficiencies of the prince, appointed Sayyid 'Ali Naqi Khan as his *Diwan* to keep a vigilant eye over him and to report his acts of omission and commission forthwith. Murad exposed his credulousness by murdering this honest officer of the State upon a mere hearsay.<sup>2</sup> By an irony of fate, the prince had to pay the penalty of his own life for the murder of this innocent man.

The relations of Murad with Dara Shikoh were strained, because the former viewed with jealousy the latter's higher position at the imperial court. Murad considered his elder brother responsible for the misfortunes that overwhelmed him after the campaign against Balkh and Badakhshan. He was sure that it was under his instigation that Shah Jahan was against him. Much fuel was added to the fire when, during the sudden illness of Shah Jahan (September 1657), the reins of government came in the hands of Dara Shikoh, who managed the issue of orders commanding Murad to relinquish Gujerat immediately and proceed forthwith to Berar—a great degradation for him, as Berar was a petty place in comparison with the rich province of Gujerat. His hatred against Dara Shikoh grew more intense, when he started suspecting the latter of forging Shah Jahan's signatures in issuing such letters to which he felt, Shah Jahan being an affectionate father, would not have agreed.<sup>3</sup>

Though himself not an ideal Muslim on account of his licentious habits, he realised that only a religious propaganda against Dara Shikoh would attract orthodox Muslims towards

1. Khafi Khan, op. cit., I, p. 701.

2. Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 8-9. The Sayyid was murdered in October 1657.

3. *Fayyazul-Qawanin*, BM MS Or 9617, Vol. I, f. 56a, Murad to Aurangzeb.

him. He, therefore, on the eve of the struggle of 1657-58, claimed to be the champion of Islam, referred to Dara Shikoh as *mulhid-i-bidin*<sup>1</sup> and professed his confidence about his success since he was a strong believer in Muhammad.<sup>2</sup>

Sarkar, following in the footsteps of Bernier, has called the prince a black sheep of the family and the greatest enemy of his own.<sup>3</sup> This assertion, however, is too sweeping to be accepted. Murad's correspondence (in the *Fayyazul-Qawanin*) reveals that he was sufficiently seized of underhand methods and was not so frank and open as has been often asserted. Fully conscious of his own weaknesses that he could not face Dara Shikoh single-handed, he had decided to make common cause with Aurangzeb. He, throughout, played the role of a second under Aurangzeb, seeking advice from him again and again. His secret letter<sup>4</sup> to Shah Jahan, after the Battle of Dharmat, begging for pardon with the ostensible object of being nominated as the next successor and his outward subservience to Aurangzeb showed his double-dealing. This discloses that he considered his subordination to Aurangzeb merely as an expedient; he thus aimed at fooling him, but was himself entrapped ultimately.

Before the outbreak of this fateful struggle, he also made frantic efforts to win over the prominent<sup>4</sup> nobles to his side. His two rejoinders to Jaswant Singh on the eve of the Battle of Dharmat of the latter's promises of help during an emergency,<sup>5</sup> his secret seducing letters to Mukhlis Khan,<sup>6</sup> Iftikhar Khan<sup>7</sup> and Nasiri Khan<sup>8</sup> belie his so-called frank nature. To crown all, he had secretly circulated among the nobles a promissory document bearing his seal and signature holding out high favours to anyone who would join him in this struggle.<sup>9</sup> Surely, a person who

1. Ibid., Murad to Ja'far Khan, f. 78a-79a.

2. Ibid., Murad to Shuja', p. 80b.

3. *History of Aurangzib*, Vol. I, p. 318.

4. *Fayyazul-Qawanin*, BM MS Or 9617, Vol. I, f. 71a, Murad to Shah Jahan.

5. Ibid., ff. 72a-72b, two letters to Jaswant Singh.

6. Ibid., f. 73b.

7. Ibid., f. 73a.

8. Ibid., f. 73a.

9. Ibid., Vol. I, ff. 77a-77b, عہد نامہ یکے از امرا

performs such actions under the garb of secrecy cannot be called frank and open.

Thus the scant virtues of Murad, were overshadowed by his lack of sincerity, ignorance of the art of administration and over-indulgence in sensual pleasures. His bravery was fully exhibited in the campaigns against Balkh and Badakhshan, but this very expedition showed that he, a doughty fighter, no doubt, was best fitted to win a battle than a war. His favourite hobby was spearing wolves and bears with his own hands—a deed which none of his brothers could perform. Bernier's assertion<sup>1</sup> that had his matchless bravery been enriched with an equal sagacity, he would have prevailed upon his brothers and become the Emperor of India, seems to be correct. Owing to his loose ways of life, he could not earn warm support from the Sunnis, who were a factor to be considered. He could not win over the Hindus around him, as he was professedly fighting a religious war against infidelity.

The discussion in the foregoing paragraphs brings home the fact that, of the four brothers, Dara Shikoh and Aurangzeb were the most conspicuous personalities; the former was the possessor of the enormous resources of the Empire (at the capital) and was unique among his contemporaries for his non-confessional outlook; the latter, though lacking the vast resources of his rival, had made a mark as a hero in the realm of action, a sun-dried statesman and a champion of the Sunnis. Shuja', the pleasure-seeker of Bengal, also suffered from the disadvantages of having an inefficient army—the cause of frequent reverses (*vide* Chapter 6). Murad, licentious and a credulous person, appeared eminently fitted to be a general rather than an Emperor.

*Bitter Enmity Between Dara Shikoh and Aurangzeb.*—Dara Shikoh considered, in fact only Aurangzeb his dangerous rival to kingship and, therefore, he utilised his influence in maligning the latter (as will be shown). He made efforts to cause more scandals about Aurangzeb before Shah Jahan than the rest of his brothers. Unfortunately, the Emperor used to lend an eager ear to him. That is why, from the very outset, Shah Jahan openly displayed his suspicions against Aurangzeb and often

1. *Travels*, p. 11.



reprimanded him very severely and unjustly. On the other hand, the shortcomings of Dara Shikoh were always ignored and he was allowed a predominant influence in the affairs of the State, which he employed to the detriment of his younger brothers.

*Discriminative Treatment by Shah Jahan.*—On the night of 26th March 1644, Princess Jahan-Ara, through a sheer accident, badly burnt her hands and stomach, and her condition became very critical. The Emperor loved his daughter very dearly and often used to weep for hours during her ailment.<sup>1</sup> Aurangzeb and Murad hastened from their headquarters to inquire after their sister. Within three weeks of his arrival in Agra, Aurangzeb was dismissed from his rank (2nd May) and his governorship ordered to be given away to Khan-i-Dauran. A mystery surrounds this humiliation of the prince. What was his fault after all, that such a heavy punishment was imposed on him? The mystery is deepened when we find the contemporary writers not helpful in the matter and mentioning it by a jugglery of words not easily comprehensible to us. Mulla 'Abdul Hamid Lahori simply said, "Duped by his foolish companions, the prince wanted to retire from this world and disregarded the wishes of the Emperor in several ways".<sup>2</sup> Such a charge-sheet is too vague and does not solve our difficulty in finding out the real cause. Another historian, Muhammad Salih Kamboh said, "The prince, having been charmed by the holy company of the ascetics, wanted to renounce the world. Since such a conduct was not appreciated by the Emperor, therefore, he degraded him from his rank".<sup>3</sup> Such an accusation is very interesting. Shah Jahan, who was always loudly professing his loyalty to orthodox Islam, was alleged to have degraded a person, because he was also treading in the same path! Professing loyalty to Islam did not mean, in any way, a challenge to the authority of the Emperor. Shah Jahan himself was a devotee of holy men. The motive of the punishment does not become clear. According to Khafi Khan,<sup>4</sup> the prince (well acquainted with the intrigues at the

1. Khafi Khan, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 600.

2. *Padshah Nama*, BM MS. Add 6556, f. 307b.

3. *'Amal-i-Salih*, BM MS Add 26221, f. 473a.

4. *Muntakhab ul-Lubab*, I, p. 600.

court) foresaw his dismissal immediately and, therefore, voluntarily resigned from his office well in advance. Ten years after the occurrence of this incident, the prince wrote to Jahan-Ara that the reason of his resignation was a protest against the animosity of Dara Shikoh and the Emperor's strong inclinations in favour of his eldest son.<sup>1</sup> The statement of Khafi Khan is, thus, corroborated to a great extent by the prince himself. In view of this evidence, it seems certain that the prince voluntarily resigned from his office as a protest against the insinuations of Dara Shikoh and the Emperor, not at all appreciating such conduct, instead humiliated him. This incident marks the beginning of the discriminatory acts of Shah Jahan against him.

Seven months later, on the recommendation of Jahan-Ara,<sup>2</sup> Aurangzeb was pardoned, reinstated in his rank and appointed Governor of Gujerat (February 1645), which post he retained till 1647. In this province, life was insecure because of the activities of several tribes<sup>3</sup>—given mostly to plundering, e.g. Kulis and Kathis, but the prince proved equal to the occasion and greatly improved its administration. In view of this, he was granted a petty promotion, i.e. an increase of one thousand to his *suwar* rank, which thus amounted to 15,000/7000 *do aspah seh aspah*.

Aurangzeb earned fame for his bravery in the campaign against Balkh and Badakhshan (1647).

In 1648, he was appointed Governor of Multan and Sind, where he developed serious grievances against the Emperor. In this period, an attempt was made to keep a jealous eye on the wealth of the prince. He was often in financial difficulties. The *jagirs* granted to him were *Dah Maha* (i.e. yielding income for ten months), but they yielded salary hardly sufficient for seven months; the province was desolated by successive droughts, floods and diseases with the result that the revenue figures had gone down considerably. The prince wanted financial help from the Emperor who, instead, taunted him, "Why don't you give

1. *Abab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, f. 208a.

2. *Padshah Nama*, BM MS Add 6556, f. 312a.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 231 (Bib. Ind.)

gold coins to your soldiers.”<sup>1</sup>

In order to encourage maritime activities for trading, Aurangzeb opened up a port at the mouth of the Indus. His enemies reported to the Emperor that the prince was making a fortune out of it. He was immediately, called upon to account for his income. He replied<sup>2</sup> that the income of a port depended upon its frequent use by the traders, arguing that since that was a newly opened port—not much known to the merchants—hence it could not yield a substantial income. His only ship recently arriving from Surat was in need of repairs and thus could not go on a voyage. In view of these circumstances, how could he submit any statement of his income? Sarkars’ assertion<sup>3</sup> that the only ship to use this port was that of Aurangzeb, seems unlikely as he has not cited any evidence in support of his contention.

Though the best part of his governorship of Multan and Sind was spent in the preparations for the two successive campaigns against Qandhar (1649 and 1652), yet he found time to suppress the refractory chiefs of Sewistan and to usher in an era of peace in the province. But, strangely<sup>3</sup> enough, no word of praise came from the imperial court! It seems, his opponents had poisoned the mind of the Emperor to such an extent that he could not appreciate any virtue of the prince. Even then, during all the critical situations, Shah Jahan had to look to him for the performance of great deeds.

*Qandhar Campaigns.*—The Emperor attached very great importance to the conquest of Qandhar and, for this task, he selected Aurangzeb to accomplish it.<sup>4</sup>

*First Campaign (1649).*—The loss of Qandhar to the Persians

1. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, f. 202b, Aurangzeb to Jahan-Ara.
2. *Ibid.*, f. 9a, Aurangzeb to Shah Jahan.
3. *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. I, p. 124.
4. The reasons why the prince was considered the only capable person for this task are not for to seek. Shuja' had already disappointed the Emperor by his failure to capture the fort of Parendā. About Murad, the Emperor's opinion did not seem to be high at all, because of the mishandling of the situation in Balkh and Badakhshan, also Shah Jahan had never entrusted him with an independent charge of the provinces without a proper guardian (already discussed). Similarly, Dara Shikoh had not yet been tried in the conduct of any such expedition.

was a great blow to the prestige of Shah Jahan and he ordered gigantic preparations for an onslaught against it. Aurangzeb was commanded to conduct this campaign along with *Diwan Sa'd-Ullah Khan*. The Emperor himself proceeded to Kabul to watch the siege from the rear. In spite of vast preparations, this campaign did not succeed because the Mughal army was not equipped with large guns able to breach the walls of the fort. The greatest disadvantage of the Mughal army was that it had to launch an offensive in the open, whereas the Persian army, by shielding itself behind the ramparts, was potent of much harm to its opponents. But Aurangzeb proved his alertness by ordering the construction of a tunnel to reach the fort and also by stationing some of his forces away from the area of operations to bar the path of the expected Persian relieving force. The Mughals had to retreat because of the approaching cold season, but the only glory they won was the crushing defeat inflicted by them on the Persian army marching to relieve their besieged brethren in the fort. This time, however, Aurangzeb could not be censured by his opponents.

The honour of the Mughals required the attempt to be repeated and the next three years were spent in vast preparations.

*Second Campaign (1652).*—Shah Jahan, in his anxiety to finish the campaign once for all, ordered extensive preparations and also sent for Shuja' for some auxiliary purposes. Suspecting that the combination of Aurangzeb and Shuja' might prove harmful to his interests, Dara Shikoh misrepresented to his father that Aurangzeb was not on good terms with Shuja' and hence it would not be feasible that both should work together. The Emperor readily believed this insinuation and advised Aurangzeb to display all good manners to keep Shuja' contented when the latter would join him in that campaign. Touched by this unprovoked warning, Aurangzeb promised to do all for the pleasure of his father.<sup>1</sup> It seems, Shah Jahan was not satisfied with this explanation and again wrote to the prince that Shuja' on his way from Bengal to Kabul, had fallen ill and had been accorded the royal permission to go back, but his affections for

1. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, f. 16a, Aurangzeb to Shah Jahan.

the father were so strong that he did not wish to return without paying respects to Shah Jahan and it was hoped that Shuja' would soon join Aurangzeb during the operations. This was a subtle hit at Aurangzeb charging him with a lack of affection and again meant a warning to the prince that he should treat Shuja' well when he joined him. Aurangzeb, fully understanding the subtle hit, admired openly the loyalty of Shuja', and prayed that he might also come up to that standard.<sup>1</sup> Thus the battle started with these bad omens. It was conducted by Aurangzeb in league with *Diwan* Sa'd-Ullah Khan. From his letters, it appears that the prince had devised his own plans for the invasion of Qandhar, but he was directed to obey only the instructions given to Sa'd-Ullah Khan by the Emperor.<sup>2</sup> In this way, Aurangzeb was deprived of the fruits of his own initiative. The Emperor himself assumed the role of supreme commander by supervising and conducting the campaign from Kabul. Every plan concerning the operations had to be approved by Shah Jahan and, in such circumstances, Aurangzeb was just a commander of secondary importance. It seems, the lesson from the failure of the previous campaign of Qandhar was not learnt. This time, again, large guns suitable for a siege were not supplied in large numbers and the Emperor wanted the prince to attack the fort from both sides. Aurangzeb considered it impracticable owing to the paucity of large guns, but executed the order, though also trying to exonerate himself from the possible tragic results.<sup>3</sup> Under such circumstances, a strong fort like Qandhar was far from being pregnable. Aurangzeb was, however, not the man to admit defeat so soon. He requested the Emperor to prolong the operations. Fearing that if the operations were prolonged, Aurangzeb might succeed in conquering Qandhar and it would add lustre to his name, Dara Shikoh made the Emperor agreeable to stop this battle. When Aurangzeb pressed his request very hard, the Emperor grudgingly granted it. But then it was too late; the orders of retreat had gained wide publicity and many officers had already left the

1. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, f. 13a, Aurangzeb to Shah Jahan.

2. *Ibid.*, f. 16b.

3. *Ibid.*, f. 23a-b.

field. In a desperate bid, the prince offered to forgo the governorship of the Deccan (which was being offered to him) and to fight just as a subordinate in the vanguard of Dara Shikoh—who was then ordered to lead the next campaign against Qandhar—but of no avail.<sup>1</sup> For the failure of this campaign, he was made the scapegoat and the Emperor hurled a volley of humiliating taunts on him, e.g.:

“Had I considered you competent to take Qandhar, I would not have summoned the forces back.”<sup>2</sup>

“The sages have said that one should not have to test the tested again.”<sup>3</sup>

“It was very strange that with such materiel, the fort was not taken.”<sup>4</sup>

“I am not going to leave Qandhar. Whatever best means I could conceive of, I would employ for the object.”<sup>5</sup>

Aurangzeb's humiliation was bitter and he was appointed Governor of the Deccan for the second time. At the time of his appointment, the Emperor tauntingly remarked<sup>6</sup> that if he could succeed in improving the lot of the Deccanis, so much the better. He was commanded to proceed to his province at once regardless of the fact that that was the month of Ramazan and his troops were tired from the extremely arduous journey they had just finished. He started on the 22nd Ramazan (17th August 1652); He was not allowed to bring his family from Multan; rather they themselves should proceed to join him at Lahore. It was the rainy season. The Punjab rivers were in flood; boat-bridges could not be constructed over them and, that is why, the movement of the prince became slow. In these circumstances, the delay was inevitable, but the Emperor censured him for his slow movement.<sup>7</sup>

1. *Ibid.*, f. 25b.

2. *Ibid.*,

3. *Ibid.*, f. 26a.

4. *Ibid.*, f. 24b.

5. *Ibid.*, In a marked contrast to this, the third campaign of Qandhar under Dara Shikoh was a great failure, but the Emperor never censured him on this account. Rather, his pay and ranks were increasing by leaps and bounds.

6. *Ibid.*, f. 26b Aurangzeb to Shah Jahan.

7. *Ibid.*, f. 29b.

*Aurangzeb, Governor of the Deccan (1653-1658.)*—It was during this period that the relations between the prince and the Emperor became highly strained. It seems, Shah Jahan was convinced that Aurangzeb was an undesirable person and hence his activities should be jealously watched. He was often unjustly censured his beliefs openly ridiculed and his integrity publicly questioned. A deliberate attempt was made to let him remain in financial difficulties as the Governor of a vast province.

On taking over charge of the province, the prince found it in an administrative chaos. After his departure from the Deccan in 1644, he was succeeded by as many as six Governors during the next ten years and these frequent changes had ruined the administration.<sup>1</sup> Thus his task was to create order out of chaos.

*His Jagirs.*—His *jagirs* in Multan, at least, yielded a salary for seven months, though, on paper, they were meant to pay for ten months, but the *jagirs* granted to him in the Deccan, while the Emperor was in an angry mood over the prince's failure in Qandhar, were less productive and Aurangzeb was, thus, to suffer an annual loss of seventeen lakhs of rupees. He protested to his father that, with his slender financial resources, he would not be able to lead a dignified life as the Governor of a vast province and also to control the two rich and refractory States of Bijapur and Golconda.<sup>2</sup> He also made a similar complaint to his sister Jahan-Ara.<sup>3</sup> To crown all, ten years of maladministration had made the provincial treasury very low. There was an annual deficit of twenty lakhs and thirty six thousand rupees.<sup>4</sup> On his representations, the Emperor authorised him to select more productive *jagirs* to make up the loss.

1. Khan-i-Dauran succeeded him on 28th May 1644. The Khan was, however, murdered during absence in Northern India on 22nd June 1645; Jai Singh then officiated. Islam Khan Mashhadi took over charge on 17th July 1645 and died on 2nd November 1647; then Shah Nawaz Khan Safavi officiated. Murad was appointed on 15th July 1648 for about a year. Sha'ista Khan was the Governor from 4th September 1649 till September 1652.

2. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, f. 25a.

3. *Ibid.*, f. 203 a-b.

4. *Ibid.*, f. 40a, Aurangzeb to Shah Jahan.

When he contemplated doing so, his opponents whispered into the ears of the Emperor that Aurangzeb was taking more than his due. Without even an inquiry, this hearsay was believed and the prince censured.<sup>1</sup> It appears, the Emperor was not inclined to ease his financial difficulties, that is why, the quarrel lasted for years. It is interesting to find that Shuja' or Murad never had to suffer such mental tortures.

*The Emperor Loses Patience.*—Economically, the Deccan was almost a ruined province. Shah Jahan had specially directed Aurangzeb to improve its agriculture and the latter had conceived his plans in right earnest. His *Diwan*, Murshid Quli Khan, who has left an indelible mark in history for his inspiring reforms in agriculture, did a great task in this direction. But the Emperor soon lost patience and started censuring him, forgetting the time factor altogether that the prince did not possess a wand of magic to cause improvements so soon. Still the censures were pouring in. At last he was forced to defend his conduct: "It is not my habit to indulge in self-praise. A country ravaged by a decade cannot be improved all of a sudden... still a thirty-three per cent increase of revenue has taken place".<sup>2</sup> But no word of praise came from the Emperor.

*Rejection of Recommendations.*— The recommendation of a Governor, in regard to his subordinates' appointments, promotions, etc., should normally be accepted by the highest authority in the interest of State services, because he, being a man on the spot, is a better judge of the local affairs. Even here, the Emperor adopted a strange attitude. The recommendations of the prince were often negatived to his disgust. He had recommended Hoshdar Khan bin Multafat Khan for the post of the superintendent of artillery, but Shah Jahan ordered instead the appointment of Safi Khan with a note of admonition to the prince, to which he protested.<sup>3</sup>

*His Subordinates Transferred to the Centre.*—Aurangzeb had, by his characteristic shrewdness and imagination, gathered around him a galaxy of talented loyalists. The opposition

1. Ibid., Aurangzeb to Shah Jahan, f. 53a.

2. Ibid., f. 42b.

3. Ibid., f. 35b.



party, feeling jealous, reported to the Emperor that Mir Malik Husain (later on, the famous Bahadur Khan) was very cruel in his dealings with the people and that he and his master (i.e., Aurangzeb) should be warned. Believing this story to be true, the Emperor issued a reprimand to the prince who not only denied this allegation, but vigorously defended<sup>1</sup> his subordinate. A short while later, it was this very Malik Husain who was called from the Deccan to leave the prince and promoted to a higher post at the imperial capital. Aurangzeb protested against this and expressed his fears that if his men continued to be transferred to the capital, then he would not be able to serve the Emperor with the same efficiency as before.<sup>2</sup>

*Sultan Muhammad's Betrothal.*—In a secret "Alliance" between Shuja' and Aurangzeb in 1652 (for details, see Chapter 6), it had been resolved to support each other in case of Dara Shikoh's expected aggression on the death of Shah Jahan, and this understanding was cemented with matrimonial alliances, e.g. Muhammad Sultan was to marry the daughter of Shuja'. Somehow or the other, the Emperor came to know of it and, in order to draw a wedge between the two brothers, he wanted to have this engagement cancelled. Aurangzeb's refusal to break his word to Shuja' made the Emperor angry and, soon after, the order allowing the fort of Asir to the prince was cancelled. Aurangzeb was sure that the cancellation of that order was due to his refusal to break *Sultan Muhammad's* engagement. The withdrawal of this order meant a great insult to him, as he had already appointed his men to take over the fort. He expressed his deep sense of mortification to Jahan-Ara at this public humiliation.<sup>3</sup>

*Repair of Ship.*—It was alleged that Aurangzeb was misappropriating government property and building a ship of his own out of the State stores. This was too much for the prince, who immediately wrote to *Sultan Muhammad*, who was then at the imperial court, to deny categorically before the Emperor the construction of any ship by him. The fact was that a ship in a dilapidated condition was given to Aurangzeb by the Emperor

1. Ibid., f. 8a.

2. Ibid., f. 207b-208b, Letter to Jahan-Ara.

3. Ibid., f. 207b, Letter to Jahan-Ara.

and it was this ship which was being repaired, of course under the imperial orders. The prince brought these facts to the notice of the Emperor, and volunteered to stop the work immediately if the latter wished.<sup>1</sup> In this way, Shah Jahan's anger was cooled down. It is a matter for astonishment that malicious stories were often concocted at the imperial court to defame Aurangzeb. Was this at the connivance of the Emperor? Why such stories were not set afloat against Shuja' or Murad, is not far to seek; the opposition party considered only Aurangzeb a factor to be reckoned with and dismissed others as insignificant.

*Karkhanahs at Burhanpur.*—Aurangzeb complained that his factory at Burhanpur was short of skilled labour, since that particular labour was a monopoly of the imperial factory and that of Jahan-Ara's.<sup>2</sup> Sarkar's assertion that Aurangzeb's factory was ordered to be closed down<sup>3</sup> is due to his misreading of the Persian text, which clearly indicates that at Burhanpur, except the royal and other one or two factories (which clearly means one of Jahan Ara and the other of Aurangzeb himself), all should be closed down. If not closed down,<sup>4</sup> his factory was crippled, no doubt, as he could not get enough skilled labour.

*Variations in Handwriting.*—Aurangzeb always used to write letters to his father in his own hand. Once he hurt his right thumb and it was with difficulty that could he write a letter; therefore, a variation in handwriting was bound to occur. It was whispered in the ears of the Emperor that Aurangzeb considered it beneath him to write to his father in his own hand and had in fact ordered his scribe to write for him. Seeing this, Shah Jahan, without calling for his explanation, censured him and the prince had to explain his position.<sup>5</sup>

*Mangoes.*—Shah Jahan charged Aurangzeb with the misappropriation of mangoes meant for the Emperor and informed him that, in future, he would send his own men to collect them

1. Ibid., f. 217a, Munshi Abu'l Fath to Sultan Muhammad.

2. Ibid., f. 207b, Letter to Jahan-Ara.

3. Ibid., f. 207b, Aurangzeb to Jahan-Ara.

4. *History of Aurangzib*, Vol. I, p. 204.

5. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, f. 58a, Aurangzeb to Shah Jahan.

from Burhanpur.<sup>1</sup> While inclined to exonerate him from this accusation (after having received his explanation), he again charged him with carelessness that mangoes were plucked half-ripe, the time spent in transit for their inspection by Aurangzeb and then their despatch to the imperial court and, subsequently, their careless handling by the carriers, spoiled them. Again, Aurangzeb had to defend his conduct.<sup>2</sup>

It appears, such highly unjustified censures by his father had exasperated Aurangzeb and he refused to take initiative even on petty matters; for example, he referred the question of granting loan of Rs. 50,000 to the cultivators of Khandesh and Berar to the Emperor for final orders. Shah Jahan snubbed him for wasting his time on such trivials but the prince expressed his helplessness.<sup>3</sup>

*Mockery of His Religious Beliefs.*— Nothing, however, was more painful to Aurangzeb than a mockery of his morals and religious beliefs. Shah Jahan did not hesitate to do even this. Upon a mere information (the veracity of which he did not care to investigate) that the prince, was trying to acquire more productive *jagirs* for himself at the cost of other State officials, he taunted him that this was an act of injustice and not worthy of a Mussalman to snatch productive *jagirs* from the deserving persons. The prince vigorously denied this allegation and his explanation showed how mortified he felt at such an attack on his morals.<sup>4</sup>

Once Prince Sultan Muhammad went to pay his respects to the Emperor wearing a red turban on his head. The courtiers (apparently under the connivance of the Emperor) made jeering gestures and even called it un-Islamic. Aurangzeb, on hearing this challenged<sup>5</sup> anybody to prove it contrary to the *Shari'ah*. This was the worst example of the mockery of his religious-mindedness.

The mass of evidence discussed in these pages leads one to conclude that Aurangzeb suffered from a grievous mental torture

1. Ibid., f. 42a.

2. Ibid., f. 206a, Aurangzeb to Jahan-Ara.

3. Ibid., f. 53a-b, Aurangzeb to Shah Jahan.

4. Ibid., f. 53a, Aurangzeb to Shah Jahan.

5. Ibid., p. 219a, Munshi Abul-Fath to Sultan Muhammad.

at the hands of his father. The trouble was that Shah Jahan had assumed the prince not entirely reliable, whose conduct should be doubted at all times. The correspondence of the prince shows that he considered Dara Shikoh, who had robbed him of his father's affections by frequent backbitings, the main instigator against him, Shah Jahan, himself suffered from the weakness of believing his elder son's canards too readily and here lay the tragedy. The enmity between Dara Shikoh and Aurangzeb was an open secret throughout the Empire and the Emperor's partiality towards his eldest son was too well known to all. Aurangzeb had suffered insults because *Shah-i-Buland Iqbal* was against him. Shuja' and Murad did not suffer at the hands of Dara Shikoh because he did not attach any importance to them.

*Golconda and Bijapur.*—Under such distressing circumstances, it was hardly possible for Aurangzeb to embark on a career of self-aggrandizement, as has been erroneously asserted by Sarkar. This policy of expansion in the Deccan was started by Akbar and continued by Jahangir and Shah Jahan. At a time when even the minor activities of Aurangzeb were objected to by the Emperor, it was hardly possible for him to conceive plans of strengthening himself at the cost of the Deccan states. Really such an accusation deprives the word of its meanings.

Aurangzeb had not only to administer the Deccan province, but also to perform delicate functions in relation to the rich neighbouring States of Golconda and Bijapur. In order to ensure implicit obedience to the imperial commands, he requested his father that these rulers should deal with the imperial court via the provincial Governor.<sup>1</sup> Probably he conceived this move to counteract any possible mischief from Dara Shikoh's side in case these rulers made direct personal contacts with him. His request was not fully granted and the consequences were very troublesome for him in the days to come.

*Causes of Friction with Golconda.*—As an agent of the imperial court, Aurangzeb had to see that these States honoured their commitments with the Mughal Government. The annual tribute of two lakhs of *Huns* from Qutbul-Mulk had always been in

1. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, f. 32a. Aurangzeb to Shah Jahan.

arrears. He was a very rich ruler of Golconda and a proud possessor of expensive jewels, but still he was not fulfilling his obligations. As a concession, Shah Jahan had allowed him to pay half of the amount in cash and the rest in the form of elephants, but even then he went on evading the payment.

Contrary to his word, Qutbul-Mulk was usurping the territory of Karnatic in league with Bijapur. The Rajah of Karnatic in utter desperation, appealed to Aurangzeb for the protection of the Mughal Government and also offered as a *peshkash* fifty lakhs of *Huns*, twenty chains for elephants, precious jewels and even agreed to embrace Islam, if helped. The prince strongly recommended him to the Emperor, who directed him to further probe into the matter and advise Golconda and Bijapur to desist from such aggressive designs. The prince did so accordingly.<sup>1</sup> In the meantime, these States offered big bribes to the Emperor who then expressed his displeasure at Aurangzeb's further probe into the matter with the Rajah of Karnatic and directed him to squeeze more and more money from the rulers of Bijapur and Golconda.<sup>2</sup> In this way, the Emperor had to eat his own words and these rulers gained the correct impression that Aurangzeb was not a factor to be reckoned with; rather things could be managed over his head. The net result of such a situation was that the much-coveted tribute did not reach the Emperor, to his disgust.

