



How a Historian Works

Resource Book for Middle School - Draft 2

Learning Expedition for Educators - 2019

Disha India Education Foundation



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Preface

• • • Disha India Education Foundation in a first, held its Courage to Lead program with educators associated with WIPRO. In another first, Disha India Education Foundation ran two parallel expeditions in this program, one in History and the other in Science.

The first module of the program which was held from 23rd to 28th September 2019 in Gurgaon culminated in this labour of love for the participants of the History Expedition entitled 'How a Historian Works' This product is a celebration of their journey and is designed to cater to the band of children in our Middle Schools.

The broad idea was Continuity and Change and participants worked around the Mughal and British periods of rule in India to see how they influenced the shaping of Delhi as we see and know it today. The relevance of the impact and influence of both Mughals and the British on our life today was understood by a real experiencing of aspects from those periods.

The journey was a very intense immersion, with participants looking very closely at primary sources from architecture in the city, and, artefacts in the National Museum. Road and city layouts, markets, houses, buildings and monuments, and, coins, paintings and other remnants from the past were some of the primary sources that our participants worked with. They learnt to notice and see things around them with a fresh perspective and a new sense of awareness.

Focused research by participants was undertaken in different aspects of life, culture and identity of the peoples of Delhi and they experienced the



process of how a historian constructs the past. The possibility, importance and relevance of having various perspectives was a value that the group got to understand.

In the process participants stretched themselves to limits in learning which they had never thought was possible. But more importantly a city was brought alive. For our participants Delhi can now never be just another city.

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A Knock on the Doors of Delhi

By Pavan & Rachita

• • • **Delhi with its thousand year old legacy has many stories to tell, anecdotes to present and architecture and structures to depict the grandeur, beauty, magnificence and the historical significance of the city. This city withstood multiple attacks and had enjoyed peace and prosperity under the rule of the Mughal dynasty. The Mughals were succeeded by the British after which the city saw the transition of power into the present democratic state.**

The Mughals made an effective and distinct impact on the indigenous aspects of culture, architecture, trade and art that have collectively lent to the greatness of this city. With the coming of the British, Delhi saw a fusion of European influence with this culture and Delhi today still has strong reminders of both Mughal and British influence on Indian culture.

Shahjahanabad, the city primarily built by Shahjahan

from 1638 to 1649 was a walled city with gates on many sides. The gates were named according to cities or countries they faced; the gate that faced Turkey was the Turqmann Gate, the gate that faced Kashmir is still known as Kashmiri Gate and so on. The main entrance into the city was called Delhi Gate and the purpose and significance of this gate was transacting trade and culture with other nations and dynasties.

