Bibbahani’s Itinerary
very day of his arrival in Thatta. This disturbed Hazin and he wrote in 1741 that if he had
remained unrecognised in this country his difficulties would have been much less.103

As soon as he entered Thatta, Hazin regretted his decision to travel to India and
immediately decided to go back to Iran, but due to the end of the sailing season, he could
not leave. Always thinking of leaving India, he spent about three years in the adjacent
towns and among them around two years in a village near Multan. During this wandering
state, he met at Bhakkar, Mir Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgirami (1704-1785) and he gave him
some of his verses in his own hand writing for remembrance.104

Perhaps due to financial constraints Hazin did not succeed in returning to Iran, and
as he says, in spite of his reluctance to go to Delhi, since it was the capital of Muhammad
Shah, he still went there.105 Hazin did not stay in Delhi for more than a year and decided to
return to Iran. For going to Khurasan via Kabul and Qandahar, he went to Lahore. Nadir
had stationed his men in Qandahar who were following the defeated Afghans and this
caused Hazin to drop the idea of travelling any further. He realized that if he went to
Qandahar, some people would think that his presence there was the reason for Nadir’s
attack on the city.106 Since Nadir’s next destination was Lahore and Hazin wanted not to
face him, despite his illness he moved to Sultanpur and then to Sarhind. When Hazin was
covering this distance, high way robbers were every where and in order to fight them he
hired musketeers in Sarhind. Leaving for Delhi Hazin met Muhammad Shah’s troops, who
according to him had covered only four days journey during two months.107 The surrender
of Lahore’s governor to Nadir, facilitated his movement towards Delhi. Nadir entered

103 Tazkirat ul Ahwal, p. 259.
105 Tazkirat ul Ahwal, p. 265.
Delhi from Karnal on 20 March 1739 (9 Zil Hajja 1151), and during his presence in the capital, Hazin was hiding in Walih Daghistani’s home.\textsuperscript{108} Hazin recorded the account of his travel to India only until 1741 in Delhi and wrote in the final paragraph:

> So far, from arriving at Shahjahanabad, I have spent three years and a half here and I have determined to leave this land for good.\textsuperscript{109}

When Nadir left India, Hazin set out from Delhi towards Lahore for the second time to find a way out to Iran. But he could not do that following quarrels with Zakaria Khan, the governor of Lahore. Zakaria Khan intended to harm him but with the intercession of Hasan Quli Khan Kashi, Muhammad Shah’s envoy to Nadir, Hazin returned safely to Delhi.\textsuperscript{110} Sirajud Din Ali Khan Arzu, Hazin’s main critic, wrote concerning Hazin’s decision to move from Delhi to Lahore:

> Since nobody appreciates him and he has a touchy temperament, he departed for Lahore, but could not go forward. On account of his inharmonious temper, homeland and loneliness is alike to him.\textsuperscript{111}

It is true that Hazin’s criticism of Indian poets created an adverse impression of him, but this factor was not the main reason for his decision to leave Delhi. In fact, Hazin from the first day of arriving in India until the point of death, wanted to leave India. In spite of Khatak’s view who says that Hazin set out for Azimabad not with the intention of

\textsuperscript{108} \textit{Riyazush-Shuara}, p.201 .
\textsuperscript{109} \textit{Tazkiratul Ahwal}, p. 258 .
\textsuperscript{110} \textit{Riyazush- Shuara}, p. 201 .
leaving India, Hazin’s letter to one of his friends shows that he travelled to Azimabad in 1751/1165, exactly in order to leave India for Iraq.

In order to go to Basra and to meet you, I reached Azimabad. I found out that departure is not possible this year. After arriving, I became ill; and my illness, on account of harsh weather and the lack of physicians intensified. So while I was hardly fit, I was compelled to shift to Awadh.

In another letter, meanwhile referring to his inability to leave Azimabad, Hazin explained that he did not want to go to Banaras on account of the presence of two Maratha commanders there. So he decided to go to Akbarabad [Agra], but he could not find a proper place to live there. Then he planned to go to Hugli, and in this order he travelled to Azimabad.

In consequence of tiredness and weakness I can not move. Until today, 1 Muharram, I am confined within the walls of this town (Azimabad).

Hazin’s old age and illness, compelled him to stay in Banaras longer than he wished. Ali Ibrahim Khan Banarasi, one of Hazin’s contemporaries wrote regarding Hazin’s journey to Bengal that he had in mind the pilgrimage to Mecca so he left for Bengal and reached Azimabad, but since he was weak and fragile, he could not continue his journey and stayed there for some years. Eventually he went to Banaras and resided

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114 Ibid, ff. 37a-38b.
there until his death. Banarasi met Hazin in Banaras and the latter dedicated him one of his treatises in his handwriting.

**Shushtari's Itinerary**

The travel geography of Shushtari who arrived in India about twenty five years after Hazin was different. The starting point of his trip along with his intimate friend, Muhammad Ali whom he called his brother was Masqat, and after one month of sea journey, they arrived in Masulipatam. After four or five days they left for Bengal, in order to go to Calcutta and in (Muharram 1202) October 1787 he was there.

