

The Mughal Empire, 1526 - 1707

Babur

In 1526, Babur invaded Hindustan (northern India) and won an astonishing victory at the **Battle of Panipat**. Over the next four years, Babur established his control over parts of northern India, but when he died in 1630, the Mughal was small and insecure.



When he was not securing new territory, Babur established his **court in Agra**. He created a luxurious court culture, including a walled garden and a library of rare books.

Humayun

Humayun failed to hold on to Babur's conquests when he was driven out of India and forced to live in exile between 1540 and 1555. After Humayun lost the **Battle of Kanauj** in 1540, **Shah Jahan** became the new emperor, vastly improving the administration.



At the start of his reign, Humayun's court was based on his horoscope, but when he regained the empire from Shah Jahan, he kept the improvements made to administration.

Akbar

Akbar extended the empire to cover more than half of India. He established efficient administrative systems, which increased the wealth of the empire. This included the **Mansabdari system**, in which 200 mansabdars had administrative responsibility across the



empire. This paid for his impressive courts at **Agra**, **Fatehpur Sikri**, and **Lahore**. Akbar was very tolerant of other religions across his empire, even abolishing the **jizya**.

Jahangir

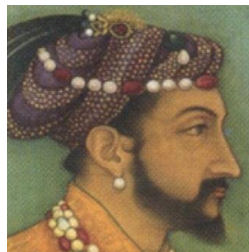
Jahangir continued his father's policy of religious tolerance, but his addiction to opium and alcohol made him an inconsistent ruler. He added limited territory to the empire. His talented wife, **Nur Jahan**, acted as co-sovereign by issuing royal decrees in her name.



Jahangir loved art and built **gardens in Kashmir**. He was slow to develop **trade with Europe** and many ordinary people continued to live in poverty during his reign.

Shah Jahan

The power and wealth of the empire reached its height in Shah Jahan's reign. He improved the system of administration set up by Akbar. He had a luxurious court, evident with his **Peacock Throne**. He had a great interest in architecture, building the **Taj Mahal** and the



new capital at **Delhi**. Through a series of battles, he extended the empire to the north and the south, including taking **Hugli** from the Portuguese in 1632.

Aurangzeb

Aurangzeb was a **deeply religious** man who avoided the drugs and alcohol that caused problems for previous emperors. He had little interest in paintings, architecture, or court culture. He was a skilled military leader who extended the empire to the south, and by the



end of his reign the empire was at its largest. After 1681, he spent 26 years in **the Deccan** trying to defeat **the Marathas**. The empire weakened in his reign.