CHAPTER II
THE MUSLIM INDIA

The Arabs were the first Muslims who came to India. They conquered Sind and Multan in 712 A.D. Sultan Mahmud, about three centuries later, led a series of plundering raids and conquered a portion of the Punjab. Towards the close of the twelfth century Muhammad Ghori subjugated Northern India; the flood-gates of India were thus opened wide to Muslim immigrants.

In Indian politics, the pre-Mohammedan foreigners like the Greeks, Scythians and Huns never became a distinct factor. They had to succumb to the assimilative power of Hinduism and sooner or later became merged in the general body of Hindu population. The immigrant Muslims were, however, Indianized in course of time, but were never Hinduised. They, however, made India their home.

Many other countries like Egypt, Persia and Afghanistan were conquered by the Muslims. They had completely overwhelmed the original cultures of the people of these countries, and these countries became a permanent part of the Islamic world. The Muslim rule in India lasted for several centuries; yet, India remained very largely a land of the Hindus, because only a small portion of the population came to profess Islam. By far the vast majority of the people of India stuck to their ancient culture and religion. This capacity of Hindu
civilization for survival in spite of the onslaughts of a militant religion is indeed a unique phenomenon.

Prithviraj, ruler of Delhi and Ajmer, had forcibly carried off the daughter of Jaichand, ruler of Kanauj, and thus incurred his hostility, and this is an instance of Rajput rivalry and jealousy at a time when Muhammad Ghori was almost knocking at the gates. The Hindu princes, however, realized the gravity of the situation and hastily formed a confederacy and placed the allied army under the command of Prithviraj who routed the Ghori army in 1191 at Tarain. Muhammad Ghori, however, fought a desperate battle with the Rajput confederacy in 1192, and defeated the Hindus. The defeat was so overwhelming that the second battle of Tarain may be regarded as a decisive combat which ensured the success of the Muslim attack on Hindustan. It was during Qutb-ud-din's viceroyalty that Bihar and Bengal were conquered by his able lieutenant Muhammad Khalji. Bihar was then ruled by the Pala Kings who were Buddhists. The Mohammedans destroyed the monasteries and killed or dispersed the monks, and the result was that Buddhism was wiped out from the land of its birth (1197).

Qutb-ud-din began the construction of the celebrated Qutab Minar. Iltutmish (1211-1236) completed its structure.

Under the Sultanate the Hindus were assigned the position of 'Zimmis'; they were thus excluded from high offices and had to pay 'jizya'. Their religion was systematically insulted; their places of worship
were destroyed and desecrated and they were subjected to differential treatment in the matter of taxation. In a word, the Hindus were despised, distrusted and fleeced. It should, however, be noted that though the Hindus were treated with contempt, they were not regarded with positive hostility. The Muslims were few in number and were not acquainted with the details of administration; the Sultans had, perforce, to utilize the services of the Hindus in ministerial works and in the collection of revenue. The co-operation of the Hindus was also essential in trade, commerce and agriculture, for the Turks were mostly military adventurers and looked down upon the commercial classes whom they mulct heavily. It should, however, be noted that the contempt in which the Hindus were held was born of religious bigotry and not racial pride. The social life of the age, generally speaking, was marked by a spirit of antagonism between the rulers and the ruled. The Turks had the conqueror's pride and Hindus and Muslims so despised the conquered population. The religious fanaticism of the Turks was a source of constant embitterment as it involved occasional forced conversion of the Hindus. On the other hand, the Hindus had deep-rooted ideas of caste distinctions and ceremonial purity and looked down upon the foreign conquerors as an unclean beef-eating people. Hence inter-dining, inter-marriage and common social relations between the two communities practically became impossible.
Conversion of the Hindus to Islam, however, resulted in the transfer of certain Hindu customs and ideas to the Muslim society. These converts and their descendants retained many usages in regard to marriage and other social events. Again, the practice of adoring saints and shrines, though it existed in some other Muslim countries, was carried much further in India, and this development was an imitation of the Hindu practice of worshipping local gods. The ceremonies connected with the worship of Muslim saints known as 'pirs' are more Indian than Islamic; both Hindus and Muslims participated in these ceremonies side by side. The growth of the spirit of mutual toleration gradually led to the common worship of 'Satyapir' in Bengal. The Hindus came to venerate Muslim saints while the Mohammedans Hindu saints. The Muslim following which Chaitanya attracted, the universal appeal of Kabir's teachings and the rise of Sikhism which included both Hindus and Muslims were all manifestations of the spirit of synthesis which worked silently beneath the troubled surface of political stress and storm.

