

A Historical Study on Mughal Emperor Akber the Great Domestic Reforms(1556–1605)

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ABSTRACT

Akbar was liberal and tolerant to other faiths and religions of his empire and he remained very sensitive towards the diverse religions in India by launching policies like Ibadat Khana. He eliminated the jizya tax owed by non-Muslims, publicized Hindu festivals at his court, and placed Hindus into civil and military positions which made India multicultural. Akbar's policies though ensured more centralization and strengthened the empire, gave good examples of forward-looking policies but some puritanical Muslim elements saw it off as heretical and un-Islamic. The research article will try to find the answer to the question of what reforms were made by Akber the Great in his empire.

Keywords: Centralization, Liberal, Strengthen, Religious, Tolerant, Multicultural

1. Introduction

Akbar the Great (1556-1605) is known as one of the most famous Mughal emperors in the history of the Indian subcontinent; his reign is associated with the further consolidation of the Mughal empire on the subcontinent and general liberalization of many aspects of the empire's administration, society, and cultures. This article looks into the ambiguity in Akbar's administration, his attempt to assimilate different religious groups, and his grand plan of an imperial integration of the empire. It examines Akbar's statecraft and its major components including administrative and military policies and sulh-i-kul peacefully embraced the religious and cultural diversities in the empire hence ensuring long-lasting stability in the Mughal Empire and a model followed by subsequent generations of the Mughals. Once during his exodus from Bikaner, despite of his being defeated, Humayun was nobly received and assisted by the rana of Amarkot. At the birthplace of Amarkot, in the year 1542, the most progenitive of all the Mughal Emperors, Akbar, came into the world. On the pretext of danger, Humayun fled to Iran; he left

behind his son Akbar who was imprisoned by his uncle Kamran¹. Here, he proved to be quite a good boy, on balance as he was nicer to the child most of the times. Subsequently, during the year, when Qandhar was occupied by the Mughal forces, Akbar and his Parents joined him. On the occasion Humayun's demise Akbar Saha was positioned in Kalanaur Punjab where he served as the commander in chief of his campaign against the Afghan rebels. Kicking the bucket at the youthful age of thirteen years and four months, he was enthroned in 1556 at Kalanaur². The position he took over had plenty of problems. The Afghans did not surrender after the fall of Agra and got a new leader, Hemu, for the final push. Kabul the capital city was under siege and in chaos. The vanquished Afghan King Sikandar Sur stayed in the northern Siwalik range. Thus, the faithful and loved by Humayun Bairam Khan replaced him as a regent of the young Akbar, taking the title of Khan-i-Khanan, and rallying the Mughal troops³. An arrow was then shot at the immediate threat posed by Hemu who was leading the opposition forces. A. Dil Shah who was a nephew of Sher Shah was holding a territory that included Chunar to the boundary of Bengal. Hemu rises in history as a market superintendent under Islam Shah, but he swiftly climbs up the ranks under Adil Shah's administration. Surprisingly, none of the twenty-two battles which Hemu fought, was he defeated in any of those battles. Adil Shah awarded him the title of Vikramajit and following the command that made him wazir of the kingdom, he was set on the mission of evicting Mughals out of the kingdom⁴. Hemu defeated Raja Tailor and made the wind to run in its back between the rivers Ganga and Jamna, and took the fort of Agra with a force of fifty thousand cavalries, five hundred elephants and strong artillery, Hemu advanced towards the capital of the Mughals, Delhi⁵. Despite the fact that both armies were finely matched and gave their best performance; Hemu triumphed over the Mughals fighting near Delhi and captured the city. However, Bairam Khan did not remain idle to the situation; on the contrary, he was rather active. It may be observed that his stand erected morale among his army and hence the march towards Delhi started.

