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The Editorial Office of the *IRCICA Journal* is based at the headquarters of the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA) in İstanbul.

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Editorial

As we present the fifth issue of *IRCICA Journal*, we are pleased to see that the journal has been successfully established as major venue for interdisciplinary studies on Islamic history, art and civilization. The launch of this journal was a milestone for the widespread dissemination of scholarly knowledge produced by IRCICA in its capacity as the cultural subsidiary of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. We are glad to see that its interdisciplinary work is coming well to fruition. In line with the official mandate of the Centre, *IRCICA Journal* galvanized its position as an esteemed and prestigious global platform for scholarly work on Islamic history, arts, handicrafts, architecture, civilization and heritage.

This issue of the journal comprises four scholarly articles in English and two scholarly articles in Arabic which perfectly reflect the international character of its scholarly audience. The content of the articles also illuminate the broad geographical scope of the research and activities of our centre reaching from South and Central Asia to Africa, and from the Balkans to the Middle East.

The first article of this issue by Dr. Abdulkadir Hashim from the University of Nairobi in Kenya gives an account of the cultivation of the culture of tolerance and coexistence in the Zanzibar Sultanate. The main argument revolves around the idea that the Zanzibar Sultanate throughout its rule managed to create and leave a tradition of coexistence among its citizens. Dr. Hashim maintains that in this spirit of coexistence not only the multi-ethnic communities such as Arabs, Europeans, Africans and Asians; but also the inter-faith and intra-sectarian diversities lived together harmoniously for over a century until the inception of manipulations by British colonial administration. Building upon slavery studies and national archives, Dr. Hisham states that British colonial rule took advantage of existing ethnic and cultural diversity and adopted a policy of stratifying citizens along ethnic lines that weakened social bonds between various ethnicities in Zanzibar. This article effectively shows the impact of colonialism on the decay of traditional social bonds in Eastern Africa.

Professor Casim Avcı from Marmara University in Istanbul concentrates on manifestations of Muslim's presence in Istanbul (Constantinople) during the Byzantine period in the second article of the issue. The article looks at the increasing presence of Muslims in the city as a result of political, military, religious, economic and socio-cultural relations between Byzantines and Muslims during nine centuries from the birth of Islam in early 7th century to the conquest of the city in 1453. Covering a long span of time, Casim Avcı portrays a wide range of Muslim figures such as ambassadors, merchants, scholars, travellers and poets coming to the city for various reasons; as well as some unfortunate ones such as prisoners and slaves. He presents a rich account of the Muslim-Byzantine relations by relying on various sources including travel writings, official historical records, chronicles, foreign policy manuals and poetry.

The third article of the issue by Assistant Professor Thowhidul Islam from the International Islamic University in Chittagong, Bangladesh, presents an outline of the educational system in Muslim Bengal under the Turko-Afghan Sultanate (1205-1576). By providing a concise overview of the evolution of the educational institutions over the course of several centuries, Thowhidul Islam displays contrasts with Buddhist and Brahmanic educational systems. The main argument of the article centers around the idea that with the Muslim conquest by the Turks in the early 13th century, a new and diversified educational system flourished in the society of Bengal that opened learning facilities for all people regardless of class or cast divisions. Before Islam, Buddhist and Brahmanic religious centers served mainly as educational institutions; and cultivation of knowledge was instructed through the Sanskrit language which was limited only to the upper classes. The article mainly aims to discover the nature of the new educational system developed under the Turko-Afghan Muslim Sultanate.

The fourth article of the issue by Professor Gulchehra Agzamova from the Institute of History at the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan presents a detailed account of the markets (bazaars) in Central Asia. The article is very important as it displays the role of

bazaars in the social fabric of Central Asian societies. Drawing on archives, historical accounts and travelbooks, Agzamova's study presents different dimensions of markets and their relationships to the formation of the cities in Central Asian Khanates. She aptly demonstrates that depending on the topography, specialization, location, or size these markets differed from each other by their peculiarities. Agzamova presents a detailed account of these Central Asian markets that played a significant role in the social, economic and cultural development of Central Asian cities from the 16th to the 19th centuries.

Passing on to the part in Arabic; the first article in the Arabic section of the journal is prepared by Dr. Salim Bin Mohamed Bin Said Al-Hanaay from the History Department of Sultan Qaboos University in Sultanate of Oman. The article addresses Arab-African relations and the spread of Islam from the Arabian Peninsula to Eastern Africa. Dr. Salim focuses on various factors such as geography, immigration and trade that contributed to the spread of Islam in Eastern Africa. He explains that Arab-African relations started with trade and the *Sabe'ioon* (The Arabs from the South of Arabian Peninsula) were the first arriving in small numbers as traders. They not only conducted trade, but also mingled with Swahili, married with them and established trade markets. Arab human characteristics and language (*Swahili*) appeared along the line of east African *Sahil* (Coast) before 500 BC. The author indicates instances when Arab traders and scholars sailed through the Indian Ocean to reach remote parts of eastern Africa and deliver Islamic teachings.

The second article in the Arabic section is written by Dr. Salem Khamis, Head of Languages and Translation Department at the Islamic University in Bemergro, Tanzania. The study titled "The effect of the Arabic language on the Swahili language" examines the interrelationship between the two languages. The analysis starts from the origins of Swahili language with a focus on grammatical and morphological features and moves on the spread of Arabic words in Swahili. Dr. Khamis adopts descriptive, analytical and inductive methods and uses Swahili and Arabic dictionaries, as

HALİT EREN

well as other sources. Following a detailed phonetical and semantic language analysis, the article indicates that around one fourth of the vocabulary of the Swahili language was borrowed from Arabic and used with slight changes. The study also pinpoints key historical events that led to the spread of Arabic language in Africa and some of the attempts made to hinder this development.

With insightful articles on the history of civilization in Eastern Africa, Central and South Asia, this issue of *IRCICA Journal* is bound to trigger new avenues of research in its respective focus areas. It is with pride and pleasure that we present the fifth issue of *IRCICA Journal* to the attention of academics, scholars and researchers across the World.

Halit Eren, Assoc. Prof.
Director General, IRCICA

Creating the Culture of Tolerance and Coexistence in the Zanzibar Sultanate¹

Abdulkadir Hashim²

Abstract

Due to its historic and strategic position, Zanzibar attracted diverse communities who created a cosmopolitan state. Among the legacies left behind by the Zanzibar Sultanate is the spirit of co-existence and tolerance between its multi-ethnic communities that included Arabs, Europeans, Africans and Asians. The spirit of tolerance encompassed inter-faith as well intra-sectarian diversities; including Ibadis from Oman, Shafi'is from Yemen, Hanafis from India and Shiites from Persia. Despite varied ethnic and religious orientations of its citizens, the Zanzibar Sultanate managed to accommodate the rulers and the ruled in a harmonious manner for over a century. A striking feature of the spirit of tolerance exhibited by the Sultans was their reception of the British colonial enterprise that initially portrayed a non-interference policy in the affairs of the Sultanate. However, after gaining control over the Sultanate, the British colonial administration gradually undermined the sovereignty of the Sultans. The British colonial officials manipulated ethnic diversities and stratified people along racial lines that weakened the social bonds between the various ethnicities in Zanzibar. Social disintegration was further accelerated by the slavery epidemic. British philanthropists and Christian missionaries exploited the anti-slavery movement by

¹ Presented at the International Symposium on the "History of the Islamic Civilization in Eastern Africa", organized by IRCICA, and the National Records & Archives Authority of the Sultanate of Oman, in cooperation with Zanzibar State University, Zanzibar, Tanzania, 3-6 September 2013.

² I thank Professor Saad S. Yahya for his comments on improving this paper.

tarnishing the image of the Arab slave owners and, by extension, the religion of Islam. Anti-slavery campaigns cultivated hatred against the slave owners and culminated in perpetuating violence and ethnic rivalry. Despite the colonial racial policies, the Sultans and the ulama interacted with the British colonial officials. The main argument of this article is that throughout its rule, the Zanzibar Sultanate managed to leave a tradition of coexistence between its citizens. This legacy needs to inform the current crisis caused by ethnic tensions and religious diversities. Contemporary Zanzibar may borrow inspiration from its glorious history so as to enhance its cultural and religious heritage and restore its significant place in the world of the Indian Ocean.

Creation of a Cosmopolitan World

Zanzibar archipelago served as a link between the continental world of Africa and the maritime world of the Indian Ocean with a culture that was distinctly urban, mercantile and cosmopolitan.³ The emergence of Zanzibar as a mercantile center in the early 19th century attracted the migration of Muslim communities and ulama who brought ideas and connections that changed the intellectual and political landscape of Zanzibar.⁴ Trade and migrations of Muslim communities from the Arabian Peninsula and the Indian sub-continent acted as a catalyst in planting the Islamic civilisation into Zanzibar's soil since the early 10th century. Oman and the East African coast were culturally and commercially connected for centuries.

The Busaidi Sultanate in Zanzibar represented the cosmopolitan spirit of the time. The Sultanate had diverse ethnicities that included the ruling Omani Arabs; the Indians of various religious

³ Abdul Sheriff, "The Spatial Dichotomy of Swahili Towns: The Case of Zanzibar in the Nineteenth Century", *Azania, Journal of the British Institute in Eastern Africa*, 36-37, 2001-2002, p.61.

⁴ Amal N. Ghazal, "The Other 'Andalus' The Omani Elite in Zanzibar and the Making of an Identity, 1880s-1930s", *The MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 5, Fall 2005, p.43.

persuasions; the Parses and Africans from different regions.⁵ By the mid-19th century, Zanzibar had a substantial population of Hadrami communities, people from Madagascar, Comorians and Barawians, indigenous Zanzibaris as well as Africans from the hinterland and a growing community of Europeans.⁶ The cosmopolitanism of Zanzibar was also represented by its Muslim scholars and their encounters with British colonial officials and Christian missionaries which constituted a vibrant intellectual world.⁷ Sheikh Abd Allah Salih Farsi (d.1982) mentioned Sheikh Abd al-Aziz al-Amawi (d.1896) who debated with Christian missionaries and noted that "There was no Muslim scholar in Zanzibar who could match Sheikh Abd al-Aziz in debating with Christian missionaries."⁸ Farsi also mentioned that Sayyid Ahmad b. Ali Itibari b. Mwinyi Mkuu Sultan referred to Sayyid Mansab b. Ali who was taught the skill of drawing by an English missionary lady who used to reside at Mkunazini church in Zanzibar. It was through this artistic exposure that Sayyid Mansab managed to draw the portrait of Sultan Khalifa b. Said who ruled in Zanzibar (r.1888-90) and refused to be photographed.⁹

Cultivating the Swahili Culture

Othman referred to the diverse descriptions of Zanzibar as a romantic clove island, the pearl of the Indian Ocean where

⁵ Valerie Hoffman, "Muslim-Christian Encounters in late Nineteenth-Century Zanzibar", *The MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 5, Fall 2005, p.59.

⁶ Abdul Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices and Ivory in Zanzibar: Integration of an East African Commercial Empire into the World Economy, 1770-1873*, London: James Currey, 1987, p.149.

⁷ A. N. Ghazal, "Islam and Arabism in Zanzibar: The Omani Elite, the Arab World and the Making of an Identity, 1880s-1930s" (*PhD Thesis, University of Alberta, Edmonton: Alberta, Spring 2005*), p.7.

⁸ A. S. Farsy, *Baaadhi ya Wanavyuoni wa KiShafi wa Mashirki ya Afrika*. (No name of publisher), p.35.

⁹ Farsy, 1944, p.27

the intermarriage of many cultures could be seen.¹⁰ Interaction between the immigrant Muslim communities and the local people created a unique Swahili culture and language based on varying combinations of African, Arab, Asian and Persian heritage. The Swahili culture was strongly influenced by Islam and had a long-standing flourishing heritage along the East African coast. Influence of the Islamic civilization on the East African coast paved the way for the development of mixed cultural codes in the form of Afro-Arabian, Afro-Asian and Perso-African cultures exemplified by the Swahili cultural and language systems which resulted in the flourishing of a massive collection of literature, new forms of architecture that reflected the interplay of Islam and local cultures.¹¹ The intermingling between the different cultures became so diverse that there was no clear demarcation between the Arab, the Arabized and the non-Arab as the case between the European and the non-European.¹² The interaction between the African and Arabian cultures was in some cases at the expense of the Arabian culture. Harries noted that

“the important thing about the dispersed Arabs who migrated to East Africa... is that they lost their culture and failed to establish another Arabian culture... Except for exclusively religious purposes, they lost what is perhaps the most binding factor of Arab culture, their language. They became Africanized; they changed their diet, they adopted customs that were new to them.”¹³

Although the existence of the indigenous African population

¹⁰ H. Othman, “Zanzibar’s Political History – The Past Haunting the Present?”, *Paper presented at the International Conference on Zanzibar History and Culture, Zanzibar 14th-16th December, 1992*, p.1.

¹¹ IRCICA, “Editorial Foreword”, *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Islamic Civilisation in Eastern Africa*, Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), Istanbul, 2006, p.14.

¹² A. A. Mazrui and I. Shariff, *The Swahili: Idiom and Identity of an African People*, Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1994, p.28.

¹³ Lyndon Harries, “The Arabs and Swahili Culture”, *Africa*, xxxiv, 1964, p.225

predominantly enveloped the East African coast, there was a vital Arabo-Islamic component that played a significant role in the Swahili culture. Being a ruling class, Omani Arabs represented an important phase of Arabisation on the coast and its social and political impact was greatly felt.¹⁴ Mazrui, a champion of the Swahili culture, introduced the concept of *Afrabia* that connotes an interaction between Africanity and Arab identity. Mazrui noted that Islam is a culture that not only embraces denominational diversity of religion, but also of dialectal diversity of language.¹⁵ Zanzibar has a large stake in the creation and development of the Swahili culture.

Creating the Culture of Tolerance

Due to its multi-ethnic culture, the Zanzibar society was much more diverse and open compared to Oman. The most outstanding feature of the Zanzibar society was its tolerance towards members of its diverse communities. Sayyid Said (r.1804-1856) adopted a policy of tolerance towards religions of his citizens. For instance, Sayyid Said did not allow the slaughter of any cattle in areas predominantly resided by Hindus to avoid offending their faith.¹⁶

In the mid-19th century, Zanzibar witnessed the influx of organised Sufi brotherhoods in various groups. The Qadiriyya, which was the dominant order, gained popularity by the coming of Sheikh Uways b. Muḥammad al-Barawi (d.1909) to Zanzibar. The Shadiliyya was introduced to Zanzibar through the Comoro

¹⁴ A. I. Salim, "The Impact of Social, Political and Cultural Changes on Kenya's Muslims – with Special Reference to the Arab-Swahili, Islamic Identities in Africa", *International Conference*, sponsored by the Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University and the School of African and Oriental Studies, SOAS, 18-20 April 1991, p.15.

¹⁵ A. A. Mazrui, "Africa and Islamic Civilization: The East African Experience", *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Islamic Civilisation in Eastern Africa*, published by Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), Istanbul, 2006, p.15.

¹⁶ Hoffman, 2005, p.59.

Islands towards the end of the nineteenth century. Among the most visible orders in Zanzibar was the Alawiyya which was introduced by the Alawi scholars as a result of migration movements of the Bani Alawi and other Hadrami groups.¹⁷ By the late 19th century, the Sufi brotherhoods had already established their presence in the Busaidi Sultanate. Mosques were closely associated with Sufi orders.

For instance, Mnara mosque was attached to the Qadiriyya and Gofu mosque was associated to the Alawiyya.¹⁸

The spirit of understanding and tolerance between the rulers and ruled can be exemplified by the following question that was channeled to Sultan Khalifa b. Harub (†1911-1960) requesting him to ask ulama the rule of reciting supplications of the Quran when escorting the coffin (*janaza*). Although the question seems to be of little magnitude, it still elaborates how people were attached to their rulers.

An interesting aspect of the answer that was given by Sayyid Umar b. Sumayt (†1973) is the spirit of tolerance and acceptance of acts perceived to be innovative (*bid'a*) and permitting such acts on the basis of Islamic legal maxims. In response to the question, Sayyid Umar mentioned that although raising voice is considered innovation (*bid'a*) when escorting a coffin, he referred to the opinion of Yemeni scholars who based their view on the maxim of the lesser of the two evils that allows people escorting the coffin to recite supplications instead of talking in worldly issues.

Source: Notes of Sheikh Fatawi b. Isa obtained from Hamid Fatawi and Saleh Fatawi in Zanzibar on 17th June 2006.¹⁹

¹⁷ A. M. Issa, "The Legacy of Qadiri Scholars in Zanzibar", In R. Loimeier and R. Seesemann, (Eds.). *The Global Worlds of the Swahili: Interfaces of Islam, Identity and Space in 19th and 20th Century East Africa*, Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2006, p.347.

¹⁸ A. K. Bang, "Cosmopolitanism Colonised? Three Cases from Zanzibar 1890-1920", In E. Simpson and K. Kresse, (Eds.) *Struggling with History: Islam and Cosmopolitanism in the Western Indian Ocean*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2008, p.176.

¹⁹ Scanned copy of the text is at Appendix A.

Intra-Sectarian Coexistence

The economic prosperity established by Sayyid Said attracted Muslim communities of diverse affiliations. By the mid-19th century, Zanzibar was already a metropolis with a sectarian diversity; Shafi'is from Yemen, Hanafi and Shia communities from the Asian continent. A striking feature of the intra-sectarian coexistence was the interaction between scholars and students of diverse affiliations. Shafi'i ulama worked together with their Ibadi counterparts and students from one sect studied under prominent scholars of the other.²⁰ Farsi gave an account of students who studied under intellectuals from various madhhabs. Sheikh Sulayman b. Muḥammad al-Alawi (d.1970) was taught by a number of Ibadi scholars who include Sheikh Sayf b. Nador al-Kharusi, Sheikh Nador b. Salim Udaym al-Rawahi (d.1920) and Sheikh Qaswar b. Hamud al-Rashidi.²¹ Sheikh Hassan b. Amer (d.1979) was taught by Ibadi scholars such as Sheikh Ali b. Muhammad al-Mandri (1925) and Sheikh Abdalla b. Amur al-Azri. Sheikh Naṣir al-Kharusi and Sheikh. Nador b. Salim b. Udaym al-Ruwaihi. Sheikh Abdulshakur b. Muhammad b. Abdurazzak from the Bohora community of Surat was taught by Sheikh Ali b. Abd Allah b. Nafi al-Mazrui. Sheikh Abdulshakur then in turn taught Sheikh Muslim b. Ali al-Barwani. Sheikh Muhammad Hirji of Indian origin was taught by Sayyid Ahmad b. Sumayt (d.1925).²²

When Sultan Sayyid Said settled in Zanzibar in 1832, he established a formal judicial structure and appointed two *qaḍis*; one from the Ibadi madhhab, Abd Allah b. Mbaruk b. Abd Allah al-Nazwi, and the other one from the Shafi'i'i madhhab, Sheikh Muhiddin al-Qahtani (d.1869). The Busaidi Sultans appointed Shafi'i qaḍis that formed the majority madhhab in the Sultanate, as opposed to the Ibadi madhhab adopted by the Omani minority

²⁰ R. L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent: Cultural Change and Traditional Islam on the East African Coast* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, p.39.

²¹ Farsy, 1944, p.60.

²² *Ibid*, p.32.

ruling class.²³ In order to gain support of their subjects, sultans appointed qadis on the basis of affiliation to the dominant sect in the Sultanate. For instance, in 1912, the ratio of Sunni qadis in Zanzibar Town was three Shafi'i qadis: Aḥmad b. Sumayt, Burhan b. Abd al-Aziz al-Amawi (d.1935) and Tahir b. Abubakar al-Amawi (d.1938) as opposed to one Ibadi qadi: 'Ali b. Muhammad al-Mandri. The increased number of Shafi'i qadis reflected the majority of the Shafi'i population in the Zanzibar archipelago compared to Pemba Island where the majority of qadis were from the Ibadi madhhab due to the dominance of the Ibadi sect on the island. In 1912 there were three Ibadi qadis in Pemba: Gharib b. Ali (d.1934) in Chake Chake, Salim b. Aḥmad in Wete and Muhammad b. Ali al-Mandri in Mkoani, with only one Shafi'i qadi Abd al-Rahim b. Mahmud al-Washili (d.1936).²⁴

Irrespective of their Ibadi affiliation, some of the Busaidi Sultans encouraged Shafi'i scholars to respond to arguments raised by Ibadi scholars. For instance, Sultan Majid (r.1856-1870) asked Sheikh Ali b. Nafi al-Mazrui (d.1894) on whether he could respond to the book *Al-Durar al-Saabigha* written by Sheikh Muhammad b. Ali al-Mandri. Sheikh Ali replied that he could do so but he feared to offend the Ibadi madhhab of the sultan. Despite the difference of affiliation, Sultan Majid allowed Sheikh Ali to respond. Sheikh Ali wrote his response in a form of a book named *Khulasat al-Daamigha*.²⁵

An interesting feature of the Ibadi-Shafi'i interaction was the conversion of Ibadis to the Shafi'i madh-hab. Among the pioneer Ibadis who converted to the Shafi'i madhhab was Sheikh Ali b. Nafi al-Mazrui. Part of the reasons given for the conversion of the Mazruis to the Shafi'i madh-hab was due to their political opposition to the Busiadi rule and the Mazrui-Swahili alliance.

²³ Pouwels, 1987, p.152

²⁴ Zanzibar National Archives, The Official Gazette of the Zanzibar Government, Vol.20, No.1042, 15th January 1912, p.8.

²⁵ Farsy, 1944, p.27.

Salim pointed out that within a period of 30 years most of the Omani tribes in Zanzibar had converted to the Shafi'i madhhab.²⁶ Soghayroun attributed the intermarriage between the Mazruis and the local tribes along the East African coast to be another factor that enhanced the conversion of the Mazruis to the Shafi'i madhhab.²⁷ It is noteworthy mentioning that a substantial part of the Busaidi family residing along the Kenya coast has converted to the Shafi'i madhhab. Other Ibadis who converted to the Shafi'i madhhab included Sheikh Salim b. Said b. Sayf al-Sheheybi (d.1930) who was taught by Sayyid Ahmad b. Sumayt and Sheikh Abd Allah Bakathir.²⁸

Despite the tolerant environment that existed in the Busaidi Sultanate, Sultan Barghash b. Said (r.1870-88.) was disturbed by the conversion of Ibadis to the Shafi'i madhhab. Therefore, Barghash did not tolerate the conversion of Sheikh Ali b. Nafi al-Mazrui to the Shafi'i madhhab. As a result of this conversion, Sheikh Ali was imprisoned until the death of Sultan Barghash in March 1888. Sultan Barghash also imprisoned Sheikh Abd al-Aziz al-Amawi for a short period of time when he introduced his own Qadiriyya branch called Nuraniyya that gained him popularity.²⁹ Sheikh Abd al-Aziz al-Amawi (d.1896) narrates in his autobiography that he was among the Shafi'i qadis who were dismissed by Sultan Barghash.³⁰ Another incident that demonstrates interference by the Sultans was the order given by Sultan Ali b. Hamud (r.1902-1911) to stop the followers of the Shadhiliyya sufi brotherhood from holding dhikr

²⁶ Salim, 1991, p.6.

²⁷ I. Soghayroun, "The Arab and Swahili Culture in Historical Perspective: Some important Links in "The History of the Mazruis in East Africa" by Sh. Al-Amin b. Ali Al-Mazrui, *Sudanic Africa*, 12, 2001, p.23.

²⁸ Farsy, 1944, p.63.

²⁹ Pouwels, 1987, p.120.

