Introduction
Introduction

The proposed theme is Indo-Persian Historiography of India during the 1st half of the 18th Century. The title has been selected with the intention to shift the rich mine of information contended in the untapped sources material which is as scattered in various repositories of India and Britain. The theme also carries significance since eighteenth has attracted the attention of historians viewing it as decline in terms of structural flaw\(^1\) agrarian crises\(^2\) as well as cultural failure\(^3\). While for some time eighteenth century is Dark Age to others. It is prosperity in the heightened activity in regions such as Awadh and Punjab. Eighteenth Century also experienced factional politics at its apex. It is a period sandwiched between two major Empires Mughal and British\(^4\). It is therefore understandable that there would be evident change in historiography as well. With this intention a sample study of five major works has been undertaken.

The study of the Indo-Persian historiography is an important aspect. It is helpful in the study of author’s cultural and religious background, methods forms of expression and concept of history. It cannot be denied that no historical literature can be properly interpreted if the culture and social setting of the age in which it was produced is not taken into consideration. As also no historical work can be properly understood if the psychology of the author is not carefully analyzed. In fact, even for other task, it would be useful to analyse the broad framework of an historian. As information about any particular event are intrinsically linked with broad framework of these historians and without analysis of this framework an individual piece of information cannot be brought


into proper focus\textsuperscript{5}. According to E.H.Carr’s, “before you study the history study the historian; before you study the historian, study his historical and social environment”\textsuperscript{6}.

We shall now trace the evolution and trends of Persian Historiography. The tradition of Persian historiography was introduced in India with coming of the Turks i.e., from 12\textsuperscript{th} century to 18\textsuperscript{th} century huge mass of historical literature were produced, which served as main source of the history of medieval of India\textsuperscript{7}. It is these historical writings in Persian, which have served as the main source of the history of medieval India. But unfortunately they have not been properly assessed and studied with reference to author’s social, cultural and religious background, methods, and forms of expression and concept of history. This has resulted in an incomplete and distorted picture of the past\textsuperscript{8}.

From the early Sultanate period upto Aurangzeb’s reign, most Persian chronicles have been edited and translated into English. Unfortunately early eighteenth century has escaped attention. Considerable historical literature still remains un-translated unedited and remains untouched available only in manuscript form. I have made an attempt to undertake a study of major Indo-Persian sources of early eighteenth century. These are still in manuscript form and preserved in different libraries of India and British Museum. In the present doctoral project, I have tried to examine five major primary sources with the intention that it might be fruitful to study the author’s social, political and religious background, his purpose, style, methodology, and attitude towards source, contents, historical causation, and importance of works and shortcomings of the historians of early eighteenth century\textsuperscript{9}.

The pioneering effort was made by Elliot and Dowson in their “History of India as told by its own Historians”\textsuperscript{10}. In 1956 A.D the first attempt was made to study about Indian historians at a conference, organized by the School of Oriental and African Studies

\textsuperscript{5}Hasan Muhibbul, \textit{Historian of Medieval India}, Eds. Meenakhshi Parkashan, New Delhi, 1983, p. V.
\textsuperscript{8}Hasan Muhibbul, \textit{Historians of Medieval India}, Eds. op. cit., p. V.
\textsuperscript{9}\textit{Ibid.}, p. XVI.
at University of London, but it contributed only partially\textsuperscript{11}. The first major systematic work to appear on the subject was Peter Hardy’s “Historians of Medieval India” in 1960. He believed that all the written history of medieval Indian Muslims is not a history but a raw material of history requiring manufacture into finished product. Although, he opened the vistas to study of medieval historians, but its assortment was very confined since he selected only five historians and had much shortcomings as a pioneer of this field\textsuperscript{12}. Later on, the Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi organised a seminar on medieval Indian historiography in 1966, which were edited by Muhibbul Hasan and published under the title “Historian of Medieval India” Meerut 1968 A.D.

Several attempts were made by renowned historian in this direction, like Khaliq Ahmad Nizāmī, who in his work “History and Historiography of Medieval India” covers upto the historians of the Sultanate period\textsuperscript{13}. Another attempt for the sources of Mughal Period is made by Harbans Mukhia in his monumental work “Historians and Historiography during the Reign of Akbar”. Furthermore, Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi has written a work entitled as “Indo Persian Historiography up to the 13\textsuperscript{th} Century”\textsuperscript{14}. Unfortunately no work on historiography has been done from seventeenth century onwards\textsuperscript{15}.

