

CLEFT BETWEEN THE JATS AND RAJPUTS DURING MUGHAL PERIOD

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Abstract

The Jats formed a large chunk of population in northern India. Our concern is their growing power over a considerable area which raised them from peasants into zamindars. They later adopted activities of freebooters. They started creating disturbances in close proximity of the capital. During the later Mughal period they gradually became turbulent and the source of Imperial concern. The geography furnishes us important information such as condition of the soil, course of rivers, location of hills, forests, rainfall, climate, its vegetation, which reveals their deep economic interest lies in this area. A tussle ensued to gain control over this area among the Jat, the Raja of Amber and the Mughal Emperor himself which sustained for a considerable time. The Jats and Rajputs confronted because both were growing in authority and consequently wanted to assert their supremacy. The tussle further enhanced because of the worthwhile Jat Belt on which Amber Raja had his eyes in order to expand and consolidate his home territory. Since the Jats were losing their territory at the hands of Amber Raja, they posed large scale devastation to express their rage.



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Historical Perspectives : The sources utilized for this study are *Kapad Dwara* Records and the other archival materials such as *Vakils Report, Arzdashts, Khatoots, Muwazana Dahsala Pargana Hindaun, Taqsim Dahsala Pargana Amarsar* preserved in Rajasthan State Archives, French traveler F. Wendel's account '*Memoirs Des Jats*', also throw good information about the Jats. Persian sources like *Chachnama, Ain-i-Akbari, Iqbalnama, Shahnama Munawwar Kalam*, and the other works like Census Reports of Rajasthan, *Vir Vinod*, and geographical dictionaries such as James Rennel '*Memoirs 'of a Map of Hindoostan, or the Mughal Empire;* Nundo Lai Dey '*Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Medieval India*' are also utilized.

The Jats were broadly divided into two sections:- *Hele* and *Dhe* as classified by A.H.Bingley. According to him this Scythian race migrated to India, settled in the valley of Indus and thence further expanded towards north. Among them this *Hele* or *Deswali* were the descendants of

original migrants. But *Dhe* or *Pachhade* were the recent arrivals of beyond 15th century extended over the area belonging to river Jamuna and Chambal, where they formed the ruling house of their own. The kinship ties among the Jats were very strong. Mostly they also had matrimonial relations among themselves. Besides this, they also had tribal bondage and because of this reason they got the large scale support of the peasants of their own caste when they defied the Mughal authority in 18th century. Bingley furnishes much information regarding different clans of the Jats living on both sides of Jamuna in each district separately. The clans like *Deswali, Pahal, Dalai, Man, Tenua* etc. were the dominant clans found in many districts, while other clans like *Ghatwal, Jatkar, Main, Puniya, Sangwan, Bhainiwal, Chahil, Malik, Goha, Rathi, Dhankar, Dahia, Hudah, Kadian, Ahlawat, Sahrawat, Jaglan, Ghaughas, Kharat, Narwal, Nandal, Kundu, Kali rammi, Phor or Dhaliwal, Bainwal, Lathir, Kadian, Dahan, Daunchak, Kalher, Sire, Dhul, Mor, Tewatia, Katamia, Rawat, Tanwar, Raibdar, Dakar, Pokhwat, Uthwal, Ahlawat, Jhar, Nahri, Surauj, Penwar, Punia, Khokhar, Dhaka, Kali, Soran, Chakora, Bora, Kakran, Salahu, Kunthel, Dangri, Kudar* etc. were also found.'

Interestingly enough one come across the areawise division of the Jats like on the name of Sinsini they were called as *Sinsiniwar* Jats, *Sogharia* Jats of Soghar and *Rauriya* Jats of Rarah, *Nohwars* of Noh. The ruling class of Bharatpur, situated in eastern Rajputana, belongs to Sinsiniwar clan. Various areas under the zamindari of Jats and Rajputs during the time of Akbar, the territories as well as the interest of the Jats and Amber chief clashed over a particular span of time. The reason for the rift was that both the powers were pursuing an expansionist policy. Fortunately for Amber Raja that he enjoyed the imperial patronage in checkmating the Jat interest. This is discernable in the conditional assignments made by the Mughal Emperor to the Amber Rajas.

According to the informations provided by Abul Fazl, since the time of Akbar, the whole area of suba Agra was inhabited by the Jats and Rajputs besides other castes. And in some of the areas of suba Agra like, Chaumuha, Khanwa, Kuthumar, Hindaun, Nuh, both Jats and Rajputs were found alongwith other castes. However, in the whole of the sarkar of Sahar, Bayanwan, Gwalior etc. The Jats and Rajputs were the dominating caste during the later Mughal period the Jats gained considerable area from what they had during the time of Akbar.

