BS HISTORY

HISTORY OF LATER MUGHALS

(BS HISTORY PROGRAMME)

Code: 9147 **Units: 1-9**



Department of History
Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad

STUDY GUIDE

BS HISTORY

HISTORY OF THE LATER MUGHALS

(COURSE CODE 9147)

Department of History
Faculty of Social Sciences & Humanities
Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad

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FOREWORD

The curriculum at AIOU is designed on modern parameters using the latest information including updates on recent trends, theories, and techniques. An extensive consultative process is also a basic component of the activity. Development of the study material to help the students throughout the country is a challenge. AIOU takes pride in undertaking this major task for the effective learning of the students.

BS History (4 Year) is being offered by the Department of History, Allama Iqbal University for the students who are interested in the discipline of History. The scheme of studies for BS History (4 Year) has been designed and the courses are developed to make them relevant to the emerging national and global trends and to meet the needs of the society in this domain. The study material provides a comprehensive coverage of the core contents of the BS History (4 Year) Program. The selection of, and the treatment of, study materials have been designed to meet both general and specific aims set out by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) through the National Curriculum Revision Committee (NCRC).

In the end, I am happy to extend my gratitude to the course team, Chairperson, Course Development Coordinator, unit writers, reviewers, and editor for the development of the course. Any suggestions for the improvement of the course will be warmly welcomed by the Department of History.

Prof. Dr Nasir Mehmud,
Vice Chancellor

COURSE TEAM

Chairman Course Team:	**Dr. Abdul Aziz Sahir**
Chairperson:	Dr. Kausar Parveen
Course Team:	Dr. Kishwar Sultana
	Dr. Kausar Parveen
	Dr Abdul Basit Mujahid
	Dr. Sadia Aziz
	Dr. Hammad Malik
	Dr Fozia Umar
Course Coordinator:	Dr. Sadia Aziz
Writer:	Dr. Sadia Aziz
	Dr. Kishwar Sultana
	Dr. Kausar Parveen
	Dr. Fozia Umar
	Mrs. Shaista Aziz
Reviewer:	Dr Riaz Ahmed
Editor:	Humaira Ejaz
Composing & Layout:	Ikram Yousaf

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I am also thankful to the editor, Ms. Humaira Ejaz, for her careful review and assistance in refining the manuscript. My appreciation is likewise extended to the staff of the Department of History, APCP, PPU, for their support at every stage of this work.

Dr. Sadia Aziz

STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

The course “History of the Later Mughals” has been structured to make it as easy as possible for you to do the required work. Being a credit hours course, it consists of nine units, one unit comprises the study work of two weeks, and thus the total study period will be eighteen weeks. We have organized this course to enable you to acquire the skill of self-learning. For each unit, an introduction is given to help you develop an objective analysis of the major and sub-themes discussed in the prescribed reading material. Besides this, the objectives of each unit are very specifically laid down to facilitate in development of a clear, logical, and rational approach. Prescribed reading material (Compulsory and Additional Readings) has also been classified. After listing “Required Reading”, we have given you a few Self-Assessment Questions. These questions are not only meant to facilitate your in understanding the required readings.

This also provides you an opportunity to assess yourself and how much you have learned. Since the coursework of one unit will include studying the prescribed reading material and carrying out the various self-assessment questions and assignments, you are required to spend two weeks on each unit.

HOW TO USE READING MATERIAL?

As this is a distance education course, we have organized the required coursework.
in the following manner to help you evolve a self-learning process in the absence of formal classroom teaching.

i) A detailed Course Introduction

ii) Introduction to each Unit

iii) After listing 'Required Readings', we have given you a few Self-Assessment Questions on each topic or theme. These questions are not only meant to facilitate you in understanding the required reading but also to provide you with an opportunity to assess yourself as to how far you have learned.

iv) To help you in answering the Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs), key ideas and formulas are given. These points will not only lead you to a better understanding but will also suggest a direction in which we expect you to think and analyse. You can, of course, think of many more points.

v) Although you choose your way of studying the required reading material, you are advised to follow the steps that are shown in the study chart.

CONTENTS

Structure of the Study Guide....6

How to Use the Study Material....7

Introduction of the Course....9

Course Objectives....11

Course Learning Outcomes....12

Course Outline....13

Unit 1 Primary Sources of the Later Mughal Period....15

Unit 2 Conditions of India after Aurangzeb: An Overview of Later Mughal Rulers....27

Unit 3 Growth of Independent and Semi-Independent States: Endogenous Reasons of Decline....41

Unit 4 East India Company and Establishment of Colonial Rule: Exogenous Reasons of Decline....55

Unit 5 Invasions: Nadir Shah of Iran: Exogenous Reasons of Decline....73

Unit 6 Ahmad Shah Abdali from Afghanistan: Exogenous Reasons of Decline....85

Unit 7 Revivalist and Resistance Movements....95

Unit 8 Theories of Mughal Downfall....117

Unit 9 War of Independence 1857....131

INTRODUCTION OF THE COURSE

This course is a comprehensive survey of the decline of the Mughal Empire in India, covering a significant historical period from 1707 to 1857. Structured into nine units, it is a reading-intensive course that discusses the major political developments while placing particular emphasis on primary sources related to the Later Mughals. Among the various endogenous and exogenous factors contributing to the decline of Mughal rule, special attention will be given to the causes, nature, consequences, and aftermath of the War of Independence in 1857.

The history of the Indian subcontinent is among the most intriguing and illuminating narratives within global history. Broadly, it can be categorized into three distinct periods, illustrating India's transformation from antiquity to modernity. The Ancient Period, which predates the birth of Christ and extends up to approximately 1000 CE, was marked by the reigns of prominent rulers such as Chandragupta Maurya, Ashoka, and Harsha. The Medieval Period commenced with the Arab expeditions in 712 CE, followed by a succession of dynasties, including the Slave, Khilji, Tughlaq, Sayyid, Lodi, and Mughal dynasties. Although each of these dynasties governed vast territories, the Mughal Empire (1526-1707) left an indelible legacy through its grandeur, administrative prowess, and cultural achievements. The success of the Mughal dynasty can be attributed to a remarkable sequence of capable rulers, including Babur, Humayun, Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan, and Aurangzeb.

Unlike European history, where the modern era is often associated with the Renaissance in the fifteenth century, the modern period in Indian history is generally considered to have begun in the mid-eighteenth century. This transformation was characterized by the gradual transfer of power from indigenous rulers to the British East India Company, particularly after 1757. The eighteenth century not only witnessed the expansion of British colonial control over Indian territories but also saw the decline of the once-mighty Mughal Empire. The decline, which had already begun during the reign of Aurangzeb, accelerated under his successors, commonly referred to as the Later Mughals.

The foundation for British involvement in India was laid in 1600 when Queen Elizabeth I granted a charter allowing a group of English merchants to establish the East India Company. The first British trading post was set up in 1608

at Surat, near present-day Mumbai. In 1612, Sir Thomas Roe, an English ambassador, secured significant trade concessions from Emperor Jahangir, enabling the British to establish multiple trading centres across the subcontinent. Surprisingly, the Mughal rulers permitted the British to mint their currency, build fortifications, and maintain a private military force for protection. Aurangzeb later granted them permission to establish the city of Calcutta and construct Fort William.

Despite facing competition from the Dutch and the French, the British East India Company ultimately emerged victorious in the struggle for dominance. The first major conflict between the European colonial powers occurred in the Carnatic region, where the British defeated the French, thereby paving the way for their political ascendancy. The financial resources accumulated by the Company played a crucial role in overcoming European rivals and securing territorial control. These successes enabled the British to consolidate their position in India, gradually shifting from a mercantile enterprise to a colonial power.

Aurangzeb, who ruled until the age of 89, left behind an empire larger than that of any previous Indian ruler. However, his successors lacked the administrative acumen and military capability to maintain the vast dominion. Following his death in 1707, most of the subsequent Mughal rulers were characterized by decadence and complacency, failing to sustain the empire's stability. Consequently, the once-formidable Mughal Empire experienced a steady decline, ultimately retaining only nominal authority over a small region. Over the next 150 years, thirteen relatively insignificant rulers collectively known as the Later Mughals presided over the deteriorating empire. The final sovereign, Bahadur Shah II, was officially deposed by the British in 1858 due to his alleged involvement in the 1857 uprising. He was subsequently exiled to Rangoon, where he passed away in 1862.

This course is systematically divided into nine units, each further subdivided into multiple thematic sections. It aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the factors that contributed to the decline of the Mughal Empire and the broader historical transitions that shaped the subcontinent during this period.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the decline of the Mughal Empire in India from 1707 to 1857. Through a critical examination of primary sources and historical narratives, the course seeks to:

1. Introduce students to key primary sources of the Later Mughal period, enabling them to analyze contemporary historical accounts.
2. Explore the political, social, and economic conditions of India after Aurangzeb's death, with a particular focus on the Later Mughal rulers and their administrative challenges.
3. Examine the endogenous factors that contributed to the decline of the Mughal Empire, including the emergence of independent and semi-independent states.
4. Investigate the exogenous causes of Mughal decline, particularly the role of the British East India Company and the invasions by Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali.
5. Analyze various revivalist and resistance movements that emerged in response to colonial expansion and internal decline.
6. Engage with historical debates regarding the causes of the Mughal downfall, assessing various historiographical interpretations.
7. Provide a detailed study of the War of Independence 1857, its causes, progression, suppression, and consequences, evaluating its impact on the transformation of Indian political history.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completing this course, students will be expected to demonstrate the following skills and competencies: inquiring, investigating, reading, writing, reasoning, and speaking as historians.

1. Interpret and critically analyze primary sources from the Later Mughal period, enhancing their ability to engage with historical texts.
2. Identify and evaluate the factors leading to the decline of the Mughal Empire, distinguishing between internal weaknesses and external pressures.
3. Explain the role of independent and semi-independent states in accelerating the disintegration of Mughal rule.
4. Assess the expansion of British colonial control, understanding the administrative, military, and economic strategies employed by the East India Company.
5. Examine the impact of foreign invasions, particularly those of Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali, on Mughal political stability.
6. Analyze the emergence of resistance and reform movements, recognizing their significance in the socio-political landscape of 18th and 19th-century India.
7. Compare different theories on the decline of the Mughal Empire, forming well-reasoned arguments based on historical evidence.
8. Enhance critical thinking and historical inquiry skills by engaging with multiple perspectives and historiographical debates.
9. Demonstrate the ability to articulate historical arguments effectively through written and oral communication.
10. Demonstrate proficiency in conveying knowledge through diverse media, encompassing:
    - Delivering effective lectures
    - Engaging in scholarly debates
    - Creating narrative commentaries for film documentaries
    - Authoring scholarly articles

COURSE OUTLINE

Unit 1: Primary Sources of the Later Mughal Period

1.1 Khafi Khan (Muntakhib-ul-Lubab)
1.2 Muqarrab Khan (Bahadur Shah Nama)
1.3 Muhammad Qasim Ibrat (Ibrat Nama)
1.4 Muhammad Ali Panipati (Tarikh-I-Muzaffari)
1.5 Khair-ud-Din Allahabadi (Ibrat Nama)
1.6 Ghulam Husain Tabatabai (Siyarul Mutakhirin)

Unit 2: Conditions of India after Aurangzeb: An Overview of Later Mughal Rulers

2.1 Bahadur Shah-I: 1707-12 AD
2.2 Jahandar Shah: 1712-13 AD
2.3 Farrukh Siyyar: 1713-19 AD
2.4 Rafi Ul-Dara Jat & Rafi Ul-Daula: 1719 AD
2.5 Mohammad Shah (Rangeela): 1719-48 AD
2.6 Ahmad Shah: 1748-54 AD
2.7 Alamgir-II: 1754-59 AD
2.8 Shah Alam-II: 1759-1806 AD
2.9 Akbar-II: 1806-37 AD
2.10 Bahadur Shah-II: 1837-57 AD

Unit 3: Growth of Independent and Semi-Independent States: Endogenous Reasons of Decline

3.1 Hyderabad
3.2 Deccan (Ascendancy of Marathas)
3.3 Bengal (Murshad Quli Khan)
3.4 Oudh
3.5 Punjab
3.6 Rohilkhand

Unit 4: East India Company and Establishment of Colonial Rule: Exogenous Reasons of Decline

4.1 English East India Company: Internal Administration
4.2 Rivalry between the English East India Company
4.3 Subsidiary System
4.4 Doctrine of Lapse
4.5 Annexation of Sindh 1843
4.6 Annexation of the Punjab 1849

Unit 5: Invasions by Nadir Shah of Iran: Exogenous Reasons of Decline

5.1 Causes of Nadir's Invasion

5.2 Battle of Karnal 1739
5.3 Impact

Unit 6: Ahmad Shah Abdali from Afghanistan: Exogenous Reasons of Decline

6.1 Causes of Abdali's Invasion
6.2 First Invasion of Ahmad Shah: 1748 AD
6.3 Second Invasion of Ahmad Shah: 1750 AD
6.4 Third Invasion: 1751 AD
6.5 Fourth Invasion: 1751 AD
6.6 Fifth Invasion: 1761 AD
6.7 Third Battle of Panipat (Its Result and Impact): 1763 AD
6.8 Sixth Invasion of Abdali: 1764 AD
6.9 Seventh and Last Invasion: 1767 AD
6.10 Impact

Unit 7: Revivalist and Resistance Movements

7.1 Shah Wali Ullah and his Family
7.2 Sayyid Ahmed Shaheed and the Jihad Movement
7.3 Haji Shariat Ullah's Fariazi Movement
7.4 Dhudoo Mian
7.5 Titu Mir
7.6 Haider Ali
7.7 Tipu Sultan
7.8 Nawab Siraj Ul-Daula (Battle of Plassey 1757)
7.9 Mir Qasim (Battle of Buxar 1764)

Unit 8: Theories of Mughal Downfall

8.1 Degeneration of Muslim Character
8.2 Crisis of the Mansabdari System
8.3 Incapability and Selfishness of the Mughal Nobility
8.4 Military Weaknesses of the Mughal Empire
8.5 Absence of a Rule of Succession
8.6 Great Firms and Financial Upheaval
8.7 British Technological Superiority

Unit 9: War of Independence 1857

9.1 Causes of Revolt
9.2 The Outbreak and Spread of the Revolt
9.3 The Suppression of the Revolt
9.4 Reasons for the Failure of the War of Independence
9.5 The Nature of the Revolt
9.6 Consequences and Impacts

Unit: 1

PRIMARY SOURCES OF THE LATER MUGHAL PERIOD

Written By: Dr. Kishwar Sultana

Reviewed By: Dr. Riaz Ahmad

CONTENTS

	Introduction	17
	Objectives	18
1.	Khafi Khan *(Muntakhib-ul-Lubab)*	19
2.	Muqarrab Khan *(Bahadur Shah Nama)*	20
3.	Muhammad Qasim Ibrat *(Ibrat Nama)*	20
4.	Muhammad Ali Panipati *(Tarikh-I-Muzaffari)*	21
5.	Khair-ud-Din Allahabadi *(Ibrat Nama)*	21
6.	Ghulam Husain Tabatabai *(Siyarul Mutakhirin)*	22
	Compulsory Reading	24
	Suggested Readings	24
	Self-Assessment Questions	25

INTRODUCTION

Baber laid the foundation of the Mughal Empire in India after defeating Sultan Ibrahim Lodhi in 1526 in the first battle of Panipat. The Mughal dynasty reached its full zenith under the reign of Akbar in the 16th century, but the Mughal Empire began to decline after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707. However, it was so firmly intermingled with the fabric of Indian society that it took more than 150 years to completely collapse. There were so many factors responsible for its downfall. There was chaos, a war of succession, incapable and licentious Mughal successors, Economic bankruptcy, weak military power and the rise of the regional powers. But in spite of all these factors, literary and academic contributions were very much there. They produced so many literary works which were unique in their field, like Muntakhib-ul-Lubab, Bahadur Shah Nama, Ibrat Nama, Tarikh-i-Muzaffari and Siyrul Mutakhirin, etc.

OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Know about the importance of primary sources.
- Know about the literary environment during Later Mughal period.
- Understand the nature of relationship of local communities (*Jats, Sikhs* and *Marathas*) with the rulers through these primary sources.
- Explain about the geography, climate, animals, forts, saints of the sub-continent.
- Critically examine the economic, social and cultural history of Later Mughal period.

1. MUNTAKHIB-UL-LUBAB (1526-1732)

Khafi Khan wrote Tarikh Khafi Khan, also known as Muntakhib-ul-Lubab in the Persian language. His father, Khawaja Mir, was in the service of Prince Murad Bakhsh, one of Shah Jehan's sons, who was treacherously put to death by his brother Aurangzeb. Later on, he also served under Aurangzeb. Khafi Khan lived under the patronage of Aurangzeb and was employed by him for political and military affairs. During the reign of Farrukh Siyar, he was made Diwan by Nizam-ul-Mulk.

Muntakhib-ul-Lubab is a history of India commencing from the invasion of Babur and ending with the fourteenth year of Muhammad Shah's reign.[1]. It was published in 1732 (during the reign of Muhammad Shah). Its major part is concerned with the period from 1605 to 1732. It is primarily valuable for containing an entire reign of the Aurangzeb, of which, in consequence of that emperor's well-known prohibition, it is very difficult to obtain a full and connected history. It is very important that he doesn't rely on the written history alone, but also puts down oral traditions that would have been lost forever if he had not recorded them for posterity. This includes the famous romance of Prince Saleem and Mehrunnisa (Jahangir and Nur Jahan), which was probably recorded here for the first time. Khafi Khan has described the rise of the Sikhs under Banda and yielded valuable details and information about the Sikhs.

Khafi Khan wrote a political history, pure and simple. His work is a brilliant reconstruction of the event, thorough, coherent, and chronologically well organized. He has the conception of the continuity of Mughal history. Perhaps, he is the only writer who gives a connected and precise account of the reforms attempted at different times to reorganize the *mansabdari* system, which was splitting under the burden of its own vast structure.[2] According to J.N. Sarkar, his history is professedly an abridgment of more original works up to the middle of Aurangzeb's reign. His reflective style, description of the condition of society,

[1] H.M. Elliot and John Dowson, *The History of India as told by its historians*, vol. I (Lahore: Sang-i-Meel Publications, 2006), 28.

[2] E, Sreedharan, *A Textbook of Historiography 500 B.C to A.D. 2000* (New Delhi: Orient Longman Private Limited, 2000), 377.

and characteristic anecdotes save his work from the dry formality of the Court annals, and he is especially informative with regards to Deccan affairs.[3]

However, according to M. Athar Ali, Khafi Khan mostly plagiarized his work from, *Shahjahan*-Nama of Sadiq Khan, containing a history of Shah Jahan (1627-1658), and its continuation by Abu''l Fazam M'amuri, containing an account of Aurangzeb's reign (1659-1707).[4]

2. TARIKH-I-SHAH ALAM BAHADUR SHAH (DANISHMAND KHAN)

Tarikh-i-Shah Alam Bahadur Shah was written by Mirza Noor-ud-Din, who holds the position of Khan-i-Saman and was later appointed as *Dorogha* of the Mughal treasury during the reign of Aurangzeb and received the title of Mukarrab Khan from him. After the death of Aurangzeb, he handed over all treasuries to Bahadur Shah I and got the title of Danishmand Khan from the new emperor. Khafi Khan in *Muntakhib-ul-Lubab* gives a very brief account of historical events, but Mukarrab Khan elaborates those events with literary touch and a futuristic perspective.

3. IBRAT-NAMA (MUHAMMAD QASIM IBRAT LAHORI)

It is a well-written history, composed by Muhammad Qasim, who was the *mansabdar* of the Mughals during the reign the Farrukh Siyar, and describes himself as a dependent of *Amiru-l-Umara* Saiyid Husain Ali Khan. Sometimes *Ibrat Nama*, called *Tarikh-i-Bahadur Shahi*. It commences with the death of Aurangzeb and terminates with the death of Kutbu-l-Mulk Saiyid Abdullah.[5]

Muhammad Qasim discusses in great detail the reign of Muhammad Shah *Rangila.* According to him, for a full year of his accession, Muhammad Shah remained a virtual prisoner in the hands of the Sayyid brothers. He was surrounded by a number of their trusted adherents, and when, occasionally, in the course of two or three months, he went out hunting and went on an excursion into the country, they went with him and brought him back. After the disappearance of

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[3] J.L. Mehta *Advanced Study in the History of Medieval India*, vol. II, Mughal Empire (1526-1707) (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1984), 64.

[4] M. Athar Ali, "The Use of Sources in Mughal Historiography", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 32, no.4 (1995):362.

[5] H.M. Elliot. *The History of India As Told by its Own Historians*. 569.

the ‘King Makers’, he also annoyed Nizam ul Mulk, who later established the independent Province of Hyderabad, Deccan, the largest part of Southern India. Muhammad Shah ruled India from 1719 to 1748, but he addicted himself to an inactive life, which entirely enervated his energy. The writer of Ibrat Nama himself was in the services of the Mughals; therefore, he dwells extensively upon the administrative, economic, and social life of the Indian people. But, despite drawing results, he left all responsibility on the reader.

4. TARIKH-I-MUZAFFARI

Tarikh-i-Muzaffari is a history of the Timurid Kings of India from 1202-1788 A.D. written by Muhammad Ali Panipati. He served as the Darogha of the Faujdari Adalat of Tirhut and Hajipur under the patronage of Nawab Muzzaffar Jang, deputy governor of Bengal, Orissa, and Bihar in the reign of Shah Alam II.[6]

He appears to have held much communication with the European officers of his time. This is one of the most accurate general histories of India. It begins with the Muhammadan Emperors of India but does not treat of them at any length till it reaches the reign of Akbar. [7] He stated in the preface that he wrote it as a means of securing an introduction to the court of the eminent noble Muhammad Rida Khan, surnamed Muzaffar Jang, who played an important role in the history of Bengal during the latter half of the 18th century. The title of the work was chosen as a compliment to Muzaffar Jang, under whom the author held positions of honor in Bihar.

5. IBRAT NAMA "THE BOOK OF WARNING"

Ibrat Nama, written by Faqir Khair-ud-Din Allahabadi, is a detailed history of the reigns of Alamgir II (1754- 59) and Shah Alam II (1759-1806), with a brief account of their ancestors beginning with Taimur. Khair ud-Din had been in the service of the British and earned a pension for the assistance rendered to James Anderson, British resident, in his negotiations with Maratha Sardar Mahadji Scindia in 1784-85. The *Ibrat Nama* is not only concerned with the life of Shah Alam II as emperor but also sheds some light on his earlier life as Prince 'Ali Gauhar; his stay at Allahabad as a dependant of the British; his restoration to the

[6] Nabi Hadi, *Dictionary of Indo-Persian Literature* (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1995), 369.

[7] Ibid,. 369.

throne of Delhi; and the treatment he received at the hands of Ghulam Qadir Ruhila. The author is concerned more with the Emperor and his heir apparent and their relations with the Marathas, Jats, Rajputs, and the Ruhilas than with the Sikhs.[8]

6. SIYAR-UL-MUTAKHERIN

Siyar-ul-Mutakherin[9] It a chronicle of Indian history written in Persian by Sayyid Ghulam Hussain Tabatabai during the days of the fall of Muslim rule in Bengal.[10] G.H. Tabatabai was the relative of Nawab Alivardi Khan. His father, Hidayat Ali Khan, held the Government of Bihar in the subadarship of Mahabat Jang, as the naib deputy. He was afterwards Faujdar or military governor of Sonpat and Panipat in the reign of Muhammad Shah.[11]

The *Siyar-ul- Mutakherin* completed in 1783 in three volumes.[12] Volume one gave valuable information about the geography, climate, animals, forts, saints, and ulema of Hindustan. It also gives a summary of ancient history as derived from the Sanskrit works translated by Faizi and others. It then notices the rise of the Muhammadan power and adds a concise history of the reigns of the various sovereigns down to the death of Aurangzeb.

Volume two *Siyar-ul- Mutakherin, Review of Modern Times,* consists of a general history of India from 1700 to 1786 A.D. It discusses the reigns of the last seven Emperors of India, an account of the progress of the English in Bengal up to 1781 A.D., and a critical examination of their government and policy in Bengal. He also discussed the relations of the English with the Nawab, the Battle of Plassey, and the establishment of English supremacy in Bengal and Bihar,

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[8] Charles Edward Buckland, *Dictionary of Indian Biographies* (New York: Haskell House, 1999), 235.

[9] Iqbal, G. Khan, "A Book with Two Views: Ghulam Hussain Khan's: An Overview of the Modern Times," in Perspective on Mutual Encounters on South Asian History, ed. Jamil Malik, (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2000), 278-298.

