

Akbar and his religious policy

Akbar is often considered as national king who united all sections of the people and he is also said to have been secular ruler who kept his personal religious ideas from framing state policies and adopted policy of religious tolerance.

There are two questions which primarily arises before the historians in regard to Akbar's religious policy: 1. To what extent Akbar's personal beliefs had influenced in his state policies? And 2. What was the response of his subjects to his state policies?

There are few reasons why Akbar became secular king.

1. He was influenced by teachings of his broad-minded mother, teacher and his relatives.
2. He was influenced by the prominent cultural ethos of Timurid polity-YasaE-Chingesi (treating all the religions alike)
3. The increasing presence of Iranian nobles at Humayun's had created an atmosphere for Akbar to learn religious tolerance.
4. His childhood psychology fearing about God shaped his religious outlook. For instance, Abul-Fazl states, as Akbar says "if he had displeased God in any manner, 'may that elephant finish us for we cannot support the burden of life under God's displeasure.'"
5. His personal engagement in Islamized version of Greek philosophy through Shaikh Mubaraq and his sons Faizi and Abul-Fazl shaped his religious world outlook through Ibadatkhana debates from 1575-1578.

Akbar was, in his early part of reign, following intolerant policies towards non-Muslims as the following statements testify:

One knows from unimpeachable evidence, including some of Akbar's own sayings recorded after 1581 that in his early years he was not only a practising Muslim but also had a very intolerant attitude towards Hindus. He regretfully admits of having forced many Hindus, during those early years, to be converted to Islam. Akbar was then looked upon by Muslim orthodox elements as a pious Muslim committed to defending Islam against infidelity. Rizqullah Mushtaqi, a well known Shaikhzada of Delhi, writing around 1580, says that Akbar was sent by God to protect Islam from being suppressed by Hemu. In one of his passing remarks Badauni suggests that during this period (early years of his reigns) Akbar was under the influence of Naqshbandiya order.

At the same time, his marriage relations with Rajput princes had forced him to initiate some liberal measures.

The measures like the announcement of the abolition of Pilgrimage Tax (1563) and Jizia (1564) or the establishment of an in'am grant for the support of a temple at Vindravan (1565) testify the fact.

during the same period when Akbar was showing increasing respect for Hindu beliefs and practices (i.e. during the sixties), he had a manifestly suppressive attitude towards the sects condemned by the orthodox Muslims as heretics.

The Iranian nobles, mostly Shi'as were encouraged and used against the discontented Turanis throughout the sixties. But at the same time their freedom to profess and practise their faith was sought to be restricted. A glaring example of such a restrictive attitude towards Shi'as was the exhumation, in 1567, of Mir Murtaza Sharifi Shirazi's remains from the vicinity (Jazvar) of Amir Khusrau's tomb in Delhi at the suggestion of Shaikh Abdu'n Nabi. The argument put forward in justification of the exhumation was that a 'heretic' could not be allowed to remain buried so close to the grave of a renowned Sunni saint. It was no doubt an extreme expression of sectarian hatred. Even Badauni had criticised the exhumation of Mir Murtaza Sharifi Shirazi's remains as a very unjust act.

Akbar's hostility towards the Mahadavis was still more pronounced. His attitude towards them continued to be repressive down to 1573 when he is reported to have suppressed them harshly in Gujarat. It was in the course of this suppression that the leading Mahadavi divine, Miyan Mustafa Bandgi, was arrested and brought to the court in chains.

6. Akbar's coming increasingly under the influence of pantheistic sufi doctrines, roughly from 1571 onwards, was a momentous turn in the development of his world view. Already by 1573, Akbar had come to regard Shaikh Muinuddin Chishti as his spiritual preceptor. In one of his conversations with Miyan Mustafa Bandgi, Akbar is reported to have declared: 'Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti is my preceptor. . . Any one who says that he was misguided (gumrah) is an infidle. I shall kill the person saying this with my own hands.' This is confirmed by Badauni's testimony to the effect that already in 1577 Akbar was regularly practising the spiritual exercises prescribed in the Chishti silsilah.

7. pantheistic doctrine of wadt ul wujud(all the religions are either true or illusions) had influenced in shaping akbar's world outlook. It questioned matter and idea.

The concept of sulh-e-kul

Abul Fazl has tried to project the idea that social strife was caused in India primarily by the absence of the spirit of sulh-i kul. He goes on to suggest in the same passage that the absence of the spirit of sulh-i kul in the Indian society was caused mainly by the preponderance of an attitude of imitation and by the suppression of intellect and reason.

8. the teachings of the contemporary Nirguna Bhakti sects criticised both Hinduism and Islam for being formalistic and socially divisive.

The conceptualization of man's relations with God articulated by Akbar in one of his not very well known statements reveals its proximity in certain important respects to the one found in the teachings of Nirguna Bhakti teachers.

Replying to a query from Murad in 1595, Akbar tells him:

'Devoting of the Matchless One is beyond the limits of the spoken word whether in respect of form, material attributes, letter or sound. Devotion to the Matchless One is (also) matchless. If God so wishes, (you) shall enter, into the private chamber of this wonderful divine mystery.

Emphasis on the absoluteness of Divine Reality and a subtle suggestion in this passage, that one could reach it, not through formal prayers, but only by cultivating the self and with the help a preceptor, recalls to mind the teaching of Kabir and Nanak.

in Akbar's system there was strong emphasis on the role of a preceptor. As he tells Murad in the above passage that the latter could hope to 'enter into the private chamber of this wonderful divine mystery (of devotion to the Matchless One)' only with the help and guidance of Akbar who was in a position of his preceptor. The status of preceptor in Akbar's system is, however, perceived as insan-i kamil of the Islamic mysticism.

In 1604 a book which is now called the Guru Granth Sahab was compiled by Guru Arjun and in this are included the compositions of Kabir. There is one particular composition in which it is very emphatically stated—'We are neither Hindu nor Musalman—we are God's men'. This idea is extremely important. I would like to elaborate only this single idea with reference to the larger background of the religious history of the country and with reference to the developments which were taking place during the sixteenth century itself.

For the larger background I would just like to mention that the use of the term 'Hinduism' (not Hindu but 'Hinduism'), came into currency during the nineteenth century and became much more current during the twentieth—it is with us now. But the use of this term has very important implications for our study of the past. For example, if you go to the sixteenth century, I do not believe that you would really find 'Hinduism' there. You will find 'Hindus' but not 'Hinduism'. Because if you are looking for very important religious developments in the history of our country after the Vedic age, you have to identify three important developments which we can refer to as Shaivism, Vaishnavism and Shaktism. These do not really exhaust every religious belief and practice of the religious history of the country but they do account for a very large chunk.

Sulh-kul and the 'Policy of Tolerance' then meant that while you ideologically reject religion, you upheld Sulh-kul. I think that explains a passage which is found in an early version of the Akbarnamah in a correspondence between Murad and Akbar. Murad says: 'What am I to do with these people who still undergo physical exercises and think that it is the worship of God, which is of course for Muslims, Nawaz, and for others their main ritualistic worship.' And Akbar says: 'You should persuade him not to do this because physical exercises cannot be equated with worship of God, but if they don't agree, then you should let them worship God in whatever manner they feel because we believe in Sulhkul.'

