

TEMPLE DESTRUCTION AND THE GREAT MUGHALS' RELIGIOUS POLICY IN NORTH INDIA: A Case Study of Banaras Region, 1526-1707

Parvez Alam

Department of History,
Banaras Hindu University,
Varanasi, India, 221005
parvezprince33@gmail.com

Paper received: 07 February 2018
Paper revised: 15 – 23 May 2018
Paper approved: 11 July 2018

ABSTRACT

Banaras also known as Varanasi (at present a district of Uttar Pradesh state, India) was a sarkar (district) under Allahabad Subah (province) during the great Mughals period (1526-1707). The great Mughals have immortal position for their contributions to Indian economic, society and culture, most important in the development of Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb (Hindustani culture). With the establishment of their state in Northern India, Mughal emperors had effected changes by their policies. One of them was their religious policy which is a very controversial topic though is very important to the history of medieval India. There are debates among the historians about it. According to one group, Mughals' religious policy was very intolerance towards non-Muslims and their holy places, while the opposite group does not agree with it, and say that Mughals adopted a liberal religious policy which was in favour of non-Muslims and their deities. In the context of Banaras we see the second view. As far as the destruction of temples is concerned was not the result of Mughals' bigotry, but due to the contemporary political and social circumstances. Mostly temples were destroyed during the war time and under political reasons. This study is based on primary Persian sources and travelogues, perusal study of Farman (decrees), and modern works done on the theme. Besides this, I have tried to derive accurate historical information from folklore, and have adopted an analytical approach. This article showed that Mughals' religious policy was in favour of Pundits (priests), Hindu scholars and temples of Banaras; many ghats and temples were built in Banaras with the full support of Mughals. Aurangzeb made many grants both cashes and lands to priests and scholars of Banaras.

Keywords: Religious policy, farman, pundit, temples, Kashi Vishvanath and Aurangzeb

INTRODUCTION

Banaras also known as Kashi and Varanasi, at present is a district of Uttar Pradesh state. It is a semi moon shaped city situated on the left bank of the river Ganges. In the Ancient time it was called Kashi and the capital of this region was Varanasi. During the medieval period Kashi became popular by the name of Banaras which is derived from Varanasi (Banarasidas, 1981: 101), actually it is the Sanskrit form of Banaras (Cunningham, 1871: 437). Since time immemorial Banaras has been the holiest city among the

seven sacred cities of Hinduism and Jainism, and also played a remarkable role in the development of Buddhism. Banaras as one of the veritable cities of India, its society, culture and economic development continues to attract a great deal of attention of historians cutting across its time framework since it enjoys a mythological cosmic popularity for religious and pilgrimage presence. The history of this city can be traced as early as in the beginning of the *Janpada* time (1200 BC- 600 BC) to till today as the city has a vibrant culture, society and living tradition.

According to Irfan Habib, "Religion has been an undoubted component of human civilization in its various stages of evolution." (Habib, 2007: 142). It played its significant role in acting on behalf of the ruling classes; however, every dynasty had ruled according to the contemporary tradition. If we observe closely all phenomena, religion has been a means to get political power through alluring the notions of the people even now. After their victory in Northern India, Mughal emperors had effected changes by their policies. One of them was their religious policy which is a very controversial topic although it is very important to the history of medieval India. There are debates among the historians about it. One view is that being a Muslim ruler, the Islamic law was dominant in the shaping of religious policy and there was no room for other religions' law. Except Akbar all rulers were intolerant to non-Muslims, and their holy places. Aurangzeb was more bigot ruler than others; due to his partial religious policy Hindus, Jats, Satnamis, Marathas and others raised rebellious flag against the Mughal empire that eventually caused the decline of the Mughal empire (Sarkar, 1912-1924; Lane-Poole, 1924; Sharma, 1940; Nehru, 1946; Husain, 2002; Sharma, 2017). On the contrary the opposite view is that the entire field of the personal law of their subjects were covered by the Hindu and Muslim laws over which they had no authority to change. The emperors, however, called themselves agents of Islam; even this left a very wide margin of freedom to the citizens in theory and in practices. The Mughals ruled over India according to Indian tradition, and did not try to impose Islamic law on their subjects which were mostly non-Muslims (Faruki, 1935; Ali, 1966 and 2006; Chandra, 1969; Truschke, 2017).

Banaras was the most sacred place of Hinduism, abode of Brahmans and Vedantic learning during the medieval period as French traveller Francois Bernier (1620-1688) who visited to Banaras in 1665 says, "The town of Benares, seated on the Ganges, in a beautiful situation, and in the midst of an extremely fine and rich country, may be considered the

general school of the Gentiles. It is the Athens of India; whither resort the Brahmans and other devotees" (Bernier, 1916: 334). Here studying the controversial region Banaras, witnessed of vicissitude in religious life due to the Mughal religious policy, the destruction of Vishvanath temple and the construction of Gyanvapi mosque, is look into how was the religious situation of Banaras during the Mughal period; Were Hindu and Muslim inhabited peacefully together in the city; How many *ghats*, temples and monasteries were constructed; How slightly changed Mughal religious policy in Aurangzeb's reign; What were the causes of temple destruction of Banaras, and to find out the causes of the demolition of Vishvanath temple? In this paper an attempt is made to answer these questions. In spite of this, an endeavour is made to show that Mughals were not intolerant; they run the state with the support and corporate of the people of India belonging to different castes and religions; they maintained the state policy similar to everyone without any discrimination of caste and creed; they ruled according to contemporary situations whichever were in the favour of the state. Whatsoever works have been done on Banaras mentioned below does not reasonably shed light on these aspects.

The first scholarly work on Banaras was done by M. A. Sherring (1826-80) who wrote *Benares, the Sacred City of the Hindus in Ancient and Modern times* in 1868. His study mainly focused on religious and cultural life of Banaras during the nineteenth century with occasional accounts of ancient history. Sherring's next book on Banaras was *Hindu Tribes and Castes as Represented in Benares* published in three volumes during 1872-1881. In this book he has tried to describe castes and tribes of Hindu inhabited in the nineteenth century of Banaras. E. B. Havell's *Benares, the Sacred City* (1905) described religious and learning aspects of Hindus, Jains and Buddhists of ancient Banaras. Besides this, Havell also presented a vivid picture of temples, *ghats*, and rites and rituals of nineteenth century Banaras. He has totally overlooked medieval Banaras. Motichandra (1985) wrote *Kashi Ka Itihas* in 1962

which delineated political history of medieval Banaras. He presents the military conquest of Banaras by the Muslims and in this process how the temples of Banaras were destroyed. However, he is not substantiating his argument with the appropriate contemporary primary sources. He only mentioned temple destruction but not analysed the reasons. For a historian it is very difficult to accept his version because of paucity of relevant sources in his writings. Kuber Nath Sukul's *Varanasi Vaibhav* (1977) and Diana L. Eck's *Banaras: City of Light* (1982) proposed that there were many troubles and conflicts in Banaras during the Muslim rule were not good for Hindu institutions. K. Chandramouli (2006) wrote *Luminous Kashi to Vibrant Varanasi* in 2006. He focussed on Banaras trade in brief, silk, arts and crafts, painting and music. We find some glimpses of economic condition of Banaras in the writing entitled *Subah of Allahabad under the great Mughals*, written by S. N. Sinha in 1974. Tarannum Fatma Lari's book *Textiles of Banaras: Yesterday and Today* (2010) sought the historical development and technical aspects of Banarasi saris. Jaya Jaitly's book *Woven Textiles of Varanasi* (2014) shed light on textiles. Madhuri Desai's work on *Banaras Reconstructed: Architecture and Sacred Space in a Hindu Holy City* published in 2017; it presents the history, building and its architectural features of Banaras from 1590 to 1930. The iconic Hindu centre in Northern India Banaras was reconstructed materially and imaginatively, and embellished with temples, monasteries, palaces and *ghats*. She argued that many temples, monasteries and *ghats* were constructed during the Mughal period.

