Masking the Unheroic: The Textual Act of Representation in Jawhar's *Tadhkirat-Ul-Waqi'at*

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Introduction

"After that, the emperor inquired about Hindal Mirza. No one had the heart to tell him. From the hill H.M. the Padishah was crying out, and there were around three hundred men there. No one replied...The Padishah entered his tent and sat there in distress as the amirs came to offer their condolences and say, 'It was his good luck to attain the rank of martyrdom in your service. Long live the emperor!' "[1]

The intimate, flowing narrative style, so evident in the above passage, is a notable characteristic of the text we are concerned with. The manner of writing is simple and there is a certain sincerity to the tone. However, the narrative is not consistent at all times. It will be seen that such inconsistencies help us in discerning the tensions within a textual narrative and aid in understanding the worldview of the author, and serve as a lens to the culture and society within which the text is embedded.

Jawhar Aftabachi dictated his Memoir of Mughal Emperor Humayun, sometime in the latter half of the 16th century. Jawhar was the ewer bearer of Humayun and had already served him for 19 years by early 1550s.[2] He was "barely literate", and according to Athar Ali, he seems to have dictated his memoir soon after Humayun's death (1556), "since to him capital was still Delhi, and the later rebel Abu'l- Ma'ali is still spoken of in sympathetic terms." Later (1587), Faizi Sarhindi was asked to polish it and write it in a proper style.[3]

Jawhar begins with an exposition of causes that led him to write the "memoir of events" of Humayun's reign. He had had the fortune of having known Humayun, for long, and had served the latter "in all conditions and at all times." It was, thus, for the sake of auspiciousness that he wanted to write a memorial to the fame of His Majesty.[4] This essay looks at Jawhar's memoir as an act of representation, meant to retrospectively shape the narrative around trajectory of Mughal Emperor Humayun's career.

There are two central theories which will be taken into consideration. First, Ali Anooshshar has suggested that the gender roles of warrior kings in early Mughal history revolved around categories of violence and politics of sexuality (including marriage alliances). For our purpose, we will be primarily concerned with the categories of violence and how crucial these were to shape the notions of kingship. Anooshahr has conceptualized violence as not only the ability to inflict it upon the enemies (including the ability to take revenge), but also the ability to endure violence and hardships, and the ability to withhold violence i.e. exhibition of mercy. A true warrior King would exhibit all of these traits, part of the masculine roles expected of a King.[5] Secondly, taking this as a premise, it will be suggested that royal virtues are in fact, multifaceted in nature. David Curly has argued that it is the multivalence of the royal virtues, which make their re-evaluation and re-positioning possible, in the hierarchy of such virtues.[6]

It will be argued that Jawhar's memoir re-positions certain virtues (primarily of mercy) up in the hierarchy of royal virtues. However, the tensions within his text reveal that he could not have done away with the other qualities, which indicates their importance in established cultural norms.

Let's begin by analyzing biography as a genre and some of the methods which can be used for a critical analysis of the same.

1. Biographies as a Source for Historical Analysis

Much of scholarship on life histories has been done in field of literary theory, usually dealing with modern literature. Biography as a medium of historical writing has received some attention, but is usually regarded as inferior to other ways of writing histories. Scholars

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like Lois Banner, Kate Brown, Alice Harris, etc., have attempted to show how writing life histories can be useful in understanding broader socio-cultural and historical processes, particularly when these are written by historians.

Our case is somewhat different. We are more concerned about using a biographical work, a "private memoir", written in 16th century Medieval India, as a source for reconstruction of history. Nonetheless, some of these ideas of modern-day biographies are fairly general and can come in useful to offer interpretations of medieval era biographies. Take for example the debates surrounding the self-culture dynamic, so central to analysing life writings. A section of scholars has emphasized the role of culture in shaping the individuals. The theories of performativity see human personality as a performance, their roles determined by the surrounding culture. Individuals either internalize these roles or rebel against them, working along same cultural conventions. This logic can be extended to the study of life histories, with individual subjects being shaped by the surrounding culture.[7] A further extension of this logic will allow us to use life writings of individuals, as reflective of culturally constructed expectations of individual roles. When the subject is a king, such roles revolve around kingship, often intertwining the personal worldview of the author and the culture of which s/he is a part.