Qutbul-Mulk, at the instance of the Shah of Persia, started and enforced the Shi'ah practices, particularly maligning the Pious Caliphs, Abu Bakr, 'Umar and Uthman and reading *Khutbah* in the name of the Shah. Aurangzeb had to report this matter to the Emperor, who issued a strong reprimand to Qutbul-Mulk.<sup>3</sup>

*Mir Jumlah.*—The affair of Mir Jumla, in fact, precipitated the crisis. Muhammad Sa'id Irdistani, popularly known in history as Mir Jumlah, the son of an oil merchant and a Shi'ah adventurer from Persia, by a freak of fortune, managed to become the Prime Minister of Qutbul-Mulk and soon justified the trust reposed in him. The finesse and diplomacy employed in the

1. Ibid., f. 44a Aurangzeb to Shah Jahan.

2. Ibid., f. 44b-45b.

3. *Fayyazul-Qawanin*, BM MS Or 9617, Vol. I, f. 17a-18b, Shah Jahan to Qutbul-Mulk.

subjugation of the Karnatic was entirely his. He had amassed a huge fortune and built up a large army manned by European gunners. Qutbul-Mulk was the ruler in name; Mir Jumlah was the real power. Soon jealousy grew between the master and the subordinate.<sup>1</sup> In order to guard himself against an abrupt attack by his master, he was badly in need of a powerful protector. Shah Jahan was willing to patronise him, as he was already well posted by Aurangzeb with the immense wealth, the sagacity and the intrepidity of the person. The issue became precipitated with the arrest of his son Muhammad Amin Khan under the orders of Qutbul-Mulk. Shah Jahan's order for the release of Muhammad Amin Khan and the safe escort of Mir Jumlah to the imperial court was, unfortunately, ignored by Qutbul-Mulk; an attack was ordered against him. Qutbul-Mulk was about to be crushed by the forces of Aurangzeb when the Emperor's order for the cessation of hostilities arrived. This order, managed over the head of Aurangzeb, caused his public humiliation and left a rankling sore in the heart of the prince, which burst severely against Dara Shikoh during the War of Succession. Then a financial wrangle between the Emperor and the prince prolonged for some time as far as booty of the war was concerned. Shah Jahan charged him with misappropriation of gifts meant for him and the prince reminded the Emperor of his promise of giving him a share in the booty.<sup>2</sup>

1. Bernier's canard (*Travels*, p. 18) that the reason of the quarrel was that Mir Jumlah was having illicit relations with Hayat Bakhsh Begum, mother of Qutbul-Mulk is not corroborated by any contemporary Persian writer. The Persian writers have mentioned in detail the causes of estrangement between the two, also alluding to the evil machinations of the jealous courtiers in this respect and nowhere mention the canard referred to by Bernier. Certainly they knew the situation better than Bernier.

2. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, f. 103a; Aurangzeb to Mua'zzam Khan, f. 128b, Aurangzeb to Shaista Khan, and ff. 222a-23b. Munshi Abul Fath to Mu'azzam Khan. It is alleged by Bernier (*Travels*, p.21) that in a secret agreement, Qutbul-Mulk had agreed to make Sultan Muhammad his heir. This has been readily accepted by Sarkar and Sharma, and they have charged the prince with self-aggrandizement. 'Aqil Khan and Khafi Khan have mentioned it nowhere—no confirmation from Persian sources. It seems to be a misinformed assertion of Bernier.

*Bijapur.*—It was the imperialist policy of expansion approved by Shah Jahan that led to a conflagration with Bijapur. In 1656, Muhammad 'Adil Shah died and was succeeded by a person of doubtful parentage. His succession was questioned by the Mughal Government and invasion ordered. Sarkar's assertion<sup>1</sup> that Bijapur was not a vassal State and that it was independent and an equal ally of the Mughals, is historically incorrect (as will be shown presently). And he also contradicts his own statement on page 256 in the first volume of the *History of Aurangzeb*: "Muhammad 'Adil Shah had displeased Shah Jahan by departing from the practice of his ancestors in as much as he held court in a lofty palace outside his citadel and witnessed elephant combats in an open plain beyond the fort instead of within and lastly by conferring the title of Khan-i-Khanan on his premier noble;" he was let off only by tendering an abject apology. In matters like this, he was dependent upon the Mughal Emperor for approval. Then how an important matter like succession could take place without the Emperor's permission?<sup>2</sup>

As for the question of illegitimacy of the successor, it may be pointed out that Aurangzeb was not in his father's favour nor would he dare to misinform the Emperor about the real position of the successor of Muhammad 'Adil Shah. His enemies, particularly Dara Shikoh, would have immediately exposed this lie. The fact is that the legitimacy of the succession of Muhammad 'Adil Shah was doubtful; none in the Mughal court could prove it otherwise and, therefore, the war was sanctioned against Bijapur. Bijapur was certainly not a vassal State in the sense that it was paying any tribute like Golconda, but it could exist only during the pleasure of the Mughal Government. Therefore, by no stretch of imagination could it be called an independent State. Shah Jahan fully convinced of the insubordination of Bijapur and dazzled by the prospect of a huge booty displayed before him by Mu'azzam Khan, sanctioned an invasion against it. Mu'azzam Khan was, in fact, the main instigator, as he was concealing an old enmity against the ruler of Bijapur.

1. *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. I, p. 263.

2. Faruki's analysis of the situation (*Aurangzeb and His Times*, p. 325) seems to be correct.

Aurangzeb, who had recently received a serious rebuff in the campaign against Golconda, did not wish to take any initiative in the matter, but it was only because of his wish to please his father at any cost that he agreed to undertake this campaign.<sup>1</sup> The Emperor also sent his renowned Generals like Mahabat Khan and Sattar Sal Hada to the support of the prince. With heroic efforts, Aurangzeb conquered the forts of Bidar and Kalyani and the whole of Bijapur was virtually lying at his feet, when the court intriguers, headed by Dara Shikoh, prevailed upon the Emperor to stop this campaign over the head of Aurangzeb<sup>2</sup> (August 1657). To make matters difficult for him, the imperial commanders (sent from the Centre) were ordered to leave the prince immediately without even bidding a farewell. This was a bolt from the blue and a severe blow to the prestige of Aurangzeb. All the Rajput forces headed by Sattar Sal Hada and the veteran Mahabat Khan along with his followers including his Rajput retainers in obedience to the imperial summons, promptly left for the capital. In this way, the military strength of Aurangzeb was drastically reduced and it was a problem for him to come out of the territory of Bijapur safe and sound.

It was these reverses that had made the enmity between Dara Shikoh and Aurangzeb very bitter. It is wrong to assume that the abrupt stoppage of the campaigns against Golconda and Bijapur was due to any variations in the official policy; it was mainly due to the apprehensions of Dara Shikoh lest Aurangzeb might not grow stronger. Such events were responsible for the heartless way in which the War of Succession was fought. Shah Jahan's extremely partial role was responsible for exacerbating the feelings between the brothers. For that state of affairs, the members of the royal family were mainly responsible; the nobles' role in this context is invisible from the contemporary sources. All these princes were having nobles of their own who may have accentuated the feelings between the brothers, but no clear-cut data on this subject is available. The responsibility of a particular noble for worsening their relations at a particular

1. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, ff. 131a-b, Aurangzeb to Sha'ista Khan.

2. *'Amal-i-Salih*, BM MS Add 26221, f. 637b.



moment cannot be established owing to the paucity of material. The nobles' role assumes importance only when the struggle actually starts and they gained opportunities to display loyalty to their masters and to show their regard for the religious considerations at stake.

## Chapter 4

# Ideological Differences

**A** PECULIARITY of the War of Succession was the clash of religious ideals between the parties, particularly between Dara Shikoh and Aurangzeb. Religious differences added to the ferocity of a struggle already aggravated by deep personal rivalries. The majority of the Sunnis, who formed a majority among the Muslims of India, played a great part in undoing the cause of Dara Shikoh and furthering that of Aurangzeb (as will be shown in this chapter).

*The Sunnis.*—The Sunnis, also known as *Ahl-i-Sunnah wal-Jama'at*, profess to be the staunch followers of the *Shari'ah* and, unlike the Shi'ah, consider the presence of an elected Caliph indispensable for its enforcement. As has already been discussed, practice never wholly conformed to the theory; election was superseded by the system of hereditary succession, but still the Sunnis desired the Head of the State to perform the functions of the Khalifah in entirety and to rule in accordance with the *Shari'ah*. The *Shari'ah* has been a living force throughout; the ruler of a Muslim people might at times deviate from it to suit the expediencies of the State, but he could not disown its supremacy (in theory) as that amounted to apostasy, which was difficult for him to commit openly.

*The Indian Sunnis in General.*—The Indian Sunnis desired their rulers to act in accordance with the *Shari'ah* and the Sultans of Delhi had Generally professed their faith in orthodox Islam. The Sunnis were, in fact, the pillars of Muslim power in India; to curb the vast population of the Hindus, it was necessary for the Sultans of Delhi to retain their loyalty. The Sunnis were

thus the favoured children of the State. The Mughal kings also (with the exception of Humayun and Akbar), professed to be Sunnis and claimed to be the agents of Islam.<sup>1</sup> The assumption of the title of Khalifah by Akbar and his successors<sup>2</sup> was made to impress the Sunnis with the sacredness of their office, so that it might be a source of strength to their government and their court historians often mentioned it in their records. The creation of the office of *Sadrus-Sudur*<sup>3</sup> also implied this very motive, i.e. to mobilise public opinion in their favour. The power and prestige of the *Sadrus-Sudur* can be gauged from the fact that he was endowed with ample patronage to realise the end in view. He was the distributor of royal charity, which often amounted to a large sum of money every year; as the head of the judiciary he used to appoint those fully versed in the Hanafi school of jurisprudence as Qadis; the extensive Mughal Empire, undoubtedly, had a large number of vacancies for Qadis, he even accorded the formal religious sanction to every new sovereign by reading a *Khutbah* in his name. In this way, the Mughal Government, by employing a majority of the Mullahs as Qadis, Imams of the Mosques and the 'Ulama sometimes holding sinecures as well, sought to impress the Sunnis of the Islamic nature of these activities. (It will not be out of place to mention here that the Mughal Government never paid the Pandits for conducting prayers in their temples.) Undoubtedly, the Mughal Government in theory paid homage to the Sunni dogma and beliefs.

Akbar, in spite of his professions of being a *Khalifah*, had administered a rude shock to the Sunnis by clearly deviating

1. S. R. Sharma, "Nature of the Mughal State," *Islamic Culture*, October 1939. A study of the Mughal coins shows that every king took pride in calling himself a *Ghazi*, Lane-Poole's *Catalogue of the Indian Coins*, volume on the Mughal Emperors.

2. Strictly speaking, this claim does not appear to be justified, as the Mughal kingship was neither elected nor answerable to the community for its actions. But Akbar, fully conscious of its importance, was the first Mughal king to adopt it, *vide* his gold coin of 100 Mohurs (equal to £50) bore *السلطان العالی الخلیفه المتعالی* Cf. Lane-Poole, *op. cit.*, p. lxxiii. Shah Jahan also assumed this title in a letter written by his *Wazir* Mustafa Pasha, when Arslan Agha, the Turkish ambassador, was dismissed from his court. *Dasturul-Insha*, N. B., Vienna, MS H. O. 167, f. 28.

3. Only a Sunni could become the *Sadrus-Sudur*.

from their dogmas and practices. His hostility to the fundamentals of Islam e.g. making a change in the *Kalimah*, belief in medley of gods, great respect and even worship for the sun,<sup>1</sup> making *Sijdah* obligatory for all<sup>2</sup> and, last but not least, the introduction of *Din-i-Ilhai* in opposition to the commonly established practices—had become fully manifest to them. It was this heterodoxy of Akbar that had fed the flames of widespread rebellion in the East (1579) and resulted in an invasion by his brother Mirza Hakim from the North-West. An important cause of the rebellion of 1579 was Akbar's religious policy. Mulla Muhammad Yazdi, a Qadi of Jaunpur enjoined the people to rebel against the heretic ruler. The prominent nobles in Bihar at that time, namely, Muhammad Ma'sum Kabuli, Sayyid Beg Bakhshi, Mir M'uizzul-Mulk, and Dervish 'Ali Sangar, actually joined the rebellion. They had recently been harassed by the imperial officers (namely, Rai Parshotam Dass and Mulla Tayyab Rai) regarding the arrears of money and branding of horses, but it was Akbar's religious innovations and Mulla Muhammad Yazdi's *Fatawa* that led to the insurrection.<sup>3</sup> For a moment, the foundations of the Empire were shaken by the simultaneous outbreak of troubles in the East and the North-West and Akbar overcame this danger partly by an ostentatious display of orthodoxy for the time being and also with the help of his Rajput and Persian (Shi'ah) supporters. These events did show the resentment against his policy.

The preachings of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi had powerfully influenced the Sunnis' thought and the orthodox Muslims considered the policy of Akbar as an abandonment of the privileged position of the professors of the orthodox faith. Realising the inaptness of such a policy, Jahangir (though himself indifferent to orthodoxy) had to make changes in it. *Sijdah*, which was very offensive to the Muslims, was excused to the 'Ulama and *Mir-i-'Adal*. The *Sadarus-Sudur Miran* was allowed an influence in State affairs.<sup>4</sup> Shah Jahan, particularly

1. *A'in-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, p. 159 Badauni, *Muntakhabul-Tawarikh*, Vol. II, p. 261.

2. *A'in-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, p. 157 Badauni, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 259, 301.

3. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, Nizam-ud-din, Vol. II, pp. 349-50, *Muntakhabul-Tawarikh*, Badauni, Vol. II, p. 261.

4. S. R. Sharma, *Religious Policies of the Mughal Emperors*, p. 33.

during the first decade of his reign, endeavoured to rule as the champion of the Sunnis.<sup>1</sup> Even in the second decade, this policy was continued. He had raised Sayyid Jalal Gujerati, the *Sadr-us-Sadur*, to the rank of 6000<sup>2</sup> (1052/1642). This was the highest rank ever conferred on the holder of a religious office and as such it naturally increased the status of the theologians at the court. *Chahar Taslim* was excused to the theologians. It was in this very period that Shah Jahan was weakening in his orthodoxy under the influence of Dara Shikoh. The religious ideas of Dara Shikoh directly clashed with those of the Sunnis who feared that, if he ascended the throne, he would further the policy of Akbar—much to their disgust.

*The Development of Dara Shikoh's Religious and Political Thought.*—In order to understand the causes of divergence between the Sunnis (in general) and Dara Shikoh, it is necessary to understand the views propounded by the latter in his extensive writings, in the form of tracts, books and various translations, which disclose the steady development of his thought towards eclecticism.

His first two books, namely<sup>3</sup> *Safinatul-Auliya*, 1049/1640 and *Sakinatul-Auliya*, 1052/1642, are biographies of the mystics of various Sufi orders. These two books, written in the prime of his youth,<sup>3</sup> display extensive research by the author and established his reputation as a great devotee of the mystics. He also suffixed the titles of Hanafi<sup>4</sup> and Qadiri<sup>5</sup> to his name. His third composition—a very small tract—was *Tariqat ul-Haqiqat*, which bears no date, but the trend of its contents reveals that it was written soon after *Sakinatul-Auliya*. It deals with mysticism and records some of the verses in praise of God that confirm his adoption of the pantheistic views.<sup>6</sup> Such belief

1. S.R. Sharma, *Religious Policies of the Mughal Emperors*, p. 96.

2. 'Abdul Hamid Lahori, *Padshah Nama*, Vol. II, p. 718 (Bib. Ind.).

3. *Safinatul-Auliya* at the age of twenty-five and *Sakinatul-Auliya* at the age of twenty-eight.

4. Hanafi is the one who belongs to the school of jurisprudence founded by Imam Abu Hanifah (669-767 A.D.)

5. Qadiri was his *nom de plume* as a poet and showed purity of his thought.

6. *Tariqatul-Haqiqat*, I. O. No. 2192/16, published by the Qaumi Press, Gujranwala, 1895, p. 1.

کعبه و سومات توئی - در صومعه و خرابات توئی - شمع و پروانه  
باده و پیمانہ عاقل و دیوانہ آشناؤ بیگانہ۔

clashes with the concept of an orthodox Muslim who believes in God's essential characteristic as "Everything is from Him"<sup>1</sup> and not at all "Everything is He"<sup>2</sup>—which was, then, being advocated by Dara Shikoh.<sup>3</sup>

*His Adoption of the Qadiriya Order.*—Dara Shikoh chose a new path of his own by becoming a member of the Qadiriya order, whereas his father and grandfather had belonged to the Chishtiyah order. This change of allegiance took place, because he found the Qadiriya order more inclined towards philanthropy, humility and also averse to fanaticism. Its founder, 'Abdul Qadir Gilani (b. 470/1077-78, d. 551/1166), preached the very closing of the gates of hell and throwing paradise open to all mankind.<sup>4</sup> Such preachings greatly influenced him for a change. The inspiring personalities of Mulla Shah Badakhshi and Shaikh Mian Mir further quickened his leanings towards the Qadiriya order. Soon after this, he wrote *Risalah-i-Haqq-Numa* (age 32) in 1056/1645, which deals with the various stages of communion with God. Here he claimed that he had, without any difficulty, achieved union with God, although the various wayfarers had to tread a tortuous path in this direction.<sup>5</sup> In this way, he wanted to impress the Muslims with his sainthood, but in the same breath, he shocked them by stating that the Prophet practised the control of breath (used the Sanskrit word *Pranyam*) in the cave of Hira and meditated (Sanskrit word used was *Chakras*) in the same way as the Hindu Yogis did.<sup>6</sup> In this work, Dara Shikoh unfolded, for the first time, his proclivities for Hinduism. He was, however, indifferent to any resentment from the Muslims' side, because of his own elevated position, but still, he did write, in defence of his pantheistic views, *Hasanatul-'Arifin* (at the age of 38), 1062/1652, in which he dubbed his critics as highwaymen in the path

1. and 2. The Persian text is همه از اوست and همه اوست respectively.

3. The prince re-affirmed his belief in pantheism in *Majma'ul-Bahrain*, 1064/1655, BM MS Add 18404, f-231b.

4. *Encyclopaedic of Islam*, Vol. I, p. 42, Luzac & Co., London, 1913.

5. *Risalah-i-Haqq-Numa*, I. O. No. 3744/3, Allahabad, 1912, p.4.

6. This remark conceals a political significance. From this time onwards, one observes a gradual drift of Dara Shikoh away from orthodox Islam and nearer Hindu beliefs. That political considerations of winning over the Hindus towards him prompted him to make this remark, is not difficult to assert. His subsequent zeal in this direction confirms our analysis.

of God, impostors and idiots, and they were none other than the Sunni 'Ulama.<sup>1</sup> He tried to silence them by asserting that he had achieved annihilation in God (Persian text فنا فی الله) and as such was in no need of prayers or observing fasts.<sup>2</sup> It will not be out of place to mention that his assertion of annihilation in God was not a new claim; it had already been asserted by various mystics in the days gone by, but they had not forsaken the obligations of orthodox religion. The novelty of Dara Shikoh was, that along with this claim, he had also sought to justify his indifference to the obligatory prayers and fasts. This appeared rather curious, because the sayings of the very mystics whom he was quoting in self-defence in *Hasanatul-'Arifin* had been punctual in observing these practices. A Muslim not observing the tenets of Islam cannot attain spiritual eminence.<sup>3</sup> He even defended his conduct before the Muslim intelligentsia by reproducing the sayings of the Hindu Baba Lal (in this book) to confirm his pantheistic beliefs.<sup>4</sup> Such a defence was a strange phenomenon indeed.

Dara Shikoh was also a friend of Sarmad, a mendicant and a wandering Jew from Armenia, converted to Islam.<sup>5</sup> Sarmad's poetry breathed the ardent fervour of a Sufi and he was an eloquent advocate of pantheism.<sup>6</sup> He always used to go about

1. *Hasanatul-'Arifin*, BM MS Or 10880, f. 2a. He actually used for them the word Abu Jahl—nothing short of an abuse for a Muslim. (Historically, Abu Jahl was the nickname of Amr bin Hisham—an implacable enemy of Muhammad. Abu Jahl was a boastful and a debauched man and was killed in the battle of Badr, 624 A.D., fighting against the Muslims.)

2. Dara Shikoh was addicted to drinking (*Tarikh-i-Shah Shuja'i*, I.O. MS 533, f. 71b; also *Storia*, Vol. I, p. 222). This was one of the reasons why his professions of spiritualism were taken lightly by the Sunnis.

3. He even despised the orthodox Muslim dress of short trousers and openly burst his contempt for those wearing this dress on the eve of the battle of Samugarh and threatened them with dire consequences with the help of Rao Sattar Sal and his junta 'Aqil Khan Razi, (*Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, p. 33.)

4. *Hasanatul-'Arifin*, BM MS Or 10880, references on Baba Lal on ff. 36a, 39b and 40a.

5. *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, BM MS Add 16670, f. 247b.

6. آنکوکه سر حقیقتش باور شد - خود پهن تر از میپهر پنهاور شد -  
ملاگوید که بر شد احمد بفلک - سرمد گوید فلک با احمد در شد -  
نمی دانم درین چرخ کهن دیر - خدائے من ابھی چند است یا غیر -

Maulvi 'Abdul Wali, K.S., "A Sketch of Life of Sarmad," *JASB* 1924, p. 111.

naked everywhere—an act shocking to the orthodox Muslims. (Sher Khan Lodi) the author of *Miratu'l-Khayal*, had expressed his indignation at such associations of Dara Shikoh and called them lunatics whose company the prince loved very much.<sup>1</sup> It was widely suspected that Sarmad was aiding and abetting the prince in his deviation from orthodox Islam.<sup>2</sup>

Dara Shikoh was, however, oblivious of the consequences of such actions and continued his studies of Hinduism more vigorously<sup>3</sup> with a view to narrowing down its gap with Islam by bringing together Sufism and the speculative thought of the Hindus, the depth of which his own association with the *Yogis* had revealed to him. He undertook the translation of their various religious books, viz. *Bhawaga Gita*, *Upanishads*, *Yoga Vasishtha* and *Proboda Candrodaya*. With his encouragement, his secretary, Chandra Bhan, composed several writings on this subject, the most notable being the "Dialogue between Dara Shikoh and Baba Lal."

In fact, Dara Shikoh's extensive studies of Hinduism began after he wrote *Risalah-i-Haqq-Numa* in 1645; immediately it had its repercussions in the realm of political affairs as well. The remission of Pilgrimage Tax by Shah Jahan, under the persistent persuasion of Dara Shikoh, meant a considerable financial relief to the Hindus at large and this was bound to make him popular with them. In 1654, he played the role of a saviour for Rana Raj Singh of Mewar when the latter's territory was on the verge of absorption by the Mughals under the orders of Shah Jahan.<sup>4</sup> His letter to Raja Jai Singh on this context is

1. P. 141.

2. That these suspicions were even shared by Aurangzeb, is borne out by the fact that after his accession, he had Sarmad executed on the charges of nudity and infidelity. "A Sketch of the Life of Sarmad," loc cit.

3. Dara Shikoh was not a pioneer in this realm. 'Abdul Razzaq Alberuni (eleven century A.C.) was a great Sanskrit scholar and the first Muslim to undertake the study of Hinduism on an extensive scale. In the Delhi Sultanate, stray attempts to understand Hinduism were made from time to time by the Muslims, Amir Khusrau being the most conspicuous one. Under Akbar, an elaborate attempt to the effect was made. Abu'l Fazl translated the six *Darshanas* of Hindu philosophy into Persian. *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and *Atherva Veda* were rendered into Persian. Under Shah Jahan, this legacy was continued owing to the keen interest of Dara Shikoh.

4. Warith, *Padshah Nama*, I. O. MS 324, f. 193b.



interesting indeed: "The particular kindness and love which I bear towards the Rajput race has now become manifest; the territory and honour of the Rana (Raj Singh) remain intact. I wish well of him."<sup>1</sup> This letter clearly shows that, apart from literary pursuits, the prince had political motives as well in his studies of Hinduism. Having failed to befriend the Sunnis, he, being a shrewd judge of men, wanted to win over the Hindus somehow or other. In this process, he went a step further and tried to identify himself with the Hindu *Avatars*.<sup>2</sup>

In *Majma'ul-Bahrain*, 1065 A.H./1655, he brought Islam (the religion of monotheism) on level with Hinduism (the faith of idol-worshippers) and failed to find any difference between the two implying thereby that one could attain salvation by following either of the two religions.<sup>3</sup> He advocated the

1. *Jaipur Records*, Persian text, pp. 121-22. Qanungo (*Life of Dara Shikoh*, p. 172), while praising the prince for this letter, conveniently forgot to mention that it was motivated by political considerations.

Mr. Muhammad Athar 'Ali in his paper entitled, "Religious Issue in the War of Succession, 1658-59," read at the Aligarh Session of the Indian History Congress held in 1960, referred to the taunt alleged to have been administered by prince Akbar in 1681 to Aurangzeb that Dara was defeated in the War of Succession because of his bias against the Rajputs and had he been friendly towards them the results would have been quite different. As against this, there is on record the well-known boast of Dara on the eve of the battle of Samugarh (*Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, p. 33) that with the help of Rao Sattar Sal Hada and his junta he would drive out the Muslim nobles like hares. Dara had in fact a large backing of the Rajputs (this is admitted by all modern writers like Qanungo, Sarkar and Faruki) and this had intoxicated him with over-confidence in his own ultimate victory. Hence the taunt alleged to have been administered to Aurangzeb by prince Akbar was either based on ignorance or the source supplying this information is a phoney one. It is historically wrong to assert that Dara was unpopular with the Rajputs or that the large number of Rajputs were not at his back. If unpopular with the Rajputs, was he popular with the Muslims?

It seems, this view of Mr. M. Athar Ali is in accordance with the current fashion of the Indian writers to measure everything in terms of secularism and to wilfully ignore the religious factors altogether.

2. In a preface to the translation of *Yoga Vasishtha* (I.O. MS 1859, f. 2b), he mentions a dream in which Vasishtha calls him and Rama Chandra brothers in pursuit of truth. By this comparison, he wanted to convince the Hindus that he too was an *Avatar*-cum-king rolled in one.

3. BM MS Add 18404, f. 232a. Probably, that is why he wore a ring with *Prabhu* engraved in Hindi characters in opposition to the Muslim denomination *al-Rabb*.

thesis that truth was not the monopoly of a particular religion; rather all religions preached the same fact. It is significant to observe that the prince had taken pains to gather only the points of similarity between Islam and Hinduism, but deliberately did not mention the striking differences between the two. It was, in fact, at this stage of the development of his ideas that he lost faith in the titles of Hanafi and Qadiri and discontinued using them with his name any more.

The contents of this book were repugnant to the aspirations of the orthodox Muslims. To escape the consequences of his pro-Hindu utterances contained in this book, the prince had stated by way of precaution that it was meant only for the benefit of the members of his family and not at all for the common folk.<sup>1</sup> These academic outbursts were not at all confidential and the State officials, who were all Persian-knowing persons, would have heard of them or read this book and formed impressions according to their beliefs. Aurangzeb particularly benefited from it, as on its very basis, Shaikh Burhan issued his *Fatwa* against Dara Shikoh (*vide* pp. 77-78). It was written just three years before the outbreak of the War of Succession and was a contributory cause of moulding the Muslims' attitude against him.

He gave the name *Sirr-i-Akbar* (1067/1657) to the translation of the *Upanishads*, in which he wrote that Qur'an was mostly allegorical and that very few people could understand its intricacies.<sup>2</sup> He himself had failed to understand it even by studying the Book of Moses, the Gospels, the Psalms and other Scriptures. Only the *Upanishads* (the revealed books) assisted him in understanding the Qur'an.<sup>3</sup> Fearing that the Muslims would detest these remarks, he had stated unambiguously in respect of this book also that it was meant only for the members of his family and not for the masses. This book, the contents of which were repugnant to orthodox Muslims, might have proved equally disastrous to him, but it was published too late (i.e. a few months before the outbreak of the War of Succession) to receive adequate publicity in the country, but it can be safely assumed that the book would have been known to the people living

1. *Majma'ul-Bahrain*, BM MS Add 18404, f. 232a.

2. *Sirr-i-Akbar*, BM MS Add 18404, f. 1.

3. *Ibid*, f. 2b. Here is a clear admission of Dara Shikoh.

in and around the imperial capital (but this is a speculation).

It is difficult to discover a precedent in history when a Muslim has ever presented a gift to a temple of the idol-worshippers. Even Akbar, with his profound leanings towards the Hindus, did not do so. But Dara Shikoh did present a stone-railing to the temple of Keshav Rai at Mathura.<sup>1</sup> This act would have endeared him to the Hindus but certainly not to the orthodox Muslims.<sup>2</sup> The temple of Chintaman spoiled by Aurangzeb, then the Governor of Gujerat, and utilised as a mosque, was restored to the Hindus by Shah Jahan under the persuasion of Dara Shikoh.

The poetry of Dara Shikoh again exhibited his equivocal belief in his own faith.<sup>3</sup> In a letter to the mystic Shah Dilruba, he wrote that the figurative (Persian text مجازی) Islam had left him and real infidelity dawned on him; "he is the wearer of a sacred thread, an idol-worshipper, nay a fire-worshipper. Oh Muslim! Do you know what is meant by an idol. Know that the true faith lies in idol-worship."

The discussion in the foregoing paragraphs summarises the following charges against Dara Shikoh by the orthodox Muslims: belief in pantheism, non-observance of prayers and fasts, drinking, pronouncing the *Vedas* as revealed books, wearing a ring with *Prabhu* engraved on it and last but not least, minimising the importance of Islam by comparing it with

1. This was a beautiful temple built by Bir Singh Bundela in the reign of Jahangir at a cost of thirty lakhs of rupees—the money gained by murdering Abul-Fazl at the instigation of Salim.

2. Aurangzeb, after his accession, ordered the removal of this stone-railing on 14th April 1666 and finally (in the middle of Ramazan) in January 1670, it was ordered to be demolished altogether as the shocking example of a Muslim gone astray. Sarkar, *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. III, p. 303.

3. *Fayyazul-Qawanin*, BM MS Or 9617, Vol. I, f. 44.

زنار پوش و بت پرست بلکه خود پرست و دیر نشین گشتم  
 اگر کافر از اسلام مجازی گشت بیزار کرا - کفر حقیقی شد پدیدار  
 مسلمان گر بدانستی که بت چیست  
 بدانستی که دین در بت پروری است  
 درون هر بت جان است نهان  
 بزیر کفر ایمان است پنهان

other religions. On an examination, one is led to conclude that these charges are concerned only with the externals of Islam and do not hit at its fundamentals. If a man's writings can be any guide to his religious beliefs, then he appears to have retained the religion to the last in which he was born.

*Majma'ul-Bahrain* and *Sirr-i-Akbar*, the books most offensive to the Sunnis, display without any doubt in their very beginning, his loyalty to the fundamentals of Islam. Therefore, it is difficult to call him a heretic.<sup>1</sup> Though not a heretic, yet his unguarded outbursts had made the Sunnis doubt his very faith in Islam. Owing to his unorthodox views and his keen interest in various religions, people considered him a medley of contradictions, a Muslim among the Muslims, a Hindu among the Hindus and a Christian among the Christians.<sup>2</sup> It seems, his study of the Qur'an was not critical, because the explanations which he gave for its verses are often as unacceptable from the point of view of the actual linguistic usage as from a criticism of the text. In his desire to identify Hinduism with the Sufi philosophy, he applies the least shade of meanings, draws the most sweeping conclusions from a partial reading of the Qur'an.<sup>3</sup>

Such a person could not be appreciated by the Sunnis. It may be true that there were no political considerations when the prince started his studies of Hinduism, but later on, when he found a storm of opposition from the Sunnis (as admitted by him while writing *Hasanatul-'Arifin*), he leaned more and more towards Hinduism. In this way, the prince, by his profound leanings towards Hinduism and lack of warmth for the orthodox Islam, had created for himself a situation in which he found himself in a fateful dilemma. He had started, as we have seen, by studying the Sufi doctrines of tolerance, but he gradually drifted away from orthodox Islam and nearer Hindu beliefs. Ultimately, he aimed to narrow down the differences between

1. According to Sarkar (*History of Aurangzib*, Vol. I, p. 298), Aurangzeb could not charge Dara Shikoh with idolatrous practices, but the latter's gift of a stone-railing to the temple of Keshav Rai was unprecedented and amounted, no doubt, to courting with idolatry.

