

HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL INDIA 1206-1707 CE

Author

Dr.R.Selvaraju, Ph.D
Associate Professor & Head
Department of History
Manonmaniam Sundaranar University
Tirunelveli - Tamil Nadu



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE & CONTINUING EDUCATION
TIRUNELVELI - TAMIL NADU -627 012.

JANUARY- 2024

Sl.No	Unit	Content	Page No
1.	I	Establishment of the Delhi Sultanate: Qutbuddin Aibak and Iltutmish -- <i>Iqta</i> System - Centralised Monarchy: Sultana Raziya and Period of Instability - Age of Balban- <i>Chihalgani</i> - Theory of Kingship - Reorganisation of the Government - Mongol Threat - Internal Restructuring and Territorial Expansion - Jalaluddin and Alauddin Khalji's approaches to the State - Changes among the ruling Classes - Conquest and Annexation.	1-19
2.	II	Problems of a Centralized State: Ghiyasuddin and Muhammad bin Tughlaq- Administrative and Political Measures - Economic and Agrarian Reforms - Token Currency Transfer of Capital- Firuz Tughlaq- Economic reforms- Military Expeditions - Impact of Sayyids and Lodis; Administration under the Delhi Sultanate	20-41
3.	III	The Foundation of Mughal Empire: Central Asian experience of Babur - India on the eve of Babur's invasion- Struggle for empire in North India - Significance of the Afghan despotism- Rise of Sher Shah Sur; Expansion and Consolidation - Political phase of Akbar; new imperial system and administration; the Mughal nobility, Mansabdari system- Jagirdari system- Nur Jahan Junta - The Mughals and the North-Western frontier - Shah Jahan and his contribution.	42-96
4.	IV	Ideology and State in Mughal India: Akbar's imperial agenda - <i>Suhl-i-kul</i> - Akbar's religion - <i>Din ilahi</i> ; Aurangzeb's relation with religious groups and institutions.; Mughal-Rajput Relations - Mughal administration: Aurangzeb - the Imperial elite- Deccan wars- Rise of Marathas under Shivaji- Popular revolts within the Mughal empire - Decline of the Mughal empire.	97-135
5.	V	Economic and Socio-Cultural Life in Medieval India: Economy: Agricultural Production, Village Society and the Revenue System - Trade-- relations with the Europeans- Society- Ruling Classes, Merchants, Artisans and Slaves - Caste, Customs and Women - Religious Ideas and Beliefs- The Sufi Movement- The Bhakti Movement in North India - Culture- Architecture - Literature - Fine Arts - Music.	136-171
6.	Annexure	References	172

UNIT - I

Establishment of the Delhi Sultanate: Qutbuddin Aibak and Iltutmish -- *Iqta* System - Centralised Monarchy: Sultana Raziya and Period of Instability - Age of Balban- *Chihalgani*- Theory of Kingship - Reorganisation of the Government - Mongol Threat - Internal Restructuring and Territorial Expansion - Jalaluddin and Alauddin Khalji's approaches to the State - Changes among the ruling Classes - Conquest and Annexation.

Objectives

- ❖ Understanding the Establishment and Evolution of the Delhi Sultanate.
- ❖ Understanding the Mongol Invasion
- ❖ Understand the rule of the Arabs, the Turks, the Afghans or Pathans and Mongols or Mughals (Chiefly Turkish) in India in detail.

Sources of Delhi Sultanate

Historical works of Zia-ud-din Barani (1286-1359) and Ibn Batuta (1304-1378), who were a witness to the rule of Muhammad-bin Tughlak 5 (1325-1351) throw much light on the rule of the Delhi Sultans. The **Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi** of Barani is the history of the Sultans of Delhi from Balban to Firoz Tughlak (1351-1388). Barani describes about the doings of kings and conquerors, their victories and defeats. Elaborate accounts about the administrative system, Mongol invasions, the economic policies of Ala-ud-din Khilji (1296-1316) and Muhammad bin Tughlak as also the ambitious schemes of conquest and the mild rule of Firoz Tughlak are found in his valuable work. By and large, he seemed to have been an impartial historian, giving attention to the merits and defects of historical personages. Ibn Batuta, the African traveler was the Qazi of Delhi city for eight years. His journal **RIHLA** which was completed in 1355 contains "a mine of history". His Indian acquaintances helped him furnish a balanced account of the Sultans of Delhi from Kutb-ud-din Aibak (1206-1210) to Muhammad bin Tughlak. Also he throws some light on the short-lived Sultanate of Madura. His observations and presentation of events pertaining to Sultans of Delhi are very useful. Amir Khusru (1253-1325), the leading poet and writer of the Delhi Sultanate wrote **Tughlak-nama** at the instance of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlak (1320-1325). It helps us to know about the early career of Muhammad bin Tughlak and other political matters. The work of Isami, composed in 1349 is a critic of Muhammad bin

Tughlak. The accounts of Muslim historian Wassaf, brought out in 1328, deals with Mongols and their invasions in India. Wassaf also makes references about Maravarman Kulasekhara Pandya (1268-1310) of the Tamil country. Besides these contemporary works, there are non-contemporary works which supplement some valuable information about the Delhi Sultanate. A Persian chronicle **Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi** of Shams-I-Siraj Afif, composed towards the close of the 14th century, the **Tabakat-i-Akbari** or Annals of Akbar of Nizam-ud-din Ahmad and the **Tarikh-I-Badani** of Badauni composed during the reign of Akbar are a few among them. Muhammad Kasim Ferishta (1570-1612) a Persian by birth wrote in 1611 **Tarikh-i-Ferishta** which tells about the general history of Muslim power in India, besides throwing some light on the Delhi Sultanate as well, in the process. **Burhan-I-Maasir** of Ali bin Aziz Ullah Tabataba (16th B.C.) also supplement some information about the Delhi Sultanate.

Coins

Numismatics is a study of coins. A great change could be noticed in the Indian Coinage during the rule of the Muslims. Instead of images prohibited by Islam, we find inscribed images and letters giving the Sultan's name, his titles, the date in the Hijra era (commencing in A.D.622), the mint name and the Kalima (Khalif) Muhammad of Ghor issued gold coins and Iltutmish silver coins. On both sides of the coins issued by Iltutmish, Delhi and Lakhnanti (Gaur), the names of the mints are mentioned. This indicates the extent of his dominions. Balban's name is inscribed on his coins in Nagara and Arabic scripts. On the coins issued by Ala-ud-din Khilji, he is described as "the second Alexander". The coins of Muhammad bin Tughlak are "exceptionally brilliant examples of calligraphic art". Firoz Tughlak (1351-1388) issued a large number of gold coins in six types. They had fairly a wider circulation in places which were under his control. In the coins Firoz Tughlak described himself as "the right hand of the "Commander of the Faithful" (i.e. the Khalif). The Sayyids also issued coins describing themselves as Timur's deputies but in reality, their coins belong to the Sultanate series. On the coins of the Lodi Sultans, it has been inscribed, as "Trusting in the Merciful One" and "Deputy of the Commander of the Faithful". These indicate their orthodox nature of life and rule.

Monuments

The monuments of the period which include both religious and non-religious structures namely, mosques, temples, palaces, official buildings, memorials, madrasahs and tombs speak volumes about the emergence of composite culture, the art forms, architecture, paintings and building construction works. The growth of Indo-Muslim art which is a

combination of Islamic and Hindu principles of art is a unique feature of the Delhi Sultanate. The Qutb Minor minaret with high tower is an impressive one. The Iltumish mausoleum served as a model for later mausoleums. The ruins of the town of Siri built by Ala-ud-din, and the fortifications and urban architecture are characteristic of the Delhi Sultanate. Carrying certain Hindu elements the buildings of the Lodi period are small and elegant. Muslim architecture also developed in the capitals of various Deccan Sultans.

Establishment of the Delhi Sultanate:-

The Delhi Sultanate was a Muslim Sultanate which ruled in Delhi and stretched over large parts of the Indian subcontinent for approximately 320 years.

The Delhi Sultanate was ruled by five dynasties:

- ❖ The Mamluk Dynasty -1206-120
- ❖ The Khilji Dynasty -120-1320
- ❖ The Tughlaq Dynasty - 1320-1414
- ❖ The Sayyid Dynasty & The Lodi dynasty -1451-1526

During the Delhi Sultanate, there was a fusion of Indian civilization with that of Islamic civilization, and the further integration of the Indian subcontinent with a growing world system and wider international networks spanning large parts of Afro-Eurasia, which had an important impact on Indian culture and society, as well as the wider world. In this unit, the emergence of Delhi Sultanate is been discussed. The invasions carried by Muhammad Tughlaq and the reforms carried by Firoz Shah Tughlaq is also analysed. The unit will also highlight the emergence of the Sayyid dynasty and the Lodhi dynasty.

The ninth century, feudal lords of Persian origin ruled over Transoxiana, Khorasan and some parts of Iran. They had to engage constantly in a fight against the Turkish tribes on their northern and eastern frontiers. This conflict led to the emergence of a new type of soldier known as Gazi. The Turks were mostly worshippers of natural forces and so were Kafirs in the eyes of the Muslims. Therefore, the Gazi soldiers fought against them for political and religious causes. With the passage of time, many Turks became Muslims and started propagating and protecting Islam. They came into conflict with the non-Muslim Turkish tribes. A Turkish slave of the Samanid dynasty named Alaptigin, who was the governor of Khurasan, supported the opposing faction in the struggle for succession in Bokhara. Fearing punishment, he proceeded towards Gazni and subsequently consolidated his position there. He occupied certain parts in

Central Asia and laid the foundation of an independent dynasty at Gazni and started ruling from Gazni as his capital. On the other side, the Samanid dynasty fell and the Gaznavids undertook the task of protecting the Islamic regions against the non-Islamic tribes of Central Asia. After Alaptigin, his son Abu Izhak and then slaves such as Baltagin, Pirai and Subuktugin became his successors. Subuktugin was the only one who was successful. Subuktigin (AD 977-999) turned his attention towards India. Around AD 980, he dispatched a Turkish army against Jaipal in which Jaipal's army had to suffer a heavy loss and he was forced to surrender for peace. He is said to have occupied the whole of Balkh Khurasan, Afghanistan and in addition, the north western frontier of India before his death. He was succeeded by his son Mahmud (AD 999-1030) to the throne of Gazni. With his accession, a new chapter started in the history of Islam. He defeated the ruler of Seitain, Khalif-bin- Ahmad and obtained the title of Sultan. Though his empire and his title enjoyed the sanction of the Khalifa but the basis of his power was conquest. Medieval Indian historians consider Mahmud of Ghazni as a soldier of Islam because of his struggle against the tribal invaders of Central Asia. Many scholars consider Mahmud Ghazni as the first Sultan-i-Azam. This title is not found inscribed on his coins where he is simply referred to as Amir Mahmud and also, this title was not given to him by the Khalifa. The saying of historian Barthold appears to be correct that in the times of Mahmud Ghazni the Ghaznavid Empire appeared in its best form. He first obtained the province of Mansur from Caliph Kadir and then acquired legal recognition and prestige for his empire. The sentiment of Gazni became more consolidated during his reign. Besides, at this time, the Turks gained predominance in the army and administration taking place at this time. The proud Persians had never accepted the language and culture of the Arabs. Thus, before their advent in India, the Turks had not only become the followers of Islam but also had become Persianized. This very culture was propagated by them in India from AD 1200 onwards. Between AD 1000 and AD 1026, Mahmud of Ghazni carried out seventeen invasions of India. His chief invasions were against the Hindushahi rulers of Punjab—Jaipal (AD 1000-1001) and Anandpala (AD 1008-1009), against Nagarkot (Kangra) (1009), Thaneswar (AD 1014), Mathura and Kanauj (AD 1018-1019), against Kalinjar (AD 1021), and Somnath (AD 1020). Mahmud Gazni died in AD 1030. Historians do not agree on the motives inspiring Mahmud of Ghazni for his Indian invasions. Some historians describe him as a soldier in the cause of Islam and say that he exhibited his religious fanaticism by breaking the idols of Hindu Gods and forcibly converting the people to Islam. However, nowadays this opinion is not accepted. Actually, his main ambition was to acquire wealth even though he was a breaker of idols. He had no wish to squander away this wealth in India itself. He wanted to utilize it for establishing

a vast central Asian empire. This is accepted without any controversy that he had no wish to establish a permanent empire in India because he always returned to Ghazni. He made no arrangements regarding his conquered areas nor did he annex the conquered areas to his empire. Only Punjab and Multan were made an integral part of his Ghaznavid Empire. The question now arises that if Mahmud had so desired, he could have established his empire in India. It is not easy to answer this question. From one point of view, it can not be said that it was impossible for him to do so because did the desire it himself nor perhaps was it possible to keep a vast country like India under control. There were no Muslim settlements at that time. The small number of people who had embraced Islam had not perhaps done so willingly and apart from other problems, language itself presented a serious problem. Probably, his soldiers also did not want to stay permanently in India. Under such circumstances it was not possible for him to set up a permanent empire in India. On the other hand, seeing the contemporary political conditions, it can be maintained that if he wanted he could have done it because there was no powerful central government in India at that time.

The country was divided into many small states and they were jealous of each other. The feeling of nationalism was totally absent and they gave more importance to their selfish interests than to the national interest. Hindu society was suffering from many evils such as the caste system; the special prerogatives were acceded to the Brahmins and Kshatriyas. This also could have been a boon for Mahmud. However, the historical fact is that Mahmud could not take advantage of this situation. The credit for this goes to Ghori and his successors. In fact,

Mahmud was a conqueror and not an empire builder. Hence, neither did he evince any interest in it nor could he do it. Muhammad Ghori (who is also known as Muizuddin Muhammad bin Sam) was the younger brother of the ruler of Ghor, Ghiyas-ud-din. He was raised to the throne of Ghazni in AD 1173. Still, he remained loyal to his brother and kept good terms with him. Though he ruled over Ghazni virtually as an independent ruler till AD 1206, he got his brother's name inscribed on the coins and behaved towards him as a feudatory does towards his lord. He invaded India only as his brother's associate and opened the way for the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate. After Muhammad Ghori, his slave Qutubuddin Aibak sat on the throne of Lahore on 25 June AD 1206. However, from AD 1206 to 1208 he was only a Malik to the brother of Muhammad Ghori at Ghor. At that time the areas of India under Turkish hold were Multan, Uchh, Naherwala, Pursaur, Sialkot, Lahore, Tarain, and Ajmer, Hansi, Kuhram, Meerut, Delhi, Badayun, Gwalior, Banaras, Kanauj, Kalingar, Oudh, Ranthambhore, Malwa, Bihar and Lachnauti. In the conquest of these, Qutubuddin had been

associated as a military commander. After the second battle of Tarain (AD 1192), he had suppressed the revolts in Ajmer and Meerut. He had conquered the areas of Hansi, Delhi, Ranthambhore etc. in the absence of Muhammad Ghori. When Muhammad Ghori had come to India in AD 1194 to attack Jaichand of Kanauj, then also Aibak had helped him. In AD 1197 he had defeated Bhimdev II of Anhilwara and thus avenged the defeat of his master. After Ghori's death, Aibak declared himself the ruler of the Indian possession and protected and extended the Delhi Sultanate by the former's finding solutions to many problems facing it.

Qutub-ud-din-Aibak:-1206

Qutub-ud-din-Aibak was born in Central Asia to Turkic parents. He was sold to a local Qazi as a slave and raised in Persia. He eventually became a slave of Muhammad of Ghor (also called Muhammad Ghori). Aibak was able to prove himself in the service of Ghori and was appointed to a military position. Ghori conquered Delhi in 1193 and returned to Khorasan leaving his Indian conquests to the care of Aibak. He annexed the region between the rivers Ganga and Yamuna. His lieutenant Bakhtiyar Khilji conquered Bihar and Bengal. Aibak fought against the Rajput rulers who were resisting the Muslim invasions. After Ghori's assassination in 1206, Aibak became the de facto ruler of the Delhi Sultanate.

He was crowned in Lahore, Pakistan where he moved his capital. Aibak was the first Muslim Sultanate ruler in northern India. The dynasty he established is known as the Slave Dynasty or the Mamluk Dynasty. He built mosques in Delhi and other areas. He was known as a generous king in times of peace and was honoured with the title *Lakhsabakhsh*. He is most remembered for laying the foundation of the **Qutb Minar** in Delhi. It was named after a Sufi saint Khwaja Qutb-ud-din Bakhtiyar Kaki. Qutb Minar was completed by Aibak's successor and son-in-law Iltutmish. It is a 240 ft tall tower. The construction was started in about 1192. The ground storey of the Minar was constructed over the ruins of the Lal Kot which was built by the Tomars. He died in a polo accident in 1210 aged about 60. He was succeeded by his son-in-law Shams ud-Din Iltutmish. His tomb is in Lahore.

Iltutmish (1211-1236 A.D.)

Kutb-ud-Din Aibak purchased Iltutmish from a noble, for his intelligence and warrior qualities. Thus Iltutmish, became the slave of Aibak, who himself was a slave. So Iltutmish is styled as "slave of a slave". Right from the beginning, Iltutmish had created a great impression of his intelligence and honesty upon his master Aibak who in turn appointed him as Amir-I-

Shikar besides giving his daughter in marriage with him. As the Sultan of Indian possessions, Aibak later appointed Iltutmish as governor of Gwalior and Badaon, which assignment he did so well to the satisfaction of his master. After the sudden death of Kutb-ud-Din Aibak in 1210 A.D, the Maliks and Amirs placed Aibak's son Aram Shah upon the throne. But the rulers of Multan and Bengal refused to recognize him as their king. In the midst of confusion and uncertainty, in the best interests of the country some of the nobles invited Shams-ud-din Iltutmish the Governor of Gwalior and Badaon to come and occupy the throne. Accordingly Iltutmish marched with his forces to Delhi, defeated and captured Aram Shah and in 1211 A.D. himself occupied the throne.

On his accession Iltutmish was confronted with many difficulties. Governors in various parts of the empire and the Hindu rulers, who were subdued by Aibak, came out openly and refused to recognize his sovereignty. In Bengal, Ali Mardan Khan declared himself independent. Nasir-ud-din Qabacha had asserted his independence in Sind. Further he was about to extend his authority over the Punjab. On the other hand, Taj-ud-din Yildiz who held Ghazni, in the absence of Mohammad of Ghor, wanted to make himself the sovereign of Hindustan. Iltutmish however faced the situation boldly. He first effectively suppressed the rebellion of the Amirs near Delhi and brought under his control the different parts of the kingdom of Delhi along with its dependencies like Badaun, Qudh, Banaras and Siwalik. In this great attempt he was able to frustrate the 30 ambitious designs of his rivals. When Taj-ud-din Yildiz, his arch rival, attacked him with big force at the historic field of Tarain in January 1216 AD, he defeated him and arrested him. Yildiz was taken prisoner and sent to Badaun where he was executed.

Meanwhile Nasir-ud-din Qabacha of Multan advanced to Lahore and occupied it. Iltutmish marched against him and drove him out of the Punjab in 1217 A.D. he was completely subdued in 1227 A.D. Qabacha ran away but accidentally drowned in the Indus River. Afterwards, Iltutmish annexed Multan, Lahore and Sind to the Delhi Sultanate. Like his father, Iwaz Khan, the son and successor of Ali Mardan Khan of Bengal challenged Iltutmish. In 1225, Iltutmish marched against him and defeated him. When Iwaz again revolted against him, through his, Iltutmish defeated him and killed him. In this way Bengal was also conquered. In his scheme of things, the Rajput states remained unsubdued. In the first instance, he attacked Mangal Dev, the ruler of Gwalior and defeated him. In his second march against Malwa, he proved himself successful and conquered Bhilsa and Ujjain. In Ujjain, after destroying Mahakali temple he took away its wealth. He also conquered Ranthambhor and

Mandu. The last expedition of Iltutmish was directed against Sind-Sagar Daob successfully, but on his way he was attacked with severe illness and carried back to Delhi where he expired on the 29th April, 1236 after the reign of 26 years. During the period, he could subdue the troublemakers and stretch the frontiers of his empire right up to the Narbada River. While Iltutmish was alive and appreciating his successful campaigns and consolidation of Muslim power in Hindustan, the caliph of Baghdad, recognizing him as the “Great Sultan of Hindustan” conferred upon him the “robe of honour” in 1279 A.D.

Thereafter, on his coins, Iltutmish described himself as the lieutenant of the Caliph. His coins, remarks, Thomas, a historian, “constituted the veritable commencement of the silver coinage of the Delhi Pathans”. Iltutmish was a great general, conqueror and a diplomat. This is more than substantiated by his successful campaigns launched against both Hindu and Muslim rulers of Hindustan and the manner in which he tackled the danger from the Mongol invasion led by Chengez Khan at that time. After overthrowing the Sultanate of Khiva, Chengez Khan was about to cross the river Indus. Being scared of rigours of Indian climate Chengez Khan withdrew from India. Iltutmish breathed freely. When the defeated Sultan of Khiv negotiated with Iltutmish requesting for help against the Mongols, but Iltutmish with great diplomatic skill refused to him, for he knew full well the superior might of the Mongols. One of the important steps that Iltutmish had taken during his reign was changing the capital city from Lahore to Delhi, which was of course an enduring work in view of the Delhi developing into a suitable centre for his ever expanding empire.

Nobles of Forty

There was no method of succession under the Delhi Sultanate. But there emerged a group of people around the Sultanate to a greater extent. They were exempt from military service and enjoyed many other privileges. Out of them “Nobles of Forty” emerged. Originally there forty turk slaves had been employed by Iltutmish to serve as his body - guards. But in due course of time they acquired positions and prestige in the Sultanate. They monopolised almost all the high posts under the government and in the army from 1235 to 1246 A.D. they wielded so much influences in the stately affairs and would depose and install any ruler they liked. Some of the leading figures of the “Nobles of Forty” were Kishlu Khan, Mohammad Junaidi Balhan etc. but Iltutmish in his last days found this “Forty” a menace to efficient administration of the state. Iltutmish was the first Muslim ruler who introduced a standard type of coin. He remodeled the currency. Under him the silver **tanka** weighing 175 grains became

the standard coin. Unlike his predecessor Kutb-ud-din Aibak, Iltutmish had enough time to lay a foundation for an organized administrative system, despite his preoccupation with continuous campaigns. With the help of Fakhr-ud-Din Ismana, an experienced **Wazir** of Baghdad and Malik Mohammad Junaidi, he set up several departments at the centre and made provisions for keeping official records and documents well preserved. He had a great sense of Justice and according to Ibn Batuta he had set up a chain and a bell by which people could approach him for Justice. Iltutmish did not lag behind in patronizing art and learning. He completed the Qutb Minar which was 150 feet high, still the loftiest minaret of India. "The whole conception of the minar and almost every detail of its construction and decoration is essentially Islamic". He also literally patronized scholars and poets. Minhaj-I-Siraj, the author of "**Tabqat-I- nasim** was the well known scholar of his time. Malik Taj-ud-Din and Ruhani were the distinguished poets of his time.

Estimate

Iltutmish may justly be regarded as the greatest ruler of the early Turkish Sultanate of Delhi, which lasted till 1290 A.D. To him belongs the credit of having saved the infant Muslim dominion in India from disintegration. He consolidated the conquests of his master Kutb-ud-din Aibak and developed them into a strong and compact monarchy extending at his death over the most parts of Hindustan. A brave warrior, he was busy till the last year of his life in military conquest. "He was at the same time gifted with brilliant qualities as a man and extended his patronage to arts and letters".

Raziya Begum (1236-1240 A.D.)

Since Iltutmish doubted the competency of his sons, he during his life time nominated his daughter Razia, as his successor. But the nobles of his court did not like to bow their heads before a woman ruler. Disregarding the wishes of Iltutmish, they raised to the throne his eldest son, Rukn-ud-din Firoz. This was an unfortunate choice. Rukn-ud-din was unfit to rule. He indulged in luxurious pursuits, neglected the affairs of the state. Matters were made worse when the work of the empire began to be carried on by his mother Sha Turkhan who became all in all. Sha Tukran was a very cruel, ambitious and callous lady and therefore, the governors of various provinces, namely, Badaun, Multan, Hansi, Lahore, Qudh and Bengal, revolted against her and thus the whole kingdom was plunged into disorder at that time. The nobles of Delhi could not tolerate all this and made Rukn-ud-din Firoz and the queen- mother as prisoners and placed Razia on the throne of Delhi in 1236 A.D. The task before the young queen was not an

easy one. Muhammad Junaidi, the **Wazir** of the kingdom and some other nobles could not reconcile themselves to the rule of a woman and revolted against her. But Razia was a capable ruler fully equipped with necessary skills as a warrior and a diplomat. Soon she overpowered her enemies. An organized attempt to create trouble was made by some heretics under the leadership of a Turk named Nur-ud-din was also repulsed by her. Those nobles and governors of provinces, who defied her authority acknowledged her sway and admired her leadership qualities. The queen was not, however, destined to enjoy a peaceful reign. She now began to show favours to Jamal-ud-Din Yakut, who was appointed master of the Royal House. This undue favour shown by her to the Abyssinian slave offended the other Turkish nobles. They turned against her. The governors of Lahore and Bhatinda revolted. Razia, along with 33 Yakut marched against Altunia, the ruler of Bhatinda, but his forces killed Yakut and imprisoned the queen. She was placed in charge of Altuniya whom she married later and on the other hand in her place, her brother Muiz-ud-din Bahram shah was proclaimed Sultan of Delhi. Razia who tried to overcome this critical situation, marched to Delhi along with her husband Altumia. But on arriving near kaithal, she was deserted by the followers of Altuniya and defeated on the 13th October, 1240, by Muiz- ud-bahran, her own brother. Later, she was put to death with her husband, the next day. Thus, the life of the queen Razia ended miserably after a reign of three years and a few royal months.

Estimate

In spite of Raziya's failure to remain in power for long she nevertheless was possessed with remarkable talents. According to Ferishta "in her father's lifetime she was employed in the affairs of the Government". As a queen, she tried to display her virtues more prominently. She conducted the affairs of her Government with considerable ability in open **darbar**. According to the contemporary Muslim Chronicle, Minhaj- us-Siraj, she "was a great sovereign, sagacious, just, beneficent, the patron of the learned, a dispenser of justice, the cherisher of her subjects, and of warlike talent, and was endowed with all the admirable attribute and qualifications necessary for kings". But, the dislike of the nobles for her being a woman was unfortunate and it clearly shows that it is not always very easy to overcome popular prejudice.

Ghiasuddin Balban

Ghiasuddin Balban was last of the three strongest Sultans produced by Slave dynasty. In spite of the initial difficulties, he succeeded in restoring law and order; eliminating the conspirators; and safeguarding and keeping the Sultanate intact. He also propounded a new

theory of Kingship chiefly as an instrument of protecting his position as Sultan and to enhance the prestige of his office. His weak successors who started a new dynasty lost to the Khiljis.

Life History

Born in A.D.1205 as Bhauddin in a rich family, Balban was captured by the Mongols and taken to Ghazni, where he was sold as a slave. Later he was brought to Delhi and bought by Iltutmish. Starting his life as an water carrier, Balban rose from one position to another by dint of hard work and ability. He had a distinguished career before he assumed the office of Sultan. Iltutmish enrolled him as the member of the famous corps of the 'the Forty' nobles. Raziya elevated him to the post of the Lord of the Hunt or Amir-i-Shikar. However, he played an important role in the dethronement of Raziya and the elevation of Bahram Shah to the throne for which he was rewarded the Jagir of Rewari and Hansi. When the Mongols besieged Uch in A.D.1246, he forced them to retire.

Ascendancy of Balban

When Nasiruddin ascended the throne he was appointed as the principal minister of the state. He suppressed the Khokars and other rebellious tribes. He was also instrumental in defeating some of the Hindu rajas and Muslim governors. His popularity earned him the jealousy of his fellow nobles who persuaded the Sultan to banish Balban. He was replaced by Imad - ud - din who was disliked by the Turkish nobles, as he was a convert. As Imad - ud - din was inefficient he was asked to go to Badaon. Balban returned to the capital and assumed the leadership. He warded off the rebellions and another Mongol invasion. As a result, Balban became very powerful and the leader of 'The Forty'. Nasiruddin placed the complete administration in the hands of Balban. As the chief minister of Nasiruddin he infused vigour and energy into the administration and checked the forces from disintegrating. It is not an exaggeration to say that, but for his energy and vigour, the Delhi Sultanate would have hardly survived the shocks of internal revolts and external aggressions.

Elevation to the Throne

Balban ascended the throne in A.D.1266 after the death of Nasiruddin. As a Sultan, he faced many difficulties. The prestige of the sultan had sunk very low due to the activities of the successors of Iltutmish. Turkish nobles were turbulent. Robbery infected the neighbourhood of Delhi. Moreover, there was the danger of recurring Mongol raids. Being a man of Iron will and great abilities, Balban was well fitted to rule in such turbulent times.

Reign of Balban

There was a total lack of fear for authority among the general populace and among the nobles. Consequently, there was a break down of law and order. In order to establish the

authority of the state Balban reorganized the army on efficient lines. The army was placed under Imad-ul-mulk, the army minister who supervised its recruitment, salary and equipment. Balban's personal vigilance and strictness increased the efficiency and discipline of the army. With the help of the standing army Balban established order in Doab and in the surroundings of Delhi. He also built outposts to prevent any raids on the capital city. In order to establish order in the countryside he himself led the forces and posted strong Afghan garrisons to put down lawlessness. Later he led an expedition to quell the hill tribes and also succeeded in his effort. He followed drastic measures such as killing the entire male population of the rebellious villages and took the women and children as slaves. Balban was a member and later head of the select body of Turkish nobles known as "The Forty." This powerful body imposed its will on the successors of Iltutmish. Balban realised the acute need to reduce its power and eliminate it if possible. He promoted junior Turks to important positions and placed them in position of equality thereby reduced the importance of senior members. He also punished the members of this group even for small faults. For instance, Malik Baqbaq, Governor of Badaun, was publicly flogged when it was found that he killed one his servants. Another member of the Forty was poisoned. Through such methods, he destroyed forever the group and emerged all-powerful.

In order to tone up the administration, he established an efficient system of espionage that kept strict watch on the activities of the turbulent nobles. He spent much of his time and money to place secret reporters in every department and province. He also asserted the character of the spies before appointing them. At the same time he also punished severely the spies and news writers if they failed to discharge their duties. Thus, Balban struck terror into their hearts of his potential opponents. Simultaneously, Balban felt the need to restore the prestige and power of the crown so as to create fear in the hearts of all subjects. He formulated a new theory of kingship. He believed that despotism alone would not bring about the obedience of the subjects. Therefore he decided to increase the personal prestige for himself. According to him, "the heart of the king was the special repository of God's favour and in this he has no equal among man-kind". Moreover, he cultivated aloofness, gave up drinking wine, and avoided participating in parties. He introduced the Persian ceremonial and stern etiquette. He prohibited drinking by the courtiers and officials and prescribed special dress for them. He never allowed any one to crack jokes or laugh. He would not talk with ordinary people. In short, by rigid ceremonial manners and dignity, he restored the prestige and authority of the crown. Though Balban was successful in suppressing the rebellions, he had to face the Mongol menace repeatedly. Balban took effective measures to check the advances of the Mongols. He placed the northwest region under the control of Sher Khan Sanqar who struck terror among

the Mongols. After his death in A.D. 1270 Balban divided the entire frontier into two parts, which were placed under the command of his two sons Muhammad Khan the elder and Bughra Khan, the younger. He also built a line of forts and garrisoned them with the Afghan soldiers. Together, Balban's sons kept the Mongol menace in check. The Mongol invasion of A.D.1273 was successfully repulsed. In A.D. 1286 when the Mongols reappeared, Muhammad fought valiantly but was killed during action.

Rebellion in Bengal

The province of Bengal was repeatedly attempting to gain independence from the control of Delhi Sultans who had to employ various methods to control province. Encouraged by the Mongol threat in the north-western frontier in A.D.1279, Tughril Khan, Governor of Bengal raised the standard of rebellion and assumed the title of Sultan. When three expeditions to Bengal failed, Balban himself led the expedition to Bengal with an army of two lakh soldiers. Tughril Khan deserted the capital Lakhnauti and fled to East Bengal. But he was captured and put to death. Balban returned to Lakhnauti and punished the followers of Tughril Khan with utmost cruelty. He appointed his son Bughra Khan, as the Governor of Bengal and advised him to remain faithful to the subjects. After his return to Delhi he punished the deserters of the Delhi army who sided with Tughril Khan. Shocked by the death of his eldest son, Muhammad, at the hands of the Mongols Balban passed away in A.D.1287.

Esimate

Balban was one of the greatest Sultans of Delhi. He was a great warrior, stern administrator and astute statesman. He established absolute control over the administration and the territories he conquered very effectively. He never hesitated to use cruel methods in achieving his goals. Abiding by his policy of blood and iron, he checked the anarchical tendencies of Turkish nobles, restored law and order by suppressing all lawless elements and ensured the safety of the infant Muslim state against the Mongol invasions thus providing strength and efficiency. He raised the dignity of the office of Sultan by propounding a new theory of kingship. Though cruel and ruthless, Balban had a remarkable sense of justice. He never showed partiality even to his kith and kin. He was a patron of Persian Literature and his court was adorned by Amir Khusru and Amir Hussan. He increased the prestige and dignity of his court by giving shelter to many princes and kings of CentralAsia who were driven out by Mongols. In short, Balban occupies a very prominent place in the history of Muslim rule in India. He raised the prestige of the Delhi Sultanate and gave peace to the people.

KHILJI DYNASTY

JALALUDDIN KHILJI - (1290 - 1296 A.D.)

Seizure of Power by Jalaluddin Khilji

Khaljis were the natives of Turkestan but migrated to Afghanistan. Later some of them migrated to India and took service under the sultans of Delhi. Jalaluddin Khilji was one among them. He took up employment under Delhi Sultans and held several positions such as Governor of Samana. As a brave soldier, he successfully repelled the Mongol invasions. Firoz became the minister of army under Kaiqubad. When Kai Khusrau, the heir-apparent of Balban was killed by the nobles, different factions emerged which competed for the power. Jalaluddin headed a powerful group. As his power increased many nobles joined him. The group caused the murder of Kaiqubad and his body was thrown into Jamuna River. As this angered the nobility in Delhi Jalaluddin Firoz avoided Delhi and crowned himself as Sultan at Kilokhari palace in A.D.1290.

At the age of seventy Jalaluddin Khilji proved to be an unsuccessful Sultan. In addition to his unpopularity, he was ineffective. The pacific and conciliatory policy even toward his opponents undermined his authority thoroughly. For instance, Malik Chhajju, a nephew of Balban rose in revolt, and marched towards Delhi, but was defeated by the army of Jalaluddin. The sultan pardoned him instead of punishing him. A large number of thugs were arrested and brought before the Sultan. He forgave them and sent them back to Bengal. Consequently, there was a break down of law and order in Bengal. Even Jalaluddin Khilji's attempts to conquer new territories proved to be a failure. Jalaluddin led an expedition against Ranthambhor in A.D.1290 but gave it up under the pretext that he was not prepared to shed even a drop of Muslim blood. However, his forces inflicted a crushing defeat on invading Mongols and some of them who stayed behind in India came to be known as New Mussalmans.. Jalaluddin's nephew and son-in-law, Alauddin Khilji was brought up with love and care and was appointed by him as the Amir-i-Tuzk and later as the Ariz-i-Mumalik. He was the most important general in the Sultan's army.

In A.D.1292, with Jalal-ud-din's blessings, he invaded Malwa and captured the town of Bhilsa. Alauddin was given the governorship of Kara and later on as a token of appreciation for his victory over the ruler of Malwa was complemented with the governorship of Awadh . He led another successful expedition against Rama Chandra Deva of Devagiri. From Devagiri he brought huge booty which he was not ready to share with Jalaluddin Khilji. The booty only

increased the ambition of Alauddin Khilji. Henceforth, he dreamt of ascending the throne of Delhi for which he was ready to do anything.

Jalauddin Khilji

Blinded by ambition, Alauddin Khilji planned to kill Jalaluddin. He sent his brother Ulugh Khan to invite him to Kara. Ulugh Khan persuaded Jalaluddin saying that Alauddin was keen to hand over the booty but was afraid to come to Delhi. Jalaluddin was forewarned about the intentions of Alauddin but he disregarded them. When he proceeded to Kara, he along with his followers were treacherously and brutally murdered by Alauddin Khilji. Then Alauddin entered Delhi and proclaimed himself as the Sultan. With his reign, begins what may be called the imperial Sultanate, during which the Sultans of Delhi, extended their authority either directly or indirectly over the Indian Peninsula.

Military

Ambitious and supremely confident, Alauddin dreamt of becoming a world conqueror like Alexander, the Great. In order to pay greater attention to his aim he needed to suppress rebellions against his authority. New Mussalmans, the Mongol converts to Islam, mutinied against him. Nusrat Khan, his general attacked and killed many of them. To teach them a lesson even women and children were mercilessly slaughtered. Rebellions by his relatives such as the one by Akat Khan, son of Alauddin's brother alerted him of the danger to his authority.

Unhesitatingly but brutally he put down the rebellions and eliminated the potential threats. Importantly he infused fear into the hearts of the nobles. Furthermore, he analysed the recurrent rebellions and came up with certain conclusions. He concluded that the inefficient spy system; use of wine; social interactions and intermarriages among nobles and excess of wealth encouraged the people to rebel against the authority. Consequently, he passed a series of ordinances which reduced the wealth in the hands of the nobles. He also reorganized the spy system. An army of spies was created and appointed at the houses of nobles and in all offices, important towns and villages. The system was very effective in checking the rebellious activities of the opponents. In order to reduce the wealth among the nobles and landlords he withdrew many concessions which were enjoyed by them. He also imposed new taxes and levies and these measures were enforced vigorously. Zia-ud-din Barani commented on the effectiveness of these measures: "the chaudhris, khuts and muqqadams were not able to ride on horse-back, to find weapons, to get fine clothes or to indulge in betel" In addition to these measures, he raised a strong standing army. The minister of army directly recruited the soldiers and they were paid fixed salaries from royal treasury. They were supplied with horses, arms and other equipment by the state. The descriptive roll of soldiers was maintained and the horses were branded to

prevent malpractices. After strengthening his position, Alauddin first conquered a major portion of Northern India. Then he turned his attention towards the south and practically brought the major portion of India under his sway. In doing so, he employed able commanders like Ulugh Khan, Nusrat Khan and Malik Kafur besides leading the army whenever necessary. As a result of rapid expansion his reign has been characterised as the “imperial period of the Sultanate.

Conquest of North India

Initially he concentrated on the conquest of the unconquered territories in the north. First to gain his attention was Gujarat. In A.D.1297, he sent an army under the command of Ulugh Khan and Nasrat Khan, who overran Gujarat and captured Kamaladevi, the beautiful queen of Raja Karnedeva II who was the ruler of Baghela. Subsequently the captive Kamaladevi became the favourite wife of the Sultan. The army returned to Delhi with rich booty and a young eunuch Malik Kafur, who later on became Alauddin’s greatest general. Thus Gujarat became a part of the Delhi Sultanate. Alauddin next turned his attention toward Ranthambhor, ruled by Hamir Deva Chauhan. Hamir Deva gave shelter to “the New Mussalmans” who subsequently rebelled against Alauddin. Again, he sent Ulughkhan and Nasrat Khan to humble Hamir Deva. When their army was repulsed, Sultan himself led the army and with great difficulty captured the fort after one year’s siege (A.D.1301) by seducing Ran Mal, the prime minister of Hamir Deva. Mewar became the next target for Alauddin Khilji. The Sultan organised an expedition against **Chittoor, the Capital of Mewar**, ruled by Rana Ratna Singh. The Sultan, as it is said, was attracted by the beauty of **Padmini**, who was the queen of Rana. Alauddin wanted to secure her at any cost. Some modern writers do not accept this story. After a brave defence for five months, Chittoor fell into the hands of the Sultan. The Rajput women including Padmini saved their honour by performing **Jauhar** a practice in which the females immolated themselves to protect them from pollution and captivity. Thus **Chittoor was conquered in A.D.1303 and was renamed Khizrabad** ,after his eldest son. After the conquest of Mewar Alauddin sent an army to Malwa. Rai Mahlak Deva, ruler of Malwa defended it strongly but was defeated in A.D.1305. Subsequently, Alauddin captured Ujjain and Chanderi. Later Mandu was also captured. These victories made Alauddin practically the lord of the whole of Northern India.

Conquest of Deccan

The enormous success in North India emboldened Alauddin Khilji to attempt the conquest of Deccan. The prevailing situation in the Deccan was very favourable to him. Deccan was then divided into four wellmarked kingdoms. They were Yadava kingdom under

Ramchandra Deva who ruled from Devagiri; Telengana with its capital at Warangal being ruled by Prataparudradeva I of the Kakatiya dynasty. Vira Bhalla III with his capital at Dwarasamudra controlled the territory which is included in the present Karnataka State and far south was under the control of Pandya king Maravarman Kulasekara. In addition to these major kingdoms, there were few minor principalities under local chiefs. Notable feature of the Deccan polity was the internal divisions and total lack of unity. It made the conquest of Deccan easier for Alauddin. Malik Kafur with the title Malik Naib(lieutenant) played a critical role in the conquest of Deccan. The Yadava Kingdom of Devagiri was under Ramachandra I. Even before Alauddin became Sultan, he led an expedition to Devagiri and returned with an immense booty. In A.D.1307, he despatched an expedition under the leadership of Malik Kafur against Ramachandra I for the non-payment of tribute and for giving asylum to Rai Karnadeva II, the fugitive ruler of Gujarat. Malik Kafur forced Ramachandra I to sue for peace. He was allowed to continue as the ruler when he agreed to pay the tribute regularly. Rai Karnadeva's daughter was taken to Delhi and was married to Khizr Khan, Alauddin's eldest son. In A.D.1309, Alauddin sent an expedition against Prataparudradeva I of the Kakatiya dynasty. Again, it was headed by Malik Kafur. Two principal aims of the expedition was to acquire the vast wealth of the kingdom and to make its ruler acknowledge the authority of Alauddin Khilji. Ramachandra I, the Yadava ruler assisted Malik Kafur in this expedition. Unable to resist the invaders, Prataparudradeva I was compelled to surrender and purchase peace by offering an immense booty of money, jewels, elephants and horses. After these successes **Malik Kafur was sent to conquer the rest of South India.**

In A.D.1310, he sacked the kingdom of Vira Ballala and forced him to pay an enormous war indemnity. Later he was permitted to continue as the vassal of Delhi. Kafur plundered some of the temples and obtained vast quantity of gold, silver, jewels and pearls. Malik Kafur then proceeded to the Pandyan Kingdom. He took advantage of the war of succession between Sundara Pandya, legitimate son of Pandya ruler Kulasekara and Vira Pandya, the illegitimate but a favourite son. When Sundara Pandya sought the help of Mailk Kafur, he came to Madurai in A.D.1311. As Vira Pandya deserted the city, Kafur plundered it. He marched as far as Rameswaram, where he destroyed the great temple and built a mosque instead. After appointing a Muslim governor at Madurai, he returned to Delhi (A.D.1311) with rich spoils. At the end of these expeditions, entire south India acknowledged the authority of Alauddin Khilji. In A.D.1312, Kafur again marched to Devagiri to chastise Ramachandradeva's son Sankaradeva, who withheld the tribute promised by his father. Sankaradeva was defeated and killed. This was the last expedition of Kafur. Thus the major

portion of Southern India accepted the sovereignty of Alauddin. The policy of Alauddin toward the kingdoms in the Deccan was different from his policy towards North Indian kingdoms. While he annexed the kingdoms of the north and placed them under his governors, in the south, he allowed the Hindu kings to retain their kingdoms on condition of acknowledging his supremacy and paying annual tribute. He wanted money for the maintenance of his standing army. Moreover, he realized the impossibility of maintaining effective control over the distant provinces in the south. Though he was greatly successful against Indian rulers he had to, like his predecessors, face the danger of the Mongol invasions. The repeated raids by the Mongols reduced the finances of the Sultanate and in one particular raid Alauddin himself was forced to take shelter in the fort of Siri. Fortunately, for the Sultan, the Mongols withdrew after plundering Delhi and its neighbourhood. This dangerous experience compelled the Sultan to adopt and complete the North West Frontier policy of Balban. He repaired the old forts and constructed new ones.

Administrative Reforms

The Khilji dynasty, led by Sultan Alauddin Khilji, ruled from 1290 to 1320. Alauddin Khilji, in particular, is known for several administrative reforms during his reign:

In administering the Sultanate, Alauddin was not ready to accept any interference. In fact, he had the courage to challenge the religious leaders who were playing an important role in the administration till then. He openly declared that, to safeguard his power and prestige to the state, he would act without any guidance of the **Ulemas**. In conversation with one of the religious leaders, he said, "Whatever I think to be for the good of the state, or suitable for the emergency I decree."

Centralization of Power: Alauddin centralized power in his own hands. He reduced the influence of the nobility and established a highly centralized administrative system.

Military Reforms: He instituted significant reforms in the military, creating a powerful standing army. He introduced the "dagh" (branding) system, which involved branding horses for better military control and management.

Market Reforms: Alauddin was also known for his economic policies. He established state control over the markets, fixing prices of commodities to ensure stability and prevent inflation.

Taxation System: Alauddin introduced a system of taxation known as the "Zabt" system. Under this system, taxes were assessed based on the actual produce of land rather than its fertility. This helped in increasing revenue for the state.

Decline of Khilji Dynasty

With a large army at his disposal, Alauddin suppressed lawlessness. He centralized all authority and kept all his powers in his own hands. Under him “the sultanate reached the highest watermark of despotism, the like of which had been unknown in India for ages”. The over centralization, repression and espionage system paralysed the structure of the government and undermined his authority. Moreover, the humiliated chiefs waited for an opportunity to strike a blow on Alauddin. Everywhere, there was discontent. As the Sultan grew older and weaker, the system began to collapse. His authority ceased to command respect. He became furious as he saw the work of his lifetime being wiped out before his own eyes. In the midst of these distressing circumstances, he died in A.D.1316.

SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Analyze the significance and impact of the token currency introduced by Muhammad bin Tughlaq in the Delhi Sultanate.
.....
2. Discuss its economic and administrative implications for the Delhi Sultanate.
.....

UNIT II

Problems of a Centralized State: Ghiyasuddin and Muhammad bin Tughlaq- Administrative and Political Measures - Economic and Agrarian Reforms - Token Currency Transfer of Capital-Firoz Tughlaq- Economic reforms- Military Expeditions - Impact of Sayyids and Lodis; Administration under the Delhi Sultanate.

Objectives

- ❖ Identify the challenges faced by centralized states under Ghiyasuddin and Muhammad bin Tughlaq.
- ❖ Understand the introduction of token currency and its impact on the economy during the Tughlaq period.
- ❖ Evaluate the impact of the Sayyids and Lodis on the Delhi Sultanate's administration.