It is equally important to understand the location and biases of the author, and the nature of relationship between the author and the subject. Thus, Jawhar's close proximity to Humayun, and the awareness of their lord-servant relationship can be used to give new meanings to the memoir. It is imperative to engage in some sort of "analytical suspicion", when looking at the possible meanings of a historical biography.[8]

Finally, there has always been some sort of ethical or didactic dimension to biographies. Banner argues that modern-day biographies have often sought to connect with and inspire the readers. In 19th century, biographies were seen as ethical endeavours based on "heroic lives of eminent men."[9]

Jawhar's memoir is no different in this respect. While Jawhar claims that it is not a study of kings, and while ethical treatise generally falls under a whole different genre of Mughal historiography (*akhlaq*), a clean division into such categories is not always possible. Taymiya Zaman has referred to the instability of genres and overlap across categories in pre-modern texts. Not only does *akhlaq* uses life stories of eminent individuals, but a work intended to be an autobiography or a biography or simply a letter can have didactic and ethical dimensions.[10]

To fully understand the act of representation, we will need to examine Jawhar's *Tadhkirat-ul-Waqi'at*, carefully for inconsistencies and contradictions. From sequencing of events, to portrayal of certain characters, analogies authors choose to draw, and the kind of interaction that goes on between multiple characters that form part of the text- all is crucial for understanding the strategies of composition.[11] A close perusal will reveal a loyal servant's attempt to portray his master in the best possible light via variety of means, despite the contradictions inherent in the same.

2. Representing Humayun: The Merciful One

"But remember that forgiveness too is a power. To beg for it is a power, and to withhold or bestow it is a power, perhaps the greatest."

-Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale*

In his bid to represent Humayun as having executed his office of kingship till the end, Jawhar has resorted to highlighting certain qualities and actions vis-a-vis others. Representation of Humayun as an ideal of a King was a slippery slope. For much of his reign, Humayun's sovereignty was a contentious subject. He was defeated by Sher Shah and had to flee the battlefield twice. Later, he fought several battles against his half-brother Mirza Kamran in order to establish dominance over Kabul. Before that he had to seek refuge in Persia. The facts of Humayun's failure to guard his throne, establish dominance over his brothers, and having to seek help from outside did not play very well with the dominant notions of brave warrior kings.

So how is it then that Jawhar attempts to present Humayun as a legitimate claimant of the office of kingship? In this section, we will look at the dominant representation of Humayun in Jawhar's memoir. Based on this, we will attempt to discern the larger notions of kingship, along which Jawhar shaped his text.

Since Humayun often fell short of the first of qualities required of a warrior king, i.e. ability to successfully inflict violence upon enemies and take revenge from the wrong-doers, it is to the latter two categories that Jawhar turned. Anooshahr has argued that Humayun has been shown as too interested in comfort and luxury by his contemporaries like Jawhar, Bayazid, and even Gulbadan. He would throw lavish feasts, and was even called delicate by one of his courtiers. In comparison, figures like Sher Shah and Babur are presented as men who participated with their soldiers and endured hardships with courage and strength.[12] However, Jawhar's texts begins by declaring that he wants to provide an account of the hardships that a deposed ruler faced and how he endured it all with self-respect and succeeded in gaining back his kingdom.[13] In fact, enduring hardships with the strength of character

and dignity has been quite prominent in Jawhar's representation of Humayun.

Some of the incidents he recalls are poignant and will have the reader sympathizing with the overthrown king and his family, and the accompanying band of loyal entourage. When they were travelling through Raja Maldeo's territory (Jaisalmer), on more than one occasion, several people simply died of thirst.[14] Sometimes, they were chased by local brigands, who would plunder any grain and other supplies they had left.[15] The Emperor had little choice except to endure hardships along with his soldiers and other members of the royal household. Such an endurance could be made successful only when the Emperor won his throne back. A fruitless endurance of hardships makes no sense.

