

Socio-Cultural aspect of Early Turkish Rule in Northern India

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Abstract

The study of the British and Indian historians has engrossed the devotion of scholars throughout 20th century. The focus of historiography on the early Turkish rule remained pre-occupied with battles and court politics. Political, religious and military aspects of the rule of the early Sultans dominated the studies of the period. There remained a lack of sympathetic interest by British historians in the internal workings of medieval Indian society, which shown for the study of the wider Islamic world. Though there is no dearth of works produced on socio-cultural conditions of the 13th century. This paper pays emphasis on specific aspects of socio-cultural conditions of early Turkish sultans. This study is first commendable attempt to assess works written on the socio-cultural milieu by the 20th-century historians had discussed the social and cultural conditions prevailing during the 13th century. This is an unexplored territory, barring one or two minor works and few articles, awaiting the attention of historians and a promising field for the modern day historians. A work is in demanding that should focus on the development of Persian culture and traditions, state role in adoption of these traditions, poets and growth of Persian poetry, centres of learning and education, educational institution and their role in transformation of social life, development in scientific instruments and growth of natural and applied sciences etc. in the 13th century.

Key- words: conditions, historian, historiography, socio-cultural, turkish.

The focus of historiography on the early Turkish rule remained pre-occupied with battles and court politics. Political, religious and military aspects of the rule of the early Sultans dominated the studies of the period. Though there is no dearth of works produced on socio-cultural conditions of the 13th century. What as Peter Hardy observed there remained a lack of sympathetic interest by British historians in the internal workings of medieval Indian society, which shown for the study of the wider Islamic world [1]. In the early 20th century apart from C.A. Storey and Thomas Arnold no British scholar has arisen to emulate in the study of Indian Islam, the achievements of E.G. Browne, R.A. Nicholson (The Mystics of Islam, London, 1914; Studies in Islamic Mysticism, Cambridge, 1967), A.G. Arberry (An Introduction to the History of Sufism, Oxford 1962; Muslim Saints and Mystics, London, 1966) and Hamilton Gibb in the study of Muslim thought in Persia and the Arab countries.

It is a recognized fact that the contribution of British scholars to the translations of Indo-Persian chronicles is invaluable. In the early phase, political and professional interests in knowing about the rule of

Muslims during the 13th century made it mandatory for them to translate medieval historical works from Arabic and Persian into English. For example, the appearance, of Henry Elliot's and John Dowson's (History of India as Told by its Own Historians), eight volumes of translations into English from the Persian and Arabic of Indo Muslim historians and Arab travellers accounts (1867 A.D.) H.G. Raverty's English translation of Minhaj Siraz's Tabaqat-i-Nasiri (1881 A.D.) shows the interest of officials and administrators of British Government in translating the works of political nature. Translations by John Briggs and James Todd were other examples of this approach to study the foundation of Muslim Rule.

The works of early British historians had a strong influence on these compendia of history material, for example Stanley Lane Poole's (Medieval India Under Mohammedan Rule, London, 1903), Vincent Smith's (The Oxford history of India, London, 1919) and W. Haig (ed.) (The Cambridge History of India, Vol. III- Turks and Afghans, London, 1928). All these authors used the data provided by Elliot and Dowson and by the Bibliotheca Indica series almost to the exclusion of any other. It was a self-imposed limitation, writes Peter Hardy [2]. Moreover, it was not true that the only literary evidence available to scholars was that provided by the works of medieval Muslim historians. Of course, the study of medieval Islam as a civilization with a total impact on Hindustan was not wholly neglected by another group of historians. Indian historians even when, as, during the first forty years of the 20th century, a narrative political history dominated modern historiography on medieval India shed light on the study of non-political institutions of early Sultans. In the 20th century, K.M. Ashraf, Mohammad Wahid Mirza, A.B.M. Habibullah, K.A. Nizami and Iqbal Husain have directed their attention to the religious and cultural aspects of the Muslim 'presence' in India nearest independence and partition (1947 A.D.). Later on, Indian historians like Mumtaz Ali Khan, Irfan Habib and I.H. Siddiqui made a major contribution towards the study of the development of Persian culture and poetry in the 13th century.