³⁰ Hoofman, "In His (Arab) Majesty's Service: The Career of a Somali Scholar and Diplomat in the Nineteenth-Century Zanzibar", In R. Loimeier and R. Seesemann, (Eds.) *The Global Worlds of the Swahili: Interfaces of Islam, Identity and Space in 19th and 20th Century East Africa*, Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2006, p.256

(prayer recitation) sessions in Zanzibar mosques in order to limit their influence.³¹

The Sultans and the Scholars

The ulama in the Zanzibar Sultanate were highly respected by the people due to their intellectual standing and contribution to the society. The Busaidi Sultans recognized the significant role played by the ulama. Since the establishment of the Busaidi Sultanate, the ulama were incorporated in the Sultan's court and occupied a prominent place in the running of the affairs of the Sultanate. Reverence to scholars can be seen since the early days when Sayyid Said accompanied Shaykh Nasir b. Jaid al-Kharusi (d.1847).³² Sayyid Said appointed Sheikh Muhiddin al-Qahtani and Sheikh Abdul al-Aziz al-Amawi both of Barawa origin, as qadis of Zanzibar and Kilwa, respectively. Similarly, Sheikh Abubakar b. Sumayt (d.1874), of Hadrami origin, was appointed as qadi in Zanzibar by Sultan Majid b. Said (r.1856-1870).³³ Scholars also served as advisors to the Sultans and represented the Sultanate as emissaries outside Zanzibar. Sheikh Abdul al-Aziz al-Amawi was appointed as an ambassador and travelled through the Sultan's mainland dominions to negotiate with local chiefs. In 1823, Sheikh Abd al-Aziz was sent to Comoro Island and then later travelled to London on a diplomatic mission.³⁴ Recognition of the role of ulama can also be seen when Sultan Ali b. Hamud sent his ship "Kilwa" to Lamu to take Sheikh Ali b. Nafi al-Mazrui to Zanzibar.³⁵

The Busaidi Sultans awarded medals to the ulama in recognition of their intellectual contributions. Among medals awarded to the ulama in Zanzibar was the Order of the Brilliant Star of Zanzibar.

³¹ Bang, 2008, p.175.

³² Ghazal, 2005, p.53.

³³ Farsy, 1944, p.53.

³⁴ M. B. Mkelle, "A Scholar for All Seasons: Sheikh Abdul Aziz al-Amani [Amawi] of Zanzibar", *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, (1992) 13 (1), p.117.

³⁵ Farsy, 1944, p.71.

Qadis awarded membership of the fourth class of the Order of the Brilliant Star of Zanzibar included Tahir b. Abubakar al-Amawi on 19 July 1919, Ali b. Muhammad al-Mandri on 29 May 1922, Abd al-rahim b. Mahmud al-Washili on 24 March 1928, Said b. Nasor al-Ghaythi (d.1942) on 1 April 1932, and Umar b. Sumayt on 4 April 1940. Another type of medal awarded by the Sultans to qadis was His Highness Sultan's Silver Jubilee Medal. Recipients of this medal included Tahir b. Abubakar al-Amawi, Said b. Nasor al-Ghaythi, Habib b. Mbaruk al-Mauli (d.1945), and Said b. Rashid al-Ghaythi (d.1954).³⁶ The British administration also awarded medals to qadis in recognition of service rendered to the British Empire. For instance, in 1919 Burhan b. Abd al-Aziz al-Amawi was invested with the Order of the British Empire (OBE) and Amer Tajo (d.1992) was awarded the Order of the British Empire Honorary Officer of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in 1957.³⁷

Due to the recognition of scholars by the Sultans, we find a number of scholars working closely with the Sultans. Scholars also respected the Sultans and in some cases praised their rule. For instance, Sayyid Ahmad b. Sumayt praised Sultan Khalifa b. Harub who was the longest serving Busaidi sultan in Zanzibar.

The Sultans and the British

Another striking feature of tolerance of the Sultans was their accommodation of the British colonial enterprise. The relationship between the Sultans and the British was a cordial one that started earlier in Oman. Administration of justice in Zanzibar should be seen within the context of the cordial relationship between

³⁶ Personal files: Zanzibar National Archives, ZNA/HC26/19, ZNA/AB86/137, ZNA/AB86/135, ZNA/AB86/139

³⁷ Bang, "Intellectuals and Civil Servants: Early 20th Century Zanzibari Ulama and the Colonial State", in M. S. Bianca (Ed.), *Islam in East Africa: New Sources (Archives, Manuscripts and Written Historical Sources, Oral History, Archaeology)* Rome, Herder, 2000, p.65.

the Sultan of Muscat and British, based on mutual exchange of interests between the two imperial powers.

Based on imperial mutual interests, the two powers of their time accommodated each other. The Sultans of the Omani-Zanzibar Empire needed political as well military support in order to consolidate their mercantile state along the East African coast. Britain's interest in the East African coast was to ensure stability of the region in order to protect trade routes in the Indian Ocean.

British friendship and later protection of the Busaidi Sultanate in Zanzibar was to enable Britain to consolidate her power along the East African coast and lay the foundations for further extension of the British influence in the hinterland. Although the Sultans welcomed Britain to protect the Sultanate, the presence of the British colonial enterprise in Zanzibar had a far reaching consequence. For strategic purposes, Britain tolerated the 'burden' of the Sultanate in the earlier period when Britain's influence over Zanzibar was relatively weak. However, after gaining authority over Zanzibar, Britain gradually exercised her power and control over the Busaidi Sultanate.

Charles Euan Smith (British Consul in Zanzibar 1889-91) used the German threat to persuade Sultan Ali b. Said (†1890-1893) to declare a British Protectorate over Zanzibar. When Euan-Smith signed a formal agreement with Sultan Ali b. Said offering British protection to Zanzibar, he did not mention any British interference in the Sultanate's internal affairs. In July 1890 the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs denied before the British House of Commons that Britain had any intention of interfering with the Sultan's authority but instead spoke of exercising a friendly influence on the Sultan.³⁸

The terms of the agreement stated that the foreign relations of the Sultanate were to be conducted with the sole advice and through the channel of the British government. The British government in

³⁸ J. E. Flint, "Zanzibar 1890-1950", in E. M. Chilver, (Eds.), *History of East Africa*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965, p.642.

exchange guaranteed the Sultan's throne and his successors, and the Sultan was given the right to nominate his successor subject to the approval of the British government.³⁹ However, within a year of the signing of a formal agreement, British colonial officials began to violate provisions of the agreement by intervening in the Sultan's internal affairs.

After the establishment of the British Protectorate over Zanzibar in 1890, Britain exercised more influence on the appointment of the Sultan. Establishment of Protectorate status over the Busaidi Sultanate imposed a new order by curtailing the authority and control of the Sultan over his territories. In October 1891, Portal staged a *coup d'état*, took control of the Sultan's finances, and appointed British officers to exercise a more immediate influence over the direction of local affairs. Portal's efforts to control the Sultanate marked a step further in the gradual loss of the Sultan's political role.⁴⁰

Portal's successor Rennel Rodd (British Consul in Zanzibar 1892-1894), proceeded with the policy of exercising influence in the appointment of the Sultan. Rodd forced Sultan Ali to sign, under protest, a declaration that he accepted Lloyd Mathews as his First Minister. After the death of Sultan Ali b. Said, Rodd's commanding power to appoint the new Sultan was apparent. When Khalid b. Barghash attempted to install himself as the Sultan, Rodd rejected Khalid's self-appointment and instead installed Hemed b. Thuwayn (†1893-1896) as the Sultan of Zanzibar in 1893. To ensure complete allegiance of the new Sultan to the British Crown, Hemed was required to "take an oath on the Koran to the British Crown as Suzerain, accept all advice from the Consul-General Rodd affecting internal or external affairs."⁴¹ After three years from the establishment of the British Protectorate over Zanzibar, the British

³⁹ L. Hailey, *Native Administration in the British African Territories*, (Vol.2) London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1950, p.5.

⁴⁰ Flint, 1965, p.644.

⁴¹ Flint, 1965, p.643.

had gained control over the Sultanate's affairs. Arthur Hardinge (British Consul-General in Zanzibar 1894-1896) described the position of Sultan Hemed b. Thuwayn as "... merely a little bird in the claws of an eagle, and as the eagle either could release the little bird or rend it to pieces, so England either could give back to him or tear away from him his dominions as she thought fit."⁴²

After the death of Sultan Hemed b. Thuwayn in 1896, Khalid b. Barghash again attempted to seize the throne by force. Basil Cave (Acting British Consul in Zanzibar) recommended that Hamud b. Muhammad be appointed as the Sultan but Khalid forced his way into the palace with about 60 armed men and more than 2000 supporters. Khalid seized the palace and proclaimed himself the Sultan. On 26 August 1893, British warships anchored in Zanzibar waters under Rear-Admiral Harry Holdsmith Rawson who gave an ultimatum to Khalid to surrender at 9:00 a.m. When Khalid refused to surrender, the British Navy bombarded the palace at 9:02 a.m. Many of Khalid's supporters fled leaving around 500 people dead and others were wounded. At 9:40 a.m. Khalid was forced to surrender. After the bombardment, the British assumed full control on the appointment of the Sultan of Zanzibar. Hamud b. Muhammad (†1896-1902), an admirer of the European lifestyle, was installed as the new Sultan. Hamud sent his only son Ali to Harrow school in England with an ambition that Ali would succeed him, despite the Zanzibar custom that the Sultan's brother was entitled to succeed as the Sultan.⁴³

When Sultan Hamud died in 1902, he was succeeded by his 17 year old son Ali who was fresh from school in England. With all the powers in his hands, British Consul-General Kestell-Cornish, issued a Proclamation appointing Ali b. Hamud as the Sultan and A.S. Rogers, who was the First Minister as Regent. With the appointment of Rogers as the Regent and the presence of the British Consul-General, British colonial officials took full control of the Sultanate's

⁴² Pouwels, 1987, p.165.

⁴³ Flint, 1965, p.646.

affairs for nearly four years (1902-1906). Henceforth, Britain could not anticipate any opposition from the newly appointed Sultan. For instance, when Sultan Ali b. Hamud showed opposition to British colonial administration, he was deposed on grounds of ill health. After Sultan Ali b. Hamud was deposed in 1911, the Sultans of Zanzibar lost their political power, and the British colonial administration assumed full control over the Sultanate's affairs.

Perpetuating Ethnic Divisions?

The British colonial takeover of the Busaidi Sultanate affected the cosmopolitan society of Zanzibar.⁴⁴ After gaining control over the Sultanate, the British colonial administrators took advantage of the existing ethnic and cultural diversity and adopted a policy of stratifying citizens of the Busaidi Sultanate along ethnic lines. The existence of various ethnicities in the Sultanate paved the way for the British colonial administration to categorize the multi-ethnic communities in Zanzibar into racial divisions. With the existence of multiple racial groups, the British colonial policy created a racial hierarchy that placed Europeans at the top, followed by Arabs and Indians in the middle, and Africans at the bottom. In Zanzibar, the British adopted a policy of racial discrimination that was implemented in areas such as education. For instance, the Educational Commission of 1920 upheld the concept of racial separation in the professions in educating Arabs for agriculture, Indians for commerce and Africans for industry.⁴⁵ Similarly, during World War II, access to rationed materials and commodities was restricted along racial lines whereby rations were distributed by the allocation of color-coded cards: Asian (green card), Arab (brown) and African (tan).⁴⁶

Distinguishing between the people of Zanzibar along ethnic

⁴⁴ Bang, 2008, p.167.

⁴⁵ Flint, 1965, p.658.

⁴⁶ Laura Fair, *Pastime and Politics: Culture, Community and Identity in Post-Abolition Urban Zanzibar, 1890-1945*, Oxford: James Currey, 2001, p.47.

lines led to the sharpening of divisions between the communities. The British policies of manipulating ethnic identities weakened the social bonds which existed between the various tribes in the Busaidi Sultanate. This colonial policy served as a seed in the disintegration of the Zanzibar society and partly contributed towards perpetuating racial divisions among the society which in turn led to the 1964 revolution.

Interaction Between the British Colonial Officials and the Ulama

Despite the racial policy adopted by the British colonial administration in Zanzibar, Muslim scholars interacted with the British colonial officials. The British colonial structures in the form of courts and commissions brought together the British colonial officials and Muslim scholars. Before the establishment of the British Protectorate in Zanzibar, qadis operated separately from British judicial officers. When the British took over control of the Sultanate in 1890, qadis were gradually integrated into the colonial courts. This in turn resulted in a situation that brought qadis into contact with British judges and magistrates. With the existence of a parallel court system in Zanzibar, the British judicial officers and qadis had to work together. This scenario created opportunities for co-operation between the British colonial officials and Muslim scholars.

An outstanding feature of the ulama-British interaction scenario is the toleration of the ulama to sit together with British colonial judges in courts and Waqf Commission and deliberate matters related to Islam. Another significant feature of the intellectual interaction was that the British judicial officers came into contact with various madhhabs: Hanafi, Shafi'i, Ibadi and Shia. This scenario of diverse madhhabs in Zanzibar presented a new dimension to the Anglo-Mohammedan law that accommodated the various madhhabs in addition to British legal principles. In dealing with cases in the Zanzibar courts, British judges referred to the texts of different schools and applied them to parties of

various madhhabs. British judicial officers adopted a liberal policy of applying the texts of a particular madhhab to the followers of another madhhab.

The British colonial officials revered ulama for their co-operation. For instance, in 1911, the Chief British Judge, Judge Murison gave to Sheikh Tahir the following recommendation:

I have known Sheikh Tahir b. Abi Bakr very well indeed for the past 15 years and have been closely associated with him in law work during that period. I have nothing but the highest praise for him from every point of view – knowledge of the Sharia, wide knowledge of, and sympathy for the natives of the Protectorate. A willingness to help at all times, throughout with the courtesy and politeness of the best type of Arab gentleman, contained with a real loyalty to British interests.⁴⁷

In some instances, the co-operation between the ulama and British colonial officials went beyond Zanzibar. When Harold Ingrams wanted to visit Yemen, he was given a recommendation letter by his friend Sayyid Ahmad b. Sumayt. Harold Ingrams mentioned in the introduction of his *Arabia and the Isles*:

The key figure was a beloved and most respected friend, Sayyid Ahmad b. Sumayt... had made me appreciate the true Arab reactions to foreign rule and though he knew how keen I was to go to his homeland, he did nothing to encourage me to do so until a few days before his death in 1925. He then sent for me... Then feeling under his pillow, he brought out the letters of introduction to his friends and gave them to me.⁴⁸

Respect of the British colonial officials to the ulama can also be seen in their obituaries. After the death of Sayyid Ahmad b. Sumayt, Ingrams wrote:

⁴⁷ Bang, "Another Scholar for All Seasons? Tahir b. Abi Bakr Al-Amawi (1877-1938) Qadi of Zanzibar, c 1900-1993", in R. Loimeier and R. Seesemann, (Eds.) *The Global Worlds of the Swahili: Interfaces of Islam, Identity and Space in 19th and 20th Century East Africa*, Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2006, p.281.

⁴⁸ H. I. Ingrams, *Arabia and the Isles*, London, 1996, p.13.

He was a well-known figure in Zanzibar, though perhaps few realized what a distinguished man he was and what a wide fame he enjoyed. No one who came in contact with him can fail to regret that that kindly, gentle old man has gone from amongst us, for no one who knew him could fail to feel better for his acquaintance. Pious and learned, yet he was intensely human; his conversation always interesting, sparkled with humor and was not wanting, moreover, in a racy perception of a characteristic mind. Courtesy is a characteristic of Arabs, but it was never better exemplified than in Sayyid Ahmad.⁴⁹

Similarly, Justice Reed offered his condolences to Sayyid Ahmad b. Sumayt by stating:

"It was not only in Zanzibar that he was revered, his fame spread far, and his opinion was sought from Egypt on intricate points of law."⁵⁰

When Sheikh Ali b. Muhammad al-Mandri died, the British colonial administration had this to say:

"from his far-reaching knowledge of the Sharia he enjoyed a very high degree of authority in matters of law and his opinions were very much sought and greatly valued. He was of irreproachable character, possessed a great gentleness and charm of manner and was eminently suited for the judicial duties which he discharged with distinction."⁵¹

The Untold Story of Slavery in Zanzibar

Works on slavery along the East African coast have blamed the Arab slave traders as the main catalyst of the unfortunate human trade. The bias against the Arab slave traders was further enhanced by writings of British philanthropists and Christian missionaries who directed their criticism to the Arabs alone forgetting their European brethren. Christian missionaries took advantage of

⁴⁹ Zanzibar National Archives, ZNA/BA 104/46, The Official Gazette, Vol. 34, No.1737, Zanzibar, May 11, 1925.

⁵⁰ Farsy, 1944, p.9.

⁵¹ Bang, 2000, p.64.

condemning slavery in Zanzibar by advancing their evangelical gains. For instance, when the Frere Treaty was signed on 5th June 1873 to abolish the export of slaves from the African mainland and close all public markets for sale of imported slaves in Zanzibar, a cathedral was built at the site of the slave market. The message from this shift depicted the coming of the missionary as the 'liberators' and the exit of the Arabs being seen as the 'oppressors'. Slavery along the East African coast, and other regions, has always been associated with the ideological label of 'Muslim or Islamic' slavery. Attributing slavery to Islam and Arabism has resulted in various misconceptions. Abdul Sheriff remarked on the significance of distinguishing between what Islam preaches about slavery in its classical texts and what Muslims in different periods and circumstances have practiced, because there has not always been congruence between the two.⁵² Sheriff objected to the use of the term Islamic or Arab slavery, taking into consideration the colonial and missionary pedigree of slavery. Sheriff argued that intellectual discourse on slavery should not use ideological labels; and instead he preferred to use a geographical one. Sheriff pointed out that writers on slavery avoided labeling the Atlantic slave trade as a 'Christian or European Slave Trade,' despite the fact that most of the slave traders were Christians and Europeans.⁵³ Linking slavery with Islam has led Knappert to attribute the Islamic civilization of the East African coast entirely on slavery.⁵⁴

Among the negative impressions left behind by the propaganda against Arab slave owners is the famous portrait of an Arab holding a stroke and leading a caravan of slaves tied with shackles. The portrait has been incorporated in the curriculum of teaching History of East Africa in schools.⁵⁵ In order to fuel hatred against

⁵² A. Sheriff, (unpublished), "A Suria: Concubine or Secondary Slave Wife? The case of Zanzibar in the 19th Century", p.2.

⁵³ A. Sheriff, (unpublished), "The Twilight of Slavery in the Persian Gulf: What Islam Preaches, What Some Muslims Practiced", p.1.

⁵⁴ Jan Knappert, *Swahili Islamic Poetry*, vol.1, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971, p.4.

⁵⁵ I. N. Al-Ismaily, *Zanzibar: Kinyanga'nyiro na Utumwa*, (No publisher), 1999, p. 175.

Arabs in Zanzibar, rumors were spread to portray Arab slave owners as barbaric and inhumane.⁵⁶ Effects of such propaganda and portraits have left an enduring negative attitude against Arabs and have cultivated hatred and culminated in precipitating violence against innocent people.

Despite the engagement of Arabs in slave trade, a number of European and American nations were involved in the servitude trade. By the later part of the 18th century, Britain became the leading nation in the slave trade. Ironically, Britain was also the leading nation to support the efforts of William Wilberforce (d.1833) who established the anti-slavery movement in the late 18th century.

The slave trade along the East African coast expanded in the late 18th century when the French needed slaves for their sugar plantations in their colonies, which included Reunion and Mauritius. During the same period Brazilian and Indian Ocean ports joined the slave trade market and their demand for slaves continued in the 19th century.⁵⁷

Demand for slaves along the East African coast was accelerated by the establishment of a plantation economy based on slave labor in Zanzibar when Sultan Sayyid Said transferred his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar in 1832. The other factor that contributed to the rise of the slave trade along the East African coast was the expansion of trade between Zanzibar, Oman and India. Based on commercial ties between city ports in the Indian Ocean, slaves from the East African coast were transported to India, south Arabia and the Persian Gulf.

The task of recruiting slaves in the interior of East Africa was shared between slave traders and middle men who were chiefs from various tribes. Tribal chiefs were provided with arms by slave traders and used to raid their neighbors whenever a need for slaves aroused. For instance, Chiefs of the Yao tribe in Tanganyika

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p.14.

⁵⁷ Rodger Frederic Morton, "Slaves, Fugitives and Freedmen on the Kenya Coast, 1873-1907", (*PhD Dissertation, Syracuse University, 1976*), p.4.

supplied slaves to Arab traders in Zanzibar.⁵⁸ Other chiefs also took advantage of the African traditional practices such as punishment for witchcraft to enslave their tribesmen. Strong African tribes used to invade members of the weak tribes and enslave them. Enslavement between members of a tribe took various forms. Tribesmen were enslaved as prisoners of war. During the reign of Sultan Bargash b. Said a famine occurred in Mrima interior of Tanganyika whereby persons from the *Zaramu* tribe were sold to Arab slave traders.⁵⁹

Although it is widely known that the Omani ruling class and the Arab elite owned slaves in Zanzibar, nevertheless, even non-Arabs owned slaves. Wahiyao were not only made slaves but they were also traded in slavery. Shirazis also owned slaves in the islands and mainland as well.⁶⁰ For instance, a lady by the name Zuhra bt. Khamis b. Kombo wrote the following deed to free her slave Juma b. Kheri:

In the name of the Most Merciful God. Zuhra bt. Khamis b. Kombo declares that she has emancipated her slave Juma b. Kheri and set him free for the sake of God, seeking His pleasure, with a hope that the Beneficent God will save her from the Hellfire; and that neither she nor anyone else amongst her heirs after her will have any right over him except the right of "wila" (matrimonial guardianship). She has also given him a piece of her shamba which is situated at Maungani in Zanzibar Island.⁶¹

Charitable endowments (*waqfs*) were established by slave powers for their slaves. For instance, in a will dated 1885, Abdallah b. Abd

⁵⁸ Nehemia Levtzion, "Slavery and Islamization in Africa: A comparative Study", In J.R. Willis, (Ed.) *Slaves and Slavery in Muslim Africa*, (Vol 1: Islam and the Ideology of Enslavement) London: Frank Cass, 1985, p.189.

⁵⁹ Abdulaziz Lodhi, "The Institution of Slavery in Zanzibar and Pemba", (Research Report No.16 Uppsala: The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1973, p.5.

⁶⁰ Al-Ismaily, 1999, p.169.

⁶¹ Zanzibar National Archives, ZNA/HC8/110, Dated Friday 12th *Jamadal Al-akhir* 1303 [18th March 1886]

al-Karim al-Najdi dedicated his *shamba* (a farm or plantation) and all the furniture and jewellery to his *surias* (concubines) Tarangi, Warasi Habshiya and Ubayda, as well as the slaves to work for them during their lifetimes, but these properties were due to revert to the dedicator's heirs upon the *surias'* deaths.⁶² Slave owners created endowments to provide for their slaves during their lifetime. For instance, Sayyid Hamud b. Sayf al-Busaidi in a will dated 18 December 1877, dedicated one of his farms for the benefit of his freed slaves who survived him. The will stipulated that the freed slaves were entitled to use the farm and its income subject to the condition that none of them had the right to dispose the farm and that after their death it would revert to the poor persons of the al-Busaidi tribe.

Despite the vices of slavery in Zanzibar, some slaves preferred to remain in the servitude status rather than seeking their freedom. Slaves who chose to remain with their masters argued that they were content with their working conditions which were far better off than the freed wage earners. For instance, Commissioner Farler (His Highness Slavery Commissioner in Pemba) pointed out a case where a slave refused to be freed. Farler noted:

A slave named Fataki told me that he was the slave of the Arab overseer at Banani: 'Those Europeans there ordered me to come and be freed. But I don't want to be freed. Hamid b. Abdullah is like my father to me, and I don't want to lose my home; will you make these Europeans leave me alone?'⁶³

Mr. Brodrick (Minister for War on Zanzibar Slavery) noted that many of the slaves in Zanzibar hardly recognized that they were in a state of slavery and felt they belonged to the master's family and many of them were very unwilling to ask for freedom.⁶⁴ Rennel Rodd (British Consul in Zanzibar 1892-1894.) argued that emancipating

⁶² Zanzibar National Archives, ZNA/HD/3/30

⁶³ Kenya National Archives, KNA/CA/1/13.

⁶⁴ The Gazette for Zanzibar and East Africa, Vol. IX No.458, 7 November 1900, p. 3.

slaves by force could break the master-slave relationship that was bounded by strong ties. He argued that when slaves were liberated by their master's free will, the strong tie that existed between them did not break and that the slaves almost invariably remained members of their masters' household. On the contrary, where slave were liberated by force, the tie was absolutely broken and the slaves had no relationship with their former master.⁶⁵

Arab slave owners together with the British colonial officials worked on gradual emancipation of slaves in order to avoid instability in the region. British colonial administration was concerned about the mass emancipation of slaves that could have led the freed slaves to become vagrants, criminals, and prostitutes. British colonial officials felt that compulsory emancipation of slaves would result in social chaos.