RISE OF TUGHLUQS DYNASTY

Establishment of Tughluq Dynasty

Ghiyas-Ud-Din Tughluq

Soon after his accession to the throne in 1320 A.D. Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq set himself to the task of keeping the administration of the State in order. The finances of the state was in a bad condition. Therefore he wanted to plug the loopholes in the land revenue administration first. He ordered for the confiscation of unlawful grants of lands and **jagirs**. He appointed honest governors in the provinces. He reduced the land tax from half of the gross produce to one-tenth or one-eleventh of the gross production. He ordered officials to be lenient and sympathetic to the tax-payers while collecting taxes from them. Since, agriculture was the main industry of the people, he encouraged it. Many barren and ravaged lands were brought under cultivation. He disallowed the system of farming where the free labour was practised. Under Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq many canals were dug to provide irrigation facilities to the agriculturists. Gardens were laid out and forts were built to provide shelter for farmers against plunderers and dacoits. The Sultan introduced reforms in other branches of administration like justice and police, so that order and security prevailed in the country. He devised a system of poor relief irrespective of religion. A postal system was set up which would facilitate letters to reach at a distance of 200 miles only in twenty-four hours. He patronised Islamic religious institutions. Literary men like Amir Khusrav, his poet laureate, received from the state a pension of one

thousand **tankas** per mensem. Another literature, Hassan Dehlvi was also patronised by the Sultan. Ghiyas-ud- din evinced keen interest in architecture. He built the city of Thghlakabad near Delhi.

Army and Conquests

At the same time Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq pursued the Khilji policy of military domination and imperialism. He maintained a very strong army. He revived the practice of descriptive rolls of soldiers and the branding of horses. The territories in the north-west were secured and strengthened by means of forts and forces against the ever possible menace from the Mongol invasions. In the Deccan, the Kakatiya ruler Prataparudradeva II of Warangal after the death of Ala-ud-din, refused to pay the tribute agreed up on to the Delhi government. So, Ghiyas-ud-din sent an expedition against Warangal in 1321 A.D. under his eldest son and heir-apparent, Fakhr-60 ud-din Muhammad Jauna Khan. But the Kakatiya ruler put up a strong resistance and the Sultan's forces returned to Delhi without achieving success. Again in 1322, under the command of Jauna Khan, a second expedition was directed against the Kakatiya ruler. This was met with success. After a desperate fight, the Kakatiya ruler surrendered, with his family and nobles, to the enemy and Warangal thereafter was renamed as Sultanpur. The allegiance of Bengal to the Delhi Sultanate was always loose. A civil war in Bengal among the sons of Shams-ud-din Firuz Shah who died in 1322 A.D., led Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq to intervene in the affairs of that province. Of the five brothers, it was Ghiyas-ud-din Bahadur who assumed big and ascended the throne defeating his rival brother Nasir- ud-din. Nasir-ud-din sought help from the Delhi Sultan who promised to come to his rescue. Consequently the Sultan marched with a force to Bengal. Ghiyas-ud-din Bahadur was defeated and arrested. A portion of Bengal was annexed and in the remaining portion, Nasir-ud-din was made king on the condition of his having recognised the imperial sovereignty of the Delhi Sultan. On his way back to Delhi, Ghiyas-ud-din reduced of submission the Rajah of Tirhut, which became henceforth a fief of the Delhi Sultanate.

Estimate

Thus Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq proved himself an able ruler and to a greater extent he helped in improving the morality and efficiency of the people around him. In spite of his good qualities of head and heart, on returning from Bengal he died in February-March, 1325 from the collapse of a wooden structure. Prince Jauna declared himself as the Sultan three days after his father's death in 1325, under the title of Muhammad bin Tughluq.

Muhammad Bin Tughluq (1325 A.D - 1351 A.D)

Succeeding his father, Muhammad bin Tughluq ascended the Delhi Sultanate in 1325 A.D. Like Ala-ud-din khilji, he lavishly distributed gold and silver coins to the people of Delhi besides honouring a number of nobles with titles. Zia-ud-din Barni, one of the contemporary writers of the period says that Muhammad bin Tughluq was an extraordinary personality and one of the most “learned and accomplished scholars of his time”. He was proficient in different branches of learning like logic, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and the physical sciences. Himself a brilliant calligraphist and he was also skilled in dialectics. In his private life he was a man of discipline devoid of any vices. He was humble and generous. According to his critics, like Ala-ud-din Khilji he was irreligious and did not listen to the advice of the devout Mussalmans. In fact, his political conduct was based on his own experience of the world. It is also true that he was “hasty and hot-tempered he must have his own way and would not tolerate opposition.” Thus he was a “mixture of opposites” and “a poor judge of human nature” which peculiar nature of his had even turned some of his noble aims unfulfilled.

Reforms and the Doab Tragedy

Having been endowed with a keen intellect he brought in some reforms in the administration of the state. He restored the compilation of a register of the land revenue and made the revenue department function efficiently. But soon he tried an ill-advised financial experiment in Doab, the rich and fertile plain between the Ganges and the Jamuna. To increase his military resources and to organise the administration on an efficient basis, Muhammad bin Tughluq had increased the rate of taxation and revived and created some additional cesses on the populace of this fertile region. When compared to the rate of taxation in vogue during the reign of Ala-ud-din, this was not excessive. But, the people of the region had experienced the hardship of a terrible famine that visited the land about the same time. The state did not relax its demands in view of the famine. Instead of resorting to relief measures to mitigate the sufferings of the peasants in the Doab, the revenue officers of the state exacted taxes with rigour. On the other hand, the Sultan was not indifferent to the woes of the famine-stricken people. He took efforts to advance loans to the agriculturists for sinking wells and brought the uncultivated lands under the plough by means of direct state management and by extending financial support. But all these came too late. As a result of famine, the agriculture in Doab suffered terribly and the impoverished peasantry leaving their agricultural holdings and migrated to other places in search of jobs and livelihood. Angered by the migration and non-payment of taxes due to the state, the Sultan took unsympathetic and inhuman methods to

bring back the reluctant ryots to their work. Some of them protested and perished. Some others fled away and organised into militant groups to challenge the Sultan.

Transfer of capital: A Miscalculated Step

Yet another ill-calculated step which ultimately caused immense suffering to the people was Muhammad bin Tughluq's decision to transfer the capital in 1327-1329 from Delhi to Devagiri. Devagiri, after 62 having brought under the control of the Delhi Sultanate was renamed by him as Daulatabad. The project of the Sultan was originally sound. A vast kingdom covering nearly three fifths of Hindustan need a capital situated of a central place and such a kingdom demanded close attention from the Sultan. Further the new capital was also safe from Mongol invasions, unlike Delhi which was constantly threatened by them. The Sultan also did his best to make the new capital endowed with all the facilities for the intending immigrants. The Sultan built a number of beautiful buildings and constructed a spacious road and planted trees on both sides of it for their convenience. A regular postal service between Delhi and Daulatabad was also being established. In all this the Sultan acted reasonable. But when the people of Delhi, out of sentimental attachment to the land of their birth refused The Sultan was harsh on them and had gone to the extent of punishing those who refused to obey his order. Added to this was their long journey of 700 miles which brought them considerable sufferings. Tired of long journey, many of them died on the way and those who reached Daulatabad felt like refugees in a strange land. Such were the disastrous results of the Sultan's miscalculated plan. The Sultan after having noticed the sad plight of immigrants reshifted the court to Delhi and ordered a return march of the people. But very few survived to return and Delhi had lost its former prosperity and grandeur. Ibn Batutah, a contemporary writer found Delhi in 1334 A.D deserted in some places bearing the marks of ruin. However, realising his folly, Muhammad bin Tughluq, after some time, brought learned men and gentlemen, tradesmen, and landowners into the city of Delhi from certain towns in his territory, and made them reside there.

Reforms in Coins

Muhammad bin Tughluq in spite of his follies, is remembered for his important monetary experiments. He remodeled the coinage with definite divisions and values thereof. A new gold piece, called the Dinar weighing 200 grains and Adali a silver coin weighting 140 grains were issued by him. But the most daring of his experiments was the issue of a token currency in copper coins between 1329 and 1330 A.D. This became legal tender like gold and silver Coins. By fixing the value of the copper coins the Sultan had a plan to fill his treasury with the gold and silver coins which would help in increasing the resources for his plans of

conquest and administration. But in contrast to his expectations, this measure failed for two reasons. Firstly, the people could not understand the significance of the measure for the state. Secondly, the Sultan did not make the issue of the copper coins monopoly of the State and failed to take proper precautions against forgery. The result was that large numbers of counterfeit coins obtained circulation. Every goldsmith struck copper coins in his workshop. Every house of a Hindu or Muslim turned into a mint. From the provincial heads down to the village headmen and landowners minted copper coins and with these they paid their tribute and purchased everything and led a happy and comfortable life; but the treasury was filled with these copper coins and as a result, the state was impoverished. Trade and industries were in consequence severely affected and there was confusion everywhere in the kingdom. The Sultan recognized his error and repealed his order making copper coins in circulation, four years after the introduction of the currency, but not before the entire stock of gold and silver coins were paid for the cheap copper coins by the state. Thus the motive behind this venture ended with the sacrifice of public funds on a large scale.

Mongol Danger and North West Frontier Policy

On the other hand, the Delhi Sultanate under the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq was not free from external danger. In 1328-1329 A.D. the Mongols under Tarmashirin Khan invaded India. He after destroying the plains of the Punjab reached the outskirts of Delhi. The change of capital to Daulatabad and the unprotected north-west frontier induced the Mongols to indulge in this design. According to one version that Muhammad bin Tughluq defeated Tarmashirin and drove him out of the country. But according to Ferishta, the Sultan instead of resisting them brought the Mongol invader off by paying large presents in gold and jewels. It was considered an act of weakness and cowardice and rendered him all the more unpopular. Like Ala-ud-din, Muhammad bin Tughluq had dreams of becoming the Sultan of the whole world. He had an ambitious design of conquering Khurasan and Iraq and mobilised a huge army for this purpose. Zia-ud-din Barni writes that 3, 70,000 men were enrolled and kept for the purpose of war. They were paid by the state for one full year. To undertake this invasion the Indian-trained ordinary soldiers could not prove to be a match for the hardy hordes of central Asia. There were also geographical and transport difficulties to pass through the Himalayas. Further the Sultan was not even safe and secure in his kingdom. His authority was yet to be established in the Deccan. His reluctant allies, the Mongols and the Sultan of Egypt were not dependable in his projected invasion. At last, the Sultan abandoned it, probably for lack of money. "His treasure, which is true source of political power, was expended".⁶⁴ Muhammad bin Tughluq had a fantastic idea of conquering Tibet

and China. Evidently the expedition was directed against some troublesome and disobedient tribals in the Kumaun - Garhwal region with the object of bringing them under the control of the Delhi Sultan. A large army was sent from Delhi under the command of an able general in 1337-1338 A.D. Though the expedition was successful, but at a big loss of men and material. Only a few soldiers returned to Delhi to relate the story of the tragic fate of the expedition. Its immediate objective was however achieved as the tribals came to terms and agreed to pay tribute to the Delhi Sultan.

Rebellions Everywhere

But the cumulative effect of all the fantastic projects of Muhammad bin Tughluq proved disastrous for him. His treasury became empty. Frequent outbreak of famines added to the misery of the people. There were popular revolts and rebellion from the nobles rocked the empire. Baha-ud-din gurshasp, close relative of his and fief-holder of Sagar near the Deccan, rebelled against him in 1326-1327 A.D. But it was put down with a heavy hand by the Sultan. The rebel was killed mercilessly. A more serious rebellion, which broke out in the next year was that of Bahram Aiba who held the fiefs of Uch, Sind and Multan. As in the case of first rebellion, the Sultan inflicted a crushing defeat on the rebel and killed him mercilessly. From 1335 A.D. the fortunes of Muhammad bin Tughluq began to wane and his authority was to be openly defied by the Hindu chiefs and Muslim governors of provinces. They even found themselves encouraged to assert their independence. By 1335 A.D. Jalal-ud-din Ahsan Shah, the governor of Madurai, proclaimed himself independent and struck coins in his own name. The Sultan's attempt to subdue Madurai failed, because of an outbreak of cholera in his camp. So, he had to retreat to Daulatabad. Thus came into existence the independent Muslim kingdom of Madurai, which lasted till 1377-1378 A.D. In the north Fakhr-ud-din Mubarak Shah, the governor of Bengal declared himself independent and struck coins in his own name in 1338 A.D. Since the Sultan of Delhi was preoccupied with other troubles then, he could do nothing to subdue the ruler of Bengal. A series of rebellions broke out in other parts of the Empire worried the Sultan. The Most formidable of all was the rebellion of Ain-ul-mulk, the governor of oudh and Zafarabad in 1340-1341 A.D. Although most of the rebellions were put down by the end of the year 1342 A.D, but they all very badly affected the resources of the state besides exhausting the energy of the Sultan. In this extremely embarrassing situation, the Sultan sought religious recognition from the Abbasid Khalifah of Egypt, to strengthen his wanning authority. After getting consent from the Khalifah, Muhammad bin Tughluq caused his name to be replaced by that of the Khalifah on the Khutha and the coins. But his object was not fulfilled. "In fact no one had

questioned the Sultan's title to the throne, but it was his policy and measures which were not to the liking of his subjects". **Last Days** The Sultan was faced with serious difficulties in almost all parts of his kingdom. When the Sultan proceeded to quell a disturbance in one part, another broke out in a different quarter. While thus occupied in chasing the rebels in Sindh, he was attacked with fever and died on 20th march, 1351 A.D. "Thus the Sultan was relieved of his people and the people of the Sultan". Stanley Lanepoole aptly observes. "With the best intentions, excellent ideas, but no balance or patience, no sense of proportion, Muhammad bin Tughluq was a transcendent failure".

Firuz Tughluq (1351 - 1388 A.D.)

Firuz Tughluq was the first cousin of Muhammad bin Tughluq. His mother was a Rajput lady. In spite of this, he was an orthodox muslim and also very regular in Islamic practice. Muhammad bin Tughluq liked his cousin and it is said that before his death, he had nominated Firuz as his successor. Above everything else, in a state of chaos, confusion and rebellious situation that followed the death of Muhammad bin Tughluq, the nobles urged Firuz to ascend the throne and save the dispirited army and disorganized administration from destruction. Submitted to the choice of the nobles he was proclaimed king in March 1351. It clearly demonstrated the power of the nobles in the selection of nobles. But attempts made by his relatives to challenge his throne were nipped in the bud itself and the majority of the nobles rallied behind Firuz Tughluq. The task before Firuz Tughluq was indeed a difficult one. Politically he had to consolidate himself and to keep the people in good humour the administrative wing of the empire should be turned efficient and made people friendly.

Conquests

In the east Shams-ud-din who declared himself independent was engaged in extending the frontiers of his kingdom threatened the Delhi Sultanate. Firuz Tughluq thereupon marched with a force of 70000 horses to Bengal in 1353 A.D. The forces of Sultan defeated the ruler of Bengal but the Sultan instead of annexing it returned to Delhi in 1354 A.D. According to one version the Sultan returned to Delhi, being moved by the sufferings of women in the besieged fort. According to another version, he apprehended disaster at the commencement of the rainy season. Whatever might have been the cause of his retreat, "the invasion only resulted in the confession of weakness". Firuz Tughluq made another attempt to reduce Bengal to submission in the course of a few years. With the help of the rival of the ruler of Bengal, emboldened by the death of the brave and able ruler, Shams-ud-din Iliyas Sha, Firuz marched against Sikandar Sha the then ruler of Bengal with a large army in 1359 A.D. But on his way he halted for six months at Zafarabad on the Gomthi river and founded in its

neighbourhood the city of Jaunpur in Memory of his cousin Muhammad bin Tughluq. But the Bengal Troops bravely defended their stronghold and Firuz could not achieve victory over his enemy. A peace was soon concluded on favourable terms for Sikander Sha. Thus the second Bengal expedition was also a failure one and it once again exhibited the Sultan's weak and vacillating nature. On his way back to Delhi, Firuz Tughluq marched against Jajnagar (Modern Orissa) whose ruler Rai fled and then submitted himself to the Sultan promising to pay annual tribute. Thus the Sultan after undergoing great difficulties, returned to Delhi after an absence of nearly 18 months. Firuz Tughluq attempted an expedition against Nagarkot when it slipped out of Delhi control in 1337 A.D. This expedition is interesting for two reasons. The Sultan while besieging the fort wasted six long months. But his long stay had helped him locate about 300 volumes of Sanskrit books on various subjects, preserved in the temple of Jwalamukhi. Immediately, he sought the help of a court-poet named Aazz-ud-din Khalid Khani to translate them into Persian under the title, *Dalail-i-Firuz Shahi*. In 1361-1362 A.D. the Sultan wanted to subdue Jam Babaniya the ruler of Sind, who refused to recognize his sovereignty with a big army. He attacked the ruler in Tattah, the capital of Sindh. The ruler also offered a stiff resistance to the Delhi troops. The Delhi army suffered greatly mainly due to the outbreak of famine and epidemic disease. The Sultan while trying to gather fresh reinforcements from Gujarat wasted too much of valuable time and energy. However he managed to attack the Sindians again 1363 and forced them to sue for peace. Finally the ruler of Sind agrees to pay an annual tribute and acknowledged allegiance to his authority. But his expeditions to Sind like his Bengal campaigns, "revealed his lack of military ability and tactical skill". Fortunately, there were no Mongol inroads during the reign of Firuz Tughluq, otherwise, the country would have engulfed in grave danger under this weak Sultan at Delhi. Besides, Firuz did not make any attempt to bring the Deccan under the control of the Delhi Sultanate. "He was resolved never more to make war upon men of Muhammeden faith". Firuz Tughluq at times behaved like a religious bigot and many a time styled himself as the deputy of the Khalifah of Egypt and on his coins his own name was associated with that of the Khalifah. He tried to conduct the affairs of the state according to the theocratic principles of his faith in vain, because, it was the rule of the Muslim minority.

Reforms

Firuz in order to enlist the support of the nobles, he revived the Jagir system which was abolished by Ala-ud-din Khilji. He also granted and farmed out the state lands to the nobles and thus strengthened his position. But in due course of time, as in the case of choosing the Sultan, the running of the central government was also to be vested in the hands of the

nobles. But with all the defects, Firuz Tughluq during his long reign of about thirty-seven years had done some good for his subjects. He abolished a few taxes and relieved people from unjust burden of some cesses. He allowed the imposition of four kinds of taxes sanctioned by the Quran (i) the Kharaj or tenth from cultivated lands (ii) the Zakat or alms (iii) the jizya or poll-tax on the non-Muslims/Hindus and other heretics (iv) and the Khams or one-fifth of the spoil and of the produce of mines. He also levied an irrigation tax (sharb) at the rate of 10 per cent of the produce of the fields. To facilitate free circulation of merchandise (goods and commodities) from one part of the country to another, the Sultan abolished certain oppressive octroi duties to the Merchants. Corrupt revenue officers and tax-collectors were punished. These measures were indeed beneficial for trade and agriculture. The prices of the articles of common consumption also became low. The Sultan also took efforts to construct a system of irrigation canals which contributed towards the improvement of agriculture. He ordered for the construction four important canals. (a) one from the Sutlej to Ghaghar, it was about 96 miles (b) the longest and the most important canal which carried the waters of the Jamuna to the city of Hissar; it was 150 miles long (c) another canal that started from the neighbourhood of 68 Madari and Sirmur hills and connected with Hansi (d) the fourth canal ran from the Ghaghra to the newly established town of Firozabad. Besides the Sultan encouraged the reclamation of waste lands on a large scale for religious and educational purposes. Firuz Tughluq's building and gardening activities indirectly benefited the people. He had a great passion for building new cities and renaming the old ones. He founded the town Jaunpur, Fatehabad, Hissar, Firuzpur near Firozabad near Delhi. He constructed or restored a number of mosques, palaces, sarais, (rest-houses) reservoirs, hospitals, tombs, baths, monumental pillars and bridges. The Sultan laid out 1,200 new gardens near Delhi and restored 30 old gardens of Ala-ud-din. He also removed two inscribed monoliths of Asoka to Delhi. The chief architect of the state was Malik Ghazi Sahana who was helped by Abdul Hug. Firuz Tughluq tried to make the judicial system more humane than before. He reformed the penal code. Before him, capital punishment and tortures were a common mode of punishment. But Firuz considering such disastrous punishments as Un-Islamic, abolished them. These were done for the Muslims only. In cities and places near Delhi where the new laws of the Sultan were enforced, the Hindu law-breakers were severely punished with and at the grass roots level where the local traditions were in vogue in the dispensation of justice, the Hindus were not affected. The Sultan by his orders had setup at all important places several courts and in every court there were two judicial officers, Mufti and Qazi. The Mufti expounded the law and the Qazi delivered the judgment. Some benevolent measures were also adopted by Firuz Tughluq for the general welfare of the people.

He tried to solve the unemployment problem by starting an Employment Bureau and provide employment for as many as possible after undertaking a through enquiry into each man's merit and capacity. He further established a Charity Bureau (Diwan-i- khairat), through which money and gifts were distributed for the marriage of girls of needy Muslims, chiefly of the middle class. The Muslim widows and orphans also sought help from this bureau and derived benefit. He founded a Charitable Hospital (Dar-ul-Shafa) where medicines and diet were supplied by efficient physicians at the cost of the state. Firuz Tughluq did not issue new coins but kept the old ones in circulation. But he introduced two fractions of mixed copper and silver coinage - half and quarter jitals, described as adha (half) and bikh respectively. These coins in particular had facilitated the transactions of the common people. But much of their utility was spoiled by minting fake coins by frauds. The army of the state was organised on a feudal basis. The regular soldiers of the army received grants of lands for their comfortable living whereas the irregulars were paid direct from the royal treasury. The other category of soldiers were paid their salaries by way of assigning lands to them against a certain payment. This had led to lot of abuse of power. The state army in general consisted of eighty or ninety thousand cavalry which was also supplemented with soldiers supplied by the nobles in times of need. But the Sultan had seriously impaired the efficiency of the army by instituting the system of "hereditary succession" in military service, irrespective of any consideration of fitness.

Slavery

Sultans of Delhi, it was Firuz Tughluq who was the first to organise the institution of slavery. The state maintained a separate establishment for the purpose. The fief-holders and nobles in different parts of the kingdom made presents of slaves to the Sultan, for which corresponding deductions were made from the taxes payable by them to the government. The state imparted education to slaves both in religion and technical ventures and encouraged them to take up jobs of their interest. Owing to the Sultan's patronage, the number of slaves greatly increased to about 1,80,000. In the Sultan's palace alone there were 40,000 slaves. Thus the institution of slavery emptied the central treasury to a greater extent. Firuz Tughluq like his predecessors maintained a magnificent and luxurious court. There were also thirty-six royal establishments, each having a separate staff of officers to look after its affairs. The expenses for the maintenance of the court and the house-hold establishments of the Sultan were also considerable.

Estimate

As was the case with most of the Sultans of Delhi, the last days of Firuz Tughluq was not at all peaceful. His trusted minister Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul died and a confidant Zafarkan, the governor of Gujarat also passed away. To cap it all, his eldest son Fathkhan died in 1374. His another son Muhammad Khan not only proved himself an incompetent contender for the throne, but also turned a trouble maker. These gravely affected both his mind and body. At last, the Sultan nominated his grand son Tughluq Khan to succeed him, before he died in September, 1388 70 A.D. In the words of Moreland: "The death of Firuz marked the end of an epoch. In the course of a few years the kingdom broke up and during the first half of fifteenth century there was no longer a single predominant Muslim power in India." However the contemporary Indian writers are unanimous in admiring the virtues of Firuz Shah.

The Successors of Firuz Shah

After Firuz Tughluq the dynasty fell into chaos. After him five successors came on the throne Delhi. Tughluq Shah who assumed the title of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq Shah II became the ruler of Delhi in 1388 A.D. Not before the lapse of one year he fell a easy victim to a conspiracy hatched by some officers and nobles in the court. He was succeeded by his cousin Abu Baqr, as the Sultan who soon was challenged by Nasir- ud-din Muhammad, his relative and was deposed in 1390 A.D. Owing to various difficulties, Nasir-ud-din Muhammad could not continue to hold the office, and he died in 1394 A.D. Then came the brief reign of his son, Humayun who also died within three months of his coming to power. The next and the last ruler of the Tughluq dynasty was Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, the youngest son of Nasir-ud-din Muhammad. Timur's invasion came during his rule. He died in 1413 A.D. All the successor of Firuz were weaklings and incompetent. They were puppets in the hands of ambitions nobles. The successors of Firuz had to encounter a series of civil wars. "These told heavily upon the prestige and resources of the state, with the result that its authority began to be challenged almost everywhere by the Muslim governors and the Hindu Chiefs".

The Invasion of Timur

The Chaotic condition of the kingdom of Delhi facilitated Amir Timur, one of the most terrible military leaders known to history, invaded India in 1398 A.D. Amir Timur, son of Amir Turghay, Chief of the Gurkan branch of the Barlas Turks, was born at Kesh in Transoxiana in 1336 A.D. He became the ruler of Samarqand in 1369. He was a very ambitious ruler. To begin with, he conquered many countries in central Asia. After having conquered Persia, Afghanistan and Mesopotamia he turned his attention towards India. The

wealth of India had naturally excited the temptation of this invader. Besides, the disintegration of the Delhi kingdom afforded him a suitable opportunity to invade. Though he was a Sunni Mussalman, but not a religious man to the extent to invade, a foreign land. It appears that he made a declaration to spread Islam in the land of infidels in order to inspire his Muslim soldiers to fight courageously. Moreover Timur had a very strong army. 71 Before marching himself to India, Timur sent his grandson Pir Muhammad with a force in 1398. He conquered Uch and Multan and overran the territories of Dipalpur and Pakpattan. He reached as far as the Sutlej and waited on the banks of the river for his grandfather, Timur. In August 1391 A.D. Timur marched towards India with a big force of 82,000 cavalry. Having captured the territories of the Jhelum and after crushing the Khokars, he joined his waiting grandson. The combined forces of Amir Timur and Pir Muhammad, after capturing several places on the way and massacring many of their inhabitants, Amir Timur advanced to the outskirts of Delhi by the end of December and butchered there about one lakh adult male captives in cold blood. Sultan Mahmud, the then Sultan of Delhi and his Minister Mallu Iqbal offered stiff resistance to the invader in vain. Having overpowered the Sultan who fled away from the battlefield, Timur entered the city of Delhi which was plundered and looted for several days. Many of the inhabitants of this city were either brutally massacred by the ferocious Turki soldiers and many of them were taken captives.

The artisans among them were sent to Samarqand to build there the famous Friday mosque which Timur himself had designed. After conquering Delhi, Timur marched towards Meerut and defeated Iliyas who resisted his advance. After looting Meerut he put a large number of people, including those who had not offered resistance. Then the successful invasion of Hardwar followed by looting of the city and massacre of people. In fact, he collected huge booty from there marching along the Sivalik Hills, he captured Kangra and sacked Jammu, the inhabitants of those places being slaughtered in large numbers. The Raja of Jammu surrendered before him and embraced Islam. Having done all this, Timur appointed his nominee Khizr Khan as the governor of Multan, Lahore and Dipalpur.

He recrossed the Indus River in March 1399 “after inflicting on India more misery” and returned to his country Samarqand. After Timur’s invasion, the city of Delhi wore a deserted look. Famine and epidemic diseases also added to the misery of the people. Badauni writers, “for two months not a bird moved a wing in Delhi”. Timur, in short, completed the dissolution of the Tughluq kingdom. In a Chaotic and unstable situation the fief-holders, the nobles and governors of different provinces were involved in constant fightings and ruined the economy and peace of the state. Most of the provinces like the Punjab, Gujarat,

Khandesh, Kalpi, Malwa and Dhar became independent. The last ruler of Tughluq dynasty died in Kaithal in 1413, after a nominal 72 sovereignty of about twenty years and with him the dynasty founded by Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq came to an ignominious end. After his death Delhi had seen bitter rivalries and utter Chaos. The nobles in the court played havoc. At this moment, Khizr Khan, the representative of Timur captured Delhi and in May 1414, ascended the throne of Delhi. Thereby he laid the foundation for the Sayyid dynasty which ruled Delhi till 1451 A.D.

The Sayyids (1414 - 1451 A.D.)

Khizr Khan, though considered as the founder of the new dynasty called Sayyid dynasty, he ruled as a Viceroy of Timur's fourth son and successor, Sha Rukh, to whom he is said to have sent tribute from Delhi. He ruled for seven years only. He did not rule a vast empire like Tughluqs in their hey-days. The authority of its ruler was limited to Delhi and other few districts around Delhi. Even in those parts, it was frequently challenged by the Hindu Zamindars of Etawah, Katehr, Kannauj, Patiali and Kampila. Khizr Khan and his loyal minister, Taj-ul- mulk struggled hard against these chronic disorders. When the minister died in January 1421, Khizr Khan himself died in May 1421. But Ferishta says, "Khizr Khan was a just and a benevolent prince." He further says that, his superior war-like qualities though helped in subduing the trouble makers both inside and outside of the court, he could neither ensure the public security nor establish the supremacy of the Central Government. Khizr Khan had nominated his son Mubarak Shah as his successor on his death-bed in 1421, to ascend the throne of Delhi. He got the consent of the Delhi nobles for the purpose. It was during his reign that Yahiya bin Ahmed Sarhindi wrote his Tarikh-i-mubarak Shahi, which is a valuable source book for the history of this period. With the exception of this, there is nothing of importance to record in his reign. Nonetheless, he was compelled to subdue the rebellions at Bhakinda and in the Doab region. The brave Khokars under their chief Jasrat challenged the Delhi Kingdom. This appeared to be a serious threat to the kingdom. On the other hand, the troublesome nobles belonging to both Hindu and Islamic faith, conspired to kill him. As planned by them, when the Sultan proceeded to superintend the construction of a newly planned town, called Mubarakabad, on the Jamuna he was killed in 1434 A.D. Subsequently, the nobles of Delhi raised the son of the deceased Sultan Muhammad to the throne of Delhi. But he also became the victim of factions and he could not keep the rebellious nobles and the provincial governors under control. After the death of Muhammad Shah in 1445 A.D, the nobles declared his son to be the ruler of the sheltered 73 kingdom, which now consisted only of the city of Delhi and the neighbouring villages. The new ruler began to rule under the title, Ala- ud-din Alam Shah.

Being weak and inefficient he made over the throne of Delhi to Buhlul Lodi, the governor of Lahore and Sirhind in 1451 and retired in an inglorious manner to his favourite place Badaun, where he spent the rest of his life.

The Lodis (1451 - 1526 A.D.)

Buhlul Khan belonged to the Lodi tribe of Afghans and was the founder of the Lodi dynasty in India. Thus, for the first time in the history of India, an Afghan ruler was seated on the throne of Delhi. Buhlul Khan Lodi was called upon to rule over a small portion of the kingdom in 1451, which again was then in a highly disorderly manner. Having been trained in the art of governance and administration, as governor of Lahore and Sirhind earlier, he wanted to attain mastery over the entire governmental machinery. He successfully got rid of Hamid Khan, by cleverly throwing him into prison with the help of his Afghan followers. He reduced to submission some provincial governors and chieftains, who had enjoyed independence for several years. Thus the chiefs of Mewat, Sambhal, Koil, Suket, Mainpuri and Bhongaon, Rewari, Etawah, Chandwar and Doab were compelled to acknowledge the authority of the Sultan. He however treated them with leniency so that they might remain loyal to him. He also successfully subdued the kingdom of Jaunpur, and appointed his son Barbak Shah, its Viceroy in 1486. While he was on his expedition against Gwalior, near the town of Jalali, he breathed his last in July 1489. As a ruler, Buhlul Khan Lodi proved to be a superior ruler since the time of Firuz of the house of Tughluq. He restored the prestige of the Muslim power in Hindustan and infused some Vigour into the government of his kingdom. Though not a learned man himself he was a patron of scholars. He enjoyed the confidence of his fellow tribesmen in governing the country. After Buhlul Khan's death, his second son Nizam Khan was proclaimed king in July 1489, under the title of Sultan Sikandar Shah. Having got rid of the succession dispute in the beginning itself, he made earnest efforts to increase the strength of the kingdom by removing the disorders and confusion. He wanted to put an end to the rebellious attitude of the provincial governors, chieftains and zamindars. He also scrutinized the accounts of the leading jagirdars who indulged in fraudulent activities. Marching against Bihar and Bengal, he was able to subdue the ruler of Bihar and in his place he appointed Dariya Khan to its government. He also compelled the Raja of Tirhut to pay his tribute. He concluded a treaty with Ala-ud-din Husain Shah of Bengal, by which, both agreed not to encroach on each others dominion. The chiefs of Dholpur, Chanderi and some other places, also rendered submission to him. He founded a new town in 1504 on the site where the modern city of Agra stands, with the object of controlling the chiefs of Etawah, Biyana, Koil, Gwalior and Dholpur in an effective manner. As long as he was on the throne of Delhi he very effectively enforced

obedience from the hostile chiefs. The Sultan breathed his last at Agra in November, 1517 A.D.

Sikandar Lodi

Sikandar Lodi was undoubtedly the ablest of the three rulers of this dynasty. He has been highly praised by contemporary as well as some later writers for his excellent qualities of head and heart. He provided for a system of justice based on the Islamic principles Shariyat. He issued orders to the effect that justice to be meted out after a thorough scrutiny of cases at all levels. For the development of agriculture and industry, Sikandar lifted tax from grains and Octroi. As a result the prices of the articles of prime necessity became excessively low. He patronized learned men and himself wrote some Persian Verses. Though able, efficient and upright, Sikandar was not free from religious intolerance. No doubt he was a benefactor of Muslims. He was a lover of fine arts and architecture. He built many mosques. He built a tomb in Delhi after the name of his father. A book on medicine was translated by the Sultan himself. It is known as "Farhang-i-sikandari." Being a very successful general, Sikander reorganized the army and followed the latest methods of warfare. After the death of Sikander, his eldest son, Ibrahim ascended the throne at Agra in November 1517 A.D. He put an end to the succession question by putting to death his younger brother, the potential contender to the throne. With a view to securing strength and efficiency, he followed a repressive policy towards the nobles, the Afghan nobles in particular. By his stern measures he alienated the sympathies of the powerful nobles of the Lohani, Formuli and Lodi tribes who constituted the official class of the state. Reacting to the stern measures, they turned disloyal to the Sultan and began to challenge his authority. In particular, the governor of Lahore, Daulat Khan and Alam Khan, an uncle of Ibrahim Lodi, openly revolted against the Sultan and had invited Babur, the Timurid ruler of Kabul, to invade India. "Thus revenge and ambition, persecutions and disloyalty, brought about the final collapse of the decadent Delhi Sultanate." Among other causes, there were certain 75 inherent weaknesses in the Delhi Sultanate. They were responsible for the disintegration and downfall of such "a large and unwieldy" empire. This in turn had paved the way for the establishment of a new Turkish rule in India in 1526 A.D.

Causes For Decline

- ❖ In the first instance, the system of government of Delhi Sultans was autocratic. The Sultan was "be all and end all" and combined in himself all powers of the State. The strength of the government depended upon the military force of the Sultan. So long as there were powerful rulers like Balban and Ala-ud-din Khilji, the Sultanate was safe both "from internal disintegration and external aggression". But as soon as it fell into

weak Sultans like Muhammad bin Tughluq and Firoz Tughluq, the process of disintegration set in.

- ❖ Most of the Sultans of Delhi did not understand the reality that they as minority was ruling the majority population which did not belong to Islamic faith. Nor, they took any serious efforts to seek the help and co-operation of the majority population of the country to run the administration smoothly. In fact, they did not attempt at building a nation and were responsible for creating a sense of alienation among the subjects professing faith other than Islam.
- ❖ Right from the time of Iltutmish to that of Muhammad bin Tughluq, the Mongols from Central Asia invaded and raided the north-west frontier areas stretching upto Delhi at times constantly. As a result of this menace, the Sultans neither found time to concentrate on their internal administration nor avoided spending huge state revenue to encounter the Mongols. Thus their invasions prevented the Sultans from strengthening the Sultanate.
- ❖ There was no law of succession among the Sultans. It was decided only after the death of the Sultan. Moreover none of the successors to the throne had a easy sailing. The nobles in all had an upper hand in deciding the next man to the throne. Often, the ascendancy of the Sultan to the throne was marked with conflict, conspiracy, murder and bloodshed. Such a system had greatly undermined the Delhi Sultanate.
- ❖ During the reign of Ala-ud-din Khilji, the Delhi Sultanate, besides, northern India extended to the South also. Unwieldy nature of the empire was greatly felt in the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq in the absence of proper means of transport and communication system. So revolt took place in different parts. Kampil, Warangal and Dwarasamudra became independent in 1344. In 1346, the Vijayanagar Empire emerged and became the centre of a powerful Hindu state. In 1347, Hassan Gangu laid the foundation for Bahmain Kingdom. Thus the bulk of the Deccan was lost to the Sultanate. Similarly in Northern India, Bengal declared independence in 1337, followed by Oudh, Sindh and Kathiawar in 1341 A.D. So the vastness of the empire proved a weakness of the Sultanate.
- ❖ The blundering measures of Muhammad bin Tughluq pushed the Delhi Sultanate to a state of disintegration. His decision to transfer capital from Delhi to Devagiri, his adoption of stern measures to collect taxes from famine-stricken farmers of the Doab, and also his introduction of token currency were such measures, which completely failed and led to widespread discontent. They also brought a great drain on the treasury.

This was accelerated by the weakness and impolitic measures of his immediate successor Firuz Tughluq. Firuz revived the **jagir** system, extended the institution of slavery, imposed **jizya** on non- Muslims and persecuted the heretical Muslim sects. This process could not be checked by the weak Sayyids, and unstatesmen like Lodis. The Lodis failed to introduce any wholesome and strong element in the administrative structure. Further a policy of repression unleashed by them on the nobles alienated their support.

- ❖ “An external calamity, which might very well be regarded as a symptom of the growing decline of the Delhi Sultanate, hastened its end”. Timur invaded India in 1398-1399 A.D. He exposed the inherent weakness of the Delhi Sultanate and looted the wealth of India. His invasion shook the empire from its very foundations and revolts broke out in various parts of the empire.
- ❖ . The military autarchy of the Turks and the Afghans could enforce obedience among the governors and peoples of the different provinces only so long as it could retain its vigour. But what actually sounded the death-knell of the Delhi Sultanate was the successful invasion of Babur in 1526 A.D.

ADMINISTRATION AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS UNDER THE DELHI SULTANATE

Central Administration

Sultan

In the Delhi Sultanate, the head of the state was the Sultan who enjoyed unlimited powers in every sphere of state activity. There was no law of succession during the period of the Sultanate. It was not necessary that the eldest son or the daughter of the Sultan should succeed the father. However, tradition developed from the reign of Sultan Iltutmish that the throne belonged to the eldest son or the daughter of the Sultan. Besides, the Sultan also had the right to nominate anyone as his successor to the throne. The Sultan, according to his strength, behaved as an all-powerful despot. The Sultan was the absolute master of the State and all legislative, executive and judicial powers vested in him. He was also the highest commander of the army. All ministers, nobles and other officers of the State were appointed, promoted and dismissed by him. His order was the law in his State. But, these were his legal powers. Their effectiveness, in practice, depended on his military strength. The nobility also wielded influence, particularly if the Sultan was weak. The Ulema, being interpreter of Islamic laws, also influenced the policy of the Sultan. Only

Alauddin Khilji and Mubarak Khilji refused to accept the interference of the Ulema in matters of the State. Apart from the maintenance of law and order within the empire, its protection from foreign invasions, another important duty of the Sultan was to extend its territories.

Ministers

- **The Naib (Naib-i-Mamlikata):** This post was created during the reign of Sultan Bahram Shah after the fall of Sultan Raziyya. The nobles had chosen one among themselves as the Naib who, in fact, enjoyed all powers of the State. However, this post was effective only during the reigns of weak rulers. In such cases, the post of Naib was next only to the Sultan and was above the Vazir. The powerful Sultans either abolished this post altogether or gave it to a noble simply to honour him, as was done by Alauddin Khilji. In that case, Naib enjoyed no special powers in administration.
- **The Vazir: The Prime Minister** was called the Vazir. He was primarily the head of the finance department called the *Dewan-i-Vizarat* and was empowered not only to supervise the income and expenditure of the state, but of all other departments as well. Whenever there was no post of Naib, the position of the Vazir was next to the Sultan. He, therefore, supervised the entire administration and looked after State matters whenever the Sultan fell ill or was out of the capital. He appointed officers for the different posts and performed various other duties. He was assisted by many officers and subordinates, most important among them being the Naib-Vazir and the *Mushrif-i-Mamalik* (auditor-general).
- **Ariz-i-mumalik:** He was the head of the department of **Diwan-i-Arz**, and in that capacity, was the controller-general of the military department. He recruited soldiers, fixed their salaries, arranged for their supplies and inspection and maintained the descriptive rolls of horses and men. He was, however, not the commander of the army, though the Sultan assigned him this responsibility on certain occasions.
- **Dabir-i-Khas (Amir-Munshi):** He was the head of the department of *Diwan-i-Insha*. All formal or confidential correspondence between the Sultan and the rulers of other states or subordinate chiefs, governors and officials was carried out by his department. He was assisted by a large number of Dabirs (writers) in his work.
- **Diwan-i-Risalat:** He was the minister of foreign affairs and looked after the diplomatic relations with foreign states and the welfare of foreign diplomats and ambassadors.
- **Sadr-us-Sudur:** He was the head of the religious department. The propagation of Islam, the observance of its principles and protection of privileges of Muslims, constituted his primary duties. He controlled the funds of the tax called zakat, which was a religious tax

on the Muslims. He provided financial assistance to mosques, Maqtabas (educational institutions for the Muslims), and Muslim scholars and religious saints. He also looked after the distribution of charity by the state.

Provinces Administration

The Delhi Sultanate was divided into provinces for the convenience of administration. They were called Iqtas. The number of Iqtas was not fixed and there was no uniformity in their administration. The head of the Iqta was called by different names, i.e., Naib Sultan, Nazim, Muqti or Wali. During the reign of Alauddin Khilji, Iqtas were divided into two categories. First, the Iqtas which were under the Delhi Sultanate from the beginning and the second, the Iqtas which were brought under the control of the Delhi Sultanate during the rule of Alauddin Khilji. The Muqtis or the Wali of the second category of Iqta were given a little more extensive powers so that the newly added territory could be brought about under the effective control of the Sultanate. Besides, these were tributary states of South India. The Hindu rulers of the South who had accepted the suzerainty of the Sultanate were independent in matters of internal administration, but paid yearly tribute to the Sultan. The Walis or the Muqtis enjoyed the same powers in relation to their Iqtas as the Sultan enjoyed in the empire. However, they were under the supervision of the Central Government and carried on orders of the Sultan in their administration. They sent yearly reports of their income and expenditure to the centre and deposited the balance in the central treasury. They maintained large armies and were required to come to the support of the Sultan whenever needed. They could not engage themselves in wars for extension of territory without the prior permission of the Sultan and when they did it, they were required to pay part of the booty to the Sultan. The elephants and the members of the royal family captured during wars were the monopoly of the Sultan. No Muqti was allowed to assume the title of the Sultan, to hold his own court or use as a canopy or the royal emblem. They were not allowed to mint coins in their names and Khutba could not be read in their names. Yet, during the rule of a weak Sultan, the Muqtis enjoyed extensive powers. During the period of Lodi Sultans, they even kept elephants, which was the exclusive right of the Sultan. In general, the Muqtis enjoyed wide powers during the period of the Sultanate. That was one reason of occasional revolts and frequent dynastic changes during this period. Besides the Muqti, there were other officers of the central government in every Iqta. There was a Vazir, an Ariz and a Qazi in each Iqta. The revenue officers, the news reporters and similar officers were also appointed in Iqtas by the Central Government. The efficiency of administration of an Iqta depended on the power of the Sultan on the one hand and on the capability of Muqti on the other.

Finance Administration

- **Ushr:** It was a land tax which was collected from Muslim peasants. It was 10 per cent of the produce on the land watered by natural resources and 5 per cent on the land which enjoyed man-made irrigation facilities.
- **Kharaj:** It was a land tax charged from non-Muslims and ranged from 1/3 to 1/2 of the produce.
- **Khams:** It was 1/5 of the booty captured in the war and 1/5 of the produce of mines or buried treasure that was found. Four-fifth of it went to the army which fought the war or to the person who found the treasure. But, except Firuz Tughluq, all Sultans collected 4/5 instead of 1/5, while Sikandar Lodi took nothing of the treasure that was found.
- **Jizya:** It was a religious tax on non-Muslims. According to Islam, a Zimmi (non-Muslim) had no right to live in the kingdom of a Muslim Sultan. But this concession was permitted after the payment of the tax called Jizya. Thenon-Muslims were divided into three categories for the purpose of payment of this tax. The first category paid at the rate of 48 dirhams, the second at 24 dirhams and the third at 12 dirhams. Women, children, beggars, cripples, blind, old men, monks, priests, Brahmins (except during the period of Firuz Tughluq) and all those who had no source of income were exempted from this tax. All Sultans collected this tax on principle but, as a practical measure, nobody collected it with severity. Dr Banarsi Prasad Saxsena has expressed another view about Jizya. He has opined that Jizya was a non-agricultural tax. Barani, Amir Khusrav and Nizam-ud-din Auliya have said that the word Jizya was used for all taxes except land revenue.
- **Zakat:** This was a religious tax which was imposed only on rich Muslims and consisted of 2 per cent of their income. Besides the above taxes, 2 per cent was charged from the Muslims and 5 per cent from the Hindus as trade tax. There was 5 per cent tax on the sale and purchase of horses. Alauddin Khilji imposed house-tax and grazing-tax as well, while Firuz Tughluq charged 10 per cent of the produce as irrigation tax from the land which enjoyed irrigation facilities provided by the State. All property which had no heirs also passed to the State. Another important source of income was presents offered to the Sultan by the people, nobles, provincial governors and feudatory chiefs.

Downfall of the Delhi Sultanate

The period between AD 1206 and AD 1526 is known as the Sultanate period in the history of India. During this period lasting 320 years, five ruling dynasties ruled successively. They were

- **Slave dynasty (AD 1206–1290),**
- **Khilji dynasty (AD 1290–1320),**
- **Tughlaq dynasty (AD 1320–1414),**
- **Sayyid dynasty (AD 1415– 1451)**
- **Lodhi dynasty (AD 1451–1526).**

The average ruling period of each dynasty was about seventy years. During these years, the Delhi Sultanate went through many ups and downs. Since its beginning, the major threat to the Sultanate came in the form of Mongol invasions. From 13th century onwards, they repeatedly attacked the Delhi Sultanate. Many other factors weakened the Delhi Sultanate.

