CHAPTER 8
DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL POETRY, LITERATURE, AND HIGH CULTURE

With the arrival of Arabs in Sind, the doors of Islamic learning, education and literature had already been opened. This from of learning reached its highest paint during the Sammah rule, especially during the period of Jām Nizāmuddīn, who invited scholars from outside India. During his period Mīr Shamsuddīn and Mīr Muīnuddīn, the two disciples of Maulana Jalāl Muḥammad, came and settled at Thatta. With the establishment of Arghūns in Sind, the horizon of learning widened, as the political instability in Central Asia, and of North India, let the scholars to come and settle in Sind, where the royal Patronage was provided to them. Shāh Beg himself was man of learning; and sought pleasure in the company of learned men. Sind became the seat of many renowned scholars as Abd’al Aziz Abhārī, Makhdūm Fākhr-i-Pūtrah, Makhdūm Bilāl, Qāzī Ḍitāh Siwistānī, Shaikh Abdullah Mūṭtaqi, Qāzī Qazān, Makhdūm Yūsūf Tayūnah,

1 Tarīkh-i-Sind, p.75.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid. pp. 102, 127-128.
Makhdüüm ‘Arabi of Halahkandi and Qāzī Shūkrallah. Qāzī Dītāh Siwistānī, was well known for his knowledge of numerology and astrology. There were others also who were famous for their command over Arabic and Persian language of these Maulana Maslikā-al-Dūb Lārī, was an expert in Arabic language, but he wrote in Persian also as Sharāḥ-i-Shūmaīl-i-Nabawī, Hawāshis-i-Tāsīr-i-Baydawī.

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4 Ibid. pp. 76, 117, 197-200, 202, 204. Also see p. 142. When Shah Beg conquered Thatta in 1519, Sayyed Shūkrallah Shirāzī, and his son Sayyed Zaheeruddin ‘Jādūm’, along with some Mashaikh (Sayyed Manbā, Sayyed Kamāl and Sayyed ‘Abdullah of Qādirī silsilah) accompanied him to Thatta. Shah Husain conferred upon him the office of Shaikh-ul Islām and also appointed him the qāzī of Thatta because of his erudition and scholarship. Mīr ‘Alī Shīr ‘Qanī Thattavī was sixth of his generation. Tūḥfat’ul Tāhirīn, ed. Badr-i-Alam Durrani, Hyderabad-Sind, 1966, pp. 146-47; Tārikh-i-Tāhirī, pp. 14-15; ‘Alī Shīr ‘Qanī Thattavī, Mūqāṭāt-us Shu’ara, ed. Pir Husammuddin Rashidi, Karachi, 1957, p. 571; Qāzī Dītāh Siestānī was a disciple of Makhdüüm Fakhr-i-Pūtrah, who was settled at Kahan. Tārikh-i-Sind, pp. 198, 199; Makhdüüm Shaikh Bilāl was the most perfect saint of Bubakan, who had called Mirza Shāh Husain a despot, because he ill treated the family of Makhdüüm Shaikh Bahāūddin Zakārīya at Multan. Zakhīrāt-ul-Khwānin, vol I, pp. 177. Qāzī Qazān was a Mahdavi by faith and was appointed qāzī of Bhakkar. Tārikh-i-Sind, pp. 114, 123, 200, 201. His grandson Mian Mīr introduced sufi tradition to Dāra Shikāh. See Annemarie Schimmel, The Empire of Great Mughals, Delhi, 2004, p. 252.

5 Tārikh-i-Sind, pp. 199-200, M’asūmī himself was his disciple who decimated Safināt-ul-Àulia to his pīr. His grandson Mīān Mīr introduced sufi tradition to Dāra Shikāh. see. Annemarie Schimmel, p. 252

6 Tārikh-i-Sind, p. 204.
Shah Husain himself was a great poet, and wrote in Persian and Turkish with the pen name of *Sipahi*. Maulana Fakhri Harwi, who wrote *Rawdat-al-Salatin* in 1554 A.D., was a great scholar who was given patronage by Mah Begum (wife of Shah Beg Arghun).