Before he could organize it proved too strong for Hemu and he was worsted before he could have time to consolidate⁶. Hemu, the Afghan rose to power and challenged the Mughal empire once more. The last fight between the Mughals and the Afghan forces took place in Panipat on

¹ I. Habib. *A Short History of Mughal India*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 56-89

² E. Abraham. *The Mughal Throne: The Saga of India's Great Emperors*, Phoenix, 2004, pp. 125-156.

³ S. V. Arthur. *Akbar the Great Mogul, 1542-1605*, Oxford University Press, 1917, pp. 111-147.

⁴ R. F. John. *The Mughal Empire*, Cambridge University Press, 1993, pp. 27-67.

⁵ L. Muni. *Akbar*. Vikas Publishing House, 1980, pp. 45-89

⁶ A. Fazal. ترجمہ اردو: سید محمد میاں، 1993، اکبرنامہ (Akbarnama)

5th of November, 1556. Despite the fact that later on, some Mughal soldiers managed to seize Hemu's artillery, the triumph in the battle seemed to be in Hemu's side when an arrow pierced his eye and he fell down. The Afghan army had no central leadership, which led to its rout; the same fate awaited Hemu who was also beheaded. Thus, Akbar had thereby in effect lost his empire and had almost to retake it⁷.

Akber Administrative Reforms

The brush with the rebellion in Gujarat, thus, gave Akbar an opportunity to spare some time and reflect on the administrative issues of the empire. When Islam Shah died the system of administration that was brought in to being by Sher Shah had become rather confusing. Akbar was thus left with no option but to start right from the scratch. Scrutinizing the ruling of Akbar, it is possible to start with one of the major problems that existed in his kingdom – the system of land revenue administration. Sher Shah Suri had a set method that included land measurements and preparation of what is called crop rate or ray to determine the peasants' responsibilities according to the fertility of the land they cultivated.⁸

This schedule was annually transformed into the central schedule of prices. Akbar continued with his policies of Sher Shah. However, when it was realized that fixing a central schedule of prices resulted in the development of great delays it acted to the disadvantage of the peasantry where the fixed prices which represent the higher court price which was generally much higher than the prices prevalent in the countryside. This led with peasants having to sell a larger quantity of their produce to the merchants and ultimately the entrepreneurs.⁹

That is why, first of all, Akbar returned to the annual assessment system. It was the qanungos who were the hereditary owners of the land and also local officers familiar with the conditions of the country were directed to furnish the actual yield, the manner in which it was cultivated, the current prices, etc. But failure is deservedly heavy here also due to the fact that the qanungos were mostly fraudulent and they tried to hide the real yield. The configuration the assessments were performed annually also led to great difficulty for the peasants and for the state. Late in the year 1573, after coming back from Gujarat, Akbar personally tackled the problem of land revenue. From the official of a king to a mere subordinate, the people of the north India were provided with officials called as karoris.¹⁰ For the specimen they collected one crore of dams amounting to Rs. 2,50,000 and they also sorted out the records given by the qanungos. To this Adi made a change after gathering information on produce, local prices and productivity through

⁷ Z. Barani. اردو تراجم، (Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi), 1986، تاریخ فیروز شاہی

⁸ W. André. *Akbar*, Oxford University Press, 2009. pp. 67-70.

⁹ G. Stewart. *The Marathas 1600-1818*, Cambridge University Press, 1993. pp. 45-47.

¹⁰ I. Habib. *Akbar and His India*, Oxford University Press, 1997. pp. 154-158.

results and then he established the dahsala in 1580. This system estimated an average yield of the several crops and the average price during the preceding ten (dah) years. The portion to be funded by the state was put at one third the average produce. This share was expressed in cash by converting it into a money amount based on an average price list compiled over the span of ten years. Therefore, while the produce from one bigha of land was described in terms of the maund, the state demand was translated into equivalent per bigha of land on average prices.¹¹

