



Research Paper

Instinctive Inquiries Into Indian Antiquity And Its Disorientated Chronicles

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ABSTRACT:

Mughal history has played a huge role in shaping our country and its history. Whenever we study the history of Mughals there is always a two-pronged story one half telling us about the grandeur and opulence but on the other side we see death, gore and hatred. The two sides do tell us a lot about the two faces of the empire but unfortunately as it might be we sometimes tend to forget that behind all that sparkle hide dark and melancholic details of their mundane day to day life that held life altering impact the very course of history, this paper is an effort to understand how history of this country was molded by the Mughal rulers and their empire.

KEYWORDS: Tamerlane, Babur, Akbar, Mongol, Shah Jahan, Afghan, Mughal, sultanate

Received 08 September, 2021; Revised: 21 September, 2021; Accepted 23 September, 2021 © The author(s) 2021. Published with open access at www.questjournals.org

INSTINCTIVE INQUIRIES INTO INDIAN ANTIQUITY AND ITS DISORIENTATED CHRONICLES

(Mughal Period: From Babur to Bahadur Shah Zafar)

The historic significance of the ties between the Middle East and Central Asia on the one hand and South Asia on the other became especially clear during the events of the first decade of the 21st century. While studying the history of the Silk Road, we can learn more about the relationships it had.¹ All one needs to do is remember the chain of events that led to the widespread dissemination of Greco-Bactrian culture, the legacy of Alexander the Great in Central Asia, throughout northern India in the time of the Kushan Empire about 100 CE, which spanned routes that connected today's Uzbekistan in Central Asia to Afghanistan, as well as parts of Pakistan and India.² Following the disintegration of the Caliphate in the late eleventh century, Persian and Afghan dynasties would gradually extend their territory and power eastward into northern India, creating the foundation for the greater spread of Islam starting in the late twelfth century.³ Tamerlane brought the Muslim Delhi Sultanate to an end in 1398, which was the last in a series of invasions that had occurred in that century. Even though Tamerlane eventually headed in another direction, that conflict played a major role in supporting the legitimacy of his heirs, the Mughals, to rule India.⁴

This serves as an important component in the history of the Silk Road due to the Mughal understanding of their Central Asian roots and the prominence of Persian and Central Asian culture at their courts. Babur was a descendant of both the Mongol Chingisids and the Timurids, who were descendants of Chinggis Khan and Timur. He was born in the Ferghana Valley, and at the age of sixteen, he took control of Samarkand. The Uzbeks soon after drove him out of the region, and he lived the rest of his life in exile in the Gobi Desert. Finally, at the end of his life he had established a firm footing in India.⁵

The Mughals held themselves in high esteem as members of an aristocratic, military-orientated family. Many academics accept as true that, they descend from Timur also known as Tamerlane, a 14th-century Turkic warlord, and Genghis Khan, a formidable Mongol warlord. Additionally, works such as Muizz al-ansab, which was compiled by the Persian translator Shah Rukh at the Timurid court in Herat, Afghanistan, detail the genealogy of the Mughals, and of other Timurids and their descendants. The general belief is that, Mughal, a

¹ Richard C. Foltz. 'Mughal India and Central Asia (Karachi, etc.) Oxford University Pr. 1998.

² Sheila S. Blair, Jonathan M. Bloom. 'The Art and Architecture of Islam 1250-1800'. Yale University Press. 1994.

³ Wheeler M. Thackston, tr. and ed. Freer and Sackler Galleries. 'The Baburnama. Memoirs of Babur, Prince and Emperor.' Oxford University Press. 1996.

⁴ Richard C. Foltz. 'Mughal India and Central Asia (Karachi, etc.) Oxford University Pr. 1998.

⁵ 'Steel and Crowther's Journey of 1615-16 from Moghul India through Persia,' in Robert Kerr, ed./ A General History and Collection of Voyages and Travels...., Vol. IX (Edinburgh and London, 1824): 206-219. Accessed on 5th June. 2021.

term referring to members of the dynasty of the same name, is an Anglicized pronunciation of the original "Mongol."⁶ It is argued, in India, the Mughals were mostly Turks, not Mongolians. It is not surprising, however, that the first Mughal emperor, Babur, was able to trace his ancestry back to Genghis Khan. The Muslims of Central Asia had a justified grudge against the Mongols because the Mongols sacked Baghdad in 13th century and destroyed the last remaining remnant of the Abbasid Caliphate. This empire split into four parts approximately three centuries after the death of Chinggis. The Golden Horde of Russia, the Ilkhanate of Iran and Iraq, the Chinese Yuan Dynasty under Kublai Khan, and finally the Mughal Empire of India each ruled their own part of the empire.⁷

It was Tamerlane, who was said to be descended from Genghis Khan, and who allegedly passed on the Mongols' bad reputation to his descendants. Jack Weatherford says of this Tatar conqueror that 'claim to descent from Genghis Khan was questionable at best.'⁸ Timur carried out barbaric acts such as torturing mercilessly and sacking cities, while Chinggis Khan abolished torture and formed alliances with people who did not fight back. In terms of religious orthodoxy, Timur believed that the Delhi Sultanate had allowed many religions other than Islam to flourish unchecked by enforcing Islamic law against them. His troops went on to carry out his orders, and before beginning his bloody attack on Delhi in 1398, he directed that Muslims and Hindus prisoners be segregated and then announced, 'every man who had infidel prisoners was to put them to death.'⁹ About one lakh Hindu prisoners were massacred on the same day, according to estimates.¹⁰

Since Timur's invasion, the kingly rule at Delhi has been teetering on the brink of collapse. Hindustan had a wise administration under Afghan Sikandar Lodi, but whatever progress Sikandar had made was undone by his son Ibrahim's incompetence, who was as imprudent as he was unjust. Muhammadan commanders and governors behaved like minor independent monarchs under his reign, whilst Bengal, where powerful Afghan rulers had been settled in virtual independence for upwards of 300 years, Bihar, Malwah, and Gujrat could barely be considered subject to Delhi. In Rajputana, a confederacy was forming under the leadership of the Rana of Mewar, which was strong enough to stand up to the monarch of Delhi. In 1525, Babar led a strong force across the Indus for the fifth and final time, and established himself master of the Panjab, partly via the sword, partly through deft diplomacy. His army was bolstered on a daily basis by the influx of Indian Musalmans, and in April 1526, he faced Ibrahim and his main force on the plains of Panipat, where they fought the battle that cost Ibrahim his army, throne, and life all at once.

During April of 1526, when the Doab region's heat was reaching unbearable levels, **Babur** and his army were close to Ibrahim Lodi's army. As the Mongols had before them, Babur's forces have found a successful way to execute a flanking maneuver. The introduction of two Anatolian artillery specialists into his army has made use of mortars and matchlocks that have never been used in India before.¹¹ As he has just lost a number of troops, he determines that Panipat, near Delhi, will give his outnumbered troops the greatest opportunity for victory, and lays out his battle formation. The guns are arranged in a circle in the middle of the combat zone, with open spaces between each one so that cavalry can move quickly from place to place. The freedom of movement left to the wings enables them to outmaneuver the opposition by virtue of their speed.¹²

In the face of well-fortified opposition, his generals whined that no opponent will launch an attack on such a formidable position, but he sees Ibrahim's greatly superior army and elephants, who he believes will make them too confident to consider the enemy as a significant threat. He was correct in his prediction.¹³ On April 20, 1526, the sultan set out for Panipat, where he planned to attack as soon as dawn arrived. At first, the Lodi forces go headlong in an attempt to penetrate the enemy lines, and then they are met by a concentrated volley of fire. Meanwhile, their flanks are assailed by a double attack. As trapped and confused as they are, they struggle to break free, but they are repelled every time. By the early afternoon, Babur's army has been victorious. He now holds total control over all the land stretching from Kabul to the southern borders of Bengal.¹⁴ It was the time when 'the sun is setting on an age, but it is rising on a new one'. The Lodi Dynasty was supplanted by the Mughal Dynasty, which are both Muslim dynasties.

The view generally held is that Babur's artillery played a key role in his victory in the first battle, firstly because Ibrahim Lodi lacked artillery on the battlefield, but also because the sound of the cannons startled Lodi's elephants, causing them to trample Lodi's own men. However, contemporary sources reveal that, not the

⁶ Richards, John F. 'The Mughal Empire'. Cambridge University Press. 1996.

⁷ Marc Jason Gilbert. 'South Asia in World History'. Oxford University Press. 2017.

⁸ Jack Weatherford. 'Chinggis Khan and the Making of the Modern World'. New York. Three Rivers Press, 2004.

⁹ R. C Majumdar (Editor). 'From Timur's autobiography cited in The Delhi Sultanate'. Bombay. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. 1967.

¹⁰ Beatrice F. Manz (2000). 'Timūr Lang'. Encyclopaedia of Islam. 10 (2nd ed.). Brill. Retrieved 24 April 2014. Accessed on 5th June 2021.