Invasions of Mongols

From the time of Iltutmish to the time of Muhammad Tughlaq, there were many Mongol invasions. From 13th century onwards, they repeatedly attacked the Delhi Sultanate. The Sultans as a policy appeased them and at times confronted them. Balban and Allauddin Khalji confronted them with full military might.

Weakness in the Sultanate army

The rulers of the Delhi Sultanate did not modernize their army. They did not pay attention towards new war techniques and did not focus on building up artillery. Gradually, they stopped paying adequate attention to the defense of the North West Frontiers.

Responsibility of the rulers of Sayyid dynasty

After the Tughlaq dynasty, the power in the Sultanate passed into the hands of Sayyids. Like the successors of Firoz Shah Tughlaq, all the rulers of this dynasty were incapable. Since none of them paid attention to the administrative reforms or the extension of the empire, disorder spread everywhere and the country became poorer. During the period of this dynasty, Doab, Katehar, Sirhind, Gwalior became centres of revolts. The Sultans remained incapable of suppressing them. The last Sultan of this dynasty, Sultan Allauddin Shah, went to Badyun leaving his capital so that he could lead a comfortable life there. The power passed to the hands of Bahlolod Lodhi.

Weaknesses of the Lodhi dynasty

There were three Sultans in the Lodhi dynasty - Bahlol Lodhi, Sikandar Lodhi and Ibrahim Lodhi. Out of these three, Sikandar Lodhi was the only capable ruler. He tried to re-establish the prestige of the Delhi Sultanate but he could not achieve much success. He did not

follow a liberal policy towards the majority of the Hindus. He broke many temples and idols. Because of his hot-tempered nature and obstinacy, he antagonized all his Amirs and Governors and also the Sultanate. As a result, the disintegration of the Sultanate was accelerated.

SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Explain the problems before Qutubuddin Aibak and his efforts towards their solutions.

.....

2. Explain Khilji's Administrative system.

.....

Unit III

The Foundation of Mughal Empire: Central Asian experience of Babur - India on the eve of Babur's invasion- Struggle for empire in North India - Significance of the Afghan despotism-Rise of Sher Shah Sur; **Expansion and Consolidation-** Political phase of Akbar; new imperial system and administration; the Mughal nobility, Mansabdari system- Jagirdari system- NurJahan Junta - The Mughals and the North-Western frontier - Shah Jahan and his contribution.

Objectives

- ❖ Understanding the Establishment and Evolution of the Mughal Empire.
- ❖ Understanding the Sher Shah Sur Invasion
- ❖ Understand the rule of the Akbar; new imperial system and Administration.

Mughal Empire - Sources

Literary Sources

The literary sources of the period are numerous indeed. They range from the autobiographies of emperors to musical compositions of the day and are alive with vitality and truth. Tuzuk I IBaburi or the Memoirs of Babour is an autobiographical piece in Turkilanguage by Babur In spite of certain time-gaps, it is a primary source for Babur's activities. The Emperor did not hesitate to record with great frankness his weaknesses as well as great merits. It is of great use in determining with accuracy many points in Babur's life as well as the early life of Humayun. "The Memoirs of Babur has been reckoned among the most enthralling and romantic works in the literature of all time".

- ❖ The **Tarikh-i-Rashidi**, a Persian work, written by Mirza Muhammad HaidarDughlat, is a valuable source material on the period of Babur and Humayun. **Habib-us-Siyar** and **Humayun-nama, written by Khvand Amir**, are interesting accounts about the entire reign of Babur and the first three years of the rule of Humayun.
- ❖ The **Humayun-nama of GulbadanBegam**, the daughter of Baburn, is an authority on Humayun's reign. The **Tazkirat- ul -Waqiat of JauharAftabchi** (a Personal valet of Humayun) is a noteworthy book nthrowinglight on almost all facets of Humayun'slife.

- ❖ The **Tarikh-i-Humayun written by Bayazid** is an important source material for the study of Humayun and Akbar Among the works on Akbar's reign special mention must be made about Tarikh-i-Akbar Shahi by Qandahari, Abuk-Fazl's Akbar-nama, Ain -Akbari, Ruqat-Abul-Fazl, and Insha-i-Abul-Fazl, Khvaja- Nizamud- din Ahmad's
- ❖ Tabaqat-i-Firishta by Mulla Muhammad Qasim Hindu Shah,
- ❖ Tarikh-i-Haqqi by Abdul-Haqq, etc.

These works supplement each other and are invaluable in the reconstruction of Akbar's rule. They have a ring of authenticity and their veracity is not much doubted. The Tarikh -i-Sher-Shahi written by Abbas Sarwani deals with the reign of Sher Shah Sur.

The aurobiography of Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Fahangiri, constitutes an important source material for Akbar's last years, Jahangir's own rule, and the early life of Shah Jahan. The Emperor is very frank in narrating the events of his time and though sometimes he "suppresses inconvenient truths", his autobiography is greatly helpful to the student of Mughal period. MutamidKhan's Iqbal-nama and Muhammad Hadi'sTatimmaWaqiat-i- fahangiri are very useful for the reign of Jahangir. Shah Jahan's period is covered by a number of chronicles. AminaiQazvini'sPadshah-nama, Abdul Hamid Lahauri'sPadshah- namma.Inayat Khan's Shahjahan-namma, are very interesting narrations about the reign of Shah Jahan. For the last of the great Mughals, Aurangzeb, we have Alamgir-nama by Mirza Muhammad Kazim, Maair-i-Alamgiri by Muhammad SaqiMustaid Khan, Muntakhab- ulLubab by Muhammad HashimKhafi Khan, etc, as important source books.

Apart from chronological accounts of the activities of the Emperors, many official works on provincial administration and statistical details also abound. While many chronicles glorify the deeds of the emperors it cannot be denied that a fair picture of the sequence of events and various details of the administration can be called out and arranged in a proper manner.

The royal grants and orders constitute yet another important source material for the period. There are large collections of poems written during the period which throw light on the economic, social and religious conditions of the time. Countless literary works on the lives of great men and saints also portray the life of the people in general.

It may also be mentioned that works in Sanskrit and local languages also form an important part in the unravelling of Mughal life. Apart from SarvadesavrittantSangrah by Mahesh Thakur, a Sanskrit history of Akbar's reign, other works dealing with exploits of

Rajputs are also noteworthy. No account would be complete without a reference to Marathi sources like 91 QalmiBakhar by Dattaji, Siva-CharitraSahitya, etc.

Archaeological Sources

Almost all the archaeological sources are catalogued and the notable remains have been critically analysed and put in proper shape. Exhaustive works on the numismatic sources also supplement the work of archaeological surveys. Edward Thomas, Lane-Poole, Nelson, Whitehead, Dames, Rodgers and others have rendered great service in proper collection and explanation of numismatic evidences. The architectural remains of the age testify to the excellence reached by the great Mughals. Huge palaces, big forts, great mausoleums, dreamlike cities like FathpurSikri, etc., are shining examples of Mughal architecture and form a valuable clue to the unfolding of Mughal drama. Babur's mighty structures have been ravaged by time but his tomb at Kabul is a magnificent one. Akbar, a great builder, left permanent imprint in the architecture of FathpurSikri, described as a "romance in stone, inconceivable and impossible at any other time or in any other circumstances". TajMahal built by Shah Jahan, one of the wonders of the world, is rapturously admired by one and all and bears eloquent testimony to the art and architecture of his times. The Mughal painting which reached its highest watermark during Jahangir's reign also testifies to the extraordinary achievements in the field of fine arts by the Mughals. The works of Percy Brown and Moti Chand throw a flood of light on the technique of Mughal painting.

Accounts of Foreign Visitors

A large number of foreign travellers visited India during the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. Their writings also constitute an important source material for the Mughal period. Though not all that is contained in the accounts of these visitors can be accepted in toto, nonetheless they supplement to the indigenous material in many respects. Among the noteworthy accounts are Travels of Ralph Fitch; Early Travels in India of W.Hawkins, Finch, Withington, Coryat, W.Terry; The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India (1615 -19) (edited by W.Foster);the Travels of Peter Mundy; Travels in the Mogul Empire (1656 -1688) by Bernier (edited by A. Constable); Travels inIndia by J.B Tavernier, etc. These accounts along with a host of similar accounts deal not only with the court but also with the habits, customs and attitudes of people in general. As Prof. Srivastava points out "these accounts cannot be accepted at their face-value, for some of them are mere bazaar gossip, and certain others are initiated on account of their racial, religious and national prejudices". Nevertheless, these accounts do serve as an important source of information for the Mughal period.

India on the Eve of Babur's Invasion

Political condition

India presented a gloomy picture of a house divided against itself on the eve of Babur's invasion. The country abounded in traitors, adventurers and opportunists upon whom the shower on coins and bestowal of titles worked wonders. The empire of Ibrahim Lodi had already shrunk into smaller dimensions. The inevitable disintegration of the Sultanate started towards the close of the reign of Muhammad -bin- Thughluq. Timur's invasion of India in 1398 gave a stunning blow to the tottering empire. After the invasion of timur, anarchy prevailed in the country and the Sultanate existed only in name. The tottering empire was held intact by Skikandar Lodi, the father of Ibrahim Lodi, by his unstated manlike acts, drove the last nail into the coffin of the Delhi Sultanate. He was an uncompromising ruler who harassed and humiliated the nobles in many ways. The sway of Ibrahim Lodi did not extend beyond Delhi, Agra, Chanderi, the Doab, Jaunpur, a part of Bihar and Biyana. India, on the eve of Babur's invasion was parceled out into a number of independent kingdoms.

Kingdoms in the North and North - West

Kangra, Nepal and Bhutan

Kangra in the Punjab and Nepal and Bhuttal skirting the Himalayas were independent Hindu kingdoms.

The Portuguese

Among the European powers, the Portuguese had established a few strongholds - Cochin, Cannanore and Goa - on the western coast. In the words of Ishwari Prasad: "India was thus a congeries of states at the opening of the sixteenth century and likely to be the easy prey of an invader who had the strength and will to attempt he conquest". Remoteness in the case of some countries and the indifference in the case of some others prevented them from meddling in the muddle of the Delhi politics. The disturbed condition in the rest of the kingdoms gave an excellent opportunity to Babur to fish in troubled waters.

Social Condition

Many changes took place in the social life of the people. The number of Muslims increased due to forcible conversions, Persuasions and promises held out for a better life. The new converts to the Islamic faith instead of adopting an indifferent attitude towards the Hindus, freely mingled with them. The life of the Hindus who were under the direct sway of the Delhi Sultans was pitiable. Many political, social and economic disabilities were put on

them. Ala-ud-din Khilji reduced the Hindus to such abject misery that wives were forced to seek work in Mussulman houses to earn their livelihood. Firuz Tughluq imposed the jizya or poll-tax on the Brahmins. Ibrahim Lodi persecuted the Hindus and ordered for the wholesale desecration of temples. The Hindus contributed to the bulk of the revenue and over and above the usual taxes they were burdened with new taxes. In short, the Hindus were reduced to the position of mere „hewers of wood and drawers of water“ the helots of the empire“. The condition of the Hindus in the distant provinces and villages was satisfactory. Under the inspiring leadership of enlightened rulers like Zain -ul-Abidin of Kashmir and Ala-un-din Husain Shah of Bengal, the Hindus breathed an air of liberty. The Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar stood forth as the champion of Hinduism and acted as a check on Muslim advance towards the south. The rise of Hindu Kingdoms like Vijayanagar and Mewar into power and prominence made the Muslim rulers administer caution in matters of religious belief persecutions, of course, existed here and there. But it was fast becoming an exception rather than a rule. Kabir and Nanak, the exponents of the later Bakhti cult, emphasized the need for Hindu-Muslim unity. They contributed a great deal to the fraternization of the two classes. The Bakhti movement considerably enriched the vernacular literature.

The Muslims were the fortunate few who enjoyed many concessions and privileges. Affluence bred indolence and moral degradation. Wine-drinking and gambling were the common vices prevalent among the people. Slavery was quite common. Among the Hindus, the Brahmins occupied an honoured place. Though women occupied an honoured place, their freedom was much restricted. Sati, female infanticide and child-marriage were common among the Hindus.

Economic Condition

India abounded in riches. Mahmud of Ghazni invaded India seventeen times. The invasions bear ample testimony to the fabulous wealth of the country. Timur carried away immense booty from India. Though the country abounded in riches, the Sultans of Delhi did not adopt a well-thought-out and comprehensive scheme for the economic regeneration of the country. Ala-ud-din Khilji introduced some reforms on the revenue side. Muhammad - bin Tughluq, the “Prince of Moneyars”, introduced some half hearted measures. But the experiments did not produce any permanent results. Firuz Tughluq constructed a number of irrigation canals. Agriculture was the main occupation of the people. But they were not indifferent to industries. Textile, sugar, metal and paper industries flourished in the country. Minor industries like cup-making, shoe making, match-making, etc., also flourished. Bombay and Gujarat topped the list in carrying on trade with foreign countries. On the whole, the

people enjoyed prosperity due to the cheapness of prices and easy living conditions. Famine made occasional visits. But the Government undertook ameliorative measures to reduce the rigours of famine. With regard to the standard of living of the people, the awe-breathing distance between the tillers of the soil and the rich remained unaltered. The rich rolled in luxuries and the poor groaned under the weight of oppressive taxation. The life of the people in the villages was one of primitive simplicity and contentment. The financial breakdown of the empire started after the invasion of Timur. The invasion brought about a complete dislocation and disorganization of trade and agriculture. The Muslim nobility, in course of time, became degenerate and its wasteful extravagance led to moral degradation and economic bankruptcy.

BABUR (1526-1530 A.D.)

Early life

Zahir-ud-din Muhammad, better known in history as Babur the Tiger, was born in 1483. He was connected with Timur, the Lame, on his father's side and Chingiz Khan on his mother's side. Thus the blood of the two great scourges of mankind, who took immense delight in the shedding of human blood, mingled in his veins. His father Umar Shaik Mirza ruled over the small kingdom of Farghana in Central Asia with headquarters at Andijan. He met with a fatal accident in 1494 after his death, his son, Babur assumed the reins of government in 1494 when he was only a lad of 11 years. He soon realized that the throne of Farghana was not a bed of roses. He was surrounded by difficulties on all sides. He has to fight against heavy odds posed by his formidable foes. He weathered many a storm in his early days. This training in the school of adversity stood him in good stead in the years to come. When he was only in his teens, he made two attempts -one in 1497 and the other in 1500 - to recover the throne of Timur in Samarqand. But the two attempts, after a moment's triumph in each case, miserably failed. To fill his cup of sorrow, he was deprived of his own kingdom of Farghana. He became a homeless fugitive for a year. These ups and downs in his life did not shake his mortal frame. Though he was placed in strait circumstances, he cherished the bold design of conquering Hindustan. The Uzbegs under shaibani Khan deprived of the Timurids one principality after another. Having failed in his attempt to recover his ancestral throne, Babur besieged Kandahar. The Uzbegs pursued him and so he raised the siege. But this proved to be a blessing because a rebellion broke out in another part of Shaibani's dominions and Babur was able to occupy Kabul in 1504. He assumed the title of Padshah or Emperor in 1507. He made another bold bid in 1511 to conquer Samarqand

which he captured in the same year. The victorious army Samarqand and Babur was given a rousing reception by the people. But the victory was short-lived. He was defeated by the Uzbeks in 1512 and again Samarqand slipped from his hands. Having failed in his attempts in the north-west, Babur shifted his centre of gravity to the south-east.

Conquest of Hindustan

The conquest of Babur into the heart of Hindustan was heralded by some minor inroads on the border territories. He captured the fortress of Bajaur in 1519. He brought under his subjection, Bhira, Khushab and the country of the Chenab and thus got a foothold in the Punjab. But the Indians recovered all the places soon after Babur left for Kabul. In 1520, he captured Badakshan. After two years, he wrested Kandahar from Shah Beg, the Arghun chief. Babur seriously turned his attention to the conquest of Hindustan only in 1524. Circumstances also favoured him. The political condition of India on the eve of Babur's invasion had already reached the boiling point. India had become the hotbed of sedition, intrigues and dissensions among the nobles. Visible signs of the dismemberment of the Delhi Sultanate had already been noticed. The conditions prevailing in the country offered a fertile ground for Babur to fish in troubled waters. Ibrahim Lodi, the last Sultan of the Delhi Sultanate, was an uncompromising ruler. He harassed and humiliated the nobles in many ways. When the lot of the nobles became unbearable, a certain section of the discontented party extended an invitation to Babur to invade Hindustan. The most prominent among them were Daulat Khan Lodi, the Governor of the Punjab and Alam Khan, an uncle of Ibrahim Lodi. It seems that Rana Sangha also invited Babur. He seized the opportunity and readily responded to their invitations. He entered the Punjab and occupied Lahore in 1524. But when his Indian allies scented that he had come for a permanent conquest of Hindustan, they turned against him. So he retraced his steps to Kabul and again came to India in 1525 with renewed vigour and with a firm determination to strike a final blow on the Delhi Sultanate.

First Battle of Panipat (1526)

Babur met Ibrahim Lodi, the titular ruler of the Delhi Sultanate, in the historic battle of Panipat in 1526. Though the army of Ibrahim Lodi was numerically strong, Babur inflicted a crushing a crushing defeat on him. The charge of his cavalry and the fire of his artillery worked wonders and smashed enemy resistance beyond recovery. Ibrahim Lodi was killed in the battle-field. Vikram, the Hindu Raja of Gwalior, who made common cause with Ibrahim Lodi met with the same fate. The battle of Panipat was a decisive battle like that of Waterloo. Immediately after the battle, Babur occupied Delhi and Agra. In the words of Ishwari Prasad: "the battle of Panipat placed the empire of Delhi in Babur's hands. The

power of the Lodi dynasty was shattered to pieces and the sovereignty of Hindustan passed to the Chaghatai Turks”.

Battle of Khanua (1527)

Babur did not become the undisputed master of Hindustan after the battle of Panipat. His work did not end with Panipat but began with Panipat. He had to still contend with the Rajputs who posed a serious threat to the infant Mughal Empire. The Rajputs rallied under the banner of Rana Sangram Singh better known as Rana Sangha of Mewar. He was a hero of hundred battles and was made of sterner stuff than all the other rivals of Babur. He also cherished the desire to seat himself on the throne of Delhi. He had at his command a formidable army. The advance-guard sent by Babur against Rana Sangha was defeated in no time by the Rajputs. The soldiers of Babur got greatly perturbed and disheartened. Babur too realized the gravity of the situation. But he was a man of indomitable will and courage. He made a soul-stirring speech to his soldiers and preached jihad or holy war against the infidels. He addressed the soldiers in the following words: “Whoever comes to the feast of life must, before it is over, drink from the cup of death. He who arrives at the inn of mortality must one day inevitably take his departure from that house of sorrow - the world. How much better is it to die with honour than to live with infamy”. The speech produced the desired effect and his soldiers pounced on the Rajput forces like famished wolves. In the battle of Khanua fought in 1527, Babur defeated the Rajputs. Rana Sangha escaped from the battle field and took refuge on one of his hill fortresses. The battle is one of the hardest fought battles in the history of India. Rushbrook. Williams says: “from that date onwards the centre of gravity of Babur’s power is shifted from Kabul to Hindustan.

Battle of Chanderi (1528)

There is no denying the fact that the battle of Khanua was a great battle. But to elevate it to the position of a decisive battle is going too far, because in that battle the Rajputs had only just submitted before the storm. They were only crippled but not completely crushed. The remnant of the Rajput forces rallied under the banner of Medini Rai of Chanderi. Babur stormed the fortress of Chanderi in spite of the gallant resistance put up by the Rajputs. It was only after this battle that the powerful Rajput confederacy was shattered to pieces and no other Rajput chief posed a serious threat to the Mughal empire or challenged the authority of Babur.

Battle of Gogra (1529)

The Afghans still fomented troubles. Muhammad Lodi, the brother of Ibrahim Lodi,

captured Bihar. Many Afghan chiefs made common cause with him. Babur sent his son, Askari in advanced and himself followed him. In the battle of Gogra, he defeated Muhammad Lodi and thus shattered his hopes of regaining the throne of Delhi to pieces.

Extent of the empire

Babur's Empire extended from the Oxus to the frontier of Bengal and from the Himalayas to Gwalior with certain portions left out here and there.

As an Administrator

Babur was no great administrator. It was not his fault because during the short span of his five-year rule in India, he spent most of his time in battles and in consolidating and strengthening his position. He accepted the system of administration which he found in practices at that time. In keeping with the usual practice, he divided the country into fiefs and each fief was put under the control of jagirdar. But the Jaidars did not en unrestrained autonomy which they d enjoyed during the time of the Lodis. Even though Babur was preoccupied with battles, he found time to effect some minor changes in the administration. He elevated the position and status of the Monarch and reduced the status of the nobles to the position of mere vassals of the Emperor. He introduced Persian customs and manners in the Court. He did not take any steps for the promotion of agriculture. He lavishly distributed the treasures of Delhi and Agra to his followers. The unsoundness of the financial situation became more marked during the reign of his son and successor, Humayun No wonder Babur "bequeathed to his son a monarchy which could be held together only by the continuance of war conditions; which in times of peace was weak, structure less and invertebrate".

Babur's Personality

Babur is an interesting figure in the whole history of Islam. His autobiography (**Babur-nama**) written in simple style speaks volumes of his outspokenness being trained in the school of adversity; he developed a spirit of toleration in his mind. He treated the fallen foe with great consideration and magnanimity. He had a warm corner for his brothers in spite of the troubles fomented by them. He treated his kinsmen with great kindness. Though he was a drunkard, he observed moderation in drinking and was not confirmed drunkard like Jahangir. In his moral life, he administered caution and exercised self-restraint. He belonged to the orthodox section (Sunni) of the Muslims. But he was not a bigot in matters of religious belief. Though he preached jihad, he did not practice systematic persecution of the Hindus. After carving out an empire, he breathed his last in 1530 at the age of 47.

Humayun(1530-1556 A.D.)

Nasir-ud-din Muhammad better known as Hmayun was born in 1508. The conditions prevailing in Hindustan at that time warranted a strong man at the helm of affairs. Though Humayun had previous experience as Governor of Badakhan and was second in command during his father's expeditions in India, he was weak and incapable of sustained effort. So immediately after the death of Babur's steps were taken to place Mahdi Khwaja, the brother - in-law of Babur, on the throne. He was a past - master in the field of administration. But the attempt fizzled out.

Difficulties of Humayun

Humayun assumed the reins of government in 1530 when he was only 23 years old. He was surrounded by difficulties on all sides. He not only inherited the patrimony left by his father but also the troubles that went along with it. He soon realized that the throne of Delhi was a bed of thorns. It was aptly said by Rushbrook Williams that Babur "bequeathed to his son a monarchy which could be held together only by the conditions of war; which in times of peace was weak, structureless and invertebrate".

(a) Legacy from Babur

Humayun not only inherited the throne from Babur but also the thorns that went along with it. Though Babur carved out an empire, he had no time to strengthen the bonds of unity and solidarity among the people. His wasteful extravagance impoverished the treasury. A practically empty treasury greeted him when Humayun ascended the throne. Further, Babur did not take steps to inculcate in the minds of the nobles the spirit of oneness and failed to instill in their hearts traditions of loyalty and obedience to the throne. The dying words of Babur to Humayun, to be lenient and considerate towards his brothers did more harm than good to him.

(b) His brothers (Kamran, Askari and Hindal)

Humayun had to face troubles from within and without. Being the eldest son of Babur, he came to the throne. The dying father advised him to be considerate and lenient to his brothers. He faithfully carried out the last wishes of his father at the expense of his own power and position. Humayun had three brothers - Kamran, Askari and Hindal. The law of primogeniture, i.e., the eldest son succeeding the father was not an accepted practice among the Muslims. In the absence of regular law of succession to the throne, might always determined right Kingship knew no Kinship at that time. Most of the troubles of Humayun

came from his brothers. Each wanted to outwit the other and cherished fond hopes of becoming the Emperor of Hindustan. In accordance with the wishes of his father, Humayun gave Kabul and Kandahar to his brother, Kamran. The surrender of Kabul to Kamran was fatal step taken by Humayun. Kabul, the nerve-centre of Babur's activities, was the main spring from which revenue flowed. The loss of Kabul deprived Humayun of a regular source of income. Further, it was the main recruiting ground for enlisting soldiers. He was now forced to depend upon an army of diverse elements consisting of Afghans, Persians, Uzbeks, Mughals, Turks and Indians whose traditions of loyalty and obedience to the throne were notorious for their vagaries. Kabul and Kandahar did not appease the territorial hunger of Kamran. Military demonstrations earned for him the Punjab and Hissar Firuza. Hissar Firuza occupied a very vulnerable position and the possession of it gave Kamran the command of the highroad between the Punjab and Delhi. Humayun assigned Sambhal to Askari. Mew at which comprised modern Alwar, the districts of Gurgaon and Mathura, and a part of Agra was given to Hindal. The division of the empire among his brothers was the first suicidal step taken by Humayun. Kamran who feigned fraternal devotion was the most potential rival to Humayun. He could have nipped the activities of Kamran in the bud. But he was extremely kind to him. Askari and Hindal who were weak and wavering were dangerous tools in the hands of adventurers and opportunists. The roots of Humayun's troubles lay in the indiscreet clemency shown to his ungrateful brothers. He trusted when he should have tried them and wavered when he should have weeded them out.

c) The Afghans

In the downpours of Panipat and Gogra, the Afghans were only drifted away but not withered. They were still factors to be reckoned within the politics of Hindustan. Muhammad Lodi, the brother of Ibrahim Lodi, was still thinking in terms of becoming the overlord of Hindustan. Sher Khan, the rising star of the east, was playing a waiting-game and was looking for an opportunity to unite the Afghans and seat himself on the throne of Delhi. Nusrat Shah backed up the cause of the Afghans in Bengal. Alam Khan, the uncle of Ibrahim Lodi who took refuge at the court of Bhadur Shan got able assistance from the latter to wreck the power of Humayun.

d) The Nobles

Humayun's close relatives who styled themselves Mirzas also fomented troubles. Of them Muhammad Zaman and Muhammad Sultan were the most formidable rivals of Humayun. They advanced claims to the throne. Mahdi Khwaja, who was posed as a rival claimant to the throne after the death of Babur, was also a potential rival to Humayun to be

bracketed with the two Mirzas mentioned above. Apart from these rivals, Humayun had to contend with other influential nobles who possessed large jagirs and wielded great power.

e) **Bahadur Shah**

Bahadur Shah of Gujarat was one of the most formidable enemies of Humayun. He was a man of consummate practical genius. He annexed Malwa and dragged Humayun into an open conflict with him by giving asylum to disaffected Afghans. He made capital out of the troubled conditions in Mewar and occupied Chitor. His ambition soared high and he was waiting for an opportunity to swallow the whole of Rajputana. In his subconscious mind, he was entertaining fond hopes to seat himself on the throne of Delhi.

f) **Character of Humayun**

Humayun himself was his greatest enemy. He lacked resolution and action. In the words of Lane-Poole: "he was incapable of sustained effort, and after a moment of triumph would bury himself in his harem and dream away the precious hours in the opium-eater's paradise whilst his enemies were thundering at the gate. Naturally kind, he forgave when he should have punished; light-hearted and sociable he revelled at the table when he ought to have been in the saddle. His character attracts but never dominates. In private life he might have been a delightful companion and a staunch friend; his virtues were Christian, and his whole life was that of a gentleman. But as a king he was a failure. His name means „fortunate“ and never was an unlucky sovereign more miscalled”.

Conquests of Humayun Expedition to Kalinjar (1531)

The fortress of Kalinjar in Bundelkhand was the first target of attack of Humayun. The Raja of the fortress put up a stiff resistance and Humayun was forced to sue for peace and receive a huge war indemnity. Though the Raja could not be cowed down to submission, he could have been at least coaxed and won over had Humayun used tact and intelligence. But he made an egregious mistake in accepting the indemnity in his hurry to face the Afghan danger in the east.

Expedition against Muhammad Lodi (1532)

The Afghan menace in Bihar under the leadership of Muhammad Lodi was the immediate cause for raising the siege of Kalinjar. He captured Jaunpur and was on his march to capture more places. His onward march was arrested by Humayun and Muhammad Lodi was defeated in the battle of Dadrah or Dourah near Lucknow in 1532.

Siege of Chunar (1532)

After subduing Muhammad Lodi, Humayun besieged the fortress of Chunar held by

Sher Khan. The siege lasted for 4 months. He was within easy reach of conquering it. But he gave up the siege and merely accepted the formal submission of Sher Khan. This was a serious diplomatic blunder committed by Humayun. Instead of subduing Sher Khan, he allowed him breathing space to recover and strengthen his position.

The period of recess (1533 - 34)

Though alarming news continued to pour in from Gujarat where Bahadur Shah had embarked on a career of territorial aggression, Humayun frittered away his energy a year and time a on feasts and festivities in Agra and Delhi for nearly a year and a half. He could have utilized this time in consolidating his conquests and in taking prompt action against Bahadur Shah. But he allowed the weed to grow

Expedition against Bahadur Shah (1535 -36)

Bahadur Shah annexed Malwa in 1531, captured the fortress of Raisin in 1532 and defeated the Rana of Chitor in 1533. He also humbled the Sultans of Khandesh, Ahmadnagar and Berar. He dragged Humayun into an open conflict with him by giving asylums to Muhammad Zaman Mirza and other disaffected Afghans. Quarrel with Bahadur Shah was inevitable. Humayun himself proceeded at the head of a large army. At that time Bahadur Shah was besieging the fortress of Chitor for a second time. Rani Karnavati, mother of the Rana, sent an earnest appeal to Humayun to help a sister in such a miserable plight. Bahadur Shah knew pretty well that Humayun would not take up arms against a Muslim when engaged in a fight with an infidel. As expected, Humayun strictly adhered to this Muslim tradition. His fraternal sympathy towards a Muslim brethren was commendable but not statesmanlike. He could have crushed Bahadur Shah and won over the Rajputs to his side. But he made a wrong calculation and committed a mistake in not striking the iron when it was hot.

After the fall of Chitor into the hands of Bahadur Shah in 1535, Humayun defeated him in the battle of Mandasor. He fled from the field of battle and took shelter in the fort of Mandu. From there he fled to Champaner and thence to Ahmadabad, Cambay and finally retired to the island of Diu. Humayun captured Mandu, Champaner, Ahmadabad and Cambay. He became the master of Gujarat and Malwa in 1535. An immense booty fell into his hands. He did not make any permanent arrangement to consolidate his conquests. As was the case before, he frittered away his energy and time in costly feasts and needless festivities. This was another great mistake committed by him. His victories hardly lasted for a year. Bahadur Shah, in the meantime, recovered Gujarat and Malwa and once again became the undisputed master of the two provinces in 1536.

Expedition against Sher Khan (1537 - 40)

After the loss of the two provinces, Humayun wasted one year in merry-making in spite of the fact that Sher Khan was strengthening his position in Bengal and Bihar. When things drifted from bad to worse, Humayun in 1537 besieged and captured the fort of Chunar held by Sher Khan. Though it was a signal victory, it did not serve any useful purpose, because it did not command any land-route. After pocketing Chunar, Humayun wasted his time in fruitless attempts to capture Bengal. He could have utilized this time to beard SHar Khan, the Tiger Lord, in his own den. In the meantime,. Sher Khan strengthened his position and added one territory after another to his possessions. He cut off the communications between Delhi and Bengal. Humayun realized the gravity of the situation rather late and started his return march in 1539. Sher Khan effected a junction with Humayun ar Chaysa in 1539 and inflicted a crushing defeat on him. To save himself, Humayun plunged into the Ganges on horseback and was saved by a water-carrier. He returned to Agra, collected another army and met sher shah at Bilgram near Kanauj in 1540. But Humayun was beaten back. He became a fugitive and Sher Shah assumed the reins of the government of Hindustan.

Humayun's Plight and Restoration

After the battle of Bilgram, better known as the battle of Kanauj, Humayun retired to Agra. He fled to sind where his son Akbar was born in Amarkot in 1542. When he found his position intolerable and prospects of recovery bleak, he went to Persia. The Shah of Persia promised to help him provided he became a convert to the Shia faith and surrendered Kandahar to him. Humayun agreed to the terms. With the help of the Shah of Persia, he captured Kandahar and Kabul from his brother Kamran. He imprisoned Askari and sent him to Mecca from where he never returned. Hindal was killed by an Afghan. Kamran was blinded at the orders of Humayun and sent to Mecca where he died in 1557. In the end at least he got rid of his ungrateful and un worthy brothers.

After consolidating his position in Afghanistan, he proceeded to Hindustan. He crossed the Indus in 1554 and captured Lahore in 1555. The palmy days of the Sur dynasty were already over. Sher Shah died in 1545 and he was succeeded by Islam Shah who in turn was succeeded by Muhammad Adil Shah. His authority was questioned by Ibrahim Shah and Sikandar Shah. Internal dissensions broke up the Sur Empire. Taking advantage of the facations, Humayun defeated Sikandar Sur in the battle of Sirhind in 1555 and occupied Delhi and Agra. Humayun recovered a part of his lost possessions. He did not live long to enjoy the fruits of his hard-won labout. In 1556, he fell down from the staircase of his library and died.

SHER SHAH

Early life

Sher Khan alias Farid better known as Sher Shah is a remarkable character in the history of India. The date and place of birth of Sher Shah are a subject of much learned debate and discussion among historians. Qanungo holds the view that Sher Shah was born in 1486 in Narnaul. Dr. Saran holds the view that he was born in 1472 in Bajwara. The original name of Sher Shah was Farid. He was born to parents of humble means. By dint of his ability he rose from position to position and finally became the Emperor of Hindustan.

His grandfather, Ibrahim Lodi, an Afghan of the Sur tribe, lived near Peshawar. He was a trader in horses. He along with his son Hasan moved to the east in search of military service and both entered the service of two Afghan nobles in the Punjab. Farid was born during this time. Hasan had eight sons through four wives. Farid and Nizam were born to his first wife, and Sulaiman and Ahmad to his youngest wife. Hasan's infatuation for his youngest wife, a slave-girl, made the lot of Farid and his mother miserable. Like the saintly Jija Bai, mother of Sivaji, Farid's mother was forsaken by her heartless husband. Farid spent his boyhood in misery and sorrow. Hasan's ability in business won for him from his master the jagirs of Sasaram and Khwaspur. Finding his position intolerable, Farid quarreled with his father and went to Jaunpur where he deeply immersed himself in the study of letters. Within a short time he got a perfect mastery over the Arabic and Persian languages. The precocity of Farid attracted the attention of Jamal Khan, the patron of his father, who brought about reconciliation between the father and the son. Hasan entrusted him with the duty of administering the jagirs of Sasaram and Khwaspur. During this period, he showed his worth as a great administrator. As Qanungo says: "Early in the 16th century Farid conceived a theory of Economics well-worthy of admiration even in the present century" To quote him again: "at Sasaram he was unconsciously undergoing the period of apprenticeship for administering the Empire of Hindustan".

Farid's rise in status and position kindled the jealousy of his step mother and once again he was driven out of home. He went to Agra and entered the service of Daulat Khan Lodi. After his father's death. Farid got back the jagirs. But difficulties did not end with that. Sulaiman, his step-brother, wanted to effect a division of the jagirs. But Farid was not for it. To make his position secure, he entered the service of Bahar Khan, the independent ruler of Bihar. In one of the hunting expeditions along with master, Farid killed a tiger single-handed and for this gallant encounter Bahar Khan conferred on him the title of Sher Khan. He also

became his deputy and tutor or his son Jalal Khan. The enemies of Sher Khan carried tales to his master and once again he was deprived of his father's jagirs. He entered Mughal service. In recognition of his services, Babur restored the jagirs to him.

Having achieved his end, Sher Khan left Mughal service and returned to Bihar. In the meantime, Bahar Khan died and his widowed wife appointed Sher Khan her deputy and guardian to her minor son Jalal Khan. For all intents and purposes, Sher Khan was the ruler of Bihar. Jalal Khan wanted to free himself from the control of Sher Khan. But as Sher Khan had in the meantime strengthened his power, it became impossible to achieve his end without side help. So he sought the help of Muhammad Shah, the ruler of Bengal. The combined forces of Jalal Khan and Muhammad Shah were defeated by Sher Khan Surajgarh. This victory gave him mastery over the whole of Bihar.

Expedition against Humayun

After the loss of Gujarat and Malwa, Humayun wasted one year in merry-making . He captured the fort of Chunar from Sher Khan. After pocketing Chunar, Humayun wasted his time in a fruitless attempt to capture Bengal. In the meantime, Sher Khan strengthened his position and added one territory after another to his possessions. He cut off the communications between Delhi and Bengal. Humayun realized the gravity of the situation rather late and started his return march in 1539. Sher Khan effected a junction with Humayun at Chausa in 1539 and inflicted a crushing defeat on him. To save himself, Humayun plunged into the Ganges on horseback and was saved by a water-carrier. After the battle of Ghausia, Sher Khan assumed the title of Sher Shah. The Khutba was read and coins were struck in his name. Humayun returned to Agra, collected another army and met Sher Shah at Bilgram near Kanauj in 1540. But Humayun was beaten back. He became a fugitive and Sher Shah assumed the reins of the government of Hindustan.

Other Campaigns of Sher Shah (1540 - 1545)

The fugitive Emperor, Humayun, was given a hot chase by Sher Shah. The pursuit took him up to the Punjab which he easily captured. From Kamran. He reduced to partial submission the warlike tribes of Gkkar situated between the upper courses of the Indus and the Jhelum. The revolt of Khizir Khan, the Governor of Bengal in 1541, drew his attention and Sher Shah hurried to Bengal, put down the revolt and dismissed him from service. He thoroughly reorganized the administration of Bengal. Rajputana was the next target of attack of Sher Shah. He conquered Malwa in 1542. In 1543, Raisin was captured. Multan and Sind were also conquered. In 1544, he conquered Marwar from Maldev. Chitor and Ranthambhor also fell. His last expedition was fitted against Kalinjar in 1544. While engaged in the siege, he

was hurt by an explosion. The fortress fell, but Sher Shah died in 1545. Qanungo says: "Thus passed away in the mid-career of victory and beneficent activity the great soldier and statesman with whom there appeared for the persecuted Hindus the dawn of the era toleration, justice, equality and political rights which broadened into a dazzling moon on the accession.

Extent of the Empire

The Empire of Sher Shah practically included the whole of North India except Assam, Nepal, Kashmir and Gujarat. It extended from the Indus in the west to the mouth of the Ganges in the east. On the north, it was bordered by the Himalayas and in the south it stretched up to the Vindhya mountains. In the south, it included Multan, Sind, Rajputana (minus Jaisalmer), Malwa and Bundelkhand.

Sher Shah's Administration

The fame of Sher Shah rests more on his brilliant administrative system than on his conquests. According to Qanungo, he was a constructive genius. But Tripathi and Dr. Saran hold the view that he was only a reformer and not an innovator because he only revived the administrative system of Ala-ud-din Khilji. But the fact cannot be denied that he breathed a new life into the dull and dreary administration which was prevailing at that time. Akbar anticipated in many ways the reforms of Sher Shah.

Central Government

Sher Shah was an enlightened despot. Like a true enlightened despot he "attempted to found an Empire broad-based upon the people's will". HE acted on the principle that "it behoves the great to be always active". He concentrated in his person civil and military powers. He personally attended to the minute details of government. In the day-to-day administration of the country, he was assisted by four ministers and two minor officers. Though the officers had great powers, real power was wielded by Sher Shah. A highly centralized monarchy tinged with bureaucracy was the characteristic feature of his government.

Provincial Government

Two views are held with regard to the provincial administration of Sher Shah. According to one view, he did not divide the country into provinces and the other view negates it. He knew quite well the insubordination of the Governors of the provinces. So it seems probable that he was not in favour of dividing the country into provinces. For administrative convenience, he might have divided the country into units of divisions known as Sarkars. There were 47 Sarkars and each in its turn was subdivided into a number of parganas. The administration of each pargana was carried on by one Amin, one Shiqdar, a

Treasurer and two writers. The Amin was in charge of revenue collection. The Shiqdar had to maintain law and order. The Treasurer was, of course, in charge of the treasury. The two writers kept the accounts - one in Hindi and the other in Persian. The work of the officers of the pargana was supervised by the two chief officers of the Sarkar - Shiqdar - Shiqdaran (Shiqdar -in -Chief) and Munsif -I-Munsifan (Munsif-in-Chief). The Chief Munsif was in charge of revenue administration. The officers of the Sarkars and parganas were transferred once in two or three years.

Revenue System

The revenue administration of Sher Shah was based on sound and just principles catering to the needs of the ryots and the claims of the government. It was he who undertook in a systematic way the survey of the land. The lands were carefully surveyed, classified and assessed. The State's due was fixed at one-fourth in some places and one-third in most parts. The payment of the State's due was allowed to be made in cash or kind, though cash payment was preferred. The settlement was directly made with each cultivator who received a patta or title-deed from the State. Had Sher Shah been spared for some more years, he would have perpetuated the ryotwari system and would have completely eliminated the jagirdari system.

Sher Shah was a veritable shepherd keeping a close watch on the interests of the cultivators. HE never allowed illegal exactions. He considered the interests of the ruler and the cultivator identical. State loans were advanced to the cultivators during monsoon failures or whenever the crops were damaged by soldiers. Strict instructions were given to revenue officers to be very lenient at the time of assessment and to be terribly strict at the time of collection. Sher Shah preferred cash payment to the grant to jagirs to the officers. His revenue reforms resulted in an enormous increase in the resources of the State.

Army

Sher Shah realized the importance of a standing army. Being an ardent lover of Ala-ud-din Khilji's military administration, he borrowed the salient features from his system. Like Ala-ud-din Khilji, he preferred a standing army to the feudal army. He personally recruited the soldiers and fixed their salary according to ability. To have direct contact with the soldiers, he combined in his person the duties of the Commander-in-Chief and pay Master General. He took utmost care to check fraudulent practices. Descriptive rolls of every soldier were maintained with a view to preventing proxies. Like Ala-ud-din Khilji, he introduced the system of branding horses with the object of preventing false musters. Most of the soldiers recruited by Sher Shah came from the Afghan-stock. The army was divided and stationed in key centres of

the Empire. He himself had a standing army under his direct command. It consisted of 1,50,000 cavalry, 25,000 infantry, 300 elephants and artillery. Discipline in the army was terrible and severe. The most brutal punishments were meted out to the disobedient and wavering soldiers. Soldiers in general were on the march. Though Sher Shah mainly relied on the Sughans, he reposed confidence in Hindus also. Brahmajit Gaur was one of his Hindu generals.

Justice

Sher Shah had a high sense of justice. The administration of justice was just and even-handed. Severe punishments were meted out to the offenders without any regard for their status and position. In the parganas, the civil cases were decided by the Amin and criminal cases were dispensed by the Qazi and the Mir-i-Adal. Several parganas had a common Musif-i-Munsifan who heard civil cases appealed from the parganas. The cases of criminal appeal, however, went to the Chief Qazi at the capital city. The highest court of appeal in the country was the imperial Sadr presided over by the Emperor.

Police

The police system of Sher Shah though crude was terribly efficient. He introduced the principle of local responsibility in detecting crimes. If a crime was committed or a theft occurred in a village, the village headman was held responsible. Though the system was primitive and harsh, it brought security to the life and property of the people.

Communication

Sher Shah realized the importance of roads for defence purposes as well as for the convenience of the people. He constructed four great roads connecting the key centres. Qanungo says: "the most permanent among the monuments of Sher Shah's glory are his great roads which have kept his memory still green in the minds of his countrymen". Shady trees were planted on either side of the roads for the comfort of the travelers. Arrangements were made in the sarais for separate quarters for Hindus and Muslims. In each sarai, two horses were kept for the news-reporters to inform the Emperor about the day-to-day happenings in the distant parts of the Empire. Thus the sarais served the purpose of posthouses. Dr. Qanungo says that the sarais became "the veritable arteries of the Empire diffusing a new life among its hitherto benumbed limbs".

Trade and Commerce

Sher Shah abolished many vexatious taxes that stood in the way of free-trade. Only two taxes were collected afterwards-one when the goods actually entered the frontier and the

other when they were actually sold. This greatly facilitated the easy movement of goods from one place to another and greatly contributed to the commercial prosperity of the Empire.

Buildings

Though Sher Shah distinguished himself in the feats of war, he did not neglect the arts of peace. HE was a great builder. He constructed the fort of Rohtas on the Jhelum. The purana Qila in Delhi is another architectural achievement of Sher Shah. Perhaps the best specimen of the architecture of the period was his mausoleum built on a high rock in the midst of a lake at Sasaram. With regard to the style adopted in the construction of the mausoleum. Vincent Smith says "the style may be described as intermediate between the austerity of the Tughluq buildings and the feminine grace of Shah Jahan's masterpiece".

Coinage

Sher Shah also left his impress on the numismatic history of India. He thoroughly reformed the coinage. He issued a large number of silver coins known as rupees. The copper coin known as dam was also circulated along with the silver rupee.

Religious Policy

Though a devout Muslim, Sher Shah was not a fanatic. Though there were stray instances which revealed his religious fervor, in general he followed a policy of religious in a land of different faiths. He did not undertake any systematic persecution of the Hindus. With regard to the attitude of Sher Shah towards Hinduism, Qanungo says that it was "not contemptuous sufferance but respectful deference".

Akbar

If one has to be called 'Great' in medieval times as a ruler one must be a brave soldier, a benevolent and wise king, a man of enlightened ideas, and a sound judge of character. Akbar, the Mughal Emperor having been possessed with all the above qualities and traits, undoubtedly occupies a unique position in the history of India. Moreover it is unusual to remain a secular ruler in the medieval times. Akbar had the credit of remaining tolerant towards other religions.

Birth and Boyhood

Akbar was born to Humayun and Hamida Banu Begum at the house of Rana Virsal of Amarkot on October 15th 1542. At that point in time his father was living the life of a fugitive. He had lost his empire to Sher Shah Sur. Akbar's childhood was spent in adversity. His father was in no position to offer resistance to Askari his brother in law who was set to attack him. Nor was he able to make headway in his expedition against Thakka and Bhakkar. So, he fled in fear to Persia along with his wife Hamida Banu, leaving behind Akbar, a child of one year.

Askari picked up the child Akbar and his wife Sultan Begum looked after him well. Humayun then secured the help of the Shah of Persia to attack Kandahar which he captured from his brother Askari in September 1545. Humayun also captured Kabul from Kamran in November 1545 and finally met his son Akbar who was then about three years old. In November 1547 arrangements were made for his education but as a young boy he was more fond of sports and animals than studies. He however, became an expert in riding swordmanship and other martial exercises. On the death of Hindal (Humayun's brother) in November 1551 the assignment of Ghazni was conferred upon Akbar. Akbar remained the Governor of Ghazni till November 1554 when Humayun embarked on an expedition for the reconquest of Hindustan. Soon Munim Khan was appointed as Akbar's guardian. 178 On the defeat of Sikandar Sur, a nephew of Sher Shah and one of the claimants to the throne of Delhi, at Sarhund on January 22, 1555, Akbar was credited with the victory in the official records and was formally declared to be the heir-apparent. Within a few months of the reoccupation of Delhi by his father, he was appointed governor of Lahore and Bairam Khan became his guardian in place of Munim Khan. Akbar was then thirteen years of age.

