
UNIT 11 RAJPUT STATES

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11.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to :

- understand the policy Babar and Humayun adopted towards the Rajputs;
- demarcate the three phases in Akbar's relations with the Rajputs;
- understand in brief the emergence of powerful Rajput States in Central India and Rajasthan and other minor Rajput states and their political relations with the Mughals; and
- analyse the nature of Mughal-Rajput relations in the 17th Century.

11.1 INTRODUCTION

The Mughal policy towards the Rajputs contributed to the expansion and consolidation of the Mughal Empire under Akbar and his successors. For long it has been held that the Mughal alliance with the Rajputs was determined by personal religious beliefs of the individual rulers. On this basis, Akbar's liberalism and Aurangzeb's orthodoxy were considered the touchstone of their policies and its impact on the political scene. However, recently the Mughal-Rajput relations are being studied within the framework of Mughal nobility as well as the tensions within the different segments of the nobility itself.

A centralised bureaucratic empire like that of the Mughals was confronted with the problem of distribution of power between its various components. The political

vicissitudes of the Mughal Empire were governed to a large extent by the struggle for supremacy or autonomy by the aristocratic elements, i.e., the Mughal bureaucracy and the autonomous **rajas** and **zamindars**. The socio-cultural factors and the geo-strategic context of the country are equally important to be taken into account. Rajasthan (which was the connecting link between the Gangetic valley and the coastal belt of western India) and Malwa in Central India played a pivotal role in determining the early course of political events in North India. The Mughal-Rajput conflict cannot be understood independently but should be seen as part of a conflict which had a past history. It developed against the backdrop of the decline of the Delhi Sultanate and the emergence of a new state system in Rajasthan, Malwa and Gujarat.

11.2 BACKGROUND: BABUR, HUMAYUN AND THE RAJPUTS

With the decline of Jaunpur and the weakening of Malwa towards the end of the 15th century, a new situation developed in North India. There was the contest between Rana Sanga of Mewar and the Lodis for domination over eastern Rajasthan and Malwa. Sanga feared the strengthening of Lodi power and therefore opened negotiations with Babur against the Lodis. As Babur progressed in accordance with the agreement, Sanga retraced his steps. He had not envisaged Babur's arrival in the Gangetic valley. His plan was to detain Babur in the Punjab while he confronted the Lodis in the Gangetic valley. The ascendancy of Babur in the Gangetic valley took Sanga by surprise. These developments led to the formation of an alliance between the Afghans, Rana Sanga and a host of other Rajput princes. The aim was to hold back the advance of Babur towards Delhi and the surrounding areas. So far no Rajput ruler had been successful in mustering support of such disparate groups as Rajputs and Afghans. The conflict between Sanga's coalition and Babur at Khanwa was not a contest between Hindus and Muslims. This is amply borne out by the very nature of the composition of Sanga's coalition. Babur condemned the Afghan chieftains who collaborated with Sanga as **kafirs** infidels and **mulhids** and also proclaimed the contest against Sanga as **jihad**. These actions do not suggest religious zeal but reflect the attempt to meet the challenge by appealing to the religious sentiments of his soldiers. Later on, Babur concentrated more on countering the Afghan danger than fighting the Rajputs. He tried to secure his control over the region adjoining Delhi-Agra zone. Outposts such as Bayana, Dholpur, Gwalior were firmly brought under control. Mewar and Chanderi in Malwa were taken. The death of Rana Sanga settled the problem as far as Rajasthan was concerned.

Babur wished to follow a forward policy in Mewar and Malwa but his practical understanding prevented him from taking up this policy till the Afghan problem in the east had been solved. During Babur's time, the relations between the Mughals and Rajputs did not develop along definite and positive lines, rather it was in consonance with the political needs.

When Humayun ascended the throne, the political scene in Malwa and Rajasthan had changed considerably. Bahadur Shah, the ruler of Gujarat, had captured Malwa after defeating its ruler Mahmud Khalji II. Rana Ratan Singh of Mewar had sided with Bahadur Shah against Malwa for which he was generously rewarded. This was an act of political expediency. However, a rupture between Rana Vikramjit of Mewar and Bahadur Shah led to siege of Chittor by the later. Though Humayun was aware of the threat posed by the augmentation of the power of Bahadur Shah in Malwa and Rajasthan, he was hesitant to get involved in the conflict with Bahadur Shah till the Afghan threat had been sorted out. Humayun's stance as regards Rajasthan was essentially defence oriented: an offensive policy was postponed for a later date. He also realised that due to internecine warfare in Mewar its power was waning. Therefore, for Humayun, its military importance as an ally was inadequate.

Humayun who joined the struggle on Chittor's side had not anticipated the power of Gujarat artillery and had overestimated the military strength of Chittor in the wake of the siege. Bahadur Shah, on the other hand, had not expected Humayun to counter him in a contest against a Hindu ruler. Chittor was devastated but Bahadur Shah's success was shortlived.

Babur and Humayun's relations with Rajputs should be viewed in the context of the Afghan problem which deterred them from making friendly overtures to the Rajput rulers.

11.3 AKBAR'S RELATIONS WITH THE RAJPUTS

We can perceive three phases in the shaping of Akbar's Rajput policy. During the first phase, which ended in 1569-70, Akbar continued with the policy followed by the Delhi Sultans; in the second phase, Akbar tried to develop and extend the alliance with Rajputs but certain components of the earlier policy were retained; the third and last phase is marked by Akbar's break with Muslim orthodoxy.

11.3.1 The First Phase

There has been a lot of debate on Akbar's relations with the Rajputs. Some argue that his policy initiated a system in which there would be no discrimination on the basis of religion in public appointments. Others hold that it was a deliberate attempt to exploit the martial attributes of the Rajputs for the expansion of the Empire and also to play them against each other thereby ensuring that they would not unitedly pose a threat to the Empire. It is also stated that Akbar's Rajput policy was a part of a broad policy of wooing the **zamindars** and martial classes which included the Rajputs and Afghans. Majority of the **zamindars** were Hindus and specially Rajputs. It is pointed out that the policy was aimed at using the Rajputs to counter the power of the Uzbegs and other disaffected nobles. Faithfulness of Rajputs was legendary. They could serve as important buttresses both within the court and outside.

Rajputs had made an impression on Akbar's mind way back in 1557 when a Rajput contingent under Bhara Mal, the ruler of Amber, had demonstrated its loyalty to Akbar. This led to a matrimonial alliance between Bhara Mal's daughter and Akbar in 1562. But this matrimonial alliance was not unique and such alliances were a common feature before Akbar's time also. These marriages were in the nature of political compromise and did not imply conversion to Islam and break with Hindu traditions. Bhara Mal had submitted to Akbar by personally paying homage to him in 1562. By encouraging this practice, Akbar was trying to establish intimate relations with those chieftains who submitted to him personally. A personal relationship, it was felt, would best ensure political allegiance. Akbar's period thus ushered in an era of personal fidelity. Matrimonial alliances did not lead to any kind of special bond between Rajputs and Mughals. Nor were these alliances with Rajputs intended to be aimed at countering recalcitrant elements or using the Rajputs for military gains. The fact that Rajputs did participate in Mughal wars against their compatriots was not unprecedented. The liberal measures such as abolition of **jiziya**, remission of pilgrim taxes, etc. which Akbar introduced between 1562-64, strengthened people's faith in Akbar as a liberal ruler. But these measures did not create an atmosphere of total peace between the Mughals and Rajputs. The war with Chittor, is an apt example. The Rajputs offered firm resistance despite the presence of Bhagwant Singh with Akbar. Akbar on the other hand proclaimed the conflict as **jihad** and martyrs as **ghazis** giving the whole affair a religious colour. He ascribed his victory to God's will, thereby emphasising the religious dimension of the conflict.

