



ISLAMIC HISTORY ----- and ----- CIVILIZATION



south
ASIA

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Baburi / Mughal Empire

(932-1274/1526-1858)

FARAZ ANJUM

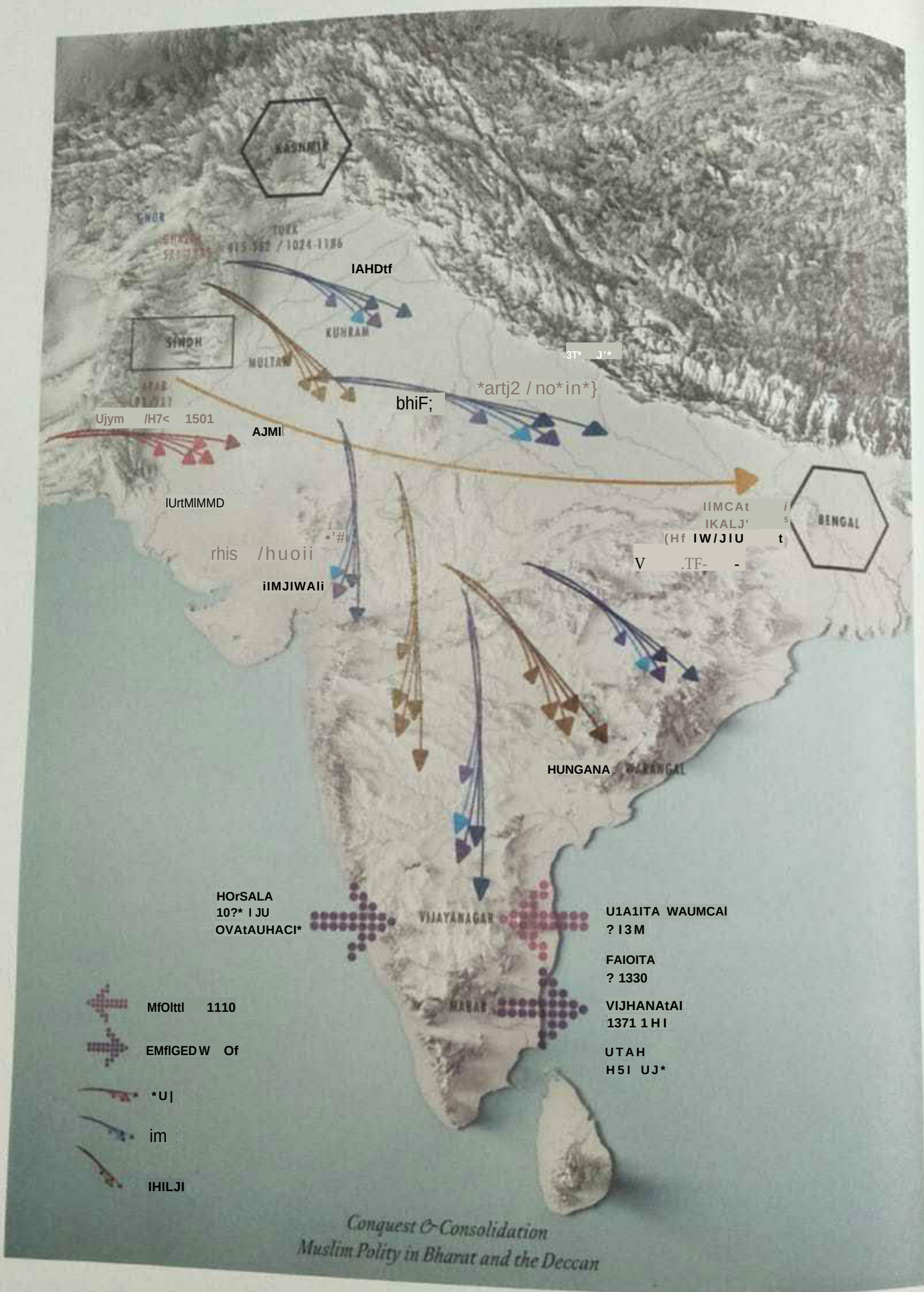
ONE of the largest states in the early modern era, the Baburi/Mughal Empire,¹⁸ encompassed an area of 3.2 million square kilometres and a population of 100 to 150 million at its zenith around 1008/1600. Its landmass included much of present day Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. It was larger in size and resources than Safavi Persia and Ottoman Turkey and was comparable only to the Ming Empire of China. The period remains unprecedented in the history of South Asia in terms of wealth and grandeur, capability of rulers and governing elites, imperial ideology and political and administrative system, technological advancement and economic growth, literary and historical output and artistic and aesthetic taste. The Mughals left an enduring cultural legacy, particularly in architecture, paintings, literature and cuisine.¹⁹

The lengthy political history of the Mughals falls into two distinct periods: Great Mughals (932-1118/1526-1707), from Zaheer al-Din Muhammad Babur to Mohi al-Din Muhammad Aurangzeb 'Alamgir, and Later Mughals (1118-1274/1707-1858) from Abu al-Nasir Qutb al-Din Muhammad Bahadur Shah, who also used the title Shah 'Alam²⁰ to Mirza Abu Zafar Siraj al-Din Muhammad Bahadur Shah Zafar.

¹⁸ The empire has been referred to by various names. The members of the ruling dynasty considered themselves to be the descendants of Amir Timur (Tamerlane) or *Timuris*. The Europeans who came in the sixteenth and subsequent centuries erroneously regarded them as belonging to Mongol race or *Mughals* while in Central Asia and the Turkish world, the dynasty came to be associated with the name of the founder, Babur and thus *Baburis*. In the chapter, the three terms have been used interchangeably.

¹⁹ For a general survey of Baburis, see John F. Richards, *Mughal Empire, I., g, The New Cambridge History of India*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993; Michael H. Fisher, *A Short History of the Mughal Empire*, London: I. B. Tauris, 2016; Abraham Early, *The Mughal Throne: The Saga of India's Great Emperors*, London: Phoenix, 2004; and Bamber Gascoigne, *The Great Moghuls*, New York: Harper & Row, 1971.

²⁰ It was a common practice amongst the Mughals that a prince was given a personal name at the time of



I. Political History

A. Babur (932-937/1526-1530)

Zaheer al-Din Muhammad Babur²¹ was born around 888/1483 in the Central Asian region of Farghana (in present day Uzbekistan and Kirghizstan). Scion of two great conquerors, Chingiz Khan (c. 557-624/1162-1227) and Amir Timur, popularly known as Tamerlane (d. 807/1405), he became the ruler of the small principality of Farghana at the age of eleven due to the accidental death of his father. At that time, Central Asia was divided into innumerable principalities, occupied mostly by his own close relatives who incessantly fought one another.²² Though his position was quite precarious, in his early career, he twice made attempts in 903/1497 and 906/1500 to conquer Samarqand, capital of his ancestor Timur and one of the most important cities of Central Asia. However, his attempts resulted in temporary occupations as he failed to retain the city for long. In the early sixteenth century, Central Asia witnessed the rise of the Uzbeks under their leader Shaibani Khan (c. 855-916/1451-1510) who repeatedly defeated the Timuris, including Babur with his new military tactics.²³

Finding his position untenable in Central Asia, Babur eventually occupied Kabul in 910/1504, from where he made repeated reconnoitring excursions in the neighbouring North India. In 913/1507-08, he adopted the title of 'Padshah' (king). In 917/1511, on hearing the news of Shaibani Khan's death in the Battle of Marv, he immediately moved to Central Asia and with the help of the Persian army occupied Samarqand for the third time. However, his association with the Persians made him unpopular among the city populace and a reunited Uzbek army defeated him next year and thus ended his third and last attempt to seize Samarqand. Now at the age of 30 years, he returned to Kabul in 919/1514-15 to start the second and more significant phase of his life.

India, in the early sixteenth century, was divided into many states ruled by

his birth. Later during the course of his life, he was bestowed with a number of other honorific titles. On coronation, generally, the prince adopted a different title. In the present case, Shah Alam's real name was M'uzzam. Later, on coronation he adopted the dual title of Bahadur Shah and Shah Alam.

²¹ The most important contemporary sources of Babur's life and adventures include Babur's own diary, titled *Babur-Nama: Memoirs of Babur*, tr. A. S. Beveridge, Two Vols. Bound in One, New Delhi: Low Price Publications, 2003 [1921]; an account of his cousin, Mirza Haidar Dughlat, *The Tarikh-i Rashidi: A History of the Moghuls of Central Asia*, tr. E. Denison Ross, ed. N. Elias, 2 Vols., New Delhi: ABI Prints & Publishing, 1998 [1895] and account of his daughter, Gul-Badan Begum, *Humayun-Nama: The History of Humayun*, tr. A. S. Beveridge, Lahore: Sang-e Meel, 1987 [1902]. The important modern works on Babur include: Stephen F. Dale, *The Garden of the Eight Paradises: Babur and the Culture of Empire in Central Asia, Afghanistan and India, 1483-1530*, Leiden: Brill, 2004; and Mohibbul Hasan, *Babur: Founder of the Mughal Empire in India*, New Delhi: Manohar, 1985.

²² For kinship relations and political conflict within an ethnic group, see Maria Eva Subtelney, "Babur's Rival Relations: A Study of Kinship and Conflict in 15th-16th Century Central Asia," *Der Islam* 66 (1989): pp. 102-118.

²³ For a study of Central Asia of Timur and his descendants, see Mansura Haider, *Medieval Central Asia: Polity, Economy and Military Organization, Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries*, New Delhi: Manohar, 2004.

different clans and tribes. It lacked a central authority. Though the Sultanate of Delhi survived the invasion of Babur's ancestor, Timur, in 800/1398, it lost its lustre and much of its territory. A circumscribed Delhi Sultanate was ruled by an Afghan fraternity of Lodis, under its third ruler Ibrahim Lodi whose harsh treatment of his own clan and inability to rally around himself the ruling elites had resulted in further erosion of his authority. During his various inroads into north India, Babur had avidly watched the prevailing political circumstances and cultivated alliances with dissident groups, even marrying with the daughter of the chief of Yusufzai tribe living on the border between Afghan territories and India. Finally in 932/1526 in the battle of Panipat, he defeated Ibrahim Lodi. Babur's superb military tactics, mostly learned from his rival Uzbeks, particularly his mobile cavalry armed with bows and use of *tulughmah*, led to his victory. Babur's forces, then, occupied Delhi and Agra and seized immense treasures, including the famous *koh-i-nur* diamond. Babur thus virtually became the master of North India. However, his authority was not yet unchallenged.

In 933/1527, Babur had to face at Khanua, a small village near Agra, a Rajput Confederacy led by Rana Sanga of Chitor. The dissident Afghan elements and those, who had expected Babur to return after the victory at Panipat, also joined hands with the Rajputs. On the other hand, disputes had arisen in Babur's army as some nobles desired to return to Kabul while some others feared authoritative rule of Babur, which was against the Turco-Mongol tradition. At that critical juncture, Babur made an emotional speech in which he appealed to religious sentiments; he declared the coming contest with the Hindu Rajputs as *Jihad* against the infidels, broke the wine cups and vowed never to take wine again. This speech had the desired effect and "all those present, officer and retainer, great and small, took the Holy Book joyfully into their hands and made vow and compact to this purport."²⁴ The speech won him the battle. Babur adopted the title *oighazi* and *fath-i padshah-i Islam* (victory of the king of Islam) as the chronogram of the victory which established his supremacy in the region. His forces then conquered Chanderi and quelled an Afghan rebellion in Bihar. Babur died at Agra in 937/1530 and his body was taken to Kabul a few years later.

Babur inherited the Turco-Mongol tradition of Central Asia which was based on radically divergent elements.²⁵ He, like the Mongols, occasionally showed extreme savagery and erected minarets of human skulls while, at the same time, like his ancestor Timur, patronised literature and culture. His memoirs, or *Baburnamah*, belongs to the *waqaijtuzk* genre and is an intimate day-to-day account of his observations, thoughts and feelings. His impressions of India were varied. He frankly admitted that he did not like the weather and climate, fauna and flora, art and architecture of India. However, he did appreciate its riches and vastness.

¹⁴ *Babur Nama: Memoirs of Babur*, p. 557.

■ « For the strong impact of Central Asian legacy on the Baburis, see Lisa Balabanlilar, *Imperial Identity in the Mughal Empire: Memory and Dynastic Politics in Early Modern South and Central Asia*, New Delhi: Viva Books, 2013.

Having a spiritual bent of mind, he was devoted to the Naqshbandi saint, Khwaja Ubaidullah Ahrar (d. 895/1490) and his descendants and versified one of Khwaja's treatises on sufi morality. Babur also wrote poetry in Turkish language and is considered one of the most important poets of Chaghatay dialect. His memoirs are particularly acclaimed for candidness and simplicity of expression?⁶

B. Humayun (937-947/1530-1540)

Nasir al-Din Muhammad Humayun²⁷ was born in Kabul in 913/1508 and was the eldest son of Babur. During his father's life time, he actively took part in his father's campaigns and showed himself to be an able general. He was, therefore, recognised as his father's successor. As a ruler, he had to face many problems. One issue was the ambitious claims of his brothers. Following Turco-Mongol *Ulus* tradition of assigning appanages,²⁸ Humayun had to give Kabul and Badakhshan to his brother Mirza Kamran (914-964/1509-1557) who also appropriated the Punjab, cutting Humayun off from Central Asia, while Mewat and Sambhal were assigned to other two brothers Mirza Askari and Mirza Hindal respectively. However, mutual jealousies and rivalries amongst the brothers remained a constant feature of Humayun's reign. He was himself addicted to opium while astrology was his main preoccupation. Another issue was his nature and character. To quote Lane-Poole, "Naturally kind, he forgave when he should have punished; light-hearted and sociable, he revelled at the table when he ought to have been in the saddle... His name means 'fortunate, and never was an unlucky sovereign more miscalled.'"²⁹

Humayun's position was precarious from day one as it was threatened simultaneously in the east by Sher Khan Sur, the Afghan lord of Bihar and in the west by Bahadur Shah (932-943/1526-1537), the ruler of Gujrat. Humayun's first campaign enabled him to contain the Afghans beyond Benares. He then moved against Bahadur Shah who had enhanced his power by overrunning Malwa and some Rajput principalities and had besieged Chitor. Humayun was able to inflict

⁶ For a study of *Baburnamah*, see Stephen Frederic Dale, "Steppe Humanism: Autobiographical Writings of Zahir al-Din Muhammad Babur, 1483-1530," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 22 no. 1 (Feb. 1990): 37-58; idem, "The Poetry and Autobiography of Baburnamah," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 55 no. 3 (Aug. 1996): 635-664.

¹⁷ Contemporary sources for Humayun include his sister, Gul-Badan Begum's *Humayun-Nama*, Jawhar Aftabachi's *Tadhkiratul-waqiat* and Bayazid Bayat's *Tarikh-i-Humayun*. These three works have been collected together in *Three Memoirs of Humayun*, Persian texts ed. and tr. by W.M. Thackston, California: Mazda, 2009. The important later studies of Humayun include Ishwari Prasad, *The Life and Times of Humayun*, Lahore: Book Traders, n.d. [1956]; S. K. Banerje, *Humayun Badshah*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938; and Sukumar Ray, *Humayun in Persia*, Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1948.

²⁸ *Ulus* was an appanage tradition which entailed that the kingdom will be divided amongst the brothers and other close relatives and the reigning monarch will be just 'first among equals'. After 993/1585, under Akbar, this tradition gradually faded out. For a study of the appanage tradition in general and role of the royal princes in particular, see, Munis D. Faruqi, *The Princes of the Mughal Empire, 1504-1719*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

²⁹ Stanley Lane-Poole, *Mediaeval India under Mohammedan Rule, 712-1764*, New York: G. P. Putnam's Son, 1903, p. 219.

on him a crushing defeat and in 943/1536, conquered Champaner and Ahmedabad, the capital of Gujrat. However, Humayun was unable to enjoy the fruits of his victory as he handed Gujrat to his brother Askari who soon abandoned all the conquered areas. While Humayun was busy against Gujrat, Sher Khan strengthened his position in the eastern provinces. In 943/1537, he occupied Bengal and became the acknowledged leader of the Afghans against the Mughals. After undue delay, Humayun finally moved against Sher Khan and the two forces met at Chausa in 946/1539. The surprise Afghan attack completely routed the Mughals. Humayun himself barely escaped alive. Next year saw another round of battle between the two rivals near Qanauj. The demoralised forces of Humayun failed to match the shrewd tactics of the Afghans; and Humayun, with a handful of followers, fled to Agra and then to Lahore. Humayun's desperate appeals to his brothers to make a joint front against Sher Shah came to nought. Kamran even refused to allow fleeing Humayun to take refuge in Kabul. Humayun therefore found a safe haven only in Persia where Shah Tahmasp, the Safavi ruler, welcomed him.

C. Afghan Interlude (947-962/1540-1555)

Sher Khan³⁰ whose original name was Farid was born in 890/1486. His grandfather came to India during the reign of Bahlol Lodi and his father entered the service of an Afghan noble. Due to differences with his father and maltreatment of his step-mother, he left his home and went to Jaunpur, a great centre of learning at that time. When father and son were ultimately reconciled, the former entrusted his estates at Sahsaram and Khawaspur to Sher Khan. Thus at an early age, he got first-hand experience of administering a large area and experimenting with new measures for establishing law and order and an effective and equitable system of assessing and collecting land revenue.

In 947/1540, Sher Khan coronated himself as Sher Shah and immediately moved in pursuit of Humayun and during the process, occupied Punjab and Sindh. He had to face a strong resistance from the turbulent Ghakkars and therefore, in order to subdue them permanently and to guard the road between Ghazni and Lahore, he built the strong fortress of Rohtas, to the west of the Jhelum river. Malwa was occupied next and then he moved towards Rajputana which was suspected of helping Humayun. He created dissensions amongst the Rajputs and one by one captured important fortresses, including Chitor and Ranthambhor. The third in line was Kalinjar which was besieged in November 950/1544. While supervising the operation, *s.huqqa* (handgrenade) which had been thrown towards

³⁰ The two important contemporary accounts of Sher Shah are Abbas Khan Sarwani's *Tankh-i Sher Shahi*, ed. & tr. by S. M. Imam al-Din, Dacca: University of Dacca, 1964 and Shaykh Rizqullah Mushtaqi, *Waqiat-i Mushtaqi*, ed. & ann. by Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui and Waqarul Hasan Siddiqui, Rampur: Rampur Raza Library, 2002. The later day studies include Kalikaranjan Qanungo, *Sher Shah: A Critical Study Based on Original Sources*, Calcutta: Kar, Majumder & Co., 1921, later revised as *Sher Shah and His Times*, Bombay: Orient Longmans, 1965; Husain Khan, *Sher Shah Suri: Ustad-i Badshahan alias Sher Shah Suri*, Lahore: Ferozsons, 1987; I. H. Siddiqui, *Sher Shah Suri and His Dynasty* Jaipur: Publication Scheme, 1995; and Bashir Ahmed Khan Matta, *Sher Shah Suri: A Fresh Perspective*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2005.

the fort rebounded and fell into a heap of other grenades which began exploding. Sher Shah was hit by one of them. He died on 11 Rabi' al-awwal 952/22 May 1545, just after the news of the capture of the fort was brought to him. Though Sher Shah got the opportunity to rule for just five years, he has been acclaimed by his contemporaries and later day historians as a great administrator. He was a precursor of Akbar for his ideas of justice for all and religious pluralism. When the news of his death was brought to Humayun in Persia, the latter acknowledged him as *ustad-i badshahan* (instructor of the monarchs).

Sher Shah's brief five year period is remembered for his large scale public works, particularly a network of roads and highways. He focussed on developmental areas and of his four great roads, one connected Sonargaon (near modern Dacca) in Bengal through Agra, Delhi and Lahore, with the Indus; others connected Agra with Burhanpur; Agra with Jodhpur and Chitor; and Lahore with Multan. He built 1700 *sarais* on these roads and in every *sarai* separate lodgings were provided for the Hindus and the Muslims. Whosoever entered the *sarai* was supplied provisions and fodder from government store. Village, market, police post and *ajami* mosque, along with *imam* and *muezzin* were provided near every *sarai*. Two horses were kept in every *sarai* to transmit news to the next station.³¹ In the words of Qanungo, "these *sarais* were the veritable arteries of the empire, diffusing a new life among its hitherto benumbed limbs."³² Internal trade was facilitated by the abolition of vexatious tolls and internal customs. Strict measures and personal vigilance of Sher Shah ensured safety of the travellers on the roads.

Sher Shah was succeeded by his son Islam Shah Sur (952-960/1545-1553) who made an effort to continue the policies of his father. He kept the fortifications in good repair and increased the number of *caravan sarais*. However, he failed to keep the rebellious spirit of his nobles in check and his reign saw repeated rebellions and no expansion of territory. Islam Shah was succeeded by Muhammad 'Adil Shah (961-962/1554-1555) who left the conduct of state affairs in the hands of his able Hindu minister, Himu. Internal dissensions amongst the Sur family further eroded the king's authority. 'Adil Shah ruled over Agra, Malwa and as far east as Jaunpur while Sikandar Shah Sur ruled independently from the foot of the Himalayas to Gujrat in the Punjab. These internal conflicts provided opportunity to Humayun to invade India.

d. Humayun's Second Period (962-963/1555-1556)

In 950/1544 Humayun had taken refuge in Persia. For the next ten years, he waited for the opportune moment to reconquer India. With the death of Sher Shah and later the division of Sur Kingdom into parts, Humayun got the long awaited chance. In 1553, he occupied Kabul, defeating and later blinding his brother, Kamran. From Kabul, duplicating his father's conquest of India, he entered India and in 962/1554,

³¹ Sarwani, *Tarikh-i Sher Shahi*, pp. 170-71.

³² Kalikaranjan Qanungo, *Sher Shah: A Critical Study Based on Original Sources*, p. 392.

at the town of Sirhind, defeated Sikandar Shah Sur, the Punjab ruler. He then entered Delhi and recovered his father's kingdom by mid-1555. However, he was not destined to rule for a long time. Just after seven months of his restoration, he tumbled down from the steps of his library in the fortress of Delhi and died.