Accession: Feb 14, 1556

Humayun died as a result of a fall from the staircase of his library located at Sher Mandal in Delhi on 27th January, 1555. The news of his father's death reached Akbar (the eldest son of Humayun) at Kalanaur in the Gurdaspur District of the Punjab, where he was engaged in operations against Sikandar Sur. Humayun's death had to be concealed in order to enable Akbar to crown himself without opposition. His guardian Bairam Khan took immediate steps to enthrone him on a brick platform and proclaimed him Emperor on February 14, 1556.

Condition of India In 1556

Though Humayun had recovered Delhi in June 1555 he had not found enough time to consolidate his position in India and though Sikandar Sur had been defeated by Humayun, his power had not been crushed. In the Eastern provinces, the Afghans were strong under their king Mohammad Shah Adali. Adali's minister, Hemu, possessed a large army and was determined to prevent Akbar from taking possession of the dominion of his father. The Rajut princess of Mewar, Jaisalmer, Bundi and Jodhpur were formidable enemies of Akbar who had increased their military strength to such an extent that they were thinking in terms of fighting against the Mughal Empire. Gujarat and Malwa had become independent. Kabul was under the control of Mirza Hakim, the half-brother of Akbar. Both Sindh and Multan were independent, Kashmir was ruled by an independent Muslim ruler and Gondwana was ruled by Rani

Durgawati, in the name of her minor son. The states of Ahmednagar, Bijapur, Golconda, Bidar, Berar and Khandesh were absolutely independent. The economic condition of the country was even worse. A widespread famine was raging with full fury and was bringing havoc to the people. The famine was particularly severe in the districts of Delhi and Agra where thousands died of starvation.

Akbar's Precarious Position: His Principal Rival Hemu

Akbar's greatest enemy was Hemu, the Hindu prime minister of Muhammad Adil Shah, who was determined to expel the Mughals from India. Adil Shah, who had made Chunar his capital, despatched Hemu to drive the Mughals out of India. Hemu was preparing to proceed to attack Agra when Humayun's death occurred. Taking advantage of the situation he advanced from Gwalior to Agra. Hemu occupied Agra, with its treasurers and proceeded towards Delhi where Tardi Beg, the Governor was defeated. Finally Ali Qulikhan Shaibani, the governor of Sambhal also abandoned his territories and fled. Hence, the entire country from Gwalior to the river Satluj passed under the control of Hemu. He set himself up as an independent ruler, carrying out his formal enthronement in the fort of Delhi. He thus became the first and the only Hindu to occupy the throne of Delhi during the medieval period of Indian History. **The Second Battle of Panipat (November 5, 1556)**

The news of the fall of Delhi and Agra alarmed the Mughals and they advised their sovereign, and then encamped at Jalandar, to retire immediately to Kabul. But Bairam Khan decided in favour of recovering Delhi and Akbar heartily agreed with his guardian. Leaving Khwaja Khizr Khan at Lahore to deal with Sikandar Sur, Akbar left Jalandar on October 13 on his expedition against Hemu. At Sirhind, the three fugitive Governors of Agra, Delhi and Sambhal met Akbar and counselled him to retreat to Kabul. Bairam Khan, however, took steps to silence them by putting Tardi Beg Khan to death with Akbar's permission. The army then continued its eventful march towards Delhi. Hemu sent forward his advance guard with a park of his artillery to encounter that of Akbar's which was proceeding rapidly under the command of Ali Quli Khan Shaibani. Ali Quli Khan inflicted a defeat on Hemu's advance guard and captured his artillery. The armies of Hemu and Akbar met on the historic battlefield of Panipat on November 5, 1556. Bairam Khan commanded the ten thousand strong Mughul army from a long distance in the rear and placed Ali Quli Khan in charge of the centre. Sikandar Khan Uzbek was in charge of the right wing and Abdullah Khan Uzbek in charge of the left wing. Akbar was kept at a safe distance behind the army. 180 Hemu's fighting strength consisted of 30,000 Rajput and Afghan cavalry and 500 war elephants who were protected by the plate armour and had musketeers and cross-bowmen mounted on their backs. He had, however, no

guns. Hemu took his position in the centre and gave charge of his right wing to Shadi Khan Kakkar and left wing to Ramayya. In spite of the initial loss of his artillery, Hemu boldly charged the Mughuls and overthrew their right and left wings. He then attacked the centre and hurled his 500 elephants against it. The Mughul centre, however, could not be broken as the troopers of their defeated wings had collected themselves and had launched an attack on Hemu's flanks. Moreover, there was a deep ravine in front, which barred Hemu's advance. Taking advantage of it Ali Quli Khan, with a part of his cavalry, made a detour and attacked Hemu's centre from Behind. Hemu made a brave counter-charge and fighting continued fiercely. At this time a stray arrow struck Hemu in the eye and made him unconscious. His army, presuming that its leader was dead, fled in all directions. The 1500 war elephants and other booty fell into the hands of Akbar and Bairam Khan. Hemu was captured and brought before Akbar and Bairam Khan. Akbar complied with the request of Bairam Khan and severed Hemu's head from his body. The second Battle of Panipat was of far-reaching importance. The Mughals got a decisive victory over the Afghans. The Afghan pretensions to the sovereignty of India were gone once for all. Delhi and Agra were occupied. Immediate steps were taken to complete the operations against Sikandar Sur, who was compelled to surrender in May 1557. He was granted an assignment in Bihar, from where he was later expelled by Akbar. He died a fugitive in Bengal (1559). Muhammad Adil Shah, the next Sur claimant to the throne of Delhi, was killed in 1557 as a result of his conflict with the ruler of Bengal. Ibrahim, the third Sur pretender, found asylum in Orissa. Thus within two years of his victory at Panipat there remained no Sur rival to contest Akbar's claim to the sovereignty of India.

Regency and Fall Of Bairam Khan

The outstanding achievements of Bairam Khan as a regent were the defeat of Hemu and the elimination of Akbar's Sur rivals. The credit of winning the second Battle of Panipat also goes in a large measure to Bairam Khan. After the Battle of Panipat, Bairam Khan by virtue of his wisdom, age and experience, was able to acquire considerable influence over Akbar 181 and became virtually the ruler of the country (1556-60). In this position, he continued the work of conquest. He conquered Gwalior and Jaunpur but failed in the case of Ranthambore and Chunar. Another expedition planned to conquer Malwa had to be recalled owing to strained relations between Bairam Khan and Akbar. However, Bairam Khan did not remain in power for long. His fall came in 1560 due to many causes. Firstly, Bairam Khan was a shia whereas the king, his household and the nobility were Sunnis. Secondly, though devoted to the interests of the state, "his disposition was arbitrary and jealous and he could not easily tolerate the

presence of possible rivals near his young master". Thirdly, as Akbar began to grow in years, he made up his mind to take on the administration into his own hands. Bairam Khan did not seem to like the idea as his influence would decline. This made Bairam Khan a little impatient. Fourthly, there were also palace intrigues. Hamida Banu, the mother of Akbar, Maham Anaga, his foster mother and her son Adham Khan and son-in-law Shihab-ud-din hated Bairam Khan and plotted to remove him. A conspiracy was hatched. One day, early in 1560, while Bairam Khan was at Agra, Akbar received the news of his mother's illness and went to Delhi. There Maham Anaga and others complained against Bairam Khan and accused him of harbouring evil designs of treason. Akbar was convinced and decided to dismiss Bairam Khan. Akbar wrote to Bairam Khan saying that he had decided to take into his own hands the reins of the government, and therefore, Bairam Khan should retire to Mecca. He was also offered a Jagir for his maintenance. Bairam Khan was advised by his followers to rise in revolt but he refused to do so. Unfortunately, Mulla Pir Muhammad, a person whom Bairam Khan detested, was sent to hasten the departure of Bairam Khan from India to Mecca. This enraged the ex-regent and he revolted. However, he was defeated and begged for forgiveness. Akbar forgave him and Bairam Khan was allowed to proceed to Mecca with dignity. Unfortunately he was murdered by Mubarak Khan, an Afghan in Gujarat. His family was brought to Ahmadabad in a destitute condition and Akbar received them honourably. Bairam Khan's infant son Abdul Rahim was brought up under Akbar's protection. In 1554 Abdul Rahim was honoured by his father's title of Khan Khana.

Lady's Government (1561-64)

After the fall of Bairam Khan in 1560 Akbar came under the influence of Maham Anaga, his foster mother. She proved to be unworthy of the trust reposed in her. Desirous of freeing himself from the control of his chief nurse, Maham Anaga, Akbar had appointed his foster-father Shams-ud-din Atga Khan his Chief Minister in November 1561, in place of Munim Khan. The appointment was highly displeasing to Maham Anaga, Adham Khan, Munim Khan, Shihab-ud-din Ahmad Khan and certain other influential members of the harem party. Adham Khan, anxious to retain his position of predominance, entered the palace with a few of his followers on May 16, 1562. He killed Atga Khan and then attempted to enter the royal apartment of Akbar. He was prevented from entering by an eunuch. Akbar asked Adham Khan as to why he had killed the minister. Adham Khan giving lame excuses also attempted to seize Akbar's hands and sword. Adham was bound and thrown down the palace terrace and he died instantaneously. After another 40 days Maham Anaga died. Akbar thus got rid of the influence of the harem party.

Early Reforms of Akbar

1. Enslaving of war Prisoners Abolished, 1562 Soon after entering his twentieth year Akbar showed evidence of a broad mindedness which his predecessors had lacked and which was to make him famous as the greatest Muslim ruler of India. Bairam Khans infant son Abdul Rahim was brought up under Akbar's protection. It was the rule during the medieval times to make slaves of the prisoners of war and to convert them and their families forcibly to Islam. Akbar abolished the system of the enslavement of wives and children of the conquered people and also saved Hinduism from mass conversion.

2. Abolition of Pilgrims' Tax, 1563 Akbar abolished the tax levied on the pilgrims who visited Hindu places of pilgrimage. This he did with a view to win over the goodwill of the Hindus. He felt that it was contrary to the will of God that anybody should be asked to pay a tax for worshipping Him, although his form of worship might be 'erraneous'.

3. Abolition of Jiziya, 1564 Akbar abolished throughout his dominion the most hated tax, called Jiziya, which all non-Muslims were required to pay. This had imposed a great disability on the Hindus and constantly reminded them that they were treated as an inferior people. Though its abolition caused a substantial loss to his treasury this measure went a long way in removing the deep rooted bitterness in the minds of the Hindus against the Muslim rulers. 183

4. Akbar's Views on Child-marriage, Female Infanticide, Dowry and Polygamy Akbar discouraged child-marriages and the system of female infanticide. A law was made that no boy below the age of 16 and no girl below the age of 14 was to be married. Consent of the bride and bridegroom was made necessary for the performance of a marriage. By another law, it was provided that no son or daughter of a nobleman could be married without ascertainment of their age by an official of the police. He disapproved of the system of high dowries. He condemned polygamy saying that it ruined the health, happiness and tranquillity of mind of a person. **5. Sati** Akbar tried to remove the custom of **Sati** from the Hindus in general and the Rajputs in particular. Special inspectors were appointed to keep a watch on the voluntary or forced **Sati**. No woman was to be burnt against her will. **6. Branding of Horses** Horses belonging to the state were branded with the royal mark or number. Thus, the Chera and Dagh system of Ala-ud-Din Khilji was reintroduced.

7. Abolition of Jagir System All Jagirs were converted into crown lands. The state became the owner of those lands and collected the revenue directly. The officers were to be paid salaries.

8. Other reforms a) Trial by ordeal was abolished b) Mir Arz was appointed to receive

petitions from the public and submit them to the emperor. c) A record office was set up and the proceedings of the court were to be recorded. d) Abdul Samad was appointed the mint master and different officials were put in charge of the provincial mints. 184

Wars and Conquests of Akbar

Akbar was a great general and conquerer. He spent practically the whole of his life in making wars and adding to his territories. He defeated Hemu in the second Battle of Panipat (1556). In 1561, Adham Khan was sent to Malwa to subdue Baz Bahadur. In the battle that took place on March 29, 1561 Baz Bahadur was badly defeated and he fled from the battle field. All the treasure, property and family of Baz Bahadur fell into the hands of the victor. Appropriating most of the spoils, Adham Khan sent to the court of Akbar only a fraction of what he had seized. Enraged by this act of Adham Khan, Akbar left Agra for Malwa on 27th April. On seeing the emperor Adham Khan humbled himself and asked for forgiveness. He was pardoned and also made governor of Malwa. While Malwa was being reduced to subjection by Adham Khan, there occurred a serious rebellion in the province of Jaunpur which was then the eastern part of Akbar's dominions. Sher Khan had collected a large army and invaded Jaunpur. The Governor of Jaunpur, Ali Quli Khan put up a stiff resistance and defeated the invader. After his victory the governor had an inclination to rebel. He sent only nominal spoils to the court of Akbar. Akbar at once hastened towards Jaunpur. The governor met Akbar at Kara and asked for forgiveness. Akbar accepted his submission and sent him back as governor of Jaunpur. Akbar then sent Asaf Khan to wrest Chunargah from the hands of the Afghans which was acquired in August 1561. In 1564 Akbar directed Asaf Khan to subdue Gondwana which was ruled by Durgavati the widow of Dalpat Shah. In the battle she was defeated. She killed herself to save her from disgrace. Her son, Vir Narayan, too, fought bravely but was defeated and killed. Asaf Khan too sent only a part of the booty he acquired but Akbar at this time was not powerful enough to punish him.

Seize of Chittoor, 1567- 68

In September 1567 Akbar resolved to conquer Chittoor, the Capital of Mewar whose ruler was Udaya Singh. The most important cause of the expedition was political. Without reducing Mewar, the premier state of Rajasthan, the ruler of which was universally acknowledged as the head of the Rajputs in the country, Akbar could not establish his claim of overlordship over northern India. Udaya Singh made commendable arrangements for the defence of his capital. Akbar arrived before the fort on Oct 23 and invested it. The siege lasted for a long time as each side was determined to achieve its objective. By chance, on February 23, 1568, Akbar fired a shot at a prominent man on the rampart of the fort. He was

Jaimal, to whom the defence of the fort was entrusted. The next day the Rajputs took up the offensive but were over powered by the Mughal - forces. Akbar entered the fort the next day and ordered a general massacre in which about 30,000 were killed. Asaf Khan was appointed Governor of Mewar and Akbar returned to Agra. The fall of Chittoor was followed by the gratifying news that Sulaiman Karrani, the ruler of Patna, had accepted Akbar's proposal to recognize him as emperor and that coins were struck in Akbar's name.

Acquisition of Ranthambhor, 1568

In April 1568, Akbar sent an expedition to Ranthambhor but had to be recalled due to the invasion of Malwa by the rebellious Mirzas. In February 1569, Akbar commenced the sieze of the fortress under his personal supervision. The siege lasted for about a month and a half and caused considerable loss of life on both sides. However, the fort was surrendered on March 18, 1569. Akbar dictated peace to the ruler of Ranthambhor, Surjan Rai, and returned to Aghra.

Surrender of Kalinjar

The fort of Kalinjar was in the possession of Raja Ram Chand of Rewa. In August 1569 Majnun Khan Qaq shal was despatched against him. With little resistance Ram Chand submitted. The Raja was given a jagir near Allahabad and Kalinjar was placed under the charge of Majnun Khan

Submission of Marwar, 1570

In November 1570 Akbar visited Nagpur, where he received the submission of the rulers of Jodhpur and Bikaner. This was followed by the submission of the ruler of Jaishalmer. Thus by the end of 1570 the whole of Rajasthan except Marwar and its tributary states recognized the suzerainty of Akbar.

Conquest of Gujarat

As Gujarat lay on the way to Mecca, Akbar was anxious to bring it under his control in order to provide safe journey to the Haj pilgrims. Its nominal king, Muzaffar Khan III, was powerless and a bloody struggle for supremacy was in progress among his ambitious and selfish nobles. 186 The Mirzas had also taken shelter there. Hence Akbar wanted to reduce Gujarat. Fortunately, a civil war was going on there and the group led by Itimad Khan appealed to Akbar for intervention. By making use of this opportunity Akbar made preparations for an expedition and sent Khan Kalan to Ahmedabad in September 1572 with horses and himself set out to undertake the campaign. Without much resistance Akbar took possession of Ahmadabad in November 1572 Khan Azam was appointed governor of Gujarat. From there Akbar proceeded to Cambay, and then to Surat and defeated Ibrahim Mirza in December

1572. Surat fell into his hands in February 1573.

Rebellion in Gujarat 1573

As soon as Akbar's back was turned, Muhammad Hussain Mirza, returned to Gujarat, formed an alliance with the disaffected nobles of the province and besieged the governor, Khan Azam in Ahmadabad. As Khan Azam was powerless against the rebels, Akbar with a small army left Fatehpur-Sikri on August 23, 1573 and reached Ahmedabad on September 2nd. The rebellion was broken. This conquest pushed Akbar's western frontier to the sea and brought him into contact with the Portuguese, who made peace with him.

Conquest of Bihar and Bengal 1574-76

Daud the Governor of Bihar had proclaimed his independence and incurred Akbar's displeasure by attacking Zamania, then the eastern outpost of the Mughal Empire. In 1574, Akbar undertook an expedition against Daud and expelled him from Bihar. The province was then annexed to the empire, Munim Khan was then given charge of the Bengal campaign. He defeated Daud at Tukra on 3rd March 1575. Daud once again made an attempt to recover Bengal but was finally defeated and killed in a battle in July 1576.

Attempt to Conquer Mewar Battle of Haldi Ghati, June 18, 1576

Although Chittor, the capital, and with it the eastern part of Mewar had been occupied in February 1568, a major portion of that kingdom remained under the control of Rana Udaya Singh. His son Pratap pledged to offer resistance to the Mughals. Akbar on his part was equally determined to acquire the remaining part of Mewar. In April 1576, Akbar sent a powerful army under Man Singh of Amber to invade Mewar. The loss of life on both sides was very heavy. Man Singh made arrangements for its occupation but failed in reducing the power of Mewar. Finally with the death of Rana on 19th Jan, 1597, Akbar got an 187 opportunity to reduce Mewar to submission. As Akbar was engaged in other quarters he could not seize the opportunity and Mewar could not be conquered and annexed.

Reduction of Kabul, 1581

Many prominent Muslim officials in Bihar and Bengal, who were opposed to Akbar's policy of absolute religious toleration and were affected by his administrative, financial and military reforms, rose in revolt and formed a conspiracy to depose Akbar and place his half brother, Mirza Muhammad Hakim of Kabul on the throne. Akbar realising that the source of his danger was from Mirza Hakim, made military preparations to attack Kabul. Akbar sent Man Singh to occupy Kabul and himself followed the Raja. Hakim fled from Kabul when Akbar entered it on August 10, 1581. Hakim submitted to Akbar who pardoned him. Akbar's step sister Bakht-un-Nisa Begum was made the governor. She was the real sister of Mirza

Hakim. Hakim took de-facto charge of the administration.

Annexation of Kashmir

In early 1586, the imperial army proceeded towards Srinagar but could not proceed due to rain and snow. The sultan of Kashmir, Yusuf Khan, feeling weak, met the imperial generals and sought for terms. He recognized Akbar as his sovereign and also issued coins in the name of the emperor. But Akbar disapproved of these arrangements. Yusuf Khan was arrested but his son Yaqub Khan escaped to Srinagar and made preparations for resistance. Akbar then sent an army and compelled him to surrender. Kashmir then was annexed and became a sarkar of the province of Kabul. **Conquest of Sindh, 1592**

Akbar coveted the southern part of Sindh without which his supremacy over north-western India could not be considered complete. He also wanted to use Sindh as a base of operations against Kandhar. In 1590 he instructed Abdur Rahman to conquer the principality of Thatta from Mirza Jani Beg. After two battles Mirza Jani Beg surrendered the entire territory including the forts of Thatta and Sehwan (1591). **Conquest of Orissa, 1592**

In 1590, Raja Man Singh invaded Orissa and made preparations to attack Qutula Khan but before the battle took place Qutula Khan died. His son, Nisar Khan, after a feeble resistance, submitted and was confirmed as governor. Two years later he again rose in rebellion but was defeated and expelled by Man Singh.

Conquest of Baluchistan, 1595

In February 1595, Mir Masum was deputed to conquer Baluchistan. This was the only territory in Northern India which had not yet acknowledged Akbar's authority. Mir Masum defeated the Pani Afghans and delivered the whole of Baluchistan including Makran to the Mughal Empire.

Acquisition of Kandhar, 1595

In April 1595, the Persian governor of Kandhar, Muzaffar Husain Mirza, peacefully delivered the fortress into the hands of Sha Beg, who was deputed by Akbar for this purpose. The acquisition of Kandhar completed Akbar's conquests in Northern India, the whole of which except a small part of Mewar, was now in his possession.

CONQUEST OF KHANDESH AND A PART OF AHMADNAGAR

(1593-1601)

AKBAR'S DECCAN POLICY

Even before he brought the whole of northern India in his possession and gave it political and administrative unity, Akbar had cherished the ambition of conquering all the four existing sultanates of the Deccan into which the old Bahamani kingdom had split. In August

1591 he despatched four diplomatic missions to Khandesh, Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golkonda asking them to recognize his suzerainty and pay him tribute. The ruler of Khandesh offered to acknowledge the emperor's authority but the other three states rejected his offer. In 1593 Akbar sent Abdur Rahim to reduce Ahmadnagar which was defended by Chand Bibi. Berar was later ceded to the empire. But soon they broke the treaty and attempted to recover Berar. Fresh operations were made in 1597 and the imperialists were victorious Akbar now sent Abul Fazl. Daulatabad fell in 1599 and Ahmadnagar was besieged and captured in 1600. In early 1599, Akbar entered Khandesh, took possession of its capital, Burhampur and besieged the fortress of Asirgarh. The ruler submitted on December 21, 1600. Khandesh now became a part of the empire. This was Akbar's last conquest. **Consolidation of the Conquests**

Akbar followed a policy of giving an organized administration to his conquests. Soon after a principality submitted to him he took steps to establish peace and order and appointed civil officers to carry out revenue settlement. Social, religious and administrative reforms were introduced in the interest of the people.

Policy Towards The Rajputs

Akbar's treatment of the Rajputs was not the outcome of thoughtless sentiment or a mere chivalrous regard for his valour, generosity and patriotism. It was the result of a deliberate policy and was based on the principles of enlightened self-interest, recognition of merit, justice and fair play. Akbar realized at an early age that his Muslim officials and followers acted principally for their own ends and could not be absolutely depended upon. Right from the day of his accession he had to face rebels in his own camp and court. Akbar was convinced that the only way to perpetuate his power and dynasty was to seek the support of the important political elements in the population of the country. The Afghan opposition to the Mughals also continued. They were preparing to overthrow the Mughal power in the Eastern parts of modern Uttar Pradesh. Akbar was shrewd enough to realise what his father and grandfather had failed to see, i.e., the Rajput power in India. The Rajputs, who held large areas in their possession, were masters of legions and renowned for their valour and fidelity. Akbar was of the opinion that the Rajputs could safely be depended upon and converted into friends. Hence he decided to seek their co-operation and use them as a counterpoise against his self-seeking Mughul, Uzbek, Persian and Afghan nobles and officials. In pursuance of this policy, he accepted the submission of Raja Bharmal of Amber (Jaipur) and made a matrimonial alliance with the family in 1562. He took Bhagwant Das and Man Singh into his service and soon discovered that they were more loyal and serviceable than most of his top ranking Muslim followers. Akbar guessed that, if the Rajputs were left in the possession of their autonomous

states and if treated honourably, they would accept him as their suzerain and he was right. One after another all the states of Rajasthan entered into alliance with him and their chiefs were enrolled as mansabdars. But this was not achieved without military demonstration and fighting in some states while others submitted without resistance. Being peculiarly free from religious fanaticism, he did not brand the Rajputs as infidels or political inferiors and also during the course of his 190 campaigns in their lands he did not indulge in destroying temples or breaking images of their gods. The result was that the Rajputs became staunch supporters of the Mughul throne and a most effective instrument for the spread of Mughal rule in India. They contributed freely and richly to the military, political, administrative, economic, social, cultural and artistic achievements of Akbar's reign. Their co-operation gave security and permanence of the Mughal rule and also brought about unprecedented economic prosperity and cultural renaissance in the country. This period witnessed a synthesis of the Hindu Muslim cultures, which is a priceless legacy of the Mughal rule.

Akbar's Land Revenue System

Sher Sha Sur was the forerunner of Akbar in the field of land revenue system. The main principles laid down by Sher Shah Sur were later followed by Akbar with necessary alterations. Sher Shah had fixed the state demand of 1/3 of the produce and made regulations for the equitable collection of land revenue. In 1575, the Jagirs were abolished. The whole empire was divided into 182 Parganas and each Pargana was under a Karori whose function was to collect revenue who were found to be greedy and corrupt. In 1582, Raja Todar Mal became the Diwan-I-Ashraf or Diwani-I-Chief. The whole land revenue system was thoroughly over-hauled. At that time the system was to fix assessments every year on the basis of the yield and prices hence the demand of the state varied from year to year. The collector's could not proceed with revenue collection till the officers fixed the rates to be charged. Todar Mal, now got an aggregate of the rates of collection for 10 years from 1570 to 1580 and 1/3 of it was taken as the basis of assessment. Land was divided into 4 classes. 1. Polaj: Land which was regularly cultivated and yielded revenue from year to year. 2. Parauti: Land which was occasionally left uncultivated so that it may regain its productive capacity during the interval. 3. Chachchar: Land which was left uncultivated for 3 or 4 years. 4. Banjar: Land which was left uncultivated for 5 or more years. 191 The share of the state was fixed at one third. The farmer was given the choice to pay either in cash or in kind. Remissions of revenue were granted in bad seasons.

Revenue Staff

The Mughal Government did not give the right of collecting land revenue to the highest bidders. It employed agencies for revenue collection. The Amil was assisted by Bitikchi,

Potdar, Qanungo, Muqaddam and Patwari. The Amil dealt severely with those who were rebellious. He also examined the registers maintained by the Patwaris, Muqaddams and Karkoons. The Bitikchi supervised the work of the Qanungoes and maintained a register of all the engagements of the peasants with the government. The Potdar received money from cultivators and issued receipts for all payments. The Qanungo was a Pargana officer. The Muqaddam was the village headman and he helped in the collection of revenue. The revenue system of Akbar worked successfully and was responsible for improving the lot of the peasants. As the share of the state was fixed, the chances of fraud on the part of the government servants were lessened. As the demand of the state was fixed, the government became sure of fixed revenue. Peasants got the security of tenure and were saved exactions. Agriculture improved and the necessities of life became cheap. Akbar's land revenue system with minor alterations continued to exist in the time of his successors.

Evolution of Akbar's Religious Policy

Akbar was born and brought up in comparatively liberal surroundings. His father was a Mughal Sunni, his mother a Persian Shia and he was born in the house of a Hindu chief. Akbar's guardian Bairam Khan was a confirmed Shia. Akbar's notable tutor, Abdul Latif had taught him the principle of Suleh-I-kul (universal peace) which Akbar never forgot. Thus heredity and environment combined to influence Akbar's religious views in the direction of liberalism. Even before he was twenty years of age, he abolished the practice of enslaving the prisoners of war and converting them to Islam. The spiritual awakening in his twentieth year became responsible for the abolition of the pilgrim's tax, in 1563, which was imposed on Hindu pilgrims visiting their holy shrines, in all parts of his empire. 192 In 1564, he abolished the Jiziya or poll-tax on non-Muslims. Although this measure marked a fundamental departure in his religious policy, Akbar, in his personal life, continued to be a good, though tolerant Muslim. He sought the company of Muslim religious men and every year performed the pilgrimage to the mausoleum of Shaikh Muin-ud-din Chishti at Ajmer. He desired to understand the principles of his religion. With this object in view, early in 1575, he erected a building entitled Ibadat Khana (House of worship) at Fatehpur Sikri, in which regular religious discussions were held on Thursday evenings. Initially the debates were confined to the Muslims. The debates ended up in quarrels among them on fundamental questions of Islamic theology. As it was divided against itself, it soon lost its influence with Akbar. Akbar was convinced that truth must be sought outside the bickerings of the Muslim scholars and Ulemas. Then began the second stage in the evolution of Akbar's religious ideas. His belief in orthodox Islam was shaken. He threw open the debates to members of other faiths, such as, Hindus,

Jains, Zoroastrians and Christians. On June 22, 1579, he mounted the pulpit and read the Khutba, in verse composed by Faizi, the poet lauret. In September Shaikh Mubarak, produced at the emperor's instance a formal document (Mahzar) giving Akbar the supreme authority of an arbiter in all controversial causes concerning Islam in the country whether they are ecclesiastical or civil. This document called as the "infallibility decree" was signed by all important Muslim divines, including Makhdum-ul-mulk and Abdun-Nabi. Akbar was to act as the Imam-I-Adil or the final interpreter of Muslim Law. Although religious discussions in the Ibadat Khana continued, Akbar now arranged for private meetings with scholars and holy men of other faiths. After his loss of faith in Sunni orthodoxy he turned to Shia scholars. Finding no consolation in the Shia faith Akbar turned to sufism but found it too inadequate. He then attempted to seek consolation in other religions, freely mixing with Hindu Sanyasis, Christian missionaries and Zoroastrian priests. But all these faiths failed to appeal to his expanding soul.

Din-I-Ilahi (1581)

The next stage in the development of the religious views of Akbar came in 1581 when he promulgated the Din-I-Ilahi. The object of the Din-I-Ilahi was to establish a national religion which would be acceptable to the Muslims and the Hindus. He tried to satisfy the thirst of the people for truth. The number of followers of Din-I-Ilahi were not large partly because Akbar was not a missionary and he also did not use force to convert people to the new faith. After his death the new faith disappeared completely.

Akbar and Christianity

A keen student of comparative religions, Akbar sent for Portuguese missionaries from Goa to enable him to make a close study of the doctrines of Christianity. In response to his invitation three Christian missions visited his court at different dates and stayed with him to explain the principles and practices of Christianity. The missionaries were allowed to build churches at Agra and Lahore and to perform worship openly. Conversions were also allowed. But, not long after did they discover that the emperor had no great desire to embrace Christianity. Akbar would not believe in a religion that was based on mere revelation and authority.

Akbar and Jainism

Jainism exercised a more profound influence on the thought and conduct of Akbar than christianity. In 1568 he is said to have arranged a religious disputation between the Jain scholars representating two rival schools of thought. In 1582 he invited one of the greatest Jain divines, Hiravijaya Suri of Tapa-Gachha, from Gujarat to explain to him the principles of Jainism. Akbar was so impressed that he gave up meat diet, released many prisoners and prohibited

animal and bird slaughter for many days in a year. The teachings of Jain monks however produced a remarkable change in Akbar's life.

Akbar and Zoroastrianism

Zoroastrianism appealed to Akbar even more than Jainism. In 1573 he made acquaintance with Dastur, Mahyarji Rana of Navasari, the greatest Zoroastrian priest and in 1578 invited him to his court to learn from him the doctrines and practices of the Parsee religion. Akbar was so impressed by the teachings that he adopted several practices of the Parsee religion.

Akbar and Hinduism

Probably Hinduism influenced Akbar much more than any other single religion. To acquire first hand knowledge of the principles and doctrines of the religion as given in the shrutis and smrites, he associated himself with prominent Hindu scholars. As a result Akbar adopted many Hindu beliefs and practices.

The Mansabdari System

During the early years of his reign, Akbar's army was mostly foreign in personnel consisting of Mongols, Turks, Uzbeks, Persians and Afghans. The commanding officers also belonged to the same race as the troops and were granted large assignments of land in lieu of their salaries. It is due to Humayun's deficiency as a leader of men and the semi-independent position of the commanders, the military aristocracy was inclined to be insubordinate making the Mughal army a weak instrument of force. The officers did not maintain the number of troops which they were required to have. They resorted to irregularities and fraudulent practices and cheated the government and soldiers alike. They attempted to resist every reform and tried to prevent Akbar from centralizing the authority and making the army a unitary organization. During his early days, Akbar had to face numerous rebellions on the part of his Mughal and Uzbek officers. He was forced to the conclusion that there was no other way of establishing his authority except by taking the absolute power of direction and control in his own hands, reducing the insubordinate military officers and reorganizing the army in such a manner as to stamp out corruption and convert it into a powerful disciplined force. The result was the mansabdari system. The word mansab means place or rank, and mansabdars were holders of rank in the imperial service. The lowest rank was that of ten and the highest that of ten thousand, which was raised by Akbar to twelve thousand. When the mansabdari system was established, the ranks above five thousand were reserved for the imperial princes, i.e., the emperor's sons and grandsons. The mansab of 8,000 and above were meant for the members of the royal family. To begin with Akbar had established only one class for each

mansab but towards the end of his reign, he introduced three grades in each of the mansabs from 5,000 downwards by instituting what is known as the sawar rank. Thus many mansabdars held a double rank, i.e., both zat and sawar ranks. The mansabdars were not required to maintain the full number of troops indicated by their ranks. The mansabs were a convenient method of fixing the status and salaries of the imperial officers. It was not necessary that a mansabdar of high rank should be employed on a correspondingly high post in the service 195 nor was it necessary that a mansabdar must be employed on a regular post or duty. The services were not classified into civil service and military service and any mansabdar was liable to be called upon to discharge either duty at any time in his career. All imperial officers, except perhaps the qazis and the Sadrs, were enrolled as members of the mansabdari system, and were required to maintain some troops proportionate to their ranks. All the vassal chiefs were also enrolled as mansabdars and were required to maintain regular troops under their command. There were no fixed rules of appointment, promotion or dismissal of the mansabdars. They held offices at the pleasure of the sovereign. The mansabs were paid high salaries in cash and sometimes were assigned land which was expected to yield to revenue corresponding to the salaries fixed for particular mansabs. Even when a mansab was assigned a land, he was not allowed to retain it for a long time, and his assignment was transferred from province to province. The mansabdars had to purchase their own horses and equipment; but sometimes they were supplied by the government. The horses of the mansabdars were branded. Each horse bore two marks, the government mark on the right thigh and the mansabdar's mark of the left thigh.

Central Administration

Theory of Kingship

Akbar's theory of kingship was the result of gradual evolution. During the early years of his reign his conception of his position and duty was that of an orthodox Muslim monarch. He was the commander of the faithful and defender and missionary of Islam, bound to carry out God's will as expressed in the Quran, and responsible to Him only. It was the Muslim learned divines, called the Ulema, who wielded great influence on the state policy. Akbar sought to remove this check and himself became the supreme authority over his Muslim subjects without being controlled either by the Ulema or the millat (Muslim population) in the empire. This object he attained by promulgating the Infallibility Decree in 1579. By this Akbar became the final interpreter of the Muslim Law. This practice also meant to unite ecclesiastical authority with that of secular power in his person. Akbar was of the opinion that the separation of these two authorities had weakened the state. The next logical step was to establish his claim to be an

impartial ruler of all his people - Muslims and non-Muslims. This meant the 196 establishment of a common citizenship based on complete toleration to the non-Muslims and their association in the administration on equal terms with Muslims. As a result of this the orthodox Sunni Ulema and the Muslim nobility together raised the standard of rebellion. But Akbar with the support of the Rajputs and Persians emerged triumphant. He was convinced that the right course was to build up a new theory of kingship based on the essential equality and welfare of diverse creeds and communities in the empire. Hence, the theory of divine right of monarchy was propounded by his scholarly secretary, Abul Fazl, who sought to prove that the king was something, more than an average human being.

The Sovereign, his Powers and Duties

Akbar was an all - powerful monarch. He was an enlightened and benevolent despot. He was the head of the state, the supreme commander of the forces, and the chief executive, and possessed the supreme legislative authority. He was the fountain-head of justice and personally decided cases and settled disputes. He was the guardian and father of his people. There was no written constitution to prescribe his duties, lay down his limitations and exercise a check on his despotism, but Akbar felt it binding upon him to ascertain the wishes of the people and never acted against their interests.

The Ministers

The central government under Akbar, after it was well organised and evolved, consisted of four departments, each presided over by a minister. The ministers were:

1. Prime Minister (Vakil)
2. Finance Minister (Diwan or Wazir)
3. Pay-Master General (Mir Bakshi)

4. Chief Sadr (Sadr-us-Sadur) Early in Akbar's reign ministers were appointed by the prime minister and their number was not fixed but when the reins of government were taken over by Akbar himself, he deprived the prime minister of this privilege. He began to appoint and dismiss ministers as he liked. Even the prime minister could be dismissed at royal will.

1. The Prime Minister (Vakil) Formerly he was the de-facto head of all the departments of the central government and had the power to appoint and dismiss other ministers. 197 But after the dismissal of Bairam Khan the Prime Minister was gradually deprived of his powers. Firstly, the department of Finance was taken out of his hands and it was taken care of by the Diwan who, in course of time, became very important. For several years Akbar did not fill the post of Vakil and he acted as his own Prime Minister.

2. The Finance Minister (Diwan or Wazir) The first finance minister was Muzaffar Khan who

presumed to work independently and hence was removed and replaced by Raja Todar Mal. The Diwan was in charge of the revenues and expenditure of the empire. His main duties were to formulate rules and regulations for the land revenue settlement and for fixing the rates of other kinds of revenues, and to scrutinize and control disbursements. He enjoyed wide powers and discretion. He was assisted by the Diwan-I-Khalsa, Diwan- I-Jagirs, Sahibi-Taujih and the Diwan-I-Bayutut. The treasury was in charge of an officer called Musrif-I-Khazana. Akbar took personal interest in the organisation and working of the department of finance.

3. The Pay Master General (Mir Bakhshi) He was required to maintain a register in which were recorded the names, ranks and salaries of the mansabdars. The salaries of all officers were disbursed through his office. All orders of appointment to mansabs of all ranks were passed through his office. As the head of the military department he had to be in touch with every mansabdar. He was required to attend the royal durbar and stand on the right side of the throne. One of his most important duties was to prepare a list of guards who had to keep watch round the royal palace.

4. The Chief Sadr (Sadr-us-Sadur) He had to discharge three duties, viz., to act as the religious advisor to the emperor, to disburse the royal charity and to function as the chief justice of the empire. During the early days of Akbar's reign the chief Sadr enjoyed great power and prestige in all the three capacities but after Akbar had reorganised his administration and rejected the Islamic theory of government, the chief Sadr naturally ceased to be his supreme religious advisor. Apart from these four ministers, there was a Mir Saman who was in charge of the royal household department including the royal harem, kitchen, guards and Karkhanas (workshops) and hence must have wielded great authority and influence.

Provincial Administration

Akbar divided his empire into well-defined provinces and established uniform administration in them. In 1602, there were fifteen provinces. The provinces were not of uniform size or income. They were known as subas. The three provinces of the Dakhin, viz., Khandesh, Berar and Ahmadnagar, were constituted into a single viceroyalty and were placed under prince Daniyal. Besides the provinces, there were many subordinate states within the empire and the chiefs had accepted Akbar as their suzerain.

Sipah Salar In each suba there was a governor (Sipah Salar) who was appointed by him. He was responsible for the welfare of the people of his province and was required to administer even-handed justice. He decided criminal cases. He was to maintain peace and order. He was entrusted with the work of realizing the tribute from the vassal states situated within the boundaries of his suba.

The Diwan He was in charge of the finance department and his duties were to collect revenue, keep accounts of balances and receipts, disburse the salaries of provincial officers and administer civil justice. It was his duty to encourage the growth of agriculture and keep a strict watch over the treasury.

The Sadr and the Qazi One officer was appointed to discharge the duties of the two offices. The sadr had to recommend to the imperial sadr deserving persons for the award of cash stipends and free grants of land whereas the quazi was the head of the judicial department of the province and decided cases.

The Provincial Bakhshi He was appointed on the recommendation of the Mir Bakshi and was in charge of recruitment, organisation, discipline and efficiency of the provincial army under the command of the Sipah Salar.

Waqaya Navis He had to post news-writers and spies in all important places in the province, including the offices of the Sipah Salar, diwan, qazi, faujdar, the police officer, etc. who were expected to submit their daily reports to 199 the waqaya Navis. Sometimes news-writers and spies were appointed by the central government and sent to the provinces and parganas.

The Kotwal He was in charge of the internal defence, health, sanitation and peace of the provincial capital. He was the supreme administrator of all the thanas of the province.

The Mir Bakshi He was in charge of the customs and boats and ferry taxes, and port duties in coastal towns.

District Administration

The Faujdar Each province was divided into a number of districts (sarkars). Every district had a faujdar who was the head of the district. He was a military officer. His duties were to maintain peace and tranquillity in his jurisdiction, to keep the roads free from robbers and to enforce imperial regulations. Being a military officer, he was in charge of a small force or local militia. He had to keep his army well equipped and in readiness for service. He was required to assist the collector in the work of revenue collection.

The Amal-Guzar He was the revenue collector. He was also required to punish robbers and other miscreants in order to protect the peasantry. He was authorities to advance loans to the peasants and to recover them gradually.

The Bitikchi Though officially styled as a writer, his duty was to prepare necessary papers and records regarding the nature of the land and its produce and it was on the basis of these records that the assessment was made by the amal-guzar.

The Khazandar (Treasurer) His main duties were to receive the revenue, keep it and for

it to the central treasury. He was not authorised to make it disbursements.

The Pargana Each sarkar was divided into a number of parganas or mahals. The pargana was the lowest fiscal and administrative unit of administration. 200 There were four principal officers in every pargana. They were: the Shiqdar, the amil, the totadar and the Karkun.

The Shiqdar He was the executive officer of the Pargana and was responsible for its general administration. His duty was to maintain peace and order in the pargana.

The Amil His main work was that of assessment and collection of land revenue. He also assisted the shiqdar in the maintenance of law and order.

The Fotadar He was the treasurer of the pargana. He discharged the same duties as the Khazandar of the district.

The Qanungo He kept the records of the crops, the revenue demands, actual payments, arrears, etc. of the entire pargana. He was a repository of the knowledge of various kinds of land tenures and other peculiarities relating to the nature of the soil, assessment and collection of revenue.

Sea ports and Frontier Outposts Apart from the parganas there were some other political and administrative divisions in certain localities. These were sea ports, frontier outposts or frontier forts and thanas. The Mughals had no navy, but as their eastern and western frontiers touched the seas they had a large number of sea ports in their possession. These sea ports were valuable owing to the large volume of trade that passed through them and the places at the west coast were those places where the Haj pilgrims embarked on their voyage to Arabia. There was an officer in charge of the port. Frontier outposts were garrisoned with troops and were administered as separate units.

Municipal Administration

The Ain-I-Akbari gives a picture of the municipal administration during the reign of Akbar. In every town a Kotwal was appointed to take charge of municipal duties, besides police work. In small towns there was no Kotwal and these duties were performed by an amal - guzar of the district.

Rebellion of Prince Salim 1599-1604

The last years of Akbar's life were clouded by anxiety caused by the rebellion of his eldest son prince Salim. In 1599 when the emperor was preparing for an expedition against Miran Bahadur of Khandesh Salim was appointed governor of Ajmer and was given the task to reduce Rana Amar Singh of Mewar. Salim failed to do anything against Rana. Akbar became angry and showed preference for his third son Daniyal. Salim who was tired of waiting for the throne, grew dissatisfied and decided to rise in rebellion. Salim, refused to accept the

governorship of Bengal and Orissa and also struck coins in his own name. Akbar sent Abul Fazl to consult Salim. The prince however had Abul Fazl murdered on August 19, 1602. Salim became a confirmed drunkard and committed acts of revolting cruelty. Salim later submitted to his father thinking that if he misbehaved his father would nominate his son **Khusrav** as his heir-apparent. He accepted the governorship of the western provinces but sent his deputies to take care of the government till his father's death in October 1605.

DEATH OF AKBAR - OCTOBER 1605

Akbar fell ill on October 3, 1605. His condition became worse on October 21, 1605. He nominated Salim as his successor. He died at midnight of October 25-26, 1605 and was buried at Sikandra.

JAHANGIR (1605-1627)

Early life

Muhammad Sultan Salim affectionately called by Akbar as Shaikhu Baba was born in 1569. His education started in 1573. He picked up Persian, Turki and Hindi and learnt geography and history. He took keen interest in botany, zoology, music and painting. In 1585, he married the daughter of Raja Bhagwan Das of Amber when he was only 15 years old. The offspring of this union was **Khusrau** who was “destined to a stormy career and a bloody grave” Before the end of 1597, he had 20 legal wives. It was in his seventeenth year that he became an addict to alcoholic beverages. The child of so many vows began to lead a vicious life and in course of time became a man of loose morals. “Soaked in wine and sunk in debauch”, he frittered away his energies. Fired by his own ambition and growing impatient of having waited so long for throne of Hindustan, Salim raised the standard of rebellion against his father in 1600 and ruled over Allahabad as an independent King. Reconciliation was effected between the father and the rebel son in 1603. To his immense relief, his two brothers **Murad** and **Daniyal** died even during the lifetime of Akbar. Akbar fell ill in 1605. Though a conspiracy was in the air to place **Khusrau**, the eldest son of Salim on throne, it fizzled out. After nominating Salim as heir apparent, Akbar died in 1605.

Accession to the throne

Muhammad Sultan Salim ascended the throne in 1605 under the title of Nur-ud-din Muhammad Jahangir Padsha Ghazi. “Jahangir” means “World Grasper” or “the Conqueror of the World”. Immediately after he came to the throne, he set up the Chain of Justice containing 60 bells with one end in the fort of Agra and the other tied to a post on the banks of the Jamna. The purpose of this was to give the aggrieved the chance of getting justice

directly from the King without the help of intermediaries. He signaled his accession by issuing number of coins and promulgating twelve edicts. Some of the edicts were the prohibition of tolls and cesses, free inheritance of property of deceased persons, prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquors, prohibition of slaughter of animals on certain days, prohibition of inhuman punishments like cutting of the noses, ears, etc., and a general amnesty to all prisoners. All these measures were intended to win the hearts of his subjects. Apart from these, he conferred titles and honours on important officials with the view to gathering around him a band of loyal supporters.

