

Chapter No. 1

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Chapter No. 1

History and Geography of al-Mansurah

Among the modern writers in the history of Sind the works of A. F. Bellasis, Henry Cousens and M. H Pathan are prominent. Despite the fact that the main purpose of this thesis is not to focus on the History of al-Mansurah but the History of artefacts of al-Mansurah, an abstract of history is included here. Following pages relating to the history of the Metropolis are borrowed for sake of ready reference for the reader from the voluminous work on the history of al-Mansurah, "Arab Kingdom of al-Mansurah in Sind" unless mentioned otherwise in this chapter. This thesis will, however, focus on the history of Islamic Artefacts found from the ruins of al-Mansurah through excavations, and were ignored in the aforementioned thesis of M. H. Pathan.

During the decade of 1960s, Dr. M. H Pathan submitted a treatise on the subject of history of Sind entitled "Arab Kingdom of al-Mansurah in Sind" at the Institute of Sindhology, University of Sind. Dr. G. A. Allana - the then Assistant Director of the Institute of Sindhology published this thesis, in 1974. In his brilliant treatises Dr. Pathan has dealt with almost all aspects of the history of Sind and covered the period between the conquest of Sind by the Arabs to the rise of the

Ghaznavids. Ever since its publication, the work of Dr. Pathan has been of a great interest for those who have been interested in the history of the region. Nevertheless, Dr. Pathan has left out an important aspect in his work "History of Art" which according to him was of little value⁴. The antiquities found from al-Mansurah form an important element in the history of Sind. In other words tracing the history of Art of the antiquities found from the ruins al-Mansurah is equally important, if not more, in compiling the History of Sind. Thus the present work is an attempt to fill the missing gap in the history of al-Mansurah.

Nevertheless, before we discuss the history of the artefacts found from al-Mansurah some light on the history of the town itself will be brought forward. The history of the metropolis can be better appreciated if studied in the context of the history of the Sind province where the town of al-Mansurah once flourished between 8th and 13th centuries AD. This chapter therefore, deals with the geography and history of Sind and History of al-Mansurah respectively.

⁴ Pathan, M. H., P.9.

History of Sind

Geography:

The great country of Sind, which now forms an integral part of Pakistan, derived its name from Indus, the mighty river that flows through it. Sindhu (or Sind), as is the term applied to the river literally means an ocean or vast collection of water⁵. It was the first great body of water encountered by Aryan invaders pushing on their march to India through the north-western gateways. The importance of the river to this country cannot be ignored, without which the whole region would have been a barren and inhospitable desert extending from the borders of Iran all the way to Himalayas.

Sind was once a far-flung Sub-Continent extending from Kashmir to Arabian Sea and from Seistan to Thar Desert in the east and included in it a greater portion of present Pakistan, South-East of Afghanistan, Makran and parts of Kirman⁶. Its present position has shrunk to a considerable limit. Before the setting up of a single province of West Pakistan in 1955, the country of Sind was bounded on the north by a portion of the Punjab province, Bahawalpur and Kalat States; on the east by Rajistan States of Jodhpur and Jaisalmir; on the west by Kalat and Lasbella States and on the south by the Arabian Sea and the great Rann of Cutch⁷.

⁵ Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. XXII, p.389; David Ross, Land of Five rivers and Sind, p.37.

⁶ Chach Nama, P. 15.

⁷ Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. XXII, OXON, 1908, p.389.

Ancient History of Sind:

The earliest known history of Sind begins with conquest of Alexander the Great, in 325 B.C. Having defeated the King of the Punjab, Raja Porus at Jehlum, he made his way down to Sind with a fleet of two thousand warships⁸. Sind at this juncture was divided in two important principalities of Upper Sind with its capital at Aror and Lower Sind with Patala as its headquarters. Mausikanos, the ruler of Upper Sind submitted to the conqueror without resistance but later instigated by his Brahmin counsellors, revolted against the authority of the Greek Emperor. He made a desperate effort to gain freedom but to no avail, as he was immediately afterwards captured by the Greek forces and beheaded⁹. The ruler of Lower Sind, Moeris is reported to have abandoned his capital in terror, which was occupied by the Greek soldiers without difficulty¹⁰. In 325 B.C. Alexander set out from Patala on his way home by sea and land route, through the coastal regions of Makran and Persia. Alexander's hold over the Indus Valley was therefore brief and short lived.

Two years later after his death in 323 B.C., his empire was shattered to pieces and the princes of India had leisure to assert independence within their principalities. In the meantime Chandra Gupta Maurya, a scion of the royal family of Magadha, who had previously instigated

⁸. V. Smith, Early History of India, p.89.

⁹. Ibid. p. 101.

¹⁰. Ibid. p.100; Cambridge History, Vol. I, pp.338-39.

the Alexander to invade the Ganges Valley, occupied a greater portion of N.W. India. In the course of next few years, he was able to overthrow the Nanda regime from Magadha, and to make himself the master of Hindustan¹¹.

Seleucus Nicator, Alexander's general who succeeded him as the King of the Eastern Empire, marched with considerable forces to reconquer the Indian territories. In 305 B.C., having entered the frontiers of India, he crossed the Indus and penetrated as far as Taxila. He met opposing him, an overwhelming army under the command of Chandra Gupta himself, who had advanced to meet the new invader. The Greek army met with a humiliating defeat and Seleucus was compelled to sue for peace. According to the terms of agreement, the Greek War-Lord was obliged to surrender all Indian possessions west of the Indus River and to give his daughter in marriage to the victor¹². After this great event Sind formed part of the great Mauryan Empire under Chandra Gupta and continued owing allegiance to his mighty successors Bindusara and Asoka. Chandra Gupta reigned for 25 years and abdicated the throne in favour of his son¹³ in 298 B.C. Bindusara Who was a Warlike prince is reported to have made successive raids on Deccan. Like his great father, he established diplomatic relations with the Greek rulers of west, especially those belonging to the house of Seleucus. His

¹¹ V. Smith, pp.117-18.

¹² Cambridge History, Vol. I,p.338; V. Smith p.119.

¹³ V. Smith, p.120.

contemporary Antiochus Soter likewise manifested the same eagerness by the exchange of gifts¹⁴.

Asoka who took up the reins of government in 272 B.C., after the death of his father Bindusara, was undoubtedly the ablest and most enlightened sovereign of ancient India. In 261 B.C., he marched on Kalinga, a region lying on the east coast of India between the Mahanadi and Godavari rivers, corresponding to modern Orissa with the most northerly portion of Madras¹⁵. The fierce battle between the contending armies resulted in a heavy carnage, which frustrated all designs of further conquest. The tragic scene of the battle had a tremendous effect on the mind and intellect of the warrior king who then resolved to abandon the traditional course of waging war and turned to the teachings of Lord Buddha. Buddhism was then declared as the State religion of India and was enforced on the reluctant masses by the decree of the King. A true and ardent champion of the Buddhist faith, Asoka moulded his life according to its sublime doctrine, which he got engraved on rocks, pillars and plates still existent in Shahbaz Garhi, Abbottabad, NWFP and some other parts of India. The death of this great religious monarch proved a decisive blow to the United Indian hegemony and brought about the ultimate fall of Mauryan Empire. The control of the Indus Valley then

¹⁴ Ibid. p.147; E.B.Havell, p. 91.

¹⁵ W.H. Moorland, Short History of India, p.53.

shifted to the Greek rulers of Bactria but their hold over the country was too uncertain and precarious¹⁶.

The co senescence of the Mauryan kings and the lust of conquest brought Demetrius into India in 190 B.C. He was the son of great Euthedemus who after incessant struggle with Antiochus the Great, succeeded in securing for himself the position of an independent ruler of Bactria¹⁷. The conquests of Demetrius were merely a passing event, as he was immediately afterwards defeated and slain, by his rival Eucratides who established himself on the Bactrian throne by the year 175 B.C. All the lands of the Indus Valley including Sind, therefore, reverted to the domination of the new king of Bactria¹⁸. The conquests of both these rulers, however, paled into insignificance before the enterprises of Menander, a kinsman of Eucratides who invaded N.W. India in the year 155 B.C. This was the third of the series of major military operations conducted by foreign rulers against the Indo Pakistan Sub-Continent. Menander having traversed Punjab overran the whole of the Indus Valley up to the Sea and proceeded south as far as Kathiawad. He then attacked Mathura in the Ganges Valley, which he took by storm and threatened to advance on Pataliputra, the Imperial Capital of India. It was with great difficulty that his advance was checked and he was forced to retreat¹⁹. Although Pataliputra and its dependencies remained

¹⁶ V. Smith, pp. 166-70; Ghafoor, Agha Abdul, *Taxila ka Tahzibi Safar Nama*, 1974, PP. 94-101.

¹⁷ V. Smith, p. 222; *Cambridge History*, Vol. I, p. 397.

¹⁸ Bashim A.L., *Wonder that was India*, p. 58.

¹⁹ Tarn, W.W., *Greek in Bactria and India*, p. 227; V. Smith, p. 225.

immune from foreign domination, Sind and Punjab continued to groan under the Greek influence for two centuries.

About the middle of 2nd century B.C. a new power rose to eminence in Central Asia; they were the Yuch-chi, a people of nomadic and barbaric tendencies. The place of their original abode is generally identified with the present province of Kansu in the neighbourhood of Sinkiang²⁰. Pressed by the innate disadvantage of nature, they moved to west in great number, in search of fresh pastures for their cattle and virgin land for their own sustenance. The first to feel their onslaught were the tribes of Doosan and Sakas of northeast Persia whom they defeated with great vigour. They soon plunged westward and put an end to the Greek Kingdom of Bactria, which existed in that region since the conquest of Alexander the Great. An offshoot of that tribe called Scythians, advanced to the Afghan hills and having crossed the Hindukush they spread over a great portion of the Punjab like whirlwind. Waves of migration took a serious turn of permanent menace. Their advance was, however, checked for the time being by Vikramaditya, the king of Ujjain whose successful resistance in 57 B.C. marks the beginning of the Hindu Samvat era²¹.

Although this victory placed a barrier on the advance of barbarians into the interior, they acquired dominant position throughout the north-western regions. The first sovereign of the race claiming

²⁰ V. Smith, p. 248.

²¹ Aitšin, E.H., Sind Gazetteer, p. 87.

sovereignty over Punjab was Kadphises I, who reigned for 30 years (15-45 AD)²². Sind at this juncture was under the domination of Indo-Parthian Greek kings, ruling the realm since the downfall of the Mauryas. The conquest of Lower Indus Valley was, however, reserved for a later period when Kanishka, the third ruler of this house, made the final subjugation of the country. Kanishka is also famous for having convened a Buddhist council, third of the series after his great predecessor Asoka and like those of Asoka, the commentaries composed by his Council have still the force of religious canon in China, Tibet and Mongolia²³. Kanishka died in 123 A.D., after a benevolent rule of nearly 45 years and was followed by three successors Vasishka, Huvishka and Vasudeva.

After the death of Vasudeva (reigned from 140-173 A.D.)²⁴ The Lower Indus Valley (Sind proper) hereafter cited as Indo Scythian continued to groan under the Kushan governors who assumed independence within their own provinces. The absence of historical data, however, makes it impossible to name those rulers who commanded indisputable sway over this region and the system of administration they happened to introduce. The Scythian hegemony in Sind appears to have been more durable as it subsisted for a fairly long time in spite of successive revolutions and the ravages of time inflicted on this unfortunate and unhappy land.

²² V. Smith, p.259.

²³ Ibid. p. 267; Aitkin, Sind Gazetteer, p. 8.

²⁴ V. Smith, pp. 273-74.

With the extinction of the Kushan dynasty in the northwest and the Andhra dynasty in the interior, the centre of gravity shifted once more to Pataliputra and a new and vigorous dynasty was brought on the scene. It was that of the mighty Guptas, whose advent is characterised as the period of revival of Hinduism, and Aryan supremacy over the whole of the Sub-Continent. Its founder, Chandra Gupta was a ruler of a small kingdom whence his marriage with a Lakhmid princess, brought him new strength and made him a paramount ruler of whole India. It was not until the reign of Chandra Gupta II (345-415 A.D.) that Sind was also added to the rising Gupta Empire, which now included almost the whole of India²⁵. Deccan was never conquered permanently by the Guptas although marauding excursions by Gupta rulers took them to the extreme south as far as Adam's bridge²⁶.

