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PREFACE

It gives me great pleasure in timely presenting the Proceedings Volume of the Ajmer Session of the Rajasthan History Congress held on March 21 & 22, 1972.

Some of the papers were indeed of outstanding merit. As in the previous years, it has not been possible to include in the volume every paper submitted for the session. Largely, inadequacy of funds has been responsible for this. For the same reason some papers could not be published in full.

The papers have been arranged according to the traditional and chronological order.

I am grateful to Dr. Paras Raj Shah, who had to undertake the responsibility of preparing and bringing out this volume. My colleague Shri Pukhraj Arya and Shri Prakash Vyas, Research scholar, gave their valuable assistance in a number of ways. Thanks are also due to Rajshri Printers for expeditiously printing the volume with care. In a volume of this size and in a short time that it has been printed, some mistakes must have crept in. I hope readers will overlook such short-comings.

January 1, 1973
University of Jodhpur
Jodhpur

R. P. Vyas
Secretary
Rajasthan History Congress

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Dr. G. N. Sharma

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Fellow Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I feel exceedingly grateful to you all for the high honour which you have conferred on me by electing me as the President for the Fifth Session of the Rajasthan History Congress. I deem myself especially honoured for my election to this august office, which was adorned in the past by four of the eminent and distinguished scholars as Dr. M. L. Sharma, Dr. A. L. Srivastava, Dr. Dasharatha Sharma and Dr. M. S. Mehta. I am quite conscious that, though, I cannot claim to be ranked with the illustrious predecessors in this office, I can at least hope to walk in their footsteps in disentangling the knots and projecting the glorious past of Rajasthan, free from distortion and misrepresentation.

We have met here in the historic city of Ajmer which can boast its hoary past and religious sanctity. Mention may be made here of a few of the many antiquarian sites, far and near, which throw valuable light on various phases of the life of their early inhabitants. The *Upanishads*, the epics and the *Puranas* are amongst the most ancient documents which preserve the race-history and traditions associated with the lake Pushkar. A study of the Saraswati, the Banas, the Luni, the Ganmbhiri, the Berach,

the Wagan and the Thar basins throw light on the dark corners of ancient history and culture of Rajasthan. The Black-and-Red pottery, the painted Grey Ware, Microliths and a few objects of copper and bronze, explored in the regions, all evidence, goes to suggest a picture of the Aryan and the tribal settlements. A variety of finds—beads, blades, weights, jars, lids furnaces, copper-pieces etc., recovered in the process of excavations at the Ahar indicate the wealth of material equipment and manufacturing skill of the residents. That the artists of the Saraswati and the Ahar valleys had full grasp of essential elements of form and decoration is apparent in the patterns and symbols used in pottery and seals. These and other sites go to prove that the North-East and South-West parts of Rajasthan happened to be the centres of great culture of the world. But here it may be suggested that indeed what has been achieved in this line is but a fraction of what remains to be known. Many sites await excavation so as to yield a more detailed picture of the Aryan and non-Aryan settlements. Evidence is yet awaited to offer a clue to determine the inter-relationship between the *Charcolithic* culture and *microlithic* culture. Equally essential is to ascertain the evolution and diffusion of the Black-and Red Ware of Ahar.

With the beginning of the Sixth century B. C., the glimpses relating to life and living became distinct. The results of the excavations and explorations at the sites of Bairat, Rairh, Nagor, Nagari, Barli, Noh, Rangamahar, Kalyanpur, etc., offer a faint-picture of cultural sequence from the 6th century B. C., to 5th century A. D. A number of different types of coins, sculptures, ornaments, inscriptions and sites of towns link up Bhramanical culture and Buddhist culture and Rajanya *Janapada* and Sibi *Janapada*. These endeavour also provide some of the missing links in the devolution of a number of states of the Salva, the Malavas, the Arjunayans, the Yadavas, the Abhiras etc. But the task of fitting these cultures, the Janapadas and small states within a frame-work of chronology is one of our fundamental problems. Turning to the various states of the period, we feel that their origin and early history needs proper elucidation. Similarly, we are not certain of their exact political and cultural relationship.