In the first phase, Akbar's attitude towards Rajputs softened and Rao Dalpat Rai, the governor (**hakim**) of Ranthambhor, was accepted in the imperial service and given **jagir**. Akbar married Bhagwant Singh's (Kachhawaha prince) sister. That Bhara Mal became a close confidant of Akbar is evident from the fact that when Akbar proceeded on the Gujarat campaign, Agra was placed under his charge a gesture shown for the first time to a Hindu Prince. However, Akbar's religious views his public policies and attitude towards Rajputs developed along separate lines and coincided only at a later stage.

11.3.2 The Second Phase

Towards the end of 1570, the relations with Rajputs were further established. Rai Kalyan Mal of Bikanar submitted to Akbar by paying homage personally along with his son. Rawal Har Rai of Jaiselmer and Kalyan Mal's daughters were married to

Akbar. Both **rajas** were firmly entrenched in their principalities and enrolled in the Imperial service. The Gujarat expedition of Akbar was an important landmark in the evolution of Mughal-Rajput relations. The Rajputs were enlisted as soldiers systematically and their salaries were fixed for the first time. Thus, the Rajputs were deployed outside Rajasthan for the first time and were given significant assignments and posts. During the Gujarat insurrection of the Mirzas, Akbar depended largely on Rajputs—(Kachawahas) Man Singh and Bhagwant Singh. Akbar also had to deal with the Mewar problem. The Rana of Mewar did not agree to personal submission and wanted to regain Chittor. Akbar remained firm on the principle of personal homage. In the meantime Marwar was subdued by Akbar.

The battle of Haldighati between the Rana of Mewar and Akbar was not a struggle between Hindus and Muslims. As important groups from among the Rajputs sided with the Mughals, this struggle cannot be termed as a struggle for independence from foreign rule. It can to some extent be characterized as the pronouncement of the ideal of regional independence. In the 16th century India, the feelings of local and regional loyalty were very powerful which could be further strengthened by emphasis on conventions and traditions. However, this catchword could not be very helpful in the long run since there was no supreme regional power amongst the Rajput states. They were vulnerable to internecine warfare and its disastrous consequences. The states located along the borders of Mewar submitted to Akbar and entered into matrimonial alliances. These states had close relations with Mewar but had always pursued a practical policy of allying with whosoever was the dominant power in the area. The ruler of Bundi and Marwar, who were in league with the Rana, were subdued. Thus, the Rana's power suffered a severe jolt and Rajputs were transformed from mere collaborators into allies of the Mughals.

Till the end of the second phase, Akbar's Rajput policy had not acquired a shape which would be disapproved by the Muslim orthodox religious elements or which would be a threat to the Muslim character of the state. Or else why an orthodox person like Badauni commended the Mewar campaign?

11.3.3 The Third Phase

The reimposition of **jizya** by Akbar in 1575, which was a step in preparation for war with Mewar, shows that Akbar had to rely on religion for serving political ends. The fall from power of the chief **sadr** Abdun Nabi and the proclamation of the **mahzar** are important events which constitute the starting point of Akbar's break with orthodoxy.

During the invasion on Punjab by Akbar's brother Mirza Hakim (the ruler of Kabul) in 1580, Akbar relied upon Rajputs such as Man Singh and Bhagwant Singh who displayed considerable valour during the siege and successfully resisted it. Akbar rewarded them by making Bhagwant Das the governor of Lahore and Man Singh the commander of the Indus region. An important consequence of Mirza Hakim's invasion was that from now onwards the Rajputs became the sword-arm of the Empire and became actively involved in Mughal administration.

A group among the nobility displayed fear over the ascendancy of Rajputs. However Akbar was strong enough to brush aside such feelings and continued to rely on the Rajputs.

Akbar tried to forge close relations with the Rajput ruling houses. The Kachhawaha family occupied a special position in the gamut of Mughal-Rajput relations. In 1580, Mani Bai, the daughter of Bhagwant Das, was married to Prince Salim. In 1583, Jodhpur, which was a part of **khalisa** was bestowed upon Mota Raja Udai Singh (Marwar) and his daughter was married to Salim. Rai Kalyan Singh's (Bikaner) daughter and Rawal Bhim's (Jaisalmer) daughters were also married to Salim. Prince Daniyal was married to a daughter of Raimal of Jodhpur.

These marriages reveal Akbar's desire to compell his successor to the throne to carry on the policy of maintaining close relationship with the Rajputs. In 1583-84, Akbar initiated a new policy of selecting loyal Muslim and Hindu nobles for performing administrative tasks. Thus, the son of Bhara Mal and Rai Lonkaran Shekhawat were

work after armour and roads; household management was placed under Raisai Darbari (Kachhawaha); Raja Askaran Kachhawaha of Narwan was assigned the task of supervising the property of minors; Jagmal Panwar, associated with Raja Bhagwant Das and Man Singh, was incharge of the department of jewels and other minerals; Rai Durga Sisodia of Rampura and Raja Todar Mal were assigned administrative tasks in the revenue department and Rai Surjan Hada was to bring matters relating to religion and faith to Prince Daniyal. Raja Birbal was a close associate of Akbar and was responsible for justice. It cannot be said with certainty to what extent this policy of deploying Rajputs for carrying out administrative tasks was successful. Abul Fazl gives the impression that it was not properly implemented.

The year 1585-86 marks an important landmark in the administrative sphere when the *subas* were given an administrative shape. Each *suba* was to have two *amirs* or *sipahsalars* as well as a *diwan* and a *bakhshi*. The Kachhawahas got the largest share of appointments among Rajputs. Lahore was given to Raja Bhagwant Das and Rai Singh of Bikaner, Kabul to Man Singh, Agra to Raja Askaran Shekhawat, Ajmer to Jagannath (son of Bhara Mal). The Rathors and Sisodias were also employed in the administrative set up but not on a very large scale.

By 1585-86, Akbar's Rajput policy had become fully developed. The alliance with Rajputs had become steady and stable. The Rajputs were now not only allies but were partners in the Empire. Conflict with the Rana of Mewar did not lead to bitterness in relations with other Rajput states of Rajasthan. Finally, the dispute with the Rana was settled and he spent the rest of his life in Chawand in South Mewar (his capital).

For analysing the relations with Rajputs in Akbar's reign, the year 1585-86 can be taken as a convenient point. Among the Rajputs enlisted in the Imperial Service, the Kachhawahas reigned supreme. In the *mansabdari* (ranking system) which was developed by Akbar the Kachhawahas held a dominant position. In the list of *mansabdars*, as given in the *Ain-i Akbari* of the 24 Rajputs 13 were Kachhawahas. Among Kachhawahas only members of Bhara Mal's family held ranks of 1500 *zat* or above. The only non-Kachhawaha Rajput who held a high rank and important posts was Rai Singh of Bikaner.