Sometimes the embarrassments that Humayun had to face in lieu of these hardships were masked as endurance and dignity.

One of the most interesting episodes in this regard is when Humayun meets Shah Tahmasp, the ruler of Persia. Many scholars have referred to Jawhar's text for a reconstruction of Humayun's adventures in Persia. This is because several other texts simply gloss over the exile. Unlike Gulbadan Begum, Jawhar paints a picture of much more difficult time.[16] As it is, Humayun was not in a very honourable position. He had lost his Empire and had been betrayed by his brothers. He was seeking refuge with another king, which itself relegated him to a position of subservience. On more than one occasion, Humayun's position as a sovereign ruler comes under scanner explicitly.

One instance is when Shah Tahmasp offers support to Humayun, but only on the condition that he embraces Shiaism. He also threatens him with dire consequences if the latter does not yield. Apparently, Humayun remained steadfast to his religion, and also went on to say that he had no great desire to be the Emperor. There is, however, an obscure reference to signing of some papers by Humayun. Before this, a deputy of Shah, Qazi Jahan, warned Humayun that on account of him, seven hundred people will be killed.[17] Humayun demanded everything in written and ended up signing one of the papers. Even if Humayun did convert[18], the episode is presented as an instance of heroic sacrifice by a kind ruler who did not want 700 people to be killed on his account. This becomes more obvious, as we juxtapose it with earlier position of Humayun, where he refused to convert and was willing to give up any hope of his kingdom, but was steadfast on not submitting.

Jawhar does attempt to show that Humayun was capable of enduring hardships (albeit not always related to the battlefield), and responding to them with strength and dignity. But where Jawhar succeeds more is in the representation of the last category of violence i.e., withholding it. It was through his generosity, claims Jawhar, that Humayun was able to do the impossible — win back his throne.[19]

Humayun is presented as the very embodiment of justice, forgiveness, and kindness.

Take the case from Humayun's time in Persia, when Humayun interceded on behalf of officials (for forgiveness), who had attempted to incite Shah against the former. This came at a time when these men were about to be punished. The Shah is said to have been amazed and he had exclaimed, "What clemency Muhammad Humayun Padishah has. These men were out to harm him, and now he intercedes on their behalf."[20] Now, to put these words into Shah's mouth, with the accompanying expression, makes it a big deal, and conspicuously so; which is the effect Jawhar intended to have.

We must remember that clemency, on part of a king, is symbolic of authority, of having the option of giving punishment, but choosing not to do so. In other words, clemency is an act of assertion of power.

One of the most effective ways in which Jawhar draws attention to a capable, forgiving, and generous Humayun is by juxtaposing him with his ungrateful, cruel, and incapable half-brother, Mirza Kamran. Kamran's treachery constitutes most of the tribulations that Humayun had to face. Following his defeat at the Battle of Kannauj (against Sher Shah), when Humayun reached Lahore, Mirza Hindal suggested that he (Humayun) get rid of Mirza Kamran so as to unite soldiers against Sher Shah. According to Jawhar, this is what Humayun said, "For the sake of this transitory world, I will not deprive my own brother of his life."[21] This is important, because soon after both Kamran and Hindal rebel. However, emperor was ever forgiving and kind. One is really struck by sheer number of chances Humayun gives to Kamran. By the time Kamran agreed to pay homage to Humayun, the former had already fought thrice against the latter.[22] An emotional scene followed, with the four brothers, reuniting, and sharing a meal. The kingdom was re-divided among the four brothers.[23] The fragrance of reunion was still fresh when, while the good Emperor was in Balkh to conquer it for Kamran, the latter rebelled again.

Kamran is also presented as more cruel in comparison to the kind Humayun. When the former seized Kabul the second time, he went on a killing rampage of officials and nobles- — nothing like that has been described at any time, for Humayun.[24]

During the siege of Champaner fort, an officer of the enemy side came to pay homage to the Emperor. When some of Humayun's men suggested that he be tortured for information on Sultan Bahadur's treasury, Humayun

refused. "When something can be done with kindness and good, what need is there for roughness and obstinacy?"[25] An interesting thing that Humayun says at this juncture is that since the officer came of his own accord, he must not be tortured. This shows that clemency had its own principles. It was only when someone sought refuge of their own accord that they were to be considered for mercy. The act of mercy after such a submission, was nothing but a further assertion of power and generosity combined.