Sultan Mahmud Kokaltash also patronized men of learning as Mir Muhammad Purani, Mir Abu’l Makarim and Maulana Yar Muhammad Yari were present in his court, and received royal patronage. Besides Arghuns, the Tarkhans also patronized men of erudition in different fields of knowledge as Mirak Abd’al Rahmân son of Shaikh Mirak Purani, who had a great knowledge of geometry, during the period of Tarkhans. Except Baqi Tarkhan, who kept the scholars at margin, and

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8 *Tarih-i-Sind*, pp. 127, 128; *Tarih-i-Tahiri*, pp. 131-132.
10 Mirak Abd’al Rahmân son of Shaikh Mirak Purani, had a great knowledge of geometry, and he said to have invented new figures in geometry. *Tarih-i-Sind*, p. 215; *Tuhfat-ul-Kiram* vol III, part I, p. 213.
instead patronized local qazis and ulema. With the accession of Jānī Beg to the throne, the literary activities got an impetus and the old traditions were revived, he himself was a poet and Ḥalīmī was his nom due plume. His poetry was very famous among the qawwals. His son Mirza Ghazı beg also received education in different secrcies out, use of arms and in affairs of government. Mirza Ghazı also got pleasure in the company of learned men and had the company of scholars like Mülla Mūrshid Yazdjardī, Tālib Amālī, Mīr Niāmat’ullah Āsīrī, and Mülla Aṣād. It was during his period when Faghfurī Gilānī had came to Qandahar at his court, and Ghazi Beg received him very well. Mirza Ghazı himself was a great poet and wrote a diwān with a penname of Waqārī. He was also an unequalled singer and especially

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11 He had asked these scholars to stay outside the town. Tārīkh-i-Tāhirī, pp. 116, 137,138. But he patronized Darwēsh Da’ud. He remitted the revenue of the land. Darwesh Da’ud’s madrasah accommodated five hundred students and they were provided free lodging boarding and dress to the students. Mazhar-i-Shāhjahānī, vol II, p. 36; Tārīkh-i-Tāhirī, pp. 46-47.
13 Tārīkh-i-Tāhirī, p. 206.
15 Ibid.
16 Tuzuk, p. 63; Zakhirat-ul-Khwānīn, vol II, p.29 ; Ma’asir-ul-Umara, vol III, pp .382-3; Tūḥfat’ul Kirām, vol III, part I, p. 188.

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sang *raag tödi* and played tambour, in fact he would play all the instruments.\(^\text{17}\) It was owing to his love for poetry and literature, that almost all the officials including soldiers of the army, started composing verses, in order to gain attention and reward from him.\(^\text{18}\)

The coming of Mughals in Sind led to the flourishing of high culture because of the political stability provided by the imperial rule. The Mughal officials during the time of Emperor Akbar, especially Mir Abu’l Qasim Khān Namkīn paid daily allowances (*ruzinah*) to most of the scholars, and even paid them fare to meet Mirān Ṣadr-i-Jāhān, and gave each one of them his own recommendations.\(^\text{19}\) The imperial tradition of awarding the scholars, and *ulema* with the revenue feel lands (*madad-i-ma’ash*) was also started in Sind, firstly in Sehwan by its faūdār Abu’l Qasim Khān Namkīn.\(^\text{20}\) In order to ensure the patronage given to scholars and men of learning Akbar appointed *ṣadr-us- sudur,*


\(^\text{18}\) *Tārikh-i-Tāhirī*, p. 13.

\(^\text{19}\) *Mazhar-i-Shāhjahānī*, vol II, p. 121.

\(^\text{20}\) *Ibid.* In the village Lak’alwi, he even reduced the share of Sayyeds, the descendant of Hazrāt Miyan Sayyed Abū Bakr to ¼ in *ghalla- bakhshī*. p. 216.
sadīr, mūr-i-‘adl, and muftis in the region.\textsuperscript{21} He even invited one of such
grant scholars poet Niyāzī at imperial court.\textsuperscript{22} The royal patronage given
to these scholars are well recorded, Sayyed Abu’l Makārim was given
stipend by Emperor Jahāngīr.\textsuperscript{23} The scholars were even given important
posts by the Emperor; as Mahmūd Beg, son of Makhdūm Talib Allāh
Mūdarris received a reward of dirhams as and a daily stipend of one
rupee\textsuperscript{24} from Aūrangzēb. Other learned person of Sind in different field
such as calligraphy, were also given them due importance. Sayyed
Muḥammad ‘Alī was a famous calligrapher of Thatta, his son was
received with a great favor at the court of Aūrangzēb.\textsuperscript{25} Mīr ‘Atā Allāh
Mashhādī, was outstanding in the excellence of his poetry and
calligraphy.\textsuperscript{26} Some of the Mughal officials of Sind were also noted

