

submission by strong superiority. The new government is something strange. People are not familiar with, or used to, its rule. But once leadership is firmly vested in the members of the family qualified to exercise royal authority in the dynasty, and once (royal authority) has been passed on by inheritance over many generations and through successive dynasties, the beginnings are forgotten, and the members of that family are clearly marked as leaders. It has become a firmly established article of faith that one must be subservient and submissive to them. People will fight with them in their behalf, as they would fight for the articles of faith. By this time, (the rulers) will not need much group (feeling to maintain) their power. It is as if obedience to the government were a divinely revealed book that cannot be changed or opposed.

(The rulers) maintain their hold over the government and their own dynasty with the help, then, either of clients and followers who grew up in the shadow and power of group feeling, or of tribal groups of a different descent who have become their clients.

Something of the sort happened to the 'Abbāsids. The group feeling of the Arabs had been destroyed by the time of the reign of al-Mu'tasim and his son, al-Wāthiq. They tried to maintain their hold over the government thereafter with the help of Persian, Turkish, Daylam,¹ Saljûq, and other clients. Then, the (non-Arabs) and their clients gained power over the provinces (of the realm). The influence of the dynasty grew smaller, and no longer extended beyond the environs of Baghdad. Eventually, the Daylam closed in upon and took possession of (that area). The caliphs were ruled by them. Then (the Daylam), in turn, lost control. The Saljûqs seized power after the Daylam, and the (caliphs) were ruled by them. Then (the Saljûqs), in turn, lost control. Finally, the Tatars closed in. They killed the caliph and wiped out every vestige of the dynasty.

The same happened to the Umayyad dynasty in Spain. When its Arab group feeling was destroyed, small princes seized power and divided the territory among themselves. In competition with each other, they distributed among themselves the realm of the Umayyad dynasty. Each one of them seized the territory under his control and aggrandized himself. (These rulers) learned of the relations that existed between the non-Arabs (in the East) and the 'Abbāsids. (Imitating them), they adopted royal surnames and used royal trappings. There was no danger that anyone would take (the prerogatives they claimed) away from them or alter (the situation in this respect), because Spain was no longer the home of groups and tribes.

¹ Daylam is the name of the region along the southern shore of the Caspian Sea and of the ethnic stock living there, which provided the 'Abbāsid caliphate with a large group of powerful mercenaries.

They tried to maintain their power with the help of clients and followers and with that of the Zanâtah and other Berber tribes which infiltrated Spain from the (African) shore. They imitated the way the Umayyad dynasty in its last stages had tried to maintain its power with their help. (These newcomers) founded large states. Each one of them had control over a section of Spain. They also had a large share of royal authority, corresponding to (that of) the dynasty they had divided up. They thus remained in power until the Almoravids, who shared in the strong Lamtûnah group feeling, crossed the sea. The latter came and replaced and dislodged them from their centres. They obliterated all traces of (the small princes) who were unable to defend themselves because they had no (longer any) group feeling. . . .

3 Members of a royal family may be able to found a dynasty that can dispense with group feeling

This is because the group feeling in which (a member of a royal family) shares may have much power over nations and races, and the inhabitants of remote regions who support his power may be obedient (to that family) and submissive. So, when such a person secedes, leaving the seat of his rule and the home of his might, and joins those inhabitants of remote regions, they adopt him. They support his rule and help him. They take care of establishing his dynasty on a firm basis. They hope that he will be confirmed in his family (rights) and take the power away from his kinsmen. They do not desire to share in any way in his rule, as they subject themselves to his group feeling and submit to the colouring of material superiority firmly belonging to him and his people. They believe, as in an article of faith, in being obedient to (him and his people). Were they to desire to share his rule with him or to rule without him, 'the earth would be shaken'. . . .¹

4 Dynasties of wide power and large royal authority have their origin in religion based either on prophethood or on truthful propaganda.

This is because royal authority results from superiority. Superiority results from group feeling. Only by God's help in establishing His religion do individual desires come together in agreement to press their claims, and hearts become united. The secret of this is that when hearts succumb to false desires and are inclined toward the world, mutual jealousy and widespread differences arise. When they

¹ Qur'an 99. 1 (1).

are turned toward the truth and reject the world and whatever is false, and advance toward God, they become one in their outlook. Jealousy disappears. Mutual co-operation and support flourish. As a result, the extent of the state widens, and the dynasty grows, as we shall explain now.

5 Religious propaganda gives a dynasty at its beginning another power in addition to that of the group feeling it possessed as the result of the number of its supporters

As we have mentioned before, the reason for this is that religious colouring does away with mutual jealousy and envy among people who share in a group feeling, and causes concentration upon the truth. When people come to have the (right) insight into their affairs, nothing can withstand them, because their outlook is one and their object one of common accord. They are willing to die for (their objectives). The members of the dynasty they attack may be many times as numerous as they. But their purposes differ, inasmuch as they are false purposes, and (the people of the worldly dynasty) come to abandon each other, since they are afraid of death. Therefore, they do not offer resistance to (the people with a religious colouring), even if they themselves are more numerous. They are overpowered by them and quickly wiped out, as a result of the luxury and humbleness existing among them, as we have mentioned before.

