# CHAPTER XIII

## THE PASSING OF THE OLD HINDU KINGDOMS

### The Coming of the Arabs

In the western part of Asia lies a vast country called Arabia, a land of rocks and deserts with a few oases and fertile valleys, thinly peopled by a hardy and sturdy folk. In this country, at a short distance from the western sea coast, stands the holy city of Mecca—where sometime in the year 570 was born the great Prophet, the founder of a religion that preached the unity of God, and roused the people to energy and unbounded enthusiasm. Under the successors of the Prophet, called Khalifas or Caliphs, who led the Faithful from A.D. 632, the arms of the Moslems advanced in all directions, and the banner of Islam floated over many countries from Irān to Spain. From the beginning the Arabs had their eyes on the rich ports of Western India and the outlying parts of the north-west borderland. As early as the time of the great Pulakeśin II, an army was sent to Thana near Bombay (*c.* A.D. 637). This was followed by expeditions to Broach, the Gulf of Debal (in Sind), and Al-Kikan (the district round Kelāt). About the middle of the seventh century, the satrapy of Zaranj in Southern Afghānistān fell into the hands of the Arabs. The turn of Makrān in Baluchistān came next. The Arabs now made repeated onslaughts on the Shāḥ of Kābul, supposed to be a descendant of the great Kanishka, and the *Ratbil* of Zābul in the upper valley of the Helmund river and some adjoining districts. The latter succumbed after a brave struggle (A.D. 870). The Turkī Shāhīya kings of Kābul maintained a precarious existence till the closing years of the ninth century when they were supplanted by Kallār, usually identified with Lalliya, the founder of the Hindu Shāhīya dynasty of Udabhāṇḍapura (Waihand, Ohind or Und on the Indus).

Meanwhile, the Arabs had followed up their success in Baluchistān by the conquest of Sind. That province figures in the narrative of Bāṇa as one of the territories overrun by Prabhākaravardhana and his more famous son, Harsha. In the days of Hiuen Tsang the throne was occupied by a Śūdra dynasty which gave way to

a Brāhmaṇa family founded by Chach. Dāhar or Dāhir, son of Chach, was on the throne when al-Hajjaj, governor of Irāk, incensed at the action of certain pirates of Debal, sent several expeditions to Sind. The earlier incursions were repulsed by Dāhir. Thereupon al-Hajjaj entrusted the work of punishing the Indian king to his nephew and son-in-law, Muhammad ibn-Kāsīm. The young commander stormed Debal, captured Nerun and some other cities and strongholds, and pushed on to the western bank of the Indus. His work was greatly facilitated by the treachery of certain Buddhist priests and renegade chiefs who deserted their sovereign and joined the invader. With the assistance of some of these traitors, Muhammad crossed the vast sheet of water separating his army from that of Dāhir and gave battle to the Indian ruler near Raor (A.D. 712). Dāhir offered a brave resistance, but was defeated and killed. The fort of Raor fell next after a heroic defence by the widowed queen. The invaders now pushed on to Bahmanābād and Alor, which submitted. The turn of Multān came next. The whole of the lower Indus valley was now dominated by the Arabs. But the invaders had no mind to stop there. Already in the time of Muhammad ibn-Kāsīm minor operations were carried on in the neighbouring provinces. A later governor, Junaid or Junayd, pursued a more aggressive policy and sent expeditions against Marmad (Marwar ?), al-Mandal (Mandor ? near Viramgam ?), Dahnaj, Barwas (Broach), Ujjain, Malibah (Mālwa), Baharimad, al-Bailaman (Vallamaṇḍala ? ) and al-Jurz (Gurjara). According to Indian inscriptions, the territories overrun by the invaders included Sind, Cutch, Surāshṭra or Kāṭhiāwār, Chavoṭaka (some Chāpa principality of Gujarāt or Western Rājputāna), a Maurya principality apparently in southern Rājputāna or Mālwa, and the Gurjjara territory apparently round Bhinmal or Broach. The progress of the Arabs was stopped by the Chālukyas in the south, the Pratihāras in the east, and the Kārkoṭas in the north. But a new scene opened with the foundation of the kingdom of Ghaznī by Alptigīn in or about A.D. 962.