From the year 1573 to 1581, Akbar was undergoing religious experimentation. He founded separate place where constructed a building called Ibadatkana and this was the space where many intellectuals from various religious traditions were called upon and they engaged in active religious intellectual dialogues. The prime intention of Akbar was to draw positive elements from different religious traditions such as Christianity, Islam, Parsi and of course Hinduism. Yet, he was not convinced with the way the religious priests entered into polemical dialogues and with the dialogues that they have produced. Therefore, he dissolved the religious engagements in 1578 and in the year 1579, Akbar brought a document called Mazir which declared that the subjects had to surrender four things namely, life, property, honour and faith. This measure clearly shows Akbar being convinced with the fact that no religion or religious person is capable of coming into terms with other tradition and no religion has absolute truth. The conception of Akbar's religious universalism came to be pronounced in the form of Sul-E-Kul in 1581.

When Akbar formulated Sul-E-Khul, he rejects both the ideological traditions, both the religious traditions. It is not an ideological act of acceptance and synthesis as one often seems to think. It is an act of rejection—essentially an act of rejection, and the part of synthesising, if there is any possibility of synthesis, is secondary, in ideological terms.

Argument on Din and Duniya given by Abul Fazl in the chapter called Ain-e-Ranamuni substantiate our view on Sul-E-Khul. According to Abul Fazl the important thing which has happened is the creation of intellect within man by God.

It is not the act of creation of man, it is the act of creation of intellect in man. And when intellect is created, he argues, then two things happen. On the one hand reason develops and on the other hand self-interest interferes. Therefore, where ideas developed differences also developed.

And two false things are created by the intellect. They are not created by God, they are created by the intellect—Din and Duniya—i.e. Religion and the Temporal World.

Both are untrue. Religion and Din are untrue. It is an illusory creation, a deception of the intellect. Temporal World is also a deception of the intellect. Things are not what they seem. In other words, there is a complete rejection of religion, of Din, not spiritual relationship between God and man but the religious form of that relationship.

Now, if Din and Duniya are delusions and lead to differences and quarrels, then how is this situation to be remedied?

It is to be remedied by an assertion of the only spiritual truth, that man and his intellect are created by God and therefore, since there is one God and everything that he creates or emanates from him is one unity, therefore all mankind is one and all that divides, whether affairs of Din, whether religion or affairs of the world, are divisive and those divisions must be rejected. And that rejection of these divisions and the assertion of the spiritual unity of mankind as reflective of the unity of God, was called Sulh-kul—the concept of 'Absolute Peace' or as Professor Rizvi translates it, 'Universal Peace'. Sulh-kul is Total Peace, also Universal Peace. This too as a term and as a concept has its roots in the mystic philosophical

traditions going back to the great Spanish thinker and ultimately West Asian thinker, by migration, Ibn al Arabi.

This policy of tolerance is not acceptable to any religion. We might say today that all religions are very good, very liberal and so on, but in our heart of hearts we know that it is untrue. Religions, by their very nature, cannot tolerate other religions just as two business firms cannot tolerate each other. I mean it is inconceivable and I think that Monserrate was much more honest than we are today when he said that Akbar's toleration of all religions is something that violates the law of all religions. No religion tolerates another religion. No religion says that other religions are true. If they are not true then they ought to be suppressed for they put forward wrong sinful views about God.

Fire arms, technology and warfare

There is no question that the advent of gunpowder weapons permanently changed the course of warfare.

We must trace the origins and influence of gunpowder weapons in India.

We must examine when firearms appeared in India, and then what other influences—whether local or foreign—played in the development of the weapons.

Then we will have to discuss their impact, not only on the medieval state, but on society as a whole.

Although the Chinese had been using gunpowder weapons before the Mongols arrived on the scene, it is not until the end of the thirteenth century that firearms of any sort, particularly rockets, appear in the Sultanate of Delhi or in regional literary references. One can consider Mongols as the agents of technological transmission.

Although cannons became somewhat common throughout India, the Mughals used them the most effectively, thus giving rise to one of the popularly called Gunpowder Empires (along with the Ottomans and Safavids).

As in late medieval Europe, the expense of cannons meant that few among the nobility besides the ruler possessed the resources to purchase them.

Fortress walls gave little shelter against cannons and the nobility quickly learned to acquiesce to the authority of the ruler.

Although similar situations appeared among some of the regional Indian states, the rise of the Mughals brings this phenomenon into better focus.

From the Portuguese, the Mughals and others learned how to make cannons from wrought iron, thus reducing the cost of the weapon, while at the same time improving it.

The Mughals, who learned from Ottoman advisors, quickly grasped the importance of light artillery as it became less expensive and more easily manufactured. While magnificent in siege warfare, the lack of maneuverability of heavy cannon left it virtually useless on the battlefield.

By the time of Akbar, heavy mortars and cannons were rarely used in the Mughal military. Light cannons that could be used on the battlefield were the mainstay of the Mughal artillery corps, including the shaturnal, similar to swivel guns, but carried on the backs of camels and even in the howdahs of elephants.

In addition to artillery, handheld firearms also became ubiquitous throughout the Mughal Empire.

We can find western influences in the technology. Western influences included new technologies in firearms manufacture. However, not all of these became widespread. As a result, stagnation occurred particularly in terms of standard weapons. The preferred weapon became the matchlock, even after other technologies surpassed it.

One cannot ignore the role of the matchlock musket in the centralization of Mughal authority.

Mughals also used musketeers to maintain their authority. Babur began his career with a scant musket bearing force of just over a hundred men, but by the time of Akbar, over 35,000 musketeers existed in the Mughal military. One reason for this was that, despite the cost of their weapon, the musketeers were actually less expensive than garrisoning cavalry forces. The expense of feeding the man and his horse grossly exceeded that of a musketeer. Thus, a small but trained force of musket wielding troops allowed the Mughals to assert their authority in even the most remote provinces. This was also possible as, for several decades, the nobility were forbidden to recruit their own forces of musketeers. At the same time, this mass force of troops with firearms undermined the Mughals. As the matchlock became ubiquitous, its cost dropped, but it also was deemed very reliable by those using it. Thus, even when other technologies came into the region, like flintlock muskets, the Mughals failed to adopt them due to economic reasons as well as the matchlock's popularity.

While firearms aided the process of centralization, it also played a role in undermining the Mughal's authority. Because of the affordability of matchlocks and the relative simplicity in gaining expertise with them, one did not have to train for years to be a warrior. Ultimately this led to the diffusion of firearms into the general populace and resistance to central authority. Beginning in the late-sixteenth century, not only political rebels, but even peasants opposed to tax collection acquired firearms. As domestic tensions grew, the widespread use and manufacture of matchlock muskets played a role in the breakdown of central authority, and the Mughals, despite several innovative attempts, failed to halt the eventual Balkanization of their empire.

Historiography of the history of the mughals

It was W. H. Moreland who initiated writing Mughal history from socio-economic perspective. In his book, "India at the death of Akbar (1920)" firstly analyzes the condition of the peasantry, urban class, zamindars class structure of other strata and secondly employs the comparative study between the Mughal peasantry and the British peasantry before the first world war. He primarily drew sources from European account.

In spite of having ignored the important work of W. H. Moreland "from Akbar to Aurangzib: , a study of Indian economic history (1923)" Brij Narain challenged Moreland through his prominent work "Indian Economic life: past and present (1929)". He wrote the history of the mughals from nationalist perspective.