Then a second refinement was made, Ohlmacher and colleagues observe. Not only local prices were provided, parganas with the same type of productivity were again divided in different assessment circle. Therefore, it was similar to involving the peasant to contribute on the basis of local yield aptitude or local prices levels. To the agricultural organization, this system had several advantages. Having wasted crops in certain areas marked by bamboos interconnectively tied by iron circles, both the peasants and the state knew where they stood. If coppers failed because of natural disasters for instance drought or floods, then the peasants were offered compromise which enabled them to pay less in land revenue. Such a system of measurement and assessment was called Zabti. Akbar applied the Zabti system in the territories which started from Lahore, passed through Allahabad and included Malwa and Gujarat zones. The Zabti system set up in the society along with the dahsala system that was a highly developed type of the forced labor on agriculture.¹²

As for other assessment systems during Akbar's reign, there were several ranging from the Zabti to the short-lived Chehelsem conducted in 1577. The most conventional and perhaps the earliest system was the batai or ghallabakhshi system in which peasants and the state took the produce in proportions that had been decided earlier. The crop division was done especially once the grains were harvested, and after they were thrashed or during the period when the crops were cut and carried in stacks or still remaining in the field. Despite the fact that this system was regarded as fairly, it was necessary to have many honest officials at the time of harvest, or, maybe, when crops ripened.¹³

Social Cohesion: Interplay of State and Religion

From the fifteenth century, different sovereigns in the South Asia region tried to find ways in which Hindus and Muslims could live in harmony. It was done by providing translated works from Sanskrit both secular and religious into Persian, encouraging local language and literature, and providing policies of religious tolerance that were more accepting. These rulers also

¹¹ S. Chandra. *Medieval India: From Sultanat to the Mughals*, Har-Anand Publications, 1997. pp. 142-146.

¹² S. Bhattacharya. Sachchidananda. *A Dictionary of Indian History*. George Braziller, 1967. pp. 98-100.

¹³ M. Shireen. *The Economy of the Mughal Empire: C. 1595*, Oxford University Press, 1987. pp. 202-206.

assimilated the Hindus into more of the important aspects of the court and the military.¹⁴At the same time, a vigorous process, guided by famous Sufis like Ramananda, the founder of the new religious movement, inspired, among others, by Kabir, Chaitanya, and Nanak, described the unity of Hinduism and Islam. From these saints it can be gotten that they were advocating for a religion of affection and dedication as opposed to one of dogma and biblical literalism. Thus, their teachings made it possible for liberal thought to emerge and being a campaign against the established religious dogma.¹⁵Akbar, being born and raised in this environment, embarked on many reformist measures as soon as he ascended the throne. His first major act was to withdraw the poll tax and the jiziyah that were payable by those resident in the Muslim countries. Albeit considering the tax was not a very high one, it provoked distinction in the subjects applied to their religion, something that Akbar would not have permitted. Apart from this Akbar also abolished the pilgrim tax on the bathing at such places as Prayag and Banaras. He also refrained from converting the captives to the Islamic religion. These measures set the foundations for the empire of equality that accepted rights for each person regardless of his religion.¹⁶To show his respect to liberal values, Akbar also brought competent Hindus into the noble circles of the Mughal Empire. The majority of these were Rajput rajas who allied with Akbar through marriage; nevertheless, he offered reserved positions to other capable persons. One of the most significant of such people as appointment was Todar Mal who specialized in the field of revenue administration to become a diwan. There was also Birbal, who eventually achieved a very good friendship with the emperor. Other names were Rai Patr Das also known as Rai Bikramajit and he also received his due credit for his work.¹⁷Hence, the framework of governance in Akbar's reign can be characterized by certain changes in the direction of the evolved perspective of an integrated society. What made his policies effective are not only the improvements of the Mughal's bureaucracy but also the religious tolerance for the various communities of the subcontinent.¹⁸From the variety of positions taken in this paper it might be concluded that assimilation of Hindu subjects under Akbar was articulated through a vast and complex conception of sovereignty which was spelled out by the official and the biographer of Akbar – Abu'l Fazl. From the writings of Abul Fazl it can be ascertained that Akbar's ideas regarding kingship were influenced by both the Timurids, the Persians and the indigenious Indian ideas and style of conceptualization. At the heart of this idea was the principle of DIVINE ILLUMINATION (farr-i-izadi) which effectively placed the ruler on the divine level of revelation where one did not need the approval of priests and mullahs. This divine charter mean the ruler had to provide among others paternal affection to all subjects regardless of their faith in