II

Arab Historiography

Tracing the genesis of historical writing, the birth of Islam gave a new impetus and infused historical awareness among the Muslims\textsuperscript{16}. In fact, history writing became one of the earliest disciplines pursued by the Arabs after the rise of Islam. The principles

\textsuperscript{11}Historians of Medieval India, op. cit., p. IX.
\textsuperscript{12}Hardy Peter, Historians of Medieval India, Luzaq & company Ltd, London, 1959.
\textsuperscript{13}Nizami Khaliq Ahmad, On history and Historian of Medieval India, Munshiram Manohar Lâl Publishers Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, 1983.
\textsuperscript{14}Siddiqui Iqtidar Husain, Indo-Persian Historiography up to the Thirteen Century, Primus Book, New Delhi, 2010.
\textsuperscript{15}Mukhia Harbans, Historian and Historiography of During the Reign of Akbar, Vikas Publishing House Pvt.Ltd, New Delhi, 1976.
\textsuperscript{16}Margoliouth D. S., Arab Historians, Idarah Adbiyat-i-Delhi, Delhi, 1977, p. 14.
of asma-ul-rijāl and usul-i-asnād, upon which, writing of ḥadīth were based, placed the Arabs on advantageous position for the writing of history also. The main subjects of early historical writing in Arabic were sirah (biographies), maghāzi (books of wars and conquest) asnāb (genealogies) and tabaqāt (classified sketches).

During the ninth century A.D. the concept of history changed and the idea of chronological collection of events developed into a plan of complete series of annals. This annalistic method (events were grouped under a year) was first adopted by Al-Jarīr-ul-Tabarī (838-923) in his Tārīkh which constituted the first universal history. After Al-Tabarī the greatest historian of Islam was Al-Masūdī (d.956). The encyclopedic treatment of Masūdī introduced a new method (based on topics), by grouping all events around Kings, dynasties and topics instead of years. In other words, the Arab historians attempted to write the history in a wide conspectus, covering entire range of society, politics, institution and culture as well. They were the first to introduce the practice of date mark and chronology in their historiography. Later, the adoption of one single era throughout the Islamic world avoided the confusion of chronology. More creative thinking led to the enunciation of philosophy of history by ‘Abd-ur-Rahmān ibn Muhammad or Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406 A.D). He is regarded as the first historian who attempted to treat history as a science and for him history was not simply a record book but a study of social relationship. He formulated the laws of ratiocination. As chroniclers, he was not much impressive but his voluminous Muqaddimah placed him to the rank of a philosopher.

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18 Faruqi Nişār Ahmad, Early Muslim Historiography, Idara-i-Adabiyat-i-Delhi, Delhi, pp.13&141.
20 Early Muslim Historiography, op. cit., p. 2.
22 It was the rule of Second Caliph ‘Umar, when a permanent Islamic calendar based on Hijra was adopted, Arab Historians, op. cit., p. 18.
The Arab tradition of historiography continued till tenth century, but with the spirit of Persian Renaissance, all the Persian traditions came to be revived, adopted and encouraged. From the second half of the tenth century, with the revival of the nationalism and the adoption of the Persian language and culture by the Turkish dynasties, historical works began to be written in Persian too.\footnote{A History of Muslim Historiography, op. cit., p. 7.}

Western Scholars are generally of the opinion that ancient Indians had no sense of history it is argued that except for Kalhana’s Rājarāngini, written around the mid twelfth century, there is absolute dearth of historical writings in ancient India. Kalhana’s Rājarāngini is definitely a unique example in the sense that it displays certain features of true concept of history as well as efforts towards correct method of writing it. For example Kalhana held the view that the first requisite of a historian is to keep an impartial mind, free from pre conceived notions and prejudices and the mission of a historian is to present a vivid description of the past days. His purpose was to provide healthy lesson to future kings. According to Basham, the Chinese and Central Asian influence to which Kashmir had been exposed by that time might have inspired Kalhana to write about the past history of Kashmir.\footnote{Cf. Basham A.L, ‘The Kashmir Chronicle’, in Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon, Eds. C.H. Philips, Oxford University Press, London, 1961, pp. 57-64.}

**Persian Historiography**

The origin of history writing in Persian resulted from the progress of education in Khurasan under the patronage of the Samanid Amir of Central Asia and Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna (997-1030 A.D.)\footnote{Indo-Persian Historiography up to the Thirteen Century, op. cit., pp. 8-9.}. In 963 A.D., Jarār-ul-Tabrī’s Arabic work Tārīkh-i-Tabrī is the first historical work which was translated by Abu ‘Alī al-Bal’ami into Persian. This source serves as the first historical work in Persian. Another major influence on medieval Indian historiography was Firdausi’s Shāhnāma. It is not yet certain, for writing his Shāhnāma, what source, Firdausi had besides Bal’ami\footnote{Moosvi Shireen, ‘Medieval Indo-Persian Historiography’ Eds. Bharti Ray, The Other Types of History, Pearson, New Delhi, 2009, pp. 59-68.}. Abu Said bin ‘Abdul Zuhak Gardezi, who was associated with Ghaznavid court, compiled his Persian history entitled...
Zain-al-Akhbār in 1050 A.D. Although Gardezī has largely summarized what he found in Arab classics about the ancient people and culture, his account of the Ghaznavid Sultans is marked by freshness and originality. Another contemporary of Gardezī was Abul Fazl Baihāqi, who compiled a history named Tārīkh-i-Ale-i-Subuktīgin. Baihāqi focused his attention not only on political development but also on the progress of culture under the patronage of the Sultan and princes29. Both Gardezī and Baihāqi are considered as pioneers of history writing in Persian. These historians followed the tradition set by Arab historians of the classic period insofar as the selection of material is concerned. They do not appear to have been influenced by the ancient Iranian historiography in which historical fact was mixed with fiction for literary embellishment30.

Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Al Bīrūnī also known as Abu Raihan, is unique among his contemporaries. Being a prolific writer, he tries to be just and impartial for the accounts of opponents and even validates their views and practices which are declared as unacceptable. He somehow tries to give an anthropological orientation to the study of his history and worked out the chronology of nations. His renowned work Tarīkh-i-Hindi is considered as an impartial research, quite graphic and charming31.

The Persian historiography was in fact influenced by Arabic tradition of history writing, more specifically; medieval Indian historians were heirs to the kind of Islamic history that developed in Persia. When the Muslims came to India they brought with them the Persian tradition of the history writing and it was kept up by the emigrants from Persia and Central Asia. From the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries, therefore, huge mass of histories, biographies and memoirs were produced. It is these historical writing in Persian which have served as the main source of the history of medieval India32.

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30 Indo-Persian Historiography up to Thirteen Century, op. cit., pp. 9-12.
Hasan Nizāmī, Fakhre-i-Mudabbir and Minhāj-i-Sirāj Jūzajānī, all the three historians of early medieval India, followed the Iranian tradition of historiography. Zia-ud-Dīn Baranī breaks fresh ground in the historiography of India. He has written a large number of books for examples, Tārīkh-i-Fīroz Shāhī, Sahifa-e-Net-e-Mohammadī and Fatawa-i-Jahāndārī. Baranī’s ideas for history rest on truthfulness and say, it is the duty of historian to be exact in his statements and avoid exaggeration or hyperboles. He insists that a true historian must speak the truth without fear or favour. He thought that responsibility of a historian is to teach the lessons of history. He considers history and ilm-i-ḥadīth as twins. He had used a different technique in the treatment of history as usually he puts his ideas into the mouth of the historical personages which have more dramatic effect than plain narrative. Peter Hardy criticises Baranī for viewing history as a part of Muslim theology. It is perhaps a misunderstanding of the term ‘Ibrat used by Baranī that has led historians to erroneously describe his Tārīkh as a part of the theology. Elliot held him to be an ‘unfair narrator’ and Dowson fretted that he was ‘sparing and inaccurate in dates, and wanting in arrangement’.

Amir Khusrau was the author of several well known historical works and had introduced a patriotic point of view that deserves to be noted. Other important of his work is that he narrates events correctly and maintains chronological order. But varieties of his subject matter and tastes, verbosity and political exaggeration minimise the historical significant of his work. So he is considered more as a poet than as a professional historian.

The two major historical works after Baranī are Shamsham-ud-Dīn Sirāj Afīf’s Tārīkh-i-Fīroz Shāhī (1400 A.D) and Yahya Sirhindi’s Tārīkh-e-Mubārak Shāhī (1434 A.D). Afīf belonged to an official family, but he did not accept any official post. He opens his history in the manner of a biography of a mystic and he uses all the terminology of mysticism for explaining the conduct of the ruler. Tārīkh-i-Mubārak

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33 Historians of Medieval India, op. cit., p. 39.
\textit{Shāhī} is a work of great value, despite its small size, as it is of prime importance for the history of the Saiyid dynasty. The author himself was courtier of Sayid Sultans of Delhi and based his work on earlier sources and described the events in correct sequence. Furthermore, in the similar direction, the author of \textit{Futūh-us-Salātīn} (1350 A.D) Isami’s place in historiography is not as high, because he is not different from his contemporaries in the treatment of history, but his importance stand in the fact that this was the first book on history of provincial dynasties. His intention was to excel against the most celebrated name in Persian literature named Firdausi. He has profusely used stories, legends, anecdotes and common reports and his history appears to be like an epic\textsuperscript{37}. Later on, with Mir Khurd’s \textit{Siyārul Auliyyā} (1370 A.D), we have another sort of history, of a Sufi order. It is also a precursor of the collection of biographies of \textit{Sufis}.

There are two major traditions of Persian historical writing which had greatly influenced Mughal historiography in India. The one, it was set by ‘Abdullah Wassāf by his writing \textit{Tārīkh-i-Wassāf}. In this, he introduced highly ornate style of writing and further embellished prose through use of philosophical quotations\textsuperscript{38}. The second, major Iranian tradition was established by ‘Abd-ullah Yezdī’s \textit{Zafarnamā}. In this chronicle, Yezdī sets out the essential feature of the official chronicles. He also combined geography with history\textsuperscript{39}.