The period from 1920 to 1947, the historians who were primarily concerned writing the history of Medieval India, had devoted to political and administrative history. One cannot deny that they did not have social and economic aspects of this period. But, they did not pay more attention on them. Following few works have got worth-mentioning.

Shafaat Ahmad Khan's "The East India Trade in the Seventeenth Century In Its Political and Economic Aspects (1923)

Hsted Bal Krishna's "Commercial Relations Between India and England 1601-1757(1924)".

D. Pant's "The Commercial Policy of the Moghuls (1930)".

B.A. Saletore's "Social and Political Life in the Vijayanagar Empire, (1934)".

K.M. Ashraf's "Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan 1200-1500 (1935)".

T.V. Mahalingam's "Administration and Social Life under Vijayanagar (1940)".

S.P. Chablani's "Economic Conditions in Sind 1592-1843 (1951).

JAGIR SYSTEM

Revenue assignments were made by the Delhi Sultans which were termed iqta and its holder iqtadar. The system was developed to appropriate the surplus from the peasantry and distribute it among the nobles. This also included the administration of the area by the assignee.

The Mughal Emperors too did the same. But, These assignments were given in lieu of cash salaries. The areas assigned were generally called jagir, and its holders jagirdar. It must be made clear that it was not land that was assigned, but the income/ revenue from the land/area was given to the jagirdars.

1. The Early Phase

Babur, after his conquest, restored to the former Afghan chieftains or conferred upon them assignment of approximately more than one-third of the conquered territories. The holders of such assignments (wajh) were known as wajhdars (wajh means remuneration). A fixed sum was assigned as wajh out of the total revenue of the area. The rest of the revenue of the territories was deemed to be a part of the khalisa. The same pattern continued under Humayun.

2. Organisation of Jagir System

During Akbar's period all the territory was broadly divided into two: khalisa and jagir. The revenue from the first went to Imperial treasury, and that from jagir was assigned to jagirdars in lieu of their salary in cash (naqd) according to their rank.

The estimated revenue was called jama or jamadami. The jama included inland transit duties, port customs and other taxes.

The term hahsil denotes amount of revenue actually collected.

The revenue officials used yet another term paibaqi. This was applied to those areas whose revenue were yet to be assigned to mansabdars.

Another important feature of the jagir system was shifting of jagir-holders from one jagir to another for administrative reasons. This system of transfers checked the jagirdars from developing local roots. At the same time, its disadvantage was that it discouraged the jagirdars from taking long term measures for the development of their areas. They were merely interested in extracting as much revenue as possible in a short time.

3. Types of Jagirs

There were four types of revenue assignments:

- a) jagirs, which were given in lieu of pay, were known as jagir tankha;
- b) jagirs given to a person on certain conditions were called mashrut jagirs;
- c) jagirs which involved no obligation of service and were independent of rank were called in'am jagirs or madat-e-mash, and
- d) jagirs which were assigned to zamindars (chieftains) in their homelands, were called watan jagirs.

Under Jahangir some Muslim nobles were given jagirs resembling to watan jagir called al-tamgha.

Tankha jagirs are transferable every three or four years, watan jagirs remained hereditary and non-transferable.

4. Management of Jagirs

The jagirdar was allowed to collect only authorised revenue (mal wajib) in accordance with the Imperial regulations.

He employed his own officials. But, The Imperial officials kept watch on the jagirdars. The diwan of the suba was supposed to prevent the oppression on the peasants by the jagirdars. From the 20th year of Akbar, amin was posted in each province to see that the jagirdars were following Imperial regulations regarding collection of revenue. The faujdar often helped the jagirdar to collect revenue whenever difficulties arose.

Lecture on the historiography of the Mughal state

(I) Colonialist interpretations:

Rushbrook Williams'

- A. aim of emphasising Hindu-Muslim divide in Indian history.
- B. propagation through history text-books as well as different literary forms in the vernaculars.
- C. the idea that the Mughal Empire represented "Muslim rule" came to be accepted by most of the educated Indians as if it was a universal truth.

(II) Liberal nationalist interpretations:

Jadunath Sarkar, R.P.Tripathi, Tara Chand, Ishwari Prasad, P. Saran, Ibne Hasan and Mohammad Mujeeb, political commentators and essayists like Jawaharlal Nehru and Humayun Kabir.

Their emphasis basically:

- A. Aspects of Mughal rule, such as supra-religious norms of governance, composite culture of the ruling elite and suppression of local sovereignties leading to political unification.
- B. Nationalists like Nehru and Tara Chand, who regarded Hindu-Muslim unity as so very essential for national resurgence and leaned towards the view that the origin of common Indian nationality could traced back to Akbar's sulh-i-kul

(III) Communal interpretations:

A. Communal interpretations perceive the history of the entire medieval period of Indian history as a story of ceaseless tussle between Hindus and Muslims, a "civilizational clash"

Hindu communalists:

A. characterization of the mughal rulers as invaders, either Akbar or Aurangazib.

B. in the Mughal Empire the entire Muslim community was in the position of a ruling group who all the time endeavoured to keep the Hindu majority subjugated and firmly under control, a relationship which hardly allowed any scope for a cultural rapprochement or even cordial interaction between the two communities.

muslim communalists:

A. expressions in writing medieval Indian history in an Islamic idiom.

B. Akbar is charged with heresy and deviation from Islam and his religious policy is held responsible for the ultimate decline and fall of the Mughal Empire.

On the other hand, Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi and Aurangzeb are glorified as the heroic figures endeavouring to stem the tide of forces hostile to Islam in the Mughal Empire.

C. The communalists motives in general: paving the ground for the blatant use of communalized history for political mobilization, by the champions of the Two-Nations Theory in both its "Pakistani" and "Hindutva" garbs.

These communal interpretations let to

Total divorce from a critical reading of the source material

and an attitude of hatred between communities

which almost let to the decline of the academic arguments.

(IV) Marxist interpretations:

S. Nurul Hasan, Satish Chandra, Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib,

Their views;

A. the characterization of the Mughal Empire as an instrument of class oppression.

B. highlights the merciless extraction of surplus produce from the peasants by the "Mughal ruling class".

C. focuses on the working of the Mughal fiscal administration and its impact on the lives of the people.

Lecture on the nature the mughal state

(I) The theory of kingship:

A. the theory of kingship not clearly defined to the mughal empire but followed the turko-mongol traditions

(a) in the Timurid system, the status of the Islamic sharia as the guiding principle of the state was not firmly established, and

(b) there also existed a great deal of uncertainty about the Timurid rulers' entitlement to sovereignty, their high aspirations and claims of noble lineage notwithstanding.

theory of sovereignty under the mughal empire continued based on

the doctrines of the Unity of Existence (wah-dat ul-wajud) of Ibn Arabi (1181-1235)

and the Divine Light (farr-i izidi) of Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi Maqtul (1191).

