

DECLINE OF MUGHAL EMPIRE (PART-4)

मुगल साम्राज्य का पतन (भाग-4)

UG SEM-5 PAPER-MJC -9

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CAUSES OF THE DECLINE (पतन के कारण)

► Muzaffar Alam , Region-centric approach:

Muzaffar Alam has used in their works region-centric approach to explain Mughal decline. M Alam, The crisis of empire in Mughal North India, Awadh and the Punjab, 1707-1748 (1986). Muzaffar Alam has made comparative study of the development in the Mughals subas of Awadh and Punjab. According to Alam, the Mughal decline in the early 18th century has to be seen in the inability of the state to maintain its policy of checks and balances between the Zamindar, jagirdars, madad-i-ma'ash holders and the local indigenous elements like the shaikhzadas in awadh.

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In the early 18th century there was a thrust of the nobles towards independent political alignments with the zamindars in order to carve out their own fortunes. Alongside there was an attempt between the various co-shares of Mughal power to encroach on each other's rights and territorial jurisdictions. These developments were not entirely incompatible with what happened earlier. But in the Hey-day of the Empire these tensions had been contained. This was achieved at times by the use of military force and at other times by balancing out the power of one social group by settling another in the vicinity.

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Muzaffar Alam concludes that the decline of the Mughal Empire was manifested both in Awadh and the Punjab in a kind of political transformation and in the emergency and configuration of the elements of a new subadari. The genesis for the emergency of independent regional units was present in both the provinces. But in Punjab it ended in chaos, while Awadh witnessed a stable dynastic rule.

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► **Jadunath Sarkar, Deteriorating Characters of the Emperors and their Nobles:**

Jadunath Sarkar, in his work, *The Fall of Mughal Empire, 1938*, and *History of Aurangzeb, 1912*, attributed the decline to deterioration in the characters of the Emperors and their nobles. Sarkar had analyzed the development of this period in the context of law and order he therefore held Aurangzeb as the arch culprit. According to Sarkar, Aurangzeb was a religious fanatic. He discriminated against sections of the nobles and of officials on the basis of religion. This led to wide scale resentments among the nobility.

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He argued that Aurangzeb's successor and their nobles were mere shadows of their predecessors and were thus unable to set right the evils of Aurangzeb's legacy.

It is difficult to find the single explanation commonly applicable to the problems of the Mughal Empire in all its regions and provinces. For similar reasons it is difficult to accept a view of Mughal decline which applies uniformly to all parts of the Mughal Empire. The Mughal Empire at best represented a consensus of both the centers and the peripheries. Different regions were affected in different ways.

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While in some regions links with the Mughal core were severed, in others they were retained. It was logical that the different regions followed different path of dissociation from the Mughal Empire. Mughal decline was thus much more complex than what the historians subscribing to the Mughal centric approach would have us believe.

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