



ignou
THE PEOPLE'S
UNIVERSITY

Indira Gandhi National Open University
School of Social Sciences

BHIC-107
HISTORY OF INDIA-IV
(c. 1206-1550)



“शिक्षा मानव को बन्धनों से मुक्त करती है आज के युग में तो यह लोकतन्त्र की भावना का आधार भी है। जन्म तथा अन्य कारणों से उत्पन्न जाति एवं वर्गगत विषमताओं को दूर करते हुए मनुष्य को इन सबसे ऊपर उठाती है।”

— इन्दिरा गाँधी



ignou
THE PEOPLE'S
UNIVERSITY

"Education is liberating force, and in our age it is also democratising force, cutting across the barriers of caste and class, smoothing out inequalities imposed by birth and other circumstances."

- Indira Gandhi

HISTORY OF INDIA-IV
(c. 1206 -1550)

EXPERT COMMITTEE

Prof. Swaraj Basu
Director
School of Social Sciences
IGNOU, New Delhi

Dr. Meenakshi Khanna
Department of History
Indraprastha College for Women
University of Delhi, Delhi

Dr. Tasneem Suhrawardy
Department of History
St. Stephen College
University of Delhi, Delhi

Dr. Ranjeeta Dutta
Centre for Historical Studies
School of Social Sciences
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Prof. Abha Singh
Faculty of History
School of Social Sciences
IGNOU, New Delhi

Prof. A.R. Khan (*Convenor*)
Faculty of History
School of Social Sciences
IGNOU, New Delhi

COURSE COORDINATOR : Prof. Abha Singh

COURSE TEAM

Prof. Abha Singh

Dr. Divya Sethi

COURSE PREPARATION TEAM

Unit No.	Course Writer	Unit No.	Course Writer
1	Prof. Abha Singh School of Social Sciences Indira Gandhi National Open University New Delhi; and Prof. Rameshwar Bahuguna Department of History & Culture Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi	2	Mr. Iftikhar Ahmad Khan Department of History M S University, Baroda; and Dr. Ravindra Kumar School of Social Sciences Indira Gandhi National Open University New Delhi
3	Dr. Kiran Dattar Janki Devi Mahavidyalaya, University of Delhi, Delhi; Prof. A. Jan Qaisar, Centre of Advance Study in History, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh; Prof. Jigar Mohammed, Jammu University, Jammu; and Prof. Abha Singh, School of Social Sciences Indira Gandhi National Open University New Delhi	4	Dr. Kiran Dattar Janki Devi Mahavidyalaya University of Delhi, Delhi Prof. Shireen Moosvi Centre of Advanced Study in History Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh; and Prof. Abha Singh School of Social Sciences Indira Gandhi National Open University New Delhi
5	Prof. Ahmad Raza Khan; and Prof. Abha Singh School of Social Sciences Indira Gandhi National Open University New Delhi	6	Dr. Sangeeta Pandey School of Social Sciences Indira Gandhi National Open University New Delhi
7	Dr. Sangeeta Pandey School of Social Sciences Indira Gandhi National Open University New Delhi	8	Dr. Firdaus Anwar Kirorimal College, University of Delhi, Delhi Prof. Sunita Zaidi Department of History and Culture, Jamia Milia Islamia, New Delhi; and Prof. Abha Singh, School of Social Sciences Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi
9	Prof. Shireen Moosvi Centre of Advanced Study in History, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh; and Dr. Kiran Dattar Janki Devi Mahavidyalaya University of Delhi, Delhi		

10	Prof. Shireen Moosvi Centre of Advanced Study in History Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh	11	Prof. A.Jan Qaisar, Centre of Advance Study in History Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh
12	Prof. Shireen Moosvi Centre of Advanced Studies in History Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh; and Prof. Abha Singh School of Social Sciences Indira Gandhi National Open University New Delhi	13	Dr. Divya Sethi Centre for Historical Studies Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; and Dr. Sohinee Basak Centre for Historical Studies Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi
14	Prof. Rameshwar Bahuguna Department of History & Culture Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi	15	Prof. Rameshwar Bahuguna Department of History & Culture Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi
16	Prof. Abha Singh School of Social Sciences Indira Gandhi National Open University New Delhi	17	Prof. Ravindra Kumar School of Social Sciences Indira Gandhi National Open University New Delhi
18	Prof. Ravindra Kumar School of Social Sciences Indira Gandhi National Open University New Delhi	19	Prof. Ravindra Kumar School of Social Sciences Indira Gandhi National Open University New Delhi

CONTENT, FORMAT AND LANGUAGE EDITING

Prof. Abha Singh

History Faculty
School of Social Sciences
Indira Gandhi National Open University
New Delhi

Cover Design Images Courtesy

Photograph Source : Column, Arai Din Ka Jhonpra, Varun Shiv Kapur, New Delhi
August, 2011 (Under Creative Commons Attribution 2.0)

Image Source : Wikimedia Commons

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Adhai_Din-ka-Jhonpra_Column_detail_\(6134514518\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Adhai_Din-ka-Jhonpra_Column_detail_(6134514518).jpg)

Print Production

Shri Tilak Raj
Assistant Registrar
MPDD, IGNOU, New Delhi

Cover Design

Ms. Arvinder Chawla
Graphic Designer
New Delhi

July, 2021

© Indira Gandhi National Open University, 2021

ISBN : 978-93-91229-66-5

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced in any form, by mimeograph or any other means, without permission in writing from the Indira Gandhi National Open University.

Further information on Indira Gandhi National Open University courses may be obtained from the University's office at Maidan Garhi, New Delhi-110 068 or visit University's Website <http://www.ignou.ac.in>.

Printed and published on behalf of the Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi by Registrar, MPDD, IGNOU, New Delhi.

Laser typesetted at Tessa Media & Computers

Printed at : Prakash Packagers, 1st Floor, Shagun Palace, Hazrathganj, Lucknow-226001. Ph. 1800 180 5304

Course Contents

	Page No
Course Introduction	7
THEME I : INTERPRETING THE DELHI SULTANATE	11
UNIT 1 : Survey of Sources	13
THEME II : POLITICAL FORMATIONS	51
UNIT 2 : Delhi Sultanate: Consolidation and Expansion	53
UNIT 3 : Evolution of Institutions: Sultan, Nobility and <i>Ulama</i>	72
UNIT 4 : Administrative Structure	92
UNIT 5 : Deccan Kingdoms	110
UNIT 6 : Vijayanagara: Expansion and Consolidation	130
UNIT 7 : Evolution of Institutions: Kingship and the <i>Nayaka</i> System	140
UNIT 8 : Emergence of New Kingdoms in the 15 th Century	150
THEME III : SOCIETY AND ECONOMY	179
UNIT 9 : Land Administration	181
UNIT 10 : Agrarian Classes	194
UNIT 11 : Technology and Society	201
UNIT 12 : Urban Economy and Monetization	222
UNIT 13 : Inland and Oceanic Trade	237
THEME IV : RELIGIOUS IDEAS AND VISUAL CULTURE	259
UNIT 14 : Bhakti Tradition	261
UNIT 15 : Sufi Tradition	278
UNIT 16 : Vedantic and Sramanic Traditions	295
UNIT 17 : Temples, Mosques, and <i>Dargahs</i> : Forms, Contexts and Meanings	309
UNIT 18 : Palaces, Forts, Mausoleums and Public Works: Forms, Contexts and Meanings	334
UNIT 19 : Paintings	354

Guidelines for Study of the Course

In this Course we have followed a uniform pattern for presenting the learning material. This starts with an introduction to the Course underlining the significant developments in chronological order and covers 4 major themes with coverage of 19 sub-themes or Units. For the convenience of study, all the Units have been presented with a uniform structure. Objectives as the first section of the Unit have been included to help you find what are you expected to learn from the study of the Unit. Please go through these objectives carefully and keep reflecting and checking them after studying a few sections of the Unit. Introduction of the Unit introduces you to the subject area covered and guides you to the way subject matter is presented. These are followed by the main subject area discussed through sections and sub-sections for ease of comprehension. In between the text, some self-check exercises have been provided. We advise you to attempt these as and when you reach them. These will help you assess your study and test your comprehension of the subject studied. Compare your answers with the answer guidelines provided after the summary. The keywords and unfamiliar terms have been provided at the end of each Unit, which have been marked in bold in the text. At the end of each Unit under Suggested Readings we have also provided a list of books and references. These include sources and books which are useful or have been consulted for developing the material for the concerned Unit. You should try to study them. We have also included instructional videos for an enhanced understanding by the students. Please try to watch these videos, they will help you in understanding and learning the subject matter in an all-inclusive manner.

COURSE INTRODUCTION

The establishment and consolidation of the Delhi Sultanate can not be studied in isolation of Central Asian developments. The rise of Islam, Turkish irruptions and Mongol inroads not only shaken the Central Asian polities but also the Indian subcontinent, particularly northern India.

The rise of Islam was the biggest event of the period and without understanding its background it would be difficult to comprehend the polity that dominated the Indian subcontinent from the 12th century onwards. The rulers of Delhi were Turks and were followers of Islam. Here, it would be appropriate to understand the environment from where the new ruling class was coming and what was their background? Islam emerged in the eighth century and soon established its sway over Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Persia and northern Africa and to a limited extent in Andulasia under the Pious Caliphs (632-661) and their Ummayyad (661-750) successors. It was under the Abbasid Caliphate (750-900) that Islam saw a phase of real peace and prosperity. Arabic assumed the language of the entire Islamicate. However, period from 900-1000 was largely marked by the decline of the Caliphate.

From the tenth century onwards the political and administrative powers of the Caliph of Baghdad began to decline giving way to the dispersal of the Caliphate at Baghdad, Spain and Egypt. Nonetheless, Caliph's nominal authority reigned supreme and no one could dare to defy that. Even as powerful as Mahmud of Ghazni, when his demand for the surrender of Samarqand got rejected by the Caliph, had to 'humbly' apologise. The waning power of the Caliph paved the way for the emergence of a several number of 'minor' polities in Iraq, Persia (Samanids and Buwaihids) and Turkestan; while across Jaxartes ruled the Turks, Tartars and the Mongols. Within Islam also factions emerged among the Sunnis, Shias and the Kharijites.

This was also the period of the Persian renaissance which gradually supplanted the Arabic as the language of the elite and the literati. The 'Persian Revolution' ended the 'superiority' of the 'Arabs'. The period following past 1000 to the 1220s marked by the dominance of the Turco-Persian empires/ideals and the dynasties that dominated the scene were the Seljuks, Khwarizmians and the Ghaznavids. Further, with the expansion of Muslim frontiers, one after the other Turkish tribe was brought into the fold of Islam. That again transformed the map of Arabia and Persia. Turks, being the excellent commanders almost commanded the forces of the Muslim world. From the tenth century onwards the overwhelming majority of the Muslim dynasties were of Turkish stock; though Persians dominated the administration, art and literature.

In 962 Turks got the opportunity to assume sovereignty. With the death of the Samanid ruler of Bokhara, Alaptagin, the Turkish governor of Khorasan established the independent kingdom at Ghazni. It was Subuktigin's (d. 997) son Mahmud, the first Muslim emperor, emerged the 'world' conqueror, became a legend; out of his 'forty' years' ceaseless warfare never had to face a 'single' defeat; ruled from Punjab to the Caspian, from Samarqand to Ray. Mahmud crossed Indian frontiers 'seventeen' times (1000-1027) and remained 'invincible'. Nonetheless, as pointed out by Mohammed Habib, 'the greed for money and power, not an enlightened desire for the spread of Islam was the motive of his Indian campaigns'. India had 'no place in his dream'. He wanted to establish 'Turco-Persian empire' and his Indian expeditions were mere 'means to that end'.

The fall of Mahmud led to the emergence of the Seljuqs under whose patronage Persian civilization flourished and reached its peak. However, the mid-twelfth century saw the extinction of the Ghaznavids and the Seljuqs leaving way to the emergence of Khorasan and Ghor on the one hand and the rise of the Mongols who overwhelmed the entire Central Asia and Persia on the other.

Mongols inhabited the steppes and were largely nomads and subsisted on cattle and horse breeding, hunting and fishing. Agriculture was almost absent there. They lived in *yurts* (tent-villages). The written script was almost absent except for the Arghuns. Chinghiz Khan, though could not read or write, used to speak Mongolian. Though they lead a nomadic life, the steppes were quite ahead of other civilizations in the field of military science. Interestingly, they were complete strangers to any religion/religious rites/rituals except the moral laws; religious tolerance was the norm. Mongols were divided into *uluses* that had military character. To the north of the Gobi desert lived the Dada *ulus* (the original Mongols) who claimed to be descendants of Qublai, the first Khaqan; east of the Mongols were the Tatars and further east of the Tatars were the Manchus. The greatest contribution of Chinghiz Khan lies in the fact that he united the dispersed steppe social groups into ‘one’ ‘single’ ‘unified’ centralised authority.

All these developments had a deep impact on the political developments of the subcontinent.

In contrast, India of that period, devoid of a single command, was a multitude of *samantas*, *thakkuras*, *rais*, *ranakas*, *rautas*; who were further divided into clans and sub-clans; striving for local independence. Amidst this any cooperation was impossible. Internal feuds resisted them to unite against a common enemy (external threat).

Almost after a gap of one hundred and fifty years, another wave of Turkish conquerors from Ghor crossed the Indian frontiers and this time they were here to stay. It was Muizuddin Muhammad bin Sam of the Shansbani dynasty of Ghor who began the second Turkish inroads. No sooner Multan, Uchh, Peshwar, Lahore, Tabarhind were captured; while the showdown was the Tarain (1192). In 1206, Muizuddin made Aibak incharge of his Indian possessions; unfortunately, on his way back to Ghor, he was assassinated.

Against this backdrop, the present Course focuses on the establishment of the Turkish Sultanate in India. The Course introduces you to the source material to understand the historical data available to construct the history of the period. The period was vibrant for its literary achievements. It not only saw the introduction of two alien languages – Persian and Arabic, but also this is the period of the emergence of regional languages and a plethora of related literature (**Unit 1**). You would find the change in the pattern of historical writings of the period. With the introduction of paper gradually manuscripts replaced inscriptions and epigraphy as a major source of information. Further, Sanskrit got gradually replaced by Persian as a dominant language of the ruling elite.

Theme II covers the establishment of the Turkish Sultanate, their expansion in the north, south and the Deccan (**Unit 2**). It also discusses the impact of the developments of the central Asian polities on Indian polity and Mongol inroads, Mongol policy of the Delhi Sultans as well as impact and repercussions of the

constant Mongol attacks on Indian frontiers. A discussion on the position of the Sultan, his relationship with the Caliphate vis-à-vis his nobility and *ulama* is the theme of **Unit 3**. You would find that the new ruling elite brought with them their systems of governance and institutions. *Iqta* was one such prominent institution through which the early Turkish Sultans succeeded in consolidating their position in the far-flung areas of the empire (**Unit 4**). It also looks into the role of *Turkani Chihilgani* (group of ‘forty’) in early Sultanate politics. The Sultanate began to show cracks from Firuz Shah Tughlaq’s period and its fall hastened by Timur’s attack in 1398. These cracks led to the disintegration of the Sultanate polity into a number of foci. There emerged several regional states in the fifteenth century that forms the theme of discussion in **Unit 8**. The political formations in the Deccan and South India are discussed in **Units 5, 6 and 7**. The Units discuss how with the decline of the Chalukyas (in the Deccan) and Cholas (in the South) initially emerged Kakatiyas and Yadavas (in the north) and Pandyas and Hoysalas (in the south). The decline of the Kakatiyas and Yadavas gave way to the emergence of the Bahmani Sultanate in the Deccan; while the downfall of the Pandyas and the Hoysalas brought to the fore emergence of the mighty Vijayanagara empire in South India. Under the liberal patronage of the Bahamanis and Vijayanagara rulers, art and culture flourished in the region.