The attribute of mercy could also be concerned with amount of violence that was inflicted. During his stay at Umarkot, Humayun was forced to confiscate some of the wealth of his *amirs* in order to pay the Rana for supplies. During this time, one Husayn Qorchi was spotted carrying away a chest of gold, jewellery, etc. Emperor ordered Qorchi's ear to be clipped. However, the man who carried out this order cut the whole ear. Emperor was enraged and tended to man's ear "with his own imperial hands." "He gave the poor man as much solace as he could." Here we get a picture of a benevolent patriarch, who did not shirk away from punishing his people for the wrong-doing, but believed in moderation (and thus could be seen as merciful).[26]

A particularly oft-repeated scene is that of *amirs*, soldiers, and lesser officials, running hither thither, with complete impunity. Many officers and soldiers had abandoned Humayun when he lost power.

When Humayun had taken back Kandhar (thanks to the aid he had received from the Shah of Persia), and was proceeding to take Kabul (from Kamran), all of Kamran's *amirs* came over to the former's side.[27] Needless to point out, not only they were forgiven, but welcomed back. It is crucial to understand that clemency could have had a political dimension. Humayun needed all the support he could get, as an overthrown king seeking to win back his throne. Even then, the underlying power dynamics of mercy cannot be ignored.

In yet another case, right before Battle of Taligan, three men — Qaraja Khan, Musahib Beg, and Babus Beg deserted to Kamran's side. Following Kamran's defeat, the three men "...hung their quivers and swords around their necks and came to kiss the Emperor's foot." They were instantly pardoned.[28]

While one way of looking at clemency is through the lens of power, another is through the lens of weakness. Jawhar's attempts to overshadow everything else in a bid to emphasize the performance of the King as the merciful one is not without its problems.

A careful scrutiny of the text lends us into the tensions within the narrative that seem to undermine Humayun's performance. The next section will seek to highlight the contradictions within Jawhar's narrative. It will be argued that Jawhar was well aware of such contradictions and resorted to various ways in order to diffuse the tension in his narrative.

3. Discerning Textual Dissonance

"...biography is built on the author's imagination...but biography resides in facts and is bound by them."

-Virginia Woolf [29]

When one begins to read between the lines and look outside the narrative that Jawhar wants us to believe in, clemency increasingly appears as a mask for weakness. This is especially the case with Kamran, who on more than one occasion defeated Humayun's army in the battlefield, and rebelled again and again, despite the chances he was given.

Anooshahr has suggested that being magnanimous could not have made up for lack of other traits so essential to gender roles of a warrior king. If, indeed, clemency was representative of power and authority, why do we witness such authority being undermined time and again within the narrative of Jawhar's memoir? We have several such instances from the text which serve to show how poorly Humayun fared when it came to assertion of imperial authority via normal "heroic" means.

Soon after taking over as the Emperor, Humayun had embarked on a campaign against Sultan Bahadur of Gujarat. Humayun's side had been winning when the Sultan escaped to Surat. By this time, Humayun and already taken the Mandu and the Champner fort. Some of the officers of Humayun advised him against following Sultan to Cambay, and instead appointing Sultan as a deputy, head back to Agra (as there had been a rebellion). When the Emperor did not pay heed, not only did his officers not respect his decision, but conspired with his brother (Askari Mirza) to force him (Humayun) to listen to them. As a result, even regular soldiers deserted Humayun, when he needed them. Yet we do not hear of any punishment being meted out to either the officers concerned or Askari. [30]

It is notable that this incident occurred even as Humayun's sovereignty was still intact. Post his defeat at Kannauj against Sher Shah, incidents of insolence on part of officers and chiefs only increased. Local chiefs like Shah Husayn Mirza of Thatta and Bakshu Langah of Uch, refused to pay homage to the Emperor. Bakshu Langah even hunted down Humayun's men.[31] Yadgar Nasir went over to the side of Shah Husayn; so did Taqchi Beg and Fazayil Beg. Humayun heard that even Muni'm Beg and Turdi Beg were planning to flee to Shah Husyan's side. In order to stop them, Humayun stayed awake with them all night and in the morning, as he caught them (trying to

flee), he went after them and asked them to come back.[32]

Only Muni'm Beg was arrested. This episode shows how openly Humayun's authority was breached and some of the people easily got away with it!