Temple desecration and destruction has been a controversial and hot topic among the historians after the destruction of Baburi mosque of Ayodhya in 1992. Following this shameful happening, Richard M. Eaton wrote a monograph entitled *Temple Desecration and Muslim States in Medieval India* in 2000. In this book he raises some questions regarding to temple destruction: In fact what temples were desecrated or destroyed during the period of medieval India? When and

by whom? How and for what purpose? In those days temples were patronized by the ruler and associated with the ruler, and deity placed in the royal temple was considered as a co-sovereign. So, if a ruler defeated another ruler, it was necessary work for the victorious king that he had to destroy not only the enemy king and his army but also the deity located in the royal temple. If the victorious king did not desecrate or destroy the royal temple of enemy, there would be chances of uprising because the locals by assembling around the old deity could stand against the conquering ruler. This was a process of sweeping away of all previous political sovereignty. Eaton says,

“When such authority was vested in a ruler whose own legitimacy was associated with a royal temple—typically one that housed an image of a ruling dynasty's state-deity, or *rashtra-devata* (usually Vishnu or Shiva) - that temple was normally looted, redefined, or destroyed, any of which would have had the effect of detaching a defeated raja from the most prominent manifestation of his former legitimacy. Temples that were not so identified or temples formerly so identified but abandoned their royal patrons and thereby rendered politically irrelevant, were normally left unharmed. Such was the case, for example, with the famous temples at Khajuraho south of the middle Gangetic Plain, which appear to have been abandoned by their Chandella royal patrons before Turkish armies reached the area in the early thirteenth century” (Eaton, 2004: 31).

Such act in fact started in India seven centuries before the invasion of Turks. Eaton lists the Hindu kings from various dynasties as the Pallavas, the Chalukyas, the Cholas, the Pandyas, and the Rashtrakutas were indulge in this practice. Hence this established pattern was followed and continued by the Turk invaders, Delhi Sultans and later on by the great Mughals (Eaton, 2004: 35-46).

The act of temple demolition also occurred in Indo-Muslim state if any Hindu officer showed sign of uprising and disloyalty, the state without any delay attacked on the territory of that officer defeated him and destroyed the royal temple associated with him. Contrary to temples lying within the kingdom were considered as state property and it was the duty of state to protect

these temples, they did so. This practice was in vogue in India before the coming of Mughals who followed the same pattern. When Jahangir marched against his arch enemy Rana Amar Singh of Mewar in 1613, he ordered for the desecration of Varah statue that had been housed in a temple at Pushkar (Ajmer) associated with Rana Amar. Similarly Shah Jahan demolished the grand temple at Orchha in 1635 when the raja revolt against the emperor (Eaton, 2004: 59, 60).

Not only temples were desecrated and demolished but mosques were also face the same fate by Hindus. When rulers or rebellions succeeded in subduing their Muslim counterpart, we see the Hindu parallel of Muslim iconoclasm. Sufi literature of Lahore mentioned that when Mahi Pal sacked Lahore, many Muslims were killed and mosques were demolished, and Hindu temples were built in its place (Ahmad, 2002: 89). According to Abbas Khan Sarwani, the Hindu landlords in Malwa and the regions around Delhi destroyed mosques and set up temples by the debris of mosques in the fifteenth century (Elliot and Dowson, 1872: 403-404). It is said about Rana Kumbha that he captured many Muslim women and had destroyed a mosque (Ahmad, 2002: 89). Rai Sen, a confederate of Rana Sanga, converted mosques into stables and plastered with cow-dung at Chanderi, Sarangpur and Ranthambore. Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi lamented on the desecration of mosques in the early seventeenth century (Ahmad, 2002: 89). The same practice was practised by the Sikhs and the Jats in the eighteenth century. Jadunath Sarkar says,

“Under Badan Singh the Jats roamed freely over the (Agra) province demolishing houses, gardens and mosques, disfiguring them for the sake of a knob of copper, a piece of marble or a bit of iron” (Sarkar, 1938: 315).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is largely based on the literary texts, and other interrelated documents available in the Persian, Arabic and other local languages. I have consulted the primary Persian sources, travel

accounts and the local sources, and used archive where *faramin* issued by Mughal emperors are kept, in the preparation of this article. Giving the limitation of language, I have tried to make use of various materials translated from original sources to develop my argument. This study is analytical, comparative and corroborative in nature aiming to interrogate different sources with a view to establish the veracity of the facts by scrutinizing different sets of documents. I have also conducted field study in the course of this to verify the existing structures, monuments, archives and libraries to substantiate my argument with reliable evidences.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Banaras before the Coming of the Mughals

Here it would be pertinent to know the entry of Muslims in Banaras. It is said that Mahmud Ghaznavi invaded Banaras twice in 1019 and 1022 (Nevill, 1909: 189). But we find the authentic history of Muslims' entry from the time of Muhammad Ghori who came along with his commander Qutub-ud Din Aibak (1206-1210) who later on laid the foundation of Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526) in 1206. They conquered Banaras which was denominated as a second capital by the Gahadavala rulers who usually gave grants to Brahmins of Banaras, and projected for the construction of temples, after defeating Gahadvala king Jai Chand in the battle of Chandawar in 1194. In the conquering process, there about one thousand temples were destroyed in Banaras region (Elliot and Dowson, 1869: 223). Certainly the number of destroyed temples is exaggerated because when Chinese traveller Hiouen Thsang or Xuanzang (602-664) visited Banaras in seventh century, he mentioned that there were from twenty to more than a hundred temples within the city or the whole region (Desai, 2017: 17, 18). Therefore, when Banaras was kept under a governor after 1194, the settlement of Muslim initiated in this region, while some non-Muslims converted to Islam. After this victory Banaras

remained under the control of Delhi Sultanate and later on the Mughals. During the Delhi Sultanate on the one hand many temples of Banaras were destroyed during the war time, on the other hand we have references that show some temples were built also in Banaras by Delhi sultans such as the rebuilding of the Vishvanath temple in Iltutmish's reign (1211-36) (Motichandra, 1985: 150) and Padmesvara temple during the reign of Alauddin Khilji (1296-1316) (Fuhrer, 1971: 51).

During this time the Bhakti movement was most popular in Banaras. The champions of it like Ramanand (1299-1411), Kabir (1398-1518), Vallabhacharya (1477-1530), Tulsidas (1532-1623) and their disciples who either visited or lived in Banaras influenced the society and culture through their works. They always tried to promote fraternity among the people without any discrimination of caste and creed. But, by and large, Hinduism was most popular religion in Banaras, and *Pundits* (priests) had dominant influence over the Hindus. Ralf Fitch, an English traveller who visited India between 1583- 1591, mentioned that Banaras city was full of the population of "Gentiles" who were the greatest idolaters. "Gentiles" come to this town on pilgrimage from far countries (Ryley, 1899: 103).