By the middle of the fifth century AD another savage race, the white Huns began to pour into India. Issuing from their wild reservoirs in Central Asia, they advanced to the Hindukush and, having entered Punjab, they appeared on the very banks of Ganges with astonishing speed. They were, however, defeated by Sikandar Gupta, with great slaughter and were forced to retreat. Taking no cognisance of the disaster inflicted on them, they appeared again with characteristic freshness and vigour. But this time they did not venture to advance

²⁵ Ibid., p 286.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 285.

the interior and contended themselves with retaining the sovereignty over Punjab and Kashmir²⁷.

While these events were taking place in North India, Dewaji, a kinsman of the royal house of Chitor, succeeded in establishing a line of kings in Sind, known as the Rai Dynasty. Heuen-Tsang, the Chinese pilgrim who visited the Indus Valley in the first half of the 6th century A.D., speaks of these kings as Sudras. The reference is perhaps to Rai Seharas I. He reports the general prosperity of the country under that rule²⁸. The other rulers of the dynasty were Rai Seharas I, Rai Sehasi I, Rai Seharas II, and Rai Sehasi the II. The rulers of this dynasty were all Buddhists and reigned over the country with great prudence and justice. Their reign is presumed to have extended in aggregate over 137 years, probably from 580-630 A.D. The boundary of their kingdom extended from Kashmir to the Arabian Sea and from Kirman to Kanauj in the east²⁹.

In the reign of the fourth king, Rai Seharas II, the Iranian Emperor sent an expedition to Sind from Nemroz. The king advanced to meet the marauders in person but was defeated and slain³⁰. He was succeeded by his son Rai Sehasi II, who is reported to have repaired the disaster by repelling the aggressors from his dominions and by

²⁷ Havell, E.B., History of Aryan Rule in India, pp. 173-74.

²⁸ V. Smith, pp. 354-55.

²⁹ Chach Nama, p. 15.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 15.

conducting regular yearly inspection tour of frontiers³¹. He was the first to organise the army on regular basis and he kept it punctually paid. Some new forts were also reported to have been built by him with the aid of his subjects who were made exempt from payment of land tax in exchange for providing material and labour for the task³². About the year 630 A.D., Rai Sehasi II, died a natural death without an issue; his minister Chach, who later founded the Brahmin dynasty, followed him.

The Brahmin usurper, who later married the widow of the deceased monarch, proved to be a benevolent ruler and under his enlightened administration people prospered exceedingly. Rana Mahurat, the ruler of Chitor, a relative of Rai Sehasi II, marched against the usurper with considerable forces, but was defeated near Jodhpur and slain³³. Secure in his power, Chach is reported to have made extensive tours of his dominions and appointed trustworthy governors over the provinces. Chach ruled for 40 years and was followed by his brother Chandra who held the kingdom for 8 years. His nephew Dahir, the eldest son of Raja Chach, in turn followed him. It was during the reign of Raja Dahir that the famous Arab invasion of Sind took place, under the command of Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Thaqafi, and this brought to an end the Brahmin dynasty in Sind.

³¹ Ibid., p. 16.

³² Hughes, A.W., Sind Gazetteer, p. 24.

³³ Chach Nama, pp.27-28.

Invasion of Sind by Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Thaqafi:

Our interest is particularly focused on this period onwards when the Arabs established their government in this part of the Indo-Pak Sub-Continent.

During the 2nd half of the 6th century i.e. in 571 AD a brilliant star shone on the horizon of al-Hijaz, which was destined to illuminate the whole world. It gave the tidings of the birth of Prophet Muhammad, who made his appearance among the most barbaric and savage society of his time. Born into a poor but highly venerated family of Qurayesh, in Mecca, he was grieved to see the social, political and religious condition of his people. Centuries of continuous freedom had fostered in them innumerable vices, which could only be washed off by an absolute and implacable reformer. With extraordinary faculty and incalculable vigour, the Prophet began to preach a new doctrine of faith based on the unity of God and universal brotherhood of the human race. In the beginning he was rejected, scorned and even subjected to severest persecution, but afterwards accepted, honoured and obeyed. The process of conversion to the new faith was slow and gradual but sure, and within 11 years after his migration to Yathrab (Madina) the prophet was able to unite the warring tribes of the desert into one compact body, under the same brotherhood, a phenomenal miracle, such as had never been seen or heard of before. He was the master of Arabia before his demise and

after him his worthy successors brought about the neighbouring countries of Syria, Iraq, Palestine and Egypt within the orbit of Islam. Before the laps of the 1st century Hijra, his successor built up a mighty empire extending from the confines of Kashghar to the Atlantic Ocean in the West, an empire greater than that of Rome at its height of greatness and splendour.

Commercial intercourse between India and the Arab world had existed long before the advent of Islam. Hindu merchants and the pilgrims are reported to have visited the holy shrines of the Ka'ba every year and performed Hajj³⁴. The Arabs knew more about India than any other country of the world due to their extensive commercial activities in the Indian Ocean. Their ships often visited the Indian ports of Deybul, Saymur, Baroch and Thana, and their commercial influence extended as far as the East Indies and China in the Far East. The Arabs are reported to have established colonies in Ceylon, Gujrat, Malabar and the Karomandal coast of India at a very early date dating back to the second half of the seventh century of the Christian era³⁵. It is related that the people of Ceylon when they heard of the advent of the holy Prophet at Mecca, sent one of their group to ascertain the report and bring an authentic account about the new Prophet and the religion that he was preaching. The man, who was subjected to a long voyage by sea, due to bad weather, reached Madina during the Caliphate of 'Umar, the second orthodox

³⁴. Farishta, Vol. II, P. 310.

³⁵. Nadvi, pp. 259-300.

Caliph. He had the honour to meet the Caliph and after receiving the required information made his way back home. On his way back to Ceylon, he died in the vicinity of Makran, but his Hindu slave managed to reach Ceylon safely, where he informed his countrymen about Islam, its founder and the Caliph, a godly person whom he had seen in simple patched garment. In consequence the people of Ceylon really loved Muslims and showed great affection to them. The Muslim women caught during the plunder of eight vessels sent by the king of Ceylon to Caliph Walid ibn 'Abdul Malik at Deybul were undoubtedly the descendants of those Arab merchants who had settled in the island immediately after the incident. One of those women belonging to the tribe of Banu Yarbu' called on al-Hajjaj to come to their rescue, and finally the incident led to an attack on Sind which resulted in the annexation of the country in the year 712 AD.³⁶

The Arabs were also acquainted with the Karomandal coast of India, which they called Mandal. It was famous for ambergris and aloe wood, which were produced in great quantity and exported to the different countries of the world³⁷. But the most important centre for the Arab was Gujrat whose ruler Balhara (probably Vallabh-Rai) felt well disposed towards the Muslims. They were allowed to establish colonies in his country, which was the largest of all the rulers of India. The inhabitants of Balhara's country believed that it was due to the favour shown to the Arabs that their rulers lived a long span of life.

³⁶ Buzark, p. 117

³⁷ Qazvini, pp. 82-83.

The country of Sind was neglected by the Arabs due to its aridity, which is summed up in the famous Arab general, deputed for a survey trip to the country. Hakim ibn Jabalah al 'Abdi's reply to Caliph 'Uthman's question was thus:

"The water is dirty, the fruits are bad, and the bandits are dangerous. If a small force is sent, it will perish; if however, a large force is sent, it will also perish, due to hunger."³⁸

In spite of this unfavourable report, attempts were made to conquer Sind for the Islamic dominions, as early as the Caliphate of 'Umar, the second orthodox Caliph.

The first systematic expedition against Sind and the coastal regions of India was directed from Oman as early as A.H. 15 (636/37 A.D.). The organiser of this expedition was Uthman ibn Abi al-As' al-Thaqafi, the Governor of Oman, who sent his brother Mughirah to pillage the coasts of al-Sind and al-Hind as an experimental enterprise. This piratical raid against Baroch, Deybul and other coastal towns proved a success and the Arab ships returned to the Arabian ports safely³⁹. Caliph 'Umar, the second orthodox Caliph was against the policy of extension of boundaries (of Muslim domain) and moreover sea voyages being perilous in their nature incurred heavy losses to human life. Naval enterprises were therefore sternly

³⁸ Chach Nama, p. 75.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 73; al Baladhuri, p. 438.

repressed by imposition of strict regulations and heavy indemnities⁴⁰. The work of conquest was however, carried on by land and the province of Fars on the northern coast of the Persian Gulf was overrun. In A.H.23 (644 A.D.) Suhayl ibn 'Adiyu attacked the country of Kirman which lay in the immediate vicinity of Fars. The Marzuban (Governor) of the province resisted the advance of the Muslim army but he was defeated and killed. The two important forts of this region Jayfat and Shirjan were captured in quick succession and the Muslim army advanced to Seistan⁴¹. Seistan was the last province of the Iranian empire and its conquest brought to the Arabs close to the borders of Sind.

The conquest of Seistan was followed by an attack on Makran, under the leadership of Hakam ibn 'Amr al-Taghlabi. The ruler of Makran (Raja Rasil) was a vassal of the king of Sind, who sent some forces to his rescue. But these combined forces were defeated and dispersed, on the bank of river Helmand. Immense booty fell into the hands of the victor who do not seem to have conquered the region permanently but returned to their bases loaded with the spoils of war⁴².

Immediately after the death of 'Umar I, the eastern provinces of Fars, Khurasan, Seistan and Kirman rose in revolt against the Arab rule. The cause of sedition was principally Yazdegrid, the last Sassanian

⁴⁰ al-Baladhuri, p. 439.

⁴¹ Ibn al-Athir, Vol. III, p. 21.

⁴² Ibid. p.22.

emperor who was still alive⁴³. 'Abdullah ibn Amir ibn Kurayz who was appointed the governor of Iraq by the third Caliph was therefore commissioned to deal with the situation. In A.H.30 (625 A.D.) 'Abdullah ibn Amir marched on Khurasan and sent Mujashi ibn Mas'ud al-Sulami to Kirman, who took the towns of Bamiyan and Borokhroh. He then led his army to Shirjan the capital of Kirman, which capitulated after a siege of a few days. The garrison was destroyed and a greater portion of the population banished⁴⁴. The fall of Shirjan was followed by the conquest of Jayrfat, Hurmuzd and other towns, where the Arabs established colonies and many families adopted a settled life in the region.

'Abdullah ibn Amir ibn Kurayz under the instructions from the Caliph 'Uthman, also sent a naval expedition to the country of Sind, under the leadership of Hakim ibn Jabalah al-'Abdi on an intelligence service to get information about the condition of the country and the possibility of an attack on it⁴⁵. Hakim returned to Iraq after possibly surveying eastern Makran and Balochistan and his reply has already been given above⁴⁶. The Arabs against the frontiers of Sind therefore carried on no further incursion during the reign of the Third orthodox Caliph. Murdering attacks on Makran and the borders of Sind were continued during the Caliphate of 'Ali and Mu'awiyah, the founder of the Umayyad dynasty. The first to violate the frontiers of Sind was

⁴³. al-Baladhuri, p. 398

⁴⁴. Ibid., p. 399.

⁴⁵. Chach Nama, p. 75; al Baladhuri, p. 438.

⁴⁶. Supra, p. 36.

Harith ibn Marrah al-Abdi, who in the reign of 'Ali, advanced as far as Qayqanan (or Qayqan) in the interior of Balochistan⁴⁷. He was followed in quick succession by two other generals Muhallab ibn Abi Sufrah and 'Abdullah ibn Sawar ibn al- 'Abdi, both of whom penetrated farther beyond Qayqanan. One of these generals, Muhallab is reported to have captured Banu and Ahwaz, lying in between Multan and Kabul but returned back laden with the spoils of war⁴⁸.

