INTRODUCTION

1: Sind and its Geography

Sind is one of the very few geographically distinct regions of Indian subcontinent comprising the lower Indus Basin, with the Baluchistan Hills, Thar desert, pressing it closely from east and west and the Sukkur gorge providing practically the only opening from the north.

The geographical boundaries of Sind extend from the lower half of the Indus valley. From Bhakkar down to the Arabian Sea, and from Kirthar Hills in the west to the desert of Thar in the east. It is situated in the second climate and lies in the longitude 102° 30' and latitude 24° 10'.

1.1 Topography of Sind:

On the basis of topography Sind region may be divided into three major and seven minor division:

2. Lower Indus valley: a. Western, b. Eastern, c. Delta

Western Highlands: Giving the description of hills of Sind region, Alm tells “in the north of Thatta the mountain form several ranges, one extends to Qandahar, and the second from sea cost to the town of Kohmar (also known as Ramgar), and terminates in Siwistan (Sehwan), where it is known as lakhi. A third range runs from Siwistan to Siwi, and this called Khar or Kirthar. The fourth mountain chain touches Kachh on one side and the Kalimati territory (lakhi hills) on the other, and is known as Karah. From the boundary of Multan and Uchh, in the north towards Thatta, there is an existence of high mountain range; while in the south from Uchh to Gujarat, there are a chain of barren sandy mountain tract, and also from Bhakkar to Nasarpur and Amarkot.” Kohistan mainly consists of arcuate mass of tertiary, forming low scraps, hogbacks and plateaus of which are the most prominent are associated with the massive Kirthar limestone. The lakhi hills are considered the highest, having an elevation at 1500 and 2000 feet.  

3 Alm, vol II, p.165.
4 Edward Thornton, A Gazetteer of the countries adjacent to India on North-West including Sindo, Afghanistan, Beloochistan, the Punjab and the neighbouring states. New Delhi, 1994, vol II, p 208.
Lower Indus Valley.

The western valley section is formed mainly of older alluvium. The Kalat and Kirthar are flanked by alluvial fans on which *rabī* and *khārīf* crops are cultivated, then it loses itself in desolate clay deserts (*pat*) between Jacobabad and Sibi.5

Western valley also comprises the Hala, or Baluchi Mountains, stretch with diminished heights, to the bank of river at Sehwan, and southward of these pub range is most western.6 Towards the south, the soil is comparatively better, with many lakes; fertile in itself. It has *Nari* river, *Nara* in the west, and the Manchhur lake.7

The Eastern valley has a range of hills stretching from Rohri towards Jaisalmer and the *Gunjah* hills, east of Indus reaching 400 feet on which Hyderabad is built.8 The valley is a great doab of recent alluvial sands and clay, falling from 250 feet to 50 feet in 200 miles,

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7 *Āţīn*, vol II, p.165. It says, “Manchhur lake is near Sehwan, is two days journey in length, with artificial islands that have been made by fishermen, who dwell on them.”
8 Edward Thornton,.vol II, p .207
and has long narrow depressions (dhoros). It has eastern Nara, and along it are small alkaline lakes (dhands). It was an extensive alluvial region stretching eastward of the fertile tract along the Indus, but being now generally deserted by water of the river, it has become a desert; with a scanty pasture to camels or horned cattle, or wild ass.  

Along the sea coast and for several miles inland delta is one of the most miserable countries in the world unlike that of Ganges delta. A section of banks of the river shows a continued succession of earth, clay and sand in layers, parallel to one another; and deposited without doubt, at different periods. One eight of the delta may be occupied at beds of rivers and inferior streams. The base or seaward line of the delta of Indus measures from the Garrah mouth, in lat 24° 43' long 67° 9' to the Sir mouth, in lat 23° 55', long 68° 15', about one hundred and twenty five miles. If it be regarded as having the shape of the triangle, the perpendicular measured from the sea shore near Thatta, where the great branches of the Indus; the Sata or eastern, the Baggur or western divaricates, is about fifty miles, and its surface is about three thousand

9 O.H.K.Spat and Learmonth, p. 507.
square miles: but as the river has in some degree deserted a considerable portion of the south-eastern part, the present delta does not contain probably more than two hundred five thousand square miles.\textsuperscript{12}

**The desert:**

It lies in the desert belt of the tropics. On the north east is the *Pat* or desert of the upper Sind, lying between that town of Shikarpoo and the Bolan Pass, and consisted of the clay deposited by the Bolan, the Nari and the torrents, which flow down from the Hala Mountains; and which are lost in this dreary tract. It is about ninety miles across and in some places resembles "the dry bed of salt lagoon in an interval between, spring tides".\textsuperscript{13} In the eastern part, within a reach of twenty miles is *Thar*, which is quite similar to *Pats*, but much sandier, extensive tracts being covered with sea hills, varying and shifting.\textsuperscript{14} The sand hills continuing from Rohri and Alor bent southward separating the Hakrah and the Indus valley.


\textsuperscript{13} Ibid, p. 206.

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
1.2 Climate:

The climate of lower Sind is sultry and disagreeable. According to Abu’l Fazl, “in the winter season, there is no need of poshtins (fur lined coats), and the summers heats are moderate, except in Sehwan.”

The climate of Sind is distinguished by great extremes of temperature, and by scantiness and capriciousness of the rainfall. The atmosphere of the coastal regions is comparatively moist, and with in the range of sea breezes, which prevail for about four months, weather is comparatively cooler. The south-west monsoon brings little rain over the coast from June till September. The coastal regions were also susceptible to hurricanes and earthquakes. A great hurricane was reported in Thatta on 15 August 1637, which increased level of Indus River and thus caused destruction. Many men, buildings, cattle perished and one thousand ships were wrecked. An earthquake was also reported in the year 1668, in the province of Thatta, especially in Samawani (under the jurisdiction of Lahari Bandar), which resulted in

15 Ā‘īn, vol II, p. 165
16 H.T. Lambrick, p.4.
its sinking down along with the thirty thousand residents. While upper Sind had very hot weather, which continues for full seven months, and had a scanty rainfall, generally violent and of short duration.

On the basis of a popular geographical notion especially climate, this region can be divided into three main divisions:

1. *Siro* or the upper country,
2. *Vicholo* or the middle country,
3. *Laru* or the lower country.