Despite Shushtari's relations with the Iranian and Indian inhabitants of Calcutta, he was homesick and decided to go back to Iran. He described his state of mind as follows:

I resided in that town (Calcutta) like an undomesticated bird that was resident in a bramble, and it was looking for the rose garden. 115

The urge intensified when his brother, Muhammad Shafi, asked him to return to Iran. Hazin was waiting for the sailing season when his cousin Sayyid Abul Qasim bin Sayyid Razi, known as Mir Alam Bahadur (1166/1752-1223/1808) came to Calcutta, as the representative of Nawab Nizam Ali Khan to the English. Mir Alam’s father, Sayyid Razi, had come to India, during the ministry of Abul Mansur Khan, known as Safdar Jang and despite his will to go back to Iran, due to the blocked way of Kabul and Qandahar he did not succeed. Afterwards he went to Hydarabad and got a warm welcome from Nizam ul Mulk, Asaf Jah. He was offered a governmental post which he declined. Unlike his father,

115 *Tuhfat ul Alam*, p. 359.
Abul Qasim was in the employment of Nizam Ali Khan, the governor of Deccan. Shushtari rues this and says:

He stepped in governmental affairs, owing to temptation of some ignorant commanders and along with being as one of the intimate companions of Nizam Ali Khan, he lost his previous honour.  

However Mir Alam visited Shushtari in Calcutta, and asked him to go along with him to Hydarabad. Since the young traveller wished to go back home, he declined and explained that he was waiting for the right season to sail. Afterwards Mir Alam asked his cousin to be agent to the governor of Deccan in Calcutta, near the British governor, as long as he was in that port. In spite of Shushtari’s refusal, Mir Alam insisted, and finally succeeded. The job commenced Shushtari’s association with the British and he became their admirer. Meanwhile he was informed of the death of his brother, Muhammad Shafi, lost his motivation to go back to Iran, and decided to stay in India.

After a few months, Shushtari decided to travel to Murshidabad, where one of his cousins, Sayyid Muhammad Mahdi was living. He travelled by a ship and passed Sirampur situated at a distant of “two farsakh” from Calcutta, and according to him, given to the Dutch by the former rulers. He wrote that this region was some kind of a penal colony and every body who committed a crime, by paying a sum to the rulers of the region, got the right to reside. He continued that the British were reluctant to go against the ruler of Sirampur in spite of their strength. Sixteen Years later, in 1806 when Bihbahani was passing by the same place, he wrote:

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116 Tuhfat ul Alam, p. 145.
The treaty between them (ruler of Sirampur) and the king of England having been broken, it is now out of their control and it is presently under the possession of the English.\textsuperscript{117}

After visiting Murshidabad, Shushtari painted a glorious picture of the town before the domination of the British and remarked that at the moment, the town is ruined and nothing is left of that glory. The nominal governor of the town was Mubarak ud Dawla, the son of Jafar Ali Khan, and the British ruled over every thing. They paid the governor a fixed stipend. Shushtari considered Mubarak ud Dawla to be a simpleton and described his deputy, one Iranian from Shiraz, as an intelligent and generous person. Shushtari concluded a marriage contract with the daughter of his cousin there, when was 33 and then returned to Calcutta.

Subsequent to his return to Calcutta a famine took place in the Deccan, especially in Hydarabad, so the rulers of that region asked him to provide as much corn and rice as possible from Masulipatam.\textsuperscript{118}

When he was afflicted with an acute illness which it took three years for him to recover, he realized that it was due to the climate of Calcutta, and decided to shift to another place. He set out for Lucknow in (Shawwal 1211) March 1796, and since he was sick his friend, Muhammad Ali Khan, and a physician, Mirza Mahdi accompanied him. He travelled by land towards Murshidabad and saw some followers of a sect known as Numud which had appeared in the last years of Aurangzeb’s reign. The initiator of this belief, one Sayyid Husain from Khurasan used the of Pahlavi language, and claimed that he was

\textsuperscript{117} India in the Early 19th Century, p. 110.
\textsuperscript{118} Tufat ul Alam, p. 391.
inspired. The Mughal king, Farrukh Siyar (1713-1719) believed in him but Muhammad Shah (1719-1748) did not, and his minister Muhammad Amin Khan planned to arrest him. Shushtari does not refer to the source of his comments, but Bihbahani, who also wrote about them, mentioned that his source, besides Siyar ul Mutakhkhirin was the oral testimony of some trusted people. In Murshidabad of 1806, he found only two or three persons belonging to this creed.120

On his way to Lucknow, Shushtari passed through Rajmahal and mentioned that its earthen jugs were renowned all over India. Afterwards he visited Bhagalpur, whose yellow white textiles were well known. While passing by Azimabad, he commented that it was the biggest town in Bihar and found it to be a habitable place with plentiful supply of grain. Some Iranian invited him to their homes. He was informed about the visit of the Governor, John Shore, from Lucknow and waited for him impatiently. When the Governor arrived, Shushtari remained with him for ten days in Patna and the Governor recommended him to the zamindars enroute for his safety and well being.