The permanent conquest of Makran was however affected during the reign of Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan by Sinan ibn Salamah al Hidhli, a man of reputed piety. He was deputed by Ziyad ibn Abi Sufyan, the Viceroy of Iraq, and was the general who made his army swear (on the divorce of their wives) that they would remain steadfast in their fight against the enemy. The Muslim army was successful and he not only conquered Makran but also made arrangements for its control and administration⁴⁹. Makran henceforth became an Arab province and a colony and also an army outpost for their attacks on Sind. Sinan al-Hidhli was followed in the governorship of Makran by Rashid ibn 'Amr al-Jadaydi (of the Banu Azd) who raided Qayqanan, but on his way back to Makran, he was defeated and killed by the native Meds⁵⁰. Sinan was therefore restored to the governorship of Makran which he retained for a period of two years and he was succeeded by

⁴⁷ Chach Nama, p. 77.

⁴⁸ al-Baladhuri, p. 438; ibn al-Athir, Vol. III, pp. 221-225.

⁴⁹ al-Baladhuri, p. 439.

⁵⁰ Chach Nama, p. 82.

Mundhir ibn Jarud ibn Basher. Unfortunately, Mundhir died of an illness in one of his expeditions to Sind, and was followed by his son Hakam ibn Mundhir who held the province for nearly six months⁵¹.

In 694 A.D. Hajjaj ibn Yusuf al-Thaqafi was appointed by Caliph 'Abd al-Malik as the Viceroy of all eastern provinces with headquarters at Kufa. A schoolteacher of Ta'if, this invincible man distinguished himself by his brilliant career as one of the greatest genius of mediaeval times. Before his appointment to the new post, Hajjaj as the governor of the holy cities, held Hijaz and Yemen as a dependency, after defeating the rival Caliph 'Abdullah ibn Zubayr. Ibn Zubayr contended with 'Abd al-Malik as the Caliph of the Muslim world for a period of eleven years, but fell fighting in the siege of Mecca in the year A.H. 73 (693 A.D.)⁵².

Hajjaj bin Yusuf, after taking over his new appointment, immediately set up an army under the command of Qutaybah ibn Muslim al-Bahili and sent it to the regions of Oxus and Jaxartes. In a series of brilliant campaigns Qutaybah overran the regions of Balkh (Bactria), Sughd (Soghdiana), Khwarism and Farghana. According to one tradition, the Muslim armies under Qutaybah penetrated as far as Kashghar, where peace was accorded with the native Chinese⁵³. An expedition was also sent against Rutbil, the ruler of Kabul, under 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Muhammad ibn al-Ash 'at, in retaliation for withholding

⁵¹. Ibid., p. 84.

⁵². ibn al-Athir, Vol. IV, p. 193.

⁵³. al-Tabari, Vol. II, p. 193.

the tribute⁵⁴. But the most important and long projected expedition was against the country of Sind, whose ruler failed to compensate the loss of eight vessels, sent by the king of Ceylon and attacked by the Sindhi pirates, and episode in which some Muslim ladies are also reported to have been involved⁵⁵. When these ships reached in the vicinity of the port of Deybul, a group of thieves referred to as Nakamarah⁵⁶ attacked these ships and after having looted their riches made the women prisoners. One of these prisoners was a Muslim woman who is reported to have belonged to the tribe of Bani 'Aziz⁵⁷ according to Chach Nama and Bani Yarbu by Baladhuri⁵⁸, shouted "O Hajjaj, come to my help". When Hajjaj received intelligence of this fact from one of the escaped prisoners, he hastened to answer, "So I am here". He then immediately dispatched an envoy to Raja Dahir, the ruler of Sind, demanding the return of the valuables plundered and the early release of the Muslim women.

The reply of Raja Dahir as related by the author of Chach Nama clearly indicates that the king of Sind was not involved in the incident and that he could not be held responsible for the acts of the pirates, committed on the high seas. But the main reason was the political asylum given by the king of Sind given to one Muhammad ibn Mu'awiyah al-'Alafi, which kindled the wrath of the Viceroy of Iraq. Hajjaj is reported to have had long standing enmity with the family of

⁵⁴ . ibn Khaldun, Vol. III, p. 67.

⁵⁵ . Chach Nama, p. 89.

⁵⁶ . Ibid., P. 89.

⁵⁷ . Ibid., P. 90.

⁵⁸ . al-Baladhuri, p. 441.

al-'Alafi, who had murdered one of his lieutenants Sa'id ibn Aslam al-Kilabi⁵⁹. The real reason of the revolt of the 'Alafi seems to have been the despotic regulations introduced in Iraq by Hajjaj ibn Yusuf al-Thaqafi.

The first regular attack on Sind organised by Hajjaj was made under the leadership of 'Abdullah ibn Nabhan al-Sulami who according to al-Baladhuri had reached Deybul. 'Abdullah was however, killed in an encounter with the Sindhian forces and the expedition proved a failure⁶⁰. The second attack was headed by Budayl ibn Tahafatah al-Bajali who proceeded to Deybul almost without opposition and led a siege to it. The garrison came out of the fort and gave battle to the invaders but was defeated with heavy losses and forced to retire. Timely reinforcement from Nerun, however saved Deybul from capitulation and a deadly conflict ensued between the contending armies. Towards the close of the battle Budayl fell from his horse and was killed. His death brought a crushing defeat for the Muslim army.⁶¹ According to al-Baladhuri, Budayl does not seem to have reached Deybul but perished on the way while fighting with the Jats of Balochistan⁶². The failure of the two expeditions induced the fieri in Hajjaj to organise for the third time a fine army selected from Syrian and other Arab contingents. The command of this new force was entrusted to Imad al-Din Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Thaqafi, a

⁵⁹ Chach Nama, p.87.

⁶⁰ al-Baladhuri, p. 441.

⁶¹ Chach Nama, p. 92; al-Baladhuri, p. 441.

⁶² al-Baladhuri, p. 441.

cousin of the Viceroy himself. The invasion of Sind by Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Thaqafi is the subject of the next chapter.

On Friday, 13th Muharram, 93 A.H. (713 A.D.) Muhammad reached Deybul and led siege to it. Deybul was large fortified town on the seashore, with a lofty temple situated in the centre of the city. A red flag, which flew over the vaulted portion of the temple, was considered to be most sacred and guarded by a host of gods. The Muslim army pitched their tents, besides the fort and dug a trench as a protection against the possible attack of Sindhis. Meanwhile catapults and other materials of war, dispatched from Makran by sea, arrived unexpectedly earlier and were fixed at their proper places⁶³. The siege of Deybul continued for eight days when on the ninth some stones from the catapults decided the struggle. The red flag was pulled down as a result of which the garrison issued out of the fort and gave battle to the invaders. They were, however, defeated with heavy losses and the fort was captured by force. The first man to enter the fort by means of a staircase was Sa'id ibn Khu'aymah of the tribe of Murad, of al-Kufa, who gave the signal for the general assault⁶⁴. In accordance with the law of war, all able-bodied men above the age of 18 were beheaded and their families reduced to slavery. Muhammad ibn al-Qasim built a mosque in the town⁶⁵. After taking Deybul Muhammad marched on al-Berun, (Kot Nerun) the inhabitant of which made peace with the conqueror and agreed to

⁶³ Ibid., p. 442; ibn Athir, Vol. IV, p. 257.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 442; Chach Nama, p. 107

⁶⁵ Ibid., pp. 442-443; ibn Athir, Vol. IV, p. 257.

pay tribute⁶⁶. The next target of attack by the Arab army was Sehban (Sehwan) which capitulated to Ms'ab ibn 'Abd al-Rahman on agreeable terms⁶⁷.

Raja Dahir, the inveterate king of Sind, advanced to meet the invaders in person, but their rapid successes obliged him to fall back on Rawar. A bridge of boats was then built by the Muslims with the aid of Raja Rasil the ruler of Cutch, and Muhammad advancing with his columns crossed the Indus⁶⁸. On the other side of the river, he was with a large army supported by elephants ready to give him battle. Muhammad ibn al-Qasim organised his army under the time honoured tactics of right, left and centre and placed himself in the heart of the army along with some selected generals like Hudhayl ibn al-Azdi, Namilah and Mas'ud, sons of al-Shari al-Kalbi and Makhariq ibn Ka'b al-Rasi. A dreadful conflict ensued as a result of the encounter, which continued for four days.⁶⁹

Raja Dahir took the field in person, clad in complete armour, seated on an elephant with a bow in his hand. Beside him in the Palki were seated two damsels, one to give him the arrows as quickly as he could shoot and the other to refresh him with a Beatle nut, whenever required⁷⁰. Towards the close of the day his elephant ran amok and rushed to the river to quench his unexpected thirst. While in the river,

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 443; Chach Nama, pp. 105-106.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 443.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 443; Chach Nama, p. 157.

⁶⁹ Chach Nama, p. 172.

⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 178-79.

the king was incessantly showered with arrows, but in that hour of peril he did not lose heart. He fought gallantly by the side of his soldiers; sword in hand but was surrounded by Arab soldiery and was killed, in the thick of fighting⁷¹. The Sindhian army seeing their leader fall, attacked with great fury but was defeated and repulsed with heavy losses. With a garrison of 15000 soldiers, Dahir's wife Bai (or Mayan of the Chach Nama) and his son Jaysia offered son resistance, by shutting the gates of the fort of Rawar. But Muhammad divided his army in two parts and by selling the fort from catapults, day and night together, destroyed some of the citadels of the fort. The city was then taken by assault and the garrison put to the sword⁷². Jaysia the son of Dahir fled to Brahminabad and the queen burnt herself dead in the self-kindled fire⁷³. Immense booty fell in the hands of the victors including 30000 slaves, out of which 30 girls were the daughters of the prominent rajas⁷⁴. One fifth of the spoils along with the head of Raja Dahir were sent under the command of Ka'b ibn Makhariq-al-Rasi, to Hajjaj ibn Yusuf al-Thaqafi as a share of Baytul Mal (Public Treasury)⁷⁵.

Muhammad marched on Brahminabad, the second largest city of the Brahmin Kingdom. On his way Muhammad captured the two forts of Bahror and Delilah, the former having a garrison of 16000 soldiers and its capture took more than two months due to the stubborn

⁷¹ al-Baladhuri, p. 443.

⁷² Chach Nama, p. 194.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 195; al Baladhuri, p. 444.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 195.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 196.

resistance offered by Sindhis who perished to the last man in defending their city⁷⁶. The inhabitants of Delilah along with their ruler Devraj, a cousin of Dahir, evacuated the fort under the cover of darkness and escaped to India, by way of desert. Muhammad ibn al-Qasim appointed Nubah ibn Harun as governor of Delilah and himself advanced to Brahminabad, situated at three miles from that town. On reaching Brahminabad, Muhammad led siege to and as usual dug a trench for the defence of his soldiers. There were about 40000 soldiers in the fort, who would come out of the fort during daytime to give battle to the Muslims and returned to the fort in the afternoon. The siege continued for more than 6 months from Rajab to Zil-Hajj 93 A.H. At last the residents of the fort sued for peace. The city was handed over to the conqueror by a stratagem and on condition that no harm would be done to the inhabitants⁷⁷. Muhammad observed strictly to the promise he made to the people who agreed to pay tribute. It was in this fort that queen Ladi, the wife of Dahir who later became wife of Muhammad ibn al-Qasim was captured and brought before the conqueror⁷⁸. This is Chach Nama's version, which seems to be more correct but al-Baladhuri on the contrary reports that force and 8000 of remaining forces of Dahir captured the fort were slain⁷⁹.

Jaysia, the son of Raja Dahir who was at Brahminabad after the battle of Rawar, wrote in vain to the rulers of ~India and adjoining

⁷⁶ . Ibid. p. 198.

⁷⁷ . Chach Nama, p. 205.

⁷⁸ . Ibid. p. 207.

⁷⁹ . al-Baladhuri, p. 444.

territories for help against the Arab invaders, but received no response. Overwhelmed by disappointment and the infidelity of his subjects, he evacuated Brahminabad along with his family and by taking the desert route he went to the Ruler of Chitor⁸⁰.