The upper Sind was situated north of about 27° N Lat., forty miles above Sehwan; central Sind was the tract between that limit and Hyderabad (old Nairun Kot). The lower Sind area is sloping or ascending to the sea, and is extended from Hyderabad to the sea; and was better known as delta country.

1.3 Rivers:

The main river of Sind is Indus. River Indus was main source of water and form a delta of rich alluvium. At a distance of sixty miles

20 It was called Sindhu or Mihran. *A‘in*, vol II p.163; *Chachnama* (tr.), Mirza Kalich Beg Fredunbeg, as *The Cahachnama; An ancient history of Sind*, reprint Delhi, 1979 , p.11.
from the sea, and about five miles below the city of Thatta, this river divides into two branches; the right arm is named Baggaur, and the left Sata.\textsuperscript{21} The eastern branch of Sata, is larger of the two and below the point of division, is one thousand yards wide.\textsuperscript{22} It expedites its water into the sea by its seven mouths, within the area span of thirty-five miles. The western arm, Baggaur, flows into one stream past Peer Putta, Bohaur, and Darajee, to within five or six miles of the sea, when it divides itself into two navigable branches, the Pittee and Pieteanee, which fall into ocean about thirty-five miles apart from each other.\textsuperscript{23} The Indus has eleven mouths namely Pittee, Pieteanee, Jooa, Reechel, and Hujamree, Khedywaree, Gora (the largest mouth), Khaer, Mulla, Seer, and Koree.\textsuperscript{24}

\textbf{Nari or Narvi River}\textsuperscript{25}:

This river flowed near Ganjaba under Siwi. When it took a tract Sarvo of marshland, it was called \textit{Dhand}.\textsuperscript{26} Its overflowed water

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\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{21} Alexander Burnes, vol III, p.228.
\item\textsuperscript{22} \textit{Ibid.}
\item\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Ibid}, p. 229.
\item\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 229, 235, 236, 237, 238.
\end{itemize}

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converts into a channel called river Nari, then joins Manchur lake. A part of this channel called by the name western Nara.

**Murah River:**

Another important river was Murah. The modern name of this river is Mula.

**Sawa River:**

It was actually a nala, flowed from the hills during rainy season, and from Manchhar lake upward during inundation, through parganas Kahan and Bubakan. Its modern name is Gaj River.

**Hakra River:**

The Nar of Hakra or Ghaggar, and Sankara river; the head channel running past Alor has dried up. It was also known by the name of Wahind and Wahan.

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29 *An Atlas,* p. 15, sheet 5-b.
30 *Mazhar-i-Shāhjahānī,* vol II, p.207.
31 Sayyed Muḥammad Tāhir Nisyānī,*Tarikh-i-Tāhir,*ed. Nabi Baksh Baluch, Hyderabad-Sind,1964, p.25; this channel also known as eastern Nara and it used to run twenty miles north of Rann of Cutch. M.R.Haig, op.cit.p.2
Sultana River:

It ran past Kandiaro.\textsuperscript{32}

Ren or Raini River:

It was a large river, running from Indus river to Badin past Jun. It was called \textit{Nullah}.\textsuperscript{33} It was not more than forty yards wide in places, with steep banks, some fifteen to twenty feet high.\textsuperscript{34}

The hydrological changes in the courses of these rivers, caused the birth of new places and ports in Sind; affecting political and economic spheres of life besides affecting social life of the habitants. The first noted change could be seen in the birth of Bhakkar, caused by a shift in the course of Hakra river,\textsuperscript{35} which flowed past Alor at the time of Arab invasion, changed its course, and then flowed to north-west of Alor. Again it changed its course to southwards, deserting Alor, inclining to within about four miles of Alor, on the north cutting its way through rocks and finally forming a loop channel around present

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\textsuperscript{33} Mazhar-i-\textit{Shahjahani}, vol II, p.203.
\textsuperscript{34} H.T.Lambrick, p.31.
\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Tarih-i-Tahir}, p.25. According to Mirza Kalich Beg, this change in the river course was caused by an earthquake in the year about 962.\textit{Chachnama} (tr.), p.10n.
\end{flushright}
Bhakkar;\textsuperscript{36} converting it into an island. Around 1300 AD, the Indus shifted its way from north of Makli hills and Bham bore, and started flowing to the south of the Makli hills (situated between Thatta and Karachi), resulting in the desertion of an ancient port Debal, and the emergence of Lahari Bandar, as a new and main port.\textsuperscript{37} In the year around 1648-52 AD, again the change in the Indus caused shoaling of entrance of this port, and it ceased to be navigable due to sand accumulation.\textsuperscript{38} The traffic was now shifted to a new port Aurangabandar or Dehrajamka.\textsuperscript{39} An English agent Richard Davidge has informed its location to be some forty kos to the north-east of

\textsuperscript{36} Henry Cousens, \textit{The Antiquities of Sind with historical outline}, Calcutta,1929,p.149. \textit{Tārīkh-i-Ṭāhirī} assigns this change to be work of some merchants who wanted to teach a lesson to tyrant Samma ruler Dalu Rai. \textit{Tārīkh-i-Ṭāhirī}, p.p.25-26; while Eastwick assigns yet another legend to it. E .B. Eastwick, \textit{Dry leaves from young Egypt}, London,1851,p.40.

\textsuperscript{37} William Floor, \textit{The Dutch East India Company(VOC) and Diewal-Sind (Pakistan),in the 17th and 18th centuries}, Islamabad,1993-94.This port could accommodate one thousand ships at a time.(Inayat Khān, \textit{Shāhjahānāmā} tr., p.212.)


\textsuperscript{39} During this time (1651-52) Aurangzēb was the Governor of Multan and Sind, it was the time when part of Kakralah came in \textit{sūba} Thatta . \textit{An Atlas}, p.1 4. On it situated the new port of Aurangabandar or Dehrajamka. Edward Thornton in his \textit{Gazetteer} mentions this port with this name. Vol II, p.182
Lahari Bandar. Aurangabandar is also mentioned as new port of Chuckerhallah. This port was situated in latitude 24° 10', longitude 67° 46', between süba Thatta and Cutch, on the delta of the river Indus, consisted of fourteen small vessels, each being of forty tons. Later this port became less important again due to change in Indus, and it was shifted to Shahbandar. During the last quarter of eighteen century Shahbandar harbour got blocked resulting in the shifting of its trade and population to Karachi. The harbors stretching 2 miles northward from manure head [against Arabian Sea] to the narrows of Layari River.