Perhaps, one of the most serious affront to Humayun's kingship occurred during his stay in Persia. First of all, in order to please the Shah and save himself from any embarrassment, Humayun had to wear the *taj*, the symbol of acceptance of Safavid authority.[33] He also had to sign some papers (suspiciously convert to Shiism) and thus submit completely. Submission was, in fact, central to the whole action of Humayun seeking refuge in Persia.

Harbans Mukhia also refers to the incident where Humayun pledged allegiance to his *amirs* because they had asked him to do so in return for their own allegiance to him! This was strange and even Hindal protested against its impropriety.[34]

On top of all of this, there were several battles in which Humayun was defeated or had to flee! Such "facts", described by Jawhar himself, appear to be in a constant conflict with the portrayal of an ideal sovereign defined solely by his mercy. Anooshahr has, in fact, used Jawhar to show how Kamran and Humayun stood opposite to each other in terms of their fulfillment of gender roles of warrior kings. While Kamran was often presented as taking charge and fighting battles, Humayun shirked away and sent his men to fight.[35] A pitiful scene is conjured before our eyes, when Jawhar narrates the tale of how Mirza Kamran was blinded. Jawhar says for Kamran, that after having been stabbed nearly 50 times in his eyes, "... That brave man did not utter a sound."[36] What need did Jauhar have of calling attention to bravery of Kamran, a man who had only been an obstacle in Humayun's return to power?

Perhaps, Jawhar could not hide his admiration for the immense courage of spirit that Kamran exhibited. After all, this was the highest degree of ability to endure violence, a trait held in high regard among warrior kings. In that sense, this curious expression of admiration (an inherent contradiction within the general tone of the text) could be reflective of culturally dominant traits of warrior kings held in high regard.

How could have Jawhar balanced describing all this while claiming that Humayun had been an ideal King, somebody who had executed their office of kingship till the very end? Jawhar was well aware of the tension within the project he had undertaken. It was no easy task to recount "the life of an unsuccessful king, but with the aim of proving his worth, retrospectively to history."[37]

It can be argued that even such affront to authority constituted Jawhar's idea of hardships that Humayun had to endure, which he did with self-respect (as Jawhar sets out in the beginning his text). There is also a possibility that he was espousing an alternate mode of kingship, a more "pacific" mode. The term pacific kingship has been used by David Curly to describe the royal virtues enshrined in *Chandimangal* of Mukunda Chakroborty. While pacific kingship is a broader concept, it includes what Curly refers to as the ordinary traits like mercy. The idea has been further elaborated by Aniket Chettry, focusing much more on the unheroic qualities of compromise, mercy and compassion.[38] In this text, king Kalkettu chose to retreat in face of aggression and hide from his enemies. According to Chhetry, this could be an honourable option only because of presence of the un-heroic qualities of mercy and compassion in the ruler.

Jahwar does emphasize traits associated with pacific kingship. The unheroic is sought to be presented as the heroic. There is, in other words, re-positioning of royal virtues; if not espousal of an altogether new mode of kingship. The tensions within the text are witness to the strong hold of established paradigms around royal virtues of Mughal kings. This is evident because Jawhar offers elaborate explanations for whenever Humayun fails to deliver according to these dominant norms (e.g. when he gets defeated in battles). It will be seen that such explanations are tactful ways of repositioning these norms within the hierarchy of royal virtues.

Jawhar resorts to specific techniques to show how, despite these well-identified roles of warrior kings which Humayun could not fulfill, the latter was still a legitimate king.

