

## JANJUAS, THEIR EARLY LIFE

DR. HUSAIN KHAN\*

Janjua is an important ancient ethnic stock of South Asia, which tribe once ruled part of Central Asia as an overlord of White Hunas, and then ruled the north west region of South Asia including Afghanistan, taking the title "Paramabhattacharaka Maharajadhiraja" or "Malikal-Hind". The majority of the progeny of this erstwhile royal family inhabit "the Central and eastern Salt Range, the east of the Pind Dadan Khan plain, and the south-west of *Tehsil* Jhelum... There are fairly large settlements in Kashmir (Aurian) and in the Kahuta *Tehsil* of Rawalpindi, and they are found in small number in many other districts."<sup>1</sup>

Raja Tanauli, a son of Raja Mal, had settled in Hazara to look after his father's appanage,<sup>2</sup> which led to the settlement of Janjuas in that region. "(The Mughul emperor) Nur ad-din Jahangir mentions a large predatory band of Januwanas (Janjuas) as far north as the Chach plain near Attock."<sup>3</sup>

Concerning the ethnic background of the Janjuas, the Chinese accounts record that during the rule of Vasudeva, the Kushana ruler, a tribe named Juan-Juan threatened his kingdom from beyond the Oxus. Some scholars identify them with the dynasty of Yavanas recorded in the *Puranas*.<sup>4</sup> But Jean Filliozat, basing his account on the Chinese Annals (Pei-Che), claims that they were a Mongol<sup>5</sup> horde.

As regards the political stature of the Juan-Juan in Central Asia, Professor A.S. Altekar records that they were the overlord of the White Hunas.<sup>6</sup> According to G. Clauson, the Juan-Juans ruled the eastern part of the Steppe from the Chinese frontier in the east to Turfan in Chinese Turkistan and a line roughly north from that point to the western tip of Lake Baikal in the west. The country to the west of their dominions as far as the Aral Sea, and including parts of Afghanistan and north-eastern Iran as well as east of Russian Turkistan, was ruled by the Ephthalites.<sup>7</sup> In relation to their disappearance from Central Asia, Hilda Ecedy also referring to the Chinese sources, informs us that the Turks who were the subjects under the Juan-Juan Empire, revolted successfully against the liege-lords and destroyed their empire:

"...as subjects of the Juan-Juan Empire, they (Turks) defeated their co-subjects, the revolting Tich-le tribes (547-550), and after the victory, aware of their strength, they asked a Juan-Juan princess as wife for their ruler. The rude refusal of the Juan-Juans, ignoring the change of forces, accelerated the fall of their Empire...in 552 (11th of March-9th April) the Turks attacked and defeated the Juan-Juans;..."<sup>8</sup>

The Juan-Juans appear to have gone off the stage of Central Asia in 555-556 A.D., as the Chinese sources are silent on their later history. The Juan-Juans migrated to the Punjab during the confusion subsequent to the overthrow of the Kushanas.<sup>9</sup> Professor Ahmad Hasan Dani identifies the Juan-Juans with the Janjuas.<sup>10</sup> The Arab geographer, Masudi, who visited India in 302-3/915, gave as follows an important piece of information on the political stature of the Janjuas in the context of the north-west regions of South Asia:

"...The King of Kanauj, who is one of the kings of Sind, is Bauura; this is a title common to all kings of Kanauj. There is also a city called Bauura, after its princess, which is now in the

---

\* Retired Professor of History, University of Peshawar.

territories of Islam, and is one of the dependencies of Multan. Through this town passes one of the (five) rivers, which form together Mihran in Sind, which is considered by al-Jahis as derived from the Nile, and by others from the Jaihun of Khurasan. This Bauura, who is the king of Kanauj, is an enemy of the Balhara, the King of India. The king of Kandahar, who is one of the kings of Sind and its mountains, is called Jahaj [the reading is not certain-Editor]. This name is common to all sovereigns of that country. From his dominion comes the river Raid, one of the five rivers which form the Mihran of Sind. Kandahar is called the country of Rahbut (Rajput)."<sup>11</sup>

Three important points transpire from the preceding excerpt: in the first instance, Masudi records the name of the contemporary Hindu dynasty which ruled the region of Kandahar, secondly this dynasty is called by him Jahaj, and thirdly the country is said to be of Rajputs. In other words the ruling family was Rajput. From Al-Biruni it is known that the ruling dynasty was Hindu Shahi which was the royal title of the dynasty<sup>12</sup> and not its ethnic or actual name.