E. Akbar (963-1014/1556-1605)

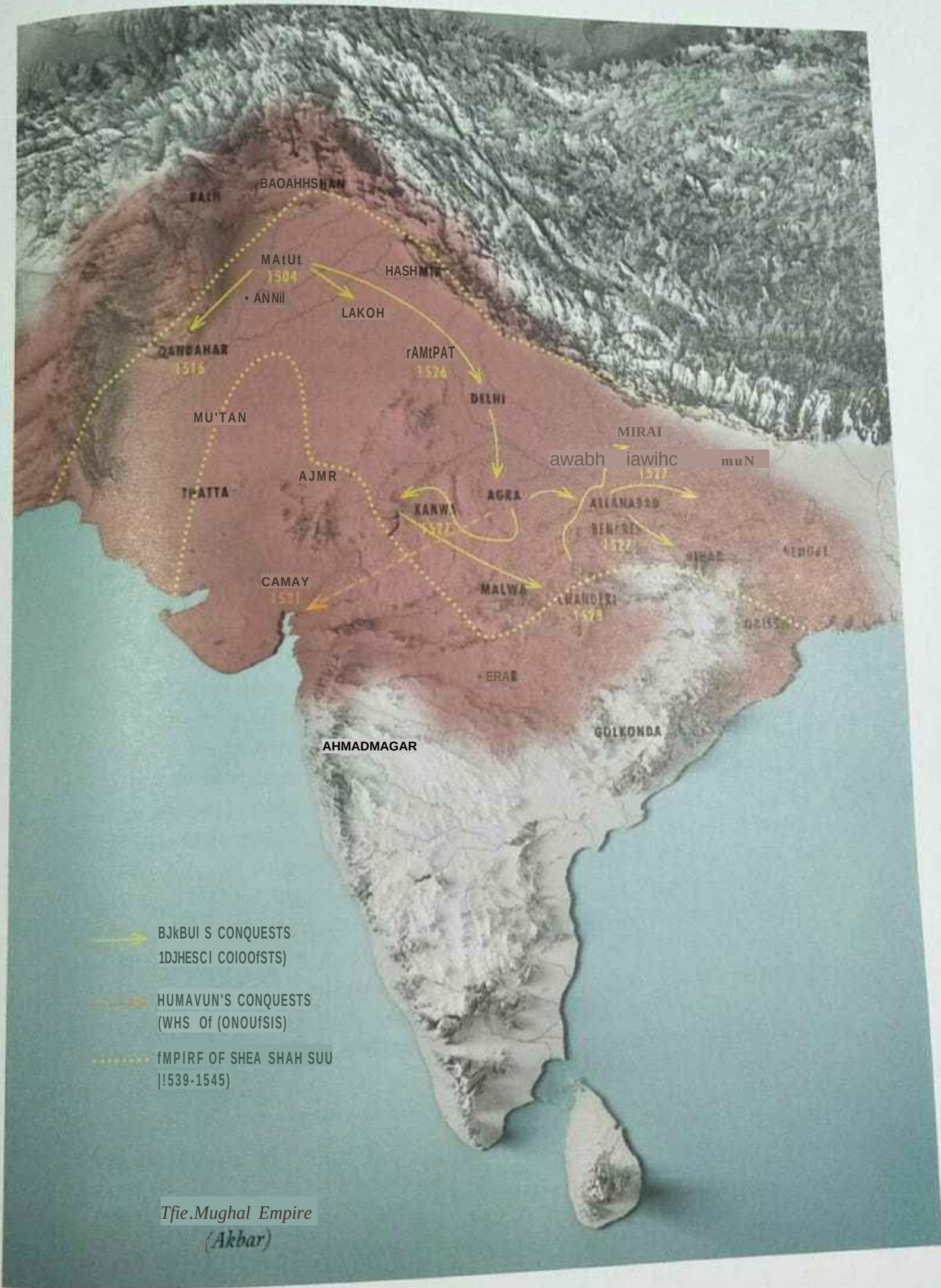
Humayun's son, Jalal al-Din Muhammad Akbar,³³ ascended the throne at the age of thirteen. His position was extremely tenuous and the rule of Mughals extended only to Punjab, Delhi and Agra while at Kabul, Akbar's half-brother, Mirza Hakeem, had become virtually an independent ruler. Soon the Surs occupied Delhi and Agra and Akbar was left with the possession of half of the Punjab only. However, the Turkoman noble and confidant of his father, Bairam Khan, acted as his regent. It was the sagacity, skill and experience of Bairam Khan that was his greatest asset. He guided young Akbar at every step in the early days. The first challenge to his authority came from Himu who, after occupying Delhi and Agra, had proclaimed himself as Raja Bikramajit II, the renowned ruler of ancient India. Bairam Khan moved to Panipat with Akbar and the Second Battle of Panipat was fought. Himu had relied on his 1500 war elephants but when an arrow hit him and made him unconscious, his army was thrown into confusion and fled. Himu was captured and killed. Bairam Khan led the pursuit of the fleeing army and reoccupied Delhi and Agra. He then conquered Gwalior and the province of Jaunpur.

For four years, Bairam Khan virtually ruled the Kingdom in the name of Akbar who spent most of his time in hunting, elephant fights and other youthful pursuits. However, as in all autocracies, this unnatural arrangement was to end. In 967/1560, Akbar celebrated his eighteenth birthday and began to feel like a man. Certain rival groups at the court, particularly his foster mother Maham Anaga and her son Adham Khan, also provoked the King to dispense with the services of Bairam Khan. Akbar sent a carefully worded message to the latter, telling him that "I have now determined to take the reins of government into my own hands and it is desirable that you should now make the pilgrimage to Makkah, upon which you have been so long intent."³⁴

Bairam Khan resented Akbar's behaviour but after a half-hearted show of

³³ Akbar's period has been chronicled in a number of contemporary sources. Most important include: Abu 'l-Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, tr. H. Beveridge, 3 Vols., Lahore: Sang-e-Meel, 2005 [1921]; Idem, *The Ain-i Akbari*, tr. H. Blochmann and H. S. Jarrett, Lahore: Sang-e-Meel, 2004 [1927]; Abd-ul-Qadir bin Malik Shah al-Badaoni, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, tr. George Ranking, W. H. Lowe and Wolsley Haig, 3 Vols., Calcutta, 1884; Nizam al-Din Ahmed, *Tabaqat-i Akbari*, tr. Brajendranath De, 3 Vols., Calcutta: The Asiatic Society, 1936; Muhammad Arif Qandhari, *Tarikh-i Akbari*, tr. Tasneem Ahmed, Delhi: Pragati Publications, 1993. Influential works in modern times include V. A. Smith, *Akbar the Great Mogul, 1542-1605*, 2nd ed., Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1962; A. L. Srivastava, *Akbar the Great*, 3 Vols., Agra: Shiva Lal Agarwal, 1962-72; I. H. Qureshi, *Akbar: Architect of the Mughal Empire*, Karachi, 1978; S. M. Burke, *Akbar the Greatest Mogul*, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1989; Irfan Habib (ed.), *Akbar and His India*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997; Iqtidar Alam Khan (& L.), *Akbar and His Age*, New Delhi: Indian Council of Historical Research, 1999.

³⁴ For the whole episode and life of Bairam Khan, see, Sukumar Ray, *Bairam Khan*, ed. M. H. A. Beg, Karachi: Institute of Central and West Asian Studies, 1992.



defiance, left for Makkah to perform *hajj*. However, on the way near Pattan in Gujrat, he was murdered by a man who had a personal grudge against him. Akbar publicly mourned Bairam Khan's death and brought up his infant son, Abdur Rahim, under his own personal care and protection?⁵ With the removal of Bairam Khan, Maham Anaga and her son became supreme. Akbar, out of courtesy for them or probably following a deliberate policy, tolerated them. However, after two years, their position became unbearable for the young monarch who in 969/1562 assumed the full powers of the state.

Akbar now embarked upon a policy of expansion of the Kingdom. He himself believed that "a monarch should be ever intent on conquest; otherwise his neighbours rise in arms against him."³⁶ Malwa had become an independent kingdom in the aftermath of the Sur downfall. In 967/1560, an army was sent which defeated the reigning monarch and Malwa was annexed. Gondwana was governed by a gallant lady Rani Durgavati. In 971/1564, the Mughal forces defeated the Rani's forces, driving her to commit suicide. Gondwana now became a part of Akbar's growing Empire. The fugitive king of Malwa was given protection by *rana* of Mewar. This act annoyed Akbar. There was also a general perception that without capturing the three important forts —Chitor, Ranthambhor and Kalinjar— no monarch could feel secure in India. Chitor was at the time in possession of Udai Singh, son of Rana Sanga. In Rabi' al-Thani 975/October 1567, Akbar's forces laid siege to the great fort; after nearly five months, Rajputs surrendered the fort. The next in line was Ranthambhor which belonged to the Hara section of the Chauhan clan. In Shaban 976/February 1569, the famous fort was besieged. Raja Man Singh of Amber, who had allied himself with Akbar, successfully convinced the commandant of the fort to surrender. Kalinjar in Bundelkhand was in possession of Raja Ramchand of Bhatha or Riwa, who submitted to Akbar's forces without resistance in 976/1569. The surrender of these three forts secured Akbar's military position in northern India and allowed him the freedom to pursue his expansionist ambition in other regions.

Gujrat was one of the most important regions of India. Having numerous ports and extensive maritime commerce, it was also one of the richest. At that time, Gujrat was divided into seven warring principalities over which Sultan Muzaffar b. Mahmud Gujrati (commonly referred to as Sultan Muzaffar III) exercised nominal authority. In 980/1572, Akbar marched from his capital Fatehpur Sikri to conquer Gujrat. Muzaffar Shah found his position untenable and surrendered to the Mughals. Akbar annexed the rich region as a new province of his Empire. Surat, its main port was then besieged and it capitulated. The capture of Surat made it possible for Akbar to establish relations with the Portuguese who controlled the Indian Ocean through their naval power.

Bengal had remained independent since the fourteenth century. In 971/1564,

¹⁵ Later, Abdur Rahim attained the rank of Khan-i-Khanan, the greatest noble of the Empire and was also prominent for his literary and artistic patronage. See Abdul Baqi Nahavandi, *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, ed. Mawli M. Hidayet Husain, 3 Vols., Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1910.

*" *Ain-i-Akbari*, p. 1155.

Sulaiman Khan, an Afghan, occupied Gaur, the capital of Bengal and founded a short-lived dynasty. Sulaiman then moved forward and besieged Rohtas, the only important fort in Bihar, which was in possession of the Mughals. Akbar sent a small force to relieve Rohtas which forced Sulaiman to retire to Bengal. Sulaiman used diplomatic means to maintain his position. He sent valuable gifts to Akbar and recognized his superior position. However, he died in 980/1572 and his son, Dau'd, succeeded him. Daud challenged the Mughals by seizing a frontier post of the Empire. In 982/1574, Akbar proceeded with his army and reached Patna. Daud took to flight. Jaunpur, Benares, Chunar and surrounding territories were occupied. Akbar returned to Sikri but his lieutenants continued the campaign. In 983/1575, a decisive battle was fought in which Daud's forces were routed. In this way, Bengal and Bihar came directly under the Mughal administration.

The beautiful area of Kashmir had enjoyed independence since a long time. It was at the time ruled by Yusuf Shah who repeatedly paid verbal submissions to Akbar. However, whenever asked to come to the royal court and do personal homage to the Emperor, he evaded the suggestion. He hoped that the difficult terrain would save him from any attack. However, in 993/1585, Akbar moved from Attock in order to launch military operation against Kashmir. Yusuf Shah blocked the Buliyas Pass on the Baramula route to check the advance of Akbar's forces. However, despite all odds, the Mughals moved forward and entered the capital Srinagar. In the meanwhile, Yusuf Shah was succeeded by his son Yaqub Shah who surrendered in 997/1589 and Kashmir was annexed to the Empire.

Sindh, the last remaining independent state of North India, was ruled by Mirza Jani Beg Tarkhan at that time. Abdur Rahim Khan-i Khanan was appointed governor of Multan and directed to annex Sindh. The Sindhis tried to defend their independence, fought two battles against the invaders but lost both. Thereupon, Mirza Jani Tarkhan surrendered Thatta and the fort of Sehwan and finally submitted. Sindh was annexed but Mirza Jani was granted his former dominions as a fief of the crown. Later the Baburi forces also conquered Makran and Balochistan.

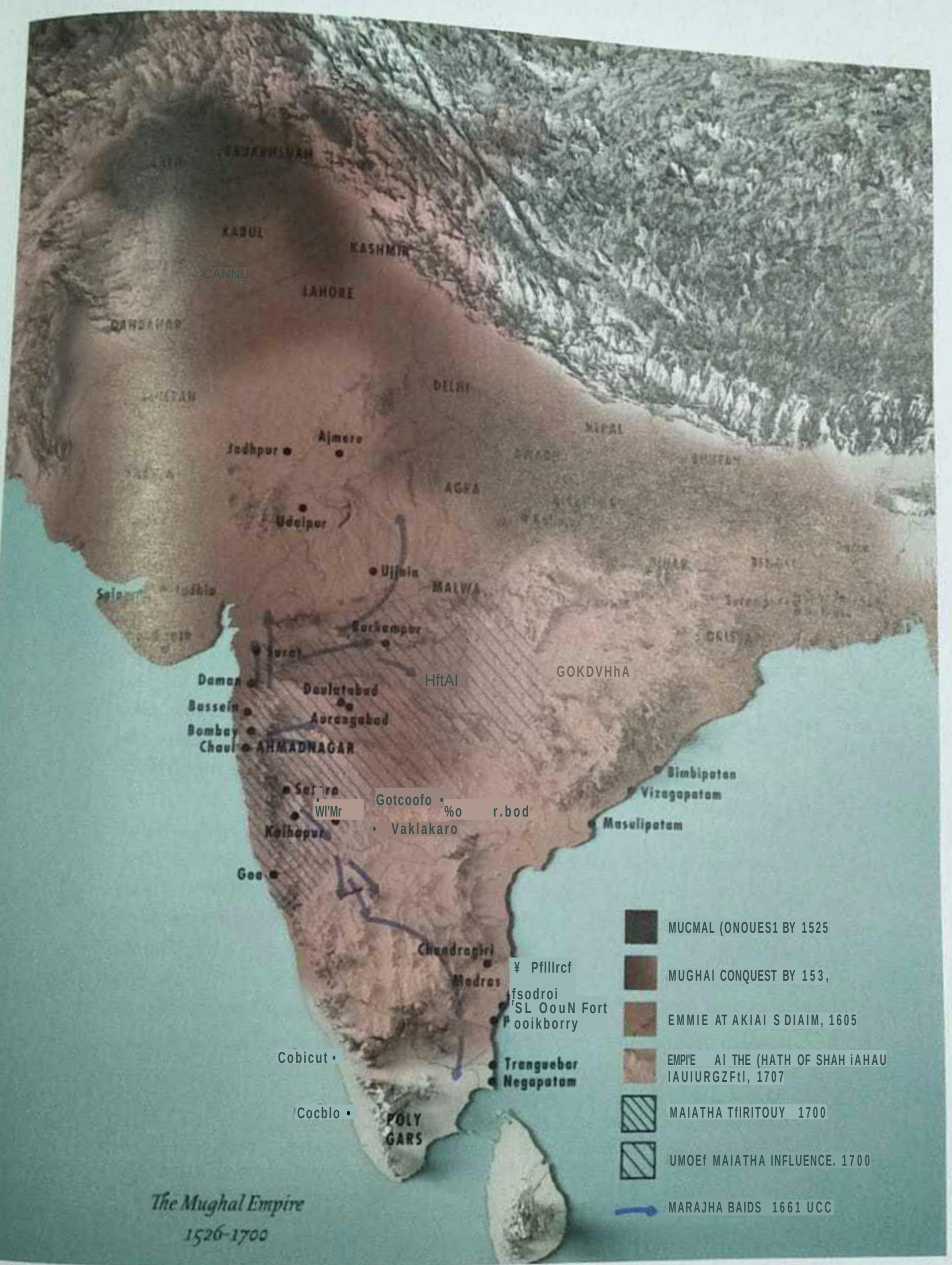
The conquest of Sindh and Balochistan was a prelude to an attack on Qandahar. However, that city came in the possession of Akbar without any attack. The Persian governor of Qandahar and Safavi Prince, Muzaffar Husain Mirza, finding his position insecure due to feuds within the family and pressure from the Uzbeks, asked Akbar to depute an officer to take over the charge of the city. The Emperor readily agreed and thus the important western province was peacefully occupied. Muzaffar Husain Mirza was rewarded with a *mansab* of 5000.

After subduing the whole of North India, the covetous eyes of Emperor Akbar turned towards the south, the area known as Deccan. This vast area was ruled by independent states — the Deccan Sultanates — which had strong differences with one another and there was hardly any possibility that they would offer a united front against the Mughals. As a first step towards the goal of conquering that area, in Shawwal 999/ August 1591, four missions were despatched to four states of Deccan — Ahmednagar, Khandesh, Bijapur and Golconda — to willingly accept the suzerainty of Akbar. In 1001/1593, the envoys returned with unsatisfactory reports. Burhan al-Mulk, the

ruler of Ahmednagar, had not sent suitable gifts which meant that he wanted to retain his independence. War was, therefore, decreed and Abdur Rahim Khan-i Khanan, along with Prince Murad was sent to lead the expedition. Ahmednagar was besieged but the dissensions between the Khan-i Khanan and the Prince and the gallantry of Chand Bibi, the regent-sister of Burhan al-Mulk, forced the Mughals to sign a treaty in 1004/1596. The treaty envisaged that Bahadur, a grandson of Burhan al-Mulk should be recognised as the Sultan of Ahmednagar under the suzerainty of Emperor Akbar. It further stipulated that the province of Berar would be ceded to the Baburi Empire. The treaty temporarily ended the war. In the next few months, political revolution in Ahmednagar entirely changed the situation. Chand Bibi was overthrown and the intriguers violated the treaty and sought to recover Berar. In Jumada al-Thani 1005/ February 1597, Khan-i Khanan fought a hardly contested battle against the Ahmednagar forces which also had support from Bijapur. Khan-i Khanan, though victorious, had to bear such losses that he could not pursue the enemy. Raja 'Ali Khan, the ruler of Khandesh, who fought on the side of the Mughals, was killed in the encounter. Akbar now decided to proceed to the South in person to conduct the war. Early in 1008/ 1600, he occupied Burhanpur which was the capital of Khandesh. Khan-i Khanan and Prince Daniyal were charged with the duty of taking Ahmednagar. They occupied the city, slaughtering some 1500 soldiers. Akbar then marched to Asirgarh, legendary fort of Khandesh and besieged it. Asirgarh was considered impregnable for having unassailable cliffs, three lines of fortifications and abundance of provisions. After a siege often and a half months, capitulation was arranged and the King and his family were sent to Gwalior. The newly acquired territories in Deccan were organised as three provinces of Ahmednagar, Berar and Khandesh. Akbar triumphantly entered his capital in the forty sixth year of his reign in Shawwal 1009/ May 1601, ending his continuous wars and conquests of forty-five years. The Imperial possessions were extended in the west to Qandahar and Balochistan, in the north to Kashmir, in the east to Bengal, and in the south to parts of Deccan.

In 973/1565-66, Akbar had to face a serious challenge to his authority in the form of an Uzbek revolt. In 971/1564, Khan Zaman and his brother Bahadur Khan, who had played an important role in defeating the Afghans at Chunar, revolted against Akbar. Then Abdullah Khan, governor of Malwa joined them. The rebels held the eastern provinces and invited Akbar's half-brother, Mirza Hakeem to invade India and read his name in the Friday *khutbah* in the great mosque of Jaunpur. On their invitation, Hakeem marched from Kabul and besieged Lahore. At this critical juncture, some Timuri nobles having close relations with the royal family also rebelled. They were led by Muhammad Sultan Mirza who was a descendent of Timur's second son (Akbar was descended from the third son)⁵⁷ and thus had a

<■ There are two important implications of this statement, first that the Baburi Empire was considered a successor of the Timuri state by the Baburis themselves and also by their kinsmen, successors of Timur. This was a natural result of Babur's claim that his conquest of the Indian Muslim Empire was his right because Timur had conquered it. The second implication is the right to lay claim to the property of a relative which derives from both traditions, Islamic and Turkic. Its Islamic origin lies in the right to *shufa* while the Turkic is rooted in the *ulus* tradition. [Ed.]



legitimate claim to the Timuri throne. Mirza's attempt to seize Delhi failed. Akbar himself marched against Mirza Hakeem who was forced to retreat to Kabul. Then he moved to the east and dislodged the Uzbeks. It was the most dangerous episode in his political career and it showed his vulnerability with regard to his nobility. This necessitated the creation of new groups of nobility and counterbalancing one against the other.

The nobles who returned to India with Humayun in 962/1555 numbered fifty-one. All of them were foreign born Muslims. Turani or Central Asian nobles — either belonging to Chaghatay, Turkish or Uzbek lineages — were twenty-seven while sixteen were Irani or Persian Shi'a nobles, including Bairam Khan. Thus, Turani *umara* had a numerical superiority over the Iranis. There was a fundamental difference in the political outlook of these two sections of nobility. The Turanis were imbued with the egalitarian and divisive attitudes of Central Asian Turkish tribes and were unwilling to accept the unbridled autocratic powers of the monarch. The Uzbek revolt of 972/ 1564-65 was also meant to check Akbar becoming an autocratic ruler. On the other hand, the Iranis were more willing to accede to the notions of an unchallenged *padshah* in the Persian imperial tradition.

In the aftermath of the Uzbek revolt, Akbar began to prefer the Persian nobility and new Persian nobles were vigorously recruited. By 988/1580, the number of Irani courtiers was substantially raised to forty-seven while the Turanis numbered sixty-six. At the same time, Akbar initiated the policy of creating a new class of Muslim nobles. Comprising of different ethnic groups, these old settlers of varied regional backgrounds numbered forty-four in 988/1580. One important family of earlier settlers was the Syeds of Baraha who had migrated from Iraq in the seventh/ thirteenth century and then settled at Sirhind. Another group of nobility created by Akbar was that of Rajputs and a few other Hindus. By 988/1580, these numbered forty-three. Thus between 980/1572 and 1000/1592, Akbar had created such a political situation where no single group of nobility was able to challenge his authority and therefore, he decided to establish his personal rule?⁸

Akbar strengthened his military machine by forging alliances with the Rajputs who were the military leaders and best fighting men of India. In an exaggerated sense, one writer notes that "there could be no Indian empire without the Rajputs, no social or political synthesis without their intelligent and active cooperation."³⁹ The bravery, steadfastness and fidelity of the Rajputs were also proverbial. Akbar got the opportunity to win the support of the Rajputs when, in 969/1562, Raja Bihari Mai of Amber offered his daughter in marriage to Akbar who welcomed the matrimonial alliance. This opened up the possibilities of further marriages and for

³⁸ The percentage of Turanis fell from 52.9% in 962 / 1555 to 38.1% in 1565-75 and 24.3% in 988/ 1580. Between 962/1555 and 988/ 1580, the position of Indian Muslims and Rajputs improved dramatically rising from almost nothing to 16.2% and 15.8% respectively. Their gains were largely at the expense of the Turanis and, to a lesser extent, Persians. See the given table of 'Racial Composition of the Mughal Nobility, 1555 - 95', in Iqtidar' Alam Khan, "The Nobility under Akbar and the Development of his Religious Policy," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 1-2 (1968): 36.

