



*Journal of Advances and
Scholarly Researches in
Allied Education*

*Vol. VIII, Issue No. XV,
July-2014, ISSN 2230-7540*

THE MUGHAL EMPIRE UNDER SHAH JAHAN IN INDIAN HISTORY: A STUDY

AN
INTERNATIONALLY
INDEXED PEER
REVIEWED &
REFEREED JOURNAL

The Mughal Empire under Shah Jahan in Indian History: A Study

Harish Chandra*

Lecturer, Department of History, Govt.PG College, Jalore, Rajasthan

Abstract – Emperor Shah Jahan (1592-1666) was one of India's largest Mughal emperors. He governed an Empire which was one of the greatest in the world's history. This included Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, India, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh today. The scale of the colossal Roman Empire and British Empire was quickly compared. Emperor Shah Jahan's reign was one of India's most stable, successful and democratic periods. In the world of art and design there were unprecedented innovations. During emperor Shah Jahan's rule, the Pacific Throne, the Taj Mahal, the Agra Fort, and many other objects that hold people fascinated even today were created. During this time financial collections rose to the maximum volume. During Emperor Shah Jahan's rule there were no significant rebellions or political invasions.

Keywords: Greatest, Prosperous, Progressive, Architecture, Indian History, Peacock Throne

-----X-----

INTRODUCTION

Shah Jahan was not very liberal, however accommodating. He directed the destruction of several Hindu temples in Lahore, Delhi and Calcutta and Christian churches (today known as Kolkata). He almost stilled partnerships with the Jain group in Gujarat, who were the royal financiers of that period interestingly. It's true that the amounts of money really soared to the maximum amount in the Mughal period. But this was not inherently attributed to investment, trade and company expansion. That was because revenues were really large and tax inspectors were unmerciful while the common citizens received tax. This led to discontent and resentment among the common people's minds against the Empire and against the Emperor. The building of some of the most remarkable artefacts, particularly the Taj Mahal in Agra, rendered Shah Jahan eternal not only in the history of India, but in the history of the world. Although it has used up enormous sums of the royal treasury money. As a result, soon after the rule of Emperor Shah Jahan, there was a rather severe fiscal crisis. In his priceless lavish lifestyle, he was so distracted that he avoided looking at the affairs of the Empire. He lost confidence in his Empire's daily affairs. It had a catastrophic effect slowly and steadily. Any of the main machines for controlling the Empire, such as the army and the Royal Management, were inadequate and unreliable. They were gullible and only worried of squeezing the Kingdom for their own gain. The army is so depleted that at one stage, it used to be one of the greatest armies in history, rebellions in Kabul, Canada, Badashan and several other locations could not be contained. Hence the reign of Shah

Jahan was a mixture of colours of black and white, giving rise to a controversy over whether or not the reign of Emperor Shah Jahan could be considered the golden age of Indian history. With respect to the compilation of data, analyses and explanations of results, the findings drawn were that during the reign of emperor Shah Jahan there was considerable progress on the art and architecture, but no round development was achieved. As a Monarch, Shah Jahan was occupied with his lavish way of living. He was oblivious of the Kingdom and its people. The comparison to the rule of Shah Jahan as the golden age of Indian history poses doubts and seems like a distant memory.



Date of Birth: January 5, 1592

Place of Birth: Lahore, Pakistan

Birth Name: Shahab-ud-din Muhammad Khurram

Date of Death: January 22, 1666

Place of Death: Agra, India

Reign: January 19, 1628 to July 31, 1658

Spouses: Kandahari Mahal, Akbarabadi Mahal, Mumtaz Mahal, Fatehpuri Mahal, Muti Begum

Children: Aurangzeb, Dara Shukoh, Jahanara Begum, Shah Shuja, Murad Baksh, Roshanara Begum, Gauhara Begum, Parhez Banu Begum, Husnara Begum, Sultan Luftallah, Sultan Daulat Afza, Huralnissa Begum, Shahzadi Surayya Banu Begum, Sultan Ummid Baksh

Father: Jahangir

Mother: Jagat Gosaini

The Military Genius:

Emperor Shah Jahan displayed exceptional intellect and military talent. In Rajasthan there was a kingdom called Mewar. Since Akbar's period, Mewar has been aggressive to Mughal supremacy. At twenty-two years of age, Shah Jahan led almost two hundred thousand troops and captured Mewar after a terrible war that lasted one year. At the time Mewar emperor, Maharana Amar Singh II gave up on him, rendering Mewar the first peaceful kingdom in the history of the Mughal Empire. Shah Jahan fought the Lodis in the Deccan area in 1617 and seized charge of the Mughal kingdom there. He made Delhi, his father's Emperor Jahangir, so grateful that he gave the prince a special seat in his court. This increased the reach of Shah Jahan into the throne. Here the noted author Edward S. Holden wrote "He was flogged by some, envied by others, loved by none," on November 5, 1846 - March 16, 1914."