The conquest of Brahminabad was followed by an attack on Aror, the capital city of itself that was defended by Gopi, another son of Raja Dahir⁸¹. On his way to Aror Muhammad received submission of the inhabitants of two important localities, Savindri and Basmad. Built on the banks of eternal Mahran, Aror boasted of very many fine buildings, graceful temples, cool orchards, connected with each other with clean metalled roads. It was the metropolis of the Hindu kingdom and contained in it beautiful palaces for the king, his ministers and the grandees of the empire. The fort wall, which surrounded the city, was impregnable enough to suffer the siege for considerable time. But tired of prolonged misery the inhabitants sent a deputation to make peace with the Arab conqueror and the city capitulated without much bloodshed⁸².

According to the terms of the agreement no harm was to be done to the inhabitants and the temple of Buddha was spared. Muhammad ibn al-Qasim built a mosque at Aror and appointed Rawah ibn Asad as the governor of the town. The judicial functions of the town were, however, entrusted to Musa ibn Ya'qub al-Thaqafi who was a

⁸⁰ Chach Nama, p. 202.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 221.

⁸² Ibid., pp. 224-25; al-Baladhuri, p. 444.

kinsman of the conqueror⁸³. After making administrative arrangements at Aror, Muhammad proceeded to the town of Bhatyah, which was situated on the southern bank of River Bias. Its ruler Kaksa, a cousin of Raja Dahir, who had previously fought against the Muslims in the battle of Rawar, submitted to the conqueror and surrendered the treasures⁸⁴. Raja Shera the ruler of Iskalandah, which was situated on the other side of River Bias, evacuated the fort on the approach of the Muslim army and took shelter with the ruler of al-Sika. Muhammad granted peace to the inhabitants of Iskalandah and appointed 'Utbah ibn Salamah al-Tamimi as the governor of the town. Raja Bajahra, who resisted the advance of the Muslim army and inflicted heavy losses on them, defended al-Sika, which was the next target of Muslim attack. Some of the best companions of Muhammad ibn al-Qasim are reported to have perished in these raids, and as such Muhammad vowed to destroy the whole city. The fort was then taken by assault and the whole town was razed to the ground. Raja Bajahra fled to Multan, which seems to have been the last great town of the Sindhian Kingdom and chief centre of pilgrimage in northern India. It was a well-fortified town surrounded by a lofty and strong wall. Muhammad led siege to it, which continued for a long time. The provisions having been wholly consumed, the Muslim soldiers had recourse to kill Asses for food⁸⁵.

⁸³ Chach Nama, p. 235.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 236.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 237.

However, a man came from the fort and revealed the passage through which water was supplied to the town. The Muslims, thereby forcing the inhabitants to sue for peace and surrender the fort, immediately closed the entrance. All able-bodied persons, whose number is given as 6000, and capable of taking arms, were beheaded and their families reduced to bondage⁸⁶. I was in this town that Muhammad granted amnesty to 6000 monks but they also were reduced to slavery. The idol of Multan identified with that of Job (Ayub) was, however, not molested but the temple was robbed of all its riches⁸⁷. Immense booty fell in the hands of the victors, which apart from huge cash, included a large quantity of gold, silver, pearls, rubies, hoarded in that edifice for countless generations. The temple yielded 13000 maunds of pure gold apart from other riches. It was due to the great quantity of gold secured from Multan that it became known as Farj Bayt al-Dhahab⁸⁸. The estimated value of the booty came to about 120 million dirhams while the expenditure incurred on the expedition was not more than 60 million dirhams⁸⁹. After the conquest of Multan Muhammad built a mosque for the Muslims and appointed Da'ud ibn Nasr al-Omani as the governor of that city⁹⁰.

Having settled the affairs of Multan, Muhammad pushed on his march further north and reached a place called Panj Mahyat (possible Panj Nad) where the demarcation line between Sind and Kashmir was re-

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 238.

⁸⁷ al-Baladhuri, p. 445; Chach Nama, p. 238.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 445; ibn Athir, p. 258.

⁸⁹ al-Baladhuri, p. 445.

⁹⁰ Chach Nama, p. 244.

established. Chach, the great Brahmin ruler of Sind, previously fixed these boundaries⁹¹.

Muhammad ibn al-Qasim contemplated an attack on the interior of India and had actually sent an army against the kingdom of Kanauj under Abu Hakim Shaybani. Abu Hakim is reported to have advanced as far as Udhaypur⁹² in modern Rajputana but the recall of Muhammad ibn al-Qasim to Damascus hampered all progress and the Muslim army therefore returned to Multan.

Meanwhile, Muhammad ibn al-Qasim, after having returned to Aror from Multan attacked Nilma and Sirsuit, in modern Kathiawad. Meds who committed acts of piracy on the high seas inhabited these regions. The ruler of Khiraj, Duhar, was also defeated and his dominions incorporated in the territories conquered by the Muslims⁹³.

End of Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Thaqafi

Caliph Walid died in the year 96 AH. and was succeeded by his brother Sulayman ibn 'Abd al-Malik who dismissed Muhammad ibn al-Qasim and appointed Yazid ibn Abi-Kabasha as-Saksaki as the governor of Sind. Yazid arrested Muhammad ibn al-Qasim and sent him to Iraq where he was imprisoned at Wasit by the 'Amir of Iraq Salih ibn 'Abd al-Rahman. Muhammad was later tortured to death by

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 238.

⁹² Ibid., p. 241.

⁹³ al-'Adabiyah, p. 448.

Salih who thereby avenged the death of his brother Adam, killed by Hajjaj ibn Yusuf al-Thaqafi on charges of being a Kharji⁹⁴.

The story of the Chach Nama that Muhammad was killed by way of punishment for molesting Raja Dahir's two daughters⁹⁵ is a mere fiction and seems to have been cooked up by the author of Chach Nama himself to justify the inhuman death of the conqueror. The real cause of the fall of Muhammad ibn al-Qasim was due to the personal feelings of the new Caliph Sulayman ibn 'Abd al-Malik who was hostile to the family of Hajjaj. Hajjaj had actively opposed the succession of Sulayman and had persuaded Walid to appoint his son 'Abd al-Aziz as heir apparent to the throne. He is also reported to have insulted Sulayman and had he been given time, he would have certainly succeeded in setting aside the succession of Sulayman⁹⁶. Secondly, Hajjaj maintained a kind of enmity with Muhallab ibn Abi Sufrah and his family. He has during the period of his power dismissed Yazid ibn Muhallab and his brothers from the respective offices held by them. Yazid was the Governor of Khurasan and his brother Habib held the Governorship of Kirman whilst the third one 'Abd al-Malik was a police officer. In 86 A.H. all the three brothers were put into prison under the orders of Hajjaj but they managed to escape after the lapse of four years and took shelter with Sulayman ibn 'Abd al-Malik, the crown prince.

⁹⁴ al-Baladhuri, pp. 445-46; ibn Athir, Vol. IV, p. 282; ibn Khaldun, Vol. III, p. 86.

⁹⁵ Chach Nama, pp. 245-47.

⁹⁶ Islamic Culture, Vol. XXVII, p. 258.

Immediately after his accession to the Caliphate Sulayman appointed Yazid ibn Muhallab as Viceroy over all the eastern provinces⁹⁷, the post previously held by Hajjaj under Walid ibn 'Abd al-Malik. Mu'awiyah ibn Muhallab assisted Ibn Abi Kabasha who was appointed to the government of Sind and an officer belonging to the family of Akk, in arresting Muhammad ibn al-Qasim and bringing him back to Iraq. Muhammad could have defied the orders of the caliph and had means to offer resistance as would appear from his own verses:⁹⁸

But as a noble man and a disciplined soldier, he submitted to the authority of the Caliph possibly in the hope of receiving due consideration for his services to the Umayyad cause. He was, however, treated roughly as a state enemy and killed in a very inhuman manner. Muhammad ibn al-Qasim had endeared himself to the natives of Sind by his humane disposition, tolerant views and policy of reconciliation, the qualities lacking in most conquerors. His death therefore, grieved the people of Sind who loved him with sincerest affection. In order to perpetuate his memory, they are reported to have built a statue of Muhammad ibn al-Qasim at Khiraj and remembered him long for his excellent qualities⁹⁹.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ al-Baladhuri, p. 446.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

Umayyad Governors:

The rule of Umayyad and 'Abbasid governors who succeeded each other in rapid succession with the exception of a few, was not a happy one for the country of Sind. The natives who seemed to have hated foreign rule were in a state of chronic revolt as would appear from the historical accounts. Muhammad ibn al-Qasim was at Multan when he was recalled to Damascus By Caliph Sulayman ibn 'Abd al-Malik, who appointed Yazid ibn Abi Kabasha as-Saksaki as governor of Sind. Muhammad was arrested by new governor and sent to Iraq where he was imprisoned by Salih ibn Abd al-Rahman, the 'Amil of Iraq, who had old account to settle with the family of Abi 'Aqil al-Thaqafi. Muhammad was tortured to death by Salih who was thereby avenged the death of his brother Adam, killed by Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf al-Thaqafi, on charges of being a Kharji¹⁰⁰.

Yazid ibn Abi Kabasha as-Saksaki died 18 days after his arrival in Sind and was allowed by Habib ibn Muhallab ibn Abi Sufrah. By this time, Dahir's son Jaysia had recovered a greater portion of his father's dominions and established himself at Brahminabad. Habib does not seem to have interfered with his authority and attacked Aror, which capitulated on agreeable terms¹⁰¹. Caliph Sulayman died in 99 A.H. (717 A.D.) after a brief reign of three years and was succeeded by his cousin the pious 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-Aziz who inaugurated a policy of reconciliation and invited the rulers of al-Sind and al-Hind to

¹⁰⁰ al-Ba'adhuri, p. 446.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, p. 446; Ibn al-Athir, Vol. IV, p.283.

accept Islam. The pious Caliph restored Jaysia, who is reported to have accepted Islam, to his father's dominion. The Caliph's governor 'Amr ibn Muslim al-Bahili, who followed Habib ibn Muhallab made successive expeditions against other parts of the country and re-conquered it for the Umayyad¹⁰². Yazid ibn 'Abd al-Malik, who succeeded 'Umar II as Caliph at Damascus appointed Junayd ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Mari as governor of Sind and held this post till the death of Hisham ibn 'Abd al-Malik. Junayd re-conquered all the important towns of the valley one by one and turned his attention to the interior of India and conducted successful expeditions against Gujrat and Nilma, which are also reported to have been conquered by the Muslims¹⁰³. According to one account Junayd is reported to have sent expeditions even against Malwa and Ujjain, which returned back with a large amount of booty. The booty collected in these attacks was so great that although spent lavishly by the governor, he could save 4000 million dirhams, which he sent to the Central Treasury¹⁰⁴.

Junayd ibn Abd al-Rahman was succeeded by Tamim ibn Zayd al-'Utbi, who possessed excellent qualities, and was a man of humane disposition although of a weak temperament. He died of illness near Deybul and was followed by Hakam ibn 'Awana al-Kalbi. Due to the weak policies of Tamim ibn Zayd, a greater portion of the province of Sind was re-conquered by the natives and, as a result of which, the Arabs were expelled from their colonies and centres established on

¹⁰² Ibid, p. 447; Ibid, p. 283

¹⁰³ al-Baladhuri, p. 447; Ibn al-Athir, Vol. V, p. 64.