4. Everybody Falls Down Sometimes

Consider the narratives of defeat in Jawhar's memoir.

Jawhar resorts to a technique which will absolve Humayun of any blame either in his defeat or in his retreat from the field. It is always someone else who makes emperor leave (flee) or else it's the cowardice of soldiers and *amirs*. Never does Humayun abandon the battlefield of his own volition.

More interestingly, he would draw such analogies, as to trivialize the very act of being defeated. Take for example the scene narrated by Jawhar right before Humayun was to face defeat at Chausa (against Sher Shah Suri). Shaykh Khalil (who had been sent for a treaty) wrote to Humayun that Sher Shah's *amir* Khawass Khan had left with a huge army after the treaty had failed. Unfortunately, not only did Emperor paid no attention, but a noble – Muayyad Beg said that they will deal with the army easily. As Jawhar says, "...God does not like self-reliance and pride...". Next day, Khwass Khan came and plundered the imperial army. Humayun was informed, even as a lone elephant charged forth. There were three men near Humayun who hung their heads in

shame, "…were peerless in courage." Finally, Humayun took on the elephant alone and even injured it, but the archer on the elephant had shot Humayun. While the elephant retreated, an injured Humayun is said to have called for an attack, but no one else came forth! Before anything could be done "someone" grabbed Humayun's reins and said, "This is no time for standing around...the talks have failed."[39]

Thus, Humayun's army was defeated at the battle of Chausa and Jawhar laid groundwork to explain why that happened. To make things clearer, Jawhar cites a story of battle between "Commander of the Faithful Hamza" and Hormuz, in which the army of Islam was defeated, because of pride displayed by Prophet himself. When Prophet was informed that a huge army had assembled, he is quoted to have said, "What concern do all those soldiers pose? Our uncle Hamza alone is sufficient." Upon hearing this, God's "zeal was stirred" and defeat befell the army of Islam. "Therefore, God's zeal is always at work, and it has even had consequences for warriors for the faith."[40] This story was placed tactfully after Muyyad Beg's faulty advice. In doing so, Jawhar not only dragged in morality, and God, but more importantly, drew an analogy to Prophet himself; thus, reducing the collateral damage to Humayun's image as the invincible emperor. Even the righteous warriors of faith had had to face defeat because of their pride. Moreover, it was not emperor's fault. It was Muyyad Beg's pride that stirred the pots of fate.

A similar story has been invoked in context of Battle of Kannauj, also against Sher Shah. Here too, we witness use of similar tropes: a reluctant Humayun forced to flee, story of a powerful figure from history (Muhammad Hanifa) who suffered defeat despite his strength (but ultimately won). Jawhar concludes by saying that even warriors of faith have both ill fortunes and good luck and that God causes these to succeed each other interchangeably.[41]

Such analogies and references to how "even" warriors of faith face these tribulations, considerably trivialize and normalize defeats for a king. Such things happened to the best and the bravest! The personal qualities of the ruler had very little to do with it. In addition, evoking the Prophet, and important figures from history of Islam, serve to lend an aura of sacrality to the Emperor. It is also notable that Humayun is not portrayed as being weak anywhere. This is crucial as it shows that Jawhar could not completely do away with virtues of valor and courage, even while he tried to de-emphasize their role.

What also comes forth from these accounts is a dominant fatalistic tone of the narrative, which sets the backdrop for the manipulation of the account. Adopting a fatalistic tone essentially means attributing events and processes to fate or luck or God's will, to absolve the humans involved of any responsibility. Jawhar uses it more forcefully when describing defeats and losses.

A glaring example of the fatalistic backdrop comes to us from period of Humayun's stay in Persia. Shah once blamed Humayun's pride for loss of his kingdom. To our surprise, Humayun accepts his flaws and says that it was all in God's hands (i.e. nothing could be done about it). However, Shah was at that time plotting against Humayun. Jawhar tells us that Shah's sister heard of this and wept, asking Shah what will be gained by harming Humayun. She also says that since Shah had enemies on all sides, he must not make another enemy. Taymiya Zaman has argued that this showed that Shah was not invincible either and that one day even he might need Humayun's help, if the wheels of fate turned against the former. [42]

The fatalistic undertone here come to the rescue of Humayun again; serving the dual purpose of reinforcing the role of the forces outside the control of the kings in determining the course of their lives, and of placing the two kings (Humayun and Shah) on an equal footing.