The \textit{Jawami-u’l-Hikāyat wa Lawami’-ul-Riwayat} of Maulana Nur-ud-Dīn Muhammad ‘Awafī\textsuperscript{40} is the first book of historical stories written in India. The anecdotal element in historical writing of medieval India was introduced by Rizq-Ullah Mushtaqi, the writer of \textit{Wāq’ait-i-Mushtāqi}\textsuperscript{41} and Shaikh Muhammad Kabir, the author of \textit{Afsāna-i-}

\textsuperscript{38}Elliot, H.M. (Sir) & Dowson, John (Professor), \textit{History of India as Told by its Own Historians}, Low price publications, Delhi, 1867, (Reprinted-2001) Vol III, pp. 24-49.
\textsuperscript{40}Elliot H.M. (Sir) & Dowson, John (Professor), \textit{History of India as Told by its Own Historians}, Susil Gupta Ltd, Calcutta, 1869. (Reprinted-1953) Vol Vth, pp. 1-55.
\textsuperscript{41}Rizqullah Mushtaqi, \textit{Wāq’ait-i-Mushtāqi}, Eds. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi, Rampur Library, New Delhi, 2002.
However, introduction of anecdotal elements in historical writing is not very approved form. Therefore, it can be stated that the writing intuition, was to just kill the time and not as a serious historians\textsuperscript{43}.

During the Mughal period, there was qualitative change that took place in historical writing. A transformation in outlook, in treatment, in technique and in theme appears to have taken place. The first major historical work to have been written in Mughal India was the Memoirs of Bābur, called BāburNāma, translated in literal fashion from Turkish to Persian by ʿAbd-ur-Rahîm Khân-i-Khânah during Akbar’s reign. This autobiography is not merely the diary of a soldier, describing marches and counter marches, or a political record, portraying his life in camp and court, but a naturalist journal as well. It also contains his personal impressions and acute reflection as well as minute detailed and lively description in the memoirs\textsuperscript{44}. During the reign of Akbar, the fusion of both the cultures, Indian and Iranian, reached its peak. It is Abul Fazl’s AkbarNāma that marks the next notable advance in Mughal Indian historiography. In certain respects he seems anxious to combine the Arab and Iranian traditions of historiography and evolve a new tradition of historiography, centring round the Emperor but also included common man\textsuperscript{45}. He is the one who developed an Indianess in the attitude of historians\textsuperscript{46}. He may be regarded as the pioneer of rational and impartial historian\textsuperscript{47}. He opens each daftar of his Ā’in with philosophical discussion, when put together these discussions open a window to his philosophy of history. It marks a new pattern in the style of history writing. Unfortunately Āin as a model, is largely ignored by the later historians. However, the credit mainly goes in exhaustive research which he had

\textsuperscript{42}Hasan Askari, Historical value of Afshan-i-Badshâhan’, Journal of Indian History, XLIII, part Ist, April 1965, pp. 183-200.
\textsuperscript{43}On history and Historian of Medieval India, op. cit., p.16.
\textsuperscript{46}Early Urdu Historiography, op. cit., p.42.
\textsuperscript{47}Historians of Medieval India, op. cit., p. 135.
carried out for writing his authentic works\textsuperscript{49}. His secular approach in history is perhaps his most remarkable contribution to historiography in medieval India\textsuperscript{50}.

According to Badā‘ūnī, history is in itself a noble branch of knowledge and refined art, as it is a means of warning to those who were aware and a source of experience for those who have intelligence and insight. His \textit{Muntakhab-ul-Tawārīkh} is obviously subjective but its importance rest in its personal testimony and his independent way of expression\textsuperscript{51}. The author of \textit{Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī}, Nizām-ud-Dīn Ahmad’s role and his writing regional histories is the great contribution to the historiography of 16\textsuperscript{th} century. From the text, it is emerged that his purpose of writing the \textit{Tabqāt} is to write a compendious history of the whole Hindustan. His work is sober, accurate and in good style. Though, his way of expression is narrative and deals only political history. However his work is considered as one of the important source of information\textsuperscript{52}.

Emperor Jahāngīr did not assign any official historian to write history for his reign, rather he himself wrote \textit{Tuzuk-i-Jahāngīrī}. His memoirs are not inferior to those of Bābur. It comes very near to Bābur in truthfulness and sincerity recording of his own weakness and faults\textsuperscript{53}. As an independent historical writing, \textit{Iqbāl Nāma-i-Jahāngīrī} by Mut‘amid Khān is also compiled for his reign. It is comprehensive history of the Mughal Emperors from Bābur to Jahāngīr. Another historian Khwāja Kamgar Husaini compiled \textit{Ma‘asir-i-Jahāngī}, it gives useful particulars of Jahāngīr as Prince Salim, not to be found elsewhere\textsuperscript{54}.

Shāhjahān’s reign witnessed a still more prolific growth of historical literature. As like his grandfather, he had the official history of his reign, compiled first by Muhammad Amīn ibn ‘Abdul Husain Qazwīnī. He writes about Shāhjahān’s princely life, followed first ten year of his reign but he could not come up to the level of Abul

