



HemuNapoleon of Medieval India

By K.K. Bhardwaj

Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 2000. N.A. Book Condition: New. Xiv+109pp The New Cambridge History of India published in 1993 records, ?Hemu, a Hindu Vaisya or a member of a literate, mercantile caste, who had risen from humble circumstances to be a general for the Sur regime, claimed royal status by employing the ancient Sanskrit title of Raja Vikramaditya. Had he succeeded this would have been a remarkable assertion of the Sanskritic/Brahmanical monarchical tradition in North India long subservient to Muslim rulers? The career of Hemu is indeed a saga of adventure, courage and patriotism. Born in a poor family in a village in Haryana, he embarked upon the ladder of life as a salt-petre merchant in Rewari. His honesty, hard-work and fair-dealing impressed the state officials and they gave him a job of weighman. Soon they appointed him the Superintendent of Markets in the State administration. That was a golden opportunity to him to show his mettle to his royal masters and he was soon promoted as Daroga-i-Dakchoki (Superintendent of Posts and Intelligence). As various Afghan Chiefs were always planning and revolting against the emperor? s authority, Hemu as an efficient Superintendent of Intelligence could keep the emperor well-cautioned. That gave...



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