The historic significance lies in 'Jahaj', the ethnic name of the Hindu-Shahis, which name Masudi reveals. It is because of this historic reference of Masudi that Sir Alexander Cunningham equates 'Jahaz' with Janjua, who according to the latter were the Hindu-Shahi of Gandhara.<sup>13</sup> This equation is supported by the fact that the ruling dynasty was called Rajput—a claim still borne by the Janjuas.

## UDABHANDA (OHIND)

### The First Capital of the Janjuas (Hindu-Shahis)

The ancient capital of Gandhara and the residence of the Janjua (Hindu Shahi) ruling dynasty is mentioned Udabhandapura by Kalhana, and is also referred to in Jonaraja's Chronicle where its capture by Sultan Shams ad-Din of Kashmir (circ. 1354–1373) is recorded.<sup>14</sup> The local evidence—'Hund Slab Inscription of the time of Jayapala (circ. 964–1002)' inscribes this town as Udabhanda.<sup>15</sup> The historic geography of the town, as covered by Sir Alexander Cunningham, is as follows:

"From Polusha Hwen Thsang travelled 200 li, or 33 miles, to the south-east to U-to-kia-han-cha, which M. Julien transcribes as Udakhanda, and M. Vivien de St. Martin identifies with Ohind on the Indus. The pilgrim describes Udakhanda as having its south side resting on the river, which tallies exactly with the position of Ohind, on the north bank of the Indus, about 15 miles above Attock. General Count and Burnes call this place Hund, and so does Mr. Loewenthal, who style Ohind a mistaken pronunciation. But the name was written Waihand or Oaihand, by Mirza Mogal Beg in 1790. To my ear the name sounded something like wahand, and this would appear to have been the pronunciation which Rashid-ud-Din obtained in A.D. 1310, as he names the place Wehand. According to all these authors Waihand was the capital of Gandhara, and Rashid-ud-Din adds that the Mogal called it Karajang. The only native writer who uses the abbreviated form of the name is Nizam-ad-Din, who in his '*Tabakat-i-Akbari*' says that Mahmud besieged Jaipal in the fort of Hind in A.D. 1002."<sup>16</sup> As regards the impact of the Janjua (Hindu Shahi) rulers of Udabhanda on the local geography, Sir Alexander Cunningham adds, "Now, Chach is the name of the great plain to the east of the Indus, immediately opposite

to Ohind; and as the plain of Banar is said to have been named after Raja Banar, it seems probable that the plain of Chach may have been named after the Brahman dynasty of Ohind.”<sup>17</sup>

A contemporary Muslim traveller, Muqaddasi, gives the following eye witness account of the city in the 10th century A.D.:

“It is a capital city of great glory and is bigger than Mansura. Situated on a square open plain, it has many gardens clean and attractive. The river (Indus) is full of water. Around the city are the gardens full of walnut, almond, banana and date. The prices are low. Three maunds of honey could be bought for one *dirham*. Bread and milk are very cheap. Pestilent insects (like mosquitoes, bugs) are absent. People are free from incurable disease. But the weather is comparatively humid and hot. The houses are built of timber covered with dry grass. It is therefore open to fire. Short of these dangers it could match with the best cities in Iran.”<sup>18</sup>

From the following account of the *Hudud al-Alam* (372–982), it appears that by the time of Jayapala, Muslims were living in Udabhanda and it was a great commercial city:

“Vayhind, a large town. Its king Jaipal is under the orders (of the raja) of Qinnauj. In it live a few Muslims, and the Hindustan merchandise such as makes precious things (*Gauhar*), and precious stuffs mostly come to this country.”<sup>19</sup>

## Jayapala

(353/964 to 392–393/1002)

Paramabhattacharaka Maharajadhiraja Paramesvara Sri Jayapala, son of Asatapala, succeeded Bhimadeva in about 353/964. Jayapala was a scion of the Janjua (Rajput) dynasty. The change in rule implied shifting of power from the descendants of Kamalu/Toramana to those of Asatapala. Jayapala being Janjua (Rajput) was known Hindu Shahi and had succeeded the former Brahman Hindu Shahi. An account in this context follows that transfer of power from Bhimadeva to Jayapala was not very smooth. Dr. Abdur Rahman reveals it as follows:

