

Mughal Rajput Relations (1526-1705): A Study

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to illustrate Mughals and Rajput Policies. During his rule, Mughal Emperor Akbar introduced several policies, which also included 'The Rajput Policy.' Abul Fazl notes that he entered into a romantic partnership with them in order "to soothe the minds of the zamindars." Over time, Akbar extended and improved this strategy. In his pursuit of policies against the Hindus, the Rajputs were the main challenge. Aurangzeb sought to destroy the Rajputs' control and annex their kingdoms. In the history of the Mughal period, the shared ties of the Mughals and the Rajputs have been of great significance.

Keywords: Rajput Policy, Mughal Emperor, Empire, Matrimonial Alliance Pilgrimage Tax, Jizya Tax, Mansabdars and Battle

Introduction

The Rajputs are inhabitants of India's northern areas. They are a warrior clan, but they formed an alliance with the Mughals for some reason, serving them with obedience and devotion. In reality, the Rajputs were the military arm of the Hindus. Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Babar (1483-1530A.D.) was also the 16th-century king of the Indian subcontinent and founder of the Mughal Empire, Babar (literally means Babar is the Lion'). In the first battle of Panipat in 1526, he defeated Ibrahim Lodi, the Sultan of Delhi, and Babar won the battle. The first battle of Panipat marked the demise of the sultanate of Delhi and the emergence of India's Mughal dynasty. A military genius and a skillful warrior are identified as the Mughal Emperor Babar. Babur had to face the Rajputs, but these wars were waged for strategic reasons. Because of his early death in 1530 A.D, Babur was not able to frame any set Rajput strategy. Nasir ud-din Muhammad Humayun (1508-1556A.D.) was the second Mughal emperor after the death of his father Babur and succeeded, at the age of twenty-three, to the throne of India. Early on, Humayun lost his kingdom to the noble Pashtun, Sher Shah Suri, but he recovered it 15 years later with Persian assistance. Subsequently, Humayun was able to extend the Empire further in a very short period, leaving his uncle, Jalal ud-din Muhammad Akbar, also known as Shahanshah, Akber-e-Azam or Akbar (means 'the Great') with a major legacy. The third and greatest emperor of the Mughal empire in India was Akbar (1542-1605 AD). Under a regent, Bairam Khan, Akbar

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succeeded his father, Humayun, who helped the young emperor extend and consolidate Mughal lands in India. In 1556, he defeated the newly self-declared Hindu King Hemu in the Second Battle of Panipat.

WHO WERE THE RAJPUTS?

Rajputs were clans or tribes with war-like habits and they follow Hindu tradition. They also claim to belong to the aristocratic class, a Kshatriya caste as per the Hindu. The Rajputs were also known for their bravery, loyalty, and faithfulness. The Rajputs in India rose to prominence during the 6th – 12th Century CE. However, towards the 12th Century, they were divided into many clans, especially with the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate. Under the rule of the **Delhi Sultanate**, many expeditions were sent towards the Rajputs. Again, the Delhi Sultanate began to disintegrate; the Rajput once again rose to prominence. Along with the Afghans, the Rajputs were also another political power in India.

Mughal Rajput Relations during Babur (1526-30)

In the First Battle of Panipat in 1526, Babur, a Mughal, conquered India and captured and defeated Ibrahim Lodi. He regulated the area just above Delhi. Babur found that he wanted to fight against the Rajputs after Babur's defeat of Ibrahim Lodi in the First Battle of Panipat. Between the Rajputs. A Rajput chief was there who was very influential. He was Mewar's Rana Sanga. The triumph of Babur in the First Battle of Panipat made him resolve to remain in India. This has given rise to a competition with the Rajputs. He organises an alliance with several Rajput states, such as Mewar, Amber, Marwar, Ajmer, Sikri, Chanderi, and Gwalior, after Rana Sanga understands that Babur is not going. This coalition also obtained support from the aristocracy of Afghanistan. In reality, Hasan Khan Mewali, one of the Afghan nobles, backed the alliance. Also for all these efforts, however, In 1527 C.E., Babur defeated the Rajputs in the Battle of Kanwar. This loss of the Rajputs made it easier for Babur to establish his rule over Northern India. Though the Rajputs were defeated in the Battle of Kanwar, Medin Rai, another chief of Malwa still offer opposition to Babur. Therefore, Babur marched towards Malwa and he captured Chanderi. In fact, Chanderi was one of the Rajput forts and this ended the power of the Rajputs during the reign of Babur. Thus we can say that during the reign of Babur, his defeats over the Rajputs provided him with a base to consolidate his rule towards the people in India in the Northern area.

