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THE RISE OF MUGHAL EMPIRE

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Abstract:

The Mughal Empire stands as a monumental chapter in the annals of Indian history, characterized by its remarkable rise to power and enduring legacy. This abstract delves into the multifaceted factors that contributed to the ascendancy of the Mughal Empire, tracing its origins, pivotal milestones, and enduring impact on the socio-political landscape of the Indian subcontinent. Beginning with Babur's conquests in the early 16th century, the narrative unfolds to reveal the strategic prowess and military acumen that laid the foundation for Mughal dominance. Through adept diplomacy, military campaigns, and shrewd alliances, the Mughals swiftly expanded their territorial reach, consolidating control over vast swathes of India. Central to the rise of the Mughal Empire was the visionary leadership exemplified by Akbar the Great. His policies of religious tolerance, administrative reforms, and innovative governance fostered a climate of stability and prosperity, transcending ethnic and religious divisions to forge a unified empire. Moreover, the Mughals' patronage of art, literature, and architecture ushered in a golden age of cultural flourishing, epitomized by iconic monuments such as the Taj Mahal and the Red Fort.

Keyword: *adept diplomacy, military campaigns, and shrewd alliances*

INTRODUCTION:

The rise of the Mughal Empire marks a significant chapter in the history of the Indian subcontinent. Emerging in the 16th century, the Mughals, descendants of the Mongol conqueror Timur and the Turkic ruler Genghis Khan, established a powerful and enduring dynasty that would shape the cultural, political, and economic landscape of South Asia for centuries to come. Led by visionary rulers such as Babur, Akbar, and Shah Jahan, the Mughal Empire reached its zenith of influence, spanning vast territories from present-day Afghanistan to Bangladesh. Through strategic military campaigns, diplomatic alliances, and innovative governance, the Mughals transformed the

region into a flourishing center of art, architecture, and commerce, leaving an indelible legacy that continues to resonate in contemporary India and beyond.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

BABUR:

Babur was the founder of the Mughal dynasty, he founded this dynasty during the 16th century (1526-1530). He claimed himself as Chagatai; he was a descendant of Genghis Khan from his mother's side and a descendant of Timur from his father's side. His real name was Zahiruddin Muhammad. He succeeded his father, Umar Shaik Mirza, in 1494, when he was just 11 years old, and became ruler of Farghana, which is currently situated in Chinese Turkestan.

MAJOR BATTLES OF BABUR:

The Panipat First Battle:

Daulat Khan Lodi, the governor of Punjab, and Maharana Sangram Singh, the king of Mewar (also known as Rana Sanga), called Babur to overthrow Ibrahim Lodi, who was the sultan of Delhi. In the First Battle of Panipat in AD 1526, Babur triumphed over Ibrahim Lodi.

Babur's armor was incredibly powerful. Guns were used for the first time in North India. Additionally, Babur was a better general. After the battle, Babur took over Agra and Delhi, succeeded to Ibrahim Lodi's crown, and laid the foundation for the ultimate rise of Mughal authority in India.

Babur's death:

Babur did not live long enough to enjoy the benefits of his victories. Babur died in AD 1530, four years after the Battle of Panipat. Babur was 47 when he passed away at Agra on December 26, 1530. Humayun, his oldest son, succeeded him. After his death, his body was first buried at Agra, but as per his orders, it was later moved to Kabul and reburied in Bagh-e Babur somewhere between 1539 and 1544.

HUMAYUN:

On March 17, 1508, Humayun was born in Kabul during Babur's attempt to expand his Empire. Throughout his early years, he traveled with him, and by the time he was eighteen, he was fighting beside him in the battle of Panipat (1526), one of the conflicts that led to the foundation of the Mughal Empire. He later took part in the battle of Agra and was sent to establish settlements in the Ganges valley, which is situated in the Empire's eastern region. He was appointed ruler of Badakhshan, a territory located between North Afghanistan and South Tajikistan, in 1528. In some ways, Badakhshan resembled the first land to be included in the Empire.

BATTLE FOUGHT BY HUMAYUN:

Chausa Battle (1539):

Humayun and Sher Shah Suri engaged in combat in this battle. The Sur Empire was

established by Sher Shah Suri. Humayun's defeat by Sher Shah Suri resulted in his flight and exile.

The Sirhind Battle (1555):

After facing 2 more defeats, he again Attacked With the help of the Safavid dynasty of Persia, Humayun returned to India to reestablish his empire after years of exile. At the Battle of Sirhind, he confronted Sher Shah Suri's son, Sikandar Shah Suri. As a result of Humayun's victory, the Mughal throne was eventually restored.

