

Celestial Sovereignty Astrology, Ritual and Kingship in Akbar's Reign

Dr. Daljit Kaur¹, Siya Joshi²
¹Professor, University of Delhi
²University of Delhi

Abstract—This paper focuses on integrating astrology, ritual, and kingship in Mughal sovereignty under Emperor Akbar (r. 1556–1605), which had until now been limited to administrative and military expansion. This paper will contribute to bridging existing literature between political, intellectual, and cultural history and the history of science. Public domain translations of the Akbarnama and Ain-i Akbari are read alongside jyotisa theory, as elaborated in Bṛihat Samhitā and Mughal material culture in the form of instruments to explore the three simultaneous modalities in which astrology functioned: knowledge, practice, and political vocabulary.

This paper will show how Akbar shaped a model of universal kingship in which political power is in tune with cosmic order (ṛta)¹ through timing rituals, auspicious planetary alignments, interpretations by court astrologers such as Maulana Chand, further promotion of cross-religious discussions in the Ibadat Khana, and his use of celestial motifs in imperial iconography.

A new light is shed on Mughal political authority, thus situated within, and entangled with the order of the heavens. Not simply the private belief of the emperor but a consciously employed strategy that looked to make the heavens visibly confirm the power on earth.

Index Terms—Akbar, imperial ideology, astrology, Akbarnama, statecraft, ritual sovereignty.

Objective

How did astrology and omens function as instruments of political legitimacy in medieval India?

From this perspective, it tries to argue that astrology was not something accidental or irrational but rather a

deliberate political mechanism through which rulers invoked the stars and performed rituals to authenticate their rule. In that sense, they are not a superstition but one mode of politics. The cosmic script was a way of performing and justifying one's kingship.

Methodology

This research is based on qualitative historical analysis, focusing on the interpretation of both primary and secondary sources. The study involves a close reading of court chronicles, particularly the domain translations of the Akbarnama (H. Beveridge) and Ain-i Akbari (H. Blochmann) as primary sources, along with secondary sources such as modern historical books, journal articles, and scholarly interpretations by historians like Vincent Smith and modern articles on Mughal astronomical culture, provide interpretative frameworks and scholarly context. Sanskrit treatises such as Brihat Samhita are used to situate Akbar's use of astrology within a longer Indic tradition of celestial kingship to examine the relationship between astrology, ritual practices, and political authority under Akbar.

This study was carried out in a library and on various academic databases and consists of a textual and interpretative analysis of secondary historical material to discuss how imperial authority was constructed with the help of astrology and symbolism. The approach is interpretative, through which the construction of imperial authority with astrology and symbolism were analysed. This study thus does not depend solely on fieldwork or surveys but, rather, engages with already

¹ Ṛta is a Vedic concept referring to cosmic order or universal harmony that governing the functioning of

the universe forming the broader intellectual background from astrological traditions. (Pingree, 1981).

available historical evidence to understand how astrology was used as an instrument of imperial rule and legitimacy in the Mughal court. Visual representations of court rituals and painting, as examples, will be used only as added evidence in this analysis.

While more recent historical studies are used in conjunction with Persian court chronicles of the period to understand the interrelationship of astrology and political power during the reign of Akbar, the primary sources are based on Abu'l Fazl's Akbarnama and Ain-i Akbari.

They form the backbone of the primary material, offering a window into how the Mughal court wove celestial imagery, royal ritual, and ideas about cosmic harmony into its vision of imperial rule. To situate these within a longer tradition, this study will engage with the *Bṛihat Saṃhitā* of Varāhamihira, a foundational jyotiṣa text, to indicate how astral knowledge and sacred kingship have long been associated in South Asian thought. On the modern historical side, the representation of Akbar as a wise and pragmatic ruler is well-established, from early formulations such as those of Vincent A. Smith to the textured picture of Akbar's ritualistic life, intellectual interests, and the milieu around him, offered by Shireen Moosvi.

Read against each other, these materials offer a view of astrology as a vocabulary for projecting authority, creating political meaning, and claiming a place in the order of the cosmos, rather than simply one of the beliefs held by the Mughals.