Revolt of Prince Khusrau (1606)

Even the very first regnal year of Jahangir was marred by the revolt of his eldest son, Prince Khusrau. There was no love lost between father and son ever he was posed as a rival claimant to the throne during the last days of Akbar. Jahangir bore a grudge against him and was looking forward for the earliest lame excuse to punish the turbulent prince. Fired by his own ambition and kindled by the encouraging words of his supporters, Khusrau still cherished dreams of occupying the throne of Hindustan. He stole away with 350 horsemen from Agra on the pretext of visiting the tomb of his grandfather. He raised the flag of insurrection against his father in 1606. The fifth Sikh Guru, Arjun, rendered financial assistance to him. The rebel army was defeated by the imperial forces. The rebel prince and his friends fled towards the direction of Kabul. But they were captured and brought to the court of Jahangir. He openly reproached Khusrau in the court and threw him into prison. Brutal punishments were meted out to his friends. Guru Arjun who rendered financial assistance was tortured to death on charges of treason and contumacy. In 1607 Jahangir scented a plot which aimed at murdering him and enthroning Khusrau. Prince Khusrau who was the guiding force behind the plot was ordered to be blinded. After ten years captivity, he was put under the care of Asaf Khan, the brother of Nur Jahan. In 1622 he was murdered by Shah Jahan.

Rebellion of Usman Khan of Bengal (1612)

Bengal which was situated in a remote corner continued to be a headache to Jahangir also. The disaffected Afghans rallied under the banner of Usman Khan and unfurled the banner of revolt. But he was defeated and killed in 1612. The defeated Afghans were treated very leniently and were warmly welcomed to enter Mughal service if they liked. His conciliatory measures made the Afghans trounce their treasonable designs. From that time onwards, they remained loyal and faithful to the Mughal government.

Mewar (1614 - 15)

Mewar remained unconquered during the time of Akbar. What his father was not able to achieve, Jahangir accomplished. The victory over Mewar was the greatest success of Mughal imperialism and was definitely a feather on the cap of Jahangir. The two expeditions - one under Prince Parwez and the other under Mahabat Khan - against Amar Singh, the Rana of Mewar, did not achieve anything. The expedition under Prince Khurram (Shah Jahan) proved a success. He smashed enemy resistance in such a way that Amar Singh was forced to sue for peace. But the fallen foe was treated with great generosity and liberal terms were offered to him. The Rana of Mewar was exempted from personal attendance in the imperial court. Chitor was restored to the Rana on condition that he should not fortify it. It was also agreed that no princesses of Mewar were to be taken to the imperial harem.

Deccan campaigns (1610 - 17)

Jahangir followed the forward policy of his father towards the Deccan. Malik Amber, the new minister of Ahmadnagar, recovered the lost possessions and restored the old dynasty to power. The various expeditions sent against Ahmadnagar failed. Prince Khurram led an expedition to Ahmadnagar and captured it. But the victory was short-lived. Soon Malik Amber recovered the lost places. The Mughal territory did not advance an inch further during the time of Jahangir. It stood where it was in 1605.

Capture of Kangra (1620)

One of the memorable and remarkable feats in the time of Jahangir was the conquest of the forts of Kangra in the Punjab. After a protracted siege which lasted for 14 months, the local chief-tain surrendered in 1620.

Loss of Kandahar (1622)

Kandahar had long been a matter of dispute between the Mughals and the Persians. It occupied a very vulnerable position. Shah Abbas I of Persia feigning comradeship with the Mughal captured Kandahar in 1622. Shah Jahan was ordered to lead the campaign so as to recover Kandahar. But apprehending danger that his absence from headquarters might weaken his cause and strengthen the claims of Shahryar, the ward of NurJahan, he did not carry out the royal order. Jahangir gave up the idea of recapturing Kandahar.

Outbreak of Plague (1616 - 24)

Bubonic plague broke out in the Doab in 1616. It soon spread to other places like a wildfire and ravaged the whole country in all its fury. It lasted for eight years and took a heavy toll of life.

Revolt of Shah Jahan (1623 - 26)

Right from the beginning, Mahabat Khan disliked the domination of Nur Jahan and Asaf Khan in State affairs and hence he opposed the Nur Jahan junta. He played an important part in suppressing the rebellion of Shah Jahan. Mahabat Khan, the real commander of the Mughal forces, threw in his lot with Prince Parwez, the nominal commander of the forces. To effect a separation between the two, Nur Jahan procured a royal firman to the effect of appointing Mahabat Khan as the Governor of Bengal. To add insult to the already humiliated, he was ordered to send back the elephants, which he got in Bengal and Bihar during his operations against the rebel prince, Shah Jahan. He was not able to brook such petty severities and so he proceeded at the head of an army to Lahore where the imperial party was camping on its way to Kabul. He effected a successful coup and the Emperor was put under guard. But Nur Jahan skillfully played upon the feelings of Mahabat Khan, outwitted him and effected the escape of herself and her husband. Mahabat Khan submitted.

Religious Policy

It is very difficult to say anything conclusively about the religious faith of Jahangir. Some consider him an atheist or an eclectic pantheist or a devout Muslim or a Christian at heart. He was not an orthodox Muslim. His religious policy omitting a few stray cases where he showed religious frenzy was without a blemish. Though he had a contempt for the Hindu religion he did not persecute the Hindus. The murder of the Sikh Guru was a political assassination and could not in any way be interpreted as an act of religious fanaticism. He permitted the Christian missionaries to preach and convert people to their faith. To give a balanced view, his religious policy was one of completed religious toleration.

Hawkins and Sir Thomas Roe

Captain William Hawkins came to the court of Jahangir in 1609 with a letter from James I so as to get some trade concessions. He was given an official post. But he failed in his mission owing to the influence of Portuguese Jesuit missionaries in the court. He left India in 1611. His memories are a valuable source of information for the study of the habits of the Emperor, the Mughal court and the administration. Sir Thomas Roe came to India in 1615 with a letter from James I. HE managed to get concessions for the British to set up trading stations in India. He left India in 1619. The Journals of Sir Thomas Roe and his Chaplain Terry are a very valuable source of information about the Mughal court.

Estimate

After wielding the scepter for 22 years, Jahangir breathed his last in 1627. He is an interesting if not a fascinating personality in the history of India. It is quite unfortunate that his reign came in between Akbar the Great and Shah Jahan the Magnificent.

NURJAHAN

Early Life

The Marriage of Jahangir with Jahan was a sensational and memorable incident in his time. Muslim chroniclers had awelt at length with the romantic story of Nur Jahan with exaggerated and over coated statements. But modern research has unraveled many mysteries surrounding her early lif and romantic career. Taking the cue from modern research, the story of Nur Jahan was as follows: Her fater Mirza Ghiyas Beg, a native of Persia, finding his life intolerable in his native country, migrated to Hindustan. He took along with him his two sins and his pregnant wife. His wife gave birth to female child in 1577 at Kandahar. Reduced to strait circumstances, they wevre at their wit"s end. Their miserable plight attracted the attention of Malik Masud, the leader of a caravan under whose protection theparty was proceeding to Hindustan. He was kind enough to use his good offices in the Mughal Court and got an appointment for Mirza Ghiyas Beg under Akbar. By dint of his ability, he roses from position to position.In the meantime. The child born at Knadahar named Mithr-un-nisa blossomed into a beautiful lady. IN her seventeenth year, she was married to ALiQuli Istajlu, a Persian adventurer.

Ali Quli was enlisted in the staff of Prince Salim during his campaign against Mewar. For his gallant encounter with a tiger, Salim conferred on his the title of SHer Afghan. He stood with Prince Salim through thick and thin during his revolt against his father. But later on he deserted him. But, when Salim came to power, he pardoned him for his past actions and granted him a jagir in Bengal. Bengal as usual became the cockpit of plots against the Mughal Government. When Jahangir got an inkling of suspicion that Sher Afghan was involved in treasonable deeds, he ordered Qutb-ud-din, the Governor of Bengal, to send Sher Afghan to the court. He got offended an irritated when Qutb-ud-din took the hasty step of arresting him. In a mood of frenzy, Sher Afghan attacked Qutb-ud-din and in the deadly encounter both died. The widowed Mihr-un-nisa along with her daughter Ladili Begum was sent to court. In 1611, i.e., four years after the death of her husband, Jahangir casually saw he in a fancy bazaar. Infatuated by her beauty, he fell in love and married her in the same year.

Beni Prasad say: "the received version that Jahangir fell in love with her during the

lifetime of Akbar, that the latter refused to gratify his wishes and induced Mirza Ghiyas beg to marry her to Sher Afghan, that the disappointed lover, immediately on his accession to power, basely contrived the death of his more successful rival, that the high-souled Mihr-un-nisa indignantly rejected the overtures of her husband's murderer for four years, but that she yielded at last—all this finds absolutely no support in the contemporary authorities". Beni Prasad contends that all these gossips are concocted by later chroniclers; Contemporary foreign visitors are silent with regard to this incident. Whether Jahangir had a hand in the murder of Sher Afghan is not only a mystery but also a controversial subject. Though the high-handed action of Jahangir in the Sher Afghan affair can be reasonably regarded as improbable cannot be summarily dismissed as incredible. As Ishwari Prasad says: "a careful perusal of contemporary chronicles leaves upon our minds the impression that the circumstances of Sher Afghan's death are of highly suspicious nature, although there is no conclusive evidence to prove that the emperor was guilty of the crime.

Character of Nur Jahan

Though Nur Jahan was 34 years old at the time of her second marriage, she retained her charm and was still a woman of matchless and surpassing beauty. She kept good health and possessed considerable physical strength. She was well-versed in the Persian language and took keen interest in poetry, music and painting. She possessed a sharp intellect. She was skilled in understanding the most knotty problems of statecraft. She wielded so much influence over Jahangir that she became a nerveless tool in her hands. Though Jahangir was the de jure ruler, the de facto ruler was Nur Jahan. For all practical purposes, the Emperor was sealed off from the political life of the country. Under her influence he became a full-blooded pleasure-seeker, shirked administrative duties and left the affairs of the country to be run by Nur Jahan. HE wanted only "a bottle of wine and a piece of meat to keep him merry". Nur Jahan worked earnestly and diligently and attended to the minute details of government. She exercised her influence to promote her kith and kin to high offices. She wielded so much power in the State that her slightest murmur could make or mar a man.

Nur Jahan set up fashions and tastes. She stood forth as the champion of the downtrodden and oppressed women. She spent money out of her own pocket and conducted the marriage of 500 destitute women. In spite of her good qualities, she was not devoid of bad traits. She was ambitious and arrogant. She lacked caution. Moderation and precision in judgment. Her humiliating treatment of the trusted and tried officers of the State landed the country in troubles.

Ascendancy of Nur Jahan

Jahangir's infatuation for Nur Jahan grew day by day. She was styled Nur Mahal (Light of the Palace) in 1611. On the death of Sultana Salima Begum in 1613, Nur Mahal was elevated to the position of the first lady of the Realm. She was styled Nur Jahan (Light of the World) in 1616. Day by day her influence increased and in course of time she became the de facto ruler. The Nur Jahan junta or faction which wielded power in the country consisted of Nur Jahan herself, Asmat Begum (mother of Nur Jahan), Mirza Ghiyas Beg (father of Nur Jahan who was then better known by his title Itimad-ud-daulah), Asaf Khan (brother of Nur Jahan) and Prince Khurram (Shah Jahan). Asmat Begum was a wise counselor. Itimad-ud-daulah was the strongest pillar in the structure of the Nur Jahan junta. Nur Jahan chiefly depended on him. Asaf Khan was a tower of strength to the junta. Prince Khurram (Joyous) was dragged into the junta in 1612 when he was married to Arjumand Banu Begum (Mumtaz Mahal), the daughter of Asaf Khan. The junta was opposed by self-willed people like Mahabat Khan and so the court was divided into two cliques and earnestly entreated the Emperor "to free himself from the dishonourable petticoat bondage". But Jahangir who had already fallen a victim to the bewitching spell of Nur Jahan turned a deaf ear to it. The malignant motives of the clique reached their climax in 1616 when Prince Khusrau was transferred to the care of Asaf Khan.

Break-up of the Nur Jahan Junta

The break-up of the junta, synchronized with the betrothal of Ladili Begum, daughter of Nur Jahan through Sher Afghan, to Prince Shahryar in 1620. Nur Jahan, thenceforward, advanced the claims of her son-in-law to the throne and left Shah Jahan in the lurch. Asaf Khan, the brother of Nur Jahan and father-in-law of Shah Jahan, bore a grudge against her. But he suppressed his feelings. The junta was further weakened by the death of Asmat Begum in 1621. The stunning blow to the junta came in 1622, when Itimad-ud-daulah died. His death sealed the doom of the junta.

Downfall of Nur Jahan

Jahangir died in 1627. His death was a signal to the war of succession among his sons. Of the sons of Jahangir, Khusrau was murdered in 1622 and Parwez died in 1626. The two surviving rivals among his sons were, Shah Jahan, the son-in-law of Asaf Khan, and Shahryar, the son-in-law of Nur Jahan. After the death of Jahangir under guard and sent word to Shah Jahan, who was in the Deccan, about the latest developments and asked him to return to headquarters in post-haste. Asaf Khan placed Dawar Bakhsh, the son of Khusrau on the throne as a stop-gap arrangement so as to keep the throne warm till the arrival of Shah Jahan.

Shahryar. Egged on by Nur Jahan made an unsuccessful bid to gain the throne. His attempt was foiled by Asaf Khan. He was defeated, thrown into prison and blinded. On his way to headquarters, Shah Jahan sent secret information to his father-in-law to dispatch all the rival claimants to the other world. The ghastly deed was promptly carried out by him. He put to death Dawar Bakhsh, his brother Gurshasp, Shahryar and the sons of Daniyal. But there is a story that the life of Dawar Bakhsh was spared and that he was allowed to go to Persia where he spent the rest of his life. Shah Jahan returned to headquarters and was proclaimed Emperor in 1628. Nur Jahan retired from political life. She received a pension of two lakhs of rupees a year from Shah Jahan. She spent the rest of her life in Lahore with her widowed daughter Ladili Begum. Nur Jahan died in 1645. She was interred in a tomb beside that of Jahangir.

SHAH JAHAN

Early Life

Prince Khurram (Joyous) better known to fame as Shah Jahan was born in 1592. His education started in 1596. He easily picked up the Persian language like a duck to water but had very little taste for Turki. He was betrothed to Arjumand Banu Begum (Mumtaz Mahal), the daughter of Asaf Khan in 1607. Kurram was one of the important personages in the Nur Jahan junta. He was the hero of the day during the subjugation of Mewar. In 1617, he got the title of Shah Jahan for his memorable feats in Ahmadnagar. The cordial relations which so far existed between Shah Jahan and Nur Jahan became strained after the betrothal of her daughter, Ladili Begum to Prince Shahryar in 1620. In 1622, Shah Jahan murdered his brother Khusrau. He raised the standard of rebellion against his father in between himself and Shahryar. His candidacy to the throne was supported by his father-in-law, Asaf Khan and that of Shahryar by Nur Jahan. After effecting the murder of Dawar Bakhsh, his brother Gurshasp, Shahryar and the sons of Daniyal in cold blood, he came to the throne in 1628.

Accession to the throne

Shah Jahan ascended the throne in 1628, assuming the high-sounding title of *Abul Musaffar Shihab-ud-din Muhammad Sahib-i-qiram II, Shah Jahan Padshah Ghazi*. The Khutba was read and coins were struck in his name. The coins issued by Nur Jahan were withdrawn from circulation.

Rebellions of Jujhar & Khan Jahan, Death of Mumtaz Mahal

The very first year of his reign was marred by the rebellion of Jujhar Singh, the

Bundela chieftain. But the rebellion was easily quelled. Jujhar Singh fled to the nearby forest and was murdered by the Khans. His two sons were converted to Islam. Many temples in Bundelkhand were demolished. The second rebellion which broke out in the second year of his reign was posed by Khan Jahan Lodi, the Governor of Deccan. The rebellion was quelled and he was put to death. A domestic calamity occurred in 1631 when Mumtaz Mahal (jewel of the Palace) died.

Famine of 1630-31

A terrible famine-ghastly and horrible beyond words - broke out in the Deccan and Gujarat. To add to the misery of the people, an epidemic also broke out. Famine and pestilence wrought untold misery on the people. They took a heavy toll of life. Ameliorative measures were undertaken on a large scale to reduce the rigours of famine and this considerably affected the State coffers.

Relations with the Portuguese

On the strength of firman issued by Akbar, the Portuguese made Hughli their base for carrying on commercial activities. They exacted heavy duties from the Indian merchants. Apart from this, their proselytizing activities and slave-trading went on unabated. Kaskm Khan, the Governor of Bengal, was deputed to deal with the Portuguese. Hughli was laid siege by the imperial forces and it fell in 1632 after three months' resistance. Many of the Portuguese were taken captives and a large number of them was forcibly converted to the Islamic faith and the rest were brutally dealt with.

Policy towards the Deccan

Ahmadnagar was annexed to the Empire in 1633. Aurangzeb served two terms as Viceroy of the Deccan. He waged wars against Bijapur and Golkunda. But as Dara, the eldest brother of Aurangzeb interfered in his policy, he was not able to annex the two kingdoms. (For details - Refer the Deccan Policy of the Mughals).

Central Asian Policy

Shah Jahan cherished dreams of recovering his ancestral dominions of Balkh, Badakshan and Samarqand in Central Asia. Balkh and Badakshan were captured by the imperial forces in 1646. But they were not able to consolidate the conquered territories. The expedition was a failure because the Mughal troops were unaccustomed to the biting cold of the region. The traditional rivalry between the Uzbeks and the Chaghatais made the people of Central Asia rise as a foe of the country. It cost the State treasury a very big amount. Thousands of people lost their lives.

Expeditions against Kandahar

Kandahar was lost to the Mughals in 1622 during the time of Jahangir. It is needless to say that it occupied a vulnerable position in the North-West-Frontier. Determined to recover it, Shah Jahan started operations. He recovered Kandahar in 1638 by treachery. Shah Abbas II of Persia recovered Kandahar in 1649. Shah Jahan made three more attempts to recover Kandahar. But all the attempts failed and Kandahar was lost for ever to the Mughals. It cost the State treasury more than half the annual income of the Empire.

Religious Policy

Shah Jahan was an orthodox Sunni Muslim. He hated the Shias like anything. One of the reasons for his campaigns against Bijapur and Golkunda was that the Sultans of the two kingdoms professed the Shia faith. He was a devout Muslim and strictly adhered to the tenets of the Islamic faith. His policy towards the Hindus marked a reaction against the policy of his grandfather, Akbar. His religious policy was shaped mainly by the fanatical and persecuting temper of his wife, Mumtaz Mahal. He issued an order in 1653 to demolish the newly built temples. In Benaras alone, 72 temples were demolished. In the same year another order was passed prohibiting the erection of new temples and the repair of old ones. The pilgrim tax which was abolished by Akbar was revived by Shah Jahan. He disliked the Christians and persecuted them. Though he did not follow a policy of systematic persecution of the Hindus, he took earnest efforts to forcibly convert people to the Islamic faith. He effectively checked the conversion of Muslims to the Hindu faith. The floodgates of religious orgy let loose during the time of Shah Jahan crashed during the reign of his son and successor Aurangzeb.

Critical Account of the Reign of Shah Jahan

The reign of Shah Jahan is usually considered the Golden Age of Mughal rule in India. It is also contended that the Empire reached the zenith of its glory and fame during his reign. A study of the writings of contemporary Muslim historians reveal the fact that Shah Jahan's reign was a glorious period in the history of India. But their views may be prejudiced. The contemporary foreign travelers - Bernier, Tavernier and Manucci - have left valuable accounts which throw a flood of light on the wonders of the Mughal court. The accounts left by them cannot be safely relied on because they are quite contradictory. Bernier give a graphic description of the tyranny of the Mughal Governors. Tavernier says: "Shah Jahan reigned not so much as a king over his subjects but as a father over his family and children". Manucci testifies to the comparative peace and prosperity which prevailed in the country. A careful perusal of the factory records show that the tyrannical rule of the provincial Governors often deprived the peasants and artisans of the bare necessities of life. Vincent

Smith is of the view that Shah Jahan failed both as a man and as a ruler. He says that “The magnificence of his court, the extent and wealth of his Empire, the comparative peace which was preserved during his reign and the unique beauty of his architectural masterpiece, the Taj, have combined to dazzle the vision of modern biographers, most of whom have slutted over his many crimes and exaggerated such virtues as he possessed”. Shah Jahan rebelled against his father, murdered his brothers and relatives and showed undue partiality to his eldest son. Vincent Smith criticizes in strong terms Shah Jahan’s monstrous incest with his eldest daughter Jahan Ara. This view of Smith is rather revolting and perverted. But Smith does justice to him when he says “whatever be the view taken of the personal character of Shah Jahan or the efficiency of his administration, it can hardly be disputed that his reign marks the climax of the Mughal dynasty and Empire.

Edwards and Garret point out that Shah Jahan’s period was “outwardly a period of great prosperity”, but his “reign sounded the knell of the Empire and of his economic system”. The Muslim historian Khafi Khan remarks “Although Akbar was a conqueror and a law-giver, yet for order; arrangement of territory and finances and the good administration of every department of the state, no prince ever reigned in India that could be compared to Shah Jahan”.

Buildings

The age of Shah Jahan is rightly called the Augustan Age in India. Under him, the Mughal School of architecture attained an extraordinarily high level of excellence. Shah Jahan is rightly called “the Prince of Builders”. The design and style employed in his buildings are quite different from those of the structures erected during the time of his father and grandfather. His buildings are characterized by “elegance rather than strength and by the lavish use of extraordinarily costly decoration”. He built a new capital city at Delhi, called Shahjahanabad. The palace in Shahjahanabad is considered by Fergusson as “the most magnificent in the East - perhaps in the world”. In the gateway of new city, there is an inscription: “If there is a paradise on earth, it is this, it is this”. His important buildings in Agra are the Diwan-i-Am (hall of Public Audience), Diwan-i-Khas (Hall of Private Audience), the Muzamman Burj (Saman Burj), the Moti Masjid (Pearl Mosque), Fami Masjid and the Taj Mahal. Taj Mahal “that bubble in marble” is fitting monument of Mumtaz Mahal, “the Lady of the Taj”. The Taj has been called “a dream in marble, designed by Titans and finished by Jewelers”. It is “a tender elegy in marble”, whose “beauty has made immortal the loveliness it commemorates”. The Taj is considered one of the wonders of the world. Shah Jahan constructed the celebrated peacock-throne at a cost of one crore of rupees. He had a passion

for the collections of precious stones. The rich diamond Koh-i-nur (Mountain of Light) presented to him by Mir Jumla added to the brilliance and splendour of the court.

In conclusion it may be pointed out that the age of Shah Jahan saw not only prosperity but also witnessed symptoms of decay of the mighty Timurid Empire. The period witnessed brisk trade with Europe. The State coffers were overflowing. The Mammoth structures erected by him bear eloquent testimony to the splendour of the age. It is true that a huge amount of money was spent for the Kandahar campaign and for the conquest of Balkh and Badakshan. Money was spent like water for the upkeep of a showy court and for the erection of mammoth buildings. The money for such wasteful schemes and costly decorations came from the poor tax-payers. But it should be noted that such schemes gave employment to a number of people. It is true that misgovernment prevailed in some of the provinces. But it was only an exception rather than a general rule. The religious fanaticism of Shah Jahan is only a blot in his personal character. It is true that he waded to the throne after murdering his kith and kin. The tradition of the land warranted such a practice for which he could not be blamed. His costly campaigns against Kandahar, Balkh and Badakshan failed. But he could not be solely blamed because circumstances conspired against him. The inexorable thing called „Fate” is unfortunately external to man. The ameliorative measures undertaken by Shah Jahan during the time of famine were commendable. There were some limitations and shortcomings in the life of Shah Jahan as a man and as a ruler. But they are only negligible drawbacks for which a man cannot be seriously condemned. Lane Poole remarks: “Shah Jahan was renowned for his kindness and benevolence which endeared him to the people” Hunter points out: “The Mughal Empire attained its highest union of strength and magnificence under Shah Jahan”. He was a great patron of letters. In fine, it may be concluded that the reign of Shah Jahan barring some reservations richly deserves to be called the Golden Age in the history of the Mughals.

War of Succession

Shah Jahan has four sons and two daughters - all born to Mumtaz Mahal. The sons were Dara Shukoh, Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad and the daughters were Jahan Ara and Roshan Ara. All the four sons had previous knowledge of statecraft and had acted as Governors in different provinces. Dara Shukoh, the eldest son, was the Governor of the Punjab But he, for most of the time stayed at court and enjoyed the confidence of his father. He was an eclectic in religious matters By his proud and arrogant nature, he incurred the displeasure of many of the nobles in the court. His eclectic views on religion were bitterly opposed by the orthodox section of the Muslims. The second son, Shuja, was the Governor

of Bengal. He was an intelligent and brave soldier. But he led a life of ease and pleasure and that rendered him weak and indolent and erratic in taking decisions at critical moments. He was a Shia by tendency and was bitterly opposed by the Sunni section of the Muslims. Aurangzeb, the third son, was the Governor of the Deccan. He was the ablest of all the sons of ShahJahan and was marked out from the very beginning as a man of promise. He was an accomplished general, a past-master in administration, crafty in action and cool and far-sighted by nature. He was an orthodox Sunni and was liked by the Sunnis in the court. Muras, the “black sheep of the imperial family” was the youngest son. He was the Governor of Gujarat. He was a brave soldier but brainless and was addicted to heavy drinking.

Shah Jahan fell ill in September, 1657. The wildest rumours spread throughout the country like a wildfire that Shah Jahan was dead. The four sons of Shah Jahan prepared themselves for the inevitable and impending trial for strength. Shuja proclaimed his independence in Bengal. The Khutba was read in his name and coins were struck. In Gujarat, Murad Bakhsh followed suit. The two were rather hasty in action which later landrd them in troubles. But Aurangzeb played a waiting-game. He entered into an alliance with Murad literally dividing the country between themselves. It was agreed that Murad was to be the ruler of the Punjab, Afghanistan, Kashmir and Sind and one third of the spoils of war should go to him. The rest of the Empire and the remaining spoils should go to Aurangzeb. Shuja marched at the head of a large army from Bengal, but was defeated by Sulaiman Shukoh, (the eldest son of Dara Shukoh) and Raja JaiSingh in the battle of Bahadupur near Benaras in 1658. In the meantime, Aurangzeb proceeded towards the north. Two imperial forces were dispatched - one under the command of Jaswant Singh of Marwar and the other under Qasim Khan to arrest the onward march of Aurangzeb and Murad . The combined arimes of the two brothers affected a junction with the imperial forces commanded by Jaswant Singh and Qasim Khan at Dharmat in 1658.

The imperial army was beaten back. Dara collected another army but was again defeated in the battle of Samuragarh. He returned to headquarters rudely shaken in health and spirits. Finding the chapter closed, he fled to Lahore. Aurangzeb entered Agra and besieged the Agra Fort. Shah Jahan put up a mild resistance. But finding further resistance futile, he opened the city-gates. He became a state prisoner. The earnest entreaties of Jahan Ara to Aurangzeb to partition the Empire among the brothers did not bear fruit. Aurangzeb then proceeded from Agra to Delhi giving a hot-chase to Dara. But as he smelled a rat in the designs of Murad, he hastily returned to Agra. He tactfully handled the situation. By giving

lavish presents he lulled the suspicion of Murad. When he was asleep, he was disarmed and taken captive and sent to the fortress of Gwalior. In Dec. 1661, he was executed on a charge of murder.

Dara fled from Delhi to Lahore and then to Gujarat. He raised another army. Raja Jaswant Singh promised to help him. But he was easily won over by Aurangzeb. Dara met the force of Aurangzeb at Deorai near Ajmer in March, 1659. But Dara once again tasted defeat at the hands of his brother. He fled to Sind in the hope of getting help from Malik Jewn, the Zamindar of Dadar, whose life he saved some years ago from the wrath of Shah Jahah. But he treacherously betrayed him into the hands of Aurangzeb's men. Dara and his second son, Shukoh were seated on a filthy elephant and paraded round the streets of Delhi. A decision was passed declaring Dara a kafir and was sentenced to death in 30th Aug. 1659. The assailants literally cut Dara to pieces. His head was cut off and the ghastly was arrested and confined in the Fort of Gwalior where he was murdered of slow poisoning in May. 1662. Shuja, in the mean while, was defeated by Aurangzeb in the battle of Khajwa in 5th Jan 1659. He fled from place to place and finally went to the Arakan hills where he was murdered by the natives in Feb. 1661. Thus Aurangzeb got rid of all his rivals, He spread the lives of Shukoh (the second son of Dara) and Azid Bakhsh (one of the sons of Murad Bakhsh). Later on they were married to his daughters.

Last days of Shah Jahan

Shah Jahan who was made a prisoner in 1658, remained a prisoner till his death in 1666. His last days were made miserable by petty severities inflicted by Aurangzeb through his slaves and eunuchs. This treatment meted out to him was nothing when compared to the murder of his own children in cold-blood when he was alive. He bore the shocks in life with great courage and patience. He found solace in the company of his eldest daughter, Jahan Ara. He died in 1666.

SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Discuss Babur's Central Asian experience and its influence on the foundation of the Mughal Empire in India.
.....
2. Describe the socio-political conditions of India on the eve of Babur's invasion and its significance in shaping the course of Mughal rule.
.....

UNIT- IV

Ideology and State in Mughal India: Akbar's imperial agenda - Suhl-i-kul - Akbar's religion - Din ilahi; Aurangzeb's relation with religious groups and institutions.; Mughal-Rajput Relations - Mughal administration-: Aurangzeb - the Imperial elite- Deccan wars- Rise of Marathas under Shivaji- Popular revolts within the Mughal empire - Decline of the Mughal empire..

Objectives

- ❖ Understand Akbar's imperial agenda and the concept of Suhl-i-kul in Mughal India.
- ❖ Analyze popular revolts within the Mughal Empire and their causes, including economic, social, and political factors.
- ❖ Assess the factors contributing to the decline of the Mughal Empire, including internal strife, external invasions, and economic challenges.

Ideology and State in Mughal India: Akbar's Imperial Agenda:

Akbar, the third Mughal emperor, pursued a policy of religious tolerance and integration known as "Sulh-i-kul," which translates to "peace with all." This policy aimed to create a harmonious society by accommodating diverse religious beliefs and practices within the Mughal Empire. Akbar sought to unify his diverse subjects under a common imperial identity, transcending religious divisions.

Sulh-i-kul - Akbar's Religion - Din-i Ilahi:

Sulh-i-kul was closely tied to Akbar's religious philosophy known as Din-i Ilahi, or the "Divine Faith." Din-i Ilahi was a syncretic religion that sought to blend elements of Islam, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, and Christianity, among others, into a unified faith. However, Din-i Ilahi did not gain widespread acceptance and remained confined to Akbar's court and a small circle of followers.

AURANGZEB

Early Life

Muhi-ud-din Muhammad Aurangzeb was born to Shah Jahan and Mumtaz Mahal in 1618. His education started in his tenth year. He got a perfect mastery over the Koran and Hadis (Traditional saying of the Prophet). In a very short period, he became well-versed in Arabic and Persian. He picked up Hindi and Turki. But fine arts were castor oil to him. When he was only 14 years old, he displayed his valour and courage by fighting with a raging

elephant. Shah Jahan who was elated by the courage of his son conferred on him the title of Bahadur (hero). Aurangzeb played an important part in suppressing the rebellion of Jujahar Singh, the Bundela chieftain. He served as Viceroy of the Deccan from 1636 to 1644. He distinguished himself in the campaigns against Balkh in 1647. After the campaign he served as Viceroy of Multan and Sind from 1648 to 1652. During this periods, he was called back twice for carrying on the siege of Kandahar. Though Kandahar was not recovered, he gained enough experience in the art of warfare. He acted as the Governor of the Deccan for a second time from 1653. He remained in office till the war of succession started. He imprisoned Shah Jahan, hacked Dara to pieces, murdered Sulaiman Shukoh by slow poisoning and assassinated Murad. He spared the lives of Sipihr Shikoh, the second son of Dara, and Izid Bakhsh, one of the sons of Murad. After a bloody blood-bath Aurangzeb came to the throne.

Accession to the throne

Aurangzeb came to the throne in 1658. But he was pre-occupied with the elimination of his rivals, the formal accession took place only in 1659. Aurangzeb ascended the throne for a second time assuming the lofty and high-sounding title of Abul-Muzaffar Muhi-ud-din Aurangzeb Bahadur Alamgir Padshah Ghazi. "Alamgir" means "Conqueror of the World" and "Ghazi" means "Holy Warrior". The Khutba was read in his name and coins were struck. The occasion was celebrated with great pomp and splendor. To win the hearts of his subjects, he abolished many vexatious taxes that stood in the way of free trade. Being an orthodox Sunni Mussulman, he promulgated a number of ordinances to make the Muslims strictly adhere to the sacred tenets of the Koran. He persecuted the Sufis for holding liberal views on religion and the Shias for heretic views.

The reign of Aurangzeb for a period of 50 years may be divided into two equal halves- one from 1658 to 1681 and the other from 1682 to 1707. During the first period, he concentrated his attention on the north and engaged himself in the expansion of the mighty Timurid Empire to far off places. During the second period, he riveted his attention to the Deccan and completely neglected the north. His indifference aggravated the already existing economic and cultural maladies in the north. The diplomatic blunders committed by Aurangzeb by annexing Bijapur and Golkunda and his repressive measures on religious grounds against different sections of the people sowed the seeds for the political, economic and cultural breakdown of the Empire.

War in the Eastern front

a) Conquest of Palamau (1661)

Beyond the southern border of Bihar, lay the district of Palamau. During the time of Shah Jahan, it was a fief of the Mughal Empire. The Raja of Palamau gave offence to Aurangzeb by failing to clear of the arrears of tribute. Daud Khan, the Governor of Bihar, was deputed by Aurangzeb to invade the district. HE captured Palamau in 1661 and it was added to the province of Bihar.

b) War with Cooch Bihar and the Ahoms of Assam

The disorder following the war of succession was taken advantage of by the rulers of Cooch Bihar and Assam and they seized the Mughal district of Kamarup that lay land-locked between the two kingdoms. To bring the two rulers to book, Aurangzeb sent Mir Jumla, the Governor of Bengal, against them. He captured Cooch Bihar in 1661 and it was added to the Mughal Empire. After subjugating Cooch Bihar, he showed his might to the king of Assam. He recovered Kamarup and captured Garhgaon, the capital of Assam in 1662. The chicken-hearted Raja of Assam, Jayadhwaj, fled from the capital offering little resistance. An immense booty fell into the hands of Mirjumla. They then took the offensive and attacked Mughal outposts. Though nature and circumstance conspired against Mir Jumla, he undauntedly carried on his work undergoing many privations. Though Mir Jumla defeated the Ahoms, the position of the Mughal forces became precarious. The ceaseless and tireless work shattered his health and he died in 1663. Finding further resistance futile the king of Assam concluded an alliance with Aurangzeb. The terms of the treaty were rather humiliating to the King of Assam. Apart of from an indemnity and a tribute which the king had to pay, he ceded some places to Aurangzeb But soon the King of Assam recovered all the lost places.

Shaista Khan (son of Asag Khan), the maternal uncle of Aurangzeb, succeeded Mir Jumla s Governor of Bengal. The Portuguese and the Arakanese indulged in piracy, plundered Bengal and carried away a number of slaves. Shaista Khan captured Chittagong - the nerve-centre of the pirates - in 1666 and put an end to the piracy committed by the Portuguese and the Arakkanese. Shaista Khan served as Viceroy of Bengal for 30 years and died in 1694.

War in the North -West Front (1672 - 75)

The Afghans of the North -West Frontier plundered Mughal territories. At first Aurangzeb tried to ward off their attacks by bribing the Afghan chieftains. But this policy instead of silencing them whetted their appetite and they continued to carry on plundering

activities with renewed vigour. The Yusufzai clan under its leader Bhagu attacked the Mughal district of Hazara. Similar attacks were made in Attock and Peshwar. But all these risings were suppressed by Aurangzeb.

But a rising of a more formidable nature came in 1672. The Afridi tribesmen, rallied under the banner of Akmal Khan. He proclaimed himself king. He exhorted his countrymen to rise in arms against the Mughals Muhammad Amir Khan, the Governor of Kabul, suffered a defeat at the hands of the Pathans. An immense booty fell into their hands. The prestige of Akmal Khan rose high and soon the whole nation rose in arms. Aurangzeb sent two expeditions against them - one under Mahabat Khan and the other under Shujaat Khan. But the two expeditions miserably failed and cost the life of Shujaat Khan.

Soon Aurangzeb realized the gravity of the situation. He himself proceeded to the frontier and set up his quarters at Hasan Abdul near Peshawar. By using tact and employing threat, he brought the rebel Pathans under his control. Many chieftains were won over by offering bribes and posts. Those who refused to submit were defeated and crushed. Thus before the end 1675 normalcy was restored in the frontier. Amir Khan, the Governor of Kabul from 1678 to 1698, continued the policy of Aurangzeb in Afghanistan and prevented the people from staging another outburst. The campaigns against the Pathans cost the State exchequer much. The practice of recruiting Afghans in the Mughal army was stopped because of the fear that they might bring the wooden horse into Mughal Troy. The withdrawal of a part of the Mughal forces from the Deccan in order to deal with the Afghans provided an excellent opportunity to Sivji to wreck and wrest territories from the Mughals.

Rajput War (1679 - 1709)

a) Marwar

Raja Jaswant Singh of Marwar died in 1678. He served the Mughal government to his last breath. But Aurangzeb wanted to annex Marwar. He reimposed the jizya on the people. The recognized Indra Singh, the grand nephew of Jaswant, as the new Raja on his paying a succession fee of 36 lakhs of rupees. But even before this arrangement was made, two posthumous sons had been born to the widowed Ranie of Jaswant Singh. Of the two sons, only one named Ajit Singh survived. The Ranie along with the infant son went to Delhi to make Aurangzeb recognize the baby as the ruler of Marwar. But Aurangzeb promised to make him the ruler provided he embraced the Islamic faith. This wounded the feelings of the Rathors. Durgadas who is considered the "flower of Rathor Chivalry" rose to the occasion and by a stroke of clever stratagem effected the escape of the Ranie and Ajit Singh to

Jodhpur. The escapade terribly annoyed Aurangzeb who then sent three contingents under his three sons Muazzam, Azam and Akbar to invade Marwar. Aurangzeb himself came to Ajmer to direct the operations. After causing destruction and havoc, Marwar was annexed in 1679. Jodhpur and other important towns were looted. Temples were desecrated and in their places mosques were erected.

b) Mewar

The Rani of Marwar appealed to Rana Raj Singh of Mewar to help her. Realising the common danger, the Sisodia of Mewar made common cause with the Rathors of Marwar. The Mughal army poured into Udaipur and Chitor, the capitals of Marwar and Mewar respectively. Aurangzeb desecrated many temples in the two cities. Having achieved his purpose, he left for Ajmer leaving a Mughal force at Chitor under the command of Prince Akbar. The Sisodias freely indulged in looting and attacking Mughal out-posts. In 1680, they made a night-attack on Akbar's camp and killed many soldiers. After the lapse of some days, the Mughal army under Akbar suffered a major reverse in a battle with Raj Singh. The failure of Akbar to cope with the affairs of Mewar annoyed Aurangzeb. HE sent him off to Marwar and deputed Prince Azam to deal with Mewar.

c) Rebellion of Prince Akbar (1681)

Prince Akbar got insulted and irritated when he was transferred to Marwar. Akbar who was then 23 years old, entertained dreams of seating himself on the throne of Hindustan with the help of the two Rajput clans. He entered into treasonable negotiations with the Sisodias and Rathors. With their help, he raised the flag of insurrection and proclaimed himself Emperor of India in 1681. He proceeded at the head of a large army backed by Sisodia and Rathor forces to Ajmer where Aurangzeb was camping. His position became precarious because the major portion of the Mughal army was in Chitor. His courage began to droop out not his cunning. He drafted a letter addressed to Prince Akar, the contents of which congratulated him for trapping the Rajput forces between the two Mughal armies. He contrived that the letter should fall into the hands of the Rajputs. The contents of the letter would make anyone believe that Prince Akbar was acting in collaboration with the Emperors so as to betray the Rajputs. They believed the contents of the letter and suspecting foul-play took to their heels deserting Akbar. The Prince also fled from the place. The Rajputs realized their folly rather late. But they honourably conducted themselves and stuck to their promise of help to Akbar. He was conducted to the court of Shambhuji, the Maratha King. As he did not get any substantial help from Shambhuji, he fled to Persia where he died in 1704.

Aurangzeb continued the war with Mewar and both sides suffered heavy losses. Considerations of prudence led Rana Jai Singh, the successor of Raj Singh, to patch up a peace with Aurangzeb in 1681. According to the terms of the treaty he ceded some places to the Emperor in lieu of the jizya and the Mughal force withdrew from Mewar. But Marwar continued to fight under the able leadership of Durgadas until Bahadur Shah I, the son successor of Aurangzeb, recognized Ajit Singh as the ruler of Marwar in 1709.

Deccan Campaigns

Aurangzeb disastrously failed in his expeditions against Sivaji. The former annexed Bijapur in 1686 and Golkunda in 1687. The successors of Sivaji carried on the war of retribution against Aurangzeb (For details - Refer the Deccan Policy of the Mughals).

Character of Aurangzeb

Diametrically opposite views are held with regard to the character of Aurangzeb. While some writers contemptuously denounced him as a hypocrite who used religion as cloak for ambition, some Muslim writers vaingloriously branded him as a Zinda Pir (living saint). His critics had dwelt at length with his bad qualities, but failed to note the good traits in him. If Shah Jahan could be exonerated from his faults and his darkest deeds could be justified on political grounds, the same standard should be applied to Aurangzeb also. He has been accused of the murder of his brothers and relatives. But such a practice of exterminating all possible rivals to the throne was not an uncommon practice among the Mughals. Aurangzeb only followed the beaten track for which he could not be blamed. Shah Jahan came to the throne after a blood-bath killing all his brothers and nephews. But Aurangzeb at least spared the lives of his nephews like Sipihr Shukoh and Izid Bakhsh. SO he was not cruel for the sake of cruelty. But the ill-treatment which he meted out to his aged father calls forth for special condemnation.

Aurangzeb's private life was simple and austere and free from all vices so common among the Kings of the age. He took to four wives which was quite in accord with the Koranic maximum of four wives which a person could take. He strictly adhered to the sacred tenets of Islam. He had good mastery over the Persian Language. He was a passionate student of Muslim theology and an excellent writer. He knew the Koran by heart. He compelled his Muslim subjects to strictly follow the Koranic principles. He practiced what he preached. Aurangzeb the "Dervish clad in imperial purple" possessed an extraordinary memory power. He was an orthodox Sunni and hated the SHias and Sufis. He identified the interests of the State with that of his personal faith and this landed him in many troubles. He was brave, diligent and sincere in this work. But he was not a far-sighted statesman. He lacked

imagination, sympathy and warmth of heart. He was by nature suspicious. He never took the officers into his confidence. By his fanatical religious policy and unstatesman like acts, he alienated by sympathies of many sections of the people which in turn led to the rise of many centrifugal tendencies in the country. The rule of the Puritan Emperor who wanted to convert India into an Islamic State was a gigantic failure. He never patronized art, architecture and literature. Fatawa-i-Alamgiri - the greatest digest of Muslim law - is the only work to which the Emperor extended his patronage.

Religious Policy of Aurangzeb

Aurangzeb was an orthodox Sunni Muslim. His religious policy was inextricably intertwined with his personal views on religion. As the champion of Sunni orthodoxy, he preached a crusade against heresy. As a staunch defender of the Islamic faith, he signalized his accession by the promulgation of a number of Islamic ordinances. He discontinued the practice of inscribing the Kalima (the Muhammed and confession of faith) on the coins with the object of preventing them from being sullied by the infidels. He abolished the celebration of the Persian New Year's day (Nauroz). He forbade the cultivation of bhang (a herb from which intoxicating beverage can be distilled). He appointed MUhtasibs (Censors of Public Morals) in different parts of the country in order to see that the people strictly adhered to the sacred tenets of the Islamic faith. To keep the moral sense of the people at a high order, the Muhtasibs were expected to put down drinking, gambling and prostitution. Aurangzeb issued orders for the repair of old mosques.

As days rolled on, the Puritan Emperor became more puritanic. In the eleventh year of his reign, he put an end to the practice of jharoka darshan (giving darshan to the people from the balcony of the palace). In the same year, he banned music in the court and dismissed all musicians. He simplified many customs in the court. The ceremonial weighing against gold and silver twice a year was stopped. He persecuted the Shias for heresy and the Sufis for holding liberal views on religion.

After refining Islam, Aurangzeb attempted to transform the infidel country (Dar-ul-harb) into the Realm of Islam (Dar-ul-Islam). Though he did not forcibly convert the people to the Islamic faith, he made them realize that they belonged to an inferior class. He imposed on them many political, social and economic disabilities. He prohibited the Hindus from repairing old temples. In 1669, he issued an order "to demolish all the schools and temples of the infidels and to put down their religious teaching and practices". The jizya was reimposed in 1679. The pilgrim tax was reimposed on the Hindus. He forbade sati which had the sanction of Brahmanical custom. He dismissed the astronomers and astrologers. The religious

fanaticism of Aurangzeb reached its height when he started a systematic apolicy of iconoclasm or idol-breaking. Many temples were razed to the ground. Promises were held out to non-Muslims for a better life by asking them to become converts to the Islamic faith. Posts and honours were conferred on people who embraced the Islamic faith. Hindu fairs and festivals were prohibited. Hindus were deliberately excluded from public offices. A duty of 5% was collected from Hindi traders where as it was only 2 ½ % for the Muslims and from that too they were exempted in 1667. Hindus except the Rajputs were not allowed to carry arms or ride on horses or elephants. All these repressive measures aimed at systematically discouraging the Hindus irritated and inflamed them. The pent up feelings of the peoplefound expression in a number of religious risings.

Effects of his Religious Policy

a) Rebellion of the Jats (1669)

The Jats, a set of sturdy people of the Mathura district, rose in open rebellion in 1669. Abdun Nabi Khan, the faujdar of Mathura, was faithfully discharging the policy of his master in systematically breaking down idols and desecrating temples. He built a mosque on the ruins of a Hindu temple. By threat and force, he removed the carved stone railing which had been presented by Dara to Keshav Rai Temple. It provoked the Jats, They killed Abdun Nabi and plundered the pargana of Sadabad. The annoyed Emperor sent several contingents against the Jats and defeated them in a battle near Tilapat. Gokul, the ring-leader, and the members of his family were imprisoned ad taken to Agra. On the platform of the police office at Agra, the leader was literally cut to pieces and the members of his family were forced to embrace the Islamic faith. But the blood of the martyr is the cement of the church. They continued their work of insurrection. In 1686, they rose in rebellion under the leadership of Raja Ram. But he was defeated and killed. After the death of Raja Ram, the work ofinsurrection was carried on by his nephew, Churaman.

b) The Bundela rebellion

Champat Rai, the king of Bundelkhand, rebelled against Aurangzeb in the early part of his reign. But the rebellion was quelled. Gircumstances forced the Bundela King to commit suicide. Chhatrasal, the son of Champat Raj, organized an attack against the Mughals on a large scale. The people of Bundelkhand and Malwa got infuriated at the religious fanaticism of Aurangzeb. They found in Champat Rai a worthy leader and a champion of Hindu faith. He repulsed many of the attacks of the Mughal forces. He died in 1731 after carving out an independent principality.

c) Rebellion of Satnamis (1672)

Another rebellion of a more formidable nature was organized by the Satnamis who resided in the districts of Narnaul and Mewar. They were a set of Hindu devotees with tonsured heads and shaven faces and dressed in the attire of Sanyasis. They were very honest and peacefully engaged themselves in traded and agriculture. The immediate provocation of the rebellion was the indecent behavior of a foot-soldier towards a Satnami peasant. Soon the quarrel developed and assumed a religious colour. They successfully repelled the attacks of the Mughal forces in charge of local officers on many occasions. Enraged at the audacity of Satnamis, Aurangzeb dispatched the imperial troops. In the battle that followed, 2,000 Satnamis were killed and the rest fled from the field of battle.

d) The opposition of the Sikhs

The Sikhs also did not escape the fanatical fury of Aurangzeb. Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru, protested against the anti-Hindu policy of Aurangzeb. He strongly objected to the desecration of temples“ by the Emperor. He was summoned to Delhi and asked to embrace the Islamic faith. He preferred death to dishonor. The Guru was tortured to death in 1675. His successor, Guru Govind Singh, organized the Sikhs into a military brotherhood. The Guru was murdered by an Afghan fanatic in 1708.

