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History Writing in Urdu: Hashmatu'l-Lah Khan, Kacho Sikandar Khan Sikandar, and the History of the Kargil District

In the field of historiography, Urdu's contribution does not appear as valuable as in literature, even though it is the first indigenous language, in the modern era, to undertake the production of historical writings.

The reasons are manifold: the circumstances of the beginning of modern history writing in this language; its suitability, which some question, as a medium for history writing; its sharing of the Indo-Muslim tradition of historiography, which up to the first half of the twentieth century did not draw from history's raw materials (official papers, archeological remains, inscriptions, coins) but only from the works of preceding historians (Hardy 1960, 1–4).

Urdu emerged as a language able to produce works of history at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, when English historiography was introduced in India. Urdu historiography, therefore, developed at the time of the decline of Indo-Persian and the emergence of Western historiography. As early as the period preceding the founding of Fort St. George College in Madras, Fort William College in Calcutta, and the Delhi College, a few works of an historical nature can be found written in Urdu. From these specimens—whether speaking about original works or translations or abridged translations of histories in Persian—one finds that this type of work was usually undertaken on commission, often from English officials, and the topics dealt with were always related to India, understood both in its totality and in its regional particularities. The language, variously called by the authors Hindi-Urdu, Urdu or Dakẖni, is in general quite simple but is often interspersed with Persian or local language words and expressions. Only on rare occasions are sources mentioned, even when it comes to well-known

authors, such as Munʿim Khān Aurañgābādī,[1] who certainly had access to state documents. Apart from this last historian, it does not seem that the authors of historical works had a particular specialization in writing history, rather, they were simply concerned with gathering a certain amount of information requested by their clients (who, very often, having only a vague notion of historiography, were not much concerned with it).

Urdu historiography, born in a moment of transition, is, in a certain sense, squashed between Persian and English history writing and unable to glean the best of either tradition. And this brings us to the use of the Urdu language as a means for writing history.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, and particularly as a consequence of the encounter with Western culture and British works, there was an effort to get rid of old stereotypes and to renew the language, making it suitable for the exposition of any topic. And though this effort was carried on, so that eventually Urdu was able to respond positively to all the stages of national historical developments, opinions are divided. There are those who hold that Urdu succeeded in stripping itself of courtly traditions, highfalutin words, artificial diction and stale images, and became a language able to reflect the psychological considerations, the emotional experiences, and even the whispering of the populace. And in doing so, it made room for the foundation of new and vigorous schools born in response to Western-style education and modern lifestyles, such that one can speak of an Urdu revival, of which Muḥammad Ḥusain Āzād (1830–1910) and Khvāja Alṭāf Ḥusain Ḥālī (1837–1914) were the precursors (see, for example, Faruqi 1959, 298–316). But others are not of the same opinion. Despite the conspicuous presence of a number of authors of material definable as scientific and historical, considered models of clarity, erudition, flexibility, and research (*ibid*., 314–15), the eminent Pakistani historian K. K. Aziz, for example, puts forward serious and justifiable doubts that, as far as history is concerned, Urdu can be a suitable language (1994, Ch. 4). He admits, however, Urdu's usefulness as far as local histories are concerned.

As for its lack of originality, if we take as examples of local histories in Urdu Ḥashmatu'l-Lāh Khān's *Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh-e Jammūṅ va Kashmīr* (1939) and Kačō Sikandar Khān Sikandar's *Qadīm Ladākh* (1987)—practically the only works reconstructing the historical events of very sensitive areas like the northern areas of Pakistan and India's Ladakh region—we see that they differ quite a bit from the usual Indo-Muslim histories. In fact, they could not be said to rely mainly on previous written histories. Ḥashmatu'l-Lāh Khān and Kačō Sikandar Khān Sikandar are not "historians

[1]He wrote at the time of the Niẓām of Hyderabad ʿAlī Khān Āṣaf Jāh.

of historians," to use Hardy's expression (1960, 1).

Wishing to know more about the Kargil area—which was brought to the world's attention by the so-called Kargil war, an armed conflict between India and Pakistan which took place between May and July 1999 in the Kargil district (Purig) of Ladakh that lies in the disputed state of Jammu and Kashmir—one must refer essentially to these two Urdu works.[2]

Up to Ḥashmatu'l-Lāh Khan's time, local people went on calling the Kargil district by its ancient name of Purig. By Purig they meant a complex of valleys (the principal ones being Suru, Dras, Shakar-Chiktan, Wākẖā and Lower Indus) inhabited mostly by Muslims, entertaining close relations with Baltistan. In fact, Islam spread into Baltistan and Purig nearly at the same time. In a way, these two areas could be taken as configuring a Muslim "frontier" on the fringe of the Buddhist Ladakh. The circumstances of Purig's Islamization, together with the vicissitudes of its Muslim kings and lords, then, would seem quite useful for a better comprehension of recent events.

