



## Mughal Administration: It's Culture in India

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The central fundamental changes were brought about by the Mughal emperors in the administrative set up of India. As the Mughal emperors did not accept the Khalifa as their nominal head, so they were free from the nominal authority of any foreign power.

The Mughal rule was not theoretic. The king was accepted as the arbiter in case of difference of opinion regarding Islamic laws.

Furthermore, the Mughal rulers also adopted the policy of religious toleration to consolidate the Mughal rule in India. Only Aurangzeb reversed the policy. Akbar had introduced an excellent system of administration to strengthen the nascent Mughal empire for which he has rightly been called as the true founder of Mughal rule in India.

### The King

The King or the emperor was the head of the state. He was the chief executive, law-maker, the commander-in-chief and the final dispenser of justice. During the time of Akbar, the emperor was accepted as the final arbiter in case of difference of opinion regarding Islamic laws. The emperor became the highest authority in the state. The Hindu tradition of Divine Right was not forgotten and Akbar himself claimed to be "the shadow of God" or the "God's representative on Earth".

Hence Akbar started the practice of "Jharokha Darshan" and "Tula-dan". The Mughal emperors wielded unlimited powers but they were not cruel or selfish. They believed that the prime duty of a king was to look after the welfare of his subjects. Akbar always used to listen personally to the complaints of the people. In the matter of administration, the king was assisted by several ministers. The ministers advised the Emperor collectively as well as individually

### 1. Vazir or Diwan (The Prime Minister):

Prime Minister was next to the Emperor in the work of administration. Originally, the Prime Minister was given the work of Diwan but later

on, the Diwan was titled as Vazir or Prime Minister. He was the head of the revenue department. He looked after the income and expenditure of the state. He also looked after the administration in the absence of Emperor. He was like other officials a mansab, sometimes commanded the army. He was assisted by several officers and subordinates.

### 2. The Mir Bakhsi (The Paymaster):

He exercised a general control over the army. He looked after the recruitment of the soldiers, branding of the horses and the elephants and also looked after all sorts of supplies to the army and training of the soldiers.

### 3. Sadr-i-Sudur:

He advised the Emperor in all religious matters. He looked after religious education, charity, recommended stipends and jagirs to scholar, ulemas, Qazis. He advised the king for the appointment of sadrs in provinces and supervised their working.

### 4. The Khan-i-Saman (Lord of High Steward):

He was in charge of emperor's household establishment. He looked after the personal necessities of the Emperor and his family. His important duty was to manage the Karkhanas of the Emperor.

### 5. Qazi-ul-Quzat:

He was the highest judicial officer of the state. He also appointed the Qazis in the provinces and districts.

### 6. The Muhtasib (Censorship of Public Morals):

He looked after the moral development of the subjects. He also checked drinking of liquor, gambling and illicit relations between men and women.

### 7. Mir-i-atish (Artillery):

He was in charge of artillery.

### 8. Daroga-i-dak-chauki (Intelligence and Post):

He was in charge of intelligence department of the state. He collected news from the Waqia-Navises or the news recorder who



were appointed by him in the provinces. It was his duty to inform the Emperor about every important affair within the empire. Thus the Mughal Emperors had a well organized system of administration at the Centre.

#### **Provincial Administration:**

For the convenience of administration the Mughal Empire was divided into a number of provinces. These provinces were Allahabad, Agra, Awadh, Ajmer, Bihar, Bengal, Ahmedabad, Delhi, Kabul, Lahore, Multan, Malwa, Berar, Khandesh and Ahmednagar. Every prince had its provincial capital. The provinces were known as Suba.

The provincial governor of a Suba was designated as Subedar or Sipah Salar. He was the emperor's representative in the Suba. He was the highest military officer in the province and commanded the provincial forces. He was the head of the judicial department. He helped the Diwan in the collection of revenue and also adopted measures for public welfare. The other important officers of the province were the Diwan, the Sadr the Amil or revenue collector, the Bitikchi, the Faujdar, the Kotwal and the Waqia Navis. The Provincial administration was an exact replica of Central administration.

For the convenience of administration each province was divided into a number of administrative units called Sarkars. The Faujdar was the chief executive and military officer of the Sarkar. His chief duty was to maintain peace and enforce laws and regulations passed by the Emperor in the district. The next important officer was the Amal Guzar or the revenue collector. His duty was to survey the land and to collect the revenue and other taxes. The Bitikchi maintained all necessary records regarding different categories of land with the help of the Quanugo. Khazanadar was the treasurer of the district.

