**JHSR Journal of Historical Studies and ResearchISSN:2583-0198**
**Volume 5, Number 1 (January - April,2025),PP.115-126.**
Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal
**Website:www.jhsr.in**
**Email:**jhsr.editor@gmail.com

# Hunting as a Symbol of Governance and Spirituality under Akbar

**Alauddin Sk[1]**

[1]Research Scholar
Department of History
Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh
Email: alauddinwb98@gmail.com

***Abstract:****Hunting, once a primal necessity for survival, evolved into a multifaceted practice with the progress of time. In the Mughal context, hunting was more than just a recreational activity. It was a carefully crafted tool used by Emperor Akbar to project his powerful image, a tool for governance, and an agency for spiritual guidance. This paper aims to delve into the diverse meanings and functions of hunting within the Mughal Empire, particularly how Emperor Akbar wielded this activity to solidify his power, and project a multifaceted image of his rule. By examining the multifaceted nature of hunting under Akbar, this paper provides a window to look how the monarchies in pre-modern times used the hunting excursion to legitimize their rule and authority.*

***Keywords****: Authority,Akbar, Governance, Hunting, Imperial Power, legitimacy etc.*

**Date of Submission: 20.01.2025 Date of Acceptance: 25.01.25**

## Introduction

While hunting was already a prevalent custom in the Indian subcontinent, the Mughals brought a distinct style and significance to this royal pursuit. Their hunting traditions, far from being a simple adoption of existing practices, were a deliberate synthesis of Central Asian nomadic heritage with the traditions of the Indian subcontinent. This combination gave rise to a multifaceted activity that served multitude of purposes, from military training and self-representation to personal amusement. The Mughal's predecessor Chengiz Khan and Timur, used their hunting expeditions to check the imperial army, keeping their forces

vigilant even during peacetime.[1] Abul Fazl, in his *Akbarnama*, documented Timur's dedication to hunting from a young age, who considered it a valuable training ground for warfare and leadership.[2] Their successors emulated their hunting strategies in the art of governance.

From the inceptions, the Mughals emphasized upon the significance of hunting for the royal princes. Mirza Haider Dughlat, a chronicler of Babur's early life and a family member, acknowledged hunting, falconry, and other skills as essential elements of princely education, useful not just for leisure but also for governing a kingdom.[3] Babur himself was an avid hunter, recording his adventures in the jungles of Peshawar and Hustgarh.[4] Even Humayun, despite his political turmoil, indulged in hunting expeditions during his exile in Persia.[5]

## Akbar's Image as Sovereign of All Living Beings

The reign of Akbar is a perfect illustration of how hunting transcended its basic purpose. Akbar was known for his passion for recreation. Beyond enjoying the reputation of being an exhilarating huntsman, his hunting expeditions fulfilled a multitude of purposes, intricately ingrained into the fabric of Mughal rule and governance. He envisioned himself not just as ruler of humans but as sovereign over all living things and the environment itself. The notion of millennial sovereignty, as scholar Azfar Moin argues Akbar blended Turko-Mongol traditions with Persian and Indian influences, projecting himself as the master of all realms – human, animal, and temporal.[6]

Abul Fazl, Akbar's sole spokesperson endorses the multifaceted dimension of imperial hunt where he discarded a misconception about hunting as 'senseless' killing of animal and medium of enjoying 'a sort of pleasure.'[7] On the contrary Abul Fazl emphasized that "deep inquirers see in hunting a means of acquisition of knowledge" of the empire.[8] He further notes that by travelling incognito, Akbar inspect the condition of the people and the army, examines the matters related to taxation, revenue system and royal household.[9] By indulgence in hunting, he also established the Mughal state as benevolent and just state by punishing the oppressors and providing justice to the oppressed.[10] Thus, Abul Fazl forcefully endorses that on the account of these higher reasons, Akbar indulge in chase and became quite enamored of it, however, "short sighted and shallow observers think that His Majesty has no other object in view but hunting; but the wise and experienced know that he pursues higher aims."[11] This notion of hunting is a mere reflection of a broader picture so far the reign of Akbar is concerned. The pages of *Akbarnama* contained the episodes in the life of Akbar frequently referred to this side of hunting, a topic which we will take up in due course.