[10] For detail see; Mohibbul Hasan, *Historians of medieval India* (New Delhi: Meenakshi Prakashan, 1983), 161.

[11] Miles Ogborn, and Charles W. J. Withers, ed. *Geographies of the Book* (London: AshgatePublishing Group, 2010), 31.

[12] H.M. Elliot. *The History of India As Told by its Own Historians*.

together with the British administrative system.[13]

Volume three discusses the history of the Nizam of Hyderabad, Haider Ali of Mysore, Nawab Wazir of Oudh, Emperor Muhammad Shah, the invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali, and his wars with the Marathas. This volume comes to an end after the affairs of the English up to 1781 A.D.[14]

Ghulam Hussain's view of colonial government is critical, but it is a criticism emanating from a feeling of incomprehension: the new principles are so far removed from the practices of the 'traditional' state that they do not carry much meaning. To him, even when a country is conquered by another race, the two peoples must come "to coalesce together into one whole, like milk and sugar that have received a simmering." This was not happening under British rule, first, because of the difference of language, and second, because of the "natural unsuitableness of the English in general, and the inaccessibleness of their rulers in particular". He also pointed out that the English procure "all their necessaries from their own country", so that Indian craftsmen receive no patronage from the court. The most important deficiency was the complete lack of direct communication between officials of the state and the people. Whereas before rulers would set aside some time to listen to their subjects on matters of revenue and justice, now there was an elaborate and unintelligible system of impersonal procedures intervening between the rulers and the people. "A. whole life is needful to attend their long, very long proceedings, and till a decision is given there is no comprehending what is going on, and what is likely to follow, nor what is the probable end of the business."[15]

However, the importance of his work is diminished by several drawbacks. He proved himself to be faithless and time-serving as an envoy. He acted in bad faith toward his patrons and benefactors. He disclosed Mir Qasim's secrets to the English, whose favour and patronage he courted at the cost of his master and of the nation. He writes with pride that he forewarned the English against the secret intentions of Mir Qasim. His hostility to Sirajuddaula remains undisguised in his

[13] Ibid.

[14] For detail see; K.K. Datta, *Alivardi and His Times* (Worlk Press: Calcutta, 1963).

[15] Partha Chattergee, "Transferring a Political Theory: Early Nationalist Thoughts in India", *Economic and Political Weekly* 21, no. 3 (1986): 122. (120-128)

writings. Ghulam Hussain was pro-English in attitude. He welcomed the new masters, the English, admired and adored them, and justified all their actions and policies. In spite of these limitations, the *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin* remains an important primary source of information, particularly for the social and cultural history of Bengal. It reflects the social degeneration of the time. He occasionally referred to the social institutions and festivities of Muslims and Hindus of the Period. References to industries, trade, and economic conditions are available in the casual observations of the author. He has given a good account of cultural life in Azimabad and Murshidabad. He has mentioned the names of a large number of scholars, poets, physicians, theologians, and men of letters who flourished under court patronage.[16]

Compulsory Reading

Rashid, Sh. Abdur. History of the Muslims of Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent, Vol. I. Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1978.

Suggested Readings

Buckland, Charles Edward. *Dictionary of Indian Biographies*. New York: Haskell House, 1999.

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[16] For detail see; Kum Kum Chatter jee, "History as Self-Representation: The Recasting of Political Tradition in Late Eighteen Century Eastern India", *Modern Asian Studies* 32, no.4 (1998): 913-948.

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Self-Assessment Questions

1. Differentiate between the primary and secondary sources?
2. There is no concept of historical writing without documents. Explain.
3. Determine the place of Khafi Khan's *Muntakhib-ul-Lubab* in Persian literature.
4. Ghulam Hussain's *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin* has some pro- English bias. And yet it is an important source of the late 18th-century Indian history. Explain.
5. Evaluate the historical value of Tarikh-i-Shah Alam Bahadur Shah by Danishmand Khan.
6. Explain the structure and composition of the Indian Society in the 18th century in the light of the Primary sources of the Later Mughals.

a) Please select an appropriate answer.

1. Who was the author of *Muntakhib-ul-Lubab*?

a) Ghulam Husain Tabatabai
b) Muhammad Ali Panipati
c) Khafi Khan
d) Muhammad Qasim Ibrat

2. *Tarikh-i-Shah Alam Bahadur Shah* was written by which historian?

a) Danishmand Khan

b) Mirza Noor-ud-Din
c) Muhammad Qasim Ibrat
d) Nizam-ul-Mulk

3. What is the primary subject of *Ibrat Nama* by Muhammad Qasim Ibrat?
a) The reign of Akbar
b) The decline of the Mughal Empire
c) The war between the British and the Mughals
d) The history of the Delhi Sultanate

4. Which of the following sources is a history of the Timurid Kings of India from 1202-1788 A.D.?
a) *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin*
b) *Tarikh-i-Muzaffari*
c) *Muntakhib-ul-Lubab*
d) *Ibrat Nama*

5. Who was the writer of *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin*?
a) Muhammad Ali Panipati
b) Sayyid Ghulam Husain Tabatabai
c) Danishmand Khan
d) Khafi Khan

Answer Keys
1. Answer: c)
2. Answer: a)
3. Answer: b)
4. Answer: b)
5. Answer: b)

Unit: 2

CONDITIONS OF INDIA AFTER AURANGZEB: AN OVERVIEW OF LATER MUGHAL RULERS

Written by: Dr. Kishwar Sultana

Reviewed by: Dr. Riaz Ahmad

CONTENTS

	Introduction	29
	Objectives	30
1.	Bahadur Shah-I: *1707-12 AD*	31
2.	Jahandar Shah: *1712-13 AD*	32
3.	Farrukh Siyyar: *1713-19 AD*	32
4.	Rafi Ul-Dara Jat & Rafi Ul-Daula: *1719 AD*	33
5.	Mohammad Shah (*Rangeela*): *1719-48 AD*	33
6.	Ahmad Shah: *1748-54 AD*	35
7.	Alamgir-II: *1754-59 AD*	36
8.	Shah Alam-II: *1759-1806 AD*	36
9.	Akbar-II: *1806-37 AD*	37
10.	Bahadur Shah-II: *1837-57 AD*	37
	Compulsory Reading	38
	Suggested Readings	38
	Self-Assessment Questions	39

INTRODUCTION

The Mughal Empire was the dominant power in the Indian Subcontinent between the mid-16th century and the early 18th century. Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur founded the Mughal Empire in India after defeating Ibrahim Lodhi in the first battle of Panipat in 1526 and superseded the Delhi Sultans as the rulers of northern India. Babur was succeeded by his eldest son Humayun, who failed in asserting a strong monarchical authority. In the first ten years of his rule, he faced so many challenges, not only from his younger brothers but also from the Afghan General Sher Shah Suri. Sher Shah Suri defeated Humayun in the battle of Chausa and Kanauj in 1540. With the Iranian help, he recaptured Kabul and Qandahar and re-established Mughal rule in Delhi in 1555. Humayun's heir, Akbar, was born in exile and was only 13 years old when his father died. It was due to his faithful *Atalique* Behram Khan, Akbar survived to demonstrate his worth.

Akbar was not only a great conqueror but also a capable organizer and a great administrator. He re-consolidated the Mughal Empire and set up a host of institutions that proved to be the foundation of an administrative system that operated even during British times. He died in 1605 and was succeeded by his son, Salim, who took the title of Jahangir, meaning "Conqueror of the World". He expanded the empire and consolidated the Mughal rule in Bengal. Around this time, European traders had started coming to India. Jahangir was succeeded by his second son, Khurram, in 1628. He took the title of Shah Jahan, meaning "the Emperor of the World". The Mughal Empire was at its zenith during Shah Jahan's rule. This was due to almost 100 years of unparalleled prosperity and peace. As a result, during this reign, the world witnessed the unique development of art and culture of the Mughal Empire. Aurangzeb ascended the throne in 1658 and ruled supreme till 1707. He ruled for 50 years, matching Akbar's reign in longevity. But unfortunately, he kept his three sons away from the royal court with the result that none of them was trained in the art of government. This proved to be very damaging for the Mughals later on.[1] These Mughal rulers were called as Great Mughals because a new age began with the unification of India under them. They were very strong and effective in their rule and great commanders of their forces. The Mansabdari system used by them played a pivotal role in making as great.

[1] For detail see; Stanley Lane-Poole, *Medieval India under Mohammedan Rule (A.D. 712-1764)* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1979).

However, the successors of Aurangzeb proved to be inefficient, lacked character, motivation, and commitment to rule the empire strongly. They were easy-loving, cowardly, and licentious. They totally ignored their state duties and were unable to halt the process of decline.

OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the circumstances that paved the way for the downfall of the Mughal Empire
- Comprehend the nature of different rulers of the Later Mughal
- Recognize the local communities that emerged during this period
- To be aware of how different rulers of neighboring countries interfere in the affairs of the Mughal rulers
- To identify the different revivalist and resistant movements in the subcontinent during 1707-1857.

1. BAHADUR SHAH 1 (1707-1712 AD)

Aurangzeb's solution to avoid a war after his death was to have the Mughal Empire divided among his three sons. This decision was not satisfactory to any of the three princes. It should come as no surprise that the sons of Aurangzeb became locked in a life-or-death struggle for succession. After all, their father came to power after a savage battle with his own brothers. The victor among Aurangzeb's sons was Muazzam. The elderly and moderate Muazzam assumed the title of Bahadur Shah and reigned for less than five years. Bahadur Shah was followed by a line of feeble successors. At the time of his accession, his age was sixty-three.[2] He wanted to follow a policy of reconciliation to win over the confidence of all classes of the masses.

Bahadur Shah faced numerous problems during his reign. The Mughal Empire was in shreds by the time Bahadur Shad had assumed control. He tried to keep peace with the Hindus, but the limitations of his realm and the realities of the situation made it almost impossible to rule. [3] According to Khafi Khan, at the end of four years, the treasure of thirteen lacs of rupees to which this emperor had succeeded was all given away. The income of the empire during his reign was insufficient to meet the expenses. Consequently, there was great parsimony shown in the government establishments and particularly in the royal household, so much so that money was received every day from the treasure of Prince 'Azimus-shan' to keep things going. He maintained the pomp and show display of the Mughal court. Bahadur Shah was a good soldier and a kind-hearted monarch. He was inclined towards the Shia doctrine and tried to introduce some Shia forms in the *khutbah,* but this was found impolitic, and he gave up. [4] During his reign, there were raising some minorities such as Rajputs in Marwar, Marathas in Deccan, and Sikhs in Punjab.[5] He left behind four sons, three of whom were killed in the bloody war of succession, with the sole survivor, Jahandar Shah, who ascended the throne in 1712.

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[2] Sunil K. Saxena, *History of Medieval India* (New Delhi: DPS Publishing House, 2011), 201.

[3] Sh. Abdur Rashid, History of the Muslims of Indo-Pakistan Sub-Contient, vol. I (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1978), 41.

[4] I.H. Qureshi, *A short History of Pakistan*. Book 3. (Karachi: University of Karachi, 1984), 125.

[5] J.N. Sarkar , *Fall of the Mughal Empire*.(India: Calcutta, 1949) , 560-67.

2. JAHANDAR SHAH 1712-13 AD

Jahandar Shah came to the throne in 1712 with the help of Irani nobles headed by Zulifiqar Khan, son of Asad Khan, the wazir of Bahadur Shah. Jahandar Shad appointed Zulfiqar Khan as his wazir, who wielded real power and authority. Jahandar Shah proved very weak, devoted to pleasure and to his favorite lady Lal Kanwar (his concubine). He was a mere puppet in the hands of Lal Kunwar. He had no will of his own and was inexperienced and indifferent to state business.[6]

The entire administration fell into utter confusion during Jahandar Shah's brief reign of 11 months. In this period, the Saiyed brothers were worse and created troubles for the ruler and fired him from the throne. When the Imperial army was defeated, he fled to Delhi and was later (Farukh Siyar) captured and executed along with Zulifqar Khan. According to Irvine, 'he was the first sovereign of the house of Taimur who proved himself absolutely unfitted to rule. The only good quality left to him in popular estimate was his liking for and liberality to religious mendicants.[7] His rule could not last more than eleven months when Sayied Brothers brought Farrukh Siyar, the second son of Azim-us-Shah, to the throne by defeating Jahandar Shah in a battle Near Delhi.

3. MUHAMMAD FARRUKH SIYAR 1713-19 AD

Farrukh Siyar (1683-1719) ascended to the throne in 1713. He assumes the Title of Jalaluddin Farrukh Siyar Padshah Ghazi. He was the Mughal emperor between 1713 and 1719. Noted as a handsome but weak ruler, easily swayed by his advisers, Farukh Siyar lacked the ability and character to rule independently. His reign witnessed the primacy of the Sayyid Brothers, who became the effective powers of the land, behind the façade of Mughal rule. Abdullah Khan and Hussain Ali, two brothers, popularly known as the Sayyid brothers, were now playing the role of King Makers. Farrukh Siyar, after coming to the Mughal throne, tried his best to get rid of them, but due to ill planning, his designs were exposed and ultimately he fell prey to the wrath of Sayyid Brothers in April 1719 when he was dragged from the throne, blinded, and confined in a dark hole where

[6] Qureshi. *A short History of Pakistan.* Book 3. 125.
[7] William Irvine. *Later Mughals* (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 1991), 241

he was put to death on 28th April 1719.[8] This ended the inglorious reign of Farrukh Siyar, whose tragic death elicited only the Sympathy of the beggars and mendicants of Delhi.[9]

4. RAFI-UD-DARAJAT AND RAFI-UD-DAULA 1719 AD

Rafi-ud-Darajat was the son of Rafi-us-Shan and a young man of twenty at the time of his accession. On 18th May 1719, Rafi ud-Darjat's uncle Neku-Siyar assumed the throne at the Agra Fort as he thought he was more eligible for the post. of all these actual circumstances, Sayyid Brothers brought Rafi-ud-Darajat onto the throne on 28th February 1719. He was deposed on 4th June 1719. He died a week later after his deposition.

He succeeded his short-lived brother Rafi-ud-Daula in that year, with the title of Shah Jahan II, by the Sayyid Brothers. A major event during his reign was the defeat of his uncle Neku Siyar in August 1719 and the recapture of Agra Fort. The Sayyid Brothers then looted Agra and seized a large amount of wealth, which once had been the personal possessions of Shah Jahan's favourite wife, Mumtaz Mahal. Like his brother, he also died in September 1719 at Delhi as a result of consumption and Lung Cancer.[10]

5. MUHAMMAD SHAH (RANGEELA) 1719-48

The Sayyids now crowned Prince Raushan Akhtar (the son of Jahan Shah) as emperor under the title of Muhammad Shah. He was a weak and inexperienced prince who had addicted himself to an inactive life, which entirely weakened his energy. Although, he himself was put on the throne by the Sayyid Brothers, Mohammad Shah tried to dispose of them, and he succeeded in doing so in 1723. He, as well as his mother Qudsia Begum, sent secret letters to Nizamul Mulk in Malwa complaining against the Sayyieds. Despite this, with the help of Turani nobles headed by Nizam-ul-Mulk, governor of the Deccan and Mir Muhammad Khan, head of the Mughal army, and his cousin Abdus Samad Khan, governor of

[8] Ibid,. 244-403.
[9] I.H. Qureshi. *A short History of Pakistan*. Book 3, p. 127
[10] Irvine. *Later Mughals*, 404-432.

Lahore, he succeeded in crushing the Sayyid brothers in 1723.[11] But he came under the influence of Turani nobles.

After the Sayyid Brothers, Mohammad Shah became free from the influence of the Sayyid Brothers after a year of his succession. He got the last chance to restore the power and prestige of the Mughal Empire. But he too failed. He was an easy and luxury-loving person. He was nicknamed as the *Rangila.* Another threat to Mughal authority suddenly materialized, and Nadir Shah of Iran invaded India in 1739. Persia had been the Mughal Empire's most powerful neighbor and played an important role in almost every Mughal power struggle. The border between the Persian and the Mughal Empires had often shifted back and forth. The great city of Kandahar area, including part of Baluchistan, was independent of both the Persian and the Mughals, and was being ruled by the Khilji's and Ghilzia's tribe, of mixed Turkish and Afghan descent. Then a Ghilzai chief captured Isfahan in Persia and mounted the Persian throne. At this time, the Nawab of Hyderabad Deccan was still serving as wazir to the emperor Mohammad Shah. He tried to convince the Mughal emperor to go to the aid of the Safavid King of Persia. Given the disunity and internal problems of the Mughal Empire, this might seem strange advice, but in fact it was the demise of the Safavid Dynasty of Persia as well as the decline of the Mughal Dynasty, which created a power vacuum, leaving the present-day Pakistan area vulnerable to Turkish and Afghan invasions. A battle was fought in February 1739 between the Mughal troops and those of Nadir Shah near Karanl, and the latter was successful. He destroyed what was left of the Mughal Empire and brought it to its end. The weakness of the Mughal army was clearly portrayed after this invasion.[12] The Maratha raids in Malwa, Gujarat, and Bundelkhand, and even in the territory in the north of these provinces, continued as before.

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[11] For detail see; Mahmud Hussain, *A History of the Freedom Movement*. vol. I. (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 2008).

[12]See for detail: L. Lockhart, *Nadir Shah: A critical Study Based Mainly Upon Contemporary Sources* (Lahore: Al-Irfan Historical Reprints, 1976).

Early in 1748, the Punjab was invaded by Ahmed Shah Abdali, an Afghan of the Sadozai sect of the Abdali or Durrani tribe, who became king of Afghanistan on Nadir Shah's fall. The invader sacked Lahore and proceeded towards Delhi, but he was encountered by Prince Ahmed, son of Mohammad Shah, at Manupur near Machhiwara and defeated and compelled to retire to Kabul. The process of the disintegration of the empire was accelerated by the *subedar's* of Mughals and thus broke away from the centre, Nizam-ul-Mulk in the Deccan, Saadat Khan in Awadh, the Rohillas in the Doab, and the Bangash Nawabs at Farrukhabad. Besides, the Marathas were in virtual control of large territories, the Jats[13] Established control around Agra and Mathura and the Sikhs in the Punjab. It was a dismissal situation for the Muslims in general. Only a unified, disciplined army under a leader of ability and vision could have stemmed the decline. There was no lack of competent soldiers, statesmen, and administrators, but they all pulled apart rather than together, and no other single factor contributed more to the ruin of Muslim power than the lack of unity amongst the leading officers and the weakening of the central authority of the Mughal Empire. The nobles did not realize that they were digging their own graves by weakening the empire.

6. AHMAD SHAH (1748-54)

Mohammad Shah died on 26th April, 1748, and was succeeded by his son Ahmad Shah, who was in the Punjab at the time of his father's death. He was 21 and possessed no experience in administration and no qualities of leadership. He was vicious, lacking in ambition and dignity. He did not attempt to put an end to the intrigues of the leading noblemen. He was unable to stop the moral degradation of the Mughal nobility and the aggravation of the party factions. He immersed himself in the pleasures of a low kind by giving up all responsibilities and handed over to a eunuch Nawab Bahadur Jawid Khan, and Safdar Jang (an arch rival of Nawab Bahadur) was appointed *wazir* in 1748. As a result, the administration went down and the enemies of the empire, notably the Sikhs in Punjab, grew stronger. In spite of this, the *wazir* co-operated with the Marathas and Jats, and with their help destroyed the Muhammad Khan Bangash of Farrukhabad and assassinated Jawid Khan.[14] The Emperor set up against him Ghaziu'ddin, entitled as Imad-ul-Mulk, a grandson of the late Nizam-ul-Mulk.

[13] For detail see; R. Majumdar, ed., *The Marhatha Supremacy*, vol. VIII, (Delhi: Bhavan Book University, 1978).

[14] I.H. Qureshi. *A short History Pakistan*. Book 3, 133

However, he deposed and blinded Emperor Ahmed Shah and made Prince Aziz-ud-Din, son of Jahandar Shah, as emperor with the title of Alamgir II.

7. ALAMGIR II (1754-59)

Alamgir II (1699-1859) succeeded at the age of 55 and was practically a puppet in the hands of his Wazir Ghaziuddin Imad-ul-Mulk, who ultimately got the king assassinated in November 1759. Alamgir II had no experience of administration or warfare, having spent most of his life in jail.[15] During his reign, Ahmad shah Abdali invaded India, captured Delhi and plundered Mathura. Ghazi-ud-Din was compelled to ask the Maratha's for help in fighting the Afghan threat. Consequently, the Marathas expanded their own territory at the Mughal's expense, although Ahmad Shah Abdali defeated them in the third Battle of Panipat, halting their Northerly advance. In 1757, the British India Company troops under Clive of India defeated the Mughal's subject ruler, Siraj-ud-Daulah, the Nawab of Bengal, and assumed effective rule of that wealthy province. Although semi-independent under its Nawab, Bengal remained a source of valuable revenue. Loss of Bengal was another blow to Mughal prestige.[16]

Imad-ul-Mulk was a man of no principles. He persecuted Ali Gauher, the elder son of the emperor. He tried to form an anti-Maratha coalition with a view to driving out the Marathas from Northern India, but failed. The relation between Alamagir II and Imad-ul-Mulk was not satisfactory, and the latter had him assassinated in November 1759. [17]

8. SHAH ALAM II 1759-1806

Ali Gauhar was the son of Alamgir II. He became king and adopted the title of Shah Alam II (1728-1806). At the time of his father's death, he was in Bihar. Although he was declared the Mughal Emperor, but he did not try to go to Delhi for 12 years. He reached Delhi in 1772 with the help of the Marathas. During that period, he tried to conquer Bihar and Bengal but failed. He was defeated in 1764 in the Battle of Buxer by the East Indian Company. In 1765, he gave Diwani in

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[15] Francis Robinson, *The Mughal emperors and the Islamic dynasties of India, Iran and Central*

Asia, 1206-1925 (New York: Thames & Hudson Press, 2007), 215-230.

[16]J.F.Richards, *The Mughal Empire: The New Cambridge History of India*, vol. 1.5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 364-68.

[17] Ibid.

Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa to the East Indian Company on the latter's promise to pay him an annual tribute of 26 lakhs rupees.

Shah Alam II proved to be even weaker than the previous Mughal rulers. First, Ghulam Qadir Rohila dominated Delhi, and he ousted him from the throne by humiliating him, but the Marathas brought him again to the throne. Ghulam Qadir Rohila was defeated and hanged by the Marathas. In 1803, the British established their dominance in Delhi by defeating the Marathas. The British, who controlled India, were almost complete, didn't disturb Shah Alam, who was a king only in name, and continued to rule till his death in 1806.

9. AKBAR II 1806-37

Shah Alam was succeeded by his eldest living son, Akbar II (1760-1837). Like his father, he was also a pensioner of the British. He was the head of the royal establishment in the Red Fort of Delhi and enjoyed the imperial title only by courtesy. Trouble arose after the death of Shah Alam II when the East Indian Company refused to acknowledge him as the Emperor and considered him only as a pensioner of the East India Company. The situation became tense under Lord Hastings when a meeting that had been arranged between him and Akbar II could not be held. The emperor demanded that Hastings appear as a subject and present the usual *nazr*. Hastening refused to have a meeting on these terms. Henceforth, the Company's Government set by their hands to curtail the privileges of the emperor. In self-defense, the emperor made a case which was fought out on his behalf in London by Raja Ram Mohan Roy. He reached England in April 1831, while the Court of Directors and the board of Control appearing to raise the *peshkash* and refused to admit other legitimate claims of Akbar, including his status as the legal sovereign. Akbar died in 1837, vainly trying to improve his financial condition or his royal status.[18]

10. BAHADUR SHAH II (1837-1857)

Bahadur Shah (1775-1862), who succeeded Akbar, continued his efforts to secure a higher subsidy, but he failed as Akbar had failed earlier. He was fond of poetry and had the title of Zafar. An agent, Mr. Thompson, was sent to England to make a direct appeal to Queen Victoria, which was unsuccessful. The crisis was

[18] I.H. Qureshi. *A short History Pakistan*. Book 3, p. 154.

reached in the time of Lord Dalhousie when he required the emperor to vacate the Red Fort. The order was later postponed for the lifetime of Bahadur Shah. He took part in the 1857 War of Independence. After the failure of the war, Bahadur Shah was arrested, and three of the heroic princes, one son and two grandsons of the emperor shot dead by the Hudson. He was exiled to Rangoon, where he died after four years of rigorous imprisonment. The government of India was assumed by Queen Victoria of Great Britain.

Compulsory Reading

Rashid, Sh. Abdur. History of the Muslims of Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent, Vol. I. Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1978.