Each Sarkar or district was divided into several Parganas. The Pargana was the lowest unit of fiscal and civil administration. The Shiqdar was the military officer and chief executive of Pargana. The Amil was the finance officer of the pargana. His duty was to collect revenue from the cultivators. Fotedar was the treasurer of the pargana.

The other important officer of the pargana was Quanugo. His duty was to prepare the papers regarding agriculture and collection of revenue. The Ain-i-Akbari refers to village administration during the reign of Akbar. The

village administration was in charge of Village Council or Panchayat. The Panchayats looked after the sanitation, irrigation, education and public works. It also dispensed justice. Muqaddam was the headman of the village. His duty was to keep order in the village and the Patwari kept records of revenue.

#### **Administration of Revenue:**

Sher Shah was the first Muslim ruler who laid down the principles for the administration of revenue. The state demand was fixed at the one-third of the produce and regulations were adopted for the collection of revenue. But the untimely death of Sher Shah his excellent land revenue system failed.

The system of collection of revenue was highly unsatisfactory during the reign of Babur and Humayun. Akbar was the first Mughal emperor who established a sound revenue system. He made various experiments during the early part of his rule in the field of revenue administration, but he did not achieve much success. But the revenue system was reorganised with the help of Raja Todar Mai.

Raja Todar Mai was appointed as Diwan-i-Ashraf in 1582 A.D. The revenue system introduced by Todar Mai was known as Ain-i-Dahshala and Zabti system. This Dahshala system was based on the classification, survey and measurement of lands and fixation of rates. Akbar proposed to assess land revenue by measurement.

Accordingly the cultivable land of the empire was surveyed and measured with the help of a jarib made of bamboo pieces secured with iron rings. The jarib based on the Gaz was equal to thirty three inches in length. The unit of area for fields was the bigha equal to 3600 square yards. The land was divided into four classes on the basis of the continuity of cultivation and fixed rent in proportion to it.

Polaj was the first category of land which was cultivated annually for each crop in succession. It yielded revenue from year to year. Parauti was the second category of land. It was occasionally left fallow in order to recover its fertility. Tax was realized at the rate of Polaj from this land when it was cultivated. Chachar was the third category of land and it had been lying fallow for three or four years.

Banjar was the fourth category of land and it had not been cultivated for five years or more. The first two categories of land, namely the Polaj and Parauti were divided into three



grades good, middle and bad according to their yield. The other two classes of land, namely Chachar and Banjar were dealt with differently. As they were not as fertile as the first two categories, their revenue was to be increased by progressive stages.

The average produce of the three categories of land was calculated for assessment of land revenue. The share of the state was fixed at one third of the average produce of all categories of land. The average produce per bigha of land was fixed on the basis of past year's production. The farmers were asked to pay revenue in cash. For this reason Akbar had divided his empire into Dastars. The price of every cereal was fixed in different dastars on the basis of local prices. Each cultivator was given Patta and Quabuliaat mentioning the area of their land and stating the amount of revenue to be paid by them to the state.

This Dahsula system was introduced in Lahore, Multan, Agra, Allahabad, Awadh, Bihar and part of Ajmer. In some parts of the empire like Thatta, Kabul and in Kashmir the system of crop division was prevalent and it was known as Ghalia Baksha. According to this system the government collected 1/3rd of total crops after harvest.

#### **Revenue Officers:**

The government dealt directly with the farmers. The Amal Guzar or the revenue collector of the district was assisted by subordinate officers like the Bitikchi, the Potdar, the Qanungo, the Patwari and the Muqaddams. The collector was given instruction to collect revenue in an amicable manner and "not to extend the head of demand out of season". In times of natural calamities advances were made to the peasants and public works were constructed to provide relief to the poor.

#### **Mughal Architecture:**

The Mughal emperors were interested in fine arts and they were great builders. Architecture made tremendous progress under the patronage of the Mughal emperors. According to Fergusson, the Mughal style of architecture was foreign in origin. But this view has been criticised by Havell. Sir John Marshall has opined that India is a vast country with manifold diversities so it cannot be said that architecture ever conformed to a single universal type. It was defended upon the personal tastes of

the emperor. The Mughal architecture is a mixture of Persian and Hindu architecture.