2. *Storia*, Vol. I, p. 222.

3. Dr. Yusuf Hussain, *L'Inde Mystique au Moyen Age*, Paris, 1929, p. 187.

the two faiths and Qanungo's assertion<sup>1</sup> totally denying the existence of political considerations in the prince's studies of Hinduism does not seem to be correct. The Rajput chiefs, as a condition of service under the Mughals, knew Persian well and might have read and appreciated his religious views and that is why he succeeded in bringing the Hindus around him during that fateful struggle, but, unfortunately, he failed to realise that, from a religious point of view, the friendship of the Hindus alone, while he was alienating his (Sunni) Muslim followers, would not suffice to win for him the Peacock Throne. His followers were Hindus in general and Shi'ah and heterodox Muslims in particular (*vide* Chapter VI). All the Hindu commanders from the ranks of 6000 down to 3000 were at his back. The matchless feats of heroism displayed for his sake by Rao Sattar Sal Hada, Mukand Singh Hada, Sujjan Singh Sissodia, Rattan Singh Rathor have become a legend in history.

*The Ideology of Shuja.*—Shuja' was neither a scholar like his elder brother nor had he any taste in the comparative study of religions. As already stated, he had become a Shi'ah and his motives for this change appear to be essentially political in nature. The Shi'ah nobles held important posts in the Empire, e.g. the Sayyids of Barah, and they were influenced by this change-over of the prince. A study of the list of his supporters reveals some curious facts: Asfandiyar Ma'muri, Nurul-Hasan, Mir Murtaza Imami, Sayyid Quli Uzbek and several Sayyids of Barah were his keenest supporters. When after the battle of Samugarh, Dara Shikoh was a spent force, the Sayyids of Barah generally shifted their loyalties to Shuja'—an insignificant person if compared with the victorious Aurangzeb. Sayyid Qasim Barah (title Shahamat Barah) and 'Abdul Jalil Barah—Dara Shikoh's deputies in charge of the forts of Allahabad and Chunara—surrendered the forts to Shuja' and also joined him and thus prevented Aurangzeb from occupying them.<sup>2</sup> The successive defeats of Shuja' had doomed for good the ambitions of the Shi'ah for a supremacy in India. The loyalty of some of the Shi'ah nobles can be gauged from the fact that when Shuja' was forced to run away from India, Sayyid 'Alam Barah along with

1. *Op. cit.*, p. 200.

2. *'Alamgir Nama*, p. 225, and *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 681-83.

ten members of his tribe and Sayyid Quli Uzbek with his followers were the only persons to share the troubles of exiled life with him.<sup>1</sup>

*Aurangzeb's Popularity.*—In sharp contrast to Dara Shikoh's doubtful attitude towards the orthodox Islam and Shuja's leanings towards the Shi'ah, Aurangzeb's loyalty to orthodox Islam was greater than that of any other prince of the house of Timur. He possessed great mastery over the Qur'an and the Hadith. He was a Sunni and a staunch believer in the school of jurisprudence founded by Imam Abu Hanifah. He was very punctual in the performance of his daily prayers, usually in a mosque with a congregation of the common people of his faith.<sup>2</sup> He never missed the fasts of Ramazan and, in this month, he used to devote six to nine hours a day studying the Qur'an in the company of the 'Ulama. He refrained from the prohibited practices, i.e. wine, fornication and music. He would not eat from the vessels of gold or silver or even wear garments not allowed by the religion. Thus from his very childhood, he had earned the reputation of a religious-minded person. As a prince, he had made the highest nobles of his father's court his friends by sagacity, piety and even humility,<sup>3</sup> which is the essential characteristic of a devout Muslim. Such qualities were bound to endear him to the Sunnis in marked contrast with Dara Shikoh, whose religious views directly clashed with them.

An important cause of enmity between Aurangzeb and Dara Shikoh was their diametrically opposite views on religious matters. He dubbed him as an apostate.<sup>4</sup> The Sufism of Dara Shikoh amounted to infidelity in the eyes of Aurangzeb, who,

1. *'Alamgir Nama*, p. 561.

2. Even in the field of battle, he would not miss his daily prayers. In 1644, in the battle against the Khan of Bukhara, the Persians were wonderstruck at his calmly and coolly offering the prayers, as if nothing dangerous was happening around him (*Ma'asir-i-Alamgiri*, p. 531).

In 1659, just on the eve of the battle of Khajwa, when Jaswant Singh had treacherously pounced upon his army and wrought havoc in its ranks Aurangzeb continued offering his "Tahajjud" prayers without the least perturbation (*Anecdotes of Aurangzib*, p. 50).

3. *Anecdotes of Aurangzeb*, p. 38.

4. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri* ff. 226b—297a, Aurangzeb, to Shah Jahan, The exact words are:

”ملحد ہے دین - دشمن مبین - رنگ از مسلمانی نداشته“

therefore, considered its extirpation as a religious duty. That is why, from the very outset, he had adopted the role of a crusader against him.

In September 1657, Dara Shikoh, on Shah Jahan's illness, issued peremptory orders in the name of the Emperor, directing the hostilities against Bijapur to cease immediately and the imperial troops to return to the capital forthwith. In this way, a very critical situation was created for Aurangzeb, as his military strength was drastically reduced. The rumour of Shah Jahan's death was afloat and the struggle for succession between the princes seemed imminent. That is why, the people thought, Bijapur, then almost within an easy reach of victory, had been forsaken, in order to spare troops for the consolidation of Dara Shikoh's position. It was under this impression that Aurangzeb appealed to the religious sense of the imperial commanders that they should support him in the struggle ahead against the "heretic" Dara Shikoh. Since the rumour of Shah Jahan's death needed an authentic confirmation, large-scale desertions to Aurangzeb did not take place,<sup>1</sup> but still twenty Muslim commanders sent from the Centre decided to disobey the summons and joined hands with him.<sup>2</sup> No Hindu commander deserted the imperialists at this stage. This is significant.

Another factor which gave religious colour to this struggle was the support of the leading Sufis and the 'Ulama for the cause of Aurangzeb who as preceptors, wielded a considerable influence over the Muslims. The *Masha'ikh*, though essentially

1. Storia, Vol. I, p. 251.

2. Muhammad Sadiq, *Tarikh-i-Shah Jahani*, BM MS Or 1671, f. 96a. The most notable among those who deserted were Najabat Khan, Rashid Khan Ilham Ullah, Khwajah 'Abid (title Qulij Khan), Mirza Sultan Safavi, Mansur Barah and so on.

Mr. M. Athar Ali in his paper, "Religious Issue in the War of Succession, has denied the existence of this reference, which is a preposterous supposition. For his information the exact Persian text is as under:

”باوجود جدا گشتن بسیاری از بندهائے پادشاهی بہت امیر نامی  
رکاب ماندند“

[“In spite of desertion of so many imperial officers, twenty eminent chiefs were left with Aurangzeb”]

and he means Muslims here. It is rather unfortunate that Mr. M. Athar Ali made this unwarranted assertion without studying the relevant folio of this manuscript.

religious persons, were also important politically, because they commanded disciples, admirers and sympathisers, who deemed it an honour to obey their *Pir* in all affairs. Owing to the paucity of material on the subject, it is impossible to estimate statistically the extent of support rendered to Aurangzeb by these persons, but still a general idea can be formed about it.

*Support of the Masha'ikh and the (Sunni) Sayyids.*

*Naqshbandi Order.*—Aurangzeb was a devoted disciple of Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum Sirhindi (the illustrious son of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi, the most renowned religious figure of the age). Shaikh Ma'sum Sirhindi had a very large number of followers among the Muslims.<sup>1</sup> The Shaikh belonged to the Naqshbandi order which was well known for its orthodoxy and also for its interest in the political affairs. Dara Shikoh did not like its orthodoxy and cherished an ill-will against the Shaikh, as he was the *Pir* of Aurangzeb<sup>2</sup>—the brother, whom he hated the most. When, in September 1657, Shah Jahan fell seriously ill, the reins of government came virtually in the hands of Dara Shikoh, it was persistently rumoured and feared that he would take the earliest opportunity of persecuting the Shaikh's innumerable followers.<sup>3</sup> That is why the prayers and blessings of the Naqshbandi order were on the side of Aurangzeb. Shaikh Bayazid of Burhanpur who, was conferred the cloak of the Order by Shaikh Ma'sum Sirhindi, had openly prayed for the success of Aurangzeb during that deadly struggle.<sup>4</sup>

*Prayers for Aurangzeb:* In order to fight the War of Succession, Aurangzeb left Aurangabad and stayed at Burhanpur (the gateway of Deccan) for one month (March 1658). It was here that he completed his preparations for the coming struggle and endeavoured to attract the Muslims towards him with the help of the local mystics who, fortunately for Aurangzeb, all belonged to the Naqshbandi order.

The prince was a disciple of Shaikh Burhan (also called Mulla Hazrat Ji), a mystic of Burhanpur and a widely respected

1. According to *Khazinatul-Asfiya* (p. 640), the Shaikh had nine hundred thousand disciples. This figure seems to be a pious exaggeration. Probably it included disciples, admirers and sympathisers as well.

2. *Munaqab-i-Adamiya wa Hazrat-i-Ahmadiya*, I. O. MS 1940, f. 183a.

3. *Ibid.*, f. 183a.

4. *Mirat'ul-Alam*, BM MS Add 7657, f. 449a.



personality at that place. He approached the mystic and complained that Dara Shikoh had gone astray from Islam; had defamed Sufism by failing to distinguish between true faith and idolatry; composed *Majma'ul-Bahrain*, a highly misleading book; reduced his father to a nullity for his own selfish interests and was on the brink of conducting a war against the Muslims for the benefit of the apostates.<sup>1</sup> He requested that the holy man might curse him and pray for Aurangzeb's victory. The Shaikh predicted, though it has been generally ignored by certain writers, victory for Aurangzeb and advised him to rule justly after assuming kingship.<sup>2</sup> This pleasing augury did hearten the followers of Aurangzeb,<sup>3</sup> who were mostly Muslims and, in accord with the general spirit of the age, were believers in the efficacy of predictions coming from such religious figures. Shaikh Nizam Fazil of Burhanpur, was the first person to congratulate the prince on this prediction.<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh Qutb Burhanpuri, a *Hafiz-i-Qur'an*, renowned for his *qir'at*, used to recite *Surhas* before the populace in the month of Ramazan. His *qir'at* was attractive to people and he thus commanded respect in the city. He publicly prayed for the success of the prince.<sup>5</sup>

Sayyid Sher Muhammad Qadiri, another mystic of Burhanpur, openly prayed for Aurangzeb's success.<sup>6</sup>

The mystics of Burhanpur were not at all in the pay of the prince and there is nothing on record to show that they ever accepted any present from him as a price for their blessings. They had agreed to say a few words of favour only because

1. Muhammad Sadiq, *Tarikh-i-Shah Jahani*, BM MS Or 1671, f. 96b.

2. Khafi Khan, *Muntakhabul-Lubab*, Vol. II, p. 11.

Sharma's assertion in his *Studies in Medieval India*, p. 259 (published in 1956) that Mulla Hazrat Ji refused to bless the prince in this venture finds no confirmation in the contemporary sources. It seems Sharma did not read the whole text. It is true, the mystic was reluctant to meet the prince at the outset, but when convinced of the religious character of the struggle, he did bless him.

3. Mr. Muhammad Athar Ali, in his paper entitled, "The Religions Issue in the war of Succession 1658-59," op. cit., stated that it was only after his victory at Samugarh that Aurangzeb "raised the bogey of Dara's heresy." This assertion is not only malicious but shows ignorance of facts on the part of the learned writer.

4. Khafi Khan, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 11.

5. *Mirat-i-Jahan-Numa*, BM MS Or 1998, f. 244a.

6. *Mirautul-'Alam*, BM MS Add 7657, f. 447a.

they were convinced of the religious nature of the cause the prince was espousing. But a surprising incident is the attitude of Sayyid Ni'mat-Ullah of Narnaul (a mystic of Gwalior) who had never met Aurangzeb before, but had heard a lot about the virtues of the prince. The mystic numbered Shuja' amongst his devotees who often used to visit his *Pir* to gain spiritual enlightenment from him. When Shuja' started his battles against Aurangzeb, the mystic did not seem to approve the conduct of his disciple, never blessed him and quietly left the territory of Bengal in disgust.<sup>1</sup> Was this disgust due to his liking for Aurangzeb?

Before entering on the struggle, Aurangzeb had, thus, gained the blessings and benedictions of several mystics who were not at all dependent upon him in any way. Politically, they were important, because they commanded a good many followers, who considered it sacred to follow the dictates of their *Pirs*. The prayers of such religious figures were, in fact, meant to convince the Muslims, particularly the followers of Aurangzeb, that they were fighting for the protection of Islam. This circumstance went a long way in hardening their attitude towards the enemy, otherwise one cannot explain how the comparatively unknown, mediocre and even smaller followers of Aurangzeb could have dared to fight with the most renowned generals of the age on Dara Shikoh's side at the battle of Samugarh (*vide* Chapter 6) and defeated them. Dara Shikoh had antagonised the Sunnis beyond any doubt and no mystic ever blessed him in this venture.<sup>2</sup> Shuja' and Murad knew well that they could considerably strengthen their position by appealing in their own ways to the religious sense of the Muslims. That is why Shuja' had leaned towards Shi'ism. Murad was loud in his advocacy of orthodox Islam<sup>3</sup> But both the brothers

1. *Miratu'l-'Alam*, BM MS Add 7657, f. 449a. (The author of this work is Muhammad Baqa, a disciple of Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum Sirhindi.)

2. Sarmad had, of course, foretold victory for Dara Shikoh, but the former, owing to his nudity, was not liked by the orthodox Muslims (Sunnis).

3. Murad was a devotee of Sayyid Jaffar Shah, a *Sajjad'ah Nishin* of Gujerat. In a letter to his spiritual guide, he narrated his victory at Dharmat and ascribed his success to God's grace and good wishes of his *Pir's* illustrious forefathers. He requested him to pray for his ultimate success as well. *Fayyaz-ul-Qawanin*, BM MS Or 9617, Vol. I, ff. 77b-78a.

failed in their endeavours. Murad only played the role of a second under Aurangzeb and, owing to lack of accomplishments, could not succeed to become the first man.

*The (Sunni) Sayyids with Aurangzeb.*—Most of the Sayyids were among the staunch supporters of Aurangzeb. As descendants of the Prophet they held a position of respect among the Muslims. Aurangzeb had always been partial and friendly disposed towards them. This personal element was also responsible for their joining the side of Aurangzeb.

Shaikh Mir Khawafi,<sup>1</sup> an eminent (Sayyid) officer of the prince (Rank 3000), was one of his chief supporters in this struggle. *'Alamgir Nama* is full of praises for his steadfast loyalty and bravery. He had rendered inestimable service to Aurangzeb by arresting, through stratagems, Shah Nawaz Khan Safavi at Burhanpur (March 1658) and Prince Murad after the battle of Samugarh (June 1658), when they were planning to create trouble for his master. His brother, Sayyid Amir Khawafi, was the Governor of the fort of Delhi, where Murad was imprisoned for the time being. In the first year of Aurangzeb's reign, he (Amir Khan Khawafi) conveyed Murad to the fort of Gwalior.

Sayyid Shah Muhammad<sup>2</sup> of Bukhara—a senior officer in the special guards of Aurangzeb (Rank 3000)—was granted the title of Murtaza Khan on the eve of this struggle and his part in the battles was exemplary. At the battle of Dharmat, he performed valiant deeds, while he was holding the charge of the vanguard. At the battle of Samugarh, his bravery was rewarded with wounds. At the battles of Khajwa and Deorai, he was again a heroic figure.

Mir Malik Husain<sup>3</sup> (the younger son of Sayyid Abul-Ma'ali Khawafi Khan and foster-brother of Aurangzeb), remained on intimate terms with Aurangzeb throughout his life. He earned a name for bravery in all battles of this struggle and succeeded in arresting Dara Shikoh from the environs of Qandhar. He was honoured with the title of Bahadur Khan (Rank 3,000).

1. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 668-70.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 597-98.

3. *Tazkiratul-Umara*, BM MS Add 16703, f. 36a.

Intimacy of Sayyid Abul-Fazl Mamuri<sup>1</sup> (title Mamur Khan) with Aurangzeb was such that he was often sent on delicate missions. When Najabat Khan, the chief counsellor of Aurangzeb during this struggle, fell out with the prince, Mamur Khan was deputed to pacify him. The Sayyid played a prominent part in the battles of Dharmat and Samugarh.

These eminent (Sunni) Sayyids fought for Aurangzeb in this struggle and the fact that they were also led by religious considerations can not be ruled out. Besides Sunni Sayyids, two eminent Shiah Sayyids, also fought strangely enough, zealously for Aurangzeb. One was Muhammad Tahir Mashhadi<sup>2</sup> (title Wazir Khan) and the other was Mirza Muhammad Mashhadi<sup>3</sup> (title Asalat Khan). The former had been a *Diwan* of the prince for a long time and enjoyed his confidence. That is why he was entrusted with the government of Khandesh, when Aurangzeb was busy fighting in the North. Both Asalat Khan and Aurangzeb were sons-in-law of Shah Nawaz Khan Safavi and thus their relations were quite intimate. The ancestors of Asalat Khan had been the guardians of the (Eighth) Imam 'Ali bin Musa and he was, by ancestry, supposed to be a staunch Shi'ah. It is suggestive, however, that both these officers fully knew the Sunni ideology of the prince and still they fought for him; this clearly showed their own equivocal faith in Shi'ism. Personal gratitude was also an important cause of their loyalty towards him, but even this admission does not exonerate them from that charge.

*The Sunni 'Ulama.*—Similarly, the Sunni 'Ulama (as shown below) supported Aurangzeb because they expected the law of the *Shari'ah* to predominate to its very letter and spirit after his accession and, as a natural consequence of it, the days of their supremacy would dawn. They constituted a highly respected class of the period when the hold of religion over the masses was strong. The orthodox Muslims consider the 'Ulama as a body the "heirs of the Prophet," not liable to commit a mistake and their being on Aurangzeb's side was to convince the Sunnis that his was a righteous cause so that it might serve

1. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. III, pp. 503-08.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 936-40.

3. *Ibid.* Vol. I, pp. 222-25.

as an inducement to deter them from fighting for Dara Shikoh. Several 'Ulama even bore the brunt of fighting as well. Mulla 'Abdul Qawwi, the tutor of Aurangzeb—well known for his piety and orthodoxy—took an active part in all battles of the struggle.<sup>1</sup> Shaikh Nizam Fazil, a scholar of Burhanpur, in the employ of the prince, performed an enormous task in making the people understand the religious character of the struggle; he was the person to approach the various mystics for blessing the prince, the most conspicuous example being that of Shaikh Burhan of Burhanpur.<sup>2</sup> Khwajah 'Abid bin 'Alam Shaikh, the leader of the learned and great men of Samarqand, was himself an 'Alim, fought for Aurangzeb's cause and, on account of his bravery shown at the battle of Dharmat, was promoted to the rank of 4000/700.<sup>3</sup> Hoshdar Khan, an intensely religious-minded person and one of the best shots of the age, also fought in the service of Aurangzeb.<sup>4</sup>

This shows that these Sunni 'Ulama not only served Aurangzeb with sword but also their very presence on his side was a sort of persuasion to the Sunnis to consider his cause a religious one. The Aurangzeb's bulk of followers were Sunnis who had joined him not due to sheer chance, but their unflinching loyalty to his cause conveyed the impression of ideological factors as well. On the other hand, Dara Shikoh, in spite of his vast resources, could not command the backing of such people. The extent of his unpopularity with the 'Ulama can be judged from the fact that Mulla Shafi' of Yazd (title Danishmand Khan), one of the most learned men of the age, immediately resigned from the office of the imperial *Bakhshi*, when the reins of government fell into the hands of Dara Shikoh on the sudden illness of Shah Jahan in September 1657.<sup>5</sup> Yet in spite of his strained relations, when later on, the fate of Dara Shikoh was hanging in the balance, his was the solitary but the most powerful speech delivered on that occasion begging for the safety of the prince.<sup>6</sup>

1. *Mirat-i-Jahan Numa*, BM MS Or 1998, f. 239b.

2. *Ibid.*, f. 240a.

3. Sudhari Lal, *Tohfah-i-Shah Jahani*, I.O. MS 2935, f. 25b and *Ma'asir-ul-Umara*, Vol. III, pp. 120-23.

4. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. III, pp. 943-46.

5. *Mirat-i-Jahan-Numa*, BM MS Or 1998, f. 238b.

6. Bernier, *Travels*, p. 100.

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*Charges against Aurangzeb:*—Some critics, particularly Europeans, e.g. Manucci, Bernier and Tavernier, charge Aurangzeb with the exploitation of his religion in order to achieve success in the struggle.

By levelling this charge, they unwittingly admit the presence of the religious factor in the War of Succession. He is dubbed as a hypocrite towards his religion, but no instance of his deviation from the Islamic faith and practices has ever been pointed out by these critics. His loyalty to the tenets of Islam has been unquestioned throughout.

Really such an alleged hypocrisy to religion must have been very curious, as it was maintained consistently even at the cost of personal comfort and popularity. It is also astonishing that this charge has been levelled by persons who had never had opportunity to have an intimate touch with the prince. These travellers had spread several tales about the other members of the royal family including Shah Jahan, but it is not astonishing that they could not get anything against Aurangzeb. As against this, the overwhelming evidence of the contemporary Persian writers praising him for being an ideal Muslim is too weighty to be set aside. These foreign travellers were not only partial but also sympathetic towards Dara Shikoh; they were touched to see his tragic fall and possibly could not forgive Aurangzeb for the wretched circumstances of Dara Shikoh.

The very fact that the majority of Aurangzeb's followers were orthodox Muslims (*vide* Chapters 5 and 6) including some of the Sunni 'Ulama—"the heirs of the Prophet"—and that such persons were conspicuous by their absence in the ranks of Dara Shikoh, conveys the impression that the religious factor in this struggle cannot be ignored. That Aurangzeb used the religious sentiment purely for his selfish ends and not at all for the benefit of his faith, would be an utterly exaggerated view, when we study the subsequent years of his reign.

*Alleged Bigotry of Aurangzeb as Governor of the Deccan against the Hindus.*—Some historians (notably Sarkar) have often asserted that it was during his second governorship of the Deccan that the prince's bigotry against the Hindus became well marked<sup>1</sup> and that it was for this reason that the

1. *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. I, p. 173.

Hindus did not support him in this struggle. Such a contention is based upon flimsy grounds and is not borne out by facts. Sarkar bases his conclusion upon a partial reading of the prince's correspondence in *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*. In one letter, Aurangzeb informed the *Wazir* Sa'd-Ullah Khan that true facts regarding the execution of the Brahman Chhabila Ram should be placed before the Emperor, so that no innocent Muslim officer might be victimised.<sup>1</sup> This Brahman had spoken about the Prophet Muhammad in an insulting language for which offence he was hanged. His relatives had filed a complaint with the Emperor that the execution of the Brahman was a grave miscarriage of justice by the officer concerned and as such he should be brought to book. By no stretch of imagination can this case lead us to draw this sweeping conclusion that it was a case of malice against the Hindus in general; it was directed only against a particular Hindu who, by using insulting language against the Prophet injured the feelings of the Muslims at large. It was the anxiety of Aurangzeb to see that true facts are placed before the Emperor that spurred him to write this letter and we cannot convict him of this charge. Secondly, Sarkar attributes the Shah Jahan's very censures of Aurangzeb for the latter's alleged anti-Hindu policy and considered this a sufficient proof to justify his conclusion. It has already been shown in the preceding pages, that most of Shah Jahan's censures of the prince were unjustified and administered under the influence of Dara Shikoh.

The good intentions of Aurangzeb (during his governorship of the Deccan, 1653-58) become quite clear by the following examples.

Rajah Indraman Dhindera, on account of his refractoriness, remained rotting in jail for twenty years under the orders of Shah Jahan. Aurangzeb, touched by the long imprisonment of the Rajah, recommended his release to the Emperor on compassionate grounds, but was informed in unambiguous terms that the Rajah could be released only if he embraced Islam. Aurangzeb was not in favour of forcible conversions and that is why he did not appreciate this condition for the Rajah's release. He expressed his sorrow at the failure of his efforts in a

1. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM Ms Or 177, f. 122a.

letter to his friend, the *Wazir* Sa'd-Ullah Khan.<sup>1</sup> Aurangzeb recommended Rao Karan for the post of the *Diwan* of Ellichpur, but the Emperor turned down his suggestion.<sup>2</sup> This rejection, however, did not dishearten the prince, who went on exerting for the Rao's promotion till, at long last, he succeeded in getting his rank enhanced.<sup>3</sup> Narsing Dass, the *Qil'adar* of Asir, was recommended for a promotion when the prince found him in straitened circumstances.<sup>4</sup> In a letter to the *Wazir* Ja'far Khan, he recommended Mahesh Dass for a consideration.<sup>5</sup> He also succeeded in getting the *jagir* restored to Hyat Singh, which was unlawfully taken away from him by the State officials.<sup>6</sup> He also wrote a recommendatory letter to 'Ali Mardan Khan in whose *jagir* the native land of Hyat Singh was situated.<sup>7</sup>

These instances show clearly that the charge of bigotry against Aurangzeb is too weak. It is, however, an undeniable fact that the Rajput armies were attached to the prince only very rarely, which was not his fault; they were reserved for Dara Shikoh with the ostensible object of strengthening him against Aurangzeb. It was this absence, in general, of the Hindus from the ranks of Aurangzeb that gave the historians wrong impressions about him.

In the struggle under review, Aurangzeb claimed to be a champion of orthodoxy against the forces of heresy led by Dara Shikoh. His followers were mostly Sunnis (details in Chapters 5 and 6), who fervently prayed and exerted for his success. A modern writer has been at pains to ignore the presence of the religious factor in this struggle altogether and has endeavoured to substantiate this assertion by stating that had the War of Succession been a struggle between the Hindus and the Muslims, the Sayyids of Barah would not have been the camp-followers of Dara Shikoh nor would Rana Raj Singh of Mewar been a supporter of

1. Ibid., f. 120a.

2. Ibid., f. 37b Aurangzeb to Shah Jahan,.

3. Warith, *Padshah Nama*, f. 495a.

4. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, f. 118a., Aurangzeb to Sa'd-Ullah Khan.

5. Ibid., f. 146a.

6. Ibid., f. 122a-b, Aurangzeb to Sa'd-Ullah Khan,

7. Ibid, f. 144b.



Aurangzeb.<sup>1</sup> A critical study of this assertion, however, does not disprove the conclusion arrived at in this chapter, i.e. it was generally a war of the Sunni ideology on the forces of heterodoxy and infidelity led by Dara Shikoh. Prince Aurangzeb, though not generally hostile to the non-Muslims, as has been shown, did not tolerate the idea of Islam losing its exalted position in India which, he thought, would occur if ever Dara Shikoh ascended the throne.)

*Examination of this Assertion.*—The reasons why the Sayyids of Barah were generally the supporters of Dara Shikoh are not far to seek. They were Shi'ah and they could have no sympathy with the Sunni ideology of Aurangzeb. Their hearths and homes were situated in the North, they had outstanding traditions of loyalty to the Mughal throne and they could not endanger all their interests for the sake of fighting for the "rebel" Aurangzeb. It is quite understandable that they should endeavour to strengthen Dara Shikoh or Shuja', and their offering no large-scale support to Aurangzeb is not astonishing.<sup>2</sup> Even prominent Shi'ahs of the age were on Dara Shikoh's side, for example, a Shi'ah scholar Khwajah 'Abdul Baqa (title Iftikhar Khan), who had committed to memory innumerable traditions and arguments of his creed, was not at all disheartened by the disappearance of Jaswant Singh and his Rajputs from the battlefield of Dharmat and lost his life fighting bravely in the battle.<sup>3</sup> Rustam Khan, the bravest Shi'ah General of the age, sacrificed himself for Dara Shikoh at the battle of Samugarh. Other bigoted Shi'ah nobles, e.g. Fakhar Khan Najm-i-thani 'Askar Khan Najm-i-thani, Zafar Khan Ahsan along with their followers were all on Dara Shikoh's side—all endeavouring to defeat the forces of orthodoxy led by Aurangzeb. The Shi'ah nobles outnumbered the followers of Dara Shikoh as far as the Muslims

1. Qanungo, op. cit., p. 200.

2. Only three Sayyids of Barah could be seen in the forces of Aurangzeb and Murad, viz. Sher Zaman Barah, Mansur Barah and Hasan bin Dildar Khan Barah, the *Faujdar* of Godrah (Gujerat). Sher Zaman Barah deserted the imperialists after the cessation of hostilities against Bijapur and joined Aurangzeb owing to old friendship. Mansur Barah joined Aurangzeb because he was not in the favour of Shah Jahan. Sayyid Hasan Barah remained with Murad because, owing to his domicile in Gujerat, he could not do anything else.

3. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. I, pp. 200-03 *Tadhkiratul-Umara*, BM MS Add 16703, f. 11b.

were concerned. The Muslim commanders in Dara Shikoh's forces holding ranks from 6000 down to 3000 were all Shi'ah. Three of the five Muslim commanders of 2500, four of the eight commanders of 2000, both of the two commanders of 1500 and five of the eight commanders of 1000 belonged to the Shi'ah sect (*vide* Table attached). Thus the glaring presence of the Savyids of Barah and the other Shi'ah nobles in the ranks of Dara Shikoh does not disprove our contention, it rather proves it.

The army of Aurangzeb, though predominantly composed of the Sunnis, also contained within its ranks a few Hindus (for details see Chapters 5 and 6). Undoubtedly, these Hindus did not join him because of their "love" for his ideology. They helped him because of personal motives. Rana Raj Singh of Mewar (on account of his rebellion in 1654) was punished by Shah Jahan with the seizure of the *Parganahs* of Pur, Mardal, Khairabad, Mandalgarh, Jahazpur, Swar, Phuli, Banera and Bednor. The loss of these *Parganahs* rankled in his mind and he found in the War of Succession an excellent opportunity to get his territories back.<sup>1</sup> Aurangzeb, whose resources were meagre in comparison to Dara Shikoh, accepted him so as to prevent him from joining the latter, thereby strengthening his own forces. The victorious Aurangzeb not only returned his territories, but also raised him to the rank of 6000/6000, 1000 *do aspah, seh aspah* and an *in'am* of two crores of *dams*.<sup>2</sup> Another important Hindu supporter of Aurangzeb was Rajah Indraman Dhindera<sup>3</sup> (*vide* p. 84), who, as a punishment for his rebellion, remained rotting in the prison for twenty years under the orders of Shah Jahan and even Aurangzeb's recommendation could not manage his release. He was liberated by the prince on his own authority on the eve of this struggle. The Rajah fought very bravely in all battles of the struggle fully realising that, in the event of the defeat of his benefactor, he might have to return to gaol.