¹¹ Butalia, Romesh C. 'The Evolution of the Artillery in India: From the Battle of Plassey to the Revolt of 1857'. Allied Publishing Limited. 1998.

¹² Davis, Paul K. '100 Decisive Battles: From Ancient Times to the Present'. Oxford University Press. 1999.

¹³ Chandra, Satish. 'Medieval India: From Sultanat to the Mughals, Part II'. Har-Anand Publications. 2009.

¹⁴ Watts, Tim J. 'Battles of Panipat'. Mikaberidze, Alexander (ed.). Conflict and Conquest in the Islamic World: A Historical Encyclopedia. ABC-CLIO. 2011.

gun, but rather the tactical approaches used in the fight played the decisive role in ensuring victory.¹⁵ Babur, as he had done previously, introduced two new war tactics: the tulughma and the araba. Tulughma's idea was to break the army into three smaller units, specifically to include the Left, the Right, and the Center. As with all other divisions, the Left and Right divisions were further divided into two sections: The Front and the Rear. By applying this strategy, a small army could be employed in a cordon-like formation around the enemy from all sides. Each cart (known as a "wheelbarrow" in many Commonwealth nations) was attached to each other by animal hide ropes and stood lined up across from the enemy formation with the use of them. Behind them were positioned cannons that were protected and supported by mantles, which could be used to maneuver the cannons with ease.¹⁶ Using these two tactics, Babur's artillery became extremely lethal. While cannons and guns were safe behind the stationary cattle carts, their crews had no fear of getting hit because the ropes which bound the carts together were covered by the hides of the oxen that were also used to move the carts. With wheeled mantelets, the heavy cannons could be positioned easily.¹⁷ As Ibrahim Lodi lost and, on the battlefield, his feudatories and generals left him to fend for himself (many of whom were mercenaries). The majority of the population who previously supported Delhi's previous master now switched allegiance to the new master of Delhi. Sultan Ibrahim could have won if he had fought for another hour, as Babur had no reserves and his troops were rapidly tiring.¹⁸

‘On the day after the battle and in harmony with Mughal Custom, Babur caused the heads of his fallen adversaries to be piled into a pyramid and had himself solemnly proclaimed ‘Ghazi’ i. e. victor in a holy war’.¹⁹

Babur in his autobiography the Baburnama describes the Mughals as having put to the sword over 15,000 to 16,000 soldiers from the Delhi garrison during their assault on the city. On the other hand, a local estimate puts the total losses somewhere between 40,000 and 50,000. Of the units led by Babur, 4,000 of his own soldiers died in the fight. There is no record of whether any elephants survived or not.²⁰ The first battle of Panipat was a crucial turning point in the history of India. Delhi was defeated in the battle of Panipat, which led to the fall of the Delhi Sultanate. The Delhi Sultanate (1200-1526) began to decay following the reign of Mohammad Tughluq. It was after the death of Sultan Ibrahim, which occurred as a result of his defeat, that the Lodhi Dynasty came to an end. This dynasty had ruled India for three centuries prior to that point.²¹ Despite it taking time for Babur and his successors to firmly establish control over the country, the defeat of the Delhi Sultanate was a major step in the process of constructing the Mughal Empire, which would continue to rule India until it was defeated in turn by the British Raj in 1868.²² To achieve imperial status, the Mughal road was anything but smooth. Even in the case of Humayun, who lost the entire kingdom during his reign, he was able to reclaim a portion of his kingdom before his death. These generations added to the empire, giving it more legitimacy, with Babur's grandson, Akbar and several other callous rulers, including Aurangzeb and Shah Jahan, the creator of the Taj Mahal.²³

In fact, as R.B. Williams writes, ‘His work started by defeating Ibrahim's army. Babur was yet to fight with many Afghans and Rajput enemies. Still his victory of Panipat is important to some extent because this victory got him valid rights of India's sovereignty.’ With his victory in the Battle of Panipat, Babur gained control of the throne of Delhi, which had previously been a goal of several powerful Indian leaders. By using this, he dealt a crippling blow to the Afghanian's position of power. After he had overcome the forces of the Rajputs at the Battle of Khanwa and the Battle of Chanderi, he had crushed the army of the Rajputs.²⁴ He completely crushed the last Afghan military power when he won the battle of Ghagara. His reign was thus responsible for the foundation of the Mughal Empire in India, which had the longest period of relative political stability in India.²⁵ According to Rush Brooke Williams, ‘Babur is considered as the founder of Mughal’ empire not in the capacity of a ruler but rather that of a conqueror’. In 1530, Babur died and was initially buried in Agra, according to the sources.²⁶ He was still there in 1539,²⁷ but shortly thereafter his corpse was exhumed and transferred to Kabul, where it was buried in 1544.²⁸

¹⁵ Butalia, Romesh C. ‘The Evolution of the Artillery in India: From the Battle of Plassey to the Revolt of 1857’. Allied Publishing Limited. 1998.

¹⁶ Watts, Tim J. "Battles of Panipat". In Mikaberidze, Alexander (ed.). Conflict and Conquest in the Islamic World: A Historical Encyclopedia. ABC-CLIO. 2011.

¹⁷ Gulcharan Singh. ‘The Battles of Panipat’. Army Educational Stores, 1966.

¹⁸ Davis, Paul K. ‘100 Decisive Battles: From Ancient Times to the Present’. Oxford University Press. 1999.

¹⁹ Frederick Augustus, Count of Noer. ‘The Emperor Akbar, a contribution towards the history of India in the 16th century’. translated, and in part revised Annette S. Beveridge. Vol.I. Calcutta. Traker, Spinkr Co. London — Trubner Co. Ludgate Hill. 1890.

²⁰ Wheeler M. Thackston. ‘Babur, Emperor of Hindustan’ trans. ‘The Baburnama: Memoirs of Babur, Prince, and Emperor’. New York: Random House, 2002.

²¹ Srivastava, Ashirvadi Lal. ‘The Sultanate of Delhi 711-1526 A D’. Shiva Lal Agarwala & Company. 1929.

²² Davis, Paul K. ‘100 Decisive Battles: From Ancient Times to the Present’, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

²³ Roy, Kaushik. ‘India's Historic Battles: From Alexander the Great to Kargil’. Hyderabad: Orient Black Swan Publishing. 2004.

²⁴ Balabanlilar, Lisa. ‘Imperial Identity in the Mughal Empire: Memory and Dynastic Politics in Early Modern South and Central Asia’. London: I.B. Tauris. 2012.

²⁵ Hasan, Mohibbul. ‘Babur: Founder of the Mughal Empire in India’. New Delhi: Manohar Publications. 1985.

²⁶ Gulbadan Begum, ‘The History of Humayun’. Humayun Namah. trans. Annette Beveridge London, 1901.

A unique and enthralling biography written by his half-sister Gulbadan Begum, 'Humayunnama,' is a fascinating account of Humayun's life as the second Mughal Emperor. According to this tome, **Humayun** was Babur's eldest son. Kamran, Askari, and Hindal were his three younger brothers. He was chosen as Babur's successor following his death in 1530. At the age of 23, Humayun ascended the throne in Agra on December 30, 1530, four days after his father's death.²⁹

Humayun inherited an empire that clung to life by the skin of its teeth. It was devoid of a centralized civil administration. He immediately encountered a slew of difficulties. He encountered opposition from Afghan nobles, Rajputs, and, most importantly, his brothers, who were forbidding and disloyal to him.

'Humayun was not the man to put down such opposition with the strong hand; he yielded, as persons of his temperament often yield, to a careless and unreflecting pursuit of pleasure and also to the inordinate use of Opium. The consequences of a life which deadens the perceptions and destroys the intellect were not slow to follow'.³⁰

Humayun was defeated in the battle of Kanauj in 1540 due to his inability to judge Sher Shah's growing power. He became a wanted man and fled to Iran via Sindh.³¹ While in Sindh, he married Hamida Bano, a young Persian girl who accompanied him on his wanderings. Akbar, his first son, was born a year later in Umerkot, upper Sindh.³² The Mughal Empire was dormant for 15 years during which time Sher Shah established the Suri Dynasty. In 1555, Humayun returned and, through sheer perseverance, reclaimed his kingdom.