Zaman has suggested that it was Jawhar's own piety which came to be tied to his depiction of Humayun.[43] But certainly, there is a textual manipulation in placement of piety at strategic points in the text.

Jawhar, on several occasions, also accounts for the mysterious miraculous powers of Humayun. One such instance is when a particular officer of Humayun by the name of Tursun Beg had fled to the side of Shah Husaynn Mirza. Upon hearing this, Humayun is said to have cursed Tursun Beg, "...May he die young!" Not long after, Tursun Beg was killed by his own slave. Having narrated this incident, Jawhar hails Humayun as "...a lord of miracles..." and then goes to say that "...kings can perform the miracles of forty saints, and H.M. performed many miracles..."[44] This goes on to show that kings were perceived as blessed with ability to perform miracles by the people, and Jawhar only worked on that notion of kingship.

Here we get a tiny glimpse of the idea of kingship that Jawhar believed in, or if he did not, it still mattered that he recorded it in his memoir of Humayun which he wished to be a tribute to fame of Humayun.

5. Conclusion

While it is evident that this was an intimate account of a ruler provided by a loyal servant; it is also much more than that. It is an act of representation that attempted to prove that Humayun had been successful in execution of the office of kingship. An interplay of emphasis on traits such as clemency and generosity, a downplay of defeats, along with stray references to the miraculous

powers, all embedded within a fatalistic narrative aid in construction of a text, which projects the so-called unheroic as heroic. Humayun, thus, gets away with self-effacement that might be involved in attributes like inability to inflict violence on enemies, or take revenge (the typical attributes required of a warrior King). At the same time, it is possible to read the contradictions within Jawhar's memoir, whether it is in facts of defeats, or in long explanations of these same defeats, or instances of breach of imperial authority by officers, or in his implicit admiration for Kamran's courage and endurance.

Performance of kingship takes a unique turn in Jawhar's text in many ways, drawing attention to attributes that might not have been that important under normal circumstances. Humayun takes on a character that is less grand, humbler, kinder and fatalistic. This shows the multivalent nature of royal virtues.

Jawhar's memoir needs further investigation to answer questions related to self and culture, and author-text relationship. A comparative analysis with other texts can perhaps, be a useful exercise if we are to unearth the "voice of a servant" through Jawhar's memoir.