The town of Karachi was founded by the Kalhora chief in the year 1729; after the blockage of the Kharak harbor. We hear of Karachi by its present name in Tūhfat'ul Kirām, when Nādir Shāh in 1742 A.D. ordered Muẓaffar 'Alī Khān Bayāt Beglārbē gái to bring ships built at


41 E.F.I.1651-54, p.118.


44 Imperial Gazzetteer of India. Karachi to Kottayam, Oxford, 1908, vol XV, p.11.

45 Indu Banga, Ports and Their Hinterlands in India, New Delhi, 1992, p.338. At that time it was called Kalachi Kun. see H.T.Lambrick, p.123.
Surat, which came to Thatta via Karachi port.\textsuperscript{46} Karachi port, unlike its predecessors remained firm to its position under the colonial rule, and even today.

Thus, the shift in the course of river Indus also caused shift in economic centres; and also in the establishment of new town like Karachi and Hyderabad. Until 18\textsuperscript{th} century, the west in Sind region was the main centre of maritime activities and agriculture, but with the charge in Indus course, Hyderabad towards east became important, and main agricultural land also shifted from west to the east. Nairun Kot in sarkār Sehwan, served as a site for the modern city of Hyderabad which was founded in 1768-69.\textsuperscript{47}

1.4 Soil:

Sind region posses mainly four types of soil; 1.\textit{Pakki} soil or \textit{rezani} land. 2.\textit{Wariasi}. 3. \textit{Kalar}. 4. \textit{Kacho} soil or \textit{Barani} land.

1. \textit{Pakki soil} or \textit{rezani land}:

This is actually old alluvium in tracts once watered by river channels or overflows had compact grounds, and is distinguished only

\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Tuhfat 'ul Kirām}, vol III, part I, p. 452.

\textsuperscript{47} \textit{An Atlas}, p.14, sheet 5-a.
by its comparatively light colour from kacho soil. This type of soil does not need deep ploughing. There was ample of rezani land on the banks of lakes in pargana Lakut (sarkār Sehwan), which was so rich that it did not need ploughing, just simple seed sprinkling was enough to grow barley.  

2. **Wariasi:**

It is loose grey sand and of texture so fine that they disintegrate virtually to powder, but it could only produce shrubs. The most characteristics shrub of the sandy tract were *khip*, *twiggy*, *phog* and *ak* bush.

3. **Kalar:**

This type of soil is very characteristics of Sind, as it contains an excessive proportion of salt. Its composition has nearly forty percent of sodium sulphate. This soil is black in colour, and does not produce anything, but darkish brown medium *kalar*, produces several variety of *salvador*, *khabar* in lower Sind and wild indigo in northern

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48 H.T.Lambrick, *op.cit.* p.16.

49 Mazhar-i-Shāhjahānī, vol II, pp. 86, 204. *Pargana Kahan* and Bubakan of *sarkār* Sehwan also had some villages which had *rezani* lands.

50 H.T. Lambrick, p. 16.
If irrigated with canal water, the soil may be prepared for rice cultivation. But it is only when the salts are present to such a greater depth, that there is no process of reclamation.

4. **Kacho soil or barānī land:**

This soil is the best in productivity. It is light loam, resulting from recent inundation. During the rainy season, when the water flows from the hills, the land is covered with alluvial deposits; and produce very good crop of millet, and sesame in *kharīf*, and mustard seed in *rabi*. These were generally located under the hills, irrigated by rain fed streams.

1.5 Irrigation:

Not only the towns and sedentary population was benefited with the Indus water, but agriculture got most of its benefit. Here cultivation also depended on river. Sehwan, Bhakkar and Thatta had a very fertile land, because of the presence of lakes in them, and also because of the presence of doab. Though for the cultivation in the

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51 Ibid, p. 16; Inayat Khān mentions that the rising level of Indus caused deposition of salt in soil and made it impregnable. *Shāhjahānāmā* (tr.), pp. 211, 212.

52 *Mazhar-i-Shāhjahān*, vol II, p. 205.

53 Ibid, pp. 137, 205.

54 Ibid, p. 26. Cultivation in Ganjabah (Bhakkar) depended firstly on the river Mauzahi, which emanated from the hill, secondly on the river Nari.
plains, irrigation mostly depended on rainfall,\textsuperscript{55} besides digging of canal for the purpose is also recorded.\textsuperscript{56} The rain irrigated villages followed \textit{ghalla-bakhši} as Ararah in Akbarabad Wahi in Sehwan.\textsuperscript{57} Though for the cultivation in the plains, under the old system of irrigation natural channels of the river Phuleli, Guni, Purar, Nara, Arul and Baggaur etc, were used along with the artificial canals, dug by the rulers to carry the inundation waters, which facilitated canal irrigation in this region.\textsuperscript{58} Irrigation was also carried through wells by \textit{charkhī}, \textit{mōktē} and \textit{bōrtī} methods. In \textit{charkhī}, the Persian wheel (known as \textit{nārū} or \textit{hurlō}) was used to convey water to the lands situated at a higher level. \textit{Chāhī} (well) irrigation was generally practiced in the areas, which was closer to river, for this purpose wells were dug, and water wheels were installed. When the \textit{charkhī} was driven with the help of camels, it was known as \textit{naru} or \textit{naʿuria}; but when the bullocks were

\textsuperscript{55} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 26,196.
\textsuperscript{56} \textit{Ibid}, pp.191.
\textsuperscript{57} \textit{Ibid}, p.155.
\textsuperscript{58} Khānwāh canal in Thatta was built by Darya Khān for irrigating the \textit{pargana} of Sakurah and the plains near the hills in Chakarhala. Mīr M‘asūm, \textit{Tārikh-i-Sind}, ed. U.M.Daudpota, Poona, 1938, p.113; \textit{Tārikh-i-Tāhirī}, p.58; Mīr Abrah had also dug a canal in the \textit{pargana} Chanduka of sarkār Bhakkar. \textit{Mazhar-i-Shāhjahānī}, vol II, pp. 17, 18.
employed to rotate charkhī, then it was known as hurlō.59 When Shāh Beg Arghun had attacked pargana Baghbanan (sarkār Sehwan), he captured one thousand camels which used to work the Persian wheels in gardens (charkhā-i-bāghāt). Yūsūf Mirāk also records the irrigation in village Nar of pargana Bubakan (sarkār Sehwan) on the pattern of Afghanistan.60 Even the zamīndārs for the cultivation of their holdings used to dig the canals for the purpose of irrigation.61

