

THE BOOK under review,¹ is based on a variety of original sources.² It attempts to highlight the role of *qazi* during the reign of Aurangzeb. It examines the position of imperial *qazis*, provincial *qazis* as well as *qazis* at the local level. The author states that a close bond existed between the *sadar* and the *qazi* as the latter received subsistence grant through the office of the *sadar* which made him virtually dependent on the Mughal government. The monopoly of interpreting religious law of Islam which was long delegated to the *qazi* was watered down because in Medieval India, *Zawabiat* (state law) very often supplemented the *Shariat*. The author further canvasses that the *qazi*, religious character of his office notwithstanding, did perform certain other administrative functions.

This book is, by and large, an extension of half a century old work of Ahmad.³ He had clearly listed duties of the *qazi* under the Mughals which included jobs like supervising the collection of customs in seaports. The present book, though more authentic, lacks the gripping interest of Ahmad's book and the tabular presentation of Hussain.⁴

The author has tried to exemplify his statements by quoting original and secondary sources of importance and this makes his work authentic and impressive. Besides discussing functions of the *qazi*, the present author has added two chapters to his work, viz., (i) *qazi* in relation to village community; and (ii) *qazi* and allied functionaries. The first of these chapters aims at showing that *qazi* had become vital to the village community as he attested representations of respectable people of the area addressed to the Emperor. This is significant because judicial function of the *qazi* did not in many cases bring the villagers in his fold as they often had their civil, religious and even criminal disputes settled through the village assemblies. In the second chapter, the author comes out with a disappointment because instead of examining nature of the relationship which subsisted between the *qazi* and other functionaries he has chosen merely to describe the functionaries like *mufti* and *muhtasib*.

The title of the book is extremely misleading because the author neither discusses at any length the administrative history of Medieval India nor makes any special contribution to the jurisprudence under Aurangzeb. It would have been a

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1. M.L. Bhatia, *History of Medieval India* (1992).
 2. E.g., *Waqiat and Akbarat-i-Darbar-i-Maulla* (Newsletters from Imperial Court from Alamgir to Muhammad Shah - extracts from Saikar Collection).
 3. Muhammad Basheer Ahmad, *The Administration of Justice in Medieval India* (1941).
 4. Wahed Hussain, *Administration of Justice during Muslim Rule in India* (1934).

lot more honest had the book been titled “Position of Qazi during the Reign of Aurangzeb” because that is all that it discusses.

However, the book will be of immense use to persons interested in functioning of the judiciary and administrative set up with reference to *qazi* in the reign of Aurangzeb.

The printing and get up of the book are excellent. Keeping in view the quality of paper and printing as also volume, the book is legitimately priced.

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