³⁹ M. P. Srivastava, *Policies of the Great Mughals*, Lahore: Book Traders, 1997, p-63.

the next two centuries, Mughal Emperors and princes got married with Rajput princesses.⁴⁰ The benefits of the matrimonial alliances were manifold. First and foremost, it ended the atmosphere of strife and bitterness and resulted in harmony and good will from both sides. Marriages involved the Rajputs in the destiny of the Mughal Empire. Some of the greatest generals and nobles and thousands of Rajput warriors fought under the banner of the Mughals. Even the contemporary conservative section of society praised Akbar for his sagacious Rajput policy. Mulla Abdul Qadir Badauni, during a campaign, on seeing the bravery of Rajputs against the Hindu opponents, exclaimed excitedly that *jujj (j Jjj Ji* [Hindu wields the sword of Islam].⁴¹

Through his matrimonial alliances with the Rajputs, Akbar was able to maintain control over the Rajput states in Rajasthan. By placing *tika* (vermillion mark) on the new *raja*'s forehead, the Emperor legitimized his position. Baburi Emperors decided the questions of succession and even the hereditary claims in Rajasthan. Thus Akbar, through cultivating the Rajputs, pre-empted the possibility of another coalition similar to that which Babur had to face at Khanua in 933/1527. On the other hand, Rajput participation in Baburi administration provided a broad multicultural base to the state and created an Indian polity in which all sections of society could take part. It also enhanced the image of Akbar in the eyes of the local population. Popular stories about Akbar, mostly mythical, dating back to that time, testify to Akbar's popularity amongst the masses.⁴²

However, the presence of Rajput ladies in the Mughal *harem* and rise of Rajput nobility were contributory factors for diluting the orthodox character of the Empire. The princes born of Rajput mothers were sometimes sent to their maternal relations for education and training. Prince Daniyal, when one month old, was sent to the town of Amber and to the care of his maternal grandmother, wife of Raja Bihari Mai. Definitely such practices strongly affected the policies of the state and intellectual orientation of the princes. Akbar's religious innovations have also been interpreted as an outcome of the *harem* influence and corollary to his policy of Rajput support.

Akbar's approach to religion⁴³ had three phases, beginning with sympathy, moving to apathy and ending with antipathy towards Islam. During the first phase, from his coronation in 963/1556 to 981/1574, he showed himself to be a

⁴⁰ Farrukh Siyar's marriage with the daughter of Raja Ajit Singh of Marwar in 1125/1714 was the last marriage of a Mughal ruler in Rajput family. For a list of Mughal-Rajput marriages, see Rekha Misra, *Women in Mughal India*, Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1967, pp. 156-57.

⁴¹ Badauni, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, p. 237.

⁴² Shirin Moosvi, *Episodes in the Life of Akbar: Contemporary Records and Reminiscences* (New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1994); C. M. Naim, "Popular Jokes and Political History: The Case of Akbar, Birbal and Mulla Do-Piyazza," in Naim's *Urdu Texts and Contexts*, Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004, pp. 225-49.

⁴³ Akbar's religious policy has been studied by many modern writers, including Khaliq Ahmed Nizami, *Akbar and Religion*, Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1989; Makhanlal Roychoudhury, *The Din-i Ilahi or the Religion of Akbar*, Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1941; Iqtidar 'Alam Khan, "Akbar's Personality Traits and World Outlook: A Critical Appraisal," *Social Scientist*, 20 nos. 9/10 (Sep.-Oct. 1992): 16-30; and Muhammad Aslam, *Din-i Ilahi aur Us Ka Pas Manzar*, Lahore, 1969.

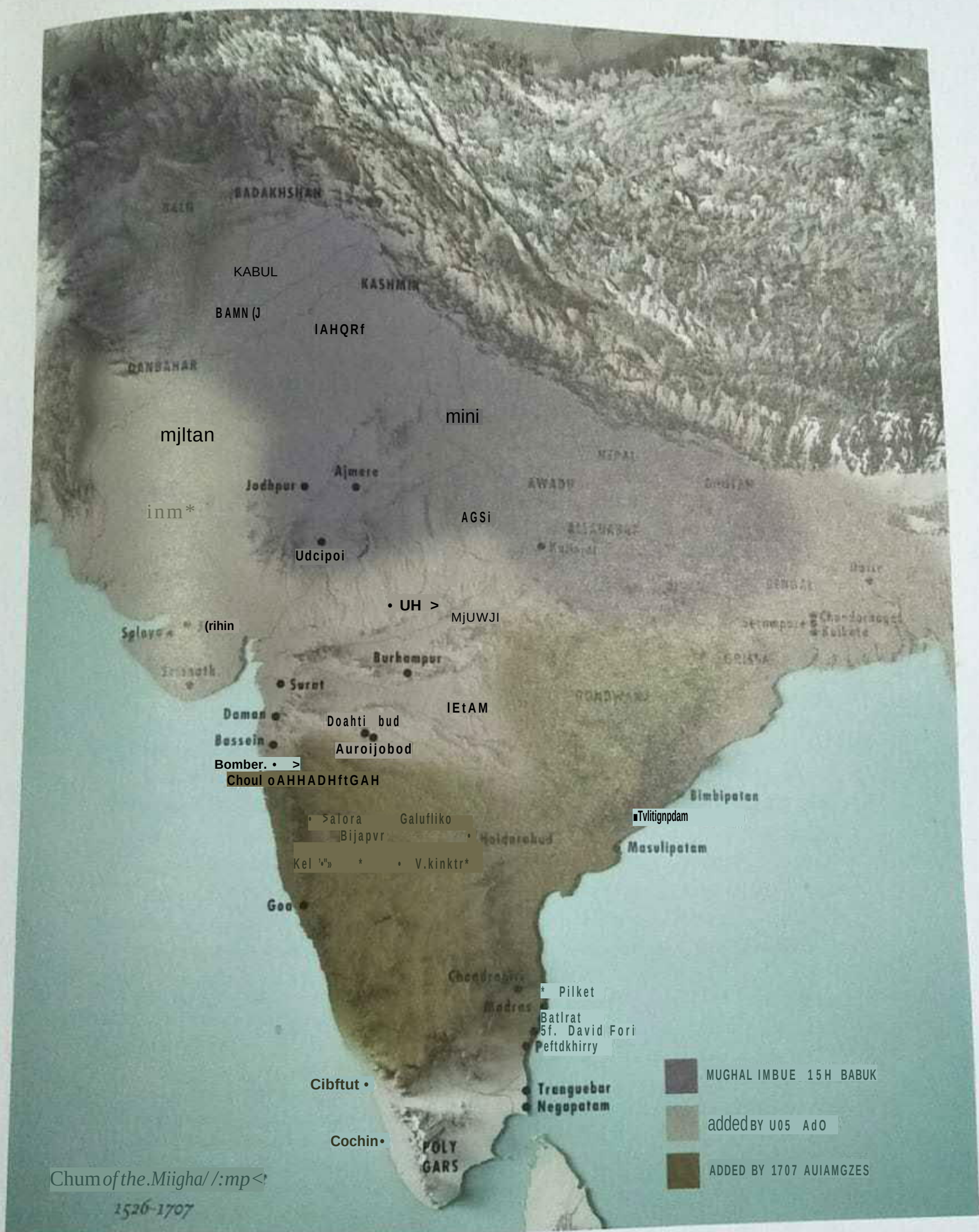
devout and orthodox Muslim, performing all religious obligations, visiting the shrines of the sufi saints and showing deep regard for the *ulama*. In some of the military campaigns, religious sentiments were invoked. In 974/1567, when the fort of Chitor was captured, a *Fathnamah* was issued which presented the campaign as *jihad*, Hindus as *kafirs* and extinction of polytheism as the object of the campaign. Similarly, the conquest of Gujrat in 980/1572 was accompanied by the shouts of *Allah-o-Akbar* and *Ya Moin* (a reference to the great saint of Ajmer, Shaykh Moin al-Din Chishti). However, these religious and devotional feelings got translated in the building of *ibadatkhana* (house of worship) in his capital city of Fatehpur Sikri in 983/1575, which ushered in the next phase of Akbar's religious approach. The main objective of the *ibadatkhana* was to enter into a dialogue and discussion with the *ulama* and seek their opinion on diverse issues. Being quite illiterate himself, Akbar was a sincere seeker of truth. Thus on every Friday, religious debates were held after congregational prayers and continued till late at night. Later Thursdays were also included for discussion. However, what transpired was opposite to the original intention of the Emperor.

During the discussions in *ibadat khana*, the bickering and mutual hostility of traditional *ulama* led to personal accusations and counter-accusations and dispute and differences on interpretation of almost every tenet of Islam. Character assassination of one another and mudslinging became a rule rather than an exception. On seeing such a situation, the Emperor remarked that "I wish I had not heard such differences of opinion from teachers of traditional subjects, nor were confounded by different interpretations of the Quranic verses and the traditions of the Prophet."⁴⁴ Akbar got disgusted with the situation and opened up the Ibadat Khana to scholars of all faith—Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Christians. This complicated the matter further as the traditional *ulama* failed to counter the non-Muslim scholars. In that whole scenario, a group of free thinking intellectuals led by Shaykh Mubarak and his sons, Abu'l Fazl and Faizi, got the opportunity to take a firm hold on the Emperor.⁴⁵ Under their influence, Akbar decided to take matters in his own hands and to step in as one invested with powers of religious guidance.

In Rabi' al-thani 987/June 1579, he decided to read the *khutba* in the mosque and lead the congregational prayers to emulate the traditions of the Pious Caliphs. He ascended the pulpit and had hardly recited the three poetical verses composed by Faizi for the occasion when he began to tremble and had to step down. The next step was the royal proclamation or *mahzar* which had been carefully drafted by Shaykh Mubarak and was signed by seven *ulama*. It emphatically declared that the rank of a *Sultan-i-Adil* (just ruler) was higher than the rank of a *mujtahid* and the former could choose any of the opinions of the jurists tendered to him in matters

⁴⁴ Cited in Nizami, *Akbar and Religion*, p. 122.

⁴⁵ Abu'l Fazl and Abdul Qadir Badauni were the two chroniclers of Akbar's court who wrote two rival accounts of the Emperor's religious proclivities. For a study of Abu'l Fazl and his family, see Azra Alvi, "Socio-Religious Outlook of Abu'l Fazl," *Medieval India Quarterly*, I (1950): 1-37. For Badauni, see, Fauzia Zareen Abbas, *Abdul Qadir Badauni as a Man and Historiographer*, Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1987.



of religion, keeping in view the welfare of mankind and the requirements of the administration. It further stipulated that as *Sultan-i'Adil*, he had the powers to issue any original order, if it was not against any specific injunction of the Quran, for providing relief to the people. In this way, the *mahdar* conferred upon Akbar the appellate and the original powers in religious matters. The part relating to the power to issue original orders became subject of criticism and suspicion. Around 988/1580, the third phase began when the antipathy towards traditional *ulama* and conservative sections of society took a new turn and Akbar started working for his own supremacy in matters of religion. As *mujtahid*, he could exercise limited powers with reference to Muslim community only but he wanted to be the religious and spiritual arbitrator of all Indian people. Badauni reports that in 989/1581, "low and mean fellows, who pretended to be learned, but were in reality fools, collected evidence that his majesty was the *sahib-izaman* (lord of the age), who would remove all differences of opinion among the 72 sects of Islam and the Hindus... All this made the Emperor the more inclined to claim the dignity of a prophet." ⁴⁶ Probably the incentive came from the contemporary movements and trends.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, there had been a mushroom growth of new philosophies and religious approaches in India. Leaders of such movements invoked the concepts of *mahdi*, *imam*, *insan-i kamil*, *murakkab-i mubin* and *mujaddid* etc. The Bhakti movement attempted to do away with religious formalism and to evolve a common religious attitude. ⁴⁷ Then first millennium of Islam was coming to an end and there was an air of anticipation that something extraordinary was going to happen. ⁴⁸ Many new religious groups had cropped up to capitalise on such expectations. ⁴⁹ Akbar and his ideologues were very much familiar with such tendencies. In the words of Tara Chand, Akbar's religious experiment was not "an isolated freak of an autocrat ... but an inevitable result of the forces which were deeply surging in India's breast." ⁵⁰

In 990/1582, formal debates on religion were stopped and new religious innovations were introduced, which have variously been referred to as *tauhid-i ilahi*, *din-i ilahi* or policy of *sulh-i kul* (peace for all). Like a spiritual cult, the royal disciples were initiated with ritualistic devotion to the Emperor, vowing to surrender their life, property, religion and honour for the founder of the faith and if the entrant happened to be a Muslim, he additionally vowed to abjure his faith in traditional (*taqlidi*) and metaphorical (*majazi*) Islam. New modes of greeting and obeisance and new rituals for having reverence for sun, light and

»* Badaoni, *Mutakhrib-ut-Tawarikh*, vol. 11, p. 295.

⁴⁷ For Bhakti movement, see Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on India*, Allahabad, 1954.

⁴⁸ Shaukat Ali, *Millenarian and Messianic Tendencies in Islamic History*, Lahore: Publishers United, 1993.

⁴⁹ The emergence of Mahdavis, Hurufis, Nuqtavis, Zikris, Ishraqis, Rishis and Nurbakhshis can be mentioned in this regard. See, A. Azfar Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam*, New York; Columbia University Press, 2012, pp. 156-58, 162-66. For the Mahdavis, see, Qamaruddin, *The Mahdawi Movement in India*, Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1985; Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *Muslim Revivalist Movements in Northern India in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Lucknow: Balkrishna Book, 1965.

⁵⁰ Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on India*, p. 165.

fire were introduced. *Ilahi* calendar replaced the *hijri* calendar. Abstinence of meat was introduced while public drinking was favoured. Having no metaphysical or even ethical foundations, it was "a haphazard agglomeration of certain rituals, whimsically visualized and pompously demonstrated."⁵¹

Except adverse criticism of the orthodox religious class, the new religious experiment never attracted much attention. From Abu'l Fazl and Bada'uni, we know that only 18 persons had accepted the new faith and all of them were Akbar's courtiers. In 995/1587, Akbar invited Man Singh to accept the new faith; his reply was revealing of the general sentiments: "Besides Hinduism and Islam, I know of no other religion."⁵² The reaction of the orthodox groups of *ulama* was quite sharp but also diverse.⁵³ All of them considered it to be damaging to the position of Islam in India. However, Shaykh 'Abd al-Haqq, one of the most prominent religious scholars of the time, focussed more on countering the challenge intellectually. He wrote a number of works in which he clarified the position of the Prophet and abated the general confusion.⁵⁴ On the other hand, Shaykh Ahmed Sirhindi, claiming to be *mujaddid al-fthani*, (renewer of the second millennium), took a more political stand and through his epistles to the courtiers of Akbar and later to his son Jahangir, countered the heterodox tendencies.⁵⁵ Akbar was at Lahore in the spring of 1005/1597 and preparations were underway for *nauroz* celebration, when "fire came down from Heaven", a conflagration started in the royal palace, which could not be controlled for three days. It was generally attributed to the Emperor's irreligious presumptions.⁵⁶

Akbar's last years were marred with troubles. His two younger sons, Murad and Danyal, died of excessive alcoholism in 1007/1599 and 1013/1604 respectively. While Akbar was engaged in the Deccan campaign in 1009/1601, his eldest son, Prince Salim (later Emperor Jahangir) rose up in revolt against his father. Akbar hurried to Agra, and offered Salim governorship of Bengal and Orissa in return for submission. The Prince rejected his father's offer and established his own court at Allahabad. Akbar directed Abu'l Fazl to pursue Salim and bring him back to Agra. But Abu'l Fazl was murdered in 1011/1602 on the orders of Salim. Finally

⁵¹ Khaliq Ahmed Nizami, *Akbar and Religion*, p. 133. V. A. Smith comments that "the Divine Faith was a monument of Akbar's folly.", *Akbar the Great Mogul*, p. 160.

⁵² ?>2.A2.Qr'i, *Mutakhib-ut-Tau/arih*, II, p. 375.

⁵³ For resistance to Akbar's religious innovations, see, Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent, 610-1947, a Brief Historical Analysis*, 2nd ed., Karachi: Maaref, 177, Ch. VII; idem, *Ulema in Politics*, Delhi: Renaissance Publishing, 1985, Ch. IV.

⁵⁴ For the life and work of the Shaykh, K. A. Nizami, *Hayat-i-Shaykh Abdul Haq Muhaddis Dehlavi*, Delhi, 1953.

⁵⁵ Yohanan Friedmann, *Shaykh Ahmed Sirhindi: An Outline of His Thought and a Study of His Image in the Eyes of Posterity*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000 [1971]; Muhammad Abdul Haq Ansari, *Sufism and Shariah: A Study of Shaykh Ahmed Sirhindi's Effort to Reform Sufism*, Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1986; Burhan Ahmed Faruqi, *The Mujaddid's Conception of Tawhid*, Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1940.

⁵⁶ Aziz Ahmed sums up the position with regard to Akbar's religious innovations by saying: "Neither in its exaggerated pre-occupation with light, sun and fire nor in its other principles of worship or ritual was there much which could place Akbar's heretical sect in a different category from other miscellaneous heresies within Islam." in *Studies in Islamic Culture in Indian Environment*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964, p. 171.



Jahangir's Tomb, Lahore

Salima Sultan Begum, most influential wife of Akbar and step-mother of Jahangir, intervened and effected reconciliation between father and son and brought the Prince to Agra in 1012/1603. Akbar died in 1014/1605 in the fiftieth year of his reign, at the age of almost sixty-three years. He was buried in the mausoleum that he had started to construct in Sikandara, near Agra.

F. Jahangir (1014-1037/1605-1627)

Prince Salim ascended the throne in 1014/1605 with the title of Nur al-Din Muhammad Jahangir.⁷ The first challenge to his authority came from none other than his own son, Khusrau, who expected that Akbar, after the revolt of Salim, would prefer him for the throne. However, when it did not happen, Khusrau left

⁷ The important contemporary sources of Jahangir's period include *The Jahangirnāmah: Memoirs of Jahangir, Emperor of India*, tr., ed. & ann. by Wheeler M. Thackston, Washington: Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1999; Motamad Khan, *Iqbalnamah-i Jahangiri*, ed. Mawlawis Abd al-Haii and Ahmed Ali, Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1865; Khawaja Kamgar Husaini, *Maasir-i Jahangiri*, ed. Azra Alvi, Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, 1978; Abd al-Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahore, *Majalis-i Jahangiri*, eds. Arif Naushahi and Moeen Nizami, Tehran: Miras-i Maktub, 2006; *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, 1615-1619*, ed. William Foster, 2 vols., London: The Hakluyt Society, 1889; Francisco Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India: The Remonstrantie*, trans. W. H. Moreland & P. Geyl, Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1925. Amongst the modern works, Beni Prasad's *History of Jahangir*, 3rd ed., Allahabad: The Indian Press, 1940 [1922] is the most important.



Nur Jahans Tomb, Lahore

the capital and revolted against his father in April 1606. On the way, he got the blessings of spiritual leader of the Sikhs, Guru Aijun, and formed a power base in the provinces of Lahore and Kabul. The Prince was, however, captured and put into prison where he died in 1031/1622. Jahangir took strong action against the supporters of Khusrau. Two hundred to eight hundred of them were ruthlessly hanged or impaled. Guru Aijun was initially fined and on refusal to pay the fine, placed in the custody of one Chandu Shah who for personal reasons put him to death. The death of the Guru, on political rather than religious grounds, became a catalyst for the transformation of the Sikh community into a military organisation. ⁵®

During Akbar's reign, Rajputs had been reconciled and given high *mansabs*. However, Rana Pratap Singh of Mewar alone differed with his other fellow Rajputs and succumbed to neither persuasion nor temptation and continued his fight against the Mughals. The fight continued during the period of Jahangir. Finally in 1023/1614 Prince Khurram compelled Rana Pratap's son and successor, Rana

⁵® The Sikh religion was established by Guni Nanak (874-946/ 1469-1539) and aimed at bringing Hinduism and Islam closer. It believed in monotheism and was against priesthood and caste distinctions. It also had close relations with the Muslims. Akbar granted several villages and land grants to the third Guru. When the Golden Temple at Amritsar was to be built, Mian Mir, a Qadri sufi of Lahore, was asked to lay the foundation stone.



The Mughal Empire
(Aurangzeb)



Asaf Khan's Tomb, Lahore

Amar Singh, to submission. Jahangir restored the fort of Chitor to the *rana* on the condition that it was not to be refortified or repaired. The latter's eldest son was received in the royal court, invested with a robe of honour and a bejewelled sword and later granted a high *mansab*. In this way, the policy towards Rajputs initiated by Akbar continued under Jahangir.

Jahangir also continued the Baburi advance towards the Deccan. In 1025/1616, Prince Khurram was given charge of the campaign. Mandu was captured and Ahmednagar surrendered next year. As a reward, Khurram was given the title of Shah Jahan and an unprecedented personal rank of 30,000. However, Malik 'Ambar, the Abyssinian minister of Ahmednagar, continued his resistance against the Mughals.

Realising its strategic position, Akbar had captured Qandahar. The Persians besieged it in 1030/1621 and occupied it next year. Jahangir sent an expedition under Prince Shahryar but failed to recover Qandahar.

A significant event of Jahangir's reign was his marriage to a girl, Mehrunnisa. Her father Mirza Ghiyas Beg had come to India from Persia during Akbar's time and joined his nobility. His son, Asaf Khan, also became an important officer of the Empire. Mehrunnisa was first married to Sher Afgan, an officer in Baburi army and gave birth to a daughter, Ladli Begum. When Sher Afgan was killed in Bengal, she came to the royal *harem*. Once Jahangir saw her and was instantly infatuated. Later he married her in 1020/1611, giving her first the title of Nur Mahal and later Nur

Jahan. Gradually her influence increased and along with her father, brother and Prince Khurram—who had married her niece—she began to exercise authority in all matters of the state. Her name also appeared on the royal coins along with Jahangir. After 1029/1620, the relations between Nur Jahan and Prince Khurram got strained. Nur Jahan had married her daughter Ladli Begum to Prince Shahiyar and as Jahangir's health began to deteriorate due to excessive drinking, Nur Jahan endeavoured to place her son-in-law on the Baburi throne. Prince Khurram asserted himself and to break the ascendancy of Nur Jahan, revolted against his father, but was captured and pardoned. In 1036/1627, Jahangir died at the age of fifty-eight and was buried in Lahore. In the ensuing struggle for the throne, Prince Khurram with the aid of his father-in-law, Asaf Khan, was able to defeat the clique of Nur Jahan and Prince Shahiyar. Nur Jahan spent the rest of her days in Lahore and died in 1055/1645.⁵

Jahangir is considered to be an easy-going and pleasure-loving King. He continued the religious policy of his father and maintained the ritualistic practices of his father's court. His rule is remembered for peace and prosperity and for his patronage of arts and letters.

* For the life of Nur Jahan, see Ellison Banks Findly, *Nur Jahan: Empress of Mughal India*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1993; Mohammad Shujauddin and Razia Shujauddin, *The Life and Times of Noor Jahan*, Lahore: The Caravan Book House, 1967.

<.. Shah Jahan (1037-1068/1627-1657)

Prince Khurram ascended the throne with the title of Shihab al-Din Muhammad Shah Jahan." He had distinguished himself as a Prince to be an able general in campaigns against Rajputs and the Deccan. He started his reign by eliminating all the claimants to the throne, thus deviating from the earlier Turco-Mongol tradition of accommodating the brothers. The Empire, under him, enjoyed a great measure of internal peace while Shah Jahan found ample time and opportunity to indulge in cultural and artistic pursuits and the royal armies attended to the expansion of the Empire. He launched an ambitious policy of large scale construction projects and expansion in the Deccan and even towards Central Asia.