(II) The nature of the state:

1. oriental Monarchical state (Bernier)

(absence of private property, land owned by the state, controle of irrigation, village community)

2. autocratic centralized state (J. F. Richards)

(imperial controle of the subjects, systematic taxation, imperial military, benevolent monarch, centralized government apparatus)

3. semi-feudalistic state and di-centralized state (Irfan habib, m. athar ali and I. A. Khan)

(the class exploitation, peasant rersistence, regionalization of the administrative system, merchant peasant alliance)

(III) the structure of the government:

1. The ruler and nature

Mongol Tradition of Assuming sovereign titles

(Humayun Padshah-i Khilafat Panah (Sovereign Defender of the Caliphate), Padshah-I Ali (the Exalted Sovereign), Padsha-i 'Alam (the Sovereign of the World), Shahinshah-i Nasal-i Adam (The Emperor of the entire Human Race))

(Akbar's still more ambitious claims Padshah-i Islam (King of Islam), Imam-i 'Adil (the Just Imam), Mujtahid ul-Asr (Juriconsultant of the Age) Insan-i Kamil (the Perfect Man). Insan-i Kamil (the Perfect Man))

(jaroga darshan, Diwan-i-khaz, Diwan-i-am and gazal khana)

2. Nobles and ruling class

early colonialist misconception that the Indian Muslims enjoyed the position of a ruling community in the Mughal Empire

the Mughal rule in India military campaigns for suppressing the Afghan tribesmen
oppression of the predominantly Muslim peasantry of Sind by Mughal jagirdars

the mughal ruling class – conglomeration of multireligious urban educated intelligentsia.

3. The views of composite culture

The attributes of sovereignty, norms of governance as well as policies in particular areas of administration of the Mughal Empire, that often tended to violate the spirit of the Islamic sharia,

(a) prohibition of cow slaughter or killing of peacocks and

(b) abolition of jizya.

These measures, were not meant simply as gestures of goodwill towards the Hindu subjects but carried stringent punishments for the violators of the prohibition.

not dictated primarily by a consideration of religious tolerance or intellectual influence of any kind.

Abolishen of the jizya in 1564,

grant of revenue-free lands for the support of the Vaishnavite temples at Vrindaban (1562, 1565)

abolition of pilgrimage tax (1563),

comprised a package of conciliatory moves aimed at inducing as large a number of the Rajput chiefs as possible to join Mughal service.

reimposition of jizya in 1575,

the rejection of jizya became a defining characteristic of the Mughal Empire.

The reimposition of Jizya strongly disapproved of not only by many of the non- Muslims but also by a large section of the Muslim members of the Mughal ruling elite.

[a] the structure of the administration at the centre

The Vakil, Diwan, Mir Bakshi, Mir Zaman and Sadr,

[B] provincial government

(Subas [12] Sipasilar or subadar governor, bakshi, khasi, kotwal and vakyanavis)

[C] the peripheral governments

(sarkar-faugdar and amil kusar, pargana-amil and kanungo)

(IV) the Military administration

The Manzabdari system

(evolution, function, zat and sawar ranks)

(V) land revenue administration

The dasala system,

(systematization, function and effects)

The zamindari system

(primary, intermediate and tributary zamindars)

The merchant peasant alliance

Conclusion

In a letter to Rana Rajsingh aurangzib 1658 "the rulers are bound to ensure "that men belonging to various communities and different religions should live in the vale of peace and pass their days in prosperity, and no one should interfere in the affairs of another".

The empire in its centralization helped by following

The introduction of mansab or number- rank,

the division of the empire into subas, sarkars and mahals

and the practice of linking the mansab obligation to expected income from assignment,

Athar Ali

"Artillery and silver influx". Were "two new sources of strength and stability" in the Mughal Empire;

Mansabdari system

The mansabdars were an integral part of the Mughal bureaucracy and formed, as Percival Spear says, 'an elite within elite'. They were appointed in all government departments except the judiciary. They held the important offices of wazir, bakshi, faujdar and the subadar, etc.

1. Meaning: The word mansab means a place or position and therefore it means a rank in the mansab system under the Mughals.
Akbar gave mansabs to both military and civil officers on the basis of their merit or service to the state. To fix the grades of officers and classify his soldiers, he was broadly inspired by the principles adopted by Chingiz Khan. The latter's army had been organised on decimal system. Mansab denoted three things:
 - i) It determined the status of its holder (the mansabdar) in the official hierarchy.
 - ii) It fixed the pay of the holder.
 - iii) It also laid upon the holder the obligation of maintaining a specified number of contingent with horses and equipment.
2. The Dual Ranks: Zat and Sawar

Initially a single number represented the rank, personal pay and the size of contingent of mansabdar. In such a situation if a person held a mansab of 500, he was to maintain a contingent of 500 and receive allowances to maintain it. In addition, he was to receive a personal pay according to a schedule and undertake other obligations specified for that rank. After some time, the rank of mansabdar instead of one number, came to be denoted by two numbers — zat and sawar. This innovation most probably occurred in 1595-96.

The first (zat) determined the mansabdar's personal pay (talab-khassa) and his rank in the organisation. The second (sawar) fixed the number of horses and horsemen to be maintained by the mansabdar and accordingly, the amount he would receive for his contingent (tabinan).

There has been controversy about the dual rank.

William Irvine thinks that the double rank meant that the mansabdars had to maintain from his personal pay two contingents * of troops.

Abdul Aziz speculates that the zat pay was purely personal with no involvement of troops. He rejects the theory of Irvine by stating that it meant the maintenance of one contingent and not two.

Athar Ali clarifies the position. He says that the first (zat) placed the mansabdar in the appropriate position among the officials of the state and, accordingly, the salary of the mansabdar was determined. The second rank (sawar) determined the number of horses and horsemen the mansabdar had to furnish.

3. The Three Classes of Mansabdars

In 1595-96, the mansabdars were classified into three groups :

- a) those with horsemen (sawar) equal to the number of the zat;
- b) those with horsemen half or more than half of the number of the zat, and
- c) those whose sawar rank was less than half of their zat rank.

4. Appointment and Promotion of Mansabdars

Granting of mansab was a prerogative of the Emperor. He could appoint anybody as mansabdar. There was no examination or written test as it existed in China. Generally, certain norms seem to have been followed. A survey of the mansabdars appointed during the reigns of the Mughal Emperors show that some groups were more favoured than the others.

The most favoured category were the sons and close kinsmen of persons who were already in service. This group was called khanazad.

Another group which was given preference was of those who held high positions in other kingdoms. The main areas from which such people came were the Uzbek and Safavi Empires and the Deccan kingdoms. These included Irani, Turani, Iraqi and Khurasani. The attraction for Mughal mansab was such that Adil Shah of Bijapur in 1636 requested the Mughal Emperor not to appoint mansabdars from among his nobles.

The rulers of autonomous principalities formed yet another group which received preferential treatment in recruitment and promotions. The main beneficiaries from this category were the Rajput kings.

Promotions were generally given on the basis of performance and lineage. In actual practice racial considerations played an important role in promotions. Unflinching loyalty was yet another consideration.

5) Maintenance of Troops and Payment

Mansabdars were asked to present their contingents for regular inspection and physical verification. The job of inspection was performed by the mir bakshi's department. It was done by a special procedure. It was called *dagh o chehra*. All the horses presented for inspection by a particular noble were branded with a specific pattern to distinguish these from those of other nobles. The physical description of troops (*chehra*) was also recorded. This way the possibility of presenting the same horse or troop for inspection was greatly reduced. This was rigorously followed. We come across a number of cases where a reduction in rank was made for nonfulfilment of obligation of maintaining specified contingents.

The scale of salary was fixed for the zat rank, but one rank had no arithmetical or proportionate relationship with the other. In other words, the salary did not go up or go down proportionately.