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

order to serve everybody's needs; the ruler had to always trust God referred to as the supreme ruler.¹⁹ Another aspect was the precise adherence to the social order and people's non-interference in the affairs of others, both in terms of ranks and professions; suppression of sectarian tensions. This approach towards the governance was best symbolized by the 'sulh-i-kul', which translated as: 'peace with all'.

Akbar's religion and philosophy knowledge also played a role in his decisions making process. In the first place, he was strictly conformable to the Wahabite creed, in matters of superstition reverencing the Tookdee, or chief priest, Abdun Nabi Khan, once deputed to carry the slippers of the sadr-us-sadur (chief qazi) of the Provinces. However, his interest in the local religions and in particular embracing of mysticism that was rather popular in the India of the time influenced the change of his views gradually. Contemplative practices and solitary prayers indicating how he was turning religiously more liberal and in search of something beyond the authority of divine, Malik's profound faith and devotion is doing the prayer on a large flat stone just outside his palace at Agra.²⁰ Privileges included the cessation of the jizyah and the pilgrim tax and these signified Akbar's proven concern for religious tolerance. He kept around himself a group of liberal scholars, the most significant of whom were Abul Fazl and his brother Faizi, who in addition to their victimized father, promoted principles similar to Mahdawi, as a result of which they were also denounced. The other influential person of the court was the Brahmin Mahesh Das, who later received the title of Raja Birbal and became one of Akbar's most intimate friends.²¹

Towards this end, in 1575, Akbar built the Ibadat Khana or the Hall of Prayer in Fatehpur Sikri his newly emerging capital. This venue was first designed for theological and spiritual discourse between the select group of Muslim scholars, ascetics and other intelligent court personnel. This forum is a perfect reflection of Akbar's overall rheological aim, which, as he himself stated, was to determine the fundamentals of true religion and present them to people. However, the first hearings, which included meetings of Muslim clerics, were characterized by unrest and overt conflict – the mullah spoke in turn, arguing with each other, and affording themselves the freedom of pride in their education. This behaviour made Akbar disillusioned and pushed him even further away from the traditional religious authorities.²² Akbar's conversion to new religious bent and his attempts to absorb people of various cultural and color into his empire was one of the biggest paradigm shift of his times. The polices that he launched created the base for social

¹⁹ S. Chandra. *Medieval India: From Sultanat to the Mughals*, Har-Anand Publications, 1993, pp. 120-126

²⁰ J. F. Richards. *The Mughal Empire*, Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp 156-158.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

integration and harmonious society, which construe his liberal vision of the government. Akbar's reign therefore can be summarized as a chapter in India's political and cultural consolidation or unification with a remarkable tolerance for the diversities that prevailed in the country.²³