Shushtari’s relationship with Mir Alam Bahadur caused Cherry, the English governor of Banaras, to entertain him well. The visit to Banaras triggered his memory of Hazin. Shushtari had in his memory some verses of Hazin and mentioned them in his travelogue. He pointed to a magnificent mosque on the bank of Ganga, which was built during Aurangzeb’s reign:

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119 Ibid, p. 397.
120 Mirat ul Ahwal, p. 274.
And there is a magnificent mosque in Banaras, constructed by Aurangzeb, on the bank of Ganga. This mosque is splendid, methodical, and one of the blessed places. It was a temple which he (Aurangzeb) destroyed and built a mosque there.\textsuperscript{121}

During his visit to Jaunpur, he wrote that this town was the seat of Sultan Muhammad Fakhr ud Din Tughluq, and flourished in the past. Moreover it was the center of learning formerly and attracted students from everywhere, but at the moment it was ruined.

About Lucknow, Shushtari mentions that, this town is one of the oldest in India. He noted the absence of a city wall unlike other cities. The topography of the city was uneven which appeared to him to be inelegant. One can contrast this impression with another one. Mirza Abu Talib, the compiler of \textit{Musair-i Talibi fi Bilad-i Afranji} who travelled to European countries from Calcutta in 1799 and visited Ottoman territories as well, praised the houses of Lucknow. In his travelogue, he wrote:

\begin{quote}
From Istanbul to Basra, I did not see a house that would satisfy the middle classes of Lucknow.\textsuperscript{122}
\end{quote}

Shushtari arrived in Lucknow in Asaf ud Dawla’s reign and wrote regarding him:

\begin{quote}
Although he was not a potent person in principalship and handling the country, and by nature was not able to act as a chief and ruled adventitiously by the confirmation of the British, but he was unique in generosity and was uncontrollable in bestowing to the ignoble and noble people and no one was deprived of his generosity.\textsuperscript{123}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{121} \textit{Tufat ul Alam}, p. 419.
\textsuperscript{122} Abu Talib Khan, \textit{Masir-i Talibi}, p. 399.
\textsuperscript{123} \textit{Tufat ul Alam}, p. 423.
However the Nawab invited him to his court and paid attention to him and due to his previous illness, asked his physicians to examine him. Afterwards he was allowed to walk in Asaf ud Dawla's gardens which were numerous and externally beautiful. When Shushtari was in Lucknow the Nawab passed away. According to him there was a tumult on the day of his death and all people, men and women were crying continuously.  

Lucknow was the final point of Shushtari's travel and he came back to Calcutta after visiting it. His description of Shahjhanabad and Jay Nagar were taken from other works, because he did not travel to these regions, although he does not refer to his sources.

**Bihbahani's Itinerary**

After a venturesome travel by sea from Masqat, Bihbahani arrived in Bombay in May 1805, in eighteen days. His final destination was Awadh, but before it, he intended to obtain other objectives. He again travelled by the water route to Hydarabad and passed through Napuli, Puna, Tuljapur and Aminabad. He succeeded to persuade Mir Alam Bahadur to help him with the reconstruction of the Karbala fort and visited Shushtari in that town. After a short time Shushtari to whom Bihbahani was very sincere, passed away in Zilqada 1220/ February 1806 and was buried in Diyar-i Mir. According to Bihbahani this burial ground was allotted to Shias and was founded some years ago by a notable Sayyid.  

He had transported the holy earth of Karbala to Hydarabad by ship in order to cover the surface of the ground by it, and founded Dayar-i-Mir.  

Since one of Bihbahani's objects in India was trade, he set out for Calcutta via Masulipatam for commerce.

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125 Bihbahani does not mention the name of this Sayyid, but as it is appear from the history of Hydarabad, Mir Muhammad Mumin Astarabadi was the founder of this cementery.

126 *Mirat ul Ahwal*, p. 237.
Bihbahani’s stay in Calcutta was short, and he left for Lucknow. All passengers who travelled from Bengal to Lucknow took a fixed route Bihbahani too visited the same places as Shushtari, except Faizabad which Bihbahani visited before going to Lucknow.

Faizabad was founded in a forest zone near Awadh, which Nawab Sadat Khan had selected. It was named after a village in Khurasan and the homeland of the Nawab. After Sadat Khan’s death in 1738 his nephew and successor, Abul Mansur Khan Safdar Jang, made it a garrison town. Afterwards Shujaud Dawla shifted the center of his governship there and to make it habitable settled twenty thousands Qizilbash families. Bihbahani mainly travelled to Faizabad in order to enjoy the favours of Asaf ud Dawal’s mother, Bahu Begum whom Bihbahani addressed as the exalted lady (Janab Aliya). This lady was the daughter of Muhammad Ishaq Khan, one of Muhammad Shah’s nobles and Safdar Jang’s daughter in law. The Emperor chose Bahu Begum as his adopted daughter. The political circumstances of Shuja ud Dawla’s reign caused that this lady enjoyed great power.

After the domination of British over Bengal in 1757, they looked for an opportunity to extend their control over the north of India. Three Indian rulers, i.e. the wandering Emperor Shah Alam II, the Nawab of Awadh Shuja ud Dawla, and the governor of Bengal, Mir Qasim, became united and fought against the British on 22 October 1764 at Buxar. This war ended in the defeat of the allied group. Shah Alam asked for refuge from the British, Shuja ud Dawla fled to the Rohilla territory, and Mir Qasim also hid away.