Ḥashmatu'l-Lāh Khān, who was not a historian by profession, but a former British Indian Civil Service official in the service of the Dogras of Kashmir, vassals of the Sikh kingdom of the Punjab, was posted to run the areas now constituting Pakistan's *shumālī ʿilāqē* (northern territories) plus the Kargil district, now a part of the Ladakh region (India). During his stay, he seized the opportunity to collect a large amount of information, and made use of it later, after his retirement, when he set himself to write about his work. He, who had access to official papers and previous histories, integrated them with epic poems in Persian (the *Shīgharnāma* by Sayyid Taḥsīn, for example), *chansons des gestes* in local languages, oral traditions, ruins of old buildings, somewhat after the fashion of the British compilers of the gazetteers of the various parts of India during colonial times.

His history contains two sections regarding Purig: Part V, History of Purig and Zanskar (pp. 676–752), consisting of a foreword and four chapters (History of the First Settlements in Purig, i.e., Suru, Kartse, Phūkar, Mulbeh and Wākẖā; History of Sut, Chiktan and Pashkyum; History of Shighar Shingo and Daras; History of Zanskar) and the eighth chapter of Part IV, entitled "Spread of Islam in Baltistan, Purig, Gilgit and Ladakh"

[2]Other sources for Purig's history are Mughal histories in Persian and the *Ladakh Chronicle*, as studied in Petech (1977). Mughal sources are Dughlat (1895), Abu'l-Faẓl (1977–1978), and Khan (1990). To these may be added Bernier (1891), who stayed in India from 1656 to 1668, during the time of Emperor Aurañgzēb. Both Khān (1939) and Sikandar (1987) quote them in their own works. Other useful works are Francke (1907), Drew (1875), and Vigne (1844).

(pp. 663–73). Let's begin by considering this last one.

He starts by stating that the first Muslim missionary in these areas was Mīr Kabīr Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī (1314–1385), a famous Sufi of the Kubravīya order who left an indelible mark on Kashmir. Quoting Muḥammadu'd-Dīn Ẕauq's *Tārīkh-e Kashmīr*, he goes on to say that Sayyid Hamadānī was in Kashmir three times: first during the reign of Sulṭān Shihābu'd-Dīn (1360–1375); a second time while Shihābu'd-Dīn was in the Punjab, engaged in a war against the Delhi sultan Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq (1373); and a third time in 1379 during the reign of Sulṭān Quṭbu'd-Dīn, whom he had converted to Islam earlier. Ḥashmatu'l-Lāh Khān admits the lack of evidence about Shāh Hamadān's (as the saint is popularly known in Kashmir) arrival in Baltistan, and writes that it is quite likely that Islam was introduced in this area through the preaching of his disciples and followers. About Purig in particular, Ḥashmatu'l-Lāh Khān affirms that the presence of Nūrbakhshī communities in this area may be taken as an indication that Islam was introduced here by Sayyid Muḥammad Nūr Bakhsh (1392/3–1464/5), who probably went from Kashmir to Skardo passing through Purig, or via Hundul. In his opinion, Purig and Baltistan adopted the Shīʿī version of Islam thanks to the work of Mīr Shamsu'd-Dīn ʿIrāqī at the beginning of the sixteenth century. He adds:

> It is possible that Ghōtā-čō Singe or Bahram [*maqpon* = lord of Skardo] ended up accepting Islam thanks to the endeavors of Sayyid Muḥammad Nūr Bakhsh, but they say that Bōkhā's son, who took the name Shēr Shāh,[3] chose the doctrine of Mīr Shamsu'd-Dīn ʿIrāqī. Probably, in Shighar and Kẖaplu as well, this same situation occurred, but in Purig the doctrine of Sayyid Muḥammad Nūr Bakhsh remained current.
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> (In Bredi 1996, 156–57)[4]

About the two principalities of Suru and Kartse, he says:

> In Suru and Kartse, the Islamic religion started spreading with Argyāl Būm-alde, who accepted Islam in Kashmir in 725 AH., corresponding to 1373 CE. Some Muslim learned men came along with him from Kashmir, took up residence in Mulbeh and started preaching the Islamic religion.
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> (*ibid.*)

He continues:

> Later on, Kōngā Namgyāl, the Raja of Suru and Kartse, had his son Ṭhī Namgyāl married to a Skardo princess, who became known in Kartse by

[3]He governed Skardo from 1515 to 1540.