Akbar went a long way in liberalizing the religious attitude when he invited people of all faiths in the Ibadat Khana including Christian, Zoroastrian, Hindu, Jain and even the atheists. This extension of the Ibadat Khana led to the introduction of new topics for the discussion and issues that questioned the basic principles of Islam namely, the infallibility of the Quran and the prophet hood of Mohammad, the concept of resurrection and the nature of God. These debates worried the theologians to Extent that there were rumors that Akbar intended to leave Islam behind. According to the opinion of the famous historian R. E. Tripathi, "people of different faiths interpreted the patience and open-mindedness of Akbar in many ways The Ibadat Khana was, instead of gaining credits, becoming increasingly discredited."²⁴In the middle of this period; an inquiry into the corrupt and tyrannous misrule of the chief Sadr Abdun Nabi in the affairs of the charitable lands known as 'madad-i-maash' disclosed glaring instances of perjury. Abdun Nabi had become rich through certain corrupt means and is noted to have been a more active bigot in this regard by having fledgling Shias and a Brahman from Mathura put to death for suicidal ideologies. At first, Akbar reduced Abdun Nabi's authority and ordered the sadrs in every province to manage the charitable lands. Later on Abdun Nabi got transferred and was appointed to work in Mecca as a performer of HAJ nor only him but many employees.²⁵ At the same time about 1580 revolt occurred in the eastern parts of the Mughal Empire. Many qazis (Islamic jurists) released fatwas regarding the heresy of Akbar to become undesired in the observation of the Muslims. Akbar reacting in the competent manner put an end to rebellion and gave severe punishments to the involved qazis. Despite the open propaganda against his office and authority, in order to tighten the reigns around the religious scholars, Akbar announced what is termed as the mahzar. This document established that when both the mujtahids, the Islamic jurists qualified to interpret the Quran, would differ as to the true meaning of a passage, it was lawful for Akbar to select the meaning that was conducive to the well-being of the nation and conducive to orderliness thus making Akbar as a "most just and wise king" have a status in the eyes of God that is higher than that of the mujtahids. Besides this, the declaration also added and made it clear that any new order which will be from Akbar and which is in accordance with the provision of Quran as well as in the interest of the nation, it must be followed and obeyed by

²³ M. Alam. *The Languages of Political Islam in India: c. 1200–1800*, University of Chicago Press, 2004, p. 98

²⁴ S.Subrahmanyam. *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India 1500-1650*, Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 110

²⁵ K. Roy. *The Mughal Empire*, Oxford University Press, 2012, pp.141-145

all.²⁶ Contrary to what people believe, this mahzar, frequently called the ‘Decree of Infallibility’, did not enable Akbar to make any religious decree which he fancied; instead, it entailed that he was to decide between two or more interpretations which jurists provided when they disagreed. Boasting the empire was in a state of religious warfare where Shia’s, Sunni’s and Mahdawis were at large fighting and killing, Akbar made the proclamation to bring about religious harmony and order. Thus the role of mahzar was to bring law and order situation into religious aspect of the Mughal Empire, and to make sure that unlike many monarchs of his time Akbar kept following the path of religious tolerance.²⁷

A further patience and tolerance to the kaffir’s rights were clearly depicted on Akbar’s policies and his actions in general, such as the sulh-i-kul which translates as the everlasting peace, for the overall society without discrimination. We must appreciate his tolerance of adherents of different religions and social and organizational assimilation of different segments of the population into the system of the empire administration that was extraordinary for the epoch. Thus, through policy of tolerance of religions and cultures, Akbar not only consolidated the Mughal state but also contributed to building a strong and united Indian society.²⁸ Akbar's engagement with diverse religious leaders and scholars gradually led him to a profound realization: Each religion had its dogmas and rituals but they did have similar fundamentals that were neg limped by sectarian striving. They both corroborate the account of chronicler Badayuni in which the examined conviction reinforced Akbar’s perspective regarding the presence of reasonable and valuable ideas within various religions. Thus, the philosophical shifts in Akbar’s religious perspective could be best summed up by his Deïsm that required was faith in a monotheistic and divine light converging in all religion through different détours. This perspective made him stress the good sides of the numerous religions, thus encouraging the tolerant behavior of followers, which was important for the prosperity of his empire.²⁹ Badayuni, a critic of Akbar’s religious reforms stated that due to Akbar’s exposition to different thinking the latter left Islam and created a new religion containing admixtures of Hinduism Christianity, Zoroastrianism and other similar religions. Nevertheless, the current history scholars usually dismiss this as an exaggeration. Thus, it is possible to conclude that there are no grounds to argue that Akbar planned to establish or propound a new religion systematically. However, what Akbar did was

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ A. Muzaffar and S. Subrahmanyam. *The Mughal State, 1526-1750*. Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 201-226.