Turning our attention to the dynastic history of Rajasthan, from the 6th century onward, we are faced at the outset with the bewildering task of determining the nature of kingship of the Rajput rulers. It seems that the celestial sanctity and the unity of *Dharm*, as expounded in several digests and literary works, were the distinctive features of the ideal of

kingship claimed by the rulers of Rajasthan. Perhaps they associated their position with the divine power in the interest of peace and order of their kingdom. Or perhaps for the expansion of the limits of their states and retaining power in their own hands against the challenges of the indigenous tribes, they tried to place the ideal of kingship upon a more dignified and impressive footing. This ideal was given monumental expression in more than one case. In Mewar Lord Eklinga was represented as conferring His earthly political mantle on Bapa who enjoyed the position of being a devotee of the Lord. The same position was later on identified with the act of acceptance of the *Diwanship* on the part of the rulers of the State. This is also true in the case of Marwar. The rulers of Jodhpur evoked the blessings of *Chamunda* by adopting the Eagle as the royal insignia. Accordingly, under the standard of the *Eklinga* and the Eagle, the celestial *aegis*, the Princes of the Mewar and Marwar directed their armies to subdue indigenous tribes of their regions and institute their authority in and around their realms. At least, two times in the long and troubled history of Mewar, the armed conquests of Maharana Kumbha and Sanga reached its widest limit and practically the major part of Rajasthan had been brought within the orbit of the unified force. The spiritual leadership was also calculated to dispel the atmosphere of distrust and suspicion, so very common among the Bhils and the Minas who were but a band of bandits. When this newly emerging power of Rajputs assumed the role of being the defender of the *Dharma*, the cows and the Brahmins, it inspired among the indigenous groups a sense of confidence, trust and co-operation. This state of affair gradually brought peace to a war-weary state. The acceptance of the *Mahadeva* and the *Durga* as the family deities by the rulers of these states naturally cemented the relations between the Rajputs and the tribals in the course of time. The *Har-Har-Mahadeva* and *Jai Mataji* became the common war cry of both the sets of people.

The origin of the Rajputs is another vexed problem of this period. Many theories have been advanced like the *Agnikula* theory, the *Suryavamsh* theory, the *Chandravamsh* theory, and the theories of the Brahman or foreign descents. Several views have been put forward by various scholars for and against these theories. Whatever view we may hold regarding them, it is certain that all these theories owe their origin to the legendary obscurity. Apart from the legendary character of the theories, certain controversial issues still remain to be settled. There arises first of all the question, whether the legendary origin was the result of a pre-planned device of the rulers themselves, or a pre-concerted device on the part of a

third party as well as that of the people in general. It appears that the early invaders of India—the Sakas, the Scythians, the Kushans and the Huns, when domiciled in this country, were naturally admitted into Hindu society. In this new arrangement, by virtue of being warriors, they were assigned Kshatriya's position. When these new claimants to princely honours accepted the faith and institutions of Brahmanism, attempts were made by the bards and the Pandits to affiliate them to the mythical heroes of the *Mahabharat* and the *Ramayana*, or ascribe to them a lofty origin from Fire, the Sun or the Moon. The bards and the Pandits, associated with the courts of these houses assigned a dignified position to their master in a manner which may not be easily challenged. When the Muslim invasions grew frequent by the 10th century this mythical origin was further tied up by knots of celestial myths with a view to maintaining rigidity in the social structure. I am confident that we will find in this thesis solution of the major problems connected with this complex and mysterious problem of the Rajput origin.

Next I would like to say a few words about the aristocratic government and the feudal lordship. To understand the real vitality of the social structure of medieval Rajasthan the social and economic factors connected with these institutions need a thorough examination. By the medieval period feudatory and aristocratic tendencies dominated almost every aspect of Rajasthani culture. The vassals and the upper classes took a leading role at the court of princes. The literature of the age was permeated with feudalism, and the major military actions were under the direct influence of the Lords and their masters. Meanwhile the influence of the privileged few came to play a large part in the lives of lower classes. Out of this institution a specific code of feudal ethics was gradually evolved. The code naturally emphasized loyalty, obedience and bravery. As regards the attitude towards women, it laid stress on an acute sense of honour. This age in Rajasthan was also a period of economic dominance of the aristocrats. From beginning to end all agricultural land, of course, remained under the control of the privileged classes, and commerce and industry, as they developed, were adapted to the prevailing feudatory and aristocratic institutions. It would indeed be an interesting study to find how the peasants, artisans and common-folks reacted towards it. Does this mean that the people in general had no active share in this kind of set-up?