Akbar was a trend setter for the later rulers as his hunting strategies and ideas reiterated by his successors. Jahangir's memoirs shed light on the myriad notion of hunting, especially in the Mughal art of administration and governance. Abdul Hamid Lahori, trained in Abul Fazl's school of thought notes that the emperor Shah Jahan "go on hunting and sight-seeing but intrinsically they aim at ascertaining the prosperity of the kingdom and state of peace as first-hand information and the mischiefs-making recalcitrants and rebellious mischievious person could not dare to put their steps out of obedience."[12] Aurangzeb utilized hunting as a means to stay informed about potential rebellions and maintain control over his vast

territory.[13] He also commanded one of his sons to slay a lion that was 'laying waste' to the countryside.[14] This exemplifies the hunts usefulness in the day to day administration of the empire and projection of the Mughal Empire as a welfare state.

## Hunting for Showcasing the Imperial Power

Akbar's hunting excursions involved multifarious objectives and served much more than amusement. They were meticulously planned and carefully executed for the display of emperor's power and strength. During his return journey from Malwa to Agra in 1561, Akbar and his entourage encountered tiger along with five sub-adult cubs in the territory of Narwar near Gwalior. Akbar presented here possessing great skill and remarkable swordsman by advancing alone and putting down the tiger with a single blow. The remaining cubs were slain by his soldiers.[15] Accounts of sixteen years old boy slaying a tiger with his bare hands, as Abul Fazl vividly describes in the incident were not mere anecdotes. They were carefully crafted narratives and artistic representations as the event considered worth illustrated as part of the famous *Akbarnama* illustration. (Figure: 1)[16] These depictions served to reinforce the image of Akbar as a fearless warrior, a powerful leader capable of conquering not only human enemies but also the beasts of the wild. This display of physical prowess was crucial for maintaining order and loyalty within the Mughal Empire.

Similarly, in another hunting expedition in 1563 at Mathura, Akbar was reported to have killed five tiger with bow and arrow. Additionally, he captured one tiger alive, while another was captured by his officers.[17] The remarkable aspect of this incident is the way Akbar was portrayed as the symbol of immense physical strength, who single-handedly dealt with six tigers, including the one captured alive. In contrast, 'bahadur' officers shown managed to subdue only one tiger.

Among the numerous organized hunts, *qamargha*, a hunting technique modeled after the Mongolian tradition, was the most effective in showcasing imperial power and authority. In this section, the focus will be on two of the most significant *qamargha* hunts organized during Akbar's reign in 1567 and 1578 in Lahore and Punjab respectively. A detailed examination of the preparations for these *qamargha* hunts will provide insight into how the emperor asserted his power through such elaborate and strategic hunting practices.

At the outset, a special order was issued by the emperor to drive animals and birds into a designated enclosure covering a vast area. In the 1567 hunt, the game was driven from areas near a mountain on one side and the river Bihat (Jhelam) on the other.[18] Similarly, in 1578 hunt, wild animals were herded from Girjhak to Bhera, covering a distance of twenty-five kos.[19] Several district officers were appointed with *Bakshis*, *Tawacis*, and *Sazawals* overseeing different quarters of the region.[20] Thousands of people from surrounding towns and villages were mobilized to assist in driving the animals into the enclosure. According to *Tarikh-i-Alfi*, nearly 50,000 peoples were employed in driving the game for 1567 hunt.[21] The process of gathering the game continued for nearly a month, with the hunting ground expanding up to ten miles in circumference. However, in the 1578 hunt, the preparations were completed within ten days. Once the enclosure was secured, the emperor entered, either

on horseback or seated in a hawdah atop an elephant, to capture various species of animals and birds. On some occasions, hunting cheetahs accompanied him, assisting in capturing deer. With Akbar's permission, high-ranking nobles were given the first opportunity to participate in the hunt. Royal women also accompanied these expeditions. The privilege of hunting was granted in a hierarchical order, starting from the highest-ranking officers to the lower-ranked troopers and footmen. Gradually, the circumference of the hunting ground was reduced to concentrate the game within a smaller area.