Suggested Readings

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a) Self-Assessment Questions

1. What were the political conditions of the Mughals after Aurangzeb?
2. Briefly discuss the circumstances and causes that led to the war of succession between the sons of Aurangzeb?
3. Write a critical note on the political role of the Sayyed Brothers in the Mughal court?
4. What were the reasons that prompted the British to establish their political control over South Asia?
5. Critically examine the circumstances and reasons that led to the establishment of the Maratha rule in India.

b) Please select the appropriate answer.

1. **Who founded the Mughal Empire in India after defeating Ibrahim Lodhi in the first battle of Panipat in 1526?**
   a) Akbar
   b) Babur
   c) Humayun
   d) Aurangzeb

2. **Which Mughal emperor ruled for 50 years, matching Akbar's reign in longevity?**
   a) Shah Jahan
   b) Aurangzeb
   c) Jahangir
   d) Bahadur Shah I

3. **What was the primary reason for the decline of the Mughal Empire after Aurangzeb?**
   a) External invasions
   b) Weak successors
   c) Economic collapse
   d) Religious conflicts

4. **Who succeeded Aurangzeb and assumed the title of Bahadur Shah I?**
   a) Jahandar Shah
   b) Muazzam
   c) Farrukh Siyar
   d) Rafi-ud-Darajat

5. **Which Mughal emperor was known for his policy of reconciliation with Hindus?**
   a) Bahadur Shah I
   b) Jahandar Shah
   c) Farrukh Siyar
   d) Muhammad Shah

Answer Key

1. **b) Babur**
2. **b) Aurangzeb**
3. **b) Weak successors**
4. **b) Muazzam**
5. **a) Bahadur Shah**

Unit: 3

GROWTH OF INDEPENDENT AND SEMI-INDEPENDENT STATES: ENDOGENOUS REASONS OF DECLINE

Written by: Sadia Aziz

Reviewed by: Dr. Riaz Ahmad

CONTENTS

	Introduction	43
	Objectives	44
1.	Hyderabad	45
2.	Deccan *(*Ascendancy of *Marahatas)*	46
	2.1 Balaji Vishwanath (1713-1720)	47
	2.2 Baji Rao (1720-1740)	47
	2.3 Balaji Baji Rao (1740-1761)	48
	2.4 The Third Battle of Panipat	48
3.	Bengal *(Murshad Quli Khan)*	*48*
4.	Oudh	49
5.	Punjab	50
	5.1 Rise of *Jats*	50
	5.2 Rise of *Sikhs*	51
6.	Rohilkhand	52
	Compulsory Reading	53
	Suggested Readings	53
	Self-Assessment Question	53

INTRODUCTION

The death of Aurangzeb on 3rd March 1707 marked the beginning of the end of the Great Mughal Empire's rule of a century and a half (1526-1707). The Mughal Empire entered its decline immediately after Aurangzeb's death. The successors of Aurangzeb, called the Later Mughal emperors, lost control over the empire, and independent kingdoms sprang up in every part of India. Among them, the state created by Marathas under the leadership of the first three Peshwas (prime minister) of Chhatrapati (prime minister) Sahu became the most extensive and powerful in India.

Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah succeeded in creating an independent state in Deccan, while Haider Ali raised the state of Mysore into a strong kingdom in South India. Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa constituted one strong state which became free within a few years after the death of Aurangzeb. The independent state of Oudh was created by Saadat Khan, Burhan-ul-mulk, while the Sikhs entrenched themselves firmly in Punjab under *Ranjit* Singh at the end of the eighteenth century. Besides, small kingdoms arose in Karnataka, Rohilkhand, Kerala, and none of them could rise to the status of a powerful state. Mostly, they fought among themselves and remained politically insignificant in the game of power politics in India. This volatile situation of states riven with political fissures among themselves gradually gave vent to the English to concede to them. This internal weakness of the states brought political and economic instability to India.

OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Enumerate how the Great Mughals were able to rule large areas of India successfully.
- Discuss the size of independent states that grew out of the ruins of the Mughal Empire in the 18th century.
- Examine critically the rise of the Marathas under the three *Peshwas* of *Chhartrapati* Shahu.
- Assess the causes and consequences of the third battle of *Panipat*.
- Discuss the relations of the *nawabs* of the independent states with the East India Company.

1. HYDERABAD

Chin Qilich Khan, titled Nizam-ul-mulk Asaf Jah afterwards, was the founder of the independent state of Hyderabad in 1774.[1] He was at Bijapur at the time of the death of Aurangzeb and remained neutral in the war of succession fought among the sons of Aurangzeb. Bahadur Shah 1 ascended to the throne after finishing off his rivals. He made Chin Qilich Khan the governor of Oudh and *faujdar* of Gorakhpur. After Bahadur Shah's death, he supported Farrukhsiyar against Jahandar Shah. Therefore, when Farrukhsiyar ascended to the throne, he appointed him governor of the six *subas* of the Deccan and awarded him the titles of Khan Khanan and Nizam-ul-mulk Bahadur Fath Jang.[2] From then onward, he dreamt nothing except to rule over the Deccan independently of Delhi. He served as a governor of Hyderabad from 1713-1715. He consolidated his position through diplomacy and war. He was displaced by Hussain Ali, one of the Sayyid brothers, who appointed him as the governor of Hyderabad.

In 1720, Nizam returned to the Deccan and seized the Viceroyalty by defeating the nephew of Husain Ali. As Emperor Mohammad Shah was himself keen to break the hold of the Sayyid Brothers. He made a deal with Nizam and confirmed him as the Viceroy of the Deccan. After the fall of the Sayyid brothers, Emperor Mohammad Shah called him to Delhi and appointed him as *vazir* of the empire in 1722, and he remained as *vazir* upto 1724. He faced severe criticism and opposition from licentious Emperor Mohammad Shah and nobles of the court because of his strict discipline. In these circumstances, he marched to Deccan without the permission of the emperor. Unhappy with this act, Mohammad Shah appointed Mubariz Khan as the governor of the Deccan. Mubariz Khan was defeated and killed by Nizam with the help of Marathas in the battle of Sakharkharda in 1724. He forced the wretched emperor of Delhi to recognize him as the governor of the south (Deccan) and confer on him the title of Asaf Jah, which his descendant still bears.[3]

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[1] For detail see, Munis Faruqui, "At Empire's End: The Nizam, Hyderabad and Eighteenth-Century India," Modern Asian Studies 43 (issue 1 2009): 5.

[2] Roper Lethbridge. *The golden book of India: a genealogical and biographical dictionary of the ruling princes, chiefs, nobles, and other personages, titled or decorated of the Indian empire* (Delhi: Aakar Books, 2005), 179.

[3] Sekhara Bandyopadhyaya, *Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2004), 17

That marked the founding of the independent state of Hyderabad, which the Nizam ruled sternly. He died at the grand age of ninety-one on the 21st May, 1748, when the contest for succession to the Deccan government gave vent to the European trading companies to interfere vigorously in the politics of the *subah*. The interference of the Marathas in the politics of the Deccan and the rise of the state of Mysore under Haider Ali created more complications for the rulers of Hyderabad. In the time of Lord Wellesley, the Nizam entered into a subsidiary alliance with the English East India Company and virtually became their subordinate ally.[4]

2. DECCAN (ASCENDANCY OF MARATHAS)

The most important threat to and bring down the Mughal Empire came from the Marathas, who possessed the strength to fill the political vacuum. Sahu, son of Shambhaji, who was imprisoned by Aurangzeb in 1689, was released by Prince Azam Shah in 1707 with a view to dividing the Maratha. The return of Sahu to Maharashtra started a civil war among them. Sahu claimed to be the king of Marahatas. He was opposed by Tara Bai, the widow of Raja Ram, who was acting as regent for his son Shivaji II. She claimed that Shivaji II had the rightful claim to be the king of the Maratha. A battle took place at Khed in October 1707 between the rival parties. Sahu won it and therefore became the *Chhatrapati* (king) of the Marathas. He was challenged by another son of Raja Ram, Shambhaji II, who settled himself at Kolhapur, but in Maharashtra, Sahu remained the Maratha king. Sahu (1707-1749) himself was neither a good commander nor a capable administrator. Yet, the Marathas reached the zenith of their power during his rule. The credit goes to his Peshwas.[5] The three Peshwas of Sahu proved competent. In fact, they made the Marathas the strongest power in India and themselves the most powerful persons among the Marathas, so much so that after the death of Sahu, the Peshwas eclipsed the Chhatrapati and assumed all powers of the state themselves.

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[4] For detail see; K.C.Sharma, *East India Company*, vol. 1 (Delhi: Vista International Publishing House, 2007).

[5]Barbara Ramusack,N. *Indian Princes and Their States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 36.

2.1 Balaji Vishwanath (1713-1720)

Balaji Vishwanath was appointed in 1708 a *carcoon* or revenue clerk by Dhanaji Jadav, the commander-in-chief of Sahu. After Dhanaji's death, he was associated with the former son, Chandra Sena Jadav, who appointed him as organiser or agent in charge of the army in 1712. He proved his abilities both as a civil administrator and a military organiser. In recognition of his services, Sahu appointed him prime minister on the 16th November 1713. Vishwanath was primarily responsible for the consolidation of Sahu's power in Maharashtra. He was an astute diplomat and concluded a treaty with Husain Ali when he came to Deccan in 1714, which helped in the rise of the Marathas. As a result of this treaty, the Maratha influence spread all over the Deccan. It clearly proves that the Marathas could interfere now in the policies of Delhi to their advantage. For this achievement, Balaji Vishwanath has been described as the "Second Founder of the Maratha Empire". [6]

2.2 Baji Rao (1720-1740)

After the death of Balaji Vishwanath in 1720, his son Baji Rao became the new Peshwa. The Nizam challenged the Marathas' right to collect *Chouth* and *Sardesh Mukhi.*[7] Fromthe Mughal provinces. Baji Rao took up the challenge. He was a great soldier and statesman. He not only succeeded in consolidating the Maratha power in the Deccan but also greatly extended it. He even yielded the idea of an All India Maratha Empire called *Hindi Pad Badshahi*. He defeated the Nizam and established Maratha supremacy over the Deccan. In 1737, Balaji made the courageous attempt and cross the Jumuna and appeared before the very gate of Delhi. The Mughal emperor, Muhammad Shah *Rangila,* called Nizam for help from Deccan. Balaji completely routed him near Bhopal in January 1738. He also defeated the Portuguese and conquered Salesette and Bassein from them and proved himself a great general by organizing the Maratha Confederacy, comprised of different Maratha Chiefs. In 1740, Balaji passed away, and his son Balji Baji Rao became the third Peshwa.

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[6] Radhey Shyam Chaurasia, *History of medieval India: from 1000 A.D. to 1707 A.D*, (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2002), 299.

[7] *Chouth* was a military tribute paid by the conquered territories imposed from early 18th century by the Maratha chief Shivaji in India. It was nominally levied at 25% on revenue. Since the Shivaji was hereditary *Sardesh Mukh* (Chief Headman) of Maharashtra, he demanded an additional levy of 10% known as *Sardesh Mukhi.*

2.3 Balaji Baji Rao (1740-1761)

Balaji Baji Rao continued the policy of his father. Balaji Baji Rao was not a military commander, but the Marathas had already penetrated into the North and went on increasing their hold and power by collecting *Chouth* and *Sardesh Mukhi* from all over India.[8]

2.4 The Third Battle of Panipat

In 1752, the Peshwa agreed with the Mughal emperor. By its term

1. The Peshwas should protect the Mughal Empire.
2. A sum of Rs. 50 lakh would be paid to the Maratha for their aid.
3. The Peshwas should be given the right to levy Chauth in Punjab, Sind, and Doab.

By accepting these terms, Marathas are directly involved in the politics of Delhi. At that time, the Mughal court was divided into two rival groups of nobles, comprised of foreign Muslim nobles and Indian Muslim nobles. The Marathas supported the Indian Muslim nobles, and foreign Muslim nobles sought the support of Ahmad Shah Abdali, the ruler of Afghanistan. Abdali agreed to help them as he was interested in capturing the territories of Kashmir, Punjab, and Multan. As a result, the Marathas and Ahmad Shah Abdali came into conflict with each other in the third battle of Panipat.

The Marathas were badly defeated and lost all their important chiefs. After hearing the heavy loss of valuable generals and great wealth, Balaji Baji Rao rushed to Panipat with a huge force, but his arrival was too late. So, he returned broken-hearted to Poona and died in 1761 few days later. He was succeeded by his son Madhav Rao l, who has been regarded as one of the greatest Peshwas. However, after the third battle of Panipat, dissentions broke out among Maratha Chiefs, and Peshwa never recovered his glory.

3. BENGAL *(MURSHAD QULI KHAN)*

Bengal also became an independent state within a few years after the death of Aurangzeb under the tutelage of *Murshad Quli* Khan, who led the Mughal administration from the late 17th century until he died in 1727. In this period, Bengal became virtually independent of the Mughal emperor, and the *subedari* or

[8] N. Jayapalan. *History of India*. (New Delhi: Atlantic Publisher, 2001), 244.

governorship became hereditary for the first time in the family of Murshad Quli. In November 1700, he was appointed as *Deewan* of Bengal and *Subedar* of Orrisa by Aurangzeb. [9]

In 1717, Farrukhsayar promoted Murshad Quli Khan to governor of Bengal. Murshad Quli Khan's success was based on imperial loyalty and obedience in his accustomed role of fiscal manager. [10] He was succeeded by his son-in-law, Shujauddin Muhammad Khan, who ruled over Bengal for about twelve years. He divided Bengal into four administrative units, improved its finances, looked after the welfare of his subjects, and dispensed justice impartially. He was succeeded by his incompetent son, Sarfaraz Khan. Ali Vardi Khan, the deputy governor of Bihar, and his brother of Haji Ahmed, the most influential courtier of Bengal over overthrew Sarfaraz Khan in a pitched battle at Giria in the district of Murshadabad in April 1740. He declared himself the Nawab of Bengal and secured confirmation of his new position from the Mughal emperor, Muhammad Shah *Rangila*.[11] He administered Bengal well and brought peace and prosperity to the state. Ali Vardi Khan was succeeded by his grandson, Siraj-ud-daula. He was a good administrator and succeeded in suppressing his internal enemies but was tracked down and killed by the British in June 1757 in the battle of Plassey. With Mir Jaffer's cooperation (Siraj-ud-Daula's commander-in-chief and father-in-law) small English army easily defeated the Nawab's large army. Mir Jaffar was made the new Nawab of Bengal. From then on, the British would appoint and remove the Nawabs of Bengal at their pleasure. Mir Jaffer was also replaced by Mir Kasim by the English in 1760. Mir Kasim was also defeated by the British in the Battle of Buxor in 1764.

4. OUDH[12]

Oudh became independent under Saadat Khan, an immigrant from Khorasan. Saadat Khan was appointed as the *subedar* by the Mughal emperor Muhammad

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[9] John R. McLane. *Land and Local Kingship in Eighteenth-Century Bengal* (London: Cambrigde University Press, 2002), 27.

[10] John F. Richards. *The Mughal Empire*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 277.

[11] J.L.Mehta. *Advance Study in the History of Modern India 1707-1813* (Delhi: New Dawn Press Group, 2005), 167-68.

[12]Muzaffar Alam, *Crisis of the Empire in Mughal North India: Awadh and the Punjab* (London: Oxford University Press. 1986).

Shah. He crushed the local chiefs of Banaras, Gazipur, Jaunpur, and Chunar with the help of his army. He was a capable soldier and wise ruler. He died in 1739 and was succeeded by his nephew and son-in-law, Safdar Jang. He rose to the position of *vakil* in 1748 under Ahmed Shah and retained his position until 1953. Safdar Jang was succeeded by his son Shuja-ud-daula. He fought as an ally of Ahmed Shah Abdali in the third battle of Panipat and also provided shelter fugitive prince Ali Gauhar. He appointed as the *vazir* of the empire in 1762 when Ali Gauhar ascended the throne with the title of Shah Alam II.[13]

He helped Mir Kasim, the fugitive Nawab of Bengal, along with the Mughal emperor in 1764 in the battle of Buxar against the British. The British came out as victorious in this war, and the participation of Mughal emperor Shah Alam added prestige to the British victory, he signed over the right of revenue collection in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa to the British. Shuja-ud-daula, however, continued to fight and was defeated by the British. By the treaty of Allahabad, on payment of fifty lakhs and surrender of some territory, Oudh was restored to its Nawab. He died on 26 January 1775 and was succeeded by his son Asaf-ud-daula.[14] The nawab of Oudh gradually increased their dependence on the British. In 1801, Saadat Ali accepted the subsidiary system imposed by Lord Wellesley and became a dependent ally of the British. Oudh was finally annexed to the British Empire in 1856 by Lord Dalhousie by a declaration, and Wajid Ali Shah was sent to Calcutta.[15]

5. PUNJAB *(RISE OF JATS AND SIKHS)*

5.1 The *Jats*

The *Jats* form a significant part of the rural population of Haryana, Punjab, the western regions of the Ganga Yamuna Doab, and eastern Rajputana. During the ancient and medieval times, the *Jats* were known for being hardy agriculturists and brave warriors. They were employed as mercenaries by Hindus as well as Muslim kings. They came into conflict with the Mughal government, the Rajputs, and the Afghans in the later seventeenth century when some of the

[13] L.P. Sharma and V.D. Mahajan, *History of British Rule in India* (Lahore: Carrier Publishers, 1998), 16.

[14] Ibid,.

[15] I.H. Quresi, *A Short History of Pakistan* (Karachi: BCC&T Press University of Karachi, 2006), 108-109.

Jat zamindars of the Agra region tried to establish an independent principality. During the 1680s, under their leader, Churaman, they invaded and captured the territories towards the west of Delhi and gradually dominated the region between the two important cities of Delhi and Agra. For a while, they became the sole master of Agra. Badan Singh (1722-1756), a nephew of *Churaman*, may be regarded as the real founder of a *Jat* state of Bharat, Deep, and Kumher.[16] The *Jat* kingdom reached its height under Suraj Mal (1756-1765), the adopted son and successor of Badan Singh. Suraj Mal was a great warrior and an astute diplomat. He successfully united the scattered *Jat* zamindars near Agra into a powerful state.[17] Though internally, it remained a tribal confederacy, and no new principle of administration was introduced, the rise of the *Jat* state had a definite impact on the state system of north India.

5.2 The *Sikhs*

Guru Nanak (1469-1538) founded Sikhism against the cast system and *Brahmin* hold over the religion. In the beginning, it was a peace-loving religious sect. It attracted mostly the Jat peasantry and the lower casts of the Punjab. Guru *Arjuna*, the fifth guru of the tenth of Sikhism, was killed by Emperor Jahangir on May 30, 1606, as a result of which this community turned into a military force. The tenth and the last Guru, *Govind Singh* considered the real founder of the Sikh power. He founded the Khalsa (brotherhood of Sikhs) in 1699 and fought bravely against the Mughals.[18] Following the third battle of Panipat in 1761, Kashmir was annexed by the Afghans in 1762. The Afghan empire had now reached its zenith, but Ahmed Shah Abdali's supremacy in Punjab was hotly contested by the Sikhs. In 1760 and 1761, while he was occupied around Delhi and *Panipat*, the *Sikhs* rose everywhere. And one chief even plundered the outskirts of Lahore.[19] But *Sikhs* like the *Marathas* were loose, disunited, and quarrelsome conglomerates of twelve kin-groups known as *Jathas* and later as *misls.* By the early 19th century, the Sikhs managed to firmly establish an independent kingdom under the leadership of *Ranjit* Singh, with the capital at Lahore in 1799.

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[16] Shail Mayaram, *Against History, Against State: Counter perspectives from the Margins* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 30.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Qureshi, *A Short History of Pakistan*, 571.

[19] V.D.Mahajan, *Advanced History of India: History of India* (New Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1990), 303.

Ranjit Singh is one of the most important personalities in the history of modern India. He created a Sikh kingdom stretching from Tibet to the Sulaiman range and from the northern reaches of the Indus to the south of Multan but took no steps to prevent British dominion. In 1809, he had to enter a treaty with the British at Amritsar by which the Sutlaj was declared as the southern boundary of the *Ranjit* Singh. All the cis-Sutlaj states came under British protection. *Ranjit* Singh thus failed to absorb the cis-Sutlaj states in his kingdom. Most of these states remained under the British protection unto 1947. The kingdom established by him met its doom ten years after his death in June 1839.

6. ROHILKHAND

Rohilkhand is the name given to the territory comprising roughly the districts of Bijnore, Muradabad, Baduan, Bareilly, Shahjahanpur, and the state of Rampur in modern Uttar Pradesh in India. The country derives its name from Rohila Afghans who settled there in the 17th century and dominated that area till their independence was extinguished by Warren Hastings in 1774.[20] The Rohillas first came into prominence under Daud, who continued to be a petty jagirdar. His adopted son, Ali Muhammad Khan Rohilla, became the leader of the Rohillas in 1721 and laid the foundations of an independent kingdom of the Rohillas. He was able to retain his army of own army and conquered district after district. In 1727, he defeated a eunuch (khawajasara) of the Emperor and seized all his property. He earned the title of *nawab* by himself and held his court like an independent prince. After his death, his possessions were divided into three parts to one of which Hafiz Rahmat Khan succeeded as the leader. The Rohillas helped Ahmed Shah Abdali in the third battle of Panipat in 1761 and got many concessions from him. They became so powerful and able to capture Delhi for some time, but had to vacate also on account of the opposition from the Marathas and Nawab of Oudh. In the time of Warren Hastings, British troops were sent to Rohilkhand to help the Nawab Wazir of Oudh. Hafiz Rahmat Khan was killed, and Rohilkhand was conquered and annexed to Oudh.[21]

[20] Qureshi, *A Short History of Pakistan,* 68-72.
[21] Ibid, 566-568.

Compulsory Reading

Rashid, Sh. Abdur. History of the Muslims of Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent, Vol. I. Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1978.

Suggested Books

Alam, Muzaffar. *Crisis of the Empire in Mughal North India: Awadh and the Punjab.* London: Oxford University Press. 1986.

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Richards, John F. *The Mughal Empire*. London: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

a) **Self-Assessment Questions**

1. Discuss the size of the independent states that sprang up out of the ruin of the Mughal Empire in the 18th century.
2. Discuss the social and economic conditions of India in the 18th century.
3. Critically evaluate the rise of the Marathas under the first three Peshwas of *Chhartrapati* Shahu.
4. The third battle of Panipat resulted in political unrest in India. Comment.
5. Account for the defeat of the Marathas at the third battle of Panipat and assess its consequences.
6. "The battle of Buxor completed the work of the battle of Plassey". Discuss.

b) Please select the appropriate answer.

1. **What marked the beginning of the decline of the Mughal Empire after Aurangzeb's death?**
   a) The rise of the British East India Company
   b) The emergence of independent and semi-independent states
   c) The invasion of Nadir Shah
   d) The Third Battle of Panipat
2. **Who founded the independent state of Hyderabad in 1724?**
   a) Saadat Khan
   b) Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah
   c) Murshad Quli Khan
   d) Balaji Vishwanath
3. **Which Maratha leader is known as the "Second Founder of the Maratha Empire"?**
   a) Baji Rao
   b) Balaji Baji Rao
   c) Balaji Vishwanath
   d) Sahu
4. **What was the primary reason for the Marathas' involvement in the Third Battle of Panipat?**
   a) To expand their territory into Afghanistan
   b) To protect the Mughal Empire from Ahmad Shah Abdali
   c) To establish an All-India Maratha Empire
   d) To defeat the British East India Company

   Who was the first Nawab of Bengal to make the subedari hereditary?
5. **Who was the first Nawab of Bengal to make the subedari hereditary?**
   a) Murshad Quli Khan
   b) Shujauddin Muhammad Khan
   c) Ali Vardi Khan
   d) Siraj-ud-Daula

Answer Key

1. **b) The emergence of independent and semi-independent states**
2. b) Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah
3. c) Balaji Vishwanath
4. (b) To protect the Mughal Empire from Ahmad Shah Abdali
5. a) Murshad Quli Khan

Unit: 4

EAST INDIA COMPANY AND ESTABLISHMENT OF COLONIAL RULE: EXOGENOUS REASONS OF DECLINE OF THE MUGHAL *EMPIRE*

Written By: Dr. Kausar Parveen

Reviewed By: Dr. Riaz Ahmad

CONTENTS

	Introduction	57
	Objectives	58
1.	English East India Company: Internal Administration	59
	1.1 East India Company Act 1773	59
	1.2 East India Company Act 1784	60
	1.3 Act of 1786	60
	1.4 Charter Act 1793	60
	1.5 Charter Act 1813	61
	1.6 Government of India Act 1833	61
	1.7 Government of India Act 1853	61
2.	Rivalry between the English East India Company and the French East India Company	61
	2.1 The First Karnataka War (1746-48)	62
	2.2 The Second Karnataka War (1749-54)	63
	2.3 The Third Karnataka War (1758-63)	64
3.	Subsidiary System	65
4.	Doctrine of Lapse	66
5.	Annexation of Sindh 1843	66
6.	Annexation of the Punjab 1849	68
	Compulsory Reading	70
	Suggested Readings	70
	Self-Assessment Questions	71

INTRODUCTION

The Muslims entered India from the land route of the north-west frontier. Once they established their rule in India, they built and maintained a strong standing army to defend their empire. The Muslim rulers did not foresee the threat from the sea route; therefore, they failed to build a strong navy to defend India from sea invaders. Vasco da Gama discovered a new sea route to India by reaching the port of Calicut on the 17th May 1498. This had far-reaching repercussions for the Mughal Empire and the West. The Mughal rulers did not realize the consequences when the European trading companies entered India and engaged in warfare for their supremacy. The weakening Mughal Empire could not bear the external pressures and succumbed to foreign superior strategic and naval power of the British.

OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Comprehend the state of the Mughal Empire during the eighteenth century;
- Grasp the involvement of European powers in the local politics in India;
- Understand the causes and the course of rivalry between the French and the British and the superiority and success of the British over its rival;
- Comprehend the British policy and strategy of expansion in India;
- Explain the response of the local rulers to external threats.

1. English East India Company: Internal Administration

The Portuguese were the first to enter India for commercial purposes. The Dutch, the English, and the French East India companies followed suit. The English and French East India Companies outmanoeuvred other rivals. The superior strategy and leadership of the English East India Company sealed the fate of the French East India Company in India.

The East India Company was an English joint-stock company initially established for the purpose of trade with the East Indies, but mainly traded with the Indian subcontinent and China. Elizabeth granted the English Royal charter, Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies on 31 December 1600. In the 17th century, it was merged with another English company in 1708, giving it a new name of the United Company of Merchants of England Trading to the East Indies, commonly known as the East India Company. It traded mainly in cotton, silk, indigo dye, saltpetre, tea, and opium. Company rule in India started in 1757 after the Battle of Plassey and lasted until 1858, when, under the Government of India Act 1858, the British government took direct administration of India. The company was dissolved on 1 January 1874 under the East India Stock Dividend Redemption Act 1873. In the following pages, a history of the evolution of internal administration not only indicates the internal working of the Company but also exposes the fact that how this internal administration helped it to manoeuvre local politics.

1.1 East India Company Act 1773

It is commonly known as the East India Company Act of 1772. Through this act, the Parliament of Great Britain imposed a series of administrative and economic reforms, establishing its sovereignty and ultimate control over the Company. The Act recognized the Company's political functions. It introduced substantial governmental control and allowed the land to be formally under the control of the Crown, but leased to the Company at {40} 000 for two years. Consequently, Warren Hastings became the first Governor-General of Bengal with administrative powers over British India. It provided that his nomination, though made by a court of directors, should in future be subject to the approval of a Council of Four appointed by the Crown.[1] Hastings was entrusted with the

[1] These included Lt. General Sir John Clavering, Sir George Monson, Sir Richard Barwell, and Sir Philip Francis.

power of peace and war. British judicial personnel would also be sent to India to introduce the British legal system. The Governor-General and the Council would have complete legislative powers. The company was allowed to maintain its virtual monopoly over trade and was made responsible for the costs of administration.[2]

1.2 East India Company Act 1784

It is also known as Pitt's India Act. The bill differentiated the East India Company's political functions from its commercial activities. In political matters the East India Company was subordinated to the British government directly. For this purpose, the Act created a Board of Commissioners generally referred to as the Board of Control for the Affairs of India. The members of the Board were the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State, and four Privy Councillors, nominated by the King. The Secretary of State was President of the Board. The bill introduced the centralized and bureaucratic British administration of India. Pitt's Act met with failure because the boundaries between government control and the company's powers were vague and subject.[3]

1.3 Act of 1786

This Act recognized the demand of Earl Cornwallis that the power of the Governor-General be enlarged to empower him, in special cases, to override the majority of his Council and act on his own special responsibility. Through this Act, the same official could hold both the offices of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief. This Act clearly demarcated responsibilities/duties between the Crown and the Company. With this Act, the Company had greater accountability for its actions, which helped in expansion and consolidation as it continued to expand its influence to nearby territories through threats and coercive actions. By the middle of the 19th century, its rule had extended across most of India, Burma, Malaysia, Singapore, and British Hong Kong.[4]

1.4 Charter Act 1793

This Act renewed the Company's charter for 20 years. It brought only minimal changes to the system of government in India.[5]

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[2] I. H. Qureshi, *A Short History of Pakistan: Book one to Four* (Karachi: University of Karachi, 2006), 727.

[3] Ibid., 731 and 771.

[4] Ibid., 732-733.

[5] Ibid., 772.

1.5 Charter Act 1813

The aggressive policies of Lord Wellesley and the Marquis of Hastings helped the company to gain control of all India, except for the Punjab, Sindh, and Nepal. The Indian Princes had become vassals of the Company. But the expense of wars strained the Company's finances. The Company was forced to petition Parliament for assistance. Besides, the Act asserted the sovereignty of the British Crown over the Indian territories held by the Company. It renewed the charter of the company for a further twenty years, but deprived the company of its Indian trade monopoly except for trade in tea and the trade with China, and ordered the company to maintain its commercial and territorial accounts separately and distinctly. Through this Act, missionaries began to enter the subcontinent.

1.6 Government of India Act 1833

The Act removed the Company's trade monopolies and denied it all its commercial functions. It renewed for another twenty years the Company's political and administrative authority. Besides, it invested the Board of Control with full power and authority over the Company. It enhanced administrative centralization through empowering the Governor-General in Council with full power and authority to superintend and control the Presidency Governments in all civil and military matters. The codification of laws is initiated. It provided that no Indian subject of the Company would be debarred from holding any office under the Company by reason of his religion, place of birth, descent, or colour. It vested the Island of St. Helena in the Crown.[6]

1.7 Government of India Act 1853

This Act provided that British India would remain under the administration of the Company in trust for the Crown until Parliament should decide otherwise.[7] With the crisis of 1857, the British crown took over the administration of the subcontinent through the proclamation of 1858 of the Queen.

2. Rivalry between the English East India Company and the French East India Company

The English and the French maintained good relations during the first half of the eighteenth century due to the fear of the Mughal emperor and economic interests. The decline of Mughal power in India opened prospects of political

[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.

power and economic enterprise, which created rivalry and competition between the two companies. The weakening of the Mughal Empire and the political turmoil in Karnataka and Hyderabad inspired them to gain political control, beneficial for their trade. The French initiated active involvement in politics. Alexander Dumas, the first French governor, invited the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Nawab of Karnataka to visit Pondicherry. Impressed by the grand reception, Nizam granted him the title of the Nawab and the right to collect revenue from the territories south of the river Krishna with the consent of the Mughal emperor. Dupleix also continued the same policy and planned to create a French Empire in India. These developments incited envy of the British. The rivalry between the English East India Company and the French East India Company resulted in three Karnataka Wars.

2.1 The First Karnataka War (1746-48)

Although the political instability in Karnataka instigated the rivalry between the English and the French but the real cause was the War of the Austrian Succession in 1740 in Europe, in which England and France were in opposite camps. The English government dispatched a naval fleet, which destroyed French ships in the Indian Ocean that triggering a war in 1741.[8]

The French governor Dupleix attacked Madras and captured it. On the English request, the Nawab of Karnataka sent an army to capture Madras, but it was defeated by a handful of French troops. Dupleix attempted to capture the fort of St. David but could not succeed even after eighteenth-month siege. In August 1748, an English fleet besieged Pondicherry but failed to capture it. With the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748 in Europe, peace was restored between the two in India as well.[9]

2.2 The Second Karnataka War (1749-54)

This time, the English initiated involvement in local politics. They agreed to help the expelled claimant of the Tanjore Throne, Shahji, on the promise of the expenses of the war and the possession of Devikottai. In the second attempt, the

[8] R. C. Majumdar and others, *An Advanced History of India* (Pakistan: Aalameen Publications, 1992), 645-648.

[9] Ibid.

English captured Devikottai. Pratap Singh made peace with the English by handing over Devikottai and the nearby territory.

The French found an opportunity with the death of Asaf Jah Nizamul Mulk of Hyderabad on 21 May 1748. A conflict emerged between Nasir Jang, the younger son of Asaf Jah Nizamul Mulk, and Muzaffar Jang, his grandson. Nasir Jang had the capital and the treasury. Muzaffar Jang made common cause with Chanda Sahib, who was aspiring for the throne of Karnataka. Dupleix promised both of them to capture Hyderabad and Karnataka. With the help of Muzaffar Jang and the French, Chanada Sahib captured Karnataka. In return, he granted eighty-one villages around Pondicherry to the French. Consequently, the British offered help to Nasir Jang, and their combined forces defeated the French on the banks of the river jinji. Chanda Sahib retreated to Pondicherry, and Muzaffar Jang surrendered to Nasir Jang.

Dupleix's conspiracies against Nasir Jang resulted in his murder by his nobles, and Muzaffar Jang was declared Nizam. He recognized Chanda Sahib as the Nawab of Karnataka, appointed Dupleix the Nawab, and the French received territories of *Northern Sarakars.*[10] The French, under the command of Bussy, managed the affairs of Hyderabad and kept the French power intact there till 1758.

The French failed to capture theTrichinopoly fort in Karnataka, and with the support of the English, Muhammad Ali refused to surrender. Robert Clive captured Arcot in 1751 with five hundred soldiers to counter the pressure on Trichinopoly. Consequently, Chanda sahib sent a large force under the command of his son to recover Arcot, which Clive successfully defended for fifty days. As a result, Chanda Sahib was forced to raise the siege of Trichnoploy and fled to Tanjore and was murdered. Muhammad Ali captured a large part of Karnataka and was recognized as its nawab in 1754. Godehu replaced Dupleix as the French governor and signed the following treaty with the English.

1. Both companies agreed to renounce all titles awarded to their officers by any native ruler and promised not to interfere in local affairs.

[10] Qureshi, *A Short History of Pakistan*, 753.

2. The French acknowledged the English possessions of St. George, St. David, and Devikottai.
3. The French withdrew their claim over Masulipatam.
4. Arrangements were made so that both companies had nearly equal territorial possessions in the South.

The second Karnataka war remained inconclusive. The English were successful in Karnataka, while the French remained influential in Hyderabad. This led to the third Karnataka War to decide the supremacy of both powers in South India.

2.3 The Third Karnataka War (1758-63)

With the start of the Seven Years' War in Europe in 1756, the English and French were again in opposite camps. Both started to attack each other's possessions in 1757. The French succeeded in capturing a large part of Karnataka except Trichinopoly, Arcot, Madras, St. David, etc. The English succeeded in the North and captured French areas of Chandranagar and their factories in Balasor, Patna, and Kasimbazar in Bengal and Bihar.

Count de Lally, the new governor of the Company and the commander of the French forces, arrived with twin objectives to drive out the English from India and improve of administration of the company. The major engagements between the two rivals took place in 1758. Lally captured St David but could not attack Madaras due to a lack of financial support from the governor of Pondicherry and naval support from Count de Ache, the naval chief. He attacked Tanjore but withdrew with the arrival of the English. Meanwhile, Count de Ache was defeated by the English commander Pocock on the sea and retreated to Pondicherry, ultimately withdrawing to Mauritius. Lally besieged Madras in 1758 and called Bussy from Hyderabad, which decreased the French influence in Hyderabad. The reinforcement from Bengal facilitated the English in capturing Masulipatam. Salabat Jang, the Nizam of Hyderabad, immediately made peace with the English and recognized the English possession of Masulipatam with surrendering its adjoining area of eighty miles in length and twenty miles in breadth. Lally was forced to raise the siege of Madaras in 1759.

The war continued, but the French were fighting a defensive war. On 22nd January 1760, the French were defeated in the War of Wandiwash, and Bussy was taken as a prisoner, which sealed the fate of the French in India. Lally signed a treaty with Hyder Ali, the ruler of Mysore, and received some military support. Pondicherry was besieged by the English, and Lally had to surrender after a few months on 16 March 1761. The English easily captured the French cities of Jinji and Mahc. The Seven Years' War ended in 1763, and with the Peace of Paris treaty, the French got back the Indian cities of Chandranagr and Pondicherry with restrictions on fortifications.

3. SUBSIDIARY SYSTEM

The British governor-general, Lord Wellesley (1798-1805), introduced the subsidiary system. By the late 18th century, with the decline of the Mughal Empire, India was divided into small and weak states. The local leaders accepted the offer of protection and security from Lord Wellesley.[11]

The main provisions of the subsidiary system were:

1. An Indian ruler will keep British forces within his territory and will be responsible for their maintenance. The British can forfeit the ruler's territory in case of delayed payments.
2. There will be a British Resident in the state.
3. An Indian ruler will not enter into any alliance with any other power, and he cannot declare war against any power without the permission of the British.
4. The ruler will not employ any Europeans other than the British, and he will dismiss other Europeans already working in the state.
5. The ruler will accept the British arbitration in case of a conflict with any other state.
6. The ruler would acknowledge the East India Company as the supreme power in India.
7. The Company will protect the state from external dangers and internal disorders.[12]

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[11] See for details K. C. Sharma, *East India Company*, vol. I (Delhi: Vista International Publishing House, 2007), 156-168.

[12] L. P. Sharma and V. D. Mahajan, *History of British Rule in India* (Delhi: Carrier Publishers, 1998), 67.

Under this doctrine, Indian rulers under British protection surrendered control of their foreign affairs to the British. Most of them disbanded their native armies and began maintaining British troops within their states to protect them from external threats. The Nizam of Hyderabad was the first ruler who accept the Subsidiary System in 1798.[13] Hyder Ali and later on Tipu Sultan of Mysore refused to accept it, but the British victory in the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War forced the state of Mysore to become a subsidiary state. The Nawab of Oudh accepted the Subsidiary System in 1801.[14] Later on, the Maratha leader Baji Rao II also accepted a subsidiary System in 1802.[15]

4. DOCTRINE OF LAPSE

Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General for the British in India between 1848 and 1856, introduced an annexation policy, the Doctrine of Lapse. According to this Doctrine, any princely state or territory under the British Subsidiary System would automatically be annexed if the ruler was either 'manifestly incompetent or died without a direct heir. The company took over the administration of the princely states of Satara in 1848, Jaipur and Sambalpur in 1849, Nagpur and Jhansi in 1854,[16] and Oudh in 1856,[17] declaring the ruler as incompetent.

5. ANNEXATION OF SINDH 1843[18]

Sea route for trade, Ranjit Singh's expansionist designs, and fear of the Russian advance in Central Asia guided the British policy towards the Sindh.[19] During the second half of the eighteenth century, three independent Talpur Amirs, one in upper Sindh with capital at Khairpur, the other in the southern part of Sindh with capital at Hyderabad, and the third one was between these two kingdoms with capital at Mirpur, were ruling.

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[13] Qureshi, *A Short History of Pakistan*, 754; Majumdar, *An Advanced History of India,* 717-718.

[14] Majumdar, *An Advanced History of India,*720-721.

[15] Qureshi, *A Short History of Pakistan*, 754.

[16] See a detailed account of annexation of Satara, Shambalpur, Jhansi and Nagpur in Sangh Mittra and S. R. Bakshi, *Administration of East India Company 1740-1856* (New Delhi: Commonwealth Publishers, 2003), 348-378.

[17] See a detailed account of annexation of Oudh in Sharma, *East India Company*, vol. I, 249-260.

[18] Majumdar, *An Advanced History of India,*760-763.

[19] Sharma and Mahajan, *History of British Rule in India,* 105.

The English established their trading centre in Sindh with the permission of the Mughal Emperor in 1630. In 1801 and later in 1802, the English agreed with the Amirs that the French, European, or American would not be allowed to settle in Sindh. In 1831, realizing the importance of Sindh, the English offered the Amirs a treaty, which they accepted under pressure due to failure to get protection from the Amir of Afghanistan and possible threats from Rangit Singh.[20] In 1832, the Amirs of Khairpur and Hyderabad permitted the English to use the roads in Sindh and the Indus River on the following terms:

1. No military equipment would be carried through these routes.
2. No armed boat or vessel shall come by these routes.
3. No English trader would settle permanently in Sindh.[21]

In 1838, the English forced another treaty on the Amirs on terms that the English would help in improving the relations between the Amirs and Rangit Singh, and an English resident would stay at the court of Hyderabad, who could travel anywhere in Sindh and keep necessary soldiers for his security.

The Amirs of Sindh were forced to be part of a tripartite treaty of the English with Shah Shuja, the Amir of Afghanistan, and Rangit Singh and pay twenty-five lakh rupees to Shah Shuja. The English forced yet another treaty on the Amir of Kairpur on 24 December 1838, through which he accepted the English as the supreme power, agreed to help the English with supplies in case of an Afghan war, and surrendered the fort of Bakhar. When the Amir of Hyderabad protested, the English occupied Karachi, and he was also forced to sign a treaty on terms of surrendering Karachi to the English and keeping a subsidiary force of five hundred English soldiers within the territory of the Amir for which he would pay an annual amount of rupees three lakhs. In July 1841, the Amir of Mirpur also signed a similar treaty with the English.

In 1842, Sir Charles Napier, charging the Amirs with disloyalty, demanded the right to mint coins, supply coal to English ships passing through the river Indus, surrender Karachi, Thatta, Sakhar, Bakhar, Rohri, and all the territories adjoining these places, which the Amirs had to comply with. Charles Napier interfered in the succession issue in Kairpur. Rustam Khan, the Amir, nominated Mir Muhammad as his successor, but Napier supported one of his brothers, Ali

[20] Ibid., 105-106.
[21] Ibid., 106.

Murad Khan, for the gaddi. When Rustam Khan fled, Napier accepted Ali Murad Khan as the Amir. Napier asked all three Amirs for a fresh treaty. The Amir of Khairpur could not reach Hyderabad in time in Hyderabad, though he conveyed his assurance to Outram in Hyderabad. Outram communicated the situation to Napier and forbade him from marching towards Hyderabad, but Napier ignored this advice. The news of marching English forces incited a mutiny in Baloch soldiers, which was successfully crushed in the battle of Miani on 17 February 1843.

6. ANNEXATION OF THE PUNJAB 1849[22]

The Sikhs, who originated as a religious order with Guru Nanak (1469-1538), developed into a military community in the time of Alamgir. After the Third Battle of Panipat, some Sikh Chiefs, however, invisibly established their sway in certain areas of the Punjab, filing the political vacuum in the absence of Afghan rulers in Kabul. Zaman Shah, a successor of Ahmad Shah Abdali, appointed Ranjit Singh, the son of a Sikh chief, as governor of Lahore in recognition of his services in 1799. Ranjit, being an energetic and ambitious young man, soon declared himself the sovereign ruler of the Punjab in 1801. He also seized Kashmir and set up a strong Sikh kingdom in the north-west.[23]

Ranjit Singh maintained friendly relations with the British and helped them in the Afghan campaign in 1839. His death in the same year generated a dispute about the succession. His army placed his minor son Dalip Singh on the throne, assuming a dominant role in the government. The British disaster in Afghanistan incited the Sikhs to attack British territories in 1845, but they were defeated at Mudki, Ferozepur, and Aliwal. The British troops entered Lahore and forced the Sikhs to enter into a treaty, acquiring the Jullundhur Doab with a huge indemnity. The British also sold Kashmir for 75 lakhs of rupees to Gulab Singh, the founder of the Dogra dynasty. An English Resident to the Sikh court supervised the government of the minor Raja Dalip Sing. Besides, the Khalsa army was disbanded, and a British army was stationed at Lahore.[24]

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[22] Majumdar, *An Advanced History of India,* 741-748.
[23] Qureshi, *A Short History of Pakistan,* 105-106.
[24] Ibid., 106.

Resenting the continuous interference of the British Resident in the administration, the Sikh governor of Multan rebelled in 1848, killing two British officers. This led to a general Sikh uprising. After some initial reverses, the British commander-in-chief, Sir Hugh Gough, obtained a decisive victory at Gujarat in 1849. The Sikhs were pushed up to the Afghan frontier, and Peshawar was occupied by the British. Finally, on 30 March 1849, Lord Dalhousie proclaimed the annexation of the Punjab.[25] The failing Mughal Empire received a death blow with the rise of foreign powers in the subcontinent. Although the rising influence and interference of these powers were important causes of the decline of the Mughal Empire but the real reasons for this decline must be sought in the endogenous reasons which weakened the Empire from within, exposed its fragile state of affairs, and provided opportunity to external powers to exploit the situation and fill the vacuum.

[25] Ibid.

Compulsory Reading

Rashid, Sh. Abdur. History of the Muslims of Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent, Vol. I. Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1978.

Suggested Readings

Majumdar, R. C. and others, *An Advanced History of India.* Pakistan: Aalameen Publications, 1992.

Sharma, L. P. and V. D. Mahajan, *History of British Rule inIndia.* Delhi: Carrier Publishers, 1998.

Sharma, K. C. *East India Company*. Vol. I. Delhi: Vista International Publishing House, 2007.

Qureshi, I.H. *A short History of Pakistan*. Book 3. Karachi: University of Karachi, 1984.

Mittra Sangh and S. R. Bakshi, *Administration of East India Company 1740-1856*. New Delhi: Commonwealth Publishers, 2003.

a) Self-Assessment Questions

1. Examine the internal administration of the English East India Company and how it contributed to its expansion and consolidation in India.
2. What were the reasons behind the rivalry between the French East India Company and the English East India Company? Also, analyse the factors that contributed to the supremacy of the latter company over the former company.
3. Examine the expansionist policy of Wellesley in British India. Discuss the response of the local rulers towards the policy.
4. Describe the Annexation Policy of Dalhousie. To what extent did it contribute to the downfall of the English East India Company?
5. Analyse the exogenous reasons for the decline of the Mughal Empire. To what extent were these reasons decisive in its decline?

b) Please select an appropriate answer.

1. Who was the ruler of Afghanistan who declared independence in 1919?
   a) King Zahir Shah
   b) Amir Amanullah Khan
   c) Sardar Daud
   d) King Nadir Shah

2. The Third Anglo-Afghan War took place in which year?
   a) 1917
   b) 1918
   c) 1919
   d) 1920

3. What was the main outcome of the Treaty of Rawalpindi (1919)?
   a) Afghanistan became a British colony
   b) Afghanistan gained full control over its foreign affairs
   c) Afghanistan became a protectorate of Russia
   d) The British retained control over Afghanistan's army

4. Which European country was the first to sign a friendship treaty with Afghanistan in 1921?

a) Britain
b) France
c) Russia
d) Germany

5. Which Afghan king was forced to abdicate in 1929 due to civil unrest?
   a) King Nadir Shah
   b) Amir Amanullah Khan
   c) King Zahir Shah
   d) Habibullah Kalakani

Answer Key

1. a) Amir Amanullah Khan
2. c) 1919
3. b) Afghanistan gained full control over its foreign affairs
4. c) Russia
5. b) Amir Amanullah Khan

Unit: 5

INVASIONS: NADIR SHAH OF IRAN: EXOGENOUS REASONS OF DECLINE

Writer: Shaista Aziz

Reviewer: Dr. Riaz Ahmad

CONTENTS

	Introduction	75
	Objectives	76
1.	Causes of Nadir's Invasion	77
	1.1 Bad condition of the Empire	77
	1.2 Shelter to Afghan fugitives	77
	1.3 Wealth of India	78
	1.4 Neglect of the Defence	78
2	Battle of Karnal 1739	78
3	Impact	81
	Compulsory Reading	82
	Suggested Readings	82
	Self-Assessment Questions	83

INTRODUCTION

Internal decay is always the prime cause of the adversity of a society, nation, or empire. But foreign invasions could accelerate the process of decay. It happened in the case of the Mughal Empire. The weak Mughal Empire faced the attack of Nadir Shah and the repeated invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali. These attacks drained the empire of its wealth, ruined the trade and industry of North India, and gave an ultimate blow to the Mughal Empire and its military power.

Nadir Shah became ruler of Persia (Iran) in 1736 AD after the overthrow Safavid dynasty. Persia was snatched away from the Safavid Dynasty by the Afghans in 1722. During the reign of Shah Tahmasp, Persia was recovered from the Afghans. Nadir Shah played an important part in that recovery and entered into the services of Shah Tahmasp. Shah Tahmasp was a weak ruler, so Nadir Shah became the de facto ruler. After the death of Tahmasp, Nadir Shah declared himself ruler of Persia. He turned out the Afghans from Persia in 1738 AD. He captured Kandahar to destroy Afghan power completely. After that, he planned to attack India. Nadir Shah was "a master of diplomacy and statecraft as well as of the sword."[1]

[1] Mahajan, *Mughal Rule in India* (Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1961), 261.

OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the impact of foreign invasion on medieval Indian history.
- Know about the circumstances that led Nadir Shah of Iran to invade India.
- Explain the course of the Battle of Karnal, between Nadir Shah and Mughal forces.
- Highlight the impact of Nadir Shah's invasion.

1 CAUSES OF NADIR SHAH'S INVASION

Nadir Shah started his Indian invasion in 1739. The invasion was due to many causes.

1.1 Bad Condition of the Empire

When Nadir Shah became ruler of Persia in 1936, Muhammad Shah was the Emperor of the Mughal Empire in India. The Mughal line had degenerated in the course of time. The dissolution of the Empire had begun towards the end of the Aurangzeb (1658-1707) reign. The war of succession hastened the process of decline. This situation further accelerated with the emergence of Turanian, Persian, and Hindustani factions during the reign of Bahadur Shah (1707-1712). When Muhammad Shah (1719-1748) was elevated to the throne in 1719. Unfortunately, during the twenty-nine years of his reign, "he watched, rather than contested, the progress of disintegration, while his court was the scene of intrigue between various factions".[2] Province after Province became independent. The process of decline of the Mughal Empire was further deepened when Nadir Shah decided on his invasion.

1.2 Shelter to Afghan Fugitives

The Persian court requested that the Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah close his frontiers to Afghan fugitives. He had given a promise to Nadir Shah to do so. However, nothing had been done, and despite that promise, shelter was given to the fugitives. To complain about it, Nadir Shah dispatched his envoy to Delhi. "He gave the envoy strict orders not to remain at the Mughal court for more than forty days".[3] Instead of any reply, his envoy was detained. Thus, the whole year passed and there was still no reply from Delhi. This provided him sufficient ground to attack. Without further delay, "Nadir Shah set out from Nadirabad for Ghazna on the 21st May, 1738, and crossed the Indian frontier".[4] Thus began the invasion of India.

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[2] L. Lockhart, *Nadir Shah: A critical Study Based Mainly Upon Contemporary Sources* (Lahore: Al-Irfan Historical Reprints, 1976), 122.

[3] *Ibid.*, 122.

[4] *Ibid*., 123.

1.3 Wealth of India

Nadir Shah excused his violation of the frontier of the Mughal Empire on the argument that he only wanted to punish the Afghan fugitives. However, the expressed desire was only a pretext. The other cause of invasion was that, due to the continual campaigns of the past few years, had caused famine-like situation had occurred in Persia, which brought her near to bankruptcy. Under these circumstances, Nadir Shah realised that he could not hope to succeed in his desired expedition to the Bosporus.[5] Under these circumstances, the Persian could not meet the requirements to maintain an armed force, and Nadir Shah must look elsewhere. The invasion of India provided the opportunity to solve the problem. With the booty of India, he could facilitate his army for further expeditions. Nadir Shah was aware of the wealth, as well as the increasing weaknesses of the Mughal Empire. He also knew that the Mughal Empire had become too weak to defend its wealth. This was a good time to penetrate into to rich but defenceless neighbouring land.

1.4 Neglect of the Defence

As Nadir Shah was an ambitious ruler. He nowknew the weakness of Mughal defence machinery. Taking into account that, the Mughal Emperor was not able to pay attention to the protection of the North-Western border of the Empire, he attacked India in 1739.

2 BATTLE OF KARNAL 1739

Nadir Shah's army reached Ghazna on 11th June and from this to Kabul. He sent a message to the *Kotwal* of Kabul, We are not concerned with the kingdom of Muhammad Shah, but since these regions are like a mine (*ma'dan*) of Afghans and number of fugitives have also joined them, it is our intention to extirpate these people. Be not anxious for yourselves, but undertake the obligations of hospitality.[6] The Mughal governor of Kabul, Nasir Khan, appealed to Delhi for help. But nothing was done to support him. He therefore fled away, and Nadir Shah captured Kabul without meeting strong resistance. Then he marched towards Peshawar. After his stay at Peshawar for four weeks, Nadir Shah marched towards Punjab. Zakariya Khan, the Governor of Lahore, after realizing the inadequacy of

[5] *Ibid*.

[6] *Ibid*., 125.

his forces and the failure of receiving Emperor support, therefore submitted in January 1739. Nadir Shah was now in possession of all the areas as far as Attock. The Mughal Emperor, Muhammad Shah, could not remain unconcerned about the danger that threatened the empire. They understood that this was not an ordinary enemy against whom they had to compete, no mere plunderer who could be saved with the spoils of a province and then return to his own country, but a leader of unshakable resolution who shaped his course with his sword.[7] To check the advancements of Nadir Shah's army, Muhammad Shah reached Karnal with an army of 300,000 men, 2,000 elephants, and a large number of cannon.[8] Nadir Shah set out a force of 60,000 Kurdish cavalry under Hajji Khan from Sirhind to check the position of the Mughal army.[9] They came into contact with Mughal forces and killed some soldiers and captured others. The Kurdish troops sent their report with some prisoners to Nadir Shah. He ordered these troops to survey both, east and west areas of the enemy position. After learning about the strength of the Emperor's strategic position, he made a practicable course of plan and camped at Kunjpura village, five and a half miles from Karnal and one and a half miles west of the River Jumna.

To note the disposition of the enemy, Nadir Shah himself rode up close to the Mughal camp. On the morning of 24th February, Nadir Shah split his army into three divisions. He ordered Nasrullah Mirza, commander of the left wing, to advance from the Jumna River towards Karnal.[10] Nadir Shah himself marched southward between the Jumna and 'Ali Mardan canal, to check the enemy position and to inspect the battlefield. He positioned himself some three and a half miles east of the Mughal camp. Meanwhile when Sa'adat Khan went to Emperor Muhammad Shah, he heard the news of the plundering of his baggage. He rushed off to recover it with his small force. They encountered Persian guards, who were advancing from the opposite direction. These Persians put on a fight to tempt Sa'adat Khan and his army away from their line.[11] Sa'adat Khan sent an urgent appeal to the camp for reinforcement of his troops. Instead of helping, Nizamu'l-Mulk said the Emperor not to fight on that day. He advised sending Khan Dauran,

[7] Mahajan, *Mughal Rule in India*, 261.
[8] Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, 131.
[9] *Ibid*., 133.
[10] *Ibid*., 135.
[11] *Ibid*., 136.

commander of the right wing, to assist Sa'adat Khan. Accordingly, Khan Dauran set out to join Sa'adat Khan. The battle began at one o'clock in the afternoon, and Sa'adat Khan and his troop formed the right wing of the Mughal army, engaged with the Persian at Kunjpura.[12] On the other hand, Khan Dauran's division, which constituted the centre wing of Mughal forces, engaged with the Persians' centre wing under the command of Nasrullah Mirza.[13]

There was a wide gap between the Khan Dauran's and Sa'adat Khan's divisions. Due to that reason, there was a lack of coordination between both of them. After heavy casualties, Sa'adat Khan's men left the battlefield and he was imprisoned. When the Emperor realized that Khan Dauran was in danger, he sent a message to the Nizamu'l-Mulk for aid to Khan Dauran. But Nizamu'l-Mulk did not obey the emperor's order due to personal enmity. The fight came to an end when Khan Dauran got deadly wounds, and the battle was over at five o'clock.[14] Khan Dauran died a day after the battle ended. Before his death, he gave the warning that "Never take the Emperor to Nadir, nor conduct Nadir to Delhi, but send away that evil from this point by any means that you can devise".[15] Nadir Shah succeeded in the battlefield because, in strategy and war tactics, he was superior then Mughal commanders, and one element in Nadir Shah's success was his improved artillery with horse-mounted guns for use against the Mughal cavalry. On the other hand, Mughal commanders were unable to forget their personal antagonism. Many divisions under Sa'adat Khan and Khan Dauran did not advance to attack, while the left wing, headed by Nizamu'l-Mulk, refused to fight.[16] Although Nizamu'l-Mulk convinced Nadir Shah to return to Persia after receiving 50 *lakhs*. Sa'adat Khan, who had enmity with Nizamu'l-Mulk, advised Nadir Shah to proceed to Delhi, where he could get an enormous booty. So Nadir Shah showed pleasure and was determined to follow Sa'adat Khan's advice. Nadir Shah summoned the Nazimu'l-Mulk to request that Emperor Muhammad Shah visit him. Nadir Shah treated the Emperor with respect, but in reality, Muhammad Shah was imprisoned. On 12th March 1739, Nadir Shah and with

[12] *Ibid*., 138.
[13] *Ibid.*
[14] *Ibid*., 139.
[15] Mahajan, *Mughal Rule in India,* 261.
[16]Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, 139.

Emperor left Karnal for Delhi. Nadir Shah reached Delhi, where *Khutba* was read in his name in the mosque.

Unfortunately, rumours of Nadir Shah's murder spread. Some inhabitants of Delhi attacked and killed the Persian guards, whom Nadir Shah, at their expressed request, had sent to protect their homes.[17] That angered Nadir Shah, and he ordered a general massacre, which continued for six hours from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. [18] Nearly thirty thousand people were killed, property was robbed, and every part of Delhi was looted by the Persians. Nadir Shah left Delhi after 57 days and returned to Persia with a huge booty, including elephants, horses, camels, and thousands of slaves. Before his departure, he put the crown on the head of Muhammad Shah. As gratitude for his reinstatement as Emperor, Muhammad Shah offered Nadir Shah all the territories of the Empire situated to the west of the River Indus from Kashmir to the Sindh, along with the provinces of Thatta and the forts belonging to them.[19] Thereupon, Nadir Shah advised Emperor on the art of government. He advised "Muhammad Shah to keep a standing army of 60,000 cavalry, to confiscate the *jagirs* (domain) of nobles and to forbid them to maintain forces of their own."[20]

3 IMPACT

As regards the impact of Nadir Shah's invasion on India, it shocked the Mughal Empire to its foundation. It hastened the process of its disintegration. This invasion exposed the internal and external weaknesses of the Empire. The invasion emptied the treasury of the Empire. Nadir Shah not only sucked the economic resources of the empire but also destroyed its prestige and power. Hopeless condition prevailed everywhere. The financial bankruptcy further contributed to the fall of the Mughal Empire.

The territories of the western area of the river Indus from Kashmir to Sindh, along with provinces of Thatta and Kabul, were completely lost to the Mughal Empire. Consequently, the natural defence of the north-west of the river Indus was lost. Weak and defenceless areas encouraged Afghans to penetrate the area to

[17] *Ibid*., 147.
[18] *Ibid.*,148.
[19] V. D. Mahajan, *Mughal Rule in India,* 262.
[20] Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, 153.

create disorder. After Nadir Shah's departure, the political chaos and uncertainty paved the way for future foreign invasions. Though the invasion made Indians realize the need to maintain an organized centralized government to save from foreign attack. But along with it, the weakness of the Mughal Empire encouraged the attitude of regional independence. This the empire. By 1740 AD, the Mughal Empire existed only in name. Nadir Shah's invasion paved the way for the successive attack from the north-west in command of the Afghan ruler Ahmad Shah Abdali afterwards.

Compulsory Reading

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Suggested Readings

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Mahajan, V. D. *Mughal Rule in India*. Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1961.

a) Self-Assessment Questions

1. Describe briefly the causes of Nadir Shah's invasion of India.
2. How did foreign invasion contribute to the decline of the Mughal Empire in India?
3. Give details about the course of the Battle of Karnal between Nadir Shah and Mughal forces.
4. What was the impact of Nadir Shah's invasion?

b) Please select an appropriate answer.

1. When did Nadir Shah invade India?
   a) 1722
   b) 1736
   c) 1739
   d) 1748

2. Who was the ruler of the Mughal Empire during Nadir Shah's invasion?
   a) Aurangzeb
   b) Bahadur Shah
   c) Muhammad Shah
   d) Shah Jahan

3. What was the major battle fought between Nadir Shah and the Mughal forces?
   a) Battle of Plassey
   b) Battle of Karnal
   c) Battle of Panipat
   d) Battle of Ghazni

4. What was the immediate cause of Nadir Shah's invasion of India?
   a) The wealth of India
   b) Shelter given to Afghan fugitives
   c) Weak Mughal defense
   d) British interference

5. What happened after rumors of Nadir Shah's murder spread in Delhi?
   a) The Mughal army launched an attack on him
   b) The citizens looted the Persian camps
   c) Nadir Shah ordered a general massacre
   d) He immediately returned to Persia

Answer Key

1. b) 1739
2. c) Muhammad Shah
3. b) Battle of Karnal
4. b) Shelter given to Afghan fugitives
5. c) Nadir Shah ordered a general massacr

Unit: 6

AHMAD SHAH ABDALI FROM AFGHANISTAN: EXOGENOUS REASON OF DECLINE

Writer: Shaista Aziz

Reviewer: Dr. Riaz Ahmad

CONTENTS

	Introduction	87
	Objectives	88
1.	Causes of Abdali's Invasion	89
	1.1 Political Supremacy	89
	1.2 Material Gains	89
	1.3 Request of Shah Waliullah, a Muslim Theologian	89
2.	First Invasion of Ahmad Shah: *1748 AD*	89
3.	Second Invasion of Ahmad Shah: *1750 AD*	90
4.	Third Invasion: *1751 AD*	90
5.	Fourth Invasion: *1751 AD*	90
6.	Fifth Invasion: *1761 AD*	91
7.	Third Battle of Panipat *(Its Result and Impact)*: *1763 AD*	91
8.	Sixth Invasion of Abdali: *1764 AD*	93
9.	Seventh and Last Invasion: *1767 AD*	93
10.	Impact	93
	Compulsory Reading	93
	Suggested Readings	93
	Self-Assessment Questions	94

INTRODUCTION

After the murder of Nadir Shah in 1747, Ahmad Shah Abdali, an Afghan chief, rose to power and established himself as the independent ruler of Afghanistan. Ahmad Shah Abdali was one of the great generals of Nadir Shah. Abdali served Nadir Shah during his campaign to India in 1739. It is said that Nadir Shah paid him tribute in these words: "I have not found in Iran, Turan, or Hind any man equal to Ahmad Shah in capacity and character".[1] While accompanying Nadir to India, Ahmad Shah Abdali had seen with his own eyes the weakness of the Mughal Empire, the inability of the emperor, the negligence of the ministers, and the desire for self-independence. Soon after becoming ruler, Ahmad Shah Abdali set up his headquarters at Kandahar. He turned his attention towards the consolidation and expansion of his kingdom. He conquered Ghazna, Kabul, and Peshawar. After establishing his power at home, Abdali started a series of attacks on the Mughal Empire in India.

[1] V. D. Mahajan, *Mughal Rule in India* (Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1961), 263.

OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Know about the circumstances that lead Ahmad Shah Abdali to invade India.
- Explain the the course of battle between Ahmad Shah Abdali and *Maratha* forces.
- Highlight the role of Shah Waliullah, a Muslim theologian for the provocation of Ahmad Shah Abdali to invade India.
- Explain the impact of foreign invasion on medieval Indian history

1. CAUSES OF ABDALI'S INVASION

There are several causes that led Ahmad Shah Abdali to invade India, such as:

1.1 Material Gains

Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India seven times from 1748 AD to 1767 AD. The major objective and cause of his invasion was to lay his hands on the wealth of India. It was badly needed to consolidate his rule in Afghanistan and provide a financial base for the government. Along with that, he had to fulfil the expenses of his army and entertain the Afghan chiefs with favours and rewards. It necessitated frequent attacks on the rich but poorly defended neighbouring empire.

1.2 Political Supremacy

The other cause of Abdali's invasion was to establish his political supremacy over the decaying Mughal Empire. After capturing the Kabul and Ghazni, Abdali claimed for all the area of Mughal Empire which was earlier annexed to his Persian Empire by Nadir Shah in 1739 AD. These areas included "the province of Punjab, including Gujarat, Aurangabad, Pasrur, and Sialkot".[2] He was aware of the rapidly disintegrating Mughal Empire and the diverse individual political interests of officials of the Mughal court. The state of chaos in Punjab and the invitation of Shah Nawaz Khan, the Governor of Punjab, served as incentives for his invasions.

1.3 Request of Shah Waliullah, a Muslim Theologian

It was the apprehension of Shah Waliullah to protect the future of Muslims from the fake plan of the evil forces of *Marathas*, Sikhs, and Jats. This provoked him to address an appeal to Ahmad Shah Abdali for direct physical intervention. Thus, the other cause of Abdali's invasion was the call of Shah Waliullah to save the Muslims from the domination of infidels.

2. FIRST INVASION OF AHMAD SHAH ABDALI: 1748 AD

To accomplish his desires, Ahmad Shah Abdali crossed the Khyber to march towards Peshawar. He established Peshawar as a permanent base camp for the expeditions. In 1748, Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India for the first time. In this invasion, Abdali captured Lahore. Flashing with victory, he ordered his troops to march towards Delhi. The Mughal army interrupted the invaders near Sirhind. During the course of the bloody conflict, the artillery store of Ahmad Shah Abdali caught fire, which resulted in heavy loss of lives. In this panic and confused situation, Abdali fled the field at night with his remaining troops.[3] Though the

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[2] J. L. Mehta, *Advanced Study in the History of Modern India 1707-1813* (India: Dawn Press, 2005), 250.

[3] *Ibid*., 251.

first invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali proved a failure. It created anarchy and a political vacuum in the region. This provided an opportunity to Sikhs to organize themselves, which later continued their struggle to overthrow the Mughal rule.

3. SECOND INVASION OF AHMAD SHAH ABDALI: 1750 AD

Once again in 1750, Ahmad Shah Abdali marched towards the Indian Subcontinent. He invaded Punjab and forced the governor of Punjab, Muin-ul-Mulk, to pay an annual tribute of 14000. Along with that, Ahmad Shah Abdali demanded reinforcement of the treaty signed between the Mughal emperor and Nadir Shah in 1739. The Governor of Punjab failed to get support from Delhi and admitted the invader. Thus four districts of Punjab, called *Chahar Mahal,* with their annual revenues, were surrendered to the invader. Ahmad Shah returned to Qandahar with immense booty and wealth. The success of the second invasion of India further boosted the reputation of Abdali in Afghanistan and gave confidence to him confidence for further invasions.

4. THIRD INVASION OF AHMAD SHAH ABDALI: 1751 AD

Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India for the third time in 1751 AD, when Muin-ul Mulk failed to pay the promised amount. Muin-ul Mulk could not succeed in receiving any reinforcement from Delhi, nor did anyone come to rescue him. Abdali defeated him and conquered Multan, Punjab, and Kashmir. Though Muin-ul Mulk fought courageously but after defeat he offered unconditional surrender to the Abdali. Abdali was deeply impressed by Muin-ul Mulk's courage and bravery and restored his governorship. Muin-ul Mulk promised to send the revenue of the Punjab and not to carry out important matters without final orders from Abdali.

5. FOURTH INVASION OF AHMAD SHAH ABDALI: 1756 AD

During the reign of Alamgir II, Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India in 1756 AD for the fourth time. Emperor Alamgir II was an incompetent ruler, and his *vazir* Imad-ul-Mulk was a selfish person. Imad-ul-Mulk attacked Punjab and imprisoned Mughalani Begum, who was appointed by Ahmad Shah Abdali as governor of the Punjab. Imad-ul-Mulk appointed Adina Beg as governor of Punjab.[4] Ahmad Shah Abdali could not tolerate this act and attacked India to teach the *vazir* a lesson. After capturing Punjab, he proceeded towards Delhi. He remained in Delhi for a month. 'There was a terrible massacre and the story of Nadir Shah was repeated Ahmad Shah Abdali married his son Timur Shah to the daughter of Alamgir II. After appointing Timur Shah as governor of Punjab and Najib-ud-Daula as *vazir,* he returned with an enormous booty.

[4] Mahajan, *Mughal Rule in India*, 264.

6. FIFTH INVASION OF AHMAD SHAH ABDALI: 1759 AD

The administration of Timur Shah for one year, from May 1757 to April 1758, was a period of chaos and disorder. The Sikh community rose in rebellion on all sides. Adina Beg Khan, governor of the Julundur Doab, revolted against the Afghans and called the *Marathas* for help. A large army of the *Marathas* under the command of Raghunath Rao invaded the Punjab in April 1758, occupied Lahore, and expelled the Afghans from there. They appointed Adina Beg Khan as their governor. But this occupation of Lahore by the *Marathas* did not last for more than a few months. Shah Waliullah appealed to Ahmad Shah Abdali in his letter, 'to bring his armies into India to suppress the forces of anarchy and disorder represented by the two organized and militant communities, the Jats and *Marathas*'.[5] On the other hand, Najib-ud-Daula also repeatedly appealed to Abdali to invade India in the name of Islam.[6] Though he had his own reasons to approach Abdali through his secret envoy to Qandahar.

To retaliate for the exclusion of Timur Shah, along with the request from Shah Waliullah, Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India for the fifth time in 1759, and finally conquered Punjab. A more rigorous clash of the Afghans with the *Marathas* was inevitable, because both had been, more or less, competing for political supremacy in the Mughal Empire. This gave way to the third battle of Panipat.

7. THIRD BATTLE OF PANIPAT: 14TH JANUARY 1761

The collision of the Abdali's army with the *Marathas* took place on the 14th In January 1761, in the decisive battle of Panipat. The strength of the Abdali's army was 60,000. Half of which were the Abdali's own subjects and the other half of his Indian allies, with 23,000 foot soldiers and 7,000 horses.[7] The estimated strength of the Maratha army, as known to their foe, consisted of 85,000, with 55,000 cavalry and 15,000 infantry, along with 15,000 Pindaris.[8] Besides having superior horses, the Abdali had more efficient artillery than that of the *Marathas*, and their officers were dressed in armour, which the *Marathas* hardly wore.

The Abdali's army was superior to the *Marathas* in respect of their approach to campaigning and discipline. Above all, there was the stimulating intelligence for war and negotiation, the towering personality of Abdali, who had risen like Nadir Shah from nothing and attained to almost the same excellence. On the fateful morning of 14th January 1761, the entire Maratha army advanced in secure

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[5] Muhammad al-Ghazali, *The Socio-Political Thought of Shah Wali Allah* (Islamabad: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2001), 128.

[6] Mehta, *Advanced Study in the History of Modern India*, 263.

[7] *Ibid.*, 280.

[8] *Ibid*.

formation towards Ahmad Shah Abdali's army camp.[9] It was shielded on all four sides by heavy artillery[10] intended to make a rigorous attack on the enemy. As far as Ahmad Shah Abdali was concerned, he had long perfected his battle plan and strategy to be pursued against his enemy as the situation demanded. The attack began at about nine o'clock in the morning, and the battle raged through the day for six or seven hours. The *Maratha* army, by planning advanced indirectly, was in an advantageous position during the first three hours of the contest.

They had shattered the centre and the inner half of the right wing of Abdali, and his defeat seemed to be inevitable. His left wing had held out against the *Marathas,* where Najib-ud-Daula was especially active. The right wing of the Maratha army was manned by the troops of Malharao Holkar, Jankoji Sindhia, and some other junior officers attached to them. Total strength of the wing was 17 500.[11] Being the senior-most officer, Holkar held the command of the entire wing. Ahmad Shah Abdali himself had reached the centre to direct the fight. Six thousand of his personal bodyguards were sent into the field to circle around the *Maratha* soldiers. Three hours of the day were left, and Ahmad Shah ordered the Khans of his tribe to attack, and eight thousand in number at once fell upon the *Marathas*.

This sudden attack created a panic condition among *Marathas,* and their resistance collapsed all of a sudden. About forty to fifty thousand *Marathas* lost their lives. Besides Vishwas Rao and Sadashiv Roa, many other renowned *sardars* were killed on the battlefield. There was not a home in *Marathas* that had not to mourn the loss of a member, and an entire generation of leaders was cut off at a blow. Later on, Peshawa summed up the losses by saying 'two peals dissolved, twenty-seven gold *mohurs* have been lost, and of the silver and copper, the total cannot be cats up'.[12] The final result was the disastrous defeat of the Maratha army. The battle of Panipat produced disastrous consequences for the *Marathas* and seriously deflected the course of Maratha imperialism. Besides immense losses in men and money, the moral effect of the defeat at Panipat was even greater. As a result of the battle, the power of the Peshwa was gone, and with it the unity of the Maratha Confederacy also disappeared. Though the Maratha were able to recover their power within a few years, they could not regain their exact old power and position.

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[9] *Ibid*., 283.

[10] *Ibid.*, 284.

[11] *Ibid*., 287.

[12] *Ibid*.,296. Two pearls refered to Vishwas Rao and Sadashiv Roa, twenty-seven gold *mohurs* refered to twenty-seven premier Maratha *sardars* and of the silver and copper means junior officers and soldiers.