In the domain of culture Islam brought a refreshingly new outlook which the ancient culture of India had to reckon with. Henceforth, the life of India became two distinct currents which flowed side by side, mingled to a varying extent along the line of contact, but did not unite to form a single stream. The culture of early Islam in India is best represented by the
The art of building of this period is a harmonious blend of Indian and Islamic traditions. The characteristic features of Indo-Islamic architecture are derived from both Hindu and Muslim sources. The Hindus came to admire many features of the Muslim culture, and the Mohammedans also, specially the learned section, began to appreciate Hindu civilization. In this connection we may mention the name of Al-Biruni and Amir Khusrau. The enlightened rulers like Zain-ul-Abidin of Kashmir and Hussain Shah of Bengal caused Hindu religious literature to be translated into Persian.

Thus, gradually a rapprochment took place between the Hindu and Muslim cultures; it resulted in fine synthesis in the realms of art and literature. In music the mingling was the greatest and the fusion created a very rich amalgam. Muslim influences could be noticed in dress and costume, in arts and crafts and in the court ceremonial and etiquette of the Hindu princes.

A good example of the union of Hindu and Muslim cultures was the evolution of the Urdu language which was by origin a dialect of the Western Hindi spoken for centuries in the neighbourhood of Delhi and Mirat. This language became gradually persianized after the arrival of the Muslims and, in course of time, developed new characteristics. Amir Khusrau (1253-1325) was the first writer who used Urdu as a vehicle for the expression of poetic fancy.
In the domain of literature the greatest gift of the Muslims is historical literature. Indian literature was sadly deficient in works of historical nature. One great means of diffusing knowledge is the use of paper, and this is also a Muslim gift.

The Muslim education of the period was confined mainly to the study of Persian literature, and few of the Muslims cared to study Sanskrit. However, two Sultans caused a few Sanskrit works to be translated into Persian. Firuz Shah secured many Sanskrit works after the capture of Nagarkot and ordered a work on philosophy and divination to be translated into Persian; Sikandar Lodi was interested in the study of medicine and so caused a Sanskrit work on the subject to be translated.

As Sanskrit was deprived of royal patronage, Sanskrit literature had a depressing effect. However, the surviving Hindu Rajas patronized Sanskrit learning and so many valuable Sanskrit works were produced during the period. Indeed, these works cannot bear comparison with the masterpieces of the preceding ages. Parthasarathi Misra wrote a number of philosophical books on 'Karma Mimansa' of which the most important is 'Shastra Dipika'. Many important commentaries were produced on the Yoga, Nava and Vaisheshika. In lyrical poetry the most outstanding name is that of Jayadev. His 'Gita Govinda' attained universal popularity. 'Vidagha Madhava' and 'Lalita Madhava' were written about 1532 by Rupa Goswami. 'Smriti' literature flourished in Mithila and Bengal; its two outstanding authors are Vachaspati Misra of Mithila and Raghuvaran of Bengal. In the south the two most celebrated writers were Sayana, the commentator of the Vedas and his learned brother, Madhava Vidyaratna; both of them flourished under the patronage of the rulers of Vijayanagar.
The rise of the 'Bhakti' cult contributed to Indian unity. This cult was brought into prominence by the great Vaishnava teacher Ramanuja (who probably died in 1137). Ramananda (placed in the last quarter of the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth century) belonged to the Ramanuja school. Ramananda contributed to the solution of the religious problems of worship of his age by simplifying worship and by liberalizing the traditional caste rules. It may be true that these novelties were due, in some measure, to the influence of Islam. Sankaracharya's logical monism and his emphasis on knowledge as the way of salvation failed to bring forth a hearty response from the common people. So the 'Bhakti' cult provided relief. The most fruitful aspect of Ramananda's work is to be found in the teaching of Kabir, his Muslim disciple. Perhaps he was the most cosmopolitan reformer in medieval India. He made a conscious effort for Hindu-Muslim unity in the sphere of religion. Kabir has written works which all religious denominations can accept. Kabir was so steadfast in his utterance of God's name, that in comparison with it he deemed worthless the rules of caste and the Hindu and Mohammedan religious observances. Kabir regrets: "Hindus call upon 'Rama', the Mussalmans on 'Rahima', yet both fight and kill each other, and none knows the truth."