The areas like Sinsini, Pinghor, Khair, Au, Sonkh which were earlier under the zamindari possession of the Jats were assigned to the Raja of Amber as his zamindari and jagirdari as both the interest of the Raja and the Mughal Emperor intersected. Consequently clash between the two became inevitable. One can also discern that the Amber Rajas had been undertaking responsibilities from earlier times in whole of the Jat area. They acted as jagirdars, faujdar, zamindar and sometime as qiladars also like in Mathura and Sinsini. Areas like Kol, were assigned to him as tankhwah jagir.

The area of Sinsini, Pingor, Khair, Au, Sonkh, etc. were considered as the watan of the Jats {watan mahaal Jataan), and they were the hereditary zamindars of Au and the surrounding areas were also under their sway. Rajaram and Ram Chahar Jat, were the zamindars of Sinsini and Soghar respectively and adjoining areas which were situated on the west of Mathura and Agra. During the Later Mughal period they were claiming the surrounding areas as their watan} But the same rights were assigned to Amber chiefs to curb their power. Except jagirdari and faujdari there were many areas where Raja was assigned the zamindari rights also like, Pinghor, Khair, Sinsini, Au, Sonkh, Mathura etc. Pargana which were the core of the empire can be enumerated as, Rewari, Bawal, Akbarabad, Mathura, Kol, Kaman, Pahari and Khohri were included in Jat-Belt. These were the areas which were considered to be the core areas of the Jats, where the Jats were now losing their hereditary right in the hands of Amber Raja.

Not only the Jats but the other zamindari caste of the area, had also become rebellious at that time, they supported each other and consequently formed a zamindari front against the Mughal Emperor and hence against the Raja of Amber. According to Irfan Habib the peasant revolt against the Mughal Empire was either under the leadership of zamindars or aspired to be zamindars. The Jat revolt was basically an agrarian uprising supported by the zamindars. It is also true that in their offensive the Jat zamindar had to seek the support of their fellow clansmen among the peasants and they could easily mobilise themselves owing to the caste solidarity. The contemporary French traveller informs us that peasants give much respect to the zamindars of the area as they respect the Mughal Emperor, The Jats, who were dominating by nature, always try to establish their sway. So, it makes no sense to expect obedience from them especially at a time when the Mughal Emperor was losing its grip even on the core of the empire. For example, the authority of Churaman was very strong in the region, the zamindars and the subjects belonged to

that locality {manatgaan) had all collected and joined together in his rebellion. Sometimes the zamindars belonged to the caste of Jats, Mewatis and Narukas started creating disturbances together. . And it was not only the question of zamindari rights, but the entire administration of that area was equally involved. It became very difficult for the jagirdars to collect the revenue smoothly in this volatile region.

Amber Raja was leasing out of his jagirs to the local ijaredars and on the other he was striving to get the areas near to his territory on ijara. The reason for taking such measure seems to be that the area under Jat-Belt being far from his watan was difficult to manage easily. Further, the local chieftains were familiar with their biradari and it was easier for them to control them. And getting ijara near his territory seems to be beneficial for the Raja in order to manage it easily and by doing this can make embankment of his watan from dangers arising in the form of ambitious zamindars on the boundaries of his watan.

Furthermore, there were certain pockets in the Jat region which were strategically very important. The environs near Thun and Kumbher the place where later on Bharatpur state was established by the Jats, had many trade routes and highways. Bharatpur was situated on the way to Agra, lying on the route from Agra to Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh to Deccan, situated as the gateway to Rajasthan. Similarly other places like Sinsini, Thun etc. were important for being situated in the vicinity of impenetrable forest (ashjaar dushwar guzaar) which was exploited by the refractory elements as camouflage.^ These places became greater source of concern as is evident from extraordinary military arrangements, frequent clashes, establishment of thanas and so on. Similarly, Pinghor fort was conquered in Sept/Oct. 1692 and in view of its strategic importance it was not demolished, instead the Amber Raja chose to encamp there and made it the base for future operations. In 1716, after the defeat of Jats by Sawai Jai Singh at Kama, he made it the base for future operations because the forts of Thun and Deeg were situated at a distance of 12 and 7 kos respectively from Kama. In that respect the fort of Kasot was also very important which served as a connecting link between Sinsini and other forts such as Soghar, Awayr and Pinghor in a region extremely difficult to access. Few reports inform us about the grant of pargana Bhusawar to Maharaja. A Parwam sent by Maharaja mentions the grant of pargana Bhusawar to him.^* It was not possible to make good arrangements at Hindaun so long as the Jats were not turned out of Bhusawar, being situated in close proximity to Hindaun. In 1694,