1.6 Crops:

Mazhar-i-Shāhjahānī gives a detailed list of rabī and kharīf crops of the region Sehwan, which included Indian millet (jawārti), nachni and ragi (māndwah), rice paddy (shālti), cotton (panbah), melon (kharbūzah) watermelon (tarbūzah), sesame (kunjīd), common

59 Reference of use of this Persian Wheel is found in the verses of famous Sindhi poet Shah Abdul Latif of Bhit. S.M. Jhangiani, Shah Abdul Latif of Bhit and His Times, 1690-1751, Delhi, 1987, pp. 123, 124. "It was put over a vertical wheel over the well. This was connected with another wheel on the same axel, whose cogs engaged with the cogs of a third, horizontal wheel. This last was rotated by oxen going round, and the movement was transferred by gearing to the well-wheel, which too thereupon rotated." Irfan Habib, Technology in Medieval India c.650-1750, New Delhi, 2008. P.11.

60 Mazhar-i-Shāhjahānī, vol II, p.212.

61 Ibid, p. 191.

62 Ibid. pp. 24, 25. In Kur, Zamin and Chhatar, dependencies of Siwi, the cotton plant measured up to jujube tree in height.
millet (argān), kangani (gal), tag san or Bengal san, urd (māsh), mung (mūng), sugarcane (nayshakar), dilpasand (kachrah), indigo (nil), among the kharīf crops whereas rabʿi crops included wheat (gandum), barley (jau), Bengal gram (nakūd), Mustard seed (sarshaf), khardal (ahūrī), common millet (arzār), tagsan or Bengal san, mung (mung), chickling vetch (masāng) lentil (ʿadās), cumin (zīrah), fennel (badyān), garlic (sir), hemp (bhāng), opium poppy (kuknār), and tabacco, (tambāku). There is also mentioning of khaliha (?) as rabʿi crop. Besides these, in the pargana of Nairun of sarkār Sehwan (earlier known as Kulab-i-Manchar), some aquatic roots and seeds were also produced, called biha-kumah or lura or napah (lotus seeds), budi, roasted root of deri, a reed which grew there along the river banks, and used in weaving mats.63

1.7 Mines and Minerals:

Besides the agriculture being main source of income, the country also abounds in mines and minerals. In Thatta, salt pits, mines of yellow stone and iron mines were present.64 Alexander Hamilton had recorded some other minerals like saltpetre, salt armomack, borax

64 Aʿīm, vol II, p. 165.
opoponax, asafetida, goat-bezoars, and some semi-precious stones like lapis tutie, and lapis lazuli. Anunbela situated in the hills of Sehwan had copper and antimony mines.

1.8 Political Geography:

Although sequestered in the extreme western corner of the South Asian subcontinent, and thus to some extent enjoying a peculiar aloofness from the developments taking place in the neighboring regions. The territorial boundaries of Sind were subjected to the political development. A cradle of the great Indian civilization which came into contact with the Aryans; and thus Indo-Aryan culture was first witnessed here. Later this region also nurtured Buddhism, the archaeological remains of which are still evident, though with the coming of Arab in eight century, Buddhism could not sustain itself and became extinct. Thus gates of Islamic contact with India were opened, which facilitated the growth of Indo-Islamic culture.

During the seventh century, prior to the advent of Arabs, the frontiers of Sind touched the boundaries of Kashmir, the borders of

Kirman and included some portions of Makran and Rajasthan. It seems that during the Sammah rule, the western boundaries of Sind extended from the Makran to the desert of Siwi (Sibi). It also appears that the eastern frontiers were fixed from the province of Bhakkar, and borders of Jaisalmer to Umarkot and Wange; while Nagar Parkar, and Suleman Nagar (Cutch) were not a part of Sind.

During the Arghun period in 1557-8, Shal, Mastang and Siwi were included in the west, while Uchch, Jujunwahan, Bhattiwahan and part of Multan to the north Sind. After the death of Shah Hussain Arghun, the territories lying above the Lakhi hills belonged to Sultan Mahmud (of Bhakkar) and those to the other side of Lakhi hills went to 'Isa Tarkhan. After the Mughal conquest of this area (in the year 1574 A.D.), Bhakkar came under the Mughal sway and became a sarkār of

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67 Chachnāmā (tr.), pp.10, 30, 37, 38.
68 Tārikh-i-Sind, p.104; Tārikh-i-Ťahīrī, p.240.
69 Ibid.
70 Mazhar-i-Shāhjahānī, vol II, pp.24, 223. In the year 1557-58 Sultan Mahmud Bhakkari brought these territories under his sway.
71 The Lakhi range is an offshoot from the Kirthar which separates Sind from Baluchistan. A mā, vol II, p.165.
72 In the year 1554-5, Sultān Maḥmud of Bhakkar and 'Isa Tarkhān signed this agreement, but they remain loyal to Shāh Husain Arghun. It was only after his death in 1555 A.D. that this agreement came into effect. Tārikh-i-Sind, pp.190, 191, 192, 193, 221.
šūba Multan; while rest of the Sind later came under the šūba of Multan. After the conquest of Sind, ‘Abdur Rahim Khān-i-Khānān sought permission of Emperor Akbar to extend its boundaries to Cutch and Makran, which Akbar denied saying these lay on the frontier of Safawid Emperor Shāh Abbās, since the relation between the two were cordial, Akbar did not want to ruin it. After the death of Ghāzī Beg Tarkhān in 1612 A.D. Thatta being a larger sarkār was converted into šūba of which the first indication came early in Shāhjahan’s reign, while Bhakkar continued to be a part of šūba Multan, extending its boundaries upto Darbela and Chadukah. Now the Sind region was divided into two; the upper Sind situated to the upper side of Indus and lower Sind included šūba Thatta. After the invasion of Nādir Shāh on Sind during the reign of Muḥammad Shāh in the year 1739-40, the

73 Mazhar-i-Shāhjahanī, vol II, p.28.
74 Revenue statistics in Bayāz-i-Khushbū, MS I.O.828, ff 180a. (Rotograph no.194, History Department Library, Aligarh Muslim University)
region was again divided into three parts by Nādir Shāh; the districts of Thatta with its dependencies were conferred on Mian Noor Muḥammad Khān of Khodabad [Shāh Quṭb Khān]; the hilly part of the country was handed to Baluchi chief Mahābat Khān, while Shikarpur, Surkana, Siwistan and Karachi including town of Chotu, were given to Daudpotas.