Persian influence on Indian art increased after Babar, and continued till the end of the reign of Akbar. But during the reign of the successors of Akbar Indian architecture and painting became essentially Indian. Babur was not impressed with the buildings which he found at Delhi and Agra. As he had poor opinion of Indian art so he sought to improve the art of building by introducing required improvements. He invited the pupils of Sivan the famous architect from Constantinople to construct the mosques and other monuments in India.

In his memoirs he writes, "In Agra alone and of the stone-cutters belonging to that place only, I every day employed on my palaces 680 persons and in Agra, Sikri Biyana, Dholpur, Gwalior and Koil there were everyday, employed on my works 1,491 stone-cutters". Most of the buildings of Babur have been destroyed, but two have survived to this day. One is a large mosque in the Kabul Bagh at Panipat and the other is the Jam-i-Masjid at Sambhal. No special progress have been made under Humayun in the realm of architecture.

Akbar took great interest in the construction of buildings. According to Abul Fazl, Akbar kept control over the price of building materials and fixed the wages of the crafts men. The first building during Akbar's reign is the Tomb of Humayun at Delhi and it was constructed by Humayun's widow, Haji Begum. It clearly exhibits the influence of Persian style. Akbar's tomb at Sikandara is another building of the same class. Its style resembles a Hindu temple or Buddhist Vihara. Akbar had constructed excellent forts at Agra, Allahabad, Ajmer and Lahore.

The Agra Fort is a massive structure of red sandstones. But the most remarkable buildings of Akbar's reign are located at Fatehpur Sikri. In 1569 he laid the foundation of this new city on the summit of a hill near Sikri in honour of Shaikh Salim Chisti. The most remarkable buildings at Fateh Pur Sikri are Jodhbai's palace, Birbal's palace, the Golden palace of Maryam-Uz-Zamani, Panch Mahal, Diwan-i-Am, Diwan-i-Khas, Buland Darwaza, Jami Masjid and the Mausoleum of Salim Chisti. Red stone was used for the construction of these buildings and Hindu and Islamic architecture have been applied in their construction.

The height of Buland Darwaza is 176 feet and it is still the highest gateway in India. It



was constructed in 1576-79 to commemorate the conquest of Gujarat. The Jama Masjid has rightly been described as “glory of Fatehpur”. Two other magnificent buildings of this period are the Palace of Forty Pillars at Allahabad and the tomb of Akbar at Sikandara near Agra. The design of this massive tomb was inspired by the Buddhist Viharas of India.

Jahangir was more interested in painting so that architecture did not make much progress during his reign. Among the notable buildings of his reign the more remarkable are the Tomb of Etmad-ud-daula at Agra and the Khuram Bagh at Allahabad. Etmad-ud-daula was built by empress Nurjahan in the memory of his father. It is wholly built of white marble. It is a double storey building and has extensive garden around it.

The Begum died in 1630 and the following year the construction work was started. The master-architect under whose supervision the work was done was Ustad Isha. The main building has been constructed in white marble. E.B. Havell writes, “It is a great ideal conception which belongs more to sculpture than to architecture. It was completed in 22 years.”

Red Fort at Delhi, Jama-Masjid at Delhi is the contributions of Sahajahan. The notable work of Shahjahan was the peacock throne. It was in the form of a cot bedstead on golden legs. It was 7 yards in length, 4 yards in width and 5 yards in height and jewels worth 86 lakhs of rupees and one lakh tolas of gold valued at 14 lakhs of rupees were used in the making of this throne. In 1739 Nadir Shah of Persia carried away this throne during his invasion of India.

After Shahjahan's death Mughal architecture declined because his successor Aurangzeb was hostile to all arts. The only notable buildings built by him are the little marble mosque in the fort of Delhi, the mosque at Varanasi built on the ruins of the Vishwanatha temple, and the Badshahi mosque in Lahore. These buildings are regarded as the latest specimen of the Mughal style of architecture.

### Painting:

Prior to the advent of Turks, painting had made remarkable progress in India. But during the pre Mughal period, the Turk and Afghan rulers discouraged it. Again the Mughals revived the art of painting and under their patronage it reached the stage of perfection. The Mughal painting represents a happy blending of Persian and Indian elements.