“It has been suggested that transfer of power from Bhima to Jayapala was not very smooth. The suggestion is based on Hodivala’s interpretation of the name of a certain ‘Sabli, son of Shahi, son of Bamhi’ who is mentioned by ‘Utbi as the ruler of the areas adjoining Kashmir at the time of Mahmud’s invasion of the Ganges valley in A.D. 1018–19. The name is variously reported as ‘Habali-’bn-Shasni,’ ‘Chanki bin Samhi’ and ‘Changi bin Mahak’, which makes it difficult to fix its correct orthography. Y. Mishra restores the name as ‘Bhimi’ (Skt. Bhaimi) and considers the bearer of this name a son of Bhima. It seems, he adds, that the name refers to Thakkana the Sahi chief who was vanquished by the commander-in-chief of the Kashmirian king Abhimanyu (A.D. 958–72). Nothing much, however, is known about Thakkana and Stein maintains that he was probably a small chief claiming descent from the Sahis of Udabhanda. Whether he was really a son of Bhima and contested the throne with Jayapala is not known for certain.”<sup>20</sup>

As regards Jayapala’s kingly stature in the context of the Hindu concept of sovereignty, the author of the *Hudud al-Alam* record as follows:

“Vayhind, a large town. Its king Jaipal is under the order (of the *raja*) of Qinnauj.”<sup>21</sup>

An analysis of the kingly stature of Jayapala in relation to the Imperial Kanauj makes it essential to discuss the status of the latter in the period under review:

Kanauj was raised to the position of imperial dignity by Harshavardhana. Vata-saraja, the King of Pratihara took its possession in 166–167/783, and made it the capital of his Pratihara empire. This empire, which continued in full glory for nearly a century, was the last great empire in Northern India before the Muslim conquest. "...About the middle of the tenth century A.D. the Pratihara empire disintegrated and was gradually reduced to the territory round about Kanauj. We do not possess any record of the Pratihara emperors of nearly half a century after Vijaypala who was on the throne early in A.D. 960".<sup>22</sup> So to speak, the period of Jayapala's rule coincided with the twilight of Pratihara empire, and this precludes even naive possibility of Jayapala being a feudatory king of the ruler of Kanauj. This being the case, the reference of *Hudud al-Alam* to Japala as being "under the orders (of the *raja*) of Qinnauj" does not seem valid.

### **Defences of Jayapala on the Western Frontier**

Jayapala built up his defences in the west of his kingdom with the help of the Afghans. In this context, the *Tarikh-i-Firishta* records that during Alaptigin's government at Ghazna, his chief commander Subuktigin often raided Lamghan and Multan. The Afghans could not defend themselves from his raids and approached Jayapala whom they told about Subuktigin's domination over them. As Janjua ruler knew that his armies could not be deployed on those frontiers owing to the severity of winter, he called to his presence Shaikh Hamid who was trustworthy among the Afghans whom the *Raja* made of his peer and placed under his control the *wilayat* of Lamghan and Multan, and in return he made a pledge to guard the frontier and prevent the armies of Islam from entering Hindustan.<sup>23</sup>

### **Khyber Fort**

In the period under review, the Afghans built a fort in the mountains of Peshawar (*Kohistan-i Peshawar*)<sup>24</sup> which they named Khyber, probably in the vicinity of Ali Masjid in the Khyber Pass. The motive for building the fort was to prevent the raids from west through the Khyber Pass towards Udabhanda.

### **Gala Fort**

In order to check the advancing enemies from the west,<sup>25</sup> the Janjua ruler built the Gala Fort in the vicinity of the Pehur pumping station. It is situated on a ridge which goes southward. It commands the Swat plain.

Despite all his defences, Jayapala failed to defend his kingdom against the forces from Ghazna. In 375–6, 376–7/986–7, he himself led an invasion of Ghazna but he suffered a defeat at the hands of Subuktigin. In about 379–8/988 he was also defeated at Lamghan. Jayapala made up some territorial losses in 388–390/988–99 when he annexed the kingdom of Lahore, but he forfeited his own territories west of the Indus including Udabhanda after his defeat in 392/1001 at Peshawar. In the spring of the following year, he committed suicide.

### **Nandana, the Second Capital of the Janjuas (Hindu Shahis)**

Nandana became a stronghold and capital of the Janjuas (Hindu Shahis) after the loss of Udabhanda (Ohind). Above fourteen miles due east of Choa Saidan Shah, below the village

of Baghanwala the outer Salt Range makes a remarkable dip; the road over the hills winds up the face of a steep rocky hill, with perpendicular precipices at the sides; so that in former days the holder of the hill had the absolute command of what is one of the most obvious routes across the range. At such a place it is not surprising to find extensive remains.<sup>26</sup> There seems to have been a fort, a temple, a mosque and a large village of which, however, little now remains. Of the fort, two semi-circular bastions are still standing. The wall defending the northern face of the ridge runs with projecting angles from the foot of a very massive pile at the north-eastern end of the top to a narrow crest in the south-west. Along with its total length of more than 900 feet, the wall is built with large undressed slabs of sandstone quarried on the spot. It is buttressed at some points with semi-circular bastions. Owing to the steepness of the slope the foundations of the wall have given way on several points, bringing it down in a confused mass of debris. Of the semi-circular bastions the one on the western extremity rises to a height of 27 feet. The sloping walls are built with large slabs of undressed stones set in regular courses. The southern face of the ridge was for the most part lined by precipitous cliffs and did not need defences.<sup>27</sup>

