

# A Study on the Sanskrit Literature of Mughal Period: A Window Pointing View

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**Abstract:** *The current paper illustrates the Sanskrit poets and writers and their works that emerged during the Mughal Period. Sanskrit language and literature have been practiced since the ancient age. Although the popularity had its share of downfall when Pal dynasty had taken over, it revived again when the Sen Dynasty came to power. It was then when the Mughals who put out the stifled literature into the light during their reign. They highlighted the Sanskrit literature and patronized poets and writers who delved deep into the language. Their works were preserved in order to help the language prosper. Although the Mughals were from another religion, they admired the dissimilarities between Sanskrit and the language they practiced. This resulted in a revolution. Their open mindedness opened a new door into the future for Sanskrit language and literature. This paper is an attempt to depict the works that were composed during the era of the Mughals.*

**Keywords:** *Mughal, Sanskrit literature, Writers, Religion, Astronomy, Smṛti, Algebra*

## Introduction

The use of Sanskrit language burgeoned vastly in India as the Mughal Empire became more influential. During their rule, the Mughals could establish peace and a sense of security in the minds of Hindus in India. They did so by allowing the proliferation of Sanskrit learning which enabled the language to flourish. Although Sanskrit was still being practiced in the kingdom, Sanskrit literature did not advance practically after 1200 AD. The first two Mughal emperors namely, Babar and Humayun were mostly occupied in conflicts and wars in order to achieve and maintain dominance in India and thus neither had time for literary activities. Consequently, no reference of any Sanskrit Literature was found from the time of the rule of the first two Mughal emperors. This changed in the sixteenth century, when Akbar became the Mughal Emperor. There was a sudden eruption of Sanskrit poetry and writing during Emperor Akbar's reign. Emperor Akbar expressed his exquisite taste in literature, art, science and culture by patronizing many scholars of the time. The royal courts would bustle with respectable and skilled Sanskrit scholars and poets during that era. The Mughals were Muslims but their liberalism transcended religion and culture. Associating two distinct cultures and languages during the 16<sup>th</sup> century truly reflected the open mindedness of the Mughal patrons. Besides the continuous strive for power and dominion in India, passion for art and language flowed through the spread of Sanskrit language in writing and use.

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### **Sanskrit Literature in Akbar's Period (1556-1605)**

Akbar was one of the mightiest and most powerful rulers of the Mughal dynasty. He was acknowledged for compassion, dedication and judgment, not much considering his ethnic foundation or religious practice. He was born with the name of Abul-Fath Jalal-ud-din Muhammad and later took the title 'Akbar' which conveys the meaning great. He never solely stood by his given religion Islam and neither rejected it rather he talked about amalgamation of different religious principles. Akbar approved many Hindu beliefs and practices, such as the migration of the soul and the doctrine of the belief, karma. "He adopted the Hindu way of life and began to celebrate many Hindu festivals, such as Raksha-Bandhan, Dashahra, Dewali and Basanta. Sometimes he would put the Hindu paint mark (tilak) on his forehead." (Srivastava, 1960, pp. 172).

Akbar was an avid learner and he often wandered to discover the realms of literature, leaving the proclivity for conquests behind. The ferocious attitude of the enemies was considerably subdued by the time Akbar had sat on the throne. As a result, he could divert much of his time to ancient learning and cultural development. He encouraged Sanskrit literature and was intrigued by it. He established a translation department where Sanskrit was translated into Persian where the first Persian-Sanskrit lexicon, *pārasī-prakāśā*, was compiled. Inspired by noble ideals, he reached out to the department and got many books in Sanskrit translated into Persian so that Hindus and Muslims came to know each other religion and culture. So many Hindu classics were translated under his patronage. "The *Mahābhārata* was translated into Persian by the joint effort of Naqib Khan, Abdul Qadir Badayuni and Shaikh Sultan under the title *Razmnamah (Book of war)*" (Srivastava, 1960, pp.239). The same bathes of scholars also translated the *Rāmāyana* into Persian. Other outstanding works translated into Persian under the patronage of the emperor were the *Lilāvati*, *Harivamśa*, and *Pañcatantra* by Bhāskarācārya. The renowned Sanskrit story of Nala and Damayanti was also made a part of Persian by Faizi renaming it *Maanavi Nal-o Daman*. He also appointed Bhanu chandra and Siddha Chandra who wrote a commentary on Bana's *Kādambarī*. He was a lover of poetry, Akbar listened to the poems of his court poets. He also joined in the discussions on theology with the learned scholars. Apart from several other translations of Sanskrit texts, he got certain original Sanskrit words composed under his patronage and patronized many Hindu Pandits. Some of the Sanskrit works that were composed by several learned men during the time he ruled are described as follows:

#### ***Rāmavinoda***

Rāmacandra provided a series of rules and data for the computation of calendars in his karanagrantha called *Rāmavinoda*. It stated Saka 1512 as the epochal year, and the length of the year alongside with the position and motions of the planets which are based on the modern Surya Siddhānta. It is a compilation of small volume of

tables focusing on the calculations of tithis and many more, accumulated in 17 verses. There are eleven chapters and 280 verses in the work. It was composed for Ramadāsa Bhupāla who was then the minister of Akbar. He initiated his book with the genealogy of Emperor Akbar. Viśvanātha even wrote an illustrative commentary on it. His calculation of the year includes the 35 of the era of Akbar i.e from A.D. 1556 when Akbar ascended the throne. “The date of composition is given as saka 1535=A.D. 1613. Sudhākara Dwivedi says that people on Jaipur side compile their almanacs with the help of this work”(Dikshit, 1981, pp.151)

Rāmacandra was the son of Ananta and belonged to the Gārgya Gotra. They lived in Dharmapura on the bank of the Narmadā, near Nasik. He wrote on *Kāmadhenu-ñikā* of Bopadeva which was perceived as a commentary or review on it. He also wrote a work on horoscopy called the *Jātakapaddhati*. Ananta had two sons, Nīlakaṇṭha and Rāmacandra. Nīlakaṇṭha also followed his father’s footsteps and composed renowned works, one being for Todaramalla, the well-known finance minister of Akbar.

Besides the *Rāmaṇoda*, in 1600, Rama wrote a literary work called *Muhūrtacintāmaṇi* which is a treatise on auspicious moments for the performance of religious ceremonies. He also wrote a commentary on it entitled *Pramitākṣara*. (Dikshit,1981, pp. 147). In addition to this there is the well-known commentary on it called *Piyusadhara*, written by his nephew Govinda. Both the works were printed.

### **Ṭoḍarānanda**

*Ṭoḍarānanda* was a vivid and a broad work on religion, civil law, astronomy and medicine by Nīlakaṇṭha; the brother of Rāmacandra, for his patron Todarmalla, the celebrated finance minister of Akbar. The amazing work is separated into three parts; the first part is named Dharma or religious law, second one is Jyotiṣa or Astronomy and the last is Vaidyaka or Medicine. The Dharma section consists of the religious and civil law, several parts of judicial procedure, marriage and etc. The Jyotiṣa section establishes the saṁhitā branch of Indian Astronomy and talks about topics like the results of eclipse, the rise of the comets, the signs of the zodiac and so on. The last section concerns the medical aspect. The extensive spectrum in its nature of the work demonstrates its encyclopedic character. It is an assemblage of excerpts from earlier writers with him having around 1000 verses. It can be noticed that a chapter on pilgrimage is incomplete and can be concluded that the work was completed hastily.

Nīlakaṇṭha, as mentioned before, was the son of Ananta and brother of Rāmacandra. His mother’s name was Padmā. Nīlakaṇṭha’s son Govinda later on presented him as a learned man at Akbar’s court. Nīlakaṇṭha had his expertise in the two sciences; Mīmāṁsā and Sāṁkhya. He also worked on many astronomical work, Samāntānta, (Varṣatantra), on Tajik which is widely known as Tājika-nīlakaṇṭhi .(Dikshit,1981,

pp.148) composed in A.D. 1587. The work is very well-known and has been so celebrated across the globe that it got published with commentaries of different languages. Viśvanātha has given his work on it with his various examples. He got very popular for *Tithi Ratnamālā* which is work on Horary astrology entitled *Praśnakaumūdī* or *Jyotisakaumūdī*. He also wrote commentaries on *Graha-Kautuka*, *Graha-Lāghava*, *Makaranda* and a work on *Muhūrtas*.

### ***Nītisāra***

*Nītisāra* is a piece of a work consisting of various topics in three śatakas. Viz

1. *Rājanītivaraṇana*
2. *Ṣṅgārādivivaraṇa* and
3. *Paramārtha-śataka*.

It is being stated by the author, *Gaṅgādhara*, that his work at the instance of Emperor Akbar. The colophon reads as under –

इतिश्रीश्रीमन् महाराजअकवरशाहिआज्ञया गङ्गाधरदीक्षित विरचितं  
नीतिसारंतृतीयपरमार्थशतकं सम्पूर्णम् (Shastri,1934, pp. 418).

–This says that the third paramārtha śataka was completed in *Nītisāra* by Gaṅgādhara dīkṣita under the command of Emperor Akbarshahi.

