INTRODUCTION

Till the first quarter of the 20th century, the historians of Indian history laid emphasis mainly on political and dynastic aspects of medieval Indian history. The study of medieval culture was completely neglected. Social history which is "a new and residual historical specialisation" has a "rich vein to work." If history is to be studied as the "history of changes in human behaviour overtime," a more close and scientific study of social classes and social institutions which condition and control human behaviour is essential.

The 18th century is a formative period in the political and cultural history of medieval India. The Mughal empire which had for centuries held together the complex social and political fabric of medieval India began to disintegrate. As a result, the Indo-Muslim society was called upon to face new moral and material challenges arising out of the emergence of new political powers, financial bankruptcy of the state, agrarian distress, decay of old industries and towns, poverty of the middle class etc., thus leading to the growth of a new social order which forms a watershed between the old and the new.

"Years of civil warfare and the life and death struggle against the resurgent militant movements within the empire had contributed to the "wholesale disappearance of the better class of military nobles and officials." The political and military changes in Central Asia dried up the channels of intercourse..."
and blocked the vivifying stream of immigrants from those lands which had been revitalising the Indian Muslim society. Denunca-
tion and dilution weakened the ruling class which became parasitic and rapacious. The Mughal emperors of the 18th century were emperors in name only. Their palaces were spacious prisons, where they engrossed themselves in debauchery and intrigue, and lived a precarious life of ease and distracted joy. None of these figures, some very tragic, excite your affection or claim your respect, but you feel disgust for some or contemptuous pity for others. There is in this period a complete lack of harmony between cultural, economic and political elements in the body social. The schism of Indian society on the moral and religious plane severed all the bonds which held together the social fabric and took the life out of the Indian people, quickened the pace of political disintegration, brought financial ruin and left the country a prey to foreign domination. In the process of the decay and the final collapse of the Mughal empire the most effective dissolvents were the Sikh and Marhatta movements which may be said to have been the principal expressions of Indian social consciousness. 

The Indians first came into political contact with the Muslims when Muhammad bin Qasim conquered Sind in 711-713. But this contact was short-lived and this period is not important from cultural point of view. But about three centuries later, the Ghasnawids established their rule in Punjab and later the Ghorians carried their raids further into the country and pave
the way for the foundation of the Sultanate of Dehli. Qutb-ud-din Aibek consolidated the conquests and the Turks now had firmly established themselves in northern India. In the 13th century the uprise of the Mongols in Central Asia completely uprooted the Muslims there and consequently Muslims of all classes in great numbers came to India and settled there permanently. The main problem before the Muslim rulers was not only the military defence of the newly conquered territories and assure its unchallenged exploitation, but to evolve new modes of living in harmony with the people who differed from them in language, religion and culture. It was a difficult problem. Once the Muslims had occupied the Indian territories, a perennial hostility between these two communities was impossible. Therefore a via media was found out, so that they could live side by side as neighbours. This work was done by the Muslim mystics, due to whose influence Hindu religious and social reformers strove to bring about greater harmony between the foreigners and the Hindus. A process of assimilation of each other customs and manners began. This process of give and take continued for a long time.

The Muslim ruling classes initially, proud of their racial superiority and conscious of the veild hostility of the conquered, followed a policy of exclusiveness. As a result of this, complete cultural integration was impossible. With the Mughal rulers of India, a new era in the cultural history of India begins. Akbar, a shrewed politician realised that active cooperation of the conquered people was essential for the stability of his dynasty
and his empire. So Akbar at once invited the Indians to share the burden of the administrative machinery and extended to them complete equality of status. The Mughal court was given an Indian colour.

Dara Shikoh further helped this process, but Aurangzeb tried to stop this process of assimilation but without results. During the 18th century we find that Hindu Culture had overshadowed the Muslim culture. In every walk of life, the Muslims were influenced by the Hindu customs and manners and social institutions. Shah Wali Ullah and other Muslim divines started a movement to free the Indian Muslim Society from the influence of Indian environment, but the process of assimilation had gone too deep and the attempt to de-Indianise Muslim outlook on life did not meet with much success.

In this thesis an attempt has been made to present a picture of the Muslim Society of the 18th century in northern India.