[4]All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.

> the name of Ṭhī-lā Khātūn. Akhūn Muḥammad Sharīf came with her from Skardo. He sent learned men to preach Islam from village to village and also undertook this task personally. His tireless activity gradually brought good results.
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> To give Ṭhī Muḥammad Sulṭān, son of Ṭhī Namgyāl, an education, Sayyid Mīr Hāshim, a learned man from Kashmir, was invited. Other ulema and mullahs came with him. They settled down in various villages and devoted themselves to the preaching of Islam. As a result of their endeavors, the Islamic religion was spread throughout the whole country, and here, as in Baltistan, no trace was left of the previous religion. The tombs of those well-respected men can be found scattered here and there, and descendants of some of them still live in various villages.
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> Then, in 840–45 AH, corresponding to 1435 CE, Sayyid Muḥammad Nūrbakhsh laid the foundations for the Islamization of Sut, Chiktan and Pashkyum. Later his disciples came and left a lasting mark upon the country, and quite a number of their followers may still be found among the local people.
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> (*ibid.*)

These few pieces of information (whose chronology, it must be said, is not always consistent with the other parts of his work)[5] have to be integrated with the part dealing with the history of the areas comprised under the collective name of Purig (1939 Part V, pp. 676–752). In the foreword to Part V, he declares two local learned men as his sources, Maulvi Mūhammad Ḥusain and Mirzā Muḥammad Khān (p. 676). Here we learn about Argyāl Būm-alde, Ṭhī Muḥammad Sulṭān and the rulers of Sut, Chiktan (also Chigtan) and Pashkyum (other princely states once composing the kingdom of Purig).

From the events the author relates (too long to be recalled here, but summarized in the appendix at the end), it emerges that Islam arrived in the area of Purig from Kashmir, and that conversion began at the top, with a king or lord, whose reasons for conversion were often political,[6] promoting its diffusion through a group of missionaries of foreign origin. As for the kind of Islam, it was Shīʿism, and, we can assume that the occasional relapses into Buddhism were related to political events, such as the temporary conquest by the staunch Sunni, Mirzā Ḥaidar of Kashmir (1548), and the repeated threats coming from the Buddhist kings of the Ladakh

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[5]Here he puts the story of Kōngā Namgyāl before the preaching of Sayyid Muḥammad Nūr Bakhsh (beginning of the fifteenth century); in the history of Suru Kartse he gives the dates 1600–1660 for the reign of Kōngā Namgyāl, two centuries later.

[6]See Kōngā Namgyāl's story in Khān (1939, 696–97).

region (they were continuous from the end of the sixteenth century up to the end of the seventeenth). The genealogical tables which Ḥashmatu'l-Lāh Khān supplies, then, show that the lords of Sut, Chiktan and Pashkyum were almost all Muslim from the seventeenth century onwards, while the rulers of Suru and Kartse bore Muslim names beginning with the eighteenth century.

The other history writer, Kačō Sikandar Khān Sikandar, is more recent, almost contemporary, since his work came out in 1987. In a way, he is quite similar to Ḥashmatu'l-Lāh Khān, but he distinguishes himself for his anxiety to prove the Kargil people's early and general conversion to Shī'ī Islam (with small minorities of Sunnis, who, he underlines, are the descendants of Kashmiri and Yarqandi traders, or of government officials who settled there in Dogra times).

Kačō Sikandar Khān Sikandar, who died on 14th June 2007, hailed from a distinguished Purig family and was born and brought up in Yokma Karbu in the Kargil district. He was educated at Sri Pratap College and Amar Singh College in Srinagar at a time when the only access from Kargil to Kashmir was by foot over the Zoji-la. After his graduation, he taught at the Middle School in Leh. In the late forties he gave up teaching after he was unable to return to Leh following winter vacation in his native village because of the occupation of Kargil by the Gilgit Scouts who had invaded the Ladakh region on behalf of Pakistan. Later, he joined the Kashmir Administrative Service and remained in government service for thirty-four years until his retirement in 1980. So, like Ḥashmatu'l-Lāh Khān, he was not a historian by profession, but a civil servant who turned to history writing after retirement. His *Qadīm Ladākh* (1987) is a major study of Ladakh history from the earliest times until the post-independence period. Kačō Sikandar was pained by the erosion of Ladakh's traditional communal harmony, the deterioration of moral values and the growing corruption in society. His autobiography, *Afkār-e Parēshān* (2004) sheds light on his views on these matters (see Bray 2008, 9–10).