Banaras and Mughal Religious Policy

This was the situation in Banaras on the eve of Babur's entry into India. After the victorious battle of Panipat (at present it is in Haryana district) in 1526, Babur started to conquer and to consolidate his newly established empire. In this process, he had to fight against the *Rajputs* of Rajasthan. Before the battle of Khanwa (presently in Bharatpur, Rajasthan) in 1527, he used the term *jihad* for his soldiers who were not willing to fight with *Rajputs* because of two reasons; one, they were homesick and another they had heard of the bravery of the *Rajputs*. However, in the battle of Panipat, he did not use the term *jihad*. So it seems that his proclamation of *jihad* was only to encourage his soldiers. S. R. Sharma pointed out that in Babur's time some temples were destroyed. His one officer named

Hindu Beg converted a temple into mosque at Sambhal (Uttar Pradesh). During the time of occupation Chanderi his *sadr* Shaikh Zain demolished many temples there. Similarly Mir Baqi destroyed the Ayodhya or Saketa (Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh) temple, the birth place of Lord Rama, and constructed a grand mosque in its place in 1528-29 by the order of Babur. Babur was also responsible for the destruction of Jain idols at Urva near Gwalior (Sharma, 1940: 9). However, Sharma's argument related to temple destructions were not supported by the pertinent primary sources. If these examples are true then also it is obvious that all the act of temple destruction occurred only during the war times not in times of peace.

Since Babur was entangled in wars, he did not determine any specific religious policy of his own. After the victory of Awadh in 1529, he appointed Jalal-ud Din Khan Sharqi as the governor of Banaras (Babur, 2014: 652). Suddenly, in a chaotic situation, Babur died. So, his successor Humayun had to face many problems. After conquering the fort of Chunar, Humayun laid siege to Banaras in 1531; it appears that during this time, he went to see the Chaukhandi stupa of Sarnath. To remember this event Govardhan, son of Todar Mal, built an octagonal edifice (*Athapahala Mahal*) at Sarnath in 1589 (Motichandra, 1985: 160). Showing a tolerant policy, Humayun made a grant of 300 acres of land to the Jangambadi *Math* (a monastery of the Jangam sect of the Shaiva of South India) of Banaras through a *farman*. The land grant was situated in Mirzapur district. This original *farman* of Humayun is still preserved in the Jangambadi *Math* of Banaras.

It is obvious that Humayun could not avail of opportunities to get the support of *Rajputs*. Due to ups and downs of situation, he had to leave India in 1540 for some years. When he came back and succeeded to capture Delhi in 1555, he suddenly died in 1556. So, like his father, he also could not get time to determine any specific religious policy. But both knew very well how to

handle the situation in a multi-religious country. Learning from the past and the experience of his predecessors and the demand of the present situation, Akbar the great (1556-1605) introduced a prolific type of tolerant religious policy of his own which helped to establish the Mughal state in India firmly. His religious policy was intimately connected with his own religious views. He realized that truth was an inhabitant of every place. He abolished the pilgrimage tax (It has been the custom of every Muslim ruler of India to realise pilgrimage tax from the every pilgrimage place of non-Muslims) in 1563; behind it his view was as Mountstuart Elphinstone says,

“Although the tax fell on a vain superstition, yet, as all modes of worship are designed for one great Being, it was wrong to cut the devout off from their mode of intercourse with their Maker” (Elphinstone, 1841: 326).

In 1564 *jizyah* (religious tax levied on non-Muslim) was also abolished by Akbar. These acts of Akbar were very revolutionary in those days. It indicates how Akbar was conscious of religious equality among his subjects. Because of his liberal religious policy, a notion of national unification and fraternity between Muslims and non-Muslims developed. Till 1567, Akbar could not give proper attention to Banaras because of his early difficulties. In the same year it is heard that a dilapidated temple was converted into a *madrasah* (college) by the *shiqdar* (governor) of Banaras named Bayazid Bayat. When Akbar came to know about this happening, he dismissed Bayazid, and gave two villages for the allowances of the teachers of this temple (Bayazid Bayat, 1941: 263, 264). Thereafter, Akbar properly gave attention to Banaras. Like his father, he also made a grant of 100 *bighas* of land to the Jangambadi *Math* of Banaras and confirmed an earlier grant made by Humayun (Ansari, 1973: 251, Document I and III).

In fact, Akbar not only permitted the rebuilding of temples, but also sponsored them. Some of the Hindu *Rajputs* of Rajasthan, who were the allies of the emperor, participated actively in the construction of Banaras *ghats* and

temples during Akbar's time. The reconstruction of Vishvanath or Vishveshwar temple was a significant event; Todar Mal rendered in available support through Narain Bhatta to the reconstruction of Vishwanath temple in 1585. He was also responsible in the construction of Draupadikund at Shivapur in 1589 (Motichandra, 1985: 162). Man Singh built many *ghats* (ford) and temples. Manmandir *ghat* is one of the most famous *ghats*, which was constructed by him in ca. 1600 (Sherring, 1975: 42, 43). Ralf Fitch has mentioned that many buildings were built on the bank of the river Ganges; different types of idols made of different kind of materials housed in those buildings which charges were in the hands of Brahmin priest who performed religious rituals (Ryley, 1899: 103-108).

In 1582, Akbar realized the unification of all religions, and introduced a new order that is called in history as *Tauhid-i Ilahi* (the assertion of the unity of God).² We see the influence of this order at Banaras also. A Muslim of Banaras named Gosala Khan who accepted *Tauhid-i Ilahi*. By the courtesy of Abul Fazl (1551-1602), a court historian of Akbar, Gosala Khan got a chance to enter into imperial army (Badauni, 1990 : 418, 419). The birth of Tulsidas in Banaras was a significant event in the history of Banaras during the reign of Akbar and Jahangir. It was the Mughals whose empire 'the freedom of speech' and 'the freedom of writing' existed. The best example is Tulsidas who not only composed *Ramchartimanas* and *Vinaya Patrika* but also to some extent criticised the Mughal emperors, and put the concept of Ram Rajya (the realm of Lord Rama). We find a vivid picture of the contemporary rites, rituals, beliefs and temples of Banaras through *Vinaya Patrika* (Tulsidas, 1956: 31-34). On the basis of the above, we can say that Banaras had reached at the peak of syncretism in the early 17th century.

At the death of Akbar, the Mughal Empire had spread over almost the whole north India, and some parts of south India. Due to Akbar's policies, the Indians started to conceive the Mughals as Indians, not foreigners. So it was necessary for

the next Mughal emperor Jahangir (1605-27) to maintain this notion. Indeed, Jahangir did according to the contemporary condition. He continued Akbar's tolerant religious policy. There was no any discrimination between Muslims and non-Muslims in his empire. After his accession, he issued twelve edicts; one of them was an admonition to high nobles especially in border areas against forcing Islam on any of the subjects of the empire (Mukhia, 2004: 30). Like his father he gave permission to Hindus for the donation, and construction of temples. Jahangir's close friend and vassal Vir Singh Deo Bundela, the ruler of Orchha (1605-1626), donated a gold casing for the pinnacle of the Vishvanath temple of Banaras (Desai, 2017: 43). He also built temples at Muttra or Mathura (birth place of Lord Krishna, Uttar Pradesh), and Bundelkhand (Madhya Pradesh). Reciprocally whenever Jahangir fought against Hindu kings, naturally temples were desecrated and destroyed (Ahmad, 2002: 88).

Jahangir experimented in the simultaneous maintenance of several religions by the state. The construction of more than seventy temples was started in Banaras alone towards the end of his reign; however, all these temples could not be completed when Jahangir died in 1627 (Elliot and Dowson, 1877: 36). At this time, a Central Asian traveller, Mahmud bin Amir Ali Balkhi visited Banaras and was horrified to see a group of twenty three Muslims (former Hindus) who had deserted their religion and turned Hindu, after having fallen in love with Hindu women. For some time, he held their company and questioned them about their mistaken ways. They pointed towards the sky and put their fingers on their foreheads. By this gesture, he understood that they attributed it to Providence (Mukhia, 2004: 39). So, this fascinating story indicates that everybody was free to follow his religion without any fear in Banaras during Jahangir's reign. The English traveller Edward Terry (1590-1660) also described the freedom of religion in Jahangir's reign. According to him, every man had liberty to profess his own religion freely (Foster, 1921: 315). The Italian traveller Pietro Della Valle (1586-1652)

also mentioned that the people of Hindustan live mix together and peacefully in the reign of Jahangir who provided equal opportunities to them in civil and military services (Pietro Della Valle, 1891: 30).