Pursuing the policy of his grandfather, Akbar, Shah Jahan launched an aggressive campaign against the Deccan states. He moved to Burhanpur to supervise the operations. While his army officials pursued war against Ahmednagar. Fath Khan, son of Malik 'Ambar, was bribed to assassinate the ruling Sultan, replacing him with his minor son, Husain Nizam Shah. Fath Khan's act of treason provided the pretext to Shah Jahan to annex Ahmednagar in 1048/1638. In the meanwhile, Asaf Khan, the Emperor's father-in-law, laid siege to Bijapur and a devastating war of attrition ensued. In 1045/1635, Shah Jahan issued an ultimatum to Golconda and Bijapur to accept his suzerainty and to pay tribute as a mark of submission. The ruler of Golconda, Abdullah Qutb Shah, got terrified and capitulated immediately, accepting the Mughal suzerainty. The King of Bijapur, 'Adil Shah, refused to surrender. Consequently, three Baburi armies attacked Bijapur. 'Adil Shah got help from Marathas who under Shahji Bhonsle fought against the invading army. Finally, 'Adil Shah had to surrender and recognise the suzerainty of Shah Jahan. Prince Aurangzeb was appointed viceroy of the Deccan who effected reforms and brought peace and prosperity back to the region. He also pursued an aggressive policy against the two remaining states. However, Golconda and Bijapur were able to retain their independence during Shah Jahan's reign.

From the beginning of his reign, Shah Jahan nurtured the desire to conquer his ancestral lands, particularly Samarqand, in Central Asia. In 1056/1646, taking advantage of the dynastic quarrels among the Uzbeks, he launched an audacious campaign in Central Asia. Prince Murad Bakhsh was sent at the head of an army. He succeeded in gaining control of two important regions of Balkh and Badakhshan but severity of weather forced him to return. He was then replaced by his brother, Prince Aurangzeb who won another battle against the Uzbeks. However, the extremity of weather and intervention of the Safavis compelled the Mughals to retreat in 1057/1647 under disastrous circumstances. This was the

⁹⁰ Important contemporary sources of Shah Jahan's reign include Abd al-Hamid Lahori, *Badshahnamah*, eds. Mawliw Kabir al-Din Ahmed and Abd al-Rahim, 3 Vols., Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1867; Muhammad Salih Kamboh, *ImfiZ Salih: Shah Jahan Namah*, ed. Ghulam Yazdani and Waheed Qureshi, 3 Vols., Lahore: Majlis-i Taraqi-i Adab, 1967; Wayne Begley and Ziyaud-din Ahmed Desai 'eds. & trans.), *The Shah Jahan Nama of Inayat Khan*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990. Modern study of Shah Jahan has been made by Banarsi Prasad Saksena, *Histoiyof Shahjahan of Dilhi*, New Delhi: Central Book Depot, 1962.

end of Shah Jahan's dream to conquer Central Asia. Shah Jahan wanted to recover Qandahar which had been conquered by the Persians. He got the opportunity when the Persian governor, 'Ali Mardan Khan, showed his inclination to change loyalties and eventually handed over the city to the Mughals in 1048/1638. As the young Persian monarch, Shah Safi, was engaged in overcoming the unrest that followed the death of Shah Abbas I, the Persians had to bear the loss of Qandahar for the time being. However, in 1058/1648, the new Safavi monarch, Shah Abbas II (1052-1076/1642-1666), turned towards Qandahar. The prestige of Mughals had fallen low due to disastrous adventure in Central Asia. In Muharram 1059/February 1649, the fort of Qandahar was occupied by the Persians. Shah Jahan despatched Aurangzeb twice, in 1059/1649 and 1062/1652, but he failed to recapture the city. The third campaign in 1063/1653 under the eldest son, Dara Shukoh (1024-1069/1615-1659) also failed. The Mughals had no answer to the military techniques of the Persians and had to renounce Qandahar.

Following his ancestor Amir Timur, Shah Jahan titled himself *sahib qiran thani*, (second lord of auspicious conjunctions) which meant grandeur and magnificence for himself as well as for his Empire. Under him, the Baburi Empire reached the pinnacle of glory and splendour. From 1037/1628 to 1044/1635, he spent one million rupees for designing his throne, decorated with peacocks and thus called the Peacock Throne as a potent symbol of imperial splendour. He built a magnificent new capital near Delhi, called Shahjahanabad.⁰¹ British administrator historians have generally depicted Shah Jahan's reign as the golden period of Indian history.⁰² However, some historians dispute this viewpoint. They contend that indiscriminate killing of the claimants to the throne in the beginning of his reign, disastrous defeats in Central Asia and loss of Qandahar to Persians —indicating a serious weakness in his military system —and finally, the grave political crisis, resulting in the war of succession, considerably tarnish the image of the golden age.

The end of Shah Jahan was also tragic. In ZilQa'dah 1067/September 1657, he fell seriously ill and the rumour spread that the Emperor was on the death bed; thus ensued a war of succession, the intensity of which was unprecedented. Dara Shukoh, aged 43 at the time, was the eldest son and the favourite of his father. He was a scholar and known for his heterodoxy and eclecticism. He was a disciple of Mian Mir (d. 1045/1635) and Mulla Shah Badakhshi (d. 1071/1661), two leading *sufis* of the Qadiri *silsilah*. He believed that the Hindu scriptures —the Vedas and the Upanishads— were divinely revealed and thus argued in his work, *Majm'a al-Bahrayn* (The Mingling of the Two Oceans) that the essential nature of Hinduism was identical to that of Islam. His views attracted those scholars and intellectuals who remained committed to Akbar's eclectic ideology. However, politically he

*1 See, Stephen P. Blake, *Shahjahanabad: the Sovereign City in Mughal India, 1639-1739*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

⁰² Mountstuart Elphinstone, *The History of India: the Hindu and Mohemetan Periods*, London: John Murray, 1866, pp. 600-01.

was a weak contender as his father's undue favour had spoiled him. He was proud and haughty, least accommodating and a mediocre general and administrator. His most important ally was his sister, Jahan Ara, who also shared his views and had a penchant for Qadiri *silsilah*.'

Aurangzeb, aged 39 at the time, was the third son of Shah Jahan and the foremost rival of Dara Shukoh. Ideologically inclined towards the orthodox Naqshbandi *silsilah*, he was a strict observer of Islam. Some Muslim nobles, officers, theologians and others drew towards him for enforcing *shar'ah* in the Baburi Empire. Politically, Aurangzeb was far more powerful contender to the throne than his elder brother. He remained viceroy of the Deccan for eight years and governor of Gujrat for three years. He commanded imperial armies during the invasion of Balkh and the first two sieges of Qandahar. He was, thus, an experienced military commander and administrator who was known for his extraordinary vigour and profound diplomatic and military skill. He had his second sister, Raushan Ara, as his ally in the royal court.

The other two brothers, Muhammad Shuja¹, aged forty-two, and Murad Bakhsh, aged thirty-three, were also contenders of the throne. Shuja¹ was the governor of the eastern provinces and was known to be intelligent and brave but also fond of ease and pleasure. Murad was governor of Gujrat and Malwa and reputed to be brave and liberal but at the same time addicted to heavy drinking.

In the ensuing contest, Aurangzeb was able to make a joint stand against Dara Shukoh by entering into an alliance with Shuja⁴ and Murad. In Rajab 1068/May 1658, in the battle of Samugarh, near Agra, Aurangzeb and Murad defeated the forces of Dara. They then proceeded to Agra and confined Shah Jahan in the royal fort under the care of his daughter, Jahan Ara. Shah Jahan spent the last eight years of his life there and died in 1076/1666. Dara Shukoh, who fled from the battle of Samugarh, was pursued and captured. He was tried for heresy and was put to death. The alliance of three brothers did not last long. Aurangzeb imprisoned Murad and he was finally executed. Shuja¹ was pursued and he fled to Burmese coast of Arakan.

Many historians have depicted the war of succession as an ideological war. However, despite different ideological orientation of the two princes, the issue at hand was mainly political. The factions that supported Dara and Aurangzeb did not align on the basis of religious divide and there were as many Hindus on one side as on the other.⁶⁴

¹ For the life and literary contribution of Dara Shikoh, see Bikrama Jit Hasrat, *Dara Shikoh: Life and Works*, 2nd rev. ed., New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1982; Kalikaranjan Qanungo, *Dara Shukoh*, Vol. 1, Calcutta: M. C. Sarkar, [1935].

* According to Athar Ali's estimate, twenty-three Hindu nobles (eleven Rajputs, ten Marathas and two other Hindus) supported Aurangzeb and Murad, as against twenty four Hindu nobles (twenty two Rajputs and two Marathas) who backed Dara Shukoh. *Mughal India: Studies in Polity, Ideas, Society and Culture*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 250. For a different version of the war of succession, see Iftikhar Ahmed Ghori, *War of Succession between the Sons of Shah Jahan, 1657-1658*, Lahore: Publishers United, 1964.

h. Aurangzeb (1068-1118/1658-1707)

Mohi al-Din Muhammad Aurangzeb 'Alamgir⁶⁵ ascended the throne by deposing his father in 1068/1658. In the early years of his reign, he pursued a policy not very different from that of his predecessors. He extended the territory of the Empire by taking offensive action in the East and the South. He also got full-fledged cooperation from the Rajputs. However, as he got ensnared in the Deccan mess and his financial difficulties (and probably his frustration as well) increased, he got into trouble with the Rajputs, Sikhs, Marathas and other dominant sections of society.

In the northeast, Baburi armies under their commander, Mir Jumla, conquered in 1071/1661 the kingdom of Cooch Bihar and next year subdued Assam. In Bengal, the governor Shaista Khan, Aurangzeb's maternal uncle, established peace and tranquillity by eradicating the Portuguese and Arakanese pirates. He also captured the port city of Chittagong from the king of Arakan; later this city was to serve as the principal port of the delta. During his governorship, Bengal became the most peaceful and prosperous region of the Empire, the revenues of which were the mainstay of Aurangzeb's army.

Under Aurangzeb, Rajputs occupied some of the key positions in Baburi nobility and Raja Jai Singh of Jaipur was the highest noble in the Empire with a *mansab* of 7,000 zat and 7,000 sawar. He had also been one of the most trusted and faithful supporter in the war of succession. In 1075/1665, he was appointed as viceroy of the Deccan provinces, a position usually reserved for the princes of royal blood. However, after 1090/1679, all this began to change and trouble started in Rajasthan. The main issue was the succession crisis of Jaswant Singh of Marwar, who died leaving no male heir behind. Aurangzeb in accordance with the tradition appointed a grand-nephew of Jaswant Singh as the next ruler of Marwar. However, the situation got complicated when the pregnant wives of Jaswant Singh gave birth to two sons posthumously, one of whom died soon after birth while the other, Ajit Singh, survived. Aurangzeb ordered that the latter be brought to Delhi and brought up in the royal term.⁶⁶ This created suspicion and mistrust

⁶⁵ Important contemporary sources of Aurangzeb's reign include Muhammad Kazim, 'Alamgimamah, eds. Mawluis Khadim Husain and Abd al- Hai, Calcutta: The Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1869; Saqi Mustad Khan, *Maasir-i-Alamgiri: A History of the Emperor Aurangzeb*, tr. Jadunath Sarkar, Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1947; *Khqfi Khan's History of 'Alamgir*, tr. S. Moinul Haq, Karachi: Pakistan Historical Society, 1975; Ishwardas Nagar, *Futuh-i 'Alamgiri*, tr. Tasneem Ahmed, Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1978; *Ruq'at-i 'Alamgiri or Letters of Aurangzeb*, tr. Jamshid H. Bilimoria, Bombay: Luzac & Co., 1908; Muhammad Bakhtawar Khan, *Wazir-i-Alam*, ed. Sajida S. Alvi, 2 Vols., Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1979. The modern works on Aurangzeb include Jadunath Sarkar, *History of Aurangzeb*, 5 Vols., Calcutta: M. C. Sarkar & Sons, 1912-24; Zahiruddin *Aurangzeb and His Times*, Lahore: Al-Biruni, 1977 [193\$]; Stanley Lane-Poole, *Aurangzeb and the Decay of the Mughal Empire*, Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1995 [1890]; Athar Ali, *Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb*, rev. ed., Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996; S. M. Azizuddin Husain, *Structure of Politics under Aurangzeb, 1658-1707*, New Delhi: Kanishka, 2002 and most recently, Audrey Truschke, *Aurangzeb: the Man and the Myth*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2017.

⁶⁶ For the divergent and conflicting reports on the succession of Jaswant Singh, see Faruki, *Aurangzeb and His Times*, Ch. IX.

among the Rajputs who revolted against the royal authority.⁶⁷ The two large states, Marwar and Mewar, rose in revolt and Aurangzeb himself had to move to Ajmer to control the situation. The circumstances became critical when the Emperor's own son, Akbar, who had been deputed to lead the royal army against the Rajputs, was seduced by the latter to ally with them and consequently he revolted against his father. Aurangzeb was able to save the situation by creating dissensions between the prince and his Rajput allies and thus compelling the prince to flee to the South.⁶⁸ In 1092/1681 *rana* of Mewar concluded a treaty with Aurangzeb and withdrew from the war but Marwar continued resistance to imperial authority till, after the death of Aurangzeb, his son and successor, Bahadur Shah recognized Ajit Singh as the next ruler of Marwar in 1121/1709.⁶⁹

The South presented a more serious problem to Aurangzeb. Pursuing the same policy of gradual expansion in the Deccan initiated by his great grandfather Akbar, he put pressure on the two remaining states—Golconda and Bijapur—which had already been weakened. However, this forward policy embroiled Aurangzeb with the Marathas, the militant Hindu residents of the Maharashtra region who had become a force to be reckoned with under their leader, Shivaji.⁷⁰ The latter's father Shahji had served under the Sultans of Ahmednagar and Bijapur and had large estates at Poona and in Karnatak. During Shah Jahan's campaigns in the Deccan, he submitted to the Mughals but served the rulers of Bijapur. His son, Shivaji, united under his banner a number of disgruntled elements and created a Maratha polity for the first time in history. He expanded power by occupying important hill forts of the region. Through his cunning and shrewdness, he became a threat to Bijapur state.

The rising power of Shivaji was now a threat to Baburi authority in the Deccan. Aurangzeb despatched Shaista Khan, a veteran general, as viceroy of the Deccan with the instructions to suppress the Marathas. Initially, Shaista Khan met a few successes and several hill forts—the hiding places of the Marathas—were occupied. However, in Shaban 1073/April 1663, in a night ambush by the Marathas, Shaista Khan barely escaped and his son was killed. Aurangzeb, then, recalled Shaista Khan and sent Diler Khan and Raja Jai Singh, with his son Prince Muazzam, to the Deccan. The new team put pressure on Shivaji and the latter had to sue for peace. In 1076/1666, he attended the court at Agra and was granted a *mansab* of five thousand which he considered to be below his status. He was kept

⁶⁷ It may be pointed out here that even under Aurangzeb, a century or more after the Rajputs had become part of the Mughal machinery of state, they enjoyed the status of confederates not of vassals and conducted themselves as confederating units, not subject or even as federating provinces.

⁶⁸ Prince Akbar sought refuge with the Marathas for the time being and finally fled to Persia where he died in 1704.

⁶⁹ For Rajput rebellion against Aurangzeb, see, Robert C. Hallissey, *The Rajput Rebellion against Aurangzeb: A Study of the Mughal Empire in Seventeenth-Century India*, Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1977.

⁷⁰ For general history of the Marathas, see Stewart Gordon, *The Marathas, 1600-1818: II. 4, The New Cambridge History of India*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. For Shivaji in particular, see, Jadunath Sarkar, *Shivaji and His Times*, 2nd ed., London: Longman, Green & Co., 1920.

in surveillance but succeeded in escaping and reaching the Deccan. This failure of Aurangzeb either to placate or suppress Shivaji was to haunt him throughout his life.

After this episode, Shivaji consolidated his position and also assumed the title of Maharaja in 1085/1674. The Baburi forces were unable to match his guerrilla tactics. He ultimately died in 1093/1682 and was succeeded by his son, Sambhaji who expanded the influence of the Marathas by raiding Burhanpur, the capital of Malwa, and committed atrocities on the Muslim population. Aurangzeb deemed it now fit to move to Deccan in person in order to crush the Marathas. Aurangzeb reached Aurangabad in 1093/1682 and he was destined never to return to the North, spending the last twenty-five years of his life fighting in the Deccan.

The presence and supervision of the Emperor, however, rapidly changed the situation. The two remaining independent states, Bijapur and Golconda, were finally occupied and annexed in 1098/1687. Sambhaji was captured and put to death in 1100/1689. His brother, Rajaram, now took over the Maratha leadership and on his death in Shawwal 1111/April 1700, his widow, Tara Bai, carried on the resistance against the royal forces. Aurangzeb conquered most of the Maratha forts but he failed to completely suppress the Maratha roving bands which challenged the royal authority whenever they could. The hilly terrain provided them abundant opportunities to hide and indulge in guerrilla warfare for which the royal army was neither trained nor equipped. "Aurangzeb remained in the Deccan, year after year, fighting an endless war and hoping to reverse a descending spiral of public order and imperial power in that region."⁷¹ How well the Baburis were able to contain the Marathas can be gauged from the fact that in 1118/1706, about one year before Aurangzeb's death, Marathas sacked Baroda, a town lying between North and South India and thus disrupted the communications between the two regions.

Aurangzeb also had to face trouble in the north-western frontier. In 1078/1667 Yusufzais rose in rebellion and the *faujdar* of Attock suppressed the rebellion. In 1083/1672, trouble again started when many tribes rose in revolt and defeated the governor of Kabul. The force sent to suppress the revolt also failed. Finally in 1085/1674 Aurangzeb himself went to Hasan Abdal and stayed there for over a year directing the operations. By the use of force and diplomacy, he restored peace. Among the leaders who rebelled against Aurangzeb was the famous Pashtu poet, Khushhal Khan Khattak, the chief of the Khattak tribe. Since the days of his grandfather, the Khattaks had helped the Mughals against their rivals Yusufzais. Khushhal himself fought with Mughal armies in Kangra, Balkh and Badakhshan and had also supported Aurangzeb against Dara Shukoh in the war of succession. His rivals, Yusufzais, supported Dara Shukoh. However, the differences arose after Aurangzeb's coronation. Khushhal Khan had hoped that Aurangzeb would restore the villages which Dara Shukoh had given to Yusufzais. Though Aurangzeb

⁷¹ Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, p. 225.

confirmed, him as chief of Khattak tribe but did not restore the Yusufzai villages. Then Aurangzeb abolished all tolls in his dominion. Khushhal Khan's family had enjoyed the privilege to collect tolls for crossing the Indus since Akbar's times. Khushhal Khan was hard hit by Aurangzeb's measure and probably publicly displayed his resentment. The governor of Peshawar had him arrested and sent him in chains to Delhi. He spent more than two years as prisoner in the Gwalior fort and even after that he was kept under house arrest and was not permitted to return to his country. At last, when he reached his homeland, he had been converted into a lifelong enemy of Aurangzeb and the Mughals. He gave expression to his feelings in "vivid and forceful verses which even now breathe fire."⁷² He came out in open rebellion and spent the remainder of his life arousing the Pathans against the Mughals in which he had only a limited success. He died broken-hearted in 1100/1689.

Aurangzeb's relations with the Sikhs became bitter and he had to face problems. Jahangir's harsh treatment of Guru Arjun had changed the character of the Sikhs from a peaceful community to a militant organisation. The next Guru Har Gobind organised the Sikhs on military lines and the conflict with the authorities became inevitable. In 1037/1628, a Mughal force was sent against them which after initial setbacks was able to overwhelm them. Guru Har Gobind had to flee to the hills. On his death in 1055/1645, he was succeeded by Guru Har Rai who supported Dara Shukoh during the War of Succession. On his death in 1071/1661, Tegh Bahadur became the next Guru who called himself as *Sacha Badshah* (True King) and started levying tribute upon the local population. This landed him in trouble with the local authorities. The imperial troops ultimately captured him and he was executed in Sha'ban 1086/November 1675. The next guru Guru Gobind Singh further intensified his efforts to militarise the Sikh community. The Sikhs were trained in the use of arms in order to wage a war against the Mughals. Guru Gobind Singh tried to make himself supreme in the hilly areas of East Punjab. He also recruited five hundred Pathan mercenaries. Many bloody battles were fought between the Sikhs and the Hindu rajas of the Punjab hills. The latter asked Emperor Aurangzeb to intervene in the conflict. Thus the combined forces of Mughals and the rajas besieged Guru Gobind Singh's stronghold Anandpur. The Guru managed to escape but his two children were captured and executed. The Guru was pursued and during the flight, he wrote a long epistle in Persian verse, generally known as *Zafamamah*, in which he complained against the authorities and appealed in the name of humanity and Islam. Aurangzeb was moved by its contents and issued orders that the Guru should not be molested. In this way, Guru Gobind was allowed to live in peace.⁷³

One of the important features of Aurangzeb's reign was the attempt to give an Islamic orientation to the Empire. Passionately inclined toward religion from an

⁷² S. M. Ikram, *History of Muslim Civilisation in India and Pakistan*, p. 420.

⁷³ For an insightful study of Mughal-Sikh relations, see Hardip Singh Syan, *Sikh Militancy in the Seventeenth Century: Religious Violence in Mughal and Early Modern India*, London: I. B. Tauris, 2013.

early age, he adopted certain measures to purify the state of un-Islamic practices. He forbade the morning appearance of the emperor in the *jharoka* window because it smacked of human worship. In the eleventh year of his reign (1079/1668), he forbade music at the royal court, banned the writing of any official histories of his reign and took other steps in conformity with the strict injunctions of the *shari'ah*. In 1090/1679, more thorough purification of the court rituals and ceremonies was ordered and *zzj/«A*, which had been abolished under Akbar, was re-imposed. While imposing *jizyah*, a number of taxes, repugnant to Islamic law, were abolished. Most of the scholars also point out that re-imposition of *jizyah* and certain other steps were mainly fiscal measures to relieve the state exchequer which was under heavy pressure due to costly wars, particularly in the South. It is a fact that re-imposition of *jizyah* had been suggested by Inayat Khan, the Diwan-i Khalsa, and Aurangzeb only endorsed that measure.

Aurangzeb has generally been accused of following a policy of religious discrimination against the Hindus and the Shias. He has been alleged to order the destruction of Hindu temples at a large scale and shutting the doors of employment to the Hindus. However, there is credible evidence to suggest that the destruction of a few Hindu temples was motivated by political factors, rather than religious ones, while certain royal *farmans* had allowed state grants for repair of the old temples.⁷⁴ Similarly, the Hindu nobles remained, as in the past, an essential part of the *mansabdari* system. Rather the number of Rajput high *mansabdars* was greater under Aurangzeb than under Akbar. As to the allegation of anti-Shia policies, it suffices to say that most of his *wazirs* and high nobles belonged to Shia sect. His policy towards Deccan states (which were ruled by Shia dynasties) was a policy initiated by Akbar and continued later by Jahangir and Shah Jahan. It had nothing to do with religious bias of the Emperor. In administrative and political matters, his policy was according to his own saying: "What connection have earthly affairs with religion? And what right have administrative works to meddle with bigotry? For you is your religion and for me is mine."⁷⁴

Aurangzeb died in Dhu al-Qa'dah 1118/ March 1707 at an advanced age of ninety after a rule of forty-nine years. His uncompromising and unaccommodating attitude towards different powerful groups, particularly non-Muslim sections, led him into serious troubles. However, his indomitable will and un-daunting courage and resilience had sustained the dwindling fortunes of the largest empire of the Mughals.