Theme III centres around the economy of the Turkish Sultans. Early Turkish Sultans were initially satisfied with ‘tributes’, gradually they penetrated the rural areas and brought modifications in the existing systems thus instituted their systems of revenue assessment and collections. The old ruling aristocracy pushed to the rural areas and survived as superior rights holders (**Units 9 and 10**). Radical changes were also brought into the agricultural sector by Muhammad bin Tughlaq by emphasising upon the cultivation of cash crops and grant of liberal agricultural loans (*sondhar*). Agriculture got a further fillip with the establishment of a network of canals by Firuz Shah Tughlaq. Turks also brought with them new technologies that revolutionised agriculture and crafts. The introduction of the Persian wheel revolutionised agriculture in the arid regions; while the spinning wheel and the treadle/pit loom facilitated the spinning and weaving process which led to the ‘textile revolution’ (**Unit 11**). The centralisation in the field of administration, economy and currency and uniform taxation all this facilitated trade and commerce and cash nexus and monetisation that in turn led to a spurt in urbanisation. Besides, as result of new technologies introduced by the Turks also facilitated the emergence of new crafts and craft groups (**Units 12 and 13**).

The focus of **Theme IV** is on religious ideas and visual cultures. With the encounter of two cultures, Islam and Hinduism, fascinating changes occurred in the field of religious ideas and visual cultures. India came in the grip of bhakti and sufi ideas each influenced the other. Similarly, with the fusion of Indian and Islamic architectural styles, there emerged a new style of architecture came to be known as Indo-Islamic. Turks also brought with them new building techniques, arch and dome along with fine cementing material that led to the emergence of the arcuate style of architecture in India. Further, the needs of new Turkish elites were different as for pattern of worship or burying their dead that facilitated the emergence of mosques, tombs and sufi *khanqahs* that completely altered the landscape of the Indian cities. Calligraphy, geometrical designs and a new style of decoration, arabesque, were also brought to the fore.

Theme I

Interpreting the Delhi Sultanate

Time Line

Arabic and Persian Historic Traditions

Political Chronicles: Delhi Sultanate

Hasan Nizami

Mirfaj-us Siraj Juzjani

Ziauddin Barani

Amir Khustau

Thakkar Phero

Isami

Shams Siraj Afif

Yahya Ahmad bin Sirhindi

Insha

Inscriptions

Sanskrit

Arabic and Persian

Malfuzat

Arab Geographers

Ibn Battuta

Literature in the Regional Languages





ignou
THE PEOPLE'S
UNIVERSITY

Photograph: Historic copy of selected parts of the Travel Report by Ibn Battuta, 1836 CE, Cairo.jpg
Courtesy: Osama Shukir Muhammed Amin; July 2019; CC-BY-SA 4.0
Source:https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Historic_copy_of_selected_parts_of_the_Travel_Report_by_Ibn_Battuta,_1836_CE,_Cairo.jpg

UNIT 1 SURVEY OF SOURCES*

Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Arabic and Persian Historic Traditions
- 1.3 Political Chronicles: Delhi Sultanate
 - 1.3.1 Hasan Nizami
 - 1.3.2 Minhaj-us Siraj Juzjani
 - 1.3.3 Amir Khusrau
 - 1.3.4 Ziauddin Barani
 - 1.3.5 Thakkar Pheru
 - 1.3.6 Isami
 - 1.3.7 Shams Siraj Afif
 - 1.3.8 Yahya bin Ahmad Sirhindi
- 1.4 *Insha* (Epistolography) Tradition
- 1.5 Official Documents
- 1.6 Inscriptions
 - 1.6.1 Arabic and Persian Inscriptions
 - 1.6.2 Sanskrit Inscriptions
- 1.7 Sufi Writings
- 1.8 Arab Accounts
 - 1.8.1 Arab Geographers' Accounts
 - 1.8.2 Ibn Battuta
- 1.9 Sanskrit Literature
- 1.10 Literature in the Regional Languages
 - 1.10.1 Social Background of the Development of Regional Languages
 - 1.10.2 Literature in the Regional Languages of North India
 - 1.10.3 Literature in the Regional Languages of South India
- 1.11 Summary
- 1.12 Keywords
- 1.13 Check Your Progress Exercises
- 1.14 Suggested Readings
- 1.15 Instructional Video Recommendations

* Prof. Abha Singh, School of Social Sciences, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi and Prof. R.P. Bahuguna, Department of History and Culture, Jamia Milia Islamia, New Delhi. Sections 1.9 and 1.10 are taken from IGNOU Course EHI-03: *India: From 8th to 15th Century*, Block 8, Unit 33, Sections 33.5-33.8.

1.0 OBJECTIVES

The present Unit aims at providing you a sweeping glimpse of the tradition of historical writings of the Sultanate India. After reading the Unit, you will be able to know:

- the traditions of Arabic and Persian historiography and differences in their styles of writing,
- some of the Arabic and Persian historical writings on/in India,
- features of dynastic history writings,
- *malfuzat* literary traditions,
- *insha* writings and how the *insha* tradition developed over the period,
- importance of inscriptions as an important source of history writing,
- how did the availability of official documents and orders enrich our understanding of the Sultanate period,
- understanding of foreign travellers on India,
- Arab travellers, their perception of India and their influence on the overall understanding of the Sultanate period,
- the reasons behind the decadence that had crept into the quality of Sanskrit works produced during the period under review,
- about the origin and growth of Urdu language,
- the factors responsible for the growth of regional languages and literature, and
- about the nature of cultural and literary synthesis achieved in this period.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The present Unit aims at addressing three basic questions: a) understanding of the history of medieval historians. For this Barani is of great importance; b) The second question is why did they write? What was the purpose of their writings? These writings were either written for a desire of fame; to please their patrons; and at times for rewards; while a few wrote for leaving records for posterity; and c) Third dominant aspect was that their writings dominated the religious discourse; ‘God’; ‘Almighty’s will’ was central to all happenings. This does not mean that intrigues, administration, etc. did not form part of their writings.

How should one write history? Some of the medieval historians/chroniclers, particularly Zia Barani, were aware of the importance of history writings (we would be discussing them in separate Sections); if it is not treated honestly they knew about its dangers.

History is all about changes. Though focus of medieval historians was on dynastic histories, nonetheless they were aware of changes from one dynasty over the other and they often discuss and remark about that – change of ideas, institutions, often relationships (among groups).

The Sultanate witnessed the flowering of a rich corpus of literature. This was a period when new languages were introduced with a remarkable growth in the sphere of culture and literature. This cultural and literary synthesis is manifested in the origin and growth of a synthetic language like Urdu and in the interchange between Persian and Sanskrit. The regional languages and literature which were considerably influenced by Sanskrit and Persian mirrored the religious, social and popular attitudes of the period under study. The Hindi works of Muslim writers like Amir Khusrau and Jayasi as well as the Bengali Vaishnavite poems composed by Bengali Muslims also highlight the process of cultural synthesis operative during this period.

1.2 ARABIC AND PERSIAN HISTORIC TRADITIONS

Arabic was the language of the Islamic world so the earliest available historical writings of the period were written in Arabic. K.A. Nizami rightly puts it, that 'The Arab tradition...cherished democratic ideals and treated history as a *biography of nations*.' Thus their narratives not just revolve around the story of the rulers, political happenings and camps; instead they speak of the life of the common man. Arabic historic tradition encompasses the socio-economic, cultural, religious, along with the political and military events thus was more democratic in approach. Arabic history tradition can truly be referred to as history of the 'age'.

The 'chain of narrators' (*isnad*) was another important feature of the Arabic historiography. To pen down the Holy *Quran* in its pristine form, the collected oral traditions required to be critically sifted to arrive at the 'most pious Truth'. The need for this validation and a deep desire to present the 'Truth and the only Truth' the tradition of *isnad* evolved and got invented. In this context Al-Baladuri's (d. 892) *Futuh-ul Buldan* is classical in this context. Baladuri narrates every event 'with reference to the chain of narrators and every reliable sources' (Siddiqui 2014: 3).

With Al-Masudi (d. 956-57) a new dimension of adding history with geography got introduced. Masudi, himself was a great traveller who even visited India and Sri Lanka, while penning down his work added his own travel experiences and geographical knowledge on various regions; thus making geographical environment a vital component at the backdrop of history, correlating the geographical facts with human historical developments; applying 'cause and effect' thus adding 'interpretation' which is an important component of scientific history.

In the eleventh century another dimension got added to Arabic historiography that officers and scholars associated with the court began writing the histories of their rulers, events. This drastically changed the tone and form of Arabic history writing; it added the component of personal biases, jealousies, likes and dislikes of the ruling aristocracy and centre started tilting towards 'court' politics and elites than on common men which is clearly reflected in the writings of Al-Musabbihi (d. 1029; on history of Egypt) and Al-Qurtubi (d. 1076-77; history of Andulasia [Spain]). Gradually with royal patronage, Arabic histories also became more and more tilted towards dynastic histories, eulogising their patrons' deeds paving way to another element, rhetoric. This is especially evident in the writings of Al-Utbi (d. 1035) in his *Tarikh-i Yamini* dealing with Subuktigin and Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna. However, Al-Biruni, who was also associated with the court, nonetheless followed the old classic Arabic tradition of history writing. In the Arab context Ibn

Khaldun's (d. 1404) *Muqaddimah* conceives dynamism of the human society, human associations (*ijtima*) with emphasis on causality. He attributes the spirit of solidarity (*asbiya*) of the clan as the chief factor behind the strength of the rulers/dynasties.

Persian historiography narrowed down the scope of history and centered around political history and life of the rulers and nobility than a socio-religious history of the age. Thus, Persian histories were *dynastic histories*; histories of the kings and 'aristocracy'. Persian historians preferred to dedicate their work to the ruler considering necessary to 'enhance the value of their work'. Minhaj-i Siraj Juzjani dedicated his *Tabaqat-i Nasiri* to Nasiruddin Mahmud, Ziauddin Barani dedicated his *Tarikh-i Firuzshahi* to Firuz Shah Tughlaq. Persian histories largely lack the discussions on literati, scholars and saints and their mention is made generally in the context of rulers. Minhaj's period was vibrant in sufi activities of great Chishti and Suhrawardi saints (Muinuddin Chishti, Bakhtiyar Kaki, Hamiduddin Nagori); but, they are largely missing from his narrative. However, though Barani's history also fell largely in Persian historiographic tradition, in his writings a subtle change is evident. He does mention scholars and sufis, though occasionally. Even, while depicting court life mention is made of musician-dancers Nusrat Bibi, Mihr Afroz; similarly though he looked down upon low born, in that process he mentions about them reaching the highest position – Ladha, the gardener, Babu Nayak, the weaver, Manka, the cook. Abul Fazl further radically modified and combined in his writings both the Arabic and Persian styles of history writings. Later, generally all historians started including the narratives of scholars and literati and the sufis along with their political narratives.

The Arabic historic tradition remained prominent till the tenth century; Persian renaissance under Firdausi and later under Shaikh Sa'di Shirazi gradually took over the Arabic tradition of history writing. No sooner Persian takes over Arabic and became the vehicle of communication and those of the Sultans and the nobles and the literati. In India it was the Persian historic tradition that dominated the Persian writings. *Chachnama* that focuses on Muhammad bin Qasim's India (particularly Sindh) and Al- Biruni's *Kitab-ul Hind* were written in Arabic style. Hasan Nizami, when asked to compose in Persian (*Taj-ul Ma'asir*) felt disappointed for he considered Arabic as the only proper language to write.

Check Your Progress-1

1) What were the characteristics of Arabic tradition of history writing?

.....
.....
.....

2) What were the characteristics of Persian tradition of history writing?

.....
.....
.....

1.3 POLITICAL CHRONICLES: DELHI SULTANATE

It would be difficult for us to discuss here all the contemporary historical writings of the period therefore we would be discussing the seminal figure of the Sultanate, Ziauddin Barani in detail as well as a few representative historians of the period. Largely, the Sultanate writings were penned down in Persian and were also in the Persian tradition. Among the earliest of such writings were Hasan Nizami's *Taj-ul Ma'asir* and Fakhr-i Mudabbir's *Adab-ul Harb wa Shuja'at*.

1.3.1 Hasan Nizami

Sadrudin Hasan Nizami's work (*Taj-ul Ma'asir*) can be called first official history. It covers the period from the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate (1191-92) upto 1229 CE¹. Barani is full of praise of his master craftsmanship in constructing the *Fath Namas*. Barani particularly praises his *Fath Nama* of Lakhnauti, which he believes became 'a model for *dabirs* (scribes)'. Hasan had deep impact of Arabic tradition and particularly influenced by his time's great Khwarizmian scholar Rashid Vatvat. Hasan's account is full of rhetoric. Even Amir Khusrau and Abul Fazl somewhat emulated his rhetoric.

Hasan belonged to a distinguished scholarly family. A native of Nishapur, his father Nizami Aruzi Samarqandi was a great scholar and friend of the most notable figure of Persia Umar Khayyam. Hasan himself was conscious of his scholarship and had frustration that his scholarship was not recognized that can be seen throughout his work. Muhammad Ali Kufi was his spiritual mentor and at his suggestion only he proceeded from Nishapur to Ghazna and thence to Delhi. This was the time when Aibak invited scholars to write the achievements of Shihabuddin Ghori, Muizzuddin Muhammad Bin Sam. At his friend's insistence, he decided to pen down the work. However, Aibak's sudden death and further transfer of capital from Lahore to Delhi by Iltutmish put further stress on Hasan, he felt distanced from his homeland. Lahore being closer to Ghazna, he could look towards Ghaznin, contrary to it, Delhi was far from Ghazna and more embedded into 'Indian' tradition. All this had deep impact upon Hasan's writings. His account, though covers upto 1229, Iltutmish was not the focus of his work, thus Iltutmish's administrative achievements, not even *iqta*, hardly find space into his work. However, he had great admiration for Aibak who is praised for his generosity towards immigrants. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui (2014: 52) argues that, Hasan 'was impressed by the towering personality of his hero, Sultan Qutbuddin Aibak... In contrast, the account of the reign of Sultan Iltutmish seems to have been compiled in haste for the purpose of presenting it at court and getting a reward in return. It lacks the literary charm of the opening part.'

His account largely focuses on the military achievements of his patron Aibak. However, no events between 1197 to 1202 are recorded by Hasan. There is also no mention of Chinghiz Khan's arrival upto Indus and its impact on Indian politics. Interestingly, conquest of Bengal (capture of Nadia) by Bakhtiyar Khalji nor his military expedition against Tibet is recorded by Hasan suggests that in Shihabuddin's vision there were three centres independent of each other and Aibak was not made the sole charge of his Indian possessions. In his desire to get rewards

¹ However, in most of the manuscripts the account comes upto 1217.

he completely ignored unpleasant facts that could put Iltutmish in an uncomfortable position. This is reflected in a complete silence of the period following Aibak's death and Iltutmish's succession again suggests that Aibak's sudden death resulted in a void. There is no mention of Aibak's son Aram Shah being enthroned by the nobles at Delhi and Amir-Dad's conspiracy against Aram Shah. Minhaj informs that Ismail secretly invited Iltutmish to Delhi from Badaun.

