

THE REIGN OF AURANGZEB AS PORTRAYED IN THE PLAY AURANGZEB BY INDIRA PARTHASARATHY

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Abstract : This research paper focuses on the administrative power of the rulers and the maintenance of the treasury. Through their administration they provide confidence and prove their people that they are under a mighty protective hand. The rulers always give hope and confidence to the people. People too believe their rulers that they would protect and provide their needs. That is why even now people pay tax and help the government to run. The play "Aurangzeb" focuses on Aurangzeb and his way of administration. He wished to protect the royal treasury from the hands of his father, Shahjahan who wanted the money to be spent on building the black marble mahal. Not only that but also he protected the throne not to be crowned by his elder brother Murad because he found him drunkard and womaniser. He did not want a drunkard and womaniser to be the ruler to the people. Moreover people would not accept such person as their ruler. Rulers should possess good qualities and leadership qualities. Aurangzeb had such qualities and skills and protected the royal treasury and saved people's money. He lived a simple life only. He gave importance to Islam's. He gave importance to the five times worship. He believed that god was the only one who could give strength to him to rule his people in the right ways. This paper highlights the thoughts of Aurangzeb and events which could prove that he was one of the right rulers to keep the royal treasury safe for the sake of his people. In CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture Volume 14 Issue 2 (June 2012) Article 7 Shubh Brat Sarkar, "History and Politics in Parthasarathy's Play Aurangzeb" says that Aurangzeb has a dream of the one-nation, one-language, one-religion. Because of this type of dream only Aurangzeb was able to have such a mind to safeguard the royal treasury for the sake of his people.

Index Terms - Administration, Behavior, Citizens, Protection, Tax, Trust, Treasury, and womanizer

I. INTRODUCTION

Indira Parthasarathy is a masterly writer of dialogue, especially when the discourse calls for a sharp play of the intellect on political and cultural issues and the articulation of multiple perspectives. He presents Aurangzeb as a monster of a certain politico-religious ideology. When Emperor Shahjahan fell ill in September 1657, a war of succession broke out among his four sons – Dara Shukoh, Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad. Dara and Aurangzeb were the main contenders. His daughter Jahanara supported Dara and Roshanara supported Aurangzeb. The Emperor himself gave his support to Dara. Aurangzeb was not happy to see Dara and Murad occupying the throne. So he decided to ascend to the throne. According to Aurangzeb there were some reasons that did not permit him to allow Dara and Murad to claim the Emperor position. One of the dreams of Aurangzeb is to protect and maintain the royal treasury. He did not like to spend people's money lavishly. He came to know that his father, The Emperor was willing to fulfil his dream of building a black marble mahal with the money from the royal treasury. So he decided that his first son Dara should not be placed as the Emperor because he could execute his father's dream. He did not want Murad too because he had been a drunkard and a womanizer. So with his intellect on politics he ascended the throne. He became the Emperor. This shows that Aurangzeb has good leadership qualities. Leaders use every opportunity to evaluate, coach and build self-confidence. Leaders have the courage to make impossible decisions also. Some of the people do not like the decision of Aurangzeb but his courage and self-confidence did it.

II. NEED OF THE STUDY.

The leaders must have certain qualities to rule or administrate the country. Then only a system can be formed and people may live a smooth life. This research paper particularly focuses on the leaders and their qualities or skills. Through the empire Aurangzeb people who have an aim to become leader can understand what type of thought a leader should possess and how to be strong in mind. This study is necessary for such future leaders.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The qualitative method of research is used. The close reading and interpretation of the text are done to analyze the behavior of Aurangzeb.

IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

EARLIER LIFE OF AURANGZEB – HIS LOVE AND HATE TOWARDS HIS FATHER:

The sixth Mughal Empire was Emperor Aurangzeb. He was the son of the Emperor Shahjahan. He was very strict to Islam and wanted his kingdom to have the same. He made Islamic law the foundation of his reign. He was a simple man who led a god-fearing life. He never touched alcohol. His predecessors were lavish in their lifestyle and were behind beautiful and precious things of the world including women. He did not have aesthetic taste and he did not want his citizens too be like that. Most of his life was spent on the battlefield conquering territories. He was strict and cruel in following justice.

When he was eight years old his father Shahjahan lost in battle to his father. His grandfather asked him to send one of his sons as a surety of good faith. So his father sent him to his father. He got angry on seeing the message sent by his grandfather to his father that it was Dara who was dearer to him than life and he would trust him only if he had sent him. His grandfather was not ready to welcome him immediately. This bitter experience only had created him some hatred for his father. Love and hate was the same deep down. He too had affection for his father but he had locked up in his heart. He did not expose it. If he had not have love or affection for his father he would have executed him when he had arrested him but he had kept him alive and allowed his sister Jahanara to be with him till his death.

THE WAR OF SUCCESSION:

When Emperor Shahjahan fell ill in September 1657, a war of Succession broke out among his four sons – Dara Shukoh, Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad. He had two daughters – Jahanara and Roshanara. Jahanara gave her support to Dara and Roshanara gave her support to Aurangzeb. The Emperor himself gave his support to Dara.