⁷¹ B. N. Pandey and Ata-ur-Rehman Qasmi, *Hindu Mandar aur Aurangzeb 'Alamgir kay Farameen*, 3rd ed., New Delhi: Maulana Azad Academy, 2006. Also see, Richard M. Eaton, "Temple Desecration and Indo-Muslim States" in *Beyond Turk and Hindu: Rethinking Religious Identities in Islamicate South Asia*, eds. David Gilmartin and Bruce B. Lawrence, Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000, pp. 246-281.

⁷⁵ Hamid al-Din Khan, *Anecdotes of Aurangzeb: English Translation of Ahkam i 'Alamgiri*, tr. Jadunath Sarkar, 4th ed., Calcutta: M. C. Sarkar and Sons, 1963, p. 88.

II. Later Mughals (1118-1274/1707-1858)

The death of Aurangzeb marked the end of the period of Great Mughals and the advent of Later Mughals. This period witnessed two marked developments. First, the Empire started shrinking in size at a steady and regular pace, resulting in the emergence of new autonomous and semi-autonomous states. Secondly, the monarchy, which was earlier the pivot of administration, gradually lost its position and different factions of nobility acquired the status of king-makers. The Baburi kings became pawns of the powerful *wazirs* and their authority got eroded.

Aurangzeb's son, Bahadur Shah, Shah 'Alam (1118-1124/1707-1712) ruled for just five years and after him, no less than six rulers ascended the throne till 1131/1719.⁷⁶ Muhammad Shah (1131-1161/1719-1748) reigned for nearly thirty years but saw further erosion of royal authority and the viceroys and governors established themselves as semi-independent rulers, leaving Delhi open to the depredations of two foreign marauders, first the Iranian Afshari ruler, Nadir Shah (r. 1149-1160/1736-1747), followed by the Afghan Abdali ruler, Ahmed Shah Durrani (r. 1160-1186/1747-1772). The first sacked Delhi in 1151/1739, annexing major areas of the Indian Empire, south of Indus river, to the Persian empire and also denuding the Mughals of their enormous wealth.⁷⁷ The Abdali rulers invaded, sacked and annexed Mughal territories five times between 1160/1747 and 1174/1761.

The Baburi throne, after Muhammad Shah, was occupied by three insignificant rulers.⁷⁸ Shah 'Alam (1173-1221/1760-1806) ascended the throne and reigned for forty-seven years. In 1174/1761, Abdali along with the Baburi King and certain other powerful groups defeated the Marathas—who had become the most powerful entity and a threat to the Mughals—in the Third Battle of Panipat. After Abdali's return, the political chaos in India continued. In 1784, the Marathas occupied Delhi and the King became a puppet in their hands. Taking advantage of the prevailing instability, the British East India Company converted itself from a corporate organisation as power brokers in the East and South of India. In 1218/1803, the English occupied Delhi but continued to deal with the Mughals as puppet kings. Two were to follow Shah 'Alam: Akbar Shah (1221-1253/1806-1837) and Bahadur Shah Zafar (1253-1274/1837-1858) where after this farce ended, promulgating, in the aftermath of the 1273/1857 uprising, direct rule of the British government.

The precipitous decline and fall of the Mughals has evoked a number of explanations. During the colonial period, William Irvine and Jadunath Sarkar propounded the 'individual approach' and held certain individuals responsible

⁷⁶ These included Azim al-Shan (1124-1124/1712-1712), Jahandar (1124-1124/1712-1713), Farrukhsiyar (1124-1131/1713-1719), Rafi al-Darajat (1131-1131/1719-1719), Shah Jahan II (1131-1131/1719-1719), Nikusiyar (1131-1131/1719-1719).

⁷⁷ For a critical study of the impact of Nadir Shah's invasion on India, see, Faraz Anjum, "Nadir Shah's Invasion of India and Fall of the Mughal Empire," *Historicus: Journal of Pakistan Historical Society*, LI11, No. 1 (Jan-March 2005): 101-111.

⁷⁸ Bahadur II (1161-1167/1748-1754), 'Alamgir II (1167-1173/1754-1760), Shah Jahan III (1173-1173/1760-1760).

for the problem. Irvine regarded the debauchery and incompetence of the Later Mughals and selfish approach of the high class nobles as mainly responsible for the fall.⁷⁹ Sarkar blamed Aurangzeb for his religious 'bigotry' which alienated the non Muslims and brought about the fall of the Mughals.⁸⁰ Irfan Habib, Satish Chandra and Michael Pearson put forward the 'system approach' and sought the answer in the *jagirdari*, *mansabdari* and military crises. Irfan Habib believed that the state system was exploitative where the peasants and *zemindars* (land holders) were drained of their wealth by the *jagirdars* on behalf of the state; while the *jagirdars* were frequently transferred from one place to the other in order to prevent them from becoming too influential. This, according to Habib, meant that the *jagirdars* had little interest in the promotion of agriculture and welfare of the peasants.⁸¹ Satish Chandra diagnosed the *mansabdari* crisis from the late half of the seventeenth century as largely responsible for the fall. As the number of *mansabdars* increased with the expansion of the boundaries of the Empire, they fell short of their expectations. In the early eighteenth century, repeated wars of successions further built up the expectations and the contenders of power made promises to woo them to their side. As the *jagirs* were limited, the King started distributing the *khalsa* (crown) land amongst them, reducing his own income and thus making himself dependent on them.⁸² Michael Pearson suggests that the real strength of the Baburi Empire rested on its image as an invincible military power and for this, it needed repeated successes to retain the loyalty of its small elite group. As the Mughals suffered defeats first in the Deccan against the Marathas and later against the Persians and the Afghans, the whole military edifice began to crumble and finally broke down.⁸³ Karen Leonard puts forward the 'great firm thesis' which explains that the powerful commercial and mercantile groups in the changed circumstances of the eighteenth century shifted their centre of activities from the Indian mainland to coastal areas and it proved to be detrimental to the interest of the erstwhile ruling classes.⁸⁴ Athar 'Ali presents the 'cultural failure thesis' which argues that Baburi Empire was not the only one which declined in the eighteenth century, rather, the Safavi Empire in Persia, and the Ottoman Empire in Turkey also met the same fate. Thus it was the European cultural superiority, with its technological innovations and intellectual advancement, which accounted for the decline and fall of the Eastern Empires.⁸⁵

⁷⁹ William Irvine, *Later Mughals*, 2 Vols. ed. Jadunath Sarkar, London: M. C. Sarkar & Sons, 1922.

⁸⁰ Jadunath Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, 4 Vols., London: M. C. Sarkar & Sons, 1932-38.

⁸¹ Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of the Mughal India, 1526-1707*, Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1963.

⁸² Satish Chandra, *Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court, 1707-1740*, Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, 1957. Muzaffar 'Alam in his *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India: Awadh and the Punjab, 1707-1748*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986, also considers 'the nobles' urge for additional powers' as bringing about a crisis, (p. 299)

⁸³ Michael N. Pearson, "Shivaji and the Decline of the Mughal Empire," *Journal of Asian Studies*, 35 no. 2 (Feb. 1976): 221-235.

⁸⁴ Karen Leonard, "The 'Great Firm' Theory of the Decline of the Mughal Empire," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 21 no. 2 (Apr. 1979): 151-167.

⁸⁵ Athar 'Ali, "The Passing of Empire: The Mughal Case," *Modern Asian Studies*, 9 no. 3 (1975): 385-96.

[11. State Administration]

General

The Baburi administrative system was a combination of classical Islamic ideals, Turco-Persian practices and local Indian traditions. Mughals inherited the system from the Sultans of Delhi and with necessary modifications implemented it in their realm.⁸⁶

Babur and Humayun continued with the previous traditions as they found little time to work for administrative innovations. Akbar was the architect of a new Mughal theory of kingship which was a blend of Turco-Mongol and Persian ideals of kingship and attributed divine and spiritual powers to the person of the King. According to Abu'l-Fazl, *padshah* (king) was a compound word—*pad* meaning stability and possession, *tend, shah* denoting origin and lordship. For him, the king was thus the 'perfect man' and real vicegerent of God on the earth. In his *Ain-i-Akhari*, Abu'l-Fazl further expounded this theory when he wrote: "Royalty is a light emanating from God, and a ray from the sun, the illuminator of the universe, the argument of the book of perfection, and the receptacle of all virtues. Modern language calls it *farr-i-izidi* (the Divine light), and the tongue of antiquity called it *kiyan-ikhuiarah* (the sublime halo). It is communicated by God to kings without the intermediate assistance of anyone, and men, in the presence of it, bend the forehead of praise towards the ground of submission."⁸⁷

Abu'l-Fazl has also enumerated the requisite elements of Mughal kingship: a paternal love towards the subjects, a large heart, daily increasing trust in God and prayer and devotion. The king, being the shadow of God (*zill Allah*) on the earth, bestowed his mercy on all without any discrimination. This, in fact, became a central point of Akbar's policy and was kept up by his successors, in a greater or smaller degree. On acquiring spiritual status for his person, the king was no longer just a temporal monarch but also claimed sacred powers. The subjects did not obey him simply because of his worldly authority but also due to his divine attributes.⁸⁸ At the same time, it became incumbent upon the King to treat his subjects with justice and equity. In this way, Akbar softened the autocracy of the absolute monarch and, in fact, transformed its very nature. This resulted, not only in a kindly and humane system of government, but also made it possible for the ruler to regard all his subjects as deserving of his personal solicitude. The Mughal

⁸⁶ For a general survey of administrative system of the Baburis, see Ibn Hasan, *The Central Structure of the Mughal Empire and its Practical Working up to the year 1600*, New Delhi: Radha Publications, 2001 [1936]; Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, *The Administration of the Mughal Empire*, Karachi: University of Karachi, 1966; Jadunath Sarkar, *The Mughal Administration*, Patna, 1920.

⁸⁷ *Ain-i Akbari*, p. 58.

⁸⁸ For claiming spiritual powers by the temporal monarchs in India and Iran, see A. Azfar Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2012. Also see, Ram Prasad Khosla, *Mughal Kingship and Nobility*, Allahabad: The Indian Press, 1934. For a critique of European perceptions of Mughal Kingship, see, Faraz Anjum, "Oriental Despotism and Mughal Imperial Ideals: A Comparative Analysis," *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, 47, No. 1 (Jan-June 2010): 97-126

Badshah was not primarily, or even mainly, an autocratic Sultan or an *amir al-muminin*, but a father to all his people and a trustee for their welfare.⁸⁰

The Mughal King was the pivot of the government and all the threads of the administration were in his hands. He, therefore, had to follow a tight schedule and from dawn to dusk, a rigid and exacting time table. The power of the Baburi king was theoretically unlimited and he posed as a despotic ruler but in reality, there were serious constraints to his authority.

The code of Islamic laws, known as *shari'ah*, though disregarded at times by the Emperor, was the supreme law of the land and it worked as a great check on his arbitrary powers. Athar 'Ali, while referring to the independent powers of *jazz's* to decide cases according to *shari'ah*, maintained that "however absolute, the state lacked the power to legislate. The Tudor monarchy [in England], with its control over Parliament and its legislation, was thus surely far more absolute or despotic than any Great Mughal."⁸¹ Ibn Hasan asserts that "the law bound the qazi, the magistrate and the king alike. The scope for a king's caprice remained only in the method of punishment. Written complaints were presented, written documents submitted, witnesses produced and cross-examined."⁸²

The highest official of the state was the Wakil. Bairam Khan's position under Akbar was that of Wakil-i Sultanat. After Bairam's dismissal, Akbar reduced the power of the Wakil and most of the time, the post was left vacant. Under Jahangir and Shah Jahan, Itimad al-Daulah Mirza Ghiyath Beg and later Asaf Khan enjoyed the powers of the Wakil. They regularly attended the royal court to place all important affairs before the Emperor. They kept the seal and received a copy of the reports from the provinces. All orders of appointment were sealed and signed by them and the court reporter gave them daily intelligence reports.

Besides wakil, the administrative system of the Empire mainly comprised of central ministers including *wazir* or *diwan ala*, *mir bakhshi*, *mir saman* and *sadr as-sudur*. In the absence of a *wazir*, the *diwan ala* enjoyed the powers of the *wazir*. He was in-charge of financial matters and the imperial treasury and the auditor of accounts. He framed rules and regulations for assessment and collection of revenue, allocated funds for expenditure on state activities and supervised the work of the departmental offices. Under him, there were four separate departments of the *diwan-i khalsa* (for crown lands), *diwan-i tan* (for salaries), *mushrif* (chief accountant), and *mustaufi* (auditor).

The *mir bakhshi* was in-charge of military affairs, secret service department and *mansabdari* system. He was responsible for presenting the candidates for *mansabs* to

⁸⁰ S. M. Ikram, *A History of Muslim Civilisation in India and Pakistan: Political and Cultural History*, 7th ed., Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1997, pp. 308-10.

⁸¹ Athar Ali, "Political Structures of the Islamic Orient in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Medieval India I: Researches in the History of India, 1200-1750*, ed. Irfan Habib, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 130.

⁸² *The Central Structure of the Mughal Empire and its Practical Working up to the Year 167*, New Delhi: Radha Publications, 2001 [1936], p. 341.

the emperor, though other high officials and princes could also introduce prospective *mansabdars* to the emperor. The papers relating to the rank and salary of *mansabdars* were prepared, for approval of the emperor, mainly in the offices of the *diwan-itan* and the *bakhshi*. The *mir bakhshi* or his assistants inspected the soldiers, the horses and the beasts of burden and other military arsenal which *mansabdars* were required to maintain. The horses, approved by the office of *mir bakhshi*, were branded, and a roll describing the soldiers was compiled. The *mir bakhshi* assigned to different *mansabdars* the duty of mounting guards on the royal palace. News reports from the provinces were first received by the *mir bakhshi* and then presented to the emperor, either directly or through the *wakil*. The *mir bakhshi* accompanied the emperor on his tours, hunting expeditions and military campaigns. He was also required to go to all important military campaigns led by the princes. Sometimes the *mir bakhshi* was given independent command in battles.

Mir Saman was in-charge of the imperial household — *karkhanas* or the *buyutatas* as the department was called. Traditionally, there were thirty six *buyutatas* or *karkhanas*, the following have been mentioned in the *ain*: the treasuries, the mint, the *farrashkhana* (the store for carpets etc.), illumination and lights, the *qurkhana* (store of insignia, banners, flags etc.), the workshop for making the royal seals, the *abdarkhana* (water and drinks), the kitchen, the fruitery, the perfumery, the wardrobe and the bedding and mattresses, the *philkhana* (elephant stables), the stables for horses, camels, cows, and mules, buildings, the library, the arsenal, the workshops for the manufacturing of shawls and textiles.⁹² The main function of the *karkhanas* was to supply the commodities needed by the palace and offices of the government. These included from the food served on the monarch's table to the pieces of artillery required by the imperial forces. The department was the greatest manufacturing agency for weapons of war and articles of luxury. It also purchased and stored all other kinds of articles. It was run strictly on business lines.

The *sadr as-sudur* was the central minister of religious affairs who also looked after education and *auqaf*. He was the main link between the *ulama* and the ruler. He derived his importance from his power to grant revenue-free subsistence land known as *madad-im 'oashor suyurqhal*. The recipients of those qualifying for *Madad-im 'oash* were divided into four categories: i. Dispassionate seekers after knowledge ii. Ascetics iii. The illiterate weak and poor iv. Uneducated men of noble birth who could not earn their living as tradesmen or professionals. Many recipients of *madad-im 'oash* ran seminaries and schools out of their grants and some assignees of lands performed useful state service by extending cultivation and planting orchards, etc. These grants were not hereditary. The sons were generally allowed to inherit their father's property and title but the emperors reserved the right to review the case afresh and to make new grants.⁹³ The main police officer in the cities was the *kotwal*

⁹² Abu'l Va.zi, *Ain-i Akbari*, pp. 5-7.

⁹³ For a study of *Sadarat, Qaza an&Ihtisab*, see Rafat Fatima Bilgrami, *Religious and Quasi-religious Departments of the Mughals, 1556-1707*, Aligarh, 1968.

who was not a military officer but he worked in collaboration with the military commandant. During Akbar's period, the *kotwals* were ordered to complete the census of all towns and large villages, giving details of the inhabitants' professions and activities. The towns were divided into *mohallas* (quarters) and each *mohalla* was placed under a *mir-i mohalla*. The *Kotwals* visited bazaars, merchants, and artisan guilds and ensured that no illegal imposts were levied in towns. They also supervised mints and checked gold and silver content of coins. They were also responsible for recovering stolen property and if they failed to catch the thieves, they had to make recompense themselves. The safety of adjoining roads to town was also their responsibility.

The head of the provincial administration⁹⁴ was *subadar* (governor) for whom the title *nazim-i subah* or *sipah-salar* (military commander) was also used. Only influential *Mansabdars* and princes were appointed as governors. Generally, all the provinces of the Deccan were placed under one governor but in other areas, not more than two contiguous provinces were combined under one governor. The governors enjoyed vast powers. They were the deputies of the emperor in the provinces. They commanded the provincial troops and were responsible for the maintenance of peace and prosperity in their provinces. For that purpose, they obtained intelligence reports from independent sources and acted accordingly to quell the disturbance. The governors were responsible for promotion of education, increase of cultivation and welfare of the people of their areas.

To assist the governors, there were provincial *diwans* and *bakhshis* who were responsible for the revenue and military administration respectively. The provincial *sadrs*, *qazis* and *mir-adls* also performed their separate duties. There was a provincial news-writer {*waqai-nawis*} who reported directly to the emperor all important events in the provinces. Another independent reporter called the *khufya-nawis* (secret reporter) also sent intelligence to the central government. Both horsemen and dispatch runners transmitted news-reports expeditiously. Theoretically all the provincial officials were subordinate to the governor but they were in direct contact with their superiors at the centre. This system of checks and balances made effective administration possible and kept the Great Mughals in power for more than two centuries.

For revenue purposes, the provinces were further divided into districts, called *Sarkars*, which were subdivided into *parganas*. The 'Amil or *Karori* was head of the land administration for the *pargana* and was chiefly responsible for collecting revenue and promoting agriculture. Sometimes, for administrative purposes, the provinces were subdivided into units known as *faujdaris* which were composed of smaller units known as *thanas* or military outposts. The *faujdar* was a senior official who performed military, police and judicial functions and also helped in revenue administration. He was required to deal with any rebellion by the *Zamindars*, *Jagirdars* and 'ummal. He maintained law and order in his area and helped the

⁹⁴ P. Saran, *ifc Provincial Government of the Mughals, 1526-1688*, Lahore: Faran Academy, 1976 [1941].

revenue officials in tax collection. *Athanadarhad* to maintain a specified number of *sawars* to support the administration. The emperor himself appointed the *faujdars* and the *mirbakhshi* controlled them while senior *thanadars* were also appointed by the central government.

Military

Babur and Humayun's armies were largely composed of war-bands. It was Akbar who transformed these divergent warring groups into an imperial army. In 981/1573, Akbar introduced regulations about fixing the grades of the officers of the state which is known as *mansabdar* system. *Mansab* literally means a rank or a position. It also means a function, prerogative or duty. The *mansabdars*, or holders of *Mansabs*, were required to perform either civil or military duties or both, but all of them were placed on the military payroll. The most significant feature of the system was that it incorporated the free warlords into the regular and state paid royal army by fitting them into a flexible imperial hierarchy, by granting them cost-based salaries and by promoting the military strength of their contingents.⁹⁵

The ranks (*mansabs*) of *mansabdars* ranged from the *dahbashi* (commander of ten) to the *dah hazari* (commander of 10,000), but *mansabs* above 5,000 were generally reserved for the princes. Initially, each *mansabdar* had to keep the number of troopers indicated by his rank and also maintained a fixed number of horses, elephants, camels and carts. However, as many *mansabdars* were unable to fulfil their obligations; after 1003/1595, Akbar divided them into three categories: first, those who had troopers equal in number to their *mansab*; second, those who had half or more; third, those who had less than half. The dual ranks of *zat* and *sawar* were introduced and the number of horsemen which a *mansabdar* had to maintain was indicated in the *sawar* rank while *zat* rank indicated his personal pay in the pay schedules. Thus the *zat* and *sawar* ranks were meant to show particular obligations and salaries.

Some *mansabdars* were paid in cash from the imperial treasury but generally they were assigned a territory known as *jagir*, whose estimated revenue was equal to the pay due for their *zat* and *sawar* ranks. *Jagirs* were transferable and generally a *mansabdar* held a *jagir* in one place for not more than three to four years. The troopers' salary varied according to the number and type of horses he possessed. Some particularly efficient troops were taken under the emperor's control by Akbar and his successors. They were not ordinarily placed under the *mansabdars*. They were named *ahadis* (from *ahad* or 'one'). Their equipment was of a very high standard, and their salary was fixed at 500 rupees. Each had to maintain five horses. They were placed under a separate *diwan* and *bakhshi* and were mustered every four months.

It was in the mid-fourteenth century that gunpowder became known in

⁹⁵ Jos Gommans, *Mughal Warfare: Indian Frontiers and High Roads to Empire, 1500-1700*, London: Routledge, 2002, p. 84. Also see, William Irvine, *The Army of the Indian Moghuls: Its Organisation and Administration*, London: Luzac & Co., 1903 and Abdul Aziz, *The Mansabdar System and the Mughal Army*, Lahore, 1945.

northern India and explosive devices were introduced, possibly via Asia Minor. However, Babur was the first to use cannon effectively in battles and has given in his *tuzk*, a description how a cannon was manufactured. In the later period, the use of cannon became widespread. According to Abu'l-Fazl, only the Ottomans could compete with India in the manufacture of guns. Initially Turkish experts were employed as gunners. When Akbar conquered Gujrat and Bengal, Europeans were also hired as gunners. Akbar also introduced some innovations. He made both light and very heavy guns. Those known as *namals* could be carried by a single person while some called *gajnals* were carried on elephants. In Akbar's reign, Hakim Fathullah Shirazi invented the multi-barrelled cannon.