Mughal Rajput Relations during Akbar (1556-1605)

When Akbar assumed the throne, he discovered that the non-Muslim population was mainly the Mughal caste. Akbar therefore believed that, not only as a Muslim king, he had to preserve his position. However in order to obtain acceptance from the non-Muslim population, he still has to have a liberal mind. As a realistic statesman, Akbar was swift to understand that the Rajputs constituted an important component of his empire's non-Muslim community. He then agreed to adopt a strategy of conciliation with the Rajputs. Akbar is trying to make a coalition so that there can be stability and money.

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WHY DID AKBAR MAKE FRIENDSHIP WITH THE RAJPUTS

1. Akbar understood early during his reign that the Rajputs being a militant and powerful race, their friendship and co-operation would prove beneficial for his empire in the long run.
2. The Rajputs were not dependent on Mughal privileges. Therefore, Akbar opted to follow a policy of diplomacy and conciliation with them.
3. Akbar realized that the active co-operation of the Rajputs would help him shake off the foreign nature of his monarchy and convert it into a national one.

In view of the above consideration, Akbar adopted a policy of diplomacy and conciliation towards the Rajputs. But, at the same time, he did not show any weakness towards the Rajputs. He even did not hesitate from taking armed action against them if they did not respond to his friendship. Prof. S.R Sharma says that in dealing with the Rajputs, Akbar comes into contact with three distinct types of Rajputs. Mainly with those Rajputs who are ready to submit to Akbar without any struggle. The three types of Rajputs are:

1. The Ruler of Amber, Bikaner, Jodhpur, and Jaisalmer.
2. Those Rajputs who initially offers resistance to Akbar but after they were defeated they were offered an honorable settlement. For example, The Rajputs Chief of Ramthambhor and Kalinga.
3. Those Rajputs who totally refused to submit to Akbar and who persisted in fighting against him. For example, Rana Pratab and Rana Udai Singh.

FEATURES OF AKBAR'S RAJPUT POLICY

First of all, to win the Rajputs to his side, Akbar concluded a number of matrimonial alliances with the Rajputs. The first matrimonial alliance was in 1562. In this year, Akbar married the daughter of Raja Bharmal of Amber. As a result of this marriage, he took Bhagwan Das and Man Singh into Mughal service. Akbar also married Rajput princesses from Bikaner and Jaisalmer. Later his son Prince Salim marry the daughter of Raja Bhagwandas.

Secondly, Akbar freely admitted the Rajputs into royal service. In the past with the establishment of Muslim rule in India, all-important position in the royal service was only for the Muslims. Akbar deviated from this tradition and offered an important and responsible position both in the civil and military departments to the Rajputs.

Thirdly, Akbar followed a policy of the village's toleration towards the Rajput. He allows complete freedom of worship to the Rajputs. For instance, the Rajput Queens marry the Mughal family. Besides, he permits to continue with their own religious worship within the palaces. He also abandoned the policy of persecution followed by earlier Muslims rulers. He did away with pilgrimage taxes in 1563 C.E. Also, he abolishes the Jizyah tax in 1564 C.E. it is a kind of tax which was paid only by the Non-Muslims population towards the Muslim ruler.

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THE PHASES OF AKBAR POLICY TOWARDS RAJPUT

When we analyze the evolution of the Rajputs policy of Akbar, it can be divided into three main phases:

1. During the first phase, beginning from the accession to the throne in 1572. The Rajput chiefs who submit to Akbar were his loyal allies. Besides, they were expected to render military services in or around their principalities and not outside.
2. During the second phase, Akbar Rajput policy may be dated from his Gujarat Campaign in 1572. During this period the Rajputs apart from being laya allies they began to emerge as the sword-arm of the empire (Protector). For example, he appoints Raja Man Singh to lead the Mughal army against Rana Pratab in 1576.
3. Thirdly, Akbar's relationship with the Rajput may be from 1578 when Bhagwan Das and Man Singh arrival at the imperial camp at Bhera in Western Punjab in preparation for a campaign in the North-West. This development also coincides with Akbar's break with the orthodox ulema. The issue of Mahzar by Akbar by which it gave him the right to choose between different schools of laws upholding the Sharia. In this third phase, the Rajputs emerged as partners of the Kingdom and a make-wait in the nobility.