1. Aurangzeb wrote him a soothing letter in the form of a *Nishan* (princely order) offering to return these territories to him on becoming victorious in the struggle ahead. He also pacified Raj Singh by saying that he would follow the practices of his forefathers as far as the religious policy was concerned. This *Nishan* shows the desperate efforts of Aurangzeb to detach Raj Singh from Dara's forces by all means.

2. *Tadhkiratul-Umara*, BM MS Add 16703, f. 140a.

3. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 265-66; also '*Alamgir Nama*, p. 194.

Incidentally, Dhindera Rajputs were connected with the Bundelas on account of matrimonial alliances<sup>1</sup> and that is why the latter, under the influence of the former, supported Aurangzeb (*vide* details in Chapters 5 and 6). These few eminent Hindus fought for Aurangzeb owing to their own peculiar circumstances, thereby unconsciously fighting for his cause. It would be far from truth to state that Aurangzeb won victories because of the support of these Hindus, but still it was some help, no doubt however small. As to the objection that with the coming of the Hindus, however small in number, the struggle loses its religious importance, it may be pointed out that the employment of dependable mercenaries to increase one's strength for the sake of the object in view is not at all improper.

The discussion in these pages comes down to the conclusion that ideological differences were also a factor in the War of Succession.

1. *Ibid.*

## Chapter 5

# Parties and Personalities

THE sons of Shah Jahan, in their earnest endeavour for the Peacock Throne, had started preparing the ground for the likely contest during the very life-time of their father. Every one of them tried in his own way to win over as many nobles as possible by holding out hopes of high favours on assuming sovereignty. The Umara, in order to secure their interests, were inclined to respond to such overtures. The prince commanding the highest position in the State and apparently possessing excellent chances of success was sure to command a large backing and the princes enjoying comparatively junior status were thus at a disadvantage. Domicile was also a factor in attracting followers towards a particular prince, e.g. it was difficult for an Amir residing in the North to proceed to help a prince in the South or *vice versa*; he had to support (half-heartedly or otherwise) a prince governing his area or to face degradation. Kinship, personal devotion and tribal feeling to some extent, also influenced the Umara in devoting themselves to a particular prince. It is with this general background in view that we should study the composition of forces of the struggle. As already stated in the preceding pages, an Amir under Shah Jahan was never a commander of less than 1000 rank and, in this chapter, only the Umara of 1000 or above will be considered. The ranks of the Umara mentioned below are those possessed by them on the eve of the fateful illness of Shah Jahan (September 1657). We will show the number of supporters of a particular prince in each grade. The highly accelerated promotions which they gained during the course of the struggle will be discussed in the next Chapter.

Of the four commanders of 6000, Jaswant Singh Rathor<sup>1</sup> (6000/6000, *do aspah seh aspah*) and Rustam Khan<sup>2</sup> (6000/6000, 5000 *do aspah seh aspah*) were the supporters of Dara Shikoh. Mu'azzam Khan<sup>3</sup> (6000/6000) personally could not fight for Aurangzeb during the first two important battles of the struggle, he placed at the disposal of his hero the whole military establishment of his imperial rank including the previous "9000 cavalry, 9000 servants, 20,000 infantry and a vast personal treasure consisting of cash money and jewels, efficient artillery, good many elephants and well-equipped Iraqi and Arabi horses."<sup>4</sup> From a financial point of view, Mu'azzam Khan was a great asset for Aurangzeb.<sup>5</sup> Sha'istah Khan<sup>6</sup> (6000/6000, *do aspah seh aspah*), maternal uncle, was very well disposed towards Aurangzeb, but he could not support him as he was in Agra at the critical moment. His relations with Aurangzeb had been cordial throughout. During the campaign against Golconda (1656 A.D.), Sha'istah Khan officiated as Governor in the absence of Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb highly praised him in his despatches to the Emperor for the good work done by the Khan and succeeded in having him granted the rank of 6000/6000 *do aspah seh aspah* and the title of Khan-i-Jahan. The Khan's underground work at Agra aiming to harm Dara Shikoh for the benefit of Aurangzeb will be discussed in the next chapter. Shuja' and Murad were not fortunate enough to have at their back the support of any such premier noble of the Empire.

Of the nine commanders of 5000, who participated in the struggle, five namely, Jafar Khan<sup>7</sup> (5000/5000, 2500 *do aspah seh aspah*), Khalil Ullah Khan<sup>8</sup> (5000/5000), Jai Singh Kachhwaha<sup>9</sup>

1. *Ma'asir-ul-Umara*, Vol. III, pp. 509-604.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 270-76.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 530-55.

4. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, f.50b. Aurangzeb to Shah Jahan.

5. In Karnatic, the Khan had made a vast fortune by acquiring the hoarded wealth at various places and plundering its old temples. He even compelled its wealthy inhabitants to surrender their fortunes to him under the severity of a lash F.F. Catrou, (*A General History of the Mogol Empire in India*, (London, 1709, p, 224),

6. *Ma'asirul-Umara*., Vol. II, pp. 690-706

7. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 531-35.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 775-82.

9. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 568-83,

(5000/5000, *do aspah seh aspah*), Maluji<sup>1</sup> (5000/5000) and Rai Singh Sissodia<sup>2</sup> (5000/2000) were the chief supporters of Dara Shikoh. Allah wardi Khan<sup>3</sup> (5000/4000) was with Shuja'. Najabat Khan<sup>4</sup> (5000/3000) was the chief counsellor and the active fighter for Aurangzeb during the whole struggle. Rana Raj Singh of Mewar<sup>5</sup> (5000/5000) had also agreed to support Aurangzeb. Shah Nawaz Khan Safavi<sup>6</sup> (the father of his deceased wife Dilras Banu) refused to fight for him and was consequently imprisoned at Burhanpur. His personal assets and the whole military establishment was confiscated by Aurangzeb.<sup>7</sup>

Of the seven commanders of 4000, four, namely, Ibrahim Khan<sup>8</sup> (son of the late 'Ali Mardan Khan) a rank-holder of 4000/3000, Rup Singh Rathor<sup>9</sup> (4000/2500), the veteran Rao Sattar Sal<sup>10</sup> (4000/4000) and Bahadur Khan Baqi Beg<sup>11</sup> (4000/3000) fought for Dara Shikoh. Sarfaraz Khan Deccani<sup>12</sup> (4000/3000), Ghazi Bijapuri<sup>13</sup> (title Randula Khan, 4000/3000) and Asalat Khan<sup>14</sup> were the supporters of Aurangzeb.

Of the thirteen commanders of 3000, eight were with the partisans of Dara Shikoh, namely, Rajah Anuradha Gaur<sup>15</sup> (3000/3000), Biram Dev Sissodia<sup>16</sup> (3000/1000), Mukarram Khan Safavi<sup>17</sup> (3000/3000) Rajah Rajrup<sup>18</sup> (3000/2500), Ram Singh Rathor<sup>19</sup>

1. Ibid., pp. 520-24.

2. Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 297-301.

3. Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 207-15.

4. Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 821-28.

5. *Tadhkiratul-Umara*, BM MS Add 16703, f. 140a.

6. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 670-76.

7. *'Amal-i-Salih*, BM MS Add 26221, f. 646a.

8. *Ma'asirul-Umara.*, Vol. I, pp. 295-301.

9. Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 268-70.

10. Ibid., pp. 260-63.

11. Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 444-47.

12. 'Abdul Hamid Lahori, *Padshah Nama*, Vol. I, Part, II, p. 257;

*Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, p. 470.

13. *Ma'asir-ul-Umara.*, Vol. II, p. 309.

14. Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 222-25.

15. Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 276-77.

16. *'Amal-i-Salih*, Vol. III, p. 456.

17. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. III, pp. 533-36.

18. Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 277-81.

19. Ibid., pp. 266-67.

(3000/1500), Ram Singh Kachhwaha<sup>1</sup> (3000/1500), Zafar Khan Ahsan<sup>2</sup> (3000/2000), and Parsuji<sup>3</sup> (3000/2000). Kartalab Khan<sup>4</sup> (3000/2000, *do aspah seh aspah*), Sultan Safavi<sup>5</sup> (3000/1500), Indraman Dhindera<sup>6</sup> (3000/?) fought for Aurangzeb. Muhammad Amin Khan's<sup>7</sup> (3000/1000) leanings towards Aurangzeb were well known. That is why, he had to suffer insults at the hands of Dara Shikoh and he did not dare to leave Agra to join Aurangzeb. Rao Karan (3000/2000), by his strange attitude, had tried to weaken Aurangzeb (details on p. 99).

Of the ten officers of 2500, seven, namely, Fakhar Khan Najm-i-Thani<sup>8</sup> (2500/1000), Ganj 'Ali Khan 'Abdullah Beg<sup>9</sup> (2500/1500), Mukand Singh Hada<sup>10</sup> (2500/1500), Namdar Khan<sup>11</sup> (2500/1500), Qubad Khan<sup>12</sup> (2500/1500), Subal Singh Sissodia<sup>13</sup> (2500/1000) and Nasiri Khan<sup>14</sup> (2500/2500) were the followers of Dara Shikoh. Aurangzeb's supporters were Muhammad Badi' Sultan<sup>15</sup> (2500/1500), Multafat Khan<sup>16</sup> (2500/1500) and Murshid Quli Khan<sup>17</sup> (2500/1500).

Of the fifteen commanders of 2000, thirteen were the partisans of Dara Shikoh, namely, Arjan Gaur<sup>18</sup> (2000/1500), Debi Singh Bundela<sup>19</sup> (2000/2000), Faiz Ullah Khan<sup>20</sup> (2000/1000), Girdhar

1. *Tadhkiratul-Umara*, BM MS Add 16703, f. 140b.

2. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 756-763.

3. *Ibid*, Vol. III, pp. 520-24.

4. *Ibid*, pp. 153-54.

5. *Ibid*, pp. 583-86.

6. *Ibid*, Vol. II, pp. 265-66.

7. *Ibid*, Vol. III, pp. 613-20.

8. *'Amal-i-Salih*, Vol. III, p. 457; *Tadhkiratul-Umara*, BM MS Add 16703, f. 76b.

9. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. III, p. 155.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 509-10.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 830-33; *Tadhkiratul-Umara*, BM Ms Add 16703, f. 103b.

12. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. III, pp. 99-102.

13. *'Amal-i-Salih*, Vol. III, p. 457.

14. *Vide* p. 121, line 20; his present rank should have been 2500 (my presumption).

15. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. III, pp. 636-37.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 500-03.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 493-500.

18. *'Amal-i-Salih*, Vol. III, p. 458.

19. *Ma'asirul-Umdra*, Vol. 'II, pp. 295-97.

20. *'Amal-i-Salih*, Vol. III, p. 459.

Gaur<sup>1</sup> (2000/2000), Ikhtisas Khan Barah<sup>2</sup> (2000/1000), Khushhal Beg Kashghari<sup>3</sup> (2000/800), Muhammad Salih Tarkhan<sup>4</sup> (2000/2000), Mu'tamid Khan Muhammad Salih Khawafi<sup>5</sup> (2000/2000), Salabat Barah<sup>6</sup> (2000/1500), Sujjan Singh Bundela<sup>7</sup> (2000/2000, 500 *do aspah seh aspah*), Dilir Khan Daudzai<sup>8</sup> (2000/2000), Sujjan Singh Sissodia<sup>9</sup> and Mukhlis Khan<sup>10</sup> (2000/?), a renowned warrior from Turan. The partisans of Shuja' were Mirza Abul' Ma'ali<sup>11</sup> (2000/2000) and Tarbiyat Khan Barlas<sup>12</sup> (2000/2000).

Of the fourteen commanders of 1500, four were with Dara Shikoh, namely, Gurdhan Rathor<sup>13</sup> (1500/?), Husain Beg Khan<sup>14</sup> (1500/1000), Iftikhar Khan Abdul Baqa<sup>15</sup> (1500/1500) and Mahesh Dass Rathor<sup>16</sup> (1500/?); the two supporters of Shuja' were Khwajah Nasir<sup>17</sup> (1500/1500) and Rashid Khan Rahman Yar<sup>18</sup> (1500/?); five supporters of Aurangzeb were Rashid Khan Ilham Ullah<sup>19</sup> (1500/1500), Shamsud-Din Khwishgi<sup>20</sup> (1500/1500), Mukhtar Khan Mir Shamsud-Din<sup>21</sup> (1500/800), Fath Rohilla<sup>22</sup> (1500/1500) and Sher Zaman Barah<sup>23</sup> (1500/400) the three partisans of Murad were Sayyid Hasan<sup>24</sup> (1500/400), Rahmat Khan<sup>25</sup>

1. Ibid., p. 458.

2. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 473-75.

3. Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 773-74.

4. Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 560-62.

5. Ibid., pp. 510-11.

6. Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 457-60.

7. Ibid., pp. 291-95.

8. Ibid., pp. 42-56.

9. Ibid pp. 452-54.

10. Ibid., p. 480.

11. Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 557-60.

12. Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 493-98.

13. Munshi Muhammad Sai'd Ahmad. *Umara-i-Hunud*, p. 311.

14. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. I, pp. 591-93.

15. Ibid., pp. 200-203.

16. Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 445-47.

17. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 336-38.

18. *Tadhkirat-ul-Umara*, BM MS Add 16703, f. 46b.

19. Ibid., f. 46b; *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 303-05.

20. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 676-677; *Amal-i-Salih*, Vol. III, p. 461.

21. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. III, pp. 620-27.

22. Ibid., pp. 22-26.

23. Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 465-68.

24. *Amal-i-Salih*, Vol. III, p. 461.

25. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 283-86; *Amal-i-Salih*, Vol. III, p. 463.



(1500/400) and Qutbud-Din Khwishgi<sup>1</sup> (1500/1400, 600 *do aspah seh aspah*).

Of the twenty commanders of 1000, ten were the followers of Dara Shikoh, namely, Ghazanfar Khan<sup>2</sup> (1000/1000), Iftikhar Khan Sultan Husain<sup>3</sup> (1000/500), Nurul-'Ayan Barah<sup>4</sup> (1000/300), Sarbuland Khan<sup>5</sup> (1000/500), Sayyid Shuja'at Khan<sup>6</sup> (1000/500), Maha Singh Bhaduriya<sup>7</sup> (1000/800), Munawwar Barah<sup>8</sup> (1000/?), Mu'azzam Fathpuri<sup>9</sup> (1000/300), Dyal Singh Jhala<sup>10</sup> (1000/?), and Saif Khan<sup>11</sup> (1000/?); Shuja's only partisan was Hasan 'Ali Khan<sup>12</sup> (1000/1000); eight partisans of Aurangzeb were Hoshdar Khan<sup>13</sup> (1000/600), Karan Kachhi<sup>14</sup> (1000/?), Hakim Muhammad Mehdi<sup>15</sup> (1000/?), 'Abid Khan Khwajah 'Abid<sup>16</sup> (1000/?), 'Isa Beg<sup>17</sup> (1000/?), Sayyid Nasir-ud-din Deccani,<sup>18</sup> 'Abdul Qawwi<sup>19</sup> (1000/?), and Sobh Karan Bundela<sup>20</sup>; Murad's

1. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. III, pp. 102-108; *'Amal-i-Salih*, Vol. III, p. 461.

2. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 866-68.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 252-55.

4. *Tadhkiratul-Umara*, BM MS Add 16703, f. 128b.

5. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 477-79.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 460-61.

7. *'Amal-i-Salih*, Vol. III, p. 465.

8. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 468.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 465.

10. According to *Tadhkiratul-Umara*, his rank was 900, but I am inclined to call him an Amir (1000).

11. *Vide* p. 132, he was raised to 1500, hence his present rank should be 1000.

12. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. I, pp. 593-99.

13. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 943-46.

14. *Tadhkiratul-Umara*, BM MS add 16703, f. 156b. According to the author, Karan Kachhi was promoted to 1500/500 on the eve of the battle of Dharmat and my presumption is that his previous rank was 1000.

15. An obscure person, *'Alamgir Nama* (p. 45) abruptly mentions him a rank-holder of 1000.

16. *Tadhkiratul-Umara*, I.O. MS 2685, folio number not given in the manuscript; only the names of the officers arranged alphabetically.

17. Rank not traceable, but being an accredited agent of Aurangzeb, he could not have been less than 1000.

18. His posting on strategic points at the battles of Dharmat and Samugarh conveys the impression that he was an Amir.

19. Having been a tutor of Aurangzeb, he could not have been of rank less than 1000.

20. According to the BM MS *Tadhkiratul-Umara* (f. 1536), he was raised to 1500 after Dharmat; hence his present rank should be 1000.

supporter was Sayyid Mansur Barah<sup>1</sup> (1000/400).

*The Role of the Princesses.*—The princesses did not play an active part in the struggle, but still their activities behind the “veil” did wield an influence, which deserves a mention.

*Jahan-Ara Begum*—Jahan-Ara Begum (b. 21st Safar, 1023/23rd March 1614), the eldest surviving child of the Emperor, was the supreme lady in the royal seraglio after the death of Mumtaz Mahal and the custodian of the royal seal *Uzbek*. Her friendship with Dara Shikoh was probably due to their common interest in Sufism<sup>2</sup> and also having had Mulla Shah Badakhshi as their preceptor. The Emperor had also allowed her to exercise a considerable influence over public affairs. The affairs of Dara Shikoh prospered because she was his constant supporter before the Emperor.<sup>3</sup>

Though on cordial relations with Dara Shikoh, yet she was also on good terms with the younger brothers. The marriage of Shuja' was mostly arranged and financed by her. It was on her recommendation that Aurangzeb was pardoned and reinstated in his rank in 1645, when she recovered from her serious ailment. There are several letters of Aurangzeb in the *Adab-i-'Alamgiri* showing their amiable relations; particularly in critical times, he often wrote to her. When she became an open ally of Dara Shikoh, her relations with Aurangzeb become strained. She also supported Dara Shikoh with her wealth. She had exerted her influence to stop the War of Succession, but since her efforts were marred by the desire to promote Dara Shikoh's cause at any cost, she could not succeed.

*Raushan-Ara Begum.*—The princess (b. 2nd Ramazan 1026/24th August 1617) was not as influential as Jahan-Ara, but she did a lot of useful work at the court for Aurangzeb. She was not on good terms with Jahan-Ara on account of party factions and used to pass important information on to Aurang-

1. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 465-68.

2. Her well-known work was *Munisul-Arwah*—a notice on the celebrated saint Mu'inud-din Chishti-1049 A.H.—in which she gives the *silsilah* or filiation of the Chishtiyah order, calls herself a *muridah* of the saint.

3. Manucci's assumption (*Storia*, Vol. I, p. 217) that she supported Dara Shikoh because he had promised to get her married on becoming king, seems baseless. She was past forty five-years and, in the East, marriages at this age are rare.

zeb, which he could not get from other sources. The letters of the prince addressed to her (extant in the *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*) display their great affection for one another.<sup>1</sup>

Last but not least, Shah Jahan, owing to his strong inclinations towards Dara Shikoh, had himself become a party in the struggle. He supported Dara Shikoh with men and money and used his own prestige for the sake of the prince (as will be shown in the next chapter).

*An Analysis of the Partisans of the Princes.*—A perusal of the list of nobles (*vide* Table attached) shows that a majority of the Umara was with Dara Shikoh rather than with Aurangzeb. Perhaps it may be erroneously inferred that the number of supporters on the side of Murad and Shuja' was conspicuously low. The fact is that Murad had so closely identified himself with Aurangzeb that it is difficult to distinguish his followers individually; the contemporary writers have offered no help in this matter. Similarly for Shuja'—though the Governor of a rich province and at the head of vast resources, yet the writers of the day have not given us a detailed account of his followers. Ma'sum, no doubt, has gone some way to solve this difficulty, but he has generally been silent on the *Mansabs* of the officers. He does state who were the confidants of the prince, but casually.

*Rajputs as the Partisans of the Princes.*—A very conspicuous majority of Dara Shikoh's supporters, as this list shows, were Rajputs. The various Rajput tribes, namely, Rathor, Hada, Sissodia, Kachhwaha, Gaur, Jhala and Bhatti were, in fact, his most important *aides*. An interesting thing about these tribes is that a strong community feeling existed amongst them. If a tribe decided to support a particular prince, then it was an *en bloc* support with no waverers within the tribe. Jaswant Singh Rathor of Jodhpur was perchance related to Jodha Bai,<sup>2</sup> the mother of Shah Jahan and as such was the favoured child of the State. His relations with the Emperor were very cordial and under the influence of the latter, the former was inclined to support Dara

1. *'Alamgir Nama* mentions her very affectionately at various places. It was in recognition of her (underground) services to Aurangzeb that the latter after, assuming kingship, not only bestowed heaps of honours on her, but entrusted her with the custody of the royal seal, *Uzbek*.

2. She was the paternal aunt of Jaswant Sidgh, *vide Tarikh-i-Shah Shuja'i*, I.O. MS. 533, f. 106a.

Shikoh. His resources can be gauged from the fact that, according to Bernier, he could bring into the battlefield 20,000 cavalry without any previous notice.<sup>1</sup> His two former subordinates, Gurdhan Rathor and Mahesh Rathor, were also imperial officers attached to him; his nephew Rup Singh Rathor, who added a golden page in history at the battle of Samugarh (*vide* Chapter 6), too, was a follower of Dara Shikoh; Ram Singh Rathor and Rattan Singh Rathor were also Dara Shikoh's men because of Jaswant Singh's influence.

Jaswant Singh's support was an additional asset to Dara Shikoh in the sense that it was also instrumental in bringing Hadas and Sissodias to his side. He was the son-in-law of the veteran Rao Sattar Sal Hada and thus the Hadas were in his fold. Mukand Singh Hada and Mohan Singh Hada too followed in his wake. Jaswant Singh was also the son-in-law of Param Dev Sissodia, who was thus an influence in bringing all important Sissodias to the ranks of Dara Shikoh, e.g. his brother Sujjan Singh Sissodia and his uncle Bhem Singh's sons Rai Singh Sissodia and Subal Singh Sissodia.

Jai Singh Kachhwaha, another premier noble of the Empire—a descendant in the third degree of Rajah Man Singh, a loyal servant of Akbar—and the Zamindar of Amber, was another supporter of Dara Shikoh. Left to himself, he might not probably have exerted himself for the prince, because of previous strained relations.<sup>2</sup> According to Manucci, Dara Shikoh had once offended Jai Singh by calling him a *mirathi*.<sup>3</sup> In India, *mirathi* is a professional singer-cum-buffoon looked down upon by society. It seems, Jai Singh was highly annoyed to observe the prince's acts of favouritism and childish follies amply displayed during the Qandhar campaign.<sup>4</sup> Exaggerated praises of Ja'far (later on Barq Andaz Khan) had made Jai Singh very angry. It was his regard for Shah Jahan that tempted him to support the prince along with his two sons Ram Singh (3000/1500) and Kirat Singh (1000/?). When he found the prince's star going into decline, he not only deserted him, but also successfully prevailed

1. *Travels*, p. 208.

2 & 4. *Lata'if ul-Akhbar*, BM MS Or 5327 (2), ff. 123a, 131b, 157b, 180a & b, 191a-b, 195b-196a, amply show their strained relations.

3 *Storia*, Vol. I, pp. 570-71.

upon Diler Khan Daudzai (2000/2000) to do the same, though the latter's first inclination was to remain loyal to his master.<sup>1</sup>

Bethal Dass Gaur, an ultra-loyalist of Shah Jahan, died in 1651, and the Emperor, out of regard for the deceased, magnanimously treated his sons, Anuradha Gaur (3000/3000), Arjun Gaur (2000/1500) and Bhem (rank ?), who all participated in the struggle on behalf of Dara Shikoh. Girdhar Gaur (2000/2000), the younger brother of the deceased Bethal Dass Gaur, and his nephew Sheo Ram Gaur (2000/1500) and Ram Kishan Gaur (rank ?) were the partisans of the prince because of the community feelings.

Thus the Rathors from Jodhpur, Hadas from Bundi and Kotah States, Sissodias and Gaurs from Mewar were supporters of Dara Shikoh. All these tribes were on cordial terms with Shah Jahan, who had made them his prominent nobles. That they supported *en bloc* the cause of Dara Shikoh, may be due to the likelihood of the latter becoming Emperor and also to please Shah Jahan. The Rajputs were conspicuously absent from the armies of Shuja'. It was only at a later stage, i.e. after the battle of Khajwa (1659) that Girdhar Rathor, a relative of Jaswant Singh, was visible in the ranks of the prince and he was soon killed by the forces of Aurangzeb.<sup>2</sup>

There is, however, a sprinkling of Rajput support in the ranks of Aurangzeb. The tribe of Dhindera Rajputs of Malwa was closely connected with the prince owing to personal considerations (already discussed in Chapter 4). It was intimately connected with the Bundelas on account of matrimonial ties<sup>3</sup> and that is why Debi Singh Bundela (2000/2000 *do aspah seh aspah*), Sujjan Singh Bundela (2000/2000,500 *do aspah seh aspah*), Sobh Karan Bundela<sup>4</sup> (1500/?) and Champat Bundela (rank ?) exerted themselves for Aurangzeb. Sobh Karan Bundela successfully prevailed upon Sattar Sal Bundela to desert Dara Shikoh

1. *Tadhkira-i-Salatin-i-Chaghatai*, Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, Persian Supplement 742, f. 61b.

2. *'Alamgir Nama*, p. 523.

3. *Ma'asivul-Umara*, Vol. II, p. 265.

4. *Tadhkiratul-Umara*, BM MS Add 16703, f. 153b. His heroic fighting at the battle of Dharmat on the side of Aurangzeb had earned him the rank of 1500.

and join Aurangzeb.<sup>1</sup> Rana Raj Singh of Mewar supported Aurangzeb purely due to economic motives (*vide* Chapter 4).

Sarkar's assertion,<sup>2</sup> that Rao Karan of Bikanir was also a supporter of Aurangzeb, finds no confirmation in the contemporary literature. Sharma seems to have derived this statement in his *Studies in Medieval India*<sup>3</sup> from Sarkar and has not mentioned the source of his information. The fact, however, is that Rao Karan of Bikanir (3000/2000) was an important member of the auxiliary force under the prince in the Deccan and had fought vigorously in the campaign against Bijapur (1657). When, on the sudden illness of Shah Jahan in September 1657, the hostilities against Bijapur were brought to a close by royal orders, all the imperial officers sent from the Centre for this campaign were called back to Agra; Rao Karan who, being a member of the provincial auxiliary force, was not directly concerned with that call, left the Deccan without informing the prince and went straight to his native land.<sup>4</sup> This was a glaring act of insubordination and '*Alamgir Nama* is full of censures for this misconduct. When Aurangzeb became the Emperor, he ordered Sayyid Amir Khan Khawafi to chastise him. Later on, through the intercession of this very officer, the Rao was pardoned and reinstated in his rank.<sup>5</sup> This narration of facts clearly brings out that the Rao was never a partisan of Aurangzeb during the War of Succession and the assertion of Sarkar repeated by Sharma to the effect is incorrect. It is possible these writers have confused Karan Kachhi a petty Zaminder in Malwa, (Aurangzeb raised him to 1500/1500 on the eve of the battle of Dharmat, *vide* '*Alamgir Nama*, p. 52) with Rao Karan of Bikanir.

The general absence of Rajputs in the ranks of Shuja', Aurangzeb and Murad was due to two factors; firstly, they were somewhat unfamiliar with these princes, as they had not

1. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, p. 510. On joining Aurangzeb on the eve of the battle of Dharmat, Sattar Sal Bundela was raised to 1000/500, which means that his rank must have been lower than that of an Amir before coming over to the prince.

2. *History of Aurangzib*, Vol. I, p. 372.

3. P. 264.

4. *Tadhkiratul-Umara*, BM MS Add 16703, f. 144a and '*Alamgir Nama*, p. 599.

5. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, p. 289.

frequently worked under them and, secondly, they possibly considered their cause a losing one. The influence of Shah Jahan also tempted them to support Dara Shikoh.

*The Influence of Domicile on the Formation of Parties.*—In normal circumstances, a Mansabdar was directly under the Emperor in respect of his appointment, promotion or dismissal. If ever there was a clash of orders between the provincial and the central governments, he was bound to obey the latter. But in these abnormal circumstances, when the authority of Shah Jahan was openly flouted, princes, who were also the provincial Governors and had become *de facto* kings, expected of Mansabdars as a condition of service to shift their loyalties to them. Each of these officers, thus, residing in a particular province, was forced to support his Governor-prince. The support might be whole-hearted or otherwise, but it could be denied only at the cost of one's own degradation. Dara Shikoh, upon a mere suspicion of disloyalty, had deprived Sha'istah Khan of the governorship of Malwa<sup>1</sup> and imprisoned Muhammad Amin Khan<sup>2</sup>. Shuja' had not spared the life of his premier noble Allah Vardi Khan as soon as he suspected him of wavering loyalty towards him.<sup>3</sup> On similar grounds, he had also executed another of his commanders, namely, Rashid Khan Rahman Yar.<sup>4</sup> Aurangzeb had imprisoned Shah Nawaz Khan Safavi (his own father-in-law) on these very grounds.<sup>5</sup> He had imprisoned even his intimate friend, Mu'azzam Khan, and thus prevented him from obeying the imperial summons to reach Agra immediately. Left to himself, Mu'azzam Khan, probably would have proceeded to Agra in obedience to the summons, but Aurangzeb did not consider it expedient to lose such a prominent person, as that would strengthen Dara Shikoh. Similarly Murad murdered Sayyid 'Ali Naqi Khan, his own *Diwan*, with his own hands because he was not sure of his steadfastness towards him.<sup>6</sup> These few instances clearly show that each Governor-prince was intolerant of any

1. 'Aqil Khan, '*Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, p. 21.

2. '*Alamgir Nama*, p. 85.

3. '*Tarikh-i-Shah Shuja'i*, l. O. MS 533, f. 115a.

4. '*Tadhkiratul-Umara*, BM MS Add 16703, f. 46b.

5. '*Alamgir Nama*, p. 53.

6. '*Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, f. 251a; also '*Tadhkirah-i-Salatin-i-Chaghatai*, f. 51a, Bibliotheque Nationale. Paris, Persian Supplement 742.

such disloyalty in his *subah*.