### Fall of the Shāhiya Dynasty of Udabhāṇḍa

Alptigīn was formerly a slave of the Samanid rulers of Central Asia. This enterprising chief made himself independent in Ghaznī and conquered a part of the kingdom of Kābul. He died in A.D. 963. In A.D. 977 his sceptre passed into the hands of his son-in-law, Sabuktigīn. He encroached on the dominions of the Shāhiya ruler Jayapāla to whom reference has been made above. In order to put a stop to the depredations of Sabuktigīn, Jayapāla advanced towards

Ghaznī and met his enemy near a place called Ghūzak between Ghaznī and Lamghan. A snow-storm compelled Jayapāla to conclude a humiliating peace, but he soon broke his engagements and brought on his head the wrath of the Sultān. The latter carried fire and sword into the territory of his antagonist and seized the districts in the neighbourhood of Lamghan. In 997 Sabuktigīn died, and in the next year the crown went to his famous son, Mahmud. In 1001 the new Sultān inflicted a crushing defeat on Jayapāla near the city of Peshāwār. Unable to survive this disgrace, the defeated king burnt himself on a funeral pyre and was succeeded by his son, Ānandapāla (A.D. 1002 or 1003). In 1006 Mahmud took Multān, but the final subjugation of the city was postponed till 1010. In 1008 he routed the troops of Ānandapāla, led by prince Brāhmaṇapāla, at the battle of Waihand, and pursued the fugitives as far as Bhimnagar.

Ānandapāla continued to offer resistance from the fastnesses of the Salt Range (Nandana). His successor, Trilochanpāla, carried on the struggle with the assistance of Saṃgrāmarāja of Kāshmīr. In the end he was compelled to retire to the east and conclude an alliance with the Chandella ruler of Kālinjar and other princes of Mid-India. But he was again defeated on the river Ruhut (Rāhib) identified by some with the Rāmgaṅgā. He was assassinated in A.D. 1021–1022. With the death of his son and successor, Bhīma, in 1026 the dynasty came to an end. Both al-Biruni and Kalhaṇa bear testimony to the courage and magnanimity of this noble line of kings who poured out their blood like water in defending the north-western gates of their country against the invader.

Mahmud did not remain content with the laurels he won in the Punjab. In 1014 he took Thānesar, and in the following years made an unsuccessful attempt to conquer the vale of Kāshmīr. He also burnt the temple of Mathurā. In 1018 he sacked Kanauj and extinguished the once powerful empire of the Pratihāras. In 1022–1023 he received the submission of Gwālior and Kālinjar. His most famous expedition, that against Somnāth in Kāṭhiāwār, was undertaken in 1025. The fall of the most celebrated Hindu shrine of the age in 1026 synchronised with the extinction of the Hindu Shāhiya kingdom of the Punjab. Four years later the Sultān died.

Mahmud's expeditions were mostly regular raids undertaken mainly with the object of destroying Hindu temples, desecrating Hindu idols and plundering the wealth of the country. Altogether seventeen expeditions are set to his credit by Muslim chroniclers who describe with glee the wanton destruction and massacre on a

large scale by Mahmud and the fabulous wealth carried by him to Ghaznī after each expedition. It is said that from Nagarkot alone he plundered "700,000 golden dināṛs, 700 *mans* of gold and silver plates, 200 *mans* of pure gold in ingots, 2,000 *mans* of unwrought silver, and twenty *mans* of various jewels, including pearls, corals, diamonds and rubies."

The only permanent results of his arduous campaigns were the annexation of the Hindu Shāhiya kingdom and certain other districts in the Punjab and the north-west borderland and the destruction of the morale of the Hindu armies. The raids of Mahmud must have made a profound impression on the minds of the great Rājput powers of Western and Central India that sought to divide among themselves the imperial heritage of the Pratihāras. During the period 1030–1192, that is to say from the death of Mahmud to the arrival on the scene of Muhammad of Ghur, the princes of the Indian interior enjoyed comparative immunity from foreign attacks. The Ghaznavid Sultāns now and then harried certain territories, and on one occasion one of their generals advanced up to Benares and sacked the holy city. But on the whole, the invaders could not make much headway. The terror inspired by their ravages had, however, lasting consequences.