British colonial officials on the ground were careful to impose drastic anti-slavery measures so as to avoid provoking an armed uprising. The reluctance of the British colonial administration to implement stringent measures against abolition of slavery in the Busaidi Sultanate was to avoid any anticipated revolutionary reaction from slaves that could result into serious political and economic turmoil. Edward Clarke (British Consul in Zanzibar 1908-1913) experienced an incident where slaves wanted to revolt against their masters. Clarke noted:

It is possible that if slaves were emancipated without first taking strong measures for the protection of life, that in Pemba many of them would rise against their former masters, and also murders would take place in isolated parts of Zanzibar. In the reign of Sayyid Ali, the Hamali porters came to me and asked for guns and powder, stating that if I would give them arms that they would murder every Arab in Zanzibar.⁶⁶

The British government exploited the anti-slavery initiative as a moral justification for invasion and annexation of East African

⁶⁵ Rennel Rodd, "Correspondence Relating to Slavery in Zanzibar", *Africa* 6 (1895), p.17.

⁶⁶ Zanzibar National Archives ZNA/AC2/1.

territories. British colonial officials were interested to secure imperial economic interests and control of trade in the interior. British viewed Arabs as their main competitors in penetrating to the interior parts of East Africa.

A British officer noted:

Where these Zanzibar Arabs go, filibustering oppression of the natives and slavery is carried on a great extent. Starting either from Mombasa or Pangani, these caravans take about 18 months to get to the Ivory districts. Whereas by ascending the Tana, I calculate that we could do the journey in six months at the most, establish friendly relations with the people and secure for the Englishmen the sole exclusive trade in rubber, ivory, Ostrich feathers, orchilla weed, to be found in that vast region.⁶⁷

A striking feature of slavery in Zanzibar was the existence of the institution of *suria* (concubinage). Female slaves were not only purchased by Arab slave owners but also by some European colonial officers. Rigby noted that in 1859 French residents openly purchased female slaves. For instance, the French Consul was charged for having purchased an Ethiopian slave girl for a considerable sum.⁶⁸

British colonial administrators anticipated that abolition of concubinage would break up families and disrupt the social organization of the Sultanate and therefore leaned towards maintaining the institution. Despite the fact that Sultan Hamud b. Muhammad heeded to the British advise to enact the Slavery Decree of 1897, he urged the British colonial administration to exempt concubines from the application of the Decree. Sultan Hamud pleaded to Lloyd Mathews (First Minster of Zanzibar 1891-1901) by stating:

Tell Hardinge I feel deeply for my subjects as regards the status of their concubines, and after freedom being forced to allow to quit their homes and become prostitutes, that concubines are practically wives,

⁶⁷ Zanzibar National Archives, NA/AC1/2.

⁶⁸ Sheriff, *Suria*, p.2.

and mothers of their master's children, sharing equal rights with children of Arab mothers; that in allowing concubines to leave their masters Arab homes will be broken up.⁶⁹

The institution of concubinage was not only practiced by affluent Arab slave owners but it was entrenched in the social lives of the Sultans. Sultan Sayyid Said left behind thirty six children on his death and almost all of them were born by his *surias*. Sayyid Said was succeeded in the throne of Oman and Zanzibar by his sons through concubine mothers. Sultans of Ethiopian concubine mothers were Thuwayn b. Said (ruled in Oman 1856-56), Turki b. Said (ruled in Oman from 1870-88), Barghash b. Said (ruled in Zanzibar 1870-88), Khalifa b. Said (ruled in Zanzibar 1888-90), and Ali b. Said (ruled in Zanzibar 1890-93). Sultan Majid b. Said (ruled in Zanzibar 1856-70) was born to a Circassian concubine mother.⁷⁰ Other Sultans of Zanzibar who were born by concubine mothers were Hemed b. Thuwain (ruled in Zanzibar 1893-1896) who was a son of a Georgian mother and Khalid b. Barghash who tried to seize the throne in Zanzibar was born by a Circassian mother.⁷¹

Restoring the Past?

Owing to its historic and strategic position, Zanzibar attracted diverse communities and served as a link between the East African coast and the maritime world of the Indian Ocean. One of the most significant legacies left behind by Zanzibar's heritage is the spirit of coexistence and tolerance between its multi-ethnic communities. Despite varied religious orientations of its citizens, the Zanzibar Sultanate managed to accommodate the rulers and the ruled in a harmonious manner for over a century.

Muslim immigrants from various parts of the Indian Ocean settled along the East African coast interacted with the local people

⁶⁹ Kenya National Archives, KNA/CA/1/13.

⁷⁰ Sheriff, *Suria*, p.5

⁷¹ Kenya National Archives, KNA/CA/1/13.

creating a unique Swahili culture that left an enduring heritage in the region. Zanzibar has significantly contributed to the creation and development of the Swahili culture.

Since the establishment of the Busaidi Sultanate in mid-19th century, the Sultans adopted a non-interference policy in dealing with the local people. Ulama were highly revered by the Sultans and appointed in various state functions. Ulama, too, exhibited respect to the rulers and in some cases wrote poems to praise the Sultans.

The spirit of tolerance encompassed inter-faith as well intra-sectarian diversities that brought together various religions and ethnicities into a cosmopolitan and harmonious society. A striking feature of the spirit of tolerance exhibited by the Sultans was their reception of the British colonial enterprise. Initially, the British colonial officials portrayed a non-interference policy in the affairs of the Sultanate. However, after gaining control over the Sultanate, the British colonial administration gradually undermined the sovereignty of the Sultans.

British manipulated ethnic diversities in Zanzibar by stratifying people along racial lines. Categorizing people into racial compartments served as a seed of conflict that divided the people during the colonial period. Divisions among the Zanzibari people was further accelerated by the slavery epidemic. British philanthropists and Christian missionaries exploited the anti-slavery movement by tarnishing the image of the Arab slave owners and, by extension, the religion of Islam. Anti-slavery campaign cultivated hatred against Arab slave owners and culminated in perpetuating violence against innocent persons. Most of the writings on slavery shouldered the blame entirely on the elite Arab slave owners and the Sultans. However, little has been mentioned on the role of Europeans and Africans in the slave trade.

Despite the dark past of Zanzibar, the people of Zanzibar have maintained their religious as well as cultural identities. Mazrui's prediction that the African continent will be merging with the Middle East seems to be a viable prophecy that could connect Zanzibar with its glorious history. Mazrui highlighted that the

interesting aspect of the cultural and political shift in relations between Africa and Middle East lays in the concept of *Afrabia*.⁷² Zanzibar may borrow a leaf from Mazrui's prophecy to enhance its cultural and religious heritage. Al-Ismaily suggested the milestone for Zanzibar's prosperous future by stating:

"Yaliyopita si ndwele, tugange yajayo. Zanzibar katika wakati huu ambapo inauguza majaraha ya yaliyopita, inahitaji kila la wema na huruma. Lengo la Wanzibari kwa sasa liwe kujiwinda katika kuwania kufanyiana wema na kusafishiyana nyonyo ili kuondoa chuki miongoni mwao na kuinusuru Zanzibar kumezwa na kuangamizwa na kwa masilahi ya kurudisha utu wao, na Zanzibar yenyewe kurejea katika neema na utukufu wake."⁷³

"The past has gone, let us focus on the future. While Zanzibar is currently healing the wounds of the past, it needs all the kindness and compassion. The objective of Zanzibaris should be to enjoin goodness and reconcile their differences in order to eliminate prejudice among themselves and protect Zanzibar from being swallowed and destroyed. And Zanzibaris should strive to restore their human dignity and reinstate Zanzibar to its glory."

⁷² Mazrui, 2006, p.8

⁷³ Al-Ismaily, 1999, p.282

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 جلاله السلطان العظيم ملك زنجبار
 السيد خليفة بن خطاب بن ثويني بن سعيد بن سلطان أبقاه الله وأمه في حياته
 سلاماً ولهم الأمان بعد تعييل ذلك الشريعة نطلب منكم ومن قضى حوركم أن
 سألوا الناعمة أهل السنة والجماعة هذه المسئلة ليقولوا بما هو الحق في هذه المسئلة للترافع
 حتى يتبين الحق من الباطل ولكم الفضل وتفضي على التوى بيدك الشريعة والسلام ختم
 تشاجرو النافق في بلادنا وافترقوا فرقتين فرقة تدعى أن إتيان الذر أمام الجنادة
 والانا شيد وعمل الشارق وحتى اقراء القران وقرارة البردة ليس من السنة بل بدعة مذمومة
 وياتهم من يعتقد كونه من السنة ويسعى للحكام المسلمين أن يدعو كل لأنه من المبيح أن يجعل
 شئ ليس من الدين كونه من الدين
 وقرقة أخرى تدعى أن إتيان الذكر والانشاد وقرارة القران وقرارة البردة مرغوبة ولا
 يرقى مخالفة ذلك والله أعلم
 عبدالله جلاسى
 صاحب منقوش

Appendix A: Scanned copy of the question posed to Sultan Khalifa and the answer given by Sayyid Umar b. Sumayt. **Source:** Notes of Sh. Fatawi b. Isa obtained from Hamid Fatawi and Saleh Fatawi in Zanzibar on 17th June 2006.

الجواب

هو لانا السلطان آدم الله يتكلم نظرت في السؤال كما امرتم والجواب هو كما قال
 في جملة المحتاج ويكره اللغظ وهو رفع الصوت ولو بالذکر والقراءة في المشي مع الجماعة
 لأن الصعابة رضي الله عنكم كرهه حيث انتهى وقال الامام النووي في كتاب الأذان والخطبة
 والصواب ما عليه السلف في السكون في حال السير معها فلا يرفع صوت بقراءة ولا ذكر ولا
 غير ذلك لأنه أسكن الخاطر وأجمع للفكر انتهى فعلم ما تقر بأن المستحب مع الجماعة
 هو المشي بالسكينة في الوضوء مع الاشتغال بالقراءة والذكر لا جهرا فإنه كما قال في
 بدعة قبيحة وبناء على كون الجهر بالخبر وغيره بدعة فما يعاداه الناس في هذا الزمان من
 رفع الصوت بالذکر وغيره خلاف ما عليه الصدر الاول ولكن لما عتب النووي
 باشتغال المشيعين بالكلام الذنوي انتهى عند رأي علماء اليمن أن اشتغال السامع

المشيعين بالذكر المؤدى الى ترك الكلام الذنوي او تقليله أو ان من استراح
 فيه ارتكبا بالاحب الضدين كما هو القاعدة الشرعية وسواء في ذلك
 اشغالهم بالتمليل أو القراءة أو غير ذلك وعليه فالجهر بالذكر في هذا الزمان مع الجماعة
 مطلوب لأنه أفضل من الاشتغال بالكلام الذنوي واختاره غالب المحققين من العلماء
 المتأخرين وأما حمل الأعلام أمام الجماعة فليس من الدين في شيء ويحرم اعتقاد كون ذلك
 من الدين بل قال سيدي الوالد في جوابه لحكومة دار السلام لما سأله عن حكم الذكر
 بالهيئة المعروفة من نشر البارق مع الرقص الحج ان هذا ان لم يكن عين اللغب
 فهو أشبه به ولا أعلم احدا من أئمة المذاهب المعول عليهم قال باستسكان هيئة
 الهيئة انتهى (فعوله ان لم يكن عين اللغب فهو أشبه) لأنه من جملة اللهو والأهمل
 الديني وحيث يكره السكون عن تفهيم الا إذا اعتقدوا ان حمل البارق طاعة
 يرجى عليها الثواب من الله فيجمع السكون عن تفهيم ومحج على الحكم ان يزجروا
 والله اعلم
 كتبه خادم الشئ
 محمد احمد راى بكر سمي
 في ٢٤ شعبا ١٣٥٨

Appendix B: Scanned copy of the poem of Sayyid Ahmad b. Sumayt praising Sayyid Khalifa b. Harub. Source: Notebook in Sumayt Family Possession in the Comoro Islands copied by Anne Bang in Moroni, July 1998.

وله في ٢٢ محرم ١٤٤٢ الموافق ٢٥ ديسمبر ١٩٢٠
 في مدح سلطان زنجبار الحالي خليفة الثاني كامل المعالي سمو الملك
 السيد خليفة حارب رثوي تهنئة بعيد الملبوس
 بعلاكم تبتهج المنفوس وتسمد وبغزكم المسمى بعز المعهد
 وبك الليالي لم تنزل مسرورة في كل آني أنسها يتجدد
 فانعم لكي يبقى الزمان منها ولنا يطيب نطل أمنا برقد
 ونميس في حلل الهنا بخليفة لجلال لم نغفوا الوجوه وتسمد
 ملك سما فوق الملوك لغاية من دورها وقف الشها والفرقد
 ورث المعاصر عن ابيه حارب لبت الشرك من في المعاصر بتشد

عن جده المولى ثويني ذي المايا
 قوم ضاريد غطارفة جمعا
 اصحى بافلاك المعالي صفحرا
 ما في ذروع بخارهم الا فتي
 اوليت حرب في الوقايح حليس
 كل معمم مخور ومجدد
 لا عيب فيهم غير ان بهم نما
 يا ايها الملك الذم بجلال
 وتزييت منه العلا بخارج
 شافت حانك الزمان فاصت
 وبكل لصر رسمير شققا عدا
 فاهنا بعيد مشرت العليا به
 وزهت معاني زخار وطلقة
 له طلعتك التي صدر الزما
 وترشقت فيم التهان والمدرا
 واليك منها خود نظم بايعا
 صلوية الا با تجلت في صنا
 فانعم عليها بالقول وبالرضي
 وايضا بخلا جلوسك المأقني ودم
 نمت نعلنا صامنا جرب الحاج ٢٠٢٠
 ديت عن عبيد والجلال بق تشد
 حجة لهم في كل مكرمة يد
 مثل الكواكب في السما تنوقد
 ساد الورى بكما له اوسيد
 او بحر جود العطا يا مريد
 ومكرم ومقطم ومسد
 شرف تباهيه النجوم ومحمد
 عرش الخلافة بزدهي والسود
 وخلال مجد في البرايا تجد
 اعيادة لك بالنهاي تقصد
 عيد بلبوس لبانك بتردد
 لما سما لك في الخلافة متعد
 ندرت حرها وصفوا اراق الموردد
 ن بها فاضحى بالمنى تنقلد
 صح فكد تتلى في الجموع وتشد
 قد زرقها لعلك وكتر حيد
 تك تزدهي فغدت جلالا حيد
 ان عرديت ان الكعاب تفر يد

Muslims in Constantinople During the Byzantine Period

Casim Avci¹

Introduction

Muslim presence in Constantinople increased gradually as a result of political, military, religious, economic and socio-cultural relations between Byzantines and Muslims over the course of approximately nine centuries from the birth of Islam in early 7th century to the conquest of Constantinople in 1453. In this process ambassadors, merchants, scholars, travellers, prisoners and slaves who came to Constantinople for various reasons had constituted an important element of Muslim presence in the city. It is possible to trace the sources of Muslim's attention to Constantinople back to the time of the Prophet^{SAW}. In Islamic sources Constantinople (Qustantiniyye in Arabic), the capital city of Byzantium was sometimes mentioned as the city of Caesar (Madinat Qaisar) and some references were made to the city that would be conquered by the Muslims. According to the references in the sources of Hadith; the Prophet^{SAW} heralded the conquest saying that "Constantinople will certainly be conquered. What an excellent commander is the commander who conquers her; what an excellent soldier is the soldier who conquers her."² Nevertheless, the Prophet^{SAW} also announced that the soldiers who would attend the first naval warfare and the first army amongst his followers who would invade Caesar's city would be forgiven their sins.³ According to other references;

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² Ahmed b. Hanbal, *al-Musnad*, IV, 335.

³ Bukhari, "Djihad", 93; Ahmad b. Hanbel, VI, 361.

the Prophet^{saw} indicated that Constantinople and Rome would be conquered, and also his response to a question about which one would be the first was that "The city of Caesar will be the first to be conquered."⁴ Indeed, according to the Hadith sources; starting from the time of the Prophet^{saw}, Muslims believed that Byzantine and Sasanid territories would be conquered. Because the Prophet^{saw}, by referring to the Sasanids and the Byzantine Empire, declared that "the possession of the treasures of Chosroes and Caesar would be taken by Muslims and that the treasures would be disbursed in the way of God."⁵

Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, had been surrounded by many nations throughout history because of its natural beauty, geographic location, political and strategic importance; and as such, it has been the target of Muslims since the first centuries of Islam. In the Abbasid era, an expedition was launched to Constantinople and the city was besieged three times in the Umayyad period; twice in Muawiya b. Abu Sufyan's reign and once in Suleyman b. Abdulmalik's reign by Caliph Mahdi-Billah under the command of his son Harun al-Rashid.⁶ The city was besieged seven times in the Ottoman era including four times

⁴ Ahmad b. Hanbel, II, 176; Darimi, "Muqaddima", 43.

⁵ Bukhari, "Djihad", 157, "Khumus" 8, "Manağib" 25.

⁶ For the expeditions launched by Muslim Arabs see E. W. Brooks, "The Campaign of 716-718 from Arabic Sources", *Journal of the Hellenic Studies*, XIX (1899), pp. 19-31; Marius Canard, "Tarih ve Efsaneye Göre Araplar'ın İstanbul Seferleri" (Turkish trans. İsmail Hami Danişmend), *İstanbul Enstitüsü Dergisi*, II (1956), pp. 213-259; R. Guiland, "L'Expedition de Mesleme contre Constantinople 717-718", *Etudes Byzantines*, Paris 1959, 89-112; Şahin Uçar, "Müslümanların İstanbul'u Fethetmek İçin Yaptıkları İlk Üç Muhasara", *Selçuk Üniversitesi Selçuk Dergisi*, Year: 2 nr.: 1, December 1986, pp. 65-83; İsmail Yiğit, "Emevîler Zamanında Gerçekleştirilen İstanbul Seferleri", *II. Uluslararası İstanbul'un Fethi Sempozyumu*, İstanbul 1997, pp. 45-61; Casim Avcı, "Müslüman Arapların İstanbul Seferleri", *Fatih Sempozyumları I-II: Tebliğler (2005-2006)*, İstanbul: Fatih Belediyesi, 2007, pp. 108-115; Mehmet Adıgüzel, *Emevîler ve Abbâsîler Döneminde İstanbul Kuşatmaları*, Unpublished MA thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 2010; Mustafa Sabri Küçükbaşçı, "Fetih Hadisi ve İstanbul Kuşatmaları", *Antikçağ'dan XXI. Yüzyıla Büyük İstanbul Tarihi*, ed. Coşkun Yılmaz, İstanbul 2015, II, 284-293.

during Bayezid I's reign, and in the seventh siege of Mehmed II "the Conquerer" on 29 May 1453 passed into the hands of Muslims.⁷

Famous companions of the Prophet^{SAW} such as Abdullah b. Abbas, Abdullah b. Umar, Abdullah b. Zubair and Abu Ayyub Khalid b. Zayd al-Ansari joined the first Constantinople siege under the command of Sufyan b. Awf in 49 (669) during the reign of Umayyad ruler Muawiya b. Ebu Sufyan (661-680). Abu Ayyub Khalid b. Zayd al-Ansari who had joined the siege despite his advanced age died of illness during the siege and was buried in a place outside the city walls. Therefore; the tombs (or graves) of many companions including Abu Ayyub al-Ansari are placed in Constantinople.⁸ Afterwards; it is possible to say that tens of thousands of Muslim came to the region during sieges by both Muslim Arabs and Turks, and they left an important mark on the history of the city.

From the earliest periods of Islam, many ambassadors came to Constantinople for several reasons such as making negotiations with Byzantines before and after the war, negotiating prisoner exchange and ransom topics, inviting them to Islam and cooperating in various matters. Numerous narrations about the ambassadors hosted in the capital at different times according to their task and the subject of negotiation are located in sources. If we keep aside Dihya b. Khalifa al-Kalbi who was sent to the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius with an invitation letter to Islam by the Prophet because the Emperor met with him in Jerusalem⁹, the narrative about the first caliph Abu Bakr sending a delegation to Constantinople in order to invite the Emperor Heraclius to Islam is remarkable. According to the narrative; Abu Bakr sent

⁷ For Constantinople expeditions launched in the Ottoman era before the conquest See Fahameddin Başar, "Osmanlıların Fetihten Önce Gerçekleştirmiş Oldukları İstanbul Kuşatmaları", İstanbul Üniversitesi 550. Yıl Uluslararası Bizans-Osmanlı Sempozyumu (XV. Yüzyıl), Editör: Sümer Atasoy, İstanbul 2004, pp. 113-127.

⁸ For further reading also see Necdet Yılmaz-Coşkun Yılmaz, İstanbullu Sahâbeler, İstanbul 2003.

⁹ For further reading also see Casim Avcı, İslâm-Bizans İlişkileri, Ankara 2015, p. 44-49.

a delegation consisting of Hisham b. As, Ubada b. Samit and Nu'aym b. Abdullah to Constantinople in order to invite Emperor Heraclius to Islam after providing peace domestically by quelling apostasy events in the first year of his caliphate. The delegation was accepted by the Emperor Heraclius in Constantinople. The glory of the Byzantine Palace with the dominant colour of purple (*al-Hamra, ahmar*), Emperor's golden throne adorned with silk fabrics and his golden crown with precious jewels attracted the attention of ambassadors. Heraclius was informed about basic religious beliefs, worship and customs by the ambassadors. The delegation was sent off with precious gifts after they were hosted in a guesthouse pertained to ambassadors for three days.¹⁰

It is known that many ambassadors were sent from the capital city Damascus to Constantinople for various reasons during the Umayyad period.¹¹ For example; the founder of the Umayyad Caliphate Muawiya b. Abu Sufyan sent a delegation under the leadership of Phanakis al-Rumi to Constantinople for peace talks because of the difficult situation against the insurgency of Christian Mardais (Mardaites; *Djaradjima* in Arabic) living in mountains of Lebanon besides the defeated army in Anatolia, and the failure of Constantinople siege. The treaty was achieved after long peace talks with the help of intermediating ambassadors. According to this treaty which was valid for a period of thirty years; Muawiya accepted a commitment to offering 3.000 dinars per year, 50 prisoners of war and 50 Arabian horses.¹²

¹⁰ Ibn A'sam el-Kufi, *Kitab al-Futuh*, Beirut nd., I, pp. 126-132; Ibn al-Djawzi *al-Wafa* (ed. M. Abdulwahid), Beirut 1966, II, 727-731; M. Hamidullah, "Une Ambassade Du Calife Abû Bakr Aupres de l'Empereur Heraclius et le Livre Byzantin de la Prediction des Destinees", *Folia Orientalia*, 2 /1-2 (1961), pp. 29-42; Casim Avci, *İslâm-Bizans İlişkileri*, Ankara 2015, pp. 54-56.

¹¹ For the delegations between Damascus and Constantinopolis in the Umayyad era since the governorship of Muawiya in Syria; see Andreas Kaplony, *Konstantinopel und Damaskus: Gesandtschaften und Verträge zwischen Kaisern und Kalifen 639-750 Untersuchungen zum Gewohnheits-Völkerrecht und zur interkulturellen Diplomatie*, Berlin 1996.

¹² Theophanes, *The Chronicle of Theophanes* (Eng. Trans. Herry Turtledove),

Ibn al-Tiqtaqa gave the following narration related to Muawiya period in his work titled *al-Fakhri*: The Caliph sent one of his ambassadors to Constantinople to make a peace treaty with the Byzantine Emperor and ordered him never to make a concession to the terms submitted. In the talks, the Emperor who found the terms offered heavy realised that he wouldn't get any concessions, and made the Ambassador sign the treaty in Empire's favour by giving him a substantial bribe of 20,000 dinars. When the ambassador returned, Muawiya noticing the situation questioned him and dismissed him from his position.¹³ It is known that the Umayyad Caliph Walid b. Abdulmalik who sent ambassadors to II. Iustinianos provided mosaic, craftsmen and money to be used in reconstruction activities.¹⁴

Omar b. Abdulaziz sent an ambassador with a letter to Emperor Leon III to invite him to Islam, discussions took place around fundamental religious issues and the Emperor replied the letter of the Caliph.¹⁵ Ibn al-Djawzi and Ibn Kathir indicated that Omar b. Abdulaziz sent Abd al-A'la b. Abu 'Amra in order to invite the Emperor to Islam and that the ambassador took his son Abdullah with him.¹⁶ Al-Mubarrad which mentioned that Abdullah b. Abd al-A'la with someone from the Ans tribe was sent to Leon III by Omar II included the discussion around fundamental religious issues between the Emperor and the ambassadors, and recorded

Philadelphia 1982, p. 54; Nikephoros, *Short History*, ed. and trans. by Cyril Mango, Washington D. C. 1990, p. 85; al-Mas'ûdî, *Muruj al-zahab* (ed. M. Muhy al-din Abd al-Hamid), I-V, Beirut 1384/1964; I, 329; Andreas N. Stratos, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century* (Eng. trans. Harry T. Hionides), Amsterdam 1975, IV, 45.