¹⁰⁴ al-Baladhuri, p. 448.

the Sindhian soil. When Hakim ibn-Awana al-Kalbi came to Sind he found no place of safety for the Muslims. He founded therefore a new town on the other side of the river and named it al-Mahfuza¹⁰⁵. One of his chief counsellors, 'Amr ibn Muhammad ibn al-Qasim who accompanied him to Sind, founded another town (opposite to al-Mahfuza) called al-Mansurah in commemoration of the victory won against the natives. Al-Mansurah later became the chief centre of Arabian activities and finally the capital of the Kingdom of al-Mansurah¹⁰⁶. It was with Hakam that, Mundhir ibn Zubayr ibn 'Abd al-Rahman al-Habbari came to Sind, whose grandson Umar ibn 'Abd al-Aziz later founded the dynasty of the rulers of al-Mansurah¹⁰⁷. Hakam is reported to have been killed in an expedition against the natives and was succeeded by 'Amr ibn Muhammad, the son of Thaqafi conqueror of Sind. Amr seems to have been involved in the civil war that broke out between the Arab tribes throughout the Indus Valley. He was defeated and besieged in his capital by the insurgents, but was rescued by the timely help of Yusuf ibn 'Umar al-Thaqafi, the governor of Iraq¹⁰⁸. Amr ibn Muhammad al-Thaqafi was dismissed by Caliph Walid ibn Yazid, who succeeded Hisham ibn 'Abd al-Malik at Damascus. He appointed Yazid ibn 'Arar to the government of Sind in the year 125 A.H. Yazid who seems to have been well-versed in the art of administration took immediate action to restore order but he fell himself prey to another ambitious man Mansur ibn Jamhur al-

¹⁰⁵ al-Baladhuri, p. 448; ibn al-Athir, Vol. IV, p. 238.

¹⁰⁶ al-Baladhuri, p. 449; al Ya'qubi, Vol. III, p. 50.

¹⁰⁷ al-Baladhuri, p. 450.

¹⁰⁸ al Ya'qubi, Vol. III, p. 56.

Kalbi. Mansur, as we are told was one of the rebellious chiefs of the declining Umayyad State and he had a hand in the murder of Walid ibn Yazid¹⁰⁹. He took active part in the two uprisings headed by Abbas ibn Hisham and Abdullah ibn Muqwiyah, the princes of the Umayyad family but having failed in his designs to gain power he fled to Sind. Yazid ibn 'Arar who was well informed about his activities, refused to grant him the permission to enter his territories by crossing the Indus. Mansur therefore attacked Sehwan and captured it by force. He then gave orders for the construction of a bridge over the Indus and having crossed it, attacked Yazid ibn 'Arar's forces by surprise. Yazid, who never suspected an attack from Mansur, made no preparation to resist his advance. He was then defeated with heavy losses and was forced to take refuge in the al-Mansurah fort, which was besieged by the forces of Mansur. Tired of war and relying on the fidelity of Mansur, Yazid surrendered the fort to Mansur but received inhuman treatment from the newcomer who put him to death in the most horrible manner. Mansur, who now became the ruler of Sind, appointed his brother over Western Sind, which included the towns of Deybul and Qandabil (modern Ghandhava). He then busied himself in making arrangements for the pacification of the country and the restoration of order. While these events were taking place in Sind, the rest of the Arab world was witnessing a great civil war, which finally brought a new and more vigorous dynasty of Caliphs in Baghdad, the 'Abbasids¹¹⁰.

¹⁰⁹ . ibn al-Athir, Vol. V, p. 135.

¹¹⁰ . al-Ya'qubi, Vol. III, PP. 64 - 67.

II - History of al-Mansurah

Foundation of al-Mansurah:

The term al-Mansurah is derived from *Nasr*, which means victory, and it is highly probable that the foundation of al-Mansurah signified a great victory won by the Arabs against the natives of Sind¹¹¹.

The renowned Muslim geographer al-Mas'udi relates that the city of al-Mansurah owes its name to Mansur ibn Jamhur al-Kalbi, the last Umayyad governor of Sind, who defended the province against the domination of the 'Abbasids¹¹². It is related that after the establishment of 'Abbasids in Iraq, Abu Muslim Khorasani sent Mughlis al-Abdi with investiture as governor of Sind. He entered the frontiers of Sind from Takharistan side, but was defeated by the forces of Mansur al-Kalbi and killed. He was then followed by Musa ibn Ka'b al-Tamimi who came to Sind with stronger force. The entry of Musa ibn Ka'b into Sind was likewise resisted by Mansur but unluckily his brother Manzur was killed in an action and he himself, defeated by the newcomer, had to flee to the desert of Rajputana, where he is reported to have perished in the sands¹¹³.

¹¹¹ Pathan, p. 65.

¹¹² al-Mas'udi, Vol. I, p. 142.

¹¹³ al-Beladuri, p. 449; Ibn al-Athir, Vol. V, p. 216.

Zakariyah al-Qazvini who followed Mas'udi in his eastern tours contradicts Mas'udi's views by stating that al-Mansurah was so called after the name of the second Abbasid Caliph Abu-Ja'far al Mansur and was also styled "Mansuriyah thania", the second al-Mansurah. He further adds that it is very hot and is encircled by a branch of the river Mahran. It has many fleas but its water is sweet and it is a place of considerable size¹¹⁴. Zakariya's views are corroborated by Ibn al-Wardi al Qarshi who is also of the opinion that al-Mansurah was founded during the reign of al-Mansur the second 'Abbasid ruler, who according to him, was the real founder of al-Mansurah¹¹⁵.

Yaqut al- Hamavi, the great Arab geographer and encyclopaedist who flourished in 13th century AD gives three different theories about the foundation of al-Mansurah. Quoting Hasan ibn Ahmad al-Muhallabi, he says that the town of al-Mansurah was founded during the time of Abu-Ja'far al Mansur the second Abbasid Caliph and named after him. The founder of the town was, however, 'Amr ibn Hafs al-Hazarmard al-Muhallabi¹¹⁶ who was the governor of Sind at that time. The other two theories, in which he mentions the names of al-Mas'udi and Hisham respectively as his chief informants, make Mansur ibn Jamhur al-Kalbi the real founder of al-Mansurah¹¹⁷. Before Yaqut gave his views, al-Idrisi had already admitted the authenticity of this fact by stating that four new cities were founded

¹¹⁴. Qazvini, p. 53.

¹¹⁵. Ibn al-Wardi, p. 62.

¹¹⁶. Yaqut al-Hamavi, Vol. VIII, P.177.

¹¹⁷. Ibid P.177.

during the reign of al-Mansur, the second Abbasid Caliph. Those were Baghdad in Iraq, al-Mansurah in Sind, al-Masisah on the Mediterranean and al-Rafiqah in the land of Jazirah (i.e. Mesopotamia).¹¹⁸

Al-Baladhuri, the oldest historian on the contrary reports that al-Mansurah was founded by 'Amr son of Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Thaqafi, during the governorship of Hakam ibn 'Awana al-Kalbi. He gives a very lucid account of its foundation and says that "during the reign of Hisham ibn 'Abd al Malik the seventh Umayyad ruler of the Hakmite branch, Tamim ibn Zayd al-Utbi was made the governor of Sind. Due to his weak policy, perhaps leniency, the country of Sind was re-conquered by the Sindhis and the Arab families who had settled in the province were expelled from their colonies and settlements. Tamim ibn Zayd al-Utbi was succeeded by Hakam ibn 'Awana ion Awana al-Kalbi, who when he came to Sind found no place of safety for the Muslims. In order to bring all the Arab tribes together at one lace he founded a new town on the eastern bank of the Buhairah (lake of estuary) facing al-Hind (i.e. India) and named it al-Mahfuza. This new town not only became a place of refuge for the Muslims but also served as the Headquarter for the governor and his army for conducting regular military operations against the refractory natives. These steps resulted in the complete pacification of the country and the land was once again re-conquered by the Arabs. Among the chief counsellors who accompanied Hakam, was one,

¹¹⁸ al-Idrisi, P. 31.

'Amr the son of ibn al- Qasim al-Thaqafi, the Arab conqueror of Sind who as or informant relates, was entrusted with a task of great military (importance) in which he became successful. To commemorate his victory, 'Amr founded another town on the other side of the river, which he name al-Mansurah¹¹⁹.

This statement of al-Baladhuri about the foundation of al-Mansurah, is supported by the two great historians Ibn al-Athir and Ibn-Khaldun who repeat the same version in their great work on Muslim History. They also assert that al-Mansurah was founded by 'Amr son of Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Thaqafi during the governorship of Hakam ibn 'Awana al-Kalbi.¹²⁰

Al-Ya'qubi who like al-Baladhuri may be considered to be almost contemporary to the events reports that Hakam ibn 'Awana al-Kalbi who succeeded ibn Zayd al-'Utbi as governor of Sind, on his arrival attacked and conquered Cutch. He then founded the town al-Mahfuza for the Muslims and brought the whole country under subjugation. During his governorship 'Amr son of Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Thaqafi who accompanied him to Sind founded another town on the other side of the river and named it al-Mansurah.¹²¹

Abu Rayhan al-Beruni, writing in 11th century AD gives a totally different theory about the foundation of al-Mansurah. He says that

¹¹⁹ al-Baladhuri, P. 448.

¹²⁰ Ibn al-Athir, Vol. IV, P. 83.

¹²¹ Al-Ya'qubi, Vol. III, P. 55.

Muhammad ibn al-Qasim entered Sind from Sijistan side and after having conquered the whole country gave the name al-Mansurah to Brahminabad and al-Ma'muriyah to Multan.¹²² Abu al-Fadl, the court historian of Akbar, on the contrary says that Bhakkar, a small town in the middle of the river Indus in upper Sind, was al-Mansurah on the assumption that after the conquest of Sind by the Arabs they changed the name of its capital Aror to al-Mansurah, signifying their victory over the rulers of Sind.¹²³

The question now arises as to who was the real founder of al-Mansurah? Al-Mas'udi is the only person among those mentioned earlier, who visited Sind, but his account about the foundation of al-Mansurah is far from historical truth. His view that al-Mansurah was founded by Mansur ibn Jamhur al-Kalbi is totally unfounded. It was in existence long before the arrival of ibn Jamhur in Sind, who is later reported to have laid siege to it.¹²⁴ It is related that due to intriguing nature of Mansur ibn Jamhur al-Kalbi he was not permitted to enter the territories of al-Mansurah by its governor Yazid ibn 'Arar, the successor of 'Amr son of ibn al-Qasim. Mansur had, therefore, recourse to stratagem, by which he was able to obtain possession of the Fort of Sehwan, where he made his preparations of his attack on al-Mansurah.¹²⁵ If, however, he founded al-Mansurah then there was no necessity of its preparations for its conquest. Likewise the

¹²² Al-Beruni, P. 11.

¹²³ Abu al-Fadl, P. 550.

¹²⁴ Al-Ya'qubi, Vol. III, P. 66.

¹²⁵ Al-Ya'qubi, Vol. III, P. 66; Islamic Culture, Vol. XVI, P. 36.

statement that al-Mansurah was founded by 'Abu Ja'far al-Mansur, the second Abbasid Caliph is also unbelievable. Al-Mansurah was the headquarter of the Umayyad governors long before the advent of the Abbasids.¹²⁶ There is no doubt that it was recovered from the usurper Mansur ibn Jamhur al-Kalbi immediately after the establishment of the Abbasid rule in Iraq. It seems that 'Amr ibn Hafs al-Hazarmard al-Muhallabi, who was the governor of Sind during the reign of al-Mansur, might have named it after his sovereign, in order to aggrandise his name and from that time onwards the city became known after the second Abbasid Caliph. The succeeding governors who were paid employees of the Abbasids might have given wide publicity to the fact that al-Mansurah had been founded by Abu Ja'far al-Mansur.

It is also incorrect to assume that the foundation of al-Mansurah was laid by Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Thaqafi, the Arab conqueror of Sind, as reported by al-Beruni. He seems to have put forward his own views on the assumption that the only great victory won by the Arabs against Sind was made by Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Thaqafi, hence the name al-Mansurah might have been given by him to Brahminabad which bore both names during his time.¹²⁷ The court historian of Akbar, Abu al-Fadl also seems to have involved himself in a great misunderstanding by citing Bhakkar as al-Mansurah.¹²⁸ In this he seems to have followed the accounts of most of the Arab

¹²⁶ al-Baladhuri, P. 447

¹²⁷ Al-Beruni, P. 11.

¹²⁸ Abu al-Fadl, P. 555

geographers who described that al-Mansurah as an island in shape situated between the two arms of the river Indus.¹²⁹ He might have also misunderstood the site of Arab capital on the assumption that it might have been founded near the ancient Hindu capital of Sind, which was Aror, near the modern town of Rohri.

