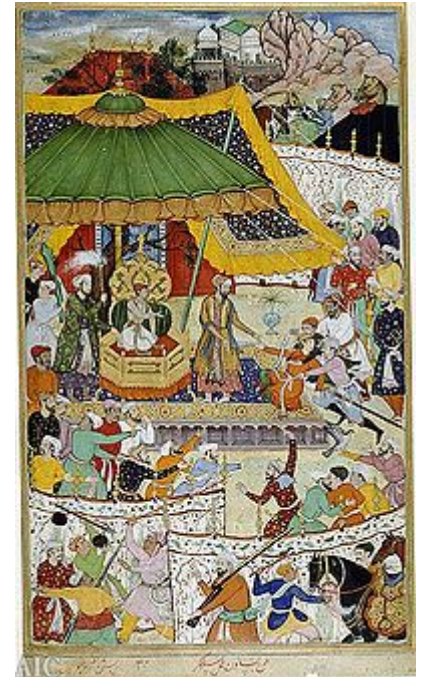


Ain-i-Akbari

The *Ain-i-Akbari* (Persian: آئین اکبری) or the "**Constitution of Akbar**", is a 16th-century, detailed document recording the administration of emperor Akbar's empire, written by his vizier, Abu'l-Fazl ibn Mubarak.^[1] It makes the Volume III and the final part of the much larger document, the *Akbarnama* (Persian: اکبر نامه), the Book of Akbar, also by Abul Fazl, and it itself is in three volumes.^[2]

It is currently housed in the Hazarduari Palace in West Bengal.



The court of Akbar, an illustration from a manuscript of the Akbarnama

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The *Ain-i-Akbari* is the third volume of the *Akbarnama* containing information regarding Akbar's reign in the form of, what would be called in modern times, administration reports, statistical compilations, or gazetteers. It contains the *áin* (i.e., mode of governing) of Emperor Akbar, and is, in fact, the administration report and statistical Return of his government. The first volume of the *Akbarnama* contains the history of Timur's family and the reigns of Babar, the Súr kings, and Humayun. The second volume is devoted to the detailed history of the nearly forty-six years of the Akbar's reign. Since it was written around 1590, it also contains details of Hindu beliefs and practices as well as a history of India.^{[3][4]}

The *Ain-i-Akbari* is itself divided into five books. The first book deals with the imperial household, and the second with the servants of the emperor, the military and civil services. The third book deals with the imperial administration, containing the regulations for the judicial and executive departments. The fourth book contains information about Hindu philosophy, science, social customs and literature. The fifth book contains sayings of Akbar^[3] along with an account of the ancestry and biography of the author

Volumes

Volume 1

The volume has a total of 90 ‘Ain’ or Regulations dealing and describing the different segments of administration and occupations at that time. The various ains include the one on the imperial mint, its workmen and their process of refining and extracting gold and silver, the dirham and the dinar etc. There are also portions dedicated to the Imperial harem (ain 15), the royal seals (ain 20), the imperial kitchen (ain 23) and its recipes and the rules relating to the days of abstinence (ain 26). The volume contains a detailed description of the trade/ business of items like fruits, vegetables, perfumes, carpets etc. and also of art and painting. Ain-i-Akbari is an excellent resource to know more about the maintenance of an army as large as Akbar's. Ain 35 onwards deals with the use and maintenance of artillery, upkeep and branding of royal horses, camels, mules and elephants, describing even the detail of the food given to the animals. The volume also has regulations pertaining to the wages of labourers, estimates of house building etc.^[5]

Volume 2

The second book treats of the servants of the throne, the military and civil services, and the attendants at court whose literary genius or musical skill receives a great deal of encouragement from the emperor, and who in their turn reflect a brilliant light on the government.

Volume 3

The third book is entirely devoted to regulations for the judicial and executive departments, the establishment of a new and more practical era, the survey of the land, the tribal divisions, and the rent-roll of the great Finance minister

Volume 4

The fourth book treats of the social condition and literary activity, especially in philosophy and law, of the Hindus, who form the bulk of the population, and in whose political advancement the emperor saw the guarantee of the stability of his realm. There are also a few chapters on the foreign invaders of India, on distinguished travellers, and on Muhammadan saints and the sects to which they respectively belong.