'Leaving his wives and Muhammad Hakim in discharge of Munim Khan and accompanied by Akbar, Humayun marched out of Kabul in the autumn of 1554..... His force was not large and as he drew near the river towards which Tatar Khan was advancing with a great army, more than one Mughal voice was raised in warning but he would not fail from his resolution Deadly carnage continued throughout the night but the dawn saw Tatar Khan's men hurrying away. Humayun's leaders disputed as to who had most contributed to the success of the day. The question was satisfactorily evaded by ascribing the principal service to prince Akbar who received a dress of honour, a jeweled crown, a considerable portion of the spoils and was, in addition, designated Humayun's successor'. Firishtah truly says, 'this victory decided the fate of the empire and the kingdom of Dihli fell forever from the hands of the Afghans'.³³

Although Humayun reclaimed his kingdom, he was not destined to rule it for an extended period of time. He died tragically in January 1556 after falling from the famous building known as Din Panah.³⁴ According to Jauhar and Firishtah:

'At the close of a day in January he had ascended the narrow outer stair which led to his library, to enjoy the fresh air upon the terrace. Just as he began to descend, the muezzin gave the summons to prayer. He seated himself on the second step from the top of the marble flight and repeated the creed. Then he tried to rise, his staff slipped along the smooth stone and he became somewhat stiff and heavy with years. He fell downwards from a height of some twenty feet. He lost consciousness but recovered it later. He had sustained internal injuries so severe to allow him to survive and he died within a few days'.³⁵

At the time of his father's death, Prince **Akbar**, a young child of about 13 years old, was on an expedition in the Panjab against Sikandar Khan Stir. The melancholy reached him at Kalamir and caused some consternation in his army, but the pressing task of establishing a new rule for Hindustan allowed little time for mourning. Humayun had named Akbar as his heir, so there could be no debate about the succession. The accession rituals were held on the 14th or 15th of February, 1556, following a few days dedicated to the rites of grief. In Delhi, Tardi Beg, who had distinguished himself during the re-conquest of India and had received Mewat in fief, had the Khutbah read in Akbar's name and had the royal insignia delivered to him by the hands of Mirza Abul Qasim, Prince Kamran's son.

Hemu, Adali Shah's all-powerful favourite and general, routed Tardi Beg, the governor of Delhi, controlled the ancient city, and entered it as king, under the whimsical title of Rajah Vikramzjit, not long after the accession. Akbar had sought to assist Tardi Beg upon hearing of Hemu's inroad, but Dihli was lost before he could reach there, so he marched to Panipat to counter Hemu.... In the battle field he mounted his horse and

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Jouhar. 'The Tezkereh al-Vakiat, or Private Memoirs of the Moghul Emperor Humayun'. trans. Charles Stewart. London. 1832.

²⁹ Begum, Gulbadan. 'The History of Humayun' (Humayun-Namah). (English translation and Persian text). Translated by Annette S. Beveridge. Royal Asiatic Society. 1902.

³⁰ Frederick Augustus, Count of Noer. 'The Emperor Akbar, a contribution towards the history of India in the 16th century'. translated, and in part revised Annette S. Beveridge. Vol.I. Calcutta. Traker, Spinkr Co. London — Trubner Co. Ludgate Hill. 1890.

³¹ Jawhar (fl. 1554) 'The Tezkereh Al Vakiat': Or, 'Private Memoirs of the Moghul Emperor Humayun'. Translated by Charles Stewart. Oriental Translation Fund. 1832.

³² R. Nath. 'Private Life of the Mughals of India'. Rupa. 2005.

³³ Frederick Augustus, Count of Noer. 'The Emperor Akbar, a contribution towards the history of India in the 16th century'. translated, and in part revised Annette S. Beveridge. Vol.I. Calcutta. Traker, Spinkr Co. London — Trubner Co. Ludgate Hill. 1890.

³⁴ John Reeve. 'The Lives of the Mughal Emperors'. The British Library Publishing Division. 2012.

³⁵ Mr. A. J. Rodgers, to the A. S. J. X L. Pa rt I, 133.

approached Hemu's van, which contained the latter's artillery, at Panipat.³⁶ On the 4th of November, 1556, he attacked this division, forcing it to retreat with heavy losses and capturing the majority of the ordnance—a success that contributed significantly to the Mughul victory on the day of the main fight.... Hemu was wounded in the eye by an arrow, receiving a horrifying gash through which the 'vapours of his hubris escaped,' according to Abul Fazl. He dropped motionless in his hauda, overcome by suffering, giving birth to the notion that he was dead.³⁷ Uncontrollable chaos engulfed his panicked troops, and each man sought refuge in flight. Hemu's mahout attempted to save his wounded master, but when he was confronted with a lance, he signaled his pursuers that he would surrender and pulled his elephant to a halt.³⁸ The enemy's general was lucky enough to be captured by Shah Quli Mahram. Hemu, badly wounded, was taken into the sight of Akbar, who had joined Bairam Khan after the battle, while the wild rout of fugitives and pursuers raged to a larger and greater distance. The latter requested that the Emperor cut off the prisoner's head so that he may gain the coveted title of Ghazi by killing an infidel, but the compassionate child could not bring himself to kill a fallen and captive opponent. Bairam himself shored off Hemu's head to terminate the delay and adapt his young ruler to the sight of blood. Akbar marched triumphantly into Dihli with 1500 prize elephants, and Agrah, along with the other towns and provinces that had paid him respect upon his accession, yielded to him without resistance once more.³⁹

'There could have been no question of the annihilation of Hindus by Muhammadans even in subject lands, for the conquerors were and remained in the minority. Moreover, Akbar's predecessor had seen the necessity of respecting the faith and the customs of the races they conquered. It is true that he himself stamped out resistance wherever it met him. Mirtha was stormed through streams of blood and even Banaras, the sacred city of Hinduism, felt his wrath because it had closed its gates against him during the rebellion of Jaunpur. Just as little however as he cherished wrath against the brave Rajputs when Mirtha had fallen, so little did he do against the refractory Banaras when it had been chastised; he made no delay in renewing intercourse with its brahmins and showed that though he could act as an autocrat, he could feel as a man.... In order to form a true judgment of Akbar, it is needful to possess the capability of losing oneself in that genius of the East which only the fewest are capable of rightly comprehending.'⁴⁰

Akbar had now governed for twelve years, the first half under Bairam Khan's tutelage and the second under female domination, amidst partisan feuds and open rebellions.⁴¹ These were the Emperor's apprenticeship years; the buffet that killed the bold Adham Khan made him a man, and now that the heads of 'Ali Quli and Bahadur lay at his feet, there was no doubt that he was Padshah of India, not just in name but in fact.⁴² He had demonstrated that he had grown into an absolute monarch, and that his will would be the rule of Hindustan from now on. To do this, two things were absolutely necessary: the assurance of peace and order within his recently pacified kingdom, as well as a border extension that would ensure its future.⁴³

The Rajputs had established as a dominant zamindar group by the middle of the sixteenth century. In Rajasthan, they had huge territory chiefdoms. One of the reasons Akbar focused on the Rajasthani Rajputs was because of this. Following his ascendancy to the Mughal Empire, Akbar launched a conquering campaign in Rajputana. Except for Mewar, several Rajputana kingdoms succumbed to Mughal rule through a combination of negotiation and force.⁴⁴ The Rana (King) of Mewar, considered one of the Rajput nations' strongest kings, fought a war with the Mughals that culminated in the Siege of Chittorgarh in 1568.⁴⁵ The Mughals took control of a large area of eastern Mewar towards the end of the siege. When Maharana Pratap took over the throne of Mewar from his father, Emperor Akbar dispatched numerous diplomatic missions to persuade Maharana Pratap to become a vassal of the Mughals. Maharana Pratap flatly refused, and an extra diplomatic mission led by Raja Todar Mal came up empty-handed. As a result of the failure of diplomacy, war was unavoidable.⁴⁶ The Battle of Haldighati took place on June 18, 1576, between the army of Maharana Pratap, the Rana of Mewar, and the forces of Mughal Emperor Akbar, led by Man Singh I of Amber. Despite the fact that the Mewar soldiers were defeated, Maharana Pratap was able to continue his brave opposition to the Mughal Empire.⁴⁷

When dealing with other Rajputs, Akbar preferred to be gentle. He chose the hard way if all else failed. Persuasion and conciliation were the soft methods, and the employment of armed troops was the harsh method.

³⁶ Chandra, Satish. *Medieval India: From Sultanate to The Mughals, Part II: Mughal Empire 1526–1748*. Third ed.. Har-Anand Publications. 2004.

³⁷ Amit Ahlawat. 'Second Battle of Panipat'. Asian History Books. 2019.

³⁸ Richards, John F. *The Mughal Empire* (The New Cambridge History of India). Cambridge University Press. 1995.

³⁹ Ram Prasad Tripathi. 'Rise and Fall of the Mughal Empire'. Central Book Depot, 1969.

⁴⁰ Frederick Augustus, Count of Noer. 'The Emperor Akbar, a contribution towards the history of India in the 16th century'. translated, and in part revised Annette S. Beveridge. Vol.I. Calcutta. Traker, Spinkr Co. London — Trubner Co. Ludgate Hill. 1890.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ali, M. Athar. 'Mughal India: Studies in Polity, Ideas, Society and Culture'. Oxford University Press. 2006.

⁴³ Beveridge, Henry. 'Akbarnama of Abu'l-Fazl ibn Mubarak' – Volume III. Asiatic Society. Calcutta. 1907.