From the beginning of Shah Jahan's reign (1627-58), the orthodox *ulama* (scholars) had tried to get high position in shaping of the state policies, but had not succeeded except for a few. The textbooks often present the picture of Shah Jahan as an orthodox Muslim king, and indeed he did take some pride in calling himself a king of Islam. But he continued the tolerant policy of his grandfather Akbar and father Jahangir. In the thirty years of his reign, he continued to appoint and promote *Rajputs* to high ranks. It is clear that Shah Jahan followed the traditional policy in employing *Rajputs* in state services (Ali, 2006: 201, 202). But as far as the matter of the Hindu temples is concerned, his policy was something different from his grandfather and father. He ordered not to demolish old temples but did not allow the construction of new temples. He embarked on a campaign of complete destruction of the newly constructed Hindu temples. As a result, seventy six temples were destroyed in Banaras (Elliot and Dowson, 1877: 36). This incident is also mentioned by Peter Mundy (1608-67) who had travelled to India during this period (Mundy, 1914: 178).

Shah Jahan did not impose *jizyah*, but he tried to re-impose the pilgrimage tax on non-Muslims. But owing to the persuasion of a Hindu scholar of Banaras named Kavindracharya Sarasvati (1627-70) who wrote a commentary on the *Rigveda* led a deputation to the emperor to request not to re-impose the pilgrimage tax. Accepting his request, Shah Jahan revoked pilgrimage tax on Banaras and Allahabad, and gave his non-Muslim subjects religious liberty (Hasrat, 1953: 112, 115; Motichandra, 1985: 174; Truschke, 2016: 37, 191). This shows that how much Shah Jahan was under the influence of Kavindracharya. Audrey Truschke who investigated the literary, social and political roles of Sanskrit at the Mughal courts in her famous book *Culture of Encounters*

(2016), argues that Kavindracharya, Brahmendra and Purnendra Sarasvati belonging to Brahmin community were famous Sanskrit scholars and leaders of Banaras of Shah Jahan period; they much influenced contemporary literature, social and politics. When Kavindracharya succeeded in the abolishing of pilgrimage tax convincing to Shah Jahan, in the praise of him, there were about seventy scholars composed a book entitled Kavindrachandrodaya (Moonrise of Kavindra). Shah Jahan and his son Dara Shikoh learned from him philosophy, poetry and *Yogavasistha* in Sanskrit language (Truschke, 2016: 50, 191). Most probably because of Kavindracharya the love for Sanskrit literature arose in Dara Shikoh's heart, Shah Jahan also made grants to the pundits of Banaras. During his visit to Banaras in 1665 Francois Bernier writes,

"I passed through Benares, and called upon the chief of the *Pendets*, who resides in that celebrated seat of learning. He is a *Fakire* or Devotee so eminent for knowledge that Chah Jehan (Shah Jahan), partly for that consideration, and partly to gratify the Rajas, granted him a pension of two thousand *roupies*, which is about one thousand *crowns*" (Bernier, 1916: 341).

The latter period of Shah Jahan is remarkable because of his elder son Dara Shikoh (1615-59) who was a supporter of secular law for everyone. Like Akbar the great he was a tolerant and syncretic person. Sufi Saint Mulla Shah Badkhshi (d. 1661) called him *sahib-i qiran-i dil* (the ruler of the realm of heart) (Tara Chand, 1943, cited in Ahmad, 2002: 191). Dara Shikoh's study led him to the conclusion that the difference between Islam and Hinduism was merely verbal and to prove this he wrote a tract called *Majmu-ul Bahrain* (meeting of two oceans). In this book he gave an exposition of the *Vedantic* view of universe and truth. It is clear that he must have derived considerable help from pundits in preparing that book (Ali, 2006, 203). When Dara Shikoh was in Banaras in 1656, he translated fifty two Upanishads into Persian with the help of a large staff of Banaras Pundits. This translation is called *Sirr-i Asrar* or *Sirr-i Akbar* (the great secret) (Bernier, 1916: 323; Ali, 2006: 203). He

also translated a Sanskrit text named *Shatbhumik* (Motichandra, 1985: 173). Such activities denote that how collaboration was between Hindus and Muslims in Banaras.

Aurangzeb and Banaras

It was appearing that Dara Shikoh would be the next Mughal emperor but in the war of succession, Aurangzeb getting the support of the *Rajputs*-notably Rana Raj Singh of Mewar and to some extent Jai Singh Kachhwaha of Amber-defeated Dara Shikoh and acceded to the throne in 1658 (Ratan Singh, 1886: 415-431). There are debates among historians with reference to Aurangzeb's religious policy. S. R. Sharma presented statistics of the Hindu *mansabdars* (grandees) to demonstrate the view that Aurangzeb deliberately worsened the position of Hindus in the administration (Sharma, 1940: 118-128). In response to this view, Athar Ali shows by statistics that the percentage of Hindu *mansabdars* was 22.5% in Akbar's reign, but it increased to 31.6% during Aurangzeb's reign (Ali, 1992: 31). According to Satish Chandra, it increased up to 33% in 1689 (Chandra, 2004: 64). About the re-imposition of *jizyah* in 1679 and the demolition of temples, J. N. Sarkar said that it was the result of Aurangzeb's religious bigotry (Sarkar, vol. III, 1972: 176-185). In response to *jizyah* Satish Chandra says that it marked a deepening political crisis due primarily to the deterioration of the situation in the Deccan. The Rathor war further accentuated it. Another factor in the re-imposition of *jizyah* was the growing unemployment among the clerical members (Chandra, 1969: 336, 337). As far as the matter of the temples demolition was concerned, Zahiruddin Faruqi justified it in the context of political circumstances and necessities. As regards to temples of Banaras, he shows through the differences in dates related to their demolition and the construction of mosques, that all circumstances point to one conclusion that the temples were not demolished due to any general order (Faruki, 1935: 127).

Here, it may be pertinent to know the ideas of Aurangzeb about religion. We can better

understand his view when in reply to a petition requesting the dismissal of non-Muslims from certain posts, he pointed out that religion has no concern with secular business and in matters of this kind bigotry should find no place. Further quoting an *ayat* (verse) of the *Quran*, he says, "You have your religion and I have mine" (Al-Kafirun: 6). Moreover, there is also another *ayat* in the *Quran* which tells us that you have no authority to compel someone for accepting Islam. The *ayat* runs as, "There shall be no compulsion in religion" (Al-Baqarah: 256). According to Audrey Truschke, Islamic teachings and the Mughal tradition admonished Aurangzeb to guard Hindu temples, pilgrimage destinations and the holy men (Truschke, 2017: 102). The matter regarding to temples he followed the statement of *shari'at* (Islamic law) - Neither ancient temples should be torn down nor should new temples be built. As the sources show this order had been applied only to Banaras. We see after having grants and permission many new temples were constructed in the other parts of India under his rule (Eaton, 2004: 56, 57; Eaton, 2014: 184-85, 263; Truschke, 2017: 103-106). Soon, after his accession to the throne, Aurangzeb issued a *farman*, probably in connection with the dispute over the right of holding charges of the ancient temples of Banaras, on February 28, 1659. The *farman* runs as:

"Let Abul Hassan worthy of favour and countenance trust to our royal bounty, and let him know that since in accordance with our innate kindness of disposition and natural benevolence, the whole of our untiring energy and all our upright intentions are engaged in promoting the public welfare and bettering the conditions of all classes, high and low. In accordance with our holy law, we have decided that the ancient temples shall not be overthrown; but that new one shall not be built. In these days of our justice, information has reached our noble and most holy court that certain persons, actuated by rancour and spite, have harassed the Hindu resident in the town of Banaras and a few other places in that neighbourhood and also certain Brahmins, keepers of the temples, in whose charge these ancient temples are, and that they further desire to remove these Brahmins from their ancient office (and this intention of theirs causes distress

to that community), therefore, our Royal Command is that, after the arrival of our lustrous order, you should direct that in future, no person shall in unlawful ways interfere or disturb Brahmins and other Hindus resident in these places, so that they may as before, remain in their occupation and continue with peace of mind to offer up prayers for the continuance of our God given Empire, that is destined to last for all that time. Consider this is an urgent matter." (Dated the 15th of Jumda-s-saniya AH 1069, AD 1658-59) (Jnan Chandra, 1957: 247, 248).³

This *farman* shows three points; first, the Islamic law about temples; second, it repudiates the charge brought against Aurangzeb; third, Aurangzeb was very eager for the protection of Hindus and Brahmins, the keepers of temples, and maintaining peace among his subjects.

According to popular tradition, Aurangzeb gave order for the dismantling of Bindu-Madhav (Vaishnava deity) and Vishvanath or Vishveswara (Shaiva deity) temples in 1669, and built Dharhara or Alamgiri mosque to replace the former while built Gyanvapi mosque to replace the latter. He also renamed the city as "Muhammadabad" which, however, did not become popular (Eck, 1993: 83). Here, we should look into the basic reasons to come across the reality behind issuing such an order by the emperor. Ultimately what happened that Aurangzeb had to go against the *farman* of 1659? There are some following views about the demolition of Vishvanath and other temples of Banaras:

First view is that it was reported to the emperor on 9th April, 1669 that the Brahmins of Sindh, Multan and especially of Banaras were engaged in teaching unholy books in their temples and schools, where not only the Hindus but also Muslims used to flock to learn knowledge and teaching. After knowing this fact, orders were issued to all governors to destroy the temples lying within the empire (Khan, 1947: 51, 52). De Graaf heard of this order for at that time he was in Hugli, Calcutta (Orme, 1805: 250). J. N. Sarkar perceived the above meaning of *Maasir-i Alamgiri* with which Richard M. Eaton is not agreed. Actually, J. N. Sarkar misinterpreted the above passage. Eaton's translation runs as:

“Orders respecting Islamic affairs were issued to the governors of all provinces that the schools and places of worship of the irreligious be subject to demolition and that with the utmost urgency the manner of teaching and the public practices of the sects of these misbelievers be suppressed” (Khan, text, 81; Eaton, 2004: 62, 65).

Eaton argues that no general order was issued to the demolition of schools or places of worship but the point is that they should be subject to dismantling. Before taking the action of temple dismantling governors were required to go through exploration (Sinha, 1974: 65-68; Eaton, 2004: 62).

Further Eaton tells us that not due to the above reason Vishvanath temple was destroyed, but in fact the cause behind it was different. It has been mentioned earlier that whoever revolt or show the sign of rebellion or disloyalty to the state, it was cogent work of the state to suppress him and destroyed the royal temple belonging to him. A revolt arose among landholders in Banaras in 1669; some of them it is said to have helped to Maratha ruler Shivaji who lately escaped from royal imprisonment. It was suspected and assumed that in this work Raja Jai Singh, the great grandson of Raja Man Singh who rebuilt Vishvanath temple of Banaras during the reign of Akbar the great, assisted Shivaji. Aurangzeb had to order for temple demolition under this circumstance (Eaton, 2004: 61). In a similar way we see that when Jat raised the flag of rebellion against the Mughal in Mathura and its neighbouring areas, and killed the patron of the mosque, Aurangzeb gave permission for the destruction of the Keshav Deva temple, and construction of an *Eid-gah* in Mathura (Khan, 1947: 57-61; Eaton, 2004: 61). Likewise in 1679 at the time Aurangzeb was entangled in war with the *Rothores* of Marwar (Jodhapur), he gave an order to the wrecking of various temples of Rajasthan of those *Rajaput* Rajas who were united to the enemies of Aurangzeb. Temples of Khadela patronised by obstinate chieftains, temples of Marwar patronised by a Raja who was strong partisan of prince Dara Shikoh, temples of Udaipur and

Chittor patronised by Rana Raj Singh were pulled down (Eaton, 2004: 61).

Another view is that in those days the practice of *Kashi karvat* system was in vogue in Banaras. There was a sacred and renowned well situated just to the east of the Vishvanath temple. In addition to the vertical opening, there was a passage leading down to the water (the river Ganges) that was used by scores of devout Hindus. In medieval Banaras, at the instigation of Pandas, pilgrims desirous of getting instant salvation jumped into the well to meet death by falling on a blade positioned there. It was misused by some immoral priests for material and sexual desires. This made Aurangzeb take action against the *Brahmin* community and Hindu temples in Banaras. This story is mentioned by Alexander Hamilton (1688-1723) (Hamilton, 1930: 13). M. A. Sherring also referred to one such incident in which a fanatic offered himself in sacrifices to Shiva, the God of the well (Sherring, 1975: 65, 66).

There is a third version. According to Bishama Narain Pandey, when Aurangzeb was passing through Banaras on his way to Bengal, the Hindu Rajas requested him to stay here to visit Vishvanath temple. Accepting the request Aurangzeb ordered army pickets to stay at Mughalsarai. The *Ranis* (queens) made a journey to take their dip in the Ganges and went to pay their homage to Vishvanath temple. After offering *puja* (prayer), except the maharani of Kutch, all the *Ranis* returned. When Aurangzeb came to know, he sent his senior officers to investigate the issue. Ultimately, they found that the statue of Lord Ganesha, which was fixed in the wall, was movable one. When the statue was moved, they saw a flight of stairs that led to the basement. They found missing *Rani* dishonoured and crying, and deprived of all her ornaments. The basement was just beneath Lord Shiva's seat. Demanding justice by Rajas (kings), Aurangzeb ordered to demolish the temple and arresting the *pandas* (Pandey, 1987: 44, 45). B. N. Pandey mentioned this point based on documentary evidence which he got through Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya's famous book *The Feathers and the Stones*. Koenraad

Elest sought some holes in this story. There is no reference to show that Aurangzeb made any journey to Bengal or nearby Banaras; it was not the way of Aurangzeb to march with *Rajput Ranis*; by which way the *Rani* disappeared in the presence of guards (Elest, 2002).