Clive, who was appointed for the second time as the governor of Bengal, concluded a treaty according to which the previous territories of Shuja ud Dawla, except for

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Allahabad, was restored to him on payment of fifty lakhs of rupees. According to this contract, Allahabad was ceded to Shah Alam, and in return he agreed with the British acquisition of the *diwani* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.\(^{130}\)

In order to pay the fixed amount, Shuja ud Dawla sought help from his relatives, but none of them supported him. The Nawab’s wife offered all her property to help her husband. Afterwards the Nawab ordered that the surplus of the revenue of his state was to be assigned to her. The British regretted the contract later, but they did not violate it until the death of the Nawab. They succeeded to impose their will on Asaf ud Dawla out of his weakness.\(^{131}\)

When Bihbahani arrived in Faizabad, Bahu Begum ordered the nobles to welcome him and he was taken to her mansion. During the five years travels in different parts of India, he got the warmest reception in Faizabad and mutually he showered praise on her:

> During the period of over a year that I had been the guest of that court, each day I was shown more and more favours and kindness and every moment held in higher and higher regard and esteem. To show hospitality to me, she many a time very kindly called me to her presence, and without any intermediary behaved with me with all condescension and kindness. It is beyond the power of my pen to describe the praiseworthy qualities of that cream of the universe.\(^{132}\)

Bihbahani remained for six months and a half in Faizabad, and then according to his original plan, decided to proceed to Lucknow. At this time, twelve years had passed

\(^{130}\) *Ibid*

\(^{131}\) *Mirat ul Ahwal*, pp. 298-299.

\(^{132}\) *India in the Early 19th Century*, p. 154.
from the death of Asaf ud Dawla, the generous Nawab of Awadh, and now his brother, Sadat Ali Khan succeeded him, who in Bihbahani’s opinion, was different from the previous Nawab in many respects.133

The other person, who was a dignitary at that time in Lucknow was the renowned mujtahid, Sayyid Dildar Ali Nasirabadi, with whom Bihbahani had corresponded. Bihbahani’s letter to Nasirabadi, which was sent from Banaras in Zil Hajja 1221 included consultations about his visit to Lucknow. Indeed Bihbahani’s reason for writing that letter was his worry about the Nawab’s indifference to the travellers from the shrine cities during recent years. According to Mir Najaf Ali Faizabadi, Nasirabadi’s pupil and the compiler of Aina-i Haq Numa, the chief mujtahid of Lucknow advised him not to travel to that town because he foresaw that the Nawab’s behavior with Bihbahani would not be according to his expectations and might even offend him.134 Bihbahani did not consider Nasirabadi’s advice and wrote a separate letter from Faizabad to the Nawab, in order to inform him of his imminent travel to Lucknow and meanwhile to obtain permission to go there. This letter met with no response from the Nawab which was further indicative of his indifference to Bihbahani’s trip. Nevertheless the latter departed from Fayzabad to Lucknow in Rajab 1222. Bahu Begum performed the convoy ceremony in the best possible way and according to an old tradition, fastened gold coins and rupees to Bihbahani’s arm. These coins were dedicated to the eighth Imam, in order to guarantee the health of the passenger during his travel.135 Bihbahani wrote in this regard:

133 Mirat ul Ahwal, p. 323.
134 Mir Najaf Ali Faizabadi, Aina-i Haq Numa, Persian MS., Aligarh Muslim University, Subhanallah collection, 297/3, copy in Noor Microfilm Center, New Delhi, f. 146a.
135 Mirat ul Ahwal, p. 308.
According to a praise worthy custom in this country, a silver rupee or a gold muhar (wrapped in a piece of cloth) dedicated to the eighth Imam (Ali bin Musa Riza) for being a guarantor against accidents, is fastened around the arm of a very dear and near one at time of his departure on journey, so Her Excellency, her kinsman and all other persons connected with the state, fastened a rupee or gold mohar around my arm as a token of their love and regard for me.136

When Bihbahani arrived in Lucknow, Sayyid Dildar Ali Nasirabadi and his elder son along with some Indian and Iranian persons welcomed him. After Bihbahani’s settled down in the capital of Awadh, two harkaras (watchman) were appointed by the order of the Nawab, to watch over him. In spite of the Iranian scholar’s desire to meet the Nawab, the latter refused to give receive him audience.

Bihbahani wrote a letter to the Nawab asking him about the reason. The Nawab responded with a question:

Why did you first go to Faizabad and why did you stay there for such a long time?137

Najaf Ali hints at different reason for the Nawab’s unfavourable attitude towards Bihbahani. Without divulging the content of that letter which Bihbahani sent to the Nawab from Banaras, Najaf Ali writes that the letter had something that offended the Nawab, so he refused to answer it. Since Bihbahani arrived in Lucknow against the Nawab’s wishes, he did not receive him and appointed two persons in order to prevent the dignitaries of the city from meeting him.138 But Bihbahani has something else to say about the appointment of the

136 India in the Early 19th Century, p. 162.
137 Mirat ul Ahwal, p. 312.
138 Aina-i Haq Numa, f. 128a.
harkaras. He writes that some days before his entry into Lucknow, Sayyid Hasan Attar, the nephew of Sayyid Ali Tabatabai, a prominent mujtahid of Karbala, arrived in that town. He forged three letters in the name of Tabatabai, and sent them to the Nawab, Afrin Ali Khan, the Khajasara, and Nasirabadi. The letters mentioned that Sayyid Hasan was sent to Lucknow to seek help from Indian dignitaries to restore the Karbala fort. Bihbahani continues that the Nawab detected Sayyid Hasan’s deception and wrote that he had enough wealth to construct the sacred fort with gold and silver ingots, but he would like to do it directly rather than through an intermediary.139 In Bihbahani’s opinion the reason of the Nawab’s distrust towards him was Sayyid Hasan’s dishonesty.