I. INTRODUCTION: POLITICS BENEATH THE STARS

Medieval Indian politics cannot be reduced simply to the count of conquests or administrative achievements. For most of the subcontinent, and certainly for the Mughals, sovereignty was conceived as part of a cosmic or divine mandate. In the sixteenth century, the monarch was not a ruler among others but an earthly locus of the universe's harmony. His actions were proper only when, by his actions, the universe's order

was sustained through the justice he dispensed among his subjects. In this regard, Akbar was more than a successful king, whose power was guaranteed by destiny rather than conquest and policy alone. Coronations, wars, and building projects were arranged under the guidance of astrologers interpreting the positions of the planets to secure divine favour (Truschke, 2017). The court astrologers (*munajjims*)² among Akbar's scholars played a crucial role in selecting auspicious times for campaigns and architectural foundations. Akbar came to personify a hybrid cosmopolitan king whose sacred legitimacy was anchored in Indic holy tradition, weaving together the cosmological and ritualistic traditions of India into the rhetoric of his kingship.

Truschke argues that, for Akbar, translation was not just a linguistic enterprise; translating Sanskrit epics and philosophical works was part of embedding moral and religious authority into the ideological framework of the court. Thus, he did not borrow the revered tradition but recreated it, politically investing in the Sanskrit discourse on kingship and authority. According to her, Akbar's "divine fervor" was more an act of statecraft embedded in sacred symbolism than a mystical impulse. Indeed, it is within this context that the consolidation of the Mughal Empire and the resurgence of the Rajputs represent one of the most dynamic intersections of power and the supernatural. It will not ask about the role of astrology or ritual symbolism in the creation of Mughal legitimacy more broadly but focus solely on Akbar's reign. In Akbar's self-fashioning as a ruler, Persianate ideas of divine kingship and Indic concepts of Rajdharma and cosmic accord with the universe were among the fundamental influences.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Existing scholarship on Akbar's reign has privileged his administration, religious policy, and imperial expansion. In works like Smith's *Akbar: The Great Mogul*, the picture appears of Akbar as a pragmatic ruler who used administrative reform and religious tolerance to integrate a diverse kingdom. In all these

² *Munajjim* is a Persian term referring to an official scholar who advised rulers on Auspicious dates for events, battles, or astronomical foundations.

works, astrology, omens, and celestial imagery are treated as marginal cultural peculiarities and do not take center stage as an instrument of political power.

The topics covered in Akbar's religious program include *sulh-ikul*, the Ibadat Khana debates, and his interactions with intellectuals from many traditions, which usually emphasize patterns of patronage, theological universalism, and moral Philosophy. Under these circumstances, imperial decision-making structured by planetary timing, horoscopes, or auspicious rituals hardly comes into focus. Even when drawing from Abu'l Fazl's *Akbarnama* and *Ain-i Akbari*, emphasis is generally placed on themes of ethical kingship and cosmopolitan erudition, while the political functions of astrology, as presented within these texts, are ignored.

Within Mughal court culture and visual-arts research, the translations of *Akbarnama* (H. Beveridge) are recognised as a foundational source for imperial ideology. They rarely look at the actual astrology like birth charts, planetary alignments, and the role of royal astrologers (Moin, 2012) that helped create the emperor's image in the stars. In this sense, cosmological representations are read as aesthetic objects rather than technologies of governance.

Shireen Moosvi's "Episodes in the Life of Akbar" provides a detailed account of the emperor's everyday activities, including his eating habits, rituals, intellectual interests, and interactions at court. She highlights Akbar's interaction with multiple scholastic traditions and his search for logical and moral governance foundations in the analysis of the Ibadat Khana debates, but she does not explore the cosmological and temporal aspects of these debates, such as their timing with auspicious nights, fasts, or celestial events. Likewise, her account of Akbar's fasting on specific days and observance of certain "sacred" dates and transitions (Moosvi, 1994, p.101) between solar months stays comparatively unexplored and lacks an analysis of the astrological reasoning behind these timings. On this basis, this work takes Moosvi as a point of departure to situate such practices in the broader context of *vyotisa*³ traditions and ritual sovereignty.

The rich detailed account of Akbar's intellectual environment, ritual activities, and personal discipline, which are essential to understanding cosmic kingship are presented descriptively rather than interpreting them through the lens of Mughal court through auspicious timings (*muḥūrt*), or *ālam-i-mīzāj* (cosmic temperament). This has allowed me to find the information in a new and different register and perspective on astrology and cosmology. This will provide another point from which to view the data suggesting a historically continuous South Asian idiom that has linked political authority with celestial order and detailing how this has historically impacted imperial ritual, timing, and political self-fashioning issues that have been rarely considered in studies of Mughal political culture, much less in the face of material culture such as astrolabes, celestial globes, and ring dials in courtly contexts. Such things are usually treated as "incidental" culture within political histories rather than as an active and efficient technology of sovereignty. Here, instead, astrology would become a language of sovereignty and cosmology and not an ambient factor in intellectual and religious histories.