¹³ Ibn al-Tiqtaqa, *al-Fakhri*, Qairo 1317, p. 68, 69.

¹⁴ al-Tabarî, *Tarikh al-rusul wa al-muluk* (ed. Abu al-Fazl Ibrahim), Qairo 1972, VI, 436; al-Maqdisî, *Ahsan al-taqasim* (ed. M. J. De Goeje), Leiden 1877, p. 158; Avci, *İslâm-Bizans İlişkileri*, p. 208.

¹⁵ See Avci, *İslâm-Bizans İlişkileri*, p. 106 ff.

¹⁶ Ibn al-Djawzi, *Sirat and Manaqib Omar b. Abdulaziz*, (ed. Na'im Zarzur), Beirut 1984, 263; Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidaya ve al-nihaya*, Beirut-Riyad 1966, IX, 205.

that the Emperor replied to the letter of the Caliph.¹⁷

Abbasid Caliph al- Mansur (754-775) sent his clerk 'Umara b. Hamza' who was known for his skills in literature and eloquent as an ambassador to Emperor Constantine V (741-775). What Umara narrated was remarkable in terms of pointing to fearful moments of the ambassadors before they were accepted by the Emperor in Byzantine palace. According to Ibn al-Fakih's (d. 289/902) narration; Umara who was sent to Constantinople with the letter of Caliph including the threat of war in a period that bilateral relations were tense, waited at three locations before reaching the palace and each time he was obliged to wait for permission from the relevant authorities in order to move to the next location. Umara reaching the palace by this way explained what happened after that: "While moving along in the palace when I reached a hall, I saw roaring lions were waiting on either sides of the way that I needed to move. I was so scared and said to myself that 'It must be the end of my life.' Nevertheless; I moved on. When I got close to the lions, they calmed down and I walked among them. When I went to the other hall, I saw two swords in front of the hall mutually heaving in my line. So that; it was impossible to pass among them, even for a fly. I moved along saying 'God who has saved me from lions saves me from swords as well.' When I got closer to the swords, they stopped and I proceeded on my way. I finally reached the Emperor's reception hall. This hall was so big, so that the emperor was almost visible. I went a bit further and was covered all over with a red smoke. I stayed where I was because I could not see my front. When the smoke disappeared, I kept moving. But this time a green smoke covered around. So I sat down and waited. After a while; when the smoke was gone, I moved on and appeared before the Emperor. After I saluted the Emperor, I presented Caliph's letter to him. The Emperor ordered me to sit, and through an interpreter he asked me questions about

¹⁷ Al-Mubarrad, *al-Kamil*, Beirut 1406/1986, II, 637, 638. ("Summa kataba jawaba kutubina")

the Caliph and the country's situation. After our conversation finished, he ordered for me to be hosted in the guesthouse." According to the narration; Umara and the Emperor gathered again with the Emperor's request and while having a tour around the palace together, Umara had a suitable time to ask the Emperor the reason of the protocol which made him have fearful moments. And the Emperor admitted with all the clarity that they appealed such a way to spread fear into the hearts of foreign ambassadors coming to the Byzantine palace.¹⁸

Al-Mansûr and al-Ma'mun supplied ancient Greek science and philosophy books from the Byzantine emperors of the period by sending ambassadors to Constantinople. The impressions of Nasr b. Azhar who was sent to Constantinople by Abbasid Caliph al-Mutawakkil in 246 (860) for giving an affirmative answer to an offer from the Byzantine palace about prisoner exchange and the ransom negotiations, were reflected in the sources as the following: "I have come to the Byzantine palace with my formal dress, my turban, my sword and my dagger on. However I was not allowed to enter the palace this way. I said that if I was not allowed, I would go back and I did. On my way; they convinced me to turn back to the palace. Then I was accepted by Bardas who was the uncle of Emperor Michael III, running the state affairs on behalf of him. Bardas was sitting on a high throne. High state officials were waiting standing around him. I sat on the seat prepared for me and presented my gifts. There were 1.000 boxes of musk, silk dresses and several rare items among them. Bardas had three interpreters next to him. I warned the interpreters not to make any additions to my words. After the negotiation I was hosted in a place near the palace with the order of Bardas." Nasr b. Azhar who indicated that they reached a treaty on prisoner exchange after long negotiations, then also negotiated with Michael III personally. His notes about the negotiation is as follows: "I told

¹⁸ Ibn al-Faqih, *Mukhtasar Kitab al-Buldan* (ed. M. J. De Goeje), Leiden 1967, pp. 137-139.

the Emperor that the treaty that we entered into with his uncle was binding on him. He nodded his head saying 'Yes.' Anyway, I have not heard him speaking a word; in the meantime, that I went to Byzantium and turned back. He was only nodding 'Yes' or shaking his head 'No' when the interpreter transferred my words to him. After positive talks, I left there."¹⁹

Yahya b. Hakam al-Gazal, sent to the Byzantine palace, probably as an ambassador to Emperor Theophilos, by Abdurrahman II (822-852), Caliph of Umayyad Dynasty in al-Andalus, gained the close friendship of the Emperor with his personality, behaviours and diplomatic skills.²⁰ The delegation sent from Andalusia by Umayyad Caliph of al-Andalus, Abdurrahman III after 338 (949) was welcomed with a grand ceremony by Emperor Constantine VII and returned to Cordoba after two years in Constantinople.²¹

It was observed that some Islamic scholars came to the capital city of Byzantium Constantinople and that debates around religious issues were made between Muslim scholars and Christian clergy in the palace in the presence of the Emperor. The famous Ash'ari theologian and Maliki Faqih Qadi Abu Bakr al-Baqillani (d. 403/1013) is one of the examples. Al-Baqillani went to Constantinople as the head of a delegation sent by the Buwayhid ruler Adud al-Dawla (978-983) for negotiating various issues like prisoner exchange with the Byzantine authorities. It should also be remembered that meanwhile General Bardas Skleros who rebelled against Emperor Basileios II (976-1025) asked Adud al-Dawla for the help of taking refuge, thereupon Basileios II sent an ambassador to Adud al-Dawla and made an extradition request for Bardas.²² According to the narration; when al-Baqillani arrived to Basileios II's palace with Adud al-Dawla's response letter, master

¹⁹ Tabari, *Tarikh*, IX, 219-220.

²⁰ Maqqari, *Nafh al-Tib* (ed. İhsan Abbas), Beirut 1388/1968, II, pp. 258-59.

²¹ See Birsnel Küçükspahioğlu, *III. Abdurrahman Dönemi Endülüs Tarihi* (300-350/912-961), Unpublished MA thesis, University of Istanbul, 1996, pp. 52-56.

²² It is known that Bardas stayed in Baghdad until Adud al-Dawla's death.

of ceremonies asked the delegation take their turbans and shoes out and stated that otherwise they would not be accepted to appear before the Emperor. Thereupon al-Baqillani said: "I can not fulfill any of your demands. If you agree, I appear before with them on; if you do not, read the letter of the ruler, write the answer, and we shall go back. When the Emperor was informed about the situation, the Emperor wants them to ask al-Baqillani the reason of his reaction to the protocol. Al-Baqillani stated "that he was a scholar, even though it was a protocol what was demanded was humiliating, no ruler would take the humiliation of his ambassador normally and he could not accept such a protocol as a Muslim who was glorified and honoured with Islam by Allah." When al-Baqillani's answer was transmitted to the Emperor, he ordered the delegation to be accepted as it was. According to the same narrative; al-Baqillani confronted a door that the only way to pass was to bend down while he was being taken to appear before the Emperor. The ambassador sensing this was for humiliating overcame this trap by turning his back to go inside.

The Emperor expressed his appreciation when al-Baqillani indicated that his reaction against the demands pointed as the protocol rules on the appearance before the Emperor was not intended for the Emperor's person, that he behaved like that because he was a scholar with strong personality and even that he would react with the same response if he faced with the same situation in his own country. A debate was organised with the participation of notable clergy including Patriarch of Constantinople Nicholas II (Chrysoberges, 979-991) in the Byzantine Palace in the presence of the Emperor. Meanwhile; when Al -Baqillani stated that he was concerned for the presence of forbidden foods for Muslims such as pork at the dinner given in honour of the ambassadors, he was laid down by the authorities that there is no food forbidden for Muslims at the dinner table. In the Byzantine palace; Al-Baqillani won the admiration of Byzantines by discussing discreetly and successfully with the Emperor Basileios II and the Christian clergy about the cases such as the belief of Trinity, Jesus, the miracle of the splitting of the moon by the Prophet (*inshiqaq al-qamar*),

the marriage of the christian clergy, the personality of Mary and Aisha; and he turned back to his country being honoured by the Emperor.²³

It was recorded that Maslama b. Abdulmalik took a mosque built during the third Constantinople siege under his command of Umayyad ruler Suleyman b. Abdulmalik (715-717) era. This mosque was mentioned in many Islamic sources and it was also confirmed in the work of Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus (913-959) titled *De Administrando Imperio* by the request of Maslama concerning the construction of a mosque.²⁴ Later the mosque built by Maslama was brought to the agenda in treaties between Byzantine and Abbasids, Fatimids, Ayyubids and Mamluks about the *khutba* in particular should be read in the name of which caliph: During the reign of Fatimid Caliph Hakim Biamrillah (996-1021), the *khutbah* was read in the name of this caliph in the mosque in Constantinople. According to the treaty during the era of al-Zahir li-I'zaz Din Allah; the Emperor repaired the mosque and appointed a *muezzin* and the *khutba* was read in the name of al-Zahir in 418 (1027). Byzantine Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (1042-1055) sent various presents as an expression of gratitude and thankfulness to Tuğrul Bey who released the King of Abkhazia without ransom and allowed him to repair and to perform prayer in the mosque, and the *khutba* was read in the name of Tuğrul Bey in 441 (1049). Albeit it was also

²³ Qadi Iyaz, *Tartib al-Madarik wa Taqrib al-Masalik li Marifat Alam Mazhab Malik* (ed. Ahmad Bakr Mahmoud), Beirut 1388/1968, III, 594-601; Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidaya wa al-Nihaya*, XI, 402-403; Nubahi, *Tarikh Qudat al-Andalus* (ed. Maryam Kasim Tavit), Beirut 1415/1995, s. 56-60; Suleyman al-Rahili, *al-Safarat al-Islamiyya ila al-Dawlat al-Bizantiyya*, Riyad 1414, pp. 232-236. For further reading about al-Baqillani's going to Constantinople as a messenger and the contents of his discussion with the Emperor Basileios II also see Çağfer Karadaş, "Bizans Sarayında Müslüman-Hıristiyan Münazarası: Büveyhî Elçisi Bâkılânî ile İmparator II. Basileios Arasında Geçen Tartışma", *İslâm Araştırmaları Dergisi*, no. 22, İstanbul 2009, pp. 1-35.

²⁴ Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio* (ed. Gy. Moravcsik; English trans. R. J. H. Jenkins), Washington, D.C., 1967, p. 93.

known that the khutbah was read in the name of Abbasid caliph through Tuğrul Bey. Fatimid Caliph Mustansir Billah sent an ambassador to Constantinople in 447 (1055) and the ambassador met with the ambassador of Sultan Tuğrul Bey. In the letter that was brought by the ambassador of Tuğrul Bey, the Byzantine administration was requested to allow the ambassador to perform prayer in the mosque in Constantinople. This was allowed and the *khutba* was read in the name of Abbasid Caliph Qaim-Biamrillah in Friday prayer. Byzantine Emperor Isaac II Angelos sent an ambassador to Salahaddin al-Ayyubi in 585 (1188), and offered him the *khutba* to be read in the name of Sultan and Abbasid caliph in the mosque in Constantinople in exchange for the old Orthodox churches in Jerusalem to be put under the Byzantine's order. Salahaddin took the Emperor 's proposal kindly. With the Emperor's ambassador he sent a *minbar*, a *khatib*, a *muezzin* and *huffaz* and an ambassador. The delegation reaching Constantinople by sea was welcomed with a ceremony here by the Emperor, the Muslim community and the merchants from Islamic countries. The *khutba* was read in the name of the Sultan and the Abbasid Caliph in Friday prayer that Muslim merchants and Muslim community inhabiting Constantinople attended. This mosque was ruined in an insurrection during the reign of Alexios Angelos (1195-1203) and was rebuilt later. But during the forth Crusade in 1204 it was ruined again and although the Muslims and the Greeks helping them to resist were inside, it was looted and burnt. Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos made the mosque rebuilt, and the Sultan of Mamluk Baybars sent mats, golden candelabras, curtains, carpets and some other items to this mosque. It was reported that the mosque was turned to a church afterwards.²⁵

²⁵ Ibn al-Faqih, *Mukhtasar Kitab al-Buldan*, p. 145; Shaykh al-Rabwa al-Dimasqi, *Nukhbat al-Dahr* (ed. M. A. F. Mehren), Saint-Petersbourg 1866, p. 227; Marius Canard, "Tarih ve Efsaneye Göre Araplar'ın İstanbul Seferleri" (Turkish trans. İsmail Hami Danişmend), *İstanbul Enstitüsü Dergisi*, II (1956), p. 231-233; İsmail Yiğit, "Emevîler Zamanında Gerçekleştirilen İstanbul Seferleri", *II. Uluslararası İstanbul'un Fethi Sempozyumu*, İstanbul 1997, p. 58-61.

A large number of Muslim prisoners and slaves were present in Constantinople, the capital of Byzantine Empire. Al-Maqdisi, one of the Islamic geographers of IVth (Xth) century, recorded that the Emperor had a mansion known as *Dar al-Balat* built next to his own palace at the back of the Hipodrome for important Muslim prisoners with the request of Maslama b. Abdulmalik who performed the third Constantinople siege in the Umayyad period, and that Muslims gathered and worshipped in this mansion. According to the same source; while notables of Muslim prisoners were staying in *Dar al-Balat*, other prisoners were employed in various works. The prisoners were not forced to eat pork and they were not mistreated.²⁶ It was seen that Caliph Omar b. Abdulaziz made a hard effort to save the Muslim prisoners in the hands of the Byzantines and sent ambassadors to Emperor Leon III for this purpose. Abd al-A'la was one of those ambassadors and a treaty was reached between the parties about releasing two Byzantine prisoners in exchange for one Muslim prisoner.²⁷

At another time Omar b. Abdulaziz sent Muhammed b. Ma'bad as the head of a delegation to Leon III to ensure the release of Muslims taken prisoner by Byzantine Empire. He reported to the Emperor that he would release the Byzantine prisoners if he accepted the treaty. However; while negotiations were continuing, the information that the Caliph was dead, reached Constantinople. It was recorded that Leon III was quite sad about Omar b. Abdulaziz's death and he remarked on him appreciatively.²⁸

The ambassador sent to the Emperor by Omar II during his research encountered with a Muslim prisoner reading Quran and grinding wheat with a hand mill. The prisoner had told him that he was forced to change his religion, that he got probed because he didn't accept Christianity, and that he was exposed to various

²⁶ al-Maqdisi, *Ahsan al-Taqaqim*, pp. 147-148

²⁷ Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqat al-Kubra*, ed. Ihsan Abbas, Beirut 1388/1968, V, 354; Ibn Asakir, *Tarikh Madinat Dimashq*, XXXIII, pp. 417, 419.

²⁸ Mas'udi, *Muru'uj*, III, 195; Ibn al-Djawzi, *Sirat wa Manaqib Omar b. 'Abdulaziz*, p. 330, 331.

forms of torture, indicated that he sustained his life by grinding and baking the wheat which was sent by the Byzantine authorities. When he was informed about the situation of the Muslim prisoner by his ambassador, the eyes of Omar b. Abdulaziz was filled with tears and he asked this prisoner to be released by writing a threatening letter to the Emperor. The ambassador conveyed the message. The Emperor concurred that he would fulfil the Caliph's request. But meanwhile it was heard that the prisoner passed away. By the request of the ambassador, the sorrowed Emperor sent the body of the prisoner who was qualified as "person with good deeds" with him.²⁹

One of the famous prisoners in Constantinople was Harun b. Yahya. There were some facts about Muslim prisoners in the narratives related to Constantinople of Harun b. Yahya who was taken prisoner in Palestine and was brought to Constantinople for a while probably at the beginning of the 9th or 10th century. Harun indicating that there were four dungeons at the entrances of the Grand Palace located in the middle of the city and one of them was reserved for Muslims, narrated that especially after Christmas during the twelve-day feast Muslim prisoners were given a banquet with the participation of the Emperor in a glorious feast hall which could be entered by passing through a court of honour, that the foods were observed to be religiously not forbidden for Muslims, for example there were no pork dishes. He added that while leaving after dining accompanied by organ, the Emperor gave two dinars and three dirhams to each of the Muslim prisoners. While the Emperor came out of the palace with ceremony for going towards Hagia Sophia Church, Muslim prisoners were also taken here to pray three times for "the Emperor's reign to last long", for the glory of the church and before the Emperor's greatness. And then they were given a number of presents.³⁰

²⁹ Abdullah b. Abdulhakam, *Sirat Omar b. Abdulaziz* (ed. Ahmad Ubayd), Beirut 1967, p. 191-193.

³⁰ Ibn Rusta, *al-A'lâq al-Khatira*, ed. M. J. De Goeje, Leiden 1892, p. 119-127.

Arab poet and commander Abu Firas al-Hamdani (d. 357/968) from Hamdanid dynasty was one of the famous figures who lived under captivity in Constantinople. Al-Hamdani was taken prisoner around Manbidj during the operation of Byzantines before the siege of Aleppo in 351 (962). He was first taken to Harshana which was a Byzantine fortress on the banks of the Euphrates River near Malatya and then to Constantinople. He stayed in Constantinople until the prisoner exchange in Radjab 355 (966). The fame of Abu Firas came from his "Rumiyyat" containing an important part of his poems including his memoirs written nearly day by day during his captivity in Byzantium. In these poems, he reflected a prisoner's yearning for his homeland, family, friends and freedom with touching expressions.³¹

The travel book of Ibn Battuta (d. 770/1368-69) known as the most famous Muslim traveller in the Middle Ages was important in terms of having the expressions of a traveller who came to Constantinople personally and met with the Emperor of the era. Ibn Battuta who lived in the XIVth century left his birthplace Morocco and went to Crimea from the port of Sinop after exploring Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Anatolia and met with Sultan Muhammed Uzbek Khan there. Ibn Battuta came to Constantinople in 732 (1332) by joining the group of 500 people, including Baylun Khatun who was the Byzantine Emperor Andronikos Palaiologos III's (1328-1341) daughter and the wife of Uzbek Khan. Baylun Khatun and the people with her were welcomed by her mother, father, state officials and people of the palace with a spectacular ceremony ten miles from Constantinople and they entered the city accompanied by "earth-shaking bells" in the words of Ibn Battuta.³²

Ibn Battuta explains their entering to Constantinople and the process afterwards as follows: "That day, we entered the magnificent Qustantiniyya around noon. All bells of the city were

³¹ Ibn Khalliqan, *Wafayat al-A'yan*, ed. Ihsan Abbas, Beirut 1968, II, 59; Abu Firas, *Diwan Abu Firas* (ed. Sami al-Dahhan), I-III, Beirut 1944.

³² See Ibn Battuta, *Rihlat Ibn Battuta* (ed. Abdulhadi Tazi) Rabat 1417/1997, II, pp. 251-258.

earthshakingly ringing. We encountered a hundred or so guards when we came in front of one of the gates of the Emperor palace. They were led by their commander. When they saw us, they started to exclaim 'Sarakino! Sarakino!' This word was meaning 'Muslims'. We were detained entering the city. Although Baylun Khatun's men told them 'they are with us', others said that 'it should be with permission.' We conveyed the situation to Baylun Khatun. Meanwhile; Baylun Khatun was appearing before her father. When she told her father about us, the Emperor ordered us to be allowed to enter. He reserved a mansion near the mansion that Baylun Khatun was staying. He ordered us not to be hindered from going wherever we wanted in the city and this fact was announced on the streets to the public by criers." Ibn Battuta indicated that food such as chicken, mutton, bread, fish and fruits were served during the three days they stayed in the mansion.

Ibn Battuta explains his coming to the Emperor's presence: "Baylun Khatun sent her Indian servant Sunbul to us in the fourth day of our arrival in Constantinople. Sunbul holding my hand took us to the Emperor's palace. We passed four big gates. In each one of them armed guards were keeping watch. When we came to the fifth gate, Sunbul infiltrated inside leaving me there. Shortly, she came back with four Greek guards. They searched me for the tools like a knife and so on. The commander in front of the gate indicating that this procedure was for everyone told me: 'Everyone who appears before the Emperor including urban or peasant, relative or guest gets this search.' After being searched the gate was opened and we entered a giant hall with the mosaic ornate walls in company with the four guards. There were animal and landscape paintings on these mosaics. The hall with the fountain in the middle and the trees around was offering a marvellous image. On the left and the right; people were standing in the calm, nobody was talking to nobody. There were three officers standing almost like a sculpture at the centre of the hall. They got me from the other four guards and they brought me forth with the sign of the protocol officer standing ahead. One of them was Jewish. After he told me that he was Syrian originally and he was an

interpreter there, he said: 'Do not be scared of their behaviour. Everyone coming here is treated like this as is the custom.' I asked the interpreter how to greet the Emperor. He said: 'Just say Salam alaykum! They understand this greeting.' After a while we came to the reception hall with an enormous dome. The Emperor was sitting on his throne, his wife the mother of Baylun Khatun was standing next to him. Khatun and her siblings took their places slightly below the throne level. Armed guardians were standing around the Emperor; six on the right side and four each on the left and the back sides. I was about to greet the Emperor, but he pointed at me to sit so that I control my excitement. After I sat for a while, I greeted him moving forward. He pointed at me to sit again, but I preferred standing. The Emperor asked me questions about Jerusalem, Qubbat al-Sakhra (Dome of the Rock), al-Khalil (Hebron), Bayt Lahm (Bethlehem), Damascus, Egypt, Iraq and Anatolia. And I gave the answers as it should be. The Jew mentioned before was interpreting between us. The Emperor who was satisfied with the informations and the answers I gave ordered the guardians to host me in a good way. He got me dressed a khil'at and ordered to be given an umbrella (*mizalla-czatr*) which was carried on the rulers' heads and was also a sign of eman, and a horse with excellent harness. He also appointed an attendant to guide me in the city sighting by my request. These were clarioned to the public with drums, clarion and trumpets as is the custom. Ibn Battuta recorded as a note that Turks especially coming from the country of Uzbek Khan were treated well as an expression of friendship. Ibn Battuta left the capital of the Byzantine Empire after he stayed there for a month and six days.³³

It was seen that many members from dynasty also came to Constantinople for taking refuge in Byzantium and asking for help during the fight for the throne in Seljuk and Ottoman eras.

³³ Ibn Battuta, *Rihlat Ibn Battuta* (ed. Abdulhadi Tazi) Rabat 1417/1997, II, p. 251, 258; Casim Avcı, "Arap-İslâm Kaynaklarında Bizans Sarayının Tasviri", *Tarih Boyunca Saray, Hayatı ve Teşkilatı -Bildiriler-*, "Globus" Dünya Basımevi, İstanbul 2006, pp. 108-109.