I have given a brief outline (and a more detailed account was not possible) of the political condition of the time and the process of disintegration that set in and gained momentum during the time of the successors of Aurangzeb. The moral and material effects of the loss of political power on Muslim society have been studied. A picture has been given of the life of the upper class as well as the common people. On the basis of contemporary records I have tried to give an account of the religious and educational reforms, the social customs and manners, dresses, food, means of transport, the main vocations followed by the Muslims and the moods and tensions of the time.
A rich and unexplored treasure of information on the above topics has buried and neglected in contemporary poetical works, biographies, malfusat and other literature. I have used this literature extensively.

Bibliography: As regards the sources, I have mainly relied upon Indian contemporary literature – Persian, Urdu and some of contemporary traveller's accounts. The contemporary Persian chronicles and literary works of eminent Persian and Urdu poets, and theologians have been utilised. The official and semi-official histories of the period have also been used for the treatment of the institution of monarchy and Mughal aristocracy. The tankirs, biographies, memoirs, story, books, books on grammar etc., and Malfusat of eminent saints, some of them almost unused so far have been fully used. The Kulliyats, Diwans, and Masnavis, both Persian and Urdu, which are rich in material for the study of the social, economic, political and religious conditions of the period, yet unexplored, have been made full use of, without which the social History of the 18th century can never be properly understood and written.

Lack of space prevents a full discussion of the source material on which this thesis is based. A fuller list is given in the bibliography. The main sources are grouped under the following heads:
1. **General.** For the period from Akbar to Aurangzeb, the following Persian works have been used: Abdul Faal's *Ain-i-Akbari*, *Akbar Nama*, *Tusuk-i-Jahangiri*, Nizam-ud-din Ahmad's *Tabagat-i-Akbari*, Abdul Hamid Lahori's *Badshah Nama*, Mohsin Fani's *Dabistan-i-Mazahib* and Saqi Musta'd Khan's *Masir-i-Alamgiri*.

2. **Contemporary**

   (a) **Taskiras:** There is a wealth of scattered informations in the Taskiras. Among the most important Taskiras written in this period were: Mir's *Nikat-us-Shuara*, Mir Hasan's *Taskira Shuara-i-Urdu*, Qais Chandpuri's *Makhsan-i-Nikat*, Gurdesi's *Taskira Rekhta*, Govan, Saiyad Ghulam Husain Shorish's *Taskira-i-Shorish*, Ali Ibrahim Khan's *Gulzar-i-Ibrahim*, Mushaffi's *Taskira-i-Hindi*, and *Aqil-i-Surriya*, Azad Bilgrami's *Khazana-i-Amira*.