Patron of Art and Architecture:

Shah Jahan is particularly regarded as a patron of art and design in world history. He established his city capital at Agra, which many scholars say has envied Istanbul (currently in Turkey) and Isfahan (currently in Iran), the two main cities of the world at that time. The famous Peacock Throne or Mayur Singhasana was commissioned. Many Europeans such as Bernier (1625 – 1688) and Sir Thomas Roe (1581 – 1644) enjoyed the splendour of his court. Some like to name the golden age of architecture his reign. Among Shah Jahan's most impressive constructions are –

- Taj Mahal and Moti Masjid in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India. Agra:
- Red Fort and Jama Masjid, Delhi, India.

- Shalimar Park, Sheesh Mahal, Naulakha Pavilion, Jahangir Tomb, Wazir Khan Mosque and Lahore Fort, now in West Punjab, Pakistan.
- AT Mahabat Khan Mosque, Peshawar, now in the province of North West Frontier, Pakistan.
- Shah Jahan Mosque in Sindh, Pakistan at present.

Finance and Administration:

Historical data shows us that the accumulation of royalties hit the maximum amount in India's Mughal Empire during Shah Jahan's rule. During this time, there were no significant rebellions or destructive forces. Shah Jahan's rule was one of the most prosperous times in Indian culture.

Contribution to Mughal Architecture

Shah Jahan was a fervent architect and was responsible for constructing some of India and Pakistan's most magnificent buildings today. Many European travelers are said to visit his Kingdom just to study the numerous methods used in building construction. Some of the world's most skilled engineers and architects have also been recorded living in his kingdom.

Construction of The Taj Mahal

The development of Taj Mahal was one of the most significant events in the life of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan. His beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal died when her fourteenth child was conceived, and her death was a haemorrhage of the postpartum. This left Shah Jahan who wanted to create the most magnificent memorial of the world in his wife's memory, shattered. The temple that became known as the Taj Mahal was constructed after several years of preparation, hard work and massive sacrifices. Today, tourists from various sections of the world are coming to India just to see this wonderful white colourful building, which is also one of India's most visited touristic destinations. Taj Mahal remains one of the world's seven wonders!

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

This thesis aims to examine a span of five hundred years. The goals of these experiments in relation to a long-term duration are to recognize the errors of the age and to consider the implications of such errors. This will help not to reproduce these errors now to find these mistakes promptly and effectively (if they continue to be recurring) and even to fix them. This specific study examines the reign of Emperor Shah Jahan and seeks to conclude whether that period can be considered the Golden Age of Indian history or not. From this point of view it can be assumed that this thesis aims at assessing Emperor Shah Jahan and his

rule, assessing the success of his policies in the operation of a Muslim empire with more than 80% of Hindu subjects.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

Any study must have such research targets that are to be reached by the end of the research. A study without any aim is like an unknown route and is potentially difficult to achieve. Nor is this study an exception to this standard. To make it successful, certain study goals had to be fixed. After reviewing the research issue, the available literature on the subject and related topics, and the general objectives of this study, the following aims for research were identified and rendered successful:

- Exploring the trends in different fields, such as security, military relations, education, art and design, commerce and trade, economic growth, and religion during the reign of the emperor Shah Jahán.
- Assessing the success of Emperor Shah Jahan's initiatives in such areas as worship, military relations, art and design, culture, group peace, generation of royalties etc.
- Discovery of discontent in the empire attributable to increasing religious bigotry, lack of reasonable usage of military force, Emperor Shah Jahan's extravagant style of life and empire, government shortcomings and foreign policy.
- Exploring if Emperor Shah Jahan was responsible during his rule for wealth, development and stability.
- Back Assessment of the emperor Shah Jahan.
- A comparison with other great Mughal emperors of Emperor Shah Jahan.
- Measuring Emperor Shah Jahan's contribution to the collapse of the Mughal Empire.

SCOPE OF STUDY:

- Emperor Shah Jahan's reign.
- His accomplishments in the fields of military, religious, industry, sculpture, architecture and management.
- Emperor Shah Jahan's mistakes.
- Exploring on the heavy side i.e. when performance or loss was heavier.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

- If emperor Shah Jahan's reign was a golden age in Indian culture, why then immediately after him the Mughal empire suffered extreme economic decline when Emperor Aurangzeb began to rule?
- If Emperor Shah Jahan's rule was not a glorious Indian age, should he be kept accountable for, and to what degree, the collapse of the Mughal Empire?

IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The value of research can be described as follows:

- It encourages the researcher to use the best method for analysis.
- It aims to accomplish study goals and to provide solutions to research issues.
- The goal is to establish synchronization between research and the purposes for which research is carried out.
- It lets the researcher pick a course to carry out the study.
- It serves as the base for analysis.

HYPOTHESIS:

A hypothesis is a particular prediction assertion. Not all experiments have theories or hypotheses. This analysis is by its very essence essential or pure or fundamental. In general, scholars aim to investigate a research subject for the first time in such experiments. The goal of such studies is to establish a theory which can be tested in further experiments. So, it is challenging to frame a hypothesis in this analysis. Therefore, attempts are being made to devise some forecasts that this study can at the end give. This review gathers secondary data from numerous blogs, publications of scientific papers in journals and books. It is anticipated that these data would enable the scholar to draw conclusions regarding Shah Jahan's achievements and shortcomings in military operations, economy, economic growth, trade and exchange, religious activities, architectural contributions. This success/failure contrast should help to infer which side was heavier.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

1. Shujauddin, Mohammad; Shujauddin, Razia (1967). "The Life and Times of Noor Jahan. Lahore: Caravan Book House." p. 121.

2. Richards, J.F. (1995). "Mughal empire (Transferred to digital print edition)". Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press. p. 127. ISBN 9780521566032.
3. Richards, J.F. (1995). "Mughal empire (Transferred to digital print edition)". Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press. p. 158. ISBN 9780521566032.
4. Jahangir, "Tuzk-e-Jahangiri; The Emperor's memoirs"
5. Nicoll, Fergus (2009). "Shah Jahan. London: Haus". p. 56. ISBN 978-1-906598-18-1.
6. Sen, Sailendra (2013). "A Textbook of Medieval Indian History. Primus Books". pp. 169–170. ISBN 978-93-80607-34-4.
7. Richards, John F. (1995). "The Mughal Empire. Cambridge University Press".
8. Desai, compiled and translated by W.E. Begley and Z.A. (1989). "Taj Mahal: the illumined tomb: an anthology of seventeenth-century Mughal and European documentary sources". Cambridge, Mass.: Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture. p. 23. ISBN 9780295969442.

CONCLUSIONS:

This thesis dealt with a time that occurred several centuries ago in history. It was on whether or not Emperor Shah Jahan's rule should be considered the Golden Age. Any study goals have been framed for this reason. Study problems were then deduced from these research targets. Adequate data have been collected and the research questions have been addressed in a tabular form in the chapter analyses and interpretations to show the relation between the data collected, evaluated based on those data, and interpreted from analyses which have framed the answers to the research questions. In other terms, attempts were made in this study to frame the responses to the research questions in order to draw a conclusion. Study issues contributing to a big research topic, the title of which is a special example. It means that at the end of the day the questions which were associated with the title were addressed and concluded whether Emperor Shah Jahan's reign could be considered the Golden Age of Indian History or not. A thorough review of the available literature on the topic, its compilation, subsequent examination and evaluation was made possible. When he was under his parent, Emperor Jahangir, he showed great potential as a prince. Yet after he collapsed on his shoulders and became the Ruler, he indulged in an extravagant and lavish life. Emperor Shah Jahan has transferred all his ability and attention to art and architecture growth. To call a period a golden age of history, there must be entire growth, not only in one

area. In this investigation, historical evidence and examination indicate that during Emperor Shah Jahan's reign the growth and development were primarily in the field of art and architecture. There is also no question that his rule is considered a golden age in art and architecture. Although Shah Jahan controlled one of history's greatest colonies, his reign as an emperor was largely peaceful and effective, he was still not liable for them. He took these from his ancestors and presented his successors to an Empire of fiscal stagnation and national dissatisfaction. So the argument that his reign, if a whole golden age can be named, is possibly invalid and unjustified.

REFERENCE:

Articles and Reports:

1. Iftikhar, Rukhsana (2013), Historical Fallacies: Shah Jahan's Reign: Period of Golden Age, South Asian Studies, Volume 28, Number 2, July – December, 2013, Page 361 -367.
2. Sharma, Monika (November, 2013), Mughal-Jain Cordiality: A Case Study of Subah Gujarat in the Reign of Shah Jahan, V-Vidyanagar (a magazine of Charutar Vidyamandal), Page 41 – 43.
3. Sparavigna, Amelia Carolina (2013), The Gardens of Taj Mahal and the Sun, International Journal of Sciences, Volume 2, Number 11, November, 201, Page 9 – 13.

Websites:

1. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Shah-Jahan>,
2. www.differencebetween.info,
3. <http://www.historydiscussion.net/history-of-india/opinions-in-calling-the-reign-of-shah-jahan-as-the-golden-period/2814>

Corresponding Author

Harish Chandra*

Lecturer, Department of History, Govt.PG College, Jalore, Rajasthan