⁴⁴ John Merci. Kim Smith; James Leuck. 'Muslim conquest and the Rajputs'. *The Medieval History of India*. 1922.

⁴⁵ Richards, John F. 'The Mughal empire. New Cambridge history of India'. Cambridge University Press. 1993.

⁴⁶ Sarkar, Jadunath. 'Military History of India'. Orient Longmans. 1960.

⁴⁷ Kesri Singh. 'Maharana Pratap - The Hero of Haldighati'. Books Treasure. 2002.

Asif Qandhari explains why Akbar chose a gentle approach. He claims there were two to three hundred rajas with formidable fortifications. It would have been impossible for any Emperor of Hindustan to conquer all of the rajas by force in his lifetime if each fort took one or half a year to conquer. As a result, Akbar believed that conciliation was the best option. The importance of Akbar-Rajput relations lay not only in the Mughal Empire's geographical and political expansion, but also in the long-term social and cultural interaction between the various social groupings of the various provinces.⁴⁸

A Mongol, a Mohammedan, a lineage of the monster Timur, the son of a weak incapable father, born in exile, appointed as a lad to the government of a disintegrated and nearly annihilated realm in sixteenth-century India, which means in an age of perfidy, treachery, avarice, and self-seeking, Akbar appears before us as a noble man, susceptible to all grand and beautiful impressions.⁴⁹ So diverse in race, customs, and religion, and who, when the limiting dogmas of their religion no longer satisfied them, acquired a purified faith in God, independent of all other religions. A closer examination, however, reveals that the contrast between what Akbar should have been as a result of the forces that shape man, and what he really became, is not as stark as we might think.

A man who has accomplished so much and aspires to do even more deserves better luck than Akbar had in his later years. He had given his sons the most meticulous education possible, giving them Christian and orthodox Mohammedan tutors at the same time in order to guide them to independent ideas through contrasts in their early years; but he was never to be pleased with his boys. He didn't appear to be as serious as he needed to be.⁵⁰ Even before their father, Murad and Danial, the Emperor's two youngest sons, died of delirium tremens. Selim, later Emperor Jehangir, was also an alcoholic, and only his wife's prudence and willpower spared him from the Timur dynasty's inherited vice. But he remained a violent, uncontrollable, violent guy (as unlike his father as possible, and ostensibly on purpose) who sided with the defeated Ulemas and proclaimed himself the restorer of Islam.⁵¹ In open rebellion against his forgiving father, he caused his father great grief, particularly by assassinating Abul Fazl, his father's trusted minister and friend, while on a journey. The death of Akbar's aged mother, to whom he had clung with a profound devotion his entire life and whom he had only outlived for a brief period, was also very near to him.⁵²

'Where now was the deity whose effluence Akbar dreamed himself to be? and whose presence was to rest, amongst all mankind, upon Akbar's children? Was it to men like Selim and Khusrau that all India and all her races—her races looking for redemption—were to be entrusted? And these were men of his own blood'.⁵³

Before succumbing to a very difficult stomach sickness, which eventually affected him mentally to a very tragic level, and carried him away on the night of the fifteenth of October, 1605, Akbar lost his greatest friends and most loyal servants. He was buried near Agra at Sikandra, in a magnificent tomb with massive proportions that he had commissioned and which still stands virtually undamaged today.⁵⁴

In case of **Jahangir** (Salim), not a dicky bird, could make up for the drawbacks of being born in the purple. Babur and Akbar's talent was forged in the crucible of actual experience and adversity. Salim was far into his thirties before he faced any troubles or calamities, even those of his own making. He discovered a path strewn with roses as the eldest son of the richest and most glorious king of the period, the general favourite in the magnificent palace-city of Fatehpur Sikri, the product of so many prayers, vows, and pilgrimages.⁵⁵ He was denied the glorious opportunities that create the silver lining of the dense clouds of want and struggle: the opportunity to gain insight into human nature; tact and resourcefulness; energy and audacity; in a word, the grit that defines character. He had a terrible proclivity to resign himself to the mercy of greater talent or craft throughout his life due to a lack of willpower and resolve. These flaws in character were exacerbated by a habit he picked up on the cusp of youth and which eventually led to his death.⁵⁶

Salim lived in close companionship with Akbar. Salim's brazen determination to seize supreme authority sparked his father's serious doubts as early as 1591. The prevailing mist of political intrigue and chicanery increasingly clouded their ties, separated their hearts, and eventually embroiled them in a terrible dispute. The Emperor had to be acutely aware of the dishonour that the prince was bringing upon himself and

⁴⁸ Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya. 'Origin of the Rajputs: The Political, Economic and Social Processes in Early Medieval Rajasthan.' The Making of Early Medieval India. Oxford University Press. 1994.

⁴⁹ Karine Schomer. 'Idea of Rajasthan: Constructions'. South Asia Publications. 1994.

⁵⁰ Smith, Vincent Arthur. Akbar the Great Mogul, 1542–1605. Oxford at The Clarendon Press. 1917.

⁵¹ Sangari, Kumkum 'Akbar: The Name of a Conjunction'. In Grewal, J.S. (ed.). The State and Society in Medieval India'. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. 2007.

⁵² Ali, M. Athar. Mughal India: Studies in Polity, Ideas, Society and Culture. Oxford University Press. 2006.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Garbe, Richard. 'Akbar, emperor of India, a picture of life and customs from the sixteenth century'. Chicago. The open court publishing company. 1909.

⁵⁵ Verma Som Prakash. 'The Lesser-known World of Mughal Emperor Jahangir'. Taylor & Francis Ltd. 2019.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

his family.⁵⁷ There is no question that Akbar was enraged and repulsed by the prince's incredible drunken antics. Abul Fazl, whose influence had sparked the prince's jealousy and animosity, skillfully fanned the emperor's resentment as a result of Salim's way of life.⁵⁸

Abul Fazal's clout was at an all-time high in the moment we're talking about. Salim felt he was being denied his rightful place in the hierarchy. Unable to overthrow his father's counsels, Abul Fazl developed a ferocious loathing for the minister. Abul Fazl replied by bringing the irregularities in Salim's life to the attention of his father and, likely, by otherwise harming his standing. Akbar's spirit was troubled by the intense feud. His son was chastised. He slandered Abul Fazl for a period. If he tried to make amends, he was condemned to be fired quickly. The fire in the prince's breast could only be put out with blood.⁵⁹

The dominant flaw of Jahangir's life and career was his proclivity to be influenced by those around him who loved him and won his affection. In the latter years of Akbar's reign, his cronies ruled over him and incited him to revolt. For ten years, he was dominated by the Nur Jahan junta. For the next five years, Nur Jahan was his only ruler.⁶⁰ They never strayed from his general ideals of domestic and foreign policy, but their aspirations torn the Empire apart. Although Jahangir cannot be blamed entirely, it is only fair to point out that the worst atrocities occurred only after his health began to fail. He may have exerted himself and avoided the double civil war if he had kept his vitality throughout his later years.⁶¹

On the whole, Jahangir's reign brought peace and prosperity to the Empire. Industry and trade advanced under its aegis, as did architecture. The end resulted in remarkable achievements; artwork reached new heights; and literature flourished like it had never done before. The Augustan age of mediaeval Indian literature was marked by a slew of notable Persian and vernacular poets from around the country. The political aspects of Jahangir's past are fascinating, but it is his cultural development that is his greatest asset.

Emperor Jahangir died at the age of fifty-eight years and one-month, solar reckoning, on the 28th Safar A.H. 1037, October 28th. Salef-ud-din Muhammad Shahryar, also known as Shahryar Mirza, was the fifth and youngest son of Mughal emperor Jahangir. Due to his lack of intelligence and capacity, he was given the nickname Nashudani, which meant "good for nothing," and he was known by that moniker. Shahryar attempted to become Emperor with the help of his powerful stepmother Nur Jahan, who also happened to be his mother-in-law.⁶² The succession was contested, and though Shahryar ruled from Lahore from 7 November 1627 to 19 January 1628, he was defeated and assassinated on the orders of his brother Khurram, who later became known as Shah Jahan. With the title of Abu- l Muzaffar Shahabuddin Muhammad Sahib Kiran- I sani, **Shah Jahan** ascended the throne at Agra on the 18th Jumada' s sani, 1037 A.H., i.e. 6th February.⁶³

Shah Jahan's status was safe and unchallenged when he ascended the throne in Agra. However, the empire's concerns required attention. The Afghan Pir Lodi, who had been administrator of the empire's southern territories under the title Khanjahan, was hostile. Despite Shah Jahan's order to remove him from the Deccan government, he allied with Murtaza Nizam Shah II, Sultan of Ahmed-Nagar, and plotted against him.⁶⁴ When the situation became critical, Shah Jahan travelled to the Deccan personally. Iradat Khan, the newly appointed governor of the Deccan, who was given the title Azam Khan, led the imperial army into Balaghat. After witnessing the imperial troops' damage, Murtaza changed his mind about Khanjahan. Khanjahan then fled to Malwa from Daulatabad, but was hunted and eventually killed.⁶⁵