76 Shikarpur was built in 1617 A.D. and is situated in upper Sind, north-west from Indus at Sukkur, some 40 miles from Carkana, and 36 miles from the edge of the deserts at Rojlanā, which seperates upper Sind from Cutch. See R. Hughes Thomas, Memoirs on Sind, Lt. T. Postan, “Miscellaneous information related to the town of Shikarpur,” first pub.1855, reprint, New Delhi,1993.2 vols, vol I, pp.87, 88. Also see Shahmet Ali, The History of Bhawalpur, London 1848. p.25.

2: Sind under the Arghuns and Tarkhāns

The history of the Arghun-Tarkhān principality of Sind dates back to 1520-92 A.D. In the sixteenth century, the Arghuns took possession of Bhakkar. The Arghuns had been in the service of the Timurids in Khurasan since the time of ‘Abu S‘aid Mirza. Amir Zūnnun, father of Shāh Beg Arghun was a noble under Sultan ‘Abu S‘aid Mirza. He spent some time at Herat in the company of his father Mīr Hasan Basrī, under Sultan Yādgār Mirza. After some time in exile he came back to Khurasan, where Sultan Husain Mirza took him under his patronage and made him Governor of the vilāyat of Ghor and Dawar under Amir Zūnnun, Arghuns had established themselves at Qandahar. In 1519-1520, the Arghun ruler Shāh Beg, was forced to move towards Sind, being hard pressed by the Safawid ruler Shāh Ismāil on the one side, and Bābur at Kabul on the other. Firstly, he occupied the fort of Siwi, and then moved towards Fatehpur, 50 kos towards Sind, where he had a fight with the sons of Pir Wali Barlās

1 Tārīkh-i-Sind, p.80.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
and the Baluches; and after defeating them he returned to Qandahar. But his entrance into Sind was not easily achieved; he had a fight with the Sammah ruler of Sind Jām Firūz, in which Sammah forces were defeated. An agreement was reached between the two parties; and a division of Sind took place, according to which the territories from Lakhi Hills down to Thatta were left under the jurisdiction of Jām Firūz, while from Lakhi upward (Including Bhakkar) the territories to be governed by Shāh Beg. After making this arrangement Shāh Beg went to Qandahar. At this juncture realizing the strategic importance of Bhakkar which not only commanded the route between Sind and the Punjab, but could also served as a secure post for meeting any invasion from the northwest down to Bolan pass; that Shāh Beg Arghun sent his foster brother Sultan Maḥmūd Khan

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5 Tarīkh-i-Sind, pp.104-5. See map 5 A in An Atlas. By the middle of the sixteenth century, the Baluches had emerged as a formidable power in Multan and in Sind. In 1519, Bābur has mentioned them as far north as Khushab and Bhira. Bāburnāma, vol I, p. 382.

6 Tarīkh-i-Sind, pp.104-5.

7 According to Āʾīn, Jām Firūz of Sammah dynasty ruled Sind from 1492 to 1520, for almost a period of eight years. Āʾīn, vol II, pp.168-9. In 1522, when Shāh Beg Arghun finally established his authority in this region, Jām went to Gujarat.

8 Tarīkh-i-Sind, pp. 113-4.

Kökaltāsh, popularly known later as Sultan Mahmūd Bhakkarī (Sultan was a part of his name and not a title), to charge of the expedition against Bhakkar which he duty captured. He took the help of the Sayyeds of Bhakkar, to successfully subdue the Dharejas.

In the year 1521, after the death of Shāh Beg, his son Shāh Husain a favorite of Bābur, succeeded him. It was during his reign that

10 Ibid, p.218. His father Mīr Fazīl Kokaltāsh, was in the services of Shāh Beg Arghun, and his mother was an Afghan from Shal and Mastang; Tarkhānnāma,tr. by Elliot and Dowson, The History of India as told by its own Historians, Lucknow, n.d. vol I, p.321.

11 Sultan Mahmūd showed much courage during Shāh Beg's invasion of Sind. He came to Bhakkar with just seventy men. Tarikh-i-Sind, p.219; Nusratnāma-i-Tarkhan, Ansar Zahid Khan, Karachi, 2000. It is based on the unique manuscript in Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, Lytton Farsiya Akhbar, no.156. P.233.

12 Though Sultan Mahmūd praised these Sayyeds before Shāh Husain, yet the Sayyeds wished to migrate to Rohri, as they were apprehensive about the fact that their influence in Bhakkar might not be liked by the Arghun ruler. Tarikh-i-Sind, pp. 122-3; Mazhar-i-Shāhjahānī, pp. 6-7. These Dharejahs evaded the payment of revenues to him and twice attempted to expel Mahmūd Khan from Bhakkar and capture the fort. But Mahmūd Khan subdued them, and captured their forty chiefs; but of them twenty-seven were executed by the orders of Mahmūd Khan, and rest were executed by the orders of Shāh Beg. Tarikh-i-Sind, pp.122-23.


14. Tarikh-i-Sind, p.127. Shāh Husain swore allegiance to the descendents of Sāhib-i-Qirān (Amīr Timūr), and declared Bābur as the Emperor. The khutba was also read in the name of Babur. P.142.
Emperor Hūmāyūn fleeing from Shēr Shāh entered Sind in 1541. Sultān Maḥmūd was asked to pay homage to the Emperor Hūmāyūn, but he refused saying, “unless my master [Shāh Husain] orders we to do so, I can not move, as then I will not be true to my master’s salt.”

It was only after Shāh Husain ordered him to provide provisions to Hūmāyūn and welcome him, that he obeyed his master’s orders. But he would not agree to Humayun’s demand that he should surrender the fort of Bhakkar, in lieu of which he was offered Chachgan in southern Sind. This led to conflict, and in 1541-43 the Mughal forces made fertile attempts to capture Bhakkar, but Sultān Maḥmūd was able to repulse both the Mughal commanders sent against him, Tāmūr Sultān, and Shaikh ‘Alī Beg Jālaīr, the latter being killed.