The mansabdars were generally paid through revenue assignments (*jagirs*). The biggest problem here was that the calculation was made on the basis of the expected income (*jama*) from the jagir during one year.

It was noticed that the actual revenue collection (*Hasil*) always fell short of the estimated income.

In such a situation, the mansabdar's salaries were fixed by a method called month-scales. For example, if a jagir yielded only half of the jama, it was called shashmaha (six-monthly). If it yielded only one-fourth, it was considered sihmaha (3 monthly). The month-scale was applied to cash salaries also.

There were deductions from the sanctioned pay.

MUGHAL-RAJPUT RELATIONS IN AKBAR'S REIGN

The evolution of relations between the Mughals and the Rajputs during the reign of Akbar can be placed within more than one historical context. They can be seen in terms of the expansion of Mughal territorial control and State power, the evolution of Akbari religious policy, and the mutual need for some kind of a political accommodation on the part of both the Rajputs and the Mughals. It is also possible to look at the obverse of this, as Norman Ziegler has done, and look at the constitution of Rajput identity in the context of Mughal suzerainty. However, on the whole, historiographical focus on this has not been adequate.

The study of Mughal-Rajput relations is particularly important because it illustrates, among other things, the incorporation of a distinct - though not homogeneous - cultural group within the larger matrix of Mughal state power, and this involved many different levels of control and accommodation. The identity of the Rajputs is by no means unambiguous, barring the fact of geographical location - in and around Rajputana. The question of the origins of the Rajput principalities and families has remained a matter of controversy. Among recent explorations of Rajput identity is an extremely rich study by Kolff, who points to certain otherwise neglected features of the evolution of Rajput identity, as it came to be understood in the Mughal period. Kolff locates the origins of this in the transition made by pastoralist bands of fighters to a measure of landed status between the thirteenth and the fifteenth centuries. Ties of solidarity were constructed between these kin groups, and they came to occupy the title 'Rajput' (literally 'son of a king'). The emphasis on genealogy as a form of legitimation in the Mughal state, argues Kolff, provided a context for the construction of elaborate, caste-based (specifically kshatriya) origin myths, replacing the open-status and socially mobile nature of Rajput hierarchies. Unilineal kin bodies came to be recognized as the sole constituents of Rajput social identity. However, Kolff argues that a variety of North Indian peasant groups and tribal elites, often constituting a mobile pastoralist soldiery, kept alive the traditions of the older Rajput character. Using North Indian folk poetry and ballads as a source, Kolff highlights the importance of military service (naukari) as one of the loci of Rajput identity, and thus places this history within the wider context of the evolution of the military labour market in North India.

Certain geo-political factors spurred the Mughal rulers to seek lasting arrangements with the Rajputs. First, Rajputana was strategically located: if not controlled from the Centre, it might make the Mughal state vulnerable to attacks both from the North West Frontier and from Malwa. Second, the areas towards the north and south of Rajputana were fertile, and potentially a source of substantial revenue. This area was criss-crossed by important trade routes running between Gujarat and the north Indian plain. Finally, Rajputana also contained a number of formidable forts, legendary for their capacity to withstand sieges, such as Chittor and Ranthambhor.

According to many historians, including J.F Richards, the (generally) accommodative and transactional nature of Akbar's relations with the Rajputs (as well as the need to develop permanent relations in the first place) was determined by the revolt of Uzbek nobles in 1564. It became important for Akbar to substantially reconstitute the nobility (a reconstitution that is a recurring feature of medieval North Indian history, right from the time of the Sultanate). By the 1580s, there was a substantial Rajput contingent in the nobility. This evidently was of much administrative and symbolic significance.

However, the narrative of the evolution of the Mughal nobility by no means exhausts the narrative of Mughal-Rajput relations, even at the level of elite relations. To put it in somewhat schematic terms, the growth of a Rajput stratum within the nobility reflects an aspect of the continuing negotiation between the Mughal State and the landed North Indian

ruling class. It is significant that in many Persian sources of this period, the terms 'Rajput' and 'zamindar' are often used interchangeably. Both Kolff and Ziegler have stressed the centrality of land to Rajput identity, in both material and symbolic / emotional terms.

Satish Chandra has classified the history of Mughal-Rajput relations under the Akbari dispensation into three broad phases. The first phase, beginning with the early years of Akbar's reign and lasting up to 1572, was a period where tentative and somewhat tenuous linkages with the Rajputs were established. Rajput chiefs - in particular the Kachhwahas - in this period became allies of the Mughal state in their existing role as the rulers of their principalities, and were not expected to perform military service outside Rajputana. The second phase, between 1572 and 1578, saw the extension of Rajput military service to the Mughals, which now transcended the frontiers of Rajputana. Rajput chiefs thus began to emerge as the military bulwark of Mughal rule, something which corresponds with Kolff's insights into the evolution of the military labour market. The third phase, from 1578 to the end of Akbar's reign, saw the extension of Rajput military functions, including their deployment in the battle against Akbar's own half-brother, Mirza Hakim, in the east in 1580. This was also the period of significant Rajput incorporation within the Mughal mansabdari system. The Kachhwahas remained the most significant support group within Rajput clans. It is important to remember, however, that Mughal-Rajput relations do not present an undifferentiated picture of accommodation and collaboration although, as Ziegler rightly points out, the Rajput policy of the Mughals was one of their more notable successes. This was also, after all, a period of rapid expansion of Mughal State authority, a process that exacted significant human costs, and exacted them brutally. Among the more violent and conflictual narratives of Mughal-Rajput relations is the Akbar's campaign against Udai Singh of Mewar, the siege of Chittor in 1567 and Ranthambhor in 1569, and the prolonged campaign against Rana Pratap. Satish Chandra points out that Rajput struggles against Mughal hegemony had less to do with ethnic identity than with the desire for local independence.

S. Inayat Ali Zaidi explains Mughal-Rajput relations in terms of the drive for enhanced resources. Thus, there existed a tension from the beginning between the attempt to reach a mutually beneficial compromise with the Rajput chiefs and the search for revenue, often through coercive measures. Very often, a heavy peshkash was levied upon these chieftains, and sometimes annual tributes were demanded. This links up, naturally, with a wider question: the dual objectives of accumulation of authority and amicable arrangements where the Rajputs were concerned. This problem was negotiated by a range of practices. In sum, these amounted to the creation of Rajput interests in the efficient functioning of the Mughal empire. Thus, the Mughals sought to allay resentment of harsh tribute exactions by constructing a sort of class solidarity between the imperial State and the Rajputs in the matter of exploitation of the peasantry. Further, and very importantly, Rajput chiefs became jagirdars. The patrimonial property of Rajputs was recognized as their jagirs - and increasingly as watan-jagirs, or non-transferable holdings. Thus, the rights and privileges of Rajput chiefs were substantially continued, with the difference that privileges that were earlier independent now became imperial endowments. This went hand in hand with the standardization of the Mughal revenue system, imperial currency, and imperial tolls. In this context, the growing induction of Rajputs into the mansabdari system can be seen as an attempt to absolutize service in the Mughal court as the highest possible aspiration, as chiefs began competing for higher mansabs.