\textsuperscript{21} *Tārīkh-i-Sind*, p. 245, Also see provincial administration of chapter one in the
thesis.
\textsuperscript{22} Famous poet Niyāzī, came to Thatta, during the period of Shāh Beg Arghūn, and
settled there. He was also patronized by Mīr Bāqī Tarkhān. Emperor Akbar had
invited him to the court but Niyāzī’s death obstructed his way to the court. *Mīqālā-
us-Shu’ara*, pp. 821-22.
\textsuperscript{23} His ancestor had come to Sind. He belonged to Qādirī Silsīlah. He was even
appointed trustee of *J’ama Masjid* of Thatta. *Tārīkh-i-Ṭahürī*, p. 35; Ansar Zahid
Khan, *History and culture of Sind*, p. 332.
\textsuperscript{24} Ansar Zahid Khan, *History and culture of Sind*, p.332.
\textsuperscript{25} *Ibid*.
\textsuperscript{26} *Mazhar-i-Shāhjahānī*, vol II, pp. 101,102.
scholars, Mīr Maʿsūm Bhakkarī was a good poet scholar and calligrapher, who belonged to Tirmizi Sayyeds, was a very famous poet wrote under a penname of Nāmī, and also very good calligrapher, whose inscriptions are found over royal buildings like Fatehpur Sikri, Agra fort, and Mandu fort etc.\(^{27}\) Abuʾl Baqā had a good command over Persian language, and he could from sentences instantly with including words which caused him stammer.\(^{28}\) Similarly Abdʿal Karīm was noted for his best chronograms during the reign of Aurangzēb.\(^{29}\) Mīr Ghārūrī Kashānī was a very good poet, who wrote masnavīs and a diwān. He was darōghah-i-darb khāna (incharge of royal mint).\(^{30}\) Another person, who had good command over algebra and mathematics, was Mūlla

\(^{27}\) He was mansābdār of 250, as given in the list of mansābdār in Āʾīn, but later his rank was increased to 1000, and he was sent in an Embassy to the court of Shāh Abbās I of Safawid dynasty; where he was received very well. After returning from there in the year 1606-07, he was given title of Amin-ul-Mulk, and was appointed amīn of Sind. Āʾīn tr. Blochmann, vol I, pp. 560, 578-79; Maʿṣir-ul-Umara, vol III, p. 327; Zakhīrāt-ul-Khwānīn, vol I, p. 203. According to Fārīd Bhakkarī, “he was a good calligraphist, “starting from Erevan, Nakhjiwan, Tabriz and Isfahān to Qandahar, Kabul, Kashmir, India and Deccan, wherever he went, he composed verses for inscription and carved them out of stone.”


\(^{29}\) Tūḥfat-ul-Kirām, vol III, part I, pp. 325, 326, 327.

Muḥammad who became sadr-us-sudūr in Jahāngīr’s reign. Another learned person from Sind was Shaikh Sa’adullah Surfī who was an accomplished scholar, perfect in esoteric and ritual sciences. He made a comparative study of different religion, and was highly venerated by Aūrangzēb, who wrote letters to him. According to ‘Alī Sher ‘Qani, “he was a voluminous writer and composer of following treatise; Hashrābar Hikmat, Risāla Kāshful Ḥaq, Risāla Sūbutī, Mazhabī Shi‘a Risāla, Tūḥfat‘ul Rasa‘īl, Risāla-i-Chahal Bayt Masnavī.”

Besides imperial patronage to individuals the centre of religious learning ie madrasas were also given patronage. Some of the famous madrasas of the period were madarsa-i- Mirzāī at Rohri, the madarsa of Makhdūm Usmān at Darbela, madarsa of Miyān ‘Abdu’l Raḥīm, Makhdūm Abu’l Qāsim and Makhdūm Raḥmat Allāh at Thatta. Hamilton records four hundred of such institutions of learning in Thatta alone.