It is true that certain aspects of medieval History of Rajasthan have remained almost unexplored, but fresh light needs to be set even on

some obscure points about the subjects on which much has been written. In this connection I may mention Prithviraj III. Whether he is to be accepted as the most picturesque and romantic figure of his time, who proudly rode his war-horse, under risk, for sweet Sanyogita, or a straight warrior who stood for the cause of medieval chivalry. Whether the Gaharvala-Chauhan and the Chalukya-Chauhan rivalries were the results of a well-arranged plan of action on the part of Prithviraj, or merely an armed show of a vain claim for the *Digvijaya*. An answer to these questions lay in Prithviraj's determination to carve out a place for himself in India. He wished to be the political figure, and he wanted, therefore, to assert his voice through the creation of war conditions around his kingdom. He tried, indeed to perpetuate an atmosphere of threat and fear by humiliating the Gaharawals, the Chandelas, and the Chalukyas. But in this policy of show of strength he was singularly unsuccessful. The Chauhan possession lay on between several antagonists which sealed his fate. Any evidence that might lend weight to such a thesis would indeed be an interesting study.

Contrary to this the glaring features of brave resistance offered by some of the rulers of Medieval Rajasthan sound a note of great military achievements. We all know that the triumph of Alauddin Khilji had conspired to undermine the foundations of the political structure of the Guhilots by the occupation of Chitor. Mewar's position was rather critical at that time. But Hammir, the chief of Sisoda took up his scheme of territorial aggrandisement against the decadent Khiljis and their Chauhan allies and rendered the restoration of Chitor feasible. He came out of the wars with enlarged territory and increased importance for Mewar. Maharana Kumbha carried out the work of Hammir still further. By his incessant wars with Malwa and Gujrat he kept the Sultans of these states in turmoil for over quarter a century. The distinguished general who had newly organized army, and the wily diplomat who arranged his alliances and negotiated his treaties, made Mewar feared and respected. By these virtues he made himself the very mirror of Rajput kingship. His career, to this day, bristles with instances of reckless courage and singular leadership. What is more to his credit, he was no more militarist. He was a man of learning and human spirit. Similarly the success of Chunda of Marwar in conquering Mandore was marvelous. According to his chroniclers the land owning warriors bowed down to him and became his men, and swore oaths of fealty against all other men. From this it is clear that the Rathore conquest of Mandore was not a simple change of master, but it was an establishment

of a new element of feudalistic order in the State organization. In this respect his measures struck many new lines in the general administration of the kingdom. A systematic study of such themes may speak volumes in favour of war like ability, strategy and diplomacy of the rulers of Rajasthan.

A fresh assessment of the causes, nature and the courses of medieval battles, without bias and passions, is a prime necessity in the writing of the military history of Rajasthan. The battles of Tarain and Khanwah are the major military operations in which the Turks and the Mughals respectively were the rivals against the Rajputs. The reliance on the number and heavy arms and weapons and the adoption of conventional arrangements of the armies at these two historic fields are sad commentaries on the traditionalism of the Rajputs. Similarly, too much faith in the impregnability of the forts brought disasters at the famous sieges of Chitor, Ranthambhor and Jalore. The Rajputs failed to create second place of defence. The result was the surrender of the forts and total destruction. But in the course of time, with the introduction of Mughal artillery the Rajput method of warfare underwent a considerable change during the later part of the 16th century. The tactics of locating defence points within hilly region and creating several fronts to face the brunts of war were the special contributions of Rana Udai Singh. The same method was faithfully followed by Rana Pratap and Raj Singh. This change over reveals a startling contrast with the picture of warfare outlined in the preceding account. The effects of this system were amazing. Mewar and Marwar, for sometimes claimed to retain the independence of their country against heavy odds.

Turning to the aspects of peace with the Mughals, which succeeded the age of resistance, we may take first the benefits it conferred on Rajasthan. First and foremost, the peace treaties brought the Princes and their nobility into contact with the Mughals who had at least to give a new type of administration and polished life. The leaven which the Mughals thus introduced acted in time upon the upper strata of society. One of the best results was the impetus for new type of industry and crafts at various centres for exchanging and marketing articles. However, there is much to be said against the Rajput-Mughal contact. If the *Dalpatvilas* is to be believed, several acts of the Mughal emperors were arbitrary and despotic leading to the imprisonment and punishment of the Rajput nobles. The Amber records make us believe that the Mughal administrators did not hesitate to tax the people of Amber without the consent of the rulers. Right of interference in

allied state of Rajasthan was Aurangzeb's plea to annex Jodhpur. In religious matters Aurangzeb's Government had been the most intolerant and unpopular.