A study of the state structure of the Rajputs is important for understanding their relations with the Mughals. On the eve of the Mughal conquests, the administrative structure was based on what is called *bhaibant* system. It was a sort of a loose confederation in which a region was held by a clan or *khap* by one or more family which had close kinship ties with the clan. A member of the leading family was called *rao/rai—rana*. There was no definite law of succession both primogeniture and the will of the ruler prevailed. But the deciding factors were the support of Rajput *sardars* (chieftains) and military might. A clan held a region relying on the support of Rajput warriors. The leading family of a clan held only a few *parganas* or *mahals* under direct control in a region and the rest were assigned in *patta* to individual members of the family who erected their own fortresses or places of residence called *basi* or *kothri*. Holders of these fortresses were called *dhani* or *thakur*. These holdings were hereditary. In these circumstances the Rana tried to extend the holding at the expense of the *thikanedars* (clan brothers) whereas the clan attempted to gain at the cost of neighbouring clans.

When a Rajput *raja* was enrolled in the Imperial service, he was given *jagir* against his *mansab* which consisted of *mahals* or *tappas* where the clan members lived. The *mahals* were a part of one or more *parganas* with a fort or *garhi* where the *raja* resided with his family. This region was the real *watan* of the *raja* though, occasionally, the term was extended to mean the entire tract held by the *raja* and his clansmen. Jahangir refers to this as *riyasat*. The term *watan jagir* came into vogue only at the end of Akbar's reign. *Jagirs* in close proximity to *watan* were considered a part of the *watan* and were not transferrable except in case of rebellion, etc. These *watan jagirs* were granted for life within Rajasthan. Outside Rajasthan, *jagirs* were transferrable. The term *watan jagir* is not referred to by Abul Fazl and other contemporary historians. The first reference to this is contained in a *farman* of Akbar to Raja Rai Singh of Bikaner. The Rajput chronicles, for example, Nainsi has a word *utan* which could be a corruption of *watan*.

The change in the state structure of Rajasthan and the evolution of the concept of **watan jagir** which replaced **bhaibant** is an interesting phenomena. By Jahangir's time the concept of **watan jagir** was firmly entrenched. Areas held by clan members and other clans were brought under the control of the **raja**. **Watan jagirs** allowed the **rajas** to consolidate their position vis-a-vis the **pattayats** which was a step towards the evolution of a stable and centralised state structure. **Watan** and **riyasat** at times overlapped.

When a **raja** died all the **parganas** controlled by him as **watan jagir** were not inevitably inherited by his successor. His successor was given a few **parganas** according to his **mansab** which was lower than that of his predecessor. Thus, **jagir** rights in a **pargana** were partitioned. This was a means of exercising control over the Rajput **rajas**.

Dispute among the Rajputs for control of certain territories was a problem in which Akbar also got entangled. For example, Pokharan was claimed by the Bhatias of Jaisalmer and rulers of Bikaner and Jodhpur. Akbar had assigned it to Mota Raja and later to Suraj Singh, but the Bhatias continued to resist and dispute could not be settled in Akbar's time.

The Mughals did not try to create dissensions among the Rajputs but they were aware of dissensions among the Rajputs on the basis of clan and personal holdings and took advantage of these differences for their own ends. For example, they transferred disputed **parganas** from one to another. The Mughal control over an autonomous **raja** was determined by the Mughal concept of paramountcy, attitudes of traditional ruling elites and political expediency. In Akbar's time Chittor and Ranthambhor forts were under Mughal appointees. The **rajas** assessed and collected land revenue according to their custom and norms, but imposition of certain taxes was disallowed. However, there was no machinery to enforce these prohibitions which were often ignored by small **rajas**. Marwar was under direct Mughal rule from 1563 to 1583. Parts of Mewar were directly controlled by the Mughals from 1568 to the early years of Jahangir's reign.

The Rajput **rajas** were granted **jagirs** outside their **watan** in neighbouring **subas** or in **subas** where they served. The **jagirs** were situated either in productive areas or in **zortslab** (rebellious) areas. The proportion of **jagirs** granted in Rajasthan and outside differed from case to case. Additional income from **jagirs** outside traditional holdings was important. **Jagirs** in Rajasthan were a more attractive proposition for the Rajputs as they carried a lot of prestige and enabled them to maintain their links with the clan which was the foundation of their power.

The establishment of a sort of **Pax Mughalica** (Mughal peace) was important if the Rajput **rajas** were to serve in different parts of the Empire without being bothered about their homelands. This meant regulation of inter-state disputes and disputes among the Rajput **rajas** and **sardars**. The Mughal policy of conferring honour on anyone was a part of the process of weakening the aristocracy by instigating the middle and lower strata to assert their independence from aristocracy. Therefore, the Mughals enlisted in the Imperial service many minor feudatories of the Rajput **rajas** themselves.

The issue of succession had invariably caused fratricidal civil wars in Rajput states. The concept of Mughal Paramountcy implied controlling succession to the throne in these states. This was not an easy task: it depended on the strength of the Mughal ruler. Akbar had pronounced that the grant of **tika** was the prerogative of the Mughal Emperor and could not be claimed as a matter of right. The fact that the Mughal Emperor could give **tika** to sons of the deceased **raja** or his brother or brother's son could lead to conflicts. But, at least, the issue could be settled without a civil war due to Mughal intervention.

As the **mansab** system developed, Akbar tried to encourage nobles to maintain mixed contingents consisting of ethnic groups like the Mughals, Rajputs etc. However this was not acceptable to many and exclusive contingents of Rajputs and Mughals were still maintained. The Rajput soldier was paid a salary lower than his Mughal counterpart but how far this encouraged nobles to employ Rajputs is not known. Akbar tried to promote heterogeneous contingents to cut across the ethnic-religious

distinctions. But we find that under Akbar and his successors ethnic-religious ties could not be weakened. Many nobles disliked the importance given to the Rajputs in the Imperial service. The Rajputs, too, found it difficult at first to adjust to the discipline in the Mughal service.

Akbar's alliance with the Rajputs began as a political coalition but later, it developed into an instrument of closer relations between Hindus and Muslims which formed the basis for a broad liberal tolerant policy towards all, irrespective of faith. Around this time, the concept of justice also became extensive. It was stressed that justice should be dispensed to all irrespective of religion, faith, caste and race. Thus Mughal-Rajput relations were seen as the beginning of a secular, non-sectarian state in which all sections of people would have some interest in its continuation. But this was not in accordance with the social and political reality. The Rajputs were generally orthodox in their social and religious outlook. They refused to enroll themselves in Akbar's *tauhid ilahi* and also did not support Akbar in opposing *sati*. Like the Rajputs, the Mughal elite was also generally orthodox. The Mughal elite and *ulema* feared that a broad liberal policy would be detrimental to their dominant position. Their opposition could be put down only by furthering the Mughal-Rajput alliance supported by powerful non-sectarian movements stressing common points between followers of the two religions. These movements were limited in their influence and the Mughal-Rajput alliance having no powerful bulwark became strained and collapsed.

11.4 THE RAJPUT STATES (RAJASTHAN)

Amber, Mewar, Marwar, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Bundi and Kota were some of the important Rajput states in Rajasthan. We will briefly discuss their emergence as powerful Rajput states and their political relations with the Mughals.