Last days of Aurangzeb

Fortune which befriended him in the first part of his reign became fickle in the second. Reminiscences of his past actions made him repent for his sins. Of his wives only Udipuri Mahal survived him. His eldest son, Muhammad Sultan, died in prison in 1676. Prince Akbar ended his life in Persia in 1704. Muazzam, Azam and Kam Bakhsh survived him. His tireless and unceasing work shattered his health and spirits. The disillusioned Puritan Emperor saw visible signs of the crumbling of the mighty Timurid Empire. In a moment of desperation, he wrote pathetic letters to his sons Azam and Kam Bakhsh. He executed a will partitioning the Empire among his three sons so as avert a war of succession. The Emperor died in 1707 at the ripe old age of 90 at Ahmadnagar. His mortal remains were interred in atomb in Daulatabad.

Aurangzeb's Contribution to the Imperial Decline

Aurangzeb was not to be solely blamed for the disintegration of the Mughal Empire. Before his death, the number of provinces rose to 21. Over centralization with a heavy doze of despotism became the nature of his government. The success of such a government depends upon the personality of the Emperor. It is true that Aurangzeb had an extraordinary

memory power and was noted for his indefatigable industry. But they are poor substitutes for efficient administration. His narrow-minded bigotry and unstatesmanlike acts aggravated the already existing malady in the administration. In the evening of his life, he lost control over the Governors of distant provinces.

Suspicious by nature, Aurangzeb never took anybody into confidence. He suspected his own sons. He did not give proper training to his sons in the art of government. He always kept them at arms length and deputed spies to watch their movements. As was the father so were the sons. They retaliated by entering into treasonable negotiations with other powers. It is mockery to run a government with out experienced leaders at the helm of affairs. The sons of Aurangzeb due to want of proper training became mediocrities. He had the utmost distrust for his ministers. So he himself attended to the minute details of government, the ministers remaining as glorified clerks. They lacked initiative, push and dash in administrative duties In course of time, they became irresponsible. It resulted in the demoralization and degeneration of the administrative machinery.

Aurangzeb failed to realize that the perpetuation of Mughal rule was based on the willing co-operation of the Hindus and Muslims. An important role was played by the Rajputs in defending and upholding the Mughal structure. But Aurangzeb by his intolerant religious policy and unstatesmanlike acts alienated the sympathies of the Sossdias of Mewar and the Rathors of Marwar. Instead of winning over the Rajuputs, he carried on incessant wars against them. HE succeeded in converting friends into foes. He made the Rajputs bitter enemies of the Empire.

Aurangzeb was an orthodox Sunni Muslim. In his desire to convert India into an Islamic State, the puritan Emperor rubbed with wrong shoulders. By his intolerant religious policy, he incurred the displeasure of a number of sects. He did not take into account the strength of popular movements in the country. The Marathas, Sikhs, Jats, Satnamis and Bundelas became the sworn enemies of the Empire. Auragzeb thought that by arresting Sivaji or executing Shamnhuji or hacking the Sikh Guru to pieces or brutally suppressing the rebellions of the Jats and Satnamis, he could scare away or strike terror in the minds of the people. But he failed to realize that popular ideas could never be crushed by acts of suppression. But on the contrary, they gather only renewed and fresh momentum by the martyrdom of the leaders. Further, he failed to note that such ideas were becoming determining political factors. Sivaji, „the Deccan Ulcer” foiled his plans. Govind Singh, he tenth Sikh Guru, organized the Sikhs into a military brotherhood. The Marathas and the Sikhs became the arch-enemies of Mughal imperialism. Has Aurangzeb been a far-sighted

statesman, he would have followed a conciliatory policy towards them. But he became a slave to narrow prejudices and lacked realism in his views.

Aurangzeb's long drawn-out wars in the Deccan brought about demoralization and degeneration in the Mughal administration. The annexation of Bijapur and Golkunda were serious diplomatic blunders committed by him. He could have allowed them to continue as independent States and could have set them against the rising power Marathas. But by reducing them to impotence, he only allowed the Marathas to gain an upper hand in the south at the expense of the two Sultanates. Bijapur and Golkunda were already dead horses. But he wasted a lot of money and time in flogging the dead horses. The financial breakdown which started during the reign of his father assumed greater dimensions during his reign and brought about the inevitable decline of the Empire.

Military might alone cannot keep an Empire intact. Ample scope should be given to the expansion of the creative talents of the people in artistic and literary fields. Aurangzeb had no taste for art and literature. All kinds of art and literature received a set-back during his reign. The creative talents of the people got stunted and stultified during his reign. In fine, it may be stated that Aurangzeb was not solely responsible for the dismemberment of the Mughal Empire. But he hastened the decline.

MARATHAS - RISE OF SHIVAJI

The cradle-land of the Marathas consisted of a narrow strip of land called Konkan sandwiched between the Arabian Sea and the Sahyadri mountains and beyond the mountains a hilly region of about 20 miles in breadth called Maval and beyond the hills plain belt called the Desh. The geographical situation of the country itself was a cause for the rise of Marathas. It was not very easy to attack a country which was surrounded on all sides by natural barriers. Further, the country had a number of hill fortresses which acted as nervecentres of their power. The Marathas had previous military experience. They had helped the Yadavas of Devagiri in their struggle against Ala-ud-din Khilji. They had served under the Bhamani Sultans in various military capacities. After the break-up of the Bahmani kingdom, they served under the Sultans of Ahmadnagar, Bujapur, Golkunda, Bidar and Berar. The Maratha noblemen filled the army of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur. They made capital out of the weakness of the sultans of the Deccan. Many underlying forces were at work which strengthened their bonds of unity and national solidarity. A common language, the religious revival brought up by religious reformers like Wkanath, Tukaram, Ramadas and Vaman Pandit and above all the genius of Shivaji sowed the seeds for renaissance in the country. All the essential ingredients for the development of a nation-state like a common language, religion, a glorious past with traditions of

loyalty and obedience and a strong desire for union were present in the Maratha country. Political unity was the only thing which the people lacked and that was supplied by the resourceful intelligence of Sivaji.

Career of Sivaji (1627 - 1680)

Early life

Sivaji was the second son of Shaji Bhonsle by his first wife Jija Bai. He claimed descent from the Yadavas of Devagiri on his mother's side and the Sisodias of Mewar on his father's side. He was born in Shivner near Junnar in 1627 (1628/1630 according to some) Shaji Bhonsle, the father of Sivaji, was a petty commander under Malik Amber, the Abyssinian minister of Ahmadnagar. After the death of Malik Amber, he played the role of king-maker in Ahmadnagar. When it was annexed to the Mughal dominions, he entered the service of the Sultan of Bijapur. In 1636, he deputed Shaji to conquer new places. He took along with him his second wife Tuka Bai and his son Vyankoji or Ekoji, leaving Sivaji and his mother Jija Bai in Poona under the guardianship of Dadaji Kondadev. Forsaken by her heartless husband, the saintly Jija Bai resolved to her miserable lot in life. What is called education, Sivaji never received. But his mother recited to him the chivalrous deeds of the heroes of the epics. She instilled in his tender mind the spirit of heroism and the need to save Hinduism from the onslaught of the Muslims. Apart from administering Shaji's jagirs at Poona, Dadaji Kondadev taught young Sivaji fighting, horseriding and a number of other manly feats. He also learnt from him the art of administration. From the very beginning, Sivaji was of an independent bent of mind. His mind ached for daring deeds and adventurous exploits. Such thoughts with the passage of time developed into patriotic fervor.

Early Conquests

Sivaji mixed with the Mavali peasants of his age and learnt the hard knocks in early life. His striking personality and indomitable courage endeared him to their hearts and he became their disputed leader. He started his career of conquest by measuring his strength with the Sultan of Bijapur. In 1646, he captured the fortress of Torna which belonged to the Sultan of Bijapur. An immense booty fell into his hands, He built a new fort Rajgarh, five miles east of Torna. After the death of Dadaji Kondadev in 1647, Sivaji became his own master. He took possession of his father's jagir. He captured the forts of Chakkan and Kondana (Singharh). The warlike activities of Sivaji came to an abrupt end in 1648 when his father was imprisoned by the Sultan of Bijapur. Sivaji appealed to prince Murad, the then Governor of the Deccan, to exert pressure on the Sultan of Bijapur to release his father. But Shah Jahan did not meddle in the affair. Shivaji was, however, released from prison in return for the surrender of the forts of

Banglore, Kondana (Singharh) and Kandarpi and also on condition of his son's good behaviour. So from 1649 to 1655 Sivaji remained quiet. But he did not allow the grass to grow under his feet. He utilized this time to strengthen and consolidate his position. Even during this time, he captured the fort of Purandar. He renewed his activities with redoubled vigour in 1656. In the same year, he captured Javli in the Satara district from Chandra Rao More, a Maratha nobleman, He was treacherously murdered. The acquisition of Javli considerably enhanced the position and power of Sivaji. An immense booty fell into his hands. He built a new fort called Pratagarh, two miles west of Javli. Subsequently in the same year, he captured the strong fortress of Raigarh, his future capital, from the Mores.

First rupture with the Mughals (1657)

Sivaji stretched his gaze beyond his modest power. He gave offence to Aurangzeb, the then Viceroy of the Deccan, by attacking the Mughal districts of Ahmadnagar and Junnar, Aurangzeb sent a contingent against Sivaji and defeated him. Aurangzeb patched up a peace with Bijapur and Sivaji also made peace with Aurangzeb. He proceeded to the north in order to participate in the war of succession. Sivaji made capital out of his absence from the Deccan. He invaded North Konkan and captured the cities of Klyan, Bhivand and the fort of Mahuli.

Murder of Afzal Khan (1659)

Sivaji's personal exploit against Afzal Khan, one of the generals of Bijapur, was a memorable episode in the history of India. The Sultan sent Afzal Khan, a consummate general noted for his treachery and savagery, against Sivji. He opened negotiations with Sivaji and solicited him to have a personal talk with him. Sivaji scented the treachery behind the move. In the conference hall where the two embraced, Afzal Khan attempted foul-play and so Sivaji tore open his bowels with the help of his bagh nakh (glove with steel claws) and plunged his dagger into Afzal Khan's side and killed him. A terrible carnage was inflicted on the Bijapuri forces. An immense booty fell into the hands of Sivaji. He did not rest on his laurels after defeating the Bijapuri forces. The Maratha forces ravaged South Kondan and Kolhapur district and captured the fort of Panhala. This was followed by the defeat of another Bijapur force and the capture of a number of forts in the vicinity. But Sivji had to suffer some reverses in arms and fortresses in 1660. He lost Panhala to Bijapur and Chakkan to the Mughals.

Night-attack on Shaista Khan's camp (1663)

Another memorable feat during the time of Sivaji was his night- attack on Shaista Khan's camp. Aurangzeb who was then the Emperor appointed Shaista Khan as the Governor of the Deccan in 1660 with the main purpose of crushing the power of Sivaji. But his plans were thwarted by the masterly strokes of Sivaji. He made a successful night-attack on Shaista

Khan's camp in Poona in 1663. He mutilated the fingers of Shaista Khan and killed one of his sons. Shaista Khan was recalled. Sivaji sacked Surat for the first time in 1664 and an immense booty fell into his hands.

Jai Singh and the Treaty of Purandar

Aurangzeb sent Raja Jai Singh against Sivaji. By diplomatic moves, the Raja formed a ring of enemies and fifth columnists against Sivaji. He besieged Purandar in 1665. Sivaji put up a heroic resistance. But finding further resistance futile, he surrendered. According to the terms of the treaty of Purandar 1665, he ceded 23 forts to the Mughals retaining 12 forts for himself. He promised to supply a contingent of 5,000 horses to Aurangzeb, the cost of which was to be compensated by the collection of chauth and sardeshmukhi in certain districts of Bujapur. As an ally of the Mughals, he backed up Raja Jai Singh in his operations against Bujapur.

Visit to Agra (1666)

Jai Singh fed Sivaji with high hopes and employed a thousand devices to induce him to visit the Emperor at Agra. Sivaji went to Agra in 1666 to see the Emperor. In the Mughal Court, he had to stand along with third-rate nobles. Thus humiliated, he exchanged hot words with the Emperor only to find himself a prisoner in his hands. But he effected his escape along with his son Shambhuji and returned home in 1666. He remained quiet for three years without any hitch with the Mughals. But he utilized this time to consolidate his position. Aurangzeb recognized Sivaji as Raja in 1668.

Second rupture with the Mughals (1670)

The peace treaty concluded between the Marathas and the Mughals was a mere truce. Soon difference of opinion developed. Aurangzeb attached a part of the jagir in Berar which was once assigned to Sivaji. Sivaji got infuriated, recalled his troops from Mughal service and opened hostilities with the Mughals. He recovered almost all the forts he had ceded to the Mughals by the treaty of Purandar. In 1670, he sacked Surat for a second time and an immense booty fell into his hands. Riding on the crest of victory, he inflicted defeat after defeat on the Mughals. Sivaji, the Deccan Ulcer, continued his policy of wrecking Mughal power by looting the Mughal provinces. In 1674, Sivaji celebrated his coronation and assumed the title of Chhatrapati.

Carnatic campaigns (1677)

In 1677, Sivaji embarked upon his career of conquest in the south. He entered into a secret treaty with the Sultan of Golkunda promising him some of the would-be-conquered territories and thus got his support in men and materials. Sivaji captured Junji and Vellore and annexed the adjoining territories which belonged to his father, Shaji. He wrested Tanjore from

his half-brother Vyankoji or Ekoji but allowed him to carry on the administration after the accepted his overlord-ship. The Nayaks of Madur promised to pay a huge amount as tribute. The Carnatic campaigns enhanced his prestige and power. The newly conquered places especially Jinji acted as a second line of defence for his successors.

Last Days of Sivaji

Sivaji's last days were clouded with grief and anxiety. His eldest son Shambhuji was a man of loose morals. Though Sivaji did not spare the rod, the child was spoiled. His attempts to refine him failed. He put him under arrest in 1676. But he escaped in the next year and joined the Mughal camp. He fled from the Mughal camp in 1679 and returned to his mother country. Though the home comment in his character. So he was imprisoned and sent to Panhala fort. The desertion of his eldest son filled him with remorse. To nominate his second son Rajaram as the heir-apparent to the throne was out of question because he was only a boy of ten years. The ceaseless and tireless work of Sivaji considerably affected his health. He fell ill and died in 1680 at the age of 53.

ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM OF SIVAJI

Sivaji's Ideal

Historians are diametrically of opposite views with regard to the ideal of an Empire which Sivaji put forth. Sardesai strongly contends that Sivaji had a pan-Hindu ideal and he wanted to set up a Hindu Empire in India. But this view cannot be accepted because Sivaji himself knew about his own limitations. He was merely contented with the establishment of a Maratha State. According to Khafi Khan, the Mughal historian, Sivaji was "an entrepreneur of rapine or a Hindu edition of Ala-ud-din or Tamerlane". The view endorsed by Khafi Khan is rather harsh. Still others hold the view that Sivaji found only a krieg staal, i.e., a government which thrives and grows only by conditions of war. His short life was one of perpetual struggle against powerful enemies like the Mughals and the Sultan of Bijapur. It was a period of preparation rather than fruition. But whatever may be the views held by historians, Sivaji did carve out a sovereign State.

Central Government

Like all rulers of the time, Sivaji was also a despot. He concentrated in his person all powers. Though he ruled the country according to his own will and pleasure, he never forgot that the end of the government was the welfare of the governed. He was true enlightened despot. In the day-to-day administration of the country, he was assisted by a Council of Ministers known as Ashta Pradhan. It was purely an advisory body and its decisions were not binding on him. The eight ministers were:

- (1) the Mukhya Pradhan or Peshwa or Prime Minister who looked after the general interests of the State and represented the King in his absence,
- (2) the Amatya or Auditor or the Finance Minister,
- (3) the Mantri or Chronicler who kept a record of the King's activities and the proceedings in the court,
- (4) the Sachiva or Superintendent was in charge of the royal correspondence,
- (5) the SYnabt ir Fireigh Secretary was in charge of the relations with foreign states,
- (6) Senapati or Commander-inChief,
- (7) Danadyaksha or Ecclesiastical head was in charge of religion and charities, and
- (8) Nyayadhisa or the chief Justice. With the exception of the last two ministers, all the others were expected to take up arms whenever commanded by the King.

Provincial Government

For the sake of administrative convenience and fiscal purposes, Sivaji divided the country into four Pranths or provinces, each under a Viceroy. Each province was sub-divided into a number of Parganas. The fort was the nerve-centre of the activities of the Pranth. The lowest unit of the government was the village in which the traditional system of government prevailed.

Revenue System

In his revenue administration, Sivaji borrowed the essential features of Malik Amber's revenue regulations. The revenue administration of Sivaji was humane and beneficent to the tillers of the soil. The lands were carefully surveyed and assessed. The State demand was fixed at 30% of the gross produce to be payable in cash or kind. Later on the tax was raised to 40% after abolishing all taxes. Liberal loans were advanced to the peasants for purchasing cattle, seed, etc. he was not in favour of granting jagirs to the officers.

Chauth and Sardeshmukhi

The revenue collected from the State was too meager to meet the requirements of the State. So Sivaji collected two taxes chauth and sardeshmukhi from the adjoining tracts of his Empire, the Mughal provinces and the territories of the Sultan of Bujapur. Different views are held by scholars with regard to the nature of the two taxes Ranade compares it to Wellesley's Subsidiary System and points out that it was a military contribution made by the districts with moral binding on the part of Sivaji to protect them from external invasions. According to Sardesai, it was in the nature of a tribute exacted from alien or conquered territories and guaranteeing them protection from the attack of other powers. But J.N. Sarkar points out: "that the payment of chauth merely saved a place from the unwelcome presence of the Maratha

soldiers but did not impose on Sivaji any corresponding obligation to guard the district from foreign invasion or internal disorder". But whatever may be the nature of the contribution, there is no denying the fact that the chauth was a source of revenue to the Maratha State. Sardeshmukhi was an additional 10% of the revenue which Sivaji collected by virtue of his position as Sardeshmukhi or Lord of Maharashtra.

Military Organisation

The army was organized on efficient lines. Formerly, the Maratha forces took up arms for one part of the year and during the other half returned to their fields. It goes to the credit of Sivaji for organizing a standing army. He converted a set of untrained, undisciplined and ill-armed soldiers into a well drilled, disciplined and better-armed soldier. He discouraged the practice of granting jagirs and making hereditary appointments. His army consisted of four divisions, viz, infantry, cavalry, an elephant corps and artillery. Though soldiers were good at guerilla methods of warfare, at a later stage they got accustomed to pitched battles. The cavalry was better paid than the infantry. In the cavalry, 25 horsemen formed the lowest unit. It was placed under a Havaldar. Five Havaldars were placed under one Jumladar (command of 125 horsemen). Five Hazaris were placed under a Panj Hazari (command of 6250 horsemen). The panj Hazaris were placed under a supreme Commander or Sar-i-nabat who commanded the entire cavalry force. In the infantry, the lowest unit of nine foot was under a Naik, five Naiks were placed under a Havaldar (command of 45 foot), two or three Havaldars were placed under one Jumladar (command of 90 or 135 foot), ten Jumladars were placed under a Hazari (command of 900 or 1350 foot) and seven Hazaris were placed under a Sar-i-nobat or Supreme commander of the infantry (command of 6300 or 9450 foot). On many occasions Sivaji himself led the army. But invariably the army was under the command of the Senpati or Commander-in-Chief who happened to be one of the members of the Ashta Prashan other than the Dhanadyaksha and Nyayadhisa. The soldiers were recruited under the personal supervision of Sivaji. The Mavalis contributed to the mainstay of his army. Even Muslims were in the army. He enforced strict discipline in the army. Women were not allowed to remain in the camp or accompany the army. Precious articles like gold and silver plundered during Maratha raids should be sent to the State coffers. He took utmost care to see that the civil population was left unmolested during the raids. Sivaji paid great attention to cows, Brahmis and the preservation of the chastity of women during raids. As the forts constituted the nerve centre of the government, meticulous care was taken to keep them on efficient lines. There were in all 280 forts. Each fort was placed under the control of 3 carefully selected officers belonging to different castes so as to prevent plots and revolts. Further, he visited the forts

frequently and most often the visits were in heralded. Sivaji realized the importance of navy. A modest beginning was made in the construction of fleet of ships.

Successors Of Shivaji

Shambhuji (1680 - 89)

Shambhuji, the eldest son of Sivaji through Sai Bai was 22 years old at the time of Sivaji's death. Rajaram, the youngest son through Soyra Bai, was ten years old at that time. Soyra Bai placed her son Rajaram on the throne of Raigarh in 1680. In the mean while, Shambhuji escaped from Panhala fort. He took possession of Raigarh and put Soyra Bai and Rajaram into prison. He succeeded to the throne in 1680. But the formal coronation took place only in 1681. Shambhuji was no doubt a brave soldier. But he led a life of ease and pleasure. Prince Akbar, son of Aurangzeb, rebelled against his father in 1681 and sought the help of Shambhuji. He stayed in the Maratha court for four years. But Shambhuji did not do anything to strengthen his position by rallying the discontented elements in Aurangzeb's Camp. In 1689, the Mughal forces captured Shambhuji along with his friend Kavi Kulash in a drunken bout. In the Mughal camp, they were hacked to pieces in the same year.

Rajaram (1689 -1700)

After the capture of Shambhuji, Rajaram, the youngest son of Sivaji, carried on the government as regent to Shahu (Sivaji II), the son of Shambhuji. The Mughal forces besieged Raigarh in 1689. The fort fell. Yesu Bai, the widow of Shambhuji, and her son Shahu were imprisoned and sent to Delhi. A number of forts fell into the hands of the Mughals. Rajaram escaped to Jinji and held aloft the standard of independence, Aurangzeb who went to besiege Maharashtra found himself besieged by the Marathas. A Mughal force was sent to besiege Jinji in 1691. It fell after a protracted siege in 1698. But Rajaram escaped to Satara. Aurangzeb besieged Satara towards the close of 1699. While the siege was in operation, Rajaram died in 1700. Satara fell to the Mughals.

Tara Bai (1700 - 1708)

After the death of Rajaram, his widow Tara Bai carried on the resistance against the Mughals. Tara Bai "a stormy petrel and no dove of peace" carried on the government as regent to her minor son Sivaji III. She was a woman of manly feats with extraordinary resourcefulness. She exhibited fire and vigour in her activities, She sent forces to ravage the six Deccan Mughal Subahs. Aurangzeb succeeded in capturing some Maratha forts. Tara Bai continued her rupture with Aurangzeb. The final defeat of Aurangzeb was mainly due to her energy. She recovered many of the forts captured by the Mughals.

Shahu (1708 - 49)

After the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, Shivaji II nicknamed Shahu, was released from prison. His homecoming complicated the political affairs in Maharashtra. Tara Bai disregarded his claim to the throne and considered him an imposter. She championed the cause of her son Shivaji III. The Maratha leaders took sides on the issue. The scales were heavily tilted in favour of Shahu. He defeated the forces of Tara Bai at Khed in 1707 and ascended the throne in 1708. With the help of some Maratha chiefs, she recovered Panhala and carried on a rival government with headquarters at Kolhapur. The division of the country into two camps greatly perturbed Shahu. A palace intrigue practically solved the problem. Rajas Bai, the second wife of Rajaram, and her son Shambhaji II imprisoned Tara Bai and her son in 1714 and Shambhaji II came to the throne of Kolhapur. The leaning of Shambhaji II of Kolhapur towards Nizam-ul-mulk irritated Shahu. He made preparation for war and defeated Shambhaji II. By the terms of the treaty of Qarns 1731, the river Warna was fixed as the boundary separating the two territories. Shambhaji II acknowledged the overlordship of Shahu. Shahu died in 1749.

Rama Raja (1750 - 77)

Shahu had no male issue. When the question of succession came, Tara Bai surprised the Maratha authorities by telling them that her grandson, one Rama Raja, was brought up by her secretly. Shahu believed the story and nominated him as the next ruler. Rama Raja came to the throne in 1750. Tara Bai who was keen on grasping power was disappointed when he signed the Sangola agreement according to which he became a mere cipher and all power passed into the hands of the Peshwa. When her plan failed, she openly repudiated him as the son of a wandering-singer. She imprisoned him. She was mainly responsible for the fall of the Bhonsles and the rise of the Peshwas to power. She died in 1761. Rama Raja died in 1777.

Shahu II, Pratap Singh and Shaji II

After the death of Rama Raja, his adopted son Shahu II, another nonentity, came to the throne. He ruled till his death occurred in 1808. Shahu II was succeeded by his son Pratap Singh in 1810. He was deposed by the British government in 1839 on charges of attempting to overthrow the British Government. The British made his younger brother Shaji Appa Saheb, better known as Shaji II, as the Raja. Pratap Singh died a prisoner in 1847. Shaji II died in 1848 without leaving a male issue. Satara was annexed to the British dominions by Dalhousie.

Mughal Administration

The Mughal administrative system was mainly the product of the genius of Akbar. Babur and Humayun, the first two rulers of the Mughal Empire, had no time to evolve a system of administration. They adopted the system which was in vogue at that time. In

elaborating his system of administration, Akbar was greatly indebted to Sher Shah, the Pathan genius. But Sher Shah did not introduce any original schemes or ideas, He only faithfully transplanted the main principles of Ala-ud-din Khilji's administration in such a way that he infused a new life and vigour into the administrative structure.

Akbar like Sher Shah was also motivated by political considerations for giving form and shape to his administrative structure. But the depth of his moral and intellectual convictions was radically different from those of Sher Shah. The genius of Akbar is revealed in his policy of religious toleration which was mainly based on the principle that every subject of the state whether Hindu or Muslim had equal rights of citizenship.

The Mughal Government was a combination of Indian and foreign elements. To use the words of Sarkar, it was " the Perso-Arabic system in an Indian setting". The Emperors of the period evinced keen interest in the welfare of the people. Though they ruled the country according to their own will pleasure, it was an enlightened despotism. The government discharged both constituent and ministrant functions. The constituent or the most elemental functions were to protect the country from external dangers and internal threats and maintain peace and order in the country. The ministrant functions were to take after the various problems like trade, industry, hospitals, roads, arts, coinage etc. The government was essentially military in character because every officer of the State was the holder of a mansab or military rank. It is worth mentioning that the Mughal Government did not undertake any socialistic schemes for the good of the people. Elaborate correspondence was maintained by the Mughal Government and so it was called a paper-government. The tone of the administration remained unchanged during the time of Jahangir and Shah Jahan but it was reversed by Aurangzeb.

The Emperor

The Emperor was all in the administration of the Empire. Virtually he was an autocrat with unrestrained powers. His will was law. But he never behaved like a despot. His authority was tempered and controlled by rebellions and the crying needs of the people. But the fact remains that the Mughal Government was purely and one-man show. The Emperor was assisted in the day-to-day administration of the country by a council of ministers. But they were in no sense his colleagues. The Emperor combined in his person all the powers. He worked hard according to a set time-table. He used to transact business of a general nature in the Diwan-i-Am (Hall of Public Audience), of a more serious nature in the Diwan-i-Khas

(Hall of Private Audience) and of a secret nature in the Ghusal Khana (Room of Secret Audience).

Central Government

The Emperor was the pivot of the Government. Though he was assisted by ministers in the day-to-day administration, they were in no way his colleagues. They were only his servants appointed and dismissed by him at his will. The highest and most important minister was the Wazir or Prime Minister. The Wazir usually headed the revenue department in his capacity as Diwan and not in his capacity as Wazir. In the time of Akbar, the Prime Minister was called Vakil and the Revenue Minister, Diwan. The other important ministers were the Khan-i-Saman, Mir-Bakshi, Sadar-us-Sadar and Muhtasib. The Khan-i-Saman was in charge of the imperial household, the Mir Bakshi or Pay Master General was in charge of disbursement of salaries to the officers. Apart from this, he had to recruit soldiers, maintain them in good order, inspect the horses and scrutinize the records of the soldiers. The Sadar-us-Sadar was the highest ecclesiastical and judicial officer in the State. The Muhtasib was the censor of public morals. Several ministers of an inferior status also formed the core of the central government.

Imperial Service

The military nature of the government was well reflected in the Imperial Service. Akbar introduced a new system known as the Mansabdari system which he borrowed from Persia. Under this system every officer was the holder of a military rank in the service. He was expected to supply a stipulated number of troops. There was no hard and fast rule which served as a basis for the recruitment of troops. The Emperor's will was law. Promotions, demotions, displacements and dismissals also depended upon the sweet will of the Emperor. The military nature of government required the employment of a large number of people. Most of them, nearly 70% were foreign Muslims. Only 30% of the posts were occupied by the Indian Muslims and Hindus. It was Akbar who enunciated the bold policy of appointing Hindus to the Public Service and most of the recipients of titles among the Hindus were the Rajputs. Considerations of prudence and desire to build an Empire broad-based on the people's will drove Akbar to follow such a policy. The general tone and morale of the Public Service remained unaltered during the reign of Jahangir and Shah Jahan. Under Aurangzeb, there was a marked deterioration and degeneration in the tone of the Public Service as a result of the exclusion of Hindus from Public Services. The degeneration in the service became so worse that Prince Akbar was forced to write to Aurangzeb like this: "The clerks and officers of state have taken to the practice of traders and are buying posts with gold and selling them for

shameful consideration. Everyone who eats salt destroys the salt-cellar”.

As previously noted, each Mansabdar was a holder of an office of rank and profit and was expected in theory to supply a stipulated number of soldiers mostly horsemen for active military service. During the time of Akbar, the Mansabdars were classified into 33 grades ranging from commanders of 10 to 10,000. The highest grade thrown open to ordinary officials was a mansab of 5,000. The higher grades above 5,000 were reserved to the members of the blood royal. But deviations from this general rule were allowed in exceptional cases. Each Mansabdar received a fixed pay out of which he was expected to maintain his quota of horses, elephants, etc. But the actual number of soldiers and animals supplied by the Mansabdar rarely agreed with the number fixed according to his rank. Fraudulent means and false musters continued to be general practice even during the time of Akbar. The Mansabdars received cash payments or grant of Jagirs. Akbar preferred the cash payment to the grant of Jagirs. A Mansabdar of 5, 000 received a monthly salary of Rs. 30,000 and a Mansabdar of 10, Rs.100.

The Army

There was no standing army worth the name during the Mughal period. In the time of Akbar, it consisted of not more than 25,000 equipped and maintained from the coffers of the State. The Emperor had to rely on four classes of troops, viz., (1) Irregular forces supplied by subordinate kings and chieftains. (2) troops supplied by Mansabdars (3) Supplementary troops raised by the State and (4) Ahadis or a body of “Gentlemen troopers” composed of young men of locus standi and good family. The troops raised by the subordinate kings and chieftains were commanded by themselves. The troops supplied by the Mansabdars were chiefly cavalry and they paid immediate allegiance to their respective Mansabdars and not to the Emperor. The troops supplied by the Mansabdars were the mainstay of the Mughal army. The troops supplied by the two categories put together were greater than that of the regular army maintained by the State. The supplementary troops or the so-called standing army under normal circumstance did not exceed 25,000. The state troops were usually put under the command of Mansabdars. The gentlemen troopers-the less fortunate people who were not able to procure mansabs - were put under the command of a separate Mansabdar. The organization of the army was based on the fourfold division consisting of the infantry, cavalry, artillery and an elephant corps. The cavalry was the flower of the army. In course of time, the elephant corps fell into disuse. But elephants were used to transport things and maintain the pomp and show of the army. A navy in the modern sense of the term did not exist during the Mughal period.

The Mughal army had certain inherent defects. There was no standing army in the real sense of the term. The irregular forces supplied by chieftains could not be counted upon. The horsemen supplied by Mansabdars rarely agreed with the number fixed according to their rank. As long as Akbar was at the helm of affairs, he kept the army in perfect order. But the inevitable deterioration started during the time of his successors. The Mansabdars were very powerful men and their contingents owed direct allegiance to them and not to the Emperor. It was this set-up that enabled Mahabat Khan to revolt against Jahangir. Further, there was no uniformity in the techniques and methods adopted by the Mansabdars. The Deccan campaigns of Jahangir became a flop owing to the disunity among them. As time went on, the number in the Mughal army swelled. But it lacked proper drill and discipline which seriously affected its efficiency. The pomp and display maintained by the army further weakened its efficiency. The army on march appeared to be a moving city with all the paraphernalia of the court including the harem, bazaar, musicians, etc. The serious defect in the army system was that the Mughals failed to realize the importance of the Navy as an essential safeguard to ward off European influence.

Police

The police administration was organized on efficient lines and it proved very effective. In the rural areas, no permanent arrangements were made to detect crimes. The Mughal Emperors since the time of Akbar followed the time immemorial custom of enforcing local responsibility for detecting crimes and thefts committed in rural areas. In the cities and towns, the Kotwal was entrusted with the duty of maintaining public order and decency. Abul Fazal in his *Ain-i-Akbari* enumerates a long list of duties which the Kotwal had to perform. Some of his duties were to detect the thieves, recover stolen goods, keep a close watch on the city during nights, maintain a band of spies, gather information about the happenings in the city, prevent the slaughter of animals, prevent sati, control prices, check weights and measures, etc. All these duties were what the Kotwal was expected to do and not what he ought to do. His only concern was to maintain peace and ensure the security of the people. In the district level, law and order was maintained by the faujdar. He suppressed local rebellions and helped the local officers in raising revenue. In spite of all these precautionary measures, the country was infested with robbers and thieves even during the time of Akbar.

Law and Justice

Judged by modern standards, the judicial system and the administration of justice in

Mughal days was in a crude form Except for the Twelve ordinances of Jahangir and the Fatawa-I Alamgiri (a Digest of Muslim law) prepared during the time of Aurangzeb, there was no written code of laws either for civil or criminal affairs. The Koranic injunctions supplemented by the Hadis or the sayings of the Prophet, and previous interpretations given by eminent judges, constituted the main source of law. In criminal cases, the Islamic law was applied to all people alike. But in the administration of civil justice in which the litigants happened to be Hindus, due consideration was given to the peculiar usages of the Hindus.

The Emperor was the fountain of justice. He was the final authority, an authority from which there was no appeal. Akbar used to spend several hours in the Diwan-i-Khas dispensing justice. Jahangir's „Bell of Justice“ reveals his high sense of justice. Shah Jahan used to hear cases on Wednesdays in the Diwan-i-Khas. The Chief Qazi was the highest judicial officer in the State. It was through the instrumentality of the Chief Qazi, Mufti and Mir Adl that justice was administered in the centre. The Mufti investigated the Muslim law, the Qazi investigated the evidence and the MirAdl pronounced the judgment. The Chief Qazi appointed a Qazi each in every provincial capital. The Qazis were expected to be and upright. According to Sarkar, the Qazis of the Mughal days were notoriously corrupt. There was so much popular discontent against them that “when the Qazi bitch died, the whole town was at the funeral. When the Qazi himself died, not a soul followed his coffin”. The Sadar-us-Sadar was the chief ecclesiastical officer of the State. He tried religious cases. In each province, there was a Sadar who discharged similar functions in the provincial level. In the village level, the cases were decided by an arbiter either in Panchayats or caste-courts. Punishment was severe in the Mughal days. Intensity of punishment varied according to the gravity of the offences. Flogging, whipping and mutilation of limbs were common punishments. Even though capital punishment was usually given by the Emperor, the provincial Governors were also empowered to pronounced death sentence for serious offences like treason, murder, sedition, etc. As there were no jails, the prisoners were confined in forts. (E.g.the Gwalior Fort).

Revenue System

The Mughal government derived its revenue from two sources - central and local. Local revenue came from the collection of minor duties and tazes imposed on production and consumption on trades and occupations. The central revenue came from land revenue, customs, mint, inheritance, presents, monopolies and the jizya. The major portion of the revenue was derived from land revenue.

Sher Shah was the first Muslim Emperor who undertook in a systematic way the

settlement of the land. Before he could attain my perfection in the field, he died. Akbar improved the revenue and perfected his system of land revenue. When he came to the throne, he found three kinds of lands in the country- the Khalsa or crown land, the jagir lands owned by powerful nobles and the sayur ghal lands or tax-free lands. The State demand was different in different places. The Jagir system had a very pernicious effect on the economic life of the people. Akbar was able to transform some of the jagirs into crown lands. But he was not able to abolish the jagir system in its entirety. The land tenure was far from satisfactory. Realizing the hopeless condition into which the financial condition of the country lay, Akbar decided to overhaul the system. In 1571, Akbar appointed Muzaffar Khan Turbati, assisted by Raja a Todar Mall, to enquire into the condition of land tenure and prepare a detailed statement of the same.

The appointment of Raja Todar Mall as the Diwan-i-Ashraf or revenue minister in 1582 marks a landmark in the revenue history of the country. He introduced salutary reforms in the field of revenue. Hitherto, the prevalent practice was to make assessments annually and the State demand was obtained from year to year. Further, the assessment was made in an arbitrary manner applying equally to both fertile and less fertile lands and whether they were cultivated or not. The peasants were oppressed by the revenue officers who were highly corrupt. Bribery and corruption were the least offences committed by them. To remove all these evils, Today Mall introduced the Standard or Regulation system for purposes of collecting revenue. The chief features of the new system were: (1) The survey and measurement of land, (2) classification of land, and (3) assessment of rates. Instead of arbitrarily fixing rates on all lands, tax was collected only from cultivated lands. The land was classified into four grades on the basis of fertility and continuity of cultivation. The demand of the State was fixed at $\frac{1}{3}$ of the gross produce to be paid in cash nor kind. Since the assessment was made for a period of ten years, the peasants were saved from the undue exactions of the revenue officer. Further, the exaction varied from year to year. Feeling secure in their possession with a fixed amount to be paid to the State, they were able to make permanent improvements of the lands. Fixity of payment, absence of intermediaries and relief from the oppression of revenue officers made the lot of the peasants better. The yield from the land increased. The demand of the State was fixed at $\frac{1}{3}$ of the gross produce. Though the State's share was a little heavy, Akbar abolished about 40 taxes including the pilgrim tax and the jizya. But the jizya was reimposed by Aurangzeb. The revenue collected from land and other sources was spent on the upkeep of the court, public building, wars, roads and rest-houses. Apart from the construction of roads and rest-houses, the Mughals did not undertake

any scheme of public utility.

Provincial Administration

For the sake of administrative convenience, the country was divided into Subahs or Provinces and the Subahs into Sarkars and the Sarkars into a number of Parganas. Towards the close of the reign of Akbar, there were 15 provinces. The number rose to 17 in the time of Jahangir and 21 in the time of Aurangzeb. The administrative machinery in the province was a replica of the central government. The Governor or Subahar was the highest officer in each province. He discharged both civil and military functions. He was assisted in the day-to-day administration by the Diwan, the Bakshi (pay-master), the Faujdar (general), Kotwal (chief police officer), the Qazi (judicial officer), Sadar (religious officer), Amil (revenue collector), Bitikchi (record keeper), Podar (treasurer), Waga-i-Navis (reporter), etc. The Diwan was the second highest officer in the State and was in charge of the revenue administration. In fact, he was a rival to the Governor and acted as a check on the autocratic tendencies of the Governor. The Emperor kept a close watch on the activities of the Governors by frequently touring the country or punishing them by dismissals, suspensions or transfers.

Art Architecture and Literature in the Mughals

Architecture

The three allied arts of architecture, painting and sculpture with the exception of the last one attained an extraordinarily high level of excellence during the Mughal period. All the early Mughal Emperors with the exception of Aurangzeb were mighty builders. The style adopted in the construction of buildings was an admixture of the best Muslim and Hindu traditions and elements.

Architecture under Babur, Humayun and Sher Shah

The comparatively shorter reign of Babur restricted his architectural outbursts. The ravages of time have completely destroyed his mighty structures. Only three mosques conceived in a humbler scale have survived. They are at Panipat, Sambhal and Agra. His tomb at Kabul is a magnificent one. The two surviving specimens of the buildings of the fugitive Emperor Humayun are the two mosques - one at Agra and the other at Fathbad. Sher Shah constructed the fort of Rohtas on the Jhelum. The two specimens of the architecture of his period are a mosque in the Purana Quila and his mausoleum built on a high rock in the midst of a lake at Sasaram. With regard to the style adopted in the construction of the mausoleum, Vincent Smith says: "the style may be described as

intermediate between the austerity of the TUghluq buildings and the feminine grace of Shah Jahan“s masterpiece”.

Architecture under Akbar

The genius of Akbar as a builder is reflected in his buildings. As Abul Fazl says: “Akbar plans splendid edifices and dress the work of his mind and heart in the garments of stone and clay”. Though he strictly adhered to Persian ideas, there was a great admixture of Hindu ideas in many of his buildings. He constructed the mausoleum of Humayun at Delhi. Though the Persian style dominates the top, the ground-plan is Indian. Hw built important buildings and palaces at Fathpur Sikri, 26 miles away from Agra and that served as the capital city between 1569 and 1584. The two imposing structures in Fathpur Sikri the Fami Masjid and the Buland Darwaza. The last one was constructed by him to commemorate his conquest of Gujarat. His other buildings Fathpur Sikri are Jodh Bai“s palace, The Diwan-i-Am and the Diwan-i-Khas. The last two buildings should not be confused with those of Shah Jahan. Akbar erected these two buildings at Fathpur Sikri which is 26 miles away from Agra and Shah Jahan constructed them in Agra. Vincent Smith says: “Fathpur Is a romance in stone, inconceivable and impossible at any other time or in any other circumstances”. Some of his other buildings are Jagangiri Mahal which is commonly called the Agra Fort, the Lahore Fort, and his mausoleum at Sikandara. The tolerant spirit of Akbar is reflected even in his buildings. The Jahangiri Mahal at Agra may easily be mistaken for the palace of a Hindu King. His mausoleum at Kikandara is designed in the model of Buddhist Viharas.

Architecture under Jahangir

Jahangir was a poor builder. The work of the mausoleum of Akbar at Sikandara started in 1605 was completed by Jahangir. The best specimen of the architecture of the period was the tomb of Itimad-ud-daulah at Agra. The tomb reflects in every part of it “the refined feminism” of Nur Jahan. As Percy Brown says: “whether regarded as an architectural composition of matchless refinement or an artistic symbot of passionate filial devotion, the tomb of Itimad-ud-daulah expresses in every part of it, the high aesthetic ideals that prevailed among the Mughals at the time”.

Architecture under Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb

Shah Jahan was undoubredly the “Prince of builders”. There was a spate of buildings in his time. (For details of the buildings of Shah Jahan refer pages 58-60). With the end of Shah Jahan“s reign, the glorious period of Mughal architecture comes to an end as Aurangzeb had neither the will nor the finance to patronize it. Aurangzeb constructed a small mosque in

the Fort of Delhi, another at Benaras on the ruins of the famous Vishwanath temple and a third at Lahore.

Painting

The art of painting owes its revival and excellence in India to the Mughals. The ancestors of Babur were great admirers of painting. Babur was a lover of nature. He liberally patronized painters. He greatly enjoyed flowers, springs and streams painted by them. Humayun developed a keen taste for painting when he was in exile. He brought with him two painters to India. But the short rule after his restoration did not give him ample time to develop painting. Akbar evinced keen interest in painting. An Indo Persian style of painting developed. Akbar patronized painting and once remarked: "It seems to me that a painter has peculiar means of recognizing God". Of the seventeen painters of his court, thirteen were Hindus. The style and subject of Mughal art are "materialistic, exotic and eclectic" and those of the Hindu art "spiritual and symbolic". The Mughal art was not soft or sentimental. It felt the urge of life with tremendous force and communicated its passionate energy to what it painted. We do not find the abstraction of ancient Indian art and the stretching of feelings beyond human capacity". The Mughal painting reached the zenith during the time of Jahangir. The art of painting became essentially Indian in character and the Persian influence was eliminated. Painting of flowers, animals, birds and other natural objects reached an extraordinarily high degree of perfection. The Rajput School was an indigenous school which flourished side by side with the Mughal School. It portrayed the simple life of the ruler, his religion, his pursuits and favorite pastimes. "With its spiritual and emotional inspiration, it supersedes the secular and as a matter of fact, the Mughal style". With the death of Jahangir "the soul of Mughal painting also departed". Shah Jahan had no taste for painting and under Aurangzeb there was a distinct decline of all kinds of art.

Sculpture

As it was against Koranic principles to erect statues the Mughal Emperors showed very little taste for the art of sculpture. Babur and Humayun were orthodox Muslims and so they had no taste for sculpture. In the reign of Akbar, a modest beginning was made in the development of the art of sculpture. Some of the specimens of the sculpture of the period are the statues of Jaimall and Patta at the gateway of the Agra Fort and the statues of two elephants at Fathpur Sikri. The marble statues of Rana Amar Singh and his son Karan Singh erected in the palace garden of Agra by Jahangir are the two specimens of the sculpture of his period. Shah Jahan was indifferent to sculpture. Aurangzeb being an orthodox Sunni Muslim ordered for the demolition of statues and figures.

Music

Music was also loved and patronized by the earlier mughal Emperors with the exception of Aurangzeb. According to Abul Fazl, 36 musicians enjoyed the patronage of Akbar. Tansen was the most accomplished singer of the time. Abul Fazl says that, "a singer like him has not been in India for the last thousand years". Jahangir and Shah Jahan loved and extended their patronage to music. Aurangzeb being an orthodox Muslim placed a ban on music at court.