### ***Nartana-nirṇaya***

*Nartana-nirṇaya* is a rich dissertation on dancing and its accompaniments. It was composed between 1555 and 1565. Even though the name narrows the spotlight, it contains other parts of the music such as tala, gayana, different ragas, the qualities and failings of a singer and so on. The work consists of four chapters out of which, the last chapter is devoted to the treatment of dancing. He states the purpose of composing his treatise before finishing his work.

Puṇḍarīkaviṭṭhala composed his *Nartana-nirṇaya* (*Ascertainment of Dance*) to please Emperor Akbar. “Puṇḍarīkaviṭṭhala entered Akbar’s court through the patronage of Man Singh and Madho Singh of the Rajasthanikachhwaha lineage, one of the earliest Rajput backers of the Mughals.” (Truschke,2016,pp.31) He composed four works, viz, *Ṣaḍrāgacandrodaya*, *Rāga-mañjarī*, *Rāga-māla* and *Nartana-nirṇaya*. The works were composed under the patronage of different princes. “He was a native of the Mysore province which was about that time (about 1500 A.D) a tributary state of the Vijayanagar empire” (Krishnacharya,1936, pp.371). *Ṣaḍrāgacandrodaya* was one of Puṇḍarika’s work from which it was found that he was a resident of Sātanurvā, a village near the hill called Śivagaṅgā in the Karṇāṭa country. He was born as a brahmin of the Jāmadagnya gotra in the Karṇāṭa Jāti. “He was at his prime during the court of Mohomedan King Burhan Khan of the Faruki dynasty which ruled between 1370-1600 at a city called Ānandavalli in Khandesh in the South.” (Chaudhuri, 1954, pp. 89)

### ***Pārasī- Prakāśā***

*Pārasī-prakāśā* is a work on astronomy which provides equivalent terms of the Persian astronomical terms. Although it is being arranged in Anushtup verses, the whole is explained in Sanskrit. Bihārī Kṛṣṇadāsa was the one in charge to write the grammar and glossary of the Persian language as spoken in India by Emperor Akbar. In other works, it can also be called a Persian-Sanskrit glossary of astronomical expressions. Bihārī Kṛṣṇadāsa also the author of his famous work *Māga-vyākṛti*, which talks about the Iranian immigrants who had joined the Hindu social system as Maga Brahmins, and proclaims himself a member of that community. “His grammar is topically arranged in a manner similar to the *Kātantra* etc; the only peculiarity is a list of Persian numerals inserted into the first chapter. The grammar in the first chapter teaches Persia (in c. 480 rules in Sanskrit with the author’s own commentary) as a transfer grammar (Sanskrit>Persian). It differs from earlier transfer grammars (Sanskrit >Prakrit) where the rules often correspond to an historical development.”(Scharfe,1977, pp.196) The interpretations can hardly be similar for their massive indifferences in the origin as for Sanskrit being more closely related to the original synthetic structure than the modern Persian. The transfers were often narrowed to reductions, where the multitude of Sanskrit forms corresponds to a single Persian form.

The work was done in the late sixteenth century on Emperor Akbar’s request. The Mughal sponsorship can be found throughout the lexicon and grammar portions of the work. Bihārī Kṛṣṇadāsa mentioned at the very beginning that his text provided a resource material for teaching Persian:

A collection of some Persian speech is produced by me  
so that those who understand Sanskrit can enlighten themselves.  
For those who desire to plunge into the great ocean of the Persian language,  
Kṛṣṇadāsa makes this life raft of words [nibadhnātivacahplavam].  
(Quote, Truschke,2016, pp. 93)

Thus, he gracefully spread across the beauty of Persian language to Sanskrit intellectuals. *Amarakoṣa* (ca. seventh century), a popular Sanskrit thesaurus, acted as a standing stick to the lexicon consisting of commonly used words in the two languages. However, the style of the grammar was not so easy going, keeping in context of the late sixteenth-century.

### ***Jaggannātha-Prakāśā***

*Jaggannātha-prakāśā* was a renowned work on smṛti during Akbar’s time. It was composed by Sura Miśra for Jaggannātha, a Kamboja warrior who lived at the court of Akbar. The work deals with the following ten subjects in ten prabhāsas: (i). Virtue, vice and duty (ii). Caste (iii). Sacraments (iv). Diurnal religious duties (v). Times meet for fasts (vi). Loyalty and expiations (vii). Impurity of the person from birth or death in one’s family (viii). Śrāddhas and gifts (ix). Religious calendar and

(x). Emancipation. The author praises his patron in the following verses:

....श्रीजगन्नाथनाम्ना निर्दिष्टोऽसौ व्यधत्ते प्रकटितयशसा सुरमिश्रः प्रकाशम्।  
अशेषकाम्बोजकुलावतंसः श्रीमज्जगन्नाथ इति प्रसिद्धः। अकारयद्धर्मनिवन्धमेतं  
धराधिपेऽप्यर्कवले नरेशे।

... It's says that renowned writer Suramisra specifically revealed the name of jagannātha. Jagannātha was significantly famous in the Kamboja family. He was the greatest king in the middle of the earth and the sun.