Najaf Ali denies that Sayyid Hasan had committed any such fraud; and objected to Bihbahani’s version on account of his prejudices against the former.140 He included in his work the very letter that Bihbahani declared as forged. In this letter the writer initially referred to the Wahabi invasion of Karbala and the damages caused by it, especially on the haram of Imam Husain. Then he reminded that apparently the Nawab of Awadh had given one and a half lakh rupees to repair the damages, but this sum had not yet reached Karbala. Afterwards the writer stated that since the delay in sending the money may be due to the lack of finding a trusted person, he has sent Sayyid Hasan Attar as the courier. The letter writer praised the bearer, his sufferings at Karbala during the invasion, and made a request to Nasirabadi to help the bearer financially.141

Bihbahani reached India four months before Sayyid Hasan and arrived in Hydarabad before him. He was present when Sayyid Hasan along with Mirza Muhammad Husain Shahristani son of the chief Mujtahid, Mirza Mahdi Shahristani, arrived there.

139 Mirat ul Ahwal, p. 320.
140 Aina-i Haq Numa,ff. 127a-127b.
141 Ibid, ff. 120a -122a.
Bihbahni wrote that he welcomed them. At this time Shushtari had become rich enough to support those Iranian travellers who went to Hydarabad. Shushtari hounered Mirza Muhammad Husain more than Sayyid Hasan on account of being the former the son of the great mujtahid, so Sayyid Hasan’s offence began from Haydarabad. Bihbahani wrote that he interposed in favour of him not to go empty handed from that town.\textsuperscript{142} However Sayyid Hasan succeeded to go earlier than Bihbahani to Lucknow and submitted the letters under the seal of his uncle, Sayyid Ali Tabatabai to the Nawab and Nasirabadi. Bihbahani claimed that Sayyid Hasan kept with him some blank papers with the seal of his uncle and wrote the letters himself. On the contrary Najaf Ali argued that Sayyid Hasan’s carrying sealed blank papers from Tabatabai was a measure of the trust placed by the former on his nephew.

Why did Najaf Ali vindicate Sayyid Hasan when the latter was not satisfied with the dignitaries of Lucknow?\textsuperscript{143} As the Indian seminarian mentioned in his work, since Sayyid Hasan descended from Sayyids and also was the nephew of a leading mujtahid, Nasirabadi’s pupil took his side. There seems to have been yet another reason for this support. It is notable that Bihbahani claimed excellence over Indian scholars, and this issue may have provoked Najaf Ali and other students of Nasirabadi to oppose him. Very likely Najaf Ali’s vindication of Sayyid Hasan was mainly due to his antagonism towards Bihbahani, who was interested in superseding Nasirabadi. It is remarkable that the Indian mujtahid himself behaved respectfully with Bihbahani while the latter was in Lucknow.

Due to unfavourable conditions in Lucknow, Bihbahani resided there for two months and a half. Bahu Begum came to know about the Nawab of Awadh’s indifference

\begin{footnotes}
\item\textsuperscript{142} Mirat ul Ahwal, p. 252.
\item\textsuperscript{143} Aina-i Haq Numa, f. 122a.
\end{footnotes}
towards Bihbahani, and called him back to Faizabad providing him an escort of musketeers. Since an Indian clergy man, Mir Abdul Ali, led the Friday congregational prayers in Faizabad, Bihbahani preferred to shift to another place, so moved to Azimabad and occupied himself in leading the prayers, teaching and answering the religious questions of the Shias.

Conclusion

The itineraries of the three Iranians reveal their objectives for coming over to India and help us to understand their experiences and living conditions. For Hazin, the main reason for coming to Delhi was financial since he was short of resources and realized that there were many Iranian nobles who could give him their patronage and protection. However, as we shall see, in Azimabad he enjoyed the patronage of Raja Ram Narain and was also in the good books of the Nawab of Bengal.

Contrary to Abdul Latif and Bahbahani, who considered Hydarabad (Deccan) as one of the main destination of their journey, on account of the presence of Mir Alam there, Hazin did not pay any heed to that. During the second half of the eighteenth century that region was under the rule of Nizam who had no particular interest in shiism. Bihbahani and Abdul Latif stayed in India from 1787 to 1810 which was the period of decline of the Mughal power. At that time the capital, Delhi had not much attraction for foreigners. This may have been the reason for Delhi to be off their itineraries.

Travelogues

The tradition of travel account writing has an old history among Muslims. Many factors induced Muslims to pay attention to travel more than any other nation. The
obligatory travel of Haj and the emphasis Islam placed on learning remain the main reasons. The abundance of journey by Muslims caused production of a good deal of travel literature by them.