The temple is in ruins which exist on the narrow but fairly level top of the ridge, "and enough still stands to show that it was two-storeyed, with a flight of stairs leading to the upper storey; and that round the second storey there was a passage, also in the walls, leading into the upper room."<sup>3</sup> The Nandana temple is, like others in the Range, in the Kashmirian style, and stands on a platform apparently of very great age, much older probably than the temple itself. This temple differs from all others in the district in facing to the west instead of the east. Is this a resemblance to the large temple at Amb near Sukesar.<sup>28</sup>

In later times a mosque was added close to the temple, and this too is now in a ruinous stand: in its courtyard is a fragment of an inscription of the same period, now too far gone to be legible.

The village was built as villages are now, the houses were of stone and mud, mortar being used in exceptional cases.

### **The Later Janjuas (Hindu Shahis)**

The Janjua rulers, who followed Jayapala, were Anandapala (392–393/1002 to 400–401/1010), Trilocanapala (400–401/1010 to 411–412/1021) and Bhima (pala) 411–412/1021 to 417/1026). Anandapala, who was Jayapala's son, seems to have moved his capital to Nandana. He opposed Sultan Mahmud on the banks of the Indus and again on the plain of Chach (district Attock) but was defeated each time. He was pursued to Bhimnagar in Kangra which also came under the Ghaznavids. He made peace with Mahmud in 400–401/1009–10 and accepted a tributary status. On his death in 401/1010, he was succeeded by his son Trilocanapala. In 403–4/1013 he suffered defeat at Nandana and at the river Tausi. He seems to have extended his kingdom a little further into the Siwalik hills, which brought him into serious conflict with the *rai* of Sharwa. He tried his best to patch up his differences with the *rai* by accepting the hand of the latter's daughter for his own son Bhima (pala). In the year 409–10/1019 Mahmud defeated Trilocanapala at the river Ramganga. The latter was assassinated by some mutinous Hindu troops in 411–412/1012. He was succeeded by Bhima (pala) who, after an uneventful reign of five years died in 417/1026. Under his father, he was the governor of Nandana. During the battle of Nandana (405/1014), Utbi refers to him and not his father, as the Malik al-Hind and the 'enemy of God' who opposed the Ghaznavid forces.

In the battle of Nandana, the Janjua prince Bhima (pala) showed himself as a superb strategist when “he took up his position in a narrow pass and entrenched himself behind large stones. With his wings protected by the side hills and his rear resting in the narrow defile, he threw a line of elephants to strengthen his front. Being a clever military strategist, he put the topography to his own advantage. From his fortified position he carried on occasional fighting, sallying forth now and then to demoralise the enemy, but without showing any intention of coming out into the open field. Mahmud therefore could not put his swift cavalry into effective use. It was only in the open field that Mahmud could defeat him with his superior cavalry force.”<sup>29</sup>

### **Janjuas (Hindu Shahis) as Patron of Learning**

The *rajas* of the Janjua (Hindu Shahi) dynasty were renowned for their love of learning, generosity and noble sentiments.<sup>30</sup> As regards their patronage for learning, Al-Biruni narrates an anecdote “about Ugrabhuti, the teacher of Anandapala, whose book named *Sisyahitavritti*, a work on the science of grammar, met with little success in Kashmir. The matter was reported to Sahi who arranged to despatch the lavish sum of 200,000 *dirhams* and other presents of similar value to Kashmir to be distributed among those who studied the book of Ugrabhuti. The stratagem worked and the book became highly prized. A similar story is recorded by Hsuan Tsang...and seems to be popular in the apocryphal history of the area.”<sup>31</sup>

### **JANJUAS (Hindu Shahis) as Refugees in Kashmir**

With the decline of the power in the Punjab, some of the Janjua (Hindu Shahi) princes moved to Kashmir and for a while continued to play a significant role in the affairs of that country. Three generations of the immigrant Janjuas (Hindu Shahis) can be clearly identified from the stray references in the *Rajatarangini*. Of these, the first two generations enjoyed power and influence but the third was important only in as much as some Kashmirian Kings took their wives from amongst its members. Among Kalhana’s own contemporaries, some Kashmirian Kasatriya families still traced their origin to the royal dynasty and their fame long survived the catastrophe at the hands of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. Under the Kashmirian Kings Ananta (419/1028 to 455/1036), several scions of that house are found, “designated as Sahiputrah or Sahivamsaja rajaputrah, in positions of great honour and power at the Kashmir court, (comp. vii sqq., 178, 274). Among the wives of King Harsha there were Vasantalekha and other Shahi princesses. (vii. 956, 1470).