The above composition of the first prabhāsa was given as A.D. 1598, which means that the work composed were in the last days of the great Emperor Akbar. (Marulasiddaiah, 1925, No. 2041)

### **Sanskrit Literature in Jahangir's Period (1605 - 1627)**

The throne of Mughal dynasty was being held by Jahangir making him the fourth emperor. He was born on 9th September 1569 in fatehpur-Sikri. His father was Akbar and mother Miriam Zamani. His mother was a Hindu and his father, despite being a Muslim had chosen to marry someone from one of the many minorities of his territory of a different religious domination. This can be shown when he married his cousin Manbai, daughter of Raja Bhagwan Das, whom he loved very dearly. He often indulged himself with discussion with the followers of different faiths. He used to enjoy listening to discourses of learned men from separate faiths. He was an appreciator of art and could write pretty well himself. "He patronized learning and encouraged literature in Persian and Sanskrit languages. Under it, auspices literature flourished as it had never done before and a host of remarkable learned persons gathered at his court and composed works in his honor." (Prasad, 1940, pp. 248) I shall mention here few of the Sanskrit works that were written during his time:

#### ***Khānkhānacarita***

Rudrakavi was one of the most celebrated court poets during the reign of Pratap Shah's father, Narayan Shah. He was very well known for four Sanskrit panegyrics for Mughal elites during the time. He was a poet who was engrossed into politics which could be found in his brilliant works. He often uses long strings of compounds, complex imagery and numerable cultural references throughout his works. He also provides an insight to philosophy, poetry, regional characteristics of women, and the types of heroines (nayika-bheda). His approach was not only enclosed in the Mughal culture but was for the general lover of Indian literature.

Rudrakavi composed a renowned work called the *Khānakhānacarita* (Acts of Khān-iKhānān) for Abd al-Rahim, also known as the Khan of Khans, is an important literary and political figure. "The work is dated to Saka 1525 i.e. A.D.

1603, as stated by the author himself.” (Pingree, 1970, pp. 80) Hence, the work was done during the last days of Akbar. He wrote this during the armed dispute between Pratap Shah and the imperial army. “*Khānakhānacarita* mixes Sanskrit poetry and prose in four chapters and pursues a twofold approach to enlisting the general’s assistance.” (Truschke, 2016, pp.82). In the first chapters Rudrakavi praises Khan-i Khanan to be a very important figure and puts him to a place where he is no less than a king himself. The final chapters are more about the military circumstances and Rahim as a protagonist. *Khānakhānacarita* unlike others uses complex linguistic constructions and thus requires profound knowledge on Sanskrit literature presenting the skills he possessed. It also puts forward very political views and insights during the time with the mixture of Sanskrit poetry.

His first important work was *Dānasāhacarita* (Acts of Generous Danyal Shah), in the praise of Akbar’s son Dānyal. Later he composed two more undated panegyrics: The *Jāhāngiracarita* (Act of Jahangir) for Jahangir which now exists in a single incomplete manuscript in present. The poet is seen to reuse verses across his four panegyrics, a lot of which can be seen in the *Jāhāngiracarita*. Another of the work is *Kīrtisamullāsa* (Brilliance of Fame) dedicated to the Prince Sultan Khuram, son of Jahangir.

### ***Bījanavāṅkura***

*Bījanavāṅkura*, is a commentary work on the metrical portions of Bhāskarācārya’s *Bījagaṇita*, a famous work on Algebra. The commentary was also known by many names such as *Bījapallava*, or *Kalpalatāvatāra*. Kṛṣṇa has suggested some new artifices of his own in it. The commentary has made his name as one of the finest in the ancient commentaries and is accepted as such by scholars. “He has written a commentary, consisting mainly of examples, on the *Jātakapaddhātī* of Śrīpati. Another of his work is *Chādakanirṇaya* which was published by Sudhākara Dvivedī composed in A.D. 1587.” (Dikshit, 1981, pp. 159). Kṛṣṇa, the author of the present commentary, was the second son of Ballāla and played a profound role at the court of Emperor Jahangir. Kṛṣṇa was well respected at the court of Jahangir.