## Revival of the Vikramādityan Tradition

The situation in the latter part of the eleventh and first three quarters of the twelfth century was not unlike that in the sixth century A.D. The old empires of the Pratihāras and the Pālas were falling to pieces like the Gupta empire after Buddha Gupta. The task of defending Hindustān fell upon their former feudatories who now set up as independent sovereigns. The fight with the Yamīnī Turks and their successors became as engrossing a subject as the earlier struggle with the Huns. There was a revival of the Vikramādityan tradition, and the example of the great hero who braved a Śaka king in his own city, and that of his famous grandson who beat back the incursions of the Huns and restored an empire after vanquishing the enemies of his family, must have inspired the greater rulers of the new age—kings like Gāṅgeyadeva of Chedi, Sindhurāja of Mālwa, and Tribhuvanamalla of Kalyāṇ, who called themselves Vikramāditya or the new Sāhasāṅka. The new spirit is well illustrated by the execution of the pusillanimous Pratihāra king Rājyapāla by a Kachchapaghāta chief who was "anxious to serve Vidhādharadeva", and the attempt of Tribhuvanamalla Vikramāditya VI to supersede the Śaka era by a

new national reckoning. But the cases of Rājyapāla, the representative of the Imperial Pratihāras, and of Tribhuvanamalla himself who fought against his own brother, are symptomatic of the weakness of the Hindu princes—their internal strife and failure, except on rare occasions, to take concerted action in a time of national crisis. The Hindus of the age, moreover, lacked the invigorating and dynamic influence of a new impulse that was then moving vast masses of mankind in Western and West Central Asia.

Bhīma I, the Chālukya or Solanki king of Gujarāt, had failed to bar the route to the holy shrine of Somnāth. After the invader was gone, he sought to repair the ravages which the Turks had inflicted on the habitations of the gods. He began to build at Somnāth a temple of stone in place of the former temple of brick and wood. His general, Vimala, built the famous Jaina temple at Abu, known as Vimala Vasahi. Other edifices were constructed in the time of the successors of Bhīma, particularly in the days of Siddharāja Jayasimha and Kumārapāla. Two later rulers, Mūlarāja II Solanki and Vīradhavala Vāghela, attained greater success than Bhīma I in repelling the attacks of invaders. Two officers of Vīradhavala, Vastupāla and Tejahpāla, have immortalised their names by the construction of magnificent shrines at Śatruñjaya, Girnār and Abu. In course of time the feelings of hostility roused by Turkish aggression wore off to a certain extent and king Arjuna of Gujarāt had the broadmindedness to endow a mosque erected by a Muslim ship-owner of Ormuz, and provided for the expenses of certain Shiite festivals. He further laid down that under the management of the Muslim community of Somnāth any surplus was to be made over to the holy districts of Mecca and Medina, In 1297, Gujarāt passed into the hands of Sultān 'Alā-ud-dīn Khalji of Delhi.

The throne of the Paramāras of Mālwa was, in the days of Sabuktigin, occupied by the famous Muñja, a great patron of poets, whose power was crushed by Taila II, the Chālukya king of the Deccan. His brother and successor, Sindhurāja, assumed the significant title of Navasāhasāṅka, that is, the new Sāhasāṅka or Vikramāditya. Bhoja, son and successor of Sindhurāja, claims victories over the Turushkas or Turks. He made his name immortal by his patronage of learning, just as the Gujarāt statesmen did by their temples. A versatile scholar, he wrote treatises on numerous subjects, including poetics, rhetoric, polity, philosophy, astronomy and architecture. He also established a college for Sanskrit studies. The construction of temples and the encouragement of Sanskrit

culture seem to have been parts of a common programme. The attempts of Pericles to restore Greek temples and foster Greek learning after the ravages of the Persian wars may be recalled in this connection. The example of Bhoja was imitated by Hindu statesmen in later ages, notably by the rulers of Vijayanagar.