11.4.1 Amber (Jaipur)

Amber is identified with the present day Jaipur. Located in eastern Rajasthan, it was ruled by the Kachhawahas. During the early years of Akbar's reign, the ruler of Amber was Raja Bharmal. We have already discussed Akbar's relations with Amber.

At the time of Akbar's death, the relationship of Raja Man Singh with Prince Salim became estranged. Raja Man Singh in league with Aziz Koka, (a Mughal noble) favoured the candidature of Prince Khusrau against Salim for the Mughal throne. Khusrau was the nephew (sister's son) of Man Singh and the son-in-law of Aziz Koka. This issue also divided the Kachhawahas. Ram Das and Raisal Darbari sided with Salim. At that time, both were incharge of the *Khazana-i-amira* (imperial treasury). Man Singh and Aziz Koka wanted to gain control over the treasury but those incharge of the treasury resisted and succeeded in safeguarding the treasury. Eventually when Jahangir became the Emperor, he was hostile to Man Singh and others who had opposed him. Man Singh was sent away to Bengal, and none of the Kachhawahas nobles were given the charge of any office throughout Jahangir's reign. Ram Das and Raisal Darbari were favoured and were raised to the rank of 5000 *zat*. Though Jahangir was unhappy with Man Singh, political exigency did not allow him to sever his relations with the powerful Kachhawaha chieftain. Therefore, in 1608, he married the daughter of Man Singh's deceased eldest son Jagat Singh. Raja Man Singh held the rank of 7000 *zat* and 7000 *sawar* till his death in 1614-15.

In 1614, Jahangir, instead of granting the *gaddi* of Amber to Maha Singh, gave *tika* to Bhao Singh who was also given the title of Mirza Raja and a rank of 4000 *zat* which was raised to 5000 *zat*. According to the law of primogeniture prevailing among the Kachhawaha clan, the *gaddi* should have gone to Maha Singh who was the son of Jagat Singh, the deceased eldest son of Man Singh. During Prince Khurram's rebellion, the Kachhawaha chieftain Mirza Raja Jai Singh was cautious and showed his indifference to the whole affair. His neutrality earned him the goodwill of Prince Khurram. When the latter became the Emperor, Jai Singh was given promotions and assigned some offices. Mirza Raja Jai Singh, who held the *mansab* of 4000 *zat* and

2,500 **sawar** at the time of Shah Jahan's accession, continued to earn promotions during the course of military service in the Deccan. By 1637 he had acquired the status of 7000 **zat** and 7000 **sawar**. He served as a commander during Aurangzeb's expeditions against Balkh and Qandahar. Besides the Mirza, many other Kachhawaha nobles also held ranks of various degrees. Many offices such as **faujdar** and **quila' dar** were assigned to them. In c. 1650, Mirza Raja Jai Singh became the **faujdar** of Delhi and, in the same year, his son Kirat Singh became the **faujdar** of Mewat. Earlier, Mirza Raja Jai Singh was appointed **subadar** of Agra and **faujdar** of Mathura.

In the war of succession between Princes Dara Shukoh and Aurangzeb, Mirza Raja Jai Singh favoured the imperial cause and earned promotions. Jaswant Singh superseded Jai Singh in the heirarchy due to Dara's support who was favoured by Shah Jahan. Jai Singh's nephew's daughter was married to Dara's son. By distinguishing himself against Prince Shuja in the eastern part of India, Mirza Raja Jai Singh had acquired the **mansab** of 7000 **zat** and 7000 **sawar** (5000 **du aspa** **sih aspa**). After the battle of Samugarh when Aurangzeb's position had become strong, the Raja and his son Ram Singh defected to Aurangzeb's side. Aurangzeb rewarded him with the **jagir** of one **kror dams**. He became a close confidant of Aurangzeb. The Raja continued to render military service to Aurangzeb. He remained in the Deccan and fought against the Marathas, Bijapur and Golconda. After Shivaji's escape from Agra, he was removed from the viceroyalty of Deccan. Shivaji was in his son's custody and Aurangzeb blamed him for the flight. After him, the Amber state was governed by his son Ram Singh and great-grandson Bishan Singh. During the period of Sawai Jai Singh, (1609-1743), the Ambar state became powerful. In 1707, after Aurangzeb's death, there ensued the succession problem. Sawai Jai Singh became entangled in the succession strife. He was disliked by the new emperor Bahadur Shah who first installed Jai Singh's brother Bijay Singh as the chieftain of Ambar and subsequently the Emperor brought Amber state under imperial control. But, in the subsequent period, Sawai Jai Singh got possession of Amber. Taking advantage of internecine conflicts and party politics at the royal court, he expanded his power and prestige by enlarging the boundaries of the Amber state. He founded a new city, Jainagar, presently known as Jaipur. At the time of accession, he possessed a small territory around Amber, but he sought revenue assignments of many **parganas** around Amber region, and also took revenue contracts (**ijara**) of many **parganas**. In this way, he succeeded in establishing the powerful Jaipur state.

11.4.2 Marwar (Jodhpur)

The Rathor chieftains of Jodhpur came from Qannauj region and established a monarchy. Rao Jodha (1446-53) founded the city of Jodhpur and it became the seat of power. Gradually, the Rathors extended their control over the large desert tract of north-west Rajasthan. Many Rathor states, namely Merta, Bikaner, Kishangarh and Nagaur came into existence, and the ruling families of these states had lineage links with the Rathor family of Jodhpur. In 1563-64, Jodhpur under Chandrasen was subdued by Akbar. It was conferred upon Mota Raja in 1583. Matrimonial alliances were established with the ruler of Marwar and **mansabs** were granted to him and his sons.

During Jahangir's reign, after meritorious services in the Deccan and the Chittor expedition, Suraj Singh had earned the position of 5000 **zat**. After his death in 1619, his son Gaj Singh was granted the **gaddi** of Jodhpur and the **mansab** of 3000 **zat** and 2000 **sawar**. Gaj Singh served in Deccan and rose to the rank of 5000 **zat** and 5000 **sawar**. He did not participate actively against Shah Jahan who had rebelled against Jahangir. When Shah Jahan became the Emperor, Gaj Singh was confirmed in his previous rank. He was deputed against the rebel Mughal noble Khan Jahan Lodi and thereafter against Adil Shah of Bijapur.

After his death in 1638, according to his will, the **gaddi** of Jodhpur was conferred on his younger son Jaswant Singh instead of the eldest son Amar Singh. Jaswant Singh was also given the title of Raja and the **mansab** of 4000 **zat**/ 4000 **sawar**. Shah Jahan also gratified Amar Singh (who was in Kabul), by augmenting his status to 3000 **zat** and 3000 **sawar** with the title of **rao**. He was also favoured with the grant of a new **watan jagir** in Nagaur. Shah Jahan's generosity was on account of Jaswant and Amar Singh's blood relationship with the Emperor's mother Jagat Gosain.