Volume 5

The fifth book contains the moral sentences and epigrammatical sayings, observations, and rules of wisdom of the emperor, which Abulfazl has gathered as the disciple gathers the sayings of the master

Important Ains

The Muster of Man (Ain 76 Book 1)

The business which Akbar Majesty transacts is multifarious. A large number of men were appointed on the days assembly of expenditure was announced. Their merits are inquired into and the coin of knowledge passes the current. Some pray his majesty to remove religious doubt; other again seek his advice for settling a worldly matter; other want medicines for their cure. Like these many other requests were made. The salaries of large number of men from Iran, Turkey, Europe, Hindustan and Kashmir are fixed in a manner described below, and the men themselves are taken before His Majesty by the paymasters. Formerly it had been custom for man to come with horses and accoutrements; but now only men appointed to the post of Ahadi were allowed to bring horses. The salary is proposed by the officer who bring them, which is then increased or decreased, though it is generally increased; for the market of His Majesty is never dull. The number of men brought before His Majesty depends on number of men available. Every Monday all such horsemen are mustered as were left from the preceding week. With the view of increasing army and zeal of officers, His Majesty gives to each who brings horsemen, a present of two dams for each horsemen.

Regulation regarding education (Ain 25 Book 3)

His Majesty orders that every school boy must learn to write the letters of the alphabet first and then learn to trace their several forms. he ought to learn the shape and name of each letter, which may be done on two days, after which the boy should proceed to write joined letter. They may be practised for a week after which boy should learn some prose and poetry by heart, and then commit to memory some verses to the praise of God, or moral sentences, each written separately. Care is to be taken that he learns everything by himself but the teacher must assist him a little.

Translations

The original Persian text was translated into English in three volumes. The first volume, translated by Heinrich Blochmann (1873) consisted of Books I and II. The second volume, translated by Colonel Henry Sullivan Jarrett (1891), consisted of Book III. The third volume, also translated by Jarrett (1896), consisted of Books IV and V. These three volumes were published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta as a part of their *Bibliotheca Indica* series.^{[3][6][7]}

References

1. Majumdar, R.C. (2007). *The Mughul Empire*, Mumbai: Bharatiya Vidyā Bhavan, p.5
2. Introduction to *Akbaranama* and *Ain-e-Akbari* (http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mea/ac/pritchet/00litlinks/abulfazl/000_intro_fwp.html) Columbia University
3. Blochmann, H. (tr) (1927, reprint 1993). *The Ain-i Akbari by Abu'l-Fazl Allamī* Vol. I, Calcutta: The Asiatic Society preface (first edition)
4. Preface (<http://persian.packhum.org/persian/main?url=pf%3Ffile%3D00702050%26ct%3D0>)
5. [1] (https://archive.org/stream/ainiakbari00jarrgoog/ainiakbari00jarrgoog_djvu.txt)
6. Jarrett, H.S. (tr) (1949, reprint 1993). *The Ain-i Akbari by Abu'l-Fazl Allamī* Vol. II, Calcutta: The Asiatic Society editor's introduction
7. Jarrett, H.S. (tr) (1948, reprint 1993). *The Ain-i Akbari by Abu'l-Fazl Allamī* Vol. III, Calcutta: The Asiatic Society editor's introduction

External links

- *Ayeen Akbery* (1684)
 - *The Ain i Akbari, Volume 3* (1894)
 - *Supplement to the first volume of Gladwin's Ayeen Akberi* (1918)
 - *Ayeen Akbery, Or, The Institutes of the Emperor Akber Volume 1*
 - *Ain-e-Akbari*, English translation, by *H. Blochmann* and *Colonel H. S. Jarrett*, 1873 – 1907. The Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta. at *Packard Humanities Institute*
 - *Ain-e-Akbari*, English tr. by *Colonel H. S. Jarrett* The Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta. 1948
 - *Aeene Akbari Part I* at *Digital Library of India*
 - Persian Text of *A'in-i Akbari* in three parts:
 - <https://archive.org/details/AbuAl-fazlsAin-iAkbariInPersianM1Part1of2>
 - <https://archive.org/details/AbuAl-fazlsAin-iAkbariInPersianM1Part2of2>
 - <https://archive.org/details/Ain-iAkbariOfAbuAl-fazlVolume2Ahval-iHindustan>
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