Figure: 1 Akbar slays a tigress (right side of double page illustration)
Source: Victoria & Albert Museum, London: IS. 2:18-1896 ((Public Domain)

These hunts served multiple purposes, primarily showcasing the emperor's power and military prowess while also functioning as grand spectacles. Some argued that these hunting grounds demonstrate the emperor's formidable authority and capacity to dominate over the lesser "predator", while "as a military tactic, the hunt enabled the pursuit and punishment of seditious officers and chief. And as a ritual form, the hunt staged the forgiveness and incorporation of these insurgents into the hierarchical order of empire."[22]

As Abul Fazl outlined that the emperor used the hunting ground to pursue higher aims, administer justice and punish the oppressors, the 1567 *qamargha* demonstrates this, as officers were rewarded, punished and pardoned based on their actions on the hunting ground. For instance: Hamid Bhakar, a yesawal shot an arrow aiming at one of the court attendants

during the hunt. Akbar initially declared a capital punishment to be meted out against him. However, his life was spared, when Qulij Khan's strike failed to injure him. But as sign of warning his head was shaved and he was mounted on an ass and paraded around the hunting-ground.[23] His sin was so significant that this event was not only recorded, but illustrated as part of *Akbarnama* painting. Hamid Bhakar appeared on the right side of the double page illustration on upper corner mounting on ass (**See Figure 2**).[24] Muzaffar Khan, the wazir brought Wazir Khan, brother of Asif Khan before Akbar in the hunting ground who pleaded for forgiveness for their temporary association with Ali Quli Khan and Bahadur Khan, known for their rebellion inclinanation. They were granted forgiveness and Akbar issued royal favors upon them.[25]

Similarly, during the 1578 qamargha, Haji Khan and other Baluchi leaders approached Akbar, seeking forgiveness. They were pardoned and even allowed to participate in the hunt alongside the emperor.[26] As Anand Panidan has argued, the hunting ground thus became a symbolic stage for reconciliation and the reintegration of rebellious chiefs into imperial favor.[27] Additionally, Akbar sought spiritual guidance through the *qamargha,* particularly in 1578 which will be discussed in due course.

## Hunting as a Metaphor for Imperial Governance

Akbar's perceptive use of hunting extended beyond his amusement and battle training. He clearly understood its potential as a platform for political intrigue and investigation. When faced with uncertain circumstances, he used to retreat to the hunt, ostensibly to distance himself from the court's machinations and ambiguous situations. The temporary withdrawal from court business allowed him to obtain objective information and assess the loyalties of his courtiers. The murder of Tardi Beg by Bairam Khan in 1556 exemplifies this strategy. Both were antagonists, and when Tardi Beg's army was routed in their first battle against Hemu in 1556, Bairam Khan summoned him to his home under false pretenses of compassion but assassinated him in a betrayal.[28] On learning of the incident, Akbar ostensibly withdrew himself from the state affairs and engaged in hunting which, according to Abul Fazl, enabled him to observe the reactions of his officials and discern the truth behind the political turmoil.[29]

Hunting also provided Akbar with a direct link to the common people, bypassing the filters of courtiers and officials. During his expeditions, he interacted with local communities, gaining first hand insights into their concerns and grievances. This practice, as Abul Fazl notes, allowed him to "acquaint himself with the condition of the people" and implement measures for their protection.[30] This emphasis on public welfare state during hunting was not mere proclamation, but documented carefully with the clear objectives for strengthening his legitimacy and to ensure the stability of his rule. During a hunting excursion in the pargana Saket in Uttar Pradesh, Akbar received a complaint from a local Brahman named Hapa about troublemakers of eight villages of the above pargana who were known for their "insolence, robbery, manslaughter, boldness and turbulence". He promptly waged war against the offenders with 200 men and 200 elephants against the more than four thousand rebels,

demonstrating his commitment to protecting his subjects.[31] This idea of hunting as imperial governance extended beyond individual case. Background for Akbar's abolition of pilgrimage tax in 1563 created during one of his hunting expeditions near Mathura where he discovered that Hindu pilgrims were unfairly taxed for their visit to the holy places. He promptly abolished the pilgrimage tax throughout his dominions, showcasing his concern for the well-being of his people.[32]

Akbar's hunting trips were not mere amusement it was intricately linked with the system of governance. Abul Fazl consistently put forward this notion whenever hunting trips were undertaken. He describes them as "diffusing the light of justice,"[33] suggesting that Akbar used them not only to inquire about the state of affairs but to extend his idea of justice to his subjects irrespective of religious beliefs or race.