Raja Jaswant Singh rendered service in Qandahar first under the command of Prince Dara Shukoh and thereafter under Prince Aurangzeb. Earlier he was the acting governor of Agra. The Raja had now acquired the status of 6000 **zat** and 6000 **sawar** (5000 **du aspa** **sih aspa**). His status was further raised by grant of the title of Maharaja and he fought on the imperial side against Aurangzeb in the battles of Dharmat and Samugarh which he lost. On the eve of this struggle, Jaswant Singh's **mansab** was raised to 7000 **zat** and 7000 **sawar** (6000 **du aspa** **sih aspa**). Jaswant Singh's sympathy with Shah Jahan and Dara Shukoh and his frequent defections had vexed Aurangzeb and the latter confiscated his **gaddi** of Jodhpur and conferred it on his nephew Rao Rai Singh, the son of Amar Singh of Nagaur. The Rajputs had no special sympathy for Dara nor Aurangzeb had any reservations regarding the Rajputs. But when eventually Aurangzeb emerged successful in the war of succession he reinstated Jaswant Singh on his **gaddi** as well as to his **mansab**. He was also appointed governor of Gujarat. It was not advisable for the Mughal Emperor to annoy the powerful Rajput chieftain who commanded a large following. Aurangzeb followed the policy of winning over the Rajputs. Thereafter, Jaswant Singh rendered services in Deccan and Afghanistan. However, his negligent conduct during and after Shivaji's surprise attack on Shaista Khan's camp in 1662 was a source of worry to Aurangzeb. Jaswant Singh was charged with sympathising with Shivaji but Aurangzeb continued to favour him. His last assignment was as **thanedar** of Jamrud in Afghanistan. This was a low post and amounted to demotion and virtual banishment to far-off places away from the Mughal court. After his death, the Rajputs were not involved in Aurangzeb's Deccan campaigns which signalled the revival of a forward policy in the Deccan after 1676. This formed the background of Aurangzeb's breach with Mewar and Marwar.

Although Aurangzeb was orthodox in his religious views in the early years of his reign, the Rajputs became partners in the Empire. Gradually, however, relations between the two became strained. The acts of territorial aggrandizement, and, matrimonial alliances contracted by the Rajput **Rajas** without the Mughal Emperor's consent were resented by Aurangzeb.

A major crisis which occurred around this time is popularly known as the Rathor Rebellion. Jaswant Singh had a son Prithvi Singh who had died during his lifetime. At the time of his death, his two wives were pregnant but there was no certainty of the birth of a male child. It was also not possible to keep the Jodhpur **gaddi** vacant for a long time. The **gaddi** could also not be conferred on Rani Hadi (the chief queen) according to the Rajput tradition. The rule of primogeniture did not prevail among the Rathors and the son whose mother was the favourite of the father was nominated to the **gaddi**. In case the successor was a minor, the state was administered by an Imperial nominee. In Marwar there were two claimants to the **gaddi**—Rao Anup Singh of Bikaner (the son of a daughter of Amar Singh) and Indra Singh of Nagaur (his grandfather was Amar Singh whose claims to the throne of Marwar had been set aside when his younger brother Jaswant Singh was given the **gaddi** of Marwar). Both offered a huge amount of **peshkash** (tribute) and Anup Singh also volunteered to escheat Jaswant Singh's property to realize the dues he owed to the government, but Aurangzeb issued orders that the state of Marwar including Jodhpur should be taken into **khalisa**. It was a part of the Mughal Empire though autonomous in internal matters. Disputed succession was one of the reasons for a state being taken into **khalisa**, something which was not unprecedented. Another reason was that many **zamindars** who had been subordinate to the Maharaja withheld revenues and created trouble. Jaswant Singh had given most of his villages in **patta** to **sardars** and was unable to recover the dues from them. He was therefore in debt to the state. Some of his **parganas** were claimed by the neighbouring states. The inclusion of Jodhpur into **khalisa** was accompanied by the grant of **parganas** of Sojat and Jaitaran for the maintenance of Jaswant Singh's family. However, Rani Hadi was not prepared to surrender Jodhpur although she had no objection to the rest of Mewar being taken into **khalisa**. She wanted to postpone the issue and awaited the birth of Jaswant Singh's child hoping that it would be a male child. Rani Hadi was supported by the Rathors and Rana Raj Singh of Mewar. Aurangzeb offered to transform the **pattas** of Jaswant Singh's followers into Imperial **pattas** in order to reduce their anxiety that they would be dislodged if Jodhpur was brought under **khalisa**. Rani Hadi refused to surrender Jodhpur. Aurangzeb decided to strike a blow. Marwar was subdued and Mughal officers including **qazis** and **muhtasibs**

(public censors) were posted at Jodhpur. However, the fort was retained by Rani Hadi. Meanwhile, two posthumous sons were born to the Ranis of Jaswant Singh. The claims of the sons were backed by Rao Anup Singh, the ruler of Bikaner and Khan Jahan, the Imperial **bakhshi**. Finally, Aurangzeb bestowed the **gaddi** of Marwar on Indra Singh for a **peshkash** of 36 lakhs of rupees. Earlier Rani Hadi had made a secret offer that Rathors would destroy all the temples in Marwar if the **tika** was granted to a son of Jaswant Singh. The Rani had wanted to postpone the decision in favour of Indra Singh. She had made this offer at the behest of Tahir Khan the **faujdar** of Jodhpur. This amazing offer was rejected by Aurangzeb. It shows that Aurangzeb's actions such as deputing officials and stone-cutters to demolish temples in Marwar and his decision to reimpose **jiziya** were being misconstrued by Rajputs and his officials. Ultimately, the Rani suggested that Jodhpur might remain under **Khalisa** rather than being given to Indra Singh.

If Aurangzeb had wanted to fulfill the objective of forcible conversion of the Hindus, he would have kept Marwar under **khalisa**. He could also have administered it through an imperial nominee till the sons of Jaswant Singh came of age. However, the Rajputs feared that Indra Singh's accession would establish an unhealthy precedent that the claims of a direct descendant of the Raja would not be considered by the Mughal Emperor arbitrarily. The destruction of temples in Marwar at Aurangzeb's behest also caused a great deal of anxiety among the Rajputs.

The two minor sons of Jaswant Singh were brought to Delhi and their claims were backed by **mir bakhshi**, etc. Aurangzeb had decided to partition the kingdom to satisfy both Indra Singh and Ajit Singh (the son of Jaswant Singh). **Tika** was to be given to Indra Singh, while Sojat and Jaitran were to be held by Ajit Singh. The division of the state was meant to weaken Jodhpur which was a part of the policy of Aurangzeb towards the Rajputs—a policy of restraint in promoting the Rajputs. All this led to an uprising of the Rathors against the Mughals. Aurangzeb converted one child of Jaswant Singh at Agra to Islam to forfeit his claim to the **gaddi**. He now also did not accept the other child of Jaswant Singh as the genuine heir. Finally, Jodhpur submitted to Aurangzeb. Durga Das escaped with the child of Jaswant Singh to Mewar.

11.4.3 Bikaner

The ruling family of Bikaner is of the same lineage as the Rathor ruling family of Jodhpur. Rao Bika (1472-1504) disassociated himself from the Jodhpur family and came to the region of the Thar desert and established the principality of Bikaner known after his name. He and his descendants subdued the local Jat chieftains and brought them under their hegemony. Jaitsi (1526-1542) seems to have joined the service of Emperor Humayun. But when Rao Maldeo of Jodhpur emerged as a powerful chieftain he brought Jaitsi under his authority. Jaitsi's son and successor Kalyan Mal joined Sher Shah's service and extended the limits of his dominion by getting the assignments of many parganas from Sher Shah.