The first book on social history which appeared in India during the 1930's, when political history dominated the scene of historiography on medieval India was K.M. Ashraf's, Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan (Calcutta, 1935). His approach was non-communal and nationalistic and he attempts to study the life and conditions of the people of medieval India in economic terms and not on religious lines. The chapters in his book are divided under headings like 'The Sultan as a Private Person', 'The Sultan as a public Person', 'The Court', 'Rural Life', 'the Standards of life', 'Domestic Life' and so on, yet it is uncharitable on the part of Peter Hardy to say that his picture of society, "is not dynamic but static; the work is an essay on dissection of a corpse not a description of a living, moving, changing organism" [3]. Ten years before K.M. Ashraf's monograph, in 1925, Yusuf Ali published his book, Making of India (London, 1925) and claimed that the Muslims 'brought a better organization and a manlier culture in India.' His approach towards the writing of medieval social history is liberal and nationalistic.

Mohammad Habib's, Indian Culture and Social life at the time of Turkish Invasions, published by the Aligarh Historical Research Institute, is but an abridgement of Alberuni's Kitab-ul-Hind. Researches by Mohammad Habib about the early Turkish rule and his theories of 'Urban Revolution' during the 13th century

found expressions in two volumes: edited, by K.A. Nizami, *Politics and Society during the Early Medieval Period: Collected works of Professor Muhammad Habib*, Vol. I, (New Delhi, 1974) and Vol. II, (New Delhi, 1981). Simon Digby reviewed Muhammad Habib views on Caste regulation and urban revolution in his article, Simon Digby, 'Caste regulations: Review of Habib's collected works'. Prabha Dixit also pointed out both, that Hindu armies included members of other castes, such as Vaisyas and Sudras, and that Al-Biruni's Brahman informants may have exaggerated the effectiveness of the caste regulations. Yohanan Friedmann pointed out in his article [4], that a recognition of one's low social status, particularly when sanctioned by religious laws, and an urge to improve it- do not necessarily in a society untouched by the 18th century European Enlightenment – go hand in hand. Peter Jackson also points out that, "Nor can the liberation that the Muslim conquerors offered to those who sought to escape from the caste system be taken for granted. The evidence for widespread conversion to Islam at the turn of the 12th century simply does not exist" [5].

Irfan Habib in his work, *Interpreting Indian History* (Shillong, 1988), examines the kind of 'social formation' established after the Ghurian-Turkish conquest of northern India (1192-1206) on the basis of (a) the form of labor process i.e. whether slavery, serfdom or wage labor; (b) the extraction of surplus value i.e. rent, profit, and (c) the system of the distribution of surplus. Based on these categories he finds that in medieval India the labour process was that of petty producer labouring under various constraints; the surplus was extracted by a tax which was identical with rent, and that it called for a centralized despotic state sustaining a vast parasitical urban economy. He concludes that medieval Indian economy was a separate social formation different from the feudal economy [6]. Irfan Habib has applied Marxist methods to medieval Indian social formation and the projects that the principal contradiction lay between the centralized ruling class (the state) and the peasantry. He viewed there was a 'Class struggle' in society while there is no evidence of a class struggle in medieval times. His approach to interpretation of medieval Indian history is strongly influenced by Marxist ideology.

Muhammad Qamaruddin in his book, *"Society and Culture in Early Medieval India (712-1526 A.D.)"* under chapter four entitled, "Society and Culture under the Delhi Sultans" observes that the first hundred years of the Delhi Sultanate were a period of complete Turkish supremacy, others having no voice in the government. He writes, how the Indian Muslims and Hindus struggled to be treated on an equal footing with the proud Turks, which took almost a century. Muhammad Qamaruddin observes that the local usages and customs had started influencing the social life of the foreign Muslims. The use of betel leaf, wearing of traditional Indian headgear and so were several ceremonies related to birth, marriage and death which penetrated the foreign Muslims way of life [7]. He writes objectively that so far as the Hindus were concerned, their social life remained relatively unaltered. He gave names of some important Hindus which were given audience and respect by Delhi Sultans such as Bhima (a wealthy merchant), Pheru (a jeweller) and Samar Singh.