   (b) **Histories:** Many contemporary histories have been consulted for discovering materials on social conditions and a selected list have been included in the bibliography. As the Muslim historians of India were interested in describing the military exploits of their masters, and were not interested with the social history of the time, therefore we do not find much material regarding social life in them yet some scattered material on social, religious, economic and political institutions is available in them. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* gives a vivid picture of degenerate Muslim society from the Kings downward; general religious and social
life of the kings, the nobles and common people. *Gulshan Gulshan Muhammad Shahi* is divided into four parts. The last part is very useful because it deals with the biographies of Hindu saints, Sikh Gurus and Muslim mystics. It contains information regarding the celebration of the death anniversaries of the Muslim saints and the fairs which used to be held at their shrines. *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh* is extremely important for topographical details. It also throws some valuable light on the social life of the period - cultural importance of Delhi and a picturesque description of the city, including its khangahs, madrasahs, mosques, shrines of great Muslim saints where Urs were organised. *Sahifa-i-Iqbal*, supplies detailed information, regarding the marriage customs and ceremonies of the Muslims. *Tarikh-i-Farrukhshah* contains information regarding the marriage customs, general life of the kings, nobles, soldiers and commonality. *Ibrat-Nama* supplies information regarding the marriage customs and general life of the Mughal nobles. *Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani* gives valuable information regarding the political, economic, social and religious conditions of the period. In the concluding pages the author gives a list of eminent mashaikh, ulema, literati, merchants, poets, astronomers, calligraphists, painters, the musical instrument players, the female dancers, the mimics, the buffoons, who were either attached to the court of Muhammad Shah or were patronised by him. *Risala Muhammad Shahi* is extremely useful for the information regarding political, economic, social and religious
condition of the period - a detailed account of the fallen
administrative institutions, royal male and female dresses,
ornaments, general life of the soldiers, nobles, and the
deplorable condition of 36 professional classes. Jhabar
Gulgar-i-Shujal, gives the picture of the bankruptcy of
the state, poverty of the masses, marriage customs, sub-
jects taught to the princes, popularity of Quwvali, cus-
toms, and rituals observed on the birth of a child, cele-
beration of Muharrum festival, and literary activities of
the nobles. Farrukh Name throws valuable lights on the
general life of Jahanader Shah, LaL Kunwar’s influence
on the politics of the day, marriage customs, Muhammad
Shah’s faith in dead saints, his dissipated life, the
degenerate condition of the Mughal nobles, un-islamic
practices observed by the Muslims, influence of Hindu
culture on Muslims, Hindu Muslim relations and literary
activities etc. Akbar-i-Mohabbat, supplies information
regarding Farrukhsiyar’s devotion towards the saints, cele-
boration of Hindu festivals by the Mughal Court, marriage
customs, and Muslim fairs etc. Ahval-ul-Khawajin, sup-
lies material regarding the court party politics during
the reign of Jahandar Shah, marriage customs, daily life
of Farrukhsiyar, causes of the dismemberment of the Mughal
empire, epicurian attitude of Muhammad Shah and his nobles.
Tarikh-i-Hindi, throw lights on the general life of the
nobles, celebration of the festival of Yasadham, general
life of the Muhammad Shah, rise of a Naib Mahdi, genero-
sity of Raushan-ud-Daula, and celebration of Shah Bhikh’s
death anniversary. In the end the author has given a list of ulema, sufis, poets and literati of the period, whom the author had met. Farrukhshiyar Nama, supplies detailed information regarding the court celebration of Nauroz. Waqiyat-i-Shah Alam Sani, supplies much material regarding the social life of the period. Tarikh-i-Muzaff, contains some valuable material regarding social customs and manners. Siyar-ul-Mutakhrin, contains material about the general social customs and manners, festivals, celebration of Hindu festivals by the Muslims, etc. Waqaya-i Alam Shahi is extremely useful for the study of the attitude of the Hindus towards Islam and its religious leaders the position of the King, general court life and court literary activities.

(c) Theological Works: Hujjat-ullah al-Baligha contains valuable material regarding the general life of the Mughal rulers and the nobles, causes of the poverty of the Muslim spiritual and religious disintegration of the Muslim society. Mirat-al-Mohaddin gives a picture of the deplorable religious conditions of the Muslims. Nala-i-Andalib deals with various subjects - informations regarding the court life, the private life of the kings and nobles, the royal processions, the life of misguided saints and religious classes. Tafhimat-i-Ilahi is extremely useful for the study of un-Islamic practice observed by the Muslims, their social customs and manners which they had adopted.

**(d) Biographies and Memoirs.** A number of biographies of the Muslim saints, and *ulema* were written during this period. *Anfas-ul-Arifin* deals with the life of author's father and some of his ancestors. Some material regarding social life is found scattered in this book. In the concluding pages we find a curriculum followed in the Muslim educational institutions of the period. *Ahsan-us-Salma* deals with the life of Shah Nizam-ud-din Aurangabadi, and supplies information regarding music assemblies of Shah Kalim Ullah. *Fakhr-ul-Talibin* and *Manaqib-i-Fakhria* give a biographical account of Shah Fakhruddin Dehlvi. It throws extremely useful light on the Khanqah life, the private and public life of the said saint. *Manaqib-i-Razzaqi* deals with the life of Shah Abdur Razzaq Ransawi and it contains some material regarding the celebration of Muharrum, marriage customs and manners etc. *Manulat-i-Mazhari* and *Magamat-i-Mazhari* deal with the life of Mirza Mazhar Jan Jana. These two books throw flood of light on the Khanqah life, and in *Manulat-i-Mazhari* we find very useful material regarding observances of Hindu customs and manners by the Muslim ladies and men. *Ma'asir-ul-Imara* gives a biographical account of the nobles of Mughal period in detail. *Ma'asir-ul-Kiram* deals with
the life of Muslim mystics and ulema in general and of
Bilgram in particular. It throws important light on the
decaying Muslim educational institutions. Shitrat-ul-
Anwar contains valuable materials regarding the Chishti
saints of the 18th century. Muraozi-i-Dehli is extremely
useful and rare for the study of social life of Muslims
of Dehli during the reign of Muhammad Shah. This gives
a complete picture of Muslim social life before Nadir
Shah. Kashif-ul-Sattar, is a biography of the saints of
the family of the author and their Hindu Muslim disciples
and some scattered references regarding general social
life and the influence of Islam on non-Muslim are avail­
able.

