

CHAPTER — V

The fact that the inhabitants of Mohammadpur are “Pathan” and Kakar Clan/Tribe of Afghan and came with Mehmood of Ghazni and did not belong to Ghazni province of Afghanistan nor in any way were related to Mehmood who was Turk bothered me to find the truth. I had my total education in Azamgarh and there was no library where I could get ancient books written by contemporary Historians in English, Urdu or Hindi which could throw some light on the expeditions of Mehmood of Ghazni. There are ancient books in Darul-Mossannefin Shibli Academy but they are in Arabic or Persian and I could not either read or understand the same hence I adopted, my own way of finding the facts and started visiting various villages around Mohammadpur and collected details of folk stories associated with each village and spots in such villages. The break through came when myself along with Mr. Mohd. Shameem Khan visited the village Anwank in 1968 specially the “taal” the lake and its surroundings. There I found the traces of thick/wide walls of fort especially on the Western and Southern sides of the Taal. This confirmed that there existed a fort.

Another point which I found that there was a mass graveyard at the Northern and Western side of the Fort which was made to burry the solders of Mehmood’s Army, who were killed. This Bheeta was intact till 1968 when I visited the place. However I happen to visit the spot again in 2009 and was shocked to find that the surroundings around the Taal has taken a sea change.

New houses; new roads are constructed and entire topography is changed. Another important thing which I found there in 1968, was an underwater tunnel leading under the water to an old structure/temple. This structure or temple appeared to have been built in the deep water. The temple appeared like an island in the lake and the tunnel was leading to the said temple.

We spoke with the old Pujari who narrated that this area was ancient town called “Awantikapuri” a sacred place of Hindu religion. He also said that when Lord Rama, Devi Sita and Lakhsman left Ajoddhya for Vanvas there first night halt was Durbasa the confluence of Rivers Majhui and Tamsa on the Borders of Faizabad and Azamgarh. The 2nd Night Halt after Durbasa was at Awantikapuri i.e. the present village Anwank. He further narrated that when Raja Parikshat the son of Abhimannu (and grand son of Arjun) was cursed by the son of Shirangi Rishi to die by (Nag) snake bite, Raja Parikshat built this

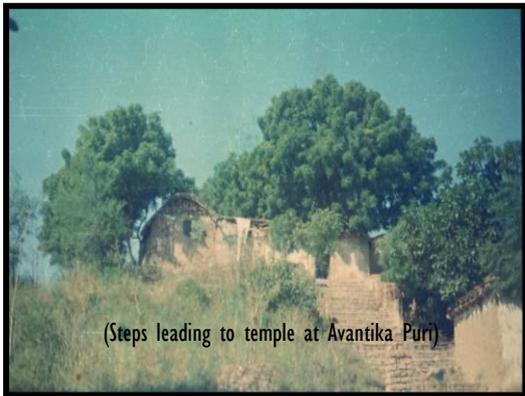
structure in the water for his abode, so that Nag may not be able to reach him as it will not venture to enter the water.

He also told that in spite of such a precaution taken by Raja Parikshat the Nag somehow reached him in this structure and bite him due to which Raja Prakshat died. Hearing the death of Raja Prakshat his son, Maha Raja Janmayjaya conducted a Sarp Yaggya at the said spot, to take revenge of the killing of his father. The story was beyond my belief, still I did not ignore any; of the statement of the Pujari and noted down all the details in whatever way he narrated. (Unfortunately, the under water tunnel has also vanished when I visited spot in 2009. A scantily clothed person met me who claimed as the new Pujari of the temple was not even aware about the existence of the tunnel. He said that since 1968 many Pujaries have changed and he was not aware of the past). The old temple was nowhere to be found/ nor visible, but on its spot, another big temple was under construction.

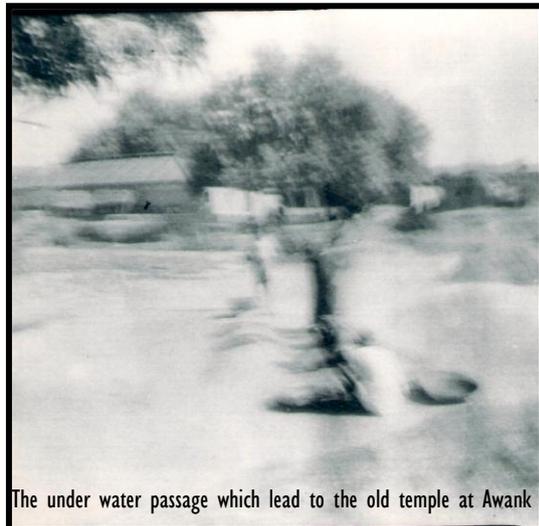
The originality of the area has been destroyed. He offered me a broacher/ Booklet, published in 2003 then in 2007 by one Adhyapak Dayanand Vishvakarma a resident of Village Anwak, with the title of "Awanti" (Anwak). I gave to the Pujari Rs.100/- and took a copy. The booklet did not throw much light on the historical aspect of the spot. I spoke with Mr. Dayanand on 25th January 2010 at about 1 p.m. on his cell phone No: 09452343145 but I found that even he was not conversant with details, which I have about the area. The booklet or broacher was printed by him more to highlight the religious importance rather historic importance.

I came in Delhi in September 1962. Some times later, I became member of Harding Municipal library situated at the Gandhi Maidan opposite Old Delhi Railway Station and I started looking to ancient books which were in plenty in the said library in English as well as Urdu and Hindi languages. (Recently it has come to my knowledge, that most of the manuscripts of the library are either stolen or destroyed due to poor maintenance and upkeep. This is most unfortunate.) There I found many books on the subject I was interested. I found Cambridge History of India Edited by Lt. Col. Sir Wolseley Haig published in 1929, by Cambridge, University Press. Also the History of India as told by its own Historians, the Mohammadan Period, and "Early Arab Geographers" by Sir H. M. Elliot and Prof. Dowson. The Medieval India Under Mohammadan Rule by Sir Stanley Lane — Poole M.A., D.Litt, published from T.Fisher Unwin Ltd., London, Adelphi Terrace, Alberuni's India, a Trubner's Oriental Series: Edited with notes & Indies of Berlin, Published from: Kegan Paul Trebner & Co. Ltd., London., The Foundation of Muslim Rule in India, by

A.B.M. Habibullah Department of Islamic History & Culture, University of Dhaka, The History of India, by Elphinstone with notes by E.B. Cowell M.A. 9th Edition. The above books fully supported the fact that Mehmood of Ghazni came up to the area where the village Anwak and Mohammadpur are situated. They also supported the existence of the fort (Qila) called "Ratagarh". And that after capturing and destroying the said fort Mehmood moved Southward to Asni now called Zafarabad in Jaunpur district and then proceeded to a place which was then called as Sarva situated at the bank of River Ken between Banda District of U.P. and Kalinjer of Madhaya Pradesh and then went back to Ghazni via Kannauj This was the expedition Mehmood undertook starting September 1018 A.D. for Hindustan and returned back to Ghazni in about March 1019 A.D.



(Steps leading to temple at Avantika Puri)



The under water passage which lead to the old temple at Awank



The Old temple at Awantika Puri (Awank)



The New temple over the old temple in
Awantika Puri (Awank)



Remenents of Qila Rata Garh

Remenents of Qila Rata Garh



The Ganjshaheeda at Noth West of the Rata Garh Qila, where the soldures of Mehmood Gaznavi were Buried.

The Havan Kund and the underground Tunnel leading to temple