The earliest accounts clearly indicate that al-Mansurah was founded near Brahminabad exactly opposite al-Mahfuza, which was the first Arab settlement in Sind. It is also clear from the accounts that its founder was 'Amr son of Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Thaqafi, who came to Sind with Hakam ibn 'Awana al-Kalbi and later succeeded with him to the governorship of Sind. The absence of the historical data, however, makes it very difficult to determine the period during which al-Mansurah was founded by 'Amr son of Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Thaqafi. It is stated that Hakam ibn 'Awana al-Kalbi with whom 'Amr came to Sind was an appointee of Khalid ibn 'Abdullah al-Qasri, the famous viceroy¹³⁰ of Iraq. He was in power for fifteen years, from 105 AH to 120 AH and Hakam was the second governor, posted to Sind during his viceroyalty. It is, therefore, probable that the period of Hakam's governorship over Sind might have commenced from 110 AH. It would be, therefore, more accurate to place the period of al-Mansurah's foundation between 110 AH to 120 AH, the period during which Hakam remained governor of Sind. Since Hakam took up the work of conquest immediately after his

¹²⁹ Al-Istak'ri, P. 173; ibn Hauqal, P. 320; Al-Qazvini, P. 38; Al-Idrisi, P. 30 and Yaqut al-Hamavi, Vol. VIII, P. 177.

¹³⁰ Al-Ya'qubi, Vol. III, P. 50-62

arrival in Sind, it is probable that al-Mansurah might have been founded by about 115 AH (corresponding to 734 AD) shortly after the foundation of al-Mahfuza, which was built earlier by the governor himself.¹³¹

Henry Cousens in his treatise on the antiquities of Sind, is of the opinion that al-Mansurah was founded by 'Amr son of Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Thaqafi and in this connection he relies mostly on the accounts of al-Baladhuri, the oldest historian. But H. G. Raverty who seems to agree to the accounts of al-Baladhuri, al-Mas'udi, and al-Idrisi, who have given three different theories about the foundation of al-Mansurah sums up his conclusion in the following words: "If all the three writers are correct, then Mansurah was founded during Hakam's time, furnished in the time of Mansur son of Jamhur and the name merely continued by Abu Ja'far Mansur."¹³²

Independent Dynasty at al-Mansurah – Banu Habbar:

Chronology of events; foundation of an independent dynasty

Caliph al-Mutawakkil was the last great ruler of the house of Abbas whose assassination in 247 / 861 marked the period of gradual decline of the Abbasid Caliphate and the disintegration of the Empire. The Turkish guards who were originally recruited to curb the ever-

¹³¹ al-Baladhuri, P. 448; al-Ya'qubi, Vol. III, P. 50; ibn al-Athir, Vol. IV, P. 283; ibn Khaldun, Vol. III, F. 67

¹³² H. Cousens, Antiquities, P. 63

increasing power of the Persians and Khurasanians became a source of permanent nuisance to the Abbasid State. In the later period of the Abbasid hegemony, the Turkish guards usurped the whole power rendering the Caliph totally impotent to deal with any situation. Although the dignity of the Caliph was maintained in highest splendour, his authority was not accepted beyond the city walls of Baghdad. Even in his capital he was as powerless as in his dominion and was chiefly confined to palace and the harem. The Turkish guards made and unmade Caliphs, appointed and transferred governors and exercised all regal powers.¹³³ It was during this period of degeneracy and decline that the provinces of Khurasan & Transoxiana were lost to the Samanids and Daylamites penetrated into the interior of Iraq. North Africa except Egypt likewise was lost to the Fatimids who were now carving a kingdom for themselves in the distant Maghrib. Worst of all were the raids of the Qarmathian heretics who plundered the cities of Basra and Kufa and threatened to attack the imperial city itself.¹³⁴ In the course of their inroads they captured Mecca, massacred the pilgrims and carried away the black stone, the universal object of the Muslim veneration. They retained this relic of ancient Arabian belief for a period of 20 years and it was only after the request of Fatimid Caliph al-Mansur that it was finally restored to the holy Ka'ba in 339 / 951.¹³⁵

¹³³ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. I, P.51; Hitti, Chapter XXXII, P. 65.

¹³⁴ Ibn Khaldun, Vol. III, PP. 335-336.

¹³⁵ Ibn Athir, Vol. VIII, P. 77.

Political scene in the Country of Sind under the Abbasids:

Under these circumstances the most distant provinces partook in general decline and assumed independence under their respective governors. The country of Sind, which extended from Multan to the Arabian Sea, neglected by central government, was divided into several principalities and ruled by various Arab Chiefs independent of each other. These rulers although owing no political allegiance to the Caliph, acknowledged him as their suzerain by reciting his name in the Friday prayers, and by the occasional dispatch of precious gifts.¹³⁶

The virtual renunciation of the political control of the Abbasids in Sind may be dated from the year 257 / 872-73, when Caliph al-Mu'tamid, in order to divert Ya'qub ibn Layth al-Safari's intentions from attacking Iraq conferred upon him the government of Sind, Balkh and Tabaristan in addition to Kirman and Seistan with which he was already invested.¹³⁷ Ya'qub who was reluctant to accept the deal and rejected the offer of the Caliph, attacked Iraq. He was, however, defeated and forced to flee to Sijistan where he died in the year (265 / 879-80).¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Elliot and Dowson, Vol. III, P.52.

¹³⁷ Ibn Athir, Vol. VIII, P. 96.

¹³⁸ Ibn Khaliqan, Vol. II, PP. 316-37; Ibn Athir, Kamil, Vol. VII, P. 96.

Since Ya'qub ibn Layth was himself involved in ruthless struggle for power, he does not seem to have taken much interest in the affairs of Sind. The two principal kingdoms of al-Mansurah and Multan being unmindful of events which took place in Iran (Persia) continued to be governed by their rulers. The kingdom of al-Mansurah, which extended from Aror to the Sea, was governed by Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz al-Habbari, who had control over the affairs of Sind. His descendants continued to rule the realm till the rise of Mahmud of Ghazni, who annexed it to his dominions in the year (416/ 1026-27).¹³⁹

It appears that the rulers of al-Mansurah might have been influenced by the Shi'ites propagandists, whose missionary works in the province of Sind, may be dated as early as 150 / 767-68. It is related that Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Ashtar, a descendent of 'Ali migrated to Sind during the governor-ship of 'Amr son of Hafs al-Hazarmard al-Muhallabi, in disguise as a trader of horses. The governor with every mark of respect who, himself being a man of pro-Shi'ite views afforded him adequate shelter received him. On receiving intelligence of the news, the Caliph al-Mansur took the governor to task for sympathizing with the state enemy and transferred him to the government of North Africa.¹⁴⁰ He was replaced by Hisham ibn 'Amr

¹³⁹ Ibn Khaldun, Vol. I, P. 327; Ma'sumi, P. 32.

¹⁴⁰ Ibn Khaldun, Vol. III, P. 108.

al-Taghlabi, who killed Abdullah al-Ashtar and sent his head to the Caliph along with the family of the deceased Shi'ites leader.¹⁴¹

An other Qurayshite, a descendant of Samah ibn Lu'ya, who maintained his capital at Multan, held the kingdom of Multan, the boundaries of which extended from Aror to the confines of Kashmir.¹⁴² Multan was famous for the temple of Sun and its great idol was the object of veneration for the non-Muslims of Sind and Hind, who flocked to it, to offer obedience and tribute. Al-Mas'udi who visited the Indus valley after 300 A.H. reports that Multan still retained the name of Farj Bayt al-Dhahab, the name given to it by the Arab conquerors who found abundant of gold in the temple.¹⁴³

Origin of the Habbarid Rulers of al-Mansurah:

The dynasty of the Banu Habbar takes its name from Habbar ibn al-Aswad of the Banu Asad tribe, who was notorious for its opposition to the holy Prophet and the religion of Islam. Habbar ibn al-Aswad is reported to have reviled the holy Prophet in public by satirising him and making absurd propaganda against him.¹⁴⁴ His brother Zama'h ibn al-Aswad was one of the chief confederates who fought against the Muslims in the battle of Badr, but was slain along with his two other brothers.¹⁴⁵ In 2nd year of A.H. while migrating to Medina the Prophet's daughter Zaynab was pursued by Habbar ibn al-Aswad

¹⁴¹ Ibn Athir, Vol. V, P. 283; Ibn Khaldun, Vol. I, PP. 198-99

¹⁴² Ibn Rustah, P. 136; Ibn Nadim P.485.

¹⁴³ al-Mas'udi, Vol. I, P. 141; Ibn Hazm, Vol. P. 110.

¹⁴⁴ Ibn Hazm, Vol. II, P. 110.

¹⁴⁵ Ibn Hisham, Vol. II, P. 302.

who is reported to have struck her with a lance, she fell from the back of the camel and was so grievously hurt that it resulted in the death of the child with which she was pregnant.¹⁴⁶

During the reign of Caliph al-Mutawakkil 232-247 / 847-861 fierce civil war broke out among the Arab tribes of Mudar and Yemen that overwhelmed the whole Indus Valley. The governor of Sind Imran ibn Musa al-Barmaki took the side of the Yemenites, who committed acts of great atrocity and vandalism against their adversaries. In this period of chaos 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-Aziz al-Habbari who was the leader of the Mudarites attacked the governor and killed him.¹⁴⁷ He then took over the control of the entire lower valley of the Indus and asked the Caliph al-Mutawakkil to confirm him in the government of Sind. The Caliph worried and sick of hearing the news of revolts every where acceded to his request and appointed him governor of Sind in the year (240 / 855).¹⁴⁸ Though an appointee of an Abbasid Caliph, Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz later showed signs of independence and taking advantage of the disorders that took place after the assassination of Caliph al-Mutawakkil, he laid the foundation of the Independent Arab Kingdom of al-Mansurah.¹⁴⁹ Following are the names of the Amirs of Habbari Dynasty who ruled over al-Mansurah between 855-1025 AD:

¹⁴⁶ Ibid: Al-Tabari, Vol. I (3) P. 1349; Ibn Hazm, Vol. II, P. 110.

¹⁴⁷ al-Baladhuri, P. 449.

¹⁴⁸ al-Ya'qubi, Vol. III, P. 177.

¹⁴⁹ Ibn Khaldun, Vol. II, P. 327.

S. No.	Name of Habbari Ruler	Period - AH / (AD)	Abbasid Caliphs
1.	Umar bin-Abd al-Aziz al-Habbari	240 - 270 (855 - 883/4)	al-Mutawakkil.
2.	Abdullah bin Umar	270 - 300 (884 to 913)	al-Mu'tamid
3.	Umar bin-Abdullah	300 - 330 (913 to 943)	al-Muqtadir
4.	Muhammad bin Abdullah	330 - 360 (943 to 973)	al-Muttaqi
5.	Ali bin Umar	360 - 375 (973 to 987)	al-Taiya
6.	(?) Manbi ibn Ali bin Umar	375 - 401 (987 to 1010)	al-Qadir Billah
7.	Khafif (Soomro)	401 - 416 (1010 to 25)	al-Qadir Billah

The last ruler was defeated by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna in 416 /1026. But according to Pathan's statement Sind was properly conquered in the reign of Sultan Mas'ud Ghazni¹⁵⁰.

Pir Hassamuddin Shah Rashdi, Dr. Mumtaz Pathan, M. H. Panwhar and Dr. Nazim all hold that the last ruler of the dynasty Khafif is one of the names of the Soomrah rulers over Sind. His name, however, has not been mentioned in the Tuhfat-ul-Ikram and other historical accounts as the first ruler of the Soomrah dynasty ruled over Sind from 1051 AD while Khafif took over the control of al-Mansurah from 401-416/1010-1025. It was in the year 416 /1025 that Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna defeated him while on his way back to Ghazna from the expedition of Somnath. Mansurah is reported to have been a

¹⁵⁰ Pathan, M.H., Arab Kingdom of al-Mansurah, P. 65-9.

great commercial centre at that time. The destruction of the city is attributed to the shift of the Indus River or civil war or even a violent disturbance / calamity¹⁵¹.