Nonetheless, Hasan fills in gaps where Minhaj is silent. Minhaj is silent about Aibak's recall to Ghazna in 1193 as mentioned by Hasan. There is no mention of Aibak's battle of Jatwan near Hansi. Many of Minhaj's narratives on Aibak's military successes are described by him as easy victories. However, Hasan's narration suggests a stiff resistance put up by the Rajputs. Hasan informs that at the battle of Anhilwara Bhim Deo II had nearly defeated the Turks. Aibak's initial defeat at Ajmer in 1196 and reinforcements from Ghazna are completely omitted by Minhaj. Hasan also praises the strength of the forts of Delhi, Meerut, Kol and Kalinjar. Fort of Gwalior is described by Hasan as 'the pearl of the necklace of the castles of Hind'. Some of the official documents provided by Hasan are of great importance which throw valuable light on the powers and functions of a governor. In this regard mention may be made of a *parwana* of Muhammad bin Sam (1193-1194) issued to the governor of Kol and *farman* (1217) of Iltutmish regarding the appointment of Prince Nasiruddin Mahmud as *wali* (governor) of Lahore.

There is hardly any focus on socio-economic and cultural aspects of the period. However, we do get information on weapons, precious stones, jewels, flowers, musical instruments, herbs, birds, and animals of his time. As many as 28 types of weapons and armoury are recorded by Hasan. Besides he also refers to *katar-i hindi* (swords), *shill-i hindi* (lance) and *bhala-i hindi* (spear). His account on merchant *caravans* and a variety of goods across the world carried by them (Chinese silk, ruby of Badakhshan, Arab horses, Moroccan leather, Chinese mirrors, brocade from Anatolia) suggestive of the brisk trading activities.

Hasan Nizami's work thus is of considerable historical importance. However, 'there is considerable foliage of metaphors, similies and rhetorical devices, but when all this literary parapharnelia is removed, the *Taj-ul Ma'asir* can be reduced to less than one-fourth of its present size without any loss of meaning and substance' (Nizami 1982: 70).

1.3.2 Minhaj-us Siraj Juzjani

Minhaj-us Siraj Juzjani's *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, it is what Rosenthal categorises as 'dynastic' history. Minhaj dedicated it to Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud. It is written in *tabaqat* style. *Tabaqa* literally means 'layer'; often used in the sense of defining generation/class/race/political order. Minhaj used it to explain dynasties and personalities. The book is divided into twenty three *tabaqa*. Each *tabaqa* is further divided into chapters and sub-sections.

Minhaj's family enjoyed high reputation in religious scholarship and piety, shared relations with the Caliphate at Baghdad. Minhaj's father Sirajuddin was sent by the Khwarizmian ruler as envoy to Caliph's court, though got killed on his way by the robbers. His ancestors also had close matrimonial ties with the ruling houses of Ghor and Ghazna. Minhaj's great grandfather Imam Abdul Khaliq was son-in-law of Sultan Ibrahim of Ghazna (1059-1099). His father was *qazi* of the Ghorid army and also that of Banian and Tukharistan. Minhaj, born at Firuz Kuh, himself

grew up in the *harem* of Princes Mah Malik who was daughter of Ghiyasuddin Muhammad bin Sam and the foster-sister and school-mate of Minhaj's mother. Mah Malik, an educated lady, a *hafiz*, was fond of Minhaj, liked books and possessed a good library which Minhaj had free access to. Minhaj himself participated in campaigns against Mongols for long four years in 1220s. Minhaj left for India in 1227 via Ghaznin and Banian and reached Uchch by boat. Qubacha got impressed by his academic and intellectual acumen and made him principal of Firuzi Madrasa at Uchch and appointed him *qazi-i lashkar* of the forces of his son. When Illutmish annexed Multan in 1227 he accompanied Minhaj to Delhi in 1227. At Delhi he was made *imam*, *qazi*, and *khatib*. In 1231 he accompanied Illutmish during Gwalior siege. After the conquest he was made *imam*, *qazi*, and *khatib* of Gwalior. In 1237 he regains the principalship of Nasiriah Madrasa. However, following Illutmish's death he got involved with the active politics of the court which affected his fortunes. During Raziya's reign he was removed from his assignment from Gwalior. In 1241 he was made chief *qazi* of Delhi by Muizuddin. He was so active in politics that the then *wazir* Muhazzabuddin got him attacked at Jama Masjid, an assault that he escaped unhurt. With Imaduddin Raihan's rise in power he again had to lose his job. But with Balban's rise in power again in 1255 he regained his office of *qazi-ul quzzat* and *qaziship* of Delhi, a position he held till the end of his life. His Friday sermons were so popular that even Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya used to attend that every Friday during his young days.

These fluctuating fortunes and his active participation in politics influenced Minhaj's writings. On one occasion he openly sided with Sultan Muizuddin Bahram Shah and had to face the exile for long two years. The lesson learnt thereafter he never got involved openly siding with one group or the other.

The *tabaqat* begins with the discussion from Adam to Prophet and Caliphs of Islam (1-4 *tabaqa*); Afterwards each dynasty is dealt in a separate chapter (*tabaqa*); The history of pre-Islamic Iran and Yemen is discussed in *tabaqa* 5-6; From the seventh *tabaqa* onwards Minhaj talks over the history of the ruling dynasties of Iran and Central Asia; 8-10 *tabaqa* deliberate upon Safavids, Samanids, and Daylamites (Buwahids); *tabaqa* 16 to 23 are the most exhaustive ones; *tabaqa* 16-19 deal with Shansbani dynasty of Ghor. From Nasiruddin Mahmud's reign onwards it turns into an annual chronicle. The discourse ended (the last *tabaqa*) with a deliberations on the rise of Mongol power under Chinghiz Khan and his successors.

Though *tabaqat* is extremely exhaustive and detailed, its focus is largely on narration of political events. Here we would largely be focusing on his writings on Ghor/Ghazana, Delhi Sultans and the Mongols.

For his early history of Islam he consulted as many as fourteen books – *Tarikh-i Baihaqi*, *Tarikh-i Yamini*, etc. to name a few. For the Delhi Sultanate he himself was the eyewitness of most of the events and often participant. 'His account of the Delhi Sultans is informative but not illuminating. Perhaps political considerations, changing attitudes and loyalties of nobles, made him extremely cautious in dealing with the accounts of the Sultans and the nobles of the period' (Nizami 1982: 79). However, his account of the Mongols which is partly based on his personal observations while dealing with the Mongols at Tulak in 1220s and for later accounts he relied on travellers and merchants who visited Delhi – Rashiduddin Hakim Balkhi, Syed Ashrafuddin Samarqandi who visited Delhi in 1258 for trading.

Minhaj's analogy on Bakhtiyar Khalji's disastrous campaign towards Tibet is interesting. He argues that Bakhtiyar wanted to control the supply line of the Tanghan horses. Similarly, Minhaj's writings indirectly conveys that he did not like the treachery of Iltutmish in getting rid of his rivals. He clearly underlines Yalduz and Qubacha being 'rulers of nobler qualities' than Iltutmish. His *tabaqa* (22) on the nobles of the Delhi Sultans deals with 25 nobles of Iltutmish. Barani, however, refers to them as a 'group of forty' (*turkan-i chihilgani*). Minhaj provides a vivid picture of the life of an *amir* – their talents, military skills, their racial backgrounds, training of a 'slave', Turkish nobles, personal intrigues, their fortunes, their assignments as *iqta* holders, their duties, etc. However, on account of political considerations some of the important nobles of the time like Qutbuddin Hasan Ghuri (on account of his strained relations with Balban) are missing. Minhaj completely identified himself with the Turkish nobility and the non-Turkish nobles do not find focus of his attention (Minhaj had to suffer his fortunes at the hands of Imaduddin Raihan). Thus Minhaj's account lacks information pertaining to role of non-Turkish nobles in the Sultanate polity, particularly one hardly gets the idea of the background of the rise of the Khalji nobility.

On account of his political affiliations he often ignored certain important events/developments. For him, rise of Raihan was just accidental. He criticized Raziya for she attempted to break-away the power of the old Turkish nobles by bringing in Yaqut. But at other place he hints at Raziya being the best choice and the unworthiness of Iltutmish's sons, 'My sons are engrossed in the pleasures of youth, and none of them possesses the capacity of managing the affairs of the country...After my death it will be seen that *not one of them* will be found more worthy of the heir-apparentship than she, my daughter' (Nizami 1982: 84). Balban's disgraceful methods to usurp power from Nasiruddin Mahmud are too well known. For Minhaj there was a dilemma if he would have supported Nasiruddin it would have umbraged Balban so he projected Nasir as 'otherworldly' less interested in the mundane political power. Thus he presented 'usurpation' of the power by Balban as the 'necessity of the situation'. Minhaj also largely suppressed the brutal murder of Qutbuddin Hasan Ghuri, a member of the *Turkan-i chihilgani* just to escape the disfavour. Nonetheless at other place he calls his assassination as martyrdom (*shahadat*) insinuating little defiance to accept the act to be far from being justified. Minhaj's projection of Nur Turk as 'materialistic' also seems to be far from the truth. For Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya calls him 'purer than rain water'.

Similarly, Minhaj's details of early Turkish campaigns, though detailed hardly provide the perspective and intensity of the Indian resistance. He has also completely ignored the discussion on the impact of the Turkish conquest and the changing administrative structure (even details on *iqtas* are missing) of the Turks and the reaction of the masses to it. Even the early Turkish period which was one of the most vibrant age for the development of Sufism in India, with towering figures like Shaikh Muinuddin Chishti, Bakhtiyar Kaki, Shaikh Fariduddin Ganj-i Shakar, Bahauddin Zakaria, Hamiduddin Nagauri, but he talks about none.

However, all this does not belittle the importance of Minhaj's account. Minhaj himself was an acclaimed scholar. Even Nizamuddin Auliya use to visit Minhaj to listen to his weekly discourses. His description of the life and activities of Shamsi and Qutbi *maliks* is extremely exhaustive with whom he himself was closely connected. But where Minhaj excels without biases is his account of the Mongols.

Portayal of Chinghiz Khan is very informative – his faith, his ferocity, his kindheartedness, qualities of justice, discipline are exhaustively described.

1.3.3 Amir Khusrau

Modern historians often argue whether Amir Khusrau can be placed in a category of a historian? Writing in 1927 Mohammad Habib highlighted the importance of Khusrau's five *masnavis* (poetical works) as important source of history. He argues Khusrau's *Khazain-ul Futuh* provides crucial information on Alauddin Khalji's reign. His argument is that probably prior to his description of Alauddin's Deccan campaigns, Khusrau just summarised what the official historian Kabiruddin might have written (his work does not survive to posterity); post-Kabiruddin, Khusrau provides graphic account of Alauddin's Deccan campaigns. However, for Peter Hardy (1966), 'Amir Khusrau...does not attempt a conspectus of the past and whose treatment of the past lacks unity of theme and chronology'. For Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui (2014: 164-165), though 'Amir Khusrau did not aim to document the past totally...[he] focused his attention on events of social and political importance ...He widened the scope of Indo-Persian historiography by inventing new genres, writing history both in prose and verse'. Khusrau shifted the focus of his history writings from 'battles, conquests and court intrigues' to 'socio-cultural life' of the period which is largely missing in the writings of early Persian writers.

Amir Khusrau (1253-1325) was a poet-historian. His style is verbose, marred by poetic imagination and full of rhetorics. Often he lacks in chronological sequences. Khusrau was a prolific writer, had written plethora of poetic literature among them his *Khamsa* stands out. Barani was privileged to meet him while he was in his youth. He praises that his compositions are in such a large number that it could form a library of its own. He also praises him as a devout sufi; fond of *sama* (sufi musical gatherings); and one of the most favourite disciple (*murid*) of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. Amir Hasan Sijzi calls him Sadi-i Hindustan. Such was Khusrau's prestige that ruler of Herat Sultan Bay Sunghar Mirza regarded his *Khamsa* better than Nizami's.

Not much is known about Khusrau's family background. Khusrau's father Saifuddin Lachin was a Turkish slave from Central Asia and both his father and maternal grandfather Imad-ul Mulk were petty slave *amirs* of Ilutmish. Soon Imad-ul mulk became trusted *amirs* of Balban (he held the post of *ariz-i shikra* [officer incharge of royal falcons]). His father died when he was just seven year old (1260-61) so he was brought up by his maternal grandfather Imad-ul Mulk at Delhi. When Imad-ul Mulk died in 1273, Khusrau joined Balban's nephew Kishlu Khan (Malik Chhajju). However, Khusrau's talent was at its best under the Khaljis. Jalaluddin Khalji made him *nadim-i khass* (chief courtier).

Here our aim is not to discuss Khusrau as a poet but as a historian. Therefore, we would largely be discussing Khusrau's *Qiran-us Sadain* (*masnavi*), *Deval Rani Khizr Khan* (*Ashiqā; masnavi*), *Nuh Sipahr*, *Ijaz-i Khusrawi* (*masnavi*), *Khazain-ul Futuh* or *Tarikh-i Alai*, and *Tughlaq Nama* (*masnavi*). Whatever historical matter he picked up to write was not by choice instead he was asked to write on a particular theme by the reigning Sultan. *Qiran-us Sadain* was composed by him at the request of Sultan Kaiqubad. This often forced Khusrau to avoid certain uncomfortable facts of the reigning monarch. His *Khazain-ul Futuh* does not talk about the brutal murder by Alauddin Khalji of his uncle and father-in-law Jalauddin Khalji. His

Qiran-us Sadain (masnavi) deals with the meeting of Sultan Kaiqubad (son) and Bughra Khan (father) and his march from Delhi to Awadh. *Sadain* sheds interesting light on the vibrant cultural life of Delhi, which Khusrau believes surpassed Bukhara and Ghazana in importance. It provides interesting insights to various building structures of Delhi, court life, convivial parties, etc.

Khusrau's *Miftah-ul Futuh (masnavi)* deals with Jalauddin Khalji's accession and his military accomplishments. Khusrau is full of praise of Jalauddin as a commander and a human being; fond of men of literature. He also throws light on Jalal's early career as a successful warrior against Mongols (in Ghazana and Kurraman) and Afghans (Salt Range). He also discusses Sultan's four major clashes against Turkish noble Aitmar (Surkha) and Aitmar (Kachhan); Malik Chhajju, governor of Kara; against Ranthambhor. Khusrau not only discusses the siege of Ranthambhor, in which he himself was the participant, but also presents the graphic account of the topography of the region with which he got so much enamoured with, particularly that of the city of Jhain, its desert, rivers.

Khusrau's writings achieves peak in Alauddin Khalji's reign. He began writing in a new genre i.e. in prose. *Khazain-ul Futuh* or *Tarikh-i Alai*, *Deval Rani Khizr Khan (Ashiqa)*, and *Nuh Sipahr* reflect his creative genius.

Khazain-ul Futuh or *Tarikh-i Alai* largely deals with Alauddin's Deccan campaigns; even as pre-Sultan his Deogir victory of 1295 down to 1312. Though prior to Deccan conquest details are quite brief about Alauddin's building construction activities (Siri), repair works (Jama Masjid and Hauz-i Sultani) his price control measures, establishment of *Dar-ul Adl*, a cloth market, proclamation on prohibition, ban on prostitutes, prevailing peace and safety of roads for travellers. He calls his price control measures as a 'public welfare' unlike Barani who discusses it as an attempt to ensure strengthening of his military to combat Mongol attacks.