Munīśvara contributed in a commentary on a part of the *Siddhānta-śiromaṇi* composed in Saka 1560 by Bhāskarācārya. His parts were seen in *Bījaganita*, which is known as the second part of the major treatise. There he stated himself as a disciple of Nṛsimha, the nephew of Gaṇeśa, the renowned author of *Grahalāghava*. From his statements, it can be concluded that Kṛṣṇa was one of the learned pandits who lived at the court of Jahangir, although, Kṛṣṇa nowhere mentioned of Jahangir as his patron.

### **Sanskrit Literature in Shah Jahan’s Period (1627- 1658)**

Shahab-ud-din Muhammad Khurram, widely known as Shah Jahan, was the fifth Mughal emperor. He ruled from 1627 to 1658. He was engaged to Arju-mand Banu Begum who is also better known as Mumtaz Mahal. She was a greatly accomplished and a proficient woman. She was very intelligent and had a tender

heart. Emperor Shah Jahan desired to immortalize the love for his beloved wife through the construction of the Taj Mahal. Hence, the Taj Mahal was constructed in memory of the queen. It is considered that the empire was at its pinnacle during his reign. Shah Jahan's reign symbolizes the climax of the Mughal dynasty. Shah Jahan contributed in various works during his thirty years to achieve a lasting impact and importance. The sector of art and literature did not embellish much during his reign. He did patronize Persian and Sanskrit learning and assisted in preparing many works in these two languages. He eradicated the tax which was imposed on the pilgrims at Benares and Prayaga, at the request of the recognized Sanskrit pandit named Kavīndrācārya Sarasvatī. Later, he conferred on him the title "Sarvavidyānidhāna". Shah Jahan's eldest son was Dara Shikoh who supported in bringing out the original Sanskrit to Persian translations of *Shrimad Bhagavad Gīta*, *Yoga Vāsīṣṭha*, principal *Upaniṣads* and *Rāmāyaṇa* ordering it through Chandar Bhan Brahman. Chandar Bhan Brahman got fifty-two (52) *Upaniṣads* translated with the name of *Sirr-i-Akbar* or *The Great secret* that he completed in 1657. These surely depict the admiration he had for Hindu pandits. Some of the great works are mentioned below:

### ***Rasagaṅgādhara***

Jagannātha Paṇḍita is widely known as for his *Rasagaṅgādhara*, *Bhāminī-vilāsa* and *Gaṅgālāhari*. (Sarma,1994, pp. 2) *Rasagaṅgādhara* is one of the most celebrated works of Jagannātha during Shah Jahan's rule. It was most probably planned to consist of five heads (anana) or chapters. It is a highly revered sanskrit poetics theory where rasa and bhāvas, guṇas, vṛttis, kāvyabheda, divisions of Dhvani etc are discussed. Jagannāth was very deliberate in his critics of the celebrated writers of the past, often expressing his own stands on it. He believes that not *rasa* but *ramaṇīyakatā* is the essence of good Kāvya (ramaṇīyakārtha-pratipudakaś śabdah kāvyam). "The work suddenly breaks off in the second chapter while dealing with the *uttarālamkāra* and Nāgeśa's commentary also goes no further. It seems therefore probable that Jagannātha could not complete his work. His vṛtti is very erudite and contains references to his many views on the subject of the theory of vyañjanā or dhvani and the expression of rasa, which are not available in any other work of alamkāra." (Dasgupta,1947, pp. 565) "He also wrote a grammatical work, directed against Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita's famous commentary *Manoramā*, and called it *Manoramā-kuca-mardana*." (De, 1976, pp. 233) There are also Stotras such as those of Viṣṇu, Lakṣmī, Gaṅga and Yamunā. Other noteworthy works are Panegyrics of *Prāṇanārāyaṇa* and *Citra-mīmāṃsa-Khaṇḍana*, a commentary on the *Kāvya-prakaśa*. It is appreciated by the readers for its outstanding precision and accuracy in the presentation of theories. Its commentary *Marma-Prakāśa* written by Nāgeśa bhaṭṭa is in the beginning of the eighteenth century.

*Bhāminī-vilāsa* is the collection of detached verses independent of each other and so, it may be called a kosakāvya. The book is split up into four vilasa: (i). Prastāvīkā (Anyokti) Vilāsa (ii). Karuṇā-Vilāsa (iii). Śṛṅgāra-Vilāsa and (iv). Sānta-Vilāsa.

The divergence lies in the number of verses and it enjoyed great popularity.