²⁸ S. S. Rahman. *Mughal Relations with the Ottoman Empire*, Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh Muslim University, 1999, pp. 134-156.

²⁹ T. Sen. *Kublai Khan and the Indian Ocean Region: A Study in the History of Diplomacy and Maritime Trade*, Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography, 2006, pp. 45-67.

not solely fitting a universalist perspective of any spiritual figure, but a specific and systematic one which was called tauhid-i-Ilahi or the Divine Monotheism.³⁰

The tauhid-i-Ilahi was an order such like as the Sufi orders though distinguished from them by the fact that. Instead of being a new religion, it was a way of worshipping and it entailed monism and individual worship. Members were required to get Akbar's permission to join and initiated in so-called 'buffet calls,' usually on Sundays. During this ceremony the initiates would fall to the ground and touch their head to Akbar, who then placed a shast, which is a formula, and the initiate is to ponder on it. This rather formula used the phrase which was dear to Akbar, Allah-o-Akbar (God is Great). Meat especially during birthdays is prohibited while initiates are required to engage in charity works on their birthdays. The tauhid-i-Ilahi had no concept of scriptures, there were no priesthood, no specific shrines and no complicated ceremonies and sacraments with the exception of the initiation ceremony.³¹

Thus, one must not mix the tauhid-i-Ilahi with the fact that Akbar developed a group of loyal nobility with full dedication to his person and policies. The 22 men whom Badayuni recommended to this inner circle covenanted to give up property, life, and honor and even traditionally mandated religious law, implying a kind of spiritual broadmindedness that is more characteristic of Sufism rather than the 'in-the-face' texts of the Quran and Hadith. Even though Badayuni has written critical remarks about Akbar, it becomes evident that Akbar's endeavors of creating a corporate body were purposeful to ensure the allegiance of the king's most trusted men, who advocated sulh-i-kul style of life.³² However, the tauhid-i-Ilahi never found much favour with Akbar's nobles, certainly the Hindus among them, with the exception of Birbal. Thus, although the membership of the order continued to be small with about eighteen core members, thousands were treated as disciples of Akbar. It was noted that Akbar never forced people into embracing the tauhid-i-Ilahi nor did he resort to bribery. The two vice directors aimed to create a loyal following that would maintain his desired state of religious tolerance and equality of all religions.³³ Some of the orthodox elements present at the court like Badayuni did not support Akbar's policies regarding mixture of the Hindu and the Islamic traditions. They perceived his actions as revolutionary because his steps, they considered as plots to challenge mainstream Islamic practices. Badayuni blamed the tauhid-i-Ilahi to the courtiers who Avicenna largely influenced Akbar and made him think that he was the insan-i-kamil of the period.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ G. J. L. Jos *The Rise of the Indo-Afghan Empire, c. 1710-1780*, BRILL, 1995, pp. 34-78.

Badayuni writes that it was under their influence that Akbar brought in the kissing of the floor before the sovereign which was hitherto done only before idols.³⁴

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study established that Akbar's religious policies, in particular, the tauhid-i-Ilahi aimed at deep rooting of pluralistic tolerance and respect for all people irrespective of religion. Thus, recognising virtues in all sides of all the known religions, and encouraging people to respect each other and to tolerate, Akbar aimed at creating the unified state. Innovative governance: The above efforts were uncommon during his interregnum thus depicting his innovative nature. Youths: He fully understood the religious diversity of his empire during his interregnum. They cause considerable controversy in orthodox circles, yet the measure were indispensable in transforming and consolidating the structures of that Mughal state.³⁵