Babur in his memoirs pays high tribute to Bihzad, the Raphael of the east. Babur was a great lover of beauty and art and he was gifted with the talent of a painter. But he did not have adequate time to develop his potentialities in this regard. Humayan developed a taste for painting while he was in exile in Persia and came in contact with painters like Min Saggid Ali and Khwaja Abdus Sanad.

He persuaded them to join his service when better times returned. He was still at Kabul when they joined him. Humayun and his little son Akbar took lesson from them in the art of painting. These two painters also came to India with Humayun. Humayun engaged them in the task of preparing a fully illustrated copy of the Dastan-l-Amir Hamzah.

Akbar had a great liking for painting. He set up a separate department of painting and the head of the department was Khwaja Abdus Samed. The emperor extended his patronage to Hindu and Muslim painters, personally examined their work every week and gave them rewards according to their progress. According to Abul Fazl there were 100 good painters at the court of Akbar.

The eminent Muslim painters were Min Sayyad Ali, Abdus Samed and Farrukh Beg. The eminent Hindu painters were Daswant, Basawan, Sanwal Das, Taraihand, Keshva and Jagannath. In the reign of Akbar some mural painting was executed but it was miniature painting and portraiture that had received the attention.

Most of the paintings were intended to illustrate the books in the imperial library like Chingiznamah, the Zafarnamah, Razomnamah, Ramayan, Kaliyadaman, Naldaman, and Ayardanish. The Mughal painting reached the rise during the reign of Jahangir. He was a great lover of nature and beauty. During his period the painters produced much better work than the painters of the previous reign. Jahangir was a connoisseur and also collected many historical paintings. The most distinguished painters of his time were Abul Hassa, Aqa Riza, Mansur, Muhammad Nadir, Bishandas, Manohar and Govardhan.

Jahangir had conferred on Abul Hasa and Mansur the titles of Nadir-ul-Zaman and Nadir-ul-Asar respectively. Among the painters Bishandas was the ablest portrait painter while Mansur and Manohar had special aptitude for painting natural scenes and birds and animals. An important factor during Jahangir's reign is the elimination of Persian influence. Painting





becomes essentially Indian in character. With the death of Jahangir, Mughal art declined in importance.

Shahajahan lacked passion for painting. He was more interested in buildings. He reduced the number of court painters and did not patronize the Mughal painting. The eminent painters of Shahajahan's period were Mir Hassan, Amg Chitra and Chintamani. Among his nobles Asaf Khan patronized the art of painting. Dara was a great patron of the pictorial art.

There was a distinct decline of pictorial art during the reign of Aurangzeb. He withdrew the royal patronage which was given to the artists. But the Mughal nobles continued to patronize the painters. There are pictures of Aurangzeb's battles and sieges which clearly indicate that he did not wholly dis-coverage the art.

During the Mughal rule, the Rajput princes did not neglect the art of painting. The Rajput school of painting grew up. Religion is closely associated with art in this school. The Rajput paintings depict the life of the innocent villager, his religion, his pursuits and pastimes.

The Mughal School of painting occupies a respectable position in the history of Indian painting. Under the Mughal patronage it attained to a high level of excellence. The only defect from which the Mughal art suffered was that it remained confined to the court of emperors, provincial rulers and their nobles. Yet, the Mughal School of painting occupies a position unique in the history of Indian painting.

#### **Music:**

The art of music was also patronized by the Mughal rulers. Babur was fond of music. Humayun also loved the company of musicians and used to listen music three times in a week. Akbar was a great patron of music. According to Abul Fazl, Akbar paid much attention to music and was the patron of all who practiced this enchanting art. There are numerous musicians at the court—Hindus, Iranis, Turanis, Kashmiris, both men and women.

Akbar had a large troupe of excellent musicians at his court. The most famous musician was Tansen of Gwalior. Noted musician Ramdas and his son Surdas also adorned the court of Akbar. The Mughal nobles also patronized music—Raja Bhagwan Das and Man Singh had great interest in music. Due to the joint efforts of both the Hindus and Muslims, Hindustani music made a great advance. New

varieties of Ragas were introduced by the noted musicians.

The eminent musicians under Jahangir were Jahangir dad, Chatr Khan, Parwizdad, Khurramdad, Makhu and Hamza. Shahajahan was a great lover of music and heard music both vocal and instrumental. He was particularly fond of Dhrupad. During his reign the best singer of Dhrupad was Lai Khan, son-in-law of Tansen.