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{49}Historians and Historiography During the Reign of Akbar, op. cit., 1976.
\item \textsuperscript{50}History of History Writing in Medieval India, op. cit., p. 133.
\item \textsuperscript{51}Historians of Medieval India, op. cit., p. 117.
\item \textsuperscript{52}Nizam-ud-Dīn Ahmad, \textit{Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī}, Trs. Beni Prasad, A.S.B, Calcutta, 1939.
\item \textsuperscript{53}Jahāngīr, \textit{Tuzuk-i-Jahāngīrī}, Eds. Sir Syed Ahmad Khān, Sir Syed Academy, Aligarh, 1864, (Reprinted-2007)
\item \textsuperscript{54}Taraporevala, Viicaji D. B & Marshal D. N, \textit{Mughal Bibliography}, The New Book Co. Private LTD, Bombay, 1962, p. 82.
\end{itemize}
Therefore, Shāhjahān replaced him and commissioned ‘Abdul Hamīd Lahorī. Taking Abul Fazl as model, he has written a detailed account of Shāhjahān, first as prince then as Emperor for twenty years, which is regarded as the final official history of his reign. After his death, this work was entrusted to his pupil and assistant, Muhammad Wāris. Who for the account of the first 20 years of the Shāhjahān’s reign, based on his master, but he had written as an independent work for the remaining period (21st to 30th year of his reign).⁵⁵ In Pādshāh Nāma, the information is exhaustive, the scope is comprehensive, and the treatment is lucid and natural. Mohammad Sādiq Khān has written Shāhjahān Nāma covering the account from the accession of Shāhjahān to his confinement. He writes his work in simple style and mentioned almost every event year by year. Being a witness and close to the Emperor, he has written an authentic account for Shāhjahān’s period⁵⁶. Unlike Muhammad Sādiq, Muhammad Salīh Kamboh composed his Shāhjahān Nāma, popularly known as ‘Amal-i- Salīh, which is considered one of the most important sources of information for the last year of Shāhjahān’s reign. His account of the first ten years of Shahjahan’s reign is based on the Pādshāh Nāma of Muhammad Amīn ibn ‘Abdul Qazvīnī. He utilizes farman, ‘arzdāshs and his memory as the sources⁵⁷.

Aurangzeb himself knew the art of writing. He was a proficient letter writer and expert in the art of calligraphy⁵⁸. Like his predecessors, Aurangzeb assigned the task of compiling the official history to a court historian Mīrzā Muhammad Kāzim. He named this work ‘Ālamgīr Nāma and covered upto 10th R.Y. of his reign. History for him is a description of life and achievements of the ruler and presentation of data in chronological order. He does not deem analyzing the situation, discovering casual connections and tracing the sources of problems⁵⁹. He has tried to project Aurangzeb as perfect man and

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⁵⁶ History of India as Told by its Own Historians, op. cit., Vol. VIIth, p. 133.
⁵⁷ Ethe Hermann., Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the Library of India office, Published by the order Secretary of State for India, Oxford,1903, Vol Ist, p. 127.
⁵⁸ Jamshed H. Bilimoria, Ruqat-i-‘Ālamgīr, Letters of Aurangzeb, Trs. Idirarah-i-Adabiyyat-i-Delhi, Delhi, 1972.
highlighted him as champion of Islam. He has bowed the direction of history in its old form by using the words such as Ghazi, Kufr and Jihād etc. He has tried to copy the style, language and framework of Abul Fazl. However, he lacks the reflection and liveliness of Abul Fazl. Probably, this could be one of the reasons to put an end to this official history. Subsequently, several other histories were compiled during his reign. Other work that seems to has been compiled by one of the nobles of Aurangzeb before the compilation of ʻĀlamgīr Nāma, is Aqil Khān Razi’s Waqiat-i-ʻĀlamgīr. He described his account objectively till the death of Shāhjahān. His work seems supplementary and of corroborative nature.60 Another historian of his reign is Mir Abul Fazl Ma‘muri, who writes a history entitled Tārīkh-i-Ma‘muri of contemporary events from which Khāfī Khān borrows extensively and in many cases, copied verbatim without bothering to acknowledge. After the death of Aurangzeb, another semi official history Ma‘asir-i-ʻĀlamgīr is written by Saqi Mustaid Khān in 1710.A.D. The first ten year is an abridgement of ʻĀlamgīr Nāma but the remainder is original, based on official documents and personal recollections.61

Many Hindū historians like Sujan Rāi Bhandari, Ishwar Dās Nāgar and Bhīmsen Saksena flourished during the reign of Aurangzeb. Sujan Rāi Bhandari has written his Khulas-ut-Tawārīkh in 1695.A.D. This account contains an abridged history of the ruler of North India since the ancient times. It is based on popular legends and the Persian histories produced in India.62 Like Sujan Rāi Bhandāri, Ishwar Dās Nāgar also seems to have been motivated by a desire to leave behind some literary works as historian. His work Fatuhat-i-ʻĀlamghiri is written in a disorganized form but his account of Rathore war constitutes as supplementary for the other contemporary sources.63 Unlike these historians, Bhīmsen’s Nushkha-i-Dilkushā is an important history of Aurangzeb’s reign. He gives free rein to his opinion on Aurangzeb’s various measurers. His assessment of the Maratha power is particularly insightful. He has critically remarked the revenue

63 Ishwar Dās Nāgar, Futuhat-i-ʻĀlamgīr, Trs. & Eds. Tasneem Ahamad, Idarah-i-Adbiyat-i-Delhi, Delhi, 1978.
officials who misappropriated the State money and had become corrupt. Aurangzeb’s military strategy adopted in the war against Marathas is criticized. But he finds no fault with Aurangzeb’s religious policy.