This happened to the Arabs at the beginning of Islam during the Muslim conquests. The armies of the Muslims at al-Qâdisiyah and at the Yarmûk numbered some 30,000 in each case, while the Persian troops at al-Qâdisiyah numbered 120,000, and the troops of Heraclius, according to al-Wâqidî, 400,000. Neither of the two parties was able to withstand the Arabs, who routed them and seized what they possessed.

This can also be illustrated (by the situation existing at the time) when the religious colouring changes and is destroyed. The power (of the ruling dynasty) is then wiped out. Superiority exists then merely in proportion to (the existing) group feeling, without the additional (power of) religion. As a result, the dynasty is overpowered by those groups (up to this time) under its control, that are equal or superior to it in strength. It had formerly overpowered the groups that had a stronger group feeling and were more deeply rooted in desert life, with the help of the additional power that religion had given it. . . .

6 *Religious propaganda cannot materialize without group feeling*

This is because every mass (political) undertaking by necessity requires group feeling. This is indicated in Muḥammad's saying: 'God sent no prophet who did not enjoy the protection of his people.' If this was the case with the prophets, who are among human beings those most likely to perform wonders, one would (expect it to apply) all the more so to others. One cannot expect them to be able to work the wonder of achieving superiority without group feeling.

To this chapter belong cases of revolutionaries from among the common people and of jurists who undertake to reform evil practices. Many religious people who follow the ways of religion come to revolt against unjust amirs. They call for a change in, and prohibition of, evil practices. They hope for a divine reward for what they do. They gain many followers and sympathizers among the great mass of the people, but they risk being killed, and most of them actually do perish in consequence of their activities as sinners, unrewarded, because God had not destined them for such (activities). He commands such activities to be undertaken only where there exists the power to bring them to a successful conclusion. Muḥammad said: 'Should one of you see evil activities, he should change them with his hand. If he cannot do that, he should change them with his tongue. And if he cannot do that, he should change them with his heart.'

Rulers and dynasties are strongly entrenched. Their foundations can be undermined and destroyed only through strong efforts backed by the group feeling of tribes and families, as we have mentioned before. Similarly, prophets in their religious propaganda depended on groups and families, though they were the ones who could have been supported by God with anything in existence, if He had wished, but in His wisdom He permitted matters to take their customary course.

If someone who is on the right path were to attempt (religious reforms) in this way, his isolation would keep him from (gaining the support of) group feeling, and he would perish. If someone merely pretends to (achieve religious reforms) in order to gain (political) leadership, he deserves to be hampered by obstacles and to fall victim to perdition. (Religious reforms) are a divine matter that materializes only with God's pleasure and support, through sincere devotion for Him and in view of good intentions toward the Muslims. No Muslim, no person of insight, could doubt this. . . .

Many deluded individuals took it upon themselves to establish the truth. They did not know that they would need group feeling for that.

They did not realize how their enterprise must necessarily end and what they would come to. Toward such people it is necessary to adopt one of the following courses. One may either treat them, if they are insane, or one may punish them either by execution or beatings when they cause trouble, or one may ridicule them and treat them as buffoons.

At the beginning of this century, a man known as al-'Abbās appeared among the Ghumārah. The lowest among the stupid and imbecile members of those tribes followed his blethering. He marched on Bādīs, one of the (Ghumārah) cities, and entered it by force. He was then killed, forty days after the start of his mission. He perished like those before him.

There are many similar cases. Their mistake is that they disregard the significance of group feeling (for success) in such matters. If deceit is involved, it is better that such a person should not succeed and be made to pay for his crime.

7 *Each dynasty has a certain amount of provinces and lands, and no more.*

The reason for this is that the group to which a given dynasty belongs and the people who support and establish it, must of necessity be distributed over the provinces and border regions which they reach and take into possession. Only thus is it possible to protect them against enemies and to enforce the laws of the dynasty relative to the collection of taxes, restrictions, and other things.

When the (various) groups have spread over the border regions and provinces, their numbers are necessarily exhausted. This, then, is the time when the territory (of the dynasty) has reached its farthest extension, where the border regions form a belt around the centre of the realm. If the dynasty then undertakes to expand beyond its holdings, its widening territory remains without military protection and is laid open to any chance attack by enemy or neighbour. This has the detrimental result for the dynasty of the creation of boldness toward it and of diminished respect for it. If the group is a very large one and its numbers are not exhausted when distributed over border regions and territories, the dynasty retains the strength to go beyond the limit (so far reached), until its expansion has gone as far as possible.

The natural reason for this (situation) lies in the fact that the power of group feeling is one of the natural powers. Any power resulting in any kind of action must proceed in its action in such manner.

A dynasty is stronger at its centre than it is at its border regions. When it has reached its farthest expansion, it becomes too weak and incapable to go any farther. This may be compared to light rays