PREFACE

In recent years historians have been increasingly attracted to the study of regional history. Serious and sustained efforts have been made to harness the enormous potential that this kind of study holds out for a better appreciation of the evolution of different political and administrative institutions, dynamics of various historical processes and ideological forces, emergence of social and cultural patterns and behaviours and shaping economic formations. Such in-depth studies at regional levels have been found to be extremely rewarding and have yielded fascinating results throwing fresh light on many obscure and hitherto little known aspects of History.

The region of Sind provides a fascinating opportunity for such a study as it is not only the cradle of one of the most ancient civilizations of the world but it has also witnessed many ethnic and cultural developments which are in a way peculiar to it. Moreover, it has produced an amazing pattern of socio-economic and political structure which provides a healthy environment for the study of the different kinds of historical development of the region. But this kind of study for the region of Sind is beset with serious problem of the paucity of informations specially about the pre-Mughal period. The scanty information which is available about this period is
scattered in the literary books, memoirs of the travellers, geographical accounts and regional histories. The relevant information has been sifted from these varied sources and an attempt has been made to present a coherent and connected account of the history of the region prior to its occupation by the Mughals by analysing it and piecing it together.

The present study seeks to bring into focus significant aspects of Pre-Mughal history. The entire span of the history of the region from the conquest of Muhammad bin Qasim in 712 A.D. till the appearance of the Arghuns on the scene who captured it in 1520 A.D. has been taken into account. For the sake of convenience this vast period has been divided into seven chapters including the geo-political and socio-economic aspects of the region. The first chapter deals with the history of Arab conquest of the region and traces their accounts till their downfall. The second chapter discusses the history of Sind under Ghaznavids. The third chapter traces the history of Sind under Delhi Sultanate. The fourth chapter is about the history of Sumirahs and their subsequent rule over Sind. The fifth chapter discusses the history of Sammahs of Sind and their dominion over the region. The sixth chapter examines the socio-cultural aspects of the history of the region and the seventh and last chapter is devoted to the economic condition of Sind during the pre-Mughal period.
It is my most pleasant duty to thank Professor Zameeruddin Siddiqi, Chairman, Department of History, for the interest he evinced in the progress of my work and the constant encouragement and inspiration that I received from him. My sincere thanks are also due to Professor Irfan Habib who has ungrudgingly helped me at various stages of the preparation of this thesis. To my supervisor Dr. Muhammad Zaki, I am particularly beholden without whose deep interest and encouragement this work could not have been completed. My sense of gratitude to him is beyond my expression. I am also grateful to Dr. I.A. Zilli and Mr. Jamal Muhammad Siddiqi for the help I received from them. I am indebted to Dr. Zafarul Islam for his unfailing help and support. I am grateful to my friends Mr. Zakir Husain and Mr. Maqsud Ahmad Khan for their help in the preparation of this thesis.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not thank the staff of the Research Library, Department of History, and that of the Library of the Institute of Islamic Studies, A.M.U. Aligarh. The librarian and his colleagues provided me with every facility in pursuing my study. I am also grateful to Mr. Faiz Habib who had very diligently prepared the maps as well as Mr. Azmatullah Qureishy for carefully typing the thesis.

The affectionate encouragement of my father Janab Neyaz Ahmad has been a great asset to me. My respectful thanks to him. I painfully recall my mother who unfortunately is not living to bless me at this occasion.

Last but not the least, I am thankful to my wife who in her own way has greatly contributed to the completion of this thesis by making it possible for me to devote my attention to my studies.