While studies of court culture have emphasized symbolism in the heavens, the techniques of scientific astrology that created them have often been neglected. At the same time, astronomical histories continue to be overwhelmingly technical and divorced from political and ceremonial activity in the Mughal court.

This paper responds to these overlapping silences by combining political history, intellectual history, visual culture, and the history of science into a single frame of analysis. It sets public domain translations of the *Akbarnama* (H. Beveridge) and *Ain-i Akbari* (H. Blochmann) against the *vyotisa* theory of the *Bṛihat Saṃhitā* and the material culture unearthed by Mughal instrument studies to analyze astrology as knowledge, practice, and political discourse all at once. Tracing how horoscopes, *muḥūrtas*, omens, celestial imagery, and the office of the *munajjim* underpinned both imperial ritual and daily governance, this study argues that astrology was not simply decorative but indeed constitutive of Akbar's cosmic sovereignty. From a

³*Jyotiṣa* refers to the traditional Sanskrit system of astral science which combines astronomy, astrology,

and ritual timings (*muhūrta*) within Indic intellectual traditions.

medievalist perspective, it recontextualizes the longevity of symbolic politics and political actors' appropriation of cultural beliefs to buttress legitimacy. By tracing how horoscopes, muḥūrtas, omens, celestial imagery, and the office of the munajjim, shaped both imperial ritual and everyday governance. The study argues that astrology was not ornamental but constitutive of Akbar's model of cosmic sovereignty. By studying the medieval roots of these practices, we can better understand the persistence of symbolic politics and how leaders harness cultural beliefs to sustain legitimacy.

III. AKBAR'S BIRTH AND COSMIC DESTINY

The birth of Akbar was one of those important astrological moments when the court astrologer, Maulana Chand, and other learned astrologers concluded that the position of the planets showed divine selection for rulership (Abu'l Fazl, trans. Beveridge, 1907). Hence, his birth was taken not as an accident but rather as a cosmic signal from heaven that the Mughals would rise again to rule, and this time the career of the dynasty's revival was to be led by Akbar.

IV. HOROSCOPES AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF AKBAR'S DIVINE KINGSHIP

Far from being a mere narrative flourish, the inclusion of several of Akbar's natal horoscopes was a deeply political act. By reproducing charts that Persian scholars had calculated with the help of Ilkhani and Greek astronomical tables, alongside charts drawn up by Indian astrologers such as Jotik Rai, Abu'l Fazl thus explicitly laid claim to the cosmopolitanism of Akbar's court while underpinning the emperor's divinely ordained status with claims to his recognition across a universal and trans-civilizational divide. Abu'l Fazl thus politicizes and symbolically employs the very contradictions presented by the different Persian and Indian horoscopes, which do not agree on the Ascendant (Virgo or Leo) (Abu'l Fazl, trans. Beveridge, 1907). However, rather than debunk

astrology, he offers two explanations for why the public was not allowed to know Akbar's true sign: one scientific the precession of the equinoxes and the other mystical the divine wisdom of concealing Akbar's true celestial sign so that it could not be known in any mundane way. This contradiction was itself evidence of Akbar's unusual vocation. Despite the contradictions in the methods applied, every horoscope invariably pointed to the greatness of Akbar in both spiritual and temporal respects. The Planetary positions, Jupiter & Mercury for intelligence & wealth, Venus for friends of noble spirits and Leo Ascendant standing for a king by birth