After restoring peace in the Deccan, Shah Jahan withdrew after partitioning the region into four provinces: Ahmednagar with Daulatabad, Khandesh, Berar, and Telengana. Shah Jahan bestowed the viceroyalty of the four provinces on his son Aurangzeb, who was eighteen at the time. During Shah Jahan's reign, the Deccan was effectively brought under the Mughal empire's dominion.⁶⁶ Despite Malik Ambar's efforts, Ahmad Nagar, which gave resistance to the Mughals, was annexed. In 1636, Shah Jahan defeated the Nizam Shahi rulers of Ahmad Nagar with the help of Mahabat Khan. When the Shiite ruler of Golkonda, Qutub Shahi, imprisoned his own minister Mir Jumla, Aurangzeb used it as an excuse to invade Golkonda. The Qutub Shahi king became a vassal of the Mughal empire after signing a treaty.⁶⁷

He built the Taj Mahal, the Moti Masjid in Lahore, Pakistan, the Jama Masjid in Delhi, the Agra Fort Section, and the Wazir Khan Mosque, the Red Fort in Delhi. In order to achieve wins over the Deccan states,

⁵⁷ Andrea, Alfred J.; Overfield, James H. *The Human Record: Sources of Global History*. Vol. 2: Since 1500 (Fifth ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin. 2005.

⁵⁸ Beni Prasad. 'History of Jahangir'. Bharatiya Kala Prakashan. 2013.

⁵⁹ Balabanlilar, Lisa *The Emperor Jahangir: Power and Kingship in Mughal India*. London: I. B. Tauris. 2020.

⁶⁰ Ellison Banks Findly. 'Nur Jahan: Empress of Mughal India'. Oxford University Press. 1993.

⁶¹ Allan, J. (1958). 'Muslim India. The Cambridge Shorter History of India' (in German). S. Chand. Retrieved 3 September 2018. Accessed on 12th June 2021.

⁶² Faruqi, Munis D. 'Princes of the Mughal Empire, 1504–1719'. Cambridge University Press. 2012.

⁶³ Richards, John F. 'The Mughal Empire. The New Cambridge History of India'. Volume V. Cambridge University Press. 1993.

⁶⁴ Faruqi, Munis D. 'Princes of the Mughal Empire. 1504–1719'. Cambridge University Press. 2012.

⁶⁵ Nicoll, Fergus. 'Shah Jahan: The Rise and Fall of the Mughal Emperor'. London: Haus. 2009.

⁶⁶ Moosvi, Shireen. 'People, Taxation, and Trade in Mughal India'. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2008.

⁶⁷ Eraly, Abraham. 'Emperors of the Peacock Throne: The Saga of the Great Mughals'. Penguin Books India. 2000.

Shah Jahan's commands proved to be extraordinary.⁶⁸ By 1636, Ahmednagar, Golconda, and Bijapur had been added to the list of tributaries. In the northwest, Mughal power was also linked. Ali Mardan Khan, the Persian governor of Kandahar, surrendered to the Mughals in 1638.⁶⁹

Shah Jahn has been described by Indian writers as the quintessential Muslim ruler. But, while the Mughal court achieved its pinnacle under him, he also set in motion forces that eventually led to the empire's demise. His operations against Balkh and Badakhshn, as well as his attempts to reclaim Kandahar, nearly bankrupted the empire.⁷⁰ In terms of religion, Shah Jahn was a more orthodox Muslim than his grandfather, Akbar, or his father, Jahangir, but not as orthodox as Aurangzeb. In terms of his Hindu subjects, he was a relatively moderate ruler.⁷¹

When Shah Jahn fell ill in September 1657, his four sons, Dara Shikh, Murd Bakhsh, Shah Shuj, and Aurangzeb, fought for his succession. In 1658, the victor, Aurangzeb, proclaimed himself emperor and imprisoned Shah Jahan in the Agra Fort until his death.⁷²

Aurangzeb has already donned the regal emblem. In the latter days of July 1658, he was hastily declared Emperor in the garden of Shalimar outside Delhi, without demanding the prerogatives of sovereignty, currency, or public prayer for the king. However, he had legally ascended the throne on the 6th of May, 1659.⁷³ Aurangzeb, I accept as true, would have had a typical Islamic education in addition to Koranic teaching, as well as a comprehensive training in the mysterious schools of Arabic grammar and the various academic accomplishments that are part of the East's traditional body of knowledge.⁷⁴ He surely gained proficiency with the poetic form as a result of his habit of creating verses, and his Persian letters' prose style is widely acclaimed in India. Following that, he expressed his dissatisfaction with his tutor's limited and conventional education, drawing a picture of a prince's education. His decision to become a Muslim Puritan was both a mark of distinction and a source of devastation for him.⁷⁵

'For religion he persecuted the Hindus and destroyed their temples, while he damaged his exchequer by abolishing the time honoured tax on the religious festivals and fairs of the unbelievers. For religion's sake he waged his unending wars in the Deccan, not so much to stretch wider the boundaries of his great empire as to bring the lands of the heretical Shia within the dominion of orthodox Islam. To him the Deccan was Dar-al-Harb: he determined to make it Dar-al- Islam. Religion induced Aurangzeb to abjure the pleasures of the senses as completely as if he had indeed become the fakir he had once desired to be. No animal food passed his lips, and his drink was water; so that, as Tavernier says, he became thin and meagre, to which the great fasts which he keeps have contributed. During the whole of the duration of the comet [four weeks, in 1665], which appeared very large in India, where then was, Aurangzeb only drank a little water and ate a small quantity of millet bread; this so much affected his health that he nearly died, for besides this he slept on the ground, with only a tiger's skin over him; and since that time, he has never had perfect health'.⁷⁶

The rise of the Maratha nationality from the ashes of their short-lived monarch, as well as the introduction of the Sikh sect as warriors and armed opponents of the reigning power, are additional notable features of Aurangzeb's reign. Thus, Aurangzeb's rule and policies are responsible for the paramount forces in Indian politics in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁷⁷ After monarchs like as Adil Shah and Qutb Shah, Sambhaji and Rajah Ram bowed down in the face of the Mughal bombardment, the people of the Deccan asserted themselves and drove the spoiler from the north. The Marathas have the distinction of being the only Indian people to have successfully checked the Mughal march and saved their homeland from foreign infringement. The next age saw them evolve as conquerors and raiders.⁷⁸

The first glow of a new dawn was discernible in our political sky during the reign in which the Mughal crescent rounded to fulness and then began to decline clearly. Our country's future lords got a firm and secure foothold on its land.⁷⁹ The English East India Company established presidencies in Madras and Bombay in 1653 and 1687, respectively, and Calcutta in 1690. The Europeans were therefore provided with a dominion within a dominion that was built to withstand the worst muggings of the "state authorities."⁸⁰

During the last two decades of the seventeenth century, the Mughal Empire's foundations were exposed as corrupt. The huge structure that Akbar had built and later Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb had expanded was as

⁶⁸ Asher, Catherine Ella Blanshard. 'Architecture of Mughal India'. The New Cambridge History of India. 2003.

⁶⁹ Prasad, Beni. 'History of Jahangir (Second ed.)'. Allahabad: The Indian Press. 1930.

⁷⁰ Satish Chandra. 'History of Medieval India: 800-1700'. Orient Blackswan. 2007.

⁷¹ Sen, Sailendra. 'Textbook of Medieval Indian History'. Primus Books. 2013.

⁷² Nicoll, Fergus. 'Shah Jahan: The Rise and Fall of the Mughal Emperor'. London: Haus. 2009.

⁷³ Audrey Truschke. 'Aurangzeb: The Life and Legacy of India's Most Controversial King'. Stanford University Press. 2017.

⁷⁴ Richards, John F. 'The Mughal Empire. The New Cambridge History of India.' Cambridge University Press. 1996.

⁷⁵ Ian Copland; Ian Mabbett; Asim Roy; Kate Brittlebank; Adam Bowles. 'A History of State and Religion in India'. Routledge. 2013.

⁷⁶ Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste. 'Travels in India.' translated V. Ball. first ed'. Volume I. 1889.

⁷⁷ Bayly, C.A. 'Indian society and the making of the British Empire'. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press. 1990.

⁷⁸ Prasad, Ishwari. 'The Mughal Empire'. Allahabad: Chugh Publications. 1974.

⁷⁹ Metcalf, Barbara D.; Metcalf, Thomas R. 'A Concise History of Modern India'. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press. 2006.