Norman Ziegler is one of the few historians to have studied the ways in which Rajputs negotiated their changing position. He chooses to tackle this problem by examining the question of loyalty. Loyalty, for Ziegler, has certain very definite, and fairly

tangible associations in the Rajput context. The concept of loyalty, at the cornerstone of Rajput polity, was based on kinship, marriage alliances and land. Each of these bases for loyalty became the subject for complex and gradual transactions between Mughal sovereignty and Rajput 'honour' and legitimacy. Initially, the organization of the Mughal court was devised in such a manner that the coterie of each Rajput nobleman was formed from among his own kinsmen, and thus familial ties were not disrupted by imperial service. Marriage alliances were the first technique of incorporation applied systematically by Akbar in his 'Rajput policy': these served to subordinate individual Rajput ruling clans, but also to do so within an ideological frame that was acceptable within Rajput society, since marriage networks (sagas) also constituted a powerful focus of both legitimacy and loyalty. Gradually, over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, argues Ziegler, kinship ties were supplemented and then partially overtaken by the growth of relationships of patron and client, service and exchange, that provided a space within which imperial service was ideologically acceptable. Service, as Kolff has pointed out, was an integral part of Rajput self-picturing, and the Mughals, it can be argued, provided one possible focus for such service, which was, in a peculiar way, both contractual and deeply ideological. Land retained its mythic and symbolic connotations in Rajput society, but on the land too there was a transformation of the basis of social relationships, which came to be bureaucratized in ways similar to the Mughal model with the sophistication of administrative procedures. The issuance of written titles or patos to villages was modelled on Mughal prototypes.

As the studies of Ziegler and Kolff demonstrate, the construction of Mughal-Rajput relations was a two-way process, and had roots both in the drive to power of the Mughal state (and the qualifications of this drive), and in a history of Rajput identity formation that was anterior to this. In the making of these relations, both the Mughals and the Rajputs acted upon each other's motivations, practices and ideologies. The eventual emergence of more or less steadfast Rajput loyalty to the Mughal cause was partly a measure of the latter's successful hegemony, but it also had more complicated moorings.

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Mughal rajput relations

the Rajput rajas represent the local ruling class. Alliance with the local ruling class of various regions was important for political stabilisation.

the type of ruling class which emerges during Akbar, you have the high Rajputs, the revenue experts, the Indian Muslims, i.e. the Shaikhzadas.

but during the Sultanat period there was always a tremendous prejudice against the employment, against the giving of high offices to Indian Muslims.

why such a broadening could not take place during the seventeenth century.

Did the Mughal-Rajput alliance help or was it a hindrance in the process, because, after all, the Mughal-Rajput alliance, with all the benefits it conferred, was still an alliance between elites.

his polity can be referred as the 'suzerain-vassal' relationship. because it was this quality through which indigenous rulers, Indian rulers, including Muslims and Hindus—they could be inducted into that polity.

Mansabdari system was an administrative organ through which he placed nobles from different ethnic groups.

He encouraged agricultural production and subsequent trade.

translations from Sanskrit into Persian, painting, architecture, historiography and religious and secular literature in both Persian and the regional languages, knowledge of these aspects—the socio-cultural dimensions of Akbar's reign—is very much there.

Now the question arises

Were these developments isolated or were these different aspects of the reign? Do they have some interconnection, some inter-relationships?

Akbar's Relations with Rajput Chiefs and Their Role in the Expansion of the Empire

By the middle of the sixteenth century, the Rajputs had emerged as a powerful group of zamindars. They had vast territory, mighty army and huge wealth.

In the early phase of his reign, Akbar felt threatened sometimes from the Turani and sometimes from the Irani nobles, the only two racial groups that he inherited.

When one of these groups created problems or revolted, he had to depend on the other.

To create a more lasting equilibrium, he decided to recruit some more racial groups into his nobility.

His choice was mainly confined to the Rajputs, the Shaikhzadas and the Afghans.

Akbar preferred the soft method in dealing with the Rajputs. Failing that, he opted for the hard method. The soft method was that of persuasion and conciliation, and the hard method was that of use of the armed forces.

The rulers who preceded in this country, after defeating the chiefs and imposing an amount of peshkash on them, left them free to manage the administration of their principalities. At the time of military campaigns they were asked to join the imperial forces. The amount of peshkash and military service was therefore not only a burden to the chiefs but also to the peasants and soldiers.

Akbar made a drastic change in the nature of this relationship. Instead of leaving them free to handle their own affairs, Akbar brought them to the central stage and treated them as partners in the sovereign power and the wealth of the Empire. Besides, at the social level also, Akbar treated them on par with the Turani and Irani nobles.

High mansabs were assigned to the Rajput nobles not less than 5000 horsemen.

From the early 1570s the Rajput chiefs were assigned significant offices.

In 1572-73, while leaving for Gujarat, Akbar made Raja Bhar Mai Vazir-i-Mutlaq of Agra. This meant that the administrative charge of the city was entrusted to him.

In 1585-86, when the Empire was divided into subas and in each suba two governors were appointed. Raja Jagannath Kachawaha and Raja Durga Sisodia were appointed the governors of Ajmer province. Raja Bhagwan Das and Rai Rai Singh of Bikaner were made the governors of Lahore. The subas of Agra and Kabul were placed under the charge of Raja Askaran and Man Singh.

Ram Das Kachawaha distinguished himself by presiding over a variety of offices. In 1595-96, he was appointed the Diwan of Gujarat.

In 1595, when Prince Murad was given the charge of the Deccan, Raja Suraj Singh Rathor was made his naib. Towards the end of Akbar's reign, Man Singh held the subas of Bihar and Bengal.

Between 1595 and 1605, the qiladari of three important forts of Rohtas, Ranthambhor and Gwalior was held by Man Singh, Jagannath and Raj Singh.

Among the Rajputs, the Kachawahas were the most trusted and were entrusted the surveillance of the Mughal harem. Bhagwan Das, Ram Das and Raisal Darbari consecutively held this charge. This office was very important since it functioned as the secretariat at the royal residence of Akbar. Ram Das is known to have made arrangements for a meeting between Akbar and Jain monk Jinachandra Suri in his garden. Others present in the meeting were Prince Salim and various other nobles.

Significantly, Akbar did not confine the recruitment only to the chiefs of the clan but also gave mansabs and offices to other members of the clan. Obviously, this was a move to break tribal solidarity.

At the social plane also, Akbar treated them like other racial groups of his nobility.

From the very beginning, Akbar established matrimonial relations with the Rajputs as he did with the Turani, Irani and Shaikhzada families. The real intention behind this relation was to cement the bond of friendship with the local zamindars.

But this strategy was not an innovation of the Mughals. In fact it was one of the characteristics of the feudal or mediaeval Indian polity.

Giving daughters/sisters in marriage to the overlords was a hallmark of political as well as social submission by the vassals. Even Babur had to give his eldest sister Khanzada Begum in marriage to Shaibani Khan when the latter defeated Babur at Samarqand in 1501. This marriage was a part of the alliance contracted between Babur and the Khan.

Bhar Mai's entry into Akbar's service and marriage of the Kachawaha princess with the Emperor in 1562 should be seen as a continuation of this tradition.

An equally significant aspect was the establishment of social intercourse between the two families.

Thus the concept of oneness at the political, administrative, social and cultural levels was strengthened by Akbar's Rajput relations.