We see a forth account that is something similar to above story. In 1987, Abdul Bismillah wrote a novel named *Jhini-Jhini Bini Chadariya* dealt with the condition of Banaras' weavers. In this novel a character named Rauf uncle said a story which seems to have been told to him by his ancestors. This story is related to the construction of Gyan Vapi mosque. He narrates:

There was a great moneylender in Kashi whose name was Gyan Chandra. He had a beautiful and young daughter named Vapi. One day, she went to Vishvanath temple to offer prayer; but there she was raped and killed by the *Pandas* (priests). On this happening, Gyan Chand wrote a letter to the emperor Aurangzeb and requested him to demolish the Vishvanath temple because inside of this temple there is a basement and tunnel which is connected to the river Ganges; there *Pandas* not only raped women but killed and threw them through tunnel into the Ganges. After hearing this appeal, Aurangzeb at once sent his army to Banaras that encamped nearby Lallapur, and a colony was set up there which is called Aurangabad. This army destroyed the temple and built a mosque on that spot, and named it Gyanvapi mosque because Gyan Chand and Vapi played a key role in all happening. It is said when the temple was demolished and Gyanvapi mosque was built there, a Persian knowing Brahmin composed this *shair* on this occasion:

شودببین کرامت بتخانه من ای شاه، گرچه خراب می
خانه خدا گردد

Babeen karamat-i Butkhanah-i man ye Shah-
Garcheh Kharab mi Shavad Khanah-i Khuda
gardad

O emperor! See the miracle of my *Butkhanah* (idol temple), if it is destroyed, turn into the house of *Khuda* (God) (Bismillah, 1987: 76, 77).

A fifth version supports the political motives behind the order against the temples. K. N. Panikkar argued that there was a nexus between Sufi rebels and pundits of the temple. That is why to break the nexus between the two Aurangzeb

ordered the destruction of the temples (Elest, 2002).

Ganj-i Arshadi gives a different view about the demolition of the temples. According to it, a communal riot that occurred in 1669 in Banaras caused the demolition of Banaras' temples (Faruki, 1935: 127-28).⁴ Similar example of riot between Hindus and Muslims we find from the District Gazetteer of Banaras occurred in 1809; the Hindus destroyed about 50 mosques including that of Gyanvapi mosque (Nevill, 1909: 207, 208). So, it can be surmised that communal riot would have been one of the causes of temple dismantling.

It is a matter of great surprise that a Hindu writer named Sujan Rai who wrote the famous book *Khulasat-ut Tawarikh* in 1695, writing about Banaras he did not mention the demolition of any temple in Banaras, though giving an account of Mathura he said that the shrine of Keshav Rai was destroyed by the order of Aurangzeb.

So, on account of the above noted aspects, it can be said that it is very difficult to find out one reason that was responsible for the demolition of Vishvanath and other temples of Banaras. But it can be surmised that the act of temple demolition took place due to the contemporary socio and political circumstances, not the discriminatory religious policy of Aurangzeb. According to time and situation his policy slightly changed. We see on one hand he grants to temples, on the other hand gave order for the demolition of temples. The sources show that throughout his reign Aurangzeb issued a number of grants and lands in the favour of Hindu priests and temples. Here are some examples. When Shri Mangaldas Maharaj Bairagi impressed Aurangzeb with his knowledge, the emperor fixed an annuity of Rs. 5 from the qasbas and mauzaas in the country of Malawa and Rajaputana, and in 1700 Aurangzeb bestowed to Shri Mangaldas a khilat, a horse, a drum, a mace, a silver umbrella with 200 dirhams (Bhatt, 1975: 358, 359). In lieu of their old grant of 2 1/2 biswa, Sudaman Brahman, the priest of Umanand temple of Guwahati in Assam, and his son received a cash grant of Rs. 20 and some cultivable waste

in 1667 (Jnan Chandra, 1957: 251). Aurangzeb issued a farman on 12th March, 1660, which not only conferred to Shanti Das the village, hill and temples of Palitana, but it makes also a further grant of the hill and temples of Girnar under the jurisdiction of Junagarh, and the hill and temples of Abuji under Sirohi as a special favour (ibid.: 253, 254). He granted the land and other facilities to the Brindaban temple at Mathura and Sikh Gurudwara of Deharadun (Chandra, 2004: 65). He gave support to the construction of temple in Gopamau in Hardoi district, Uttar Pradesh (Habib, 1999: 162). Writing about the temple of Someshwar Mahadev of Allahabad, Pradeep Kesharwani said that Aurangzeb not only visited Someshwar Mahadev temple situated on the bank of Sangam (confluence of the rivers- Ganges, Jamuna and Saraswati) but also offered grant and land for its maintenance. There is a pillar containing 15 sentences in Sanskrit mentioning, “the ruler of the country visited the temple in 1674 and gave heavy grants to the temple, both in the form of land and money” (The Times of India, 2015: 1). There are a lot of examples that denied the bigot image of Aurangzeb.

Similarly Aurangzeb made many grants and lands to Banaras temples and Brahmins. In reality, Aurangzeb had tried to maintain order and law in Banaras, and was conscious for the safety of Brahmins. He always made efforts that they live peacefully, and no any officer could disturb them without any proper reason. Here I am representing some farman (decrees) of Aurangzeb issued in the favour of Brahmins and temples of Banaras. These farman were brought into light by Jnan Chandra. He pointed out that in distributing lands, and making grants to Brahmins, Math and temples Aurangzeb was not bias. Through a farman (decree) issued on 1 Rabi-awal, 1078 A.H. / 21 August, 1667 he confirmed the land of 178 bighas, which was earlier granted them by a farman dated 5th Ramadan, 1071 A. H. / 4th May 1661, to Jangams, the followers of Jangam sect, a Saivite sect, of Banaras. The farman runs as follows:

“All the present and future *Jagirdars* and *karo-ris* in *pargana haveli*, Banaras, *subah* Allahabad, are informed that according to the order of the Emperor, 178 *bighas* of land has been granted to the *Jangams* to help them in their maintenance. The old officials have also verified this fact, before this also. On the present occasion also they have produced evidence bearing the seal of the Malik of the said *pargana* to the effect that they are, as before, in possession of the land and their title is clearly proved. Therefore, according to the order of the Emperor, the same has been left to them as the sacrifice (*Nisar*) for the head of the Emperor. The said land should be returned to them from the beginning of the *Kharif* crop as it was before and they should not in any way be interfered with, so that these *Jangams* may utilise the income of every crop and ear in their maintenance and pray for the existence of the kingdom of the emperor. Herein they shall fail not and act otherwise” (Jnan Chandra, 1957: 249-50).

In 1672 Nazir Beg captured five *havelis* which were in the possession of Arjunmal and *Jangams* when they complained about it to Aurangzeb; he immediately issued a *farman* for restoring those *havelis*:

“The officials of *haveli* Muhammadabad – known as Banaras- *subah* Allahabad, are to be informed that these days Arjunmal and the *Jangams*, residents of *Pargana* Banaras, have appeared before (the emperor) and had made complaint that Nazir Beg, a resident of Banaras, has by force taken possessions of five *havelis*, which they had in *qasba* Banaras. It is, therefore, ordered that if their case is found true and the title of the complainants proved, Nazir Beg should not be allowed to enter the said *havelis*, so that in future the *Jangams* may not appear as complainants before me to seek their redress” (Jnan Chandra, 1957: 249).

Another *farman* of Aurangzeb shows that how he was determined and concerned to maintain peace among his Hindu subjects for that he used to take immediate action. On 17th *Rabi-ul Akhir*, 1091 A.H. / 17th May, 1680 he issued the following *farman* that runs as:

“At this auspicious time an august *farman* was issued whereas Maharajdhairaj Raja Ram Singh has represented to the most holy and exalted court that a mansion was built by his father in *Mohalla* Madho Rai, on the bank of Ganges at Banaras for the residence of Bhagawant Gosain who is also his religious preceptor, and as certain persons harass

the Gosain, therefore our royal command is that, after the arrival of this lustrous order, the present and future officers should direct that in future, no person shall in any way interfere or disturb the Gosain, so that he may continue with peace of mind to offer up prayers for the continuance of our God-given Empire, that is destined to last for all time. Consider this is as an urgent matter” (Jnan Chandra, 1957: 248-449).