⁸⁰ Bayly, C.A. 'Indian society and the making of the British Empire'. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press. 1990.

strong as ever, but it was as brittle as a house of cards, which collapsed the moment the foreign invaders struck it with their lances.⁸¹ The Treasury was devoid of money. The Imperial army knew it had been defeated, and so avoided any contact with the enemy. The empire was on the verge of collapse.⁸² Its weakness was far more profound than its material resources. The empire's moral authority had dissipated, with the loss of competence and integrity among its people. Ministers and princes alike had lost their skill in managing public affairs and skill in performing tasks.⁸³ As a military instrument, the army had broken down. Even in his letters Aurangzeb rages against the failings of his aides, berating them with his pen and expressing his despair. contemporaries like Bhimsen and Khafi Khan who lamented the downfall of the nobles and the general population alike, wonder why it happened so.⁸⁴

Even in his private life, he was unassuming and moderate, as if he were a hermit. He was as unflinching in the face of hardships such as marching all day, as a seasoned private. His heart was unmoved by fear or mercy, regardless of the circumstances. The ancient wisdom which can be found in ethical books was his specialty.⁸⁵ Besides, he had served in the military and worked on diplomatic missions during his father's lifetime. Even so, fifty years of sovereign rule brought about failure and chaos! This paradoxical state of affairs arises because of Aurangzeb's policies and actions. To the students of political philosophy, his reign is just as important as the history of India.⁸⁶ Even when dying and suffering from illness, Aurangzeb assured the population that he was still alive in order to keep a second civil war from happening. He passed away in Bhangar, a military encampment in Maharashtra, on March 3, 1707, at the age of 88.⁸⁷

Qutb-ud-Din Muhammad Azam was briefly an emperor of the Mughal Empire, commonly known as the **Azam Shah**, reigning between 14 March 1707 and 8 June 1707. He was the 6th Mughal Emperor's eldest son, Aurangzeb, and Dilras Banu Begum, his chief consort. On 12 August 1681, Azam was appointed to the position of heir-like to his father; it was retained until Aurangzeb died.⁸⁸ He has been Viceroy of Berar Subah, Malwa, Bengal, Gujarat and the Deccan during his long military career. After the death of his father on 14 March 1707, Azam ascended the Mughal throne in Ahmednagar. However, on 8 June 1707 Azam Shah's older brother, Prince **Bahadur Shah I**, defeated and killed him and his three sons, Sultan Bidar Bakhen, Shahzada Jawan Bakht Bahadur and Shahzada Sikandar Shan Bahadur, during the battle of Jajau.⁸⁹

Due to his appeasement parties by granting of title and honours, he was known as Shah Alam I and dubbed Shahi-i-Bekhabar by Khafi Khan. After slaying his two brothers and defeating Kam Baksh in the Battle of Jajau, he rose to the throne in 1707.⁹⁰ In real terms, he was the last Mughal who had absolute power. He attempted to forge a bond between Sikhs and Marathas. He gave the Marathas the authority to collect Sardesh Mukhi from the Deccan but not Chauth. Following Muazzam's death, a new succession conflict erupted amongst his sons Jahander Shah, Azim-us Shah, Rafi-us Shah, and Jahan Shah.⁹¹

After Bahadur Shah I died in 1712, his four sons fought over the throne. With the support of Zulfiqar Khan, Jahandar Shah was eventually victorious. On March 29, 1712, **Jahandar Shah** took the throne, with Zulfiqar Khan as his all-powerful minister.⁹² Jahandar Shah was a hedonist, a risk taker, and a pleasure seeker. He was devoted to Lal Kanwar, a musician's daughter from a musical household. After overcoming his siblings, Jahandar Shah succeeded to the throne and elevated Lal Kanwar to the title of queen. She was granted the title of Imtiyaz Mughal and was declared empress. The emperor, who was a big fan of luxury and pleasure, spent a lot of time with Lal Kanwar, who had a lot of power over him. She was even with him on the battlefield.⁹³ Her family was allocated jagirs and was nominated to mansabs. The entire administration came into the hands of Lal Kanwar's relatives, who looted and mismanaged the state as a result of Jahandar Shah's indifference. During Jahandar Shah's reign, the practise of royal favourites intervening in governmental issues became popular.⁹⁴

Muhammad **Farrukhsiyar**, Bahadur Shah's grandson and Azim-ush-second Shan's son, posed a threat to Jahandar Shah. Following his father's death, Farrukhsiyar declared himself Emperor. On January 6, 1713, he defeated Jahandar Shah with the support of the Saiyid brothers on the battlefield of Samugarh. Jahandar Shah

⁸¹ Chandra, Satish. 'Medieval India: From Sultanat to the Mughals'. Har-Anand Publications. 2005.

⁸² Hussein, S M. 'Structure of Politics Under Aurangzeb 1658-1707'. Kanishka Publishers Distributors. 2002.

⁸³ Truschke, Audrey. 'Aurangzeb: The Life and Legacy of India's Most Controversial King'. Stanford University Press. 2017.

⁸⁴ Ahmad, Fazl. 'Heroes of Islam'. Lahore. Sh. Muhammad Ashraff, 1993.

⁸⁵ Eraly, Abraham. 'The Mughal World: Life in India's Last Golden Age'. Penguin Books India. 2007.

⁸⁶ Schimmel, Annemarie. 'The empire of the great Mughals'. London: Reaktion Books. 2004.

⁸⁷ Pletcher, Kenneth. 'The History of India'. Britannica Educational Publishing. 2010.

⁸⁸ Sarkar, Sir Jadunath. 'History of Aurangzeb: First half of the reign, 1658-1681'. M.C. Sarkar & sons. 1916.

⁸⁹ Eraly, Abraham. 'Emperors of the peacock throne: the saga of the great Mughals'. New Delhi: Penguin books. 2000.

⁹⁰ Faruqui, Munis D. 'The Princes of the Mughal Empire. 1504-1719'. Cambridge University Press. 2012.

⁹¹ Irvine, William. 'The Later Mughals'. Low Price Publications. 1904.

⁹² Montgomery-Massingberd. Hugh Burke. 'Royal Families of the World, II'. Burke's Peerage. 1977.

⁹³ Misra, Rekha. 'Women in Mughal India'. New Delhi. Munshiram Manoharlal. 1967.

⁹⁴ Nigam, S. B. P. 'The Jahandarnamah of Nur- ud-rin. Journal of Indian History'. 61. Department of Modern Indian History. 1983. Accessed on 12th June 2021.

and Lal Kanwar managed to flee and returned to Delhi, where they sought the assistance of Zulfiqar Khan⁹⁵. In order to acquire the favour of the new emperor, Zulfiqar Khan imprisoned Jahandar Shah instead of assisting him. On February 11, 1713, Jahandar Shah was assassinated in prison and buried alongside other members of the dynasty in the vault of Humayun's tomb.⁹⁶

Between 1713 until 1719, Farrukhsiyar was the Mughal emperor. Farrukhsiyar was known as an unattractive but weak emperor who was easily swayed by his counsel. He lacked the skills and character to rule alone. Behind the façade of Mughal authority, the Syed Brothers rose to power and became the effective rulers of the kingdom during his reign.⁹⁷

The British East India Company obtained duty-free trading rights in all of Bengal for a modest three thousand rupees a year during Farrukhsiyar's reign, in 1717. The Company's surgeon, William Hamilton, is reported to have cured Farrukhsiyar of some ailment, prompting the emperor to award the Company commercial privileges.⁹⁸ Another narrative involves a bribe paid to a seraglio eunuch and a rumoured British naval raid on the Moghul navy at Surat. This order, dubbed the "golden firman" by the Company, was of limited utility. Even though the East India Company claimed duty exemptions based on this firman, the Mughal rulers of Bengal defied their suzerain's decree and continued to collect customs duty from the East India Company from Murshid Quli Khan onwards.⁹⁹

Farrukhsiyar, on the other hand, met a humiliating and bloody end in the short term, as his persistent planning eventually led the Syed Brothers to remove him as Emperor. Farrukhsiyar was imprisoned and starved before being blinded with needles on the orders of the Syed Brothers on February 28, 1719.¹⁰⁰ On the night of April 27/28, 1719, Farrukhsiyar was strangled to death. The Syed Brothers assassinated him and installed his first-cousin, Rafi Ul-Darjat, on the throne. Farrukhsiyar's father and Rafi-ud-father durjat's were brothers.¹⁰¹

Rafi-Ud-Darajat was Rafi-ush-Shan's son. He succeeded Farrukh Siyar as Mughal Emperor. On February 28, 1719, he ascended to the throne. At the time of his accession, he was only 20 years old. Rafi-Ud-Darajat was a brilliant man, but he was completely ruled by the Sayyid brothers, who ran the government in his name.¹⁰²

Rafi-ud-Darajat was a rather weak ruler. The Sayyid brothers, on the other hand, were extremely intelligent. During Rafi-ud-Darajat's reign, only a few revolts were effectively subdued by the Sayyid Brothers.¹⁰³ Nikusiyar, Akbar's son, staged a coup at the Agra Fort, proclaiming himself emperor and appointing Mitra Sen, a Nagar Brahman, as his wazir. Nakusiyar was overpowered because the Sayyid brothers backed Rafi-Ud-Darajat. Rafi-ud-Darajat passed away on June 13, 1719. He died from tuberculosis. Rafi-ud-brother, Darajat's Rafi-ud-daulah, succeeded him. Shah Jahan II is another name for Rafi-ud-daulah.¹⁰⁴ For a brief moment in 1719, **Shah Jahan II** was the twelfth Mughal emperor. He succeeded his short-lived brother Rafi-ud-Darajat in that year after being chosen by the Sayyid brothers. He died of tuberculosis, same like his brother, and was buried at Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki's dargah.¹⁰⁵

Nasir-ud-Din Muhammad Shah reigned from 1719 to 1748 as the thirteenth Mughal emperor. He was the fourth son of Bahadur Shah I's son, Khujista Akhtar. He ascended the throne at the tender age of 17 with the assistance of the Sayyid brothers. Muhammad Shah was nicknamed "Rangila," which translates as "the Colorful."¹⁰⁶ Muhammad Shah Rangeela's reign marked the beginning of the empire's degeneration in real terms. This era saw the rise of numerous independent and semi-independent states such as Bengal, Oudh, and South India, as well as the breakup of Kabul. Similarly, splinter groups benefited from the crumbling Mughal Empire's growing weakness.