Another religious teacher preaching the Bhakti cult was Sri Chaitanya (1485-1533) of Bengal. In accepting disciples, he did not observe caste restrictions. He raised his voice against the rituals and declared that true worship consisted of love and devotion. Even Muslims were admitted to the new religious fraternity organized under his influence.

Some ardent reformers of Maharashtra also tried to bridge the gulf between Hinduism and Islam. They were calling the people to identify 'Rama' and 'Rahima'. Their aim was freedom from the bonds of formal ritualism and caste distinction and uniting the
people in common love of man and faith in God. Gnaneswar and Namdev (thirteenth and fourteenth centuries), Eknath and Tukaram (fifteenth and sixteenth centuries), and Ramdas (seventeenth century) were among the saints associated with the Bhakti movement in Maharashtra. Their writings and orations supplied the spiritual background to the political aims of workers like Shivaji. Learning and philosophy till then confined to Sanskrit and consequently unintelligible to the masses were rendered accessible to common man by being expressed through various popular and attractive forms of Marathi verses often set to musical tunes. As a result, the pulsation of a new life began to be felt throughout the land. The Maratha religious reformers had great significance in political history.

In the north, Guru Nanak (1469-1538) was the founder of Sikhism. He concluded that "there is no Hindu and no Mussalman." He travelled extensively in different parts of India and even went to Mecca and Baghdad. The Sikhs gradually became a separate community. The fifth Guru, Arjun (1581-1606), was a great organizer, and the Sikhs gradually organized a kind of government of their own and began to consider themselves as a distinct body. The suspicious of Emperor Jahangir was excited by Arjun's political and religious activities and the Sikh Guru was cruelly put to death. Thus the peaceful evolution of Sikhism came to an end and the Sikhs emerged as a military sect under his son and successor, Hargobind (1606-1645).

The Reformation movement had two results. The religious
teachers tried to bridge the gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims, and thus, paved the way for Akbar's liberalism. The second effect was that the vernacular literature of different provinces received a distinct impetus. The Vaishnavas created in Bengal a vast lyrical literature. Ramananda and Kabir preached and wrote poems in Hindi and thereby greatly enriched Hindi poetry. Mira Bai composed her songs in Brajabhasa. The verses of Guru Nanak enriched the Punjabi language. The devotional songs of Namdeva helped the growth of Marathi literature. In Bengal Chandidas produced his beautiful lyrical poems. Vidyapati, although he wrote in Maithili, is looked upon as a poet of Bengal. Some of the Sultans of Bengal like Hossain Shah and Nasrat Shah appreciated Hindu culture and caused the 'Mahabharata' and the 'Ramayana' to be translated from Sanskrit into Bengali. The kings of Vijayanagar patronized Telegu literature.

Babur

Babur's place in history rests on his Indian conquests which opened the way for a new imperial line. By overthrowing the Afghan power at Panipat in 1526 he founded the Mughal empire, and by weakening the Rajput states he strengthened its foundation.