The Sayyids of Barah, as a class with minor exceptions, supported Dara Shikoh, because, being the residents of the Doab, they had old traditions of loyalty to the Mughal throne. When, after the battle of Samugarh, Dara Shikoh appeared to be doomed, his deputies commanding the forts of Allahabad and Chunar, viz. Abdul Jalil Barah and Sayyid Qasim Barah, joined Shuja under instructions from him.<sup>1</sup> The course of subsequent events shows that the Sayyids of Barah shifted their loyalties towards Shuja' and became his henchmen. The reason why they persisted in helping Shuja'—a defeated person—has already been discussed in the chapter on "Ideological Differences." Sayyid 'Alam Barah remained so loyal to Shuja' that he accompanied the prince even to Arracan along with his kinsmen and sacrificed himself for his sake.<sup>2</sup> Among the numerous Sayyids of Barah, Aurangzeb could claim only three persons as his supporters including the two brothers Mansur Barah and Sher Zaman Barah, whereas their younger brother Munawwar Barah was with Dara Shikoh. In this way, these two brothers fought against one another at the battle of Samugarh and by their conduct tried to show that loyalty to the master was more important than mere brotherly feelings, though this was a rare happening. Sayyid Hasan bin Dildar Khan Barah was the *Faujdar* and Jagirdar of the *Sarkar* of Godrah (Gujerat province). It was the fact of domicile that determined his joining Murad.

Ghazanfar Khan bin Allah Vardi Khan remained away from his father for a long time at the imperial court and gained many distinctions. The place of domicile obliged him to become a supporter of Dara Shikoh, whereas his father and brother Hasan 'Ali Khan, owing to the former's appointment as the Governor of Bihar, had to become the supporters of Shuja'. After the defeat of Shuja' at Bahadurgarh (February 1658), Hasan 'Ali Khan slipped away and joined the royal army, but later on, when large scale desertions took place in the ranks of Sulaiman Shikoh, the Khan also deserted and joined Aurangzeb.<sup>3</sup> Allah-Vardi Khan was also contemplating deserting Shuja', but he

1. 'Alamgir Nama, p. 225.

2. Ibid, p. 561.

3. Ma'asirul-Umara, Vol. I, pp. 593-99, also 'Alamgir Nama, p. 141.



was caught and murdered.

Bahadur Khan Baqi Beg<sup>1</sup> (4000/3000), the most loyal of Dara Shikoh's lieutenants and virtually in charge of the campaign against Shuja' (February 1658), (though formally Jai Singh was supreme commander), was on intimate terms with the prince and exerted vigorously for him. His death during the struggle was a blow to Dara Shikoh, who hoped to depend on his unstinted support. Fakhar Khan Najm-i-Thani, 'Askar Khan Najm-i-Thani and Zafar Khan Ahsan were also the keenest supporters of the prince, one of the reasons being their domicile in the prince's province.

The nobles stationed at the imperial court had to support Dara Shikoh—even Khalil Ullah Khan and his son, despite their cold relations with him. The sons of the late 'Ali Mardan Khan, namely, Isma'il Beg and Ibrahim Beg, and his sons-in-law, Faiz Ullah Khan and Husain Beg Khan Zig, were tempted to become the followers of Dara Shikoh under the influence of the Emperor. Other Muslim nobles, e.g. Khushal Beg Kashghari, Tahir Khan and Qubad Khan, along with other Turanians joined the prince under the same influence. The Emperor could successfully persuade only the nobles living in or around the capital, but seemed to have lost his influence over those posted at far-off places.

*Followers of Shuja.*—A perusal of the followers of Shuja' shows that almost all of them were locally stationed officers. He succeeded in shaking the loyalties of the Bihari nobles only, since Bihar came to him as a windfall. Its Governor, Allah Vardi Khan, consented to become his premier noble and chief counsellor. Mirza Abu'l Ma'ali (2000/2000), a Jagirdar of Bihar, was also forced to become his follower (owing to the influence of domicile). Mukarram Khan Safavi (3000/3000) too joined him under these circumstances. Leaving aside these "outside" nobles, all the officers of Shuja' were his subordinates in Bengal. Amongst them, Khwajah Nasir (1500/1500) was an important person upon whom the prince placed so much reliance that he was commanded to protect his harem during the battle of Khajwa (January 1659). Mir Asfandiyar Ma'muri was the person mainly responsible for instigating him for the battle of Khajwa<sup>2</sup>.

1. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. I, pp. 444-47.

2. *Tarikh-i-Shah Shuja'i*, I.O. MS 533, ff. 97a and 99a.

It appears, that Shuja' was becoming reconciled to the victorious Aurangzeb, but this particular officer goaded him to try his luck once more. Thus he had drawn a wedge between the two brothers, of course keeping in view his own selfish interests. His other notable followers were Ibn-i-Husain, *Darogha-i-Top Khanah*, Nur-ul-Hasan, Jani Beg, Mir Murtaza Imami and Qasim Koka. They all fought valiantly for their master, but the declining future of the prince urged them to desert him one by one. The decision of Shuja' to leave India for good was arrived at with the approval of Jani Beg.<sup>1</sup>

*The Followers of Aurangzeb.*—The followers of Aurangzeb, like those of Dara Shikoh, consisted of his own troops and also of the imperial commanders, the only difference being that the imperial commanders had joined Aurangzeb of their own free will, whereas persuasion coupled with compulsion had been necessary for Dara Shikoh.

During his long governorship of the Deccan, Aurangzeb had gathered a band of proteges around him, who were his most devoted followers, e.g. Multafat Khan and his son Hoshdar Khan, Murshid Quli Khan, Shaikh Mir Khawafi and his brother Amir Khan Khawafi, Muhammad Beg Tabrezi (Zulfiqar Khan) 'Abdul Qawwi, Wazir Muhammad Tahir Khurasani, Himmat Khan Mir-i- 'Isa, and Mukhtar Khan Mir Shamsud-din. Among the loyalists, Fath Khan Rohilla<sup>2</sup> was an important figure who exerted himself vigorously in favour of the prince along with his brothers Hayat (title Zabardast Khan), Sharif and Shahbaz, his nephews Rasul and Rustam and a number of his followers and connections. Their loyalty to the leader must have been strengthened by the feeling that the prince, with his higher accomplishments, was the likeliest successor to the throne and, therefore, their interests would be quite safe. Asalat Khan Mashhadi<sup>3</sup> (the son-in-law of Shah Nawaz Khan Safavi like Aurangzeb) and Mir Malik Husain<sup>4</sup> (foster-brother of the prince) were the supporters of Aurangzeb owing to relationship, but had they not been in the Deccan at that time, they would not have been able to exert themselves so vigorously for their hero.

1. Ibid, f. 162a.

2. *Ma'asir-ul-Umara*, Vol. III, pp. 22-26.

3. Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 222-25.

4. *Tadhkiratul-Umara*, BM MS Add 16703, f. 36a.

*Cessation of Hostilities against Bijapur (August 1657).*—Parties were formed and started functioning at once after the stoppage of the campaign against Bijapur. This event afforded Aurangzeb an opportunity to seduce the imperial nobles to his side. He well knew that once they reached the capital, then Dara Shikoh would utilise them against him. His appeal did not go in vain. Various nobles who did not like Dara Shikoh refused to return to Agra and became Aurangzeb's men, the most conspicuous among them being Najabat Khan bin Mirza Shah Rukh who concealed an ill-will against Dara Shikoh ever since the Qandhar campaign.<sup>1</sup> He joined the prince with his two sons, Isma'il Khan and Ibrahim Khan. Being holder of the highest rank, he acted as chief counsellor to the prince during the whole struggle. Qulij Khan Khwajah 'Abid,<sup>2</sup> Rashid Khan Ilham Ullah,<sup>3</sup> Mirza Sultan Safavi<sup>4</sup> all high ranking officers, deserted to Aurangzeb. Among their motives was to further their own interests. Besides this, the prince was fortunate in commanding the sympathies of so many nobles who were outwardly the men of Dara Shikoh, but actually were disloyal to him, e.g. his maternal uncle Sha'istah Khan, whose friendship with Aurangzeb was well known, but, owing to his domicile in Agra at that time, could not offer him any help and instead did a lot of underground work for the benefit of his friend. The Khan was related to several nobles and was influential because of matrimonial relations with them. One of his sisters Farzanah Begum was married to Ja'far Khan, the *Vakil*—the successor of Mu'azzam Khan. Another sister Malikah Banu (married to Saif Khan Mirza Safi) had a daughter Hamidah Begum wedded to Khalil Ullah Khan. Still another Salihah Begum (wife of Mir-i-Miran) was thus the step-mother of Khalil Ullah Khan. According to the author of *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Sha'istah Khan was the best liked and best known of all the nobles.<sup>5</sup> Hence one could assume that he had a hand in shaking the loyalty of several nobles from Dara Shikoh and Khalil Ullah Khan's case might be one of them. Outwardly, Sha'istah Khan pretended to be

1. *Lata'if-ul-Akhbar*, BM MS Or 5327(2), f. 180a.

2. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. III, pp. 120-23.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 503-05.

4. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 583-86

5. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 699-706. (Mir-i-Miran was the father of Khalil Ullah Khan).

loyal to Dara Shikoh and his duplicity will be discussed in the next chapter. Dara Shikoh knew the doubtful loyalty of Muhammad Amin Khan towards him. That is why he had imprisoned him but, the intervention of Shah Jahan saved him from any further disgrace. Khalil Ullah Khan had a windfall promotion on the recommendation of Dara Shikoh, but his subversive activities did the prince incalculable harm to the benefit of Aurangzeb (to be discussed in the next chapter).

A mystery surrounds the conduct of Rajah Maha Singh of Bhaduriyah. This veteran fought at the battle of Samugarh on the side of Dara Shikoh. The contemporary Persian historians have mentioned it unambiguously that it was with the help of the Rajah of Bhaduriyah that Aurangzeb (after the battle of Dharmat) crossed the river Chambal<sup>1</sup> and thus was enabled to fight a decisive battle at Samugarh. No contemporary writer has mentioned the name of the Rajah of Bhaduriyah in this context, but from the stray information gathered together, we have come to the conclusion that it was Maha Singh Bhaduriyah—the very Rajah who supported Dara Shikoh at Samugarh. Manucci<sup>2</sup> and Bernier<sup>3</sup> simply mentioned that it was Champat who did this valuable service to Aurangzeb. It is quite possible that Champat might have been the name of a commander or a relative of Maha Singh Bhaduriyah, as it was only with the connivance of the latter that Aurangzeb could be conducted quietly through the Rajah's territory. It seems, Maha Singh Bhaduriyah, in order to please Dara Shikoh and Aurangzeb simultaneously resorted to double-dealing, i.e. he himself remained with Dara Shikoh and secretly deputed his own man to help Aurangzeb. This assumption is further substantiated by the fact that the Rajah's son Uddat Singh gained rapid promotions under the Emperor Aurangzeb and reached up to the rank of 3000 and was appointed the *Faujdar* of Irich.

The desertion of several nobles during and after the battle of Dharmat, e.g. Debi Singh Bundela, Sattar Sal Bundela, Nasiri Khan and Saif Khan, showed that the army of Dara Shikoh, outwardly very imposing and magnificent, did possess

1. 'Aqil Khan, *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, p. 33.

2. *Storia*, Vol. I, p, 267.

3. *Travels*, p. 46.

traitors secretly disposed to Aurangzeb. Qasim Khan's loyalty to Dara Shikoh at Dharmat had been doubted by Bernier and Khafi Khan (*vide* detailed discussion in the next chapter).

*Absence of the Feeling of Tribal-mindedness.*—Another factor worthy of notice is that tribal feeling was not the dominant factor in determining the loyalties of the nobles towards a particular prince. This observation is true in all cases except in the case of Rajputs and also on the whole as far as the Sayyids of Barah were concerned. Leaving aside these two classes, domicile was the determining factor as far as the conduct of the nobles was concerned. For example, members of the Khwishgi tribe were visible in the ranks of both Dara Shikoh and Aurangzeb, because of the sheer pressure of domicile at that time. It is interesting to observe that the nobles, though more clannish-minded than anything else, had to yield to the factor of domicile in this struggle. This is a peculiarity of the War of Succession.

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## Chapter 6

# Political and Military Developments

**I**N this chapter, an attempt has been made to examine the moves and counter-moves employed by the contestants in this struggle to achieve their ends once the war had broken out, the highly accelerated promotions conferred on their supporters, general collusion between the Muslims on either side at the battle of Dharmat and its absence to a greater extent at the decisive battle of Samugarh. Unfortunately, the contemporary records do not give a vivid picture of the role of the nobles as advisers of the princes and it is only with the stray references that one has to be contented.

*Illness of Shah Jahan—September 1657.*—The Emperor fell very seriously ill of strangury and all his public engagements were cancelled. The *Jharoka Darshan* and daily *Darbar* were stopped. As very few persons were given access to the Emperor, wild and malicious rumours began to spread everywhere. The bankers wrote in guarded language about Shah Jahan's health: "Let it be known that the vessel of butter was filled to overflowing and the butter in it was lost"<sup>1</sup>. It was persistently rumoured that the Emperor was dead and Dara Shikoh was concealing the news to secure his own succession to the throne. The princes, grandees, state officials and even servants employed at the court had no expectation that the Emperor was living and that is why an atmosphere of uncertainty had shrouded everything. To make matters worse, in order to prevent the leakage of such news to his brothers, he set men to watch ferries and closed the

1. *Storia*, Vol. I, p. 241.

roads leading towards Bengal, Gujerat and the Deccan. The court agents of Shuja' and Murad were harassed and ordered to submit only a censored account to their masters. A short while afterwards, Mir Abu'l-Hasan, the *Vakil* of Shuja', was imprisoned<sup>1</sup> and 'Isa Khan, the agent of Aurangzeb, also met the same treatment.<sup>2</sup> Such measures caused very adverse reactions on the nobles and the Zamindars. This also gave encouragement to the unruly spirits who sought for a field of action. The Rajah of Cooch Bihar raided Northern Bengal and Kamrup, while an Assamese army occupied Kamrup including Gauhati.<sup>3</sup>

The relations of the younger brothers with Dara Shikoh were highly strained and the news of Shah Jahan's dangerous illness made them highly discontented. It was this common hostility to *Shah-i-Buland Iqbal* that gave them an incentive to make common cause against him. Even as early as 1652, they had attempted to form a sort of defensive "alliance" against him.

"*Triple Alliance of 1652.*"—Bitter as the humiliation of Aurangzeb was at the failure of the Qandhar campaign, he knew the secret hand of Dara Shikoh to be behind all these insults. Shuja' although specially summoned from Bengal to participate in the campaign, was not allowed to do so on the presumption that they were not on good terms with each other. Shuja' remained at Kabul for several months closely watching the activities of his elder brother and burning with jealousy at his monopolising the ears of the Emperor. The extreme sense of insecurity on Shah Jahan's death and the frustrations caused to Shuja' tempted them to have an intimate conversation at Agra soon after the campaign of 1652.<sup>4</sup> They fully realised that after the demise of their father, their very life and honour would be in jeopardy if Dara Shikoh succeeded in ascending the throne. Therefore, in order to ward off such dangers, they made verbal commitments of mutual help cemented by the proposals of matrimony, i.e. Sultan Muhammad to marry the daughter of Shuja' and Zainul-'Abdin to wed the daughter of Aurangzeb. The terms of this "Alliance" were meant to be

1. *Tarikh-i-Shah Shuja'i*, I.O. MS 533, f. 30b.

2. *'Alamgir Nama*, p. 34.

3. Shihabud-Din Talish, *Tarikh-i-Asham*, Calcutta, 1847. pp. 6-7.

4. 'Aqil Khan Razi, *Waqi'at-i-Alamgiri*, pp. 12-13.

confidential and are therefore, not fully known to us. Murad, in one of his letters to Aurangzeb, incidentally alluded to that "Alliance" mentioning its important condition that if a particular brother was attacked by Dara Shikoh, the rest would immediately come to his rescue.<sup>1</sup> It seems that beyond a general agreement on principles, no specific terms were settled. Having formed this "Alliance" Shuja' and Aurangzeb departed. Aurangzeb, on his way to the Deccan, met Murad at Doraha, acquainted him with this pact and prevailed upon him to join it for the sake of their mutual safety. In this way, the dread of Dara Shikoh had made the three younger brothers united against him.

This "Alliance" was the first attempt of the younger princes to safeguard their interests against the threatened excesses of Dara Shikoh. Though the terms of the "Alliance" are not found in black and white anywhere, one could reasonably assume that the younger brothers would have agreed to divide the Empire among themselves on the death of Shah Jahan and to remove Dara Shikoh altogether from the political scene, or, in other words, none of them could claim for himself the sovereignty of the whole of the Empire, which was to be divided amongst them equitably.

Owing to the excessive ambitions of Shuja' and Murad, this "Alliance" did not prove of any value ultimately, as we shall see.

*Chaos and uncertainty in the Empire.*—The dangerous illness of the Emperor had made the younger princes very panicky even about their very existence. Fully realising the "Triple Alliance of 1652," they began to plan measures for their safety. For this purpose, they started a regular correspondence, sometimes using even a confidential code. As they were nearer to each other, Aurangzeb and Murad carried on communications more regularly, but they also took Shuja' into their confidence. Accordingly, they started devising plans for their mutual safety and they had made some progress; but before they could accomplish anything concrete, Shuja' claimed for himself the sovereignty of the whole of the Mughal Empire (October 1657) under the title of *Abu'l-Faiz Nasirud-Din Muhammad Sahib Qiran III Shah Shuja' Bahadur Ghazi*; issued his own coinage and had the *Khutbah* read

1. *Fayyazul-Qawanin*, BM MS Or 9617, Vol. I, ff. 58a and 61b.



in his name.<sup>1</sup> Having assumed the insignia of kingship, he started towards the imperial capital to snatch power from Dara Shikoh. This very assertion was a violation of the tacit understandings of the "Triple Alliance" of 1652, which clearly implied that none of the brothers could claim for himself the sovereignty of the whole of the Empire, which was intended to be divided amongst them on an equitable basis. This claim weakened the bonds of the "Alliance."

*Grave Provocation to Murad.*—Concerned over the growing intimacy between Aurangzeb and Murad, Dara Shikoh planned to draw a wedge between them. He managed to have the royal orders issued commanding Murad to relinquish the rich province of Gujerat at once and to proceed forthwith to take charge of Berar from Aurangzeb.<sup>2</sup> This order also directed that Murad's pay, which had hitherto been a charge on the imperial treasury of Surat, was to be paid from Berar. By this stroke of diplomacy, it was intended to degrade Murad by offering him a petty governorship and also to create dissensions between him and Aurangzeb by reducing the territory of the latter, but this move had had the undesired effect. The friendship of the two brothers became firmer. Murad refused to believe that a loving father like Shah Jahan could ever be a party to such an unkind act, which had solely been accomplished by Dara Shikoh, who was an expert in forging the signatures of the Emperor.<sup>3</sup> Hence, he argued, the question of carrying out that order did not arise. Matters became serious, when the *Qila'dar* of the imperial treasury of Surat, in response to the orders from the Central Government, refused to pay the salary and allowances of the prince. Murad immediately sent his forces under his faithful officer Khwajah Shahbaz for his chastisement. During the course of the operations, his men intercepted a letter which seemed to have come from the imperial court written by the *Qila'dar's* son to his father reporting the death of Shah Jahan.<sup>4</sup> In these circumstances, Murad considered himself released from any obligation to obey the Centre, because then it was nothing but

1. *Tarikh-i-Shah Shuja'i*, I. O. MS 533, f. 32b.

2. *Fayyazul-Qawanin*, BM MS Or 9617, Vol. I, f. 56b, Murad to Aurangzeb.

3. *Ibid.*, f. 56a, Murad to Aurangzeb.

4. *Ibid.*, f. 71b-72a, Murad to Sha'istah Khan.

the Government of Dara Shikoh. Therefore, he did not wish to lag behind Shuja' in matters of assuming kingship. He also claimed the sovereignty of the whole of the Mughal Empire under the title of Murawwajud-Din, issued his own coinage and had the *Khutbah* read in his name (November 1657). On suspicions of disloyalty, he killed his *Diwan* (Sayyid 'Ali Naqi) and seized the imperial treasury from the latter's custody.<sup>1</sup> Under his orders, Khwajah Shahbaz intensified operations, sacked Surat and appropriated for his master its treasury. Unfortunately, a substantial sum of money was not found in the imperial treasury. That is why the merchants of that city were forced to advance a loan of six lakhs of rupees to Murad.<sup>2</sup>

In this way, Shuja' and Murad, by assuming kingship of the whole of the Mughal Empire, had violated the understandings of the "Triple Alliance of 1652," which, to all intents and purposes, had now become a dead letter. Even then, as we shall see subsequently, Murad maintained cordial relations with Aurangzeb as, without the latter's help, he did not hope to accomplish much.

*Murad's efforts to consolidate His Position.*—After having assumed kingship, Murad conferred high-sounding titles of Tahawwar Khan, Murshid Parast Khan and Fath Jang on his followers and also showered presents of money and expensive gifts on them. Owing to the paucity of evidence, it is not possible to indentify all his followers, as they had soon mixed up with those of Aurangzeb. However, some of them are as under.

Owing to the influence of domicile, Hakim Ziaud-din (title Rahmat Khan) 1500/400, Superintendent of the *Karkhanahs* of Ahmadabad, Qutbud-din Khwishgi, 1500/1400, 600 *do aspah, seh aspah*, Jagirdar and *Faujdar* of Pattan, Sayyid Hasan Barah, Jagirdar of the *Sarkar* of Godrah, and Mansur Barah of the provincial auxiliary force, were amongst his followers. His most trusted person was Khwajah Shahbaz (the officer who sacked Surat under his orders), upon whom he conferred the highest rank, i.e., 3000/2000, *do aspah seh aspah*<sup>3</sup> and also presented him a flag and drum.<sup>4</sup>

1. Muhammad Hadi surnamed Kamwar Khan. *Tadhkirah-i-Salatin-i-Chaghatai*, Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, Persian Supplement, 742 f. 51a.

2. Khafi Khan, *Muntakhabul-Lubab*, II, p. 7.

3. & 4. *Fayyazul-Qawanin*, BM MS Or 9617, Vol. I, ff. 79b-80a and 79a-79b. (Murad raised the Khan to 5000 after the battle of Samugarh, 'Aqil Khan Razi, *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, p. 71.)

It seems, his financial position was not very sound. That is why the highest rank he could afford to confer was a three thousand one. The money gained from Surat was utilised in financing the ensuing struggle and he was able to raise approximately nine to ten thousand soldiers.<sup>1</sup>

He also wrote tempting and flattering letters to the imperial nobles to win their support. In a letter,<sup>2</sup> he reminded Iftikhar Khan of a previous meeting at a place between Akbarabad and Mathura, where he had promised his solemn support whenever any emergency arose. He further wrote that the three younger princes were one with one another, because their aim was to strengthen the religion of Muhammad. In a letter to Mukhlis Khan,<sup>3</sup> he reminded him of their old friendship and requested him to rush to his camp, no matter where he was at that time. In a letter to Nasiri Khan,<sup>4</sup> he reminded him that the time for the fulfilment of the previous solemn undertakings had arrived. Murad, in a despatch received from his agent Shaikh Muhammad Amin, learnt that Nasiri Khan was keen to join him, but was afraid of Aurangzeb whom he had deserted during the campaign against Bijapur (in response to the imperial call) without even a farewell. Murad assured the Khan that Aurangzeb would pardon him in case he joined their ranks and his *mansab* would be enhanced as a matter of certainty. In a desperate bid, Murad circulated among as many nobles as he could, a promissory document duly stamped and signed by him promising in the name of God and the Prophet that whosoever would help him in that struggle would be amply rewarded as soon as success was achieved.<sup>5</sup> In spite of these frantic efforts, there is nothing on record to show that he succeeded in winning even a single noble to his side before the battle of Dharmat.

It is certain that Murad realised fully that with the limited resources at his disposal, he alone could not face the power of Dara Shikoh. That is why he developed his relations with Aurangzeb more and more and in fact they became closer day by day. After

1. *Futuh-at-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Add 23, 884, f. 19a.

2. *Fayyaz-ul-Qawanin*, BM MS Or 9617, Vol. I, ff. 73a-b.

3. *Ibid.*, f. 73b.

4. *Ibid.*, vol. I, f. 73a.

5. *Ibid.*, ff. 77a-b.

having gone through their correspondence in *Fayyazul-Qawanin*, one gains a vivid impression that Murad was placing more and more reliance and dependence upon Aurangzeb. He was seeking his advice very often. It seems that he had rather accepted the role of a second man. He sought his advice on how he should behave, if Dara Shikoh extended the hand of friendship to him, to which the reply came that in view of his (Murad's) assumption of kingship, no such offer is likely to come, but if it really came, he should outwardly welcome it not at all slackening his own vigilance. Aurangzeb also disapproved of Murad's assumption of sovereignty as no confirmation of the death of Shah Jahan had yet been forthcoming. He did not appreciate the sack of Surat either and since the campaign had been launched, he advised him to finish it as soon as possible in order to spare his forces for the coming struggle. A copy of this letter was also sent to Shuja' for information.<sup>1</sup>

*Position of Aurangzeb.*—Aurangzeb's letters addressed to Mu'azzam Khan (written at his dictation by Munshi Abu'l-Fath) show that he was very much worried during those days.<sup>2</sup> The abrupt stoppage of the hostilities against Bijapur had administered a grievous shock to his power and prestige in the Deccan. The rumour of the Emperor's death had placed his very life and honour in danger, as that might mean Dara Shikoh's ascendancy—utterly detrimental to his best interests. His greatest worry was that once Dara Shikoh managed to remain at the helm of affairs for some time, then his position would become consolidated. It was easier for Shuja' and Murad to assume independence and proceed towards Agra to snatch power from the elder brother, because they were having no internal difficulties; their territories were not surrounded by any hostile powers who could stab them in the back while they were fighting for their existence in the North. Unfortunately for Aurangzeb, around his territories were situated the inimical States of Bijapur and Golconda and the rising power of the Marathas. Last but not least, the death of his senior queen Dilras Banu (8th October 1657) had added to his mental torture.<sup>3</sup> It really required a very brave heart to face

1. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or ' Aurangzeb to Shuja', f. 200a.

2. Ibid., Munshi Abu'l-Fath Qabil Khan to Mu'azzam Khan, f. 231b.

3. Ibid., Qabil Khan to Mu'azzam Khan, f. 639b (Dilras Banu was married to Aurangzeb on 8th May 1637),

these difficulties and Aurangzeb was in fact made of the stuff of which brave men are made. He even feared that these of his followers who had joined him because of their faith in his ultimate victory seeing any slackness in him would desert him thereby diminishing his strength and he would be reduced to a state of extreme insecurity. Therefore, to strike a blow at once was a dire necessity for him. The impetuosity of Murad was also goading him to act at once. At last Aurangzeb decided upon action, but before doing so, the hostile States of the Deccan had to be pacified. Even in these circumstances, he did not assume the sovereignty of the Empire and in his dealings with the Deccan States he never addressed them on his personal behalf, but rather as an agent of Shah Jahan. In view of his critical position, he found it impracticable to exact any tribute from Bijapur, but left it alone against a mere promise not to extend its boundaries; he also pacified Golconda with promises of favours if it behaved well during his absence from the South and himself started making huge preparations for the struggle ahead. He had already thought of excuses for his military preparations in case the Emperor recovered from his illness, e.g., if he were questioned about his preparations, he was to state that they were necessary for the subjugation of the Bijapuris, and if questioned why he did not return from the Bijapur campaign to Daulatabad direct, his excuse would be that he wished to visit the tomb of his recently dead wife, Dilras Banu, at Aurangabad. That is why on his way from Bijapur, he had adopted a particular route as would lead not only to Daulatabad but also to Burhanpur. If Shah Jahan recovered, then he would march straight to Daulatabad, otherwise to Burhanpur for the inevitable contest.<sup>1</sup> All these facts are explicitly stated in the letters of Aurangzeb to Mu'azzam Khan (in the *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*).

*Efforts of Aurangzeb at Consolidation.*—The recall of troops from the Bijapur campaign had made his position very critical. The intended departure of Mu'azzam Khan to the imperial capital (in response to the summons) had added to his worries. Being a confidant of the prince, he knew all his most intimate secrets, plans, etc., for the conduct of the struggle ahead. It was feared that Mu'azzam Khan, who, for the sake of his family's safety,

1, Ibid., Qabil Khan to Mu'azzam Khan, f. 231a.

had betrayed his benefactor Qutbul-Mulk and brought in the Mughal armies for the latter's destruction, could do the same by betraying all the secrets of Aurangzeb to Dara Shikoh for the same reason as soon as he reached Agra. The Khan possessed great wealth and an efficient artillery manned by European gunners. Therefore, Aurangzeb did not like to lose such an important person for the benefit of Dara Shikoh. As for the assertions of Bernier<sup>1</sup> and Manucci,<sup>2</sup> also believed by Sarkar,<sup>3</sup> that there was collusion between Aurangzeb and Mu'azzam Khan and that the latter himself volunteered his arrest to the former (January 1658), seems highly improbable owing to the following reasons:

After the battle of Samugarh, when Aurangzeb was the supreme power in the country, he cherished no apprehension from any quarter in concealing the services of Mu'azzam Khan to his cause; while ordering the release of the Khan, Aurangzeb positively owned responsibility for his arrest and thus himself negated the charges of treason earlier levelled against the Khan in his despatches to Shah Jahan. He also categorically stated that he had imprisoned him not for an-treachery on his part, but purely because political necessity demanded it.<sup>4</sup>

'*Alamgir Nama*<sup>5</sup> also mentions that the arrest was a political expediency. 'Aqil Khan Razi<sup>6</sup> and Muhammad Salih Kamboh<sup>7</sup> also put the sole responsibility of that arrest on Aurangzeb.

This overwhelming evidence obliges us to accept the view that there was no collusion whatsoever between Aurangzeb and Mu'azzam Khan and that the latter was arrested to suit Aurangzeb's political convenience.

*Aurangzeb's "Honours List."*—Since September 1657 when Shah Jahan was taken seriously ill, Aurangzeb had patiently waited and watched the trend of events still February 1658

1. *Travels*, pp. 29-30.

2. *Storia*, Vol. I, p. 250.

3. *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. I, p. 361.

4. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS OR 177, ff. 115a-b, Munshi Abu'l Fath Mu'azzam Khan.

5. P. 84.

6. *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, p. 20.

7. '*Amal-i-Salih*, BM MS Add 26221, f. 646a.

only when he decided to strike a blow. He became sure that Shah Jahan, if not dead, had without doubt been deprived of all powers and that the reins of government had fallen into the hands of Dara Shikoh—a circumstance which he could never tolerate. Therefore, he left Aurangabad on the 11th February 1658 and reached Burhanpur on 18th. Though he did not formally assume the sovereignty of the Mughal Empire, yet it was here at Burhanpur that he started exercising royal prerogatives, which, strictly speaking, the Governor of a province was not competent to do. As already stated in the chapter on the “Mughal Nobility”, only the Emperor was competent to appoint, promote, demote or dismiss an officer and the exercise of such powers by a prince was certainly contrary to the established practices of the Mughal Government. Aurangzeb issued a comprehensive “Honours List” conferring promotions and high-sounding titles on his followers, the salient features of which are as follows.<sup>1</sup>

Najabat Khan, his premier noble, raised to 7000/7000,

Sarfraz Khan Deccani raised to 5000/4000.

Mirza Sultan Safavi, Dama Ji and Jadu Rao raised to 4000/2000, 4000/1300 and 4000/2500 respectively.

Five promotions of 3000, viz., Indraman Dhindera 3000/2000, Shamsud-din Khwishgi 3000/2000, Muftakhar Khan bin A'zam Khan 3000/2000 and also conferred the post of a *Bakhshi*, Mir Malik Husain promoted to 3000/1500 and the title of Bahadur Khan.