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31 Mullah Muḥammad was a teacher of Āsaf Jahān. Zakhīrāt-ul-Khwānīn, vol II, pp. 373, 374. He was put to death by Mahābat Khān.
32 Fatima Zehra Bilgrami, ‘‘ ‘Alī Sher ‘Qani Thattavī’s life and contribution to the history and culture of Sind,’’ PIHC, Delhi, 1992, section II, pp.321-331.
33 Muqālāt-us-Shu’ara, pp. 122-3.
34 Tārīkh-i-Sind, pp. 170, 240; Tārīkh-i-Ṭāhirī, pp. 46-47.
As a result of this patronage, writing of Arabic and Persian texts, and histories in court style became evident and sixteenth and seventeenth century. Qāżi Muḥammad Zāhir of Thatta, wrote *Fatawā-i-Zāhirī*. Sayy ēd ‘Alī Thānī Shirāzi wrote *Adāb-al- Murūdīn*; (a book on sufi practices) Miyā Ziya’al-dīn who was a great scholar and poet wrote *Hirz-al-Bashār*, He was also known as Mīr Lutf Allāh. Maulana Shakībī, who was in the time of Jānī Beg, wrote *Saqīnāma*, a full poem on conquest of Sind by the Mughals. For this Khān-i-Khānān gave him the award of one thousand *muhir*, while Mirza Jānī Beg, gave him the award of one thousand *ashrafs*. Besides, these, the out of writing regional history in personalized way also started in Sind. As a result of which Idrākī Beglārī’s *Beglārnāma*, Mīr Ma’sūm Bhakkārī’s *Tārīkh-i-Sind*, Ma’sūmī also wrote a short treatise on medicine *Mufrīdāt-i-Ma’sūmit*. He also helped Nizāmuddin Ahmad in the compilation of *Tabqāt-i-Akbarī*, Sayyed Muḥammad Ṭāhir Nisyānī’s *Tārīkh-i-Ṭāhūrī*, Yūsūf Mirāk’s *Mazhār-i-Shāhjahānī*, ‘Alī Shīr ‘Qanī Thattavi’s

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36 He also wrote *hawāshis* on Arabic text books. *Muqālāt-us-Shu’ara*, p. 381.
37 *Tārīkh-i-Sind*, pp. 215-16.
Tūḥfat 'ul-Kirām, and Muqālāt-us-Shu'ara in late eighteenth century are some of the examples of such writings. A part from it biographies of nobles, scholars and saints were also produced notably, Muqālāt-us-Shu'ara(1761), is the best literary production of ‘Alī Sher ‘Qani Thattavi. It is the first biography of Sindhi poets in Persian. Besides the poets of Sind, he mentions the names of other poets who migrated to Sind from abroad and made various cities, towns and places of Sind as the theme of their poetry, though before him Sayyed Abdūl Qādir Thattavī wrote Ḥadiqāt-ul-Awliyā a biographical sketch of Sufis of Sind ,and Rawdāt-al-Salāṭīn by Fakhrī Harwī, Zakhirat-ul-Khwanin by Shaikh Farīd Bhakkarī (in three volumes), which not only deals with the nobles of Sind, but also of Mughal court. He also wrote Tārīḵ-i-Hadrāt-i-Shāhjahanī, Tūḥfa-i-Sarandāz. The Sindhi scholars also contributed in great historic work of Aurangzēb’s reign ie. Abu’l Khayr and Makhduṃ Nizām’al Dīn Thānī, contributed in the compilation of

42 In this Shaikh Farīd Bhakkarī, had put in writing the names of each and every member of the family of Itmad’ud daūla (father of Nūr Jāhān). Zakhirāt-ul-Khwānin vol II, p. 12.
Fatawa-i-'Alamgiri, Arabic and Persian lughats (lexicons) were written by Abdūl Rashīd known as Farhang-i-Rashidi.