The fashion of biographical histories has developed further. In *Ma’asiri Rahimī* (1616) ‘Abdul Baqi Nihawandi attempted a complete biography of noble, the famous ‘Abd-ur-Rahim Khān-i-Khāna. Another monumental biographical account *Ma’asir-ul-Umarā*, is written by Shāhnawāz Khān. This work covers biographical dictionary of the wazīrs, high officials and noblemen generally connected with Mughal rulers from 1500-1780 A.D. They are ably written and full of important historical detail. Other similar work is *Taṣkirat-ul-Umrā* written by Kewal Ram, but it seems a meager compilation, giving an account of all dignitaries above the mansab of two hundred and containing very little information of nobility, privilege, and insignia bestowed upon each person and the occasion of his promotion. Furthermore, Mullah Muhammad Qāsim Hindū Shāh surnamed Farishta is the author of a monumental work *Gulsan-i-Ibrāhim* or *Naurās Nāma*, better known as *Tārīkh-i-Farishta*. This work is written around 1619-20 A.D. with accuracy and devoid of religious and political prejudice. He treats history in a somewhat different manner from the traditional approach of the north and appears to be more interested in furnishing details and narrating events than in teaching lessons of history. He based his account on around thirty five earlier histories’ books and covers mainly every medieval Muslim Deccani kingdoms.

In the subsequent period, Muhammad Hashim Khāfī Khān has written *Muntakhab-ul-Lubāb*, which covers a wide range from the Ghori’s invasion to 1733 A.D. Khāfī Khān was employed as dīwān under Nizām-ul-Mulk in Deccan. Personally

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67 *Mughal Bibliography*, op. cit., p. 89.
occupying high position and close to too many nobles of first rank, he witnessed the events, which occurred rapidly after the death of Aurangzeb. He was a gifted narrator and proved his intelligence on casting light on every worth mentioning occurrence. But as far as content is concerned, it appears that he has borrowed extensively and often without changing the sentences from the work attributed to Sādiq Khān and Abul Fazl Ma’muri. The portion which is based on his personal observation is considered authentic source for that period. Bahādur Shāh also made an attempt to write an official history by a Dānishmand Khān who named his work Bahādurshāh Nāma. But this work covers upto first two years (1707-1709) of Bahādur Shāh’s reign. As history writing became private and lost accuracy, but at the same time tended to become more critical. However, despite being critical, these private histories seem to be devoid of any large grasp of historical process.

III

Nature and Concept of Eighteenth Century Historiography

The output of historians during the early Eighteenth Century was consequently great. The fact remains that the growth of the Persian literature on the whole was not hindered owing to the withdrawal of the imperial patronage and great hurdles that were placed before it during this period. As it continued to thrive on individual initiatives as it is evident from the mass of the literature produced in the language during this period in different branches of knowledge.

The main themes of historians during the period were political and secular. Generally they devoted a fair amount of space in their works to military operations, achievements at battle fields and colourful activities of the imperial court. Description of

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74 Historians of Medieval India, op. cit., pp. 149-163.
administrative functions, acts of generosity and patronage of art and literature were also mentioned by them. The historian of this period rarely indulged in rhetoric or florid style of writing, lucidity and simplicity serves the objective of writings. The concept of history was based on those moral precepts which had influenced the outlook and culture of the people. The historians liked to draw parallels from the past to compare similar situation facing the rulers and nobles. Moral lessons derived from the past events were recommended to sovereigns and states men. They sought to explain the course of history in terms of struggle between the forces of good and evil. Most of the historians are mainly contemporary to the events and incidents which they noted in their works. They either attended the imperial court or served the ministers in the capital. Some of them were in the service of the officials and governors in distant provinces. In this way they had excellent means to obtain adequate and authentic information about different events. The information about incidents in which they did not directly participate, they tried to collect from those who had firsthand knowledge of the incidents.

The historians of this period generally had independent and individual methods of collecting data and for the majority of historians, the only source for the collection of their data had only his pen, paper and memory. So collection and rejection of data was sometimes determined by different motives. Though the facts were the same but their interpretations varied. This variation was found because of their particular situations, social background and political interests of these historians. Generally in faction feuds among the courtiers and Amirs, they aligned themselves with one or the other group. This attachment to any particular patron affected their approaches for writing.

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77 Muhammad Qāsim Aurangabādī, Ahwal-ul-Khawāqīn, Rotograph No. 36; see also Tarīkh-i-Hindi, op. cit., C.A.S, Deptt of History A.M.U. Aligarh.
78 Khān Muhammad Hādī Kāmwar, Taẓkīrat-us-Salātīn Chaghtai, op. cit; Khān, Khafi, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, op. cit.
Consequently, element of subjectivity influenced their attempts to explain the account and thus a lot of subjective histories are written by them.\textsuperscript{80} 

The contemporary writers who saw the empire passing into the turmoil of internal rivalries did not hesitate to condemn the policies of the Emperors.\textsuperscript{81} For example, Bahādur Shāh was blamed for his extreme generosity in lavishing gifts and privileges of office and power on worthless persons.\textsuperscript{82} Jahāndār Shāh was depicted as drinker and careless ruler.\textsuperscript{83} Muhammad Shāh was accused for his idleness which made him incapable of holding the self seeking nobles under control. So we find these historians took courage to criticise the administration openly. But the lacuna of these historians is the absence of causal relationship which was a pragmatic need. They seem involved in giving details of incidents to find time to bind their narration in thread of cause and effect relationship.