AKBAR:

Among the Mughal dynasty's greatest emperors was Akbar. Born in Amarkot about 1542 CE, he was the son of Humayun and Hamida Banu Begum. When Humayun passed away. In 1556 CE, at the age of 13 years and 4 months, he was crowned at Kalanaur. During his rule, India's Mughal ruler, Akbar, engaged in a great deal of warfare. The Battle of Haldighati fought in 1576, was a significant conflict during his military career. The Rajput king Maharana Pratap of Mewar and Akbar's army, under the command of Man Singh, his dependable general, engaged in combat in the Battle of Haldighati. Tensions between the Rajput kings, who wanted to preserve their independence, and the Mughal Empire, which was expanding its domain in India, gave rise to the fight. Known for his bravery, Maharana Pratap led his Rajput army in battle against the more massive and well-organized Mughal army. Pratap's soldiers fought bravely in spite of their numerical disadvantage, taking advantage of the rocky Haldighati pass and guerrilla tactics. Both sides showed incredible bravery and expertise in the fierce battle. But in the end, the Mughal army's greater military might and organization won out.

POLICIES OF AKBAR:

Revenue Reforms:

In order to improve revenue collection, Akbar instituted the "zabt" system. The earlier jagirdari system was replaced with this one, which attempted to determine taxes based on the productivity of the land. Stability for peasants and equitable taxes were the objectives.

Religious Policies:

In order to promote unity between devotees of various faiths, Akbar adopted a policy of religious tolerance. In addition to founding the syncretic religious organization Din-i-Ilahi, which promotes inclusion and togetherness, he also eliminated the jizya tax on non-Muslims.

Military:

Akbar's military was composed of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, and it was well-organized. With inventions like the "dahsala" system, which gave soldiers regular pay and training to ensure a disciplined and efficient force, he reorganized military management.

Justice System:

To ensure the fair administration of justice, Akbar established a distinct court system headed

by qazis, or judges. He established the "court of complaints," or "Majlis-i-Mazalim," to settle disputes and guarantee that his subjects were treated fairly.

JAHANGIR:

After the death of Akbar, Akbar's son, Jahangir, took over as ruler. Salim, the eldest child of Jodha Bai and Akbar, ascended to the throne around 1605 CE after Akbar's death. He took on the title of "world conqueror," Nur-ud-din Muhammad Jahangir. In early 1611 CE, he got married to Mehr-un-nisa, the widow of Sher Afghan, also referred to as Nur Jahan (the light of the world). Jahangir appointed her father, Itimad Ud Daulah, chief Diwan. He was a man of honor. This relationship also helped her other family members. Jahangir, the fourth Mughal emperor of India, had a rich and eventful early life, marked by struggles for power, military campaigns, and administrative reforms.

Battles and Military Campaigns:

Jahangir's early reign was marked by several military campaigns aimed at consolidating Mughal authority and expanding the empire's territories. Notable among these was the suppression of the revolt led by his own son, Khusrau Mirza, who challenged Jahangir's authority. The conflict culminated in the Battle of Bhairawal, where Jahangir emerged victorious, although it strained his relationship with his son. Additionally, Jahangir faced challenges from within the empire, particularly from powerful regional governors and rebellious nobles. He embarked on military expeditions to quell these revolts and assert his authority. Despite facing resistance, Jahangir succeeded in maintaining control over the Mughal Empire and stabilizing its frontiers.

Jahangir's greatest success was resolving the unresolved conflict with Mewar. Amar Singh of Mewar, the Maharana Pratap's son, bowed to Jahangir around 1615 CE. Karan Singh, the son of Rana, was granted the rank of mansabdar, which was formerly reserved for the rulers of Jodhpur, Bikaner, and Amber. As a result, Jahangir finished the work that Akbar had started and improved the Rajput alliance.

Administration:

Jahangir's administration was characterized by a continuation of the centralized bureaucratic system established by his predecessors, particularly his father, Akbar. He maintained a complex administrative structure with provincial governors, revenue officials, and military commanders overseeing different aspects of governance. He implemented various administrative reforms aimed at enhancing efficiency and revenue collection while ensuring the welfare of his subjects. Furthermore, Jahangir continued his father's policy of religious tolerance, promoting harmony among people of different faiths within his empire. He patronized art, literature, and architecture, fostering a vibrant cultural environment at the Mughal court. After Jahangir's death in around 1627 CE, Shah Jahan arrived in Agra and took the throne with the help of the army, Chief Diwan Asaf Khan, and the

nobility. After receiving a pension, Nur Jahan led a retired life till her death eighteen years later. She was buried in Lahore.

SHAH JAHAN:

On January 5, 1592, in Lahore, during the reign of his grandfather, Emperor Akbar, Shah Jahan was born as Prince Khurram. He was the third child born to Rajput Queen Jagat Gosain and Emperor Jahangir. Shah Jahan established his military ability and administrative acumen at a young age by working as his father's aide on military expeditions and taking on leadership roles in the Mughal court.