The Emperor bestowed on him the title of "Gunasamundar". The most distinguished Hindu musicians were Pandit Jagannath and Janardan Bhatta. Pandit Jagannath was both a composer and singer and had received the title of Maha-Kaviraj. Aurangzeb banned music in his court. By his order poets and singers were banished from the court.

#### **Persian Literature:**

A new era in the domain of literary history began during the Mughal period. Due to the tolerant policy of Mughal emperors art and literature thrived. Babur was a great scholar and well versed in Arabic, Persian and Turki. His greatest achievement was his memoires which he wrote in Turkish language.

Humayun was also a great scholar and evinced great interest in Geography and astronomy. However the reign of Akbar was the golden period of Indo-Islamic literature. The important historical works of this period are Tarikh-i-Aifi of Mullu Daud, the Ain-i-Akbari and Akbarnama of Abul-Fazl the Muntakhab-ul-Tawarikh by Badauni, Taboqat-i-Akbari by Nizam-ud-din-Ahmad, Akbarnama by Faizi Sarhindi, the Masir-i- Rahimi of Abdul Baqi. The greatest writer of the age was Abul Fazl. Different parts of Mahabharata were translated into Persian and were compiled under the title Razm Namah.

Jahangir also patronised scholars. Many eminent scholars like Ghiyas Baig, Naqzib Khan, Mutamad Khan, Niamat Vilah, Abdul Haq Dihlaur adorned his court. Historical works like Masir-i-Jahangir, Iqbalnamah-i-Jahangir and Zubd-ul-Tawarikh were compiled during his reign. Shahjahan also extended his patronage to scholars and among the famous scholars of the time are Abdul Hamid Lahori, author of Padshahnamah, Amin Quzwini, author of another Padshahnamah, Inayat Khan, author of Shahajahannamah and Mohammad Salih, author of Amal Salih which are all histories of Shahajahan's reign.



Prince Dara was also a great scholar and translated the Hindu scriptures like Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, and Yogavasistha into Persian. During Aurangzeb's reign the well known historians are Khafi Khan's Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Alamgir—Namah of Mirza Mohammad, Masir-i-Alamgiri of Mohammad Saqi, Nuskhah-i- Dilkhusla of Bhimsena and Fatuhat-i-Alamgiri by Iswar Das. The Ruqqat-i-Alamgiri is a collection of Aurangzeb's letters which shows his mastery over simple and elegant Persian.

### **Hindi Literature:**

The 16th and 17th centuries marked the growth of Hindi literature. The first notable Hindi writer was Malik Mohammad Jayasi, who wrote the famous Philosophic epic Padmavat. The history of Hindi literature entered upon a new epoch with the accession of Akbar. He was deeply interested in Hindi poetry and Song. His nobles like Birbal, Todar Mai, Raja Bhagwan Das and Man singh wrote verses in Hindi.

Among his ministers Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Klianan was a notable poet. Most of the poetry of this period was religious and the themes were borrowed from the cults of Rama and Krishna. The eminent poets of the Krishna cult were the Ashtadap of Vallabhacharya and Surdas the blind bard of Agra.

In his Sursagar he wrote the sports of Krishna's childhood and composed hundreds of verses describing the beauty of Krishna and his beloved Radha. Other poets of this school were Nanda Das, the author of Ras-Panchadhyayi, Vithal Nath, the author of Chaurasi Vaisnavaki Varta, Paramananda Das, Ras Khan and Kumbhar Das.

Among the poets of Rama cult, the foremost is Tulsi Das, whose name is a household word in Northern India. He laid emphasis on the worship of Rama. He wrote a number of works such as Rama Gitavali, Krishna Gitavali, Vinayapatrika and Vairagya Sandipani. But his most famous work is "Rama Charita Manasa". George Giersen described Rama Charita Manasa as, "The one Bible of a hundred million of people".

Besides these writers there were others whose work determined the canons of poetic criticism. The most notable writers of these songs are Keshava Das, Sundar, Senapati and the Tripathi brothers. Keshava Das in his work 'Kavi Priya' has described the good qualities of a poem and also other matters connected with the art of

writing poetry. His other works are Rama Chandrika, a story of the life of Rama, Rasik Priya, a treatise on poetical composition and Alankara Manjari, a work on prosody. Sundar was a great poet. Emperor Shahajahan conferred on him the title of Ravi Raya and Mahakavi Raya.