Erbasan (Erbasgan) who was the uncle of Alparslan the Sultan of Seljuk Empire came to Constantinople along with the forces under his command before Manzikert Battle just because he fell out with Alparslan and took service with Emperor Romanos Diogenes by taking refuge.³⁴ Mansur, the son of Qutalmish and the big brother of Suleyman Shah who was the founder of Anatolian Seljuk Empire, also took refuge in Constantinople after he lost the fight for dominance against Suleyman Shah were among them.³⁵

Seljukid Bey Abu al-Qasim holding down the fort on behalf of Suleyman Shah when he was not in İznik (Nikea) and being followed by Sultan Malik-Shah began to act independently and came to Constantinople accepting Emperor Alexios' invitation. Abu al-Qasim was very welcomed in Constantinople. Almost every day banquets were being given for him, horse and car races were being arranged at the hippodrome in honour of him, and his residence date in Constantinople was being tried to be protracted for several reasons. The Emperor gave Abu al-Qasim the title "sebastos" and saw him off to Iznik (Nikea).³⁶

Anatolian Seljukid ruler Masud I (1116-1155) and his brother Malik Arab also went to Constantinople to ask for the help of John Komnenos II during the fight for the throne.³⁷

Sultan Kilic Arslan II (1155-1192) went to Constantinople for meeting with Manuel Komnenos I who was the supporter of the enemy alliance including Zangids and Danishmends and was welcomed there with dignity and kindness by the Byzantines.

³⁴ Urfalı Mateos, *Vekayinâme* (Turkish trans. Hrant Andreasyan), Ankara 1987, p. 137-138; Attaleiates, *Tarih* (Turkish trans. Bilge Umar), İstanbul 2008, p. 144, 146; Erdoğan Merçil, "Bizans'ta Selçuklu Hanedan Mensupları", *XI. Türk Tarih Kongresi Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler*, Ankara 1994, II, pp. 709-710; Yusuf Ayönü, *Selçuklular ve Bizans*, Ankara 2014, p. 37-38.

³⁵ Abu'l-Faraj Gregorius, *Abu'l-Farac Tarihi* (Turkish trans. Ömer Rıza Doğrul), Ankara 1999, I, 328-329; Merçil, p. 711.

³⁶ Anna Komnena, *Alexiad* (Turkish trans. Bilge Umar), İstanbul 1996, p. 199-200; Merçil, p. 711-712; Ayönü, p. 80-81.

³⁷ Merçil, p. 712-713; Muharrem Kesik, *Türkiye Selçuklu Devleti Tarihi Sultan I. Mesud Dönemi (116-1155)*, Ankara 2003, p. 53.

Banquets were given in Constantinople for the Sultan. Horse races and entertainments were arranged. Everyday meals were presented to the Sultan in silver and golden plates which were presents for him. The Sultan sat at a table with the Emperor after he stayed in Constantinople for eighty days. The ornaments and plates on this table were presented to the Sultan as a present. 1.000 horsemen from Sultan's attendants were also given various presents. A treaty was signed between the Emperor and the Sultan. The Emperor also subsidized. After this treaty Kilic Arslan II left Constantinople. Shahin Shah, the defeated brother against Kilic Arslan II, and Dhul-Nun of Danishmends went to Istanbul for asking the support of the Byzantine Emperor.³⁸

The Anatolan Seljukid Sultan Kaykhusraw I who was dethroned in 593 (1196) went to Istanbul with his attendants and took refuge in Alexios Angelos. Kaykhusraw III who made a close friend with the Emperor was married off to one of the notable statesmen of Byzantium Manuel Mavrozomes' daughter during his residence in Constantinople. After the occupation of Constantinople by the Crusades in 1204, he left there for going to a castle on an island where his father in-law was living. Meanwhile his sons Kayqaus and Kayqubad I were with him as well.³⁹

Sultan Kayqaus II who lost the throne in 660 (1262) went to Constantinople boarding a ship from Antalya along with his mother, wife, sons (Mesud II and Rukn al-Din Kayumars), enough to carry valuable items and jewelleries. He was very welcomed here by Emperor Michael Palaiologos VIII who recaptured Constantinople from the Crusaders. The Emperor showed respect to the Sultan's children and relatives, and he allowed him to live in Constantinople as he wished, and his guards to be around him. Residences for each one of them were prepared for making them live in the way they deserved. Sultan's soldiers and supporters

³⁸ Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kamil*, XI, 317; Niketas Khoniates, *Historia* (Turkish trans. Fikret İşiltan), Ankara 1995, p. 81-82; Merçil, p. 713-714; Ayönü, p. 155-160.

³⁹ See Merçil, p. 715-717; Ayönü, p. 199-201.

also came to the sultan by entering Byzantine territory. Later this crowded Turkish community was settled to Dobruja. But later on; the Emperor who was scared of Ilkhanates imprisoned Kayqaus II with his mother, two sons and sister in Enos (Enez) Castle at the mouth of Maritsa (Meriç River). One of the Sultan's young sons detaining in Istanbul was christianised and he was given the name of Malik (Prince) Constantin. Commanders of Kayqaus II and men were taken to Hagia Sophia and they were forced to be Christian. Those who did not accept Christianity were killed. Kayqaus and his sons were rescued by Berke Khan the ruler of the Golden Horde.⁴⁰

In the Ottoman era, Orhan Bey supported his father in-law Ioannes Kantakuzenos VI for coming to the Byzantine throne. Then he went to Uskudar with his wife Theodora. Negotiations were made and a peace treaty was signed.⁴¹ According to the treaty signed in 1376 between Sultan Murad I and the Byzantine Emperor Andronikos Palaiologos IV; the Emperor accepted the protection of the rights of Muslims living in Constantinople and the appointment of a qadi for ruling their cases.⁴² A Turkish neighbourhood in which also had a mosque was formed in Constantinople by Bayezid I's (1389-1403) request. Emperor Manuel II who was stuck in a difficult situation after the first Constantinople siege of Bayezid I which lasted 7 months in 1391 offered peace. According to the treaty made between the two parties; it was accepted to form a Muslim neighbourhood with seven hundred houses allocated for Muslims in Sirkeci, Constantinople; to build a mosque in this neighbourhood; a qadi to be appointed by the Ottomans to rule dispute cases of the Muslims in this neighbourhood among themselves or with

⁴⁰ Merçil, p. 718-721; Ayönü, p. 259-260.

⁴¹ Fahameddin Başar, *Osmanlı Kaynaklarına Göre Osmanlı-Bizans Münasebetleri (1299-1451)*, unpublished PhD thesis, İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü 1991, p. 144-145; Halil İncılık, *Kuruluş Dönemi Osmanlı Sultanları (1302-1481)*, İstanbul 2010, p. 54.

⁴² Başar, p. 224

the Byzantines. In that era, most of the Turkish and Muslim population in Constantinople consisted of those residing there for the purpose of trading.⁴³ Although Emperor Manuel did not observe the terms of the treaty at the beginning, he had to fulfil it after the third Constantinople siege of Sultan Bayezid in 1397. On this basis; seven hundred houses were allocated for Turks in Sirkeci and a masjid was built there. Bâyezid brought families from Taraklı Yenicesi, Göynük and the coasts of the Black Sea and settled them in this neighbourhood. He also appointed a qadi and an imam for them.⁴⁴

Byzantine Emperor Manuel Palaiologos II, taking the advantage of the throne struggle between the Ottoman princes after the defeat of Bayezid I (who besieged Constantinople four times) against Timur in Ankara War in 1402, closed the Turkish court and the mosque in Constantinople and took trade concessions away from the Muslims. Suleyman Chalabi (Emir Suleyman), the son of Bayezid I, went to Constantinople and got the support of the Emperor Manuel II. Suleyman Chalabi leaving his younger brother Kasım Chalabi and his sister Fatma Sultan hostages in Constantinople, went to Edirne and proclaimed his reign. The other sons of Bayezid I; Mehmed Chalabi, Isa Chalabi and Mustafa Chalabi (Düzmece Mustafa) with Mustafa (Küçük Mustafa), the son of Mehmed I, went to Constantinople for taking the refuge in the Emperor Manuel Palaiologos II during the throne struggle and received military support by staying there for a while. Although Constantinople was besieged by Musa Chalabi in 1411 and by Murad II in 1422, they could not succeed. The last Byzantine Emperors Ioannes

⁴³ See Nevra Necipoğlu, "15. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Konstantinopolis'te Osmanlı Tacirleri", *Cogito* (Special Issue on Byzantium), XVII (1999), pp. 235-246. Koray Durak, "Doğuya Açılan Bir Pencere: Erken Ortaçağ İslâm Kaynaklarında Konstantinopolis ve Konstantinopolis'te Müslümanlar", *Bizantion'dan İstanbul'a: Bir Başkent'in 8.000 Yılı*, (ed. Koray Durak), İstanbul 2010, pp. 106, 109.

⁴⁴ Âşıkpaşazâde, *Osmanoğullarının Tarihi* (ed. Kemal Yavuz-M. A. Yekta Saraç), İstanbul 2003, p. 130; Mehmed Neşri, *Kitâb-ı Cihân-Nümâ* (ed. Faik Reşit Unat-Mehmet A. Köymen), Ankara 1987, I, 331; Başar, p. 245, 255, 259, 261.

Palaiologos VIII and Konstantinos Palaiologos XI supported and provoked Orhan Chalabi who stayed in Constantinople for a long time for the throne struggle against Sultan Murad II and then his son Mehmed the Conquerer. Mehmed II, the Conquerer besieged Constantinople in 1453 and sent Mahmud Pasha as his ambassador to the Emperor Konstantinos XI for the city being delivered; but he received a refusal. At the end of the siege; the city fell to the control of Muslims and the Byzantine Empire vanished with the conquest of Constantinople on 29 May 1453.⁴⁵

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⁴⁵ Âşıkpaşazâde, p. 414; Neşrî, II, 426-427, 492-495; Başar, p. 269-271, 274, 288.

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Markets (Bazaars) and Their Role in the Life of Cities of Central Asian Khanates

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As places of external, internal and transit trade, markets played a significant role in the social, economic and cultural development of Central Asian cities. Usually, the existence of the market in a city is a distinctive feature and it draws close attention. For example, 16th century author Fazlullah ibn Ruzbikhan Isfahani wrote the following comments: "There are city *hakimiyat* (town municipality), mosque and market in Sighnaq city."¹

The size of the markets, their financial operations and other aspects mainly depended on the role of the city in which they were located. Socio-economic factors and the political conditions were also important. Political instability in some states led to the aggravation of economic situation and resulted in the exacerbation of the problems in trade and markets. The representative of the Muscovy Company from England, Anthony Jenkinson, visited the Khiva Khanate in 1558. He wrote the following about the Urgench city: "Because of successive wars which lasted for seven years, this city passed from one owner to another for four times. That is why there are a few tradesmen in it, and those are very poor."²

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¹ Fazlallah ibn Ruzbikhan Isfahani. *Mikhmanname-ii Bukhara* (Zapiski bukharskogo gostya), translated and edited by R. P. Dzhililova. Moscow, 1976. p.117.

² Jenkinson A. *Puteshestvie v Srednyuyu Aziyu 1558-1560 gg.*, *Angliiskie puteshestvenniki v Moskovskom gosudarstve v XVI v.*, translated from English by Yu.G. Got'e, Moscow, 1938. p.177.

On the contrary, we can see the revival of trade and the increase of the number of markets at times of political stability. 16th century author Hafiz Tanish Bukhari tells that during the rule of Abdullah Khan II in Bukhara, there was a revival in the markets, new forms of market operations appeared and new caravansaries were built. Hafiz Tanish Bukhari also wrote about the renewal of the socio-economic situation in the country in that period: "There is not any place near [Bukhara] to have a rest for tired travelers, at any directions, in the desert and in the steppe."³

Markets are considered to be the faces of the medieval city. One could find there the representatives of both the city and the rural/steppe population selling different goods. There were also the foreign merchants who came to Central Asia who could be seen in those markets. Scholar H. Vambery, who visited Bukhara in the second half of the 19th century, wrote: "Markets are charming by the variety of people, cloth, and traditions..."⁴

Cities, being commercial and economic centers, were famous for their various markets. Speaking about the markets of the Central Asian Khanates, we should pay attention to the specialization on selling certain type of goods. Zahir ad-din Muhammad Babur, describing Samarqand city at the end of the 16th century, gave the following information on markets of the city:

Samarqand is a much regulated city. There is a special peculiarity that you cannot find in all cities. Here every handicraftsman has his own peculiar market...⁵

³ Khafiz-i Tanish ibn Mir Muhammad Bukhari Sharaf-name shakhi (Kniga shakhsnoi slavy), Faksimile rukopisi D 88, translated and edited by M.A. Salakhedinova, Part 1. Moscow, 1983. p. 296.

⁴ Vambery A. Puteshestvie po Srednei Azii. (Iz Tegerana cherez turkmenskuyu step' po vostochnomu beregu Kaspiiskogo moria v Khivu, Bukharu i Samarkand, predpriniatoe v 1863 g. s nauchnoi tsel'yu po porucheniiu Vengerskoi akademii v Peshte, chlenom eia A. Vamberi), Moscow, 1867. p.57.

⁵ Babur Z. M. Baburname (Notes of Babur), translated by M. Sal'e, second edition, Tashkent, 1993, p. 463.

Proving this fact, A. Jenkinson, who visited Bukhara in 1558 wrote:

"... here every specialization of the handicraft has its own market."⁶

Different sources from the period including documents also testify to this specialization in the markets of late Middle Ages. Particularly, the documents about sale-and-purchase contracts of properties of *Juybari* sheikhs, who had significant political and economic influence in Bukhara in the 16th and 17th centuries, contain crucial information about different types of markets. The following are the markets mentioned in the documents: the market of sellers of fabrics, the market of decorative hat makers (*taqiyaduzlar*), the cloth market, the market of decorative hat (*duppi*) sellers, the market of *mahsi* (local type of shoes) sellers, the market of metallic goods sellers, the market of sellers of ropes, the food market, money exchange offices (*sarraḡ*) and others.⁷ Another author, Budrin also noted that in Bukhara in the second decade of the 19th century there were markets for every kind of goods. He mentioned special markets for silk handkerchiefs and capes, threads and materials, Russian goods, dishes, copper dishes, shoes, cattle, woods and firewood, food, bread and many other things.⁸ Russian scholar N. Khanykov gave crucial information about the following markets: market of sellers of boots made from goat's leather, fish market, candle market, markets of sellers of flour, oats, corns, salt, coals, unbleached calico materials, dried fruits, drugs, melons and water-melons, pomegranate and pears, eggs, milk products, knives, oils, ropes, accessories for horse-riding and others.⁹

We can also see this specialization of markets on certain type of goods in other cities of Central Asia. For instance, Nur Muhammad

⁶ Jenkinson A. Puteshestvie v Srednyuyu Aziyu 1558-1560 gg. p.182

⁷ Ivanov P.P. Khoziaistvo dzhuibarskikh sheikhov. K istorii feodal'nogo zemlevladieniia v Srednei Azii v XVI – XVII vv. Moscow - Leningrad, 1954, p.88, 93, 250.

⁸ Russkie v Bukhare v 1820 g, (Zapiski ochevidtsa), Turkestanskii sbornik, Tom.239, St. Petersburg, 1880, p.26.

⁹ Khanykov N. Opisanie Bukharskogo khanstva, St. Petersburg, 1843, p. 92-93.

Alimov states that in Tashkent in 1735 there were "separate goods in every market" and "cotton, silk, boots, are sold in different markets."¹⁰ Mining engineers M. Pospelov and T. Burnashev stayed in Tashkent in 1800. They mentioned the big market, which was situated at the center of the city and occupied a large territory. There were special zones in this market and they divided the goods according to peculiar areas of specialization.¹¹ Evidence from that period give us additional information about the markets of Tashkent city. According to these, this market was "400 sazhen' (1 sazhen' equals 7 feet) in length and 100 sazhen' wide" and had 2400 *dukkans* (workshops). Various goods were on display in these *dukkans* (shops) and this part of the market is named after the goods that were sold there.

According to factual materials, the names of these market's departments were the following: grocery market, market of sellers of *mayiz* (dried grapes), pistachios, nuts, apples, pomegranates and melons; the Qazoqpurush market, which satisfied the needs of steppe nomadic population and sold unbleached calico, leather, waistbands (*belbogh*), kerchiefs; Krich market selling fried millet, onion and carrot; oats market selling oats, millet, rice and pea; the market for leather; flour market; rush mat market (*kigiz bozor*) selling *namad* (carpets made of sheep wool), lashes (*qamchin*), ropes, sacks, *khurjuns*, belts; mutton market; meat market; the market of bakers; *kavush* market which was specialized on selling boots; wood market (*yoghoch bozor*) specialized on selling wood goods – doors, posts and other wood constructions; *kurpa-gilam* market, which sold carpets and *kurpa* (national blanket for sitting on the floor); iron market, specialized on selling nails, sickles, saws and other things; copper market which sold copper goods – plates, teapots, spoons, wash-bowl; candle market, specialized on soaps

¹⁰ Rasskaz sarta Nur-Mukhameta, zapisannyi v marte 1735 g. v Orenburgskoi ekspeditsii, o kirgizskikh khanakh, gorodakh Tashkent, Turkestan i raznykh drugikh predmetakh, Materialy po istorii Rossii, Orenburg, 1900, p.57.

¹¹ Poezdka Pospelova i Burnasheva v Tashkent v 1800 g, Turkestanskii sbornik, T.343, St. Petersburg, 1883, p.28.

and candles; *choypurush* market, selling tea and sugar; market of different materials; *adras* market – the market of expensive decorative materials; market selling knives; cotton market; tobacco market; *tovoq* market, specialized on the sale of kitchen utensils; jewelry market; market of saddles; market selling hides and others.¹²

Other big cities of Central Asia like Khiva, Kokand, Namangan and Karshi also had markets, which were divided according to the types of the goods. For example, a document from Khiva Khans' archive reports that in the 19th century central Khiva market consisted of a number of specialized markets like cotton market (*ghavocha*), sesame market, grain-crops market, market selling the seeds of cotton (*chigit*), rice market and tobacco market.¹³ Cattle market of this city was also divided to several small branches. Not far away from these markets was the market selling hay and other necessary items for cattle breeding.¹⁴

The specialization of markets depended on and shaped by the economic contacts and mutual needs of the cities and the countryside surrounding them. Here we should mention that some markets were distinctive with their links with the cities. Some sources contain information about famous *bozor-i bargi tut* (mulberry trees' leaves) markets in the regions where breeding of silkworm was significant. In the 19th century, Samarkand had such diverse markets. In these markets silkworm moth breeders could buy the necessary quantity of the mulberry leaves. In one such market situated close to Sherdor madrassa, different seedlings were being sold. Especially mulberry trees and *Balkhiyan* and *Khorezmiyan* varieties were among the most preferred ones.¹⁵

¹² Geins A. K. Upravlenie Tashkentom pri Kokandskom vladichestve // Sobranie literaturnykh trudov. T.II. St. Petersburg, 1898, p. 287.

¹³ Ivanov P. P. Arkhiv khivinskih khanov XIX v. Issledovaniia i opisaniie s istoricheskim vvedeniem, Leningrad, 1940, p. 139.

¹⁴ Sazonov M. V. Traditsionnoe khoziaistvo uzbekov İuzhnogo Khorezma, Leningrad, 1978, p. 97.

¹⁵ Adomalli Yu. Razvedenie shelkovichnykh chervei v Srednei Azii, Materialy dlia statistiki Turkestanского kraia. Vyp. 1. S-Petersburg, 1872, p. 516.

Besides that, in certain seasons, there was a big sale of silk cocoons in the region's markets. F. Nazarov, who was in Kokand in the 19th century, wrote the following: "As soon as we arrived in Kokand, we saw a big quantity of silk cocoons everywhere in the markets."¹⁶ Khiva, in this period, was also prominent among such kind of markets.¹⁷

The topography of the city markets also presents a significant point of interest. Usually in central parts of the city there were markets of jewelers, changers, blacksmiths, and clothiers. The markets which specialized on selling agricultural goods and cattle were usually situated in the countryside, as such markets needed big territories. Mir Izzat Ulla, who came to Bukhara from India in the 19th century mentioned that "The horse market is situated closer to the cemetery of Bahouddin Naqshband and wednesday was the day for the trade."¹⁸ Another horse market of Samarkand was situated at 1.5 *chaqirim* from Samarqand gates.¹⁹ The third horse market of the city was outside of the city gate called *Imom Darvoza*. The market for the sale of caws, sheep and camels was situated outside of another city gate – *Namozgoh Darvoza*.²⁰

Market buildings and different trade constructions inside them were sharing a number of common properties, as well as differing in some aspects. City markets, as a rule, were situated at the center of the city, in public places or in big streets and at crossroads. From the sources we learn that some streets served as markets. E.

¹⁶ Nazarov F. Zapiski o nekotorykh narodakh i zemliakh srednei chasti Azii. Moscow, 1968, p. 51.

¹⁷ Ivanov P.P. Arkhiv khivinskikh khanov XIX v., p. 319.

¹⁸ Puteshestvie Mir Izzet Ulli ot granitsy Kokandskogo khanstva do goroda Samarkanda, Sokolov Yu.A. Bukhara, Samarkand, Kelif v 1813 godu (Publikatsiia otryvka "Puteshestvie Mir Izzet Ulli v Srednyuyu Aziyu v 1812 – 1813 godakh"), Trudy SAGU. Novaia seriia. Vyp. XC. Istoricheskaya nauka. Kniga 14. Seriya "Istoriia", Tashkent, 1957, p. 197.

¹⁹ Khanykov N. Opisanie Bukharskogo khanstva ... p. 92-93.

²⁰ Rempel' L.I. Iz istorii gradostroitel'stva na Vostoke (Materialy po planirovke staroi Bukhary), Iskustvo zodchikh Uzbekistana, Tashkent, 1962, p. 242.

Meyendorf, describing Bukhara in the 1820s, noted the following: "Here you can find the streets 0,5 *chaqirim* long, and on two sides of them there are shops (*dukkans*)."²¹ G. I. Danilevskii confirms this description. In Gurlen city 66 *dukkans* were situated "at the center of the city on both sides of the main street."²²

In most cases the top side of these streets was covered. 16th century author A. Jenkinson describes Urgench market in the following manner: "... The top of one long street is covered and there is a market in it."²³ The scholar A.P. Khoroshkhin proved the specialization of city markets in Central Asia. He mentioned that the markets in Tashkent occupied the entire streets which were covered on the top.²⁴ These streets were covered in the following manner: big logs were set across and rush, thatch or brushwood was spreading on them. One of the authors of the 19th century also indicated that the market of Kokand city in this period was covered with *soyabon* – roof for keeping the shade.²⁵ In a similar manner, the street markets of Samarkand were covered with "thick layer of *soyabon*, which preserved them from sun rays."²⁶

It is necessary to note that the markets were equipped with different kinds of shops. Usually the shops were divided in accordance with the goods sold, very often there were *dukkans* near shops, adapted to production and selling of certain goods. Witnesses recount that in Tashkent some shops were consisted of two floors, and in most cases *dukkans* had no doors and were closed by wood logs at night.²⁷

²¹ Meiendorf E. K. Puteshestvie iz Orenburga v Bukharu. Moscow, 1975, p. 91.

²² Danilevskii G. I. Opisanie Khivinskogo khanstva, Zapiski Imperatorskogo Russkogo Geograficheskogo obshchestva. St. Petersburg, 1851, Book 5, p. 105.

²³ Jenkinson A. Puteshestvie v Srednyuyu Aziyu 1558-1560 gg. p. 177.

²⁴ Khoroshkhin A. P. Ocherki Tashkenta, Sbornik statei, kasaiushchikhsia do Turkestanskogo kraia, St. Petersburg, 1876, p. 95.

²⁵ Kun A. Nekotorye svedeniia o Ferganskoi doline, Voennyi sbornik, 1876. P.428.

²⁶ Karazin N. Sredneaziatskie etiudy. Chapan-atinskie etiudy, Turkestanskii sbornik. Tom 89. St. Petersburg, 1873, p. 280.

²⁷ Khoroshkhin A. P. Ocherki Tashkenta... p. 95.