In 1687 Aurangzeb granted the land to a Hindu religious teacher of Banaras issuing a *farman* that runs as

“At this auspicious time an august *farman* was issued that as two plots of land measuring 588 *dira*, situated on the bank of the Ganges at the Benimadho *ghat*, in Banaras (one plot is in front of the house of Ramjivan Gosain and on the bank of the central mosque, and the other is higher up) are lying vacant without any building and belong to *Bait-ul-mal*, we have, therefore granted the same to Ramjivan Gosain and his son as *inam*, so that after building dwelling houses for the pious Brahmins and holy fakirs on the above mentioned plots, he should remain engaged in the contemplation of God and continue to offer prayers for the continuance of our God-gifted Empire that is destined to last for all time. It is, therefore, incumbent on our illustrious sons, exalted ministries, noble *umra*, high officials, *daroghas* and present and future *kotwals*, to exert themselves for the continual and permanent observance of this hallowed ordinance, and to permit the above mentioned plots to remain in the possession of the aforesaid person and his descendents from generation to generation, and to consider him exempt from all dues and taxes, and not to demand from him a new *sanad* every year” (Jnan Chandra, 1957: 250).

Furthermore, in 1685 Aurangzeb gave support in the foundation of Kumaraswamy *Math*, and the reconstruction of Kedar temple where the south Indian pilgrims started to visit freely. It is said that Kumaraswamy reached Delhi from Banaras riding on the back of a lion. Aurangzeb was impressed by his intellectuality. Eventually he gave him permission for establishing of Kumaraswamy *Math* and Kedar temple (Desai, 2017: 52, 53).

CONCLUSION

Very rightly Audrey Truschke has pointed out, “Hindu and Jain temples dotted the landscape of

Aurangzeb’s kingdom. These religious institutions were entitled to Mughal state protection, and Aurangzeb generally endeavoured to ensure their well-being. By the same token, from a Mughal perspective, that goodwill could be revoked when specific temples or their associates acted against imperial interests. Accordingly, Emperor Aurangzeb authorized targeted temple destructions and desecrations throughout his rule” (Truschke, 2017: 99, 100).

On the basis of the above quotation and discussion on the religious policy of Mughal emperors in context of Banaras, it can be said that the Mughals to the great extent followed a liberal religious policy. Very often, they showed their support and gave grants and lands to the temples and Brahmins of Banaras according to which the politico-socio-economic needs of the contemporary period framed the basis of Mughal religious policy. Mughal rulers treated temples lying within their sovereign domain according to the situation. They undertook to protect both the physical structures and their Brahman functionaries. They gave importance to the maintenance of peace, law and order among the various communities. If temples were destroyed especially in Aurangzeb’s reign, the causes behind it must have been others not the bigotry of Aurangzeb as usually believed. A distorted view about the religious policy of Mughal emperors especially of Aurangzeb has been made by imperialist and some nationalist historians; that view is mostly rooted even now in the conception of people which caused many communal riots in India. But, the view must be examined in the contemporary socio-political situation.

NOTES

¹*Jihad* is an Arabic word whose literal meaning is “striving for a worthy and ennobling cause”. It is of two types; one is *jihad al-Akbar* (the greater *jihad*) which means fighting against those low inner forces which prevent man from becoming a good man; another is *jihad al-Asghar* (the lesser *jihad*) which means battling against the *kafirs* (infidels), if they humiliate you. (Jalal, 2008: 3, 9, 38, 69)

²According to Badauni, the condition for initiation into this *silsilah* (order) was through the acceptance of the four steps of allegiance, which required sacrifice of property, life, honour and religion. Akbar termed its creed ‘*Tauhid-i Ilahi*’. Roychaudhury fol-

lowing H. Blochmann inaccurately called this 'Din-i Ilahi' (Divine faith) but suggested that it was similar to a type of Sufi order, not a religion. (Badauni, 1865: 304-25)

³This original Farman is kept in Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India.

⁴*Ganj-i Arshadi*, an account of daily life and a collection of the sayings of Shah Tayyab of Banaras and of Shah Mohammad Rashid and Shah Mohammad of Jaunpur. This book was compiled during Aurangzeb's time.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad, Aziz. 2002. *Studies in Islamic Culture in the India Environment*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Ali, Athar. 1966, revised edition, 1997. *The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Ali, Athar. 2006. *Mughal India: Studies in Policy, Ideas, Society and Culture*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Ansari, Muhammad Azhar. 1973. "A note on the Six Jangamari Documents of Banaras". *Proceedings of Indian History Congress*. Chandigarh: 251, Appendix, Documents I and III.
- Babur, Zahiruddin Muhammad. 2014. *Babur-Nama (Memoirs of Babur)*. Annette Susannah Beveridge (tr). Delhi: Low Price Publication.
- Badauni, Abdul Qadir. 1990. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*. George S. A. Ranking (tr) vol. II. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.
- Banarasidas. 1981. *Ardhakathanak*. Mukund Lath (tr). Jaipur: Rajasthan Prakrit Bharati Sanathan
- Bayat, Bayazid. 1941. *Tazkira-i Humayun wa Akbar*. Muhammad Hidayat Hosain (ed). Calcutta: The Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.
- Bernier, Francois. 1916. *Travels in the Mogul Empire, 1656-1668*. Archibald Constable (tr), revised by V. A. Smith. London: Oxford University Press.
- Bhatt, S. K. 1975. "Two Persian Documents Relating to the Religious Policy of the Mughals: A *Parwanah* of Aurangzeb, 1112 A. H., and A *Parwanah* of Muhammad Shah, 13 Julus." *Proceedings of Indian History Congress*. Aligarh.
- Bismillah, Abdul. 1987. *Jhini-Jhini Bini Chadariya*. New Delhi: Rajkamal Prakasan.
- Chandra, Jnan. 1957. "Aurangzeb and Hindu Temples". *Journal of Pakistan Historical Society*, 5 (4): 247-256.
- Chandra, Satish. Sep. 1969. "Jizyah and the State in India during the 17th Century". *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 12 (3): 322-340.
- Chandra, Satish. 2004. "Aurangzeb Ka Punarmulyankan." In *Itihas ki Punarvyakhya: an Anthology of Articles reinterpreting Indian History*. Naresh Nadeem (tr). New Delhi: Raj Kamal Prakashan.
- Chandramouli, K. 2006. *Luminous Kashi to Vibrant Varanasi*. Varanasi: Indica Books.
- Cunningham, Alexander. 1871. *The Ancient Geography of India*. London: Trubner and Company.
- Desai, Madhuri. 2017. *Banaras Reconstructed: Architecture and Sacred Space in a Hindu Holy City*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan.
- Eaton, Richard M. 2004. *Temple Desecration and Muslim States in Medieval India*. Gurgaon: Hope India Publications.
- Eaton, Richard M. 2014. *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Eck, Diana L. 1993. *Banaras: City of Light*. Haryana: Penguin Books India.
- Elest, Koenraad. 2002. "Why did Aurangzeb demolish the Kashi Vishvanath?", from: <http://koenraadelst.bharatvani.org/books/acet/ch7.htm>
- Elliot, H. M. and John Dowson. 1869, 1872 1877. *The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period*. Vols. II, IV, VII. London: Trubner and Company, 57 and 59, Ludgate Hill.
- Elphinstone, Mountstuart. 1841. *The History of India*. Vol. II. London: John Murray
- Faruki, Zahiruddin. 1935. *Aurangzeb and His Times*. Bombay: D. B. Taraporevala Sons and Company.