Literature

The Mughal period up to the reign of Shah Jahan witnessed continuous and regular literary outbursts. The Mughal rulers were great scholars and patrons of learning. Babur himself was an accomplished scholar well-versed in Arabic, Persian and Turki. His autobiography, Babur-nama, written in flawless Turki is a priceless record. Humayun was also a refined scholar. The Humayun-nama of Gulbadan Begum, the daughter of Babur, is an authority on Humayun's reign. Akbar's age was the Elizabethan age of Persian and Hindi literature. He extended his patronage to Persian and Hindi literature. Some of the famous prose writers of the period in the Persian language were AbulFazl, Nizam-ud-din Ahmad, Baduni and Mulla Daud. Abul Fazl was undoubtedly the greatest writer of the period. His title to fame rests on his two works - the Ain-I Akbari and Akbar-nama. Ghizali and Faizi were the great Persian poets of the period. The Ramayana, a portion of Mahabharata, Raja Tarangini, Panchatantra, etc., were translated into the Persian language. Jahangir also patronized writers. He himself was a good scholar and writer. His autobiography displays his fine literary taste. Shah Jahan also patronized men of letters. Abdul Hamid Lahori wrote the Padshah-nama and Inayat Khan wrote the Shahjahan-nama. Dara, the eldest son of Shah Jahan, was a scholar of outstanding merit. He wrote many books which are considered masterpieces of Persian literature. He took pains to get the Upanishads, the Bhagavata Gita and Yoga Vasishtha translated into the Persian language. The only literary work which received the patronage of Aurangzeb was the fatwa-i-Alamgiri, the greatest digest of Muslim law. Zeb-un-Nisa Begum, the daughter of Aurangzeb, was an accomplished poetess and the diwan-i-Makhfi is a fitting monument to her poetic genius.

Hindi literature also flourished along with Persian. Abdur Rahim the Khan-i-Khanan, Bhagwan Das, Man Singh and Birbal were great Hindi poets of the period. Birbal's poetic talents earned for him the title of Kavipriya from Akbar. Malik Muhammad Jayasi wrote the

Padmavat, a poem in Hindi, describing the story of Padmini, the peerless Queen of Mewar. Surdas, the blind bard of Agra, was a talented poet. Tulsidas was the author of Ramacharitamanasa (Lake of the deeds of Rama), a Hindi version of the Ramayana. Shah Jahan lavishly patronized Hindi poetry. Hindi literature received a set-back during the time of Aurangzeb. Urdu literature made some moderate progress in the States of Bijapur and Golkunda. The Mughal Princesses evinced keen interest in art and literature. The most important among them were Gulbadan Begum (daughter of Babur), Sultana Salima Begum (daughter of Humayun's sister Gulruk), Maham Anaga, Nur Jahan, Mumtaz Mahal, Jahan Ara (daughter of Shah Jahan) and Zeb-un-Nisa begum (daughter of Aurangzeb).

Education

In spite of all these literary outbursts, the Mughal Emperors failed to take steps for the spread of education among the masses. Madrasahs were maintained by the State with liberal grants. But no well-thought-out attempt was made by them to organise a system of public education. Aurangzeb issued an order to demolish the schools of the Hindus.

Deccan Policy Of The Mughals

When the Mughals were busy strengthening and consolidating their position in the North, the Deccan was dominated by the Hindu Empire of Vijayanagar. Side by side with the Vijayanagar Empire flourished the five independent Muslim States of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Golkunda, Bidar and Berar. The five States with the exception of Berar made common cause and defeated Rama Raya of Vijayanagar in the battle of Talikota in 1565. The inevitable disintegration of the Empire started in that year. But the fall of Vijayanagar did not brighten the prospects of the Muslim kingdoms because they were soon engulfed in Mughal imperialism. Ahmadnagar added Berar to its territories in 1574. The small principality of Khandesh which was nowhere in the picture then came to the limelight. Bidar dwindled to insignificance and it was annexed by Bijapur in 1619.

Deccan Policy of Akbar (1595 - 1601)

Beni Prasad says: "the Deccan policy of the Mughals was a legacy of two thousand years, the direct outcome of geographical facts". Akbar had three aims in prosecuting a vigorous policy in the Deccan. One was the imperialistic design of becoming the overlord of the whole of India. The second one was that the Mughal army had grown in size and strength and hence a large army could not be held idle for a long time. The third one which motivated Akbar was to come into grips with the Portuguese who had already established their strongholds in the south and whose presence in the south was a danger to the peace, security

and integrity of the Empire.

Campaigns against Ahmadnagar

Akbar dispatched diplomatic missions to the Deccani kingdoms of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Golconda and Khandesh with the express note of ordering them to accept his overlordship. With the exception of Khandesh, the other three kingdoms refused to submit. So operations were started against the kingdoms of the Deccan. Ahmadnagar was the first State to bear the brunt of the Mughal attack. The city was heroically defended by its regent Chand Bibi. In 1596, peace was concluded. Chand Bibi ceded Berar - a part of the Ahmadnagar - to the Mughals, Berar was incorporated with the Mughal territories. Fighting broke out again. The imperial forces defeated that of Ahmadnagar at Supa near Ashta on the Godavari in 1597. An internal dissension in Ahmadnagar led to another war with the Mughals Chand Bibi was either murdered or forced to commit suicide. Though the city fell, it was not annexed to the Empire.

Siege of Asirgarh in Khandesh

Khandesh which formerly agreed to accept the overlordship of Akbar broke the promise. Akbar easily captured Burhanpur, the capital of Khandesh. He then laid siege to the impregnable fortress of Asirgarh, the key to the Deccan, in Khandesh. After a protracted siege, the fortress fell in 1601. The newly conquered territories in the Deccan were constituted into the three Subahs of Ahmadnagar, Khandesh and Berar. The people of these territories disliked Mughal imperialism and popular risings broke out in different places in favour of the old dynasties.

Deccan policy of Jahangir (1610 - 17)

Jahangir followed the forward policy of his father towards the Deccan. Malik Amber, the new minister of Ahmadnagar, recovered the lost possessions and restored the old dynasty to power. The various expeditions sent against Ahmadnagar failed. Prince Khurram led an expedition to Ahmadnagar and captured it. But the victory was short-lived. Soon Malik Amber recovered the lost places. The Mughal territory did not advance an inch further during the time of Jahangir. It stood where it was in 1605.

Deccan policy of Shah Jahan (1630 - 57)

Ahmadnagar

A new chapter opened in the Deccan policy of the Mughal with the accession of Shah Jahan. The political picture in Ahmadnagar by that time was completely changed. Malik Amber died in 1626 and was succeeded by his unworthy son Fateh Khan. He murdered his

own Sultan, Murtazam, at the instigation of Shah Jahan and placed on the throne his minor son, Hsain Shah. When the Mughals besieged the fortress of Daulatabad in 1631, Fateh Khan refused to surrender it. But he betrayed the cause of his country by surrendering it after accepting a bribe of 101/2 lakhs of rupees. The Sultan's minor son Husain Shah was taken captive and confined in then Fort of Gwalior. Fateh Khan was absorbed in imperial service on a fat salary. Ahmadnagar was annexed to the Mughal Empire in 1633.

Bijapur and Golkunda

The rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda professed the Shia faith. Their independencne was offensive to and incompatible with Mughal imperialism. So operations were started against the two kinngndoms. Golkunda submitted and accepted the overlordship of Shah Jahan. Bijapur wanted to remain independent. So Asaf Khan was sent ot invade Bijapur. The city was besieged. The Bijapuries adopted the scorched-earth policy. Due to want to supplies, the Mughal forcoes withdrew. Operations against Bujapur were renewed in 1635. In the meantime, Shaji Bhonsle, father of Sivaji, recovered a substantial portion of Ahmadnagar and placed a pretender on the throne. Bijapur made common cause with Ahmadnagar. But shah Jahan recovered Ahmadnagar and Shaji was driven out. Muhammad Adil Shah, the Sultan of Bijapur, was forced to accept the overlordship of Shah Jahan. He promised not to interfere in the affairs of Golkunda. A small part of Ahmadnagar was handed over to him by Shah Jahan.

Aurangzeb's First Viceroyalty of the Deccan (1636-44)

It was at this time that Aurangzeb was appointed Viceroy of the Deccan for the first time. Though he wanted to follow a vigorous policy against the Shia States of Bijapur and Golkunda, Dara read meanings and interfered in his policy. So Aurangzeb was unjustly dismissed from service. On the whole, this was an uneventful period. Aurangzeb was followed by weak and incompetent viceroys.

Aurangzeb's Second Viceroyalty of the Deccan (1653 - 58)

Aurangzeb was appointed Viceroy of the Deccan a second time in 1653, which office he held till 1658. On his arrival in the Deccan after a long absence of nine years, he found the State in the grip of a serious financial situation. He effected a settlement of the land on the lines of Todar Mall with slight modifications. His reform put the economic condition of the State in proper order and contributed to the prosperity of the peasants.

Aurangzeb was an orthodox Sunni and so he wanted to destroy the independence of Bijapur and Golkunda. On the pretext that the Sultan of Bijapur had fallen into arrears, he

besieged Bijapur in 1656. He would have made a short meal of Bijapur. But he was forced by Shah Jahan to raise the siege due to the interference of Dara and Jahan Ara. Aurangzeb then riveted his attention on Golkunda. On the pretext that the Sultan of Golkunda was an imposter, he attacked Golkunda. In this case also Dara interfered and peace was concluded with Golkunda at the behest of Shah Jahan.

Deccan policy of Aurangzeb (1680 - 1707) Campaigns against Sivaji

The disorders immediately following the War of Succession spared the Deccan for sometime from the onrush of Mughal imperialism. During the first part of his reign, Aurangzeb was busy in the north for a period of 22 years. Aurangzeb appointed Shaista Khan as the Governor of the Deccan in 1660 with the main purpose of crushing the power of Sivaji. But his plans were thwarted by the masterly strokes of Sivaji. He made successful night attack on Shaista Khan's camp at Poona in 1663, mutilated his fingers and killed one of his sons. Shaista Khan was recalled. Aurangzeb sent Raja Jai Singh against Sivaji. He besieged Purandar in 1665. Sivaji put up a heroic resistance. But finding further resistance futile, he surrendered. According to the terms of the treaty of Purandar, 1665, he ceded 23 forts to the Mughals retaining 12 forts for himself. He promised to supply a contingent of 5,000 horses to be compensated by the collection of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi in certain districts of Bijapur. Sivaji went to Agra in 1666 to seek audience with Emperor only to find himself a prisoner in his hands. But he effected his escape along with his son Shambhuji and returned home in 1666. Aurangzeb recognized Sivaji as Raja in 1668. Shambhuji, the son of Sivaji, was made a Mansabdar of 5,000 and Sivaji got a jagir in Berar. He started his offensive against the Mughals in 1670 and recovered almost all the forts he had ceded to them. The "Deccan Ulcer" continued the policy of foiling the attempts of Aurangzeb till the former's death in 1680. The period ranging from 1658 to 1681 was characterized by a low tide in the Deccan policy of Aurangzeb.

Bijapur (1686)

Prince Akbar proclaimed his independence in 1681 with the help of the Rathors of Marwar and the Sisodias of Mewar. But he was deserted by the Rajputs due to the clever stratagem employed by Aurangzeb. He spent 4 years in fruitless attempts to capture Prince Akbar and in disastrous operations against Shambhuji. Having failed in these two attempts, he riveted his attention on Bijapur and Golkunda. In 1685, operations were started against Bijapur. In 1686, Bijapur surrendered and the dynasty which ruled over the State for nearly two centuries came to an inglorious end. Bijapur was annexed in 1686. This was the first diplomatic blunder committed by Aurangzeb in the Deccan because the people of Bijapur

hated Mughal imperialism and longed for the rule of the old dynasty.

Golkunda (1687)

After the fall of Bijapur, Aurangzeb turned his attention to Golkunda. Abul Hasan, the ruler of Golkunda was a pleasure-seeker. Golkunda was besieged by the Mughal forces in 1687. After a protracted siege which lasted for 8 months, Aurangzeb entered the fortress after bribing the officers. Abul Hasan was made a prisoner and sent to Daulatabad. Golkunda was incorporated with Mughal dominions in 1687. This was the second diplomatic blunder committed by Aurangzeb in the Deccan. Further, it allowed a free-hand to the Marathas to increase their power at the expense of these two kingdoms because it was very difficult to control these two states from remote Delhi.

Relations with the Marathas

After capturing Bijapur and Golkunda, Aurangzeb turned his attention to the Marathas. Some Maratha forts fell into his hands. In 1689, Mughal forces captured Shambhuji along with his friend Kavi Kulash in a drunken bout. In the Mughal camp they were hacked to pieces in the same year. After the death of Shambhuji, Rajaram came to power. The Mughal forces besieged Raigarh, the capital city in 1689. The fort fell. Yesu Bai (widowed wife of Shambhuji) and her son Shahu were imprisoned and sent to Delhi. A number of forts fell into the hands of the Marathas. Rajaram escaped to Jinji and held aloft the standard of independence. The Marathas harassed the Mughal camps by their frequent surprise raids. Aurangzeb who went to besiege Maharashtra found himself besieged by the Marathas. A Mughal force was sent to besiege Jinji in 1691. It fell after a protracted siege in 1698. But Rajaram escaped to Satara. Aurangzeb besieged Satara towards the close of 1699 while the siege was in operation, Rajaram died in 1700 and Satara also fell. After his death, his widowed wife Tara Bai carried on the resistance against the Mughals. She sent the Maratha forces to ravage the six Deccan Mughal Subahs. Aurangzeb succeeded in capturing some Maratha forts. The final defeat of Aurangzeb was mainly due to her energy and she recovered many of the forts captured by the Mughals. His last exploit was directed against the fort of Wagingera which belonged to a low caste tribe and which formerly owed allegiance to the Mughal Emperor. At a heavy cost of men and materials, the fort was captured.

Downfall of the Mughal Empire

1. Personal Despotism

The Mughal Government hinged on personal despotism depending upon the character and personality of the ruler for its perpetuation. The first six Mughal Emperors were

men of ability and they kept the ship of the State on an even keel. Everything went on well so long as strong and capable rulers were at the helm of affairs. As soon as the strong hand was removed, the inevitable collapse of the Empire started. The Mughal dynasty ceased to produce supermen after Aurangzeb. His successors were craven-hearted and thoroughly incompetent to shoulder the onerous responsibilities of the State. They became nerveless tools in the hands of self seeking adventurers and opportunists whose corrupt and inefficient administration drivelled the country into the sotage of decay.

2. Decay of the Administrative Machinery

The imperial civil service during the time of the early Mughal Emperors was manned by men of superior ability. The progressive deterioration in the character of the later Mughal Emperors went hand in hand with that of the Mughal nobility. The Muslim aristocracy was not a hereditary one with traditions of loyalty and obedience attached to the throne. It consisted of a band of adventurers and opportunists whose loyalty to the throne was notorious for its vagaries. The Rajput aristocracy, on the other hand, had already established glorious traditions of loyalty and obedience to the throne. Akbar was very wise in taking them into his confidence and honoured them with places in the government of the country. But Aurangzeb estranged the feelings of the Rajputs. The Sisodias of Mewar and the Rathors of Marwar became the sworn enemies of the Mughal Empire. Akbar discontinued the practice of granting jagirs to the nobles. But it was revived during the time of his successors. The nobles grew in wealth and influence at the expense of the Emperors. Affluence bred indolence and debauchery. The nobles indulged in the meanest and the basest of vices. They shirked duties and followed beauties.

3. Demoralisation of the Mughal army

The organization of the Mughal army contained certain inherent defects. There was no standing army. (For details of the defects of the Mughal army - Refer page 80).

4. Overcentralisation and unwieldy nature of the Empire

Overcentralisation was the characteristic feature of the Mughal Government. The Emperor Combined in his person all the powers. With the passage of time, the extent of the Empire reached its saturation point. The power-crazy Emperors were unwilling to share power with the Governors of the provinces. The evils of overcentralisation are into the very vitals of the Empire. Excessive work brought senselessness at the centre and paralysis at the extremities. The provincial Governors were saddled with responsibility but without any power. The unfortunate divorce of power from responsibility brought about demoralization in

administration. When the Empire became unwieldy the Emperor was not able to exercise any effective control over the provincial Governors. Misgovernment of the provinces became the order of the day. The Governors deprived the people of the bare necessities of life. As the Emperor was always haunted by the menace of the provincial revolts and the shadow of the domestic traitor, he was not able to fully exert in the government of the country. When things went out of his control, the Governors asserted their independence and severed their connection with centre. The Nizam of Hyderabad was the first to assert his independence. His example was followed by the Governors of Oudh, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Rohilkhand.

5. Absence of a regular law of Succession

The absence of a regular law of succession to the throne seriously hampered the strength and growth of the law primogeniture, i.e., the practice of the eldest son succeeding to the throne was alien to the Mughals. Kingship knew no kinship at that time. Such chronic blood-feuds created factions in the court which undermined the strength of the Empire.

6. Rise of the Marathas

The Marathas under Sivaji grew into a strong power. In course of time, it became a national upsurge. They carried on their incessant crusade against the imperialism and fanaticism of the Mughals. The Marathas under the Peshwas and the Confederate Chiefs humiliated and dictated terms to the Mughal Emperors.

7. Foreign Invasions

The tottering Mughal Empire was given stunning blows by foreign invaders like Nadir Shah of Persia and Ahmad Shah Abdali of Afghanistan. These two freebooters carried away immense riches from India.

8. Bad Finance

The needless wars of Aurangzeb in the Deccan and the upkeep of a showy court by his predecessors completely drained up the sources of revenue. The financial breakdown of the Empire which started even during the time of Shah Jahan reached its culmination during the rule of Aurangzeb. Shah Jahan spent money like water in the erection of his mammoth structures. The people groaned under the weight of heavy taxation. Want of finance sapped the vitality of the Empire and that inevitably brought about the dismemberment of the Empire.

9. Successors of Aurangzeb

The successors of Aurangzeb were thoroughly incompetent. It was the heyday of King-makers like the Sayyid brothers and opportunists like Gulam Quadir. The year 1719

witnessed four Emperors seated on the throne one after another. This itself clearly indicates the fact that the later Mughal Emperors were playthings in the hands of opportunists. The downfall of the Empire under such circumstances was only a foregone conclusion.

10. Advent of the English

The infiltration and penetration of the British synchronized at a time when the Mughal Emperors practically became nonentities. The Mughal Empire which had already become a dead horse was flogged more than once by the Marathas. It was left to the British to bury deep the dead horse.

Self Assessment Questions.

1. Evaluate Akbar's approach to religion, including his creation of the Din-i-Ilahi.
.....
2. Discuss Aurangzeb's military campaigns in the Deccan and their impact on the Mughal Empire,
.....
3. Evaluate the rise of the Marathas under Shivaji and its significance in challenging Mughal authority in the Deccan region.
.....

UNIT- V

Economic and Socio-Cultural Life in Medieval India: Economy: Agricultural Production, Village Society and the Revenue System - Trade-- relations with the Europeans- Society- Ruling Classes, Merchants, Artisans and Slaves - Caste, Customs and Women - Religious Ideas and Beliefs- The Sufi Movement- The Bhakti Movement in North India - Culture- Architecture - Literature - Fine Arts - Music.

Objectives

- ❖ Discuss the Economic and Socio-Cultural Life in Medieval India
- ❖ Discuss the rise of new languages and the growth of literature in medieval India.
- ❖ Discuss the philosophy, and practices of various orders of Bhakti saints in India.

Economy

It was a monsoon-based agriculture. Agriculture and industries related to it alone flourished in a semi-feudalistic society like the Mughals.

Agriculture

Agriculture was the main occupation of the people of India. The peasants took full advantage of the peace established by the Mughals in the country. The important crops grown were varieties of paddy, wheat, barley, cotton, indigo, sugar-cane, poppy, sesame, linseed, rape, millets, pulses etc. The method of cultivation was more or less the same as at present. Tobacco was introduced by the Mughals to India in 1604-1605. The chief items of non-agricultural production were fisheries, minerals, salt, sugar opium, indigo and liquor. Gold was found in Kumayun Mountains, the Punjab, iron in many parts of the country, copper in Rajasthan and Central India, Red stone at Fatehpur-Sikri, yellow stone in Thatta, Marble in Jaipure, Diamond in Golkunda and Chota Nagpur. Salt came from the lake of Sambhar and the hills of the Punjab. It was also manufactured from sea and lake water in Gujarat and Sind. Opium was extensively cultivated in Malwa and Bihar and liquor was made almost everywhere. Saltpetre was also manufactured and was much in demand for munition.

Industry

India during this period was the manufacture of cotton cloth. The leading cotton cloth industries were found in Agra, Malwa, the Deccan and Gujarat. Muslim cloth of finer variety was produced at Sonargaon in the Dacca district. Miscellaneous goods such as cotton carpets, rugs, ropes, bed-tapes, etc were manufactured everywhere. Moreland says that “the aggregate production of cotton goods was one of the great facts of the industrial world of the year 1600, so much of cotton was produced in the country that after clothing the people of India, the same was exported to Africa, Arabia, Egypt, Burma, Malacca, the Straits and other Asiatic Markets”. The other industrial centers were Banaras, Agra, Burhampur, Multan and Lahore. Dying and weaving of silk was in practice but the demand of silk was not much. The important silk weaving centres were set up at Lahore, Agra and Fatepur-Sikri. The shawl, carpet and silk weaving industries were also patronized by Akbar. Besides wooden chests, stools and boxes occupied a unique place in the craft industry of the Mughals. Leather goods were produced in small quantities. Paper, pottery and bricks were manufactured in large quantities. Edward Terry describes that “many curious boxes, trunks, pen cases, carpets etc were procurable in the Mughals dominions”. Metal work also developed considerably during the Mughal period. Indian swords and daggers won great popularity. Gold and silver were used for ornaments. Building industries also developed during this period. Precious stones were mined on a large scale and cut to different shapes.

Trade and Commerce

There was a brisk trade with many countries of Asia and Europe. Ceylon, Burma, China, Japan, East Indies, Nepal, Persia, Central Asia, Arabia and the Red Sea ports and East Africa were commercially connected with India during the period of the Mughals. Akbar and Jahangir took great interest in the foreign sea-borne trade. The important outlets for foreign sea-borne trade were the ports of Bombay, Surat, Bengal (particularly Sonargaon), the Coramandel coast, Malabar Coast and the Indus. The chief exports were textiles, pepper, indigo, opium and other drugs and miscellaneous goods. The chief imports from foreign countries were horses, ivory, coral, amber, textiles, including silk, velvet, brocade, perfumes, bullion, metals, precious stones, and European wine and African slaves. The state charged low customs duties. The total foreign trade of India at the beginning of the 17th century was not very large. There was no market for European goods among the people of India on account of the high prices of European goods. The Indian traders demanded that they must be paid in

gold or silver for the goods exported from India. Indian merchants were as clever as their foreign counterparts. A European reference in this connection can be made to Virji Vora who between 1619 and 1670 financed the transaction of English merchants and practically controlled the whole trade of Surat.

Prices

We learn from contemporary writers like Abul Fazl and some other writers that the prices of articles, especially those of common consumption by a large number of people like rice, vegetables, spices, meat, livestock and milk were very low. But the average income of the people was low or perhaps lower. The people did not, however, suffer from absolute poverty, for their needs were few.

Currency

Sher Shah Sur abolished the old currency and issued a copper coin called Dam. The revenue of the state was also calculated in terms of Dam. There was not much alteration in the currency after the death of Akbar. The rupee contained 175 grains of silver. It was worth 40 Dams upto 1616. From 1627 onwards the value of rupee was about 30 Dams. 313 The foreign travellers state that the Indian rupee was made of pure silver under the Mughals.

Famines

The failure of seasonal rains is invariably followed by a famine. Many famines broke out during the Mughal period. A great famine broke out in the neighbourhood of Agra and Biyana in 1555-1565, Gujarat in 1573, Kashmir in 1595 to 1598, again Gujarat in 1630-32 and Coromandal coast in 1645-46. Badauni writes about the famine in the Coramandel coast. "Men ate their own kind and the appearance of the famished sufferers was so hideous that one could scarcely look upon them. The whole country was a desert". The famine was followed by epidemics and floods. Akbar was the first ruler who took relief measures for those who had suffered from famines.

Society in the Medieval Age:

India of those days as even of today lived in villages and the society was broadly divided into Hindus and Muslims. The Hindus needless to say formed the great majority of the population; they included the Jains, the Buddhists and the Sikhs among them. The upper classes of the Hindu society mostly belonged to the Brahman, Kayastha,

Rajput and Vaishya castes and did neither inter-dine nor inter-marry between them. There were many other mixed classes in the society. The Baidyas were a mixed class next to the Brahmanas. These apart there were various other castes and sub-castes which grew up as a result of social mixture i.e. intermarriage between castes. There was much conservatism among the Hindus of upper classes.

The Muslims were divided into two major sections, viz:

- Those who came with the conquerors or for trade and commerce or employment from countries like Arabia, Persia, Afghanistan, Abyssinia etc. and
- The converts from the indigenous Hindu population and their descendants.

As the country was open to foreign traders and travellers, there were also people of various nationalities from Europe, such as the Portuguese, English, Parsis, Chinese etc. The history of the medieval period of India like that of the Middle Ages of the European history is largely occupied by the story of warfare of the kings and emperors. The common people and their condition were by and large beyond the attention of the historians except insofar as they hurt themselves, into history by their activities in relation to the kings or emperors.

Abul Fazl and some European travellers of the Mughal period have referred to the contemporary people of India and their condition. Among the European travellers Ralph Fitch, William Hawking's, Sir Thomas Roe, Francisco Paelsart, Bernier, Tavernier, Thevenot etc. deserve special mention.

The society during the Mughal period was feudal in nature. Nobility and the officials of the state were entitled to high esteem in the society. Their standard of living was very high. Luxury, debauchery, drinking etc. were their special characteristics. Apart from the kings and emperors the nobles also had their harem. From Abul Fazl it is known that the imperial harem had five thousand women. The nobility was characterised by mutual jealousy, conspiracy and recrimination.

Below the nobility, we find the existence of the middle class whose number was comparatively small. Their standard of living was moderate and far below that of the nobles and state officials. Middle class was above the contemporary vices of drinking, debauchery and lavity. But the merchants of the west-coast of India were fabulously rich and their standard of living was also very high.

The condition of the common people, compared to the nobility and the middle class was miserable. They had not the wherewithal to purchased warm clothes, shoes etc. which were luxury items to them. Francisco Paelsart remarked that in normal years although they would have no difficulty in maintaining themselves, in times of natural calamities like flood, drought and famine their condition would beggar description.

Paelsart who lived in India for long seven years during the Mughal rule remarked that the labourers, the grocers, the bearers or servant classes were three sections of the society who were nominally free men but in reality their condition was no better than that of the slaves.

The common people lived in huddles of mud and reeds. They were poor yet they were subjected to exactions by the state officials. From the time of Shah Jahan there was much repression on the common people, particularly the peasants. Gradually their condition became desperate. The provincial governors and officials realised as much money as they could from the peasants by repressing them.

About the social habits and practices Edward Terry remarks that “None of the people there at any time seen drunk (though they might find liquor enough to do it but the very offal and dregs of that people, and these rarely or very seldom.” In the diet and food habits the Indians were temperate; and they were polite to the strangers. The prominent social practices of the time among the Hindus were Suttee, Kulinism etc. and among the Hindus and the Muslims, child-marriage and dowry-system.

Akbar sought to check the evil practices of Suttee and child-marriage. From the writings of Bolt, Scrafton and Crauford we come to know that social evils increased in Bengal during the eighteenth century. In Maharashtra dowry-system was discouraged. Widow re-marriage was prevalent in certain parts of India.

Among the various types of deterioration in the social life in the eighteenth century, one redeeming feature was the continuity of Hindu-Muslim re-approachment and growth of understanding and amiability between the two great Indian communities. The reign of Akbar was remarkably important in this regard, even under Aurangzeb a Muhammadan poet Alwal wrote many Hindi poems and translated Padmavat into Bengali. While the Hindus showed reverence to Muslim Pirs (saints), the Muslims did likewise to the Hindu Yogis (Saints).

One of the demoralizing institutions of the society was slavery and there was a regular slave trade. Likewise eunuchs were bought and sold. Akbar's attempt to prohibit it did not succeed. The upper classes dressed themselves in a long coat and light trousers and turbans. Many wore a silk or cotton scarf round the waist and slung down the ends of the scarf down the leg. Poor Hindus wore dhotis one end of which was tied round the waist. Poor Muslims put on pyjama and long shirt.

Perfumes and oils were used by men and women, both Hindu and Muslim. Pan served as a sort of lip stick. Hindu women wore saris while the Muslims women wore pyjamas or ghagras. Soap made of pulses or soap berry was used. Muslim men and women used collyrium in their eyes and women coloured their palms and feet with Mehdi.

Among the indoor games chess, cards, games of guites, satranj and among outdoor games hunting, polo (Chaugan) etc. were popular with the high ranking people. Wrestling, juggler's feats, magic shows etc. were enjoyed by all. Games like tiger hunting, elephant snaring were the privileges of the Emperor. Music both in the court and in private residences fairs and festivals, specially those sponsored by the state, for example Nauroj were occasions for enjoyment by all people.

Hindu festivals like Dasserah, Vasant, Dipavali (prohibited during Aurangzeb's reign) and Muslim festivals of two Ids, Shab-i-barat etc. were festivals of great enjoyment by the respective communities. Occasional fairs were held at Hardwar, Prayag, Mathura, Kurukshetra and many other places of Hindu pilgrimages and also in places of Muslim Pilgrimages like Ajmer, Panipat, Sirhind etc. The position of women under the Mughals marked a definite deterioration. Purdah system of the Muslim women and the growing

conservatism in the Hindu family life precluding Hindu women except of the low castes from coming out of their houses made the life of the women rather un-enjoyable.

Polygamy was permitted by the Quranic law and a Muslim could take four wives at a time. A Shiah Muslim has no restriction as to the number of wives. While the Hindu ruling class indulged in polygamy the Muslims almost as a rule would have more than one wife. The Emperors and nobles maintained harem i.e. a number of women not formally married.

The Medieval Age—Indian Merchants vs. European Traders:

The route through which India maintained maritime contact with the Red Sea area was rendered unsafe due to the Turkish control over the area from the Persian Gulf to the Near East. The Red Sea route itself was also interfered with by the Egyptian Government. Early in the seventeenth century Aden was more a garrison under its “rapacious and treacherous” Turkish governor. Aden and Mocha—two leading sea ports—were important commercial centres due to influx of pilgrims and traders from Egypt who purchased eastern products, in return for gold and silver. These ports were main outlets of the maritime activities of the traders of Gujarat, Cambay and Diu. The same ports were frequented by pilgrims and merchants from Lahari Bandar port in Sind, Mughal port of Surat, Bijapur port of Dabhol and the Vijayanagar ports of Cannanore and Cochin. Indian ships of States commanding the sea coast from the Cape of Good Hope and Madagascar to the East Indies and the Far East brought vast wealth and resources to the Turks. When the Turkish officers came down heavily on the English merchants, the masters of the Indian ships often played the role of mediators of intermediaries; the Turks evidently derived considerable profit from the trade carried on by the Indian ships. In Mocha there was an Indian colony. The Indians built for themselves “a petty town of slight cabins, along the strand.” Some of the masters of the ships of Nakhuda of the great ships had their own houses at Mocha. Such houses were occasionally venues of discussions between the Indian Nakhudas and Turkish officers. Malik Ambar, a thirty year old name sake of the famous Malik Ambar of Ahmadnagar, used to style himself as “Nakhuda of the great ship, captain of Dabul, the port of Bijapur.” This great ship had the capacity to carry 4,000 Khandies (one Khandi = 20 maunds) of goods. Mahomet, i.e. Mohammad of Cannanore is referred to in the East India Company papers as another influential Nakhuda from Vijayanagar. Although there were constant frictions between the

English merchants and the ‘Turkish authorities, the relation between the English and the India ships were on the whole tolerably good. From the Indian merchants the English traders obtained information of the progress which their predecessors like William Hawkins, Jourdain and Sharpeigh had been making with regard to the development of trade in Surat and Cambay. The Indian Nakhudas played an important role in the release of the Englishmen imprisoned by the Turks at Mocha.

Sir Henry Middleton, the General of the 6th Voyage of the English East India Company towards India, who received great help from the Indian Nakhudas when he and his men were imprisoned at Mocha by the Turkish authorities, reached Surat on September 26, 1611. Denied trade privilege by the Mughal emperor due to the opposition of the Portuguese, Middleton sailed from Surat on February 11, 1612. He decided to return to the Red Sea and avenge himself on the Turks, Mughals and the Portuguese.

Nicholas Downton gives in detail the plan the English contemplated of following. “Our best way is to lie in the way of the Red Sea ‘where the English would find’ ships of Surat and Cambay with diverse others, the subjects of the great Mogul but also men of Diu, subject to the Portuguese.” The idea was that the capture of these ships would not only injure the Mughals and the Portuguese, but would be “no small disturbance to the Turks at Mocha, for though there were no goods of theirs thereon, the loss of customs would greatly pinch and vex them and spoil the ‘Turks’ scale’ at Aden and Mocha.

The ships of Dhabol, Malabar and other places would be permitted to proceed unmolested. This would have the effect of warning the Mughals that the English were not a nation “to be coarsely treated.” Thus, the measures of reprisal would compel the Mughals to duly honour and respect the English. Middleton’s party actually captured two ships- one from Cochin bound for Chaul laden with dried coconut, raw silk etc. and another from Chaul, bound for Ormuz.

Some bales of raw silk were taken away from the Cochin ship and a few bags of rice from the Chaul ship, and the ships were let off. Next Middleton’s fleet lay in wait in the straits of Bad-el-Mandeb to intercept all ships entering the Red Sea. This was to be done in order to avenge the wrong done to the English at Mocha by the Turks, and indirectly warn the Mughal emperor that the subjects of the king of England would not put up with so great abuses un-avenged and captured goods from the Indian ships for compensating their loss in India. They were also determined to seize the Portuguese ships of Diu.

Downton remained at Aden to intercept all Indian ships and divert them into the straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, where Middleton lay in wait. Downton intercepted a ship from Lahari Bandar and took away some of its merchandise. Another ship of 200 tons from Diu and a large ship named Muhammadi from Dabhol were intercepted. The latter being from friendly State was not despoiled.

Although Malik Ambar, the Nakhuda of the ship, was thought to be too much proud and insolent and Downton thought of attacking the ship, the large ship's speed was too great for Downton's ship Peppercorn to reach her. Downton in desperation fired a shot at her. From the ship of Diu, which the sailors gave out to be a ship from Cutsnagana, Downton took away a few bales of cotton, cloth, butter and oil.

In the meantime, Middleton intercepted as many as eleven Indian ships, Rahimi (1500 tons), Harsonnee (600 tons), Mohammadee (450 tons) of Surat, Sullamettee (450/60 tons), Caderee (200 tons), Agancany (208 tons) of Diu, and Caudree (400 tons) of Dabhol, a big ship from Cannanore, 3 ships from Malabar—altogether eleven ships.

The English employed a thorough method of plunder of the Indian ships which was the daily business of the men under him. All Indian merchant ships were searched one after another. All commodities suitable for the market in England, such as indigo, packs of cloth, etc. and the spoils were divided between Middleton and another Sari who joined him. The Indian merchants were forced to exchange their goods for the English merchandise.

No transit charges of the Indian goods were added to the value of the Indian commodities whereas all rates and taxes etc. were added to the value of the English goods while exchanges were made. The unusual delay in settling the exchange accounts or sale of Indian goods was so sickening to the Indian merchants that many of them left the goods at the prices dictated by the English, even at a great loss in order to return home.

The Gujarat and Diu ships which were targets of attack being of Mughal and Portuguese ownership were kept under surveillance and ransom was demanded for their release. Even Downton found the process of realisation of ransom “a most troublesome and heart-renting business” because of the cries of the poor people, difficulty in their getting money and the pressure put on them to pay the ransom with haste and the exorbitant rate of interest charged by the Turks for lending money to the Indian merchants and sailors. Every ship had to pay a huge amount as ransom.

The news of the fate of the Indian merchants and the ships in the Red Sea reached Surat toward the latter part of 1612. A Mughal ship returning from Mocha in

September, 1612 gave out the information of the treatment of the Indian ships by Henry Middleton.

There was great nervousness among the English merchants such as Thomas Aldworth, William Biddulph, and Nicholas Withington as to what might befall them. But “influential men came to those Englishmen, assured them that the news need not disturb them and that in spite of the injury done by Middleton to the Indian ships, they would continue to show “honest respect” to the Englishmen. “This is a curious but sad commentary on the naval weakness of the Mughals” and set naval vigilance to sleep and naval expansion unattended.

Industry: European Traders:

The seventeenth century and the major part of the eighteenth, exhibited almost similar industrial organisation and features although a marked process of decline was noticeable. There were extensive and diverse manufactures the premier manufacturing industries being cotton and silk textiles. Orme observes that “on the coast of Coromandel and the province of Bengal, where at some distance from the high road or a principal town, it is difficult to find a village in which every man, woman or child is not employed in making a piece of cloth.” The manufacture of cloth and silk fabrics was on domestic basis and every weaver’s house was a little textile manufactory. What was specially noteworthy was that the tillers of the soil could spend their time and the agricultural vacations such as after sowing and harvesting seasons in the manufacture of cloth or some kind of work in the loom.

From Bernier we come to know that there was rigid specialisation. For instance a goldsmith would not work on silver and the hereditary nature of the craftsmanship gave an extraordinary specialisation. A weaver would weave only a particular staff which would naturally give him a special proficiency at work through repetition. The family traditionally followed the same trade.

Foster, Bernier and Abul Fazl referred to Karkhanas which manufactured the articles needed by the imperial household, the aristocracy, the official dom. These manufactories employed a large number of workers who worked for the manufacture of the items of luxury. But these began to disappear gradually.

Metallic industries such as iron, glass, brass, weapons, gold and silver vessels and ornaments etc., other industries like salt petre, salt, jute, sugar, opium, etc. were highly

developed. But with the decline of agriculture due to lack of initiative and enterprise oppression by the overlords, other industries also began to decline.

With the advent of the European merchants the cotton and silk textile industries received an initial fillip. Textile industry was scattered all over India. Surat was noted for the manufacture of finest Indian brocades, calicoes and muslins. Ahmadabad also manufactured brocades of gold and silver, carpets, satins, taffetas, silk linen and cotton cloth. Burhanpur in Khandesh, Chanderi in Malwa were also important centres of textile manufactures.

Masulipatam, Chicacole, Ellore, Burrampore, Vizagapatam etc. were noted for manufacture of cotton piece goods, muslins, silk calico prints etc. Jaunpur, Benares Allahabad etc. were important centres of calico manufacture, manufacture of chintz, gazi, cotton piece goods. Bihar and Orissa also were centres of manufacture of cloth. Bengal “produced cloth of all kinds, most beautiful muslins, silk raw or worked.” Dhaka held the premier position in Bengal for the manufacture of delicate cloth and muslin Dhaka also famous for embroidery and flowering works.

The Mughal commercial policy was an unwise as bankrupt of economic foresight. The most important illustration is the farman of Farruk Shiyar of 1717 by which the English traders were granted an unqualified right of trading in Bengal and Gujarat, denied to other foreign and even to indigenous merchants, to carry on duty-free trade on an annual payment of a meagre sum of Rs. 3,000/- only.

This while meant a huge loss of revenue to the government, virtually conceded a sort of an extra-territorial right to the English which affected the sovereignty of the Mughal emperor and paved the way for the commercial and eventually the political supremacy of the English in India. The English merchants were permitted to carry on export and import trade only but not to participate in the internal trade of the country. They were issued dustaks, i.e. discharge certificates to cover their export and import trade without having to pay duties at check-points. This English merchant later began to abuse these dustaks.

Nawab Murshid Quli Khan was sufficiently shrewd and wise to see the implications of the concession granted to the English and disobeyed the farman. In the meantime, the Portuguese decline, particularly after the sack of Hughli in 1632 continued without any hope of recovery. The Dutch, the most formidable rivals of the English in India in the first half of the seventeenth century had lost their position Lack of foresight of the Dutch directors, their ignorance of the actual state of things in India and the

prospect the Indian trade held out made them keep themselves preoccupied in Indonesia, Cochin, Travancore, Malabour, Ceylon etc. and neglect Bengal. The result was their ultimate ouster.

More powerful and aggressive than the Dutch were the French traders. The only European trading company that contended with the English was the French East India Company. The first half of the eighteenth century saw the ouster of the French and the exclusive commercial supremacy and political accession of the English in India. The advent of the European trading communities and the eventual supremacy of the English in the matter carried with it also, the subjugation of the Indian trade and industries and conversion of India into a raw material producing and supplying country. All this had its impact on the Indian trading community.

India had trade relations with Basra, Muscat, Ormuz, and other ports of the Persian Gulf, China, Arabia, Java, Malacca, Sumatra, Madagascar, Comoro Islands, Mozambique and other ports of East Africa. Bengal had flourishing trade in Bengal sugar, cotton cloths, silk stuffs. "The immense commerce of Bengal was the central point to which the riches of India were attracted. Specie flowed in by thousand channels.... the Gulfs (of Mocha and Persia) poured in their treasures into this river (the Ganges)" (Verelst). Bengal had trade relations with Laccadives, Maldives, China, Pegu, Manilla, Malaya, Philippines, Persia, Red Sea, African coast, Tibet etc. Persian, Abyssinian, Chinese, Turkish, Arabian, Jewish, Moorish, Armenian traders flocked to Bengal.

In the seventeenth century individual Indian merchants like Baharji Borah of Surat and Malaya Coast controlled the wholesale trade of particular regions. Such merchants were both investors and carriers of the then flourishing internal and external trade. In the east coast merchants like Kanakaraya Mudali, Ananda Ranga Pillai, Seshachala Chetty and others were of great repute as investors and carriers of internal and foreign trade.

Bengal merchants had trade relations with Kashmir, Punjab, Gujarat, Malabar, Coromandel, Assam, Cachar etc. In Bihar the European traders purchased salt petre through contact merchants i.e. dalals like Omichand, Digchand, Khwaja Wajid etc. Some of the Indian merchants and bankers even took part in active politics, for instance Jagat Seths and Umichand in Bengal, Arjunji Nathji in Western India.

Seventeenth century and first few decades of the eighteenth was bright both for Indian trade and traders. But the process of drainage of Indian economy started with the growing commercial power of the English and with gradual transformation of the East

India Company into a political power in the post-Plassey period the Indian trade and Indian traders began to suffer till the latter were ousted from the field due to unfair competition of the English.

The invasion of the English into the private trade of the country, their abuse of *Dastaks* etc. had the effect of the ouster of the Indian merchants from the field. Scramble for riches and scandalous misuse of *dastaks* after Plassey unleashed the forces of economic decline and emergence of commercial and political supremacy of the English. The main principle of the British commercial policy in India was to protect the textile industry of Britain against the competition of the Indian textile manufactures. An Act was passed in 1700 prohibiting use of silk goods and calico-prints of Bengal, Persia, China and the East Indies in England. Raw silk was allowed to be imported into England in 1701. Added to all this was the cruel treatment of the weavers and tenders which hastened the decline of the Indian trading community and the destruction of the manufactures. The political disintegration of the Mughal Empire sapped the economic vitality of India. External invasion and internal disruption affected easy transit of goods from one part of the country to the other.

Inter provincial trade gradually came to a standstill. What still lingered was due to the fact that the Mughal Empire took some length of time to die. When it had become incapacitated the economic reins were assumed by the English merchant community.

Status of Women

Women did not enjoy a high position in the society but they occupied a prominent position in the family. Most of them led a life of dignity and respect. They lived devoted lives. The welfare of the family depended upon their care, love, benevolence and dedication. **Sati** was common among the Hindus. **Purdah** and child marriage were also prevalent. Hindu women did not move out of their houses except those of the lower class. Muslims observed **purdha** much stricter than the Hindus. Polygamy was very common among the Muslims. In some cases the Hindus also married many wives. Talaq or divorce and remarriage were common among the Muslims. There was no Talaq among the Hindus. The outstanding ability of Hindu women were brought to light by Raj Durgawathi of Gondwana (who was a brave soldier and a capable administrator) Rani Karmavathi, Mira Bai, Tara Bai, etc. Among the Muslims Nur Jahan, Mumtaz Mahal, Chand Bibi, Jahanara and Raushanara Zebunisa played important roles in the affairs of that time. Both of the Hindu and Muslim women of elite and other well-to-do spent a great deal of money on ornaments. **19.2.2 Education** The Mughal government did not consider to be its duty to educate the people. It had no department of education and did not allocate a

portion of the public revenue for the spread of literacy. However, Akbar made an attempt to encourage education and opened a number of primary, and secondary schools and even colleges. He reformed the curriculum and included certain important subjects in the curriculum such as science of morals, social behaviour, arithmetic, agriculture, geometry, astronomy, physiogamy, foretelling, household economy, public administration, medicine, logic, history, etc. The medium of instruction was made Persian except in the schools of Sanskrit and Hindi. Good handwriting was emphasized upon and calligraphy was practiced. Classes were held twice a day, in the morning and in the evening with an interval for meals. Students were not required to pay fees. The teachers were supported by the rich. Sometime the teacher received presents from the parents of his pupils. Banaras and Nadia were the higher seats of Hindu learning during the Mughal period. Bernier writes: “Banaras is a kind of University but it has no colleges or regular classes as we find in our Universities, but resembles rather the schools of the ancients, the master being spread over different parts of the town in private houses”. Other higher seats of Hindu learning were Mithila, Tirhit, Mathura, Prayag, Ujjain, Ayodhya, Sarhind Multan and Mithila. Muslims too established schools at Delhi, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri and Lahore. Jaumpur earned a name in the Muslim education and retained its importance throughout the Mughal period. Female education was confined to princes and upper class women. There were no schools for girls but well to do people employed tutors for education of their daughters. They were taught literature, elementary arithmetic and religious scripture. Some educated women like Gulbaden Begam, Salina Sultana, Rupmati, Zeb-un-Misa and others distinguished themselves in the literary sphere. Rani Durgawathi, Chand Bibi, Nur Jahan, Jahanara and Sahibiji played an important part in the politics of their time. 309

19.2.3 Beliefs, Customs and Traditions European travellers observed the customs and traditions of India and opined that they played an important part during the Mughals. The important rites observed by Hindus were **Chhati** (sixth day after birth), **Mundan** (shaving of the head), **Chatavan** (taking a cereal for the first time by the child), **Vidyambha** (beginning of education), **Vivaha** (Marriage) and **Sharadha** (ceremony after the death). Muslims also deserved their own rites of **Aqiqah** (birth of child) **Bismillah** (beginning of education), Marriage and **Chahlum** (40th day after death). Besides, Hindus believed that a dip in the Ganges was sure to purify them of all their sins. Pilgrimages were popular among the Hindus and Muslims in spite of the difficulties of means of communication and transport. Up to the reign of Akbar, it was customary for all the Mughal rulers to levy a tax on pilgrims and that brought a lot of revenue. However, the pilgrim tax was abolished by Akbar in 1563 throughout his dominions. Abul Fazl referred that “abolition of the pilgrim tax resulted in a loss of millions of rupees to the royal

exchequer". **Zizya** was re-imposed by Aurangzeb but he does not seem to have re-imposed the pilgrim tax. Pilgrimage to Macca was an annual event of great importance under the Mughals. The Mughal emperors had no navy of their own and they depended on the Portuguese and other European countries. The result was that occasionally there were troubles and they entered into conflict with another. As early as 15th century Nicolo Conti and other travellers noticed very large Indian built vessels on the west coast which were maintained solely for Haj purpose.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

The Hindus and Muslims observed certain fairs and festivals. The important festivals of the Hindus were Holi, Basant panchami, Dushera, Diwali, Shivaratri and Sankranti. The important Muslim festivals were Id-ul-Zuba, Id-ul-Fitr, Shab-I-Barat, Muharram and Milad-un-Nabi. In addition to the above, **Naurong** was celebrated in the aristocratic circles with great pomp and show. It was usually celebrated in large gardens or parks on the river side. The state banquets were given on that occasion.