The first major work which discussed the role of Persian customs and traditions in shaping the polity of the early Turkish Sultans was, K.M. Ashraf, *'Life and Conditions of the people of Hindustan (1200-1550 A.D.)*

[8]. It was mainly based on Islamic sources. Ashraf observes that the transfer of the seat of the caliph to Baghdad, Persian ideas began to flow in. the Muslims came to assimilate the old doctrine of Persian imperialism and fell an easy prey to the culture of their conquered people (Persians). He further adds that "Intheir eager fascination, Muslims did not stop to pick and choose from Persian ideas; they adopted them wholesale in every sphere of life."

While making an assessment of K.M. Ashraf monograph some things appear henceforth, he did not mention the titles of Sultans which were copied from Persia. He further did not elaborate scientific instruments and their uses in sea voyages; moreover, his is a general social, economy and political survey of social conditions much influenced by the modern parameters. Ashraf did not discuss the libraries of Delhi Sultans, hospitals, and religious and secular education imparted. The role played by the different immigrants in bringing ideas, culture and traditions from Persian lands. He did not elaborate the Persian poetry, poets and their poems. Moreover, in the words of Peter Hardy, [9] "It is a consideration of the status, habits and standard of life of different classes in medieval Indian society within the general area of the Delhi sultanate excluding, 'all references to the civil administration, the system of land revenue, the army, the system of transport, the ideas of education and the development of literature or even to the religious life of the people." In this book, K.M. Ashraf appears to be a nationalist convinced that India's problems were primarily social and economic, not religious or communal.

Another important historian who discussed Persian cultural traditions is K.A. Nizami, who opines that long before his advent into India, the Turk had been Persianized in his thought and behaviour. The spirit of Persian Renaissance, though a spent-up force at this time had so captivated his imagination that he was anxious to recreate and revive as much as Persian culture and traditions as possible. From theories of kingship to names and nomenclature of institutions and officers, court etiquettes and army organization, every detail of the Ilbarite political organization breathed the Persian atmosphere [10]. The sultans consequently invoked the spirit of Sassanid Persia and derived ideological vitality and cultural stamina from it.

K.A. Nizami is of the view that the administrative institutions of the Delhi Sultanate, most of them had evolved and developed in Persian lands. The slaves of the imperial household were recruited, maintained and disciplined according to Persian traditions. The armies were modelled on the armies of medieval Persia, with the same arms, equipment and tactics. K.A. Nizami further says that the Turks in their social life also adopted Persian customs, etiquettes and ceremonials. The court of Delhi sultan's a replica of Sassanid court, customs of pabos or zaminbos, the Persian festival of Nauroz were symbols of Persian culture and traditions imbibed by the early Turkish sultans [11]. K.A. Nizami though gives a clear picture of Persian influence on the Turkish state, but he left so many questions unanswered and did not shed much light on some of the features mentioned. He did not write about the training, education and early life of QutbuddinAibek, Iltutmish and Balban. Why did the early Sultans evolve Persian customs and traditions and not Indian traditions when they were ruling in northern India? He did not elaborate on the Persian features of administrative machinery and slave institutions in much

detail. As far as the question of army organization is concerned, he summed up saying the armies of Turks were modelled on the armies of medieval Persia. The nature and scope of his book reflect the political and religious outlook of the 13th century, an analysis of events and their social contexts missing.

Another important Indian historian who contributed to the study of Persian poetry and prose writings is I.H. Siddiqui. He writes that the emergence of Persian knowing intelligentsia, the dearth of Arabic knowing Muslims and continuing waves of Persian speaking immigrants from central Asia led to the growth of Persian customs and traditions. This led the Sultans and the members of ruling elite to get the Arabic classic on religion and statecraft translated into Persian for the benefit of Persian knowing and speaking intelligentsia. He further says that so far the Persian language generally served as a vehicle for expression in poetry but now in India, owing to the translations of Arabic classics it developed into a language both of science and religious philosophy. He believes that the early Indo-Persian writers on statecraft were inspired by the early Arabic classics as well as the writings of Imam Ghazzali and Nizam-ul-Mulk Tusi on the system of governance, yet the transmuting of the old ideas caused by the Indian environment is implicit therein.