As a rule, shops were managed by leaders. Besides responsibility for their own row, the leaders were taking care of internal life of groups of shops. For example the leader was settling disputes and conflicts, providing raw materials for handicraftsmen, and observing production quality, prices and sale. Besides that, leaders had other duties, for example, in Tashkent they employed guards for securing the *dukkans* at night. They were also responsible for cleanliness of the territory.²⁸

Different types of markets, such as *tim* and *toq*, were formed in Central Asian cities. The documents from Juybari Sheikhs' Archive testify to the fact that in the 16th century Bukhara there existed a kind of market named *tim*. In these markets decorative national hats, unbleached calico, and cloth were being sold. Architecturally speaking, *tims* are brick buildings, having oblong forms and covered on the top. Different shops were situated inside of them. *Tim*, which was built by the ruler of Bukhara Abdullah Khan II in the 80s of the 16th century, had a form of a Wrong Square. Situated at the center with the aid of brick pillars, there was a cupola above the *tim*, and there were small ones around it.²⁹

Tims were built in other cities of Central Asia too. For example, the *tim* ordered by Khiva Khanate's ruler Allah-quli Khan in Khiva included "a very big building with cupolas", inside of which there were openings for the light. Inside of the *tim* there were "wood closets and small *dukkans* for the sellers to sit."³⁰

Another type of market, *toq*, was also widespread. They were built on crossroads. It was squared with six, eight corners from the brick, covered at the top by *cupola*. Instead of *dukkans* we find *hujra* (niches, situated inside) in this type of buildings. Moneychangers' *toq*, jewelers' *toq*, hats sellers' *toq* and others can be attributed to such trade buildings. E. Meyendorf noted that

²⁸ Geins A. K. Upravlenie Tashkentom pri Kokandskom vladichestve, Sobranie literaturnykh trudov. Tom II, St. Petersburg, 1898, p.521.

²⁹ Shishkin V. A. Arkhitekturnye pamiatniki Bukhary, Tashkent, 1936, p. 70.

³⁰ Kostenko L. Gorod Khiva v 1873 g., Turkestanskii sbornik. Tom 82. St. Petersburg, 1879, p.328.

in Bukhara in the beginning of the 19th century there “were such crossroads, which are covered by large cupola, supported by thick pillars” and “sellers of colored silk, *duppi* (national hats), knives and other things were situated inside them.”³¹

Another type of Central Asian city markets was *chorsu* or *choharsu*. Usually these markets were situated on the crossroads and were built with *cupola* from *ganch* there. Markets of such kind were almost in all cities of Central Asia. *Chorsu* of Samarkand in the sources of the 19th century was described as covered on the top building, which had ways out of all sides and consisted of brick buildings. Mir Izzat Ulla, who visited Central Asia in the 19th century, gives us the following information about Bukhara *chorsu*: “Every day (early in the morning) *bozori chorsu* begins its activity. It is situated at the center of trade square.”³² Another 19th century author wrote that *chorsu* of Shahrisabz and Qarshi “are not very big, on the top they were surrounded by cupola and the buildings inside it had a round form.”³³ Usually different small goods were being sold in these markets.

Usually these markets were situated at central squares of the city. In most cases the trade centers were on Registan squares, situated at the central part of the city. This was characteristic for the cities of the Bukhara Khanate. For example, in the sources of the 16th century one of the Bukhara markets was mentioned as “a Registan market.”³⁴ We can obtain information about this market in other sources of the later periods. Sources of the 19th century note that the Registan market is the biggest market of the city.³⁵ According to the words of a witness, a part of the market was occupied by *dukkans*, and another part was intended for selling

³¹ Meiendorf E. K., *Puteshestvie iz Orenburga v Bukharu*, p. 102

³² *Puteshestvie Mir Izzet Ulli ot granitsy Kokandskogo khanstva do goroda Samarkanda*. p. 201.

³³ Khoroshkhin A. P., *Samarkand (Listki iz pamiatnoi knizhki)*, p. 193.

³⁴ Ivanov P. P., *Khoziaistvo dzhuibarskikh sheikhov*, p. 106.

³⁵ Maev N. A., *Ocherki Bukharskogo khanstva*. Tashkent, 1875. p. 67.

firewood, vegetables, rice, corn, sesame oil, feed for the camels, various fruits, bread and different everyday goods.³⁶ Another author of the 19th century, Budrin, was also proving this fact by noting that "all kind of things are being sold here."³⁷

We can see the existence of the market on Registan square on the example of other cities of the region. An author from the 19th century wrote that the Registan of Qarshi city was occupied by "market shops."³⁸

The eastern side of Registan of Samarkand and the territory close to Sherdor and Tillyakori madrassas were occupied by petty goods, which were laid on the counters or on the land.³⁹ Together with big central city markets there were small ones as well. Usually they were situated on the crossroads and between separate districts (*mahalla*). They mainly specialized on the sale of everyday goods like food and groceries. It was possible to buy such goods like flavor, rice, cereals, corn, sliced carrot, candle and other goods in the grocery.⁴⁰

Also in the cities, especially in Bukhara Khanate there was another kind of market called *seraha* (three roads)⁴¹. These markets were formed on the crossing of three roads. P. I. Demezov in 1830s included *Sari bazari* markets in the above mentioned group of markets and wrote that "there are small markets known as *Sari bazar* on every crossroad."⁴²

We find examples of markets not only in large economic centers of Central Asia, but also in other big and small cities of the region.

³⁶ Meiendorf E. K., *Puteshestvie iz Orenburga v Bukharu*, p. 101.

³⁷ *Russkie v Bukhare v 1820 g. (Zapiski ochevidtsa)*, p. 26.

³⁸ Maev N. A., *Ocherki Bukharskogo khanstva*, p. 53.

³⁹ Khoroshkhin A. P., *Samarkand (Listki iz pamiatnoi knizhki)*... p. 193.

⁴⁰ Tursunov N. O., *Razvitie gorodskikh i sel'skikh poselenii severnogo Tadzhikistana v. XVIII – v nachale XX vv. Tashkent*, 1991, p. 88.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Zapiski o Bukharskom khanstve (Otchioty P.I. Demezova i I.V. Vitkevicha)*. Moscow, 1983, p. 58.

And we can say that the markets played a certain role in these cities. Such markets usually were located on the crossroads of caravan ways. These roads were connecting separate regions, nomadic and settled populations. These markets were specialized in the sale of different goods ranging from everyday needs and cloth to utensils and many other things. One of these markets, known as *ovqat bozori* ("food market") was in Djizak city. This market played an important role not only in the life of townspeople, but also in the life of the population living close to city areas. One of the authors of the 19th century wrote that in Djizak's market the mutual exchange of the goods among the tradesmen of one country with merchants of another was not like in Kokand's market. But as food market – *ovqat bozori* – it played a very important role.⁴³

On the ways connecting small and big cities there were also some other markets and they satisfied the needs of the wayfarers and neighboring population. In the 19th century A. Vamberi noted: "Every hour, and sometimes every half an hour we passed-by a *bozorli-joy* (small market)."⁴⁴

As being the centers of economical relations with neighboring countries, settlements and settled population, importance of city markets cannot be underestimated. Based on the example of the cities of Khiva Khanate, we can see that these markets were situated on the ways which were comfortable for the population to reach. In most cities of the khanate, city markets were outside of the city. This was the reason why it was easier to trade with neighboring areas and especially with nomadic population. For example in the 19th century, the market of Kyat city –which consisted of 40 *dukkans*– was located at the opposite direction of the city gates. One part of 320 *dukkans* of Urgench was close to market gates and another one was outside the city in three stalls. 150 *dukkans* of Hazorasp city were also situated outside the

⁴³ Petrovskii N. Moia poezdka v Bukharu. Putevye nabliudeniia i zametki. Vol. 2. Tashkent, 1982, p. 213.

⁴⁴ Vambery A. Puteshestvie po Sredney Azii: Dopolnenie k Puteshestviuu po Srednei Azii. Moscow, 1868, p. 166.

city gates. In the capital of the Khiva Khanate, besides central markets, there were 260 *dukkans* located in different parts of the city. These *dukkans* were mainly outside of the city walls and close to Boqchi and Shermuhammad-Ata gates.⁴⁵

The relationship and the exchange between the cities and villages of Khiva khanate was carried out not only by roads but also through waterways. This situation had an effect on the topographical positioning of the markets. City markets, located on the banks of large rivers and channels included a special pier, where different crafts and boats could berth. According to the materials from the first half of the 19th century, the market of Khojeyli city consisted of 150 *dukkans* and "was situated in southern part of the city on the left bank of Suvonli channel." The market of Tashavuz city, consisted of 180 *dukkans*, and "was in two stalls near to wood bridge of the channel." The market of Ghazavat city consisted of 25 *dukkans* and "was built in two stalls on the right bank of Ghazavat channel."⁴⁶

In some cities, instead of markets, houses were employed as exchange places. The main reason behind this tendency was the absence of markets in some regions. This practice was seen in the territories closer to nomadic areas. For example, according to a 16th century author, Arquq city was one of such centers. "As a result of the absence of markets and *dukkans* in the city, trade was taking place in houses of the population. Soldiers were buying different goods from these houses."⁴⁷ In regions where the population is settled, we see a contrary situation. Authors of the 19th century described the Fergana valley in the following manner: "Very seldom trade takes place in the houses. Because, firstly, according to the religion the goods for sale should be presented explicitly and everybody should see them; secondly, the seller should get

⁴⁵ Danilevskii G. I. Opisanie Khivinskogo khanstva, p.103.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 111.

⁴⁷ Fazlallah ibn Ruzbikhan Isfahani. Mikhmanname-ii Bukhara (Zapiski Bukharskogo gostia), translated and edited by R. P. Dzhaliylova, Moscow, 1976, p. 75-76.

all the news about the prices; and thirdly, the trade process needs two witnesses and these people could not be found at one's home at any time."⁴⁸

But in some cities of Central Asia the trade, especially wholesale, was taking place at houses. For example, Urgench city, which was a large trade center of the Khiva Khanate had significant number of rich tradesmen. An author from the 19th century noted: "It is difficult to find concrete conclusions looking on the markets of Urgench city in spite of the fact that this city united all wholesale trade of the khanate. Urgench's market was built for the trade of internal goods. Important agreements on external trade are concluded in the houses of famous tradesmen. It was so, because they were not sure that the next day they would wake up alive and save for another day."⁴⁹

Even in times of war and political instability the markets played their role as economic centers and the places of sale and purchase. In these periods, the processes of sale and purchase acquired specific features. Information given in *Babur-name* verifies this supposition.⁵⁰

Another interesting point for our research is the working regimen of the markets. Research on this question show that there were special trading days in every city of Central Asian khanates. Alongside wholesale and retail trade, the population from neighboring areas and cities came to markets in these days. Factual material of the 19th century also show that this event was typical for city markets of Central Asia. For example, in Samarqand market days were Sunday and Wednesday.⁵¹ The same holds for Qarshi

⁴⁸ Nalivkin V. i Nalivkina M. *Ocherk byta zhenshchiny*, p. 34.

⁴⁹ Kun A. *Kul'tura oazisa nizov'ev Amu-Dar'i*, Materialy dlia statistiki Turkestanskogo kraia, Vypusk 1. St. Petersburg, 1876, p. 87.

⁵⁰ Babur Z. M. *Baburname (Notes of Babur)*, translated by M. Sal'e, second edition, Tashkent, 1993, p. 65.

⁵¹ *Puteshestvie Mir Izzet Ulli ot granitsy Kokandskogo khanstva do goroda Samarkanda..* p. 196; Khoroshkhin A. P. *Samarkand (Listki iz pamiatnoi knizhki)*, p. 195; Khanykov N. *Samarkand, Rasskaz ochevidtza*, p. 203.

city.⁵² In Karmina city it was Monday, and in Katta-Qurghan it was Saturday.⁵³ We can see this practice in Khiva Khanate's cities too. N. Murav'iov, who visited the khanate in the 19th century, noted that "In Khiva Khanate it is prohibited to trade everyday, the Khan had determined special market days on his lands, and active people from Urgench city come for trade on these days."⁵⁴ In the 19th century there were the following market days for Khiva Khanate's cities: Monday and Friday for Khiva, Wednesday and Sunday for Urgench, Tuesday and Thursday for Gurlan, Monday and Thursday for Ghazavat, Wednesday and Saturday for Qiyat, Monday and Friday for Hazarasp, Wednesday and Saturday for Tashauz, Tuesday and Saturday for Khanqa, Monday and Friday for Khujayli, Tuesday and Friday for Shahabad.⁵⁵

The same situation also holds true for the Kokand Khanate. F. Nazarov, who visited Kokand in 1813-1814 stated: "There were 3 brick markets and the trade is carried out twice a week."⁵⁶ A. Kun also points out two markets days in Kokand.⁵⁷ Certain market days were typical for other Central Asian cities like Tashkent, Marghilan, Namangan, and usually they were twice a week.⁵⁸ In those days, tradesmen of various categories, accredited representatives of the tradesmen and other people came with their goods from different cities, settlements and steppes. Some tradesmen could visit different cities during the market days and sell their goods there.

Market days provided the basis for the activity of different

⁵² Puteshestvie Mir Izzet Ulli ot granitsy Kokandskogo khanstva do goroda Samarkanda, p. 213

⁵³ Ibid. p. 196 – 197.

⁵⁴ Murav'iov N. Puteshestvie v Turkmeniiu i Khivu v 1819 i 1820. p. 2, Moscow, 1922, p. 90.

⁵⁵ Ibidem.

⁵⁶ Nazarov F. Zapiski o nekotorykh narodakh i zemliakh srednei chasti Azii, p. 51.

⁵⁷ Kun A. Nekotorye svedeniia o Ferganskoi doline, p. 428.

⁵⁸ Nazarov F. Zapiski o nekotorykh narodakh i zemliakh srednei chasti Azii. p. 49; Mikhailov N. Namangan (Ocherk), Turkestanskii sbornik. TOM 16. p. 206.

representatives of the society. We can see that on the example of cattle markets called *mol bozori*, which were widespread in many cities of the country. The main sellers on these markets were cattle breeders and the steppe population. Determination of special market days was helpful for the process of sale and purchase. For Tashkent city, cattle market special day was Sunday⁵⁹, for Bukhara, located near to Sheikh Naqshband's grave, it was Wednesday.

But we can not say that the trade took place only on these special market days. The markets were also functioning on the remaining days of the week. But the transactions were limited to food and grocery, petty trade so to say. Some sources corroborated the existence of "petty trading" in other days in Namangan, Samarkand and Khojeyli.⁶⁰

The determination of special market days was typical for the majority of Central Asian cities. At the same time there were a number of markets, distinguished by some features. For example we can take the markets of Bukhara, which was one of the large trade centers of the period under study. Different markets of this city were working in accordance with one regimen during the whole week.⁶¹ 19th century author E. K. Meyendorf noted that the goods were brought to the *dukkans* of the market "everyday at 11 a.m." and "were taken at 3 p.m."⁶² A. Vambery's observations conform to Meyendorf's: "Taking big bales freight handlers are hurrying to the market, it is petty goods of small sellers, and in the evening they take it from the shops to home."⁶³ Chorsu and Registan markets of Bukhara had everyday trade and there were a number of distinctive features. F. Efremov, who visited the city in

⁵⁹ Geins A. K. Upravlenie pri Kokandskom vladichestve, p. 522.

⁶⁰ Mikhailov N. Namangan, p.72; Khanykov N. Opisanie Bukharskogo khanstva, p.105; 109; Danilevskii G. I. Opisanie Khivinskogo khanstva. p. 103.

⁶¹ Khanykov N. Opisanie Bukharskogo khanstva, p. 92-93.

⁶² Meiendorf E. K. Puteshestvie iz Orenburga, p. 101.

⁶³ Vamberi, Ocherki Srednei Azii, p. 167

the 1770s stated that: "On the market, called *chorsu* trade takes place from morning till night. And in the evening trade is continued on Registan."⁶⁴ Another author, Budrin, also confirms this: "There is a market, called Registan near to the main mosque, and in the evening trade is here."⁶⁵ From the account of the visitors we read the following concerning the main city square Registan: "In spite of its big size the square is full of people, camels, goods and different kinds of food, and there are only two narrow passages for walking."⁶⁶ Mir Izzat Ulla also mentioned that city markets of Registan (*bozor-i Registon*) and Chorsu (*bozor-i Chorsu*) were open every day.⁶⁷

Usually trade took place in daytime as the *Shari'a* (Islamic canonical law) was against trading at night.⁶⁸ And as a result it was thought that the night trade does not correspond to religious purposes. Although not frequently, one could also see trading on city markets at night. But this was only possible with the special permission of the ruler. For example, take the order of Ubaydullah Khan from the dynasty of Ashtarkhanids: "... (high) order informs it is compulsory for all city handicraftsmen and masters to decorate their *dukkans*, and they should trade day and night without breaks."⁶⁹

Sometimes night-time trade took place on holidays, especially during the month of Ramadan. The author of the composition of *Ta'rikh-i Jadida-ii Tashkent* Muhammad Salih wrote the following about Tashkent in the 19th century:

⁶⁴ Efremov F. Rossiiskogo unter-ofitsera Efremova, Stranstvovaniia i prikliucheniia v Bukhariiu, Khivu, Persiiu i Indiiu. St. Petersburg, 1786. p. 120.

⁶⁵ Russkie v Bukhare v 1820, p. 26.

⁶⁶ Zapiski o Bukharskom khanstve, p. 57.

⁶⁷ Puteshestvie Mir Izzet Ulli ot granitsy Kokandskogo khanstva do goroda Samarkanda, p. 201

⁶⁸ Nalivkin V. and Nalivkina M. Ocherk byta zhenshchiny, p. 6.

⁶⁹ Mir Muhammad Amin-i Bukhari. Ubaydullaname, translated from Persian by A. A. Semenov, Tashkent, 1957, p. 25.

"Market shops are continued till confectioneries on Chorsu market. During Ramadan month trade is carrying on even at night, the people trade and play different games."⁷⁰

A. Vambery gives a detailed description of the Shurakhan market: "I was looking for my friends at the market. I had to pass a big mass of people who were shouting. Sellers and buyers were on horses. It was very funny to see a woman sitting on the horse; she had a sheepskin sack, filled with *qimiz* (horse's milk) and could pour *qimiz* in one's mouth, who stood near and wanted to drink."⁷¹ We can see the peculiarity of the markets and types of the trading on the example of other cities. Comprising of 150 *dukkans* the market of Chimbay in the 19th century attracted the population from neighboring areas and people actively participated in trading during market days. And through the Kengli Canal at the center of the city "cottons, fish and cattle were brought and sold on the boats on Wednesdays and Mondays."⁷²

Besides the markets that are named after the goods sold, there were also others that were named according to their location to the nearest buildings. As an example we can consider the names of many Bukhara markets of the second half of the 16th century: Kuhak Bathhouse Market (Bozor-i Hammom-i Kuhak), Mulla Amir Mosque's Market (Bozor-i Masjid-i Mullo Amir), Safidfurushes Market Near to MaghOk Mosque, Market Near to New Gates (Bozor-i Darvoza-i Nau) and others.⁷³

Usually, the markets were the property of certain persons, especially of the ruling dynasty's representatives, officials and religious men. Accordingly, in the middle of the 16th century the Registan market in Bukhara was known as Mir Yahya Market⁷⁴,

⁷⁰ Urinboev A., Buriyev O. Toshkent Muhammad Solih tavsifida, Tashkent, 1983, p. 40.

⁷¹ Vamberi A. Puteshestvie po Sredney Azii, p. 127.

⁷² Kun A. Kul'tura oazisov nizov'ya Amu-Dar'i, p. 229.

⁷³ Ivanov P. P. Khoziaistvo dzhuibarskikh sheikhov, p.p. 97, 101, 111, 118.

⁷⁴ Ibid. p. 106.

who was its owner. In Khiva Khanate there were many markets, which were the property of certain persons. In the 19th century in different parts of the khanate there existed private markets. Murav'iov states that:

"In many places population build dukkans, rent is paid to the owner of these lands, and certain part of it should be paid to Khan as tax."⁷⁵

The role the markets played in socio-economic life of the cities was very important. They were the centers of employment. For example you could find representatives of different subsidiary professions like yard-keepers (*farrosh*), watchmen (*qorovul*) and freight handlers (*hammol*) in the market. Usually they sold their labor-power on the markets. E. Meyendorf reports that in a distance of just two *chaqirims* from Bukhara, he met people who agreed to do everything for a small sum of money, and freight handlers who were carrying loads of tradesmen to the market.⁷⁶

Markets were also the centers of social life. Orders of the rulers and decrees were proclaimed in these places. People could see with their own eyes the execution of offenders of *sharia* and law. A. Jenkinson wrote the following about Bukhara in the 16th century: "If someone drinks anything except horse milk (*qimiz*) or water, they beat him by lashes and turn out in the market."⁷⁷ This situation was typical for other cities of Central Asia as well. F. Nazarov, visiting Kokand in 1813–1814, stated that in the market he had seen the relatives of one killed man who came there in order to punish the killer and behead him.⁷⁸ "As Registan was the visiting place of most people, the decrees were executed there: criminals are beheaded and the heads of enemies killed in battlegrounds

⁷⁵ Murav'iov N. Puteshestvie v Turkmeniiu i Khivu v 1819 i 1829 gg. pp. 32, 91.

⁷⁶ Meyendorf E. K. Puteshestvie iz Orenburga v Bukharu, p.p. 101, 118.

⁷⁷ Jenkinson A. Puteshestvie v Srednyuyu Aziiu 1558-1560 gg, p. 182.

⁷⁸ Nazarov F. Zapiski o nekotorykh narodakh i zemliakh srednei chasti Azii, p. 52.

are displayed."⁷⁹ These were the comments mentioned by E. Meyendorf about Bukhara in the Late Middle Ages. Khiva markets show similar characteristics. One of the authors from the 19th century noted that in Khiva the market square near to Hazorasp Gates was the usual place of execution.

The markets were also the centers of cultural life. Public oral recitations like poetry reading ceremonies were taking place in these places. Book sale was wide spread, and in some cases there were specialized markets like market of book sellers in Tashkent (Sahhoflar bozori) and paper market in Bukhara.⁸⁰ P. Demezov wrote that the paper market in Bukhara was situated in the Registan square and "it was the single place in the city where people could buy paper, *qalam* (rush pens) and even old books."⁸¹ From Mir Izzat Ulla we learn that there were book sellers close to one of Bukhara Chorsu market's sides.⁸² A. Vambery also wrote about Bukhara book market and mentioned 22 book shops (*dukkans*).⁸³ There were special *dukkans* too, which sold books in Kokand market.⁸⁴

We also encounter *dukkans* of doctors (*tabib*) in cities. In these *dukkans*, drugs prepared from special plants were being sold and sometimes sick people were being treated.⁸⁵

Different performances took place in the markets. It is worthwhile to remind one that took place at the Chorsu market of Shahrisabz in the 19th century: "In daytime there is trading at the Chorsu market, and in the evening there are performances..." On this market and near to Oq-Saroy Palace, high above the ground,

⁷⁹ Meiendorf E. K. Puteshestvie iz Orenburga v Bukharu, p. 101

⁸⁰ Mallitskii. Toshkent mahalla va mavzelari, Tashkent, 1992. p. 13.

⁸¹ Demezov P. I. Zapiski o Bukharskom khanstve, p. 57.

⁸² Puteshestvie Mir Izzet Ulli ot granitsy Kokandskogo khanstva do goroda Samarkanda, p. 201

⁸³ Vamberi A. Puteshestvie po Srednei Azii, p. 150

⁸⁴ Nalivkin V. i Nalivkina M. Ocherk byta zhenshchiny, p. 4

⁸⁵ Tursunov N. O. Razvitie gorodskikh i sel'skikh poselenii, p. 90.

ropes were tightly stretched and *dorboz*⁸⁶ (rope-walkers) showed their skills.⁸⁷

From the 16th to the first half of the 19th century, the markets played a significant role in the life of Central Asian cities. These markets had heavy influences on the development of socio-economic and cultural relations. As we have seen above, there were several types of the Central Asian markets. These markets were differing from each other by their particularities and were in close connection with social-economic life of the cities.

⁸⁶ Dorbozlar means the participants of vagrant theatre.

⁸⁷ Maev N.A. Ocherki Bukharskogo khanstva, p. 38.