pargana Kho was granted to Maharaja in lieu of Bhusawar on the request of Bakhshi-ul-Mulk InaytuUah Khan. The Vakil expresses his surprise as to why Bakhshi-ul-Mulk did not request for pargana Bhusawar inspite of knowing the fact. It appears that Maharaja was anxious to take Basawar in jagir for the reason that it was more convenient to tackle the Jat rebels from this place. The distance of one area from another also considered important because of their location like in 1693 Maharaja was requested to send an Arzdasht regarding the distance between Barah and Hindaun and explain the difficulties in the conquest of Barah because of this reason. These places were strategically very important and both Jats and Rajputs wanted to retain them under their possession.

Amber Raja was apprehensive that Emperor may believe on the versions of other people and in response to this Emperor assured him to verify the matter before taking any action. Kamaluddin Khan had made false complaints against the Maharaja and approached the Emperor for the grant of the faujdari of Hindaun, Bayana and Mathura. And assured the Emperor that he will turn out the Jats from Mathura within two years. Though after sometime Emperor regretted for paying heed to false complaints of Kamaluddin Khan At another place Emperor expressed his regret that he believed the allegations against the Amber Raja for settling the Jats. Amir-ul-Umara also complained against the Amber Raja regarding carelessness in Mathura as a result revenue has been in arrears. But Raja had acquaintance with some nobles at the court who used to plead his case before the Emperor. Mirza Yar Ali Beg promised to plead the case of Raja's mansab after the conquest of Jawar fort. Likewise Jumdat-ul-Mulk also requested about the mansab of Maharaja and that of Kunwarji.

Amber Raja proposed to construct a canal from Kama to Sinsini when he was on the expedition at Sinsini. The proposal was accepted by Umdat-ul-Mulk, It seems that Amber Raja wished to ensure facility of water to his army as there was scarcity of water for the maintenance of army. In another source it is mentioned that it is easier to conquer Sinsini in rainy season when the water was available there. "" Covered pathways were also erected by his commander Hari Singh at the time of the conquest of Baroda fort. The security arrangements on the roads were also very important as frequent loot and plunder took place on it like in Gokul, Brindavan, Mathura, Nagar, Guhi Soul, Palwal. etc' Raja was ordered to make arrangements on the passage between Fatehpur and Mauzabad.

In order to govern the administration smoothly the Raja of Amber recognised the identity of some chieftains on the one hand and engaged them in the administration on the other. As we see in the case of Kol that the local chieftains were authorised with certain powers in order to control the situation' Badan Singh was also recognised by Sawai Jai Singh after the failure of the second expedition at Thun. Wendel says that it mostly happened that in order to control the revolt raised by the zamindars the government had to send an army but sometimes the situation was pacified by accepting some conditions of the zamindars. Occasionally it also happened that the state had to avoid it for sometimes or the steps were taken against them after a long time. It seems that Raja had adopted this strategy of pacifying the situation by alluring them at some places where it works. But this tactic did not always work suitably in case of Jats because it would prove dangerous to extend some power to them because we find that whenever Churaman Jat was authorised with any charge or administrative post, he had always taken advantage of such privileges in order to extend his power.

Conclusion :

From the above investigations, it can be concluded that the Jats and Rajputs confronted because both were growing in authority and consequently wanted to assert their supremacy. The tussle further enhanced because of the worthwhile Jat Belt on which Amber Raja had his eyes in order to expand and consolidate his home territory. Since the Jats were losing their territory at the hands of Amber Raja, they posed large scale devastation to express their rage.

In such a situation the jagirdars were unable to collect revenue smoothly. We can clearly notice the situation in the form of growing tendency of ijara to the powerful jagirdars i.e. Amber Raja or to the local magnates i.e. muqaddams, chaudhries etc. Raja of Amber had difficult task to perform along with these assignments. On the one hand, he had to face difficulties posed by the some of the nobles on the other hand he had to perform the duty of taming the aggressive Jats. His power and resources also increased with these grants but alongside he was assigned the difficult task to bring the belligerent Jats under control. Though he was given lucrative assignments to perform his duty but the Emperor was very much attentive to balance his power.

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