Emperor Nader Shah, the founder of the Afsharid dynasty of Persia, invaded Northern India, eventually assaulting Delhi in March 1739. At the Battle of Karnal, his army handily destroyed the Mughals, and in the aftermath of the battle, he would conquer the Mughal capital.¹⁰⁷ Nadir Shah lived as Emperor in the Mughal capital for two months, with Muhammad Shah as his political prisoner. Nadir Shah depleted Delhi's financial reserves, crippling the Mughal economy.¹⁰⁸

⁹⁵ Irvine, William. 'The Later Mughals'. Low Price Publications. 1904.

⁹⁶ Faruqui, Munis D. 'The Princes of the Mughal Empire. 1504–1719'. Cambridge University Press. 2012.

⁹⁷ Fisher, Michael H. 'A Short History of the Mughal Empire'. I. B. Tauris. 2015.

⁹⁸ Sen, Sailendra. 'A Textbook of Medieval Indian History'. Primus Books. 2013.

⁹⁹ Sastri, Kallidaikurichi. 'A Comprehensive History of India: 1712–1772'. The University of Michigan. Orient Longmans. 1978.

¹⁰⁰ Irvine, William. 'The Later Mughals'. Low Price Publications. 1904.

¹⁰¹ Chandra, Satish. 'Medieval India: From Sultanat to the Mughal Empire', Har Anand Publications Pvt Ltd. 2007.

¹⁰² Schimmel, Annemarie. 'The empire of the great Mughals'. London: Reaktion Books. 2004.

¹⁰³ Irvine, William. 'The Later Mughals'. Low Price Publications. 1904.

¹⁰⁴ Schimmel, Annemarie. 'The empire of the great Mughals'. London: Reaktion Books. 2004.

¹⁰⁵ Mehta, Jaswant Lal. 'Advanced Study in the History of Modern India 1707–1813'. Sterling Publishers. 2005.

¹⁰⁶ Sen, Sailendra. 'A Textbook of Medieval Indian History'. Primus Books. 2013.

¹⁰⁷ Axworthy, Michael. 'Sword of Persia: Nader Shah, from Tribal Warrior to Conquering Tyrant'. I.B. Tauris. 2010.

¹⁰⁸ William Dalrymple, Anita Anand. 'Koh-i-Noor'. Bloomsbury Publishing. 2017.

The Marathas began a long war with the Mughals, popularly known the Maratha-Mughal War (1725-1763),¹⁰⁹ which proved to be their eventual downfall. Sikhs also carved out an independent territory in Punjab by allying with the Marathas. In 1738, the Marathas defeated the Mughals and even entered Delhi, which Bajji Rao agreed to leave only after Muhammad Shah agreed to advantageous terms.¹¹⁰ He left the Mughal Empire powerless and vulnerable to total disintegration. It was unable to reclaim its former glory and power.¹¹¹ According to some academics, many fell in battle with the victory of the Mughal Army during the Battle of Manupur (1748). This had been kept secret at first. When the news reached the Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah, however, he could not talk, he got sick and did not leave his room for three days suddenly. He fasted during this time. On 26 April 1748 he died because of grief; imams from Mecca attended his funeral.¹¹²

On April 29, 1748, after Muhammad Shah's death, his son **Ahmad Shah** ascended to the throne. He was 23 years old at the time of his nomination and had no prior administrative experience. The Mughal Empire was on the verge of collapse when Ahmed Shah came to power. The city of Delhi (the Mughal capital) had been looted and much of northern India had been ransacked by the invading army of Nadir Shah during his father's reign. Ahmed Shah inherited a severely weakened Mughal state.¹¹³ Despite becoming the hero of the battle of Sarhind, in which Ahmad Shah Abdali was defeated, Ahmad Shah lacked leadership characteristics and was unable to govern the state's affairs. As a result, his Wazir, Safdar Jang, took over the government. Safdar Jang, however, was unable to effectively govern the administration and spent the most of his time wallowing in internal warfare and self-aggrandizement. In 1750, Safdar Jang joined the Marhattas in their fight against Ahmad Shah.¹¹⁴

During Ahmad Shah's brief rule, there was a lot of upheaval. The Rohillas rose up in revolt, and for the second time, Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded Punjab and marched towards Delhi. Ahmad Shah made peace with Ahmad Shah Abdali by yielding Punjab and Multan in order to escape the destruction of Delhi.¹¹⁵ Because Ahmad Shah was deemed unable to lead, Imad-ul-Mulk Ghazi-ud-Din, Asaf Jah's grandson, was appointed Wazir. With the help of Marhattas, Ahmad Shah was caught, blinded, and imprisoned in 1754, and Aziz-ud-din Alamgir, Jahandar Shah's second son, was installed on the throne. On January 1, 1775, Ahmad Shah died in Delhi while imprisoned.¹¹⁶

When Aziz-ud-Din ascended to the throne, he chose the name Alamgir and strove to imitate Aurangzeb, who had also called himself **Alamgir II**. However, he was already 55 years old at the time of his accession to the throne and possessed few, if any, of Aurangzeb's talents.¹¹⁷ Alamgir II, on the other hand, had spent much of his life in prison and had little prior experience in administration or fighting. Alamgir remained a puppet of his own vizier, (Wazir) Ghazi-ud-Din Imad-ul-Mulk, who held power throughout his reign.¹¹⁸

Relationships between Alamgir and the Vizier, Ghazi-ud-Din, deteriorated beyond repair as Ahmad Shah Durrani planned to reclaim the Punjab from the Hindu Marathas, urged by Muslim leaders such as Shah Waliullah.¹¹⁹ Fearing that Alamgir might be kidnapped by the Afghan overlord and knowing that the imperial treasury could not afford a ransom, the vizier put an end to Alamgir's life the same way he had put an end to his predecessors—by killing him. The vizier then rushed off to Mecca for the hajj and was never prosecuted for either regicide act.¹²⁰

Shah Jahan III, also known as Muhi-ul-millat, was the Mughal Emperor for a short period of time. Muhi us-Sunnat, the eldest son of Muhammad Kam Bakhsh, Aurangzeb's youngest son, was his father. With the support of Imad-ul-Mulk, he was installed on the Mughal throne in December 1759 as a result of the complexities in Delhi. Maratha chiefs toppled him afterwards.¹²¹

Shah Alam II sometimes known as Ali Gohar or Ali Gauhar, was the seventeenth Mughal Emperor and the son of Alamgir II.¹²² Shah Alam II ascended to the throne of a shattered Mughal empire. During his reign,

¹⁰⁹ Tony Jaques. 'Dictionary of Battles and Sieges: A-E. Dictionary of Battles and Sieges: A Guide to 8,500 Battles from Antiquity Through the Twenty-first Century'. Greenwood Publishing Group. 2007.

¹¹⁰ Jaques, T. 'Dictionary of Battles and Sieges: A-E'. Greenwood Press. 2007.

¹¹¹ H. G. Keene. 'Moghul Empire'. Allen & Co Waterloo Place Pall Mall. 1866.

¹¹² Farooqi, N.R. 'Mughal-Ottoman relations: a study of political & diplomatic relations between Mughal India and the Ottoman Empire, 1556-1748'. Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli. 1989.

¹¹³ Sharma, S. R. 'Mughal Empire in India: A Systematic Study Including Source Material'. Atlantic Publishers & Dist. 1999.

¹¹⁴ Kaushik Roy. 'War, Culture and Society in Early Modern South Asia, 1740-1849'. Routledge. 2011.

¹¹⁵ Markovits, Claude. 'A History of Modern India, 1480-1950'. Anthem Press. 2004.