After this victory at Panipat, Ahmad Shah Abdali acquired control of Delhi, coins were struck, and the *khutba* was read in his name. Abdali departed from India towards the close of 1762. He ordered the Indian chiefs to recognize Shah Alam II as emperor and deputed Najib-ud-Daula to look after the administration of Delhi.

8. SIXTH INVASION OF AHMAD SHAH ABDALI: 1764 AD

The Sikhs, who had revived by this time, relieved Khwaja Abid, the Durrani governor of Lahore, and occupied the city. This brought back the Abdali to invade India for the sixth time in March 1764. He had, however, to return to his own country after a fortnight's stay at Lahore due to the outbreak of a civil war and rebellion among his troops.

9. SEVENTH AND LAST INVASION: 1767 AD

Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India again in 1767 to restrain the Sikhs in Punjab. He could not succeed in subduing the Sikhs and had to retreat soon, owing to some internal troubles, chiefly the mutiny of his troops. As soon as he had turned back, the Sikhs reoccupied Lahore and the entire region. But Ahmad Shah Abdali retained hold of Peshawar and the country west of Attock.

10. IMPACT

Ahmad Shah Abdali's invasions brought catastrophic effects in several ways. Firstly, it accelerated the dismemberment of the trembling Mughal Empire. Secondly, it presented a serious test to the rapidly spreading Maratha imperialism. And sealed the fate of the *Marathas* for their dream of supremacy in the country. Thirdly, it indirectly helped the rise of the Sikh power stronger than ever. The Sikhs fully exploited the weaknesses of the Mughals and the state of anarchy and chaos in the northern part of the country.

Compulsory Reading

Rashid, Sh. Abdur. History of the Muslims of Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent, Vol. I. Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1978.

Suggested Readings

Al-Ghazali, Muhammad. *The Socio-Political Thought of Shah Wali Allah.* Islamabad: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2001.
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Mehta, J. L. *Advanced Study in the History of Modern India 1707-1813.* India: Dawn Press, 2005.

a) Self-Assessment Questions

1. Describe briefly the causes of Ahmad Shah Abdali's invasion of India.
2. How did foreign invasion contribute to the decline of the Mughal Empire in India?
3. Do you consider that the 'Battle of Panipat was a decisive factor in sealing the fate of the Marathas for their dream of supremacy in India?
4. Discuss in detail the different invasions of Ahmed Shah Abdali in India.

b) Please select an appropriate answer.

1. Who was Ahmad Shah Abdali before becoming the ruler of Afghanistan?
a) A Mughal governor
b) A general under Nadir Shah
c) A Maratha commander
d) A British ally

2. In which year did Ahmad Shah Abdali establish his rule in Afghanistan?
a) 1739
b) 1747
c) 1751
d) 1761

3. What was the primary reason for Ahmad Shah Abdali's invasions of India?
a) Religious expansion
b) Material gains and wealth
c) Mughal emperor's invitation
d) British support

4. How many times did Ahmad Shah Abdali invade India?
a) 4
b) 5
c) 6
d) 7

5. Who invited Ahmad Shah Abdali to invade India to counter the Marathas?
a) Sir Syed Ahmad Khan
b) Shah Waliullah
c) Tipu Sultan
d) Mir Qasim

Answer Key

1. b) A general under Nadir Shah
2. b) 1747
3. b) Material gains and wealth
4. d) 7
5. b) Shah Waliullah

Unit: 7

REVIVALIST AND RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS

Written by: Dr.Fozia Umar

Reviewed by: Dr. Riaz Ahmad

CONTENTS

	Introduction	98
	Objectives	99
1.	Shah Wali Ullah and his Family	100
	1.1 Religious Services	100
	1.2 Political Services	101
	1.3 Legacy	101
2.	Sayyid Ahmed Shaheed and the Jihad Movement	102
	2.1 Religious Services	102
	2.2 Political Services	103
	2.3 Legacy	103
3.	Haji Shariat Ullah's Fariazi Movement	104
	3.1 Religious Services	104
	3.2 Political Services	105
4.	Dhudoo Mian	105
	4.1 Religious Services	105
	4.2 Political Services	105
5.	Titu Mir	106
	5.1 Services	106
6.	Haider Ali	107

6.1 Political Services 108

7. Tipu Sultan 108

7.1 Political Services 109

8. Nawab Siraj Ul-Daula (Battle of Plassey 1757) 109

8.1 Battle of Plassey 110

8.2 Causes 110

8.3 Effects 112

9. Mir Qasim (Battle of Buxar 1764) 112

9.1 Battle of Buxar 113

9.2 Causes 113

9.3 Effects 114

Compulsory Reading 114

Suggested Readings 114

Self-Assessment Questions 115

INTRODUCTION

The revitalization movement and political-religious resistance movements promise deliverance from the deprivation, the elimination of foreign domination, and a new interpretation of the human condition based on traditional cultural values. It is common in societies undergoing severe stress associated with colonial conquest and intense class or racial exploitation.[1]

The reactionary movements are usually instigated by the creative minority.[2] They determine the course of history in any region and pledge for the deliverance from deprivation of basic rights, incompetent ruler, invader, bad governance, and for safeguarding basic human rights and so on. The revivalist movements in the South Asian sub-continent were initiated by two main fronts. Some movements were launched and mobilized by the religious scholars such as Shah Wali Ullah, Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed and Haji Shariat Ullah against the moral deterioration of the Muslim masses as well as the rulers. Whereas some local rulers like Haider Ali, Tipu Sultan, Nawab Siraj ud Daulla and Mir Qasim gave a tough military resistance to the foreign invaders as true sons of the soil. During the late 18th and early 19th century, many religious and nationalist movements were launched to raise the moral character and socio-political uplift of the Muslims. As long as Muslims were politically dominant in the sub-continent, no need was felt to organize them as a community; it was the loss of a political power base and its socio-economic impact that accelerated the pace of Muslim revival and reform. Similarly, it was the time when the British effort for the establishment and later consolidation of their supremacy in the sub-continent became evident. Therefore, military resistance from the Muslims was also the need of the hour to be shown. In the present unit, revivalist and resistance movements launched either by the religious scholar or by the political ruler are discussed.

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[1] *The Columbia Encyclopaedia*, 6th ed., S.V. "Revitalization Movement." 2008.

[2] Creative minority, the term coined by Toyn bee is a dominant group of a society generally the educated middle class which respond on behalf of the society to some internal or external threat. It has the ability to mobilise people on a common agenda promising the deliverance from the posed issues.

OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the revivalist movements initiated by Shah Wali Ullah and Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed for the Muslim uplift.
- Discuss the objectives and consequences of the *Faraizi* Movement.
- Comprehend the military resistance provided by the local rulers of the sub-continent against British rule in India.

1. SHAH WALI ULLAH AND HIS FAMILY

Shah Wali Ullah was a great Muslim reformer of the 18th century. He was born on 21 February 1703 in Delhi in a religious family. He completed his formal education from his father, Abd-ur-Rehman, at the age of 15 and was later initiated in *Naqshbandiya Silsilah*.[3] He was well-versed in the Quran and Hadith. At the age of 14, he had completed his studies in Quran, Hadith, Fiqh, Philosophy, and Jurisprudence and had also acquired some basic knowledge of medicine. [4] He rendered many services for the revival and uplift of Islam and Muslims. After the death of his father, Shah Abd-ur-Rehman, he taught in *Madrassah Rahimiyah* for 12 years.[5] There, he wrote many books and rendered many religious, political, and national services.

1.1 Religious Services

1. He translated the Holy Quran into Persian with the title *Fateh Rehman Fi Tarjuma tul Quran*. His task was carried over by his sons Shah Rafi-ud-din and Shah Abdul Qadir, who translated the Quran into Urdu for the better understanding of the Muslim masses.
2. He wrote a book titled *Tafheemat-i-Ilahia* in which he criticised the merrymaking of the incapable rulers and advised them to change their attitude.
3. He wrote a commentary on the Book of Hadith *Mauttah* (Mota) in Arabic and Persian known as *Almosava* and *Almosafa*.
4. Besides this, he was a well-versed teacher of Hadith and propagated Islam and arranged Hadiths with respect to their topics.
5. He set himself for the task of removing the differences and bridging the gulf between Shi'as and Sunnis.[6]
6. He recommended the application of *Ijtihad* instead of blind *Taqlid*.[7]
7. He wrote 50 books, the most famous is *Hujjat-ullah-il-Balighah* (a descriptive account dealing with the causes of chaos and disintegration). [8]

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[3] I. H. Qureshi. *A Short History of Pakistan: Alien Rule and the Rise of Muslim Nationalism. (Karachi: University of Karachi, 2006),* 621.

[4] G. Allana, *Muslim Political Thought through the Ages: 1526-1947* (Rawalpindi: Bilal & Co, 2001), 38.

[5] Qureshi, *A Short History of Pakistan*, 620.

[6] Ibid., 621.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid., 622.

8. His works also dealt with the Hadith, Sunnah, and Islamic jurisprudence.[9]
9. He trained a group of ulema and established several branches of his school at Delhi and prepared grounds for a wider and more effective dissemination of his ideas.[10]

1.2 Political Services

1. He visited areas outside India and highlighted the threats, the Muslims were facing with the rise of the Marathas. He advised the Muslims to strive for Allah. At that time, he asked the Muslims to counter the Maratha power.
2. He prepared Najib-ud-Daula (Rohilla Chief) and Shuja-ud-Daula (Nawab of Oudh) for *Jehad.*
3. He wrote a letter to Ahmad Shah Abdali (King of Afghanistan) requesting him to save Muslims from the Marhattas. Consequently, the Marhattas were defeated in 3rd battle of Panipat.

1.3 Legacy

Maulana Qasim Nanotvi who later founded Madrassah Deoband was the follower of Shah Wali Ullah. His son Shah Abdul Aziz was so well trained by himself that he launched Jehad Movement which was carried forward by Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed. Shah Wali Ullah not only provided numerous services for Muslim revival and uplift but also laid the foundation of many reformist and revivalist movements in the form of his followers as a legacy.

Shah Wali Ullah had four sons- Shah Abdul Aziz, Shah Rafi-ud-din, Shah Abdul Qadir, and Shah Abdul Ghani.[11] The battle of Delhi in September 1803 Marhatta power was crushed but the British were recognized as masters of sub-continent and plundered the place. As a result of this event, Shah Abdul Aziz launched a movement to reverse the decline of Islam in India. He directed the message not only to elites but also made it a mass mobilization movement and inspired the Jihad movement for the liberation of Punjab from the Sikh rule.

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[9] Allana, *Muslim Political Thought,* 47.
[10] Qureshi, *A Short History of Pakistan*, 622.
[11] Ibid., 625.

2. SAYYID AHMAD SHAHEED AND THE JIHAD MOVEMENT

In the first half of the 19th century, Punjab was under the tyrannical rule of Sikhs whose persecution of Muslims had become intolerable. Shah Abdul Aziz, for a long time, continued to preach the religio-political philosophy of Shah Wali Ullah. Therefore, Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed was assigned the leadership of the Jihad Movement against the British and the Sikhs. Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed was born in 1786 at Rai Bareilly.[12] He began his career as *Sawar* in the service of Nawab Amir Khan.[13] He was a student of Abdul Qadir, son of Shah Wali Ullah. He was inspired by Shah Abdul Aziz. In 1810, he joined the army of Nawab Ameer Khan of Tonak to take part in the Jihad against the British. After 1817, he became the disciple of Maulana Muhammad Ismail, known as Shah Ismail Shaheed.[14] In 1820, he started visiting different areas of India to muster the support for the movement. He travelled from Delhi to Saharanpur, then to Rampur, and from there to Calcutta and Patna. In 1822, after his return from Mecca to Delhi, he had a vast number of supporters to begin a war of liberation against the Sikhs.

2.1 Religious Services

1. Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed condemned all the corrupt practices and innovations in Islam, such as paying visits to the tombs of saints, heavy expenditure on the occasion of marriage and birth ceremonies, and called them harmful and extravagant social practices.
2. In 1818, he wrote *Sirat-i-Mustaqim,*[15] Which is an authentic expression of his viewpoint and is a summary of the reforms of Shah Wali Ullah.
3. He ordered the Muslims to offer regular prayers and abandon the *Bidats.*
4. He had moderate views on Taqlid. He did not belong to any one of the well-known schools of Sufism; rather, he had the initiative in all *Qadiriyah, Chishtiyah, Naqshbandiyah,* and *Mujaddidiyah* schools.
5. He launched the Mujahedin Movement, aiming at the renaissance of Islam in India, which has religious and political influence.

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[12] Ibid., 626.

[13] S. M. Ikram. *A History of Muslim Civilization in India and Pakistan: A Political and Cultural History* (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1997), 537.

[14] Qureshi, *A Short History of Pakistan*, 626.

[15] Ikram, *A History of Muslim Civilization in India and Pakistan,* 537.

6. He was an outstanding orator. His religious and political sermons won him well-known followers and companions as Shah Ismail and Maulvi Abdul Hayy, and enforced *Shariah* upon Pathans in Peshawar. [16]

2.2 Political Services

1. He launched Mujahedin Movement from Frontier Province (KPK) along with Yusufzai against Sikhs.
2. He was well supplied with recruits and many from Uttar Pradesh, Bengal, and Bihar.[17]
3. In December 1826, he attacked the Sikh army and killed thousands of Sikh soldiers.
4. He defeated the Sikhs in the Battle of Hazru.
5. In January 1827, he established an Islamic state in the area under his caliphate and organized local administration.
6. In November 1830, he succeeded in capturing Peshawar[18]Soon afterwards, he was compelled to give up Peshawar.
7. In 1831, he met the Sikhs courageously at Balakot. In this battle, Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed and Shah Ismail Shaheed, along with many other leaders, died a martyr's death.

2.3 Legacy

According to I.H. Qureshi,

The expedition was a military failure mainly due to the lack of coordination, in the rigidity with which the laws of *shariah* were enforced upon the Pathans, who were unused to the organized government, and the cupidity and self-interests of Afghans. But the fire that Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed had lit continued to be a major source of anxiety for the British for more than sixty years. After his death, Wilayat Ali and Inayat Ali assumed the leadership of the movement. A rebel colony of the remnants of his followers was established at Sitana. [19]

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[16] Qureshi, *A Short History of Pakistan*, 626.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.

3. HAJI SHARIAT ULLAH'S *FARAIZI* MOVEMENT

In Muslim Bengal, a religio-political reform movement was founded by Haji Shariat-Ullah in 1804. Haji Shariat Ullah was born in Faridpur in 1768.[20] At the age of eighteen, he went to Mecca on a pilgrimage and stayed there for 20 years, and became a disciple of Sheikh Tahir as Sunbul-al-Makki.[21] He was inspired by the Shafi school of thought. On his return to India, he saw the miserable conditions of the oppressed Muslim peasants, who were passing through a critical phase of history. The British traders and the Hindu Zamindars were giving them ill-treatment. [22] He conclusion that the reason for Muslim sufferings was detachment from *Faraiz* (religious commandments) and oppression from Hindu Zamindars. Therefore, he launched the *Faraizi* Movement. [23]

3.1 Religious Services

1. He was a skilful orator and a good Arabic scholar.[24] He propagated his ideas for several years in the village of his native district and was recognized as a pious man.
2. He asked Muslims to give up un-Islamic customs and practices like *Tazia*, dancing, and singing, and to act upon the commandments of religion called *Faraiz* or duties.
3. "The chief innovation introduced by him was the non-observance of Friday prayers and of the two great 'Eids' because the sub-continent under British rule was *Dar-ul-harb* (the land of infidels)". [25]
4. He was against the prevalent procedure of Sufi initiation and replaced the expressions *piri muridi,* which suggested complete submission, with the relationship between *ustad* and *shagird*. [26]
5. He worked for the eradication of social evils from society and propagated the doctrine against religious superstitions.

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[20] Ibid., 628
[21] Ibid.
[22] Allana, *Muslim Political Thought,* 91.
[23] Ibid., 93.
[24] Qureshi, A *Short History of Pakistan*, 628.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ikram, *A History of Muslim Civilization in India and Pakistan,* 540.

3.2 Political Services

The Faraizi Movement infused a spirit of nationalism among the Muslim community in Bengal. They became aware of their rights and started exerting agitation.

This movement gave Muslim peasantry a new sense of dignity.
Hindu landlords were alarmed by his doctrine; therefore, he was sent to Navabari in Dacca district, where he resumed his mission and his influence expanded considerably.[27]

4. DUDHU MIAN

Haji Shariat Ullah was succeeded by his son Haji Muhammad Mohsin, better known in history as Dudhu Mian. [28] He was born in 1819[29] and went on pilgrimage at a young age. On his return, he took the responsibility of organizing the movement launched by his father. He was more active and blessed with organizing ability; therefore, he infused a new spirit in the movement.

4.1 Religious Services

1. He organized the peasants of Faridpur district and wanted them to declare Jihad against the British.
2. He made cultivators and village workmen, the largest number of converts.

4.2 Political Services

1. "The most remarkable advance made during Dudhu Mian's lifetime was the organization of *Faraiziri*. He divided Eastern Bengal into circles, and appointed a *Khalifa*, or agent, to each with power to collect contributions for furtherance of the objects of the central association". [30] The *Khalifas* kept him informed about the occurrences and events in their jurisdictions.
2. He showed exceptional qualities of leadership and acquired a great influence in Bakerganj, Dacca, Faridpur, and Patna districts.
3. He asserted the quality of all men and attached greater importance to the

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[27] Qureshi, A *Short History of Pakistan*, 628.

[28] Sekhar, Bandopadhayay. *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2007), 163.

[29] Ikram, *A History of Muslim Civilization in India and Pakistan,* 541.

[30] Qureshi, A *Short History of Pakistan*, 628.

welfare of the lowly and the poor.[31]

4. He asked his followers not to pay taxes to Hindu Zamindars and proclaimed that the earth belongs to God and no one has a right to occupy it as an inheritance or levy taxes upon it.[32] He encouraged peasants to settle in the *Khas Mahal* lands managed by the government.

In 1838, he was wrongly charged with abetting the plunder of several houses. In 1841, he was committed to the sessions on a trumped-up charge of murder but was acquitted; on several occasions, he was tried for different reasons, but each time he was acquitted for lack of evidence. He settled disputes, administered summary justice, and punished any Hindu, Muslim, or Christian who dared to bring suits in adjoining Munsif's court without first referring matters to him". [33] He was arrested in the revolt of 1857, which dealt a death blow to the movement, and he died in 1860.

5. TITU MIR

The success of the Mujahedin Movement had its repercussions in Bengal, and a contemporary movement was launched to address the sufferings of the Muslims. Mir Nasir Ali, popularly known as Titu Mir, was born in 1782 in the district of 24 *Parganas.* In 1819, he went to Mecca for pilgrimage, where he met Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed and was spiritually inspired by his doctrine.[34] On his return, he observed the suppression of Muslims and devoted himself to the cause of his country. The peasants of Bengal were much aggrieved at the oppression of the Hindu Zamindars. He decided to liberate the Muslims from the cruelty of Hindu Zamindars and the British. The religious movement launched by him is known as *Tariqah-i-Muhammadiya*. [35]

5.1 Services

1. Titu Mir led a peasant revolt against the exactions of the government and the oppression of the landlords. [36]
2. The movement took root in the districts of Faridpur, Nadia, and 24 *Parganas* during the year 1831-32.

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[31] Ibid., 629.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Sekhar, *From Plassey to Partition*, 162.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Qureshi, A *Short History of Pakistan*, 627.

3. He fortified the place and organized a large group of followers. Narkelbaria, a village near Calcutta, was made the centre of his activities. A fort of bamboo was constructed at Narkelbaria, and war material was collected.
4. Masum Khan was appointed the commander of his forces, and Miskin Shah was his advisors; both rendered courageous services for the cause of Muslims.
5. He defeated Krishna Deva Rai, a big Zaimindar of Purnia, who imposed a tax on beards upon Muslims. This tax was collected in Purnia, and the amount of the tax was Rs. 2.50.[37]
6. Kaliprasanna Mukherjee, a Zamindar of Gobardanga and the chief of Kuthir of Mollarhat, was also crushed.
7. He was able to set up a government of his own, which threatened the Hindu Zamindars and the British.

In 1830, William Bentinck sent an army consisting of 100 English soldiers, 300 sepoys, and a few gunmen under Colonel Stuart to Narkelbaria. The opposite forces met each other. Titu Mir got defeated because of inferior weapons. Titu Mir was killed, and nearly 350 of his followers were taken prisoners. [38] Masum Khan was arrested and sentenced to death, and the fort was destroyed. The peasant revolt laid the foundation of consciousness and resistance to the oppressive policies of the government.

6. HAIDER ALI

Haider Ali was born in 1727 and was a Quraishi immigrant. [39] His father, Fateh Muhammad, served at important posts in the armies of Acrot and Mysore. At the age of five, he was sent to live with his uncle, who was a Mansabdar of the Raja of Mysore, from where he acquired sound training in warfare and administration. He was appointed an officer in the state by Nand Raj, the Wazir of Mysore. In 1752, he was made the governor of Dundegal. From 1752 to 1761, he suppressed many revolts and defeated Marhattas. In 1761, he became the commander of the Mysore army.

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[37] Ikram, *A History of Muslim Civilization in India and Pakistan,* 542.
[38] Qureshi, A *Short History of Pakistan*, 627.
[39] Ibid., 741.

6.1 Political Services

1. He controlled the chaotic conditions in the kingdom created by the incompetence of King Chikka Krishna Raja. The king appointed him to deal with the crisis and invested him with the supreme authority. [40]
2. He put the financial matters in order, established peace, organized administration, and trained the army on a European model.[41]
3. He defeated the allied forces of the English and the Nizam in the first battle of Mysore (1767-69) and concluded peace on his own terms.
4. He supported the French in the Anglo-French wars; many French chiefs and soldiers joined his army after the failure of Lally's schemes.
5. He participated in the Second Mysore War and fought bravely. In this war, he was assisted by his son Tipu Sultan and died in 1782. His son continued the war, and in 1784, with the Treaty of Mangalore, the war ended.
6. Besides being an able soldier, he was a great administrator. He divided his central government into 18 departments, each governed by a minister.
7. He occupied Sira and its dependencies, brought the petty neighbouring principalities under his control. He conquered Bednu and renamed it Haidernagar. The acquisition of this small but rich kingdom greatly added to his resources. [42]
8. He posed a check on the plundering and territorial ambitions of the Marhattas.
9. He was a great patron of agriculture and commerce. [43]
10. He followed the policy of religious tolerance; Hindus on merit were given great importance. Purnia and Krishna Rao were among the notable Hindus of his court.

7. TIPU SULTAN

He was born in 1752 at Devan Hall (near Bangalore). [44]He was taught Arabic, Persian, English, and French; moreover, he was given training in the art

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[40] Ibid., 741-42.
[41] Ibid., 742.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Allana, *Muslim Political Thought,* 60.
[44] Shaukat Wasti, *Indo Pak History: 1526-1965* (Peshawar: University Book Agency, 1971), 206.

of modern warfare. [45] French military officers were appointed to train him in the art of war. He started participating in the wars with his father at a very young age. He became the ruler of Mysore in 1782, after the death of his father.[46]

7.1 Political Services

1. He did not accept the subsidiary alliance. He was a true patriot and resisted courageously against the English domination.
2. The establishment of peace throughout the empire, the introduction of the beneficent reforms in all branches of administration, the dispensation of even-handed justice to all, the dispensation of trade and industry, all proved him an able administrator.
3. He introduced a new calendar to meet the administrative difficulties.
4. Trade and industry grew rapidly; new cities sprang up all over Mysore.
5. Tipu was interested in modernising the agricultural economy by repairing old irrigation systems and constructing new ones by promoting agricultural manufacturing, and introducing sericulture in Mysore. [47]
6. The army was modern and well-equipped.
7. As a diplomat, he was at his best, and he sent embassies to France and Turkey and corresponded with Zaman Shah of Afghanistan.
8. He prohibited drinking and abandoned polyandry. He abolished landlordism and made the tillers and owners of the land. [48]
9. He defeated the English in the Second Mysore War.

8. NAWAB SIRAJ-UD-DAULA AND THE BATTLE OF PLASSEY 1757

Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula belongs to a noble family. His father, Zain-ud-din, was the ruler of Bihar, and his mother, Amina Begum, was the youngest daughter of Nawab Ali Vardi Khan. He was raised with the necessary education and training. Nawab Siraj ud Daulla was the grandson of Ali Vardi Khan. He assisted his grandfather in the military expeditions against the Maratha in 1746. Ali Vardi Khan had no son; therefore, in 1752 officially declared his grandson the successor to the throne. He became the ruler of Bengal and confronted the English domination**.**

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[45] Allana, *Muslim Political Thought,* 77.
[46] Ikram, *Modern Muslim India,* 515.
[47] Sekhar, *From Plassey to Partition*, 34.
[48] Allana, *Muslim Political Thought,* 79.