This kind of situation could not foster the growth of the spirit congenial to a compact national state organization. As a result, from the 18th century onward, Rajasthan drew towards the unhealthy tendencies of strengthening of regional differences and feudalistic fervour. By inevitable force of circumstances the habits and tastes of the Rajput Princes were modelled after European pattern. The local merchant capital was driven away in favour of foreign industrial capital. The old centres and markets of trade like Pali, Sambhar, Badmer, Medta etc., began to lose their importance. The prospects of salt, opium, cotton and wool trade was decided by the British masters. The cottage industry and village handicraft began to face dullness and it gradually began to dwindle. The entire fabric of British rule jeopardised the economic life of the people of Rajasthan. Many a self-supporting communities became jobless. These evils of British rule cannot be over-looked simply because the English Masters introduced English education, industrial development and improved means of transportation and communication. Let us be optimistic enough to think that the influx of the world changes was bound to bring important reaction upon Indian life sooner or later, with or without the British rule.

Reflecting minds may denounce some of the political events of war, battles, defeats and victories, just narrated, as dull tales of the dramatic acts of kings, warriors and statesmen. But they have other aspects which should not be ignored. They throw light upon such events from which the lessons could be learnt. They diffuse knowledge which is useful to men in daily life. Bacon is right when he says that "Histories make men wise." Take for instance, the wars and conquests referred to above. They may be a sad narration of human brutality and barbarism, they are still a vital factor in the world politics. The fate of ordinary men is still shaped and re-shaped by war and conquests. Even in our own days past events go to help politicians and statesmen in solving grave problems. They may draw from them an inexhaustible store of experience and inspiration. Mr. Renier has correctly stated : "It is still highly necessary for statesmen to know precedents, good, bad and indifferent, for the purpose of comparison and subsequent action." The political history is indeed an expression of a people's pride in the past. Therefore, while dwelling upon events of war, and

war techniques in Rajasthan, I was fully alive of their use, specially in such a critical moment of abnormal conditions. The Rajasthanis—men and women, in past have sacrificed their lives cheerfully, for the defence of their land. People of this land are aware of these elements of history and have fixed their noble norms in the moment of country's need.

It is, of course, not true to think that history of Rajasthan deals with the lives and actions of heroes and warriors; in a sense it may be said to consists of lives of several individuals who have made their contribution in their own way. It deals with the achievements of persons in all their complexity and incalculability. The history of the constructive skill of hundreds of masons who built the *Shilaparakar* of Nagari, the *Kirtistambha* of Chitor, the fort of Kumbhalgarh and the *Nochouki* of Rajnagar is lively and thrilling. Similarly, if we search the history of thought in the annals of Rajasthan we find an undercurrent of a quest for rational order. Harita perhaps was the first thinker of our early medieval period who wished the state to be governed according to the counsel of the elders. Later on, too, rational thinking persisted in the writings of the *Eklingamahatmya* and the *Rajratnakar* and other works on statecraft and art of government. The writers of the *Jagat Sinha Kavya* and the *Abhayodava* frankly admit that the monarchy if not handled properly could degenerate into tyranny and anarchy. These writings also emphasise the role of moral and ethical behaviour of the rulers and the ruled. Equally it is interesting to note that the history of Rajasthan is not divorced from the sociological repercussions of history. Right from the age of Sawai Jai Singh to the period of British Raj, Rajasthan witnessed a rapid progress in urbanisation and industrialisation. New groups of craftsmen and a whole middle stratum of the *Oswals* and the *Kayasthas* dominated economic and political power. A process of accommodation and synthesis also seems to be very active in the sphere of language, dress and manners. The missionary activity too intruded into the faiths and creeds of men. Thus the history of Rajasthan, in the garb of political history, contains integrated themes pertaining to a life movement of the entire community.

When we have reflected on several types of patterns of historical events, we are in a position to assess the present available published historical literature. The writing of Rajasthan History chronologically and dynasty-wise under the horizontal scheme was much favoured by the early historians,

of this state. Colonel Tod comes first who deserves premier position by order of seniority and by virtue of unearthing new materials for his *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*. The same model with little modification was adopted by the subsequent writers, of whom Kaviraj Shyamaldas, the writer of the *Vir Vinod*, Dr. G. H. Ojha, the author of several series of the history of Rajasthan, Pt. V. N. Reu, the writer of the *Marwar-Raj-ka-Itihas*, Munshi Jawala Sahai, the writer of *Waqia-i-Rajputana* and Pt. Ram Karan Asopa, the writer of *Marwar ka Mul Itihas*, etc., are pre-eminent. Munshi Devi Prasad and Harbilas Sharda preferred to confine themselves on the biographical and other historical writings of value.