Another field of literature, which was quite flourishing in Sind was poetry: which had lot of Persian influence in it, more than Arabic, and was, sometimes inspired by the sufī philosophy because Sind was the home of several skilled exponents of sufī thought during the middle ages. The Islamic idea of music as part of the service of god has also played some part in shaping of Sindhi poetry. The chief kinds of serious poetical composition cultivated by the Sindhis have been Madahs, Munājāts, Marsiyahs and ‘Kowars’ or ‘Lanāts’. The first are praises of God, the prophet and Saints. The second are the religious hymns. The third are elegies generally concerned with the martyrdom of Hasan and Husain, the fourth are composition which deal with the moral virtues and vices of mankind: While the lighter from of composition include songs of victory, eulogy, kafis or wais, a form of amatory verse, bayt (couplets) and sanyoras or love messages, which was based on Persian

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43 Nabi Hadi, Dictionary of Indo-Persian Literature, Delhi, 1995, p. 35.
45 H.T. Sorley, Shāh Abdul Latif of Bhit, p. 240.
models but possessed a local character. In context of its richness in poetry, and other form of literature, Shaikh Farid Bhakkari calls Thatta second Iran.  

Among the literary society, poetry was given a special place in Sind. Among the Arghuns, Shāh Husain, not only patronized it but himself was interested and used to write with the penname of Sipahi the Tarkhāns also provided royal patronage to this branch of literature. Poetry was patronized by Mirza Jānī Beg who wrote with the penname of Halimi whose ghazals were quite famous among the qawwals, while Mirza Ghāzī wrote with the penname of Waqārī. He had written an entire diwan, Diwān-i-Waqārī. He had patronized many poets like Ṭaliba Mazandarānī, Shaīda Isfahānī, and ten other renowned poets of the time. Mulla Mūrshid Yazdjardī was a famous poet in the court of Mirza Ghāzī. Amongst the Tarkhāns, Mirza Jānī Beg, Mirza Sālih Tarkhān, ‘Isa Tarkhān II were also good poets, while Bāqī Tarkhān had patronized poets like Gaznafar Beg, Fīrāqi and Rangīn.

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46 Zakhirat-ul-Khwā́nīn, vol II, p.31
47 Ibid, p. 29; Tuhfat ‘ul Kirām, vol III, part I, p. 188
Under the patronage of Mughal officials certain local folklores were also turned into poetry; Idrākī Beglar adopted this style, who under the patronage of Mīr Abu’l Qāsim Sultān (1601-1602 A.D.) wrote *Chanēsarnāma* or *Wāqia-i-Chanēsar wā Lāila*, while Mīr M’asūm Nāmī wrote *Husn wa Nāz* (story of Sassi and Punnu) and *Parī Surat*. He wrote a *Diwān*, and *masnavī Madā-ul-Afqār*, in an imitation of *Makhzān-ul-Asrār* of Nizāmī. While Mūlla Muqīm converted story of Mumal and Mendra into Persian poetry, with the title of *Tarannūm-i-Ishq*. With these Mīr M’a’sūm Nāmī introduced writing of *Khamsah masnavī* in Sind, in fact it was he, who introduced the trend of writing poetry based on popular folklore. Similarly *Masnavī-i-Mazāhir ‘ul Asār* was written by Shāh Jahāngīr Hāshmī in 940 A.H, and *Masnavī-i-Mehawā-Mah* by Ata Thattawi. Another form included was satire, which was written by Zafar Khan Ahsan with the name of Ata Thattavi.

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52 *Tūḥfat’ul-Kirām*, vol III, part I, pp. 76,367. See the Persian texts list given at the end for *Masnavī-i-Mazāhir* by Shāh Jahāngīr Hāshmi, His collection of verses is known as *Diwān-i-Hāshmi. Tārīkh-i-Sind*, p. 205.

53 He was from ‘Ālāmghīr’s reign to Mūḥammad Shāh’s reign. (1063-1130 A.H.) *Tūḥfat’ul-Kirām*, vol III, part I, pp. 423, 424, 425. Some other poets of *masnavī*
form, which derives its origin from the Arabs flourished during this period, was *qasīdahs*, a form marshaled by Shāh Jahāngīr Hāshmī and Fakhrī Harwī, ‘Abdūl Ḥākim ‘Ala.\(^5^4\)