Figure: 2 Akbar's qamargha hunt of 1567 (right side of double page painting)
Source: Victoria & Albert Museum, London: IS.2:56-1896 (Public Domain)

In 1570, after initiating repairs and expansions to the fort of Ajmer, Akbar set out on a hunting expedition towards Nagor, using it as a strategic opportunity to address political concerns and suppress dissent. During this journey, he learned that the city's prosperity depended on three reservoirs—Kaidani, Shams Talao, and Kukur Talao. However, one of these tanks had become clogged with earth, causing a water shortage that led to residents abandoning the city. Akbar ordered the tank to be cleared and refilled with water to restore Nagor's former glory and alleviate the crisis.[34] Thus, this hunting trip provides Akbar with the opportunity to gather crucial information and establish his image as a benevolent ruler.

Similarly in July 1572, while traveling to Ajmer, Akbar received reports from his scouts about a tiger that constantly lay in wait for the travellers and killed them. He personally set out to hunt down the beast as he considered the 'extirpation of causers of evil' (referring to tiger) 'is one of the duties of the sovereignty'.[35] Similarly, Jahangir also portrayed himself as a protector by slaying two tigers to ensure the safety of travelers along the Panipat-Karnal route.[36]

Akbar's sense of ruler-ship extended beyond his human subjects; he also regarded himself as the emperor of the animal kingdom as pointed out earlier. On one occasion, during an elephant hunt in the forests of Narwar, he spotted a massive serpent, measuring about seven

*Akbarshahi* yards in length, that had already devoured several spotted deer (*chital*) and was poised to kill more. Akbar ordered the serpent to be killed to prevent further destruction, thereby protecting the deer from harm.[37]

## Hunting as Spiritual Quest

Akbar's hunting expeditions were not simply recreational pursuits. His hunting expeditions also served a spiritual purpose. Abul Fazl endorses that during the hunting excursion Akbar was "pursuing spiritual game", highlighting his desire to connect with the divine. This pursuit manifested in various ways. In 1562, during a hunt, Akbar decided to visit the sacred tomb of Shaikh Muinuddin Chisti in Ajmer with a handful of officers by defying the advice of his courtiers for a risky journey.[38] This act exemplifies his commitment to his faith and his willingness to undertake spiritual quests even amidst seemingly mundane activities.

Akbar's hunting as a tool for spiritual connection is masterfully crafted by his chronicler Abul Fazl in a hunting incident. Akbar during his journey to visit the shrine of Baba Farid from Nagaur to Pak Pattan received reports from his scouts about a herd of wild asses (*gurkhar*). He set out on foot in pursuit of the games accompanied by three or four specially chosen huntsmen (*qarawal*). When he fired his gun, all but one of the asses managed to escape from the herd. Akbar continued the chase one after another, killing a total of thirteen wild asses that day. However, with each successive shot, the remaining herd would scatter further. In pursuance of the fleeing animals, Akbar repeatedly advancing deeper into the desert, eventually moved far ahead of his huntsmen. At one point, consumed by thirst, he found himself without any trace of water or water-bearers. His thirst was so intense that he lost the ability to speak. At this critical juncture, "mystic guides led the water-bearers through the boundless desert" to relieve the emperor.[39] This episode reinforced his legitimacy as a divinely chosen ruler by portraying his hunts as a medium for spiritual enlightenment and divine connection. Abul Fazl, at the outset of the event set forth the agenda that this particular hunt was not merely for the pursuit of pleasure, but "inwardly, there was in his (Akbar) heart the longing to know the God".[40] Furthermore, this event was not only documented in textual sources but also visually represented in the *Akbarnama* paintings. In this illustration, Akbar is depicted seated on a carpet in deep spiritual contemplation, while the corpses of wild asses lie on the ground beneath a tree, positioned at the left corner of the composition (**Figure 3**).

Akbar's portrayal as a ruler receiving mystic guidance through hunting was meticulously crafted narratives to reinforce his image as a divinely chosen sovereign. This notion of mystical encounter prominently highlighted by the contemporaries during a *qamargha* hunt occurred in 1578 in the Salt Range. Abul Fazl noted that something extraordinary happened in course of the hunt "the description of it cannot be comprehended by the feeble intellect of common-place people…there had been a marvelous intercourse with the mystery-knowing heart of the holy sanctuary".[41] He added that "a sublime joy took possession of his bodily frame. The attraction (*jazaba*) of cognition of God cast its rays".[42] In response to this spiritual awakening, the emperor ordered the release of the captured animals and cut his hair short as

an act of devotion to God.[43] Abul Fazl then proceeds to record how people interpreted what could have happened in the *qamargha* ground.