Murshid Quli Khan raised to 3000/1500.

Two promotions of 2500 rank, viz. Rustam Rao 2500/1200, Baba Ji Bhonsla 2500/1500.

Twelve promotions of 2000, viz. Fath Rohilla 2000/2000, Wali Mahaldar 2000/1000, 'Abdullah Beg Sarai 2000/1000, Betu Ji 2000/1000, Mir Shamsud-din bin Mukhtar Khan 2000/1000, Sher Zaman Barah 2000/600, Bias Rao 2000/1200, Dada Ji 2000/1000, Muhammad 'Aqil Barlas 2000/400 and the title of Tahawwar Khan, Bakhtiyar Khan 2000/1500, Muhammad Ibrahim Khan 2000/1000 and the title of Shuja'at Khan, and Mir Murad 2000/400 and the title of Ghairat Khan.

Thirteen promotions of 1500 rank, viz, Mir Ahmad bin Sadaat

1. *'Alamgir Nama*, pp. 42-55.

Khan 1500/800, Muhammad Mun'im Khan 1500/600, Mir Salih 1500/500, Isma'il Afghan 1500/300, Hoshdar Khan 1500/700, Tir Bhonsla 1500/1000, Qila'dar Khan 1500/1000, Qazi Nizami 1500/200, Daku Ji 1500/1000, Karan Kachhi 1500/500, 'Abdul Qawwi 1500/100, Muhammad Sharif Polikchi 1500/1000, 'Isa Beg 1500/200 and the title of Sazawar Khan.

Twelve promotions of 1000, viz. Sayyid Nasirud-din Deccani 1000/800, Saif Ullah 'Arab 1000/800, Sayyid Zainul-'Abidin Bukhari 1000/300, Hakim Muhammad Amin Shirazi 1000/?, Hakim Muhammad Mehdi Irdistani 1000/?, Sayyid 'Abdur Rahman 1000/1000, Muhammad Isma'il bin Najabat Khan 1000/500, Mir Abu'l Fazl Ma'muri 1000/400, Ni'mat Ullah bin Hissamud-din 1000/200, Hayat Afghan 1000/800 and the title of Zabardast Khan, Husain Beg 1000/400 and the Zamindar Kali Bhect 1000/500.

In addition to these promotions, the prince also made the following appointments.<sup>1</sup>

His son Mu'azzam was appointed Governor of the Deccan, Muhammad Tahir Khurasani was granted the title of Wazir Khan and given charge of Khandesh and Khwajah Manzur promoted as the *Qila'dar* of Daulatabad.

It may be asked whether Aurangzeb really possessed such extensive resources in money or revenue assignments that he was in a position to issue such a tempting "Honours List." The contemporary writers do not at all, help us in the matter but it can be safely assumed that the allotment of *jagirs* by his revenue department was not practicable in times of war. Moreover, the *jagirs* in the Deccan were not paying (this was known to all) and if he were to promise *jagirs* in the north, it was just like a promise in the air. He possessed, no doubt, the vast wealth of Mu'azzam Khan plus, of course, the substantial sum of money pocketed from the treasuries of Asir and Daulatabad. According to 'Aqil Khan Razi,<sup>2</sup> the prince had gained a handsome booty during the campaign against Golconda (1656 A.C.)—which he was to utilise in this struggle.

Aurangzeb also conferred lofty titles on his nobles, for instance, Asalat Khan on Mirza Muhammad Mashhadi, Bahadur Khan on his foster-brother Mir Malik Husain, Murtaza Khan

1. Based on 'Alamgir Nama, pp. 42-55.

2. *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, p. 14.



on Sayyid Shah Muhammad, Dilawar Khan on Sayyid 'Abdur Rahman and Zulfiqar Khan on Muhammad Beg Tabrezi. He gave away costly presents to his men as well.

It was here at Burhanpur, that he made extensive preparations for war and took into serious consideration the trend of events in his favour. In the meantime, he had received 'Isa Khan, his agent at the imperial court, who conveyed to him the secret messages of support from the nobles at Agra. While at Burhanpur, he learnt of the doubtful loyalty of Shah Nawaz Khan Safavi (the father of his deceased wife, Dilras Banu) and immediately had him arrested and his whole establishment confiscated<sup>1</sup> (20th March 1658). Certain that his army was purged of doubtful elements, he now started conceiving plans for future action.

*Dara Shikoh's Vigorous Efforts to Consolidate His Position.*—As already stated, Dara Shikoh commanded the greatest patronage and even enjoyed the blessings of Shah Jahan in this enterprise. He raised his own servants to ranks of imperial officers and also made very tempting offers of promotions to the nobles—such rises, which ordinarily they could have gained only after having put in long meritorious services to the state. These promotions were ordered by Shah Jahan on the recommendation of the prince.

First of all, he gave all the important posts in the capital to those whom he thought to be his own men. For instance, Khalil-Ullah Khan was raised to 5000/5000, *do aspah seh aspah*, honoured with a robe of honour and appointed Governor of the imperial capital; Mir Khan, his son, was attached to him and another son Ruh-Ullah Khan was granted the *Diwani* of the province;<sup>2</sup> Husain Beg Khan (son-in-law of the late 'Ali Mardan Khan) was appointed to the confidential position and made *Mir-i-Tuzuk*; Muhammad Salih 'Ali Mardani was made *Diwan-i-Bayutat*, *Bakhshi* and the news writer of the capital; his elder brother Muhammad Muqim was made *Diwan-i-Bayutat* of the royal household and promoted to 1000/150;<sup>3</sup> Fazil Khan was raised to 3000/1000 and Taqarrub Khan was presented jewels and raised to 5000/1000<sup>4</sup>. Doubting the loyalty of Mu'azzam

1. *Amal-i-Salih*, BM MS Add 26221, f. 639a.

2. *Ibid.*, f. 639a.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*, f. 641a.

Khan (then in the Deccan), Dara Shikoh removed him from the high post and appointed Ja'far Khan in his place.<sup>1</sup>

Daud Khan, the *Faujdar* of Mathura, was presented an elephant and Abdal Beg Kotwal was conferred the title of Kotwal Khan.<sup>2</sup>

His servants 'Izzat Khan, Sayyid Qusim, Shaikh Musa Gilani and Tarbiyat Khan were appointed his deputies in the provinces of Lahore, Allahabad, Multan and Oudh respectively.<sup>3</sup>

Rajah Maha Singh Bhaduriyah was promoted to 1000/1000, Abul Hasan, the *Diwan* of Allahabad, was also made the *Bakhshi* and news writer of the province.

Those who obeyed the imperial summons and left the campaign of Bijapur without even a farewell to Aurangzeb, were honoured thus:<sup>4</sup>

Nasiri Khan was raised to 3000/3000; Rajah Shiv Ram Gaur was raised to 2500/2500 and made the *Qila'dar* of Miandu; Sayyid Shihab Barah was conferred *khil'at*, raised to 1500/400, made the *Faujdar* of Mandsur and also conferred the title of Sher Khan; Sarbuland Khan was promoted to 1500/600 and appointed *Darogha-i-Top Khanah*; Rai Singh Sissodia was honoured with a *khil'at* and presents; Mahabat Khan was presented a special robe of honour and appointed Governor of Kabul.

To weaken his opponents, Dara Shikoh also resorted to diplomacy. Sha'istah Khan the Governor of Malwa, was a well-known friend and well-wisher of Aurangzeb and that is why he was degraded from his position and recalled to the imperial capital. Even a more serious blow was dealt to Murad by transferring him to Berar, as has been discussed in the preceding pages.

Dara Shikoh thought that Shuja' needed a chastisement, as he had assumed independence and was proceeding towards the imperial capital for a mischief. Murad was not obeying the orders of his transfer to Berar, had sacked Surat and also behaved like a king; he too deserved a punishment. With these notions in view, he successfully prevailed upon the Emperor to sanction military action against both of them.

Under Dara Shikoh's orders, an army of 20,000 cavalry, 2000

1. *Amal-i-Salih*, f. 641a.

2. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, f. 248b.

3. *'Amal-i-Salih*, BM MS Add 26221, ff. 639a and 641a.

4. *Ibid.*, f. 641a.

foot musketeers, 200 *barq andaz* (artillery men) and well-equipped elephants, was sent to chastise Shuja 'who was hastening towards the capital against him. To hearten the officers of this army, the following promotions were ordered.<sup>1</sup>

Sulaiman Shikoh was raised to 15000/10000 and also conferred costly presents.

Jai Singh was raised to 6000/5000, *do aspah seh aspah* and also presented expensive gifts.

Bahadur Khan Baqi Beg, the most loyal of Dara Shikoh's lieutenants, was raised to 4000/3000, and also the Deputy Governor of Bihar.

Rajah Anuradha Gaur was raised to 3500/3000, *do aspah seh aspah* and also honoured with expensive gifts.

Shaikh Farid bin Qutbud-din Rohilla was raised to 3000/2000 and also granted a robe of honour.

Diler Khan Rohilla, who, in response to the imperial call, had left the campaign of Bijapur without a farewell even to Aurangzeb, was raised to 2500/2500 and also granted a special robe of honour.

'Abdullah Khan, who had just arrived from Kabul, was raised to 2500/2000.

In this way, Dara Shikoh sent all his trusted persons to punish Shuja'.<sup>2</sup>

For the chastisement of Murad, preparations on a higher scale were made, as it was feared that he would not be so vulnerable. Qasim Khan<sup>3</sup> was appointed Governor of Gujerat in place of Murad and was raised to 5000/5000, *do aspah seh aspah* and presented gifts of exceptional value. He was ordered to take charge of the province from Murad or else to employ force to see that royal orders were carried out without any delay. To the vacancy caused by the transfer of Sha'istah Khan from Malwa, Jaswant Singh Rathor<sup>4</sup> was appointed and blessed with many honours, for instance, promotion to the rank of

1. *Amal-i-Salih*, ff. 643b-644a.

2. *Ibid.*, f. 644a.

3. *Ibid.*, f. 647b.

4. *Ibid.*

7000/7000, 5000 *do aspah seh aspah*. He was ordered to offer every assistance to Qasim Khan in making Murad obey the royal orders. Thus, under the leadership of these two generals, armies were sent against Murad. No action had as yet been ordered against Aurangzeb, as he had not, so far, done anything to defy the Central Government openly.

*Defeat of Shuja'*. (February 1658).—Shuja' was the first to assume sovereignty and also to march towards Agra to undo Dara Shikoh. He marched along with his large forces up to Bahadurgarh, where the armies of Sulaiman Shikoh encountered him. The actual charge of the imperial forces<sup>1</sup> was, however, in the hands of Jai Singh and Bahadur Khan Baqi Beg. It was reported to Sulaiman Shikoh that Shuja' took this battle not very seriously. He had taken no precautions, was indulging in merry-making all the time and used to sleep till late in the morning. This afforded him an opportunity to attack Shuja' all of a sudden. Shuja' was soon defeated miserably and because of the frantic efforts of his nobles, particularly Mir Asfandiyar Ma'muri and Sayyid Isma'il, who had blocked the path of the victorious army, the prince gained time to ride on an elephant and flee;<sup>2</sup> he might otherwise have been arrested to his utter disgrace. As for the bravery of his soldiers, it was stated that they ran away in such panic that women in the way often snatched away their armaments by a mere show of threats.<sup>3</sup> Some of them even threw away their arms in order to facilitate their flight. The elephants, horses and expensive articles thus abandoned were heaped up in the way. This defeat not only doomed the reputation of Shuja' but also cooled the zeal of his

1. Sarkar's assertion (*History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. II, p. 131) that the real command was in the hands of Jai Singh and Diler Khan Rohilla is in conflict with the author of *Ma'asirul-Umara*, who clearly states that the real powers, in fact, lay in the hands of Bahadur Khan Baqi Beg and not with Jai Singh. It seems, the latter is correct, because Bahadur Khan Baqi Beg was the most trusted man of Dara Shikoh and, owing to the previous bickerings (already mentioned), the latter would not have liked to give a free hand to Jai Singh. Diler Khan was far junior in command to Jai Singh and hence not he but Bahadur Khan could, with some justification, be treated on par with him, as his rank and status was sufficiently higher; (Jai Singh 6000/5000, Bahadur Khan 4000/3000, Diler Khan 2500/2500).

2. *Tarikh-i-Shah Shuja'i*, I.O. MS 533, f. 36b; '*Alamgir Nama*, p. 31.

3. *Tarikh-i-Shah Shuja'i*, f. 39b,

Persian followers. The victorious army carried on a hot pursuit of the vanquished.

Following this clear victory of Dara's forces at Bahadurgarh over Shuja', the following promotions were ordered by the Emperor on the recommendation of the prince.<sup>1</sup>

Sulaiman Shikoh was promoted to 20,000/15,000, 5000 *do aspah seh aspah*.

Jai Singh was promoted to 7000/6000, 5000 *do aspah seh aspah*.

Rajah Anuradha Gaur raised to 4000/3500, 1000 *do aspah seh aspah*.

Diler Khan was raised to 3000/3000.

The object of these promotions was to steel the loyalty of the officers, but it seems the instinct of self-preservation urged them to salute only the rising sun. When they found the star of the prince going into decline, large-scale desertions of fair-weather "loyalists" ruined him, as we shall see.

*Coalition of Aurangzeb and Murad.*—It is certain that the defeat of Shuja' made these two brothers more united than ever and their plans became more comprehensive and determined. On the imperial side, it was being emphatically asserted that Shah Jahan was quite safe and sound, fully recovered from his illness, and that the princes should not cause any commotion. The princes, however, refused to believe these reports as true. If really authentic, they wanted to pay their respects to the Emperor and to free him from the baneful influence of Dara Shikoh, who had incapacitated him. Another aim of their seeing the Emperor was to get Murad pardoned for his acts of high-handedness in claiming kingship.<sup>2</sup>

Aurangzeb started from Burhanpur on 20th March 1658 and in accordance with previous arrangements, joined Murad across the river Narbada at a place near the village Dipalpur (April 14, 1658). Most probably, it was here that in accordance with the wishes of Murad, an agreement was signed between the two brothers,<sup>3</sup> the contents of which are give below:<sup>4</sup>

1. *'Amal-i-Salih*, BM MS Add 26221, ff. 644b, 645a,

2. *'Alamgir Nama*, p. 41.

3. Khafi Khan's assertion (*Muntakhabul-Lubab*, Vol. II, p. 9) that Aurangzeb duped Murad by stating that he had no interest in this transitory world and that after the removal of the "heretic" Dara Shikoh, he would go on a pilgrimage to Mecca to renounce the world altogether, is untrue in view of the solemn assertion which was duly put into black and white.

4. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, ff. 96a-b.

“Whereas the design of acquiring the throne has now been set on foot, the standards of the Prophet have turned their faces to their goal and all my pious aim is to uproot the bramble of idolatry and infidelity from the realm of Islam and to overwhelm and crush the idolatrous chief with his followers and strongholds, so that tranquillity may be enforced in India—and whereas my brother, dear as my own heart, has joined me in this holy mission, has confirmed afresh strong professions of faith the terms of co-operation between us previously built on solemn oaths and has agreed that after the extirpation of the enemy of the church and state, he will stay firmly in the station of allegiance and help and everywhere and at all times, he will be my companion, the friend of my friends and the enemy of my enemies and will not ask for any lands besides the portion of imperial dominions that will be left to him at his request—therefore, I write that, so long as this brother does not display any conduct opposed to oneness of aim and sincerity, my love and favour to him will daily increase and I shall stand by him under all circumstances. After the God-forsaken idolater has been overthrown, I shall keep my promise and, as previously settled, I shall hand over to him the provinces of Lahore, Kabul, Kashmir, Multan, Bhakkar Thatta, the whole of the region to the Arabian Sea (and all the districts up to the coast of the Bay of Oman) without any hesitation on my part and with the least possible delay. As to the truth of this promise, I take God and the Prophet as witnesses.” [The seal and palm impression of Aurangzeb was also affixed to the treaty.]

‘Aqil Khan Razi gave more details of this alliance:’ one-third of the booty for Murad and the rest for Aurangzeb; Murad was also to set up the standard of kingship there, issue coins and proclaim his own *Khutbah* as an independent monarch.

*Some Comments on this Agreement.*—This agreement is undated, but it can be safely assumed that it was concluded after the illness of Shah Jahan (September 1657) but definitely before the battle of Dharmat (April 1658). Sharma’s assertion<sup>2</sup> doubting the existence of this agreement on the assumption that its very terms could have exasperated an emotional person like Murad,

1. *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, p. 25.

2. *Studies in Medieval India*, p. 254.

leads us nowhere. The evidence of *Adab-i-'Alamgiri* corroborated by 'Aqil Khan Razi cannot be rejected.

Even a cursory glance brings home the fact that it was not at all an agreement between two equals, and Aurangzeb, throughout, retains a precedence over Murad. It will not be correct to call it a formal agreement at all, but rather a tacit understanding. If, on the one hand, it speaks of Aurangzeb's sincerity and noble intentions towards Murad, it also clearly states that so long as Murad is equally sincere and affectionate towards Aurangzeb, everything will take place according to his wishes. By implication it clearly means that if Murad deviated from the path of righteousness in regard to his elder brother, the latter stood released from his obligations. It also gives a clear impression that Aurangzeb never intended to renounce the world, rather he wished to take an active part in it.

*Last-minute Efforts for Peace.*—It was here at Dharmat that Muhammad Faruq, the *Bakhshi* of Jahan-Ara, brought a letter from her<sup>1</sup>, in which she scolded Aurangzeb for having resorted to military preparations against Dara Shikoh, the elder brother and the nominee of Shah Jahan for succession. She advised him to desist from such a bad deed as would bring him disgrace both in this world and the next and not to become guilty of fighting in the month of Ramazan and shed the blood of innocent Muslims for his personal interests. In reply,<sup>2</sup> Aurangzeb recounted his complaints against Dara Shikoh and asserted that all troubles would come to an end if he (Dara Shikoh) was removed from the towering position and an opportunity was afforded to him (Aurangzeb) to serve the aged father. Murad also addressed a letter<sup>3</sup> in the same spirit to Shah Jahan, but he wrote a secret letter<sup>4</sup> as well to the Emperor (without the knowledge of Aurangzeb) begging for pardon with the object of winning favours from him. This was a clear case of double-dealing on the part of Murad.

*Battle of Dharmat (15th April 1658).*—Dara Shikoh had sent

1. *Fayyazul-Qawanin*, BM MS Or 9617, Vol. I, ff. 85a-b; *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, pp. 34-36.

2. *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, pp. 36-41.

3. *Fayyazul-Qawanin*, BM MS Or 9617, Vol. I, f. 70b.

4. *Ibid.*, f. 71a.

two armies for the chastisement of Murad. The supreme control of the expedition was vested in Jaswant Singh—he being the most senior officer. The march of the armies of Aurangzeb from Burhanpur towards the North was so orderly and stealthy that the Central Government, in spite of its resources of intelligence, was not forewarned in time. That is why it had adopted no precautionary measures to bar the passage of the prince across the Narbada and thus, indirectly facilitated the junction of the forces of Aurangzeb with those of Murad. Jaswant Singh first heard of this junction from Rajah Shiv Ram Gaur, the *Qila'dar* of Mandu, who, alarmed at the sight of these hostile forces, deserted the fort and sought refuge with the Rajput chief,<sup>1</sup> who was equally perturbed and not at all prepared for this eventuality. Realising this, the princes attempted to win him over to their side. Murad wrote two soothing letters to him successively reminding him of the previous promises of help during an emergency and expressing the belief that he (Jaswant Singh,) was there only for his welfare.<sup>2</sup> In order to win him over, Aurangzeb also deputed the eloquent Sunder Brahman<sup>3</sup> (title Kavi Rai) to Jaswant Singh with friendly messages and asking him not to prevent them from proceeding towards Agra to pay respects to their father. But, it seems, Jaswant Singh, only to outwit them, wanted to delay matters; the princes quickly understood this and forced a battle on him without any loss of time. It was one of the fiercest battles ever fought in India. On the princes' side, there was the inspiring leadership of Murad, efficient artillery manned by the experienced European gunners and, last but not least, the devotion and loyalty of, for example, Shaikh 'Abdul 'Aziz (the adopted son of the late Shaikh 'Abdul Latif, the mystic of Burhanpur, who was Aurangzeb's *Pir*) who earned an undying fame by having received as many as twenty-one wounds in this battle;<sup>4</sup> his confidants Shaikh Mir Khawafi and his brother Amir Khan Khawafi,

1. Khafi Khan, *Muntakhabul-Lubab*, Vol. II, p. 13.

2. *Fayyazul-Qawanin*, BM MS Or 9617, Vol. I, ff. 72a-b, two letters.

3. *Badshah Nama*, BM MS Add 6556, f. 94a. The correct name is Kavi Rai and not Kab Rai as erroneously given in the manuscript. He was given the title of Kavi Rai by Shah Jahan.

4. *Tadhkiratul-Umara*, BM MS Add 16703, f. 69a.



Najabat Khan, the chief counsellor along with his two sons Ibrahim and Isma'il, all exerted themselves vigorously at the battlefield. Zulfiqar Khan, in utter desperation, in accordance with the traditions of chivalry, alighted from his horse and suffered many wounds.<sup>1</sup> The only major loss for Aurangzeb was the death of the invaluable Murshid Quli Khan; otherwise on the princes' side, there were fewer casualties. The general collusion between the Muslims on both sides (as we shall see) was also to some extent responsible for it. It is interesting to find that even the Hindu followers of Aurangzeb, namely, Kartalab Khan, Indra-man Dhindera and Sobh Karan Bundela, fought heroically on his side.

On the other hand, the picture that is offered to us by the imperial forces is quite different. The commonly held notion<sup>2</sup> that all the Rajputs present fought this battle with great loyalty to Dara Shikoh, is challengeable on account of the following facts:

Sattar Sal Bundela (under the influence of Sobh Karan Bundela, a supporter of Aurangzeb) deserted the imperialists before the very outbreak of the battle of Dharmat and joined Aurangzeb, who promoted him to the rank of 1000/500.<sup>3</sup>

Debi Singh Bundela deserted the imperialists during the very thick of the battle and joined the ranks of Aurangzeb<sup>4</sup>.

Sujjan Singh Bundela, perceiving weaknesses in the imperial army, retired from the battle field without fighting<sup>5</sup> and, later on, joined Aurangzeb.

As for the rest of the Rajputs who formed the bulk of the army, no doubt, they fought very bravely for a short while, but considering their opponents invincible, most of them, contrary to the Rajput traditions of chivalry and steadfast loyalty to their master, sought safety in flight. Jaswant Singh Rathor of Jodhpur, the premier noble of the Empire, in fact, led this flight. During this battle, the Rajputs had suffered heavy losses, for example, they had lost as many as twenty-four famous chiefs<sup>6</sup> (the most conspicuous

1. *'Alamgir Nama*, p. 67.

2. Sarkar, *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. II, pp. 14-15.

3. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, p. 510.

4. *'Alamgir Nama*, p. 70, *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 295-97.

5. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 291-92.

6. *Futuh-at-i-'Alamgir*, BM MS Add 23884, f. 22a; but 'Aqil Khan in his *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, p. 30 mentions forty chiefs killed.

being Mukand Singh Hada, Sujjan Singh Sissodia, Rattan Singh Rathor, Arjun Gaur, Dyal Dass Jhala and Mohan Singh Hada) and a large number of soldiers. Was this heavy loss of life the reason of their flight? If so, it was really an unworthy and cowardly act.

Strangely enough, the Muslims on the imperial side had lost an insignificant number of persons. The loyalty of Qasim Khan (5000/5000, *do aspah seh aspah*) and his Muslim followers to the cause of Dara Shikoh has often been doubted, for example, by Khafi Khan<sup>1</sup> and Bernier.<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Salih Kamboh condemns the conduct of Qasim Khan as a "piece of extreme shamelessness".<sup>3</sup> Even *'Alamgir Nama* indirectly admits that he and his men did not exert themselves well on the imperial side.<sup>4</sup> It is, however, an undeniable fact that the Khan was on friendly terms with Aurangzeb and had been in secret correspondence with him. The prince, in one of his letters, praised him for his devotion and loyalty and took pride in considering him his henchman, no matter where he was. He further assured him that for a long time, he had been considerate towards him on account of his unchallengeable sincerity and assured him that the rewards would be amply increased day by day.<sup>5</sup>

It was this very Qasim Khan, the commander of the Muslims—secretly well disposed towards Aurangzeb—who was stationed along with his 10,000 troops at one wing of the vanguard;<sup>6</sup> Mukand Singh Hada led the other wing which had violently attacked the artillery of Aurangzeb and killed its chief, Murshid Quli Khan. Had the Rajput chief been reinforced by Qasim Khan, the outcome of the battle would have been quite different. The contemporary accounts of this battle do not mention that the Khan ever took any part either in attacking the opposite forces or coming to the rescue of those Rajputs who were fighting violently. His example of indifference to the cause of his master was bound to be followed by his soldiers from the very nature of the *Mansabdari* system, wherein they were expected to be loyal to

1. *Muntakhabul-Lubab*, Vol. II, p. 18.

2. *Travels*, p. 39.

3. *'Amal-i-Salih*, BM MS Add 26221, f. 648b.

4. P. 72. "Qasim Khan and his followers, who had not become the target of the arrows of Fate, fled."

5. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, f. 165a.

6. 'Aqil Khan Razi, *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, p.28.

their immediate officer—the paymaster, and not the ultimate one.

There are strong reasons to suspect the loyalty of another imperial officer, Nasiri Khan, who had long before been receiving overtures of friendship from Murad (already discussed) as well as soothing letters from Aurangzeb and giving a favourable response to both of them. It seems, the friendship between Aurangzeb and the Khan had been very old and intimate. In the *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, there are extant as many as thirty-two letters written to him by the prince before and during this struggle<sup>1</sup>—amply showing their intimate friendship. Though the Khan had deserted Aurangzeb during the campaign against Bijapur in response to the imperial summons, yet he was feeling sorry for it and wanted again to join him<sup>2</sup>—as these letters disclose. Ultimately, he joined the prince, as we shall see, on the eve of the decisive battle of Samugarh. The Khan, owing to his previous connections and his keen desire to join Aurangzeb, could not have fought loyally at Dharmat for Dara Shikoh. The contemporary accounts do not at all mention his role anywhere in this battle, which confirms our doubts. A result of this general attitude was that the Muslims suffered insignificant losses in comparison with their fellow Rajputs who suffered an abnormally heavy toll of life. This is admitted by all the writers of those times.<sup>3</sup> The day following the battle, four Muslim officers, namely, Mukhlis Khan (2500/?), Saif Khan (1000/?), Mas'ud Yadgar (1000/?), and Muhammad Muqim (1000/?), deserted to Aurangzeb, who accepted their services and was pleased to honour them.<sup>4</sup> Of these four officers, Mukhlis Khan, a renowned Turanian soldier (on the imperial side at Dharmat), was in charge of scouts and skirmishes (*Karavul*) and his indifference to his master's cause would have done the latter a great harm. To call these four officers self-seeking careerists would be unjust on our part, because, by going over to Aurangzeb, they had taken a great risk, as the prince was still unequal in resources to Dara Shikoh. It was expected that with the return of Sulaiman Shikoh's forces from Bengal, the imperial side would become preponderant and

1. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, ff. 178a-186a.

2. *Fayyazul-Qawanin*, BM MS Or 9617, Vol. I, f. 73a.

3. For example, *'Alamgir Nama*, p. 73; *'Amal-i-Salih*, BM MS Add 26221, f. 648b, *Muntakhabul-Lubab*, Vol. II, p. 17.

4. *'Alamgir Nama*, p. 78; also see p. 130 of this work.

ultimately Dara Shikoh might win. Sarkar's assertion<sup>1</sup> that these officers could not have fought wholeheartedly during the battle only twenty-four hours earlier, seems correct.

In view of these considerations, it is difficult to accept Faruki's conclusion<sup>2</sup> that the Muslims on the imperial side fought loyally in the battle. Rather we are obliged to suspect with some justification that there was some collusion between the Muslims on either side. The only Muslim officer who went on fighting with an unflinching zeal and who was not at all disheartened by the disappearance of Jaswant Singh and his followers from the battle field, was Khwajah 'Abdul Baqa (title Iftikhar Khan).<sup>3</sup> why he did so has already been discussed in the chapter on "Ideological Differences."

A huge booty in the form of grand artillery, elephants and other military equipment fell into the hands of the victors,<sup>4</sup> who also gained great prestige; Dara Shikoh was brought down to their level.

Immediately after the victory, Aurangzeb, on reaching Ujjain, in order to hearten his followers, issued an "Honours List" conferring promotions, high-sounding titles and presents on them.<sup>5</sup>

The bravery of Murad was duly commended and he was presented 15,000 gold pieces (*Ashrafis*), four elephants and other gifts.

Prince Sultan Muhammad was raised to 20,000/15,000.

Najabat Khan, the chief counsellor, was conferred lofty title of Khan-i-Khanan Sipah Salar, given one lakh of rupees in cash and other gifts.

*Four Promotions of 4000 rank.*—Ghazi Bijapuri was raised to 4000/4000 and the title of Randula Khan; Kartalab Khan 4000/4000, 1000 *do aspah seh aspah*; 'Abid Khan 4000/4000; Multafat Khan 4000/2500 and was conferred the *Diwani* (in place of Murshid Quli Khan who had been killed at Dharmat), the title of A'zam Khan, a special robe of honour and other gifts.

*One Promotion of 3500 Rank.*—Mir Zia'ud-din, who was made

1. *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. II, p. 7.

2. *Aurangzeb and His Times*, p. 54.

3. *Tadhkiratul-Umara*, BM MS Add 16703, f. 11b.

4. 'Alamgir Nama, p. 73, Khafi Khan, *Muntakhabul-Lubab*, Vol. II, p. 18; 'Aqil Khan Razi, *Waqi'at-i-Alamgiri*, p. 31.

5. Based on 'Alamgir Nama, pp. 75-78.

Himmat Khan at Burhanpur, was now conferred Islam Khani, raised to 3500/500 and a cash prize of Rs. 4000.

*Four Promotions of 3000 Rank.*—Shuja'at Khan bin Khan-i-Khanan Bahadur Sipah Salar 3000/2000; 'Abdur Rahman Bijapuri 3000/1500 and the title of Sharza Khani; Ilham Ullah bin Rashid Khan Ansari 3000/3000,500 *do aspah seh aspah* and a robe of honour; Mukhlis Khan<sup>1</sup> bin Mansur Haji, a renowned Turanian soldier, who had deserted the imperialists on the second day of the battle of Dharmat, was raised to 3000/1500 and was also granted a robe of honour, a horse, Rs. 20,000 in cash and the title of Yak Taz Khani—these promotions were given to him in recognition of his "collusion."

*Seven Promotions of 2000 Rank.*—Fath Rohilla raised to 2000/500 and the title of Fath Jang Khani along with presents; Isma'il Khwishgi raised to 2000/600 and granted the title of Janbaz Khani and a flag; Kamal Lodi promoted to 2000/500 and the title of Hazbar Khani; Muhammad Beg Khwishgi raised to 2000/500 and the title of Dindar Khani; Murtaza Khan promoted to 2000/500 and gifts; Ahmad Beg Khwishgi raised to 2000/500 and the title of Islam Khani; Mir 'Isa bin Islam Khan 2000/200 and the title of Himmat Khan.