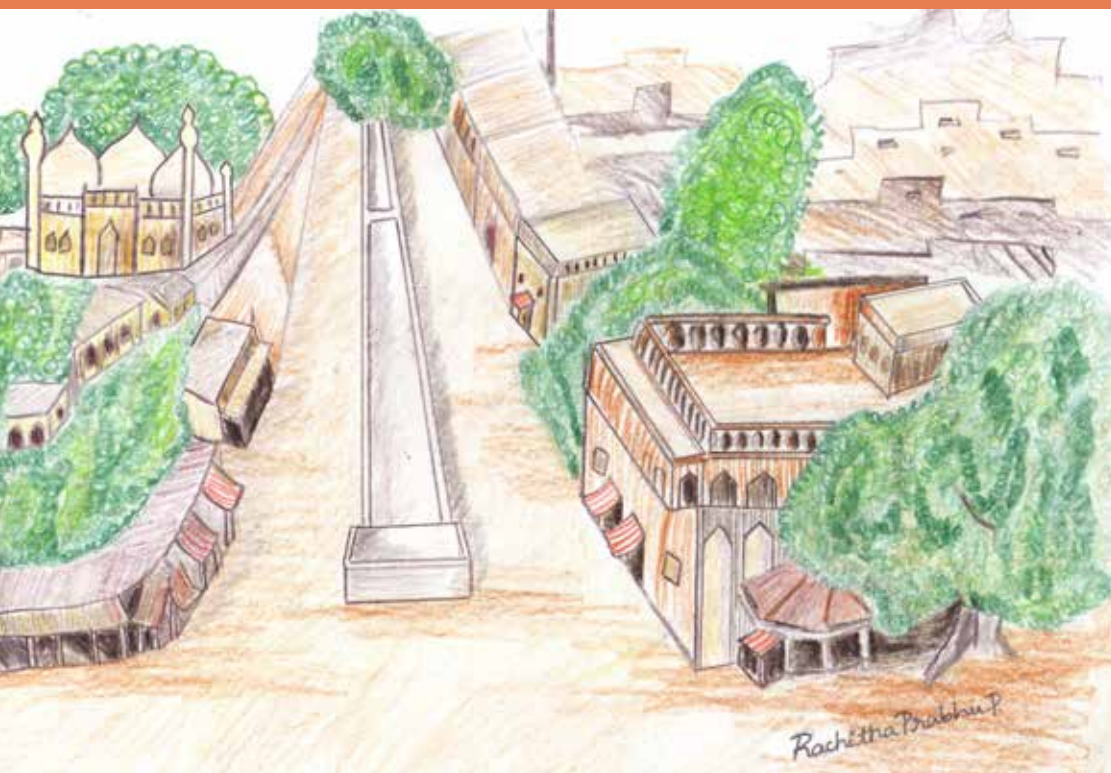
The British built a new city outside the walled Shahjahanabad. Their city needed no walls. They did build a gate though, a massive and impressive structure which we know today as India Gate. It was more a symbol of British power, as they had by then colonized a large part of the world. India Gate which is so well known in Delhi commemorates the sacrifices made by the soldiers in the World War I. The gate and the wide road leading from it to the viceroy building were used for administrative purposes and the common masses were not allowed to enter.

The predominant and prominent structure in the Mughal city of Shahjahanabad is the Red Fort. It is a complex whose grandeur and splendour were indeed befitting of the Mughal emperors who ruled from here after Shahjehan its builder and first occupant. Its fame had spread far and wide. The fort is said to have been designed by Ustad Ahmad Lahori who also gave us Tajmahal. It was built on the banks of river Yamuna over a period of about a decade, a mammoth project that saw strenuous effort by all those who were involved in its creation. It consists of many internal structures used for administrative purposes like Naubat Khaana and Diwan-E-Aam. Diwan-E-Khas, Rang Mahal and the gardens along Sawan Bhadon were meant for the Emperors and their many wives and children. The road leading from the fort through the intersecting cross roads led to the planned bazaar spaces which is known even today as Chandni Chowk. Chandni Chowk had one relatively wide street down the middle and a network of smaller lanes and by-lanes called 'Gali' and 'Kunche' that



connected the interior regions of the market. These Galis and Kunches are so narrow that they were, and still are, used mostly by pedestrians.

The city of Shahjahanabad must have been an influence for the British to come up with the plan for their Delhi. Delhi was made the British capital in 1911 before which it was Calcutta. The new city was planned three miles south of the Mughal city around Raisina hills and was developed both for administrative and residential purposes. It was designed and built by Sir Edwin Lutyens and this part of Delhi is still called Lutyen's Delhi. The space and access in the vicinity gave the British the opportunity to construct huge structures ranging from the India Gate, leading through 'Raj Path' (King's Way) towards the Rashtrapati Bhavan (Viceroy's Residence) in one straight and impressive line. This area was connected to 'Jan path' (Queen's Way) which is one of the radial roads from Connaught Place a market area built specifically for the British. Lutyen's Delhi has very broad, tree-lined roads that intersect at impressive roundabouts.



Today's Delhi has mushroomed into the National Capital Region. Migrants in very large numbers from all over the country have made this city their home over the decades since India got her independence. While the city has retained the sights, the memories and flavours that the Mughals and British established in their times, Delhi has seen a great surge in the very popular structures we know as 'Apartments' or 'Condominiums' as a result of the ever rising population and the influence of modern architecture. Flyovers have come up everywhere and roads widened to make this city an interesting mix of the old and the new. Mughlai food to British bungalows and much more, Delhi's veins reverberate even today with intricacies and subtleties in the most convenient way.