- Foster, William, ed. 1921. *Early travels in India, 1583-1619*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Fuhrer, A. 1971. *The Sharqi Architecture of Jaunpur*. Varanasi: Indological Book House.
- Habib, Irfan, ed. 1999. *Medieval India*, vol. II. New Delhi: Raj Kamal Prakashan.
- Habib, Irfan, ed. 2007. "Kabir the Historical Setting." In *Religion in Indian History*. Irfan Habib (ed). New Delhi: Tulika Books.
- Hamilton, Alexander. 1930. *A New Account of the East Indies*, William Foster (ed), vol. II. London: The Argonaut press.
- Hasrat, Bikramajit. 1953. *Dara Shikoh*. Calcutta.
- Havell, E. B. 1905. *Benares the Sacred City: Sketches of Hindu Life and Religion*. Varanasi: Vishwavidyalaya Prakashan.
- Husain, S. M. Azizuddin. 2002. *Structure of Politics under Aurangzeb: 1658-1707*. New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers, Distributers.
- Jaitly, Jaya. 2014. *Woven Textiles of Varanasi*. New Delhi: Niyogi Books.
- Jalal, Ayesha. 2008. *Partisans of Allah: Jihad in South Asia*. London: Harvard University Press.
- Kesharwani, Pradeep. 2015. *The Times of India (News Paper)*, Varanasi, Friday, 11 September, 2015.
- Khan, Saqi Musta'id. 1947. *Maasir-i Alamgiri*. J. N. Sarkar (tr). Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.
- Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin (tr.). 2013. *The Quran*. Farida Khanam (ed). New Delhi: Goodword Books.
- Lari, Tarannum Fatma. 2010. *Textiles of Banaras: Yesterday and Today*. Varanasi: Indica Books.
- Lane-Poole, Stanley. 1924. *Rulers of India Aurangzeb and the Decay of Mughal Empire*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Motichandra. 1985. *Kashi Ka Itihas*. Varanasi: Vishwavidyalaya Prakashan.
- Mukhia, Harbans. 2004. *The Mughals of India*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing.
- Mundy, Peter. 1914. *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia (1628-34), 1608-1667*. Richard C. Temple (ed.). London: The Hakluyt Society.
- Nehru, Jawaharlal. 1946, sixth impression, 1994. *The Discovery of India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Nevill, H. R. 1909. *Benares Gazetteer*, vol. XXVI. Allahabad: F Luker, supdt, Govt. Press.
- Orme, Robert (1728-1801). 1805. *Historical Fragments of the Mogul Empire, of the Morattoes, and of the English Concerns in Indostan from the year M, DC, LIX*. London: F. Wingrave.
- Pandey, B. N. 1987. *Islam and Indian Culture*. Patna: Khuda Baksh Oriental Public Library.
- Pietro Della Valle. 1892. *The Travels of Pietro Della Valle in India*. Edward Grey (ed), vol. I. London: The Hakluyt Society.
- Ryley, J. Horton. 1899. *Ralf Fitch, England's Pioneer to India and Burma*. London: T. Fisher Unwin.
- Sarkar, J. N. 1932-1938. *The Fall of the Mughal Empire*, in 4 volumes. Calcutta.
- Sarkar, J. N. 1972. *History of Aurangzeb*, vol. III. New Delhi: Orient Longman.
- Sharma, Sri Ram. 1940. *The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Sharma, Vashi. 2017. *The Naked Mughal: Forbidden Tales of Harem and Butchery*. Agniveer.
- Sherring, M. A. 1975. *Banaras: The Sacred City of the Hindus: An Account of Benares in Ancient and Modern times*. Delhi: B. R. Publication.
- Sherring, M. A. 1872-1881. *Hindu Tribes and Castes as Represented in Benares*, in III volumes. London: Thacker Spink.
- Singh, Ratan. 1886. *Vir Vinod*. Vol. II. Udaipur: Rajyantralay
- Sinha, S. N. 1974. *Subah of Allahabad under the Great Mughals (1580-1707)*. New Delhi: Jamia Millia Islamia.
- Sukul, Kubernath. 1977. *Varanasi Vaibhav*. Patna: Bihar Rashtrabhasha Parishad.

Tara Chand. 1943. "Dara Shikoh and the Upanishads". *Islamic Culture*, XVII: 397-413.

Tulsidas. 1956. *Vinaya Patrika*. Viyogi Hari (annotated). Varanasi: Sahitya Seva Sadan.

Truschke, Audrey. 2016. *Culture of Encounters: Sanskrit at the Mughal Court*. Haryana: Penguin Books.

Sherring, M. Audrey. 2017. *Aurangzeb: The Man and The Myth*. Haryana: Penguin Viking.

Glossary:

Bairagi: Its literal meaning is one who is devoid of passion, a Hindu ascetic, most correctly a Vaishnavite sect.

Bait-ul maal: Literarily 'House of treasury' that is Central Treasury where all money collected and spent on the running of the state, and spending on the poor and needy.

Bigha: *Bigha* is a traditional unit of measurement of land. Its size varied within every wide limit, both by place and by period. One *bigha* is equal to 0.25 hectare or 2500 square metres or 3087.41 square yards.

Biswa: One-twentieth of a *bigha*

Daroghas: A minor officer in charge of a local office.

Dira: length of a hand

Dirham: A silver coin.

Eid Ghah: A place usually outside the city or village where mass prayers are offered by the Muslims on the occasion of *Eid-ul Fitr* and *Eid-ul Adha*.

Farman: Plural *faramin*; it was a royal order bearing the seal of the emperor. It was an order directly issued by the emperor.

Ghat: A flight of steps leading down to a river.

Gosain: Its literal meaning is master of passion, a title given to Hindu ascetics.

Haveli: It is a traditional mansion with historical and architectural significance.

Inam: A reward applied especially to gifts made by the ruler whether in the form of a sum of money or a stipend paid in cash or a grant of revenue.

Jagirdar: The holder of an assignment of revenues in Mughal India in lieu of payment of salary

Janpada: Literally state; The Janpada were realm, republic and kingdom of the Vedic period on the Indian subcontinent, 1200 BC-600 BC.

Jizyah: The poll tax levied on non-Muslims in a Muslim-ruled society.

Kachhawaha: A Rajput clan belong to Amber (Jaipur).

Kharif: The autumn crop

Khilat: It means 'robe of honour', actually it is an Arabic term to refer to gifts in general, but in particular to a robe of honour given by the ruler to a subordinate.

Kotawal: A title given to someone who had charge of internal defence, health, sanitation and all other municipal functions of a district.

Karori: The popular designation of the collector of reserved revenue, known officially as *Amalguzar*.

Mansabdar: The member of the imperial bureaucracy of Mughal India.

Mauzaas: Generally used in a wide sense as a place or locality; later on denotes a village.

Math: A residence of Hindu ascetic orders

Mohalla: A section or part of a town; quarter of a city.

Nisar: Its literal meaning is 'sacrifice'. It was a ritual of transferring one's present or future pitfalls or ailments through sacrificing money or anything precious.

Pundit: Learned Hindu

Pargana: Administrative unit akin to *tehsil*.

Qasba: Country town.

Rajput: Great Hindu military and landholding caste of north India.

Ram Rajya: Ancient Hindu utopian concept of ideal state where everyone will remain true to his/her moral obligations, and will live peacefully and happily.

Sadr: The head of the religious department, charities and grants.

Sanad: A charter or grant

Sari: It is an attire of Indian subcontinent, mostly wear by women.

Sarkar: Administrative unit akin to district.

Shiqdar: Chief administrator of *parganas*.

Subah: Administrative unit akin to province or state.

Umra: Plural of *amir*; nobles of high rank.