*Three Promotions of 1500 Rank.*—Mir Abu'l Fazl Ma'muri raised to 1500/500 and the title of Ma'mur Khani, Saif Khan bin Tarbiyat Khan, the *Bakhshi* of Shah Jahan's time, who deserted the imperialists on the second day of the battle of Dharmat promoted to the rank of 1500/700 and the title of Saif Khani;<sup>2</sup> Mas'ud Yadgar who had also joined Aurangzeb along with Saif Khan was raised to 1500/600, granted a *Khil'at* and his grandfather's title Ahad Beg Khani.

*Three Promotions of 1000 Rank.*—Khwajah Kalan<sup>3</sup> was raised to 1000/200, granted the title of Kifayat Khani and appointed the

1. Murad's seductive letter to Mukhlis Khan, already mentioned.  
2. It is alleged that Saif Khan was degraded by Shah Jahan under the instigation of Dara Shikoh and no cause was ever given for this degradation. Prince Aurangzeb, in a letter, urged Mu'azzam Khan, to recommend the reinstatement of the condemned person and succeeded, *vide Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, f. 102a. This very officer was a deserter at Dharmat and was later on, commissioned to put Dara Shikoh to death.

3. He was the *Khalu* (husband of mother's sister) of the historian Khafi Khan.

*Diwan* of Malwa; Daulat Afghan raised to 1000/500; Muhammad Muqim who deserted the imperialists on the second day of the battle of Dharmat, was raised to 1000/500, conferred a *Khil'at* and the title of Muqim Khani. These two officers were granted these promotions on account of "collusion."

In addition to these promotions, Shaikh Abdul 'Aziz, Hamiduddin, Hamid Kakar, Mas'ud Mangali, Rajah Indraman Dhindera, Sarfaraz Khan, Zulfiqar Khan and Bahadur Khan were honoured with gifts. Debi Singh Bundela<sup>1</sup> was also presented a robe of honour and a horse.

After a short stay of three days at Ujjain, the victors resumed their march forward and, on 21st May, they reached Gwalior. Here Nasiri Khan (already discussed), who had fought on the side of the imperialists at Dharmat, joined Aurangzeb who immediately promoted him to 5000/5000 and granted him a special robe of honour, a horse, an elephant and his father's title.<sup>2</sup>

*Reactions of Dara Shikoh.*—Dara Shikoh's anger at the defeat at Dharmat knew no bounds. He swore vengeance on his opponents. His very first target was Muhammad Amin Khan whose only fault was that he was the son of Mu'azzam Khan, an alleged accomplice of Aurangzeb. Muhammad Amin Khan was imprisoned,<sup>3</sup> but released soon through the good offices of Shah Jahan. Even then Dara Shikoh removed the Khan from the post of the imperial *Bakhshi* and appointed Khalil Ullah Khan in his place. The prince hurriedly summoned nobles from far and near for the emergency and also sent an urgent call to Sulaiman Shikoh ordering him to come to terms with Shuja' in Bengal immediately. In fact, it was this army which consisted mostly of dependable persons, but owing to the unavoidable circumstances, it was prevented from taking a decisive part in

1. A deserter of Dara Shikoh at Dharmat.

2. *Tadhkiratul-Umara*, BM MS Add 16703, f. 102b.

3. Khafi Khan, *Muntakhabul-Lubab*, Vol. II, p. 21; 'Alamgir Nama, p. 84. According to Bernier (*Travels*, p. 41), Dara Shikoh thought Qasim Khan gravely responsible for the defeat at Dharmat. Had this assertion been a fact, the prince would never have allowed him an important position at the battle of Samugarh.

the battle ahead—to his extreme ill-fortune.

The Emperor was convalescing at Delhi, when the news of the defeat at Dharmat was conveyed to him. Dara Shikoh worried him so much with complaints and remonstrances that he was forced, even against medical advice, to leave immediately for Agra, in order to use the awe of his authority to gather the nobles around his son and also to allow him to utilise the imperial treasury at the capital for his pressing needs.

The Emperor expressed his hatred for war between brothers and advised Dara Shikoh to avoid it at any cost. He even conceived the idea of proceeding personally to the battle field to assure the princes of his health and also for mediation.<sup>1</sup> In case, the Emperor thought, the princes even then insisted on fighting, they might be deserted by their followers who were the least expected to face their supreme overlord in the battle field. In this way, the Emperor hoped to bring about peace. But Dara Shikoh vigorously opposed this proposal and was determined to go on alone. Even Sha'istah Khan opposed this very sensible proposal, because either he did not wish to antagonise Dara Shikoh by openly opposing him or because he wished both these brothers to fight so that Aurangzeb might get the opportunity of annihilating Dara Shikoh in the open. The latter alternative seems to be correct. How could he tender advice beneficial to Dara Shikoh, who had very recently degraded him from the governorship of Malwa? In this way, owing to the bitter opposition of the prince and discouragement from Sha'istah Khan in whom the Emperor had great faith, the proposal was dropped.

According to 'Aqil Khan Razi,<sup>2</sup> some nobles suggested to the Emperor that the imperial forces should not bar the princes from paying respects to their father at the capital; rather they should be welcomed to do so along with their supporters so that once they were in the court, the Emperor could employ his authority to scatter their followers far and wide and then send the princes back to their provinces completely shorn of prestige and supporters. Once the princes lost their supporters,

1. Khafi Khan, *Muntakhabul-Lubab*, Vol. II, p. 21.

2. *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, p. 33.

it would be very difficult for them to regain their strength and thus the war of succession would come to an end. This was the most sensible suggestion, but Dara Shikoh obstinately opposed it. He charged the Muslim nobles who made this suggestion with cowardice and contemptuously remarked that it was immaterial whether they followed him or not; the support of Rao Sattar Sal and the fellow Rajputs was sufficient for him and, after attaining victory, he would retaliate by reducing these short-trousered persons (i.e. the Muslim nobles) to an extremely abject position.<sup>1</sup> Hearing this, the Muslim nobles naturally withdrew their allegiance from him; if he did not need them, they argued among themselves, then why should they endanger themselves for his sake?

It seems, Dara Shikoh also had some justification for these bold assertions. At that time, he was not only the master of the vast imperial treasury at the capital but also the supreme commander of the royal armies. He had already wrought havoc on Shuja' who would not recover very soon. As for Aurangzeb and Murad, their resources paled into insignificance in comparison with his. Their armies were much fatigued after having suffered so many trials and tribulations in the way, and to defeat them at that juncture, he appears to have thought, was an easy job and he would monopolise the kingship easily. On the other hand, the Emperor's personal presence at the battle field would save them from annihilation and, after some time, they would again endeavour to challenge his (Dara Shikoh's) authority. Hence he did not wish to miss the opportunity which had suddenly come to him. It seems, he was greatly encouraged in these designs by the Rajputs (particularly Sattar Sal Hada), who hoped to gain by his accession to the throne.

*Battle of Samugarh (29th May 1658).*—Dara Shikoh was eminently right in calculating that in resources of men and money, he was far ahead of his opponents. Some of the best generals of the age were on his side, e.g., the flower of the Rajput chivalry, Rao Sattar Sal Hada of Bundi, Rup Singh Rathor and Ram Singh Rathor, Rajah Shiv Ram Gaur, Girdhar Gaur, the brother, and Bhem, the son of the late Rajah Bethal Dass Gaur and Ram Kishan Gaur, Biram Dev Sissodia, Kanwar Ram

1. Aqil Khan Razi, *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, p. 33.



Singh (the son of Mirza Rajah Jai Singh) and a host of Rajput veterans were determined this time to remove the imputation of cowardice made against their race by the flight of Jaswant Singh from the battle field of Dharmat. The Sayyids of Barah were keen on displaying their loyalty to their master, conspicuous among them were Sayyid Sher Khan Barah, Munawwar Barah, Nurul-'Ayan Barah and Maqbul Barah. Rustam Khan Feroz Jang, one of the bravest generals of the age, was also his supporter. His army consisted of imperial troops and also his own—all numbering approximately 50,000. The strategy of Dara Shikoh was to prevent the hostile forces from crossing the river Chambal and to postpone the military action till the arrival of Sulaiman Shikoh. But Aurangzeb, through a master stroke of strategy (already discussed in the previous chapter), succeeded in crossing the river at an obscure place and thus all the precautionary measures of Dara Shikoh in preventing his passage, failed. Aurangzeb forced the battle on him.

After crossing the Chambal, Aurangzeb made one last effort for peace. In a letter to Shah Jahan<sup>1</sup>, he again mentioned his grievances against the excesses of Dara Shikoh, who had deprived his father of all power and usurped all authority for himself; the *Shah-i-Buland Iqbal* had stabbed him in the back by abruptly stopping the hostilities against Bijapur and had snatched his *jagirs* at Malwa in an attempt to impoverish him—all these deeds he had accomplished under Shah Jahan's signatures. It was only to release the Emperor from his clutches, the prince protested, that he had undertaken such an arduous journey, but Dara Shikoh had barred his way by sending Jaswant Singh against him, who was, however, soon annihilated in the battle field. If, apart from paying respects to the Emperor, the prince argued, he had any other motive, he could have easily arrested the Rajput chief with his panic-stricken followers and dealt with them severely. He further represented that the existing serious troubles in the Empire could be put to an end only if Dara Shikoh was immediately sent away to govern his own province, i.e. the Punjab. Aurangzeb wrote a similar letter to the *Vakil* Ja'far Khan also.<sup>2</sup> No

1. *Fayyazul-Qawanin*, BM MS Or 9617, Vol. I, ff. 86a-87b; *'Amal-i-Salih* Vol. III, pp. 292-94 (Bib. Ind.).

2. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, ff. 146b-147a.

reply to either of these letters was received by the prince.

*Weaknesses in the Army of Dara Shikoh.*—In spite of its magnificent appearance, the army of Dara Shikoh suffered from the same weaknesses as displayed at Dharmat. Dara's army consisted largely of his own troops and Rajput contingents. They were all reliable; but the remaining were the Muslim nobles who were with him because of extraneous factors, i.e. either due to Shah Jahan's influence or owing to their accidental presence at the capital and they were generally not dependable. His army was also a collection of heterogeneous persons not at all united by any single command. It did contain traitors within its ranks, who professed loyalty to the master only in words. Khalil Ullah Khan's treacherous advice<sup>1</sup> to his master to change his seat from an elephant to a horse (when the victory was within reach) has often been mentioned as the immediate cause of the defeat of the imperialists. This is the assertion of Bernier and Manucci who also state that this imperial officer, along with his 30,000 Mughals,<sup>2</sup> stood still on the presumption that his was a reserve force meant to fight only if the situation seemed to be going out of control. Elphinstone has vigorously challenged this statement.<sup>3</sup> According to him, if Khalil Ullah Khan, along with his large army, really did not participate in the battle, how could he dare later on to tender this advice to the prince and how would the latter have cared to listen to him? Dara Shikoh was the moving spirit in the battle field on that day; how the alleged inactivity of Khalil Ullah Khan could have escaped his notice? This sweeping statement is not at all supported by contemporary Persian writers, who were conversant with the situation more intimately than Bernier or Manucci. Khafi Khan, on the other hand, mentions that Khalil Ullah Khan, the leader of the imperial van, led 3000 or 4000 Uzbek archers against the elephant of Murad.<sup>4</sup> In fact, Khalil Ullah Khan did exert himself but only once for a short while throughout that fierce battle. One hears no more of his further activities on the side of Dara Shikoh. 'Aqil Khan

1. Bernier, *Tavels*, pp. 53-54; Manucci, *Storia*, Vol. 1. pp. 281-82.

2. According to 'Aqil Khan Razi, p. 46. Khalil Ullah Khan who commanded 15,000 horsemen made no exertions whatsoever in this battle for the sake of Dara Shikoh.

3. *History of India*, p. 584.

4. *Muntakhabul-Lubab*, Vol II, p. 26.

Razi's assertion that the Khan was in collusion with Aurangzeb seems to be correct.<sup>1</sup> The fact, however, is that Dara Shikoh fled from the battle field only when he found the vast majority of his supporters (viz. Rao Sattar Sal Hada, Bhem, the son, and Raja Shiv Ram, the nephew of the late Raja Bethal Dass Gaur, Rup Singh Rathor and other Rajputs, also the veteran Rustam Khan) killed there and then and no hope of victory, whatsoever, was left to him.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to Khalil Ullah Khan, there were two more officers whose loyalty to Dara Shikoh was open to grave doubts. Qasim Khan who had made no serious exertions at Dharmat was also present at Samugarh. He was stationed on the left wing of the imperial army.<sup>3</sup> The contemporary writers are silent about his actions at the battle field and from this we should conclude that he might not have exerted himself over much. Another commander Maha Singh Bhaduriyah's role had been far from satisfactory (p. 105). These officers, though not the main cause of Dara Shikoh's defeat, were certainly the most unhelpful to the prince.

*General Absence of Collusion at the Battle of Samugarh.*—As already stated, on the eve of the battle of Dharmat and during the course of the fighting, diplomacy had been at work. The princes not only succeeded in persuading some of the imperial nobles to their side but had also been eminently successful in shaking the loyalties of the bulk of the Muslim commanders. It is, however, interesting to find that these conditions were in general not applicable to the Battle of Samugarh. At this battle, the situation was such that diplomacy had no scope for work. Only the arbitrament of the sword could decide the main issues between the parties. The parties, on the whole, with some exceptions (already mentioned) consisted of rigid persons, who could be broken but not bent to suit the whims of their opponents. A peculiarity of this battle was that the staunch

1. *Waqi'at-i-Alamgiri*, p. 46. That Khalil Ullah Khan was really a confidant of Aurangzeb, is borne out by the fact that immediately after the victory at Samugarh, the former was deputed by the latter to inquire into the inner motives of Shah Jahan in summoning the prince to the Agra fort for a meeting.

2. *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, p. 48, *Muntakhabul-Lubab*, II. pp. 28-29. Ishar Dass Nagar, *Fatuhah-i-'Alamgiri* BM MS Add 23884, f. 19a.

3. *Alamgir Nama*, p. 96.

followers of Dara Shikoh (i.e., the bulk of his followers) were predominantly Rajputs or the Shi'i nobles, who created a name in history by their bravery. As for the bravery of the Rajputs, the contemporary writers have unanimously paid tributes to it. Next to them were the Shi'i nobles supporting him wholeheartedly. The Sayyids of Barah, who were generally Shi'a, fought heroically for him. His other Shi'i confidants, namely, Zafar Khan Ahsan (well-known for his bigotry) exerted himself very strenuously along with 5000 cavalry at the left wing;<sup>1</sup> Fakhr Khan Najm-i-Sani was also attached to the left wing, 'Askar Khan Najm-i-Sani, the *Mir-i-Bakhshi*, with 3000 veterans formed the auxiliary force of the van, Husain Beg Khan (son-in-law of the late 'Ali Mardan Khan) the efficient superintendent of artillery and the three brothers Isma'il Khan, Ibrahim Khan and Ishaq Beg (the sons of the late 'Ali Mardan Khan) were also Dara Shikoh's henchmen. Ghazanfar Khan son of Allahwardi Khan was a conspicuous supporter of Dara Shikoh. The bravest Shi'a general of the age Rustam Khan was one of his greatest pillars. The fact that the eminent (and even bigoted) Shi'i generals of the times fought so desperately for their master, gives credence to the view that they did not wish the ideology of Aurangzeb to prevail. On the other hand, the followers of Aurangzeb, (including the bigots like Mulla 'Abdul Qawwi, Hoshdar Khan) fought wholeheartedly for their beliefs. Keeping in view the spirit of the age, one cannot lose sight of the ideological factor also influencing the struggle under review. Under such circumstances, the possibility of a collusion between the Muslims on both sides on a larger scale should be ruled out. An important cause of Dara's defeat was that his artillery was very cumbersome and less mobile, whereas the artillery of Aurangzeb under Saf Shikan Khan wrought havoc on the enemy. By advancing in front of his artillery, Dara hampered his own gun men.<sup>2</sup> He never recovered from this mistake and this was an important cause of his defeat.

The victory of the princes was due not only to the superior leadership of Aurangzeb, but was also indebted to the fervent

1. *'Alamgir Nama*, p. 84 and *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 756—763.

2. *Waqi'at-i-Alamgiri*, p. 47.

zeal of his Sunni followers, otherwise one cannot explain how his petty and not at all well known soldiers could have dared to take up cudgels with the most renowned generals of the age on Dara's side and defeated them. The bravery of the imperial commanders e.g., Rup Singh Rathor and Ram Singh Rathor had become a proverb,<sup>1</sup> but even they failed. Only a fanatical zeal of Aurangzeb's followers could have aroused them to the courage necessary to face the veterans of the age.

The result of the victory at Samugarh was that Aurangzeb became the supreme power in the Empire. This is corroborated by the fact that after the Battle of Samugarh, Shah Jahan sent the commendatory letter and the famous sword 'Alamgir to Aurangzeb and not to Murad—the "King". All the nobles flocked to the ranks of Aurangzeb and professed loyalty to him and not to Murad. The nobles, in order to secure their prospects, disowned Shah Jahan, their supreme overlord and ultimately Dara Shikoh as well.

*Nobles flock to the ranks of Aurangzeb.*<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Amin Khan, who was under clouds in the regime of Dara Shikoh because of his inclinations towards Aurangzeb, was the first to pay his respects to the latter, who awarded him a special robe of honour and raised him to 4000/3000 (Ramazan 8, 1068 A.H./May 30, 1658 A.C.).

I'tiqad Khan bin the late Asaf Khan, Ja'far Khan and Ghazanfar Khan, the sons of Allahwardi Khan and Fakhar Khan Najm-i-Sani—all waited on Aurangzeb and were rewarded. Fakhar Khan Najm-i-Sani, however, was not pardoned entirely, he was deprived of his *mansab* on account of his having been a staunch follower of Dara Shikoh and lived in the capital on pension. (Ramazan 9/May 31).

Tahir Khan, Qubad Khan, Sarbuland Khan, Nawazish Khan and others joined the victor and were favoured. (Ramazan 11/June 2).

Khusrau and Bahram, the sons of Nazr Muhammad Khan and

1. 'Alamgir Nama, p. 102 and Muntakhabul-Lubab, II, pp. 26-27.

2. based on 'Alamgir Nama, pp. 111—120.

Muhammad Badi' bin Khusrau bin Nazr Muhammad, Tarbiyat Khan and Khwajah 'Abdul Wahab Dahbedi were graciously received when they joined the prince. (Ramazan 12th/June 3).

Sha'istah Khan, who was imprisoned by the Emperor on hearing the bad news of Dara Shikoh's defeat at Samugarh and was released by Shah Jahan after few days, paid his respects to Aurangzeb. On the same day, Khalil Ullah Khan and some other nobles including Maluji Deccani also joined. (Ramazan 14th/June 5).

Qasim Khan, Asad Khan, the second *Bakhshi*, Namdar Khan, Zafar Khan Ahsan, Sayyid Sher Khan Barah, Husain Beg Khan, 'Abdun-Nabi and others joined. (Ramazan 15th/June 6).

Shaikh Mirak and others joined and were honoured. (Ramazan 17th/June 8).

Ja'far Khan the *Vakil* and Taqarrab Khan joined and were honoured. (Ramazan 19th/June 10).

*Captivity of Shah Jahan.*—Immediately after the Battle of Samugarh, Aurangzeb wrote an apologetic letter to his father, begging to be pardoned for all that had happened and blamed Dara Shikoh, as usual, for these calamities.<sup>1</sup> Shah Jahan's reply was delivered to him by Fazil Khan the *Khan-i-Saman* and Sayyid Hidayat Ullah the *Sadr*. (June 1). Aurangzeb lent an eager ear to them and expressed his willingness to pay a visit to his father at the Agra fort as desired by the latter.<sup>2</sup> On the next day (June 2), these officers called on him again and along with the message, also delivered presents and the famous sword 'Alamgir on behalf of the Emperor. But, this time, they found the prince a changed person. It seems, he had been instigated by his nobles to defer the proposed visit to the Emperor for the sake of his own security and even the best efforts of these messengers failed to dispel the doubts of the prince. Therefore, they had to go back disappointed. Sarkar is of the view that it was under Sha'istah Khan's advice that he had changed his mind.<sup>3</sup> The fact is that on hearing the defeat of Dara Shikoh at Samughrh, Shah Jahan had immediately imprisoned Sha'istah

1. *Waqi-i-'Alamgiri*, 'Aqil Khan Razi. pp. 50-52.

2. *Woqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, 'Aqil Khan Razi, p. 52.

3. *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. II, p. 75.

Khan and also confiscated his *Jagir* and *Mansab*. The Khan was released<sup>1</sup> on Ramazan 12th/June 3 and it was only on June 5 that he was in a position to pay a visit to the prince.<sup>2</sup> Sarkar's suspicion that the Khan might have sent an advice to Aurangzeb on this context, seems a far-fetched idea, because while in jail, Sha'istah Khan was not in a position to know the outside happenings. The messages of Shah Jahan to Aurangzeb were not public and the Khan who was no longer in the confidence of the Emperor, was not expected to know them on June 2, particularly when he himself was a prisoner. Hence the suspicions of Sarkar are unfounded. But still the instigation was there. The nobles who endangered their all assets for the sake of making Aurangzeb a success, could not afford to see their hero in danger. As yet, the Agra fort was in the grip of unfriendly persons and there was no sense in taking a risk to see the Emperor, who was not at all well-disposed towards the prince. By 2nd June, imperial nobles of high ranks had not joined Aurangzeb and he had to depend mostly upon the advice of his old confidants, e.g., Shaikh Mir Khawafi, Bahadur Khan, 'Abdul Qawwi and so on, who would have certainly discouraged him<sup>3</sup> in such actions.

On June 5, Shah Jahan sent for him again through Fazil Khan and Khalil Ullah Khan, the latter, however, warned the prince from visiting the Emperor in the fort as there was the likelihood of an attack on his life.<sup>3</sup> Thus the peace mission failed and the prince expressed his inability to see the Emperor for the time being. On this very day, Khalil Ullah Khan and Sha'istah Khan joined the ranks of the prince (June 5) and most probably, it was under their instigation that the Agra fort was besieged by his troops and brought under the control of Aurangzeb and Shah Jahan deprived of all powers, but still he did not assume Kingship and behaved as if he was an agent of Shah Jahan. Probably this was the reason which encouraged the Emperor to direct Jahan-Ara on June 10 to the prince with the suggestion of partitioning the Empire among the brothers

1. *Adab-i-Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, f, 258b.

2. *'Alamgir Nama*, p. 114.

3. *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, 'Aqil Khan Razi, p. 55 and *Tarikh-i-Shah Jahani*, BM MS Or 174, f. 201b.

and proposing the status of *Shah-i-Buland Iqbal* for Aurangzeb<sup>1</sup> (June 10), but he could not accept it as he had started doubting seriously the motives of the Emperor. He was disgusted to learn the secret advice of Shah Jahan<sup>2</sup> to Murad that the latter should murder him through a stratagem and earn thereby the succession to the Empire. He was also perturbed to learn that the Emperor was busy secretly employing his influence for strengthening the position of Dara Shikoh. Owing to these reasons, he rejected the entreaties of Jahan-Ara. Faruki's emphatic assertion<sup>3</sup> that this meeting took place on 2nd June is contrary to the evidence contained in '*Alamgir Nama*<sup>4</sup>—more reliable as far as dates are concerned and hence is not at all acceptable.

"*Honours List*".<sup>5</sup> On 20th Ramazan/11th June, Aurangzeb entered the capital after having won over the bulk of the prominent nobles of the Empire and issued his "Honours List".

Khalil Ullah Khan promoted to 6000/6000, *do aspah seh aspah*, Muhammad Amin Khan restored to his old post of a *Bakhshi* (which had been snatched away by Dara Shikoh) and also awarded a *khil'at*,

Tarbiyat Khan promoted to 4000/4000 and the governorship of Ajmir,

Khan Zaman granted a drum, rank of 4000/2000 and Qil'adarship of Zafarabad,

Asad Khan the *II Bakhshi* promoted to 3000/1500,

Faiz Ullah Khan promoted to 3000/1500,

Iradat Khan who had been degraded recently by Shah Jahan

1. *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, 'Aqil Khan Razi, pp. 60-61. Tripathi's assertion (*Rise and Fall of The Mughal Empire*, Allahabad, 1956, p. 487) that Jahan-Ara advised Aurangzeb, on the eve of the Battle of Samugarh, to return to his province and he would be promoted to the rank of *Shah-i-Buland Iqbal* and Dara Shikoh to be sent away to the Panjab province—is incorrect. These proposals were, no doubt, made by Jahan-Ara to Aurangzeb, but after the Battle of Samugarh, when Dara Shikoh had lost everything and not at all before the Battle of Samugarh.

2. *Tarikh-i-Shah Shuja'i*, Muhammad Ma'sum, I.O. MS 534, f. 80a.

3. *Aurangzeb And His Times*, p. 59. Faruki has relied for this assertion on Khafi Khan (*Muntakhabul-Lubab*, Vol. II, p. 31), who himself is vague, when mentioning this incident.

4. '*Alamgir Nama*, p. 116.

5. *Ibid*, p. 119.



under the advice of Dara Shikoh, was granted 2500/1500.

On the very next day (June 12), Tahir Khan and Qubad Khan were raised to 4000/2500 and 3000/2500 respectively.

A significant thing to note is that after the Battle of Samugarh, i.e., from 29th May till 13th June, Aurangzeb did not order any pursuit of Dara Shikoh. It was only when he learnt that Dara Shikoh was busy making military preparations at Dehli that he ordered his pursuit. The question is why he did not order the pursuit immediately after the Battle. Perhaps he thought that Dara Shikoh was a ruined person and for the sake of his own safety, would quit the country voluntarily. When he found his calculations wrong, he ordered a vigorous pursuit of the fugitive prince. Further, he wrote soothing letters to the imperial commanders pursuing Shuja' in Bengal, advising them to desert Sulaiman Shikoh, their supreme commander and join his ranks immediately for the sake of their own benefit.<sup>1</sup>

*Desertions in the ranks of Sulaiman Shikoh.*—The defeat of Dara Shikoh at Samugarh had very adverse effects on the fortunes of Sulaiman Shikoh in Bengal. Also the soothing letters of Aurangzeb had shaken the loyalty of the bulk of his nobles. Immediately the old injuries were remembered by these officers. Jai Singh, who had not forgotten his insults at the hands of Dara Shikoh during the Qandhar campaign, also probably did not appreciate the placing of Bahadur Khan Baqi Beg—a junior officer—on par with him during the said campaign. He even found his interests in a serious jeopardy if he continued supporting any longer the interests of Dara Shikoh—a doomed man. The fear of the invasion of his homeland (Jaipur) must have been one of the causes urging him to join Aurangzeb. His whole career of service under the Mughal government was in danger, if he persisted in siding with the losing side. All these circumstances forced him to desert Sulaiman Shikoh immediately. He also prevailed upon his junior colleagues, namely, Hasan 'Ali, Khan<sup>2</sup> (who had deserted to the armies of Dara after the defeat of Shuja', February, 1658), Diler Khan Rohilla<sup>3</sup> and Ikhtisas

1. *Storia*, Vol. I, p. 284.

2. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, p. 593-599.

3. *Ibid*, vol. II, p. 45. Diler Khan Rohilla was later on destined to be the greatest general of Aurangzeb.

Khan Barah<sup>1</sup> to do the same. Diler Khan Rohilla, Jai Singh and Hasan 'Ali Khan joined the ranks of Aurangzeb on 22nd., 26th and 27th June, 1658 respectively. Aurangzeb immediately promoted Diler Khan to 3000/3000 and Hasan' Ali Khan to 1500/1000 with the title of Khan. In spite of his hostility towards Dara Shikoh, Jai Singh, however, did not show the meanness to arrest Sulaiman Shikoh—so easily within his reach—but he rather encouraged him to seek a refuge anywhere he thought fit. In this confusion, Salabat Bhan Barah, in whom Dara Shikoh had great faith, also deserted Sulaiman Shikoh and joined Aurangzeb,<sup>2</sup> (September 10, 1658). It only goes to the credit of Bahadur Khan Baqi Beg, that when Sulaiman Shikoh was deserted by all, he fully knowing that the cause he was espousing was a lost one, still exerted himself strenuously to save his master. He dissuaded him from proceeding towards Agra, as that was fraught with danger, he instead took him to Sri Nagar (in the Swalik Hills). These exertions told upon his health and he sacrificed his life in the service of his master.<sup>3</sup>

The defeat of Shuja' had undone him altogether, but fortune smiled on him, since the very strong combination of Aurangzeb and Murad against Dara Shikoh forced the latter to offer the most attractive terms to Shuja'. He was allowed to possess Bengal, Orissa and Bihar to the east of Monghyr.<sup>4</sup> This tempting offer was made by Dara Shikoh in a desperate bid to relieve his forces from Bengal in order to face with a full strength the armies of Aurangzeb and Murad, but it was too late.

*Arrest of Murad.*—(June 25, 1658). Murad was burning with jealousy at the growing importance of Aurangzeb and the instigation of flatterers made him forget the solemn undertakings of the agreement of 1658, by virtue of which he was bound to remain a loyal supporter of Aurangzeb. Now he wished the sovereignty of the whole Empire and nothing less. On the other hand, Aurangzeb, true to his word, had paid him one-third of the booty, i.e., Rs. twenty *lakh* and also undertook to confer the Panjab, Kashmir and Kabul in accordance with the previous

1. Ibid, Vol. II, pp. 473-475.

2. 'Alamgir Nama, p. 198.

3. *Ma'asirul-Umara*. Vol. I, pp. 444-47.

4. *Turikh-i-Shah Shuja'i*. I.O. MS 533, ff. 52a-56a.

agreement as soon as Dara Shikoh was finished off.<sup>1</sup> It seems, Murad considered his share an insignificant one and nothing short of the Empire could satisfy him. With this motive in view, he lavishly spent his money in winning over the nobles to his side and raised an enormous army of 20,000 soldiers. He also started conferring titles on the nobles just like Aurangzeb. He stopped visiting Aurangzeb. He seduced many nobles to his side who otherwise would have joined Aurangzeb. He succeeded in winning over Ibrahim Khan son of the late ,Ali Mardan Khan to his side.<sup>2</sup>

These circumstances annoyed Aurangzeb, who was also learning with grave concern the enormous military preparations of Dara Shikoh against him. He could not undertake a vigorous pursuit of Dara Shikoh because he was expecting treachery from Murad at any time. When he left Agra to pursue Dara Shikoh, Murad did not join him, but followed him rather suspiciously at some distance. Aurangzeb's worry was that if Murad's mischief was not nipped in the bud, he might be crushed in between the two inimical forces of Dara Shikoh and Murad. In this way, the possibility of his clash with Murad seemed imminent, which he wished to avoid at any cost.