¹¹⁶ Jr, Everett Jenkins. 'The Muslim Diaspora (Volume 2, 1500-1799): A Comprehensive Chronology of the Spread of Islam in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas'. McFarland. 2015.

¹¹⁷ Eraly, Abraham. 'The Mughal throne: the saga of India's great emperors. London, UK: Phoenix. 2004.

¹¹⁸ Hansen, Waldemar. 'The Peacock Throne; the drama of Mogul India'. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. 1972.

¹¹⁹ Richards, John F. 'The Mughal Empire. The New Cambridge history of India'. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. 1993.

¹²⁰ Robinson, Francis. 'The Mughal emperors and the Islamic dynasties of India, Iran and Central Asia, 1206-1925'. New York, NY: Thames & Hudson. 2007.

¹²¹ Jaswant Lal Mehta. 'Advanced Study in the History of Modern India 1707-1813'. New Dawn Press. 2005.

¹²² Dalrymple, W. 'The Anarchy'. London: Bloomsbury. 2019.

his influence was so reduced that the Persian phrase Sultanat-e-Shah Alam, Az Dilli ta Palam ('The empire of Shah Alam is from Delhi to Palam') was coined. Palam is a Delhi suburb.¹²³

Shah Alam was subjected to frequent raids, the most notable of which was conducted by the Emir of Afghanistan, Ahmed Shah Abdali, and culminated in the Third Battle of Panipat, which pitted the Maratha Empire, which held suzerainty over Mughal affairs in Delhi, against the Afghans commanded by Abdali.¹²⁴ The Marathas, headed by Sadashivrao Bhau, drove the Abdali invading armies out in 1760, deposing Shah Jahan III, Feroze Jung III's puppet Mughal ruler, and installing Shah Alam II as the legitimate emperor under Maratha control.¹²⁵ The sole and genuine emperor, Shah Alam II, was unable to return to Delhi until 1772, when he was protected by the Maratha general Mahadaji Shinde. At the Battle of Buxar, he fought against the British East India Company.¹²⁶

Nawab Majad-ud-Daula was followed by Ghulam Qadir, the grandson of Najib Khan, who convinced Shah Alam II to appoint him as the Grand Vizier of the Mughal Empire with the help of his Sikh friends. Ghulam Qadir searched the palaces for the Mughal treasure, which was estimated to be worth Rs. Two hundred fifty million.¹²⁷ Ghulam Qadir, unable to find such a sum and enraged by the Mughal Emperor's attempts to kill him and his Sikh friends, blinded Shah Alam II with an Afghani knife on August 10, 1788.¹²⁸ Ghulam Qadir treated the emperor and his family with harshness. Three attendants and two water-carriers who attempted to assist the wounded emperor were beheaded, and Ghulam Qadir allegedly pulled the aged Mughal Emperor's beard.¹²⁹ After ten weeks, during which Ghulam Qadir stripped the royal family's princesses naked and forced them to dance naked in front of him (after which they jumped into the Yamuna river to drown), the royal family's honour and the Mughal Empire's prestige were at an all-time low, Mahadaji Shinde intervened and killed Ghulam Qadir, retaking Delhi on October 2, 1788. He functioned as Shah Alam II's defender and restored him to the throne.¹³⁰ Mahadaji Shinde dispatched Ghulam Qadir's ears and eyes to Shah Alam.¹³¹ Following the Second Anglo-Maratha War's Battle of Delhi British troops invaded Delhi on 14 September 1803 to end Maratha control over the Mughals, putting Shah Alam, then a blind elderly man sprawl under a ragged canopy, under British guard.¹³² The Mughal Emperor no longer had the military strength to impose his will, but he commanded reverence throughout the country as a dignified member of the House of Timur. On November 19, 1806, Shah Alam II died of natural causes.¹³³

Ghulam Qadir, a Rohilla chieftain, seized power in Delhi in 1788 and began abusing the reigning Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II verbally, physically, and mentally. To discover a legal method of carrying out such crimes, the emperor was ousted, and Prince Mahmud Shah was enthroned as **Nasir ud din Muhammad Jahan Shah** on July 31, 1788, thanks to the manipulations of the former Empress Badshah Begum.¹³⁴ His reign was merely ceremonial. Ghulam Qadir's troops ransacked the Red Fort Palace on the day of his ascension. Cruelties and torture were later committed on the entire Timurid family. Mahadaji Shinde's forces arrived, forcing Ghulam Qadir to flee with the monarch. After the invasion of Delhi by the Shinde on October 16, 1788, he was overthrown by the Shinde in favour of Shah Alam II.¹³⁵ Gulam Qadir led him to Mirat, where he threatened to execute the hapless prince and other Imperial family hostages he had taken with him, but was stopped by his own bodyguard, Manyar Singh. The Rohilla retreated, leaving the kidnapped princes behind. When Shinde's soldiers seized Mirat on the 18th of December, Mahmud Shah was once again imprisoned in the Salimgarh Fort. He died in 1790, purportedly on Shah Alam II's orders, for his role in the 1788 turbulences.¹³⁶

Akbar II was India's nineteenth Mughal emperor, also known as Akbar Shah II. From 1806 to 1837, he ruled. He was Shah Alam II's second son and the father of Bahadur Shah II. Because of the growing British influence in India through the East India Company, Akbar had little operative control.¹³⁷

The region under Mughal dominion had been considerably diminished by the time **Bahadur Shah Zafar** ascended the throne, as had the emperor's symbolic and other powers. In the end, he was solely known as the "King of Delhi." Despite this, the sepoys saw him as their sole commander against the British and sought his

¹²³ H. C. Fanshawe. 'Delhi, Past and Present'. Asian Educational Services. 1998.

¹²⁴ Jaswant Lal Mehta. 'Advanced Study in the History of Modern India 1707-1813'. New Dawn Press. 2005.

¹²⁵ S. M. Ikram. 'XIX. A Century of Political Decline: 1707-1803'. In Ainslie T. Embree (ed.). 'Muslim Civilization in India'. New York: Columbia University Press. 1964.

¹²⁶ Prof. M. Hasan. 'History of Islam' .2nd. Vol. Adam Publishers & Distributors. 2009.

¹²⁷ S.R. Sharma. 'Mughal empire in India: a systematic study including source material'. Atlantic Publishers & Dist. 1999.

¹²⁸ Misbah Islam. 'Decline of Muslim States and Societies'. Xlibris Corporation. 2008.

¹²⁹ G. Keene. 'The Fall of the Moghul Empire of Hindustan'. Echo Library, 2007.

¹³⁰ A. R. Kulkarni. 'Marathas and the Marathas Country: The Marathas'. Books & Books, 1996.

¹³¹ Dalrymple, William. 'The Anarchy'. United Kingdom. Bloomsbury publishing. 2019.

¹³² Misbah Islam. 'Decline of Muslim States and Societies'. Xlibris Corporation. 2008.

¹³³ H. C. Fanshawe. 'Delhi, Past and Present'. Asian Educational Services. 1998.

¹³⁴ Hasan, Iqtida. 'Later Moghuls and Urdu literature'. Ferozsons. 1995.

¹³⁵ Sarkar, Jadunath. 'Fall of The Mughal Empire Vol. 1'. Orient Longman. 1964.

¹³⁶ S.R. Sharma. 'Mughal empire in India: a systematic study including source material'. Atlantic Publishers & Dist. 1999.

¹³⁷ G. Keene. 'The Fall of the Moghul Empire of Hindustan'. Echo Library, 2007.

help in the revolt.¹³⁸ Zafar was also recognized as one of the most liberal and peace-loving kings, and his religious neutrality is supposed to be one of the reasons the sepoys chose him as their mascot.¹³⁹ It was an ignominious conclusion for a man whose Mughal forebears had governed a vast region that included modern-day India, Pakistan, significant parts of Afghanistan, and Bangladesh for three centuries.¹⁴⁰

Despite the fact that his rule could not equal to that of great forefathers such as Akbar or Aurangzeb, he became the rallying point for the 1857 "Indian rebellion," in which soldiers from undivided India rose against the British East India Company.¹⁴¹ Following their defeat, the emperor was prosecuted for treason, imprisoned, and banished to British-controlled territory in what is now Myanmar (Burma). On November 7th, he died in captivity at the age of 87, yet his poems lived on.¹⁴²

Conclusion of the discussion: The dissolution of the Mughal Empire created ripe ground for British colonization. Bahadur Shah II had a significant symbolic role in 1857, and his death in 1862 marked the end of the Mughal Empire. As a result, economic collapse and external intrusions served as termites in the Mughal empire's sturdy timber. As a result, Mughal emperors were merely symbolic rulers, with real power resting with the new kingdoms and their rulers. Finally, by the early eighteenth century, the Mughal Empire had entirely collapsed. This was beneficial to Europeans who were interested in India's wealth. Europeans would have an easier time fighting the newly constituted minor states than the Mughal Empire itself.

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