*Gaṅgālāhari* is a popular poem written in the praise of Gaṅgā. Jagannātha Paṇḍita portrayed his expertise in Sanskrit through this Stotra. The poem reflects the love of Indian culture for this river-goddess which later on was translated into Hindi and English. Gaṅgā symbolizes more than the stream of water. From the perspective of the believers, she is believed to be the Goddess Makarāsanastha and at the transcendental level she is considered to be ‘Sachidānanda-svarūpa Brahmadravarūpiṇī.’

Another well-known work of Jagannātha is a Sanskrit panegyric titled *Āsapha-vilāsa* for Nawab Āsaf Khan, brother of Nur Jahan and a nobleman in the court of Shah Jahan, in whose praise he wrote his *Āsapha-vilāsa*. It focuses on the visit of Āsaf Khan in Kashmir in the company of Shah Jahan where he emphasizes the beauty and mythology related to Kashmir in Sanskrit. He often uses great Sanskrit comparison to showcase his admiration for Āsaf Khan. Moreover, at the finale of the prose section, Jagannātha places him within numerous hierarchies of Sanskrit aesthetic theory.

[Āsaf Khan] is respected in battle and honored by the gods. Among all neighboring rulers who are related to the world conqueror, he is like literature [kāvyā] is to speech, like poetic suggestion [dhvani] is to literature, like aesthetic emotion [rasa] is to poetic suggestion, and like erotic love [śṛṅgāra] is to aesthetic emotion. Nawab Āsaf Khan, who bathes in the essence of all śāstras, is esteemed thus because of his sweetness and greatness that stir the hearts of all sensitive critics. ( Truschke, 2016, pp. 90)

A lot of scholars find that the brief extant text to be incomplete making *Āsapha-vilāsa* a controversial topic. Nonetheless, it succeeds to add a valuable perception of how patrons and authors made Sanskrit relevant within the Mughal imperium in the fine work in Kashmir’s appreciation of the Mughals. His works transcend the cultural boundary when it comes to the readers without stepping out of his traditional conventions.

Jagannātha Paṇḍitarāja is undoubtedly one of the greatest rhetoricians when it comes to the literary history of India both as a critic and poet in Sanskrit. He was the last prodigious inspiration on Sanskrit Poetics, and as a poet also, he is similarly celebrated. His father’s and mother’s names were perubhaṭṭa or peramabhaṭṭa and Lakṣmī respectively. They were from the village Mungundu in the Godavari district. He belonged to khandrika family and was a Telegu Brāhmin. He is well known for being a literary theorist or rhetorician. “He was the poet-laureate of Shah-Jahan and the emperor used to listen to his composition and bestow upon him royal gifts and favours.”(Srivastava,1960, pp.324) Furthermore Shah Jahan also granted him title of Paṇḍitarāja (King of the Learned). His works were remarkably diverse and achieved great expertise in the Vedas, Vedānta, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Mīmāṃsā, Grammar and Aesthetics.

### ***Siddhānta-sārvabhauma***

*Siddhānta-sārvabhauma*, also called *Siddhantatattvārtha* written by Munīśvara, was an expert in his field at that period of time. It is remembered as a certified compendium of theoretical astronomy. It is a compilation of the several siddhāntas on Indian astronomy. The chapters discussed in the work are: (i). Measurement of true solar year (ii). Duration of the years (iii). Motions of planets (iv). Measures of months and years and the mode of reckoning them (v). Modes of planetary orbits (vi). Measures of bulk (vii). Diameter and motions of the earth (viii). Equatorial regions (ix). Calculation of latitudes and nadir (x). Curved motions of the planets (xi). Nodes (xii). Position of the earth (xiii). The orbits of the planets (xiv). Arcs between the vernal equinoctial point and the equator etc. (Mitra, vol. 5, pp. 171)

The work was done by Munīśvara, also known as Viśvarūpa who was the son of Raṅganātha. In his works he added that he had the fortune to get favors from Kārtik swāmī and his was Nārayaṇa, Kṛṣṇa's disciple. He was the famous mathematician who produced accurate sine tables. The date of composition is 1627 which can be known from his work. Therefore, it is acknowledged that Shah Jahan ascended the throne during that period. Munīśvara was born in A. D. 1603.