8.1 Battle of Plassey

The Battle of Plassey was a clear British East India Company triumph over the Nawab of Bengal and his French allies. After defeating ,the British East India Company firmly established its rule in India.

8.2 Causes

1. English supported Rajballabh, who was the rival claimant when Siraj acceded to the throne.
2. The English were issuing certain trade privileges in Bengal granted to them by the Mughal Emperor Furrukhsiyar.
   "Furrukhsiyar's fireman exempted the company's goods from terminal duty. Under the benefit of these Parwanas, the employees of the Company smuggled their private merchandise, causing loss to the exchequer. Siraj-ud-Daula cancelled all such parwanas or *dastaks*".[49] (*Dastaks* is the free passé which declared that the goods belonged to the British and therefore are exempted from trade tax)
3. Krishandas, a son of Rajballabh, who was a rich merchant, had fled to Calcutta with his family and treasure. He was given shelter by the English and was not handed over to Siraj when he was asked.
4. "The main cause was the additional fortification of Calcutta, which the English had recently taken, as a precautionary measure against the French in anticipation of the breaking of the Seven-Year war in Europe". [50]
5. These factors enraged Nawab; he advanced and captured Calcutta and occupied the English factory at Qasimbazar.[51]
   The possessions of Calcutta became memorable in history on account of the so called Black Hole episode, which occupies a prominent place in the narratives of Holwell. According to his version, 146 English prisoners were confined during the night in a small room, known as Black Hole, 18 feet long by 14 feet 10 inches wide. 123 dies of suffocation, and 23 miserable survivors alone remained to tell the tale of that tragic summer night. [52]

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[49] Wasti, *Indo Pak History*, 183.

[50] R. C. Majumdar, H. C. Raychaudhri & Kalikinkar Datta. *An Advanced History of India*. (London: Macmillan, 2008), 648.

[51] V. D. Mahajan, *Modern Indian History* (New Delhi: S. Chand Group, 2010) , 26.

[52] Majumdar, *An Advanced History of India*, 650.

The truth of the incident is doubted by modern Historians, as it seems impossible to confine such a large group of people in such a small room. When the news of the capture of Calcutta and the incident of Black Hole reached Madras, an expedition was sent from there for the recovery of Calcutta under the command of Clive with a fleet under Admiral Watson.[53] Clive recaptured Calcutta in January 1757. Nawab besieged Calcutta but failed to capture it; consequently, a peace Treaty was signed between the two. The Nawab restored the privileges of the English Company; they were allowed to fortify Calcutta, as the Seven Years' War had broken out, the English captured Chandranagore from the French." [54]

The treaty of Alinagar prevented the French from coming to Bengal to help the Nawab. The English got the permission to trade without customs duty, to mint coins, and compensation for their losses". [55]
The English were not satisfied yet and encouraged all those who were against the Nawab and became a party to hatch a conspiracy against the Nawab. The Nawab had displeased many people; Rajballabh was dismissed from the post of *diwan*, Mir Zafar was deposed from the post of *Mir Bakhshi*, Jagat Seth, the biggest banker of Bengal, was disrespected, and Khadim Khan, the military commander, was not rewarded well.

All conspired against him. The English wanted to replace the Nawab with Mir Jafar to serve English interests, as he was the Commander in Chief of the Nawab. A conspiracy was hatched in which the English, Mir Jafar, Rai Durlab (treasure), and Amin Chand (rich merchant) were the main actors. According to the conspiracy, Mir Jafar was required to side with the English. During the battle with Nawab, in return, he would be rewarded with the throne of Bengal. After the plan had been finalised, Clive changed his tone and, in a letter, accused Nawab of violating the treaty by corresponding with the French.[56] He marched to Murshidabad and encamped at Plassey. Nawab fought a battle in June 1757; Mir Jafar and his army left the ranks of Nawab and stood as silent spectators. However, Mir Mardan, Mir Mohan Lah, and the French remained loyal to the Nawab. The English won the battle due to the treachery of Mir Jafar. Nawab

[53] Mahajan. *Modern Indian History* , 27.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Majumdar, *An Advanced History of India*, 652.
[56] Mahajan. *Modern Indian History,* 27.

escaped from battle and reached Murshidabad,[57] Where he was chased and killed by Miran, son of Mir Jafar.

8.3 Effects

The Battle of Plassey was the first armed conflict between the European and the local powers. The decisive victory of the British Power exposed the weakness of the Mughals and other native powers forever. Hence, it laid the foundation of a new chapter in the history of India. The following are the consequences of the Battle of Plassey.

1. Political leadership of Bengal changed, and the throne of Bengal fell into the hands of Mir Jafar. It resulted in the extension of British territories around Calcutta. The financial position of the Company was enhanced. The new Nawab gave one crore of rupees and the territory of 24 parganas to the Company.
2. The financial gains in a war indirectly increased the military expenditure of the British as the accumulated wealth was used in the 3rd Carnatic War against the French.
3. The prestige of the English Company was enhanced immensely, and it exposed the political weakness of India and disunity among different communities. The English became the de facto rulers of Bengal, and Mir Jafar remained a puppet in their hands.
4. Mir Jafar was made the Nawab of Bengal; it was called the first revolution in Bengal. He gave a lot of money to the offices of the Company. This excited the greed of the officers. Thus, the Battle of Plassey prepared the grounds for subsequent revolutions in Bengal.

9. MIR QASIM AND THE BATTLE OF BUXAR 1764

Mir Qasim ascended the *Masnad* on October 20, 1760. [58] He came from a noble Persian family; his father, Mir Razi Khan, was an imperial Mansabdar and held a jagir in Bengal. [59] He received a good education and developed a taste for mathematics and astrology. [60] He gave military resistance to the domination of British rule in the sub-continent. He remained Nawab of Bengal from 1760 to

[57] Majumdar, *An Advanced History of India*, 656.

[58] Sheikh Abdur Rashid. *History of the Muslims of Indo Pakistan Sub-continent: 1707-1806* (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1978), 315.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid.

1763 and proved his administrative skills. He reorganized the departments of revenue, justice, and defence. Mir Qasim increased the number of check posts of customs and started checking the trade goods of the English. Within a short time, he reduced the powers of the Zamindars and cut down unnecessary expenditure. He cleared all the arrears of English and paid the pending salaries of his soldiers. He shifted the capital from Murshidabad to Monghyr and adopted an independent policy.[61]

9.1 Battle of Buxar

The Battle of Buxar was fought between Mir Qasim and the English. The relationships between Qasim and England became strained due to several factors. The most important of them was the issue of free trade. The English wanted to get rid of Mir Qasim. Thus, the situation led to arm conflict.

9.2 Causes

1. The English began to draw facilities and privileges by misusing the conditions for trade. They started conducting free trade, which caused heavy financial loss to the Bengal government. Mir Qasim prohibited the trade of the Company's servant. to carry out his orders, Mir Qasim increased the number of check posts of customs and started checking the trade goods of India.
2. The Calcutta Council rejected the treaty of Monghyr. [62] The English deposed Mir Qasim and restored Mir Jafar to power. They recalled Mir Jafar and declared him the new Nawab of Bengal in 1763. Mir Jafar accepted all the conditions of the English. Then an English army was sent under Major Adams to give battle to Mir Qasim.
3. Mir Qasim was not a good general. He was defeated by the English in the battles at Katwah, Giria, Suti, and Udaynala. After his defeats, Mir Qasim went to Oudh and concluded a treaty with Shah Alam II and Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula of Oudh, which entitled them to help Mir Qasim, and in return, Mir Qasim was to pay rupees eleven lac per month as the expenditure of the combined forces.

In 1764, the battle of Buxar was fought between the English and the combined forces of Shal Alam II, Nawab of Oudh, and Mir Qasim. The battle was

[61] Qureshi, *A Short History of Pakistan*, 722.
[62] Sekhar, *From Plassey to Partition*, 55.

won by the English, and Mir Qasim fled to Delhi. Shuja-ud-Daula refused to accept the authority of the English and sued for peace when English forces ended Oudh and advanced up to Lucknow. Shah Alam II surrendered to the English.

9.3 Effects

1. After this victory, the English had no formidable adversary in the province that could challenge their authority. Mir Jafar was restored and ruled as a nominal ruler.
2. The defeat of the Mughal Emperor encouraged the English to establish a formal empire in India.
3. Clive received districts of Karah and Allahabad from the Nawab of Oudh as war indemnity and obtained "*Diwani*" of Bengal from the Mughal Emperor by handing over the districts to him. It paved the way for English to control the northern areas.

Compulsory Reading

Rashid, Sh. Abdur. History of the Muslims of Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent, Vol. I. Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1978.

Suggested Readings

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a) Self-Assessment Questions

1. Critically evaluate the services rendered by Shah Wali Ullah and his successors for the uplift of the Muslims.
2. Give a comprehensive account of the *Faraizi* Movement.
3. Compare the movements launched by Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed and Titu Mir, and also discuss the causes of their failure.
4. Give the character and estimate of Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan.
5. Critically examine the role played by Mir Jafar in the Battle of Plassey.

b) Please select an appropriate answer.

1. Who was the key figure behind the revivalist movement in the 18th century in India?
   a) Shah Waliullah
   b) Mir Jafar
   c) Haider Ali
   d) Tipu Sultan

2. Which book was written by Shah Waliullah to explain the decline of the Muslim rule in India?
   a) Sirat-i-Mustaqim
   b) Tafheemat-i-Ilahia
   c) Hujjat-ullah-il-Balighah
   d) Fateh Rehman Fi Tarjuma tul Quran

3. Who translated the Quran into Urdu for better understanding of the Muslim masses?
   a) Shah Waliullah
   b) Shah Abdul Aziz
   c) Shah Rafi-ud-Din and Shah Abdul Qadir
   d) Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed

4. Which ruler was invited by Shah Waliullah to fight against the Marathas?
   a) Ahmad Shah Abdali
   b) Nadir Shah
   c) Tipu Sultan
   d) Haider Ali

5. Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed launched which movement against British and Sikh rule?
   a) Jihad Movement
   b) Tariqah-i-Muhammadiya
   c) Faraizi Movement
   d) Mujahedin Movement

Answer Key

1. a) Shah Waliullah
2. c) Hujjat-ullah-il-Balighah
3. c) Shah Rafi-ud-Din and Shah Abdul Qadir
4. a) Ahmad Shah Abdali
5. a) Jihad Movement

Unit: 8

THEORIES OF MUGHAL DOWNFALL

Writer: Sadia Aziz

Reviewer: Dr. Riaz Ahmad

CONTENTS

	Introduction	119
	Objectives	120
1.	Degeneration of Muslim Character	121
2.	Crisis of the Mansabdari System	121
3.	Incapability and Selfishness of the Mughal Nobility	122
4.	Military Weaknesses of the Mughal	123
5.	Absence of a Rule of Succession	124
6.	Great Firms and Financial Upheaval	125
7.	British Technological Superiority	126
	Compulsory Reading	128
	Suggested Readings	128
	Self-Assessment Questions	129

INTRODUCTION

The Mughal Empire reached its greatest extent in the time of Aurangzeb Alamgir, but a drastic decline in its power and prestige came about within a few decades of his death. The Mughal Empire did not collapse suddenly. It took 150 years after the death of Aurangzeb to finally come to an end. The causes of its decline and eventual downfall cannot be traced to any one single factor, but a combination of factors which together chipped away at the once invincible might of the Mughals. [1]

To the vast majority of the population of India, the Mughal Empire was essentially a foreign Empire, and on that account, it could not expect to secure its existence upon a firm foundation of spontaneous popular support.[2] Alien in its nature and administrative organization, it was feeble to induce such feelings as those that led the people of Maharashtra to follow and fight for Shiva ji.[3]

The last Great Mughal, Aurangzeb Alamgir, is also considered responsible for the decline of the Mughal Empire. His religious policy led to disunity and alienated the sympathy and support of the Hindus.[4] The Deccan policy of Aurangzeb was also partly responsible for the downfall of the Mughal Empire. Although these policies did lead to the weakening of the empire, the major cause of the decline was the lack of competent and worthy successors to Aurangzeb. They lacked qualities that were essential to deal with the affairs of a kingdom. They, therefore, could not sustain the following empire, once famous for grandeur and glory. According to Stanley Lane-Poole, "As some imperial corpse preserved for ages in its dread seclusion, crowned and armed and still majestic, yet falls to the dust at the mere breath of heaven, so fell the Empire of the Mughals when the great name that guarded it was no more". [5]

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[1] For different theories about the decline of the Mughal Empire in India, see; J.F. Richards, "The Imperial Crisis in the Deccan," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 35, no. 2 (1976): 237-256. M.N.Pearson, "Shiva G and the Decline of the Mughal Empire," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 35, no. 2 (1976): 221-235. P. Hardy, "Commentary and Critique," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 35, no. 2 (1976):257-263. Hamida Khatoon Naqvi, "Aurangzeb's Policies and Decline of the Mughal Empire," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 37, no. I (1977): 191-192. Stephan P. Blake, "The Patrimonial-Bureaucratic Empire of the Mughals," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 39, no. I (1979): 77-94.

[2] Stephan Meredyth Edwards and Herbert Leonard, *Mughal Rule in India* (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 1995), 351.

[3] Ibid.

[4] M.Athar Ali, "The Passing of Empire: The Mughal Case," *Modern Asian Studies* 9, no. 3 (1975): 385.

[5] Stanley Lane-Poole, *Medieval India under Mohammedan Rule (A.D. 712-1764)* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1979), 411.

OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to

- Explain the different theories about the disintegration of the Mughal Dynasty in India.
- Elucidate the role of Mughal nobility in the downfall of the Mughals in 18th-century India.
- Figure out the importance and defects of the *Mansabdari* system, which further paved the way for the decline of the Mughal Empire in India.
- Highlight the impact and outcomes of the 'twilight of Mughals' in India.

1. DEGENERATION OF MUSLIM CHARACTER

The foremost cause of the loss of political power was a crisis in the Muslim character itself—incompetence, shortsighted, selfishness, corruption, and other corroding evils are destroying the soul of the Muslims. Aurangzeb Alamgir is found to complain repeatedly that men of honesty and sincerity had become rare in his time and that competent men were not available for responsible offices in the government.[6]

2. CRISIS IN *MANSABDARI* SYSTEM

The Mughal Empire has been described as a 'war state' at its core.[7] At its best, the Mughal government sought no higher goal than the maintenance of internal order and the preservation of external peace. For this very reason, it sought to develop a highly centralized bureaucratic system, with a despotic ruler at its top and the mighty military power just below him.[8] Akbar evolved a unique system to regulate the central services of the government by introducing what was known as the *Mansabdari* System. The term 'mansab' is derived from the Arabic word *mansib,* meaning a post, office, rank, or status.[9] All the gazetted imperial officers of the state who performed both civil and military functions were classified into 66 grades, from *mansab* of ten to ten thousand. Much greater ranks were given to princesfor example, Shah Jahan was given the rank of 30,000 by Jahangir.[10] Later, the number was reduced to 33.[11] They were directly recruited, promoted, and suspended by the Emperor himself. The *mansabdari* system later deteriorated; therefore, with the ascendancy of weak rulers on the throne, and as corruption and repression increased.

Under this system, every *mansabdar* had to maintain as many soldiers as were indicated by his rank of *zat*. The rank of *sawar* the number of horsemen among them. Sometimes they were paid in cash, but those *mansabdars* who were not paid in cash were awarded a *jagir* or landed estate instead of salary. They were the *jagirdars* who required collecting the revenue from the particular *jagir* on which one part would go to the state, and the other two parts would cover his personal expenses and the maintenance allowances for his soldiers and horses.

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[6] I.H.Qureshi. *A Short History of Pakistan* (Book 3) (Karachi: BCC&T Press, 2006), 39.

[7] J.F.Richards, *The Mughal Empire: The New Cambridge History of India*, vol. 1.5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 282.

[8] Edwards*, Mughal Rule in India*, 351.

[9] P.Raghunadha Rao, *Indian Heritage and Culture* (New Delhi, Sterling Publishers, 2007), 45.

[10] Qureshi. *A Short History of Pakistan*, 169.

[11] Ibid.

This relationship between the emperor and the nobility forms the crux of the entire imperial edifice.[12] The effectiveness and the durability of this relationship depended on the personal qualities of the emperor and the constant expansion of resources. The system had not set rules regarding appointment, dismissal, and promotion. Everything depends upon the personal whim of the emperor and so the member of the aristocracy only had personal loyalty to the emperor himself. This defect brought many intrigues and neglect of duties on the part of the officials. This also explains why the Mughals needed to be constantly involved in the territorial expansion of their dominion.

During the last years of Aurangzeb's reign, with no conquests, the number of *jagirdars* appointed rose to such a great number that there was a serious shortage of *jagirs*.[13] Due to the lack of good *jagirs* and and decrease in the resources of the empire deteriorated the functional relationship between the emperor and the aristocracy indicating the inefficiency within the imperial Mughal administrative system.[14] Consequently, when the administrative machine deteriorated and the Government proved incapable of fulfilling its police duty, and when at the same time the line of the Great Mughals degenerated into a succession of licentious rulers, this resulted in a decline in the military strength of the empire.

3. INCAPABILITY AND SELFISHNESS OF THE MUGHAL NOBILITY

The names of some of the Mughal Nobles, like Bairam Khan, Munim Khan, Muzaffar Khan, Abdul Rahim Khan-e-Khanna, Himad-ud-Daula, Mahabat Khan, Asa Khan, and Saad-Ullah Khan, proved as the pillars of the Great Mughal Empire.[15] However, the economic crises of the 18th century, the various ethno-religious groups within the aristocracy began other. About four-fifths of the land revenue of the empire was under the control of the *mansabdars*, but this income was unevenly distributed among them, creating jealousy within the aristocracy.

This economic crisis, known as the *jagirdari* crisis of the 18th century when the resources of the empire were diminishing rapidly.[16] This added to the already existing factionalism at court. The Mughal nobility was divided into three warring factions: the Irani group led by Asad Khan and his son Zulfiqar Khan, the Turani

[12] Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2007), 3.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] For detail see; Lane-Poole, *Medieval India under Mohammedan Rule (A.D. 712-1764)*, 1979.

[16] For detail see; M.Athar Ali, *The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb* (London: Oxford University Press, 1997).

group led by Ghazi-ud-din, Feroz Jung, and his son Chin Qulich Khan (Nizam-ul-Mulk), and the Hindustani group led by Sayyid brothers, Khan-i-Dauran, some Afghan leaders, and some Hindus. These factions were not organized around ethnicity or religion, but more around family ties, personal friendship, and above all, selfish interest.[17] These factions fighting never went beyond the imperial court or questioned the divine right of the Mughal emperors but tried more to extend their influence over them to control the distribution of patronage. This struggle badly upset the whole administration. Jealousy and hypocrisy ruled the country. Such a state of affairs turned the country too weak to survive.

4. WEAKNESS OF THE ARMY

The edifice of the empire clearly rested on its military prowess.[18] The degeneration of the Mughal Army also played a great part in the collapse of the Mughal Empire. The Mughal army was not a national army but was a mixture of diverse ethnic groups, each trying to follow its own peculiar methods and maneuvers. The Mughal army was organized more or less on a feudal basis where the common soldier owed allegiance to the *Mansabdar* as his chief, not an officer. Such hired (mercenaries) soldiers without coherence or loyalty were unfit custodians of the interests of the empire. The defects of this system, though evident enough in the revolts of Bairam Khan and Mahabat Khan, assumed alarming proportions under the later Mughals. Thus, through its numerical strength increased as years went on, it grew cumbersome and hard to be controlled and managed. Laxity of discipline converted the army into a mob. Drill was unknown, and a soldier's training, which he might undergo, was not compulsory.

The abundance of riches of India, the use of wine, and comforts had very negative effects on the Mughal army. The soldiers cared more for their personal gains and less for combating enemies. In 1739, Nadir Shah not only murdered the people of Delhi but also ordered their wholesale massacre. When such a thing is done by foreigners, it only proves that the existing government is helpless. The Mughal artillery was crude and ineffective against the guerrilla tactics of the *Marathas,* who opted for protracted guerrilla warfare through small bands of swift, light cavalry.[19] The Maratha fortress, which the Mughal armies could not

[17] Bandyopadhyay, *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India* , 3.

[18] Rohan D'souza, "Crisis before the fall: Some Speculations on the Decline of the Ottomans, Safavids and Mughals," *Social* Scientist, vol. 30, no. 9/10 (2002): 8.

[19] Ibid,.21.

capture despite repeated attempts easily scrummed to British arms.

5. ABSENCE OF A RULE OF SUCCESSION

There were no clear rules of succession among the Mughals. The absence of the law of primogeniture among the Mughals usually meant a war of succession among the sons of the dying Emperor in which the *mansabdars* took sides. The sword was the grand arbiter of right, and every son was prepared to try his fortune against his brothers or son; the proverbial saying, 'Kingship knows no kinship,' was practiced by them rather with vengeance.[20] Such a system, though not commendable, was not without its advantages. It provided the country with the ablest son of the dying Emperor as the ruler.

Babur as the founder of the Mughal dynasty faced no opposition from his family for the throne of India. His son, Humayun, was confronted with several hostile forces on all sides and worst of all his three treacherous brothers, Kamran, Hindal and Askari, also claimant of the throne.[21] They caused numerous problems for him. Akbar faced his half-brother, Mirza Muhammad Hakim, who governed Kabul and its surroundings.[22] Jahangir had no brother but Shah Jahan, his son confronted with him for the throne of Delhi.[23] The most famous of all Mughal succession wars was that which brought down a ruling Emperor Shah Jahan. Aurangzeb came out as victorious by mercilessly killed his three brothers, Shah Shuja, Kam Baksh and Dara Shikoh.[24]

Aurangzeb died in 1707 and before his death he left a will by which he partitioned his empire among three sons. Despite this a bitter fratricidal war took place among the three princes for the throne. Muazzam was the ruler of Kabul and the Punjab, Muhammad Azim the second son was the ruler of Malwa and Gujrat Kam Baksh, the third son was the ruler of the Deccan. Prince Muzzam came to the throne after defeating his brothers.[25] The Mughal system of government being despotic much depended on the personality of the emperor. Under a strong

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[20] Jaswant Lal Mehta, *Advanced Study in the History of Modern India* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers PVT Limited, 2005), 7.

[21] Ashvini Agarwal, Studies *in Mughal History* (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas Publishers, 1983), 4.

[22] J.F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire: The New Cambridge History of India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 18.

[23] Lisa Balabanlilar, *Imperial Identity in Mughal Empire: Memory and Dynastic Politics in Early Modern Central Asia* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2012), 122.

[24] Ibid,. 130-131.

[25] Qureshi, A Short History of Pakistan (book 3), 122.

Emperor all went but the succession of weak emperor was reflected in every field of administration.

Bahaddur Shah (1707-1712) was 69 at the time of his succession to the throne and was too old to maintain the prestige of the empire. Jahandar Shah (1712-1713) the next in succession was a profligate fool. Farrukh Siyar (1713-1719) was a contemptible coward. Muhammad Shah (1719-1748) spent most of his time watching animal fights. He was nicknamed "Rangila" for his addiction to wine and women. Ahmed Shah was unable to cope successfully with the disintegration forces that grew so alarming on all sides.[26] The empire was reduced to a small district around Delhi. The emperor was deposed and blinded in 1754 by the Wazir. Such weak and imbecile Emperors could hardly act as worthy custodians of public interact or maintain the integrity of the empire.

Under the later Mughals sinister factor entered the politics of the Emperor, bringing out the worst features of the law of succession. The princes of the royal dynasty receded into the background while the struggle was fought by leaders of rival factions using royal princes as nominal leaders. Powerful nobles acted as King Makers, making and unmaking Emperors to suit their personal interests. Farrukh Siyar owed his elevation to the throne to the Sayyid brothers. Hussain Ali, Deputy Governor of Patna, and Abdullah, the governor of Allahabad. Blinding a deposed king was the fixed usage. Zulfiqar Khan emerged as the kingmaker in the war of succession that followed the death of Bahadur Shah I in 1712. The Sayyid brothers (Hussain Ali and Abdulla Khan) acted as King-makers during 1713-19 when they raised four imperial princes to the throne. The Sayyids were determined to rule through the imperial puppets.[27] At last, they were removed from their position by a faction of Mir Muhahmad Amin and Asif Jah Nizam-ul-Mulk. Thus, the defective law of succession weakened the body politic and crippled it financially and militarily.