Of our own times, Dr. M. L. Sharma, the writer of the Histories of Kota and Jaipur and Dr. Dasharatha Sharma, the writer of the *Early Chauhan Dynasties* and the editor of the *Rajasthan through the Ages* are eminent historians and scholars of repute who introduced a critical, systematic and organised studies of dynastic and institutional histories. I too followed the same pattern of research and discovery in my book *Mewar and the Mughal Emperors*. My other works like the *Social Life in Medieval Rajasthan*, *A Bibliography of Medieval Rajasthan*, *The Rajasthan studies*, *the Glories of Mewar* and the *Rajasthan ka Itihas* strike a new note in the study of tracts and several social and cultural aspects, dividing the themes and subjects vertically.

With this background the researches in various aspects of Rajasthan history and institutions were initiated resulting in the fruitful production and publication of several theses of which the *Marwar and the Mughals* by Dr. V. S. Bhargava, *the Marwar and the Marathas* by Dr. G. R. Parihar, the *Role of Nobility in Marwar* by Dr. R. P. Vyas, the *Mewar and Maratha Relations* by Dr. K. S. Gupta and the *Political awakening in Rajasthan* by Dr. K. S. Saxena are worth mentioning. I am glad to know that the theses of Dr. B. S. Mathur (*Administration of Mewar from 1750 to 1850*), Dr. V. S. Bhatnagar (*History of Rajasthan during the 18th century*), Dr. R. P. Joshi, (*A Century of British Rule in Ajmer*), Dr. (Miss) Padmaja (*Man Singh of Jodhpur and his times*) and Dr. P. R. Shah (*Raj Marwar under British Influence*) are in the process of publication. There are two notable unpublished theses, presented at the Rajasthan University, Jaipur, of which one by Dr. V. K. Vashishtha (*Rajputana Agency, 1832 to 1858*) and another by

Dr. Zabar Singh (*Marwar and East India Company*) merit in concise and orderly form.

But we should not be content with all this. And yet I cannot but feel that the time has come for a more critical approach to the study of other valuable aspects of Rajasthan history. Subject like interstate relations, land problems, vocational and technical education, town-planning, technique of war, military strategy, Christian Missionary, peasants' condition, History of Railway development, Industrial potentialities, agricultural and irrigation facilities, trading centres and traders, etc., relevant to Rajasthan, may be fruitfully attempted with a historical perspective. It is the time for us to discard finally to build our history solely on dynastic treatment. There is an availability of many manuscripts in regard to subjects like medicine, engineering, chemical technology, digging of wells, water finding etc. There are some very important treatise on military science which cover the aspects like arms and training and controlling of horses and elephants. There are some manuscripts on the study of craft dealing with weaving, colouring process and polishing system which are instructive and useful. There is also material to study the history of ideas. This kind of study will help us to examine the relationship and impact of science, art, religion on the development of changing patterns of government and ideas of the people. Copious records and private letters are available for a fruitful study of the growth of ideas of national liberation.

This discussion on themes lead me to another very relevant aspect, the maintaining of the standard of scholarship and quality of research produced. For our future writings we should be very careful in the selection of the young researchers. Adequate facilities and guidance should then be provided for training such students in the art of methodology and historical understanding. They should be encouraged to take up such topics of research in which the language equipment will help them in tackling the basic sources, which may be in Sanskrit, Persian, or Rajasthani. This would enable young researchers to form a more balanced conception of historical studies, and their works would be then more effective and practical.

It is also necessary that the task of history should be facilitated by the provision of suitable reference works, such as indices, calenders of records and guides to manuscripts. Rajasthan is a gold mine for fresh material

which needs a thorough investigation. The valuable assets of the *Bhandars* and the State Archives are still awaiting publication. The work of preparing bibliographies of manuscripts and records in *extenso* should be taken up by the Universities of Rajasthan without inordinate delay. Let us hope that the State Government will pay greater attention in future to the preparation of the basic tools of research and thus encourage the systematic study of the Rajasthan History.

Friends, I have taken enough of your time and thank you for the patience with which you have endured me all this time.

'JAI HIND'