Part II of his *Qadīm Ladākh* deals with the history of Chiktan, Sut and Pashkyum (pp. 190–217), Suru and Kartse (pp. 218–29), Phūkar, Wākẖā and Mulbeh (pp. 230–32), and Zanskar (pp. 235 ff.). His account does not differ much from Ḥashmatu'l-Lāh Khān's, but he relies more on local lore and folk songs, of which he was an expert (see Sikandar 1997). This led him, sometimes, to give slightly different versions of events. For instance, telling about the conversion of the first Muslim ruler of Suru, Kartse and Mulbeh, Argyāl Būm-alde, on the basis of a Ladakhī folk song, he identifies him

with Rinchen, the first Muslim ruler of Kashmir, who accepted Islam from the saint Bulbul Shāh and took the name of Ṣadru'd-Dīn Shāh (pp. 542–43).

And then, like Ḥashmatu'l-Lāh Khān, he devotes a chapter to the diffusion of Islam (pp. 541–72).

Here, quoting Ḥashmatu'l-Lāh Khān, he states that in Purig, as in Baltistan, Islam started with Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī. Sayyid Muḥammad Nūr Bakhsh followed, and was welcomed by the population as a *khalīfa* of Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī. And finally, Mīr Shamsu'd-Dīn ʿIrāqī converted many kings and common people from Buddhism to Shīʿī Islam (pp. 551–54). Kačō Sikandar's opinion is that Sayyid Muḥammad Nūr Baksh was a Shīʿī Muslim, the first of the *silsila* of the Nūrbakhshi Sayyids, who expressed his teachings in a Sufi form. He says that this is confirmed by Nūrbakhshī texts, where the sect is called "*firqa nūrbakhshīya imāmīya ṣūfīya*" (Nūrbakhshī Imāmī Sufi sect) (p. 557). Kačō Sikandar states that when people say that in the Kargil area there are two Shīʿī sects, the Twelver and the Nūrbakhshī, they mean a distinction that existed once, but later was no more. The local ulema, in fact, explained that the Nūrbakhshīya was not a sect but a Sufi *ṭarīqa* (order), and almost all the Purig Nūrbakhshīs, with a few exceptions, agreed to regard themselves as Twelvers (p. 564).

At the end of this chapter Kačō Sikandar places a sayyid genealogy, that of the Musavī sayyids of Purig, in which, he says, he tried his best to insert all the descendants of Mīr Shamsu'd-Dīn ʿIrāqī who were living in Kargil District at the time of his writing (pp. 571–72). He starts from Imām Mūsā Kazim, son of Imām Jaʿfar Ṣādiq, and goes down to Mīr Shamsu'd-Dīn ʿIrāqī, the 22nd of this line, and his son Sayyid Dānyāl, who had fled to Skardo because of Mirzā Ḥaidar's persecution, but was taken captive and then executed (Rizvi 1986, 173). After Sayyid Murtaẓā, the 32nd of the line, we find three names, but after two passages, only one branch continues, that of Sayyid Jamālu'd-Dīn. From this one, other branches spring, and after successive subdivisions and eight passages appear the names of the Musavī sayyids living in various Kargil villages in 1987. It seems as if the author is willing to underline the connection between Purig's missionaries and Mīr Shamsu'd-Dīn ʿIrāqī in order to prove the early and general conversion of Kargil's people to Shīʿī Islam. He says that everywhere one can see mosques, minarets and *imāmbāṛahs* and that the people observe the ritual fast and go on pilgrimage to Mecca and the holy places of Iran and Iraq (p. 568). The presence of so many sayyids, of whom some ten descending from the illustrious family of Mīr Shamsu'd-Dīn ʿIrāqī, aims at having Kargil recognized as a place of long-established adherence to orthodox Shīʿī Islam. Kačō Sikandar also informs us that in religious questions Kargil's people seek guidance and inspiration from the ulema

and *mujtahids* of Iran and Iraq, whom they prefer to those of Lucknow (India), and that their style of life is a truly Islamic one (*ibid.*).

Kačō Sikandar's care in underlining the Muslim Shīʿī identity of his fellow countrymen has an obvious political reason, given the present situation in Kashmir, of which Ladakh is a part.