Ijaz-i Khusrawi primarily a collection of epistles and documents (for details see **Section 1.5**). It depicts Alauddin's power at its height; vibrancy of the cultural life of Delhi; strength of Alauddin's army; densely populated, affluent and vibrant towns and cities. But what stands out in *Ijaz-i Khusrawi* is Khusrau's attempt to put forth the ideals of the governance.

Deval Rani Khizr Khan (Ashiqa) is a tragic love story of Deval Rani and Alauddin's son Khizr Khan (1315). *Nuh Sipahr* deals primarily with Mubarak Khalji's Deccan campaigns. It is full of praise of India, its people. It also discusses various dialects spoken in the region. Both *masnavis* throw light on the vivacity of court rituals and ceremonies, royal births and royal marriages, its rituals; particularly interesting are the details of Khizr Khan's marriage rituals in *Deval Rani Khizr Khan* and victory celebrations of Mubarak Khalji at Delhi after his return from Deogir success and Prince Muhammad's birth ceremonies (1318) in *Nuh Sipahr*.

Amir Khusrau's *Tughlaq Nama* celebrates victories of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq. Only from *Tughlaq Nama* we could get details of the early career of the founder of the Tughlaq dynasty, Ghazi Malik: Khusrau mentions Ghazi Malik called himself in his early career as *mard-i aawara*. He was employed by Jalauddin Khalji; later joined Alauddin Khalji's brother Ulugh Khan. Alauddin got impressed by him during the siege of Ranthambhor.

Amir Khusrau's account is strong on topographical details: geography, rivers, mountains, place names, scenic beauty, forests, along with various stages of the

army marches all are described with graphic details in the descriptions of routes from Dipalpur to Delhi (*Tughlaq Nama*); Delhi to the Deccan across Narmada and Vindhyan ranges (*Khazain-ul Futuh*); Delhi to Awadh (*Qiran-us Sadain*). His nostalgia for Delhi was everlasting. While he was in Multan, a city that he never liked, he often remembers the vibrancy of Delhi, echoes of *rubab* and *ud*. Though he praises Awadh in his *Firqanama*, its climate flora-fauna, its mangoes; beauty of Sarayu/Ghaghra; courteous residents, still memories of Delhi haunts him. He was full of praise of Narmada, its scenic beauty of the surroundings. However, among all the cities he was fond of Deogir, wrote a *qasida* (panegyric) *Sahifat-ul Ausaf* when accompanied Ulugh Khan (future Muhammad bin Tughluq). He was a great admirer of his country (India): ‘I have praised India for two reasons. First, because India is the land of my birth and our Country...Its climate is better than that of Khorasan....Brahmans here are as learned as Aristotle.’

1.3.4 Ziauddin Barani

Ziauddin Barani was a prolific writer. His works reflect his profound scholarship. His primary works are: *Tarikh-i Firuzshahi* and *Fatawa-i Jahandari* (1335/1337 [revised]) and *Sahifa-i Nat-i Muhammadi*.

Barani’s detail account on prices throws valuable light on Alauddin’s price control measures. Barani also throws interesting light on the construction activities of Alauddin – fortification of Siri wall, Jami Mosque, several cities and towns, Hauz Khas, etc. Barani showed his clear dislike for Alauddin for showing disregard for *Sharia* in dealing with punishments, though he praises in general the progress of the Sultanate under Alauddin and particularly that of Delhi, its bazaars, trade, craftsmen and artisans. Barani’s account of Afghanpura tragedy is of importance where unlike the general blame that Muhammad Tughlaq was responsible for his father’s death; he conspired against him, he emphasizes upon his innocence and calls it an accidental death. He served as *nadim* (counsellor/courtier) for seventeen years under Muhammad bin Tughlaq and is full of praise for his benefactor, calls him ‘Sultan-i Sa’id’ (pious ruler) and a *shahid* (martyr). Barani informs us that he attempted to combine both spiritual and temporal powers (Caliph of the Prophet and those of the Sultan). He praises him as a genius in military leadership, learning and generosity. Barani also emphasizes upon his great literary pursuits, his interest in the rational sciences (*ilm-i m’aqul*) and his fondness for philosophers and rationalists and he disregarded traditional sciences (*manqul*), particularly under the influence of Ubaid Sha’ir (poet) and S’ad Mantaqi (logician). Barani informs that Muhammad Tughlaq was a great supporter of reason. Thus he did not hesitate killing pious and religious minded/orthodox Muslims, *ulama*, *mashaikhs* and Saiyyids, nonetheless he was a pious Muslim performing five times prayers. Barani’s comment with regard to failure of his policies is also very important to understand the personality of Muhammad bin Tughlaq. He says that failures of his projects were not on account of his lack of faith in Islam instead because the people were not willing to cooperate for the implementation of his progressive policies. He rather portays him an ‘intellectual follower of Islam, anxious to lead his people on the path of progress through the new laws and regulations formulated by him’ (Siddiqui 2014: 213). Ikhtisan, the *dabir-i khas* of the Sultan calls him *Numan-i Sani* (Abu Hanifa of the age) for his command over Islamic law.

Barani’s detailed account of the appointment of various low born to high offices is invaluable. Similarly, the details pertaining to the network of canals built by Sultan

Firuz Shah Tughlaq is unique, no other contemporary's analysis on the theme is so insightful and detailed. He argues that it would be valuable for posterity and the over-all socio-economic development of the region.

1.3.5 Thakkar Pheru

Thakkar Pheru was a 14th century Shrimal Jain from Kannana (a place in Gujarat). His father was Thakkur Chand. He received his first employment in Alauddin Khalji's treasury as a coin, gems, and metal specialist; Qutbuddin Mubarak Khalji made him incharge of the royal mint which he continued to hold the post till the reign of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq. He wrote several books in Prakrit to guide his son Hempal particularly in the craft of gems and metals. Among them his *Dravya Pariksha* (on metals and coins) and *Ratna Pariksha* (on gem stones) are most important works. *Dravya Pariksha* contains four chapters and 149 *gathas*. The work is extremely useful which throws interesting light on how to prepare alloys (*tridhatu* [copper, silver and gold]; *dvidhatu* [copper and silver]) and purify them; methods of casting coins; purification of metals and alloys for casting silver/gold coins along with required shapes and weights. The book is of utmost importance to understand the actual working of the mints, coin-casts, weights and measures, etc. His *Dhatupatti* also deals with origin, purification and smelting of metals. It is extremely important to learn the availability of various metals in a region. His *Bhugarbha Prakash* not only deals with different kinds of soils but also it tells how one can identify the availability of a particular metal by the taste of soil. His another valuable work *Ratna Prakash* contains 132 *gathas*. It discusses various types of precious stones and pearls – their origin, size, colour, luster, specific qualities, evaluation, their medicinal value, even their units of weighing (from *rai* to *taank*). Thakkur Pheru has also written *Vastu Sar* which is a work on architectural techniques – how to lay foundations; various types of structures; placement of rooms; designs and directions of windows. Thus Pheru's works are extremely important to understand the highly technical aspects, the coinage and the architectural techniques, information which are otherwise not available to us in other historical works.

1.3.6 Isami

The uniqueness of Isami's *Futuh-us Salatin* lies in the fact that it is the only versified history written in the medieval period. Faizi did want to pen down *Akbarnama* in versified form but the project never materialized. Similarly, Badauni records that Badr-i Chach did compose versified *Shahnama* dedicated to Muhammad bin Tughlaq. But it does not survive to posterity. Unlike the poetic verbose and sumptuous style Isami's narration is plain and simple without rhetorics. However, Isami had no predisposition of a historian. He frequently mixes historical facts with fiction.

However, to put Isami's work in perspective it is essential to know his family background and understand the contemporary developments. Isami belonged to a family of administrators who served early Turkish Sultans. His ancestor Fakhr-ul Mulk Isami came from Baghdad to Multan and thence to Delhi where he was received by Iltutmish in person and made him his *wazir* (Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui however casts doubts over his appointment as *wazir*). His son Zahir-ul Mulk was *wakil-i dar* of Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud. His son Izzuddin was Isami's grandfather who was *sipah salar* of Balban's army. Though we do not hear anything about

Isami's father and he was brought up by his grandfather Izzuddin. The chief factor behind Isami's antagonism was death of his grandfather Izzuddin during Muhammad Tughlaq's exodus from Delhi to Daulatabad where he ordered *ulama*, *mashaikh*, and nobles to move to Deogir. The journey proved fatal for the 90 year old Izzuddin who succumbed to the pressure of the tortuous journey. 'No wonder that he describes the lamentations of the caravans moving to Deogir as that of a person "to be buried alive"' (Nizami 1982: 113). This created so much bitterness against Muhammad bin Tughlaq that when *amiran-i sadah* rebelled and declared independence in the Deccan he greeted Alauddin Bahman Shah's success. Isami had a mystic bent of mind and was the disciple of Shaikh Zain-ul Haq, a *khalifa* of Shaikh Burhanuddin Gharib, who was in turn *khalifa* of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya.

Isami wanted to write in tune with the literary tradition of *Shahnama*. His account begins from Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna (999-1030) upto 1350, a history of complete 350 years and dedicated to the founder Bahmanid Sultan Alauddin Bahman Shah. For him Mahmud was the ideal Sultan thus most appropriate point to begin his narrative. For him Mahmud's invasion of north India heralded laying down of the Islamic Sultanate while in similar manner Alauddin Bahman Shah's account symbolized the beginning of the Islamic Sultanate in the south.

Besides aspiring to establish his recognition as acclaimed poet, he aimed to please his patron Alauddin Bahman Shah. He began the task at the invitation of Qazi Bahauddin Hajib-i Qissa. Bahman Shah's ascendancy was a result of a rebellion against the Tughlaq Shah, 'therefore the ruler could be best pleased if the rebellion was justified and Muhammad Tughluq was painted as a tyrant and a renegade' (Nizami 1982: 110). Isami has compared Muhammad Tughlaq with a Yezid and a Pharaoh thus legitimized the claims of the nascent Bahmani rule and its rebellion against Muhammad Tughlaq.

Though account is regnal, Isami is poor in recording dates, at times dates are wrongly given. However, his purpose was not to present a chronological account of a particular Sultan instead he aimed at providing an overall impressionistic account of the period. In spite of his misogynist remarks about Raziya his narration that Raziya enjoyed the confidence and popular support of the masses in Delhi is substantiated by the political developments of Raziya's reign. However, some information provided by Isami is exclusive, that one does not find anywhere else. There is almost complete void of the events of the last six years of Nasiruddin Mahmud's reign. Isami fills up the gap. Only through Isami one comes to know that Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud was not the son of Iltutmish but was his grandson. Information on Balban poisoning Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud comes from Isami only and Qutbuddin Hasan Ghuri's murder was 'committed at the instance of Balban'. Isami is full of praise of Alauddin Khalji. Isami provides exhaustive details on the creation of *amiran-i sadah* and Muhammad bin Tughlaq's nobility. Isami's mention of Prince Muhammad's marriage with a Hindu princess, sheds an interesting light on the process of Indianisation, which suggests that it began much earlier in the Ibari period. Isami's remark on Muhammad Tughluq's participation in Hindu festivals, celebrating Holi, keeping in company of the *jogis* reflect the cultural vibrancy of Muhammad Tughlaq's reign and his egalitarian outlook towards other religious faiths and cultures. Similarly, while Minhaj is silent on Iltutmish's sufi bent, Isami records about his contacts with the mystics of Baghdad; his verdict on *sama*. Isami's account of Alauddin Bahman Shah and rise of the Bahmanid

power is the first hand and the most exhaustive account and the ‘primary’ source of the period.

1.3.7 Shams Siraj Afif

Afif belonged to aristocratic circle of Delhi. His grandfather Malik S’ad-ul Mulk Shihab Afif served Ghazi Malik (Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq) at Dipalpur as an *amaldar* (revenue official). Afif’s father Siraj and Firuz Tughlaq were said to be the foster brothers. With Ghazi Malik Shihab also moved to Delhi and enjoyed fortunes. Afif informs that his father served as *Shab-nawis-i khawassan* (keeper of the muster roll of the Sultan’s slaves performing night duty) and in the *diwan-i wizarat*. There is no mention of Afif holding any official post, though Afif often used to go long with his father in his various assignments as well as accompanied Firuz in hunting operations.

Shams Siraj Afif’s *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi* is an account of Firuz Shah Tughlaq’s reign compiled towards the close of the fourteenth century. It is divided into five *qisms* (parts) and each with 18 *muqadimas* (chapters). However, the 4 *muqadimas* (15th *muqadima* partially available) of the fifth *qisms* do not survive. Peter Hardy argues that Afif’s work is more in the form of a sufi *tazkira* (biography). He attributes historical events ‘to the influence of holy men’. Even Timur’s invasion is looked as ‘inscrutability of the Divine Will which allows calamity to descend upon the people of Delhi’. Even Hansi being left untouched by Timur is explained by Afif on account of the *barakat* (blessings) of the sufi saint. Hardy believes that aim of Afif was to present the ‘golden age of the Sultanate’ before Timur’s devastation. Hardy (1966: 53-54) criticizes Afif that ‘he does not interpret the past in such a way as to teach specific ethical principles and courses of action. The past is a spectacle of true religion, not a school of true religion’. ‘Thus for Afif there is no organic relation between the biography of Firuz Shah and the history of his time’ (Hardy 1966:51). However, Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui contests that it is free from ‘hagiographical embroidery’ and is ‘historical’. Afif is often weak in providing chronology and exact dates.

Tarikh was probably compiled by Afif after Timur’s destruction when he was quite old for he laments over the devastation following Timur’s attack. The text is important to understand Firuz’s expeditions to Lakhnauti, Jajnar, Nagarkot and Thatta. Afif’s account is also important in the sense that Afif attempts to analyse causes of the defeat of the Delhi Sultans at the hands of Timur in 1398. He saw the onslaught and destruction of the Sultanate by Timur with his own eyes.

There are certain happenings which are otherwise not mentioned in other historical work’s of Firuz’s reign can be gleaned from Afif only, particularly, we come to know about Muhammad bin Tughlaq’s sister’s son Dawar Khan’s claim to the throne through Afif. Afif does criticize Firuz Tughlaq’s policy of introducing grant of small *iqtas* to soldiers and army commanders in lieu of cash salaries and making it hereditary.

Afif’s account of buildings, gardens and canals constructed by Firuz is outstanding and full of details. Afif’s description of Rajabwah and Ulugh Khani canals stretching upto his newly built town Hissar Firuza and connecting it to the prosperity of the region is exhaustive. His description of philanthropic activities, particularly *shifakhana* (both for animals and humans) with free medicines and food brings to light Firuz’s saintly qualities. Firuz’s interests in astrology and his establishment

of astrolabes and *tasgharial* (water clock with gong) are fulfilling. Afif also provides the first ever reference of the total revenues of the Sultanate under Firuz.

Afif also provides the details of the working of administration under Firuz Shah Tughlaq, prevalence of corruption, etc. Corruption was so much rooted that officials in the *Diwan-i arz* asked one *tanka* per horse as bribe when brought for muster. He is also critical of Abu Raja's appointment at *diwan-i wizarat*; his misbehaviour with the *wazir*, and blamed him for taking bribes.

Afif throws interesting light on Firuz's close relations with the Hindus. He talks about marriage of Firuz's father (younger brother of Ghazi Malik) with Bibi Naila, daughter of Bhatti chieftain of Abhohar who was the governor of Dipalpur at that time. Later she was christened Bibi Bano. Firuz is reported to have close relations with his mother's Hindu relations. His mother's brother Bheru Bhatti held the position of the chief of the royal bodyguards under Firuz.