In dealing with the Rajputs almost all Rajput princes accepted Akbar's suzerainty, except for Mewar. Rana Pratab, the Rajput chief of Mewar had never accepted Akbar as the ruler of India and fought against him all his life. Akbar defeats Rana Pratab in the Battle of Haldighati which takes place in the year 1576 C.E. And he conquered a large part of Mewar but yet the Rana never submitted himself to Akbar.

SIGNIFICANT OF AKBAR RAJPUT POLICY

1. Most of the Rajput states had submitted to Akbar. As a result, they have supported Akbar for his extension of rule in India.
2. Due to the friendship with the Rajputs, it brought peace and stability. It even further led to economic prosperity in the country.
3. The submission of the Rajputs to Akbar, it helps him to become a national ruler.
4. The friendship of the Rajput is indispensable because Rajputana serves as a major route towards the Deccan, Malwa, Sind, and Gujarat.
5. Akbar's Rajput policy drew the Rajput close to the Muslims. This has helped in the growth of new cultures, i.e. Indo-Muslim culture. Moreover, it also led to the growth of a new type of art popularly known as Indo-Muslim Art.
6. Jahangir also follows a policy of conciliation towards the Rajput. His mom was also a Rajput princess. Also, he married a number of Rajput Princesses of Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, and Bikaner.

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Mughal Rajput Relations during Jahangir

Jahangir was the son of Akbar, like his father, Jahangir was an imperialist. Besides, he wants to extend the boundaries of his empire. Mewar was the only Rajput territory that had not submitted to the Mughals. Therefore, Jahangir wanted to defeat the Rajput of Mewar. In 1587 C.E, Rana Pratab, the Rajput chief of Mewar died and he succeeded by his son Amar Singh. He also continued to follow the policy of resistance towards the Mughals. Jahangir, therefore, sent a number of expedition towards Mewar but it was only the expedition of 1614-1615 C.E which has led by Prince Khurram (who was later known as Shah Jahan) that Mewar was devastated and ultimately the Rajputs had to come to a negotiation with the Mughals.

Therefore, the war ends with treaties in 1615 CE. The treaties are:

1. The Rana accepts the suzerainty of the Mughals.
2. The emperor restores all territories of Mewar including the fort of Chittar. But the Rana fo does not have the right to fortify or repair the fort of Chittar.
3. The Rana was not obliged to attend the imperial court but his son Karan Singh was to represent him and also to assist the Mughal Emperor with his troops.
4. The Rana was not required to enter into a matrimonial alliance with the Mughals.
5. The Rana's son Karan Singh was to enroll as Mansabdar of 5000 Zat and 500 Sawar.
6. The treaty of 1615 that was signed between Rana Amar Singh and the Mughals (during the reign of Jahangir) had a tremendous impact on the history of the Mughals. This was so because right from the time of Babur, Mewar was constantly fighting against the Mughals and it was the treaty of 1615 that ended the long-drawn struggle between the Mughals and the Rajput states of Mewar.

Mughal Rajput Relations during Shahjahan

Shah Jahan also followed the Rajput policy of his father and grandfather. The Rajput during his reign still served the Mughal empire. However, they did not have the same prominent position in life as before. It was during the reign of Jahangir that Shah Jahan was known as Prince Khurram and that he was able to subdue the Rajput state of Mewar. But again during his reign the Rana of Mewar, Jagat Singh began to refortify the fort of Chittor in violation of the treaty of 1615.

Therefore, Shah Jahan has sent a force against Mewar and ultimately the Rana of Mewar had to tender an apology to the Mughals and also to dismantle the new addition to the fort.

Mughal Rajput Relations during Aurangzeb

During the initial years of his reign, Aurangzeb continued the policy of his predecessors towards the Rajput. Therefore, he appoints Some of the Rajputs to Mughal services like Jaswant Singh of Mewar

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and Jai Singh of Amber. But Aurangzeb was a staunch Sunni Muslim and therefore he wants to convert India into an Islamic Empire.

Besides Aurangzeb was also an autocrat and therefore he wants to conquer every tribe and community that stands on his way so as to add to the Mughal territory.