When Akbar's regent Bairam Khan revolted in 1560-61, he sought shelter in Bikaner. After this event, Raja Bhagwant Das Kachhawaha, who was related to Kalyan Mal, brought the latter to join Akbar's service in 1570. A Rathor princess of Bikaner was also married to Akbar. Rao Kalyan Mal and his son Rai Singh were given the **mansab** of 2000 zat and 4000 zat respectively. Rai Singh's son Dalpat was also granted the **mansab** of 500 zat.

Rao Rai Singh along with his son Dalpat rendered military service in the Mughal campaigns in different parts of the Empire. They participated in the campaigns of Sind, Punjab, Bengal and subdued the chieftains of Sirohi and Abu.

The bond between Rao Rai Singh and the Mughal ruling family was further strengthened by the marriage of the daughter of the Rao with Prince Salim. The Rao was appointed the **subadar** of **suba** Lahore in 1586-87. The social status of Rao was enhanced when Akbar conferred the title of **raja** on him.

Jahangir, after his accession in 1605, promoted Rao Rai Singh to the **mansab** of 5000, zat and appointed the Raja to guard the **harem** while he himself decided to chase the rebel Prince Khurram. Rai Singh neglected his duty and went to Bikaner.

He was later on pardoned by Jahangir due to the intervention of Amir ul Umra Sharif Khan. After his death in 1612, his son Dalpat succeeded him. Rai Singh, due to his love for the mother of his younger son Sur Singh, had chosen him as his successor. But when it was reported to Jahangir, he overruled Rai Singh's choice and personally gave **tika** to Dalpat. By this action he made it clear that the power of granting succession rested with the central power only, i.e., the Mughal Emperor. Later on, Dalpat rebelled against the Emperor and Sur Singh, who helped to arrest Dalpat, was installed as the ruler of Bikaner. Sur Singh by rendering meritorious services had risen to the status of 3000 **zat** and 2000 **Sawar** during Jahangir's reign. Shah Jahan, after assuming power, promoted the Rao to the status of 4000 **zat** and 3000 **sawar**. The Rao participated in many campaigns. After his death in 1630-31, his son Karan was granted the **gaddi** with the title of **rao** and a **mansab** of 2000 **zat** and 1000 **sawar**. Satar Sal, another son of Sur Singh, was given the **mansab** of 500 **zat** and 200 **sawar**. Rao Karan served in Deccan and played a significant role in subduing many **zamindars** of the region. In the war of succession, the Rao decided to remain neutral and went to Bikaner instead of siding with either of the contending Princes for the Mughal throne. Aurangzeb, after his accession, forced the Rao to rejoin his service. He was given the **mansab** of 3000 **zat** and 2000 **sawar** and deputed to Deccan. In the campaign against the **zamindar** of Chanda, he played a dubious role which cost him his position. His son Anup Singh with the **mansab** of 2500 **zat** and 2000 **sawar** was given Bikaner. The deposed Rao settled in Aurangabad where he died in 1666-67. Anup Singh's services in Deccan earned him the title of **raja**. He fought against the Marathas and was appointed the **qila' dar** of Nusratabad. After his death in 1699, his son Sarup Singh was given the **tika** with a **mansab** of 1000 **zat** and 500 **sawar**.

11.4.4 Mewar

Mewar was one of the largest Rajput states in Rajasthan. It had three strong forts, i.e., Chittor, Kumbhalmer and Mandal. It was ruled by the Sisodia chiefs. The trade-route from Agra to Gujarat passed through the Sisodia territory; therefore, it had great importance for the Mughal Emperor. The Sisodia chieftains had brought many local chieftains under their hegemony. The contest of Rana Sanga with Babur has already been discussed. Mewar's defeat attracted external invasions. Bahadur Shah of Gujarat attacked Mewar and succeeded in forcing the Rana to accept his suzerainty.

Rana Udai Singh, the successor of Rana Vikramjit, gave shelter to Baz Bahadur, the ruler of Malwa. Akbar led an expedition against Chittor in 1567 and captured it. Rana Pratap succeeded Udai Singh. He refused to pay personal homage to Akbar but sent his son Amar Singh along with **peshkash** to the court. The result was the battle of Haldighati which proved ruinous for the Rajputs. Mewar had always defied Mughal authority due to its size, terrain and geographical location. Under Akbar no favours were given to Mewar. In 1614, Prince Khurram led an expedition and forced Rana Amar Singh to submit. The Rana sent his son Kunwar Karan to the court where he was treated favourably. He was given the status of a **mansabdar** of **panj hazari** (5000 **zat**). However, the treaty which was contracted between the Rana and the Mughals, granted many privileges to the Rana. It was decided that the Rana would not render military service to the Mughals in person, but he would depute a person with only 1500 troopers. It was also decided that the Rana would not get the fort of Chittor repaired. The Rana enjoyed the status of 5000 **zat** in the Mughal **mansab** hierarchy. In 1619, when Rana Amar Singh died, Kunwar Karan succeeded him with the title of **rana** and the **mansab** of 5000 **zat**. After his death in 1628, his son Jagat Singh received the **mansab** of 5000 **zat** and 5000 **sawar** from Emperor Shah Jahan.

In 1654, in violation of the treaty of 1614, when Jagat Singh began to repair the fort, Shah Jahan deputed Sadullah Khan in 1656 to take action against the Rana. To punish the Rana for the violation of the treaty, some **parganas** were sequestered and annexed to the imperial **Khalisa**. Rana Jagat Singh's successor Rana Raj Singh approached prince Dara Shukoh, and, through his intervention the Rana saved his dominion from large scale devastation by Sadullah Khan. However, the Rana continued to depute a person with a fixed number of troopers for rendering military service to the Mughal Emperor.

In the war of succession, Rana Raj Singh remained a silent spectator but, when the decisive battle of Deorai near Ajmer was imminent, both Dara Shukoh and Aurangzeb became keen to seek help from the Rana. Dara Shukoh had taken position at Deorai hill which was very important strategically. If Jaswant Singh and Rana Raj Singh had both joined Dara it would have been disastrous for Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb, visualising all these aspects, hastened to promise the Rana that he would restore him to the honour enjoyed by Rana Sangram Singh. But he did not keep his promise. However, Aurangzeb raised him to the **mansab** of 6000 **zat** and 6000 **sawar**. The **parganas** confiscated from the Rana were restored to him. The territories of Dungarpur, Banswara and Deolia whose chieftains had fought against Aurangzeb were also assigned as **ghair amali jagir** to the Rana. In addition, two **kror dams** were granted in **inam** (revenue free land grants) to him. Rana's interest in Mewar succession dispute was mainly to reassert the importance of Mewar in Rajput politics. When Rana Jai Singh became the ruler he was forced to cede the **parganas** of Mandal, Bidur, etc in lieu of **jiziya** and also not to support the Rathors. But the unity between the Sisodias and Rathors had already suffered. Rana Jai Singh did not wholeheartedly support Ajit Singh's succession to the **gaddi** of Marwar due to secret attempts made by the Rathors to sequester territories in Mewar. However, in 1696, the Rana of Mewar married his niece to Ajit Singh. Finally **tika** was given to Ajit Singh, though Jodhpur was retained by Aurangzeb.