6. GREAT FIRMS AND FINANCIAL UPHEAVALS

After the death of Aurangzeb, the Mughal Empire faced financial bankruptcy. The Deccan wars initiated by Aurangzeb ruined the finances of the Empire. The marches of the imperial army damaged crops in Deccan, while the beasts of burden ate away all the standing crops and greenery.[28] Whatever was left

[26] John McLeod, *History of India* (New York: Greenwood Press, 2002), 60-64.

[27] Ibid.

[28] V. D Mahajan,. *Mughal Rule in India* (Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1961), 173.

was destroyed by the Maratha raiders. The riot gave up agriculture in disgust, and many took to a life of plunder and highway robbery. There was a dislocation of trade and industry.[29]

Under the later Mughal Emperors, the provinces of Bengal, Gujarat, Deccan, and Oudh became autonomous and independent. As a result, the financial resources of the government became less and the government's treasury became empty. In the last days of the Mughal rule, the emperors were pensioners of the British administration.[30] Due to the lack of financial resources, it had become difficult to raise a huge army for defense. Thus, to worsening condition of the economy became the cause of the decline of the Muslim rule in the Subcontinent. Babur, founder of the Mughal dynasty, once said, "There is no supremacy and grip on the world without means and resources; without lands and retainers, sovereignty and command are impossible."[31]

With the weakness of the Central Mughal Authority in the eighteenth century, warlordism raised in its ugly head. The European companies also acted as warlords and profited from the confused time. The European companies outdid Indian princes in every sphere, whether it was trade and commerce or diplomacy and war. The static and stationary Indian society faced a challenge from a dynamic and progressive West. It is a sad commentary on the Mughal aristocracy that while they spent hundreds and thousands in importing European luxury articles, none ever thought of purchasing a printing press. In fact, India was left far behind in the race for civilization.

7. BRITISH TECHNOLOGICAL SUPERIORITY

When Baber made his first raid into India, where his dynasty established one of the greatest land powers of Asia, the Portuguese sea power already controlled the Indian Ocean. The Mughals stuck to the land and never thought of building up a navy to reflect their great power. Even the Mughal ships carrying pilgrims across the Arabian Sea depended for their protection on the Portuguese.[32]

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[29] Ibid.

[30]For detail see; Unit 3Salma Ahmed Farooqui, *A Comprehensive Study of Medieval Indi: From twelfth to the Mid-Eighteenth Century* (Delhi: Longman Press, 2011), 305.

[31] Zaheer-ud-din Muhammad Babur, *Babur Nama*, trans. A.S.Beveridge (New Delhi: Oriental Books, 1970), 525.

[32] Hermann Kulke and Dietmar Rothermund, *History of India* (London: Routledge, 1997), 197.

Through diplomacy, military skill, and persistence, the English East India Company emerged as successful as compared to the Portuguese and the French in exploiting the volatile circumstances in India in general and Bengal in particular. They first succeeded in getting permission from Emperor Jahangir to build forts and conduct trade in Surat, Agra, and Ahmadabad around 1620.[33] But given the prevailing trend of decline in the Mughal Empire, particularly towards the end of Aurangzeb's reign, they gradually became politically ambitious.

In 1688, the British blockaded the Bombay and Mughal ports and captured many Mughal ships. As the Mughal Emperor responded strongly, they were forced to sign a treaty in 1690. The company was given a license for trade only on condition that the captured vessels would be returned and a payment of one hundred and fifty thousand would be received as war indemnity.[34] Though this treaty apparently restrained the British, this was not good for the Mughal Empire in the long run. The reason is that this treaty legitimized the presence of the British, as well as their right to do business in India. From this time onwards, the British organized their strength in Bombay, Madras, and Bengal and tried to help build up an alliance that was not sympathetic to the Mughals. The British who came as traders took full advantage of the internal anarchy. They conspired with Mir Jafar and became the masters of Bengal. The gold of Bengal made their success possible in the Anglo-French wars in the Deccan. In Mysore, they won over Mir Sadiq to betray Tipu Sultan. They used their advanced military power as well as intriguing tricks to weaken the Muslim government and succeeded in their imperialistic designs. [35] After the failure of the War of Independence in 1857, they put an end to the Muslim rule and brought the whole continent under their possession.

Compulsory Reading

Rashid, Sh. Abdur. History of the Muslims of Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent, Vol. I. Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1978.

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[33] Mehta, *Advanced Study in the History of Modern India*, 15.

[34] Ibid,.16-17.

[35] John McLeod, *History of Indi*a (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002), 68-74.

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Ali, M.Athar. *The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb*. London: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Babur, Zaheer-ud-din Muhammad. *Babur Nama*. Translated by A.S. Beveridge. New Delhi: Oriental Books, 1970.

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Bandyopadhyaya, Sekhara. *Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India.* New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2004.

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Farooqui, Salma Ahmed. *A Comprehensive Study of Medieval Indi: From twelfth to the Mid-Eighteenth Century*. Delhi: Longman Press, 2011.

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Ali, M. Athar. "The Use of Sources in Mughal Historiography". *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 32, no.4 (1995): 361-373.

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P. Hardy, "Commentary and Critique." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 35, no. 2 (1976):257-263.
Pearson, M.N. "Shiva G and the Decline of the Mughal Empire." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 35, no. 2 (1976): 221-235.
Richards, J.F. "The Imperial Crisis in the Deccan." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 35. no. 2 (1976): 237-256.

a) Self-Assessment Questions

1. Do you agree that Aurangzeb Alamgir's religious and Deccan policy hastened the disintegration of the mighty Mughal Empire?
2. It is argued that the degeneration of Muslim society in the 18th century was due to the lack of religious knowledge. Explain.
3. What was the *Jagirdari* Crisis, and how was it responsible for the decline of the Mughal Empire?
4. Trace the effects of the power politics of different factions of Nobels on the Mughal court during the first half of the 18th century.
5. The absence of the law of primogeniture among the Mughals is the main cause of the war of succession. Explain with examples.
6. Explain the nature of the army during Mughal rule and identify its deficiencies.
7. Critically examine the factors that led to the downfall of the Mughal Empire in India.

b) Please select an appropriate answer.

1. **What was the primary reason for the decline of the Mughal Empire?**
   a) British invasion
   b) Combination of multiple factors
2. c) Religious policies of Aurangzeb
   d) Economic crisis
3. **Which Mughal emperor is often blamed for the decline of the empire due to his religious policies?**

a) Akbar
b) Aurangzeb
c) Shah Jahan
d) Jahangir

4. **What was the *Mansabdari* system primarily used for?**
   a) Religious reforms
   b) Military and civil administration
   c) Trade and commerce
   d) Agricultural development

5. **What was the main issue with the *Mansabdari* system during the later Mughal period?**
   a) Lack of soldiers
   b) Corruption and lack of resources
   c) Overpopulation
   d) Religious conflicts

6. **What was the *Jagirdari* crisis?**
   a) A crisis in the Mughal army
   b) A shortage of *jagirs* and uneven distribution of resources
   c) A religious conflict among nobles
   d) A rebellion by peasants

Answer Key

1. b) Combination of multiple factors
2. b) Aurangzeb
3. Military and civil administration
4. b) Corruption and lack of resources
5. b) A shortage

Unit: 9

THEORIES OF MUGHAL DOWNFALL

Writer: Sadia Aziz

Reviewer: Dr. Riaz Ahmad

CONTENTS

	Introduction	133
	Objectives	134
1.	Degeneration of Muslim Character	135
2.	Crisis of the Mansabdari System	135
3.	Incapability and Selfishness of the Mughal Nobility	136
4	Military Weaknesses of the Mughal	137
5.	Absence of a Rule of Succession	138
6.	Great Firms and Financial Upheaval	139
7.	British Technological Superiority	140
	Compulsory Reading	141
	Suggested Readings	141
	Self-Assessment Questions	143

INTRODUCTION

The Mughal Empire reached its greatest extent in the time of Aurangzeb Alamgir, but a drastic decline in its power and prestige came about within a few decades of his death. The Mughal Empire did not collapse suddenly. It took 150 years after the death of Aurangzeb to finally come to an end. The causes of its decline and eventual downfall cannot be traced to any one single factor, but a combination of factors which together chipped away at the once invincible might of the Mughals. [1]

To the vast majority of the population of India, the Mughal Empire was essentially a foreign Empire, and on that account, it could not expect to secure its existence upon a firm foundation of spontaneous popular support.[2] Alien in its nature and administrative organization, it was feeble to induce such feelings as those that led the people of Maharashtra to follow and fight for Shiva ji.[3]

The last Great Mughal, Aurangzeb Alamgir, is also considered responsible for the decline of the Mughal Empire. His religious policy led to disunity and alienated the sympathy and support of the Hindus.[4] The Deccan policy of Aurangzeb was also partly responsible for the downfall of the Mughal Empire. Although these policies did lead to the weakening of the empire, the major cause of the decline was the lack of competent and worthy successors to Aurangzeb. They lacked qualities that were essential to deal with the affairs of a kingdom. They, therefore, could not sustain the following empire, once famous for grandeur and glory. According to Stanley Lane-Poole, "As some imperial corpse preserved for ages in its dread seclusion, crowned and armed and still majestic, yet falls to the dust at the mere breath of heaven, so fell the Empire of the Mughals when the great name that guarded it was no more". [5]

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[1] For different theories about the decline of the Mughal Empire in India, see; J.F. Richards, "The Imperial Crisis in the Deccan," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 35, no. 2 (1976): 237-256. M.N.Pearson, "Shiva G and the Decline of the Mughal Empire," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 35, no. 2 (1976): 221-235. P. Hardy, "Commentary and Critique," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 35, no. 2 (1976):257-263. Hamida Khatoon Naqvi, "Aurangzeb's Policies and Decline of the Mughal Empire," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 37, no. I (1977): 191-192. Stephan P. Blake, "The Patrimonial-Bureaucratic Empire of the Mughals," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 39, no. I (1979): 77-94.

[2] Stephan Meredyth Edwards and Herbert Leonard, *Mughal Rule in India* (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 1995), 351.

[3] Ibid.

[4] M.Athar Ali, "The Passing of Empire: The Mughal Case," *Modern Asian Studies* 9, no. 3 (1975): 385.

[5] Stanley Lane-Poole, *Medieval India under Mohammedan Rule (A.D. 712-1764)* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1979), 411.

OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to

- Explain the different theories about the disintegration of the Mughal Dynasty in India.
- Elucidate the role of Mughal nobility in the downfall of the Mughals in 18th-century India.
- Figure out the importance and defects of the *Mansabdari* system, which further paved the way for the decline of the Mughal Empire in India.
- Highlight the impact and outcomes of the 'twilight of Mughals' in India.

1. DEGENERATION OF MUSLIM CHARACTER

The foremost cause of the loss of political power was a crisis in the Muslim character itself. Incompetence, shortsighted, selfishness, corruption, and other corroding evils are destroying the soul of the Muslims. Aurangzeb Alamgir is found to complain repeatedly that men of honesty and sincerity had become rare in his time and that competent men were not available for responsible offices in the government.[6]

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[7] J.F.Richards, *The Mughal Empire: The New Cambridge History of India*, vol. 1.5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 282.

[8] Edwards*, Mughal Rule in India*, 351.

[9] P.Raghunadha Rao, *Indian Heritage and Culture* (New Delhi, Sterling Publishers, 2007), 45.

[10] Qureshi. *A Short History of Pakistan*, 169.

[11] Ibid.

horses. This relationship between the emperor and the nobility forms the crux of the entire imperial edifice.[12] The effectiveness and the durability of this relationship depended on the personal qualities of the emperor and the constant expansion of resources. The system had not set rules regarding appointment, dismissal, and promotion. Everything depends upon the personal whim of the emperor and so the member of the aristocracy only had personal loyalty to the emperor himself. This defect brought many intrigues and neglect of duties on the part of the officials. This also explains why the Mughals needed to be constantly involved in the territorial expansion of their dominion.

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This economic crisis, known as the *jagirdari* crisis of the 18th century when the resources of the empire were diminishing rapidly.[16] This added to the already existing factionalism at court. The Mughal nobility was divided into three warring

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[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] For detail see; Lane-Poole, *Medieval India under Mohammedan Rule (A.D. 712-1764)*, 1979.

[16] For detail see; M.Athar Ali, *The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb* (London: Oxford University Press, 1997).

factions: the Irani group led by Asad Khan and his son Zulfiqar Khan, the Turani group led by Ghazi-ud-din, Feroz Jung, and his son Chin Qulich Khan (Nizam-ul-Mulk), and the Hindustani group led by Sayyid brothers, Khan-i-Dauran, some Afghan leaders, and some Hindus. These factions were not organized around ethnicity or religion, but more around family ties, personal friendship, and above all, selfish interest.[17] These factions fighting never went beyond the imperial court or questioned the divine right of the Mughal emperors but tried more to extend their influence over them to control the distribution of patronage. This struggle badly upset the whole administration. Jealousy and hypocrisy ruled the country. Such a state of affairs turned the country too weak to survive.

4. WEAKNESS OF THE ARMY

The edifice of the empire clearly rested on its military prowess.[18] The degeneration of the Mughal Army also played a great part in the collapse of the Mughal Empire. The Mughal army was not a national army but was a mixture of diverse ethnic groups, each trying to follow its own peculiar methods and maneuvers. The Mughal army was organized more or less on a feudal basis where the common soldier owed allegiance to the *Mansabdar* as his chief, not an officer. Such hired (mercenaries) soldiers without coherence or loyalty were unfit custodians of the interests of the empire. The defects of this system, though evident enough in the revolts of Bairam Khan and Mahabat Khan, assumed alarming proportions under the later Mughals. Thus, through its numerical strength increased as years went on, it grew cumbersome and hard to be controlled and managed. Laxity of discipline converted the army into a mob. Drill was unknown, and a soldier's training, which he might undergo, was not compulsory.

The abundance of riches of India, the use of wine, and comforts had very negative effects on the Mughal army. The soldiers cared more for their personal gains and less for combating enemies. In 1739, Nadir Shah not only murdered the people of Delhi but also ordered their wholesale massacre. When such a thing is done by foreigners, it only proves that the existing government is helpless. The Mughal artillery was crude and ineffective against the guerrilla tactics of the *Marathas,* who opted for protracted guerrilla warfare through small bands of

[17] Bandyopadhyay, *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India* , 3.

[18] Rohan D'souza, "Crisis before the fall: Some Speculations on the Decline of the Ottomans, Safavids and Mughals," *Social* Scientist, vol. 30, no. 9/10 (2002): 8.

swift, light cavalry.[19] The Maratha fortress, which the Mughal armies could not capture despite repeated attempts easily scrummed to British arms.

5. ABSENCE OF A RULE OF SUCCESSION

There were no clear rules of succession among the Mughals. The absence of the law of primogeniture among the Mughals usually meant a war of succession among the sons of the dying Emperor in which the *mansabdars* took sides. The sword was the grand arbiter of right, and every son was prepared to try his fortune against his brothers or son; the proverbial saying, 'Kingship knows no kinship,' was practiced by them rather with vengeance.[20] Such a system, though not commendable, was not without its advantages. It provided the country with the ablest son of the dying Emperor as the ruler.

Babur, as the founder of the Mughal dynasty, faced no opposition from his family for the throne of India. His son, Humayun, was confronted with several hostile forces on all sides, and worst of all, his three treacherous brothers, Kamran, Hindal, and Askari, also claimant of the throne.[21] They caused numerous problems for him. Akbar faced his half-brother, Mirza Muhammad Hakim, who governed Kabul and its surroundings.[22] Jahangir had no brother but Shah Jahan, his son confronted him for the throne of Delhi.[23] The most famous of all Mughal succession wars was that which brought down the ruling Emperor Shah Jahan. Aurangzeb came out as victorious by mercilessly killing his three brothers, Shah Shuja, Kam Baksh, and Dara Shikoh.[24]

Aurangzeb died in 1707, and before his death, he left a will by which he partitioned his empire among his three sons. In spite of this, a bitter fratricidal war took place among the three princes for the throne. Muazzam was the ruler of Kabul and the Punjab, and Muhammad Azim, the second son, was the ruler of Malwa and Gujrat. Kam Baksh, the third son, was the ruler of the Deccan. Prince Muzzam came to the throne after defeating his brothers.[25] The Mughal system of

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[19] Ibid,.21.

[20] Jaswant Lal Mehta, *Advanced Study in the History of Modern India* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers PVT Limited, 2005), 7.

[21] Ashvini Agarwal, Studies *in Mughal History* (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas Publishers, 1983), 4.

[22] J.F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire: The New Cambridge History of India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 18.

[23] Lisa Balabanlilar, *Imperial Identity in Mughal Empire: Memory and Dynastic Politics in Early Modern Central Asia* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2012), 122.

[24] Ibid,. 130-131.

[25] Qureshi, A Short History of Pakistan (book 3), 122.

government, being despotic depended much on the personality of the emperor. Under a strong Emperor, all went but the succession of weak emperors was reflected in every field of administration.

Bahaddur Shah (1707-1712) was 69 at the time of his succession to the throne and was too old to maintain the prestige of the empire. Jahandar Shah (1712-1713), the next in succession, was a profligate fool. Farrukh Siyar (1713-1719) was a contemptible coward. Muhammad Shah (1719-1748) spent most of his time watching animal fights. He was nicknamed "Rangila" for his addiction to wine and women. Ahmed Shah was unable to cope successfully with the disintegration forces that grew so alarming on all sides.[26] The empire was reduced to a small district around Delhi. The emperor was deposed and blinded in 1754 by the Wazir. Such weak and imbecile Emperors could hardly act as worthy custodians of public interact or maintain the integrity of the empire.

Under the later Mughals sinister factor entered the politics of the Emperor, bringing out the worst features of the law of succession. The princes of the royal dynasty receded into the background while the struggle was fought by leaders of rival factions using royal princes as nominal leaders. Powerful nobles acted as King Makers, making and unmaking Emperors to suit their personal interests. Farrukh Siyar owed his elevation to the throne to the Sayyid brothers. Hussain Ali, Deputy Governor of Patna, and Abdullah Governor of Allahabad. Blinding a deposed king was the fixed usage. Zulfiqar Khan emerged as the kingmaker in the war of succession that followed the death of Bahadur Shah I in 1712. The Sayyid brothers (Hussain Ali and Abdulla Khan) acted as King-makers during 1713-19 when they raised four imperial princes to the throne. The Sayyids were determined to rule through the imperial puppets.[27] At last, they were removed from their position by a faction of Mir Muhahmad Amin and Asif Jah Nizam-ul-Mulk. Thus, the defective law of succession weakened the body politic and crippled it financially and militarily.

6. GREAT FIRMS AND FINANCIAL UPHEAVALS

After the death of Aurangzeb, the Mughal Empire faced financial bankruptcy. The Deccan wars initiated by Aurangzeb ruined the finances of the Empire. The marches of the imperial army damaged crops in Deccan, while the beasts of burden ate away all the standing crops and greenery.[28] Whatever was left

[26] John McLeod, *History of India* (New York: Greenwood Press, 2002), 60-64.

[27] Ibid.

[28] V. D Mahajan,. *Mughal Rule in India* (Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1961), 173.

was destroyed by the Maratha raiders. The riot gave up agriculture in disgust, and many took to a life of plunder and highway robbery. There was a dislocation of trade and industry.[29]

Under the later Mughal Emperors, the provinces of Bengal, Gujarat, Deccan, and Oudh became autonomous and independent. As a result, the financial resources of the government became less and the government's treasury became empty. In the last days of the Mughal rule, the emperors were pensioners of the British administration.[30] Due to the lack of financial resources, it had become difficult to raise a huge army for defense. Thus, to worsening condition of the economy became the cause of the decline of the Muslim rule in the Subcontinent. Babur, founder of the Mughal dynasty, once said, "There is no supremacy and grip on the world without means and resources; without lands and retainers, sovereignty and command are impossible."[31]

With the weakness of the Central Mughal Authority in the eighteenth century, warlordism raised in its ugly head. The European companies also acted as warlords and profited from the confused time. The European companies outdid Indian princes in every sphere, whether it was trade and commerce or diplomacy and war. The static and stationary Indian society faced a challenge from a dynamic and progressive West. It is a sad commentary on the Mughal aristocracy that while they spent hundreds and thousands in importing European luxury articles, none ever thought of purchasing a printing press. In fact, India was left far behind in the race for civilization.

7. BRITISH TECHNOLOGICAL SUPERIORITY

When Baber made his first raid into India, where his dynasty established one of the greatest land powers of Asia, the Portuguese sea power already controlled the Indian Ocean. The Mughals stuck to the land and never thought of building up a navy to reflect their great power. Even the Mughal ships carrying pilgrims across the Arabian Sea depended for their protection on the Portuguese.[32]

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[29] Ibid.

[30]For detail see; Unit 3Salma Ahmed Farooqui, *A Comprehensive Study of Medieval Indi: From twelfth to the Mid-Eighteenth Century* (Delhi: Longman Press, 2011), 305.

[31] Zaheer-ud-din Muhammad Babur, *Babur Nama*, trans. A.S.Beveridge (New Delhi: Oriental Books, 1970), 525.

[32] Hermann Kulke and Dietmar Rothermund, *History of India* (London: Routledge, 1997), 197.

Through diplomacy, military skill, and persistence, the English East India Company emerged as successful as compared to the Portuguese and French in exploiting the volatile circumstances in India in general and Bengal in particular. They first succeeded in getting permission from Emperor Jahangir to build forts and conduct trade in Surat, Agra, and Ahmadabad around 1620.[33] But given the prevailing trend of decline in the Mughal Empire, particularly towards the end of Aurangzeb's reign, they gradually became politically ambitious.

In 1688, the British blockaded the Bombay and Mughal ports and captured many Mughal ships. As the Mughal Emperor responded strongly, they were forced to sign a treaty in 1690. The company was given a license for trade only on condition that the captured vessels would be returned, and a payment of one hundred and fifty thousand would be received as war indemnity.[34] Though this treaty apparently restrained the British, this was not good for the Mughal Empire in the long run. The reason is that this treaty legitimized the presence of the British, as well as their right to do business in India. From this time onwards, the British organized their strength in Bombay, Madras, and Bengal and tried to help build up an alliance that was not sympathetic to the Mughals. The British who came as traders took full advantage of the internal anarchy. They conspired with Mir Jafar and became the masters of Bengal. The gold of Bengal made their success possible in the Anglo-French wars in the Deccan. In Mysore, they won over Mir Sadiq to betray Tipu Sultan. They used their advanced military power as well as intriguing tricks to weaken the Muslim government and succeeded in their imperialistic designs. [35] After the failure of the War of Independence 1857, they put as end to the Muslim rule and brought the whole continent under their possession.

Compulsory Reading

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[33] Mehta, *Advanced Study in the History of Modern India*, 15.

[34] Ibid,.16-17.

[35] John McLeod, *History of Indi*a (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002), 68-74.

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a) Self-Assessment Questions:

1. Do you agree that Aurangzeb Alamgir's religious and Deccan policy hastened the disintegration of the mighty Mughal Empire?
2. It is argued that the degeneration of Muslim society in the 18th century was due to the lack of religious knowledge. Explain.
3. What was the *Jagirdari* Crisis, and how was it responsible for the decline of the Mughal Empire?
4. Trace the effects of the power politics of different factions of Nobles on the Mughal court during the first half of the 18th century.
5. The absence of the law of primogeniture among the Mughals is the main cause of the war of succession. Explain with examples.
6. Explain the nature of the army during Mughal rule and identify its deficiencies.
7. Critically examine the factors that led to the downfall of the Mughal Empire in India.

b) Please select an appropriate answer.

1. What was the immediate cause of the Revolt of 1857?
   a) Introduction of Doctrine of Lapse
   b) Introduction of greased cartridges
   c) Introduction of English education
   d) High taxation on farmers

2. The **Doctrine of Lapse**, used by the British to annex Indian states, was introduced by:
   a) Lord Canning
   b) Lord Dalhousie
   c) Lord Cornwallis
   d) Lord Wellesley

3. Which Indian ruler fought against the British after they refused to recognize her adopted son as the legal heir?
   a) Rani Lakshmi Bai
   b) Nana Sahib
   c) Bahadur Shah Zafar
   d) Kunwar Singh

4. Which British policy caused discontent among Indian rulers by denying them the right to adopt an heir?
   a) Subsidiary Alliance
   b) Doctrine of Lapse
   c) Divide and Rule
   d) Permanent Settlement

5. Who was declared the symbolic leader of the Revolt of 1857?
   a) Nana Sahib
   b) Bahadur Shah Zafar
   c) Rani Lakshmi Bai
   d) Tatya Tope

Answer Key

1. b) Introduction of greased cartridges
2. b) Lord Dalhousie
3. a) Rani Lakshmi Bai
4. b) Doctrine of Lapse
5. b) Bahadur Shah Zafar