In 1631, he wrote Sunder-Srinagar, Senapati, a devotee of Krishna, has narrated the different aspects of the art of poetry in his work "Kabita Ratnakar". Among the Tripathi brothers, the most notable was Bhaskar who enjoyed the patronage of the Maratha ruler Sivaji and Chhatrasala Bundela of Poona.

His famous works are chhatrasad Satak, Sivaraj Bhasan and Shivavali. Another famous poet of this period was Biharilal Chaube. He is the author of the Bihari Satsai, a collection of about 700 dohas and Sorthas. The decline of Hindi poetry started during the reign of Aurangzeb. The disintegration of Mughal empire had a disastrous effect on Hindi literature.

### **Bengali:**

During this period Bengali language and literature also developed owing the effect of religious reform movement. Sri Chaitanya had such a tremendous impact on the minds of the people of Bengal that a number of works were composed regarding his life and teachings and biographies of his chief followers. The most famous among such works are Chaitanya Charitamitra by Krishnadas Kaviraj, Chaitanya Bhagwat, another biography of Chaitanya by Vrindabandas and Bhakti Ratnakar by Narahari Chakravarti, a detailed biography of Chaitanya. Sanskrit works were also translated into Bengali.

### **Sanskrit:**

Jagannath Pandit, the greatest Sanskrit writer, and poet adorned the court of Shahajahan. Ganga Lahiri is the most famous work of Jagannath Pandit. The other famous poets of this period were Kavindra, Rupagoswami and Girdharnath, Rupagoswami wrote Vidagdha Mandir. Similarly Gujrati, Marathi, Rajasthani, Tamil, Telugu, oriya and Maithcli languages were also enriched by the eminent writers during this period.

### **Disintegration of the Mughal Empire:**

The Rise and fall is the go of the world, and therefore, the Mughal empire was not an exception to it. The Mughal empire which was established by Babar in 1526 A.D. and which



flourished during the regime of his worthy successors like Akbar, Jahangir and Shahajahan met its bitter end just after the reign of Aurangzeb. It is said, that the rise of the Mughal empire was a sensational event in history, its disintegration was equally a tragic tale.

However, its disintegration was not an event of any single day like the fall of Napoleon or of Hitler. It passed through different phases. The empire though began to crack during the reign of Aurangzeb; its disintegration became rapid after his death during the reign of his weak successors. They failed to encounter internal problems and foreign invaders. However, there were certain factors which contributed a lot for its disintegration.

**They are as follows:**

**(1) Vastness of the empire:**

It was the vastness of the Mughal empire which made the empire sink under its own weight. The far-flung Mughal empire embraced almost the whole of India. Such a vast empire could be kept under control by strong and powerful kings like Akbar. Shahajahan and Aurangzeb were weak and inefficient.

Moreover, communication was in a very rudimentary stage which was a great obstacle for the emperor and other administrative officers to move from one part of the empire to another part. It was seen that the emperor like Aurangzeb took long 27 years to solve the Deccan problem, but he could not do it, latter he lost control over the north. It was all due to the vastness of the empire. Therefore, the disintegration of the empire became inevitable.

**(2) Mughal rule was alien in India:**

The Mughal rule was alien in India. The Hindu people were never friendly to the Mughal rulers except the emperor Akbar. S.M. Edwards says, 'To the vast majority of the people of India, the Mughal empire was essentially a foreign Empire, and on that account could not expect to secure its existence upon a firm foundation of spontaneous popular support.

Alien in its nature and administrative organisation, it was powerless to evoke such feelings as those which led to the people of Maharashtra to follow and fight for Shivaji, it drew no strength from ancient tradition, which has always exerted so marked an influence upon Hindi ideals and sentiments". The only exception occurred in the reign of Akbar. This alien feeling became stronger in the reign of Aurangzeb and

his successors. Therefore the Mughal rule lacked the support of the majority and was unpopular.

**(3) War of Succession:**

The Mughal rule lacked any firm Law of Succession and as a result there was frequent, War among the princes for the throne. Brothers of the royal family used to fight against one another to secure the throne. Such Wars of Succession gave the provincial governors golden opportunities to make themselves independent. This shook the very foundation of the Mughal empire.