An Outline of the Educational System in Muslim Bengal Under the Turko-Afghan Sultanate (1204-1576)

Md. Thowhidul Islam*

Abstract

Since the inception of Islam, educational development has been a major goal of the Muslim society. Historically, from the beginning of the Muslim conquest of Bengal by the Turks in the early 13th century, the society had also witnessed the rapid development of a new educational system. Before Islam in Bengal, the Buddhist and Brahmanic religious centers were serving as the main educational centers. Cultivation of knowledge was instructed through the Sanskrit language and was limited only to the upper class people. But the scenario got a change under the Muslims, both the Turko-Afghan Sultanate (1204-1576) and the Mughals (1576-1757). The period witnessed rapid advancement in the educational field, which changed the traditional system. The rulers patronized the spread of education considering it as their religious obligation. Besides the sultans the sufis, ulamas, nobles, chieftains-all contributed in this regard. Masjids and madrasahs mainly served as centers of Muslim education. In the masjids, informal teaching was offered in all branches of Islamic studies, from elementary to the highest level. The imams of the masjids were acknowledged teachers of the community. Madrasahs were the most important institution, where formal education was instructed. Maktabas were used for primary education, which were organized either in the masjids or private houses. Majilises were developed around individual scholars as higher educational centers such as the learning center of Shaikh

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Jalaluddin Tabrizi at Deotala, Shaikh Sharfuddin Abu Tawama at Sonargaon, Dhaka etc. There was co-education at primary level, but higher education for women was limited only to the high and high-middle class families. Different branches of Islamic sciences such as tafsir, hadith, fiqh-jurisprudence, logic together with many diverse subjects such as natural sciences, mathematics, medicine, agriculture, astronomy, geography and Arabic-Persian languages and literature were taught in these institutions. To sustain these educational institutions, the rulers provided state patronage and granted rent-free lands as endowment. Thus, a very new and diversified educational system flourished in the society of Bengal under the Muslim rulers, which opened learning facilities for all people, founding many educational institutions throughout the country. This article is mainly predicated on the nature and dimensions of educational system, which developed particularly during the Turko-Afghan Muslim Sultanate (1204-1576) in Bengal.

Key Words: Turko-Afghan Sultanate, Bengal, Educational development.

Introduction

"Recite in the name of your Lord who created." (Surat-al-Alaq, v.1) is the first verse of the Holy Qur'an. The Prophet Muhammad^{SAW} said: "The seeking of knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim- male or female." (At-Tirmidhi, Hadith 74); and "Allah makes the way to Paradise easy for him who treads the path in search of knowledge" (Nawawi, Hadith 1381). Thus Islam gave importance to the acquiring, cultivating and imparting knowledge. Islam considered the cultivation of knowledge as a religious duty and so there is no separation of religious and secular education in Islam. Educational development was a part of the development of Muslim society wherever and whenever it founded from the time of the Prophet Mohammad^{SAW} who founded *Suffah Madrasah*¹ in Medina and

¹ Suffah was an attached residential educational center with the mosque of the Prophet. The students were known as ahl-al-Suffa. Abu Huraira, Mua'z bin Zabl were among the famous students of this center.

instructed his followers to contribute in imparting knowledge. The era of Khulafa-al-Rashedin² (632-661) and the Umayyad period (661-750) had also witnessed the development of education in Muslim society. The Abbasid period (750-1258) was marked as the golden period of Muslim history for the development of different branches of education; and science in the society centering Baghdad which left a remarkable contribution to world civilization. "*The general level of literacy was greater in the medieval Islamic lands than in Byzantium or Western Europe.*"³ Armstrong wrote that "*Muslim scholars made more scientific discoveries during this time than in the whole of previously recorded history.*"⁴ Contemporarily, the Muslim rule in Spain (711-1492) had set another great example of such development in Europe. Cordova turned into an excellent learning center under the Muslims, while the rest of Europe was almost in dark ages. "For nearly eight centuries, under the Mohammedan rule, Spain set all Europe a shining example of a civilized and enlightened state... Art, literature and science prospered as they then prospered nowhere else in Europe... Mathematics, astronomy, botany, history, philosophy and jurisprudence were to be mastered in Spain, and Spain alone."⁵ This development paved the way for European renaissance. Gaston Wiet commented "*People of the West should publicly express their gratitude to the scholars of the Abbasid period, which was known and appreciated in Europe during the middle ages.*"⁶ From the very beginning of the establishment of Muslim rule in Bengal (comprising modern Bangladesh and West Bengal of India), in the early 13th century by

² Khulafa-al-Rashedin (632-661), the time of four pious caliph of Islam- Hazrat Abu Bakr (632-634), Hazrat Omar (634-644), Hazrat Othman (644-656) and Hazrat Ali (656-661).

³ Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair, *Islam- A Thousand Years of Faith and Power*, Yale University Press, London, p.120

⁴ Karen Armstrong, *Islam- A Short Story*, Phoenix, London, p.47

⁵ Stanley Lane-Poole, *The Moors in Spain*, T. Fisher Unwin, London, pp. vii-viii (preface)

⁶ Gaston Wiet, *Baghdad: Metropolis of the Abbasid Caliphate*, University of Oklahoma Press, chapter 5, retrieved from: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/med/wiet.html>.

the Turkish forces led by Ikhtiaruddin Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji defeating the then Sena King Lakhman Sena (Chowdhury, n.d.), which ultimately emerged as an independent Sultanate in Eastern India, the society had witnessed the development of a new educational system. Many formal and informal educational centers were established in different parts of Bengal targeting different age groups and classes of people with diverse curricula. This development occurred under both the Sultanate period (1204-1576) and the Mughal Empire (1576-1757). As most of the contemporary writings mainly focused on political and biographical issues, it is difficult to determine the exact educational system during the Muslim rule in Bengal. This article aims at accumulating the information with a view to discover the integrated system of education developed in Bengal under the Muslim rule particularly under the Turko-Afghan Sultanate (1204-1576).

Education in Pre-Muslim Bengal

To understand educational development under the Muslim rule, it is important to understand the educational condition before the advent of Islam in Bengal. It is indeed difficult to determine the system and nature of education that prevailed in pre-Islam Bengal due to the paucity of historical sources. The available materials give us only a generalized idea about the education in Bengal before Islam. "The Buddhist and Brahmanic religious centers practically served as educational centers. Fa-Hien⁷ stayed at Tamralipti⁸ for two years

⁷ Fa-Hien (337-422), Chinese Buddhist monk, pilgrim traveler, and author of one of the earliest Chinese accounts of India. *Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms, Being an Account by the Chinese Monk Fa-hien of His Travels in India and Ceylon*; translated and edited by James Legge, (Oxford, 1886); *Travels of Fah-Hian and Sung-Yun, Buddhist Pilgrims from China to India*, translated by S. Beal. (1869).

⁸ Tamralipti was an ancient settlement located on the eastern coast near the confluence of the Bay of Bengal and River Ganga. It was one of the most important trade centers of India which had multidirectional links with different geographical regions of South Asia, frequented by traders, travelers and pilgrims.

to study and copy various Buddhist manuscripts. Brahmanic and Buddhist learning had developed appreciably and become widespread when Hiuen-Tsang⁹ (7th century) visited Kajangala, Pundravardhan, Kamarupa, Samatata, Tamralipti and Karnasuvarna. He noticed more than 300 Buddhist *shramanas* in 6/7 *vihars* at Kajangala; more than 3000 *shramanas* in 20 *viharas* in Pundravardhan; more than 2000 *shramanas* in 30 *viharas* in Samatata and more than 2000 *shramanas* in the 10 *viharas* both at Tamralipti and Karnasuvarna."¹⁰ "Hiuen-Tsang's *guru* and vastly learned in all *shastras* and *sutras*, was the *mahacharya* (head teacher) at Nalanda, where more than 10000 *sramanas* resided to learn... All the Buddhist *vihars* and *sangharamas* in Bengal were centers for the cultivation of Buddhist learning. The curriculum also included various secular subjects such as grammar, philology, medicine, astronomy, music and arts, *chaturveda*, *sankhya*, *Mahayana shastras*, *yoga shastra* etc... Thus by the 6th-7th century Aryan language and learning primarily based on Brahmanic-Jaina-Buddhist religions had reached Bengal."¹¹

In the decades before the conquest by the Turkish Muslims, Bengal was passing through socio-political anarchy. M. N. Roy remarked that "After the downfall of Buddhism, the country found itself in a worse state of economic ruin, political oppression, intellectual anarchy and spiritual chaos. Practically, the entire society was involved in that tragic process of decay and decomposition."¹² Cultivation of knowledge was definitely limited to the upper classes of the society¹³ for example *brahmans*, ministers, military officers,

⁹ Hiuen-Tsang (603-664), 7th century Buddhist pilgrim who left behind an account about India and Bengal. He translated 657 Sanskrit Buddhist works. His most important work is the *Xiyu Ji* (*His-yu Chi*).

¹⁰ Sirajul Islam (ed.), *Banglapedia*- National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, v-3, pp. 444-445, 2003.

¹¹ Sirajul Islam (ed.), *Banglapedia*- National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, v-3, p. 445, 2003.

¹² M. N. Roy, *The Historical Role of Islam*, Delhi, pp. 82-84.

¹³ Sirajul Islam (ed.), *Banglapedia*- National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, v-3, p. 445, 2003.

members of royal families etc. Over the course of time some socio-religious groups created under the strict caste system in Hindu society such as *brahman*¹⁴, *kshatriya*¹⁵, *vaishya*¹⁶ and *shudra*.¹⁷ There were about nearly hundred castes and sub-castes existed in the then Hindu society among which social interactions were prohibited. The lower classes of Hindus had no social rights; even they had no permission to enter into the city.¹⁸ The caste system was strictly observed in the educational system¹⁹ and the lower classes of Hindus were extremely out of educational facilities.

"Different religious *shastras* were taught in the Hindu temples such as *Veda, Agama, Niti, Mimangsa, Vedanta, Shruti, Smriti and Purana*... It is difficult to know how these *shastras* were taught. It may be assumed that *brahman* pundits used to establish *chatuspathis* in their own houses or in and around the temples and take as many students as they could manage, under their care. Students used to study one or more subjects under one teacher (*acharya*) and then move to others for other subjects."²⁰

Recitation and listening were the methods of education and the *brahman* himself was meant by the school.²¹ The Vedic learning,

¹⁴ Brahman is the one supreme, universal Spirit that is the origin and support of the phenomenal universe. Brahman is sometimes referred to as the Godhead in Hinduism.

¹⁵ Kshatriya means warrior. It traditionally constituted the military and ruling elite of the Vedic-Hindu social system.

¹⁶ Vaishya comprises merchants, cattle-herders and artisans. The Vaisyas eventually became land-owners, money-lenders and influential traders.

¹⁷ Shudras are the servants and laborers of Hindu society. They can be said to form about 75 to 80 percent of the population of Hindus.

¹⁸ R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, The University of Dacca, Vol. 1, pp. 565-593.

¹⁹ AFM Abdul Bari, *Amader Shikkar Itihash (History of Our Education)*, Sylhet, 1972, p. 2.

²⁰ Sirajul Islam (ed.), *Banglapedia- National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh*, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, v-3, p. 445, 2003.

²¹ Md. Momin Ullah, *Shikkar Itinash (History of Education)*, Mita Publications, Dhaka, pp. 61-69.

mythological stories of Hinduism, mathematics and astrological learning were among the main subjects of education.²² The site of religious centers like temples, houses of *brahmans*, guest houses and even sometimes the shadowed space under a big tree used as a place of educational practice. *Tol* was the educational center only for the sons of *brahmans* and *pathshala* was for the *kshatriya* and *vaishya*. No education was given for the *shudra*. The medium of education was Sanskrit language, which was not the language of common people.

Summarizing the educational system in pre-Islam Bengal, A. M. Chowdhury wrote "So it can be assumed with some amount of certainty that though we are not aware of institutionalized education, there must have been a fairly large educated class who could produce those literatures. There must have been some predecessors of the *tols* and *pathshalas* of medieval age, where there were arrangements for education, if not for the common people, but definitely for the people belonging to the upper classes of the society. *Gurugrhas*, *axramas* and Buddhist *viharas* served as centers of education. That secular subjects were taught along with religious studies are clear from the books that have come down to us. But they do not, however, give us any indication about the system of education."²³

Education in the Muslim Period

As the cultivation of knowledge has been considered as an obligatory duty for the Muslims in Islam, educational development has been given priority in every Muslim society; and Bengal was not an exception from this tradition. With the Muslim conquest, the Khalji Turks also carried with them the traditional practice of education and the rich cultural heritage of their society to Bengal.

²² AKM Mojammel Hoque, *Varot Borshe Shikkhar Kromobikash (Gradual Expansion of Education in India)*, Dhaka, 1976, p. 138.

²³ Sirajul Islam (ed.), *Banglapedia- National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh*, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, v-3, p. 446, 2003.

"Bakhtiyar Khalji and his successor Khalji Maliks established *masjids*, *madrasahs* and *khanqahs* (seats of religious divines) in the capital city Lakhnawati and other important administrative centers of their conquered territories."²⁴ Gradually, other parts of Bengal such as Gaur, Pandua, Tabrizabad, Ghoraghat, Satgaon and Sonargaon developed as urban settlements together with several educational centers. Muslim *sultans* of Bengal encouraged impart of education from the very beginning, scholastic or elementary, to fulfill their religious obligations. All the elites in Muslim society—the *sufis*, *ulamas*, nobles, officials, chieftains, philanthropists and well-to-do persons paid their enthusiastic contribution in spreading education. "It is said to have been the practice of the Muslim land proprietors to entertain teachers at their own private cost for the benefit of the children of the poor in the neighborhood, and it was a rare thing to find an opulent farmer or head of a village who had not a teacher in his employment for that purpose."²⁵

With the patronization of the Muslim rulers and positive support from the surroundings, many centers developed in different places of Bengal where education was cultivated such as *masjid*, *madrasah*, *maktab*, *khanqah*, *majilis* etc. To maintain these educational institutions, the rulers provided scholarships and granted tax-free lands as endowments. As the education was closely related with religious studies, the Hindus and the Muslims developed separate educational structures on the basis of their religious traditions. The curricula included many diverse courses together with religious education. In most of the Muslim educational institutions, education was provided freely with lodging-boarding facilities. Here we tried to sketch out a picture of educational system developed in Muslim Bengal under the Turko-Afghan Sultanate (1204-1576).

²⁴ Minhaj Siraj, *Tabaqat-i Nasiri* (1881), Vol. 1, trans. By Major Raverty, Gilbert and Rivington, London, Reprint New Delhi, 1970, p. 427.

²⁵ J. Long, *Adam's Report on Vernacular Education in Bengal and Bihar*, Home Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1868, p. 40

Educational Institutions

After the Muslim conquest of Bengal, gradually different types of centers developed in different places of Bengal. The earliest center was *masjid*, which was primarily a center of prayer. *Maktab* was developed as primary educational center. The formal educational institution was *madrasah*. *Majilis*, and *khanqah* were developed as center of divinity around sufi-saints, which in course of time turned into higher educational centers.

Masjid

The educational system in Muslim Bengal developed following the tradition of central Islamic lands as most of the rulers and officials were immigrants from the then Muslim world. From the early days of Islam, *masjid* has been considered as the nerve center of civil life of the Muslim society. Besides being a place of prayer, *masjid* was also a learning center, where teaching was offered in all branches of Islamic studies, from elementary stage to the highest level to the different aged groups. The most learned personalities of the respective communities were selected as *imams* of the *masjids*. With the expansion of Islamic territories, *masjid* retained the function of education along with its original purpose as the place of prayers.

After the foundation of Muslim rule in Bengal, *masjids* developed as the nerve centers of the society. In every administrative center and other important places where there was a sizable Muslim population, the *Sultans* and their officers or wealthy persons constructed *masjids*. The *imams* of the *masjids* were acknowledged teachers who were considered to be able to teach inhabitants of the locality. They sometimes had to instruct the prayer-offering people how to perform prayers, or sometimes teach the children about the primary teachings of Islam, or the correct recitation of the Holy Qur'an. The education practiced in the *masjids* was mainly related to Islamic learning and instructed through informal ways. Thus, *masjids* functioned as informal learning centers. There were hundreds of *masjids* constructed throughout Bengal. "Of some 200 inscriptions so far discovered more than 100 relate to the

construction of mosques."²⁶ Of these, the most remarkable one is Adina Masjid of Pandua of Maldah district of West Bengal, built by Sultan Sikandar Shah in 1375 having a dimension of 507.5 feet north to south and 285.5 feet east to west with an enclosed open court.²⁷ Khan Jahan's Masjid at Bagerhat of Bangladesh is another notable example popularly known as Shatgumbad (sixty tombs) Masjid, one of the most impressive Muslim monuments in Indian subcontinent, built by Khan al-Azam Ulugh Khan Jahan, who conquered the greater part of southern Bengal during Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud Shah (1435-59)²⁸. Among other notable *masjids* Zafar Khan Ghazi's Masjid (1298), at Tribeni, Hughli district of West Bengal, Baba Adam Masjid (1483) at Rampal, Munshiganj, Gopalganj Masjid in Dinajpur (1460), Darasbari Masjid (1479) in Gaur built by Sultan Yusuf Shah, Masjidbari Masjid (1471-1472) at Mirzaganj of Patuakhali, built by Khan Muazzam Aziyal Khan, Chota Sona Masjid in Gaur built by Wali Muhammad, a high official in the court of Sultan Alauddin Husain Shah (1494-1519), Boro Sona Masjid (1526) in Gaur built by Nusrat Shah, *Bagha Masjid* (1523-24) of Rajshahi, built by Sultan Nusrat Shah (1519-32), Kusumba Masjid (1558-59) of Rajshahi, Bangladesh etc.²⁹ Educational practice in the *masjids* is also evident from its architectural features. In every *masjid*, besides having a central prayer room, there were also other attached rooms which were mainly used for educational practice. There were also rooms for the scholars and learners, together with ablution and other logistic facilities. Because of these facilities, many scholars used to establish their educational circles around the *masjids*. Thus, an educational practice and education friendly

²⁶ M. Mohar Ali, *History of the Muslims of Bengal*, V-1B, Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, 2003, pp. 627-628.

²⁷ M. Mohar Ali, *History of the Muslims of Bengal*, V-1B, Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, 2003, p. 888.

²⁸ Sirajul Islam (ed.), *Banglapedia- National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh*, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, v-9, p. 246, 2003.

²⁹ Sirajul Islam (ed.), *Banglapedia- National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh*, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, v-7, pp. 81-90, 2003.

environment developed in and around the *masjids* in Bengal during the Turko-Afghan Sultanate.

Maktab or Primary Educational Center

Primary education was an immediate and important concern of the Muslim society as the Muslim children needed education to understand the instructions of Islam and observe religious duties accordingly. *Maktabs* developed in the Muslim society of Bengal as the primary educational centers with a view to remove illiteracy by educating Muslim children. These were mainly concerned with the fundamentals of Islamic practices together with some basic education. The *maktabs* were primarily originated with the *masjids* and sometimes organized either in a house attached to the *masjid*³⁰, or in a private house of respective locality. These were established either by wealthy individuals of the respective locality, *sufi-alims*, or by joint efforts of the inhabitants being supported by the state endowments as well as of individuals. The historical evidences support the idea of widespread existence of *maktabs* throughout the region and their effectiveness in promoting primary education in the society. Mukundaram states: "*Maktabs* were also set up where Muslim children taught by *makhdums* (*teachers*)."³¹ Education Commission of 1885 observed the spread up of *maktabs* wherever the Muslims predominated in numbers.³² "There were 100,000 primary schools (*maktabs*) in Bengal and Bihar, the population of which was estimated at 40,000,000 so that there would be a village school (*maktab*) for more than three hundred school going boys between the age of 5 and 12."³³ This number referred us to the fact that how

³⁰ H. G. Rawlison, *India: A Short Cultural History*, London, 1937, p. 372.

³¹ Mukundaram, *Chandikavya*, quoted in J.N. Das Gupta, *Bengal in the Sixteenth Century*, Calcutta University, 1914, pp. 90-91.

³² RBPCEC, *Report of the Bengal Provincial Committee of the Education Commission*, Calcutta, Part – II, para. 183, 1886.

³³ J. Long, *Adam's Report on Vernacular Education in Bengal and Bihar*, Home Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1868, pp. 18-19.

much widely primary educational facilities developed in Bengal. A *masjid* is seldom found in the village area without a *maktab*. Apart from the general *maktabs*, there was another kind of special *maktab* for memorizing the Holy Qur'an known as *hifzkhana*. The wealthy persons often used to maintain private teachers in their houses for educating their own children in a better domestic environment. Adam states:

"There are many private Mohammedan schools (*maktabs*) begun and conducted by individuals of studious habits who have made the cultivation of letters the chief occupation of their lives, and by whom the profession of learning is followed, not merely as a means of livelihood, but as a meritorious work productive of moral and religious benefit to themselves and their fellow creatures."³⁴

Thus, primary educational facilities widely expanded in the society during the Turko-Afghan sultanate rule, which remarkably contributed to remove illiteracy from the society of Bengal.

Madrasah or School/College

Besides *masjid* and *maktab*, the most important educational institution developed in the Muslim society was the *madrasah*. A good number of *madrasahs* were set up in the cities and important places by the Muslim rulers, nobles and philanthropic persons, the most notable example is Nizamiya Madrasah of Baghdad founded by the Statesman Nizam-al-Mulk in 1065.

"After the Muslim conquest of Bengal, Bakhtiyar Khalji and his successor Khalji Maliks established *masjids*, *madrasahs* and *khanqah* (seats of religious divines) in the capital city Lakhnauti and other important administrative centers of their conquered territories."³⁵

So Lakhnauti became the earliest learning center, which gradually extended throughout the region. *Madrasahs* were primarily

³⁴ Ibid., p. 29.

³⁵ Minhaj Siraj, *Tabaqat-i Nasiri* (1881), Vol. 1, trans. By Major Raverty, Gilbert and Rivington, London, Reprint New Delhi, 1970, p. 427.

established by an individual scholar-*sufi-alim*, and having congenial atmosphere and enthusiastic support from the local inhabitants, ruling elite, officials, wealthy individuals, philanthropic persons, they gradually turned into big institutions. Hundreds of students flocked into these *madrassahs* not only from various localities of Bengal, but also from other parts of Indian subcontinent and even from different parts of the Muslim world. Many historical-literary and epigraphic evidences provide us the information that there were many *madrassahs* in different parts of Bengal, though it is difficult to identify definitely because of the long lapse of time. Ghiyath-al-Din Iwaz Khalji, a lieutenant of Bakhtiyar Khalji, built a superb *masjid*, a *madrassah* and a caravanserai at Lakhnauti soon after his accession.³⁶ Darasbari³⁷ at Gaura comprising a large *masjid*, gallery-cum-lecture hall, was a big *madrassah* with *jami masjid*.

The discovered inscription of the reign of Shams al-Din Yusuf Shah (1474-1481) from the debris of Darasbari³⁸ supports that a *jami masjid* was erected in 1479. A few yards away on the east side of the *masjid* another structural site was discovered which could be used as *madrassah* building on the evidence of another inscription discovered from its debris of the time of Sultan Ala al-Din Husain Shah (1493-1519), which records the construction of *madrassah* in 1502 (JASB, 1979-81). It may be presumed that Shams al-Din Yusuf Shah started constructing a *jami masjid* and *madrassah* in Darasbari, the *jami masjid* was completed in 1479, while the *madrassah* building was finally completed in the reign of Ala' al-Din Husayn Shah in 1502-04.³⁹ The inscription begins with the well-known *hadith* "Search

³⁶ N. N. Law, *Promotion of Learning in India During the Muhammadan Rule*, London, 1916, p.106.

³⁷ Darasbari, a locality in the suburb of Gaur is now situated in Shibganj of Rajshahi of Bangladesh.

³⁸ The epigraph is now preserved in the Indian National Museum, Calcutta. For details see A.H. Dani, *Bibliography of the Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal*, Asiatic Society of Pakistan Dacca, 1960, p. 31.

³⁹ Dr. A. K. M. Yaqub Ali, *Education for Muslims Under the Bengal Sultanate*, Islamic Studies, Vol. XXVI, Islamic Research Institute, Islamabad, 1985, p.423.

after knowledge, even if it be in China" and states that the *madrasah* was established "for the teaching of the sciences of religion and for instruction in the principles which lead to certainty."⁴⁰ This indicates that it was a higher educational institution. The name Darasbari (college compound/madrasah) itself testifies that there was a good arrangement for education. Dar al-Khayrat (the house of benevolence) was another *madrasah*, built at Triveni in Hoogly district of West Bengal. From the discovered inscription, it may be said that the *madrasah* was founded by Qadi Nasir Muhammad in 1298 during the reign of Sultan Rukn al-Din Kay-ka'us (1291-1301), which continued to flourish afterwards. It was rebuilt by Khan Jahan Zafar Khan in 1313 during the reign of Shams al-Din Firuz Shah (1301-1322).⁴¹ The *Navagrama* inscriptions⁴² support the idea of having an academy of learning together with a *masjid*, a *madrasah* in the Khittah Simlabad⁴³ during the reign of Sultan Nasir al-Din Mahmud Shah (1442-1459).⁴⁴ It may be presumed from the inscription that the *madrasah* was founded by Ulugh Rahim Khan, the head of Khittah Simlabad. Another epigraph discovered in a little *masjid*, in the Englishbazar police station in Malda district, of the reign of Ala al-Din Husain Shah dated with 1502, testifies the erection of a *madrasah* by the order of the *Sultan*⁴⁵, though the location of this *madrasah* could not be identified because of unclear inscription. Westmacott and

⁴⁰ M. Mohar Ali, *History of the Muslims of Bengal*, V-1B, Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, (with reference from J.A.S.B., 1874 p. 303), 2003A, p. 830.