Afif discusses ten *maqamat* (qualities) that a Sultan must possess: *shafaqat* (compassion), *afw* (forgiveness), *adl* and *fazl* (justice and wisdom), *muqatila* and *muhariba* (fight against evil forces and upholding true religion), *ithar* and *iftikhar* (generosity and dignity), *azamat* and *rab* (power and majesty), *hushiari* and *bedari* (vigilance and abstinence from lust), *intibah* and *ibrat* (circumspection), *fath* and *nusrat* (victory and grace), *kirasat* and *firasat* (sagacity and farsightedness). Afif praises Firuz Shah Tughlaq possessing all kingly and saintly *maqamats*. To establish superiority of Firuz he often compares his reign with that of Alauddin. For him prices were cheap in Alauddin's reign but were cheaper in Firuz Tughlaq's reign. His reign was superior because the success was achieved without 'efforts'.

1.3.8 Yahya bin Ahmad Sirhindi

Yahya's account is the only contemporary source to know the historical developments during the Saiyyid period, 1414-1438. The importance of Yahya's work can be understood by sheer fact that Nizamuddin Ahmad has almost copied verbatim his account of the Saiyyids from Yahya. Even Badauni and Firishta's accounts of the Saiyyid's is largely borrowed from Yahya.

Yahya bin Ahmad Sirhindi in his *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi* begins his account from Muizzuddin Ghor upto the reign of Syed ruler Muhammad Shah (1438). His narrative prior to Tughlaq period is somewhat brief. His is dynastic history in the sense that it deals with each reign individually.

Yahya was not the courtier, though he was writing with a desire to seek patronage and favour of the reigning monarch, thus dedicated his work to Sultan Mubarak Shah. However, sudden murder of Mubarak left the author in a state of confusion. For earlier periods Yahya has copied largely from Minhaj, Amir Khusrau's *Qiran-us Sadain* and Barani.

Yahya has written 'essentially in Islamic framework': begins with the invocation of Allah, Prophet, Caliphs, Hasan and Husain, and on the fortunes of Islam under Muhammad bin Sam. He believed in the divine interventions in history; historical events had defined divine purpose. With the exception of Muhammad bin Tughlaq's projects, which he attributes to 'human actions and decisions,' for him every action was the result of the 'will of God' whether it was Qutbuddin Aibak's death after fatal fall or Iltutmish's victory against Yilduz. Unlike Barani, who believed only 'truth' be presented, Yahya often concludes 'only God knows the truth'. Yahya's

narrations are ‘bare record of the outward physical manifestations of action by Sultans and nobles. History [by him] is a succession of military and political events’ (Hardy 1966: 60). He considers Muhammad bin Sam and Qutbuddin Aibak as the founders of the Sultanate. In spite of following Barani he omits Alauddin’s economic measures. However, his account of Muhammad bin Tughlaq is little elaborate and he does try to analyse the events as a result of human actions. He argues that the peace and prosperity of Alauddin’s reign took the shape of crimes, corruptions, rebellions and terror during Muhammad bin Tughlaq’s reign on account of: i) sack of towns by the Mongols under Tarmashirin; ii) increase of land tax that forced peasants to desert their lands; iii) transfer of entire population from Delhi to Daulatabad; iv) Qarachil expedition which resulted in almost loss of 80000 strong forces; v) repressive policies of Muhammad bin Tughlaq; vi) oppression, violence and tyranny. Yahya argues that on account of that, ‘The affairs of the kingdom fell completely into disorder’.

His approach to historical facts is largely ‘casual and indifferent’. Peter hardy (1966: 63) argues that, ‘Events happen first in Yahya’s account and causes are occasionally dragged in afterwards to explain them...[He] writes as a somewhat disinterested spectator of the past’. ‘Yahya ibn Ahmad was simply making a literary offering...the avoidance of the vanities of a wicked world...what Indo-Muslim readers liked to read...History for Yahya ibn Ahmad is a body of transmitted fact, not to be questioned, but to be adorned at random by suitable saws and conventional morals in verse form’ (Hardy 1966: 67).

Check Your Progress-2

- 1) Do you agree that Minhaj’s account lacks information pertaining to role of non-Turkish nobles in the Sultanate polity?
.....
.....
.....
- 2) Write the contribution of Barani to history writing.
.....
.....
.....
- 3) Who was Thakkur Pheru? What light do his works throw on the coinage system, weights and measures and metal technology of the Sultanate period?
.....
.....
.....

1.4 INSHA (EPISTOLOGRAPHY) TRADITION

Insha literally means ‘creation’. However, in the medieval period it denotes personal letters, state correspondences. They provide firsthand information on the working

of administration as well as prevailing socio-cultural conditions and ideas during the medieval period. *Insha* collections of the Sultanate period that survive today are a few and the most prominent ones are *Ijaz-i Khusrawi* of Amir Khusrau and *Insha-i Mahru* of Ain-ul Mulk Abdullah bin Mahru. The best *insha* collections produced in the 15-16th century in the Deccan are *Riyaz-ul Insha* of Khwaja Jahan Mahmud Gawan and *Insha-i Tahir* of Shah Tahir Husaini. During the Sultanate period there existed a separate department of *diwan-i insha*, with *katib*, (writer), *dabir* (commonly used in the Sultanate period) and *munshi* (more commonly used by the Mughals). They were responsible for the drafting of the official letters. *Insha* writings were largely written in the context of *diwani*. *Insha* literature was directly connected with chancellery practices of the Delhi Sultans and later the Mughals. Interestingly, the surviving *insha* collections are of those who were not holding any post in the *diwan-i insha* office. Neither Ain-ul Mulk nor Amir Khusrau ever served in the department of *diwan-i insha* nonetheless their collections contain apart from state correspondences, important private correspondences as well. These documents often derived from various sources, for the idea of penning down of these documents was largely to provide specimen of all kinds of documents styles available.

There were thus two types of *inshas*, one, written for epistographical writings, thus they may not necessarily be real. *Manazir-ul Insha* of Khwaja Jahan Mahmud Gawan is the example of this type of *insha*. In other types documents/letters/correspondences are preserved. These second types of *insha* are of great historical significance.

While Amir Khusrau's style of *insha* writing is highly ornate, *Insha-i Mahru* is comparatively written in simpler form. *Ijaz-i Khusrawi* was compiled around 1292 CE. Amir Khusrau himself admits that he had also used his imagination in writing factitious letters. However, a few of his letters throw ample light on the contemporary history/society. Amir Khusrau's *insha* is also useful in the sense that through these letters we come across the presence of various literary and social figures of his period. It also throws valuable light on contemporary administration, socio-economic conditions and also the religious and literary traditions of the period.

Rashiduddin Fazlullah's *Mukatabat-i Rashidi*, though written by a Hamadani, who was a powerful *wazir* of Il-Khanid Iran, is important to understand the Il-Khanid-Khalji relations. The letters were written during *circa* 1304-1307 when Fazlullah visited Il-Khanid ruler Uljaitu's (1304-1316) envoy. It is reported that he received a warm welcome by Alauddin Khalji, even he is reported to have granted four villages to him as *suyurghal* (revenue-free grant). It contains a letter of Alauddin sent to Fazlullah suggests that in spite of Alauddin's anxieties pertaining to Mongols of Central Asia, he had cordial relations with the Il-Khanids. Through his letters we also come to know about the distinguished literati class of the period. He specifically mentions Maulana Shamsuddin Hindi of Delhi as a distinguished mathematician of his time.

Insha-i Mahru is a collection of Mahru's personal correspondences, particularly important are his letters which he wrote as governor of Multan during Firuz Shah Tughlaq's reign; though some pertains to Muhammad Tughlaq's reign. *Insha* contains in all 134 documents dealing primarily with *manshurs*, *misals*, *ahd-namas* (oath of loyalty), *arzdashts*, personal letters, and proclamations. It throws valuable

light on the socio-economic, cultural, political and administrative history of the period. *Insha* throws interesting light on the purpose of religious grants. It appears that grants were generally not given as personal favour, instead it aimed at personal charity, a fact also confirmed by Ibn Battuta. *Ahd-namas*, which were oath of loyalty *amirs* had to take, suggests, as K.A. Nizami puts forth were 'a sign of weakness, rather than of strength'. Presence of such *ahd-namas* one does not find during Alauddin or Muhammad Tughlaq's periods. *Mahru* is also an important source to understand the nature of the bestowal of religious grants. Interestingly grants were also given for blessing the souls of past Sultans (Muhammad bin Sam, Prince Muhammad, Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq, etc.) to teachers, *muazzins*, etc. Some letters deals with issues relating to non-realisation of the taxes. One of the letters suggests the disapproval of forced labour. *Mahru*'s letters also help us understand a number of revenue vocabulary, specially the nature of taxes – *jiziya*, *kharaj*, *khut*, *dangana*, *shiq*, *idrar*, *kharaji*, etc. *Mahru*'s letter explains why Firuz took such a stern step against the *ibahati* (marrying a woman before she was formally divorced). It suggests that such trend was on the rise that's why Firuz took hard steps against such practice. A very interesting aspect related to the composition of the *zamindar* class is explained and confirms to proclamation of 1353 of Firuz that together the *muqaddams* and the *mafrozian* constituted the *zamindar* class.

1.5 OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

The range of official documents is too wide to count. It includes *farmans* (emperor's orders), *nishans* (orders issued by a prince), *parwanas* (instructions issued by a king to his subordinates), *hasb-ul hukm* (order issued by a minister at the instructions of an emperor), *dastur-ul amal* (administrative or fiscal regulations), etc.

Ijaz-i Khusrawi of Amir Khusrau contains specimen *fathnamas*, *farmans*, and *arzdashts* (petitions). Khusrau largely constructed them in the form of 'good counsel' – what good governor's duties are; what treatment should be given to traders, strategy to be adopted in defense of the frontiers; what relations to be maintained between a victor and the vanquished. Two such important letters mentioned by him are Alauddin's *farman* issued at his accession and *farman* of Balban issued by him after the conquest of Lakhnauti. In his *fathnama* (1281; issued after Balban's Lakhnauti victory) Khusrau counsels the Sultan the need to conquer Odisha for elephants and treasures. Khusrau's *farman* addressed to Prince Farid Khan also reflects his futuristic counsels which involved clandestine criticism of Alauddin Khalji not to let Ma'abar and Dwar Samudra. It should have been directly governed by the Sultan and not left independent just in return for annual tribute. Khusrau tried to impress upon that in the provinces people of men of letters and of the sword should be appointed. He expresses the desire to be tolerant to other religious faiths. In one of the *arzdashts* of Badr Haji (fictitious name) to Prince Khizr Khan Khusrau puts forth Hindukush to be the natural frontier for India; an ideal for which Shahjahan was striving for. In one of the document Khusrau expresses that low born should not wield higher positions; he was votary of aristocratic birth; he looked down upon the Afghans for their rustic mannerism. He placed sufis higher than *ulama* though he believed them to be the 'torches in the dark'. He praises honest *qazis* but looked down upon their fraudulent practices.

Dastur-ul amals are crucial sources of information to know the actual working of the administration. The earliest of such document available to us is *Dastur-ul*

Albab fi Ilm-il Hisab of Firuz Shah's period written by Abdul Hamid Muharrir Ghaznavi. He produced the work mainly to instruct his son in the art of ledger-keeping. It throws valuable light on various administrative procedures and norms as well as a number of technical terms used during the period.

1.6 INSCRIPTIONS

In this Section our focus is mainly on Arabic/Persian and Sanskrit inscriptions.

1.6.1 Arabic and Persian Inscriptions

The major difference between the Persian and the Sanskrit inscription style is while 'Hindu' inscriptions (Sanskrit) of pre-1200 attained special importance owing to the great dearth of historical sources...similar is missing for the Muslim period of history (Persian/Arabic inscriptions)' (Bendrey 1944). In fact one would find brevity in Arabic and Persian inscriptions; while Sanskrit inscriptions are full of genealogical details and throw considerable light on 'personal' details of the inscriber/monarch/donee. However, Persian inscriptions of Nagaur (Rajasthan) and Gujarat are exceptions in this regard. They are rich in genealogies.

Earliest Arabic inscriptions are found from Sind, Gujarat and Haryana. Almost all pre-Mughal inscriptions from Bengal are Arabic; interestingly, one of the earliest inscriptions of Persian also comes from Bengal (1229-1231 of Balka Khan Khalji). In contrast, all Sultanat inscriptions in Gujarat are in Persian, though Arabic dominated during the period of Gujarat Sultanate (1406-1580).

Moreover, even inscribing of Quranic verses, argues Anthony Welch, are not 'created out of context'. According to Welch they carry 'symbolic and allegoric' meaning. Welch while analyzing Quranic verses inscribed in the Qutb Complex argues that it served the purpose of *dar-ul Islam* and are valuable in reflecting the religious thoughts and values of a monarch.

Persian inscriptions are also important in understanding the working of the Sultanate administration at the grassroot level. Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq's Chunar inscription of 1333 records the appointment of a Hindu Sai Raj as his *wazir*. Though ample information is available on *ariz-i mumalik* (head of the military department), there is hardly any information available on the presence of *ariz* at provincial levels. Inscription of 1404-1405 shows the presence of such *ariz* at provincial level as well. Similarly, in the Sultanate period *Hajib's* position was that of an intermediary between the officials and the Sultan. Firuz's inscription of 1319 interestingly refers to an office of *hajib-i Hinduan* probably meant to liaison between the Sultan and the provincial Hindu officials visiting the court. Likewise, inscriptions of Lodi period suggest that the provincial divisions of *shiqq* and *pargana* got firmly established under the Lodis.

Some of the inscriptions throw light on the prevailing sectarian biases. Some inscriptions found on Nilgaraun ki Masjid (1381, Chatsu, Rajasthan), Rangarezon ki Masjid (1439, Hindaun, Rajasthan) suggest presence of 'caste'/'profession' related specific worship-places (mosques). One of the inscriptions (1400-1401) of Mahmud Shah Tughlaq (1394-1413) throws light on the tremors of chaos and terror created by Timur's invasion.

Firuz Shah's *Futuh-i Firuz Shahi* was originally inscribed on the Jami Mosque of Firuzabad, perhaps inspired by inscription of the Ashokan pillar to communicate

people through inscriptions. It primarily meant to applaud the achievements, charity and welfare activities of Sultan Firuz. K.A. Nizami calls it 'essentially a religious inscription' for it largely relates to the religious activities and was originally inscribed on the walls of the Jami mosque. Mention of *mulhid* (heretic) and *ibahati* (*kafir*) in *Futuhat* and the punishments meted out to Ahmad Bihari, Rukn and Mehdi suggest that during this period heretic trends emerged in prominence. It provides detailed account of the building activities of Firuz, even those within the shrine of Nizamuddin Auliya, though, his secular constructions particularly network of canal, etc. are missing from the account. Firuz also mentions about the general ban imposed by him on visits to the *kunds* and also ban inflicted upon women in particular visiting sufi shrines. All this provides insights into Firuz's religious ideas. Sultan also mentions about the building of a state hospital where free food and medicines were provided. It also informs us Firuz receiving a *manshur* (letter of investiture) from the Caliph.

1.6.2 Sanskrit Inscriptions

Sanskrit inscriptions are important source to understand the historical developments of the Sultanate period.