According to the struggle for the supremacy between the centre and provinces, the historians are also divided into two groups, some displayed enthusiastic partiality towards the imperial centre, while others lend their support to local chieftain and provincial governors. Historians like Qāsim Aurangabādī, Yusuf Muhammad Khān and others who compiled their work in Deccan, supported the Badā‘ūnī ul Mulk in his conflict with the centre. But the writers like Ashub, Rustam ōili, Shafi Warid, Mīrzā Muhammad, Shiv Dās, Muhamad Hādi Khān Kāmwar etc, held the imperialist point of view.

These writers frankly presented the degradation of nobility in a very strong language.\textsuperscript{84} In an atmosphere filled with faction feuds, generally historians felt constrain to take side and was compelled to advocate the cause of their group leaders or patrons.

\textsuperscript{80}Anonymous, \textit{Risala-i-Muhammad Shāh wa Khān-i-Dauran}, Rotograph No 08, C.A.S, Department of History A.M.U, Aligarh.


\textsuperscript{84}Ataullah, ‘The Shurfā and Razils: The perception of decaying class in Eighteenth Century’, \textit{P.I.H.C}, 70\textsuperscript{th} session, Delhi, 2009-10, pp. 372-379.
Now writing was used as an effective instrument to heighten the interests of one group of nobles at expense of another. Most of them lacked critical sense to investigate the truth and did not recognize the importance of objectivity in collection and use of their historical writings. These historians recorded only what happened without going beneath the surface of the things. What historians could not have explained or wanted to conceal on ground of suitability, they attributed it to chance or the Divine will by saying that only God know the reality of the matter. Without going deep into matter and investigating the truth, they concluded that Truth is known to God alone. Also, these historians do not give any where a cognate explanation for the success of any ruler also. ‘God gives victory’ and ‘Destiny leads failure’ is the formula which they usually followed.\(^8^5\)

A special category of prose, that was *Inshā*, to which modern historians assigned much importance, made rapid progress from this period onwards.\(^8^6\) These *Inshā* collections give us an idea of mental climate of the period and the literary and cultural ideals and pattern of the age. Enormous details of historical importance lay hidden in these collections. It was from the latter half of the 17\(^{th}\) century that the *tazkira* literature came to be produced in abundance. This literature forms a very valuable source of information for the study of the cultural and literary trends in Mughal India.\(^8^7\)

Another key feature of the historiography of the period was that several historical works were written on individual initiative. It appears that if any scholar found it adversely affecting his career or there was a danger to his life, he used to write works without mentioning his name. For instance many works like *Tārīkh-i-Ahmad Shāhī, Risalah-i- Muhmmad Shāh wa Khān Daurān, Sahifā-i-Iqbāl* and *Hādisah-i-Nādir Shāhī* were written anonymously. What we know about authors is that they were eye witness to the affairs and contemporary of that period. Poets of early eighteenth century were also not lagging behind historians, to depict their period and miserable condition of the state.

\(^8^5\) *Ibrat Nama*, op. cit., f. 40a.
in their poetry. These poetical works reflect the social cultural and political condition of the period also\textsuperscript{88}.

Persian being the official language, it was important to know those who were willing to get job in imperial services. A new class in the Hindū community emerged which is known Kayasth. The Kayasth were expert in Persian and well suited for the post of munshi. By the end of seventeenth century they started to take interest in history writing also\textsuperscript{89}. So a new class of historian emerged, who generally adopted simple language and recorded not only political actions but also the various social issues of their period. Thus we find, historical narrative no longer move around rulers and great persons but swing towards other aspects of society. The historians of this period cover political events, but narrated the social, economic and cultural conditions of the common people, which they personally experienced. Thus the historical literature of the eighteenth century is very extensive and it is not possible to analyze it fully in single work. So I have selected few sources which are eye witness accounts of that period. These sources are primary in nature and contemporary for both time and place to these authors.

IV

Chapter Layout


Chapter first, deals with historiographical study of \textit{Tazkirat-us-Salātīn ChaghtāĪ} written by Muhammad Hādī Khān Kāmwar. This work is extremely significant because he had first served in the Deccan under Aurangzeb. After his death, he held several posts in Delhi. This author had thus a unique opportunity of collecting data for writing this

\textsuperscript{88}Umar Muhammad, ‘The cultural Background of Sauda’s poetry’, \textit{P.I.H.C}, 34\textsuperscript{th} session, Chandigarh, 1973, p. 315.

work. Originally this work was written in two parts. The first starts from the origin of the Mongols to the death of Jahāngīr and second starts from the reign of Emperor Shāhjahān and end abruptly in the six R.Y. of Emperor Muhammad Shāh. History for him was the history of Kings and Saints mainly. He has followed excellent chronology and even minor details are also written with dates. His style of writing is simple and assumes the character of diary of events. For the account of Post Aurangzeb this work reflects the approach of an imperial observer who had written under the patronage of neither Emperor nor any noble. His account is reliable for the successors of Aurangzeb.