Indian historian U.N. Day's *The Government of the Sultanate*, discuss in its introduction, 'The Model of the Government' which deals with the inheritance of the institutions of the early Turkish rulers. He traces the background of the institution inherited by the Delhi Sultans from the times of Muhammad the Prophet. He says, "It was in Persia that the Muslims or the Saracens came in contact with a culture far superior to their own... they could not resist copying the Persian system of government and Persian culture." [12]. He further adds that it was at Baghdad that the influence of the Arabs faded and the Persian influence began to dominate under the Abbasides. When the Abbasid Caliphate began to decline and distant provinces turned into independent Muslim kingdoms, this pattern was adopted by them with necessary modifications. The Turkish Sultans of Delhi also adopted many offices from this pattern and made additions and alterations in them as demanded by the various administrative problems that they were called upon to solve. The early men of letters represented a trans-Indus tradition, writes Muhammad Qamaruddin. He further adds that most of these intellectuals had received their education beyond the border, and although they settled down in Islamic India, the indigenous literary tradition was slow in developing [13]. Muhammad Aziz Ahmad says that the Turkish government of the 13th century was composed of several elements, borrowed from various countries. The king and his courtiers breathed the atmosphere of Persian Paganism; the army was organized after the manners of the Mongols and the Turks, and below the central government was the old Hindu system of local government [14].

Iqbal Husain writes, "India-born poets Abul Faraj Runi and Masud's ad Salman of the Ghaznavid period are recognized as the leading poets of early Persian literature of the world. They were writers of good and chaste Persian. Their style is plain and simple and in all their verses they have shown, to their best advantage, their power, their resources, their fertility and their fine artistic instincts' [15]. The two 13th century poets, who earned a good deal of discussion in Iqbal Husain's book' are Tajuddin Reza and Shihabuddin Mihmara. Another

poet of repute who finds a mention in Iqbal Husain's work is Amid LowikiSunami, a poet associated with the court of Sultan Nasiruddin Muhammad in Multan. Amid LowikiSunami was born in Sunam. His full name being Faiz Ullah while he adopted amid as a pseudonym. 'Fakhr ul-Mulk' was his official title. Besides, qasidas, Amid composed ghazals and satires that soon assumed the importance of a literary tradition in the history of Persian literature in India. Iqbal Husain's work is very informative for the poets of Ghaznavid times.

Recently, Nazir Ahmad has discovered and published along with a critical introduction (in English) and copious notes (in Persian), the diwans of Saiyid Siraj-ud-din known as SirajiKhurasani, entitled 'Diwan-i-Saiyid Siraj-ud-din Khurasani' (Aligarh, 1972) and the diwans of Amid LowikiSunami, entitled 'Diwan-i-Amid LowikiSunami' (Lahore, 1984). Nazir Ahmad has shown by a comparative study that some of Siraji's qasidas have been composed in imitation of some of the masters of poetry. Especially Suzani (died A.D. 1173), Anwari (died A.D. 1191), Mujir (died A.D. 1190) and Khaqani (died A.D. 1198) [16]. Another important work which sheds light on the development of Persian literature in the 13th century is *Some Important Persian Prose Writings of the Thirteenth Century A.D. in India* by Mumtaz Ali Khan (Aligarh, 1970). Mumtaz Ali Khan says, "only a few works, both in verse and prose have survived the ravages of time; and they are of immense value" [17]. They not only reveal the quality and merit of the poets or scholars but also shed important light on the life and culture of the age. Stressing the importance of the 'Lubab-ul-Albab', an anthology-cum-tazkira of early Persian poets by Sadid-ud-din Muhammad Awfi, Mumtaz Ali Khan writes, "It possesses unique historical importance as the oldest compilation of the kind in Persian, preserving the names of many ancient poets who are otherwise unknown, together with a great deal of verse that is nowhere else to be found."

Scholars held different views about the entry of Awfi in India. Muhammad Nizam-ud-din suggestion about Awfi's entry into India through Lahore from Ghazna after the Mongol invasion of central Asia in 1218 A.D, has been accepted rather uncritically by Mumtaz Ali Khan [18].