**(4) Weak Successors of Aurangzeb:**

It is a fact that the much success and stability of an empire depend on the ability and efficiency of an emperor. Fortunately the six Mughal emperors from Babur to Aurangzeb were by and large efficient and Powerful. But unfortunately all those who came after Aurangzeb were weak and inefficient out of the eleven rulers who ruled from 1707 to 1806, none of them was found efficient.

According to Michael Edwardes, "The customary struggle for power followed the death of Aurangzeb, but it was a struggle between the second rate and the third rate. Out of it a series of weak rulers emerged who permitted the empire to fall apart at the seas.

Further not only the successors of Aurangzeb were weak and inefficient, but also they possessed immoral character. Neglecting their own duties they had kept them indulged in wine and woman. They also lacked moral and physical strength of mind required for a strong ruler. This brought the fall of the empire.

**(5) Mughal Nobility:**

During the reign of later Mughals, there were no such worthy Amirs and nobles like Bairam Khan, Asaf Khan, Munim Khan, Muzafar Khan and Mohabat Khan of the early periods. They were indeed the principal pillars of the Mughal empire. But the nobles and Amirs of the later Mughal period were power-loving, self-seeking and ungrateful.

They also kept them indulged in various immoral activities and were always after pleasure and luxury. The govt. become corrupt as the Amirs, noble, officers' even emperors accepted bribes, in the name of gifts. They utterly neglected their duties which as a result hastened the disintegration of the Mughal empire.



#### **(6) Economic bankruptcy:**

A government in order to be stable one must have sound economy. The economic condition of the Mughal Empire was sound during the reign of Akbar. But after him, there came a steady decline in the economic condition of the empire. It is said that

Shahajahan had made the treasury almost half by waging wars and constructing palatial buildings. During the reign of Aurangzeb, its decline was rapid. The later Mughals drained the treasury by spending money in comforts and luxury.

#### **Responsibility of Aurangzeb:**

Apart from all these, Aurangzeb himself in fact was largely responsible for the disintegration of the Mughal empire. His anti-shia and anti-hindu policy alienated a major section of the society from his support. Many gifted shia muslims who were very capable and efficient become his enemies. Similarly his anti-Hindu policy not only alienated Hindus from the Mughal rule but also led to the rebellions of the Jats, the Bundelas, the Sikhs and the Rajput's.

All these shook the very foundation of the Mughal empire. Further, he did not learn anything from the Rajput policy of Akbar. He reversed his policies and his hatred towards the Rajput's forced them to fight against Mughal empire. Finally his own suspicious nature and long twenty five years Deccan campaign sounded the death knell of the Mughal empire.

Commenting on the responsibility of Aurangzeb for the disintegration of a Mughal empire, Jadunath Sarkar writes, "It is not true that Aurangzeb alone caused the fall of the Mughal empire, yet he did nothing to avert it, but deliberately quickened the destructive forces always present in rigid theocratic form of Government because he was a reactionary by instinct and no reforming statesman."

#### **Rise of Provincial Powers:**

It was after the death of Aurangzeb the provincial governors of different states declared their independence. They took the advantage of a weak Centre and declared their independence by disregarding the authority of Delhi. Nizam-ul-Mulk of Deccan was first among them who declared his independence. Similarly the ruler of Oudh as well as Alivardi Khan, the ruler of Bengal became independent. As a result of this the Mughal empire was gradually confined to Delhi and its periphery.

#### **Invasions of Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali:**

The Mughal empire was invaded by a number of foreign invaders during the time of weak and unsuccessful, later Mughal rulers between 1739 to 1761. The invasions shook the roots of the empire. Nadir Shah's invasion proved very fatal from political and economic points of view. He carried away a huge booty and crippled the Mughal empire economically. Ahmad Shah Abdali came to India after Nadir Shah. He also drained a lot of wealth from India and shattered the structure of the Mughal administration. The inefficient later Mughals failed to check them.

#### **Rise of British Power:**

Finally, it was British, who made the Mughal rule single with dust. The British came to India as traders. Subsequently through the application of diplomacy and a developed art of warfare they tried to establish an empire in India as their own. Their rise to power led to the eclipse of the Mughal empire. It was after their success in the Great Revolt of 1857 that the last Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah II, was arrested and deposed. This was the last scene of the Mughal drama enacted on the stage of India.

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