The Chandellas of Jejākabhukti or Bundelkhand had, under Dhaṅga, Gaṇḍa, and Vidyādhara, possibly attempted to help the cause of the Shāhis of Udabhāṇḍa, but their efforts proved unavailing. Vidyādhara, however, seems to have matured plans, along with the Kalachuri king and Bhoja of Mālwa, for the restoration of the prestige of Hindu arms. But the power of his family soon declined. There was a revival under Kīrtivarman Chandella in the closing years of the eleventh century, but some of his successors were not so strong as he was. One of them, Paramardideva, suffered defeats at the hands of Prithvīrāja III, the Chauhan king of Ajmer and Delhi. The power of the Chandellas was shattered by Qutb-ud-din Aibak in A.D. 1202. Like the contemporary dynasties of Gujarāt and Mālwa, the Chandellas showed their interest in the work of reconstruction by the building of temples at Khajuraho and the encouragement of poets like Kṛishṇa Miśra who adorned the court of Kīrtivarman.

Politically, a more important *rôle* was played by the Kalachuri kings, Gāṅgeyadeva and his son Lakshmī Karṇa. The former, as already stated above, assumed the title of Vikramāditya and took under his protection the holy cities of Allahābād and Benares. Lakshmī Karṇa seems to have made himself master of the Southern Doāb and did much to revive the glorious traditions associated with the empires of Harsha and Bhoja I. He conciliated the rulers of Bengal by matrimonial alliances and pushed his conquests southwards as far as Kaliṅga. Had he lived longer, he might have restored the shattered fabric of imperialism in northern India and erected an effective barrier against the advance of the Turks. His career was cut short by a hostile combination of the rulers of Gujarāt, Mālwa, Bundelkhand and the Deccan. The Kalachuris still retained considerable power under his son and grandson, but the control of the Madhya-deśa (upper Ganges valley) soon passed into the hands of the famous house of Gāhaḍavāla.

The founder of the Gāhaḍavāla dynasty was Chandradeva who rose to power in the closing decade of the eleventh century. His grandson, Govinda Chandra, was the real ruler of the Madhya-deśa for half a century, first as crown prince (1104–1114) and later on as king (1114–1154). He founded an empire embracing the greater part of the present United Provinces and Bihār. He successfully

defended Jetavana (in northern Oudh), Benares and other holy places of Buddhists and Hindus alike against the Turks. But a rival empire was established in the west by the Chauhan Vigraharāja IV with seats at Ajmer and Delhi. The latter city was probably founded by a Tomara chieftain about the middle of the eleventh century A.D., and it was from the Tomaras that the Chauhans obtained possession of this famous capital. Prithvīrāja III, nephew of Vigraharāja IV, came into conflict with Jayachchandra (Jai Chand), grandson of Govinda Chandra. The rivalry of the Chauhans and the Gāhaḍavālas weakened them both till all of them were swept away by a fresh deluge that was gathering force in the wilds of Ghur in Afghānistān.

## Bengal under the later Pālas and the Senas

Sheltered by the Kalachuris and the early Gāhaḍavālas who for more than a century protected the Madhya-deśa against a rush of invasion from the north-west, the local dynasts of Eastern India passed through vicissitudes of a different kind. The name of the Pāla sovereign of Gauḍa was still invoked in distant Benares as late as A.D. 1026. In the following decades, the Pālas entered into close relations with Lakshmī Karṇa, the great king of Chedi. The passing away of Karṇa almost coincided with a fresh disaster that fell to the lot of the Gauḍa empire. A local rising in North Bengal drove the Pālas from Varendrī. The power of the house of Dharmapāla was restored by Rāmapāla, mainly with the assistance of his Rāshṭrakūṭa relations. But the restored kingdom had no long lease of life left to it, being ultimately overthrown in Bengal by Vijaya Sena, scion of a family that came from the Deccan. The struggle between indigenous and foreign military chieftains in Bengal ended in the victory of the latter.