Administration:

He kept a highly developed administrative system in place, with military commanders, revenue officials, and provincial governors in charge of various governmental functions. Shah Jahan was well-known for his sponsorship of architecture, which peaked with the building of the famous Taj Mahal as a tribute to his adored wife, Mumtaz Mahal. This architectural wonder illustrates Shah Jahan's dedication to advancing art and culture throughout the Mughal Empire, as do other magnificent structures like Delhi's Red Fort and Jama Masjid. Shah Jahan also carried out a number of administrative changes with the goal of improving social welfare, revenue collection, and governance effectiveness. His collection of memoirs, the "Badshahnama," is proof of his passion for justice and governance and offers insights into his administrative procedures and decision-making process. In summary, Shah Jahan's formative years were characterized by notable accomplishments in both the military and administrative domains. His military prowess and administrative innovations left a lasting impression on Indian history while promoting the stability and prosperity of the Mughal Empire throughout his rule.

ARCHITECTURE:

TAJ MAHAL:

The Taj Mahal is definitely the most well-known of Shah Jahan's architectural creations. It is a symbol of love and masterful design. Constructed as a white marble mausoleum in Agra, the Taj Mahal was commissioned by Shah Jahan as a memorial to his beloved wife, Mumtaz Mahal, who died giving birth. The Taj Mahal, created by architect Ustad Ahmad Lahauri, is renowned for its excellent craftsmanship, symmetrical design, and elaborate marble inlay work. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

Red Fort, Delhi:

Built by Shah Jahan, the Red Fort (Lal Qila) is an architectural marvel that served as the primary home of the Mughal emperors in Delhi. Built between 1638 and 1648, the fort is well-known for its elaborate marble work, red sandstone walls, and expansive mansions inside its compound. Among its noteworthy buildings are the Diwan-i-Am (Hall of Public Audience) and

Diwan-i-Khas (Hall of Private Audience), which display the beauty and extravagance of Mughal architecture.

AURANGZEB:

The sixth Mughal Emperor of India was Aurangzeb. Known by another name, "Alamgir," he ruled from 1658 to 1707. The Mughal Empire peaked and grew to be the biggest empire in India during his reign. His territories ranged from Kashmir in the north to Jinji in the south, and from Hindukush in the west to Chittagong in the east. He ruled for a period of approximately fifty years. During his ambitious reign, the Mughal Empire had strong economic growth, and he was a deeply conservative Muslim emperor. On November 3, 1618, Aurangzeb was born in Dahod, Gujarat. As the son of Mumtaz Mahal and Shah Jahan, he rose to the throne. He had a natural curiosity ever since he was young. His military and administrative prowess was impressive. At a very young age, his father, Shah Jahan, gave him multiple military duties.

Aurangzeb's religious policy:

He was an extremely conservative Sunni Muslim king who had the lowest regard for religious differences. He made decisions that complied with the Quran's Sharia law. In court, he outlawed singing and drinking. It was also banned to drink in public. Muhtasibs were chosen to ensure respect for sharia, or customary Islamic law, and that individuals refrain from drinking in public areas. He imposed limitations on the Safavid dynasty of Iran's celebration of Nauroz. While instrumental music and "Naubat," the royal band, were permitted in courts, he outlawed singing and dancing. Aurangzeb reinstated the poll tax, also known as the jizyah tax, on non-Muslim citizens in 1679. In 1564, Akbar abolished Jizya. These taxes were not, however, payable to women, children, the elderly, or those in economically disadvantaged groups. He also raised the land tax, which had a significant negative impact on the Hindu Jats, in order to pay for state expenses.

Temple abolition:

New temples, churches, synagogues, etc. could not be built, according to him. Religious buildings and temples with a long history were exempt. However, he faced political opposition from Marathas, Jats, and others when he destroyed the Somnath temple. Furthermore, he gave the order to demolish several Gujarati temples. Numerous temples located in Odisha, as well as ancient temples in Udaipur, Jodhpur, and the neighboring Parganas, were demolished. There was no significant temple building in the south after 1679. During his reign, Aurangzeb was believed to have destroyed about fifteen large temples.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, one of the most significant dynasties in Indian history, the Mughal Empire, is a monument to the majesty, diversity, and enduring legacy of its kind. The Mughal Empire, which ruled for three centuries, from the early 16th to the mid-19th century, had a profound impact on the

subcontinent of India's political, cultural, and architectural landscape. The Mughal emperors established a vast and strong empire that spanned much of South Asia through their creative administrative practices, military strength, and support of the arts and culture. In addition to promoting a dynamic and multicultural culture, the empire's centralized administration, revenue reforms, and policies of religious tolerance all contributed to its stability and success.

The world is still enthralled and inspired by the Mughal Empire's architectural legacy, which is exemplified by famous structures like the Taj Mahal, Red Fort, and Jama Masjid and highlights the artistic sophistication and aesthetic accomplishments of the empire.

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