⁴¹ Ali, M. Mohar, *History of the Muslims of Bengal*, V-1B, Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, (with reference from J.A.S.B., 1870, pp. 287-88), p. 2003B, p. 832.

⁴² Navagrama is now a village in Tarash of Pabna. The epigraphs with ID No. 3171, are now preserved in the Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. It has been first published in the Journal of the Varendra Research Museum, Vol. 6.

⁴³ Khittah Simlabad. Generally the term khittah is applied to an administrative zone with a city fortified with ramparts and walls. Khittah Simlabad comprised with northern Pabna, south-western Bogra and south-eastern Rajshahi.

⁴⁴ Dr. A. K. M. Yaqub Ali, *Education for Muslims Under the Bengal Sultanate*, Islamic Studies, Vol. XXVI, Islamic Research Institute, Islamabad, 1985, p.423.

⁴⁵ A. H. Dani, *Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah, Shah-i-Bangalah*, Sir Jadunath Sarker Commemoration Volumes, Punjab University, 1958, p. 49.

Blochmann opined that the *madrasah* may belonged to one of Gaur⁴⁶, while Stapleton favored that the view that the *madrasah* was either of Darasbari or Belbari.⁴⁷ Ghiyath al-Din Azam Shah (1392-1410), a famous *Sultan* of Bengal founded *madrasahs* at the two holy cities of Makkah and Medina.⁴⁸ The *madrasah* provided with advanced learning on different branches of Islamic sciences specially *ilm-al-fiqh* or Islamic jurisprudence. This information supports us to realize how much the *Sultans* of Bengal patronized education wherever it was at home or abroad. Ala al-Din Husain Shah received his fame for establishing a good number of *madrasahs* throughout the region. From the above description we may conclude that *madrasahs* were set up in almost all the administrative centers and important localities of Bengal as the official educational institution during the Turko-Afghan sultanate period by the Muslim rulers, their subordinates, administrative officials, wealthy individuals or *sufi-alims*.

Majilis or Academy/Seminary

Besides *madrasah*, another kind of learning center grew up in different important places of Bengal, which was known as *majilis*. Abu al-Fadl stated that "All civilized nation have schools for the education of their youth, but Hindustan is particularly famous for its seminaries."⁴⁹ The *majilises* developed around distinguished individual scholars in response to the desire of inquisitive students for higher learning. They provided higher educational facilities in different branches of Islamic studies such as *tafsir*, *hadith*, *fiqh*,

⁴⁶ H. Blochmann, *Contribution to the Geography and History of Bengal*, No. II, JASB, Calcutta, Vol. XLIII, Part I, 1968, p. 303.

⁴⁷ H. E. Stapleton (ed.), *Abid Ali Khan Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, Bengal Secretariat Book depo, Calcutta, 1930, p. 157.

⁴⁸ A. Karim, *Makkah Sharife Bangali Madrasah (Bengali Madrasah in the Holy Makkah)*, Baitus-Sharaf Islami Gobeshona Protishtan, Chittagong, Bangladesh, 1987, pp. 9-27.

⁴⁹ N. N. Law, *Promotion of Learning in India During the Muhammadan Rule*, London, 1916, p. 161.

literature and even various branches of natural sciences. With the growth of *majilises*, a remarkable number of scholars migrated from different parts of the Islamic world into Bengal; most of them worked in the *majilises* and devoted themselves in spreading higher education in Bengal. They were generally held at private premises. Below are some examples of *majilis* developed in Bengal.

Tabrizabad

The learning center of Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrizi at Deotala of Pandua was one of the earliest *majilises*. The site of his academic center acquired the designation of Tabrizabad after his name. Shaikh Tabrizi originally came from Tabriz of Persia and settled down at Deotala, most probably in the beginning of 13th century.⁵⁰ He devoted himself fully to the spread of education and with the support of contemporary rulers particularly of Rukn al-Din Barbak Shah (1459-1474), Nasir al-Din Nusrat Shah (1519-1531) and Sulaiman Karrani (1566-1572), he constructed one *jami* (university) and two other *masjids* there.⁵¹ His circle gradually extended towards Pandua. Several old buildings there indicate that a *masjid*, two *chillakhanas* (seminar buildings), a *tanurkhana* (Kitchen) and a *bhandarkhana* (storehouse) were set up by Shaikh Tabrizi. These architectural remains lead us to think that the center was largely facilitated with the boarding-lodging facilities for the scholars and learners. The center was supported by several personal and government endowments including of Bais Hazari estate (twenty-two thousand *bighas* of landed property) by the government.

⁵⁰ A. Karim, *Social History of the Muslims in Bengal*, Baitush Sharaf Islamic Research Institute, Chittagong, Bangladesh, 1985, pp. 123-128.

⁵¹ M. Mohar Ali, *History of the Muslims of Bengal*, V-1B, Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, (with reference from J.A.S.B., 1874 pp. 296-297), 2003C, p. 833.

Sonargaon

Another important learning center was founded at Sonargaon, near to Dhaka city by Shaikh Sharf al-Din Abu Tawama, who travelled from Bukhara to Delhi during the time of Sultan Ghiyath al-Din Balban (1266-1286) and then to Bengal accompanying his pupil Sharf al-Din Yahya Maneri from Bihar in the early 80s of 13th century.⁵² Shaikh Abu Tawama was a highly learned personality who accomplished in diverse branches of education including religious studies, chemistry, natural sciences etc. He built up an academy at Sonargaon, which soon earned its fame as an excellent center of higher education. The students from all over the subcontinent and other parts of the world flocked to this institution to receive higher studies in different branches of Islamic learning such as *tafsir*, *hadith*, *fiqh* as well as many diverse subjects such as logic, mathematics, chemistry, medical science, language etc. Religious and secular sciences were taught in this great educational seminary. Shaikh Sharf al-Din Yahya Maneri was one of his prominent students, who married to the daughter of Shaikh Abu Tawama and established a similar center at Maner of Bihar. Shaikh Abu Tawama was buried in Sonargaon, near to his center. He wrote a famous book on Sufism titled *Maqamat*.⁵³ The institution continued to be a great center of learning for long after his death. It produced illustrious scholars like Sharf al-Din Yahya Maneri and a good number of scholars came here such as Shaikh Alaul Haque, Shaikh Anwar, Shaikh Rafi al-Din, Shaikh Zahid. Thus, this *majilis* played an important role in spreading education in East Bengal during the successive period of Bengal Sultanate.

⁵² M. Mohar Ali, *History of the Muslims of Bengal*, V-1B, Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, (with reference from S.H. al-Masumi, "Sunargaon in Learning", *Islamic Culture*, V-XXVII, January 1953, pp. 1-3), 2003D, p. 834.

⁵³ A. Karim, *Social History of the Muslims in Bengal*, Baitush Sharaf Islamic Research Institute, Chittagong, Bangladesh, 1985, pp. 96-102.

Pandua

Another seminar together with a hospital organized by Shaikh Ala-al-Haque at Pandua, an important trading and learning center of medieval Bengal. Shaikh Ala-al-Haque devoted to the promotion of education and cultural pursuits there by establishing seminary, which was extensively supported with the boarding-lodging and hospital facilities for the scholars and learners. After the death of Shaikh Ala-al-Haque in 1398, Shaikh Nur Qutb al-Alam, his son and student continued to run the center. Many contemporary *sultans* such as Shams al-Din Ilyas Shah, Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah, Rukn al-Din Barbak Shah, Shams al-Din Yusuf Shah and Jalal al-Din Fath Shah patronized the scholars and learning activities there. To support the center, Sultan Ala al-Din Husain Shah endowed 42 villages, Sultan Nasir al-Din Mahmud Shah built a *masjid* there in 1490-91, while Mughal prince Shah Shuja granted rent-free land. Famous students of this academy were Mir Syeed Ashraf Jahangir, who came from central Asia, Shaikh Nasir al-Din, Shaikh Hussain Dhukarposh, Husam al-Din of Manikpur, Shams al-Din of Ajmer, Shaikh Kaku of Lahore.⁵⁴ Thus, it turned into a center of spiritual and cultural activities of medieval Bengal.

Mahisantosh

Shaikh Taqi al-Din Arabi founded a *majilis* at Mahisun⁵⁵, identified as Mahisantosh⁵⁶ of present Rajshahi district most probably in the mid of 13th century.⁵⁷ Yahya Maneri (d. 1291),

⁵⁴ M. Mohar Ali, *History of the Muslims of Bengal*, V-1B, Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, (with reference from Deokot inscription, Hadrat Pandua inscription of Mahmud Shah-11), 2003E, pp. 836-837.

⁵⁵ A. Rahim, *Social and Cultural History of Bengal*, Vol. I, Pakistan Historical Society, Karachi, 1963, p. 180.

⁵⁶ Mahisantosh is about 75 miles distant from Rajshahi city to the north.

⁵⁷ A. K. M. Yaqub Ali, *Mahisantosh: A Site of Historical and Archaeological Interest in Bangladesh*, Islamic Culture, Vol. LVIII, No. 2, Hyderabad, April, 1984, pp. 139-140.

the father of the renowned scholar Shaikh Sharaf al-Din Maneri is reported to have received education under Mawlana Taqi al-Din Arabi at Mahisun.⁵⁸ Considering the importance of its geo-economic location, Sultan Rukn al-Din Barbak Shah (1459-1474) established a mint there.⁵⁹ Some architectural structures including a *masjid*, city ramparts, and tombs witnessed to its being an important trade and educational center in medieval Bengal.

Gangarampur

Another important academy was founded at Gangarampur, Dinajpur by Shaikh Ata in the early Sultanate period of Bengal. The center received patronage and support from several *Sultans*. Sultan Sikandar Shah built a domed structure there in 1363, Sultan Jalal al-Din Fath Shah reconstructed a stone building there in 1482, Sultan Shams al-Din Muzaffar Shah constructed a *masjid* there, Sultan Ala al-Din Husain Shah constructed another *masjid* in 1512. All the inscriptions mentioned Shaikh Ata with great respect as Shaikh al-Mashaikh, Qutb al-Aulia, Siraj al-Haq wa al-Shar etc.⁶⁰

Bagha

Another important learning center of Husain Shahi period was founded by Shah Muazzam Danishmand known as Shah Daula at Bagha, Rajshahi.⁶¹ Sultan Nasir al-Din Nusrat Shah (1519-1531)

⁵⁸ Shaikh Sharaf al-Din Maneri, *Maktubat-i-Sadi (Letters from a Sufi Teacher)*, tr. by Bajinath Singh, Golden Elixir Press, 2010, p. 17.

⁵⁹ A. Karim, *Corpus of the Muslim Coins of Bengal*, Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca, 1960, p. 162.

⁶⁰ M. Mohar Ali, *History of the Muslims of Bengal*, V-1B, Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, (with reference from Sonargaon inscription of Nusrat Shah, Devikot inscription of Sikandar Shah, Gangarampur inscription of Muzaffar Shah), 2003F, pp. 835-836.

⁶¹ S. Ahmad, *Inscriptions of Bengal*, Vol. IV, Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi, 1960, p. 212.

erected a *jami masjid* there in 1523-24⁶², and centering this *masjid*, a learning center was developed. From the accounts of Abdul Latif it is known that Hawda Mian ran a learning center in a mud-built house.⁶³ Hawda Mian is possibly a corrupt form of the original name of Hamid Danishmand, son of Shah Muazzam Danishmand. Mughal emperor Shah Jahan made an endowment of 42 villages to this center during his time. William Adam in his report marked that "The *madrasah* at Kushba, Bagha is an endowed institution of long-standing."⁶⁴ Thus the institution continued to flourish through generations.

Content and Curricula of Education

It is difficult to determine the content and course-curricula of education in the institutions developed in Muslim Bengal due to the shortage of information; rather we can only sketch an outline. The *maktabs* were the primary educational centers for the Muslim children. The content of primary education included all the basic courses of Islamic studies and practices such as correct recitation of the Holy Qur'an, principles relating to ablution, five prayers (*salat*), fasting (*sawm*), pilgrimage (*hajj*), alms (*zakat*), basic teachings from the Holy Qur'an, *hadith* and *fiqh*. Along with these subjects, the elements of Arabic, Persian and Bangla languages, some basic education on diverse subjects such as arithmetic, history, mathematics, geography etc. were also taught to the students in the *maktabs*. As the Muslim children are instructed to start observing prayers at the age of seven⁶⁵, it was assumed that they had to start primary education at the age of five. Generally, *imams* of the *masjids* were entitled with the responsibility of teaching the children in the

⁶² Ibid., p. 214

⁶³ J. N. Sarkar, *A Description of North Bengal in 1609 A.D.*, Bengal Past and Present, 1928, p. 144.

⁶⁴ J. Long, *Adam's Report on Vernacular Education in Bengal and Bihar*, Home Secretariat Press, 1868, Calcutta, p.112.

⁶⁵ Abu Dawud, *Sunan-i-Abu Dawud*, Vol. I, Cairo, 1952, p. 115.

maktabs. After completing primary education in the *maktabs*, the students would proceed to the *madrasah*.

The *madrasahs* were institutions of secondary and higher secondary level education and the *majilises* were the institutions used for higher education. Different branches of Islamic sciences, such as *tafsir* (exegesis), *hadith* (traditions of the Prophet), *fiqh* (Islamic law), *usul-al-fiqh* (principles of Islamic law), *tasawwuf* (mysticism), *adab* (literature), *nahu* (grammar), *kalam* (scholastic theology), *mantiq* (logic) etc.⁶⁶ were mainly taught in the *madrasah* and *majilis*. Important *tafsir* books, collection of *hadith* like those of Bukhari and Muslim, important books on *fiqh* were necessarily used in those institutions. Development of Islamic scripts such as transcribing the *Sahih al-Bukhari* by Muhammad b. Yazdan Bakhsh in 1503⁶⁷, writing *Nam-i-Haq* a work on *fiqh* supposed to be written by Sharaf al-Din Abu Tawamah or by some of his disciples⁶⁸, support the idea of incorporating *hadith* and *fiqh* studies into the courses of study at higher levels. Learning Arabic as the language of the Holy Qur'an and Persian as the court language⁶⁹ had been given importance in the courses of study even from the primary to higher level. They learnt Persian books *Panjnama*, *Gulistan*, *Amadnama*, *Bostan*, *Yusuf-Zuleikha*, *Sikandarnama*, *Bahar Danish* and Arabic books *Mizan*, *Munshaib*, *Sarf Mir*, *Miat Amil*, *Sharh-i-Miat Amil* and others.⁷⁰ The chief aim was to attain such proficiency in the Persian

⁶⁶ K. A. Nizami, *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India During the Thirteenth Century*, Aligarh, 1961, p. 151, note I.

⁶⁷ A. Karim, *Social History of the Muslims in Bengal*, Baitush Sharaf Islamic Research Institute, Chittagong, Bangladesh, p. 81. (With reference from Catalogue of Arabic and Persian MSS. in Oriental Public Library, Bankipure, Vol. V, Part I, Nos. 130-132), 1985A.

⁶⁸ A. Karim, *Social History of the Muslims in Bengal*, Baitush Sharaf Islamic Research Institute, Chittagong, Bangladesh, 1985, pp. 76-79.

⁶⁹ A. R. Mallick, *British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal*, Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca, 1961, p. 153.

⁷⁰ J. Long, *Adam's Report on Vernacular Education in Bengal and Bihar*, Home Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1868, pp. 113-116.

language as might enable them to earn their livelihood.⁷¹ Analytical study of the Holy Qur'an, *hadith*, *fiqh* and *usul-al-fiqh* formed the principal courses of the advanced studies in the *majilises*. Besides these, diverse subjects such as natural sciences, logic, mathematics, medicine, arithmetic, agriculture, astronomy, home-economics, geography, alchemy, geometry, history and others were also taught in the higher educational centers. Though in a later period, Abu al-Fadl's statement supported the idea when he wrote "Every boy ought to read books on morals, arithmetic, agriculture, mensuration, geometry, astronomy, anatomy, physiognomy, household matters, rules of governmental, medicine, logic, higher mathematics, science and history all of which may gradually be acquired."⁷² "Works of Euclid on geometry, and of Ptolemy on astronomy, in translation, and those of Ibn-Sina and Ibn-Rushd on medicine were used as textbooks."⁷³ Intensive courses on Arabic and Persian language and literature were also taught in these institutions for advanced learners. Observing the beautiful writing on the inscription slabs and transcribing books, we may assume that the penmanship was taught in the higher learning center. Courses were designed to suit the needs of students. They were not required to study every subject. Academic activities were informal. The courses of studies and general policies were determined by their respective teachers and heads known as *mudir*, *mudarris*, *muallim*, *ustadh*, *shaikhs*, *muhaddith*, *mufassir*, *faqih* etc.

Women Education

There was co-education for both the boys and girls at primary level in the *maktabs*. But in the *madrasah* and *majilis*, there was

⁷¹ J. Long, *Adam's Report on Vernacular Education in Bengal and Bihar*, Home Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1868, p. 29.

⁷² Abu Al-Fadl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, tr. by H. Blochmann, Vol. I, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1873, p. 288.

⁷³ J. Long, *Adam's Report on Vernacular Education in Bengal and Bihar*, Home Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1868, p.161.

no arrangement for co-education or separate education for the women. The aristocratic Muslim families used to establish private educational arrangements for the women of their families. Thus, the higher education for women was limited to the aristocratic, royal, higher and high-middle class families only. Sometimes, the teachers used to go to the private houses and teach the girls individually. So the number of educated women was limited.

Hindu Education

As the education was closely related to religion, it developed in Muslim and Hindu societies separately. With the positive development of educational system in Muslim society, a change also came into the Hindu society. Prior to Islam, learning was limited to the *brahmans* and higher classes people of Hindu society, but the masses had no access into the educational centers. Gradually *pathshala*, which developed as primary educational center in Hindu society, made open for the boys and girls of Hindu society irrespective of caste system. Mainly the wealthy persons of Hindu society and the ruling classes patronized these centers. Adam mentioned the number of *pathshalas* of some districts: Midnapore 548, Murshidabad 62, Birbhum 407, Burdwan 629, and Dinajpur 119.⁷⁴ Together with the Hindu religious education, Sanskrit and Bangla languages were also taught there. Adam states: "The students were taught *saraswati bandana* or salutation to the goddess of learning, the rhyming arithmetical rules of *subhankara*, the *cowrie* table, the numeration table, the *katha* table, the rules of arithmetic, agriculture, commerce, letter writing, the *Ramayana*, the *Manasamangala* etc. were included."⁷⁵ For higher education, *tole* was developed in the Hindus society, where learning was practiced only through the Sanskrit language. It was affordable only for

⁷⁴ J. Long, *Adam's Report on Vernacular Education in Bengal and Bihar*, Home Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1868, pp.153-156.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

the higher classes people of Hindu society such as *brahman* and *kshatriya*. Hindu religious teaching was the core of study together with some diverse courses such as history, philosophy, astronomy etc. Nabadvip was the principal center of education for the Hindus. Among other important Hindu educational centers, Saptagram, Sylhet, and Chittagong were well known, where students and religious devotees gathered to satisfy their educational and spiritual needs.⁷⁶ As Persian was the state language, many Hindus also received education together with the Muslims in Arabic and Persian schools to qualify themselves for different governmental positions. According to Adam's report of the 193 Arabic and Persian schools which he traced in Murshidabad, Burdwan and Birbhum districts, there were a total of 786 Muslim boys and 784 Hindu boys.⁷⁷ Of the five districts of Bengal and Bihar, there were 215 Muslim teachers and 14 Hindu teachers in the Persian-Arabic schools of that area. But the Hindu scholars numbered 2096 as against Muslim scholars of these schools.⁷⁸

Characteristics of the Educational System

From the above description, it can be said that the educational practice developed in Muslim Bengal through informal ways. We may summarize the major characteristics of the educational system as follows:

- » Education was provided freely and it was free from all kinds of fees.
- » There was no discrimination based on caste and creed in providing educational facility.

⁷⁶ Sirajul Islam (ed.), *Banglapedia- National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh*, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, 2003, v.3, pp. 446.

⁷⁷ J. Long, *Adam's Report on Vernacular Education in Bengal and Bihar*, Home Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1868, p. 33.

⁷⁸ A. R. Mallick, *British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal*, Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca, 1961, pp. 153-164

- » Lodging-boarding-medical facilities, together with educational materials including books-papers and even clothing were also provided freely to the learners.
- » Though there was no separate department of education in the state administration, promotion of learning was considered an important duty of the state.
- » The state generously used to assign the income of *waqf*-endowments, tax-free land, scholarships for the scholars, for the maintenance of educational institutions. Higher learning centers were, in all fairness, financed by the Muslim rulers of Bengal.
- » The rulers, high officials, scholars, wealthy individuals enthusiastically used to contribute in the educational activities by private charity, endowments and other logistic supports.
- » The Institutions established for the specific purpose of strengthening the Islamic learning. Also it served as the center of higher education comprising various subjects.
- » The syllabus-curricula, recommended books for study, class schedule, examination and evaluation process, publication of result are determined by the respective teachers and heads.
- » Teachers and students could move freely from one institution to another according to their needs.
- » Generally the students used to sit around the teacher on the floor. The environment was very intimate and learning friendly. The students had to obey the instruction of teacher strictly.
- » On successful completion of higher study, the students were honored with giving *sanad*-certificate.

Conclusion

This study presents a broad outline of the education system developed in Bengal during the Turko-Afghan Sultanate. Following the teachings of Islam, construction, maintenance and patronage of learning and educational institutions was regarded as one

of the greatest virtuous deeds. The *Sultans*, officials, the *sufis*, *ulamas*, nobles, chieftains, and well-to-do individuals paid their enthusiastic contribution in support of education. The royal court of the *Sultans* had become the meeting places of scholars, who were also granted handsome allowances. For example Minhaj-i-Siraj, the great historian, received patronage from Malik Izz-ud-Din, the governor of Lakhnauti, Shams-ud-Din Dabir and Qazi Asir, two great poets patronized by Bughra Khan, The Independent Ruler of Bengal, Poet Ibrahim Qawwam, Zahid-ud-Din, Mansur Siraji, Yusuf bin Hamid, Syeed Husain, the physician Shahab-ud-Din received the patronage of Sultan Rukunuddin Barbak Shah, famous Muhaddith Muhammad bin Yazdan was patronized by Ala-ud-Din Hussein Shah, Poet Shah Muhammad Sagir, writer of Yusuf Zulaikha received patronage of Sultan Gias-ud-Din Mahmud Shah.⁷⁹ Sometimes scholars from other countries were invited to come and settle in Bengal, who left a remarkable contribution in the field of scholarly development.⁸⁰

Thus almost all the *Sultans* of Bengal, from beginning to the end of the period, paid due attention towards educational and scholarly development in Bengal. Taking advantage of this positive atmosphere, the learned personalities established many learning centers in different towns, cities and important localities of Bengal. Though the educational system was informal, the syllabus and courses followed in those institutions testify that the study was not limited to religious studies, rather it included many diverse subjects to meet the demand of the contemporary society. Speaking about the education during the Muslim rule, W. W. Hunter wrote

They possessed a system of education... which was capable of affording a high degree of intellectual training and polish, was founded on

⁷⁹ A. Karim, *Social History of the Muslims in Bengal*, Baitush Sharaf Islamic Research Institute, Chittagong, Bangladesh, 1985, pp. 62-92.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 93-114.

principles not wholly unsound, though presented in an antiquated form, and which was infinitely superior to any other system of education then existing in India, a system which secured to them an intellectual as well as a material supremacy."⁸¹

We, therefore, undoubtedly conclude that a very moderate educational system developed in Bengal during the times of Turko-Afghan Sultanate in Bengal (1204-1576).

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