In the year 1543-44, Shāh Husain entrusted the charge of Siwi (Sibi, below the Bolan pass) to Sultān Maḥmūd, where he

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16 Tārikh-i-Sind, p. 170.
17 Ibid, pp.174-76. Hūmāyūn wanted this fort for his ladies, who could safely dwell there, while he himself planned to go to Gujarat.
successfully subdued the Baluch;\textsuperscript{19} and attempted to impose tribute on the nomads\textsuperscript{20} throughout the reign of Shāh Husaīn, Sultān Maḥmūd enjoyed his confidence, so much so that he was even given the charge of the real (muhr) of Shāh Husaīn.\textsuperscript{21} The Governor of Thatta, ‘Isa Tarkhān approached Sultān Maḥmūd, in the year 1554-55, to come to a secret agreement according to which, after the death of Shāh Husaīn, they would divide the territory of Sind between themselves, whereby the territories lying above the Lakhi Hills were to belong to Sultān Maḥmūd and those the other side of Lakhi Hills, were to go to ‘Isa Tarkhān.\textsuperscript{22} But they more to remain loyal towards Shāh Husaīn, so long as he was alive.\textsuperscript{23} Sultān Maḥmūd apparently concurred.

After the death of Shāh Husaīn early in 1555, this arrangement came into effect, whereby Sultān Maḥmūd started ruling

\textsuperscript{19} Tarīkh-i- Sind, p.220; Mazhar-i-Shāhjahānī, vol II, p.32.
\textsuperscript{20} Mazhar-i-Shāhjahānī, vol II, p.27. These Baluches belonged to Nuhmardi clan, and dwelt in Kirthar range, which runs from Sehwan to Siwi. They maintained three thousand cavalry and seven thousand infantry. Āʾīn, vol II, p.165.
\textsuperscript{21} Tarīkh-i- Sind, p. 91.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid, pp.190-91, 221; but according to the author of Tarkhānānāmā, it was Sultān Mahmūd who approached Mirza ‘Isa Tarkhān for this alliance. Tarkhānānāmā (tr.), pp.321-22; the Tarkhān family had become powerful in lower Sind in around 1520. (Āʾīn, vol II, pp. 168-69.)
\textsuperscript{23} Tarīkh-i- Sind, pp.190-91.
Bhakkar\textsuperscript{24} almost like an independent ruler, and ‘Isa Tarkhān started similarly ruling Thatta.\textsuperscript{25} Sultān Mahmūd even stuck coins in his own name, and had his name included in the \textit{khutba} (Friday sermon).\textsuperscript{26} He subdued the recalcitrant Baluch and Samejahs.\textsuperscript{27} He dealt very harshly with the malcontents. When in 1558-59 Nāhar Ḵān of Sitpur (on the Panjnad south west of Multan) tried to defy the orders of Sultān Mahmūd, he laid siege to the fort of Sitpur, and was only after the payment of four lakh \textit{laris} as indemnity that Sultan Mahmud went back to Bhakkar.\textsuperscript{28} In the year 1557-58, he brought the territory of Uch, Jujuwahan and Bhattiwahan (now in Bhawalpur Territory) under his sway.\textsuperscript{29}

Sultān Mahmūd maintained very cordial relationship with the Safawid ruler, Shāh Tahmāsp. In 1557-58, he was granted a flag,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{24} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 102-3, 221. Shāh Husain died from paralysis at Alipur on Tuesday 12th \textit{Rabi’ul Awwal}, 962 A.H. (4th February, 1555).
\item \textsuperscript{25} \textit{Ibid}, p.207. It was during his rule that the Portuguese attacked Thatta and taken it by surprise. \textit{Tārikh-i-Tāhirī}, pp. 111-14.
\item \textsuperscript{27} \textit{Tārikh-i- Sind}, p. 221.
\item \textsuperscript{28} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 223-4. The siege continued for two months, and after the intermediation of Khwāja Kalān, ‘Abdullāh Muftī, and Mir Yār Muḥammad Ṣādī, Nāhar Ḵān sued for peace.
\item \textsuperscript{29} \textit{Ibid}, p. 223.
\end{itemize}
kettledrum, robes and ten thousand togh [yak tail standard].

They frequently exchanged embassies also. Shāh Tahmāsp also gave him the title of “Khān-i-Khānān.” The Munshāt-i-Namkān, a massive collection of documents of Akbar’s reign, contains one of Shāh Tahmāsp letters of Emperor Akbar, in which he recommended Sultan Mahmūd for the title of Khān-i-Khānān and Sipahsālār. It is almost certain that Shāh Tahmāsp was anxious that the title having been given by him to Sultan Mahmūd Khān should be confirmed by Akbar, so as to establish the latter’s consent to Bhakkar passing under Safawid influence. Akbar’s reply indicated his reluctances to meet the Shāh’s wishes, through the reason given was that Hūmāyūn had already conferred the same title upon Munīm Khān. Shāh Tahmāsp had also

30 Ibid.
31 Ibid, p. 225. In the year 1561-2, an envoy of Shāh Tahmāsp, Haq Būrī Beg came to Bhakkar with many costly presents, and he stayed there for one year. Next year, he was sent back with Abu’l Makram, an envoy on behalf of Sultan Mahmūd Khān. Haq Būrī Beg was sent once again to Bhakkar by Shāh Tahmāsp.
32 Ibid.
34 Ibid, p. 236. Akbar also said that Sultan Mahmūd had been given the title of ‘Itibār Khān.”
recommended for an enhancement in the rank of Sultān Maḥmūd.\textsuperscript{35} It is really surprising that the Shāh should have made such a recommendation, since the official chronicler Abu’l Fazl does not even include Sultān Maḥmūd in the list of nobles of the Empire.\textsuperscript{36} Yet curiously enough, Akbar’s reply to Tāhmāsp implies that he considered Sultān Maḥmūd Khān as a grander of his Empire, Abu’l Fazl infact mentions that in his conflict with the Tarkhāns of Thatta, Sultān Maḥmūd Khān drew on the assistance of the Mirzas of Qandahar, who had charge of that fort on behalf of Shāh Tāhmāsp\textsuperscript{37} and this, again suggests that, rather than being a grander or subordinate ruler of the Mughals, Sultān Maḥmūd was including towards the Safawids. Sultān Maḥmūd however did not wish to the Mughals unnecessarily whenever any Mughal noble passed through his territory, he treated him very

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid, p. 242.