There was another form of poetry also which was influenced by Sufi and Bhakti Movements in Sind. The main exponent of this form of poetry, were Qāżī Qazān (1463-1551), Prān Nāth (1618-1694), Sāchal Sarmast (1739-1829), and Shāh ‘Abdūl Latīf of Bhit (1689-1752). Out of these Qāżī Qazān, who was the *qāżī* of Bhakkar, made experiment with prevailing poetic Hindi form of ‘*doha*’ by changing its rhyming scheme and number of lines, and produced a new from i.e. *bayt* (couplet).\(^5^5\) While Prān Nāth was the first person who introduced *Sagun Bhakti* in Sindhi poetry,\(^5^6\) Sāchal Sarmast, was the rebellious *sufi* poet of

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\(^{54}\) *Tārikh-i-Sind*, pp. 205, 206; *Muqālāt-us-Shu’ara*, pp. 185-86, 442-43, 487, 844-89. There were others like Muḥsin Thattawi who wrote *qasīdah* for Nādīr Shāh, in one of his twenty six couplets. He was during Aūrangzēb’s reign and was a much renounced poet even known in Thatta. He died in 1749 A.D. *Tūḥfāt’ul Kirām*, vol III, part, pp. 377, 456, 457, 458.

\(^{55}\) *Medieval Indian literature*, edited by K. Ayyappa Pannikar, Delhi, 2000, vol IV, p. 374. For Qāżī Qazān see *Tārikh-i-Sind*, pp. 114, 123, 200, 201

\(^{56}\) *Ibid*, p. 382. He was a disciple of Swami Nijānand, and he wrote over six hundred slokas in Sindhi. He was in Sind between 1667-1668 A.D. Somehow, in his writing.
Sind, whose real name was Abdūl Wahāb, while Sāchal/Sāchu was his pen name. He wrote in Sindhi, Urdu, Hindi, Persian, Arabic and Punjabi. He for the first time introduced *ghazal* in Sindhi poetry. His *kāfis* are also very famous among the local people of Sind.

The most famous poet of eighteenth century was Shāh Abdūl Latīf of Bhit, who wrote *Shāhjo Risālo*. He was a grandson of Shāh 'Abdūl Karīm of Bālārī (1536-1625), a much revered mystic poet of Sind. His style is harmonious and happy blend of sanskritized vocabulary and Persian and Arabic phraseology; his lyrics are music oriented. He had written poems like *Sūr Sorath, Sūr Asa, Sūr Suhini, Sūr Sarang, Sūr kedaro, Sūr Maizuri, Sūr Rip, Sūr Dahir, Sūr Yaman Kalyan, Sūr Kalyān, Ramkālī* and *Māsnāvīs*. There was other, who had mastered in music like Mīr Mirān Sānī Amīr Khān, who was present in Sind during the late seventeenth century. It’s said that he had one thousand

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57 *Medieval Indian literature*, p.442


59 Out of these *Sūr Asa* deals with oneness of god *Sūr Suhini* are love poems, *Sūr Sarang* are poems on rain, *Sūr Maizuri* deals, with union of man with god (*sufi* element), and *Sūr Kedaro* are the ballad of the sorrow of Muharram. H.T. Sorley, *Shāh Abdūl Latīf of Bhit*, pp. 227, 233, 234, 244, 245, 254, 255.

disciples in entire Hindustan. Thus it can be said that, while the rich trends of learning were initiated by the Arghuns, and were taken to higher steps by the Tarkhāns, who gave lot of patronage for learning. With the coming of Mughals, Sind experimented Persianized style of writing whether it was histories that were written, or poetry. The poetry of Sind of sixteenth, seventeenth and mid eighteenth century, combines the Indo Persian style, imbibing in itself the cultural movements of the period; which was patronized by the Mughal court, and by the Mughal officials who were present in Sind at that time.

The effect of Mughal rule on Sindhi literary society and culture can be seen in the way the histories and poetry were being written, by adopting the Persian historiography style. Moreover, treatise on medicine was also written. In the buildings, the Mughal style of architecture was evident whether it was a J'amī mosque or the mausoleums that were constructed by the Mughal nobles during that period. The Sindhi calligraphist also left their impression not only on architecture of Sind, but also on royal buildings Agra fort, Fatehpur Sikri mosque, and Mandu fort. Thus with the establishment of the Mughal rule in Sind, the common man was groomed by the interaction with the royal court and imperial nobles. The literature that was being
written, and the balladic traditions which were orally transmitted
combined together and gave birth to high culture in Sind, whose
effect was felt on scholars’, nobles’ and artisans’ work.