India and Pakistan's dispute over Kashmir has had serious repercussions for Ladakh, whose economy has undergone a dramatic change, giving rise to an increasing competition between Muslims and Buddhists. Muslim-Buddhist relations have seen a continuous deterioration from the first requests for the separation of Ladakh from the Muslim majority Kashmir, presented to Nehru by the Ladakh Buddhist Association. The first Buddhist-Muslim riots—an absolute novelty for Ladakh—broke out in 1969. Resentment continued growing with the Buddhist Action Committee asking, among other things, for Tibetan refugees to settle in Ladakh and for the substitution of Ladakhī for Urdu in government schools. In 1980 Buddhists founded the All-Party Ladakh Action Committee and Muslims replied by establishing the Kargil Action Committee, asking for a constitution of the Kargil and Leh Districts in the province on the model of Jammu and Kashmir. The appearance of Islamic militancy and insurrection in the Valley in 1989 multiplied mutual fears and Leh Buddhists started an economic and social boycott of Muslims that went on for four years. In 1992 Indian government mediation brought about an agreement between the Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA) and the Ladakh Muslim Association, established to protect the interests of the Muslims of Leh. In 1995 the Indian government created the Leh Autonomous Hill Council, granting Leh District a remarkable autonomy, as requested by Buddhists. A similar autonomy was granted to Kargil District (established in 1979), and in 2003 the Kargil Council was created, not without a certain resistance from the Buddhists of Zanskar and Kargil. But since 2000, when Jammu and Kashmir's prime minister, Fārūq ʿAbdullah, made a request to the Indian government to give back to the provincial state the autonomy it enjoyed up to 1953, the LBA started to agitate for the partition of the state into three parts: Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh to be carried out on the basis of religion (Hindu Jammu, Muslim Kashmir and Buddhist Ladakh), and got the backing of Hindu religious associations and political parties.

In these conditions, the Kargil district, situated just a few kilometers from the Line of Control, is in quite an awkward position. Its people, eighty-five percent Shīʿa, seem to be caught in the difficult situation of trying to maintain the equilibrium, not only within Ladakh province (where they have to come to terms with people who are ethnically close, but religiously different) but also in relation to Kashmir (where there is a

Muslim majority, but overwhelmingly Sunni), to say nothing of the larger conflict between India and Pakistan.

In Kashmir the presence of a number of pro-Pakistan Sunni militant and rabidly anti-Shīʿī groups (Sala 2006, 10-14) makes the Shīʿas of Kargil quite cautious. They worry about a possible unification with Pakistan and look increasingly to Iran for inspiration, political as well as religious. Their experience during the 1999 war (in which the people of Kargil suffered bombings and were victimized) has reinforced their desire to side with India, fearing a Pakistan that looks aggressive, and whose governments, civil as well as military, fail to protect their Shīʿa citizens targeted by sectarian outfits linked with powerful Wahhabi elements (see Taj, 2009). Therefore they underline their Shīʿī identity to distance themselves from the jihadist and pro-Pakistan elements of Kashmir.

This kind of analysis is possible only in light of the information provided by Ḥashmatu'l-Lāh Khān and Kačō Sikandar, without whose works it would be impossible to gain any insight into the significance, political as well as religious, of the diffusion of Islam in these frontier areas. These authors' histories, therefore, through the medium of Urdu, preserve, transmit and make accessible to a wider audience a precious kind of knowledge regarding territories like the Kargil District, whose study seems particularly interesting in the perspective of the history of the diffusion of Islam in South Asia and its significance in the understanding of present political dynamics. ❑

Appendix

Argyāl Būm-alde was a prince of the family of Nīāthī Astan, a Tibetan runaway from Lhasa who arrived in Purig from Koge to establish the first real government in this area, founding the kingdom of Purig with Phūkar as its capital. In the twilight period of this dynasty a second adventurer, Ṭhāthā Khān, arrived, from Gilgit. His progeny gradually overtook Nīāthī Astan's. When all these events actually took place is not clear. Anyway, two princes of the losing dynasty, Argyāl Būm-alde and his brother Čōz Būm-alde, two orphans of tender age, were compelled to seek refuge in Kashmir. The Kashmir's raja took them under his protection and, in due time, gave his daughter Gañgā Rānī in marriage to the elder one. The raja of Kashmir assigned to the newlyweds lordship over a Kashmiri area bordering Purig, and provided the two brothers with an army in order to win back their lost kingdom. In this way Argyāl Būm-alde became lord of Suru, Kartse,

and Mulbeh, governing from 1345 to 1400. In unknown circumstances, while in Kashmir, the two brothers and Gañgā Rānī had accepted Islam. From then on Gañgā Rānī became known as Muslim Bēgam, but Ḥashmatu'l-Lāh Khān does not give the two brothers' Muslim names, because, he declares, in their country they were referred to by their childhood names. Argyāl Būm-alde changed his capital city, leaving Kartse for Mulbeh, where he took up residence with his queen, his brother and a party of Muslims who had come with him from Kashmir. In Mulbeh he had a mosque built and gave some impulse to the preaching of Islam. The three tombs near the mosque are most likely those of Argyāl Būm-alde and his queen, and, perhaps Čōz Būm-alde (Khān 1939, 694).