A number of clear-sighted ones of the holy assemblage thought that he had met in these inspiring fields one of the pious anchorites and had gained his desire." Another set thought that he had met in with one of the holy spirits, others were convinced that the speech of the silent ones of the wilderness had conveyed a message to him. Others thought that the beasts of the forests had with a tongueless tongue imparted Divine secrets to him. When he had for a long time received the Divine rays, the blissful servants came and in proportion to their capacity carried off the fragments of the feast.[44]

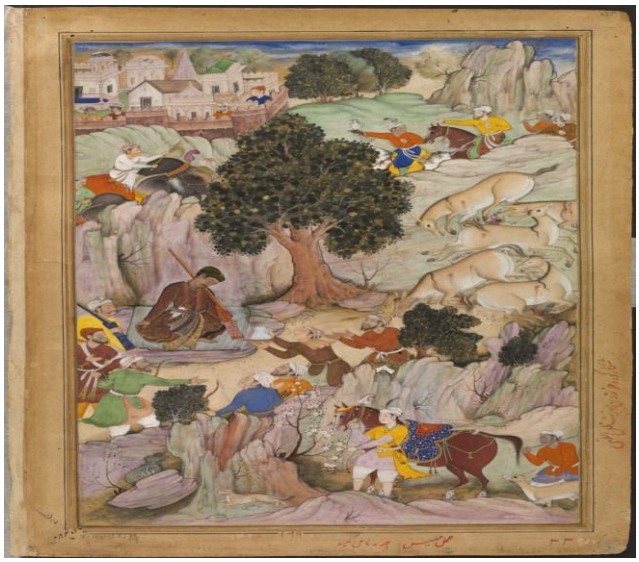

Figure: 3 Akbar hunting wild asses in the desert by Mahesh & Kesav
Source: Victoria & Albert Museum, London: IS. 2:84-1896 (Public Domain)

Hunting, in this context, should be understood in a broader perspective, serving as a conduit through which the emperor attained divine wisdom. While it is widely recognized that Abul Fazl, as Akbar's official historian, may have deliberately crafted these narratives, however, their significance in the process of legitimization of Akbar's rule cannot be overlooked. These accounts reinforced an image of the emperor whose authority was beyond question. Thus, Abul Fazl depicted Akbar as the Perfect Man (*insan-i-kamil*)[45], and such narratives were integral to the larger imperial project of identity formation. Even if one sets aside Abul Fazl's account of the 1578 hunt, three other contemporary sources conveyed similar messages, highlighting extraordinary events that influenced a transformation in Akbar's behavior.

Nizamuddin Ahmad's writing about the 1578 hunt closely resembles with the description of Abul Fazl. Nizamuddin writes that,

> Suddenly, a certain condition, at once, came upon the emperor, and a great ecstasy took possession of him. There came upon him, in whom was revealed personal and attributive rays of brightness and were combined all perfections, partial as well as total, such a condition as words cannot describe. In this matter people expressed different opinions. A number of people thought that, that

> chosen one of God had communion with supernatural beings; and others imagined that the tongueless ones that roam in the plains, and the silent-lipped ones that wander in the forests, had told him, what there was to say, with the tongue of silence.[46]

Abdul Qadir Badauni, an ardent critic of Akbar was of the opinion that "suddenly all at once a strange state and strong frenzy came upon the Emperor, and an extraordinary change was manifested in his manner, to such an extent as cannot be accounted for. And everyone attributed it to some cause or other; but God alone knoweth secrets. And at that time he ordered the hunting to be abandoned."[47]

Arif Qandhari's account, although a short, resembles with Abul Fazl, Nizamuddin Ahmad and Badauni. He reported that "a mysterious 'Divine Call' had descended on the emperor which tranced him completely. The Divine call revealed a message to him regarding certain affairs while he was going towards hunting ring".[48] In addition, a contemporary an eyewitness account of 1578 is *Dalpat Vilas*. This text, although provides a different history of the hunt, align with the view that on the second day of hunting while Akbar returned from his hunt, he behaved strangely.[49]

Thus, the emperor's encounter with supernatural phenomenon during the hunt played a crucial role in the legitimization of their rule. Emperor Akbar patronized a group of people, best represented by Abul Fazl who carefully crafted his image as recipient of supernatural power. Abul Fazl also sought to portray these miracle centered round the emperor as widely accepted by his subjects. The striking example of this belief is an incident where a traveller who encounter a tiger while passing through a jungle. Instead of fleeing or fighting the beast, he drew a circle around himself and called upon the name of Akbar. The tiger halted at the utterance of Akbar's name, allowing the traveller to escape unharmed.[50]

Such miraculous associations with monarchs were not an uncommon phenomenon in those times. As Marc Bloch is his *The Royal Touch* explores that both in France and England kings were believed to possess healing powers, who were capable of curing disease and illness simply by their touch.[51] These attributions of supernatural abilities have historically been linked to royalty, strengthening their legitimacy and divine right to rule.