*Tazkirat ul Ahwal (Description of Events)*

Hazin revealed concerning the motive of writing his travelogue:

> The cause of writing this work in the end of year 1154/1742 in Delhi, was my insomnia in nights, while I have lost the calm and can not engage myself in anything, so whatever unwillingly my pen stated, I recorded during two nights.\(^{144}\)

As Hazin explains, he wrote the most part of *Tazkirat ul Ahwal* during two nights, without access to any sources, and perhaps his reliance on memory alone caused his inability to mention the exact date for all events.

He did not give a title to his account and it is variously known as *Tazkirat ul Ahwal*, *Sawanih-i Umri*, *Tarikh-i Hazin* and *Safarnama-i Hazin*. These titles are not entirely unsuitable, because the book describes the history of Iran and India, contains Hazin’s life story, and includes the account of his travels. Contrary to the customary style in Hazin’s period, his prose in this book is simple and fluent, and in spite of its brevity, clears up some important events of India and Iran. When Nadir Shah invaded Delhi, Hazin was in this town, and according to Walih, was hiding in latter’s home.\(^{145}\) This makes Hazin an eyewitness to this event. Hence some modern historians like Lockhart and Sarkar relied on his travel text as a trustworthy source. Hazin describes the start of the battle as follows:

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\(^{144}\) *Tazkirat ul Ahwal*, p. 262.

\(^{145}\) *Riyaz ush Shuara*, p. 201
At length Nadir Shah came up; the two armies met on the plain of Karnal, which is four stage distant from Shalighanabad, and a war started between them. The Indians having gathered their artillery around were closely hemmed in by their own field-pieces, and as a division of the Qizilbash had also formed a ring on every side of them, all intercourse with the exterior was closed to them and dearth and famine fell on the army, so that their condition turned out to be such as in the world of their pride they had never even imagined. 146

Hazin described the Mughal king and his men as proud persons, because according to him, they did not pay attention to Nadir’s ambassador and before him to Shah Tahmasp’s envoy. Hazin continued the account as follows:

Nadir Shah divided his army into two parts; one he left to guard his camp, and with the other division he assaulted the Indians. Burhan ul Mulk was taken alive; Khan Dauran, the Amirul umara, and Muzaffar Khan his brother, and a number of the distinguished umaras, with an immense quantity of troops were slain. 147

Hazin’s narrative from the rumour of Nadir’s murder, and the ensuing massacare of the Delhi population brings out the importance of this source.

Briefly as soon as this rumon was spread, the stupid opportunists, revolted with arms in every passage, and went ahead to kill the Qizilbash, and this adventure surrounded all the town. The Qizilbash who did not understand the language of the Indians, were

146 *Tazkirat ul Ahwal*, pp. 280-281.
unaware of the adventure, and were passing everywhere in the town. The Indians had
surprise attacks on the Qizilbash, and killed many of them. Even when the might fell
the rebels did not stop and the fight continued. 148

According to Hazin, Nadir's reaction towards this event was as follows:

Nadir Shah mounted on the horse at the morning and ordered a general massacre. An
army, including mounted and foot soldiers were ordered to carry it out. He (Nadir) told
them, no one should stay alive wherever a Qizilbash was killed. The Qizilbash army
started the massacre and plunder. They entered the houses of the people and went to
the extreme. They pillaged the properties and captured the households, and a great part
of town was ruined and burned. At the half day, when the number of the dead, couldn't
not be counted, Nadir ordered amnesty, and his army stopped. 149

The account of Hazin of Nadir's massacre in Delhi is very close to what Sarkar has
narrated of this event based on different sources. 150 In spite of Hazin's hostility towards
Nadir, he did no refer in his account to Nadir's intention to plunder the wealth of India.

Since Hazin did not have any formal affiliation to the Safavid court, he wrote as an
independent scholar. This gives his account a certain edge over those written for fear or
favour. He combined description with analysis. For instance, in his view, the Safavid
failure against the Afghans was caused firstly by the era of peace which prevailed during
the Safavid period, and less battle hardy, made the troops and secondly, the disunity among

148 Tazkirat ul Ahwal, p. 282.
149 Tazkirat ul Ahwal, pp. 282-283.
150 J.N. Sarkar, Nadir Shah in India, Calcutta, 1925, pp. 64-68.
the heads of the army. Browne agrees with the first assessment of Hazin, and approves it by narrating a Quranic account about the Prophet Sulaiman:

There is a well-known tradition of the Muhammadans that Solomon died standing, supported by the staff on which he leaned, and that his death remained unknown to the Jinn, who laboured at his command in the construction of the Temple, for a year, until the wood-worm ate through the staff and the body fell to the ground. This legend may well serve as a parable of the century of Safawi rule which followed the death of Shah Abbas the Great, who by his strength and wisdom, gave to Persia a period of peace and outward prosperity which for nearly a hundred years protected his successors from the result of their incompetence.

In Browne’s opinion, in spite of Hazin’s presence in Isfahan during the Afghan incursion, his description is not sufficiently vivid and impressive. Browne considers the account of European observers like Father Krusinski more expressive than Hazin’s. Nevertheless there is no doubt that Hazin’s tazkira is one of the most important sources on the history of both, India and Iran in the eighteenth century.