Sher Shah

Sher Shah (1540 - 1545) is more notable than Humayun (1530-1539 : 1545-1556), for his short rule of five years was marked by many beneficent reforms in every branch of administration. Sher Shah's statesmanship is best known by the fact that his reforms had an importance beyond the immediate time. These reforms were a precious legacy to the mughal emperors. His system of land revenue, his administrative reforms
and his policy of religious toleration prepared the ground for Akbar's glorious work. Towards the Hindus he followed an enlightened policy of toleration. He employed Hindus in important offices of the State. One of his best generals was a Hindu named Brahmagit Gaur. Mr. Keene has optly remarked: "No Government - not even the British - has shown so much wisdom as this Pathan."

On Humayun's death his eldest son, Akbar (1556-1605) succeeded him to the throne. He displayed a rare genius for constructive statesmanship. Babur and Humayun had neither time nor opportunity to consolidate their conquests. Akbar's administrative measures turned a mere military occupation into a well-ordered empire. His was a government broad-based upon the willing support and co-operation of the people. He was the first Muslim ruler to divorce religion from politics and to remove all invidious distinctions based on religion and race. Akbar's liberal policy went a long way towards the Hindu-Muslim unity and unity at large among the people of all sects. Akbar had a wide outlook on religion. The Bakti movement had created a new atmosphere in India. He abolished the 'jizya' on non-Muslims. He abolished the taxes on Hindu pilgrims and forbade the enslavement of prisoners of war. His principle was universal religious toleration. His Hindu male relations like Raja Bhagwan Das, Man Singh and others obtained very high ranks. Through Hindu-Muslim marriage Akbar made an attempt for Hindu-Muslim unity; and by giving high posts to Hindus, he endeavoured to attract Hindu sympathy and to remove the grievances of the Hindus. Hindu learning was encouraged. Hindu temples were allowed to be freely erected; Hindu religious fairs were permitted to be freely held. Akbar succeeded in securing Hindu
support and made Mughal hold on India much stronger than
the control exercised by the Turko-Afghans. He made a supreme
effort to liberate Indian Islam from Arabicism and adapt it to
the needs of India as the Persians had evolved Shiaism to make
Islam suited to their national genius. With Akbar began a great
religions and literary movement for the adaptation of Islam to
the traditions of India and with Dara it ended. His policy was
wholly national. At the core of his nature there was something
that craved for justice and humanitarianism. His Rajput wives
and Hindu courtiers gave him a glimpse into the world beyond
Islam.

Akbar promulgated a new religion, the Din-i-Ilahi or
Divine Religion which was an attempt at the synthesis of the
warring creeds which were weakening the country. The Din-i-Ilahi
contained elements from diverse faiths. It appears that Akbar's
object was to establish a "national religion" which would enable
the Hindus as well as the Muslims to worship God at the same
shrine with a common ritual. A common religion was believed by
him to be one of the prime factors in making a nation and Akbar
sought to achieve it by promulgating a religion that might be
acceptable to all.

Akbar's humanitarianism was in general followed by
Jahangir and Shah Jahan. It is Aurangzeb (1658-1707) who deviated.

Aurangzeb was an orthodox Sunni Musselman. He wanted to
set up a purely Islamic state. He began to adopt measures which
antagonized Hindu sentiment and alienated his Persian adherents
who were mostly Shias.
His religion warped his judgment; he allowed religion to override politics. Instead of removing sharp religions differences, he accentuated them. He issued orders to the provincial governors to destroy the temples and schools of the Hindus and to put a stop to the teachings and practice of idolatrous forms of worship. The famous temple of Viswanath at Benares was destroyed and out of its materials a stately mosque was erected to dominate the city. Mathura was similarly desecrated. He defiled and destroyed even the temples in the cities of the friendly Rajput States. He forbade the appointment of Hindu officers in the Revenue Department. He re-imposed in 1679 the hated jizya. This impolitic measure completed the estrangement of the Hindus.