\textsuperscript{37} Bāqī Tarkhān, son of ‘Īsā Tarkhān, complained to the Emperor Akbar about the high handedness of Sultān Maḥmūd in which he mentioned Sultān Maḥmūd’s alliance with the Mirzas of Qandahar. Ultimately a farman was issued to Sultān Maḥmūd. \textit{Akbarnāma}, vol II, pp. 278-79; ‘Abdul Qādir Badāuni, \textit{Mīntakhab-ut-Tawāriḵh}, ed. Ali Ahmed and Lees, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1864-9. 3 vols, vol II, p.91.
well. To please the Mughal Emperor, he even imprisoned the fugitive Mughal noble, Shāh Abu’l Ma‘alī, for a period of seven months in Bhakkar in 1556, and it was only after the farmān was issued to send Abu’l Ma‘alī to the royal court, that Sultān Maḥmūd released him and sent him by way of Multan. Similarly in 1560, Sultān Maḥmūd denied passage to Bāīram Khān, desirous for going to haj pilgrimage, for few that his receiving Bāīram Khān might among Akbar, who had dismissed Bāīram Khān.

Sultān Maḥmūd, entrenched at Bhakkar, also thought to keep the Tarkhāns of Thatta at bay, by interfering in their internal matters. In 1565-66, Sultān Maḥmūd not only entertained at Bhakkar certain Arghun readers whom Mirza ‘Isa Tarkhān had driver out, but

38 In the year 1556, while Bahādur Khān, Qubad Khān, Yāqūb Beg, Shāh Tārdī Beg’ Muzaffar Khān, and Tarsūn Muḥammad Khān, were returning from Qandahar, Sultān Maḥmūd Khān entertained them very well. Tārīkh-i- Sind, p.221.

39 Ibid.

40 In 1560, Sultān Maḥmūd was alarmed by hearing the news of the journey of Bāīram Khān to Mecca via Bhakkar. He directed that chaharbagh, where Hūmāyūn had stayed in the neighborhood of Bhakkar, be laid waste, so that Bāīram Khān might not think of staying there, when Bāīram Khān come to know of this, he changed his route and went to Gujarat via Pattan. Tārīkh-i- Sind, p.224. This was despite the fact that just one year earlier, Sultān Maḥmūd had married Gaūhar Tāj Begum, daughter of Shāh Tārdī Beg, a relative of Khān-i-Khānān Bāīram Khān. P.223
sent his troops to help them besiege Siwistan (Sehwan), an enterprise in which success eluded him.\footnote{Ibid, pp. 225-26.} Previously in 1561-62, Mirza Muḥammad Bāqī Tarkhān after having some tension with his father and brother Mirza Muḥammad Sālīh, took shelter under Sultān Mahmūd, who intermediated and asked ‘Isa Tarkhān to forgive his son so finally in 1562-63, Bāqī was sent back to his father.\footnote{Ibid, pp. 224-25; Tarkhānnāma (tr.), pp. 324-25.} Bāqī Tarkhān succeeded his father after his death. An important event took place when the window of Shāh Beg, Māh Begum\footnote{Mah Begum, was the daughter of Muhammad Muqīm (brother of Shāh Beg), who was captured in a battle with Bābur in 1517. Bābur married her to one of his nobles Qāsim Kōka, and Nāhid Begum was born to them. Later on by the efforts of Shāh Beg, Māh Begum escaped from Kabul, leaving her daughter there. Māh Begum being a widow now married Shāh Beg. Tārikh-i-Sind, pp.103-07.} died in the custody of Bāqī Tarkhān. Nāhid Begum, the daughter of Māh Begum approached Sultān Mahmūd to punish Bāqī Tarkhān. Sultān Mahmūd, thereupon, asked them to obtain a \textit{farmān} from the Emperor Akbar. After obtaining a \textit{farmān} she along with her husband Muhībb ‘Alī,\footnote{Muhībb ‘Alī, son of Mir Khalīfa, was a \textit{mansabdār} of 1000 (\textit{A}’\textit{in}, vol I, p. 160). He gave up military service and lived in retirement. Emperor Akbar now gave him the territory of Multan. Tārikh-i-Sind, p. 227.} and

\textit{farman}
Mujahid Khan came to the vicinity of Bhakkar to take his help. But at this juncture Sultan Mahmud declined to extend any help. Shocked by his treatment the Mughal nobles along with the Arghuns decided to laid siege to the fort of Mathila (north-east of Bhakkar); thereafter they captured it, from the governor Mubarak Khan; a slave of Sultan Mahmud in the year 1572-73. After this Mubarak Khan also joined hands with the Mughal forces, but, along with his son Beg Oghli was soon after killed.

In the year 1572-73, Akbar confirmed the governorship of Bhakkar on Sultan Mahmud and sent a farmān with Mūrji Tawāchī to the effect; he also withdrew Muhībb ‘Alī and Mujahid Khan from

45 Mujahid Khan, was the grandson of Saʿid Khan Mughal, the Governor of Multan. Muntakhab-ut-Tawārīkh, vol II, p. 134.

46 Ibid. Badāunī says, “because Sultan Mahmud did not trust Muhībb ‘Alī, therefore, he asked them to go via Jaisalmer, then only he will help them otherwise not.” But Maʿsūm Bhakkarī says, “because Nāhid Begum, Muhībb ‘Alī, and Mujahid Khan brought those Arghuns, whom Sultan Mahmud had ousted, this infuriated Sultan Mahmud and he refused to help them. Tārikh-i-Sind, p. 237.

47 Mathila was a mahal in the sarkār of Bhakkar, with a total revenue of 1,35,3713 dams. Ārn, vol II, p.163. For the details regarding the siege of the fort of Mathila see Tārikh-i-Sind, pp. 228-9; Akbarnāma, vol II, pp.362-64; Muntakhab-ut-Tawārīkh, vol II, p. 135.

48 Mubarak Khan was a slave, purchased by Sultan Mahmud for two hundred black laris. Tārikh-i-Sind, p. 232; Mazhar-i-Shāhjahānī, vol II, p. 31.