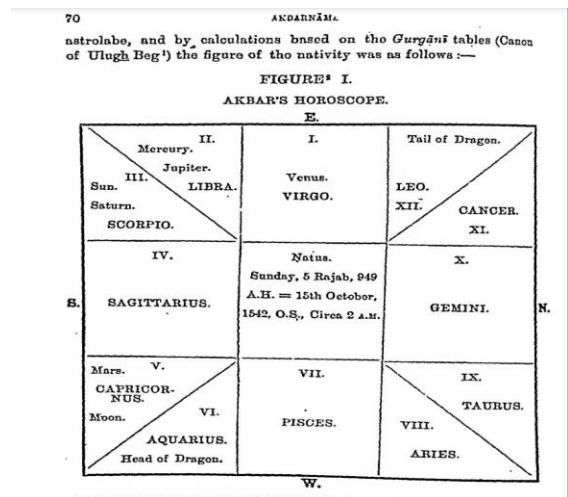


Figure 1. Akbar's Horoscope from the Akbarnama⁴

In Akbar: The Great Mogul, Vincent Smith describes how Akbar's increasing disenchantment with traditional Muslim clergy prompted him to look for spiritual understanding outside of a particular faith. Akbar opened his court to discussion with Hindu, Jain, Zoroastrian, and other non-Muslim religious scholars to the ulama's ideological rivalries. This cosmopolitan climate of intellectual life was not simply the reflection of one of Akbar's political ambitions "to unite the discordant elements of his vast empire in one harmonious whole" (Smith, 1903) but also his self-conception as a divinely illuminated sovereign whose authority was above sectarian contest.

⁴ Abu'l Fazl, *Akbarnama*, trans. H Beveridge, Vol.3 (reprint edition); *Ain-i Akbari*, trans. H. Blochmann, Vol.1 (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1873), p.70



Figure 2&3. Akbar holds a religious assembly at Fatehpur Sikri in his Ibadat Khana, Fatehpur Sikri.
 Figure 4. Court astrologer interpreting a royal horoscope in the Mughal court tradition.

V. THE CELESTIAL ARCHITECTURE OF MUGHAL KINGSHIP

In *Akbar: The Great Mogul*, Vincent Smith describes how Akbar's increasing disenchantment with traditional Muslim clergy prompted him to look for spiritual understanding outside of a particular faith. Akbar opened his court to discussion with Hindu, Jain, Zoroastrian, and other non-Muslim religious scholars to the ulama's ideological rivalries. This cosmopolitan climate of intellectual life was not simply the reflection of one of Akbar's political ambitions—"to unite the discordant elements of his vast empire in one harmonious whole" (Smith, 1903) but also his self-conception as a divinely illuminated sovereign whose authority was above sectarian contest.

Akbar's court was not only an administrative hub but also a cosmological theatre. Abu'l Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari* presents Akbar as the *zill-i-ilahi*⁵ ("Shadow of God"), he was envisioned not merely as ruler but as the pivot of the universe. A phrase that encapsulated his claim to divine reflection on earth⁶. Akbar's politics of time management was itself an act of celestial control. His introduction of the *Ilahi Era* in 1584 sought to rationalize the calendar along solar lines, aligning

political time with cosmological order (Lal, 2005), showing excellent mastery over both human and divine temporality.

Thus, astrology worked on two registers. It naturalized Islamic rule within Indian cosmological assumptions and shielded the Mughal emperor, constrained by the demands of religious orthodoxy, with a protective layer of ideological legitimation. The Mughals situated sovereignty within the mandate of the cosmos. In this broader spiritual sense, Akbar could deploy astrology, cosmic symbolism, and ritual performance to reinforce imperial legitimation. For example, during the many public rituals of solar and fire worship, Akbar would kneel before the sun and fire, and the lighting of lamps in the evening ritual required courtiers to stand. In this way, Akbar presented himself as the earthly counterpart to the heavenly source of light. Like the sun, which brought order and light to the cosmos, Akbar, too, was shown as the king who brought unity, light, and moral clarity to his empire. Such imagery echoed the astrological and cosmological imagery in *Akbarnama*, where Akbar's destiny is inscribed in the stars. By inscribing his kingship in the language of light, celestial motion, and cosmic necessity, Akbar made astrology and solar

⁵ A Mughal Imperial concept presenting the emperor as the earthly reflection of divine authority.

⁶ (Abu'l Fazl, trans. Blochmann, 1590/2010).

symbolism the ground of ritual and ideological authority: he was the central force around which the empire revolved.

VI. THE CULT OF LIGHT

According to *Ain-i-Akbari*, Akbar's obsession with the sun as the ultimate image of divine light became a cult at the Mughal court. It was further underlined by the coinage depicting solar imagery and the royal orders issued following solar events. It is therefore not surprising that every day the emperor was present to greet the sun during the ceremony of *jharokha darshan*. In this way, the emperor presented himself as the earthly radiance of divine light. This idea was well known to the Mughal elite, as it was found in Persian Illuminationism (*Ishrāqī*) and Indic notions of solar kingship.