His religious policy proved to be politically disastrous. The policy roused a tempest of revolt all over the country. The wanton insult to their religion provoked the Jats, the Bundelas and the Satwamis to rise in revolt. The Rajputs were alienated. The Marathas stiffened their opposition to the Mughal power. Shivaji aimed at establishing a Hindu 'raja'.

With the exception of Aurangzeb all the early Mughal Emperors had fine artistic tastes. The century covered by the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan was the golden age of Mughal culture; it witnessed a glorious outburst of activity in architecture, painting and music. The Mughals set up standards which still extort the admiration of all. The cultural richness of the age was possible because the Mughals ensured a long period of peace and prosperity. They also patronized learning; under their auspices there grew up a rich crop of literature. In this culture, there was a happy blend of Muslim and Hindu traditions.

The gulf between the Hindu and Muslim, noticeable in synthesis.
the sphere of politics, was largely bridged over in the realm of arts and literature.

Architecture

It was in architecture that the Mughals made their most impressive contribution to Indian culture; they were prolific builders and their buildings were masterpieces. Sher Shah who dispossessed Humayun was also a great builder; he introduced a more refined and dignified style than what prevailed before. The new style of architecture begun by Sher Shah was greatly developed by Akbar. Akbar's tolerant spirit and artistic sense gave full play to Persian and Hindu influences. Akbar adorned his capital Agra with many magnificent buildings. But his most important buildings are to be found at Fatehpur Sikri. In Jodh Bai's palace at Fatehpur Sikri the synthesis of Hindu and Muslim styles is obvious; Akbar's tolerant spirit allowed the Hindu artists to make use of decorative designs characteristic of Hindu and Jain temples. Akbar's mausoleum at Sikandra is modelled on the Buddhist Vihars of India. It was planned by Akbar and constructed by Jahangir. Jahangir had fine artistic sense, but his tastes were for painting rather than for architecture. Itimad-ud-daulah was built over the grave of the father of Nurjahan. Shah Jahan was the prince of builders. In his time the art of building in India reached its zenith of perfection. Of his buildings the most important are Diwan-i-Am, the Diwan-i-Khas, the Jam-i-Masjid, the Moti Masjid and the Tajmahal. The finest flower of the Mughal art is the famous Taj Mahal. With Shah Jahan's death the Mughal art in all its manifestations began to decline. His puritanic son, Aurangzeb, cared little for architecture and less for
Humayun had love for painting. Akbar's tolerant spirit brought Persian art into close touch with Indian art. The school of painting that grew up under Akbar represented a happy blend of Indian and Persian arts. The walls of Fathpur Sikri were decorated with paintings by the Hindu and Persian artists. Of the seventeen leading artists at Akbar's Court named by Abul Fazal thirteen were Hindus. Far from regarding painting as un-Islamic Akbar looked upon painting as a means of realizing the glory of God. Jahangir was an expert critic of painting and a keen collector of historical paintings. Under him the school of painting received a fresh stimulus and a new direction. He eliminated Persian influence and developed a new style which was purely Indian. Of the Hindu painters the most eminent was Bishen Das; he was a portrait-painter and was unequalled in his age for taking likenesses. Also, there grew up in this age a distinct school of painting in Rajputana. The Rajput artists took for their scenes from Hindu mythology, village life and the social pursuits and pastimes of common people. With Jahangir's death the art of painting declined for want of royal patronage. Shah Jahan neglected painting. Dara Sukoh was a patron of pictorial art. But Aurangzeb regarded painting as un-Islamic.

Music A Mughal prince looked upon music as one of the distinctive accomplishments. Babur composed songs. Humayun also loved music. Akbar took a keen interest in music and his patronage drew to his court musicians from all parts of India. There were thirty-six singers at Akbar's Court. The most famous of them was
Tansen of Gwalior. Shah Jahan was also fond of music; two great Hindu musicians of his time were Jagannath and Janardan Bhatta of Bikaner. Music was banned by Aurangzeb.