Among the Sanskrit inscriptions the most important one is the Palam *Baoli* Inscription inscribed on a stepped well (*baoli*) by the builder Uddhara, a resident of Delhi. Though it is not dated but genealogies of Sultans ends at Balban suggests that it belongs to Balban's period. It is thirty one lines long inscription written in Nagari script. It is interesting that the inscription provides a complete list of the Delhi Sultans beginning from Shihabuddin Muhammad bin Sam upto Balban. Balban is adorned with (Hindu) titles like *Hammira* and *Nayaka*. Interestingly it does not include Aram Shah's name suggests that Aram Shah was probably not officially recognized as ruler. Similarly, as Raziya's coins contain the name Jalaluddin, for Raziya here also the word Jalaluddin is mentioned. Another important information it sheds is on the then regions of India (while defining the extent of Balban's empire; though its exaggerated). It speaks of Gauda (Bengal), Andhra, Kerala, Karnata (Karnataka), Gurjjara and Lata (Gujarat). Similarly, it identifies the builder Uddhara with Ucca (Uchha, near Multan). It is important on two counts: one, it informs us that the place was situated on the confluence of Sutlej, Beas and Chenab with Indus suggests that these rivers flowed independently till they reached Uchh. Besides, the inscription also throws light on the presence of Multani merchants in Delhi. Uddhara was probably a Multani merchant settled in Delhi. Barani informs that Multani was a rich merchant community, even advancing loans to the state (Balban). For Uddhara title *thakkura* is used. Here usage *thakkura* for a non-kshatriya is interesting; similar usage could be found in Kapiladhara Stone Inscription (1194) of Varanasi district where title *thakkura* is used for builder of Kapiladhara tank Lakshmidhara who was a Vastavaya (Srivastava; a Kayastha). The inscription is also important for it provides one of the earliest references of the usage of the word 'Hariana' (Minhaj has also used the term in his *Tabaqat*).

Qutb Minar Stone Inscription informs that Alauddin Khalji brought structural changes in the fourth storey of the Qutb Minar and added a cupola (*chhatri*) to it. Another Qutb Minar inscription of 1326 and 1332 of Muhammad bin Tughlaq's period refers that the fourth storey got damaged by lightning and was repaired by

Muhammad Tughlaq. Another Qutb Minar inscription is of 1369 which records that on account of the lightning the top storey of the minar got damaged so its repairs were done by Firuz Tughlaq – a fact which is corroborated by Firuz's *Futuh-i Firuz Shahi* as well. It also throws light on the artisans. The masons employed appear to be all Hindus – Nana, Salha, Lola, Lakshamana.

Another two inscriptions: one Naraina Stone inscription (1327) inscribed by Sridhara Rohitaga (from Rohtak) on the *baoli* he got built at village Narana (Afif mentions it a *gasba*) and the second one inscribed on another *baoli* by a merchant Khetala and Paitala of Agroha in village Sarvala (in the region of Raisina Hills, New Delhi; 1328) suggest that even after the transfer of capital (1326) Delhi was not completely desolated but rich merchant communities were residing and flourishing there.

Sanskrit inscriptions frequently refer to *ranakas* and *rautas*. It helps us understanding the hierarchy of the *ranakas* and *rautas* (abbreviation *ra* for *rauta*). The inscriptions suggest that they were placed lower to the *ranakas*. Stone inscription of Jhansi fort dated 1262 records that *ranaka* Abhayadeva of the Yadava family granted a village (Sakela) to Sulhana, son of *rauta* Sadheka.

Further, a number of inscriptions in Ajaigarh and Deogarh forts, Jhansi district suggest widespread influence of the Jains in the area in the 13th century. Similarly, Lalitpur stone inscription (1424) throws light on certain facts which are otherwise not known to us through literary sources. It mentions that Malwa ruler Sultan Hoshang Shah (alias Alp Khan) had a Jain wife Ambika who had a son Holi who consecrated the two images of Padmanandi and Damavasanta suggests the tolerant attitude of Hoshang Shah towards the Jains, even his wife and son continued to practise Jainism.

Pillar and wall inscriptions of Sita-Ramji ka Mandir in Soron contain as many as 38 pilgrim records. They shed interesting light on the trend of pilgrimage in the region: upto 1290 we find frequent inscriptional records of pilgrims here (as many as 15). But during the Khaljis and the Tughlaqs only one such inscriptional record is available suggestive of the declining importance of this pilgrim centre. Then under the Saiyyids and the Lodis again we get as many as 16 such records (out of which 13 alone belong to Bahlul Lodi's period) suggests that the importance of this pilgrim centre revived again under the Lodis.

A number of inscriptions found during this period are bilingual (Sanskrit and Persian). Among them Mubarakpur Kotla inscription of 1517 is of importance. It is written in Sanskrit and Persian. It pertains to the construction of a well (*imarat-i chah*) by Bibi Murad Khatun, daughter of Dilawar Khan Sarwani (a noble of Bahlul Lodi) and Bahlul Lodi's daughter Ayisha who was the disciple of Shaikh Sikandar Serati. We know about Bahlul Lodi's daughter Ayisha only through this inscription.

Check Your Progress-3

- 1) What are *inshas*?

.....

.....

.....

- 2) Write briefly on the importance of *insha-i Mahru*.

.....
.....
.....

- 3) Write a note on *Ijaz-i Khusrawi*.

.....
.....
.....

- 4) Discuss the importance of Sanskrit inscriptions as an important source to construct the history of the Delhi Sultanate.

.....
.....
.....

1.7 SUFI WRITINGS

In the mystic accounts we find three types of literature – *malfuzat*, *maktubat* (letters) and biographical account of the sufis. Among them *malfuzat* are of prime importance. *Malfuzat* are conversations/discourses of sufis/mystics. Though, these *malfuzat* primarily address the moral and religious aspects, it nonetheless throw valuable light on general life and conditions of common masses, which otherwise official historians and chroniclers of the time fail to address. K.A. Nizami (1982) rightly puts that, ‘In many cases the information found in mystic records acts as a corrective to the impressions created and perpetuated by the political chronicles’. The earliest of such *malfuzat* penned in India is that of Amir Hasan Sijzi’s *Fawaid-ul Fuad* (contains the discourses between 1308 to 1322-23). It is the compilation of the conversations of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya.

Fawaid-ul Fuad clearly disapproves the role of Nur Turk in the overthrow of Raziya in contrast to Minhaj’s account who presents a vivid picture of Nur Turk’s role in ousting Raziya. Another important *malfuzat* was *Surur-us Sudur* which is the conversations of Shaikh Hamiduddin Nagauri and his grandson Fariduddin Mahmud. It brings to light deep veneration of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq towards Shaikh Hamiduddin Nagauri. Another important *malfuzat* is *Khair-ul Majalis* by Hamid Qalandar which are the conversations of Shaikh Nasiruddin Chirag. It presents a vivid account of changing attitude of the Chishtis towards society and economy. Among other important *malfuzats* are those of the discourses of Shaikh Burhanuddin Gharib (*Ahsan-ul Aqwal*) and those of Saiyyid Muhammad Gesu Daraz (*Jawami-ul Kalam*). *Malfuzat* of Shaikh Husamuddin Manikpuri (*Rafiq-ul Arifin*) reflects on spread of Chishti sufi centres in small towns. Another important *malfuzat* was penned down by Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi of the discourses of his *pir* Shaikh Ahmad Abdul Haqq of Rudauli.

Maktubat are letters/correspondences of sufi masters through which they used to train their disciples living far away. It focuses on problems of varied nature faced

by their disciples. Among these *maktubat*, most important are those of Abdul Quddus Gangohi.

Another important source is biographies of the sufis. The earliest and most important of such biographies is *Siyar-ul Auliya* of Amir Khurd. However, they required to be looked with critical eyes, they often contain exaggerated accounts, miracles, etc. in praise of their masters. For example, Amir Khurd's account of Shaikh Fariduddin Ganj-i Shakar later gets wrapped up into various miraculous stories and finally in *Jawahir-i Faridi* of Ali Asgar Chishti it becomes difficult to sift the historical truth. Thus while analysing mystical literature one needs a careful reading of the source and the background of the writer concerned.

1.8 ARAB ACCOUNTS

In the Delhi Sultanate Persian was the state language so largely the literature was produced in Persian, though among the scholarly circles Arabic was the language of men of literature. From Iltutmish's reign onwards, particularly following Mongol menace a huge number of Arabic scholars migrated from Persia and Central Asia and received the patronage of the Delhi Sultans. Sultan Firuz Tughlaq was a great patron of Arabic scholars. He even ordered Majduddin Firuzabadi to compile an Arabic dictionary, the *Qamus*.

1.8.1 Arab Geographers' Accounts

The earliest of the travel accounts for the medieval period comes from the pen of the Arab geographers, some visited and some borrowed the information from those who visited. Indo-Arab relations got radical boost when Al-Mamun established *bait-ul hikma* at Baghdad and thus started the project of translating a number of Sanskrit texts into Arabic, resulting in the emergence of a series of scholars who knew Sanskrit and Arabic both which led to the emergence of interests in Indian scholarship, culture and history. One finds accounts on India in the works of Al-Masudi, Ibn Khurdazbih (d. 911; *Kitab-ul Masalik wal Mamalik*), Sulaiman Tajir (*Akhbar-us Sind wal Hind*; 851), Al-Istakhari (visited India in 951; his *Masalik wal mamalik* contains valuable information on India, particularly about its geography and provides a map of contemporary Sindh as well) and Ibn Hauqal (*Surat al-Arz*, 989; provides fascinating account of the cities of India along with a map of Sindh) which reaches its climax in the writings of Albiruni (973-1050) who accompanied Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna. In his *Kitab-ul Hind* he provides vivid account of India.

Al-Umari (d. 1348) though never visited India but provides details on India in his *Masalik al-Absar fi mamalik al-Amsar* based on the works of travellers who visited India. On the authority of Muhammad bin Abdur Rahim (*Tuhfat-ul Albab*) he praises India, 'the huge country, great justice, considerable wealth, good administration, constant convenience of life, and security... The Indians are the most learned people in the branches of philosophy, medicine, arithmetic and (skilled) in all the wonderful crafts...' (Zaki 2009: 6). He talks in detail the cities and provinces of India particularly Delhi and Deogir, Muhammad bin Tughlaq's new capital which he called *Qubbat-ul Islam*. His description of the postal system by the authority of Sirajuddin Abul Safa Omar Ash-Shibli can be placed next to Ibn Battuta. In the writings of Arab accounts special attraction was caught by Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq. Interestingly, in contrast to Indian chroniclers, he received extensive

praises from their pen ‘for his unbounded generosity, vast erudition, intellectual achievements and administrative genius’ (Zaki 2009: vi). Al-Umari on the authority of Sheikh Mubarak writes that, ‘The acts of generosity and charity of the Sultan are such that the world should write them on pages of its records of good deeds and the people inscribed them in...’ (Zaki 2009: 32). He further comments, ‘Nobody can dress and ride with saddles covered or embroidered with gold except he upon whom the Sultan had bestowed them’ (Zaki 2009: 40).

1.8.2 Ibn Battuta

Ibn Battuta (1304-1369) was a Moroccan traveller. His account widens our understanding of the Sultanate with an Afro-Asian perspective. He entered India through northwestern gateway, touched Indian soil in 1333 and left India in 1344. He not only travelled extensively Indian territories but also held prominent position of *Qazi* of Delhi for long seven years under Muhammad bin Tughlaq. Ibn Battuta’s *Rehla* throws valuable light on the judicial, political, military institutions, postal system, literati, court etiquettes, agricultural produce (particular mention is made of mango and betel-leaf), trade, weights and measures, customs and manners during Muhammad bin Tughlaq’s period. A detailed account of Muhammad Tughlaq’s transfer of capital, his devastating Qarachil expedition, severity of famines is provided by Ibn Battuta. Another interesting account which otherwise is not available to us is his description as well as praise of the effective postal system. He records:

In India the post is of two kinds. The horse-post called *ulaq* is run by the royal horses stationed at a distance of every four miles. The foot post has three stations per mile; it is called *dawa*, that is to say, one-third of a mile... This foot-post is quicker than the horse-post; and often it is used to transport the fruits of Khurasan... In the same way notorious criminals were transported... Similarly, water for the sultan’s use is carried from the Ganges to Daulatabad... at a distance of forty days’ journey...

Rihla 1976: 3-4

Though Ibn Battuta’s account throws light on various facets of political and social life, one needs to be careful in accepting the truth. Ibn Battuta records that, ‘One of the most serious reprehensions against the sultan is that he forced the inhabitants of Dehli into exile... he ordered the inhabitants to leave Dehli... when the sultan had done that, all the inhabitants of Dehli came out leaving behind their property and baggage, and the city was reduced to a desert’ (*Rihla* 1976: 94). However, Ibn Battuta’s narration does not seem to have been testified by inscriptional evidence. Two of the Sanskrit inscriptions (discussed in detail in **Sub-section 1.6.2**) of 1327 and 1328 testify that common people (merchants, etc.) were largely not affected and it is correctly argued by Zia Barani that it uprooted the large section of the ‘upper classes’.

Check Your Progress-4

1) What are *malfuzat*?

.....
.....
.....

2) Do you agree that *malfuzat* are important source to construct the life of a common men of the period?

- 3) Discuss Ibn Battuta's contribution to history writing.

1.9 SANSKRIT LITERATURE

It is generally believed that the loss of official patronage caused the decline of Sanskrit literature during the Sultanate period. While it is true that Persian replaced Sanskrit as the official language, there was no quantitative decline in the production of Sanskrit literary works as such. The period is remarkable for the immense production of literary works in different branches of Sanskrit literature – *kavya* (poetical narrative), religion and philosophy, grammar, drama, stories, medicine, astronomy, commentaries and digests on the Law Books (*Dharamashastras*) and other classical Sanskrit works. Nor was the loss of official patronage to Sanskrit absent for there were still many kings who patronized Sanskrit poets – especially in South India and Rajasthan. But while Sanskrit works continued to be produced in large number, there seems to be a marked decline in the quality of these works. This decline had set in before the establishment of the Sultanate and became more pronounced during the Sultanate period. There was not much originality in most of the Sanskrit works that appeared during this period. Much of the Sanskrit writing was wearisomely repetitive, artificial and forced. Sanskrit works on religious themes were often characterised by metaphysical speculations. Biographical works were mainly in the form of heroic ballads which contained hagiographical details and stories of romance. Sanskrit lost the patronage of the new Persian speaking ruling class but the Sultanate did not interfere with the independent production of Sanskrit literary works. In fact, the introduction of paper during the Sultanate period gave an impetus to the literary activity of reproduction and dissemination of already existing Sanskrit texts such as the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*.

South India, Bengal, Mithila and Western India played the leading role in the production of Sanskrit literary works. The Vijaynagara kings patronised Sanskrit poets. The Jain scholars in Western India also contributed to the growth of Sanskrit literature. The most famous of Jain scholars of Sanskrit literature in Western India was Hemachandra Suri who belonged to the 12th century. Mithila in northern Bihar developed into yet another centre of Sanskrit. Later, towards the end of the Sultanate period and during the Mughal period, the Chaitanya movement in Bengal and Odisha contributed to the production of Sanskrit works in several fields – drama, *champu* (a mixed form of verse and prose), grammar, etc.