49 Tārikh-i-Sind, pp. 230-33.
there. At this juncture, Sultan Mahmud fell ill, suffering from dropsy. He wished to surrender the fort of Bhakkar to Emperor Akbar, provided Akbar sent another agent. Akbar agreed, but Mujahid Khan and Muhibb 'Ali Khan went on with the siege. The siege was still being conducted when Sultan Mahmud Khan died on 8 Safar 982 A.H. (30 May 1574). The garrison in the fort contained to resist, till Gesu Khan sent by Akbar arrived (3 August 1574) and, dispersing the besiegers, took Bhakkar on behalf of Akbar.

Thus, Bhakkar finally came under Mughal sway. Bhakkar became a sarkar of the sūba of Multan, with 12 mahals, and a total revenue of 1824497 dams, and 2,82,013 bighas of measured land. Banwati Dās was appointed the karōri (revenue collector) of sarkar Bhakkar. The name of Tarsun Khan, son of Shāh Muḥammad Saiṭ-ul-Mulk, was proposed for the governorship of Bhakkar. But senior nobles requested

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50 Ibid, pp. 234-35.
52 Ṭārkīh-i-Sind, pp. 235-36.
55 Tarsun Khan was a mansabdār of 5000. Āʾīn, vol I, p. 160.
Akbar not to appoint a son of Sāfi-ull Mulk to such frontier territory. As a result Tarsün Khān was recalled to Agra; and in his place Mīr Sayyed Muḥammad, mir-i-adl (judge) of Amroha a personal friend of Badāunī, was appointed as a hākim (commandant) of Bhakkar; with a raised mansab of 1000. The entire administration of Bhakkar was now set up according to the standard of Mughal pattern, with its commandants (hākims) continuing to be transferred after every two to three years.

56 Tārikh-i-Sind, p. 245. According to Abu’l Fazl, “The government of Bhakkar was entrusted to Tarsün Khān who hastened to that province.” Akbarnāma, vol III, 91-2. M. Athar Ali has also mentioned Tarsün Khān as hākim of Bhakkar; probably he relied on Akbarnāmā. (The Apparatus, p. 4)

57 Badāunī writes that, “Mīr Sayyed Muḥammad, mīr-i-‘adl of Amroha, was appointed to the government of Bhakkar in the year 984 A.H. (1575-76).” While Ma’sūm Bhakkarī says that he arrived at Bhakkar on Ramzan 11, 983 A.H. (14th December, 1575). Tārikh-i-Sind, p. 245-46.
3: An Analysis of the Contemporary Sources

The political history of Sind in the sixteenth and seventeenth century is well illuminated by a number of detailed chronicles, beginning with Mīr Muḥammad Purānī’s Nusratnāmā-i-Tarkhān, written before 1562-63, and followed by Mīr Mʿasūm’s Tārīkh-i-Sind, written in 1599-1600, Idrākī Thattavi’s Beglārnāmā, written in 1608-09. Tāhīr Muḥammad Nisyānī’s Tārīkh-i-Tāhīrī, completed 1620-21; and Mīr Sayyed Muḥammad’s Tarkhānnāmā written in 1651. The Mazhar-i-Shāhjahānī of Yūsuf Mirāk, written in 1634, gives a description of Sind, in the form of a very detailed administrative gazetteer. Furthermore, a large number of documents on Sind are preserved in a unique collection titled Jamm-i-Badī, though belonged to a period between 1710-33 A.D., compiled by Jān Muḥammad

1 Recently published, ed. Ansar Zahid Khan, Karachi, 2000. It is based on the unique manuscript in Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, Lytton Farsiya Akhbar, no.156.
2 Ed. U.M. Daudpota, Poona, 1938.
3 Ed. N.A. Baloch, Hyderabad, Sind, 1980.
Munshī Thattavī, in 1733-34.\(^6\) Besides Qābil Khān’s Ādāb-i-ʿAlamgūrī and documents in such earlier collections as Nigārnāmā-i-Munshī of Malikzādā and Bayāz-i-Khūshbūi,\(^7\) which give valuable information about Sind. Then there is another Persian source which belongs to late eighteenth century Tūḥfat’ul Kirām written in 1766-7,\(^8\) and Muqālāt-i-Shuʿarā in 1760 by ‘Alī Sher ʿQanī Thattavī in 1767-68,\(^9\) and 1760-61 respectively. It provides valuable information about Governors of Sind in addition to detailed list given by M. Athar Ali in The Apparatus of the Empire, and of Nādir Shāh’s invasion and subsequent division of Sind and also biographies of saints and literary persons of Sind.

Āʿīn-i-Akbarī and Akbarnāmā of Abu’l Fazl remained an incomparable source which is quite rich in information about the topography, economy, administration, and administrative division of the region of Sind. For the coming of Arghuns in Sind, Baburnāmā

\(^6\) Kitab-i-Jamm-i-Bādī, ff 28b, 30a-b. Transcribed, no. 124, Department of History Library, Aligarh Muslim University. These documents are titled Jamm-i-Bādī, compiled by one Jān Muḥammad Munshī son of Muḥammad Ārif presumably after 1733-34 A.D., these documents dates between 1703-04 to 1733-34 A.D.

\(^7\) Bayāz-i-Khūshbū, MS I.O.828, ff180a. (Rotograph no.194, History Department Library, Aligarh Muslim University)

\(^8\) Ed. Husamuddin Rashidi, Hyderabad, Sind, 1971.

provides detailed information about Arghun lineage, whose information is further corroborated by the regional histories of Sind. Tuzuk-i-Jahāngīrī further enriches information after Akbar, and then for Shāhjāhān’s reign, I have mainly relied on Lāhori’s Bādshāhnāmā and Mazhar-i-Shāhjahānī.

Besides these, other sources shedding light on economic and other aspects of history of Sind region, such as English Factory Records, Petition of John Spiller in Sloanne collection, and Travelers’ Accounts, Numismatic and Epigraphic evidence is also forthcoming. For the architecture of Sind, I have mainly relied on the Archaeological Survey Report by Henry Cousens’ Antiquities of Sind, and A.H. Dani, Thatta- Islamic Architecture, while for the topography; I have mainly consulted Gazetteers, H.T. Lambrick’s Sind- A General Introduction; M.R. Haig’s Indus Delta Country, and An Atlas of the Mughal Empire by Irfan Habib.