Muhammad Habib passed over the concept of mobility in social and professional areas. Irfan Habib modified this argument whose focus was more on economic and technological change. He examined critically the hypothesis of urban revolution in the light of more empirical evidence and a better understanding of the social and economic history of the period [19]. He supports the view that there was expansion in the urban economy during the 13th and 14th centuries; the size, and possibly the number, of cities, increased; and there was an increase in craft production and commerce factors henceforth leading to social and professional mobility [20]. He argues, in fact, that the important changes and improvement in technology came about during this period, leading to larger production.

Vicious Mongol attacks on cities and towns across southern Eurasia launched centuries of migration into India. Warriors, scholars, mystics, merchants, artists, artisans, peasants and workers followed ancient trade routes and new opportunities that opened up in the new domains of Indian sultans, believes I.H.

Siddiqui [21] Immigrants altered societies where they settled most commonly, in urban centers along trade routes. They generated multi-cultural centers of social change, mostly in and around urban centers. The old cities took on the form of cosmopolitan urban centers, while in the newly founded towns and cities artisans and craftsmen, considered low caste in the Hindu social system, could now live in their huts even in the vicinity of the quarters owned by members of the ruling elite. This process of urbanization started under the Sultans, soon led to social mobility among craftsmen in the urban centers, writes I.H. Siddiqui. Another factor, subscribed by I.H. Siddiqui is the boost in trade encouraged diversity in tastes and suggested ideas for the modification and improvement of old and indigenous crafts which further promoted the cause of mobility among working classes.

Another article by S.C. Misra entitled "SocialMobilityinPre-MughalIndia" questions the following essentials of inquiry into social mobility: is mobility central to the social system in that period or peripheral; is it individual or familial or wider and societal, affecting organized groups like castes? He suggested that the impact of the new faith and the social system and large-scale migrations accelerated vertical mobility, both upwards and downwards [22].

For India, a collection of essays which offer a comprehensive study of the development of technology in ancient and medieval times is edited by A. Roy and S.K. Bagchi entitled 'Technology in Ancient and Medieval India' (Delhi, 1986). We have four articles by Irfan Habib regarding the medieval technology developments and exchanges between India and the Islamic world during the time of early Turkish rulers. The first article by Irfan Habib entitled "Technological Changes and Society – 13th and 14th centuries" examined the evidence in four different areas: textile industry, irrigation, writing material and scientific instruments and cavalry [23]. He says that the spinning wheel could have come into use only during the 13th century and quotes two sources of information for it, one during the times of Raziya, stated by Isami in Futuh-us Salatin (1350 A.D.) and second, stated by Sadi in Bostan (1257 A.D.).

Another article by Irfan Habib discusses, "Social and Economic changes in Northern India (1200-1500)". He explains that the new system that came to be established through war, spoliation and enslavement after the Ghurian conquest can be seen by two inter-related factor making for economic and social change. The first was the development in production technology, and the second was the new position and composition obtained by certain large castes and communities. Irfan Habib believes that the history of Indian production technology was in its infancy during the 13th and 14th centuries in India. He discusses the following equipment and techniques: Araghatta, Spinning wheel, Weaver's loom, Calico-printing, Lime-mortar. In December 1984, Irfan Habib read an article at the UNESCO symposium on the 'Role of the Arab and Islamic Civilization in the History of Mankind', Kuwait entitled "Medieval Technology Exchanges between India and the Islamic world." In this paper, he writes about five spheres in which the important techniques were transmitted to India: Right angle Gearing, Spinning wheel, and Distillation, Paper and Building construction. He also studied three

spheres of 'reverse transmission' (India transmitted to Islamic world) – ParallelWorm/double Rollers, Bowing and Cloth printing. Finally, he describes the nature of exchanges in technological fields that took place between India and Islamic world.