Munīśvara was also well known for his works other than *Siddhānta-sārvabhauma*. One of them were *Marīcī*, an in-depth interpretation on the Gaṇitādhyāya and Golādhyāya of Bhāskar's *Siddhāntasiromaṇi*. Another renowned was his work on the *Līlāvāṇī* of Bhāskarācārya containing 7000 verses, entitled *Niṣṛṣṭārthadūṇī Līlāvati Vivṛiti*. *Pāṭisāra* is an independent work on elementary arithmetic. "He has mentioned at the end the date of the completion of the first half of the *Marīcī* commentary in a strange chronogram." (Dikshit, 1981, pp.161)

### ***Sarvasiddhāntarāja***

*Sarvasiddhāntarāja* is an amazing astronomical work composed by Nityānanda in A.D 1640. The work can be split into two sections: The Gaṇitādhyāya and Golādhyāya. He tried to achieve the knowledge and analytical elements found in their texts that are of Islamic origin, e.g. computational methods, geometrical argument, astronomical models, diagrammatic proofs etc. The Gaṇitādhyāya contains of the following nine chapters: (i). Mīmāṃsā (Rationale), (ii). Mean places, (iii). True places, (iv). Three problems, (v). Lunar eclipse, (vi). Solar eclipse, (vii). Elevation of moons cusps, (viii). Conjunction of planets with stars and (ix). Shadow and the Golādhyāya contains three chapters: (i). The Universe, (ii). The celestial sphere and (iii). Instruments. The distinct feature of this work, which makes it unique from all other Siddhānta works described so far, is that it follows the Sāyana system. He has fully discussed in the first chapter on 'Mīmāṃsā' (Rationale) how the Sāyana system is the supreme structure and how it is recognized as such by Gods and Ṛṣis. (Dikshit, 1981, pp.165). Nonetheless, very little is known about the work's actual use in the calculation of almanacs.

Nityānanda was a Sanskrit astronomer. He was commissioned by a minister of the emperor to translate into Sanskrit from the Indo-Persian. He lived in Indrapurī near Kurukṣetra. He was from the Gauda family and his gotra was Mudgala. He was brought up in the Dulināhaṭṭa tradition of teaching. According to Sudhākara, Dulināhaṭṭa was his traditional inherent residence. His father was Devadatta, son of Nārāyaṇa. ( Plofker,1963, pp.324)

He was also recognized for another of his astronomical work called *Siddhāntasindhu* where he mentions Shah Jahan as his patron and ancestors up to Babar. It was composed for Vasafa Khan (Asafkhan, 1641) who was the Minister of Shah Jahan.

### ***Pārasī-Prakāśa***

Vedāṅgarāya was a renowned author during the time of Shah Jahan for his numerous astronomical and religious treatise. He mainly bloomed during his reign and presented quite a few of his works to please the emperor. One of his famous works is the *Pārasī-prakāśa* in which are given methods for “converting Hindu into Muhamedan dates and vice versa and the Arabic and Persian names of the days of the week, the months, the planets, the constellations, the signs of the zodiac etc. Several Arabic technical terms of astronomy and others that are ordinarily used in astrological treatises are explained, and the influences of the planets in different positions are mentioned.” (Kielhorn and Bhandarkar, 1884, pp. 14) He wrote the work to impress the emperor Shah Jahan and gain his indulgence.

The son of Vedāṅgarāya, Nandikeśvara, is also well-known for his famous astrological work called *Gaṇakamaṇḍana*. In the work, Vedāṅgarāya’s another name, Mālajit, was stated and was aware with the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. He got the title of Vedāṅgarāya from the emperor of Delhi. “Mālajit identified as Vedāṅgarāya, was the son of Tīgalabhaṭṭa who was the son of Ratnabhaṭṭa. Ratnabhaṭṭa lived at Śrīsthala in Gujarat.” (Kielhorn and Bhandarkar, 1884, pp.14)

### **Sanskrit Literature in Aurangzeb’s Period (1658 -1707)**

Muhi-ud-Din Muhammad who is generally known as Aurangzeb is supposed to be the last of the Mughal emperors after whose death, the empire concluded. He ruled the entire Indian Subcontinent for a time frame of 49 years. He was the third son of Shah Jahan and Mumtaz Mahal. In Dahod, a place in Gujarat on 3rd November, he was born. A great deal of controversies regarding Aurangzeb’s personality was being noted during his time. “He gave grants of lands to Hindu temples and priests, and that if he ordered the destruction of Hindu temples, he did so during his time of war or to reclaim those mosques which had been forcibly occupied by the Hindus and converted into temples.”(Srivastava,1960, pp.359) Nonetheless he was a very diligent man, logical and disciplined in habits and thought and an unrelenting worker. His inclination towards his bias made him not be concerned in learning Sanskrit. Aurangzeb tended to have a hostile attitude towards Hindus. Therefore, the extent of his influence on Sanskrit learning at the time of his rule

can be thought as little. Nevertheless, many of the works made their way through his time. The descriptions of two of the works are mentioned below:

### ***Muhūrtamālā***

*Muhūrtamālā* is a renowned work on ‘muhūrtas’<sup>2</sup> or auspicious moments written at Varanashi by Jyotiṣī Raghunāthain Aurangzeb’s time. It holds and deals with moments which are considered favorable for performing religious ceremonies.