End of the Dynasty of Banu Habbar:

Ibn Hazm and ibn Khaldun, both assert that Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni brought about the end of the Arab Kingdom of al-Mansurah,¹⁵² but no reason has been assigned for the extinguishing of the Arab rule in the country.

Ma'sumi a local historian relates the following story about the conquest of Sind by the Ghaznavid Sultan. He reports, "In the year 416/1025 Mahmud set out from Ghazni and after having conquered Multan and Uch, established his headquarter at Multan. From Multan he sent his minister 'Abd al-Razzaq who entered Sind in 417/1026 and effected the conquest of the country by capturing Bhakkar, Siwistan and Thatta". He further reports that a great number of Arabs were expelled while the remaining people were treated kindly and granted adequate pension.¹⁵³ The historical evidence however, disapproves the version of al-Ma'sumi, for Mahmud had no minister by name of 'Abd al-Razzaq. His minister's name was Khwaja Ahmad Hasan Maymandi who had a son called 'Abd al-Razzaq. This 'Abd al-

¹⁵¹ Qasim Ali Qasim, LMB, P. 5.

¹⁵² Ibn Khaldun, Vol. II, P. 327; Ibn Hazm P. 109.

¹⁵³ Ma'sumi, P. 53.

Razzaq was appointed to the government of Seistan, by Sultan Maudud ibn Mas'ud, the grandson of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna.¹⁵⁴

The Question now arises whether the rulers of al-Mansurah were Ism'illis or Qarmathian heretics as is generally supposed or whether there were other reasons for the attack of Mahmud on their kingdom. It is however, certain that up to 375 / 986 the rulers of al-Mansurah were Sunnite Muslims, and the Khutba was read in the name of the 'Abbasid Caliphs. During the same period at Multan, the Khutba was read in the name of the Fatimids as reported by Bashshari al-Maqdisi.¹⁵⁵

As already indicated the influence of Shi'ite propaganda in Sind was as old as the reign of Caliph al-Mansur in whose time Abdullah al Ashtar came to Sind. But the Isma'ili or Qarmathian influence in Sind may be dated with the rise of Qarmathian movement in Iraq or the foundation of the Fatimid dynasty in Egypt in 969 AD. It is related that during the reign of Caliph al-Mu'iz (952-975 AD) there was a man named ion al-Haytham in charge of Isma'ili propaganda in Sind whose conduct and teaching were greatly at variance with the Isma'ili orthodoxy taught by the Imam and his close associates. He was, however, not disturbed and allowed to continue with his mission, in spite of the fact that he made many changes in the Isma'ili doctrine. He is also reported to have given permission for the observance of

¹⁵⁴ . Ma'sumi, Appendix P, 270.

¹⁵⁵ . Bashshari, P. 485.

un-Islamic practices and relaxed certain statues of Islam, for those who had been Muslim before joining Isma'ilism.

The Da'i of Sind became successful at last and was able to convert the ruler of Multan, who openly proclaimed the suzerainty of the Fatimid Caliph at a very early period. Jalam ibn Shayban, who not only revived the Isma'ili orthodoxy but also reported to have destroyed the idol of Multan, which had survived throughout the Arab domination over Sind, followed him.¹⁵⁶

As regards to Isma'ili missionary influence over al-Mansurah very little is known, but it seems that Fatimid influence was prevalent at the court of al-Mansurah as early as 375 AH when al Maqdisi came to Sind. There was a diplomatic relationship between the rulers of al-Mansurah and the Buwayhid rulers of Iraq and the geographer had seen an envoy of al-Mansurah in the court of Adad al-Dawlah at Shiraz.¹⁵⁷ The Buwayhids are also responsible for the establishment of the Shi'ah festivals including the public mourning on the 10th of al-Muharram and the rejoicing (18th Dhu-al-Hijjah) on the alleged appointment of 'Ali by the Prophet as his successor at Ghadir al-Khumm.¹⁵⁸

It seems that some years after the departure of the geographer al-Maqdisi, the rulers of al-Mansurah might have adjured the orthodoxy

¹⁵⁶ Islamic culture, Vol. XXIII. PP. 299-300.

¹⁵⁷ Bashshari, p. 485.

¹⁵⁸ Hitti, p. 471.

and accepted the Isma'ili Qarmathian doctrine, the propagation of which was dominant in the whole Indus Valley. This step of the rulers of al-Mansurah might have been taken for political reasons in order to avoid the fury of those fanatics who would have otherwise overthrown his kingdom. Moreover, in this period the Qarmathians had suffered a great reverse at Multan at the hands of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni.¹⁵⁹ It is, therefore, highly probable that they might have attacked al-Mansurah and overthrown the Habbarid rule in the Lower Indus Valley.

Annexation of al-Mansurah by Sultan Mahmud of

Ghazna: Farrukhi, the contemporary writer informs us that the ruler of al-Mansurah whose name was Khafif fled to the jungles on the arrival of the forces of Sultan Mahmud and was drowned in the river.¹⁶⁰ The statement of Farrukhi is ratified by ibn al-Athir who, however, omits to mention the name of the ruler of al-Mansurah. He reports that the ruler of al-Mansurah had become a heretic and the Sultan wanted to punish him by marching to al-Mansurah. The ruler evacuated his capital on the approach of the Sultan's forces and took shelter in the neighbouring jungles, along with his army. He was, however, pursued by the army of Sultan Mahmud and in the encounter that followed, a great number of his soldiers were killed

¹⁵⁹ Nazim, P. 99.

¹⁶⁰ Farrukhi, P. 74.

and many more were drowned in the river; thereafter the Sultan returned to Ghazni, by way of Bhatyah.¹⁶¹

The above account leaves no suspicion about the end of Arab Kingdom of al-Mansurah, which was extinguished by the Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. Henceforth, the Lower Indus Valley came under the domination of the Ghaznavids, who held the province up to the decline and fall of the dynasty.

III- Destruction of al-Mansurah.

Historical and Archaeological evidence:

Once the history of Ancient Sind, independent dynasty of Banu Habbar at al-Mansurah, and its fall to the Ghaznavids is established, it is but quite natural to find out the facts that led to the destruction of the metropolis. The popular version is that al-Mansurah was destroyed by a convulsion of nature in the form of an earthquake. Alternate theories make either the change of the course of river or an invasion as the probable cause of depopulation and its destruction.

The site of al-Mansurah-cum-Brahminabad has been visited by many foreigners including Bellasis, Richardson, Cunningham, Raverty,

¹⁶¹ . Ibn Athir, Vol. IX, P. 33.

M.R. Haig and Henry Cousens – who has written the most comprehensive treaties on the antiquities of Sind. Of these visitors, Mr. Bellasis seems to have been greatly interested in the site, which he calls the "Pompeii of Sind". He not only visited the site again and again but also carried out excavations the result of which throw much light on the fate of this town which at one time was the flourishing centre of Arab administration and culture¹⁶².

Bellasis narrates his famous account on Brahminabad¹⁶³ as follows:

"Very little is known of the history of Brahminabad, except what tradition tells: as usual, it is mixed up with fable; but wanting records, even fable has its value, the popular account of Brahminabad as far as I have been able to procure it, is as follows:

"That about seven or eight centuries ago Brahminabad was a rich and flourishing city. That in those days a very wicked king, named Dolora, reigned those parts; and among his many iniquities he made a law that all young maidens, who married any of his subjects, were to pass the wedding night in his palace. The breach of law was death. Now a certain rich noble had a daughter, beautiful and fair, and she was about to be married. But this law was an insuperable obstacle to the father's wishes. In his difficulties, he went for assistance to a priest of a great sanctity, who was supposed to have

¹⁶² Pathan, M.H., P. 161.

¹⁶³ An Account of the Ancient & Ruined City of Brahminabad, in Sind Bombay, 1856.

a power of communicating with both Heaven and Hell and asked for advice. The priest told the rich man that he could only devise one way of helping him, and that was by destroying the whole city of Brahminabad, if King Dolora did not by a certain day abrogate this iniquitous law. The rich man besought the priest very earnestly to save the city: he offered him jewels, and silver and gold, to devise some other means; but the priest was firm, and said he has seen well into futurity, and that there was no other remedy. Then said the rich man, save my daughter's honour, should even Brahminabad be ruined. Accordingly there went a prophecy, proclaiming all the inhabitants, that if by a certain day King Dolora did not abrogate this wicked law, Brahminabad would be utterly destroyed, and warning all faithful people to flee the city before the impending calamity came to pass. The King took no heed, and continued in his wicked ways, living in pleasure and luxury in the midst of his lascivious Court. The day came and with the most awful tempest, followed by a violent earthquake. The city of Brahminabad was laid low in ruins, and in its fall, King, courtiers and unbelievers were buried.

Those who believed the prophecy of the priest, and had made their escape before this calamity took place are said to have wandered about Sind for a whole year, seeking for a spot whereon to settle and build them another city. They searched in vain for a site as beautiful as that of their ruined Brahminabad; for lands as fertile and rich, for

trade as great and flourishing. At last they came to Nusserpur¹⁶⁴ and that being the best place they had seen since they had left their own beautiful city, they settled there, and built them another brick city, and there they dwelt. This too has disappeared and Nusserpur is now a mud-built town, like all the rest of towns in Sind; but the remains of the old brick city are to be seen to this day. Such is the legend of Brahminabad and its inhabitants."

Tuhfat-ul-Ikiram

I have consulted Syed Sabir Ali Shah, a learned Syed of Thatta and have referred to the few Sindee Books that give any account of Brahminabad, and from these authorities I gain the following particulars:

The Syed states that the city appears to have been founded before the Hindu dynasty of Brahmins, which commenced in the first year of Hijree or A.D. 622. He said it is mentioned in the Tuhfat-ul-Ikiram that Chach, the first of the Brahmin Kings, who ruled in Sind, appointed his young brother Chunder as his viceroy at Alor and employed himself in arranging the boundaries of his kingdom, having subdued Mah, the Chief of Sehwan, and Agheer, the Chief of Brahminabad. From this the Syed infers that the city was probably founded during the reign of the Rajahs before the Brahmin dynasty.

¹⁶⁴ Nusserpur is a city of acknowledged antiquity and like Brahminabad, situated on the banks of the old Indus. It is still a place of some repute and learning, and has an inconsiderable trade.

The Syed also states that the city must have been ruined before the expiration of fourth Hijree century, or about A.D.1020 as he finds it mentioned in the Tuhfat-ul-Ikiram in the narrations of the Sumras that Chota Amranee, brother of Dolora Amranee, departed to Baghdad on account of his brother's injustice. The Chota Amranee embraced Islam, and married the daughter of a celebrated Arab, whom he brought to Sind in the fourth century, together with a number of Arabs, who, in company with Syed Ali Masumi, had been made over to him by the Caliph of Baghdad.

Chach Nama contains a history of Chach, the first of the Brahmin Kings of Sind, and of his domains. It was written in the original Arabic, about 700 A.D. Therein mentioned of the Brahminabad as the chief city of one of the divisions of the kingdom of Cyrus bin Saheerae, who lived before the time of Muhammad (PBUH). It also contains an account of the battles fought there, but mentions neither the date of its foundation nor its destruction.

The Tuhfat-ul-Ikiram contains a comprehensive history of Sind, and was written about ninety years ago A.H. 1180. and is a modern work in comparison with the Chach Nama. The Chach Nama was written by Ali Kufi who came to Sind with the army of Muhammad bin Qasim, sent in A.D. 710 by the Caliph Walid, son of Abdul Malik of Baghdad. Muhammad bin Qasim defeated Dahir, son of Chach, conquered Sind, and overthrew the Brahmin dynasty in 711 AD.

I do not think any objection to the supposition that Brahminabad was destroyed by an earthquake can be founded on the fact that a large portion of the tower has remained standing so long after the city itself had been deserted. It may owe its partial preservation to its superior size and solidity, and the fragment which has been standing within the memory of the present inhabitants is evidently but a very small portion of the original edifice.