FOOD AND DRESS

There was no uniformity in India in regard to the food habits while the Hindus were both vegetarians and non-vegetarians, the Muslims were non-vegetarians. The royal family and nobility spent a great deal of their income on dress which consisted of a large coat, tight trousers, a turban or cap and a 310 silk scarf tied at the waist with ends hanging down. The dress of the Hindu ladies was Dhoti or sari. The Muslim women used the pyjama or Gharana with jacket kurtas. Their head dress was a scarf. The use of ornaments was practically universal. The ordinary people could not afford to put on expensive dresses.

Amusement and Popular Entertainments

The early Mughal emperors inherited a taste for outdoor exercise and sports. Babur was fond of hunting and swimming. Only a year before his death, he swam the Ganges. He states that "counting every stroke, I crossed it with thirty-three, then without resting swam back again. I swam the other river, the Ganges had remained to do". Akbar and Shah Jahan devoted a lot of time for hunting. According to William Hawkins that "Jahangir maintained a large number of birds due to the fond of hunting which was continuously for 2 months and 20 days". One more record refers that antelope-hunting was also popular under Jahangir. Besides, animal-fighting was also popular with the Mughal emperors and their courtiers. Elephants, buffaloes, rams and other beasts and birds took part in those contest. Foreigners were very much impressed by elephant fights. Tom Coryat says that "twice every week, elephant fight before him, the bravest spectacle in the world. Many of them are thirteen feet and a half high

and they seem to jostle together like two mountains and they were not parted in the midst of their fighting by certain fire works, they would exceed gore and cruentate one another by their murdering teeth". The other outdoor popular amusements at that time were wrestling, polo and pigeon-flying. Abul Fazl has given a list of the famous wrestlers of his day. He tells us that two of well-matched pairs used to wrestle before the emperor every day for rewards. Polo or chaugan was introduced by early Muhammadan rulers of Delhi. Akbar was well-known to play the game polo and also he learnt the art of pigeon-flying from one of his tutors. One of the European records refers that Akbar kept more than twenty-thousand pigeons and it was continued during the time of Jahangir.

BAKTHI MOVEMENT IN NORTH INDIA

Hinduism survived the advent of new religions like Buddhism and Jainism. In fact it absorbed into its fold not only the principles of these religions but also had gone to the extent of accepting Buddha and Mahaveera into its pantheon. But the arrival of Islam presented a serious challenge to Hinduism. For the first time it encountered a new religion which resisted its absorptive efforts. Muslims had a clear and definite idea of God and His manifestation. Not surprisingly, they held on to their religion with certainty and tenacity. Given the situation, practitioners of Hinduism, both the leaders and the masses, were compelled to have a relook at their religion. In contrast to the simplicity of Islam, they found Hinduism too complex and Hindu

society riddled with obscure practices. The rituals and the practice of untouchability were the bane of Hinduism. Islamic idea of social equality attracted the lower sections of Hindu society. Many of them began to convert to Islam voluntarily. Such a move struck at the very existence of Hinduism. The intermixture of Hindu Muslim culture in various spheres exposed two communities to one another. The need to coexist also prompted many religious leaders to preach the notion of harmony. Hinduism survived the advent of new religions like Buddhism and Jainism. In fact it absorbed into its fold not only the principles of these religions but also had gone to the extent of accepting Buddha and Mahaveera into its pantheon. But the arrival of Islam presented a serious challenge to Hinduism. For the first time it encountered a new religion which resisted its absorptive efforts. Muslims had a clear and definite idea of God and His manifestation. Not surprisingly, they held on to their religion with certainty and tenacity. Given the situation, practitioners of Hinduism, both the leaders and the masses, were compelled to have a relook at their religion. In contrast to the simplicity of Islam, they found Hinduism too complex and Hindu society riddled with obscure practices. The rituals and the practice of untouchability were the bane of Hinduism. Islamic idea of social equality attracted

the lower sections of Hindu society. Many of them began to convert to Islam voluntarily. Such a move struck at the very existence of Hinduism. communities to one another. The need to coexist also prompted many religious leaders to preach the notion of harmony.

HINDUISM LEADERS

Hinduism sprang into new life and became a living force in reaction to the arrival of Islam and its emergence as a political religion. . The movement was led by many leaders. **Most famous saints of this period were Ramanuja, Ramanand, Vallabhacharya, and Chaitanya.** The influence of Islam was manifest in the teachings of **Namadeva, Kabir and Guru Nanak.**

Ramanuja

The earliest exponent of the Bhakti movement was the great Vaishnava teacher Ramanuja, he lived in the twelfth century. He preached the worship of Vishnu. For him, devotion alone one could attain salvation. He contented that individual souls were not essentially one with god. He endowed the personal God with beautiful qualities. He gained more followers in the south than in the North.

Ramananda

The Bhakti was Ramananda, a follower of Ramanuja. He lived in the last quarter of the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth century. He was a worshipper of Rama and completely negated caste system and preached the doctrine of Bhakti to people of all castes and to both the sexes. He had twelve principle disciples, one of whom was a barber, another cobbler and the third a Mohammedan weaver. He preached in Hindi, the language of the people and his message made a strong appeal to the downtrodden classes among the Hindus. Some of his disciples became founders of different schools. They spread the Bhakti movement widely in Central and Northern India. Of all the disciples, Kabir was the most famous.

Vallabhacharya was the most distinguished preacher of the Krishna cult. He was born near Banaras. Even as a boy, Vallabhacharya displayed remarkable literary talent and came to be looked upon as a prodigy. After having had his education at Kashi, he went to the court of Krishna Devaraya of Vijayanagar, where he defeated some scholars of Saivism in debate. His philosophy is called **Suddhadwaita** or doctrine of pure monism, identifying the individual self with Brahman. He preached the formula of dedication to God. Devotion to Krishna was emphasized besides self-control and renunciation of worldly pleasures.

Chaitanya, (A.D.1485 - 1534)

Chaitanya was another leader of the Bhakti movement. He was the contemporary of Vallabhacharya. He renounced the world and became an ascetic at the age of twenty four and spent the remainder of his life in preaching his message of love and devotion. He traveled widely both in the north and the southern India. He had attracted the people wherever he went by his personality and his message. He preached that both men and women could attain salvation by intense selfless devotion to Krishna. He laid emphasis on purity of life, patience and humility of conduct. He had unbounded compassion for suffering humanity and was the refuge of the wretched and the distressed. He condemned caste distinctions and preached to all alike. His was a magnetic personality. He was no doubt a great spiritualist of the age. In addition to these leaders, there were others like Namadeva, Kabir and Nanak. All of them condemned caste, worship of many Gods and advocated true faith, sincerity and purity of life. Namadeva, the Maratha saint, preached the unity of God and condemned idol-worship and all outward observances. Kabir, was the greatest disciple of Ramanand. According to tradition, he was the discarded child of a Brahmin widow and was brought up by a Muslim weaver Niru and his wife. He accepted Ramananda as his spiritual master and preached the religion of love to all people irrespective of caste and creed. He aimed at bridging the gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims and so described himself as the child of Allah and Ram. Devotion to god was the main point of teaching and he condemned all outward ceremonials practiced by the Hindus and on purity of mind and sincerity of heart. He sought freedom from transmigration and attempted to attain the true path by means of Bhakti. Another reformer was Nanak, the founder of Sikhism. He was born at Talwandi near Lahore. He travelled widely in North India and was said to have visited Arabia. The message of Kabir made a great impression upon him. He started his career with the noble statement that "there is no Hindu and no Mussalman", and spent his whole life in preaching his gospel of universal toleration. He vehemently condemned the superstition and formalism of both Hinduism and Islam and hypocrisy. He preached the unity of god and equality of all men. He laid emphasis. on the need for devotion and the help of a guru to guide one in the path of god. He had both Hindu and Muslim followers. He nominated Angad as his successor, who gave unity and organization to his followers. Later they were known as Sikhs.

IMPACT OF THE MOVEMENT

The movement spread the whole of the country. It was a movement of the people. The impact of Islam familiarized the people with an outlook which was quite different from that of

orthodox Hinduism. The challenge of an alien faith made the Hindu thinkers revitalize their religion by simplifying creed and worship and by condemning the distinctions of castes. They preached the doctrine of Bhakti among the depressed classes and held that salvation was open to all and it was not the privilege of the few. The depressed classes thus enjoyed a new sense of human dignity. More importantly, the movement brought about harmonising tendency. It fostered goodwill between the two communities. The Hindus began to worship Muslim saints and the Muslims began to show respect to Hindu savants.

SUFISM

Sufi teaching began with Sufism and the teaching was more focused on the relationship between the teacher and student. It is this chain of initiation that is often referred to as Silsila. The Silsila became the primary mode of teaching with the Sufis that would be connected to the Shaykh of order and then it would be linked to the Prophet Muhammad. There were five prominent Sufi orders, Qadiri, Mujaddedi, Chishti, Naqshbandi and Shadhili that were named after the Shaykh pertaining to a specific order. This was the first most important aspect of Sufism; the second was that of Sufi Meditation. It is essential to the teaching of the Sufi shaykhs included in the Tariqa. Some Sufi Shaykhs were known to begin the Sufi meditation practices and to formulate them.

Sufi Tariqahs

Even though Sufism emerged from the Islamic world, however, it still found a favourable ground in India due to the khanqah or the lodge or dormitory that was solely run by Sufis. These were also called Jamaat Khana which comprised of halls large enough to house gatherings. These were organized establishments that would receive waqf or fiscal grants; they did not receive any funding from royal court. These dwelling places soon evolved and became prominent in India due to the spread and acceptance of Sufism in India. It was due to the establishment of Sufi khanqah that the master-teacher and student relationship became stronger and fruitful. The students would seek teaching and study, pray, worship and read together. The literature of Sufis were more connected to the academic side of teaching that also included theological and jurisprudential works often confined to madrasa. The mystical works included teaching comprised of discourses, hagiographical writing and letters by the master. These three became the means of knowledge dissemination. The code of conduct or the Adab was studied by Sufis and many Sufi saints wrote texts that are related to the divine connection that was widely spread in India. The Sufi thought was widely accepted in the country and was favoured by the masses in general that is still held in awe and respect by Indians. To the Muslims, it became a source of social history and religious order.

Khanqah was not limited to teaching and spreading Sufism, it also served the purpose of providing community shelter. Soon, many such facilities were built in the remote and rural areas especially Hindu vicinities. The Chishti order was the first to establish it in the light of generosity and hospitality. Always welcoming and open to the visitors, it was all about spirituality and giving basic education.

The Sufi Orders

Shadhiliyya

The founder of **Shadhiliyya** order is said to be Imam Nooruddeen. Later on it evolved into Fassiya branch and was referred to as the Fasiyatush Shadhiliyya that became the most wide spread order and the most practiced one. It is said to be founded by Sheikh Aboobakkar of Kayalpatnam and Sheikh Mir Ahmad belonging to Madurai. In Tamil Nadu, Mir Ahmad is remembered and revered through his tomb called the Madura Maqbara.

Chishtiyyah

Chishtiyyah became a well-known order that was widely spread and followed in Persia and Central Asia. The first ever saint of this order is said to be Abu Ishaq Shami and later on it was formally established as Chishti order in Afghanistan by the name of Chishti-i-Sharif. The Chishtiyyah is said to have emerged with the world famous Sufi saint Moinuddin Chishti who ardently campaigned it throughout India that is followed even today and practiced by many. The venerated saint is often formally referred to as Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti and he is said to have belonged to sistan or the southwest Afghanistan or the eastern Iran. During his formative years he travelled extensively to Middle East, Central Asia and South Asia. His influence spread at the time when he arrived in Delhi in the year 1193 that was the time when things were transforming fast with the end of the Ghurid reign. After that he decided to settle in the city of Ajmer in Rajasthan, this happened at the time when the Delhi Sultanate was established. Soon all the spiritual activities undertaken by Moinuddin Chishti were creating an impact on Islam and the southern part of India. It was the Chishti order that began the khanqah that was established to reach out to local communities, established with an intention of reaching out to as many people as possible and spreading Islamic teachings through the use of charity work. The movements grew with the dervishes and their spiritual teaching and they were widely accepted without any coercion or bloodshed. Chishtis were fast becoming popular due to the khanqahs and their ideology of simplistic life and its teachings that pertained to peace, humanity and generosity. It is due to their spiritualistic efforts and their teaching that they

gained importance amongst Hindus, every cast of Hindus started giving them importance. The concrete evidence of the Chishti and the influence of his teaching is the tomb of Moinuddin Chishti that is till date held in great respect by people of both the religions and casts.

Suhrwardiyyah

Abdul-Wahir Abu Najib as-Suhrawardi is said to be the founder of Suhrwardiyyah order of the Sufi movement. His guru was Ahmad Ghazali who had an elder brother called Abu Hamid Ghazali. The spiritual teaching of Ahmad Ghazali is what established this order that became a prominent one in the medieval Iran, which is prior to the arrival of Persian immigrants in India that happened with the invasion of Mongols. The role of Abu Najib cannot be denied in the spreading of this order as he was the nephew of Suhrawardi and brought it into the mainstream. Then it was transformed into written treaties that included theories on Sufism, this was carried out by Abu Hafs Umar. He mostly translated the text called Gift of Deep Knowledge or the Awa'rif al-Mar'if that became the handbook of teaching at madrasas and became one of the popular teaching books related to the Suhrawardiyya. During the same time, the movement spread on a global level due to the contribution of Abu Hafs who became an ambassador to this order. He began teaching Sufism in Baghdad, the rulers of Ayyubid residing in Syria and Egypt too experienced the touch of this order. He was a spiritual and a political leader of the Sufis who established himself on a global level. His strategy to keep a cordial relationship with other nations and political leaders in the Islamic empire led to his popularity across borders. He was widely accepted and respected for his positive influence and attitudes that lead to the approval of the Sufi orders by many.

Architecture:

With the advent of the Mughals, Indo-Muslim architecture reached its fullness and unity specially under the patronage of Emperor Akbar. The Mughal emperors were by tradition lovers of nature and art, and as such they showed a marked interest in art and culture of the time in which their personality itself was reflected, so to say.

Babur and Humayun had uncertain times which did not conduce to the development of art and architecture. Babur had, however, a keen sense of perception of nature and art as we know from his memoirs, and even during the very short period of his rule consumed mostly by warfare, he did not fail to undertake certain ambitious building projects at Agra, Sikri, Gwalior, Dholpur, Kiul and Biana.

In his memoirs there is reference to his employing 680 workmen daily working on his buildings at Agra while “1491 stonecutters worked daily on my buildings at Agra, Sikri, Biana, Dholpur, Gwalior and Kiul.” Considered from the number of workmen employed, the ambitiousness of the scheme of buildings may be imagined. It is difficult to determine the style and architectural features of his buildings as hardly any monument definitely attributable to Babur have survived today.

About one mosque built within the Lodi Fort at Agra, Babur himself remarked that “it is not well done” and “it is in Hindustani fashion.” Obviously, Indian architecture at that time had not acquired anything to commend to his inherent artistic taste. He was, however, very much impressed by the workmanship and beauty of the palaces of Man Singh and Vikramjit within the Gwalior Fort.

Humayun was as aesthetically inclined as his father and in the early years of his reign undertook the building of a new city at Delhi which he named Dinpanh i.e. an asylum of the wise and intelligent persons. But it is doubtful in the city which was to consist of a magnificent place of seven storeys with gardens, orchards etc. was ever completed, even if it were, the first Mughal city might have been destroyed during the Mughal-Afghan contest.

The material records which have survived of both Babur and Humayun’s contributions to art and architecture are negligible and only contribution they made was to leave behind them an aesthetic sense to be followed up by their successors in more favourable times.

Interruption of the Mughal rule by Sher Shah was also an interruption in the history of Mughal art and architecture but the intervention of the reign of Sher Shah was a welcome chapter in the history of art and architecture and as Percy Brown remarks. Sher Shah was “a man of marked constructional propensities and architectural ideals.” Few architectural illustrations of his reign are of exceptional character and clearly exemplify his ideals of and attitude towards building art.

In the history of Indo-Muslim architecture Sher Shah’s buildings are important link between earlier Indo-Muslim style under the Delhi Sultanate and the later Indo-Muslim style under the Mughals. At Sasaram and in its neighbourhood there are five monuments, majority of which in all probability were built during Sher Shah’s reign. Of these the Mausoleum of Sher Shah stands out prominently as the best, supreme in conception and extra-ordinary in architectural interest.

Under Sher Shah a forceful architectural movement expressive of his versatile nature was initiated at the capital Purana Quila on the site of Indraprastha exhibited exceptionally elegant treatment at once of massive vigour and refined grace.

Quila-i-Kuhna Masjid, Sher Shah's chapel royal, is the only surviving monument of his time and serves as a specimen of the qualities of the various buildings Sher Shah had erected. It was from the time of Akbar that the Mughal architectural style as a distinctive tradition may be said to have begun. He undertook an elaborate programme of building projects in different parts of his empire and initiated and gave direction to a vigorous architectural activity.

The mausoleum of Humayun at Delhi is a landmark in the history of the art of building of the Mughals and it heralded the new movement in the architectural style. This mausoleum erected by Humayun's widow Humayun Haji Begam (Akbar's stepmother) during early years of Akbar's reign is one of the most striking monuments of Indo-Islamic architecture. Both the exterior and interior arrangements of the structure are equally pleasing.

The white marble dome of the mausoleum shows new features in shape and new structural conception. Percy Brown in assessing the various elements contributing to the conception and execution of this noble mausoleum remarks that "perhaps the nearest definition of the architectural style of this monument is that it represents an Indian interpretation of a Persian conception, as while there is much in its structure that is indigenous, there is at the same time much that can only be of Persian inspiration."

The tomb of Muhammad Ghaus at Gwalior is a nearly contemporary architectural work of the mausoleum of Humayun. This tomb has certain features characteristic of Gujarat and Malwa Muslim architecture. It may be said, that during the early years of the Mughal rule several forces were at work which attempted a revivification of the moribund art of building of the previous epoch. Only a new, intelligent direction of the new forces was what was needed for a refined architectural movement.

Akbar, as we know from Abul Fazl, planned his splendid edifices and "dresses the work of his mind and heart in the garment of stone and clay." Akbar was a man of profound culture and of fine literary and aesthetic tastes as could be seen in his patronage of literature and initiation of ambitious architectural projects.

Akbar's architectural projects differed from earlier architectural styles and instead of drawing on the Persian style he evolved an indigenous style only where the Indian conceptions and techniques were found wanting to give fullest expression to- his own

ideas. By using the Indian artistic and architectural skill and indigenous materials he gave architecture during his period an Indian character of the buildings during Akbar's reign the fortresses occupied an important position. These were built to render protection to the timid "to frighten the rebellious and to please the obedient." "Delightful villas and imposing towers" as Abul Fazl observed were built to "afford excellent protection against cold and rain, provide for the comfort of the princesses of the harem, and are conducive to that dignity which is so necessary for worldly power." Saris, schools, places of worship were also built for utilitarian and cultural benefits of the subjects. Thus Akbar's building activities had political military, utilitarian and cultural objects in view.

The most noteworthy building projects of Akbar's early years of reign are the palace— fortresses of Agra and Lahore. Akbar's buildings at Agra occupied the southern angle of the fort and were linked with the parapet of the eastern wall over-looking the river Jumna. Most of these buildings have not survived. Among the few that have escaped ravages of time and destruction Akbari Mahal and Jahangiri Mahal are two important palaces.

The former was completed in 1571 and the latter was presumably built for the heir apparent Jahangir towards the end of Akbar's reign. The fort at Lahore, the construction of which was started almost at the same time and at Allahabad two decades later were also carried out on a grand scale.

It may be pointed out that the place-fortress at Agra was built of fire-red hewn stones linked by iron rings and joints are so even and close that it is difficult to insert a hair in-between the two stones. The Akbari Mahal and Jahangiri Mahal in general, resemble Man Singh's palace-fortress at Gwalior built early in the 16th century. The palace-fortress at Allahabad is also a very elegant structure.

The most magnificent and ambitious architectural project of Akbar is the new capital built on the ridge at Sikri 26 miles west of Agra. This city was later named Fathpur- Sikri (city of victory) after Akbar's conquest of Gujarat in 1572. The conception of the new imperial headquarters is linked with circumstances connected with the birth of Salim, the later emperor Jahangir.

Saint Shaikh Salim Chisti lived in Sikri who predicted the birth of a son to Akbar who would survive to succeed him as emperor. The queen was kept at Sikri where a magnificent place now stands, known as Rangmahal near the residence of the saint. There the queen gave birth in 1569 to a son, who was named Salim. This new capital city with its

grand mosque, delightful palaces and pavilions, spacious official buildings and other edifices bears Akbar's magnificent achievement as a patron of the art of building.

In Fathpur Sikri we have one of the finest groups of Mughal buildings, majority of which still survive. "Conceived and built as a single unit, the work was pushed on with such phenomenal speed that, as if by magic, palaces, public buildings, mosques, and tombs, gardens and baths, pavilions and water-courses were called into being beneath the sandstone ridge of Sikri."

Jahangir in his memoirs writes "in the course of fourteen or fifteen years that hill full of wild beasts became a city containing all kinds of gardens and buildings lofty edifices and pleasant palaces attractive to the heart." Father Monserrate and Ralph Fitch praised the splendour and prosperity of the city. The latter described it as greater than the city of London with its teeming population and wealth of merchandise.

The monuments of Fathpur Sikri fall under two distinct categories, religious and secular. The most splendid creation of this new capital is the grand Jami Masjid. Fergusson has called it the glory of Fathpur Sikri, Hardly surpassed by any in India. It served as the model for great congregational mosques usually associated with the chief cities of the Mughal empire. Jami Masjid was conceived as a balanced and harmonious composition. The city of Fathpur Sikri occupies a rectangular area enclosed by bastion walls running round its three sides, one side being protected by the lake. The wall was of little military value compared to the solid and massive walls of Agra or the Lahore fort. **"Nine gate-ways" are there "in the fortress wall"** the Agra gate being the principal entrance to the city. Each gateway was built in such a fashion as to accommodate a large number of troops. From the Agra gate the road leads to Diwan-i-Am and further to Jami Masjid. The southern entrance to the Jami Masjid where the original entrance was replaced by the construction of a massive portal known as Buland Darwaza with its immense bulk towering above the buildings of the city represents one of the most striking compositions ever known.

This gateway served a double purpose of a triumph arch and an imposing gateway to a grand mosque Jami Masjid. Buland Darwaza represents a perfect coordination of structural and ornamental aspects of architectural art. Two additions made within the mosque enclosure were the tomb of Shaikh Salim Chisti the patron Saint of Sikri. It is a small but very attractive building of marble, erected in 1571 by Nawab Qutb-ud-din Khan with its delicate ornamental work has a soft effeminate grace. It stands in definite contrast to the robust style of Akbari architecture. Close to the saint's tomb stands the mausoleum

of Islam Khan, grandson of the saint, built of red sand-stone. But this building retains Akbari style.

The secular buildings within the Fathpur Sikri are by far the most numerous. There were palaces, offices, private residences, Daftar Khana on the office, Diwan-i-khas, the audience hall, Jodha Bai's palace, Raja Birbal's palace were secular buildings. The secular buildings had some markedly Hindu and Jaina features and obviously copied from the Hindu and Jaina styles of architecture. Panch Mahal in Fathpur Sikri has been described -by art critics as a "fantastic creation." It consists of a tall pyramidal structure of five storeys' each designed as an open pavilion supported by pillars of excellent design. Jahangir's reign served as a period of transition insofar as the art of building was concerned, from the phase of Akbar's time to that of Shah Jahan. The tendency towards decorative and ornamental architecture at the cost of grandeur and boldness of conception is discernible from the time of Jahangir.

Akbar's genius for constructive ideas and conceiving architectural projects was now giving place to use of costly materials to clothe creative ideas of the past. There was little creativeness and intellectuality in structural designs, more of lavish use of costly materials to create a sumptuous decorative effect.

The most important transition was the substitution of red-sand stone by white marble. In Akbar's buildings marble was used in order to lend relief and colour contrast to red- sand stone. This gave a most charming feature in the ornamentation of the surfaces of the buildings. But this sense of value and beauty of contrast of colour and ornamentation were undermined in the subsequent period when the buildings were made of white marble only. This transition took place towards the end of the reign of Jahangir. It goes without saying that marble has somewhat effeminate quality and beauty and lacks the boldness, solidity and strength imparted by red-sand stone.

Jahangir was fond of colour and this was imparted to his buildings. The system of pietra dura i.e. the inlaid mosaic work of hard and precious stones of various hues and shades which gave colourful and picturesque effect to the buildings was introduced. Jahangir completed Akbar's tomb at Sikandara near Agra, the foundation of which was laid by Akbar himself. Although completed by Jahangir its conception, its layout etc. were of Akbar. Jahangir's own tomb at Shahdara near Lahore was more or less built on the same lines at Akbar's tomb.

It may be pointed out that Jahangir did not leave any personal impression on the architecture of his time. His palace at Lahore in which he lived during most of his life has

nothing distinctive from architectural point of view. Shalimar Bagh in Kashmir is one of the most charming of Jahangir's undertakings.

Two tombs built towards the end of the reign of Jahangir are rather successful achievements from the points of view of design as well as execution. One is the tomb of Itimad-ud-daula, father of Jahangir's famous consort Nur Jahan and the other is the tomb of Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan at Delhi.

Itimad-ud-daula's tomb is significant in the Mughal architectural history for it is the link between the two important phases of architecture namely of Akbar and Shah Jahan, Itimad-ud-daula's tomb is the first notable building made of white marble with rich ornamentation in pietra dura which reached culmination under Shah Jahan.

The tomb of Abur-Rahim supplies the link between Humayun's tomb at Delhi and Raj Mahal built by Shah Jahan. It is, however, worthwhile to mention that during the reign of Jahangir Akbari style of architecture lost its substance and vigour. Shah Jahan occupies a high place in the history of Mughal building art and his extraordinarily liberal patronage of this art. The Mughal architecture during Shah Jahan's reign showed two distinct departures from the Akbari style. Shah Jahan's predilection for marble is graphically illustrated by the replacements of the earlier sand-stone buildings of Akbar at Agra which a court panegyrist author of. *Badshah-nama* described as "barbaric abomination" by marble palaces pavilions which were praised as masterpieces of the "august reign" of Shah Jahan **"when lovely things reached the zenith of perfection."**

Architecture during Shah Jahan's reign had three special features, (i) the extensive use of white marble instead of red sand-stone. Marble of a pure white texture and delicate grains was procured from the quarries of Makrana in Jodhpur. The costly fabric required costly decoration and pietra dura i.e. gilding and mosaic of precious stones which constituted a special feature of Shah Jahan's buildings.

Tendency to lavish display of pomp ornamentation give ample expression to the exaggerated sense of luxury and magnificence of Shah Jahan's court. Although not endowed with that originality and nobility of imagination which his grandfather Akbar possessed, Shah Jahan was doubtlessly a great builder. He not only replaced the sandstone buildings at Agra and Lahore forts, by marble palaces and pavilions but he projected a new capital city at Delhi, that of Shahjahanabad where he built a fortress of unusual dimension and erected splendid palaces, administrative buildings and other structures. Both at Agra and Delhi he built two grand congregational mosques. At Agra he built his far-formed "dream in marble", the mausoleum, Taj Mahal to enshrine the mortal

remains of his beloved consort Arjumand Banu Begam better known as Mumtaz Mahal. Under Shah Jahan, Mughal architecture produced a plentiful crop, but beneath this plenty was hidden the forces of degeneration.

Efforts were made to build pretty structures, ornamented and refined in appearance rather than to make new experiments in structural conception or in design. Eulogy of panegyrist does not apply to all the buildings of the time of Shah Jahan although a few are not of mean artistic beauty. At Lahore fort Shah Jahan's buildings consist of the **Diwan-i-Am, a hall with forty pillars, the Musamman Burz**, the Khwabagh, the Shish Mahal and few other buildings. Emphasis was laid on the pietra dura. The buildings of Shah Jahan at Delhi and Lahore originally appeared to be of the same style and character. Remodelling of former buildings was undertaken on an extensive scale at Agra fort and nowhere is the contrast between Akbar's style of architecture and that of Shah Jahan is so pronounced, "The former noble and robust and the latter, elegant and, to a certain extent, feeble." **The Diwan-i-Am in Agra** fort as well as Delhi fort are of red sand stone and because of the use of the red- sand stone some scholars ascribe these to Akbar-Jahangir period, "it is definitely known to have been" the work of Shah Jahan most possibly at the earliest period of his architectural undertakings when marble was yet to become the sole material for the purpose.

Behind the **Diwan-i-Am** stood the **Diwan-i-Khas** and in between was the **Machchhi Bhavan**. **Diwan-i-Khas (1636-37)** is entirely built of marble. Close to the south is situated the building called **Khas Mahal with a spacious court of Anguri Bagh** (grape-garden) in the front. According to Abdul Hamid Lahauri, author of Padshah-nama, the ceiling of the building was originally inlaid with patterns in gold and colour, traces of which are still discernible. In the north-east corner of the court stands Shish Mahal (palace of mirror) with two chambers with arrangements for bath.

A little apart from the group of buildings described above is situated the Moti Masjid (Pearl mosque) which according to Fergusson is "one of the purest and most elegant buildings of its class to be found anywhere." Moti Masjid of Agra has a remarkably restrained grandeur which stands in sharp contrast to the floral beauty of other buildings of Shah Jahan.

In 1638 Shah Jahan started construction of Shahjahanabad at Delhi. The city is on the right bank of the Jumna. With a grand palace and a congregational mosque called Jami Masjid the city is a splendid architectural work of a splendid of the Mughal emperors. The palace fortress, the Red Fort as it is called because of the red-sand stone

fabric of its rampart walls was designed on a massive scale with all amenities of a luxurious life of an imperial house and court. It has two main gateways, one in the middle of the western wall and the other in the south.

Two buildings, the **Diwan-i-Am and Rang Mahal** give us an idea of the grandeur and brilliance of conception of these two palaces. **Diwan-i-khas, the private audience hall**, was an indispensable part of the Mughal court etiquette and court life. The **Rang Mahal** was the palace of pleasure used by the emperor after a busy and tiring day's work.

The Diwan-i-Khas is built entirely of white marble and every available space in the facade is wrought in brilliant colour, lusturous gold and costly pietra dura which have now disappeared due to pilferage. Fergusson thinks that "if not the most beautiful, certainly the most highly ornamented of all Shah Jahan's buildings" Rang Mahal is also one of the most sumptuous conceptions of Shah Jahan's architectural undertakings. **Jami Masjid at Delhi is the largest and the most well-known mosque in whole of India. It forms the essential element of Shahjahanabad.**

The other important building is **the Diwan-i-Am** i.e. the public audience hall which was also designed in a stately manner. It is built of sand-stone but was originally shell-plastered which gave it a white look to fit in with the white marble structures that stand around. It is a colonnaded hall open on three sides covered only at the rear and the facade consists of nine foliated arches rising from double columns.

It has a canopied platform of white marble richly inlaid with precious stones. The magnificence of this throne platform known as *Nashihman-i-Zill-i-Ilahi* (seat of the shadow of God) is an excellent example of the splendour and pageantry of the grand Mughals at the time of their supreme brilliance. The pietra dura work is attributed to one Austin de Bordeaux.

Arrangements for constant supply of water from the Jumna, seventy miles up the river, brought to the fortress by the canal of Ali Mardan and brought into the palace through an artificially scalloped marble cascade placed near Shah Burz was a rare feat of hydro-engineering.

Before concluding Shah Jahan's works of building it is worthwhile to write a few words about the grand mausoleum the Taj which with its luminous beauty and picturesque setting has been attracting millions of enamoured visitors from different parts of the world far and near. With its milk-white beauty the Taj has its beauty of texture and lineaments that leaves an abiding impression on the mind of the visitor.

This grand mausoleum to enshrine the mortal remains of his beloved consort Mumtaz Mahal took many years from 1631 to 1653 to complete and entailed an expenditure of four and half million pound sterling and continued labour of twenty thousand men and artisans.

The chief craftsman who gave shape to this noble mausoleum was Ustad Isa who lived in Agra at that time and historians have found father Manrique's statement that the model of the mausoleum was prepared by Geronimo Verronea, a Venetian resident of Agra to be incorrect. Dr. Smith's statement that the Taj, is the product of "European and Asiatic genius is not burned out by scrutiny of the style and structural design and techniques of the Taj.

In fact, it is the culmination of the architectural style and trend noticeable in the tombs of Humayun and Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan. The writer of the inscriptions of the wall surface Amanat Khan Shirazi came from Qandahar while architect of the dome Ismail Khan Rumi came from Constantinople. According to modern historians the craftsmen from Kanauj and Multan and not the French jeweller Austin de Bordeaux did the work of the *petra dura*. The garden was planned by Ranmal, a Kashmiri garden-planner.

Taj, it must be said in conclusion, does not show any European intervention and is entirely Indian in look and in style and technique. Its flawless execution, its ornamentation and its picturesque setting, its luminous beauty and purity of lineaments make it a rare product of ingenuity of man. Yet critics have seen in it an effeminacy and an inherent weakness of strength and "lack of variety in its architectural forms." Aldous Huxley finds in it a "poverty of imagination" when the monuments is viewed more closely. "The Taj is not so much a triumph of architecture as of splendid decorative setting and to this the monument owes much of its charm and beauty."

Aurangzeb's accession marks the end of the rich tradition in the building art of the Mughals and the beginning of a period of decline. His reign saw a rapid dissolution of the Mughal architectural style.

Under Aurangzeb, the Mughal empire reached a dizzy height and symptoms of disintegration became visible in his life time and the inevitable crash was not long to come. Naturally enough, when the empire was reaching to its tollering height, forces of decline were already at play although unnoticed. Such circumstances are not conducive to cultural activities. Cultural activities in all forms, architecture not excluded, naturally

began to languish. Added to this political reason was the personal puritanic character of Aurangzeb himself.

Aurangzeb's intolerance of other religions precluded his extending that aesthetic patronage to Hindu and other non-Muslims which is essential for development of art and culture. While both Jahangir and Shah Jahan recognised the technical skill and efficiency of indigenous artists and craftsmen and utilised their services, Aurangzeb stopped this and the indigenous style and technique were nipped at the roots.

When the indigenous source dried up the architectural art was rapidly disintegrated. The economic pressure due to military undertakings of Aurangzeb's reign was also unhelpful to the building art of the reign. Productions of Aurangzeb's time are therefore few and definitely of an inferior quality.

Two mosques, namely **the Moti-Masjid inside the Delhi fort built for Aurangzeb's** personal prayers and Jami masjid at Lahore built by Fidayi Khan Kuka a provincial officer, deserve mention. The Moti Masjid is a small but graceful structure of marble of most polished variety. **The Jami Masjid also known as Badshahi Masjid** is an imposing and vigorous composition. It is built of red-sand stone with three white marble domes.

These mosques although bear some semblance of former achievements due to their orthodox character, reveal undoubtedly the symptoms of approaching decline. The tomb of Aurangzeb's queen Rabi-a-ud-Daurani at Aurangabad is a pathetic illustration of the deteriorated Mughal architectural style under Aurangzeb. According to Fergusson it "narrowly escapes vulgarity and bad taste."

With the death of Aurangzeb (1707) the grand empire vanished and with it collapsed the Mughal architectural style. The Mughal architectural style was long dead when the last of the dynasty of the Great Mughals was bereft of his titular sovereignty.

Mughal Painting in the Medieval Period:

Mughal painting represents one of the most important phases Of Indian art of painting. The imperial Mughals introduced a new concept in Indian art. In conception and execution Mughal miniatures show something never seen in India before, and their impact could be noticed throughout the Deccan, Rajasthan, the Punjab Hills and northern India even when the grand Mughals had vanished.

The Mughal art of painting was the product of combination of Hindu and Persian ideas. The Persian painting had been influenced by the Mongols who after conquering Persia introduced there the Chinese art of painting which was the product of Indian

Buddhist, Bactrian, Iranian and Mongolian influences. In Persia eventually the Mongolian and Chinese styles of art vanished leaving the field to Indian and Persian styles in which colour predominated.

The Mughal painting adopted the materialistic aspects of the court life such as hunting scenes, elephant fight, royal procession, durbar scene etc. The contemporary Hindu artists, however, depicted scenes from Indian classics, lofty thoughts about life and motherland and its creeds.

Foundation of Mughal painting was laid by Humayun who inherited his father's love of Nature and beauty. While at Persia he secured the services of two of Persia's greatest master artists, Mir .Sayyid Ali and Abdus Samad who could not receive Shah of Persia Shah Tahmasp's patronage due to his lack of interest in part because of his religious bigotry. These two artists were persuaded by Humayun to join his court at Kabul before his recovery of Delhi.

Young Akbar received lessons in painting from them. Both these master artists followed Humayun to Delhi. Humayun had also recruited a large number of talented artists from different parts of the country and his court became soon the centre for fine and sophisticated productions. The most important work of art produced by the Mughal studio is known as Hamzanama which consisted of nearly 1200 paintings drawn in bold and vivid colours.

Unfortunately a small fragment of this massive work of art has survived which is now included in the collections in Europe and America. There is a controversy among the historians about the emperor who actually had initiated the work. According to Badauni and Shahnawaz Khan it was Akbar who initiated it, but according to others it was Humayun. Modern historians are of opinion that it must have been initiated by Akbar and completed by 1575-76 A.D. Till 1562 we notice the influence of the Persian art predominant on the Mughal art of painting. But from that we notice a marked change which showed itself in the fusion of Persian and Indian (Hindu) styles and techniques of painting. The first product of this combination was the painting depicting the arrival of the famous musician Tansen in Akbar's court (1-562). With Akbar's increasing interest in diverse religions and his insatiable desire to go into the depth of these religions led to the production of sumptuous manuscripts, original and translations but also many illustrations painted by the painters of the imperial atelier. Abul Fazl mentions the names of fifteen painters both Hindu and Muslims, such as Daswant, Basawan, Kesav, Lai

Mukund, Mishkin, Farrukh, Madhu, Jagan, Mahes, Khem Karan, Tara, Sanwala, Haribans and Ram.

These painters were recruited from various centres of Indian art such as Gujarat, Gwalior, Kashmir, Lahore, Rajasthan and eastern Uttar Pradesh. According to Abul Fazl Daswant was the 'first master' of the age and "did not trail behind those of Bihzad and the painters of China."

The only manuscript in which the painting of this celebrated painters can be seen in Razmnama now preserved in the Museum of Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II of Jaipur. Farrukh also assisted in illustrating this manuscript. Lai, Tulsi, Mishkin were also responsible for some five paintings during the reign of Akbar. Baswan's painting of Majnun on an emaciated horse now preserved in Calcutta Museum is a masterpiece.

According to Abul Fazl more than a hundred painters became famous during Akbar's time out of which a number had attained perfection. Akbar took personal interest in the work of the artists providing them with every facility including costly materials needed for painting. He would reward the works which would be of excellent workmanship. The painters working in Fathpur Sikri were conferred military rank of mansabdars or ahadis.

The paintings of the artists of the imperial atelier have been preserved in various museums all over India, Asia and Europe: for instance, Fogg Museum of Cambridge, Bodelian Library of Oxford, Watters Gallery of Baltimore, Albert Museum of London, British Museum, London, Imperial Library at Tehran and various Indian Libraries and Museums. Some of the finest paintings of the last decades of the 16th century to be found in Akbarnama are preserved in fragments in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Under Jahangir the art of painting received a new turn and a fresh life and trend had been infused in the style of Mughal painting. Even before his accession to the throne Prince Salim set up a new studio under an emigre Harati painter Aqa Riza, which worked in full swing at Agra even when Salim was in rebellion against his father. The paintings of the period, i.e. before Salim's accession of Jahangir contained in manuscripts of Raj Kumar, collection of Ghazls and Rubais by Hasan Dihlvi in those of Anwar-i-Suhaili by Aqa Riza are now preserved in foreign libraries and museums.

The trend begun in his Princely days reached its culmination during the reign of Jahangir as emperor and freed the painting from its bond with the text of manuscripts. Jahangir wanted his master painters to specialise in different branches of the art so that

they might paint pictures of persons or groups or themes selected by the Emperor himself.

Initially he instructed his artists to illustrate certain interesting parts of the manuscripts kept in the imperial archives. Later he got interested in portraits and had a large number portrait of the members of the royal family, dignitaries of the imperial court, men of religion, and persons important in the fields of literature and music etc. It may be pointed out, that portrait painting was practised in Akbar's time also.

In some paintings preserved in Jahangir's albums the names of the persons were noted by Jahangir himself and certain cases names of the painters, the dates of the works are also to be found. Artists Manohar, Nanha and Farrukh Beg were at first entrusted with the work of painting, but later Manohar, Abul Hasan and Bishndas were engaged to paint the portraits. Their style and technique were copied later during the reigns of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb.

From the time of Akbar the Mughal painting began to feel the impact of European painting. Jahangir while a Prince began to appreciate the European paintings and engravings of Christian subjects and some of the Mughal artists began to copy designs and details of works from them. Baswan and Abul Hasan's works clearly show influence of European art.

Jahangir was keen on preserving the record of the important events of his reign in paintings. Records of his coronation, important festivals, assemblies, rare birds, animals, holi festival, birthday weighing etc. in painting were prepared by the artists during his reign.

In the next stage of development the Mughal painters introduced occasional European scenes and figures in their work. They used with enough efficiency the technique of light and shade, modelling and perspective.

Although Shah Jahan was interested in good miniatures and illustrated manuscripts, the glamour and refinement of Mughal painting were lost after Jahangir's time. At the early stage of his reign the artists were allowed to work as was usual under the reign of Jahangir, but soon he reduced the number of the painters and only one Persian artist was in his employ. Deprived of royal patronage the artists would sell their work to earn their livelihood. The result was that the artists lost their status of dignity and were relegated the position of artisans.

Shah Jahan, however, loved himself to be portrayed as a universal monarch under divine care—the angels carrying the crown for him. Standing or sitting on his peacock

throne in the best of attire or on horseback etc. were the portraits that he loved to be painted of himself.

Decay of the art of painting under Shah Jahan was also noticeable in the use of loud and extravagant colours in place of harmonious blend of colours and the freshness and vigour of the paintings of the period of Jahangir. Dara Shukoh was, however, patron of master painters who under his patronage produced exquisite portraits of young princes and beautiful maidens.

Although decadence had set in, the portrait painting in general was practised more abundantly under Shah Jahan. Muhammad Nadir Samar-qandis' works were abundant and had fine draftsmanship and a feminine touch.

The process of decline was hastened by Aurangzeb by his bigotry and hatred against art of painting. Towards the end of his rule he might have developed some interest in painting for a number of good quality miniatures, showing the Emperor engaged in hunting, in court, in war, were produced. The art of painting which did not receive royal patronage naturally shifted from the imperial capital to regional centres.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and particularly from the time of Aurangzeb the art of painting developed in centres like Mewar, Amber, Bikaner, Bundi etc. in Rajasthan, in Golconda, Bijapur, Ahmadnagar in the Deccan. As many Rajput rulers served under the Mughals and spent much of their time in the Mughal court, they naturally were influenced by whatever development that had taken place there.

The impact of this Mughal influence was also noticeable on the Rajasthani art of painting and the paintings of the 16th and the 17th centuries of Rajasthan betrays a close knowledge of Mughal art of painting within the broader Rajasthani frame-work.

In the Deccan the style and technique of painting had been very refined and sophisticated. Brilliant colour scheme, rich decorative details differ considerably from the Mughal art. Musical painting, that is, depiction of ragas and raginis in painting prepared in Bijapur is unique in history of Indian art.

Hindola Raga painted in Bijapur in the 16th century, now preserved in the National Museum, New Delhi-is the finest example of musical painting. A set of ten exquisite pieces of such work show indebtedness to Mughal painting. The enchanting figure of an unknown lady, sometimes identified as the Queen of Sheba prepared at Bijapur is another piece of rare artistic product. The peacock throne of Shah Jahan referred to before was a masterpiece of art of gold and silver smithy and finest jewellery.

SELF ASSESSMENTS QUESTIONS

1. Explain the Bakthi Movement in North India.
.....
2. Explain the Revenue System in Medieval India
.....
3. Write a detail about the status of Women in North India?
.....

LEARNING RESOURCES

Recommended Books

1. Chand, Tara, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, Indian Press, 1954.
2. Chandra, Satish, *Medieval India: From Sultanat to the Mughals*, Har-Anand Pub., Delhi, 1998.
3. Habib, Mohammad and K.A. Nizami, *Comprehensive History of India: The Delhi Sultanat (A.D. 1206-1526)*, People's Publishing House, Delhi, 1970.
4. Mehta, J.L., *Advanced Study in the History of Medieval India, 1000 - 1526 A.D.*, Sterling Pub., New Delhi, 1986
5. Mehta, J.L., *Advanced Study in the History of Medieval India, Vol. III: Medieval Indian Society and Culture*, Sterling Pub., New Delhi, 1990
6. Raychaudhuri, Tapan and Irfan Habib, ed., *The Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol. I: c. 1200 - c. 1750*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1982.

References

- Ali, Athar. M., *Mughal India, Studies in Polity, Ideas, Society and Culture*, OUP, New Delhi, 2007
- Chandra, Satish, *Essays on Medieval Indian History*, OUP, New Delhi, 2005
- Habib, Mohammed and Irfan Habib, ed., *Studies in Medieval Indian Polity and Culture: The Delhi Sultanate and its Times*, OUP, New Delhi, 2016
- Habibullah, A.B.M., *The Foundation of Muslim Rule in India*, Central Book Depot, 1967
- Hasan, NurulS., *Religion State and Society in Medieval India*, OUP, New Delhi, 2008
- Nigam, S.B.P., *Nobility under the Sultans of Delhi*, Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1968
- Pandey, A.B., *Early Medieval India*, Central Book Depot, 1976
- Qureshi, *Administration of the Mughal Empire*, Low Price Publications, 1990.
- Qureshi, *Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi*, 1942.