Generally it is believed that the Mughals neglected the navy which ultimately became a major reason for their downfall. The fact, however, is that Akbar had established an imperial naval department, called Nawara in Bengal, and its in-charge was called *mir-i bahar* [*amir al-bahr*, the older form got duly transformed into admiral]. However, it did not rise above a provincial department as the *mir-i bahar* worked directly under the provincial governor. Jahangir and Shah Jahan did not take any interest in this Bengal fleet. It was under Aurangzeb that naval fleet of Bengal again came into prominence. Mir Jumla employed 323 boats in his Assam campaign. Shaista Khan built a shipyard at Dacca. It was mainly with the help of his naval force that he not only inflicted a crushing defeat on Maghs and European pirates but also conquered Chittagong. However, it is a fact that the Baburi emperors did not extend these naval activities at the centre and their royal navy was never able to compete with the emerging European powers.⁹⁶

Judicial Structure

The judicial structure of the Mughals was a combination of Perso-Arabic system in the Indian setting.⁹⁷ It also borrowed some features from Turco-Mongol traditions.⁹⁸ There were two main agencies for administering justice: imperial office and *qazi's* court. Mughal rulers generally endorsed the popular notion that the monarch was the fountain-head of all justice. Therefore, the highest agency for the administration of justice was the court of the king. Ordinary cases were attended to by the king in the open *darbar* every day and important cases which required evidence of witnesses were attended to by him on the day in the week fixed exclusively for the administration of justice. This arrangement for providing justice was not disturbed when the king proceeded on military expeditions, pleasure trips or on tours to different provinces. The king tried both civil and criminal cases and acted both as a court of first instance and a court of appeal.

⁹⁶ Atul Chandra Roy, *A History of Mughal Navy and Naval Warfare*, World Press, 1972 and idem, *History of Bengal, Mughal Period, 1526-1765*, Calcutta: Mababharat Publishers, 1968.

⁹⁷ For judicial system of the Baburis, see, Muhammad Basheer Ahmed, *The Administration of Justice in Medieval India*, Aligarh: Aligarh Historical Research Institute, 1941; Wahed Husain, *Administration of Justice during the Muslim Rule in India*, Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1934.

⁹⁸ For example, *yasa* of Chingis Khan was generally invoked for punishing the rebels.

The king appointed a *qazial-quzat* or the chief *qazi* who was head of the judicial administration of the realm and could appoint subordinate judicial officers with the consent of the king. He had powers to try original civil and criminal cases and to hear appeals from provincial courts whose working he supervised. He was assisted by one or two *qazis* of eminence. He also administered the oath of accession to the sovereign and ensured that the *khutbah* was read in the Emperor's name in the mosque in order to give validity to his accession.

There were no fixed rules and regulations for appeal nor were there fixed appellate courts to which cases could be taken against the judgements of the court of first instance. Either of the parties or the judicial officer himself could refer the case to king's court or the court of *qazial-quzat*.

Along with a *qazi*, the king could also appoint a *mir'adl* in big cities and their jurisdiction was separately defined. The king also appointed a *qazi-i 'askar* for administering justice in army units. *Qazis* were not just appointed in big cities but even *parganas* and *qasbahs* (small towns) had their own *qazis*. Only the villages, which comprised more than seventy percent of Indian population, from the ancient times had their own separate local village council (*panchayat*) system to decide local disputes. Mughals, like the earlier rulers, generally did not interfere in the autonomy of the village. The civil cases of the Hindus affecting their personal life were decided by Pundits according to Hindu religious law.

The *qazi* did not rely solely on witnesses' oath and testimony but was also required, when necessary, to make impartial and diligent inquiries. The *qazis* also acted as registrars of surety bonds, bail bonds, contracts and title deeds. The *muftis* were the experts on *sharia* law and gave *fatwas* (formal legal rulings) on disputes referred to them by members of the public or by *qazis*. Their rulings were binding in matters of marriage, divorce and inheritance, but other legal questions were either decided by the *qazis* or were left to the rulers' discretion. *Mohtasibs* acted as subordinate officers of the *qazis*. Their responsibilities traditionally included the control of sale and purchase transactions in bazaars, weights and measures, genuineness of coins and the suppression of prostitution and other immoral offences. Under Aurangzeb, the *mohtasib* was also empowered to prevent forbidden deeds, particularly drinking intoxicating liquor and taking *bhanga* (Indian hemp) and other drugs. There was no strict separation of duties of the *mohtasib*, *qazi* and chief of police (*kotwal*).

The governor possessed a right of general supervision over the administration of criminal justice in his province. He himself sat in the court to try cases, and the *Faujdar*s sent him the accused arrested by them. It was his duty to inquire into the nature of charges and to send those whose cases fell under *sharia* for trial to the *qazi*, to try political offences himself and to refer revenue cases to the *diwan*. The governor used to inspect the jails once a month and looked into the condition of the prisoners. He was authorized to release those whom he considered innocent and to direct the *qazi* to try pending cases of the accused in custody without delay.

The kind and quantum of punishment was left entirely to the discretion of the judge who generally followed the Islamic practices of *qisas*, *diyat*, *hadd* and *tazir*. All

the Baburi kings generally favoured a policy that wide powers of punishment should not be left in the hands of judicial or executive officers. The regulations, therefore, required that all cases of capital punishments should be sanctioned by the King.

IV. Social and Economic Life

Like the Sultanate period, the Indian society under the Mughals was segmented into different groups on the basis of religious, racial, caste, clan and ethnic differences. Despite many points of contact between the Hindus and Muslims on the highest as well as on the lowest levels, their life currents flowed separately as their spiritual sources of inspiration were different. Some sufi orders and the Bhagats tried to bring them closer but they succeeded only partially. The Muslim aristocracy mainly consisted of descendants of foreign immigrants. But gradually, they had adapted themselves to new environment and had become thoroughly Indianised. The majority of Indian Muslims consisted of those who themselves or whose forefathers had embraced Islam. They punctiliously observed Islamic rituals but had retained many features of local culture and thus they acted as a bridge between the Muslim minority and Hindu majority.

During the period, the Muslim and Hindu festivals continued with their usual fervour. The Muslims celebrated *Eid al-Azha*, *Eid al-Fitr*, *Shab-i Barat* and *Eid-Milad al-Nabi* while the Hindus celebrated *Holi*, *Diwali* and other religious festivals. These festivals provided an opportunity to both Muslims and Hindus for social interaction as the followers of the two religions earnestly participated in each other's festivals. The Mughals also introduced some non-religious festivals and ceremonies. *Nauroz* (a pre-Islamic Persian festival to celebrate the new year) was observed at the state level and festivities were held. The people decorated their houses and wore new dresses. The king bestowed *jagirs*, robes of honour, titles and promotions of ranks on that occasion. The *mina bazar* (fancy fair) became a special feature of Mughal social life. It was first introduced in Humayun's time but became popular under Akbar. One objective of holding such events was the emperor's desire to come into contact with the common people directly and to acquaint himself with their conditions. Sometimes the participants used this opportunity to bring their grievances to the notice of the emperor. The *Mina Bazar* was also open to members of the nobility who visited it for enjoyment and fun."

The women of the period, generally, exercised great influence within the family. The women of the ruling family and upper classes enjoyed considerable freedom. Babur's daughter, Gulbadan Begum, wrote an important account of her father and brother, *Humayun Nama*, which testifies to her intellectual worth as

⁹⁹ For a general survey of social conditions under Baburis, see Yusuf Husain, *Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture*, Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1957; Muhammad Yasin, *Social History of Islamic India: 1605-1748*, Lucknow: The Lipper India Publishing House, 1958; Tara Chand, *Society and State in the Mughal Period*, Lahore: Book Traders, 1979, pp. 53-54. Neelam Chaudhary, *Socio-Economic History of Mughal India*, Delhi: Discovery Publishing House, 1987.

well as the active role played by the *haremladies*. Akbar's mother, Hamida Banu Begum, was an able adviser to her husband as well as to her son while Akbar's wife, Salima Sultan Begum, was also endowed with excellent mental calibre. Jahangir's wife, Nur Jahan, played so dominant a role that later historians considered her as the real force behind the Emperor. Shah Jahan's wife, Mumtaz Mahal, has been immortalised by her mausoleum, the Taj Mahal. Shah Jahan's daughters, Jahan Ara and Roshan Ara, also played important role during their father's and later during their brother's reign. Jahan Ara wrote two important works on sufi saints: *Monis-ul-Aru/ahon* Chishti saint, Shaykh Moin al-Din Ajmeri and *Risalah-i Sahibiyyahon* Qadiri saints, Mian Mir and his disciples. Aurangzeb's daughter, Zeb-un-Nisa, was an accomplished poet and used *Makhjias* her *nomde plume*.

Purdah was observed strictly among Muslim ladies but the Hindu aristocracy and the middle classes in northern India also observed it. Among the poorer sections of society, where the women used to work outside their homes, it was less prevalent. Polygamy was the norm among the upper classes but a vast majority of the people practised monogamy because of economic constraints. Child marriage was also permissible and vastly practised. Mughals tried to prevent *sati* (Hindu practice of immolation of widow on her husband's pyre) but they were only partially successful. The women were fond of ornaments and jewellery. Abu'l Fazl has mentioned thirty-seven different ornaments, made of gold, silver or baser metals, worn by the Indian women.¹⁰⁰

Sufism has always been a great source of spiritual devotion for Indian masses and has enormously influenced their lives. During the Sultanate period, two sufi orders (*silsilahs*), Chishti and Suhrawardi, had emerged in India. Under the Mughals, along with these two orders, others such as Qadiri, Naqshbandi and Shattari orders spread in India. The sufi *khanqahs* and shrines, which attracted both Muslims and non-Muslims, were centres of not just spiritual rejuvenation but also added moral excellence, cultural elegance and social charm to the society. They richly contributed to the literary, social and spiritual life of the period.¹⁰¹ They promoted local native languages as well as an atmosphere of religious pluralism. Many historians have maintained that the sufis of the era had a large share in whatever conversion to Islam had taken place in India. The view has not gone unchallenged. Leaving aside the controversy, the fact of the matter is that the impact of sufi teachings on the social life of the Indian masses cannot be denied. Many low-caste Hindus, Buddhists and Jains, when converted to Islam, moved upward socially.

¹⁰⁰ For a detailed study of women's lives, see, Ruby Lal, *Domesticity and Power in the Early Mughal World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005; Rekha Misra, *Women in Mughal India*, Allahabad: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1967; Z. Kausar, *Muslim Women in Medieval India*, Patna: Janaki Prakashan, 1992; Soma Mukherjee, *Royal Mughal Ladies and their Contribution*, New Delhi: Gyan Publishing, 2001; For popular misconceptions about Mughal *harem*, particularly European travellers' representations, see, Faraz Anjum, "Strangers' Gaze: Mughal Harem and European Travellers of the Seventeenth Century," *Pakistan Vision*, 12, No. 1 (June 2011): 70-113.

For a detailed study of sufi activities under Baburis, see Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *History of Sufism*, Vol. 11, Lahore: Sohail Academy, 2004.

On the economic front, the Mughals laid great emphasis on the promotion of agriculture as land produce was the mainstay of their finance. It was Sher Shah who had introduced agrarian reforms which were continued during Akbar's time. In order to standardize the unit of measurement, ayard, called a *gaz*, consisting of forty-one digits, was adopted. An area of sixty square yards was called a *bigah*. Instead of a rope which shrank because of moisture, a bamboo rod joined together with iron rings was used. The land was classified according to the length of its cultivation. If it had been continuously under cultivation, it paid full dues. If it was left uncultivated only for a short time to recover its fertility, it paid the dues only when it was cultivated. When infertile land was brought under cultivation, during the first year, only a nominal demand was laid upon it in the shape of one or two serper *bigah*. In the second year, this demand was raised to five serper *bigah*. In the third year it paid half of the normal demand; this was gradually raised until it paid the full demand on the fifth year. The cultivated area had to be grouped in accordance with the similarity in climate and other natural factors. Each area had a common *Dastur*, a schedule of average produce. According to *ain-idahsalah*, figures from fifteenth to the nineteenth years of Akbar's reign were collected from the local records and the figures for the twentieth to the twenty-fourth years were supplied by the finance department. From this data, average annual yield of a homogenous area was calculated and the state demand worked out. This method of assessment was known as *zabt* system. When a holding had paid state demand over a number of years, i. e., ten to twelve years, it became quite apparent what the average payment had been, and the state and the cultivator came to an agreement whereby a fixed sum was paid and the area cultivated and the crops grown were not taken into consideration, this was a contract and was known as *nasaq*. Akabar fixed a third of the gross produce as the state demand; but from the beginning, the scale was not uniform in all parts of the empire. It varied between one eighth and one half. The prevailing scale in the Ajmer area was one seventh, whereas in Gujrat, it was one half. In case of failure of crops, commissioners known as *amins* were sent to assess the extent of damage and to recommend the amount of remission. The *zabt* and *nasaq* systems envisaged payment in cash.

The state tried to protect the peasant from the extortions of its officers as well as the local authorities. Every peasant entered into an agreement with the state which meant preparation of two documents: the *pattah* (title deed) which was drawn up by the representative of the state or the *mansabdar* mentioning the area under cultivation, the crops and the amount of demand and the *qabuliyat* (deed of agreement) drawn up on behalf of the peasant, repeating the details of the *pattah* and confirming the peasant's acceptance of the assessment. The former was kept by the peasant while the latter was deposited in the local revenue office. The fruit gardens were charged with a flat rate of 2-3/4 per *bigah*. However, if it was found that the orchard was not sufficiently productive, a fifth or a sixth of the net produce was claimed.¹⁰²

¹⁰² For a detailed study of agrarian system and the prevalent conditions, see Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of the Mughals, 1556-1707*, 2nd rev. ed., New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999 [1963].

Generally, the attitude of the government towards the peasants was that of benevolence as it realised that prosperity of the empire depended on their welfare and progress. Mughals were eager to expand agriculture and special concessions were given for bringing under cultivation barren and uncultivated land. They were also eager to introduce new crops and fruits in India. Abu'l Fazl mentions the cultivation of forty-one crops in the revenue circles of Agra—sixteen rabi and twenty-five *kharif* crops. During Baburi rule, pineapples, potatoes, guava, custard apples, tobacco, honeydew variety of melon and new varieties of grapes were grown for the first time in India. A major development in agriculture was the use of grafting techniques for improving the quality. The state undertook the construction of irrigation canals and reservoirs and irrigation works were put in charge of local officers called *daroghas* of canals who were responsible to keep them in good repair.

A remarkable feature of this period was the growth and development of large cities. The process of urbanization began during the Sultanate period and reached its zenith under the Mughals. Delhi was pre-eminent and the European travellers visiting it in the sixteenth century compared it to London, Paris or Constantinople. The other important cities in northern India which excelled in size, population and wealth were Agra, Lahore and Srinagar. Agra was the biggest seventeenth century city with a population of 500,000 to 600,000. Ahmedabad, the capital of Gujrat, was justly considered as one of the finest cities of the world.^{1,3}

The period of the Mughals, known for its peace and security, facilitated the development of internal and external trade and commerce. The roads and highways were fairly safe in the interior of the country while in the less settled parts of the country, special guards protected the trade *caravans*. India during this period was quite self-sufficient and only certain metals and a few luxury articles were imported. The government fostered commercial relations with European nations and allowed them to establish their factories in coastal towns. The impact of European commerce with India on a competitive basis was beneficial in many ways. New markets were opened for Indian exports and the existing ones further expanded.

The chief exports of India in the seventeenth century were textiles, spices, indigo, saltpetre, ginger, opium and sugar while the imports were gold, silver, horses, copper, tin, zinc, lead, mercury, coral, amber, precious stones, velvets, perfumes, China goods, wines and African slaves. Cloth, particularly cotton textile, was the centre of manufacturing life of India and was the chief article of export to Southeast Asia, Europe, Middle East and East Africa.”⁴ Its production was spread all over the

^{1,3} There is a general consensus that out of the total population of 142 million in India around 1600 AD, 85 per cent of the people lived in villages while only 15 per cent resided in towns and cities. See, Irfan Habib, “Population,” in *The Cambridge Economic History of India, c. 1200-c.1750*, eds. Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib, vol. I, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982; reprint, Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2004, p. 169; Shireen Moosvi, *The Economy of the Mughal Empire, c. 1595: A Statistical Study*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1987, pp. 299-321.

¹⁰⁴ For a study of Indian textiles and their impact on the global world, see, Giorgio Riello and Tirthankar Roy, eds. *How India Clothed the World: The World of South Asian Textiles, 1500-1850*, Leiden: Brill, 2009 and Ruth Barnes, ed. *Textile in Indian Ocean Societies*, London: Routledge Curzon, 2005.

country, but Dacca, Banaras, Agra, Multan, Burhanpur, Lahore, Ahmedabad., Patna, Baroda, Broach and Surat were important centres. The fine muslins of Dacca, the silks of Bengal and the brocades of Banaras were justly famous. In the seventeenth century the export of textiles to Europe consisted of nearly 8,000 bales. Indian calicoes were popular in England which absorbed nearly a million pieces every year.

The Baburi Empire was the largest producer of industrial goods in the world. The imperial workshops employed craftsmen who manufactured some of the finest products which covered a wide range of goods —fine cotton and silk fabrics and metalwork in iron, steel, brass, copper, gold and silver. Indian swords and weapons were greatly prized; Indian copper and brass vessels and gold and silver ornaments were well-known. The skill of Indian goldsmiths, jewellers and workers in pearls and precious stones, was the wonder of the world. The art of manufacturing boats and ocean-going ships was highly advanced. In 1112/1700, the population of India was twenty times that of United Kingdom. India's share of total world output at that time has been estimated at twenty per cent— nearly a quarter, Britain's share at three per cent.¹⁰⁴

The bulk of the empire's wealth was concentrated in the hands of less than five hundred families, comprising of the ruling class and high *mansabdars*. They lived lavishly and used to have a large staff of servants and retinue.¹⁰⁷ The middle class consisted of merchants, traders and professional and service groups. The Mughals brought peace and prosperity to the country and the middle class was the main beneficiary of the process. It was, therefore, sufficiently well-off. The lower classes living in the towns and cities and the peasantry in the rural side was not prosperous. They lived a simple and austere life.¹⁰⁸

IV. Education, Science and Culture

The Baburi kings, like their predecessors, had no separate department of education because education in those days was a purely private matter.” Any qualified person could present himself as a teacher. Every educational institution,

¹⁰⁷ Hameed Khatoon Naqvi, *Mughal Hindustan: Cities and Industries 1556-* Karachi, 1974, pp. 322-326.

¹⁰⁶ Nial Ferguson, *Empire*, New York: Basic Books, 2004, p. 22 cited in Zahid Shariff, “Orientalism and Pakistan,” *Lahore Journal of Polity Studies*, 3 no. 1 (December 2009): 41.

¹⁰⁷ In 1647, about 60 per cent of the estimated revenue of the empire was assigned to 445 *Mansabdars* of 500 ranks and above. Abdul Hamid Lahori, *Badshah namah*, 11: 715-16 cited in S. A. A. Rizvi, *The Wonder that was India*, vol. II, 1200-1700, London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1987, p. 177.

¹⁰⁸ According to Satish Chandra, “the picture of peasant life in Mughal India is not one of acute discontent, except in some areas at different periods.” Idem., “Standard of Living: Mughal India,” in *The Cambridge Economic History of India, c. 1200-c. 1700*, eds. Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib, vol. I, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982; reprint, Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2004, p. 463. Also see, Faraz Anjum, “Conditions of Common People under the Mughals: A Critical Study of Representations of European Travellers,” *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, 47, No. 2 (July-December 2010): 33-64.

¹⁰⁵ For general survey of education and learning under Baburis, see, S. M. JaHar, *Education in Muslim India*, Delhi: Idarah-i Adbiyat-i Delli, 1936; Abul Hasnat Nadvi, *Hindustanhi Qadeem Islami Ilarsghahain*, Lahore: Milli Printers, 1979; Narendra Nath Law, *Promotion of Learning in India during Muhammadan Rule by Muhammadans*, London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1916.

maktabor madrasah, recruited its own staff and ran it privately. However, the state religious department, under the *sadr as-sudur*, had a role to play as it provided endowments in the form of *madad-imo'* ashgrants in cash and *jagirs* to the individual scholars and teachers as well as to the institutions. The nobility also patronized the educational institutions, Education was thus totally free. No educational institution charged any fee and the students were often provided with books and means of sustenance.¹¹⁰

Grants were not limited to the Muslim institutions only as Hindu temples, *pundits* and scholars were also recipients of such grants. Even Aurangzeb, often accused of religious bigotry, granted land and money to schools generously for teaching Sanskrit and Hindu religion. In *madrasahs* and *maktabs*, there was no discrimination between the Hindus and the Muslims. A large number of Hindu poets, historians and even lexicographers benefitted from the educational policy as some Hindu scholars excelled in rational sciences and were appointed teachers in *madrasahs*.¹¹¹

Mosques and *maktabs* were generally used for early education while *madrasahs* were reserved for middle and higher education. The basic objective of *madrasah* education was to transmit the core message of Islam to the students and to equip them with the skills which made them socially useful. It was generally assumed that this message and these skills were available in classics, mostly written by the end of the eighth century of Islamic era. Along with the texts of these books, numerous commentaries, super-commentaries, notes and glosses related to these texts formed the curriculum of *madrasah* education. The curriculum consisted of transmitted subjects (*ulum-i-naqliyyah/manqulat*) and rational subjects (*'ulum-i-aqliyyah/maqulat*). The former included Quran, *tafsir* (Quranic exegesis), *ahadith* (traditions), Arabic grammar and syntax, and Islamic law and jurisprudence, while the latter mainly consisted of logic, philosophy and various branches of mathematics including accountancy and medicine.^{1,2} Traditionally the transmitted subjects dominated the curriculum but at the beginning of the sixteenth century, rational sciences began to receive greater attention. One of the major influences, contributing to this development was the arrival of Mir Fathullah Shirazi (d. 997/1589) from Iran to India.¹¹³ He reached Akbar's court

¹¹⁰ Khaliq Ahmed Nizami points out that "no teacher in medieval India could set up an educational institution and instruct people in different religious sciences unless he had obtained an *ijazat-namah* from an authority on the subjects he intended to teach. The *ijazat-namah* was the medieval form of modern certificates and diplomas." *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century*, Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1961, p. 347.

^{1,1} For details see, Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, *The Education of Hindus under Muslim Rule*, Karachi: Academy of Educational Research, 1963; Syed Abdullah, *Adbiyat-i-Farsi mein Hinduon ka Hissa*, Delhi: Anjuman-i-Taraqi-i-Urdu, 1942.

¹¹² Abu'l-Fazl mentions the subjects that were taught in schools during Akbar's reign. He reports that "every boy ought to read books on morals, arithmetic, the notation peculiar to arithmetic, agriculture, mensuration, geometry, astronomy, physiognomy, household matters, the rules of government, medicine, logic, the *tabii*, *riyazi*, and *ilahi* sciences, and history; all of which may be gradually acquired." *Ain-i Akbari*, II: Ain 25.

¹¹³ For the contribution of Mir Fathullah Shirazi, see M. A. Alvi and Abdur Rahman, *Fathullah Shirazi: A Sixteenth Century Indian Scientist*, New Delhi, 1968; S. M. Azizuddin Husain, "Mir Fathullah Shirazi's Contribution for the Revision of the Syllabi of Indian Madrasahs during Akbar's Reign," in S. M. Azizuddin

in Rabi¹ al-thani 991/May 1583 and was acknowledged, as “the most learned man of the learned men of his time.”¹⁴ Fathullah Shirazi’s influence was tremendous which could be traced down to Mulla Nizam al-Din (d. 1161/1748) of Farangi Mahal who, in the early eighteenth century, initiated Dars-i Nizamiyya, which became the basis of modern curriculum of *madrasah* education in South Asia.¹⁵ In the new curriculum, rational sciences were given more prominent place.¹⁶ Dars-i Nizamiyya also brought about a change in the style of teaching as it emphasized comprehension, rather than rote learning.