Argyāl Būm-alde, who had no sons, was succeeded by Čōz Būm-alde (1400–1420), who took his queen from a Buddhist family, and played no part in the spread of Islam. From him up to Kōngā Namgyāl (1600–1660), there are no indications about the kings being Muslims. They do not bear Muslim names, and the author writes that of the two sons of Ṭhōng Alde (1470–1520), the elder was to govern and the younger to become a *lama*, but the two swapped positions and the younger left his monastery and became king. This can only mean a return to Buddhism, especially in light of another passage where it is said that the elder son of Thōng Alde left his throne and went to Lhasa (*ibid*., 701).

Following Kōnčūk Sherāb Astan's death, Kōngā Namgyāl and his brothers divided their father's kingdom among themselves. As the eldest son, he got Suru-Kartse proper, and, wary of the intentions of the *gyalpo* (king) of Ladakh, tried to make his state safer by entering into an alliance with Kashmir and Skardo. To solemnize the alliance, he asked for the hand of a daughter of Skardo's ruler for his son and heir, Ṭhī Namgyāl. His request was granted but he had to accept that the offspring of the couple would be Muslim and that Suru-Kartse would be open to the preaching of Islam. So the Balti princess, then known as Ṭhī-lā Khātūn, arrived in the winter capital of Kartse-kẖar with a retinue which included the prominent Akhūn Muḥammad Sharīf and other learned Muslim men who set about their task of spreading Islam among the Suru-Kartse people.

Ṭhī Namgyāl (1660–1700) allowed his Muslim queen, a pious woman, to use her money and jewels for building a beautiful mosque in Kartse-kẖar and sent for qualified builders and artisans from Kashmir.[7] Akhūn

[7]The mosque was destroyed during the Dogra conquest when the soldiers of Vazīr Lakẖpat set it on fire and burned the royal palace as well. A wall remained standing (with an inscription indicating the date of its construction), but that was lost during successive reconstructions. The present mosque of Kartse-khar is completely new. In similar circumstances, Akhūn Muḥammad Sharīf's house at

Muḥammad Sharīf brought a number of learned men along with him to preach Islam from village to village, and slowly and gradually their work bore fruit. They took up residence in the villages and their descendants remained in the Suru valley and multiplied.

From Ṭhī Namgyāl and Ṭhī-lā Khātūn, Ṭhī Muḥammad Sulṭān was born (he reigned from 1700 to 1746). Sayyid Mīr Hāshim was called from Kashmir to serve as the boy's teacher, and he arrived in the company of Sajan Mīr Munshī and Akhūn Faẓl. This last one went to stay in Wakẖa, invited by the local king, who wanted his son, whom he called Babur Khān, to be brought up in the Islamic religion (*ibid.*, 706).

Khān and Sikandar, both of whom rely on the local tradition, credit Ṭhī Muḥammad Sulṭān—unquestionably the first Muslim ruler of Suru and Kartse—with a victory over Kishtwar. However, nothing about it is found in the local history of Kishtwar. His queen, who was from the Kẖāplū royal family according to some and was Aḥmad Shāh of Skardo's sister according to others, failed to produce heirs, resulting in a dynastic crisis. Ṭhī Muḥammad Sulṭān had just one son from a concubine, and taking the advice of his Buddhist vizier he entertained the idea of nominating the *gyalpo* of Ladakh as his heir. The queen, in agreement with the Muslim vizier ʿAlī Yār, wanted him to choose a Kẖaplu or Skardo prince as his successor. While the king was away on a hunting party, she killed the Buddhist vizier and turned all the Buddhist subjects against her. Ṭhī Muḥammad Sulṭān was then obliged to designate the king of Ladakh as his heir. The queen was so aggrieved by this decision that she burned all her ornaments and took poison. Ṭhī Muḥammad Sulṭān had a great tomb built for her among the wild rose bushes across the canal of Kartse-kẖar. There he put all her belongings and even her horse, which was fed through a small window but died after only a few days.