11.4.5 Jaisalmer

In the Western Thar desert of Rajasthan, there were many Bhati chieftains independent of each other. Muhta Nainsi, a compiler of the **Khyat** in the second half of seventeenth century, has referred to many of them ruling over Pugal, Bikanpur, Derawar, Motasar, Hapasara and Jaisalmer. They did not have a centralized political organisation but Jaisalmer was the largest and the most powerful Bhati state among these. Rao Loon Karan (1528-50) subdued the chieftain of Derawar and included it in his territory. Rawal Har Raj of Jaisalmer, who was related to the Kachhawaha family by matrimonial ties was brought by Bhagwant Das to join Emperor Akbar's service in 1570. His acceptance of Mughal suzerainty was accompanied by the marriage of his daughter to the Emperor. Further, this bond was strengthened by giving Har Raj's son Rawal Bhim's daughter in marriage to Prince Salim. She was given the title of **malika i Jahan**. Rawal Bhim (1578-1614) rendered military service to the Mughals in Sind and was given the **mansab** of 3000 **zat** by the end of Akbar's reign.

In the absence of any male issue, Jahangir after Rawal Bhim's death (related to the Kachhawaha family) in 1614, granted succession to his younger brother Kalyan. He got the **mansab** of 2000 **zat** and 1000 **sawar** and the hereditary title of **rawal**. After his death in 1647, his son Manohar Das became the Rawal of Jaisalmer. The line of succession changed when Manohar Das died in 1649. Ram Chand, being the heir-apparent, became the ruler of Jaisalmer, but Shah Jahan overruled his succession and gave **tika** to Sabal Singh who was from the lineage of Rawal Maldeo (1550-1561), the ruler of Jaisalmer. Shah Jahan seems to have intervened in succession because of the internecine feuds among the Bhatias in Jaisalmer. Sabal Singh was the son of Mirza Raja Jai Singh's sister and had rendered meritorious service in Peshawar where he protected successfully the imperial treasury from the recalcitrant Afghans.

Shah Jahan due to all these considerations decided to grant **tika** to Sabal Singh. The Emperor asked Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur to instal Sabal Singh on the **gaddi** Jaisalmer. After Sabal Singh's death, his son Amar Singh became the Rawal in 1659. Amar Singh's energies were spent mostly in fighting with the local Rajput refractories and the neighbouring Rathor chieftain Anup Singh of Bikaner. Aurangzeb assigned Pokharan, Phalaudi and Malani **parganas** in **jagir** to Amar Singh, but after his death in 1701 his **jagir** was seized by his neighbours—the Rathors and Daud Khan Afghan of Shikarpur.

11.4.6 Bundi and Kota

The south-eastern region of Rajasthan was known as Hadauti also. The Rajputs who governed the region are known as Hadas. Before the second half of the 16th century, the Hadas were not in prominence. They were subordinate to the Rana of

Mewar. Rao Surjan Hada, who was the incharge of the impregnable fort of Ranthambor on behalf of the Rana of Mewar, submitted to Akbar in 1561-62. The Rao and his sons Duda and Bhoj joined the Imperial service and they served the Mughals in Bihar, Orissa and Deccan. Rao Surjan and Bhoj held the mansabs of 2000 zat and 900 zat respectively.

Rao Surjan had divided his dominion between his sons Duda and Bhoj. When the eldest son Duda rebelled against his father, Bundi was given to the younger son Bhoj. The Hada chieftains continued to render military service to the Mughal Emperor. Ratan, Hada had become a favourite of Jahangir and he played an important role in suppressing Prince Khurram's revolt in Burhanpur. He got the mansab of 5000 zat and 5000 sawar, and the titles of Sarbuland Ray and Ram Rai. The latter title was considered the highest honour in Deccan. His son Madho Singh and brother Hriday Narain were also given mansabs.

Shah Jahan, after his accession, decided to curb the power of the Hada chieftains of Bundi. In 1631, after Rao Ratan's death, the territory of Bundi was divided into two parts—Bundi and Kota. The Emperor gave tilka of Bundi to Satrsal who was the heir apparent of Bundi, and Kota was given to Ratan's son Madho Singh. Since then, Bundi and Kota became separate independent states. The Hada chieftains of Bundi and Kota continued to serve the Mughals in their military campaigns. Rao Satrsal fought on the imperial side against Aurangzeb in the war of succession and was killed in the battle of Samugarh. When the Mughal central authority weakened, the chieftains of Kota and Bundi fought with each other for domination over the region.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) What were the basic features of Babur and Humayun's policy towards the Rajputs?

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- 2) Distinguish the three phases in Akbar's Rajput policy.

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11.5 THE RAJPUT STATES IN CENTRAL INDIA

The important Rajput states in central India were Dhandera, Rewa and Orcha.

Dhandera

It was a Rajput principality in the suba of Malwa. The chieftains of chandera were connected to the Bundelas and Panwars.

Orcha

A large principality in central India known as Orcha was in the possession of the Bundela Rajputs. It was situated on a strategically important route linking the North and Deccan. The Mughals taking advantage of the internal dissensions among the Bundelas curtailed their power by dividing their territory among different families.

Bandhogarh or Rewa

The chieftains of Bandhogarh are known as Baghelas. Their territory was large and was a part of Allahabad suba.

11.6 OTHER RAJPUT STATES

Certain lesser important Rajput states were the hill Rajputs states and Baglana and Idar.

11.6.1 Baglana and Idar

The chieftains of Baglana claimed their descent from the Rathors of Qannauj. According to a tradition, three Rathor chieftains came from Qannauj to Pali in Rajasthan and established three independent states in Jodhpur, Baglana and Idar. The Rathor chieftains of Baglana founded their states after dispossessing the Bhils. The chieftain of Baglana was called Birji. The territory of Baglana lay between Gujarat and Deccan and was a very rich territory. It had seven strong forts including Salher and Malher. Baglana remained subordinate to either of the two states of Khandesh or Gujarat. Like Baglana, the Rathor chieftains of Idar, too, owed allegiance either to Gujarat or Mewar.

11.6.2 The Hill Rajput States

There were a number of hill Rajput states in North western India. Some of them emerged powerful in the 16th century. Since these states were remotely situated in hilly, inaccessible tracts, it was not easy for the centre to keep them under control. The chieftains of Jammu, Nagarkot (Kangra) Mau-Nurpur, Gular (a branch of Kangra family), Chamba and Kumaon were subdued by Akbar, but intermittently they used to defy Mughal authority. They were well versed in fighting in hill regions and the Mughals installed them in the North-Western frontier. The Mughals interfered in the succession issue in these states. They contracted marriage alliances with the hill states, granted **mansabs** to the hill chieftains and sequestered their territories. Of the hill states, only Kuman succeeded in establishing a centralised administrative system.

11.7 MUGHAL-RAJPUT RELATIONS IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Mughal-Rajput relations in the 16th century developed according to the political requirement of the two main ruling elites in North India—the Mughals and Rajputs. In the 17th century however it suffered a setback against the backdrop of steady expansion of the Empire, internal conflicts among the Rajputs and proclamation of the principle of regional autonomy by different sections.