Many Rajput rulers patronised Sanskrit poets. These poets wrote the family histories of their patrons in the classical form of a Sanskrit eulogy. The writings of these family histories followed a set formula and became an established trend during this period. Some of these Sanskrit works such as *Prithvirajavijaya* and *Hammirmahakavya* are well known. A number of historical poems are on Muslim

rulers, e.g., *Rajavinoda* – a biography of Sultan Mahmud Begarha of Gujarat written by his court poet, Udayaraja. Kalhan's *Rajatarangini* (12th century), which presents the history of Kashmir kings, was followed in the Sultanate period by a second *Rajatarangini* by Jonaraja who wrote the history of Kashmir kings from Jayasimha to Sultan Zainul Abidin (1420-1470). A third *Rajatarangini* was written by Srivara who took the history of Kashmir down to 1486. All these works present eulogistic accounts of their patrons but they contain useful historical material, too. In addition to these historical *kavyas*, a large number of semi-historical texts called *prabandhas* were also written. The *prabandhas* are replete with legendary and hagiographical material but, some of them, such as Merutunga's *Orabandhakasha Chintamani* and Rajashekhar's *Prabandhakosha* contain material of historical significance. On the whole, however, it must be pointed out that despite voluminous production, the Sanskrit literature of the Sultanate period had lost much of its original vitality and creativity, and the bulk of this literature remained unaffected by the intellectual developments of the age.

Sanskrit Translations in Persian

The pioneering experiments of Amir Khusrau laid the foundation of literary and cultural synthesis in the contemporary Indian society. There was a growing interchange between Persian and Sanskrit. Many Sanskrit works began to be translated into Arabic and Persian. The first scholar to translate Sanskrit stories into Persian was Zia Nakhshabi (d. 1350). His *Tuti Nama* is based on a Sanskrit work. Many Sanskrit works were translated into Persian during the reigns of Firuz Shah Tughlaq and Sikandar Lodi. Zain-ul Abidin, the famous ruler of Kashmir during the 15th century, got the *Mahabharata* and Kalhan's *Rajatarangini* translated into Persian from Sanskrit. Thus it appears that by the end of the Sultanate period such literary exercises must have given rise to a set of people who were familiar with both Sanskrit and Persian and who had the knowledge of the religious ideas of Hinduism and Islam. However, little attempt was made by the Sanskrit knowing non-Muslim scholars, to translate works of Persian and Arabic literature into Sanskrit. Such an absence of reciprocity on the part of the Brahmanical elite indicated its insular outlook which was earlier highlighted by Alberuni in the 11th century. The lack of receptivity to ideas from other cultures and languages may partly explain the decadence of the Sanskrit literature during this period.

It is thus clear that Persian occupied an important place among the languages of the period. It became the official language and the language of the Sultanate ruling elite. It brought with it many new and refreshing social and religious ideas. Its introduction in India led to the widening of the intellectual horizon of the Indian poets, thinkers and social reformers. Above all, it introduced new literary forms and styles.

1.10 LITERATURE IN REGIONAL LANGUAGES

One of the important features of the literary history of this period is the development of literature in regional languages in various parts of India. Regional languages which grew rapidly during this period in northern India included Hindi, Punjabi, Bengali, Assamese, Oriya, Marathi and Gujarati.

Each one of these languages originated from a corresponding Indo-Aryan Prakrit in its Apabhramsa stage. This origin can be traced back to the seventh-eighth

centuries. The three South Indian languages – Tamil, Kannada and Telugu – have a longer literary history than that of the North Indian regional languages. The literary history of the Tamil language goes back to the beginning of the Common Era. Kannada and Telugu also have older literary traditions than the North Indian regional languages. Malayalam is the youngest among the South Indian languages and it was not before the fourteenth century that it developed as an independent literary form.

1.10.1 Social Background of the Development of Regional Languages

Important factors which contributed to the development of the literature in the regional languages during our period are as follows:

- i) During the post-Gupta period, the growth of ‘feudal’ society, economy and polity led to the emergence of regional entities and cultures roughly from the seventh-eighth centuries. One consequence of the growth of regionalism was the emergence of the earliest forms of the regional languages from the Apabhramsa.
- ii) As has been mentioned above, the decline in the quality of Sanskrit literature had set in much before the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate. Much of the Sanskrit literature which appeared from the 10th-11th centuries lacked spontaneity and did not appeal to the masses. Its appeal was confined to a very small Brahmanical circle. The replacement of Sanskrit by Persian as the official language during the Sultanate period further intensified the process of the decline of the Sanskrit literature. Once it lost the official patronage it had enjoyed at the centre, many kingdoms during the Sultanate period promoted the use of regional languages since Persian was an unfamiliar language in many parts of the country. Regional languages were used, in addition to Sanskrit, for administrative purpose in many kingdoms even during the pre-Turkish period. In the territories under the rule of the Sultans of Delhi, there are references to ‘Hindi’ knowing revenue officials at the local level.
- iii) The Turkish conquest of Northern India during the 13th century led to the end of the Rajput-Brahman alliance and consequently the influence of the Brahmins diminished in the society. Once the upper caste domination diminished, the primacy of Sanskrit received a setback, and regional languages which were spoken at the popular level, came to the fore.
- iv) The growth of non-Brahmanical and non-conformist Nathpanthi movement and later that of various bhakti movements – both conformist and radical monotheistic – played an important role in the rapid growth of regional literature (for details see **Unit 14**). Before the rise of the Nathpanthis, much of the literature of their predecessors – the Buddhist Siddhas – was written in regional languages including Hindi. The Nathpanthi movement, which was the first beneficiary of the diminished influence of Brahmanism and which reached its culmination during the 13th and 14th centuries, promoted the cause of regional popular languages. The growth of the bhakti movements in North India from 15th century onwards played the most crucial role in the development of the regional languages and contributed to the rapid development of a great corpus of literature in these languages. The bhakti

saints composed their verses in the languages understood by the people who were attracted towards them. They made use of popular idioms, popular legends and folk tales. The bhakti movements contributed to the growth of popular regional languages in yet another way. The bhakti saints, in particular those who belonged to the conventional stream of the bhakti movement, translated or adapted epics, *Puranas* and the *Bhagavad Gita* from Sanskrit into regional languages in order to make their contents accessible to the people. In this way, the bhakti poets popularised bhakti episodes drawn from various Sanskrit texts. The contents of these texts were not only translated in the languages in which people could understand them but they were also presented in simple terms before the people.

1.10.2 Literature in the Regional Languages of North India

In this Section we will deal with the literary works produced in the regional languages of North India.

The Development of Hindi Literature

What is today known as Hindi was developed in various forms in the medieval period. The dialects of Hindi included Brajbhasha, Awadhi, Rajasthani, Maithili, Bhojpuri, Malwi, etc. In our period the literature of Hindi language developed in these dialects. In addition to these dialects, a mixed form of Hindi, known as *Khari Boli* (originally meaning a rough, crude and raw speech) was also developing.

First Phase

Scholars have placed the origin of the Hindi language between 7th and 10th centuries – it was in this period that Hindi was evolving out of Apabhramsa. The period between 7th-8th centuries and 14th century (before the rise of the bhakti poetry) is characterised as ‘*Veergatha Kala*’ (age of Heroic Poetry) by scholars. Another name used for describing this period is *Adi Kala* (early period). Much poetry of this period was composed by bards who were patronised by various Rajput rulers. The bards glorified such virtues of their patrons as chivalry and bravery. They also highlighted the element of romance in their poetical narratives. In its essence, this literature symbolises the values and attitudes of the Rajput ruling classes. The bards who composed this literature were not concerned with the aspirations of the common people. Most of the bardic poetical narratives were composed in the Rajasthani dialect of Hindi. The most famous of them is the *Prithviraja Raso* which is attributed to Chand Bardai, the court ministerial of Prithviraja, the last Rajput king of Delhi. Other heroic poetical narratives included *Visaldeva Raso*, *Hammir Raso*, *Khumana Raso*, etc. The authenticity of most of these *raso* narratives in their existing forms is open to grave doubts and it seems that their contents were expanded during the later centuries. Thus for instance, it is only the nucleus of the *Prithviraja Raso* which was written during this period (12th century), and interpolations were made later in the original draft.

Not all the Hindi literature of the period between 7th-8th centuries and 14th century belonged to the genre of bardic poetry. The Buddhist *siddhas* and later the Nathpanthi *yogis* composed religious poetry in an archaic form of Hindi. In Western India, the Jain scholars also composed religious poetry in Rajasthani highlighting various aspects of religious and social life of the people. The contribution of Amir Khusrau to Persian literature has already been mentioned. But he also composed

poems in mixed form of Hindi which ultimately developed into *Khari Boli* or Hindustani. He called this language *hindavi*. Some of his Hindi verses are found in his *Khaliq Bari* which is often ascribed to him but which in all likelihood was written much later.

Second Phase: The Age of the Bhakti Poetry

The second phase in the growth of Hindi literature began in the 14th-15th centuries. Various streams of the bhakti movement exercised profound influence on the Hindi literature of this phase. This phase of Hindi literature has been characterised as *Bhakti Kala* (Age of Devotion) and it continued till the Mughal period. This phase which began with Kabir marked the richest flowering of Hindi literature. The bhakti poets of the period were two-fold: the *saguna* poets (who believed in god with human form and attributes) and *nirguna* poets (who believed in non-incarnate Absolute God). Kabir was the leader of the *nirguna* bhakti poets most of whom belonged to lower castes of the society and were poor and illiterate. Kabir's own mother-tongue was Bhojpuri but he composed in a mixed dialect which could be understood by people in various parts of North India. Kabir's language is characterised by what has been termed 'rough rhetoric'. The non-conformist and unorthodox ideas of Kabir and other *nirguna* saints will be discussed in **Unit (14)** on the bhakti movement. What is important from literary point of view is Kabir's use of a language which combines bluntness of style with potency and eloquence. He used his strong and rough verses to present a powerful denunciation of various rituals. Another important characteristic of Kabir's short poetical utterances is the use of *ulatbasi* or 'upside-down language' which consisted of a series of paradoxes and enigmas. It has been pointed out that Kabir inherited the *ulatbasi* tradition from the Nathpanthis and adapted it for an effective rhetorical and teaching device. Kabir and other 'low-caste' monotheistic poets (Sen, Pipa, Dhanna, Raidas, etc.) expressed themselves in oral style. The poetry they composed forms a part of oral literature. Their verses were compiled much later – earliest instance of their written compositions are from the *Adi Granth* in 1604. Being illiterate, they had *no* direct access to the Sanskrit literature. They expressed themselves in the local languages of the people. The literary genre in which they composed most of their short but effective utterances was *doha* (a short rhymed poem). In short, the poetry of Kabir and other *nirguna* saints of the 15th century played the most important role in transforming the Hindi vernaculars into a 'literary' language.

The poets belonging to the conventional Vaishnava bhakti movement in North India were mostly Brahmans and were familiar with Brahmanical scriptures and Sanskrit texts. The Vaishnava poets believed in the concept of devotion to a personal God and, accordingly, came to be divided as devotees of Rama and Krishna. The Rama bhakti poetry in Hindi flourished mainly during the Mughal period. Its greatest exponent and perhaps the greatest poet of Hindi literature was Tulsidas (1532-1623) who wrote the famous *Ram Charit Manas* in the Awadhi dialect of Hindi. Among the Krishna bhakti poets, Vidyapati composed verses about the love of Radha and Krishna in Maithili Hindi. The influence of his lyrical poetry was felt in Bengal and some Bengali poets imitated his songs. Vrindavan near Mathura emerged as a centre of Vaishnava bhakti poetry by the end of the Sultanate period. These poets were devotees of Krishna and composed their verses in *Braj bhasha*. The greatest of these poets was Surdas (c. 1483-1563). Another great name in the Vaishnava bhakti poetry was that of Mira Bai (c. 1498-1543). She was a

Krishna devotee and composed her songs in Rajasthani but many of these songs were later incorporated in other Hindi dialects and also in Gujarati.

Sufi Contribution to Hindi Literature

Sufi saints and other scholars of this period contributed substantially to the growth of Hindi literature. The Chishti sufis made use of Hindi devotional songs of *sama* (ecstatic singing and dancing) sessions. Sufi mystical and allegorical meanings were given to various Hindi terms such as ‘Gopis’, ‘Raslila’, etc. The sufi poets combined Islamic mysticism with imaginative use of Indian love tales, popular legends and stories. Mulla Daud’s *Chandayan* (written in c. 1379) is the earliest of such poetical works. Qutuban’s *Mrigavati* (written in 1501) is another example of mystical romantic poetry composed in Hindi. Malik Muhammad Jayasi’s *Padmavat* written in 1540 in Awadhi Hindi is the best example of allegorical narrative. The literary compositions of the sufi poets also contributed to the incorporation of many Arabic and Persian words into Hindi literature and thus played an important role in cultural and literary synthesis.

The Origin and Growth of Urdu Language

Scholars have advanced various theories to explain the origin of the Urdu language in the period following the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate. Various opinions have been expressed on the identity of the dialect of Hindi on which the Persian element was grafted resulting in the growth of a new language. The dialects that have been mentioned are Braj *bhasha*, Haryanvi and other dialects spoken in the neighbourhood of Delhi, and the Punjabi language. All these dialects have influenced the Urdu language in its formative stage and it is difficult to pinpoint the exact dialect which combined with Persian to give rise to Urdu. However, it is an established fact that by the end of the 14th century, Urdu was emerging as an independent language. Like Hindi, the basic structure of Urdu consisted of *Khari Boli* – a mixture of various dialects spoken in Delhi and surrounding regions. Delhi, during this period, was ideally situated for the growth of a synthetic language since, on the one hand it was surrounded by people speaking different dialects and, on the other hand, it had a Persian speaking ruling elite. Thus, Urdu adopted Persian script and Persian literary tradition but by incorporating the basic structure of Hindi dialects evolved an individuality of its own.

The word Urdu is of Turkish origin and means an army or camp. In its initial form, Urdu appears to have been devised as an improvised speech to enable the Persian speaking Turkish ruling class and soldiers to communicate with the local people including Muslim converts. However, it had not yet acquired a literary form. This new common language took a century to acquire a concrete shape and came to be called ‘Hindavi’ by Amir Khusrau. Hindavi thus forms the basis of both Hindi and Urdu. Amir Khusrau composed verses in Hindavi (using Persian script) and thus laid the foundation of Urdu literature. However, it was in the Deccan that Urdu first acquired a standardised literary form and came to be known as Dakhini during the 15th century. It developed first under the Bahmani rule and flourished in the Bijapur and Golconda kingdoms. Gesu Daraz’s *Miraj-ul Ashiqin* is the earliest work in Dakhini Urdu. Till the 18th century, Urdu was called by various names such as ‘Hindavi’, ‘Dakhini’, ‘Hindustani’ or ‘Rekhta’ (which means mingling several things to produce something new). In its developed form, Dakhini Urdu

travelled back to the north and soon became popular during the Mughal period. It was during the period of the disintegration of the Mughal empire in the 18th century that the Urdu literature reached great heights.

Punjabi Literature

Two distinct trends developed in the history of the Punjabi literature during the period between the beginning of the 13th century and beginning of the sixteenth century. On the one hand, this period was marked by the growth of sufi and bhakti poetry and, on the other, by heroic ballads and folk literature. Sufi poetical compositions attributed to the famous Chisti sufi master Baba Farid (Shaikh Fariduddin Ganj Shakar, c. 1173-1265) are regarded as pioneering contribution to poetry in the Punjabi language. The hymns composed by Guru Nanak in the sixteenth century imparted a proper literary form to the language. The second Sikh Guru Angad gave the Punjabi language a distinct script called Gurumukhi. The hymns composed by Guru Nanak were later incorporated in the *Adi Granth* by the fifth Sikh Guru Arjan in 1604. His poetry is characterised by chastity of sentiment and by variety in his style and poetic diction.