When Harsa succumbed to his rebel foes (A.D. 1101) these royal ladies maintained the fame of their race for valour and courage. They set fire to the stormed palace and found a heroic death in its flames (vii, 1550–1571). Kalhana also takes occasion to mention the great repute enjoyed in his own time by numerous Kasatriya clans which claimed descent from the Shahi race, (vii. 3230).<sup>32</sup>

#### *References*

1. *Punjab District Gazetteers, Volume XXVII, Jhelum District, with Maps, 1904, 93.*
2. Lepel H. Criffin, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab* (Lahore, 1910), ii, 254.
3. *Jhelum District with Maps, 1904, 94.*

4. I.H. Qureshi (Editor) *A Short History of Pakistan, Ancient Period* (Karachi, 1967), 125.
5. *Political History of India*, Eng. trans. Phillip Spratt (Calcutta, 1957), 155.
6. *The Vakataka-Gupta Age* (Banaras ceprint, 1954), 177.
7. Abdur Rahman, *The Last Two Dynasties of the Sahis* (Islamabad, 1979), 48.
8. Trade and war relations between the Turks and China in the second half of the 6th century, *Acta Orientalia*, xxi, No. 2 (1968, Budapest), 133, 155 (No. 15).
9. *The Vakataka-Gupta Age*, 19.
10. *A Short History of Pakistan, Ancient Period*, 140.
11. Abul Hasan bin 'Ali Hussain bin 'Ali, Masudi, *Muruj al-Dhahab* (ed.), Abdur Rahman, Muhammad (Cairo, 1316 A.H.), P. 103, English translation Elliot and Dowson, *History of India As Told By Its Own Historians* (London, 1967), I, p. 22.
12. Beside the Hindu-Shahi, Al-Biruni refers to other contemporary royal families which bore the title of 'Shah', that is, in the west and north of Kashmir were chiefs e.g. "The Balor Shah and the Shugnan Shah while the remote parts upto the frontiers of Badakshan belonged to Wakhan Shah...In the North in the mountains of Balor and Shamilan dwelt the Turks tribes called Bhattavaryan whose chief was styled Bhatta-Shah".  
  
Dr. Niaz Ahmad, "North-West Frontier Regions of Pakistan Geographical, Tribes and Historical perspective", *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society*, xxxvi, January 1988, i, 53.
13. *Coins in Medieval India* (London, 1894), 56.
14. M.A. Stein, "The Sahi of Udabhandu", Note J-V. 152-155, vide Kalhana's *Rajatarangani*, Eng. trans., (Delhi reprint, 1979), II, p. 337.
15. *The Last Two Dynasties of the Sahis*, Appendix A, 312.
16. *The Ancient Geography of India* (London, 1871 A.D.), 61.
17. Ibid. 63-64.
18. Khurshid Ahmad Faruqi, *Islami Dunya Dasaven Sadi Isvi Men* (Delhi, 1962), 264-65.
19. *Hudud al-Alam*, Eng. trans, V. Minorsky (London, 1930), p. 92. The Muslims resident of Udabhandu (Ohind) appear to be merchants.
20. *The Last Two Dynasties of the Sahi*, 132, 133.
21. *Hadud al-Alam*, op. cit., p. 92.
22. R.O. Majumdar and others (editors), *The Age of Imperial Kanauj* (Bombay, 1964), 38.
23. Mulla Muhammad Qasim Hindu Shah, *Tarikh-i-Firishta* (Nawal Kishore, 132 A.H.), I, p. 18.

24. Ibid., p. 17.
25. A.H. Dani, *Peshawar Historic City of the Frontier* (Peshawar, 1969), 201.
26. *Jhelum District with Maps, 1904*, 46.
27. *The Last Two Dynasties of the Sahis*, 273.
28. *Jhelum District with Maps, 1904*, 46, n. 2.
29. *The Last Two Dynasties of the Sahis*, 167.
30. Muhammad Nazim *The Life and Times of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna* (Lahore reprint, 1973), 96.
31. *The Last Two Dynasties of the Sahis*, 157, n. 3.
32. Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*, Eng. trans., II, J-V. 152–55.