

MUGHAL DYNASTY: FROM BABUR TO AURANGZEB

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Abstract:

The Mughal kingdom has an everlasting impact on the whole concept of the country. The advent of the sixteenth century marks the beginning of the three new forces in the country which changed the course of her future history. Although Akbar, very eagerly in his reign, was able to remove some of his principal adversaries, he cannot be said to have obtained any real hold over the country and the enemies of his house were neither weak nor few in number. Shah Jahan, however, saw the sequence differently, whether correctly or incorrectly. The town of Hugli, situated on the bank of the river had of late risen to importance owing to the Portuguese settlers, besides their usual vocation of commerce, also indulged in the slave trade and very frequently used to seize the orphan children of Hindus and Muhammadans and forcibly convert them to Christianity.

Keywords: advent, reign, sequence, indulged, seize, adversaries.

Historical works will describe and examine the lives of many brave heroes and the many hardships they faced, which we learned through hearing stories and reading them in books. In the historical stories, we know many strongest heroes than women as our historians, leaders, and the ones who were ready to drop their blood for the country. When history came into the literature, it is a thing that was beyond the imagination. Because history is a true event that was placed before many centuries that informs future generations about the past, literature is an imagination. Over the past few years, the relationship between history and literature has become intertwined, a tumultuous relationship that understands by novelists, and historiographers. The Mughal kingdom has an everlasting impact on the whole concept of the country. The advent of the sixteenth century marks the beginning of the three new forces in the country which changed the course of her future history. These pressures also substantially impacted how the country's citizens lived their national lives. In fact, they laid the foundations of modern India. The Mughal rule in Delhi began with Babur's victory over Ibrahim Lodhi in 1526.

The Mughal empire was started by Babur and later expanded and cemented by his grandson Akbar. Along with expanding his empire's borders, Akbar also developed an organisational structure and financial framework that gave the Mughal government a distinct identity and sense of coherence. The empire after his death maintained its full glory for about a century after which it began to show some signs of decline. When Babur was busy scoring victories over the emperor of Delhi and was occupied with suppressing the troublesome nobility of the late ruler of India. The movements gradually gained strength over the course of two centuries and as a result of changed political circumstances, they also transformed. About the middle of the seventeenth century, these religio-political forces made themselves felt both in Punjab and Maharashtra, though not so keenly or acutely in the former province.

The history of Akbar (1556-1605) is practically the history of the whole of Northern India during the second half of the sixteenth century and the Emperor himself is the outstanding figure upon which the eye of the historian is constantly riveted throughout the period. Although Akbar was only a boy of fourteen when he ascended the throne yet he lived to be the greatest Muslim Emperor that ever-ruled India, he has become one of the chief heroes of our history wherein he is immortalized as a great king whose memory is vividly maintained in the hearts of the people of the country, even the lapse of more than three hundred years. 'He possessed,' remarks a historian, His 'broad-minded sympathy, that capacity to trust and to generate confidence, that generous faith in a loyal people' allowed him to piece together a huge and durable empire from the few military conquests that his father had given him.

As a result, beginning in 1560, Akbar, who was 20 at the time, removed the Protector from his position and declared his desire to take control of the government himself. The Khan, who resented the insolence of Akbar's envoy, rebelled. He was defeated in Punjab and taken prisoner, graciously pardoned by his sovereign, and allowed to proceed to Mecca, on a pilgrimage. But he was not destined to reach his goal and on his way to the coast near Patan was waylaid and killed by a private enemy in January 1561. His little son Abdur Rahim was saved and lived to rise to the highest rank in Akbar's service and married the daughter of Prince Daniyal. Although Akbar, very eagerly in his reign, was able to remove some of his principal adversaries, he cannot be said to have obtained any real hold over the country and the enemies of his house were neither weak nor few in number. His own armies were less powerful than those of his adversaries; his chances of obtaining aid from Kabul were fewer, while the Indian soldiery was yet untried, and from their attachment to former dynasties, as yet impossible to be trusted.

Akbar was partially reconciled to Prince Salim on his deathbed. Accordingly, after his father Salim had been crowned emperor, Prince Khusro either owing to fear of ill-treatment from his father or actuated by ambition or by both, quietly left Agra and advanced on Lahore with whatever troops he could collect on the way. Jahangir immediately followed him. The rebellion was suppressed in less than three weeks and Jahangir was now determined to teach a thorough lesson to the Prince and his followers. Later, in 1620, the unfortunate prisoner was passed on to the custody of his brother, Prince Khurram who, as the emperor knew, was not well-disposed towards his brother. It was suspected that he was strangled by the order of his brother Khurram. Given the lack of affection between the father and son, Jahangir "reports his son's death without remark or expression of remorse" in his memoirs.

Jahangir was naturally delighted by this success over the Rana of Mewar. Another notable victory that attended Jahangir's arms in a direction in which his father had failed, was the reduction of the strongest fortress of Kangra (1620) which had held out successfully at an earlier date against the armies of Akbar. Nanak was born in Talwandi, from his childhood he was of a contemplative turn of mind as he grew in years his love for spiritual inquiry increased and he eventually left his home and started itinerant preaching. He made the vehement claim that Brahmans and Mullahs who practiced religion as a career were not the real teachers of truth; rather, they were like blind men guiding the blind, and the only way to find redemption was to dedicate oneself to serving God. However, the Guru refused to take the position for whatever reason, which turned the minister Chandu Shah against him and led to his death when the Guru was tried for treason and punished by Jahangir.