The examination of tauhid-i-Ilahi and related practices in Akbar's court, also demonstrate one of the many significant turning points in the Mughal government and the social regulations. Even though the organisation known as the tauhid-i-Ilahi ceased with Akbar's reign, its ideals were carried on by the next Mughal rulers as well as the social-political structure of the empire. Although Jahangir followed the practice for some time of enrolling murids (disciples) and issuing them shast (spiritual formula), the process of a deeper institutionalization of personal loyalty felt towards the emperor, an idea initiated by Akbar, was its enduring intervention. This loyalty was not an abstract one because it was institutionally woven into the governing system to ensure that among the nobles a feeling like personal obligation towards the emperor was induced.³⁶ Even though tauhid-i-Ilahi was no more practiced, the generic political philosophy of Akbar's rule, namely sulh-i-kul which can be translated as the 'peace of all', continued to be followed by the Mughal Empire. This principle stressed on the coexistence of and peaceful relations between various religious groups, which was followed by later Mughal kings. In the eyes of the nobles most of them were not inclined to support political and social assertiveness of puritanical religious orthodoxy least of all in a tradition that was formulated by Akbar initiated by himself as a sheer pluralist.³⁷

Thus, it can be concluded that Akbar's activities associated with the implementation of sulh-i-kul did not remain limited to the political-technique but expanded into social, cultural and even philosophical planes of Muslim India. He founded a major translation office that was to translate

³⁴ S. Annemarie. *The Empire of the Great Mughals: History, Art and Culture*, Reaktion Books, 2004, pp. 56-78.

³⁵ F. E. Banks. *Nur Jahan: Empress of Mughal India*, Oxford University Press, 1993, pp. 45-78.

³⁶ K. Roy. *The Mughal Empire*, Oxford University Press, 2012, pp. 141-145.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

masterpieces from Sanskrit, Arabic and Greek and other languages into Persian, the Mughal court's language. It also meaningful to state; that this initiative enabled people to make the classics closer and realize the concept of culture as a synthesis. The first works translated were Singhasan Battisi, the Atharva Veda, the Bible and then the major works, the Mahabharata, the Gita, the Ramayana and other works which were considered to be literary and sciences such as Panchatantra and geographical work. Persian was also used for a Quran translation probably for the first time in Akbar's reign thus affirming his inclusive ideology.³⁸ Besides these, Akbar practiced several social and educational reforms to provide a new dimensions, to the society with an intention to make is more scientific. In matters of social justice, he tried to eliminate sati or the burning of the widows, this was however allowed if the woman himself demanded it and this she had to do willingly. He did not allow the practice of burning the young widows who had not come into union consummation with their husband and he made widow remarriage legal. Akbar also opposed polygamy except in the cases of infertility of the first wife and also raised the legal age of marriage to girls fourteen and for boys sixteen. Limits were placed on wine and spirit sales because public morality was also to be regulated.³⁹

Indeed, Akbar's educational reforms were progressive, and he allowed teaching of moral characters, mathematics, and science agriculture geometry astronomy government I logic and history. The intended purpose of this curriculum revision was to prepare for enlightened and rational human beings who could be useful in the society. Akbar's continuing and extensive encouragement of literature, music, painting, poetry and other forms of arts made his court culture as one of the most active and advanced centers of learning and creativity. It must be noted that his court housed the famous navaratna, or the nine treasures, which were the most skilled persons in various areas.⁴⁰ Akbar turned Mughal state into an organization which was secular, liberal, and progressive in social sphere and incorporated people in to mainstream to advance their civilization. Thus, it is possible to note that, agreeing in general with J. Infamous, Akbar was a relatively tolerant ruler, who created quite suitable conditions for the empire: religious tolerance, administrative reforms and even the support of artists and scientists. The stress that was placed on the orthopraxy of religion in the preceding systems of rule saw poor score on the aspect of inclusiveness. Thus, several components of the Non-Barbarian policy persisted after Akbar's death, shaping the political and cultural history of India in the post-Mughal period.

³⁸ A. Muzaffar and S. Subrahmanyam. *The Mughal State, 1526-1750*. Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 134-145.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

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