VII. RAJPUT PARALLELS: RITUAL SOVEREIGNTY AND COSMIC KINGSHIP

While Emperor Akbar transformed celestial legitimacy into imperial philosophy, Rajput rulers contemporaneously articulated sovereignty through Indic ritual frameworks. The Rajput kings grounded their celestial legitimization in myths of birth and ritual, claiming descent from the solar (*Suryavansha*) and lunar (*Chandravansha*) dynasties and thus asserting that their lineages had come into being through the stars. The *Raj Tilak* ceremony often synchronized with *Pushya Nakshatra*, symbolized royal alignment with the heavens. The consultation of Brahmin astrologers before wars or marriages reinforced their cosmic entitlement to rule (Gupta, 2011).

Akbar's alliances and matrimonial ties with Rajput houses thus carried ritual as well as political meaning. Through these marriages, Akbar symbolically entered the divine genealogies of the sun and moon, thereby extending his claims to celestial authority. In participating in the rituals of the Rajputs, Akbar combined Mughal and Indic discourses on legitimacy and forged a shared cosmology of power transcending religious divisions. The city of Jaipur was the ultimate product of astrological imagination, based on *Jyotisha* and recalling the long-standing tradition of the polity as a cosmic mandala. Similarly, the founding of

Fatehpur Sikri (Asher, 1992) is emblematic with its spatial layout reflecting astrological symbolism,

VIII. REINTERPRETING LEGITIMACY: REASON AND THE SUPERNATURAL

Indeed, from one perspective, Akbar can be seen as the embodiment of rationality in historical writing. However, rationality was inscribed in the metaphysical order. The *Din-i-Ilahi* exemplified his quest for moral universality grounded in cosmic balance rather than doctrinal uniformity (Alam & Subrahmanyam, 1998).

Akbar's celestial politics combined reason and revelation in such a way that he used astrology not as an irrational belief but as a moral discourse in governance. In aligning the empire with the cosmos, Akbar set forth a vision of sovereignty that was at once earthbound and astral, ethical humanism, and divine geometry

IX. NEGOTIATING ORTHODOXY, BETWEEN FAITH AND SCIENCE: KINGS MIGHT DOUBT THE HEAVENS, BUT THEY NEVER IGNORED THEM

A king might well doubt the heavens but could not afford to ignore them. However, the celestial authority was never passively or readily accepted in medieval India. This status that astrology enjoyed within the Mughal court was far from uncontested. Orthodox theologians viewed it as impious, yet Akbar defended it as rational knowledge (*ilm*). Abu'l Fazl describes astrology as the "science of celestial influences," rejecting fatalism but valuing its predictive logic. It is in this light that Akbar institutionalized this rationalized astrology, as shown by his commissioning the translation of the Sanskrit texts and Brahmin astrologers debating in the *Ibadat Khana*. This gave a multi-dimensional aspect to astrology, as Akbar projected *Sulh-i Kul* or universal peace. Akbar treated astrology as a rational universal science rather than a blind belief in fate. Among Rajput rulers, the use of astrology was flexible: while they believed in it, only some prophecies and auspicious timings (*muhurtas*) were used to legitimize choices that were already made. The faith in the stars was thus negotiated: an instrument of power, alternatively oscillating between conviction and convenience.

X. CONTEMPORARY RESONANCE: ASTROLOGY AS SOFT POWER

This makes the whole exercise relevant even today. In today's India, rulers continue to consult astrologers; the timing of inaugurations is still fixed on auspicious hours; and all those rituals continue to be held, if only for public consumption. Temple visits, ritual ceremonies, and inaugurations on a shubh muhurat continue the logic of medieval kingship: these actions symbolically inscribe the authority of the ruler as ordained by a higher power. Astrology was a tool medieval kings used to forge political unity. Rituals and omens are still the principal vehicles through which political culture seeks popular approval and emotional connection in modern India. Political choices become less questionable when cosmically or spiritually sanctioned. Studying medieval astrology can thus sensitize us to the broader, if subtle, logic of politics everywhere, belief systems and legitimacy of power.