Literature. There grew up a vast and varied literature during the Mughal period. The Mughal emperors were patrons of literature; they took a lively interest in literary productions, both Persian and Hindu and thereby promoted a happy fusion of cultures.

India had built up a great culture before the advent of the English. Though the concept of nation in the strictly political sense, grew up during the British rule, yet India had long been preparing one of its main bases, culture.

Greater were the diversities and the state broke down. Although there was a great acquisition in the cultural field, although the period was marked by an addition to architecture, literature, music, painting and stronger kingdoms and wiser administrations, the state broke down and the English set in. Greater were the diversities during the Muslim period. During the Hindu period although there were castes, there was only one religion all over the land. The Muslims came to India, and one distinct religion came face to face with another distinct religion. Although the Turko-Afghans and the Mughals were of the same, Muslim religion, a religion which had recently been born, a religion of brotherhood and its followers were all full of enthusiasm, they fought fiercely between themselves. Further, Aurangzeb was a confirmed
Sunni and strongly disliked the Sias. The Sias, naturally, nursed enmity with him in turn. Aurangzeb's treatment of the Hindus, his destruction of Hindu temples, reimposition of jizya, all accelerated the alienation of the Hindus. The relation that developed during this period between the Hindus and the Muslims elongated in the British period. No amount of effort on the part of the religions synthesizers like Tukaram, Ramdas, Kabir could fundamentally unify these two conflicting sects. It may rather be inferred from the sincerity in the efforts made from time to time by the religious reformers for Hindu-Muslim unity how severe were the differences between the two. The climate of India is another important factor that had weakened the Muslims. Like the Sakas and the Huns and the Gurjaras, the Muslims, too, succumbed to the easeful influence of India's climate. The powers that came from outside and had been habituated to a grim struggle for existence gradually lost their desperation when they settled down in India, a land of plenty and peace and pleasure. That the English, too, proved towards the end to be a spent power in the world was also chiefly due to their long dependence on India's abundance.

Dr. Tara Chand writes:

"The divisions among the Muslims were not as sharp and rigid as those among the Hindus, but they too had their higher and lower classes - the 'sharif', comprising the ruling group of warriors, scholars and priests and the 'ajlaf' or the lowly and the mean, who followed occupations considered
unworthy of the upper class. Each group among the Muslims contained varying proportions of converts whose habits and customs, ways of living and beliefs approximated to those of the original group from which they came. The fresh arrivals from the Muslim countries and their descendants of the first or second generation were culturally different from the converts and the families of long standing. It has to be remembered that till the death of Aurangzeb a ceaseless stream of emigrants - scholars, soldiers and traders from Iran, Afghanistan and Trans-Oxiana - continued to pour into India, attracted by the fame and plenour of the Mughal empire and the opportunities of services and wealth which it offered. They tended to weaken the forces of assimilation."