The Inclusion of names of his teachers and references to eminent scholars in different cities, makes Hazin’s travelogue a valuable source of information for the intellectual world of Safavid Iran. Some of these scholars perished in the Isfahan adventure in 1722 and if Hazin had not preserved their names and works, they would have in all likelihood remained unknown.

151 Tazkirat ul Ahwal, p. 197.
153 Ibid, p. 115.
Tuhfat ul Alam (Gift to the World)

Abdul Latif Shushtari was propped up in India by his cousin Mir Alam and he thereupon felt indebted to his benefactor and dedicated his travelogue to him. Moreover, since Mir Alam was born in India, his knowledge of his home town and his ancestors was not adequate. Abdul Latif describes the reason for writing this book:

Since the awareness of the honours of one's predecessors has many benefits, some wise men have devoted their time to writing history. It also occurred to the mind of (this writer) Abdul Latif bin Abi Talib al Musavi al Shushtari to write a brief history of Shushtar as well as the merits and achievements of my ancestors, uncles and cousins who were dwellers of that town; and then dedicate it to the prosperous Nawab, Sayyid Abul Qasim bin Sayyid Razi known as Mir Alam Bahadur. 154

Abdul Latif's travelogue is cast in the framework of a historical account. This book commenced with the history of Shushtar but followed the travels of the writer in India along with the history and geography of this country and some aspects of the culture of its people. As the editor of Tufat ul Alam indicates, although the writer of Tuhfa mentions some incredible anecdotes about India and Indians in his book, he professes the groundlessness of these stories, contrary to Sultan ul Wa'izin, an Iranian traveller to India in the early nineteenth century, who wanted his readers not to reject his narration, even when they found them strange. 155 For instance when Shushtari was describing the methods of yogis mortifying, wrote that there is some incredible stories about these yogis, like their

154 Tuhfat ul Alam, p. 31.
155 Sultan ul Wa'izin Abul Fath Hasani Husaini, Safar Nama, Persian Ms. Malik Library, Tehran, No. 1244, f. 4b.
voluntary death, and reviving after one thousand years, or more, but sound judgment refuse to believe these legends.\textsuperscript{156}

If we accept Peter Burke's classification of travellers into two groups of short travellers and those on long hauls,\textsuperscript{157} Shushtri would fall into the second group, because he wrote his account after at least 12-13 years of stay in India. His style is laboured and artificial which added value to a book in those days.

Since on many occasions Shushtari copied and reproduced Hazin's statements, it is apparent that the former had seen Hazin's travel account written sixty two years before his own. Although Shushtari did not consider this an unethical practice, he attracted the charge of plagiarism.\textsuperscript{158}

Shushtri 's work is popular with western scholars perhaps because he has been one of the first Iranian to have had direct contacts with the British. During this contact he either he ignored or was unaware of their colonial designs.

Justly speaking, the British do not have an intention to expand their country in past and present.\textsuperscript{159}

Moreover since Shushtari has a detailed account of the scientific achievements of Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and of the method of government there, western writers also paid attention to his work in order to see how an oriental writer looks at the West. In a general statement on the works of those Iranian who wrote about the

West, Cole stated:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{156} \textit{Tufat ul Alam}, pp. 448-449.
  \item \textsuperscript{158} \textit{Tuhfat ul Alam}, p. 22.
  \item \textsuperscript{159} \textit{Waqaya-i Hind}, Asafiyya Library, Parsian MS., No. f. 320.
\end{itemize}
The authors appear to have depended on interviews with Persian-speaking Europeans, rather than upon reading printed texts, for their information, and this caused them sometimes to garble facts and details (one writer confidently asserts that British monarchs are permitted legal polygamy, and that the hair of all native Americans is white). The question arises, moreover, of to what extent the picture they derived of Europeans reflected the self-image of their informants; but this problem exists in all “ethnography”.  

Shushtari’s good relationships with the British motivated him to take up a position against Tipu Sultan, and accuse him of vanity and debasement, and at the same time praise the sociability, bravery and good governance of the English. Bihbahani’s judgment of Tipu Sultan was different. He labelled Tipu’s guard who had Tipu killed treacherous and thanked God for killing him. 

According to Shushtari, Bihbahani noticed his travel account in the early 1805 at Hydarabad and encouraged him to continue the narration of the events after 1801 (the year Tuhfat ul Alam was terminated). Hence Shushtari annexed a small part to his work under the title of Zail ut Tuhfa, which was complementary to the Tuhfa.

All researchers have mentioned Tuhfat ul Alam as the sole work of Shushtari, but he has another one to his credit, i.e his daily notes from 1802 to 1804, which were collected under the title Waqay-i Hind. These notes contain some remarkable information about India and Iranians living in this country that shall be discussed subsequently. Moreover the

160 Cole, Sacred Space and Holy War, p. 126.
162 Mirat ul Ahwal pp. 234-235.
163 Tuhfat ul Alam, p. 469.
writer refers in his daily notes to yet another work by him, *Farhang* or *Risala-i Lughat*, but there is no trace left of this lexicon.