RAJPUT POLICY OF AURANGZEB

1. He took his first step when he sent an expedition to Marwar, the most powerful Rajput state at that time. He sent an expedition because the best troops of Raja Jaswant Singh were still awake in the North-West.
2. The Mughal could easily capture the state of Marwar. After capturing Marwar, Aurangzeb orders the destruction of all Hindu Temples and reimpose the lizyah tax which was already been abolish a century ago by Akbar.
3. Akbar placed Inder Singh a relative of Jaswant Singh to the throne of Marwar, who agreed to pay to the Mughal an amount of RS 36, 00,000.
4. Aurangzeb wanted to bring Ajit Singh of Marwar in the Mughal harem itself but this was not acceptable by the Rajput. On the other hand, the Rajput leaders impressed Aurangzeb to accept the legitimate claims of Ajit Singh to the throne of Marwar. However, Aurangzeb did not pay any heed to this demand.
5. Disgusted with the high handed attitude of Aurangzeb, the Rajput under the leadership of Durgadas Rathor, they rose in revolt against Aurangzeb, This greatly annoyed Aurangzeb and he sent a big force led by Prince Akbar to Marwar in 1679.
6. Aurangzeb moved to Ajmer to direct the operation in person. After much resistance, the Mughal forces succeeded in overpowering the Rajputs.
7. The whole of the province of Marwar and the Hindu temples were knock-down. Aurangzeb then divided the whole country into small districts and placed each of them under different Mughal Faujdars (Military Commanders).

RAJPUT STATE OF MEWAR

When the Rajput state of Mewar had revolted against Aurangzeb, the Rana of Mewar also joined the side of Marwar. When Aurangzeb came to know about it, he sent the Mughal forces to invade Mewar.

After tough resistance for about five years, the Rajput of Mewar was forced to retire to the mountains. The Mughal emperor then seized the property of Rana of Mewar and he also ordered the destruction of temples around Udaipur and at Chittor.

After his victory over Mewar, Aurangzeb returned back to Delhi, leaving the territory of Chittor under the care of his son Prince Akbar. However, Prince Akbar failed to deal with the Rajputs efficiently and

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the Rajputs continued the war against the Mughal and they also succeeded in capturing some of their territories.

THE TRANSFERRED PRINCE AKBAR AND PRINCE AZAM

As a result of these setbacks, Aurangzeb transfers Prince Akbar to Marwar, and Prince Azam was sent to Mewar to deal with the rising Rajputs in Mewar. While Prince Azam was on the verge of victory against the Rajputs, Aurangzeb receives the news that Prince Akbar had revolted against him in Marwar with the help of Rajputs of Marwar. Aurangzeb was greatly angry but he dreams of a clever strategy.

Aurangzeb wrote a letter to Prince Akbar and planned that this letter should reach in the hands of the Rajputs. In this letter, Aurangzeb congratulated the Prince for fooling the Rajputs. As planned, the letter fell into the hands of the Rajput's and it had the desired result.

As a result, it created dissensions among the supporters of Prince Akbar. Subsequently, this greatly weakened the position of the Prince and ultimately the Prince ran away to the Deccan. From the **Deccan**, he fled to Persian where he died in the year 1704.

Meanwhile, the struggle continued between the Rajputs of Mewar and the Mughal. But ultimately the Rajput of Mewar concluded peace with the Mughals and they signed a treaty in 1681. This treaty is popularly known as the Treaty of Udaipur.

TREATY OF UDAIPUR

1. According to this treaty, the Rana of Mewar Jai Singh agreed to pay an indemnity of Rupees 3,00,000 (Lakh) within two years.
2. He also agreed to cede the Parganas of Nepir Mandal and Bednore to the Mughals.
3. He also promised not to help the rebellions Rathors of Marwar.
4. The Rana also promised not to repair the fort of Chittor.
5. The Mughals, on the other hand, agree to withdraw their forces from Mewar to recognize the Rana of Mewar who was a Mansabdar of 5,000.
6. However, even after the conclusion of the treaty between the Mughals and Mewar, Marwar still continued their struggle against the Mughals for the next 30 years. The struggle continues till Ajit Singh was given necessary recognition as the ruler of Marwar by Bahadur Shah in 1709.

CONCLUSION

From the above Rajput's policy of Aurangzeb, has shows that the Mughal Relations with the Rajput during Aurangzeb had reverted the traditional policy of his predecessors towards the Rajputs. As a result of this, he lost the support of the Rajputs who were known for their bravery, courage, and faithfulness.

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It also deprived Aurangzeb of the services of the trusted class of good administrators and brave soldiers.

It also caused the Mughal Empire clearly both in men, money as well as prestige. The examples of the Rajputs to rise against Aurangzeb also encouraged the others to challenge the authority of Aurangzeb. Therefore, the administrative machinery began to slip out from the control of the emperor which contributed to the downfall of the Mughal Empire.

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