In his article, I.H. Siddiqui[24] pointed out that one of the important lacunas in medieval Indian studies is in the realm of science and technology. He discusses this theme which touches astronomy, astronomical instruments and time-keeping devices during the period of the Delhi Sultanate. He also explains various time-keeping devices evolved from the times of the early Turkish Sultans till the times of Babur. He says that during this period, scientific ideas, new mechanical and scientific instruments found their way into India along with the streams of elite immigration from the neighbouring countries especially central Asia. I.H. Siddiqui believes that the source of the scientific knowledge and instruments introduced in the Sultanate by the refugees laid either in the Arab-Persian lands or central Asia. The Islamic Civilization acquired the knowledge of natural and applied sciences from different countries but made advancement in the same through their own researches. They also invented instruments useful in scientific applications. One thing which comes to fore is that how I.H. Siddiqui missed that astronomy and astrology were a development from the ancient times in India. Another point which Irfan Habib stated, which I.H. Siddiqui did not make mention of is the reverse transmission of technology from India to central Asia.

In the late 1970's, a member of the National Commission for the Compilation of the History of Sciences in India, O.P. Jaggi published eight volumes of research work done on the development of the History of Science and Technology in India. These eight volumes trace the development of the applied and natural sciences from ancient to the modern times. The following is a list of eight different volumes with their titles:

- Volume I– Dawn of Indian Technology (Pre and Proto-Historical Period)
- Volume II - Dawn of Indian Science
- Volume III - Folk Medicine
- Volume IV - Indian System of Medicine
- Volume V - Yogic and Tantric Medicine
- Volume VI - Astronomy and Mathematics
- Volume VII - Science and Technology in Medieval India
- Volume VIII- Medicine in Medieval India

Volumes Seven and Eight are of particular significance to the study of the development of Science and Technology and Medicine during the period of the early Turkish rule. In Volume VII, O.P. Jaggi studies the development of science and technology from the beginning of the 13th century of the 19th century. He says that a significant development of this period was the introduction of the already developed Muslim institutions – religious, cultural, scientific and technological to a cultural area which had its own well-developed, similar institutions. Writing about the developments of Industries in medieval times O.P. Jaggi writes that people engaged themselves in extensive and varied industrial activities. The artisans met the local demand and also the

demand of traders from foreign countries. He writes that an important feature of manufacturing scene of the period is the institution of Karkhanas or workshops run as a department of the government. Astronomy and mathematics as practised and understood in medieval India had its origin in the Arab world, and also Persia and Central Asia. O.P. Jaggi says that the main purpose of astronomy in India in medieval times was to work out a calendar, fix the dates of festivals and of eclipses, calculation of time and casting of horoscopes. The casting of horoscope gave astronomer-sum-astrologer his social importance [25].

While tracing the development of the natural sciences, O.P. Jaggi says animals and animal life had been a subject of great interest to the Arab physicians. He also discussed the state of education, attitudes of people, astronomy and mathematics, alchemy and chemistry, zoology, agriculture and botany, menstruations, military technology, textiles, paper manufacture, miscellaneous industries, architecture, agricultural techniques and implements and transport and communication under different chapters.

Volume VIII is devoted to the development of medicine, entitled 'Medicine in Medieval India'. O.P. Jaggi in this volume studies the history of Unani medicine, its beginning and the basis, its coming into India with the Muslims, its physician and manuscripts and its adaptation to the Indian milieu. The first traceable medical book on Unani medicine written in India was a Persian translation of Kitab-ul-Saidana (Materia Medica and Pharmacology) of Al-Beruni. This was translated by Abu Bakr bin Ali bin Uthman, who lived at the court of Iltutmish. A manuscript of this book is said to be available in the British Museum, London and also in the state Library in Berlin [26].

During this period, the Hindu and Muslim sciences did not influence each other very much in spite of their proximity. In the field of technology, however, there was massive exchange resulting in significant developments. The indigenous medicine system – Ayurvedic medicine was incorporated in the materia-medica of Unani Tibb or Tibb (Islamic system of medicine) because firstly the drugs from central Asia were not available here and secondly the rules of health and hygiene most suited to the climatic and environmental conditions of India were studied and incorporated in the Unani system of medicine.