Indeed, the Muslims in general continued to stay aloof. They were not absorbed in the Hindu community like the Huns, the Gurjaras, the Kushans and the Sakas. The Muslims were a ruling race in India, and so they maintained a sense of superiority and distinctness. But, unlike the English, they considered this country to be their own, for they had lost their home outside. Moreover, many Muslims were converted Hindus. Other religions in India, even Zoroastrianism which came from outside, had affinity with Hinduism. The Muslims hated idolatry and consequently many of them disliked the Hindus. The Hindus regarded the Muslims as 'mlecchas' and iconoclasts. Further, the majority of the Muslims in Bengal were converts from the lower rung of the Hindus and so the upper class Hindus treated the Muslim masses no better
than the low castes of their own society. However, the Hindu-Muslim social relationship in these days still continues to be a controversial point. In his 'Influence of Islam on Indian Culture' Dr. Tera Chand writes that close contact between the Hindus and Muslims during the long period of six or seven centuries when they lived side by side brought about such a transformation of both that each lost its individual character and a new culture was formed by the fusion of the two, which was neither exclusively Hindu nor purely Muslim. It was a Muslim-Hindu culture or Indian culture. Lajpat Rai also expressed the view that the Hindus and Muslims coalesced into an Indian people much in the same way as the Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Dapes and Normans did in England. But this view is often severely criticized. Lajpat Rai sought Hindu-Muslim unity in the freedom movement, and seems to have forgotten that fusion in England was complete within a century or two of the Norman conquest as nobody in Britain could find out thereafter who belonged to any one of these groups. Indeed, there has grown a pious tendency among some political leaders and historians to discover a Hindu-Muslim coalescence in the past, so that the foundation of Hindu-Muslim brotherhood in future might rest on solid grounds. Dr. R.C. Majumdar remarks that even before the establishment of British rule, there was a distinct cleavage between the Hindus and Muslims in Bengal. He, however, admits that in spite of occasional communal riots and fundamental differences each community tacitly recognized as abnormal and usual the position evolved in course of centuries and scrupulously respected the feelings and sentiments of the other. He writes: "Many respectable Muslims maintained
permanent kitchens under Hindu management for their Hindu guests, and Hindus would either do the same or arrange with a Muslim neighbour for the food of their Muslim guests. It is also true that long residence as close neighbours exercised some influence on both. Many local beliefs and superstitions, reverence for holy saints and festivals of the other community, many folk songs and popular pastimes, and even some social etiquette and customs were in common between the two communities. But these were minor points and did not touch the essentials of life. In all vital matters affecting the culture, the Hindus and Muslims lived in two water-tight compartments as it were.” (4).

Sikhs, Marathas & Rajputs: It would not be out of place to discuss here what some writers remark about the Sikh and Maratha risings in India. Some hold that those were parochial national risings. But at that time there was no concept of nation in India. Good warriors and good fightings are not the exclusive proofs of nationality. Besides, nationality integrates the people. Where there is a tendency towards disintegration, it means that either no sense of nationality has grown or more nationalities than one are there. The Rajputs were divided into several clans. The Sikhs had skirmishes with the Mughals, and many of them gloriously sacrificed their lives. They had a profound love of their religion. Subsequently, they fought with the English. The Marathas, too, fought with the Mughals and subsequently with the English. Religion played an important role in these risings. Though he observed toleration of all creeds, Shivaji (1627-1680) was a devout Hindu. It is sometimes claimed that the Marathas
had an aim to establish a 'Hindu Raj' on the ruins of the Mughal empire. Peshwa Baji Rao I preached the ideal of "Hindu Pad Padshahi". Because of this ideal the Hindu 'zamindars' and ruling chiefs entertained sympathy for the Marathas. But this ideal was not evenly pursued and was altogether given up by his successors. From the vivid account given by Sir Jadunath Sarkar about the Bargas in Bengal during the reign of Alivardi Khan we learn that the Bargas oppressed the Hindus and Muslims alike. They set fire to the dwelling places and even to the temples. Further, although the Marathas subsequently fought hard against the British, they were not unwilling to join them against other Indian powers. The Maratha chiefs made overtures to the English Government at Fort William in Bengal proposing a joint action against the Nawab of Bengal and offering very advantageous terms to the English. That the Marathas made alliance with the British against Mysore points to the same direction. Parochial nationality is also ascribed to the Rajputs. But it is a Rajput, Jaichandra, who invited the Muslims against Prithviraj, another Rajput king. Besides, there were Rajputs who associated with the Mughals. However, it cannot be denied that the Rajputs were proud of their race and the Rajput kings fought very hard against the Muslims to preserve their religion and independence. The Sikhs fighting with the Muslims at the initial stage wanted to preserve their religion and separate existence. The Sikh 'Misl' governed the Punjab after Ahmad Shah Abdali had invaded India for the last time in 1767. Ranjit Singh (1780-1839) unified the Panjab and raised a very fine army. But after his death the solidarity
broke down. The army became the master of the State and dictated and made and unmade the 'Wazirs'. Self-interest, treachery, and the absence of competent leaders were the cause of their defeat in both the Anglo-Sikh wars (1845-46, 1848-49). No troops could have fought better than the Sikhs, no army could have been worse led. It is interesting to note that the Sikhs lost their freedom in 1849, yet it is only after 9 years that the Sikh soldiers helped the English to quell the outbreak of 1857-58. The Marathas were generally patriotic. Warren Hastings and Sir Charles Metcalfe stated that the Marathas were differentiated from the rest of the Indian people by the persistence of their patriotism under all vicissitudes. The impulse given by Shivaji endured for about a century and a half. But patriotism and nationalism do not always coincide. Individual patriotism is not nationalism. Further, nationalism guards against disintegration of sovereignty. Although the Marathas had more than individual patriotism, they had not the strength to remain undivided. Maharashtra finally broke into pieces, and there arose five independent sovereigns. It should be noted that the Maratha army was massacred by Ahmad Shah Abdali in the third Battle of Panipat (1761), but the Sikhs stood firm against Abdali. Ahmad Shah is said to have remarked that it would be necessary for the complete reduction of Sikh power to wait until their religious fervour had evaporated. During their war of independence from Abdali the Sikhs presented an almost united front, and for the successful termination of the struggle credit should be given to Sikh solidarity and not any individual.
It is, however, interesting to observe that the Sikhs and the Marathas who were once fierce fighters against the British were helpers of British subjugation of India in later years. During the Uprising of 1857-8 Sindhia remained aloof. It appears that the Rajputs had individual chivalry and patriotism. There was a number of Rajput States and frequent were the conflicts among themselves. They could never rise in a body against the Mughals or the Marathas. The Rajputs in the eighteenth century seemed to be a played out party. Be that as it may, we cannot but refer to the Rajputs, the Sikhs and the Marathas while tracing the growth of the concept of nation in India which had its actual birth only in the early twentieth century.