Ṭhī Muḥammad Sulṭān went to meet an emissary of the *gyalpo*, and formalized the adoption. In 1746, when Ṭhī Muḥammad died, the king of Ladakh acquired Suru and Kartse and sent his second-born son, Tāshī Namgyāl, to Kartse-kẖar as ruler. A sizeable portion of the Suru-Kartse people did not recognize his authority and he tried to put down dissension by having the vizier ʿAlī Yār and his son deported to Ladakh. The *gyalpo* of Ladakh had to pacify his new subjects, enforcing again Ṭhī Muḥammad's laws about land property, house property, and so on. Tāshī Namgyāl retired to a monastery and from then on Suru-Kartse was governed by Leh through *kharpons* (governors), usually local notables, sometimes Muslim and sometimes Buddhist, up to the time of the Dogra

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Satyang Kung was also destroyed (Sikandar 1987, 224).

conquest in 1836 (Khān 1939, 700–701; Sikandar 1987, 228).

From 1420 to 1450 we find in Sut, Chiktan and Pashkyum a king, Asturgpā Čō, who accepted Islam, according to Ḥashmat Khan. His son Amrud Čō (1451–1475) was definitely a Muslim because his Muslim name Murīd Khān is known. During the reign of the first of his sons, a weak ruler who bore the non-Muslim name of Dōrō Čō, the attacks of his neighbors (the *gyalpo* of Ladakh, whose army reached Khalsi bridge under Kanji; the ruler of Astor) reduced his dominions to Sut and Chiktan. After him his brother, with the half Muslim name of Ḥabīb Čō (1490–1510), ruled. It was probably during his time that the kind of Islam preached by Nūr Bakhsh's disciples, and, later on, by Mīr Shamsu'd-Dīn ʿIrāqī, was spreading in his dominions.

Ḥashmat Khān assumes that the Nūrbakhshīya spread into Purig from nearby Kẖaplu in Baltistan. He suggests that, because Mīr Shamsu'd-Dīn ʿIrāqī was in the Shighar area (Baltistan) during Ḥabīb Čō's rule over Purig (in fact, over Sut and Chiktan), this king accepted Islam from him. In this way, Ḥabīb Čō's conversion should have occurred around 1500. He adds that, probably, Amrud Čō/Murīd Khān and his son Ḥabīb Čō accepted Islam at one and the same time (Khān 1939, 717).

Ḥabīb Čō made political use of his conversion, entering into an alliance with the Muslim kings of Baltistan against the *gyalpo* of Ladakh in an attempt to take back the lands lost under his brother. Actually, Ḥabīb Čō could not get any territorial benefit from this enterprise, but he obtained, at least, a peaceful period, since the pressure of Ladakh on his kingdom was considerably reduced.

During the time of Aḥmad Malik (1510–1535), who succeeded Ḥabīb Čō, Sulṭān Saʿīd Khān, *vālī* of Yarqand, initiated a war against Ladakh and Kashmir. Ḥashmat Khān dwells on Ladakh, but says little about Purig (Mohammed 2007, 35–37). He states that Mirzā Ḥaidar Dughlat arrived in Sut from Ladakh via Zanskar and Suru, and Aḥmad Malik, confronted with his overwhelming forces, and on account of his being a fellow Muslim, submitted to him. From Purig, Mirzā Ḥaidar Dughlat proceeded to Kashmir, leaving behind material traces of his passage.[8] Later, when Sulṭān Saʿīd Khān was back in Yarqand, Mirzā Ḥaidar attacked Lhasa. On his way back, he again led his army through Zanskar, stirring up anxieties in Suru and Kartse. After Mirzā Ḥaidar's return from war, Sevang Namgyāl established his power over Ladakh and resumed his attacks against Baltistan via Hanula (Chorbat pass) (Khān 1939, 719).

[8]Specimens of the material traces left by Mirzā Ḥaidar Dughlat's passage are the castle and the road built by him (see Khān 1939, 718).

According to Ḥashmat Khān, following Mirzā Ḥaidar Dughlat's attack and Aḥmad Malik of Suru's submission, the ruler Kẖokẖor Baghram (1535–1550) entered into agreements with the Ladakh's *gyalpo* and sent his second son, Tsering Mālik, to Chiktan, as his governor. (A. H. Francke mentions that according to the local tradition Tsering Mālik was the first Muslim lord of Chiktan (1907, 73–74)). Argyāl Mālik, the first-born son, stayed with the father and, on his death, succeeded him as sultan of Sut.