Bengali Literature

Folk songs called *Charyapads* – composed between the 10th and 12th century are the earliest specimens of Bengali language. The Turkish conquest of Bengal by the middle of 13th century contributed to the decline of Sanskrit and the importance of folk themes and forms as media of literary expression began to increase. By the fifteenth century, three main trends developed in the Bengali literature: (i) Vaishnav bhakti poetry; (ii) translations and free adaptations of the epics, and (iii) *Mangala kavya*. The first great Vaishnava bhakti poet in Bengal was Chandidas (15th century) who patronised Bengali literature. Vidyapathi composed his devotional songs in Maithili dialect but many of his songs were later absorbed into Bengali under the influence of the Vaishnava movement. Chaitanya and his movement gave further impetus to the growth of the Vaishnava literature in Bengali. Many Vaishnava poets were inspired by Chaitanya in his own time and after his death. Among the Vaishnava poets, some were Muslims. The second major trend in the history of Bengali literature which began from the early fifteenth century drew inspiration from the epics and other Sanskrit scriptures. Sultan Husain Shah (1493-1519) and his successor Nusrat Shah (1519-32) patronised Bengali literature. Two Bengali poets Kavindra and Srikanandi rendered the *Mahabharata* into Bengali verse during their reigns. In the early years of the fifteenth century, Kritivasa Ojha produced a Bengali poetical adaptation of Valmiki's Sanskrit *Ramayana*. Maladhar Basu adapted Vaishnava Sanskrit work the *Bhagavata Purana* into Bengali during the later 15th century and it came to be known as *Srikrishnavijaya*. Another, and the most popular Bengali rendering of the *Mahabharata* was produced by Kasirama. These Bengali translations and adaptations played an important role in influencing the cultural and religious life of the people in medieval Bengal. The third trend in the Bengali literature consisted of the emergence of *Mangala kavya*. These are sectarian poetical narratives and their focus was on the conflicts and rivalries among gods and goddesses. But they do contain humanistic elements, too, since they highlight popular aspirations and sufferings. Manika Datta and Mukundrama were two notable poets of *Mangala kavya* during the later 15th and 16th centuries.

Assamese Literature

Hema Sarasvati was the first poet of Assamese language. She composed *Prahladacharita* and *Hara-Gauri Samvada* during the later part of the 13th century. Her contemporary poet was Harihara Vipra who chose episodes from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* for his poetry. From the 14th century, Kamata and Cachar became centres for the development of Assamese literature. Madhava Kundali, who popularized the *Ramayana* story in Assam by rendering it into the language and idiom of the common people, was the most important Assamese poet of the 14th century. His language was less Sanskritised than that of Hema Sarasvati and Harihara Vipra and was closer to the language of the common people. The growth of Vaishnava bhakti movement under Sankaradeva in the second part of the fifteenth century made considerable contribution to the Assamese literature. *Kirtana Ghosa* is regarded as the most important Vaishnava religious text written in Assamese language. It is an anthology of devotional songs, most of which were composed by Sankaradeva but other poets also made their contributions. Sankaradeva also wrote many dramas (*Ankiya Nat*) which were based on the *Purana* episodes. He also composed a new type of devotional poetry called *Bargit* (*Bragita*). Sankaradeva's disciple Madhavadeva (1489-1596) also composed many literary works and further enriched the *Bargit* form of poetry.

Oriya Literature

It was during the 13th-14th centuries that the Oriya language assumed literary character. Saraladasa (14th century) was the first great poet of Odisha. He composed the Oriya *Mahabharata* which is regarded as a great epic by the people of Odisha. Oriya literature began to enter into a new phase from the beginning of the 16th century when the Vaishnava bhakti movement grew there under Chaitanya's influence. Many of Chaitanya's disciples translated or adapted Sanskrit works on bhakti into the Oriya language. One of the close associates of Chaitanya was Jagannath Das who became the greatest Oriya literary figure of his time. His Oriya translation of the *Bhagavata Purana* became popular among the people.

Marathi Literature

Literature in verse form began to emerge in the Marathi language from the later part of the 13th century. Early Marathi literature was dominated by Saiva Nathpanthis. Two earliest Marathi texts – *Viveka Darpana* and the *Gorakhagita* – belonged to the Nathpanthi tradition. The most important poet of this phase was Mukundaraj who belonged to the Nathpanthi tradition and who wrote his *Vivek Sindhu* in chaste popular language. Another dominant influence on the Marathi literature during its formative stage was exercised by the poets belonging to the Mahanubhava cult which emerged in the 13th century.

The Mahanubhava saint-poets were among the architects of the early Marathi devotional literature and made important contribution to Marathi lexicography, commentaries, rhetoric, grammar, prosody, etc.

The Varkari bhakti saint-poets of Maharashtra further developed the bhakti literature in the Marathi language. First among them was Jnanadeva (13th century). He wrote a commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita*. It was named *Bhavartha Dipika* and popularly came to be known as *Jnanasvari*. It is the fundamental text of the Maharashtra Vaishnava bhakti saints belonging to the Varkari tradition. Another saint-poet

belonging to the Varkari tradition was Namdev (1270-1350). He composed large number of *Abhangas* (short lyrical poems) in Marathi. He travelled to the north and later his verses were included in the Sikh scripture, the *Adi Granth*.

Two other great saint-poets of medieval Maharashtra, Eknath (1548-1600) and Tukaram (1598-1649) belong to the Mughal period: they also made substantial contribution to the growth of the Marathi literature.

Gujarati Literature

Both Rajasthani and Gujarati languages emerged from old Western Rajasthani. The first phase in the development of the Gujarati literature lasted till the middle of the fifteenth century. During this phase, two main literary forms developed in the Gujarati literature – the *prabandha* or the narrative poem and the *muktaka* or the short poem. The first category included heroic romances, poetic romances and *rasas* or long poems. The subject-matter of these poems consisted of historical themes interspersed with fiction, popular legends and Jain mythology. The second category of *muktaka* or short poem adopted various forms such as *phagu*, *baramasi* and the *chapo*. *Phagu* means a short lyrical poem stressing on the element of *viraha* or separation. The second phase in the history of the Gujarati literature began in the late fifteenth century with the spread of the Vaishnava bhakti poetry. Narasimha Mehta (1414-1480) was a great Gujarati bhakti poet. He made use of his poetry to popularise Vaishnava bhakti in Gujarat.

Check Your Progress-5

- 1) Discuss the social background of the rise of regional languages.

.....

- 2) Explain the origin and growth of Urdu language.

.....

- 3) Mark (✓) or (×) against the statements given below:

- a) The second phase of growth of Hindi Literature is characterised as *Bhakti kala*. ()
- b) Kabir was a *saguna* poet who believed in a God with human form and attributes. ()
- c) A large number of *Abhangas* were composed by Namdev. ()
- d) *Prabandha* and the *muktaka* were the characteristic Marathi literary genre. ()

1.10.3 Literature in the Languages of South India

This Section takes into account the progress made in the literature written in the South Indian languages.

Tamil Literature

The great age of the Tamil literature came to an end with the decline of the Chola Empire. Writers and poets, however, continued to make contribution to the Tamil literature. Villiputturar, who probably lived in the thirteenth century, was an important literary figure of the period. He rendered the Tamil version of the *Mahabharata* which is called *Bharatam* and which became popular among the Tamil-speaking people. He introduced the tradition of using Sanskrit words and literary expressions in Tamil poetry. Another great poet and a contemporary of Villiputturar was Arunagirinatha. He composed *Tiruppagal* – a lyrical and devotional work in praise of god Murugan. The period is also known for elaborate commentaries written by Vaishnava scholars. Commentaries were also written on such literary works of the Sangam age as the *Tolkappiyam* and the *Kural*. These commentaries are a model of medieval Tamil prose and are known for their clarity and brevity. Another great author, Kachiappa Sivachariar composed *Kandapuranam* in praise of god Subramanya.

Telugu Literature

Literature in the Telugu language made great progress from 13th century onwards. During the 13th and 14th centuries, Telugu translations and adaptations of Sanskrit works were produced. The most important Telugu poet in the first half of the 14th century was Errapragdda. He popularised the *champu* genre of literary writing (mixed form of verse and prose). He composed the *Ramayana* in this genre. He translated a part of the *Mahabharata* and another Vaishnava Sanskrit work, *Harivamsa* into Telugu. Srinatha (1365-1440) was another great Telugu writer. He translated Sriharsha's *Naishadha Kavya* into Telugu. He also composed verses on the theme of historical romance and this laid the foundation for the age of classical *prabandhas* in the Telugu literature. His contemporary, Potana, was a great poet who translated the *Bhagavata Parana* into Telugu. The Telugu literature achieved its highest position in the sixteenth century during the reign of the Vijaynagara king, Krishnadeva Raya, who himself was a poet in both Sanskrit and Telugu and who wrote *Amukta Malyada* in Telugu. He patronised many Telugu poets, most famous of whom was Peddana. Peddana wrote *Manu Charita* in Telugu. One important characteristic of the Telugu literature of this period was the increasing influence of Sanskrit on the Telugu language.

Kannada Literature

The early phase of the Kannada literature (upto 12th century) was dominated by Jain writers. From the middle of the 12th century, Virasaivism – a popular religious movement – began to influence the people and literature of the Kannada speaking region. The religious literary work of Basava (known as *Vachanas*), the founder of the Virasaiva movement and those of his followers constitute an important contribution to the medieval Kannada literature. A late 14th century Virasaiva poet, Bhima Kavi composed the *Basava Purana*. Before him, two other Virasaiva poets of the 13th century, Harisvara and Raghavanka, composed their works in new Kannada styles which later became popular. The later Hoysala rulers patronised many Kannada poets and writers. One of them, Rudra Bhatta wrote *Jagannathavijaya* in *champu* genre. This work was an adaptation from the Sanskrit work *Vishnu Purana*. The period between 14th and 16th centuries saw further growth of the Kannada literature under the patronage of the Vijaynagara kings and their

feudatories, One of the greatest poets of this period was Kumara Vyasa who composed the Kannada version of *Mahabharata* in the middle of the 15th century.

Malayalam literature

Malayalam is the youngest of the South Indian languages. It originated as a dialect of Tamil in the Malabar region. Gradually, it separated itself from Tamil and acquired an independent status in the fourteenth century. Political isolation of the Malabar region from Tamilnadu and the introduction of new linguistic forms by foreigners contributed to the development of Malayalam as an independent language. The earliest literature was in oral form consisting of songs and ballads. The earliest literary composition was the *Rama Charitam* produced in the 14th century. From sixteenth century onwards, Malayalam began to come under the dominant influence of Sanskrit and borrowed a great deal from the latter.

Check Your Progress-6

1) Write growth of Telugu in the 13-15th centuries.

.....

.....

.....

2) Do you agree that Malayalam is the youngest of the South Indian languages?

.....

.....

.....

3) Mark (✓) or (×) against the statements given below:

- a) The great age of the Tamil literature began in the post-Chola period. ()
- b) Rudra Bhatta wrote *Jagannathavijaya* in *champu* genre. ()
- c) Krishnadevaraya wrote *Amukta Malyada* in Telugu. ()
- d) The religious-literary works of Basava in Kannada are known as *Vachanas*. ()

1.11 SUMMARY

There existed two traditions of medieval historiography in north India – Arabic and Persian. While Arabic historiography can truly be called histories of the ‘age’; Persian history tradition primarily focussed on dynastic histories. In India largely Persian history tradition dominated. Among the political chronicles of the Delhi Sultanate Minhaj’s *Tabaqat* though extremely precise on political details and chronology is full of drab details on Ilbari dynasty and its rulers. In contrast, though Barani also wrote in the same Persian history tradition, his analysis of history is much wider and throws light on the lives of common masses and provides rather a more critical view of history. Besides chroniclers’ accounts Sultanate period is rich in terms of official documents (*dastur-ul Amals*), *insha* and sufi *malfuz* literature. Ibn Battuta’s account provides new Afro-European perspectives to the historical events of the period. Though medieval historiography was dominated

by Persian historiographic tradition, regional histories and traditions and bardic accounts are extremely useful.

In this Unit we have also traced the growth of regional languages and literature during the Sultanate period. The decline in the quality of Sanskrit works produced in this period has been emphasised. The factors responsible for the growth of regional languages and literature have been stressed. The nature of Sanskrit, Persian and regional literature produced during this period has been analysed. This analysis points to the cultural synthesis which was achieved as a result of interchange between Sanskrit and Persian that was evident from the origin and growth of Urdu during this period.

1.12 KEYWORDS

<i>Arzdasht</i>	Petitions
<i>Champu</i>	Combination of prose and poetry
<i>Dastur-ul amal</i>	Administrative or fiscal regulations
<i>Hasb-ul hukm</i>	Order issued by a minister at the instructions of an emperor
<i>Farmans</i>	King's orders
<i>Malfuzat</i>	Conversations of sufi saints
<i>Muktaka</i>	Short poems
<i>Parwanas</i>	Orders/Instructions issued by a king to his subordinates
<i>Prabandha</i>	Narrative poem

1.13 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress-1

- 1) See Section 1.2
- 2) See Section 1.2

Check Your Progress-2

- 1) See Sub-section 1.3.1
- 2) See Sub-section 1.3.4
- 3) See Sub-section 1.3.5

Check Your Progress-3

- 1) See Section 1.4
- 2) See Section 1.4
- 3) See Section 1.5
- 4) See Sub-section 1.6.2

Check Your Progress-4

- 1) See Section 1.7
- 2) See Section 1.7
- 3) See Sub-section 1.8.2

Check Your Progress-5

- 1) See Sub-section 1.10.1
- 2) See Sub-section 1.10.2
- 3) See Sub-section 1.10.2

Check Your Progress-6

- 1) See Sub-section 1.10.3
- 2) See Sub-section 1.10.3
- 3) See Sub-section 1.10.3

1.14 SUGGESTED READINGS

Bendrey, V.S., (1944) *Study of Muslim Inscriptions* (Bombay: Karnatak Publishing House).

Habib, Mohammad, (1950) 'Chishti Mystic Records of the Sultanate Period', *Medieval India Quarterly*, Vol. 1.

Habib, Mohammad, (1927) 'Hazarat Amir Khusrau of Delhi', Bombay. Reprint in *Collected Works of Professor Mohammad Habib*, ed. K.A. Nizami, New Delhi: 1974.

Hardy, Peter, (1966) *Historians of Medieval India* (London: Luzac & Co.).

Hasan, Mohibul, (2018 [1982]) *History and Historians of Medieval India* (New Delhi: Aakar Books).

Husain, Mahdi, (1976) *The Rehla of Ibn Battuta* (Baroda: Oriental Institute).

Nizami, K.A., (1982) *On History and Historians of Medieval India* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal).

Prasad, Pushpa, (1990) *Sanskrit Inscriptions of Delhi Sultanate 1191-1526* (Delhi: Oxford University Press).

Siddiqui, I.H., (2014) *Indo-Persian Historiography, to the Fourteenth Century* (New Delhi: Primus Books).

Zaki, Muhammad, (2009) *Arab Accounts of India (During the Fourteenth Century)* (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli).

1.15 INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEO RECOMMENDATIONS

Historiography and Sources of the Delhi Sultanate

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LcL2c-NM0lA&t=47s>