Notes

1. Jawhar Aftabchi, Tadhkirat-ul-Waqi'at in *The Three Memoirs of Humayun: A Bilingual Persian-English Text in Two Volumes. Gulbadan Begim's Humáyunnáma; Jawhar Áftábachí's Tadhkiratu'l-wáqiát; Báyazid Bayát's Táríkh-i Humáyún,* ed. Wheeler M. Thackston, (Mazda Publication; Bilingual edition, 15 March 2009), p. 154.
2. Ibid., p. 157.
3. M. Athar Ali, "The Use of Sources in Mughal historiography", *The Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*, Third Series, Vol. 5, No. 3, (November 1995), pp. 367-368.
   In a way, then there are multiple people involved in production of Jawhar's Tazkira (including the scribe). Analysing any differences in these manuscripts might be an interesting venture, but is beyond the scope of this paper.
4. Jawhar Aftabchi, *Tadhkirat-ul-Waqi'at*, p. 72.
5. Ali Anooshahr, "The King who would be Man: The Gender Roles of the Warrior King in Early Mughal History", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Third Series, Vol. 13, No. 3, (Jul.2008), pp. 328-329.
6. David Curly, "Kings and Commerce on an Agrarian Frontier: Kalketu's Story in Mukunda's Chandimangal", *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 38, 3, (Sage publications, 2001), p. 301.
7. Lois W. Banner, "Biography as History", *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 114, No. 3, (June 2009), pp. 581-82.
8. H. Porter Abbot, "Autobiography, Autography, Fiction: Groundwork for a Taxonomy of Textual Categories," *New Literary History*, Vol. 19, No. 3; History Critiques and Criticism, Some Inquiries (Spring, 1948), pp. 608-609.
   Abbot originally uses the term to differentiate between reader response to autobiographies vis-a-vis fictions.
9. Lois W. Banner, "Biography as History", p. 579.
10. Taymiya R. Zaman, "Instructive Memory: An analysis of Auto/Biographical writing in Early Mughal India", *Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 54 (2011), pp. 678-681.
11. Alice Kessler-Harris argues that the subject of a biography can illuminate much more than the personal if we analyse the tensions between and the interaction of the subject with the socio-political-cultural milieu they inhabit.
    Alice Kessler-Harris, "Why Biography?", *The Americal Historical Review*, Vol. 114, No. 3, (June 2009), pp. 625-630.
12. Ali Anooshahr, "The King who would be Man", pp. 330-331.
13. Jawhar Aftabchi, *Tadhkirat-ul-Waqi'at*, p. 72.
14. Ibid., pp. 104-109.
15. Ibid., p. 115.
16. For a comparative analysis of these texts, read Taymiya R. Zaman, "Instructive Memory", pp. 685-696.
17. Jawhar Aftabchi, *Tadhkirat-ul-Waqi'at*, pp. 122-23.
18. Taymiya R. Zaman, "Instructive Memory", p. 691.
19. Jawhar Aftabchi, *Tadhkirat-ul-Waqi'at*, p. 72.
20. Ibid., p. 127.
21. Ibid., p. 96.
22. Kamran was not the only half-brother who rebelled. Both Mirza Askari and Mirza Hindal were disloyal at different points, but not as frequently as Kamran. In fact, when Kamran was forced to surrender (after the Battle of Talingan), it was only then that Humayun ordered that Askari's chains be removed as well (He had refused to surrender Qandhar).
23. Jawhar Aftabchi, *Tadhkirat-ul-Waqi'at*, pp. 144-45.
24. Ibid., p. 138.
    There is, however, on few occasions, references to plunder and loot by Humayun's men, when they were on the move.
25. Ibid., p. 76.
26. Ibid., p. 109.
27. Ibid., pp. 135 and 143.
28. Ibid., pp. 141-143.
29. As quoted in Alice Kessler-Harris, "Why Biography?", p. 625.
30. Jawhar Aftabchi, *Tadhkirat-ul-Waqi'at*, pp. 144-45.
31. Ibid., pp. 99-103.
32. Ibid., p. 102.

On another occasion, Humayun was afraid that Haji Muhammad Koka would dessert him. In that case also, he resorted to staying up all night and talking and "telling tales", p. 150.

33. Azfar Moin, The Millennial Sovereign, Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam, Cambridge University Press, (New York, 2012), pp. 136-140.
34. Harbans Mukhia, Historians and Historiography during the reign of Akbar, (Vikas Publishing House Ltd., New Delhi, 1976), pp. 168-169.
35. It is owing to such tensions within the text that Ali Anooshahr is able to reach such a conclusion. Of course, the author uses several other texts to support his theory

and is not limited to Jawhar. Ali Anooshahr, "The King who would be Man", pp. 328-329.

36. Jawhar Aftabchi, *Tadhkirat-ul-Waqi'at*, pp. 144-45.
37. Taymiya R. Zaman, "Instructive Memory", p. 685.
38. David Curly, "Kings and Commerce on an Agrarian Frontier", pp. 299-334.
    Aniket Tathagata Chettry, "The Textual Representation of Kingship and Authority in the Chandimangal of Mukunda Chakroborty", *Forthcoming*.
39. Jawhar Aftabchi, *Tadhkirat-ul-Waqi'at*, pp. 87-88.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid., pp. 91-93.
42. Taymiya R.Zaman, "Instructive Memory", pp. 691-92
43. Ibid., p. 696.
44. Jawhar Aftabchi, Tadhkirat-ul-Waqi'at, p. 112.