Madrasahs were centres of higher learning. Babur and Humayun lacked sufficient time to set up new *madrasahs*. However, Akbar built a grand *madrasah* at Fatehpur Sikri. *Madrasah Abu'l Fazl* was also established there. Akbar also built *Madrasahs* in Agra and Gujrat. *Madrasahs* established by royal ladies included *Madrasah Khair al-Manazil* founded by Akbar’s wet nurse Maham Anga and *Madrasah Maqbara Humayun*, founded by Akbar’s mother, Hamida Banu Begum. Jahangir renovated many old *madrasah* buildings and furnished them. Shah Jahan in 1060/1650 established a royal *madrasah* at Delhi. He also had the *Madrasah Dar al-Baq* at Agra repaired. Dara Shikoh built a *madrasah* at Thanesar, Punjab, named *Madrasah Shaykh Chilli*. Of the personal *madrasahs*, the most prominent were ‘Abdul Hakim Sialkoti’s at his home city, *Madrasah Shaista Khan* at Dhaka, *Madrasah Shaykh al-Islam* at Ahmadabad and *Madrasah Mir Jumla* at Delhi. Shah Waliullah’s father Abdul Rahim also set up *Madrasah-i Rahimiyah* at Delhi. Many renowned scholars studied in this eminent institution. Aurangzeb lavishly spent on Muslim education and had many *madrasahs* established. In his reign, Thatta alone had four hundred *madrasahs*.¹⁷ He got building of Farangi Mahal at Lucknow from the Dutch and handed it over to Mulla Qutb al-Din’s sons around 1106/1695. One of them, Mulla Nizam al-Din, set up a grand *madrasah* at Farangi Mahal. During Baburi era, an extensive network of *madrasahs* had come up all over India.¹⁸

No annual examinations were held in this system of education. Students were promoted from a lower to a higher class according to the assessment of

Husain, ed., *Madrasa Education in India: Eleventh to Twenty First Century*, New Delhi, 2005, 24-36; Ali Anooshahr, “Shirazi Scholars and the Political Culture of Sixteenth-century Indo-Persian World,” *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 51 no. 3 (2014): 331-352.

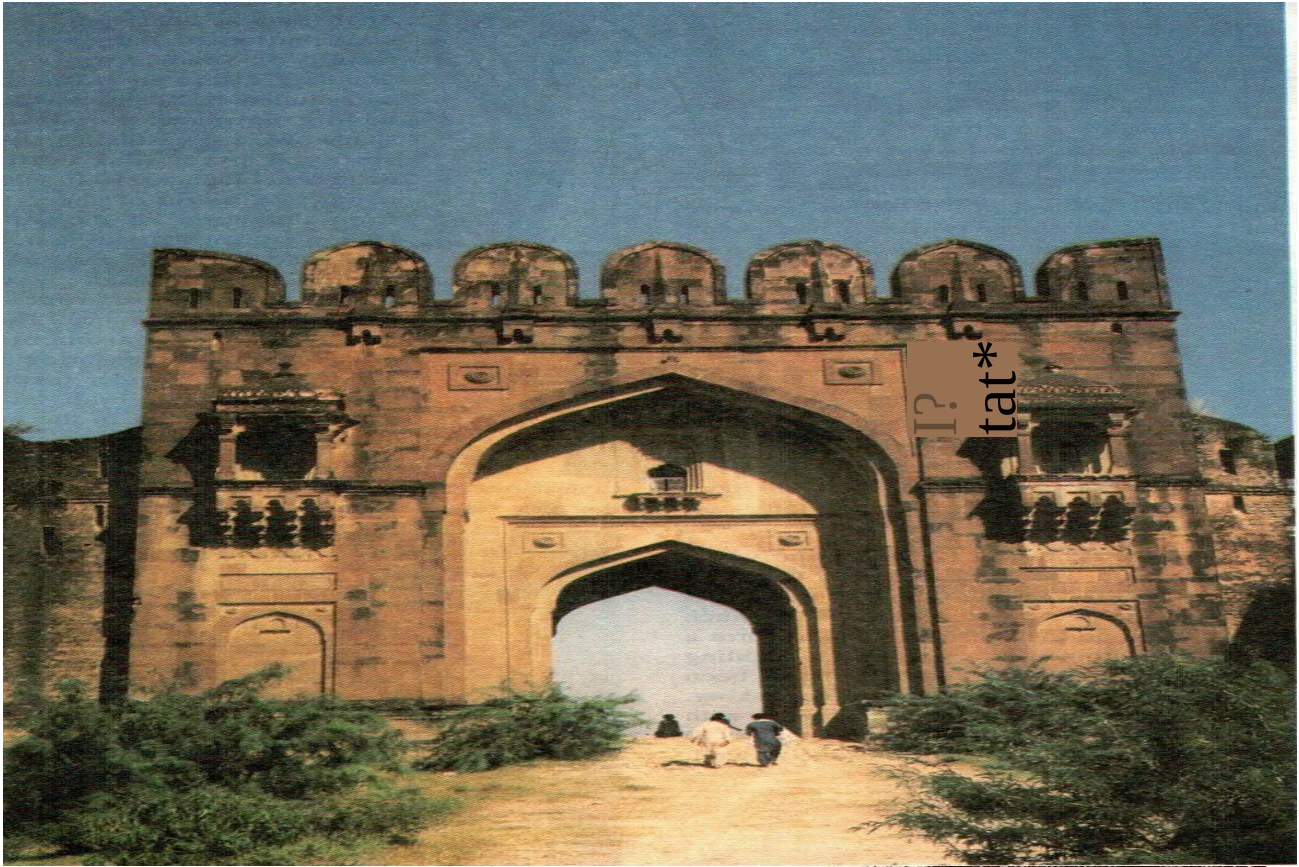
¹⁴ Badauni, *Muntakhabat Tawarikh*, III: 109-238. Abu ‘l Fazl wrote about him that “if the books of antiquity should be lost, Mir Fathullah Shirazi will restore them” cited in Yusul Husain, *Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture*, p. 80.

¹⁵ Francis Robinson has traced a direct line of transmission from Fathullah Shirazi to Mulla Nizam al-Din, see *The Ulema of Farangi Mahal and Islamic Culture in South Asia*, Delhi, 2001.

¹⁶ In the curriculum of *Madrasah-i Rahimiyya* of Delhi (headed by the famous scholar, Shah Wali Ullah), there were only two books on logic while in Dars-i Nizamiyya, eleven books on logic were taught. See for the curriculum of the medieval period, G. M. D. Suh, *Al Minhaj: Being the Evolution of Curriculum in the Muslim Educational Institutions of India*, Delhi, 1977.

¹⁷ Syed Altaf Ali Brelvi, “Development of Education,” in *Islam in South Asia*, ed. Waheed-uz-Zaman and M. Saleem Akhtar, Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1993, p. 153.

¹⁸ For details of *Madrasahs* of the Baburi period, see, Abul Hasnat Nadvi, *Hindustan ki Qadeem Islami Darasgahain*, and Abdus Salam Nadvi, “Taleem ki Taraqi,” in *Hindustan kay Musalman Hukmaran kay Ahad kay Tamadduni Karnamay*, ed. Shah Moeen al-Din Nadvi, Azamgarh: Darul Musannifeen, 1963, pp. 188-239.



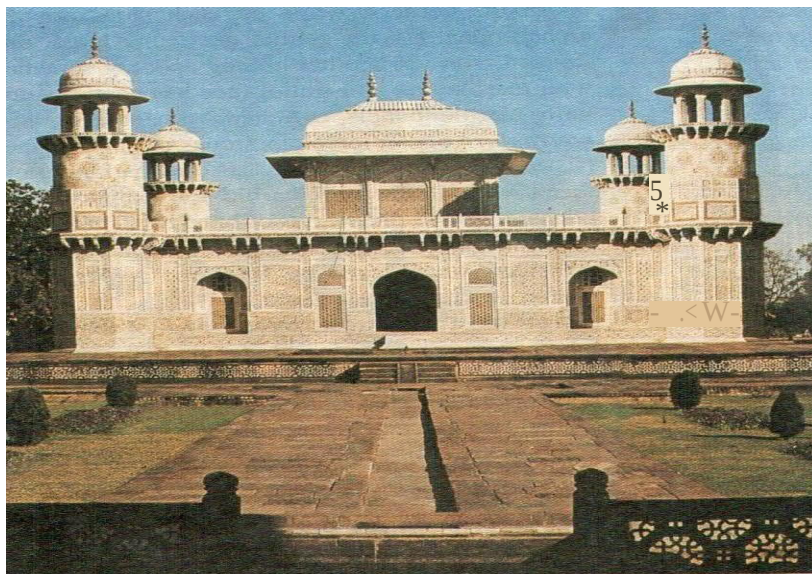
Sohail Gate, Rohtas Fort, Jhelum

Humayun's Tomb. Delhi





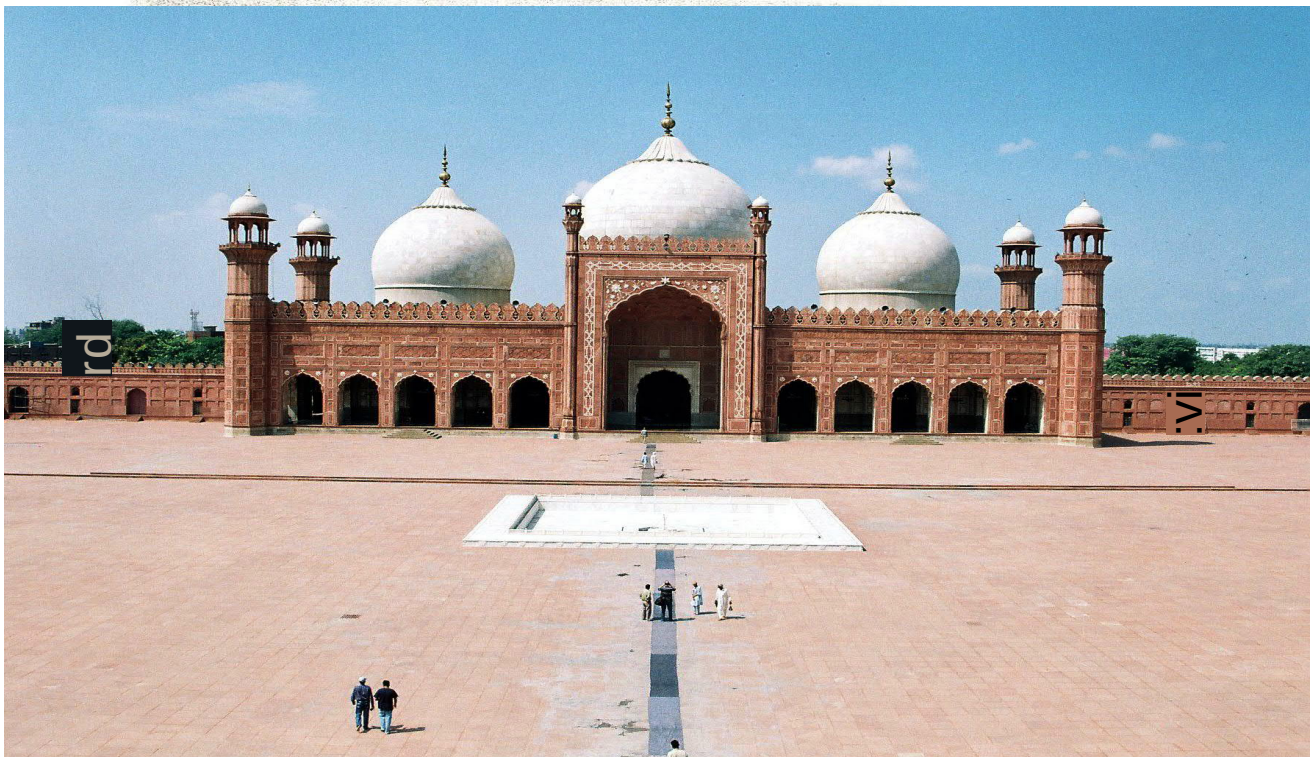
Panch Mahal, Fatehpur Sikri



Tomb of Imdad ad-Daulah, Agra



Wazir Khan Mosque, Lahore



Badshahi Mosque, Lahore



F1-z Gate, Badshahi Mosque, Lahore



'Alamgiri Gate, Lahore

the concerned teachers who took into account the total academic career of the students, whom they knew very intimately. Thus the award of *ijaza* (certificate/authorization) was a personal matter between the teacher and his student. Before issuing a certificate, the teacher ensured that his pupil had understood the meaning and objective of the book, and had actively participated in thoughtful debates over its content. Students went from one teacher to another to obtain authorization and the more authorizations they obtained the more qualified they were considered.¹¹ The concept of specialization existed and each seat of learning specialized in its own particular branch. The Farangi Mahal *Madrasah* and the institutes of Awadh specialized in Philosophy and Logic, *Madrasah-i Rahimiyyah* and the *madrasahs* of Delhi emphasized studies in *hadith* and *Tafsir* and the Sialkot school in Grammar.

Arabic was the sacred language for the Indian Muslims and most of the religious literature were produced in that language. Literary activities in Arabic increased in quantity as well as quality after the coming of the Mughals.¹² The prominent *ulama* and *sufis* of the period compiled a number of commentaries of the Quran and *ahadith*, and wrote books on *fiqh* and mysticism in Arabic. Amongst the long list, the names of Shaykh Abdul Haq Muhaddis, Abdul Hakim Sialkoti, Shah Wali Ullah, Muhib Ullah Bihari and Ghulam 'Ali Azad Bilgrami are conspicuous. *Fatawa-i 'Alamyin*, known outside India as *al-fatawa al-Hindiyyah*, was a compendium of Hanafi law, compiled by a board of *ulama*, headed by Shaykh Nizam, on the orders of Aurangzeb.

As to female education, women belonging to royalty and nobility were generally educated. Even among the middle classes, the education of girls was not totally neglected. There were *maktabs* for imparting religious education to girls in private houses where elderly women taught the Quran and books on morals.

Mughals showed keen interest in the development of sciences, particularly medicine. The *Ayurvedic vaid*s (doctors of Indian medicine) and *hakims* (doctors of Greek-cum-Islamic medicine) formed a recognized professional group, often following the profession of their fathers; thus emerged the concept of 'physicians' family. All such prospective physicians learnt the family craft from family members. Perhaps it was the reason that only a few specialized medical institutions, such as Hashim's medical *Madrasah* at Ahmedabad were established in that period. In the late eighteenth century the *Farangi Mahal* became a major institution where students did medical apprenticeship, otherwise, *Dars-i Nizamiyyah* adequately catered for the basic requirements of the medical education.

There were three types of physicians in Mughal India. First, those who joined the service of the king and nobles; second those who were receiving state patronage by way of cash salaries, *nazranas* and grants and thirdly the *bazar* physicians. The

¹¹ Shaykh 'Abdal-Haq has explained his method of getting education during his student life: "In studying of the book, discussion, revision '*Taqraar* 0 *A'adah*., reading of glosses and commentaries, I would spend my entire time." *Abhbaral-Akfyar*, Urdu tr. Iqbal al-Din Ahmed, Karachi: Darul Ishaat, 1997, p. 402.

M. G. Zubaid Ahmed, *The Contribution of Indo-Pakistan to Arabic Literature, from Ancient Times to 1857*, Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1946.

first two were appointed on the basis of assessment of their knowledge and experience. The bazar physicians had their own clinics in the market.¹²¹

During the reign of Babur and Humayun, Hakim Yusuf b. Muhammad Yusufi was an expert in symptomology, therapeutics, ophthalmology and general medicine. He was the author of at least twelve books and his two treatises *Fawa'id al-Akhyar* and *Ilajal-Amraz* dealt with hygiene and therapeutics. Hakim Muhammad b. Yusuf al-Tabib al-Harawi was one of the most broadly-read pathologists of his time. He composed a number of treatises including *Bahar al-Jawahir* and *Ayun al-Hayat*. Hakim Abdul Razzaq compiled *Khulasat al-Tashrih*, which deals with human anatomy. Under Akbar, Hakim Bhina was a reputed surgeon and composed a book on medical prescriptions which was popularly known as *Mujarrabat-i-Shaykh Bhina*. Hakim Ain al-Mulk Dawwani Shirazi excelled himself in the field of ophthalmology. His treatise, *Fawa'id al-Insan*, is a work on pharmacology in versified form. Hakim 'Ali Gilani was an accomplished physician. He had considerable knowledge in the fields of osteology, mycology, angiology, necrology and the digestive system. Hakim Fathullah Shirazi translated the famous *Qanun* of Abu 'Ali Sina (Avicenna) into Persian for the benefit of the people. Muqarrab Khan and Hakim 'Ali Akbar were renowned surgeons of Jahangir's time. Muqarrab Khan was also an expert bleeder and veterinarian. Amanullah Firoz Jang Khanazad Khan had a sound understanding of medicine. He wrote *Ganj-i Bad Awurd* on pharmacology and *Ummal-Ilaj* on purgatives. Under Shah Jahan, Hakim Masum Shustari wrote books on pharmacology. His *Qarabadin-i Ma'sum* deals with the preparation of drugs, pastes, syrups, tablets, enemata, gargles and ointments. Hakim Nur ud Din Ain al-Mulk's two works *Alfaz-i Adwiyya* and *Ilajat-i Dara Shukohi* were compendia of medical science. In the reign of Aurangzeb, Hakim Sanjak was an expert in the field of ophthalmic. Danishmand Khan was well-versed in anatomy and knew the work of William Harvey on the circulation of blood. Nur al-Haq Sirhindi wrote *Ain al-Hayat*, a rare work on plague. Hakim Muhammad Akbar Arzani wrote a commentary on Chaghmini's *Qanuncha*. Qazi Muhammad Arif wrote *Tibb-i Qazi Arif*, a general work on medicine containing prescriptions for diseases that were especially indigenous to India.

Mughals established a network of free public hospitals in all the large cities of the country where generally the Hakims and the Vaidas worked side by side. Many shelter-cum-health care centres for animals and birds were also set up in some places. During the seventeenth century, in the region of Cambay, Surat and Ahmedabad, foreign travellers noticed various such centres which were called *pinjra polsin* local dialect.

Beside medicine, Mughals were also interested in technological developments. The official *karkhanas* not only served as manufacturing agencies but also as centres for technical and vocational training. The novices were placed under a master-craftsman

¹²¹ S. A. N. Rezavi, "Physicians as Professionals", in Deepak Kumar (ed.), *Disease and Medicine in India: A Historical Overview*, New Delhi: Tulika Publication, 2001. Also see, Idem, "An Aristocratic Physician of the Mughal Empire: Muqarrab Khan," *Medieval India*, I, ed., Irfan Habib, 1992.

(*ustad*) to learn the trade and in course of time they became experts themselves.¹¹ In this way, many artisans and craftsmen who got training in the *karkhanas*, later set up their own independent workshops. Fathullah Shirazi could be compared to his near contemporary Italian, Leonardo da Vinci (856-925/1452-1519), for mechanical inventions. He designed a millstone which ground com. He invented a looking-glass which showed curious figures, and a gun which could be converted to pieces and then put together again when required. With the Mughals, the Samarqand School of mathematics and astronomy began to play a prominent part in the study of these subjects in India. Humayun had a great liking for astronomy and astrology and caused terrestrial and celestial globes constructed for the purpose.

Mughal interest in animals and nature turned them to the study of botany and zoology. Babur compiled a comprehensive gazetteer of Hindustan, describing at length the animals, fruits and flowers of the land he had conquered. Akbar was ardently enamoured of animals of all kinds and collected them from Persia, Turkestan and Kashmir. The inmates of his menagerie included horses, elephants, antelopes, the *nilgai*, rhinoceroses, large buffaloes with prodigious horns, lions, tigers, some of the finest sporting dogs of every kind, and species of birds of prey used in field sports for catching partridges, cranes, hares, and even for hunting antelopes. He was a great breeder of domestic animals—elephants, camels, cows and horses; and the breeds of horses produced in his stables were as fine as those of Arabia. The Game Department of Akbar maintained a record of all animals hunted, with measurements and the minutest details concerning them. Jahangir was the greatest naturalist among the Baburi kings and “his profuse and engrossing memoirs are a veritable natural history of the animals that came under his notice, and a record of the most searching observations concerning them.”¹² He maintained a big aviary and menagerie where he carried on his observations, tests and experiments. He dissected objects of his hunt to examine the internal parts. Jahangir’s keen powers of observation and passion for knowledge imparted to his descriptions an objective thoroughness characteristic of modern scientific writing. In describing organisms observed by him, he gave local names, geographical distribution and even structural characteristics, weights, measurements and some interesting notes on ecology and behaviour. His descriptions were often precise enough for the correct scientific identification of the objects described. His studies of the sarus crane, and the gestation period of the elephant, are two amongst his original contributions. He recorded his observations and experiments of breeding trials and hybridization. He has described about thirty-six species of animals. As a naturalist, Jahangir was interested in the study of plants. Some fifty-seven plants

¹¹² For the development of science under Baburis, see, D. M. Bose, S. N. Sen and B. V. Subbarayappa, eds. *Concise History of Science in India* (New Delhi: Indian National Science Academy, 1971); Ahsan Jan Qaiser, *His Indian Response to European Technology and Culture, AD 1495-1707*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982; Irfan Habib, “The Technology and Economy of Mughal India,” *Indian Economic and Social History Review* DOI: 10.1177/001946468001700101; Irfan Habib, “Akbar and Technology,” *Social Scientist*, 20 no. 9/10 (Sep. - Oct. 1992): 3-15.

¹²³ Alvi and Rahman, *Jahangir the Naturalist*, p. 4.

have been described in his work as also the type of inflorescence, pollination and methods of fruit preservation.

In the latter half of the fifteenth century, Indian cities of Sialkot, Zafarabad, Patna, Murshidabad, Ahmedabad, Aurangabad and Mysore were among the well-known centres of paper production. Zafarabad was significantly known as Kaghlishaher (paper city) and produced glossy and strong paper from bamboo pulp. Ahmedabad's paper was of export quality, glossy and in different sizes and colours. The technique of paper-making was practically the same throughout the country, differing only in the preparation of the pulp from different raw materials. The Mughals gave considerable encouragement to the production of paper which became an important vehicle of royal communication and legal transactions so much so that their rule has been called 'rule of paper', a rule wherein everything was reduced in writing and put on paper.¹²⁴

The metal-smiths, particularly in the central, eastern and southern parts of India, were known for the production of intricate forms of both copper and bronze images which were being produced on a large scale. Iron-smelting and forging operations were also followed with further achievements such as the production of large iron pillars for use in temples, and of damascened swords of high quality. Cosmetics and perfumes became increasingly popular and some new compositions also appeared to cater for the needs of the royal baths and religious ceremonies. *Ain-i-Akbari* speaks of the 'Regulations of the Perfume Office of Akbar'. The 'atar of roses was a popular perfume, the discovery of which is attributed to the mother of Queen Nur Jahan.