XI. CONCLUSION

Akbar's reign exemplified how politics worked in Indo-Islamic South Asia during the sixteenth century in the context of a cosmology that entwined imperial power with celestial order. At Akbar's court, astrology did not belong to a collection of charms and trinkets used in palace ceremonies. It was a language of politics in which sovereignty could be expressed, argued about, and exercised. Planetary calculations, auspicious dates, and solar iconography were included into kingship ceremonies, administrative decisions, and the emperor's own self-presentation. Court histories such as the Akbarnama and accounts of the Ibadat Khana debates emphasize how Akbar looked to present himself as a temporal ruler who proved a cosmic correspondence between his reign and the movements of the heavens to justify his role as a mediator between heaven and earth.

This image was meticulously developed through ritual, art, and intellectual patronage. However, this is not something strange in the long run of South Asian history; indeed, it is part of a familiar tradition of divine-cosmic rulership expressed within a South Asian framework. Cosmologically, this study points to the necessity of analyzing the Mughal state through a particular cosmological lens, which, along with

military and administrative dimensions, has constituted its popular image in recent scholarship. I argue that, under Akbar, astrology developed into an active field of legitimacy that shaped imperial ritual, informed ethical authority, and influenced the grammar of kingship. This cosmological image of the empire ruled by stars, planets, and heavenly light was constructed through rituals, art, and intellectual patronage, with the specific goal of gaining both cosmic sanction and political obedience from the emperor.

REFERENCES

Primary Sources

- [1] Varāhamihira. *Brihat Samhita*. Translated by M. Ramakrishna Bhat. 2 vols. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1981–1982.
- [2] (Original composition: 6th century CE)
- [3] Babur, Zahir al-Din Muhammad. *Baburnama: Memoirs of Babur, Prince, and Emperor*. Translated by Wheeler M. Thackston. New York: Modern Library, 2002.
- [4] (Original composition: early 16th century)
- [5] Abu'l Fazl ibn Mubarak. *The Akbarnama*. Translated by Henry Beveridge. 3 vols. Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1897–1939.
- [6] (Original composition: c. 1590–1596)
- [7] Abu'l Fazl ibn Mubarak. *The Ain-i-Akbari*. Translated by Heinrich Blochmann and H. S. Jarrett. 3 vols. Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1873–1907.
- [8] (Original composition: c. 1595)
- [9] Badauni, Abd al-Qadir. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*. Translated by W. H. Lowe. 3 vols. Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1884–1925.
- [10] (Original composition: c. 1595–1602)
- [11] Jahangir, Nur al-Din Muhammad. *The Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri or Memoirs of Jahangir*. Translated by Alexander Rogers and Henry Beveridge. 2 vols. London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1909–1914.
- [12] (Original composition: early 17th century)

Secondary Sources

- [1] Smith, V. A. (1903). *Akbar: The great mogul, 1542–1605*. Oxford University Press. <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.499248>
- Rizvi, S. A. A. *Religious and Intellectual History*

- of the Muslims in Akbar's Reign. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1975.
- [2] Pingree, David. *Jyotiḥśāstra: Astral and Mathematical Literature*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1981.
- [3] Sarma, S. R. (1992). Astronomical instruments in Mughal miniatures. In I. Wezler (Ed.), *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* (Vol. 16–17, pp. 235–276).
- [4] Asher, Catherine B. *Architecture of Mughal India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992
- [5] Koch, Ebba. *Mughal Art and Imperial Ideology: Collected Essays*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- [6] Mukhia, Harbans. *The Mughals of India*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.
- [7] Ali, D. (2006). *Courtly culture and political life in early medieval India*. Cambridge University Press.
- [8] Moin, A. Azfar. "Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam." *Past & Present* 205, no. 1 (2009): 77–12.
- [9] Alam, Muzaffar, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam. *Writing the Mughal World: Studies on Culture and Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.
- [10] Moin, Azfar. *The Millennial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.
- [11] Blake, Stephen P. *Time in Early Modern Islam: Calendar, Ceremony, and Chronology in the Safavid, Mughal, and Ottoman Empires*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- [12] Moin, Afzal "The Emperor's Cosmic Body: Image, Ritual, and Kingship under Akbar." *Journal of Persianate Studies* 8, no. 2 (2015): 145–17
- [13] Truschke, Audrey. *Culture of Encounters: Sanskrit at the Mughal Court*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012
- [14] Islam in histories that challenge our understanding of India.
- [15] (n.d.). The Caravan. <https://hindi.caravanmagazine.in/reviews-essays/islam-histories-challenge-understanding-india>