Therefore, he resorted to diplomacy. Nurud-Din, an intimate of Murad, aided and abetted in this foul play.<sup>3</sup> The fears of Murad were dispelled by the professions of sincerity and quietly he was arrested by Shaikh Mir and Diler Khan, the confidants of Aurangzeb.<sup>4</sup> This plan was executed so quietly and quickly that none of his confidants could become aware of it. Though it was extremely unworthy, yet it was expedient no doubt and meant an immunity to the masses from one more calamitous battle. Murad was imprisoned in the fort of Delhi and later on transferred to Gwalior.<sup>5</sup> The whole military establishment of Murad was taken over and his nobles joined Aurangzeb; they were Debi Singh Bundela, Sayyid Hasan Barah, Diwan Rahmat Ullah, Dil Dost and Dildar Beg, the sons of

1. *Waqi 'at-i-Alamgiri*, ,Aqil Khan Razi,p. 66. According to '*Alamgir Nama*,p. 117, Aurangzeb paid Murad 26 lakhs of Rupees.

2. *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, 'Aqil Khan Razi,p. 65.

3. *Ibid*,p. 67.

4. *Alamgir Nama*,p. 138.

5. *Alamgir Nama*,p. 291,303.

Sarfaraz Khan Qadimi, Qutbud-din Khwishgi, Muhammad Mehdi, *Mir-i-Saman*, Mir Fattah and a host of other nobles—they were all honoured except Ibrahim Khan who was not pardoned, but he was granted a handsome pension.<sup>1</sup>

*Aurangzeb's assumption of sovereignty.*—(July 21, 1658 at Delhi). Thus all the rivals seemed cowed down and Aurangzeb announced his assumption of kingship, but the proclamation of royal titles, issue of coinage and the reading out of *Khutbah*—the essential requisites of kingship—were, however, postponed for the time being.<sup>2</sup>

So far, Aurangzeb had been running the government affairs as an agent of Shah Jahan, but the passage of time had shown him the impracticability of this position, (for a detailed discussion, see Appendix I, "Some comments on the deposition of Shah Jahan").

*Pursuit of the vanquished.*—Aurangzeb had settled the affair of Murad, apparently pacified Shuja' by conferring Bihar on him, sowed the seeds of dissensions in the army of Sulaiman Shikoh and sent Fidai Khan and Sha'istah Khan in pursuit against him and also deprived Shah Jahan of his sovereignty. In the meantime, he had been receiving disquieting reports about the extensive military preparations of Dara Shikoh. Therefore, to settle the matter once for all, he started in his pursuit on 12th June (1658).

*Activities of Dara Shikoh.*—(at Delhi, from June 5-12).

Soon after his defeat at Samugarh, Dara Shikoh fled to Agra and then to Delhi, where he stayed for a week. During this short time, he made strenuous preparations to recoup his losses. He collected money by laying his hands freely on the government stores and the houses of the nobles. He also wrote letters to the nobles at distant places promising them high favours if they joined him. He waited in vain for the arrival of Sulaiman Shikoh. Dara Shikoh, however, succeeded in raising an army of 10,000 soldiers. His immediate problem was where to go. The idea of proceeding towards Allahabad did not appeal to him despite the presence of his supporters in that fortress. His fear was that if he

1. *Tadhkirah-i-Salatin-i-Chaghatai*, B.N. Paris. Persian Supplement 74<sup>2</sup> f. 60a.

2. *Alamgir Nama*, p. 155.

went to the East, he might be crushed in between the hostile forces of Shuja' and Aurangzeb. Any further stay at Delhi was dangerous, because the rainy season was fast approaching, which might put a serious check on his movements. With the arrival of Aurangzeb in Agra on June 11, he found himself in an imminent danger of a clash with the superior forces of his rival. The idea of going to Lahore appealed him most, as from there, he hoped to enlist sturdy recruits for his army and also his faithful deputy 'Izzat Beg was a thoroughly dependable person in that province. Therefore, he left Delhi on June 13. On his way to Lahore, he passed through Sirhind, where its *Faujdar* and revenue collector Raja Rai Todar Mal Shah Jahani<sup>1</sup> had as a precautionary measure, hidden both himself and the state treasure of twenty *lakhs* of Rupees. But the prince succeeded in snatching the money and reached Lahore on July 3. Here he made extensive military preparations and also succeeded in gaining one crore of Rupees from the provincial treasury. Raja Rajrup, the *zamindar* of Kohistan (already discussed in chapter 3) owing to his residence in that province and Khanjar Khan, the *Faujdar* of Bhera, also joined him due to the same reason. He deputed Daud Khan with strong reinforcements to bar the passage of Aurangzeb at the Sutlej. He also persuaded Shuja' to create trouble for Aurangzeb by attacking him from the East.<sup>2</sup> He was even contemplating to assume kingship in the manner of Aurangzeb, who had done so recently at Delhi.

The news of Aurangzeb's start in pursuit of Dara Shikoh led to desertions in the latter's ranks. Khalil Ullah Khan and Bahadur Khan easily crossed the Sutlej (August 5, 1658) in spite of the vigorous arrangements of Dara Shikoh to the contrary. Then he tried to stop them at the Bias. Khalil Ullah Khan, seeing the vast military preparations of the foe, applied to Aurangzeb for further reinforcements and immediately Jai Singh, Diler Khan and Saf Shikan Khan were sent for help. Dara Shikoh lost heart and fled to Multan (August 18). During the course of this commotion, Raja Rajrup, on the pretext of enlisting more soldiers, received a handsome amount of money from the prince, decamped with this

1. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 286-287.

2. *'Alamgir Nama*, p. 180.

money and never met the prince again.<sup>1</sup> Khanjar Khan also deserted (September 15) and joined Aurangzeb.<sup>2</sup> Dara Shikoh reached Multan on September 5. Still he had an army of 14,000 and wanted to fight his pursuers at that place. On Khalil Ullah Khan's report to the effect, Aurangzeb started in person and reached Multan (September 25). Dara Shikoh stayed at Multan hardly for eight days (September 5-13) and he left for Bhakkar immediately after learning of Aurangzeb's departure for Multan. After his flight from Multan, Dara Shikoh was reduced to the position of a mere chief of few thousand soldiers. Therefore, Aurangzeb left his pursuit in the hands of his commanders and himself returned to the capital.

The fortress of Bhakkar was under Basant and Sayyid 'Abdul Razzaq—the loyal officers of Dara Shikoh, who were willing to face his pursuers vigorously. But Dara Shikoh lost heart and even from here he ran away. This act of the prince created a wave of disappointment among his followers and large scale desertions took place, e.g., Mir 'Aziz, Shaikh Nizam, Mir Rustam, Sayyid Tatar Barah, Sayyid Jawad Bukhari and some of his principal servants along with 4000 soldiers left him.<sup>3</sup> He was on the verge of being arrested by his pursuers when the timely and stealthy help of Muhammad Salih Tarkhan.<sup>4</sup> (married to the daughter of Dara Shikoh's foster-brother) saved him from the misfortune. Now the road leading to Qandhar was before him but owing to the vigorous opposition of his Harem, the project was dropped. The pursuit of Dara Shikoh by Bahadur Khan and Jai Singh was conducted very vigorously and they were specifically directed either to arrest the prince or to expel him completely from India.<sup>5</sup> The treachery of Muhammad Salih Tarkhan worried the imperial commanders very much, but the pursuit was continued.

In the meantime, the imperial troops were recalled by Aurangzeb. Sarkar's assertion,<sup>6</sup> that the reason of their recall was the insurrection of Shuja', does not seem to be wholly correct. The

1. *Storia*, Vol. I, p. 310.

2. *'Alamgir Nama*, p. 198.

3. *'Alamgir Nama*, p. 274.

4. *Ma'asirul-Umara*, Vol. III, pp. 560-562.

5. *Despatches of Jai Singh to Aurangzeb*, Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, Persian Supplement 476, f. 105a.

6. *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. II, p. 128.

pursuers were utterly exhausted<sup>1</sup> and they could not take an active part in the battle for sometime at least. The real reason seems to be the intended departure of Dara Shikoh for Persia that prompted Aurangzeb to recall his troops.

*Battle of Khajwa.* (January 5, 1659). The astounding successes of Aurangzeb had shocked Shuja', but he wanted to make another desperate bid for the peacock throne. He left for the imperial capital and in the way, his resources were multiplied when Dara's officers in charge of the forts of Rohtas, Chunar and Benares surrendered themselves to him. After covering some distance he reached Khajwa where he was stopped by prince Sultan Muhammad, who was soon joined by his father Aurangzeb and the battle started in no time.

On Aurangzeb's side the strategy of war was mostly that of Mu'azzam Khan (recently released by Aurangzeb and granted rare distinctions).<sup>2</sup> Jaswant Singh, who had recently joined Aurangzeb under the advice of Jai Singh was to command the right wing; he, at the very dead of night, (January 4) pounced upon Aurangzeb's forces along with his 14,000 Rajputs and by his basest treachery<sup>3</sup> created a hell of trouble in his ranks. He had even sent a secret message to Shuja' to attack Aurangzeb's forces when he would be busy creating havoc in Aurangzeb's forces. Shuja' did not believe this news and remained passive at that fateful moment. Aurangzeb was at that time busy performing his *Tahajjad* prayers; his wonderful coolness saved the whole situation and the order was soon restored in his ranks. His armies numbered about 50,000 troops, whereas Shuja' had only 23,000. Shuja' took the offensive and had virtually smashed the left wing of the enemy. Then his troops marched towards Aurangzeb where their progress was arrested to some extent.

1. *Despatches of Jai Singh to Aurangzeb*, Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris. Persian Supplement 476, f. 104a. It is also stated here that Jai Singh, during the course of this vigorous pursuit, had suffered a loss of 3000 horses and only 1000 were left to him. As for the losses of Bahadur Khan also engaged in the pursuit, nothing is known.

2. *'Alamgir Nama*, p. 190.

3. Aurangzeb's letter to Jai Singh, B.N. Paris, op. cit., ff. 2a-b.

"The behaviour of Jaswant Singh at the battle of Khawaja was such as could not be expected even from the meanest of the mean soldiers not to speak of the chief of the Rajput tribe of Rathors."

Aurangzeb got the legs of his elephant chained and faced the enemy like a rock. Sayyid, 'Alam Barah, Shaikh Wali', Shaikh Zarif, Hasan Khwishgi and others fought bravely for Shuja' but in vain. Shuja' deserted his elephant and took his seat on the horseback. This was a signal for flight to his army. Shuja' was now a spent up force and Mu'azzam Khan was ordered to pursue him and as a result of seventeen months' vigorous pursuit the prince was forced to leave Bengal for good (May 1660).

*Dara Shikoh.* Dara Shikoh, instead of proceeding towards Persia, reached Gujerat, where its Governor Shah Nawaz Khan Safavi (recently released by Aurangzeb and promoted to that post) accorded a royal welcome to him. Dara Shikoh was also promised full support from Jaswant Singh (who was soon to be chastised by Aurangzeb for his treachery at Khajwa) for another bid for the throne. With high hopes, the Prince started towards the North again, but was soon disillusioned to learn that the Rajput chief had gone back on his word (because Jai Singh had got him pardoned by Aurangzeb)<sup>1</sup> and did not know what to do. In the meantime, Aurangzeb had reached near him for a battle.

*Battle of Deorai.* (March 12—14, 1659). Dismay had already overwhelmed the ranks of Dara Shikoh. Nevertheless he prepared his defences in a hillock and fixed up artillery guns from place to place. Aurangzeb's forces were stationed at a respectable distance from his enemy. On the first day of the battle, his forces could not make any headway. On the second day, Shaikh Mir and Diler Khan forced Dara's army to come out in the open for a fight. The fighting lingered on for sometime and left no alternative for Dara but to run away. Except Firoz Mewati, none accompanied him. His confidants 'Askar Khan, Sayyid Ibrahim and his son Jan Beg and Muhammad Beg Turkman joined the ranks of Aurangzeb.<sup>2</sup> Aurangzeb's most precious loss was his loyal supporter Shaikh Mir Khawafi and on the opposite side, Shah Nawaz Khan Safavi was killed.

A strong force under Bahadur Khan and Jai Singh was sent

1. Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri P. 85.

2. 'Alamgir Nama, p. 326.



in pursuit of Dara Shikoh.<sup>1</sup> The misery of the fugitive prince was intense. His wife Nadira Begum, died during these wanderings. At long last, through the treachery of Malik Jiwan, the *zamindar* of Dadar, who was the host of Dara Shikoh for a few days, the prince was arrested at Dadar and handed over to the imperial officers Jai Singh and Bahadur Khan. This was the most welcome news for Aurangzeb, who acknowledged it with pleasure and greatly praised his officers for this difficult task.<sup>2</sup>

Sulaiman Shikoh, who had sought refuge with Raja Prithvi Singh of Sri Nagar, (Swalik Hills) was also surrendered to the Mughal government, through the diplomacy of Jai Singh.

Thus all rivals of Aurangzeb were no more on the scene and he was left as the unquestioned ruler of India. His coronation was performed with great pomp and show in 1659.

1. *Ibid*, pp. 330-332.

2. *Despatches of Jai Singh to Aurangzeb*, Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, Persian Supplement 476, f. 2b.

## Some Reflections on the War of Succession

**I**T was one of the bloodiest wars ever fought on the issue of succession in the whole history of Islam. The maxim "Kingship knows no kinship" was fully justified but the saying "Blood is thicker than water" proved entirely false. What added to the fierceness of the struggle was that the contestants being very capable persons, each in his own way, also possessed huge resources of men and money and they strained every nerve to utilise them to their utmost. On the loss of human lives in this war, there are conflicting reports; the consensus of the opinion, however, revolves round the figure of about half a *lakh*.

As for the subsequent wars of succession fought after the death of Aurangzeb, it can be said without any fear of contradiction that they all pale into insignificance if compared with the struggle under review. Neither the contestants ever possessed such remarkable personalities as those of Aurangzeb or Dara Shikoh, nor they had such vast resources of war at hand. Religion, which was an important factor in the present struggle was also an inconsiderable element in the later wars of succession.

It is interesting to imagine the effect of Aurangzeb's vivid recollection of his part in the War of Succession on his behaviour towards his own sons. He always kept a vigilant eye on them; even their most minute activities were jealously spied upon and reported to the Emperor, who always took a particular care to see that none of them ever becomes stronger enough so as to constitute a menace to his sovereignty. It is an incontestible historical fact that Aurangzeb never hesitated to impose sentences of imprisonment or even fines on them for offences,

which his father Shah Jahan had always ignored. Aurangzeb's sons usually preferred to be stationed away from the imperial capital in order to escape the jealous supervision of an exacting father. Prince Akbar's exasperation and consequent rebellion (1681) against the father totally sealed his fate. He fully knew that his father would never forgive him and so he sought safety in banishing himself from India. It is arguable that there is a connection between the Wars of Succession of 1657-58 and those of 1707 and 1712 in that Aurangzeb's jealous suspicions denied his sons and grandsons that training in loyalty and in the management of imperial affairs which might have prevented sacrificing long-term welfare of the imperial family to immediate fratricidal passion.

Had Dara Shikoh been victorious in this struggle, the history of Sunni Islam would have been very different. Judged from the extensive writings, it is quite safe to infer that he would have not only revived the religious policy of Akbar but even gone further to the disgust of the Sunnis who, undoubtedly, formed the pillar of the Mughal Power in India. On the other hand, Aurangzeb was an ideal Muslim in the eyes of the orthodox; they knew that with his accession, the forces of heterodoxy and infidelity would receive a setback,<sup>1</sup> and that Islam would be consolidated in its exalted position in the sub-continent. That their hopes and aspirations came out true and Sunni Islam became firm footed, has been amply borne out by the subsequent history of Indo-Pakistan. Some have even asserted that the Two Nation Theory, which has so profoundly affected the modern politics of the land, possibly, might not have seen the light of day but for the accession of Aurangzeb 'Alamgir to the peacock throne, (though this seems to be a slight overtone).

1. in a letter to Suban Quli the ruler of Balkh, Aurangzeb defended his treatment of Dara Shikoh purely on religious grounds. *Bahar-i-Sukhn*, BM MS Or 178, f. 24b.

## Appendix I

# Some Comments on the Deposition of Shah Jahan

**T**HIS act of Aurangzeb has earned him the most adverse comments of the historians and has been deemed an unfilial act. It seems that this view has been based mostly on sentimentalism rather than on a critical study of the pressing circumstances, which had left no other alternative for Aurangzeb. The discussion below will show how Aurangzeb was pressed by exigencies to move from one step to another at long last to the most unpleasant one.

In September, 1657, the rumour of Shah Jahan's death and the consequent assumption of sovereignty by Dara Shikoh was afloat everywhere. The threatened war of succession among the brothers seemed imminent and a war of nerves was already going on in all corners of the Empire. Had Aurangzeb remained disinterested, most of his officers would have deserted him and joined the contestants in order to safeguard their interests with the ultimate consequence that his security problems would have become very grave. Therefore, an important motive of his departure from the Deccan to the North was the instinct of self-preservation. He had explicitly stated again and again that his struggle was not at all directed against Shah Jahan, but solely against Dara Shikoh with whom he had acute personal and ideological differences. His main aim was to oust him from the exalted position, which Aurangzeb considered detrimental to his best interests. The defeat of Dara Shikoh at Samugarh ruined the prince, but still no serious attempt was made immediately to pursue him, because the main object of removing him from the higher position had been achieved.

Subsequently, it was the attitude of Shah Jahan, which stiffened that of Aurangzeb and was responsible for the unfortunate incidents which followed later. Shah Jahan, who had throughout been very partial towards his eldest son, failed to have Aurangzeb defeated in the battle field, and then resorted to undo him through diplomacy. He sent him presents including the historic sword 'Alamgir and also expressed a fervent desire to see him through his emissaries Khalil Ullah Khan, Ni'mat Ilahi and the Khan-i-Saman Fazil Khan. Khalil Ullah, by winking his eye, advised Aurangzeb not to visit Shah Jahan<sup>1</sup> as that was fraught with dangers. He, therefore, desisted himself from doing so and ostensibly acknowledged with thanks the greetings from his father and promised to pay respects to him at an opportune time. The Emperor soon lost patience and not contented with one, he sent him three calls for an immediate meeting at the Agra fort within a brief space of one week. Shah Jahan had been censuring the prince unjustly ever since the latter's failure at Qandhar and had never felt the urge of seeing him. These messages contained very soft words—all the time urging the prince to rush to see him at the fort at once—in a marked contrast with the censures he had been receiving as a Governor of the Deccan. These honeyed words ostensibly aimed at removing the misgivings of the prince, were bound to be viewed with concern by the latter and particularly by his followers, who had put their whole careers into jeopardy for the sake their hero.

If, on one hand, Shah Jahan was keen to disarm the suspicions of the prince by a display of paternal love, on the other hand, he was busy writing secret letters to Murad,<sup>2</sup> Shuja,<sup>3</sup> and Mahabat Khan,<sup>4</sup> the Governor of Kabul, inciting them to create troubles for Aurangzeb. He also secretly advised Dara Shikoh, to prolong his stay at Delhi where he was busy making extensive military preparations as something in his best interests was to take place shortly.<sup>5</sup> This information was intercepted at the very

1. *Tadhkira-i-Salatin-i-Chaghatai*, Muhammad Hadi alias Kamwar Khan, B.N. Paris, Persian Supplement 742, f. 58a.

2. *Tarikh-i-Shah Shuja'i*, I.O. MS 533, f. 80a.

3. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177, Aurangzeb to Shah Jahan, ff. 299a-300b.

4. *Muntakhabul-Lubab*, Khafi Khan, II, p. 36.

5. *Waqi'at i-Alamgiri*, 'Aqil Khan Razi., p. 63.

time, when Aurangzeb was proceeding on his way to see his father. This mass of evidence elicited from the contemporary writers cannot be brushed aside as forged, particularly when it is also corroborated by the foreign travellers, who cannot be suspected of partiality towards Aurangzeb. According to Bernier,<sup>1</sup> it was Raushan-Ara Begum, who had apprised Aurangzeb of the presence of Tartar women guards directed to murder him immediately on entering the fort. Manucci, a partisan of Dara Shikoh, who had fought for his master at the battle of Samugarh and missed no opportunity of maligning Aurangzeb in his voluminous *Storia*, also mentioned<sup>2</sup> frankly that had Aurangzeb gone to visit his father, he would have been killed by the women guards in the fort, who were all skilled in the use of arms. These circumstances appear to have convinced Aurangzeb of the dangerous intentions of Shah Jahan and that is why he dropped the idea of visiting his father. In such circumstances, he could not accept Jahan-Ara's suggestion proposing a partition of the Empire amongst the brothers, as it meant only giving time to Dara Shikoh to consolidate his position. The plan was, in fact, put forth too late, when the intentions of Shah Jahan towards Aurangzeb were open to grave suspicion. The prince feared that if he restored the sovereignty of Shah Jahan, it would automatically mean the return of Dara Shikoh to his previous status, the outcome he wanted to avoid at any cost. This would not only mean his own safety in grave danger, but was also tantamount to betraying the religious scruples which had been the source of strength to him in that struggle and posterity condemning him as a hypocrite. Even in these pressing conditions, he strove to rule as an agent of the Emperor, but as this position seemed untenable, he had to assume the sovereignty of the Empire upon himself. Therefore, the deposition of Shah Jahan was a sheer necessity for Aurangzeb.

The captivity of Shah Jahan has been wrongly termed as such. The only restriction imposed was his confinement in the four walls of the extensive Agra fort. Within the fort, his movements were watched only to the extent that he might not be able to drop any inflammatory letter outside against Aurangzeb, other-

1. *Travels*, p. 65.

2. *Storia*, I, p. 291.

wise all his requirements were adequately satisfied. Fazil Khan (rank 3000) was specially deputed to see to all comforts of Shah Jahan.<sup>1</sup> The anniversary of Mumtaz Mahal was regularly celebrated in the fort without any hindrance. The debts of Shah Jahan due to some merchants were also cleared by Aurangzeb. He was often the recipient of presents from Aurangzeb. The letters of Aurangzeb to Shah Jahan, even after the former's assumption of sovereignty, are full of deep reverence for the father, which is simply an unprecedented thing in the Mughal history. Throughout the struggle, Aurangzeb had been at pains to show that he was acting against Dara Shikoh and not at all against Shah Jahan, whereas the latter and his father both, had openly rebelled against their respective fathers.

1. *Abad-i-'Alamgiri*, BM MS Or 177. f. 162-163, Aurangzeb to Fazil Khan.

## Appendix II

# Responsibility of the 'Ulama for the Execution of Dara Shikoh. (August 30, 1659).

THE story still persists in text books by modern writers that the 'Ulama in the pay of Aurangzeb signed a decree demanding the death penalty for Dara Shikoh on account of his alleged heresies<sup>1</sup> and that they did it solely to please their master. One is fortunate to find ample contemporary sources for a critical study of this period, but none of them, official or non-official, has mentioned the legal decree anywhere. Khafi Khan, who wrote his voluminous history about seventy three years after the murder of Dara Shikoh and approximately twenty five years after the death of Aurangzeb, was the first person to hold the 'Ulama responsible for the murder of the prince.<sup>2</sup> He stated that Aurangzeb ordered the execution of Dara Shikoh under a legal opinion of lawyers, as he had gone astray from the *Shar'*, vilified the faith, had intimately associated himself with the forces of heresy and infidelity and that he was the author of a highly misleading book, entitled *Majma'al-Bahrain*. But *'Alamgir Nama* says nothing about the legal decree responsible for the execution of the prince. It simply states that his execution was ordered from expediency and that it was promptly carried out.<sup>3</sup>

1. *History of Aurangzeb*, Sarkar, Vol. II, p. 214, *Aurangzeb And His Times* Faruki, p. 71, *Rise and Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Tripathi, p. 496.

2. *Muntakhabul-Lubab*, Vol. II, p. 87. Nawab Ghulam Husain Khan's *Siyarul-Mutakhirin*, 1195 A.H./1738 A.C., also alluded to this legal decree. There is a possibility that he might have copied this reference from Khafi Khan.

3. *'Alamgir Nama*, p.432.



If Khafi Khan was correct in his assertion, then there seems no reason, why '*Alamgir Nama* should suppress it, as its official announcement would not have meant any slight for its hero (i.e., Aurangzeb). If '*Alamgir Nama* could explicitly hold the *Ulama* responsible for the execution of Murad, then how could it have concealed the hand of the '*Ulama* in the murder of Dara Shikoh.

It is a fact worthy of notice that Khafi Khan who had generally plagiarised Muhammad Sadiq's *Tarikh-i-Shah Jahani*, could not find any hint about the legal decree in that book, and appears to have added this information from his own. Fortunately for us, Ma'sum by an incidental reference, has solved the whole mystery.<sup>1</sup> He has stated unambiguously that first of all, Aurangzeb on the advice of his counsellors was contemplating imprisoning Dara Shikoh in the fort of Gwalior, where Murad was also serving his imprisonment. Later on, at the instance of Raushan-Ara and others, it was decided to deprive him of his life and to bury him in the very premises of Humayun's tomb, In this way, Ma'sum made no mention of any legal decree and held the Emperor and his advisers responsible for the execution of Dara Shikoh.

The contemporary non-official works, *Tadhkirah-i-Salatin-i-Chaghatai* of Muhammad Hadi alias Kamwar Khan, e.g., '*Amali-Salih*' *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, *Nuskha-i-Dilkusha* of Bhem Sen and *Futuh-i-'Alamgiri* of Ishar Dass Nagar have never mentioned anywhere that a legal decree was responsible for the loss of Dara Shikoh's life. The very fact that Aurangzeb ordered Dara Shikoh to be buried in Humayun's tomb suggests the absence of any legal decree, as otherwise that would have meant an act of disrespect to bury a heretic by the side of his revered forefather. Bernier,<sup>2</sup> who was actually in Delhi in those fateful days, tells the same tale, that the execution of Dara Shikoh was decided upon by the Emperor and his confidants and they consisted of Raushan-Ara, '*Ulama* and high-ranking government officers. The voices which spoke strongly against Dara Shikoh were, firstly, of Hakim Daud (title Taqarrab Khan) demanding a death penalty for the alleged heresies of the

1. *Tarikh-i-Shah Shuja'i*, I.O. MS 533, f. 142b. (1070 A.H./1660. A.C.)

2. *Travel*, p. 100.

prince<sup>1</sup> and secondly that of Raushan-Ara asking for the same in the interest of the state. She was supported by Sha'istah Khan, Khalil Ullah Khan and Muhammad Amin Khan—the old enemies of the prince.

The evidence of Ma'sum, its confirmation by Bernier and its implicit endorsement by '*Alamgir Nama*, forces us to reject the statement of Khafi Khan as malicious against the '*Ulama* of the times of Aurangzeb. In fact, it was the confidants of the Emperor, '*Ulama* and laymen alike including Raushan-Ara, who had sealed the fate of Dara Shikoh. It appears that Khafi Khan has given vent to his prejudices as a Shi'a<sup>2</sup> so as to magnify the alleged short-sightedness of the Sunni '*Ulama* of those times. There is a possibility that he might have gained this information from his father Khwajah Mir, a loyal employee of Murad—the very circumstance prejudices the whole case.

1. Ibid, p. 101. According to Bernier, Hakim Daud was beheaded soon by somebody on account of his vehement support for the execution of Dara Shikoh. This assertion is not at all confirmed by any contemporary source.

2. Khafi Khan is a curious Shi'a historian. A keen study of his voluminous *Muntakhabul-Lubab* conveys the impression that there is not much worth praising in the Mughals. If ever he praises a Mughal Emperor for his good laws, he loses no time in asserting that such laws were not actually found in force. He is too subtle in inflicting hits on the Mughals.

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*Adab-i-'Alamgiri*.—Compiler Muhammad Sadiq Mutalibi. BM MS Or 177. It is a highly useful document containing the correspondence of prince Aurangzeb addressed to Shah Jahan, other princes and the various nobles in the period from 1650-58 an invaluable source for the War of Succession. Though these letters display only one side of the picture, yet it is difficult to doubt their authenticity for the following reasons:

*Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, was compiled in 1115 A.H./1704 A.C., not at all under an official patronage—at a time, when 'Alamgir was worn out, too much engrossed in the Deccan wars and was spending his whole time and energies in the South. The Emperor had already forbidden the writing of his own history on religious considerations and the question of his tempering with this document to give him a *post facto* justification for his attitude in the War of Succession, seems highly improbable.

The compiler of this document Muhammad Sadiq Mutalibi had been the scribe of prince Akbar, the younger son of Aurangzeb for sometime. Having been closely associated with prince Akbar, Muhammad Sadiq Mutalibi could have no sympathy with Aurangzeb—the person responsible for the banishment of his master. Moreover, the compiler had undertaken this task at the earnest wish of his son (as he himself mentioned it in the introduction of the document) and there is nothing in the manuscript to convey the impression of any official influence over it. Some of the assertions in the *Adab-i-'Alamgiri* have also been verified from the contemporary sources, viz. *Fayyazul-Qawanin*.

2. *A'in-i-Akbari*.—Abu'l Fazal 'Allami. BM MS Add 7652 and the text edited by H. Blochmann, Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta,

1872. This is actually the fourth part of the famous Akbar Nama—dealing mainly with the administrative system of Akbar.

*Akbar Nama.*—Abul Fazl 'Allami, BM MS Add 27247 and the Persian text edited by Agha Ahmad 'Ali and Maulvi 'Abdur Rahim, Bib. Ind., Calcutta 1877-87. This is the famous history of Akbar completed in 1595 and later on continued till 1601.

*'Alamgir Nama.* Muhammad Kazim Shirazi. The work was completed in 1688. The Persian text has been edited by Maulvi Khadim Husain, Bib. Ind. Calcutta, 1868. This is the official history of the first ten years of Aurangzeb's reign and is particularly very useful for the dates of occurrence of various events. Too much verbosity and flowery phraseology in it. Contrary to the fashion of historians, 'Alamgir Nama hurled the most uncharitable epithets on the opponents of Aurangzeb, particularly Shuja', Dara Shikoh and his sons, but Aurangzeb himself described as a superhuman person. It has also suppressed some truths distasteful to its hero.

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This work has been sometimes known as *Zafar Nama-i-*



'*Alamgiri*, *Halat-i-'Alamgiri* and *Waqā-i-'Alamgiri*. An author while writing a book usually mentions in the preface, the name of the book the subject matter etc., but 'Aqil Khan Razi did not do so. Probably he feared that his narrative of this struggle written in such an independent and a fearless manner might involve him in trouble with 'Alamgir and therefore, he did not deem it expedient to disclose his name. The work remained unknown till after the death of Aurangzeb, when it was discovered by Khafi Khan.

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**The following misprints are regretted**

<u>Page</u>	<u>Line</u>	<u>Incorrect</u>	<u>Correct</u>
4	Last but one line	Khilafat-Ullah	Khalifat-Ullah
30	24	Ilwamish	Balban
31	6	Muzaffargarh	Muzaffarnagar
32	5	consideration	consideration
43	21	hand	and
45	26	advantages	advantages
75	Foot note 4	دشمن دین مبین	دشمن دین مبین
82	17	slows	shows
84	17	agent	against
148	Foot note 3, line 2	khawaja	Khajwa
158	23	e.g.,	(delete e.g. from this line)
164	26	remaind	remained