Tsering Mālik had the Chiktan castle built, and took up his residence there as ruler of the country. At his father's death, he, who entertained wishes of independence, but was unwilling to go against his elder brother openly, started attending the court of the king of Ladakh and made a pact with him. As a part of the pact, Tsering Mālik accepted to give his wife to the *gyalpo* and marry in exchange one of the *gyalpo*'s daughters. Back in Chiktan, Tsering Mālik (who governed Chiktan and Pashkyum from 1555 to 1600) declared his independence, provoking his brother's reaction. During this period, ʿAlī Shēr Khān, the crown prince of Sulṭān Ghāzī Mīr of Skardo, was expanding his father's dominions at the expense of Ladakh. From Kartakẖsha, in pursuit of a Ladakhi army, he had entered Purig, when Tsering Mālik asked him for help to confront his brother. ʿAlī Shēr Khān marched on Sut and took it. This confirmed Tsering Mālik as ruler of Chiktan. With Tsering Mālik's help, the Skardo prince conquered Budhkẖarbu as well, and left a party of his soldiers there when he returned to Kartakẖsha (Khān 1939, 720). Jamyang Namgyāl took advantage of the return of the Balti army to Kartakẖsha and, with the help of the local people, who were Buddhist, reconquered Budhkẖarbu. Tsering Mālik went there to pay homage to his father-in-law, who did not question his independence and bestowed the name of Sankẖan on the new-born son of Tsering Mālik and his daughter. From Budhkẖarbu, Jamyang Namgyāl marched upon Wakẖa, whose lord did not come out to confront him and accepted his overlordship. Then he went to Mulbeh, where he encountered resistance.

ʿAlī Shēr Khān of Skardo, in alliance with the other Muslim rulers of Baltistan, replied to Jamyang Namgyāl's moves against Ladakh. The *gyalpo* rushed back to defend his dominions, but was defeated, taken prisoner and brought to Skardo. Purig's kings, thanks to the Baltis' intervention, gained considerable autonomy.

Following the division that occurred at the time of the war between Jamyang Namgyāl of Ladakh and the sultans of Baltistan, Chiktan and Pashkyum were now being governed by Tsering Malik, and Sut was under Sulṭān Mālik, who became ruler after the death of his father Argyāl Mālik in 1600. Sulṭān Mālik—after whom all the names of the Sut rulers are Muslim

—made an attempt at reunifying the kingdom. He attacked Chiktan and killed his uncle Tsering Mālik and his cousin Sankẖan, son of Tsering and the daughter of the *gyalpo* of Ladakh. He took Sankẖan's minor children, Ādam Mālik and Čō Sazang Mālik, prisoner, and confined them in the castle of Yuqmakharbu under strict guard. Sulṭān Mālik proved unable to make himself accepted as a legitimate ruler by the Chiktan's people, who were still Buddhist for the most part. They sent emissaries to Singe Namgyāl (1616–1642) in Leh and to ʿAlī Shēr Khān (1595–1633) in Skardo asking for their help. A physician from Chiktan, who lived in Skardo, succeeded in restoring the queen to health. As a reward, he asked ʿAlī Shēr Khān to receive his fellow countrymen and listen to their request. ʿAlī Shēr Khān subsequently agreed to dispatch an envoy to the king of Sut, advising him to set Sankẖan Mālik's children free and send them back to their country. And Sulṭān Mālik readily followed his advice. The young princes were already back in Chiktan when Singe Namgyāl, who at first had been too busy to reply to the call of the people of Chiktan, decided to intervene. He entered Purig and took Wakẖa and Mulbeh. He then conquered Suru and Kartse, taking its king prisoner. Singe Namgyāl was on his way to Sut when Ṭhī Muḥammad Sulṭān, who succeeded his father Sulṭān Mālik in 1630, called for the help of the lord (*maqpon*) of Skardo. By then, Skardo's position was not as firm as it had been in ʿAlī Shēr Khān's time. After a succession struggle with his brother, Ādam Khān was now in power. He owed his position to the intervention of the Mughal emperor (see Dani 1989, 222). Ādam Khān appealed for help to the Mughal governor of Kashmir, ʿAlī Mardān Khān, who sent an army to Purig under the command of Ḥasan Bēg Khān. The encounter between the Mughal and the Ladakhi armies occurred in Karpo-kẖar. Singe Namgyāl was defeated and sued for peace. His request was granted, but he had to accept the conditions of recognizing the supremacy of the Mughal emperor and leaving Suru and Kartse. In reporting these events, Ḥashmat Khān quotes Ẕakāu'l-Lāh's *Tārīkh-e Hind* (1879) extensively (1939, 725).

From that time on (after passing from the alternate influence of Skardo and Leh over to that of the Mughals) up to the Dogra conquest (1618–1834), there is a long line of sultans, who very often married daughters of the kings of Ladakh. Ḥashmat Khān says that, while he was in those areas, descendants of the lords of Chiktan, Sut and Pashkyum were still living there, very often holding office in the Government's service (*ibid.*, 725–28). ❑

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