Sources and historiography

1. The sequential arrangement of facts in a well-set framework of chronology and genealogy constitutes the very essence of history. But, arrangement of facts in a historical narration requires reliable sources. These sources being used to reconstruct the past may be available to us in the form of monuments, coins, material remains, literary works, chronicles, biographies, autobiographies, travelogues, Farman letters, etc.
2. Credibility, veracity, genuineness of the source that a historian chose to reconstruct the past is very essential. Similarly, a kind of method the he or she chooses to employ in recording as well as in narrating the facts is also very significant. Because, an irrelevant source and a subjective method may lead to the production of fiction and not the history.
3. Popular assumption of Europeans about the people of India as lagging the sense of history writing is completely unwarranted and immaterial. Yet, the truth of the matter is, the discovery of our pre-modern past, medieval past in particular began with European scholarship such as orientalist, evangelicists, utilitarians and finally imperialists. By saying this, one cannot deny that there was no historian in the pre-modern India. Moreover, the very purpose, intention and object of the British discovery of India's past is to acquaint knowledge about India and to subjugate Indians to their colonial administration and nothing else.
4. At one time Indian archaeology was confined mainly to unearthing India's remote past: prehistory and proto-history. In recent decades, archaeologists have diverted their attention to discovering the sites of medieval towns, villages, caravanserais, and roads. Not only do medieval paintings and artifacts reveal the artistic talents of the medieval painters and craftsmen, but they illuminate the social and economic history of the times.
5. The coins preserved in the museums in India, Europe, and North America is a most important source for the study of currency systems, trade, and commerce. They are also helpful in correcting dates of political events.
6. Literary sources are the most important sources of the late medieval past. Farmans (imperial decrees), notes, orders, and the correspondence of some rulers and their dignitaries, various manuals on polity, administration, law, and warfare, and diplomatic letters written under Mughal rule are available to us. Among them, the political chronicles are the most significant category of source material for our study. They are usually in Persian, but some are written in Arabic or in the local Indian languages. They are generally compiled under the patronage of the central or provincial governments, but independent scholars also wrote a considerable number.

There is wide ray of primary and secondary sources available to the historians to work on. Primary sources are available to us in Arabic and Persian languages while the secondary sources are mostly written in English language with rich historiographical traditions.

In medieval india, historiography or evolution of history writing as discipline has emerged as an independent scholarship. However, structured and systematic history writing was not there in the

beginning of the medieval period and it emerged lately. However, one cannot negate the values of albaruni's work in the framework of history writing. The most scholarly history writing traditions were done by the scholars like Hazan Nizami, Minhaj-ussiraj and Amir Khushru. But, In medieval historiography, there came a break through with the arrival of Zia-uddin Barani who tend to look at the history writing away from the Islamic theology. His works were purely analytical and attempted to criticize the shariat when it was imposed on the people by the ruler.

Persian language sources

the Mughal historiography dominated by the Persian sources can be grouped into five categories on the basis of characteristics, types of writing and their contents. They are as follows 1. Autobiographies and biographies, 2. Official court histories, histories written by the historians without the sponsorship of the rulers, 4. Farmans and orders of Mughal emperors, provincial nobles and other rulers, 5. Letters exchanged by the emperors with nobles and other rulers and 6. Inscriptions and coins.

1. Autobiographies and biographies

Autobiographies, by transcending the physical world of the writer, take the reader into the psychological world of the writer which is rarely found in other types of sources. There are two important autobiographies and several other biographies which may help us in reconstructing the history of the Mughals. Let us analyse them as below:

A) Baburnama or Tuzuk-E-Baburi

Babur's autobiography written in Chaghatei Turkish language provides very exciting glimpses of the Mughal history. It was translated into Persian by abdur Rahim Khan-e-kanan during the reign of Akbar and in the 19th century it was further rendered into English by MS. Bevrige. However, the seventeen pages of Baburnama was missing in the original text. It provides accounts of history of struggles of Babur, his appreciation of the scenic beauty of Hindustan, his revenue collection, his hardship against indian rulers, his appreciation of beauty of temples, his personal enjoyment of wine in the companionship of many nobles Etc.

B) Humayunnamas

Humayun the personality who had to loose his kingdom to Sher Shah suri had to recapture it with the support of the Persians in fact who were those who gave him shelter while he was wandering in the terrain of western sind. His stay in Persia actually gave him an opportunity to learn language, culture, art and architecture and later he he introduced them all in India. That is to say, his central Asian origin was now overshadowed by the Persian influence.

There are two pieces of biographies called Humayunnama one written by Jauhar Abta Bakshi and the other written by his sister Gulbadan Begum. In the terms of time and content, the former work is very influential although it has belived to be dictated by Humayun to the scholar. It is actually dealing with political history. The later written by Gulbadan Begum does have some chronological problem. However, it sheds light on Humayun's life at length. Though Begum worte from the herum of Akbar, she did not speak much about it.

C) Tuzuk-e-Jahangiri

Although the emperor Akbar paid no attention to writing memoir or an autobiography, his son Salim or Jahangir did it by producing a fantastic memoir called Tuzuk-E-Jahangiri. Jahangir is to be appreciated for two things in his autobiography 1. He speaks all the events accurate and 2. He admits the truth even murdering Abul fazal. Similarly, Jahangir's work speaks about the flora and fauna of the Hindustan, his art appreciation and the struggles he faced in Deccan. He elaborates about the chain of justice established by himself in the palace. The surprising thing about Jahangir was that he never stated about his marriage with Nurjahan and anything about her life.

2. Official court histories

There are several histories written at the command of the emperors and other provincial rulers in Persian. But, the works of Abul fazal and badauni remain to be outstanding works as far as historiography of the Mughals.

Abul fazal's akbarnama and ain-E-akbari

A prolific scholar and historian abul fazal influenced by his father Sheik Mubaraq's liberal school of thought of writing history wrote two monumental work called akbarnama and ain-e-akbari. They are together found in three volumes. While the first two volumes are called as akbarnama and the last and final volume comes to be known as ain-E-akbari. The first book akbarnama deals with the following things

- A) His philosophy of history: it primarily rests on two principles of akbar 1. Toleration to all the religions and 2. Reason and not faith is the basis for all the religions.
- B) Abul fazal's emphasis on accuracy and credibility of facts: he says that he had checked and cross-checked the facts for the events that he has been narrating.
- C) Stating purposes of writing history clearly: abul fazal states that "if you want to know about history, you must know about reign of akbar. If you want to know about reign of akbar, you must know about his india since the beginning." He further states that his scholarship of writing history may not suit the present generation and it is written for the intellectuals of the future generations.
- D) Analytical methodology in history writing: abul fazal is very analytical in approaching the framework of history. He divides the reign of all the personalities as an unit from the beginning of adam to akbar. He then divides each and every events that occurred as an unit under akbar.
- E) Emphasis on the theory of functioning of state" he looks at the ruler and his authority in two ways 1. As a personality to be contracted by the people in order to ensure protection, peace and justice and 2. As a person to be seen as divine agent and not person endowed with divine right to rule, he is only answerable to god who is the creator and not belonging to any religion.
- F) Ain-e-akbari: it is a political and administrative history of akbar's reign. It is considered to be one of the imperial gazettiers of akbar. It deals with court life, administration and army. It enumerates details of the revenue collections. It brings out various problems faced by the provinces. As shireen moozvi states, it can be studied under three heads 1. Manzilabahdi dealing with the courtly life, 2. Sipahibahdi dealing with military and 3.