*Mirat ul Ahwal-i Jahan Nama (The Cosmorama Mirror)*

It was common among the Iranians who travelled abroad in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to write a travel account, Bihbahani was no exception. He already had inclination towards writing but the interest of the Qajar prince, Muhammad Ali Mirza, in historical books encouraged Bihbahani more to write an account of his journey to a foreign country. Bihbahani had met this Iranian prince at the outset of his voyage in Hamadan, and after completing his work, offered it to him when he went back.

Bihbahani’s travelogue is somewhat superior compared to other accounts written in the same period. His attention and curiosity drove him to offer a detailed account of the history, geography, religious, mores and cultures of India. It is true that he drew a part of his information from *Tuhfat ul Alam*, but he supplemented it with other works, such as *Siyar ul Mutakhirin*, and conversation with Indians and also with those Iranians who had travelled before him to India to acquire useful information, specially on the history of India in the eighteenth century.

Bihbahani’s curiosity invited him to inquire personally of the historical events of India, particularly on the history of the Shiite dynasties in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

He traversed the route between Mumbai and Lucknow via Hyderabad and Bengal, to present valuable information of the history of cities on his way, their present condition and in the case of decline, its reason, the well known buildings and monuments,
particularly famous mosques. He paid special attention to the Iranians living in India and remembered them by name.

Bihbahani also associated with the British in India, but not so much as Shushtari. Moreover his perceptions of the British were not the same as Shushtari's. Abd ul Hadi Hairi, a contemporary Iranian scholar, knew Bihbahani's and Shushtari's views about the English and criticized the former for his lack of awareness of the dangers of British colonialism. But in fact Bihbahani was aware of the colonial character of the British power and called them *jama'at-i makr tawiyyat* (deceitful community), and warned the notables of his country, against the colonial plans of the English in this way:

> The situation of the Indian people and kings, declined from the highest level to the nadir of wretchedness, due to their negligence of the Christians (the English). So it is necessary for the devoted servants of the Sultanate in Iran to be aware of the awful consequences of friendship with this deceitful community and not to be deceived by their softness and flattery, and not to be satisfied by their promises.

Bihbahani presented an account of his ancestors, among them the family of the prominent Shiite scholars in the Safavid period, Majlisi I and II. Most contemporary writers suppose Bihbahani as the main referenc of this account, while he took the information from another source entitled *Risala dar Ansab-i Khandan-i Majlisi* written by Mirza Haider Ali Majlisi, Mijlisi I's grandson. The value of Bihbahani's work was

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165 *Mirat ul Ahwal*, p. 199.
167 This monograph is printed by Ali Dawani at the end of *Mirat ul Ahwal*, Tehran, 1991
bringing this account down to his age. He also descended from the Majlisi family by Muhammad Taqi Majlisi's daughter, Amana Bagum, who was a learned lady. The grand daughter of Amana Bagum, got married to Muhammad Akmal; and Muhammad baqir Bihbahani, was the result of this union. Due to the role of Muhammad Baqir-i Majlisi, as Shaykh ul Islam in the court of the Safavids, his family history is amply documented.

Bihbahani terminated his two volume travelogue in April 1805, when he was 35.\(^{168}\) He gives a list of his works and also the text of his certificates issued by the leading \textit{Mujtahids} of Iraq at the end of the first volume. The second volume is mainly on the history and culture of European countries. Regarding this part, both Iranian and European scholars believe that his information was not accurate. For instance he wrote in the history of Britain that this region was under the dominance of the Muslim rulers during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods.\(^{169}\) Probably he mistook Britain for Spain which was under the command of Muslim rulers till the fourteenth century. Cole has offered an analysis of Bihbahani's views of the government in England as follows:

Aqa Ahmad, although he played down the democratic elements in British government, did see the kings and ministers as constrained by Parliament, which he defines as the "place of consultation" (\textit{mahall-i mashvirat}). But he depicts the MPs as pawns in the hand of the prime minister, who could use them to thwart royal policies with which he disagreed. Of the three authores (Shushtari, Abu Talib Isfahani and Bihbahani)

\(^{168}\) Prof. A.F. Haider has translated Bihbahani's work (except the first chapter) in English, and the book has been printed by Khuda Bakhsh Library of Patna, in 1996 under the title of \textit{India in the early 19th century}.

\(^{169}\) \textit{Mirat ul Ahwal}, p. 450
Bihbahani stresses juridical egalitarianism least, and has a tendency to see the aristocracy and the cabinet as the predominant forces in society.¹⁷⁰

All the three travelogues are both travel texts and historical works. The presence of Hazin, during the Afghan invasion of Isfahan, and his account of this event, gives a specific value to his work. Likewise he was present in Delhi during Nadir's attack, and his account of this adventure is interesting to read. Comparison with Hazin's book, Shushtari's is more like a travel account; but the word for word copying of some of Hazins material brings down its value; likewise, the section on the history and culture of Europe, curtails the coverage of India. Among the three writers, Bihbahani's description of the history and culture of India is the most detailed. Only he mentions the exact dates of the events and his description of them appear to be trustworthy; when he mentions the words of Shushtari he cites him as the main narrator.

¹⁷⁰ *Sacred Space and Holy War*, p. 129.