Recent researches by I.H. Siddiqui and his utilization of conventional and un-conventional study material bring forth some insights into the developments of hospitals (Bimaristan and medicines). He quotes from Sadiduddin Muhammad Awfi's Lubab-ul Albab and Jawami ul-Hikayatwa-Lavami ul-Rivayat [27] and says that our author incidentally refers to the bimaristan in Ghazna where the patients suffering from mental trouble were treated while the later Indo-Persian writers furnish a somewhat detailed description both of the private and government hospitals in Delhi during the 14th century [28]. Unfortunately, these valuable technological studies often remained fairly isolated contributions, they did not, so far, instigate a debate such as could have lead to some degree of scholarly consensus.

A very informative article on the use of medicine and cure of diseases and hospitals is by S.H. Askari entitled, "Medicines and Hospitals in Muslim India". A.B.M. Habibullah also discussed the names of two well

known and honoured names in the annals of medicine who were court physicians of Balban– Badruddin Damashqi and Husamuddin Marikla. Another healing art expert who was also well versed in the field of mathematics and astronomy was Hamiduddin Mutriz, a jewel of Balban's court [29]. R.B. Chatterjee's article "Indian Surgery- Past and Present", also shed light on the advancement made by Indian physicians in surgery during the ancient and medieval periods.

The possession of the akhurchana and pilkhana remained an important asset to the early Turkish Sultans of Delhi. It has been argued by Simon Digby, on good grounds, that the control of the supply of elephants-next to that of horses – became one of the important factors in the establishment of the political hegemony of the Delhi Sultanate [30]. Barani confirms the importance of horses and elephants for the control of Hindustan under the 13th-century slave ruler Balban. Yet, the veterinary sciences were not studied in much detail by the 20th century Indian and British historians. Except for the work by Simon Digby who studied only the war supplies aspect of the ashvashastra and gajashastra.

About education, in the Sultanate period, we can learn from the books of N.N. Law entitled, "Promotion of Learning in India during the Muhammadan Rule (by Muhammadans)", (London, 1916) and S.M. Jaffar, entitled, "Education in Muslim India: Being An Enquiry into the State of Education during the Muslim Period of Indian History, 1000-1800 A.D.". Works of Yusuf Hussain Khan and K.A. Nizami are also important for the promotion of education by early Delhi Sultans during the 13th century. Monographs on different dynasties and rulers also make mention about them. In this regard K.A. Nizami's essay on "A Medieval Indian Madrasa" in his *Studies in Medieval Indian History* (Aligarh, 1956) is illuminating. However, the interest of the government of the Sultanate in public education was of a limited nature and not much money seems to have been spent on it.

The old series of an archaeological survey of India reports (1862-1884), largely reports of tours of Cunningham and his associates, contain much material on the major architectural sites of the sub-continent, although some of these are merely incidental to the main purposes of the reports. The new imperial series of the archaeological survey, including the regional surveys, presents more precise and detailed description of individual sites. These sources of historical information about architecture in India were supplemented by the Archaeological Survey of India Annual Reports, from 1902 onwards. The report prepared by Ghulam Yazdani, director archaeology department of Nizami's domain, is also a valuable source of information about Deccan sites. The further historical material is available in the volumes of *Epigraphia Indica* and *Epigraphia Indomoslemica*, as well as in some of the memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India are important sources.

Fergusson's *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* is out of date but contains much valuable material within its limited field of view, and Percy Brown's *Indian Architecture* suffers from being a superficial treatment aimed at a non-specialist public. E.B. Havell's *Indian Architecture* has yet to be treated on the lines of,

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say, George Marcais's *L'architecture musulmane d'occident*. A monograph by Fanshawe entitled, *Delhi: Past and Present* offer the study of architectural sites of Delhi. There are some articles which shed light on the architecture of the early Sultans of Delhi. Recently two monographs on the architecture in medieval India appeared, first of these written by Monica Juneja (ed.), entitled, *Architecture in Medieval India: Forms, Contexts and Histories*, (New Delhi, 2001) and second by S.A.R. Khan entitled, *Medieval Indian Architecture* (New Delhi, 2004).