Ragunātha was the son of Nṛṣimha, the one who was given the title of *Jyotirvitsarasa* from Emperor Akbar when the latter conquered the fort of Āseri. Nṛṣimha’s family hailed from Dabhol, in South Konkan, but he settled at Benares. He had the patronage of Emperor Akbar. The author was from the Śāṅḍilyagotra and was known as a Chitpavan Brahmin. The composition was done at the time when Aurangzeb had commenced his rule by defeating Dara Shah, Suja Shah and Murad Shah in around 1660 A.D. The writer has given the following account in a verse:

जित्वा दाराशाहंसुजाशाहंमुरादशाहं च।  
अवरंगजेवशाहेशसत्यवनीममायमुद्योगः॥

I have undertaken this work when Emperor Aurangzeb is ruling the earth, after conquering Dara, Shuja and Murad.” (Dikshit, 1981, pp.361)

### ***Muhūrtaratna***

*Muhūrtaratna* is a treatise combining the religious and astrological aspects to provide the moments fit for the performance of religious ceremonies. The work is divided into twenty-seven chapters each describing certain moments as favorable for performing particular acts. They are as follows: (i). Saṃvatsara (ii). Tithi (iii). Vāra (iv). Nakṣatra (v). Yoga (vi). Karaṇapraviṣṭi (vii). Muhūrta (viii). Upagraha (ix). Saṅkrānti (x). Gocara (xi). Candratārādīsthala (xii). Lagna (xiii). Saṃskāra (xiv). Samayaśuddhi (xv). Mahādoṣanirūpaṇa (xvi). Vratibandha (xvii). Samāvarttana (xviii). Churikā (xix). Vivāha (xx). Vadhūpraveśa (xxi). Rājyābhīṣeka (xxii). Yātrā (xxiii). Vāstu (xxiv). Gṛhapraveśa (xxv). Devapraṭiṣṭhā (xxvi). Genealogy of Aurangzeb (xxvii). Svasthānagotravarṇana (Pingree, 1970, pp. 55) The last two chapters consist of the genealogy of Emperor Aurangzeb and the author’s own story respectively. The references and details from the author it can be deduced that his work was composed under Aurangzeb.

Īśvaradāsa was the son of Keśavaśarmā who obtained the title *Jyotiṣarāya* and also plenty of wealth from Jahangir on account of his proficiency in the science of astrology. The family hailed from Kālīñjara and were Kānyakubja Brahmins belonging to Vatsagotra (Marulasiddaiah, 1925, vol.3, No. 10). During that very time of 1585 A.D. to A.D.1663 Aurangzeb was at the peak of his power.

## Conclusion

A clear understanding of the Mughal's contribution to the Sanskrit language and literature is crucial to understanding the first uses Sanskrit. It also helps us to develop a clear perception of where it might have originated. A lot of writers and poets of the Mughal era have contributed to the nourishment of this language through their work. This nourishment, thus enabled the language to evolve. Although stifled by the conflicts arising in the initial years of the Mughal era, the development of Sanskrit received a lot of attention from the era of Emperor Akbar. The fact that Sanskrit is still practiced worldwide to this day in the 21st century is evidence that it has been etched with threads of history.

## Endnotes

1. Chandar Bhan Braman, the Mughal state secretary or munshi, was one of the great Indo-Persian poets and prose stylists of early modern South Asia. Chandar Bhan's life spanned the reigns of four emperors: Akbar (1556-1605), Jahangir (1605-1627), Shah Jahan (1628-1658), and Aurangzeb (1658-1707). As a high caste Hindu who worked for a series of Muslim monarchs and other officials, forming powerful friendships along the way. Chandar Bhan's experience bears vivid testimony to the pluralistic atmosphere of the Mughal court, particularly during the reign of Shah Jahan, the celebrated builder of the Taj Mahal.

Kinra, Rajeev (2015). *Writing Self, Writing Empire* (Chandra Bhan Brahman and the cultural world of the Indo-Persian State Secretary), (First Edition), University of California Press, P. 7

2. Certain rules have been framed to show what moments prove beneficial if selected for performing the sanctifying ceremony of impregnation, for starting on journeys and for several other functions concerning everyday life; and the moments thus selected are technically known as 'muturtas'

Dikshit, Sankar Balakrishna (1981). *Bharatiya Jyotish Sastra*, [History of Indian Astronomy], part-2, The controller of Publications, Delhi, P. 355

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