The conqueror founded a new line, that of the Senas. The ancestors of the new king came from Karṇāṭa in the Deccan. They established a principality in Western Bengal which came into prominence under Sāmanta Sena. Sāmanta Sena seems to have retained some connection with his southern compatriots. After him came Hemanta Sena. Vijaya Sena, son of Hemanta Sena, allied himself with the illustrious family of the Śūras and founded the independent sovereignty of his own dynasty. He vanquished the king of Gauḍa, apparently of Pāla lineage, and the neighbouring princes of North Bihār, Assam and Orissa. He also laid the foundation of the city of Vijayapura in Western Bengal, which became the metropolis of the Sena family. Vikramapura in

Eastern Bengal, which was apparently conquered from the Yādava Varmans, possibly served as the second capital. It was certainly graced occasionally by the presence of the Sena sovereign.

The son and successor of Vijaya Sena was Ballāla Sena, a name famous in Bengali legend as the reputed founder of *Kulinism*, a system of nobility. He is also credited with the authorship of two notable works, the *Dānasāgara* and the *Adbhutasāgara*.

Ballāla Sena's son, Lakshmaṇa Sena, probably began to rule in A.D. 1178–1179 or 1184–1185, though some scholars push the date of his accession much further back and regard him as the founder of the Lakshmaṇa Sena era of A.D. 1119. He seems to have served his apprenticeship in the work of government as viceroy or military governor in charge of some district in Kaliṅga. On coming to the throne, he distinguished himself as a conqueror and a patron of learning. He claims to have pushed his conquests as far as Kaliṅga, reduced Kāmarūpa to subjection and vanquished the king of Benares, who is no other than the Gāhaḍavāla king of Kanauj. Among the poets who graced his court, the most eminent were Jayadeva, the author of the *Gīta-Govinda*, and Dhoyī, the author of the *Pavanadūta*. The last-mentioned work contains an interesting description of the Sena capital. The Senas, however, failed to stem the tide of Muslim invasion once the dyke erected by the Gāhaḍavālas was broken. Rai Lakhmaniya, usually identified with Lakshmaṇa Sena, had to flee before the advancing arms of Malik Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Muhammad Khalji towards the close of the twelfth or early in the thirteenth century. His sons, Viśvarūpa Sena and Keśava Sena, maintained the struggle against the "Garga Yavanas", that is to say, the Muslim invaders from the Kābul valley, and preserved their independence in Eastern Bengal till the latter half of the thirteenth century.

## The Later Chālukyas and the Cholas

Karṇāṭa, the home territory of the Senas, was from 973 to 1190 dominated, with a short intermission, by the Chālukya family established by Taila II. While the Shāhis of Udabhāṇḍa were trying to defend the north-western gates of India against the Turks of Ghaznī, the Chālukyas were engaged in bitter feuds with the Paramāras of Mālwa and the Cholas of Tanjore. They do not appear to have actually helped the foreign invaders like their predecessors, the Rāshṭrakūṭas. The Cholas, under Rājarāja I

and his famous son, Rājendra Chola I, conquered nearly the whole of the present Madras Presidency. The generals of Rājendra carried their arms as far as the Ganges, while Chola admirals asserted their authority over several overseas territories including Ceylon, the Nicobar Islands and parts of the Malay Peninsula and the Archipelago. Rājendra inflicted a defeat on Mahīpāla I of Bengal. He also vanquished the Chālukya king of the Deccan plateau at Musangi. The prestige of the Chālukya arms was restored, to a certain extent, by Someśvara Āhavamalla, at Koppam, but he suffered a crushing defeat at Kūḍal Śangamam at the hands of a son of Rājendra Chola I. In the last quarter of the eleventh and first quarter of the twelfth century the sovereignty of the Deccan was shared between Vikramāditya VI, the second son of Āhavamalla and Rājendra Chola (III) Kulottuṅga I, son of a daughter of Rājendra Chola I. As already stated above, Vikramāditya VI established a new era in the place of the old reckoning of the 'Śaka' king, and his example was followed by Siddharāja Jayasimha of Gujarāt. The reign of Vikramāditya VI stands as a landmark in the history of Hindu law, and saw the composition of a famous digest by the great jurist Vijñāneśvara. Poetry was also cultivated at the Chālukya court, and the celebrated author Bilhaṇa wrote his *Vikramāṅkadeva-charita*, or Deeds of Vikramāditya, to commemorate the achievements of his patron. Someśvara III, son and successor of Vikramāditya VI, was also a writer of repute.