Finbarr Barry Flood's article entitled, "Ghurid Monuments and Muslim identities: Epigraphy and exegesis in twelfth- Century Afghanistan", draws information on Ghurid architectural monuments and numismatic inscriptions to examine the ways in which contemporary doctrinal disputes inflected elite cultural production during the 12th century. It suggests that a rhetorical emphasis on idolatry and disbelief in Ghurid epigraphy was part of a contemporary intra-sunni polemic, and not primarily an address to those who were literally outside the fold of Islam. Another article by Rita Taploo entitled, "The Origin and Development of Islamic Tombs in India (I)", discussed the burial practice and tombs of Sultans of Delhi. Two tombs of early Delhi Sultans, (i) Sultan Ghori's Tomb of Prince Nasiruddin Muhammad and (ii) Tomb of Sultan Iltutmush's Tomb and their architectural makeup are discussed by the author. There is another article by R.N. Nath entitled, "Concept of the Qutub Minar", which aims to discuss the history of the structure, its nomenclature, its architectural derivation, and its origin and *raison d'être*.

There are two very important works on the paintings of the Sultanate period. The first being a book by Richard Ettinghausen entitled "Paintings of the Sultans and Emperors of India in American Collection," published by Lalit Kala Akademi and the second attempt was made by M. Abdullah Chaghtai on the subject, entitled, "Painting During The Sultanate Period (C.E. 712-1575)". In his book Richard Ettinghausen has confined himself to giving a description of the paintings in the American collection covering both the Sultanate and the Mughal periods, but M. Abdullah Chaghtai has dealt with the subject elaborately in regular historical sequence right from the establishment of Muslim rule in India in 712 A.D down to 1575 A.D. The author has tried to trace the origin and development of the art of paintings during the period under study. G.N. Sharma's article entitled "An Approach to Mewar School of Painting (13th to 18th century A.D.)", has been a significant contributor to the study of Rajput paintings during the medieval period.

Works written on the socio-cultural milieu by the 20th-century historians had discussed the social and cultural conditions prevailing during the 13th century. Historical writings on Persian culture and traditions stressed that two factors were largely responsible for the adoption of these traditions, first, the early Turkish Sultans from childhood were brought up in these cultural traditions and second, the large-scale immigration from Persian speaking lands to India throughout the 13th century gave it further impetus. The study of the Indo-Persian poetry of the 13th century that has been neglected by the scholars of history until the last decade of the 20th century when I.H. Siddiqui, influenced by the works of some Persian scholars of Persian department of Aligarh University, started searching for historical materials in these Persian prose and poetry works. Still, the *qasidas*, *diwans* and medieval literary works of 13th century await historical scrutiny by the modern historians.

A common consensus is in demand over these works of non-conventional nature. The historiography on the early Persian poets provides us with better insights into the concepts of love, beauty, religion, moral and cultural values of the elite of the early sultanate period than by the chronicles. And it will be no exaggeration to say that we are provided by poets with better insights into the knowledge of different crafts, technological devices, cultural ethos and ideas, religious, philosophical and intellectual traditions of the contemporary period. History of science and technology in India has, so far, received only scanty attention both by Indian and British historians. Even those few Indian and British historians, who have devoted their attention to this aspect of Indian history, have researched mostly into the ancient period. The study of science and technology in India in the medieval period and particularly in the times of the early Turkish rule has remained neglected, except for few articles published here and there. If we search for relevant evidence in conventional and non-conventional sources, we may gain insights into the socio-cultural milieu of the 13th century. The odd bits pieced together from the chronicles, supplemented by explorations of other source material, hopefully, enable the 20th-century historians to reconstruct a fuller portrait of the society of the Delhi Sultanate than hitherto. This lack of interest is not due to the paucity of the source material that is available, or that this field of study is less interesting. The problem has been that those, few who are interested in the history of science in India in this period, have been lacking in the knowledge of the languages in which the source materials are available, namely, Persian and Arabic. This is an unexplored territory, barring one or two minor works and few articles, awaiting the attention of historians and a promising field for the modern day historians. A work is in demanding that should focus on the development of Persian culture and traditions, state role in adoption of these traditions, poets and growth of Persian poetry, centers of learning and education, educational institution and their role in transformation of social life, development in scientific instruments and growth of natural and applied sciences etc. in the 13th century.

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