The tendency during the British period has been delineated in the subsequent chapters. In India the concept of nation had its birth in the British period. The unity in this period became a political or national unity. The concept of nation became gradually clearer and pervaded more and more people and the British had to quit India in 1947, but, of course, not before partition of the country.

In the British period the concept of nation took two courses for its development. We shall soon see how under the influence of Sir Syed Ahmed, Ameer Ali, Mohammad Iqbal, Jinnah and others, the Muslims also developed their concept of the nation. Before the birth of the Indian National Congress, Indian nationalism was purely Hindu nationalism. 'Hindu Mela', 'Hindu Patriot' go to prove the fact. Bankim's concept of Indian nation
was also the Hindu concept of nation. Sir Syed Ahmad first propagated the two-nation theory, and Jinnah carried it to its logical end. Iqbal propagated the idea of Pakistan, and Jinnah gave it a concrete form.

India is now free. It appears that now there is no war to the building up of a healthy Indian nation composed of Hindus, Muslims, Christians and other sects. During Pakistan's aggression in 1965 many Indian Mohammedans and Christians fought hard for India and died in the battle-field. Many Indian Muslims reproved Pakistan's attack of India. Whenever there has been a communal riot in Pakistan and a retaliation has taken place in India, many Indian Muslims have held the Govt. of Pakistan responsible for such riots. Although still many Hindus look upon the Indian Muslims with suspicion, it is true that the pernicious causes that kept the Muslims aloof till 1947 no longer exist. The sword had long dropped from the hands of the Muslims, and with the departure of the English the instigations to communal riots and the invidious policy of 'divide and rule' are also gone. India is a secular state. It is a land for all Indians, all sects. Dr. Zakir Hussain, President of India, and Mr. M.C. Chagla, the Minister for Foreign Affairs for some time, are Mohammedans and true Indians. The American papers write that no facet of Dr. Zakir Hossain’s victory in the Indian Presidential election is more important than the demonstration that India is what Jawaharlal Nehru and other progressive Indians claimed it to be - a secular and not a Hindu state. (Hindu-Muslim relations during the British rule have been discussed in detail in other chapters)