# Conclusion

The hunting tradition under Akbar transcended from a mere amusement into a form of military exercise and a symbol of power and authority. Besides, demonstrating the aura and prestige, the emperor carried diverse administrative and political duties under the guise of hunting expedition i.e. dealing with the rebellions, assessing the taxation system, punishing the oppressors, providing justice to the oppressed, gathering unbiased information of an ongoing problem and testing the loyalties of the nobles and officers. This provides a window to navigate the intricate political landscape by actively engaging themselves in the administrative affairs. Thereby, as a metaphor for rule and governance, hunting was the key to Akbar for extending the Mughal idea of justice to the populace.

Additionally, Akbar's hunting expeditions can be seen as a medium for legitimization through divine agency. His supposed experiences of supernatural power during hunts, as propagated by his theorist Abul Fazl and the imperial elite, were designed to elevate him beyond the status of an ordinary monarch. This carefully constructed narrative played a crucial role in shaping his imperial identity. The portrayal of a ruler possessing miraculous powers during hunts was a well-established phenomenon in pre-modern times, reinforcing the idea of divine sanction for kingship as we have seen in the case of Akbar.

## Notes and References

[1] For myriad notion of Chengiz Khan's hunting expedition see Juvaini, Ata Malik, *Tarikh-i Jahan Gusa* or *The History of the World Conqueror,* ed., Mirza Mohammad Qazvini, trans., J. A. Boyle, Cambridge, 1958, pp. 27-31; and for Timur's, see Arabshah, Ahmed ibn, *Tamerlane, or Timur the Great Amir,* trans., J. H. Sanders, London, 1936, pp. 308–09

[2] Abul Fazl, *Akbarnama,* (ed.), Maulvi Ahmad Ali and Maulvi Abdul Rahim, 3 vols., Calcutta: The Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1878; trans., H. Beveridge, 3 vols., Calcutta: The Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1907-1939, rept. Ess Ess Publications, New Delhi, 1973, vol. 1, p. 207. [henceforth *Akbarnama*] (I have consulted Persian edition and reference are made whenever used; and quotations are used mostly from English translation).

[3] Dughlat, Mirza Haider *Tarikh-i Rashidi,* trans., Edward D. Ross under the title *A History of Moghuls of Central Asia,* London, 1895, p. 4, Also quoted in Bamber Gascoigne, *The Great Moghuls*, London, 1971, p. 25.

[4] Babur, *Babur-Nama or Memoirs of Babur,* trans., A. S. Beveridge from the original Turki, 1921, rept. by New Delhi: Low Price Publication, 1989, pp. 488-503.

[5] *Akbarnama,* trans., vol. 1, p. 415.

[6] Moin, A. Azfar, *Millennial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.

[7] Abu'l Faẓl, *Ā'īn-i Akbarī,* ed. H. Blochmann, The Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1872, rept. 1993, vol. II, p. 204; Eng. tr., H. Blochmann, The Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1873, revised & edited by D. C. Phillott, 1927, p. 292. (I have consulted the Persian edition and quotations are made from the translation).

[8] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. II, p. 204; trans., vol. 1, p. 292

[9] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. II, p. 204; trans., vol. 1, p. 292

[10] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. II, p. 204; trans., vol. 1, p. 292

[11] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. II, p. 204; trans., vol. 1, p. 292

[12] Lahori, Abdul Hamid, *Padshahnama (1592-1638),* trans., Hamid Afaq Siddhiqi, Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 2010, vol. 1, p. 57

[13] Khan, Saqi Must'ad, *Maāsir-i-'Ālamgiri,* translated and annotated by Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Calcutta: The Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1947, rept. 1990, pp. 57, 123.

[14] Bernier, Francois, *Travels in the Mogul Empire AD 1656-1668,* Eng. tr., Archibald Constable, 2nd revised edition V.A. Smith, London: Oxford University Press, 1916, p. 182.