Sometime after the death of Someśvara III, the power of the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa was temporarily eclipsed by Bijjala Kalachurya and his sons. After 1190 the empire of Kalyāṇa split up into three parts, namely, the kingdom of Devagiri founded by the Yādavas, the kingdom of Warangal governed by the Kākatīyas and the kingdom of Dorasamudra ruled by the Hoysalas. The Chola empire also declined after Rājendra Chola Kulottuṅga. The southern part of the Chola dominions fell into the hands of the Pāṇḍyas. The home provinces formed a battle-ground between the Hoysalas, the Kākatīyas and other powers. In the country between the Godāvarī and the Ganges which had once been overrun by the great Rājendra Chola I, rose the empire of the Eastern Gaṅgas of Kaliṅga and Orissa.

### Successors of the Imperial Chālukyas and Cholas

The independent Yādava kingdom of Devagiri was founded by Bhillama and was raised by his grandson Siṅghana to the position of the premier kingdom of the Deccan. Learning was encouraged, and a college of astronomy was established for the study of the works of Bhāskarāchārya, the celebrated astronomer. The age of the later Yādavas saw the composition of the famous works of Hemādri, Bopadeva, and Jñāneśvara. The rulers of Devagiri, however, proved unequal to the task of defending the Deccan against the northern invader in the manner of Gautamīputra and Pulakeśin II of old. In 1294 the troops of 'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī swooped down upon Devagiri and exacted a heavy contribution from Rāmachandra, the Yādava king. In 1306–1307 Malik Kāfur again invaded the Yādava dominions and forced the king to pay tribute. The son of Rāmachandra was killed about 1312, and his son-in-law was flayed alive about 1317. Hindu sovereignty in Mahārāshṭra came to an end and was not restored till the seventeenth century.

The Kākatīyas rose to power under Prolarāja II. His grandson, Gaṇapati, extended his dominions as far as Kāñchī in the south. The kingdom flourished under Rudramma, daughter of Gaṇapati, who is highly extolled by the Venetian traveller, Marco Polo. The power of the dynasty was destroyed by the Sultāns of Delhi early in the fourteenth century.

The Hoysalas of Dorasamudra attained great power under Vishṇuvardhana and his grandson, Vīra Ballāla II. Under later kings they conquered a part of the Tamil country. Vīra Ballāla III, the last notable ruler of the house, sustained defeats at the hands of Kāfur, the general of 'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, and finally perished in or about A.D. 1342.

The Pāṇḍya kingdom, which won fame in the thirteenth century as the dominant power in the Tamil country and a great centre of international trade, was overrun by Kāfur early in the fourteenth century. After a brief period of Muslim rule, it was absorbed into the empire of Vijayanagar.

Orissa became a powerful kingdom under Anantavarman Choḍa Gaṅga whose descendants defended their dominions with some amount of success against the Muslim conquerors of Bengal. The Gaṅga line came to an end in 1434 when it was supplanted by the famous Kapilendra. The royal family founded by him was also very powerful and ruled over an extensive empire. The kings successfully defended Orissa against the attacks of Muslim rulers from the north and west, and sometimes even invaded their dominions.

It was not till 1568 that Orissa was finally conquered by the Muslims.

Like the Rājput kingdoms of the north, the princes of Southern India failed to offer a combined resistance to invaders and fell one by one. Only the Hindus beyond the Kṛishṇā and the Tuṅgabhadrā rallied under the banner of Harihara and Bukka, and for several centuries maintained their independence in the far south of India.