PREFACE

Historians have, for many decades now, been working on the social and cultural history of India. They have produced a large number of works providing meticulous details about the life of the people viz. their religion, morals, manners, foods, dress, art, culture, etc. In these works the political, dynamic and constitutional aspects were relegated to the background. Although the lead in this direction was taken by the western scholars, the Indian scholars did not lag behind. The pioneer in this regard was K.P. Jayaswal, who dealt with the social institutions prevailing in ancient India in his book *Hindu polity*. The other prominent scholars who dealt with the various aspects of social, economic and cultural life in ancient India were A.S. Attelkar, Dr. Beni Parsad, and Dr. Mookherji.

The social and cultural history of medieval India has not been ignored by historians as well. K.M. Ashral’s *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan*, P.N. Chopra’s *Some Aspects of Muslim Rule in India*, Dr. Tara Chand’s *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture* and Dr. M. Athar Ali’s *Mughal India: Studies in Polity, Ideas and Culture* are some of the influential works on the subject. These works are indeed valuable, but they do not cover all the aspects of the social, culture and economic history of medieval India. The source material is inadequate and scattered, and regional differences stands as a barrier to meaningful general study.

The study of Mughal culture would help us better understand the historical roots of our composite culture that has recently been attacked by the right wing, communal forces. The Mughal state contributed immensely in the
emergence of a shared Hindu-Muslim, that was tolerant, catholic and broad-minded in nature. Indeed, our study of the Mughal society and culture is not without contemporary relevance.

The present work is confined to the period between 1526 and 1707, and covers the Northern, Central and Western India. The Deccan did not come fully into the administrative orbit of the Mughals even at the end of the 17th century.

The main objective of the present work is to unequal the ideas and institutions which shaped the life of the people, and contributed to synthesis of the Hindu-Muslim culture in such areas as religion, thought, social set up, language, literature, architecture, painting and Fine Arts etc. through marshalling facts.

[Signature]

Rahnuma Ghani