Under the Mughals, all important towns had private libraries.¹²⁵ There were three types of libraries: libraries of royal family and high nobles, libraries attached to *madrasahs*, and private libraries of scholars. The Royal Library of the Mughals was a large institution, maintained by an efficient staff. It was linked to the department of calligraphy that cooperated with the department of miniature painting and the department of translation. A librarian, appointed on account of his scholarship, headed the institution. A large workforce of gilders, book binders and cutters were also associated with the Library. The Indian nobility followed in the footsteps of royal family in their passion for collecting manuscripts and books. They made special efforts to lay their hands on any rare literary gem, to enrich their personal collections. 'Abdur Rahim Khan-i Khanan, as the governor of Gujrat, maintained an excellent personal library at Ahmedabad.¹²⁶ Every *madrasah* usually had a library, big or small, attached to it. Public libraries were not in existence. It was, therefore,

¹²⁴ Jadunath Sarkar, cited in Syed Abdullah, *Adbiyat-i Farsi mein Hinduon ka Hissa*, Preface.

¹²⁵ For libraries under the Baburis, see, Bimal Kumar Datta, *Libraries and Librarianship of Ancient and Medieval India*, Delhi: Atma Ram & Sons, 1960; Syed Abu Zafar Nadvi, "Kutab Khanay" in *Hindustan hay Musalman Hukmaran on hay Ahad kay Tamadduni Karnamay*, ed. Shah Moeen al-Din Nadvi, Azamgarh: Darul Musannifeen, 1963, pp. 263-316.

¹²⁶ Maulana Shibili Nomani has called this library an academy or Dar-ul-Hikmah. Idem., *Maqalat-e-Shibli*, vol. 4, ed. Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, Azamgarh: Darul Musanafeen, 1951, p. 72.

necessary for scholars to have their own collection of books. Scholars, teachers and *sufis* all had their own book assortments. Their collections benefitted many, including their students. Even the average common man was allowed to borrow books from these learned men.

The tradition of diffusing education among the Muslims in Baburi India was so strong till the nineteenth century that the British officers were scared of speaking to the members of noble families for fear of exposing themselves because they quoted Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Galen and Avicenna in their ordinary talk. Major Sleeman, a veteran British officer, who had spent thirty-five years in India, while writing in 1260/1844, has acknowledged it confirming how cultured, refined and well-read the educated Indians were in that era.¹²⁷

V. Art and Architecture

Mughal Emperors have been hailed as "among the world's most aesthetically minded rulers."¹²⁸ They created artistic works and architectural monuments which are still considered wonders of the world. It was, thus, natural that different art forms reached the pinnacle of glory under them.

Architecture was the main pastime of the Mughals since their buildings, through their majesty and grandeur, were an ever present reminder of their imperial might and power.¹²⁹ It was inspired from three sources: native Indo-Islamic, Perso-Central Asian and local Hindu-Buddhist. Thus many elements fused together to constitute the Mughal style of architecture. The curved *do-chala* roof from Bengal and the cusped arches from Delhi and Gujrat were derived from native Indo-Islamic source while the extensive use of tilework, the *Iwan* as a central feature in mosques, the use of domes, the *CharBagh* (garden divided into four) and the four-centre point arch came from Perso-Central Asian influence. Distinctive Hindu-Buddhist features included trabeate stone construction, richly ornamented carved piers and columns, shallow arches made out of corbels and the use of *chhatris*, *chajjas* and *jharokas*.¹³⁰

The main Baburi buildings included palaces, forts, mosques, tombs and gardens. The material and decoration used for these buildings varied widely depending on the region and the type of construction. However, red sandstone was most widely used in the early buildings, subsequently white marble in conjunction with red

¹²⁷ W. H. Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections of an India Official*, rev'd ed., London: Humphrey Milford, 1915 [1844], pp. 280 & 410.

¹²⁸ Stuart C. Welch, *Art of Mughal India: Painting and Precious Objects*, New York: The Asia Society Inc. 1964, p. 11.

¹²⁹ For detailed study of Baburi architecture, see, Catherine B. Asher, *Architecture of Mughal India*, I. 4, *The New Cambridge History of India*, Cambridge, 1992; Ebba Koch, *Mughal Art and Imperial Ideology: Collected Studies*, New Delhi, 2001; Idem., *Mughal Architecture: An Outline of Its History and Development (126-1858)*, Munich, 1991; R. Nith, *History of Mughal Architecture*, 4 Vols., New Delhi 1985-2005. E. Begley and Z. A. Desai, *Taj Mahal: The Illuminated Tomb: An Anthology of Seventeenth-Century Mughal and European Documentary Sources*, Cambridge, 1989; Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture (Islamic Period)*, Bombay, 1975; J. Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, New Delhi 1972 [1876]; E. B. Havell, *Indian Architecture: Its Psychology, Structure, and History from the First Muhammadan Invasion to the Present Day*, London, 1927 [1913].

¹³⁰ *Chhatri* means domed kiosk resting on pillars, *chhajja* is sloping stone overhung at roof level while *jharoka* is a projecting balcony supported on corbels with a hood resting on columns.

sandstone began to be employed as a stone cladding for the front of monumental buildings whereas it was used as an inlay and outline for the red sandstone ground. Later, under Shah Jahan, white marble facing was used to cover entire buildings—its best example is the Taj Mahal. Besides red sandstone and marble, rubble stone was used for building walls and baked brick for the construction of domes and arches although these were usually covered with plaster or facing stones. Decoration of buildings was carried out in a variety of ways including ceramic tilework, carved and inlaid stonework, *pietra dura* inlay with coloured and semi-precious stones. Mughal architecture excelled in the quality of its carved stonework, from shallow relief depictions of flowers to intricate pierced-marble screens known as *jali*. It is not just the grandiose design but rather a “complete integration of every detail of decoration, structure, mass and space in the service of a single paramount idea which produces the best examples of Mughal architecture.”¹¹

Babur summoned from Constantinople pupils of the great Ottoman architect, Sinan, and entrusted to them the construction of mosques and gardens. Babur was a lover of gardens and laid out several after his conquest of Delhi. One of the earliest Mughal gardens called Rambagh or Aram Bagh in Agra was planned by Babur himself. The standard form of Mughal gardens was derived from the Persian *Char Bagh*. It was a regular and formal arrangement of squares, usually in the form of terraces placed on a slope, for easy distribution of water, with pavilions at the centre. Artificial pools with numerous fountains formed an important part of the plan and the flagged causeways were shadowed by avenues of trees.

Humayun built the earliest Mughal palace, the Purana Qil'ah (Old Fort), in Delhi which was completed by Sur rulers. The palace is surrounded by a huge wall 1.5 km long with three huge gateways. The buildings under Babur and Humayun exhibit no trace of local influence and are distinctly foreign. An important building in the early period is the mausoleum of Sher Shah, built by the ruler himself, on an elevated plinth in the midst of a lake at Sahsaram (Bihar).

Akbar was immensely interested in architecture. His principal medium was red sandstone. He started an ambitious project of building his new capital at Fatehpur Sikri which remained the seat of his court. The buildings at Sikri showed a combination of different elements but particularly Hindu influence was predominant. There is abundance of diverse minute carvings in the Turkish Sultana's palace, Raja Birbal's house and the *Diwan-i Khas*. Another eminent structure is the tomb of Shaykh Salim Chishti which is made of pure white marble. An important feature of Sikri buildings is that each building possessed unique features and no two structures were alike in design. Akbar also built two huge fortresses at Agra and Lahore. Lahore Fort was different from Sikri buildings in material and style. It had a number of carved decorations, representing living things. Elephants and lions appeared in the brackets and peacocks on the friezes.

Haji Begum, widow of Humayun, built her husband's tomb at Delhi in

¹¹ Kamil Klawns *Mumtaz, Architecture in Pakistan*, London: AMimar Book, 1985, pp. 51-52.

976/1569. It is distinctly different from other buildings of Akbar and is considered a precursor of Taj Mahal. Double dome, use of *chhatris* and a large geometrical garden are the features which were later followed in the Taj. The mausoleum itself is of red or yellowish sandstone with marble panels and a white marble dome. The entrance gate of the large compound has beautiful Persian arches and large alcoves, along with turrets on either side with lotus finials. It combines for the first time the Iranian and the Hindu styles.

Jahangir built his father's mausoleum at Sikandra, near Agra. It represented the cultural synthesis which was the ideal of the late Emperor. However, the building which marked the transition from red sandstone to marble is the tomb of Itimad al-Daulah at Agra. Built by his daughter, Nur Jahan, in 1036/1627-1628, with its full surfacing of marble, the introduction of *pietra dura* and an assimilation of different styles, the mausoleum is considered a forerunner of Taj Mahal. Jahangir, a passionate lover of nature, was keen to lay out gardens and thus a large number of beautiful gardens were laid out in Kashmir and the Punjab. Jahangir's beautiful mausoleum at Shahdara near Lahore was probably planned by the Emperor himself, but it was completed in the next reign by his widow Nur Jahan. It is a beautiful building which is decorated with inlaid marbles, glazed tiles and painted patterns and the whole structure reminds one of Taj Mahal.

Shah Jahan is known as architect Emperor for his magnificent edifices. His period was the reign of marble and he replaced many sandstone structures of his predecessors in the forts of Agra and Lahore and other places with marble. However, along with the change of material, minute and tasteful decoration and ornamentation as well as grand conception and design with feminine elegance were the other features of his architectural achievements. Amongst the more famous of Shah Jahan's buildings are the *Moti Masjid* or 'Pearl Mosque' and Taj Mahal at Agra, the Red Fort and *Jamia Masjid* at Delhi, palaces and gardens at Lahore, particularly Shalimar Garden, a beautiful mosque at Thatta in Sindh, a fort, a palace and a mosque at Kabul, royal buildings in Kashmir and many edifices at Ajmer and Ahmedabad. In Lahore, he also constructed a number of buildings, mainly with glazed tiles, the style known as Kashi. The finest product of this style is Wazir Khan's Mosque, which was erected in 1634 by the local governor. Other buildings constructed in this style at Lahore were Gulabi Bagh, Chauburji and 'Ali Mardan Khan's tomb.

Aurangzeb was not a great builder but amongst some buildings of merit constructed in his reign are the grand Badshahi Mosque of Lahore, completed in 1084/1674 and *Moti Masjid* inside the Red Fort, Delhi, completed in 1072/1662. It is a small mosque constructed of white and grey marble. The tomb of Aurangzeb's wife, Rabia Durrani, at Aurangabad, constructed in 1089/1678, marks the ebb of Shah Jahani tradition as it is a "base copy" of the Taj Mahal.^{1,2}

Under the Mughals, the art of painting was greatly cultivated and a distinct

*H. K. Sherwani, *Cultural Trends in Medieval India: Architecture, Painting, Literature and Language*, Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1965, p. 35.

school evolved.’³³ It was during Humayun’s period that two leading painters of Iran, Khawaja ‘Abd al-Samad and Mir Syed ‘Ali came to India and under their general supervision, an imperial atelier of painters began to develop. Akbar, who was trained by them, collected artists from all parts of his Empire at court and they brought with them elements of various traditions. They welded together disparate artistic idioms, synthesizing the Persian elements with the Indian, to form a Mughal School of painting. Two outstanding painters of Akbar’s court were Daswant and Basawan. Under Akbar, various projects to illustrate important stories, histories and poetical works were initiated.

An ambitious project was the illustration of *Dastan-i Amir Hamza*, where the new school’s leaning towards naturalism, use of bright colours, sweeping movements and an innate sense of wonder is remarkably visible. Some historical manuscripts were also illustrated and hundreds of paintings were thus drawn. The most accomplished was the *Akbarnamah* which represented artistic advancement as the miniatures got smaller but more delicate and refined. Most of the paintings were the joint work of two artists, one who made the design and the other who applied the colours and completed the picture. Sometimes a portrait specialist and an expert in the art of mixing colours also lent their hands to the painting. An important undertaking under Akbar was the illustration of the Persian adaptation of the Hindu epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. As most of the royal artists were Hindus, these projects were close to their hearts and they revealed “an endlessly inventive imagination and great resourcefulness in illustrating the myths.”³⁴ Akbar’s painters also illustrated the Persian classics, notably the *Khamsa* of Nizami, the *Khamsa* of Amir Khusraw and the *Diwan-i Hafiz*. In these manuscripts, a single artist executed each painting which was remarkable for its exquisite detail and sumptuous colours.

Jahangir was an ardent connoisseur of paintings. He patronised a number of painters, most importantly, Abul Hasan, Ustad Mansur, Bishandas, Manohar son of Basawan, Govardhan and Daulat. Under Jahangir, new experiments were undertaken. Instead of book illustration, portraiture became a more popular form. Great court scenes, with courtiers and retainers, were painted which was an agglomeration of a large number of portraits. In these paintings, the design and composition became more serene and formal, colours more sober and harmonious and the brushwork more exquisite and detailed. Along with human figures, a large number of birds, animals as well as flowers and plants were exquisitely and realistically painted.

Under Shah Jahan, the tradition continued but he was more interested in architecture, with the result that painting declined both in quantity and

For a detailed study of paintings under Baburis, see, Milo Cleveland Beach, *Mughal and Rajput Painting*, I: *The New Cambridge History of India*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992; Percy Brown, *Indian Painting under the Mughals, 1555-1750*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924; Stuart C. Welch, *The Art of Mughal India: Painting and Precious Objects*, New York: The Asia Society Inc. 1964; Som Prakash Verma, *Interpreting Mughal Painting: Essays on Art, Society and Culture*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009.

³⁴ Pramod Chandra, “Medieval Indian Miniature Painting,” in *A Cultural History of India*, ed. A. L. Basham, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1975, p. 329.

quality. Fewer works were undertaken and the paintings became more static and symmetrical, colours heavier and ornamentation more lavish. Aurangzeb was least interested in the art of painting and royal patronage gradually declined. The imperial atelier produced fewer works which mainly followed Shah Jahani tradition.

Music was a developed art during the Sultanate period but under the Mughals, it reached its zenith. Abu'l Fazl calls music 'the talisman of knowledge' which had 'wonderful power'.³⁵ Mughals were great lovers of music and their courts became a haven for the classical musicians. Their musical establishment was huge and many musicians, vocalists and instrumentalists got ample opportunities to experiment with new melodies and musical ideas. It was under Mughals that *dhurpad* reached its climax and was gradually replaced by *khyal* which represented a synthesis of Muslim and Hindu traditions.

Babur was not only a connoisseur of music but also an accomplished music critic. He in his memoirs has recorded the names and contribution of different musicians of Central Asia. However, little is known about Babur and Humayun's patronage of Indian music. It was Akbar who patronized music in his court. Abu'l Fazl records a list of thirty-eight top ranking maestros and musicians who performed before the Emperor. These artists belonged to different ethnic groups and synthesized the traditions of Indian, Persian and Central Asian music. The music in the court was divided into two parts: vocal and instrumental. The vocal music was that of *dhurpad* style and was represented by famed Tan Sen and his Gwalior school. Instrumentalists were mainly of foreign origin. There were seven teams and each played on the fixed day of the week. Beside Tan Sen, other musician of original creative ideas was Baz Bahadur, the ex-ruler of Malwa, who after defeat, accepted service under Akbar. His wife Rupmati was also a talented artist.

Jahangir and Shah Jahan continued the tradition of patronizing musicians and arranging musical soiree and functions at the court as well as at the *harem*. Aurangzeb is generally accused of banning music from his court and ending the royal patronage to music. However, there is credible evidence to suggest that he not only did not ban music but rather patronized it. It is no coincidence that some important works on Indian music were compiled during his period.³⁶ During the later Mughals, the tradition of music patronage continued.

The Baburi dynasty began and ended with poet kings and the period saw the height of literary accomplishments. Not just Persian, but other languages: Turkish, Arabic, Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu and regional languages flourished during this period.

Turkish was the native language of the Mughals. Babur inherited the poetical talent and literary taste of his family. His *Babumamah*, written in Turkish, proves

³⁵ *Ain-i Akbari*, p. 498.

³⁶ For a detailed and insightful study of the status of music under Aurangzeb, see, Katherine Butler Brown, "Did Aurangzeb ban Music? Questions for the Historiography of his Reign," *Modern Asian Studies* 41 no. 1 (2007): 77-120; Muhammad Aslam, "Salatin-i Dehli aur Shahan-i Mughlia ka Zauq-i Mausiqi," *Journal of the Punjab University Historical Society* WW no. 3 (Oct. -Nov. 1992): 1-164. For the position of music in royal court and imperial culture, see, Bonnie C. Wade, *Imagining Sound: An Ethnomusicological Study of Music, Art and Culture in Mughal India*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998.

him to be an accomplished prose writer. He was also a fairly good poet in both Turkish and Persian. He even composed Turkish works on the art of metrics and rhetoric. Babur's taste for Turkish was bequeathed to his son Kamran who has left a full *Diwan* in Turkish. Later Bairam Khan also composed a *Diwan* in Turkish and Persian and his son, 'Abd al-Rahim Khan-i Khanan, was also a poet of Turkish and a patron of hundreds of literary figures. The royal family as well as the Indian elites continued to learn Turkish and even as late as the nineteenth century, Turkish poetry continued to be composed, understood and admired in India; though for political reasons, Persian dominated the literary scene.^{1,7}

The period of Mughals has been acclaimed as the 'Indian summer of Persian literature'.^{1,8} The amount of Persian literature produced in India is far more extensive than that composed in Iran. Every branch of literature was cherished, ranging from mystical poetry to biographies and medical treatises. Under Akbar, a number of important Sanskrit works were rendered into Persian. These included, among others, *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, *Kalilah Damnah*, *Nal-o-Daman*, *Singhasan Battisi*, *Tutinamah* & *Bhagwad Gita*.^{1,9}

The reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan were the high points in the evolution of Persian poetry. Persian poets of India developed a literary style of their own, known as *Sabak-i Hindi*. Poetry was considered as basic accomplishment of a cultured person and the royal family itself was well endowed with poetic talent. A royal scion lacking ability to compose couplets was an exception. Amongst the royal family, Humayun, Dara Shikoh and Zeb-un-Nisa compiled *Diwans*.

The congenial environment of Baburi court attracted hundreds of poets and other literary figures to India. The first such immigration took place under Humayun who brought a number of Irani poets with him to India. However, the process continued till the late eighteenth century and these fertile minds enriched the soil of India. Bada'uni mentions some 170 Persian poets, fifty-nine of them lived at Akbar's court. Among them Faizi and Urfi (d. 999/1591) stand out as the select of the age. Akbar established the post of Poet Laureate and first Ghazali Mashhadi (d. 980/1572) and later Faizi was appointed to that post. Talib Amuli (d. 1035/1626) was the poet laureate of Jahangir while Naziri (d. 1020/1612), and Zuhuri (d. 1024/1615) were the other important poets. Abu Talib Kalim (d. 1060/1650) was the poet laureate of Shah Jahan who recorded every important event in his *qasidahs* and *Mathnavis* and thus his poetry is a "valuable document for our knowledge of Indian cultural life in the mid-seventeenth century."¹⁴⁰ Ghani Kashmiri (d. 1071/1661), Qudsi Mashhadi (d. 1066/1656) and Munir Lahori (d. 1055/1645) were the other important poets

¹³⁷ Benedek Peri, "Turkish Literature in Muslim India," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, pp. 814-15.

■* Annmarie Schmill, *Islamic Literatures of India*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1973, p. 9. For detailed study of Persian literature under the Baburis, see, Abdul Ghani, *J. History of Persian Language and Literature at the Mughal Court, from Babur to Akbar*, 3 Vols., Karachi: Indus Publications, 1983 [1930].

¹³⁹ For details see, Audrey Truschke, *Culture of Encounters: Sanskrit at the Mughal Court*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2016 and, M. Athar Ali, "Translation of Sanskrit Works at Akbar's Court," *Social Scientist* 20 no. 9/10 (Sep. -Oct. 1992): 38-45.

¹⁴⁰ Annemarie Schimmel, *Islamic Literatures of India*, p. 34.

of Shah Jahan's time. Saib Tabarizi (d. 1088/1677) visited India in the beginning of Shah Jahan's reign and stayed there for just six years but his influence was profound. Aurangzeb had no poet laureate. In the later period, Mirza Bedil (d. 1133/1721) stands out as one of the greatest Persian poet who was the master of Indian style. The salient features of Persian poetry in India included puns, chronograms, satires, original similes and concepts.¹⁴¹

Beside poetry, Persian prose was also cultivated. One genre was the *tazkirahs* of poets, *ulama*, sufis and other notables of the age. A number of such collective biographies were written during this period. One such specialist on biographies was Amin Razi, who compiled, the *Hafilqim* {Seven Climate}, in 1002/1594, a work dealing with about fifteen hundred poets, saints and scholars arranged according to their towns and countries. Another encyclopaedic work on Baburi nobility is *Ma'athiral-Umara* compiled by Samsam al-Daulah Shah Nawaz Khan c. 1172/1759 while 'Abd al-Haqq's *Akhbar al-Akhyar* is a collection of the sufis' biographies. The epistolography {*Insha*) had also developed into a literary art form in this era and different persons have left their mark for their ornate or simple style.¹⁴² Abu'l Fazl and Faizi were experts of this art form. Later Sadullah Khan, minister of Shah Jahan, was also acknowledged a master of literary epistle writing. Aurangzeb's own letters, compiled as *Ruq'at* or *Kalimat al-Tayyabat*, are specimen of a forceful and elegant style. At the very end of the Baburi dynasty, Mirza Asadullah Ghalib wrote his Urdu letters in strikingly unique style. Collections of his letters, named *Urdu-i Mualla* and *Aud-i Hindi*, are perhaps the best specimen of Urdu prose.

In the eighteenth century, because of the anarchic political situation, Urdu and regional languages began to flourish.¹⁴³ With the decline of Persian, the court of the last Baburi king Bahadur Shah Zafar, not a mean Urdu poet himself, whose nominal rule was restricted to the Delhi Fort only, witnessed a galaxy of such renowned Urdu poets as Momin Khan Momin, Ustad Ibrahim Zauq and Mirza Asadullah Ghalib, reciting their Urdu *ghazals* in *musha'ira*.

¹⁴¹ Hadi Hasan, *Mughal Poetry: Its Cultural and Historical Value*, Delhi: Askar Books, 2008 [1951], p. 19.

¹⁴² For details see, Momin Mohiuddin, *The Chancellery and Persian Epistolography under the Mughals, from Babur to Shah Jahan, 1526-1658: A Study on Insha, Daral-Insha and Munshis Based on Original Documents*, Calcutta: Iran Society, 1971 and Rajeev Kinra, *Writing Self, Writing Empire: Chandar Bhan Brahman and the Cultural Word of the Indo-Persian Secretary*, California: California University Press, 2015.

¹⁴³ For a discussion on the dominance of Urdu in the eighteenth century, see, Khurshidul Islam and Ralph Russel, *Three Mughal Poets: Mir, Sauda and Mir Hasan*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994 [1968].