Mulka-E-bahdi dealing with the provinces. The abul fazal's ain-e-akbari reveals the culture and geography of the country. He provides us all the details in a tabular column with proper rows and columns in long hand description with fearing that the digits might be misplaced by the future generations.

- G) Criticism: abul fazal is often seen to be flatterer or the person praising his patron but this criticism does not sustain because of the critical scholarship that he put forward in his historiography.

Badauni's works of Muntakab-ul-tawariq and Najat-e-rasheed

abdul Qadir Badauni was the most prolific historian, a critic of akbar and a court chronicler in the 16th century. He wrote two historical books one known by the name Muntakab-ud-Tawarik and other by Najat-E-rasheed. The former is in three volumes, first deals with delhi sultanates, the second with forty years of akbar's reign and the third deals with the contemporaries of akbar. The second work known by the name Najat-e-rasheed brings about a vivid accounts of peoples life and history in particular.

- A) Nurturing: badauni was student of sheik mubaraq and friend of abul fazal wrote these works under the reign of akbar.
- B) Polyglot interested in music and art: he knew Sanskrit, Persian and various other languages. He knew Persian and indian music.
- C) Accuracy: Badauni's was accurate in stating the events and historical processes .
- D) Ability to bring out historical interpretation as an exciting memories: he makes history as an interesting stories of past. He actually takes back to the history while reading his works.
- E) Critical of akbar's liberalism and "deviation from Islamic theology" he was staunch critic of Akbar's liberalism and sul-e-kul and says that he is violating and destroying islam.
- F) He refused to accept mansab status confirmed by akbar on him. He hesitated while the emperor requested him to translate Mahabarat and ramayan into Persian from Sanskrit.
- G) His Najat-e-Rasheed gives us a vivid account of life history of the people of Hindustan.

Nizamuddin's work of Tabaqat-E-Akbari

This work is in two volumes. The first volume deals with the political history of entire india including the region of Deccan and peninsular and the second volume brings out the history of the reign of akbar.

Historical scholarships under Shahjahan and aurangzib

Although history writing did not have much prominence under Jahangir, his son and successor had greater interest in historical scholarships. As soon as he ascended the throne in 1628 he commissioned historians to write the history of his reign and his ancestry and for this purpose he appointed Muhammad ameen Khazvini. He wrote the Padshahnama. He wrote only the first ten years of shahjahan's reign and discontinued. It might have been the issue that shahjahan was not convinced with his dating method. Therefore, the job of rewriting history owed to yet another scholar namely

abdul hamid lahori who wrote the history of twenty years of shahjahan's reign with the inclusion of solar calendar called Ilahi and lunar calendar called Hijra. However, there came about the third volume written by yet another personality called Muhammad wariz who concentrated on the last 10 years of shahjahan's reign. In terms of its accuracy, dating and interpretations, the Padshahnama replicated the akbarnama of abul fazal.

Large number of historical scholarships came about under the sponsorship of the emperor aurangzib. The important works are alamgirnama of Muhammad Qasim and Mazir-E-alamgiri of Muhammad saqi Mustaid Khan. The later work has been translated by modern Indian and nationalist scholar called Jadunat Sarkar. Actually reading of this particular work has brought some controversy. The scholars J.N. Sarkar and S.R. Sharma are prominent among them. They are as follow:

- 1) When Dara Shuko and his brother Aurangzib engaged in fratricidal war, the hindus took part of Dara and the Muslims took side of aurangzib. This assumption has been rejected by historian Athar ali in the light of statistical data which do not subscribe to this fact. On the contrary, both hindus and muslims took part in each camps equally.
- 2) Aurangzib took anti-hindu measures thus excluded hindus from his nobility. In other words, the participation of hindus in the nobility was declining. This view is also rejected by athar ali who states that in comparison to previous mughal emperors, it was Aurangzeb who had the largest number of the hindu nobles in his court. The composition of hindus in the nobility was mostly drawn from the Marathas instead of the Rajputs which was earlier trend.

3. Farmans and orders of the emperors

4.

There are sever royal decrees issued by the emperors and other nobles to make the people obedient and communicate some of the wishes of the emperors. There are two important decrees issued one to Rafiqdas Karori who was the governor of Gujarat dealing with the administration of Gujarat, the second dealing with Mirzanathan of Bengal that gives very vivid account of Mughal administration in Bengal.

4. Letters exchanged between the emperors and the nobles and other provincial governors

There are several letters written both in Persian and rajasthani which meant to convey emperors' visit, obedience, submission of the local rulers and nobles. Aurangzib's letter to azimuddin his grand son in Bengal, ishardas Nagar of Gujarat who fought on behalf of Aurangzeb against the rajputs and various other letters exchanged with the Rajput rulers by Aurangzeb called as akbaras. They are all important as far as the study of the mugh era is concerned.

5. Works of provincial governors and others

Ali mulla khan's Mirat-e-ahmadi, the work of Bimsen saxina and others are very important in the study of the Mughal era. They are all found in Persian language.

6. Inscriptions and coins

Although several types of official histories and other textual sources are available to us for the study of the Mughal period, one cannot ignore the importance of the inscriptions mostly written in Arabic on the surface of the larger monuments built during this period. Similarly, the collection of coins about this period also help us in reconstructing the economic history of this period.

2. Sources in vernacular languages

Though Persian language enjoyed the status of the linguafranka of the country, one cannot negate the historical importance of the vernacular languages in the production and reproduction of historical works. They are available to us in Rajasthani, Marathi, Telugu and Tamil. For instance, the bardic literature of rajasthan, the voluminous works of literature available in Marathi, amukta Malyatta of Krishna devaraya of the vijayanagar empire and Maduravijayam of Lakshmi Nayakar are very important pieces of historical sources.

3. European sources

The arrival of the Europeans to india began very remotely in the early past. However, the rich interpretations about indian richness left by them actually created a popular enthusiasm among medieval and modern travelers, merchants, aristocrats and ambasedors who took new adventures in the 16th and 17th centuries. One must remember the fact that the blockade of the land root by the ottoman turks in 1453 enthused the Europeans to take new wave of discovery to india and south east asia. The accounts left by the merchants, factories, travelers and others remain to be used as valuable historical sources. Let us study them as below:

- A) Descriptive sources: accounts of franch travelers such as travernier, thevnot and francois martin provide vivid account of the social condition of the 17th century India.
 - B) Analytical sources: the consultation reports of the factories and their resolution reports often sent to their home countries are in the nature of analytical source which help us in studying the Mughal past very neatly.
 - C) Diaries: diaries of the duch traveler pelsert in the beginning of the 17th century and the French governor francois martin are very helpful in understanding the Mughal era.
 - D) Letters of the jessuite missionaries: the letters of father monserate and others who visited the court of emperor akbar are very valuable pieces of informations for the study of history of india.
- Germans, Italians and other Portuguese travelers also visited india such as joseph tiffen theller, Nicholo Manucci and accounts of Portuguese governors are available to us.

There several drawbacks which remain to be addressed while reading the European accounts. They are as follows

- A) All of them took the euro-centric approach in the study of Indian situation that is viewing everything found in India from European point of view. Thus always they consider Indians inferior to European counterpart.
- B) They never visited countryside and stayed only in towns thus speak largely about cities and towns.
- C) Their interpretations and data on which they depend are not accurate because of lack of knowledge about Indian languages.
- D)