Jahangir and Shah Jahan

During the reign of these rulers the alliance with the Rajputs established by Akbar was strengthened despite certain hurdles. The most creditable achievement of Jahangir was the cessation of war with Mewar. He did not press upon personal submission of the Rana and accepted the homage paid by his son. To Rana were restored all those territories which had been taken from him either in Akbar's time or Jahangir's time. Rana's son was also favoured with a **mansab** and jagir. Jahangir established the tradition that Rana's son or brother should serve the Emperor. Matrimonial relations with Mughals were not forced upon the Rana. The Chittor fort was a powerful bastion which had consistently disregarded Mughal power and Jahangir did not want it to be repaired to its former shape. Jahangir carried forward Akbar's policy of establishing matrimonial relations with the Rajput **rajas**. However, after Mewar's submission these marriages took place less frequently. Most of them took place while Mewar was opposing the Mughals. Once Mewar had been humbled, the alliance with the Rajputs had become stable. Thus, to some extent,

these marriages served only a fixed political aim. Marriages did bring about amicable relations between Mughals and Rajputs. They were mostly contracted in anticipation of imminent contest for power.

During Jahangir's reign the rulers of four leading states of Rajputana—Mewar, Marwar, Amber and Bikaner—held the **mansab** of 5000 **zat** or above. The Kachchawahas lost their dominant position in the nobility. The rulers of the Rajput states now got higher **mansabs** in comparison to Akbar's time. During the first decade of Jahangir's reign there was a sharp fall in the total **mansab** granted to the Rajputs following Khusrau's rebellion. An analysis of the **mansab** and offices conferred during Jahangir's reign shows that they were type-cast on the basis of ethnic origin, caste, etc. The Rajputs were mainly employed as **qila' dars** of forts or as **faujdar**. But this type casting was not inflexible nor rested on communal considerations as Jahangir was liberal in matters pertaining to religion.

During Shah Jahan's reign, they were given important commands and were granted high **mansabs**. This reflects that he trusted the Rajputs and assigned them important duties. Shah Jahan, however, discontinued Jahangir's policy of not granting **subadari** to the Rajput **rajas** of leading houses. However, these assignments were few and infrequent. The Rajputs continued to be given posts such as **qila' dar** and **faujdar**. The differentiation between civil and military was still made on the basis of caste and ethnic origins. During Jahangir's and Shah Jahan's time, the Rajputs continued to be allies but their role in administration was negligible.

Two conflicts against Bundelas and Mewar took place during Shah Jahan's reign and both occurred due to conflicting interpretations of concept of paramountcy and suzerainty. As suzerain power, the Rajputs indulged in military raids for gaining territory at the cost of their neighbours and for extorting money from those who were theoretically subordinate to them but could rebel against them whenever the opportunity arose.

The Mughals who held hegemonic power wanted to control these conflicts out of self-interest and because the subordinate chieftains had direct relations with the Mughals to protect themselves and seek Mughal help whenever necessary. Thus, the class allies—Rajputs and Mughals—had common interests as far as collection of land revenue and maintenance of law and order were concerned, but there were differences as far as rights and privileges were concerned. They could be sorted out by a process of give and take or could lead to tensions. The Mughals tried to make it clear that no subordinate **raja** could extend his territory without the consent of the Mughal Emperor. If he was prepared to part with the gains of conquest, he could be granted permission. This reflects the class nature of the struggle between Mughals and Rajputs.

Conflict with Mewar should be examined in the light of the concept of Mughal paramountcy. Certain subordinate principalities of Mewar had asserted their independence during Akbar's time. But, in 1615, overlordship of Mewar over these states territories was recognised. Later, these subordinate chieftains again asserted their independence and tried to expand into neighbouring areas. They were supported by the Mughals. Conflict for control over territories took place between the Mughals and Mewar. Refortification of Chittor by the Rana was only a pretext for war with Chittor. Shah Jahan destroyed the fort and sequestered many **parganas** in Chittor.

Aurangzeb

Aurangzeb's policy towards the Rajputs from 1680's onwards caused worry both to the Rajputs as well as to a section of the Mughal nobility. This is evident from the Rajput-Mughal nobles' complicity in the rebellion of Prince Akbar. The rulers of Mewar and Marwar were dissatisfied with Aurangzeb's policy and they wanted restoration of territories sequestered by Aurangzeb. A section at the Mughal court, e.g., Prince Azam considered Aurangzeb's Rajput policy faulty and attempted to conspire with the Rana of Mewar expecting his help in the war of succession. In the second half of the 17th century Aurangzeb became lukewarm towards the Rajputs. Rajputs were not given important assignments. He interfered in matters relating to matrimonial alliances among the Rajputs. However, Aurangzeb's breach with Mewar and Marwar did not mean a breach with the Rajputs in general. The rulers of

Amber, Bikaner, Bundi and Kota continued to receive **mansabs**. But they were not accorded high ranks or positions in Aurangzeb's reign like during the reign of Akbar and his successors Jahangir and Shah Jahan.

It cannot be said that wars with Mewar and Marwar signalled the discontinuation of Akbar's policy of alliance with the Rajputs. In fact, the wars reflect the conflict between the policy of alliance with the Rajputs and the broader policy of winning over the local ruling elites, i.e. **zamindars**. We cannot say that Aurangzeb's orthodoxy solely shaped his Rajput policy. There were other factors at work. As the Mughal Empire got consolidated in the north, the next step was to extend its boundaries southwards which meant alliance with local ruling elements, i.e., the Marathas. The Rajputs lost their prominent position in the Mughal system. The importance of the Marathas increased in the second half of the 17th century. Now the Rajputs needed the alliance with the Mughals.

The wars with Mewar and Marwar were a drain on the treasury but not a serious one and did not in any substantial way affect the overland trade to the Cambay sea-ports. However, Aurangzeb's Rajput policy reflected his incompetence to deal with issues effectively which affected the prestige of the Empire. It led to political and religious discord which demonstrated lack of political acumen. All this gave impetus to rebellions by the Mughal Princes in league with the Rajputs.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Which were the important hill Rajput states during this period?

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- 2) What were the main tenets of Mughal policy towards the Rajputs in the 17th century?

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11.8 LET US SUM UP

Mughal alliance with the Rajputs did create an atmosphere of interaction between Hindus and Muslims but it was limited in scope. It basically served the purpose of **realpolitik** for both the Rajputs and Mughals, but it did not succeed in extending the social base of the Empire which was the need of the times. Recourse to religion was by and large a measure of political expediency.

11.9 KEY WORDS

Dam : A Mughal Copper coin; 40 **dams** = 1 Mughal silver rupee.

Ghair Amli Jagirs : Jagirs granted to **pesh kashi** zamindars.

11.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) See Section 11.2
- 2) See Section 11.3 and Sub-sec 11.3.1, 11.3.2 and 11.3.3

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) See Sub-sec 11.6.2
- 2) See Section 11.7

SOME USEFUL BOOKS FOR THIS BLOCK

- 1) Satish Chandra, **Medieval India.**
- 2) Satish Chandra, **Mughal Religious Policies**, Vikas Publication, 1993.
- 3) H.R. Sherwani and P.M. Joshi, **History of the Medieval Deccan** in 2 vols.
- 4) Radhey Shyam, **The Kingdom of Ahmednagar**
- 5) Jadunath Sarkar, **Shivaji and His Times**
- 6) S.N. Sen, **Rise and Fall of the Maratha Power**
- 7) G.S. Sardesai, **New History of the Marathas Vol. I**
- 3) J.F. Richards, **Mughal Administration in Golconda.**