Dara presented himself at Agra when his father was ill. Shuja, then Governor of Bengal, proclaimed himself Emperor and marched towards Agra but upon reaching Benaras was met and defeated by an army led by Dara's son Sulaiman Shukoh, and forced to retire to Bengal. Murad and Aurangzeb, Governor of Gujarat and Governor of Deccan, initially formed an alliance and marched towards the north. The Emperor sent an army to stop them but defeated by Aurangzeb's superior military tactics. The combined army of Aurangzeb and Murad then marched on, towards Agra. At the plain of Samugarh, eight miles to the east of Agra Fort, they were met by a 50000 – strong army led by Dara. A battle took place on 2th May 1658 which resulted in the defeat of Dara who then fled. Aurangzeb entered the Agra Fort and ordered the old Emperor to be arrested and confined to the fort with only Jahanara for company. Shahjahan died on 22 January 1666, after eight years of confinement. Now Murad had jealous of Aurangzeb and attempted open opposition to him. Aurangzeb laid a trap for him had arrested and executed him in December 1661. Meanwhile Aurangzeb had too met Shuja in battle at Khajwah, near Allahabad, in January 165 and vanquished his forces. Shuja and his family were slaughtered in May 1660.

EMPEROR SHAHJAHAN'S DREAM:

In the play "Aurangzeb" by Indira Parthasarathy, we can see the conversation between Shahjahan and his daughter Jahanara. He expresses his dream to his daughter very well. He wants his dream should be fulfilled by them. He asks Jahanara to look into Taj Mahal and says that it is a white flower that bloomed out of Mumtaz's dreams. He says that he wants to have a black flower to come out of his dreams and it should be the shadow of Taj Mahal. She asks her father how much it would cost. He says that women and merchant only would concern about money and art would not concern about money. Jahanara feels for such huge amount to be spent on building a mahal. She feels that the money of people should not be used in that way. But he says that people would enjoy the art after three hundred years. Here it is clear that he gives important to Art. At last he asks Dara to fulfil his dream as he was the true heir. Jahanara says if Aurangzeb would come to know it he would react in more vilifying manner because already he has called him "spendthrift". Dara says that if he was with the support of people what could Aurangzeb do to him. Kindly see the following reply of Jahanara to Dara:

"JAHANARA: Aurangzeb is already vilifying the Emperor as a "spendthrift"...now, if he comes to know that money is going to be spent in crores... that by itself will lend an edge to his campaign. "

At the end of their conversation Dara promised in the name of Allah that he would carry out his orders. He would build the black marble mahal for him.

In one of the conversation, Shahjahan told Roshanara that he wanted Aurangzeb to build a black marble mahal and bury him there.

WHY AURANGZEB DEFEATED DAR:

Dara wished to fulfil his father's dream of building a black marble mahal. This would cost crores of money. The money would be taken from the Royal treasury. That money is the money collected from the people as tax etc. people's money.

Aurangzeb thought in himself that he should not accept any plan that would waste money in crores and asked Allah to grant him strength to do.

He knew very well if Dara is crowned he will surely build a black marble mahal which would cost crores. So he did not like Dara to be crowned. So he defeated him.

WHY AURANGZEB DEFEATED MURAD:

After the namaz Aurangzeb and others had conversation. They talked about Murad. Sultan Muhammad says that Murad wants only wine and women. Aurangzeb asks him whether that was their wish that he would ascend to the throne being a drunkard and a womaniser. He told them that he had decided not to make him Emperor because if he had given that there would be only liquor shops and bawdy houses in the country. He told them that a herd of the sheep knew very well what should be given to the people. He told that he would bring a kind of governance that would close down all the drinking houses and brothels in Hindustan. He told that there was no place for music and dance in Hindustan. According to him all these arts would corrupt morals turn human beings into wastrels. He wanted such people should be destroyed and buried deep down into the earth.

When Aurangzeb discussed with his sister Roshanara about his brothers, He told her about Murad that he was a man who had no pleasure in life except wine and women. He told that if such man developed political ambitions and wanted to rule over the country, it would go against social justice. It is clear from the following dialogue.

“Aurangzeb: Here was a man for whom there was no pleasure in life except wine and women. If such a man develops political ambitions and wants to rule the country, it will go against social justice to let him live on, sister” (pg.no 37).

It is also clear that Aurangzeb has given important to see to social justice. It is one of the important quality of a ruler.

Aurangzeb determined that he would come to power somehow so that he would make Hindustan a great nation which would speak one language and follow one religion.

This was the reason that Aurangzeb had defeated Murad. He wanted to do good to his people. He wanted to maintain social justice. He wanted to prove that he was a good ruler.

From this we can understand that he wants to protect people and their money. He wishes to use people’s money in a right way that could be useful to the people themselves.

V.RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It is made clear that Aurangzeb wishes to become Emperor in order to protect Hindustan from the hands of drunkard and womanizer. He wants to protect Hindustan from the hands of the rulers who would rob their own country. He thinks that his father is ready to rob people’s money to build a black marble mahal in order to fulfil his dream. He wants to bring good discipline to Hindustan. He is a god fear man and wants to do good things to his people. Where there is fear of God definitely there would be social justice. This paper clearly shows that Aurangzeb protected the Royal treasury from his father’s hand and from his brother Dara’s hand. They were eager to use the money to build black marble mahal. As a father Shahjahan told Dara to fulfil his dream. As a true son Dara wants to build a black marble mahal to fulfil his father’s wish. The two did not care about their people and their money which they are ready to spend lavishly. This shows clearly the organizational behavior of Aurangzeb.

Arpit Chaturvedi points out the remarks of S.R. Sharma that Aurangzeb character was a great enigma even to his contemporaries. His reign was a riddle in contrasts. Aurangzeb as a prince had shown great promise both as an administrator and as a general. If the writer of his anecdotes Sir Jadunath Sarkar is true, Shahjahan too appears to have foreseen that “the resolution and intelligence of Aurangzeb make it necessary that he (alone) would undertake this difficult task (of ruling India).

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