(c) Stories: Kar Nama-i-Ishaq, Hangama-i-Ishaq, Chamanis-
tan supplies valuable information regarding social customs
and manners of the Muslims, Hindu-Muslim relations, indoor
and outdoor games and pastimes and an account of the
coffee houses of the Chandani Chauk of Dehli.

(f) Maktubat: Among the collections of letters -
Maktubat-i-Kalimi gives a biographical account of the
life of Shah Kalim Ullah, and the atmosphere of his
Khangah, and the way he was propagating Islam. Insha-i-
Babar-i-Maani, Babar-i-Pitrat, Munshiat-i-Madhu Ram,
Insha-i-Ajab, Insha-i-Mukhlis, Insha-i-Har Kiran, Insha-
i-Kirat Afroz supply some information regarding Muslim
customs and manners. Kalmat-i-Taiyabat is a collection
of letters of Mirza Mazhar Jan Jana, Shah Wali Ullah and
others. The 14th letter of Mazhar is extremely useful
and important for the study of Muslims' attitude towards Hindu religion. This collection throws meagre light on the political, economic and religious condition of the period.

(g) Poetical Works: Diwan-i-Izzaat, Diwan-i-Waqf, Diwan-i-Mazhar Jana Jana, Diwan-i-Waqf Lahori, Diwan-i-Arsoq, Masnavi Sarapa-i-Mashooq, Masnavi Mir Abdul Jalil Bilgrami contains some material regarding social life. Masnavi of Mir Abdul Jalil Bilgrami is very important for the study of marriage customs and rituals.

2. Secondary.

(a) Theological Works: Tuhfa-i-Ashna-i-Ahariya, is very important for the study of Shia-Sunni controversy and the influence of Shiaism in northern India in the 18th century.

(b) Biographies and Memoirs. Malfusat-i-Shah Abdul Aziz Dehlvi, Khasinat-al-Asifya, Mangib-i-Mahbbobian Noor-ul-Cuilib, Takmila-i-Siyar-ul-Auliya, supply supplementary information regarding Muslim mystics, their activities, Khangah life, contact with the masses etc. Waqiyat-i-Asfari, supplies very important information regarding the life of fallen Mughal family, princes etc.

(c) Grammar: Dariva-i-Latafat is extremely useful for the study of social life. It supplies information regarding male and female dresses, ornaments, cosmetics, games, superstitious activities of Muslim ladies, the development of Urdu language and the cultural importance of Dehli and Lucknow.
II: URDU:

1. Contemporary:
   (a) Theological Works: *Hidavat Nama* and *Tambih-un-Nisa* throw flood of light on the un-Islamic observances of the Muslims.
   (b) Poetic Collections: This period saw the development of Urdu poetry, therefore we find a large number of poetic collections in the form of *Divane* and *Mullivats*. There is a wealth of information in these poetic collections for the study of the social life of the 18th century. It is from this literature that a complete picture of Muslim Society can be presented.

2. Secondary:
   (a) Theological Works: *Hidavat-ul-Momineen, Hiyat-i-Ta'zbat, Masalle Nasihat-ul-Muslimin, Risala-i-Tazia Dari, Sirat-al-mustaqim, Taqwiyat-ul-Iman*, are very important sources of information for the study of religious life of the Muslims and the un-Islamic practices observed by them in their customs and manners.

III: ENGLISH

General and Contemporary accounts: Besides the Persian and Urdu sources the accounts of foreign travellers, who visited India in the 17th and 18th centuries and have left very valuable material regarding Hindu and Muslim social institutions have been used. The most important travellers were Monserrate (1580-82), Dalla Valle Pietro