[15] *Akbarnama,* for Persian, vol. II, p. 144; vol. 2, p. 222-23.

[16] For detail discussion on the above painting see Sen, Geeti *Paintings from the Akbarnama: A Visual Chronicle of Mughal India,* Varanasi: Lustre Press, 1984, plate no. 11, 20, p. 48, 68; and Divyabhanusinh, 'Hunting in Mughal Paintings', in S.P. Verma (ed.), Flora and Fauna in Mughal Art, Mumbai: Marg Publication, 1999, pp. 94-108.

[17] *Akbarnama,* for Persian, vol. II, pp. 189-190; trans., vol. 2, pp. 294-95.

[18] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. II, pp. 281-82; trans., vol. 2, pp. 416-18.

[19] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. III, p. 241; trans., vol. 3, pp. 345.

[20] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. II, p. 281; trans., vol. 2, p. 416.

[21] *Ibid.,* trans., vol. 2, p. 416, foot note 2.

[22] Pandian, Anand, 'Predatory Care: The Imperial Hunt in Mughal and British India', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, Vol.14, No.1, March 2001, p. 90; See also, Allsen, Thomas A., *The Royal Hunt in Eurasian History,* University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2006.

[23] *Akbarnama,* for Persian, vol. II, p. 282, trans., vol. 2, p. 417.

[24] For an alternate perspective, see Talbot, Cynthia, 'Anger and Atonement in Mughal India: An alternative account of Akbar's hunt', *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 55, No. 5, 2021, pp. 1413-1460.

[25] *Akbarnama,* for Persian, vol. II, p. 282; trans., vol. 2, *op. cit.,* p. 418.

[26] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. III, p. 241; trans., vol. 3, p. 346.

[27] Pandian, 'Predatory Care', *op. cit.,* pp. 90-99.

[28] *Akbarnama,* for Persian, vol. II, p. 32; trans., vol. 2, p. 52.

[29] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. II, p. 32; trans., vol. 2, p. 52.

[30] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. II, p. 220; trans., vol. 2, p. 312.

[31] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. II, p. 163; trans., vol. 2, pp. 251-52.

[32] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. II, pp. 189-190; trans., vol. 2, pp. 294-95

[33] *Ibid.,* trans., vol. 2, pp. 251-253.

[34] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. II, p. 357; trans., vol. 2, p. 517.

[35] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. II, p. 371; trans., vol. 2, p. 539.

[36] Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri,* 2 vols., trans, A. Rogers and H. Beveridge, London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1909-14, vol. 1, p. 136.

[37] *Akbarnama,* for Persian, vol. II, p. 244; trans., vol. 2, pp. 368-69.

[38] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. II, p. 155; trans., vol. 2, p. 240.

[39] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. II, pp. 359-60; trans., vol. 2, p. 522.

[40] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. II, pp. 359-60; trans., vol. 2, p. 522.

[41] *Ibid.,* for Persian, vol. III, pp. 241-42; trans., vol. 3, p. 345-47.

[42] *Ibid.,* trans., vol. 3, p. 347.

[43]*Ibid.,* trans., vol. 3, p. 347.

[44] *Ibid.,* trans., vol. 3, p. 347.

[45] Tripathi, R. P., 'The Turko-Mongol Theory of Kingship', in Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subramanyam (eds.), *The Mughal State, 1526-1750,* Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 123.

[46] Ahmad, Nizamuddin, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari,* 3 vols., trans., B. De, Calcutta: The Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1913-35, vol. 2, pp. 511-512.

[47] Badauni, Abdul Qadir, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, trans., George S. A. Ranking, (ed.), 2 vols., 1898, rept. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 1990, vol. 2, p. 261.

[48] Qandhari, Muhammad Arif, *Tarikh-i Akbari*, trans., Tasneem Ahmad, Delhi: Pragati Publications, 1993, p. 272.

[49] Talbot, 'Anger and Atonement', *op. cit.*, pp. 1413-1460.

[50] *Akbarnama*, for Persian, vol. III, pp. 276-77; trans., vol. 3, pp. 403-404; The story is discussed in somewhat greater details by Nizamuddin Ahmed in *Tabaqat-i Akbari,* vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 525.

[51] Bloch, Marc, *The Royal Touch: Sacred Monarchy and Scrofula in England and France,* translated by J. E. Anderson, 1973, rept., New York: Routledge, 2015.