Chapter second comprises the study of Jahāndār Nāma of Nur-ud-Dīn Fāruqī, which exclusively deals with Jahāndār Shāh. The author decided to write about Jahāndār Shāh, as he feared that the name of Jahāndār Shāh would disappear from the annals of history. Therefore he wanted to make him immortal through his writing. The style of expression adopted by author is simple, plain and free from hyperbole and rhetoric. The author has given several poetical quotations to make his work interesting. The importance of Jahāndār Nāma lay in the fact that it is the first eyewitness contemporary account and the later historians gathered information for the short reign of Jahāndār Shāh from this work. However it is not a comprehensive account, but seems unbiased for any particular group of the court nobles. This work contains detailed eye-witness description of the wars of succession among four brothers of Jahāndār Shāh and between Emperor Jahāndār Shāh and his nephew Farrukh Siyar.

Chapter third, attempts to focus on details of ‘Ibrat Nāma written by Mīrzā Muhammad bin Mutamid Khān. Who was born on 21Jamadi I 1070 A.H. in Jalālābād near Kabul. He was employed during the last year of Emperor Aurangzeb and got a mansab of 400/50 in the reign of Emperor Bahādur Shāh. During the reign of Emperor Farrukh Siyar he was sent to Jalālābād to confiscate the property of Jalal Khān Ruhillah and later appointed for the post of Rāhun. He begins his account from the last days of Aurangzeb and brings it down to the accession of Rafi‘-ud-Darjāt. The purpose for his writing is to inscribe about himself and about his time in the form of roznāmchāh. The style of writing is simple and he starts to write every Waqā’ i‘ with heading in a chronological order. The significance of this work lays in the fact that he recorded the
events of which he was an eye witnessed in a systematic way, without showing partiality to either Farrukh Siyar or Saiyid Brothers.

In chapter fourth I have projected to provide information of Tārīkh-i-Hindī and about its author Rustam ‘Ali Shāhībādī. This work was composed in the year 1154 A.H / 1742 A.D. during the 23 R.Y of Emperor Muhammad Shāh’s reign. The purpose of his writing seems to focus light on a brief account of just Kings and how they controlled oppressors and tyrants, in the hope that it might prove a lesson to wise and persuade them to withdraw their affection from this world. The author’s views for history, is appear to draw a moral lesson and recommend the present generation to judge the prevailing situation in the light of past events and foresee things to come. This work is divided into an introduction (muqaddama), ten chapters (tabaqāt) and conclusions (khātima). Further its muqaddama was divided into five sub parts (fasul), begins with glorification God, praise of Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) and his companion. It also deals with divine origin of world and praise for Hindustan. He starts his chapter with the account of mythological Hindū Raja Yadhistir to Ria Pithora. His last chapter that deals the successor of Aurangzeb, particularly Muhammad Shāh which are considered more lengthily and in chronological order that constitutes a valuable portion of the narrative. He concludes his account in three parts with writing the names of scholars (ulemā), teachers (mudarris) and poets (shuarā) of different parts of Hindustan, whom the author has seen or heard of. It may be considered as important useful source, as it is not copied from any known source and tried to write only those account which he personally observed or listened from trustworthy persons. This author has also provided a list of sources which he quoted for his narrations. He has given a good detail description of Maratha’s depredation and invasion of Nādir Shāh. But, he has exaggerated much for the account of Saiyids Husain ‘Ali Khān, Nawab Burhān-ul-Mulk, his patron Yar Muhammad Khān and criticised severely to Nizām-ul-Mulk. Altogether this work constitutes one of the important sources of early eighteenth century.

Finally last but not least, chapter fifth covers Shāhnāma-i- Munawwar- Kalām of Shiv Dās which is considered one of the primary sources of early eighteenth century. The author Shiv Dās appointed as munshī in the court and he was resident of Lucknow. The purpose of his writing was to give lesson (‘ībrat) to others. The importance of this
work lays in the facts that it is an eyewitness account and written by Hindu historian on individual interest. Whatever he has recorded based on his personal knowledge or what he received from trustworthy person. The author has tried to give an unprejudiced account. He starts his account from the reign of Emperor Farrukh Siyar and cover upto the 4th R. Y. of Emperor Muhammamd Shāh. It covers 123 Waqā’ i‘ and 42 official letters and out of which 22 are farmāns. Unlike, other sources, every narration start with heading of Waqā’ i‘. These Waqā’ i‘ consist several unconnected anecdotes which were written on selective basis. No doubt this work mainly deals with the politics of that period, but these anecdotes also throws light on the contemporary society of northern India. It covers the day to day account of transaction in the imperial court and celebrations of festivals and accession. There are also long descriptions of gifts, grants, presents, and review of animals, dance and music performance of the court.