In the time of Kalhoras, so much remained that the reigning prince ordered the demolition of the steps leading to the top, for the purpose of frustrating the designs of robbers, who used the tower as a place of observation, from which to watch the travellers as a preliminary to plundering them. A large portion of the tower, without the steps, was standing till about thirty five years ago when it fell, and has since remained in much the same as it is now - a mere fragment. **(Plate-95)**

Mr. Haig is of the opinion that the destruction of al-Mansurah was due to the change of the course of the Indus¹⁶⁵. He states that Mansurah was founded soon after the middle of the 8th century had comparatively a short life. His information is based upon Yaqut who wrote his famous geographical work in the 2nd decade of the 13th century and mentioned al-Mansurah as still flourishing. But Abu al-Fida writing in the first quarter of the 14th century says that the city with three other cities of the same name in the different parts of the east was in ruins. If both the writers are correct, it is probably to be

¹⁶⁵ Haig, M.R., P. 73.

inferred that a great change in the course of Indus took place some time between the middle of the 13th century and the early years of the 14th century and this caused the ruins of al-Mansurah¹⁶⁶. Mr. Haig might have based his theory on the stories current about a merchant Saif-al-Muluk and others who reported to have changed the course of the river Indus by artificial and miraculous means. This fact is further inferred from the vestiges of ancient towns found along the old bed of this mad river which due to its changing nature, rendered them desolate and finally ruined. Even in modern time the river is totally uncontrollable and plays havoc with the country side during the inundation season¹⁶⁷.

Henry Cousens on the contrary assumes that the destruction of al-Mansurah was due to some foreign invasions mostly from the eastern desert, which resulted in the ruthless massacre of its population and the complete sack of the town. It seems that he might have based his views on the account of the Arab writers who spoke of the marauding attacks of Jats and Meds, a warlike people who inhabited the flanks of the eastern desert. This fact is further inferred from the sudden disappearance of al-Mansurah and the advent of a new people, the Sumerah, who are reported to be of Rajput origin. Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna does not seem to have destroyed al-Mansurah. He only chastised its ruler and then appointed his own governor at al-Mansurah to replace the rule of the Arabs. It is,

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, P. 73; Pathan M.H, P. 161.
¹⁶⁷ Tuhfatul Kiram Vol. III, P.44.

therefore, supposed that according to Henry Cousens the town of al-Mansurah might have been destroyed by the Sumerah Rajputs who attacked Sind during the weak rule of the later Ghaznavids and took over the control of the Lower Indus Valley¹⁶⁸.

Archaeological Evidence:

Bellasis, Richardson, Cunningham, and Raverty all agree that al-Mansurah was destroyed by an earthquake and this is more acceptable account for the reason mentioned above in the excavation report.

Had the town of al-Mansurah been de-peopled by the change of river course, its destruction could have been gradual and the people would have carried everything away with them including valuables and coined money, which have been found on the surface of the ruins¹⁶⁹. At the same time, some of the buildings might have survived up to the present age in some tolerable condition, due to the fact that the buildings in the town were built substantially and on raised platform. Moreover, the change of river course could not have had such a great influence over the destinies of a capital town which received the water supply mostly from the wells. That the sub-soil water did not fall is clear from the presence of a well on the site and the water is tolerably potable¹⁷⁰. Further the observation of the site shows

¹⁶⁸ Henry Cousens, *Antiquities of Sind*, P. 71; Pathan, M.H., P. 162.

¹⁶⁹ Hughes, *Gazetteer of Sind*, P. 131

¹⁷⁰ Henry Cousens, *Antiquities*, P. 70.

numerous wells, the number of which may exceed 2000. The change of the river course would have at the most decreased the commercial importance of the town, the inland trade of which was mostly conducted by boats plying on the river Indus. The excavations have yielded a variety of pottery superior to that found nowadays in Sind, including vessels of china ware. Pieces of glass and crystal were also found with fragments of cups, bottles plates including pretty stones, and doorknockers apart from coins of gold, silver and copper and ornaments were also discovered from the site¹⁷¹. These things could not have been found, if the city was deserted in good order. Moreover, the inhabitants would not have left their cattle, horse and beast of burden behind whose bones have been found in great quantity in the three houses excavated by Mr. Bellasis¹⁷². It was custom in Sind that the cattle were generally tied within the house premises in the courtyard, same practice continues to this day. This shows that the cattle were not removed when the catastrophe befell the town.

The fact that the town of al-Mansurah was destroyed by an invading army hostile to the Arabs also appear to be untenable. On this, the remark of Mr. Richardson is fully acceptable " had twenty barrels of powder been placed under each individual building, the ruins could hardly have been perfect; besides whatever mischief the soldiery of the conquering army might have committed on buildings and other

¹⁷¹ Hughes, Gazetteer of Sind, P. 131

¹⁷² An Account of the Ancient & Ruined City of Brahminabad, in Sind Bombay, 1856; Hughes, Gazetteer of Sind, P. 130

property, they would have surely carried away coins and other valuables which are found in infinite number on the surface of the site.¹⁷³ The enemy would not have left a single head of the cattle in their loot, if they intended to destroy the city. There would have been a general conflagration, as was the practice in medieval times and at least half of the city would have been burnt. The observation of the site shows little sign of violation by fire and the charcoal that was discovered was not in any quantity, but as much as may be expected to be used by the occupants of the houses for cooking purposes.¹⁷⁴ If there would have been any fire, it would have certainly consumed the women's bangles and bracelets and delicate articles made of glass, ivory and copper, which have been unearthed from the ruins. Even harder metal, like iron would have been decomposed and melted away. Moreover, the enemy could have destroyed at the most half of the town and remnant of the population could have very easily revived and rehabilitated it".

A. F. Bellasis says "We selected for excavation a heap of ruins standing on the verge of the principal bazaar of square. We had not commenced many minutes before we came upon the edge of a wall; cleaning it, we soon came upon a cross wall and then upon another, and another, until a house with a variety of rooms began fast to take shape, and disclose its proportions. We had not dug two feet before we came to quantities of bones, and at that, and greater depths,

¹⁷³ Hughes, Gazetteer of Sind, P. 136.

¹⁷⁴ Hughes, Gazetteer of Sind, P. 135

skeletons were so numerous that it was hardly possible to dig a spade full of earth without bringing up particles of bones. As far as I could judge, many were undeniably human bones, and others those of cattle and of horses. The human bones were chiefly found in doorways, as if the people had been trying to escape, and others in the corners of the rooms. Many of the skeletons were in a perfect shape to show the position of the body it had assumed: some were upright, some recumbent, with their faces down, and some crouched in a sitting posture. One in particular, I remember, finding in a doorway, the man had evidently been rushing out of his house, when a mass of brickwork, had in its fall, crushed him to the ground, and there his bones were lying extended full length and the face downwards. These bones, on exposure to the atmosphere, mostly crumbled to dust and it was very difficult to obtain any but fragments. But in excavating you often obtain a good section of the skeleton and thereby can easily tell the position of the body.

Besides bones, I found large quantities of pottery in great varieties, and much of it of a very superior description to any I see now a day in Sind. A good deal of pottery was glazed in colours, of great brilliancy, and some of the vessels are of a fine kind of earthenware or china. Pieces of glass and crystal were also found, both in the excavations and on the surface of the ruins, in quantities, and the glass of all colours. Fragments of cups, bottles, and platters were very numerous. Some of the glass was beautifully stained of a deep blue colour, and other portions were worked in raised and ribbed patterns,

displaying a high standard of art in their manufacture. Stones for grinding grain; others for grinding curry-stuff, and some for mixing paints; several stones for sharpening knives and tools; several large pieces of corundum or emery, also used by cutlers to sharpen swords and instruments quantities of cornelian chips, and agates, and other pretty stones; balls, beautifully turned, of ivory, agate, and marble; coins chiefly of copper, few of silver; beads and ornaments of cornelian and glass in every variety. In one of the rooms I found a large grain jar, ribbed in circles, its mouth was arched over with brickwork. I at first took it for a well, but afterwards discovered it to be a sunken jar. The diameter of its mouth was two feet, and inside it was empty for four feet, the bottom portion being filled with mould, possibly the decomposed remains of the grain. (Plates-1-122) + (figures 6-109).

The city must have been famed, like the present city of Ahmadabad and Cambay in Gujrat, for its work in cornelian and agates; and it is probable that it was from that province that a trade was carried on for these stones. There are no carnelians of the kind found indigenous in the alluvial plain around Brahminabad and the mines of Kupperwunj in Gujrat are probably the nearest place from which they could have been imported. From the quantity of cornelian chips etc., besides grinding and sharpening stones found in the excavations, I am led to conclude that the house excavated must have been inhabited by a lapidary.

Under all these circumstances with reference to my excavations, I think it highly probable that the popular account that Brahminabad was destroyed by earthquake is true. It must have been some such convulsion of nature to have effected the complete and utter destruction of a city so strongly built as Brahminabad; and I further think it probable that the same convulsion that shook the city to its very foundation changed the course of the river which once without doubt washed the city walls".¹⁷⁵

The description given by A. F Bellasis clearly indicates the probable fate of the town and testifies to the truth of the popular version of its destruction by an earthquake. The wretched inhabitants were sleeping in their houses as would appear from the discovery of the skeletons in the corners of the rooms in sleeping and sitting position. But before they could come to their senses the roofs and walls fell down burying them under the debris. Further, the human bones on doorways clearly indicate the attempt of the people to save themselves by rushing out of the houses, from the catastrophe which seems to have overtaken the town unexpectedly and during the odd hours of night. They were, however, not allowed time to leave due to severity of the tremor in which everything crumbled down. The bones of bullocks, camels, horses and other animals and birds show that they were not removed from the houses when the earthquake overtook the town. Since the cattle are generally sent out for

¹⁷⁵ An Account of the Ancient & Ruined City of Brahminabad, in Sind Bombay, 1856.

pasturing during daytime, they would not have perished if the catastrophe befell the town during daytime.

It is generally questioned why the tower which ought to have come down first was not effected by the earthquake. On this the views of Mr. Bellasis are fully acceptable that the solidity and superior size of this tower enabled it to survive for such a long period, but that is evidently only a small portion of the original edifice.¹⁷⁶ "In the times of Kalhoras, he says, " so much remained that the reigning prince ordered the demolition of the steps leading to the top for the purpose of frustrating the designs of the robbers who used the tower a place of observation from which to watch travellers as a preliminary to plundering". A large portion of the tower without steps was standing till about 1819 AD., when it fell and has since remained in much the same state as it is now, a mere fragment.¹⁷⁷

The period of the destruction of al-Mansurah is almost uncertain due to the absence of historical evidence. It was in existence when al-Istakhri came to Sind¹⁷⁸ and was a flourishing town during Bashshari's visit to the Lower Indus Valley (375 AH.).¹⁷⁹ It is spoken of by al-Beruni as al-Mansurah Bahmanva during the 11th century AD¹⁸⁰. Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna who is reported to have put an end to the Arab dynasty of al-Mansurah on account of their converting to

¹⁷⁶ Hughes, Gazetteer of Sind, P. 136

¹⁷⁷ Hughes, Gazetteer of Sind, P. 137

¹⁷⁸ al-Istakhri, P. 173.

¹⁷⁹ al-Bashshari, P. 479.

¹⁸⁰ al-Beruni, P. 100.

Isma'ili heretics did not destroy it but on the contrary appointed his own men to administer the country. The author of *Tabaqat-e-Nasiri* reports that when he was at Ucha in 623/1227-28, al-Mansurah was occupied by band of the Khalj tribe of Turks, who fleeing from the Mongol onslaught took shelter in it¹⁸¹. At that period it is reported to have been situated in Nasiruddin Qubacha's territories and to have been one of the towns of Siwistan. From this account it would appear that the town of al-Mansurah which had been the cultural and administrative centre of the Arabs in Sind, might have lost its importance and been replaced by Siwistan or Sehwan. Raverty puts it "at the time of Khalj tribe in al-Mansurah, it may have been deserted, and the inhabitants were probably very few".¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ Minhaj, P. 143

¹⁸² Raverty, P.199