Jahangir's *Memoirs* that the bubonic plague broke out in Punjab in the tenth year of his

accession (1616). The disease attacked first the rats and mice as it does even today and then the infection spread rapidly among the people of the province. Jahangir ordered his son Prince Shah Jahan to take command of the expeditionary force that was to be sent for the recovery of the town. Shah Jahan, however, saw the sequence differently, whether correctly or incorrectly. He believed that his participation in the border offensive was only a cover for getting him out of India, so he denied the nomination made in his place. However, before the exceptional army left the city, the emperor learned of Shah Jahan's uprising, and the projected campaign was abandoned.

Due to ill health, Jahangir could not punish the insolence of the turbulent Mahabat Khan. From Kabul, he proceeded to Kashmir, but as he found the climate of the valley too severe, he returned to Lahore and died on the way near Bhimbar on October 28, 1627. The emperor's body was carried to Lahore where it was buried in the tomb, he had built for himself outside of the city. The information regarding the period of Jahangir's rule is many and valuable. The emperor's own memoirs cover a period of 19 years of his supremacy and present a true representation of himself. Besides that, we possess the accounts of several Englishmen who visited the Court of the emperor and enjoyed many opportunities of observing closely the state of affairs at the Court.

The rebellious Bundela Rajputs revolted during the first year of Shah Jahan's rule, using their nation's Bundelkhand's difficulty as an excuse. Raja Jhujhar Singh, one of the brave Rajput lords, led the uprising. The rebellion was soon suppressed but the Raja eluded the grasp of the imperial forces and continued to give them trouble from his mountainous retreat till he was killed in a charge skirmish with the Gonds who occupied these wild regions. The town of Hugli, situated on the bank of the river had of late risen to importance owing to the Portuguese settlers, besides their usual vocation of commerce, also indulged in the slave trade and very frequently used to seize the orphan children of Hindus and Muhammadans and forcibly convert them to Christianity. By such proceedings, they gave offense to the local authorities and early in the year 1632 some of their men incurred the displeasure of the empress by seizing two slave girls who were claimed by Mumtaz Mahal. The emperor issued an order for the wholesale destruction of their settlements in Bengal and the governor Kasim Khan accordingly captured the town and razed the Portuguese fort and factories to the ground. However, it should be noted that a small number of the Portuguese soldiers in the town put up such a valiant fight against Kasim Khan's massive army, which is thought to have numbered around 15,000 men, that it required him a full three months to destroy this little stronghold at Hugli.

Akbar, however, again recovered it in 1594 when after thirty years of possession it was again lost to the emperor of Delhi in 1623 during the reign of Jahangir. No serious effort was made between the years 1623 and 1638 for the recovery of Kandahar but the transactions in the Deccan were concluded Shah Jahan turned his attention to this important frontier post. The Persian governor of the town, Ali Mardan Khan, was not gratified with the action of his sovereign and with a little pressure combined with the enticement of gold from Shah Jahan, he betrayed the citadel into the hands of the Mughal officers and himself took refuge at Delhi. He was received, as may well be supposed, with great honour at the Mughal Court and was afterward at different times made governor of Kashmir and Kabul and employed on various military and other duties. The fame of this engineer-general has been perpetuated in India by the great public works which were executed under his guidance such as the great canal near Delhi and the Shalimar gardens at Lahore.

When Aurangzeb himself was busy crushing the opposition of Shujah in the Eastern

provinces his men were hunting the unfortunate Dara from place to place. On June 9, 1659, this deceitful host turned him into his assailant. The unfortunate Dara was now brought to Delhi and paraded through the streets of the city, clad in rags and seated upon a mean and filthy elephant. This spectacle in which the traitor Jiwan Khan appeared riding on a horse alongside Dara, excited popular resentment which after a few days broke out into a riot directed against Jiwan Khan. Having already considered ending his brother's life, Aurangzeb now gave the go-ahead for his death.

During the summer of 1664, Aurangzeb had a serious attack of illness and was confined to his bed for more than a month. The emperor, on the recommendation of his doctors, travelled to Kashmir to recover his health and spent some of the cold seasons in the valley after he had recovered at the beginning of July and had gathered enough strength to embark on a lengthy voyage. Doctor Bernier, a French physician, travelled with the emperor on the march and provides a fascinating description of the voyage in a string of letters to M. de Merveilles. Aurangzeb needed to divert his attention southward since a significant power had emerged there and his Deccan rulers and generals were not enjoying a peaceful time. This power was the Maratha power and Shivaji, the implacable leader of the Marathas, had gradually built up his strength and had become a very important factor in the politics of the south. However, first, go back some years and give some account of the Maratha people before can take up the story of the rise of Shivaji.

Aurangzeb is said to have left written instructions just before his death for a peaceful partition of the empire among his three sons. The three brothers accordingly went to war, each asserting his claim to the undisputed sovereignty of all India. Although Hargobind had ascended the *gaddi* as a sworn enemy of the Muslim government, the persecutors of his father, sometimes he was not only unmolested but was a favourite friend and follower of Jahangir. Hargobind fell into disfavour with the emperor and was shut up for about twelve years with other political prisoners in the fort of Gwalior. He was eventually released by Jahangir and, was engaged in the war against the officers of Shah Jahan. Perhaps the empire had never established itself firmly in Indian soil.

The powerful and tenacious monarchs Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan, and Aurangzeb all were men of remarkable talent. This system that Akbar had built up during his reign was therefore maintained in more or less working order throughout a period of over one hundred years. But Aurangzeb, the last Great Mughals, ruled for an unusually long period of fifty years. The Mughal military machine had also begun to show signs of decay even early as the reign of Shah Jahan. He was more interested in his gaudy jewel, the Peacock Throne, than in his cavalry or ordnance factories. The powerful moral and military support of the Hindus so cleverly secured for his throne by Akbar, was lost by the erroneous policy of his successors.

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