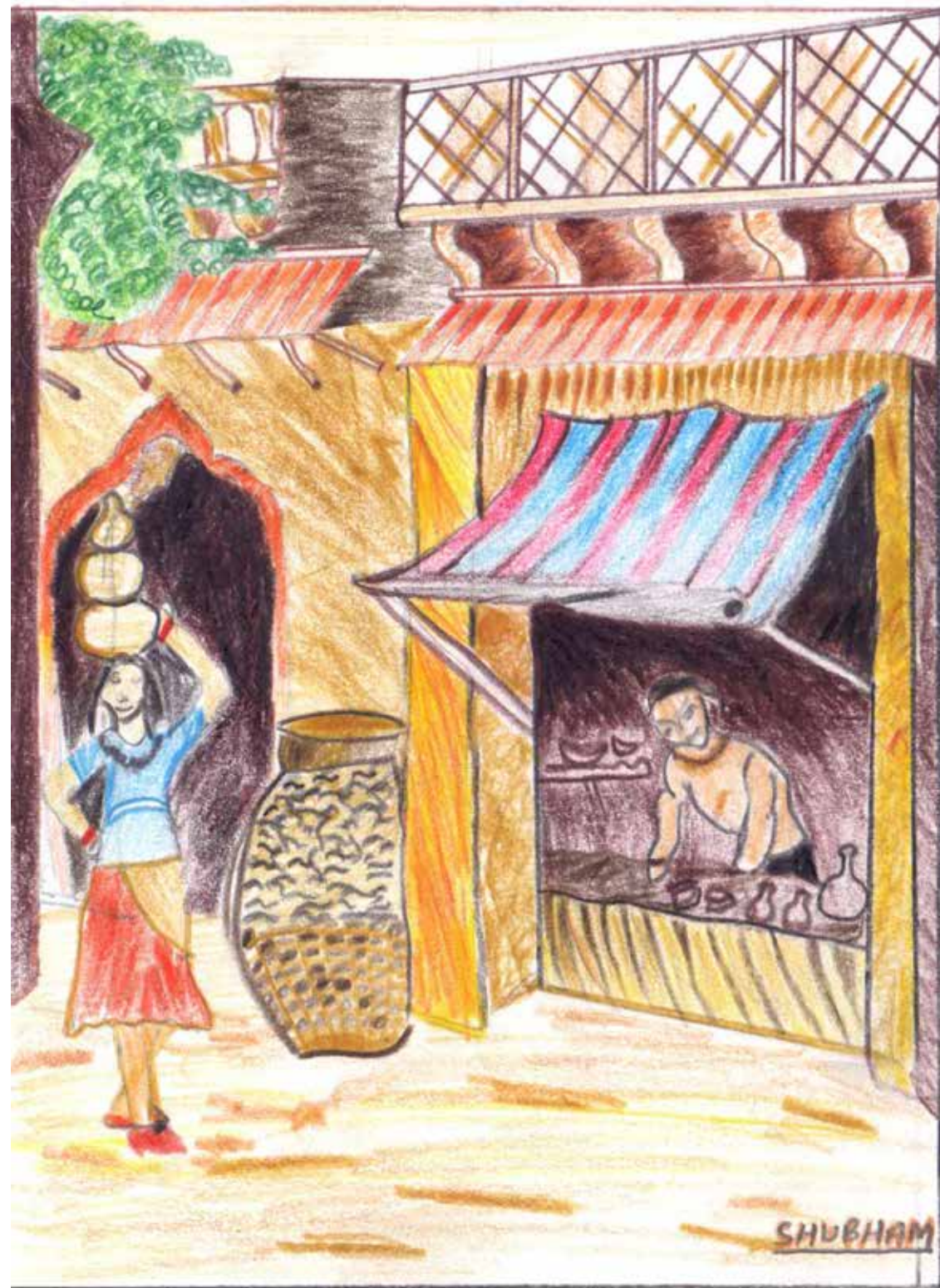
A Walk through the Bazaars

By Divya & Shubham

••• Bazaars or markets, since the start of civilizations have prominently been sources of community interaction, trade and economy. Even though these purposes largely remained constant, the design, social and political contexts have changed over time. Through the prism of Chandni Chowk and Connaught Place popularly known as CP, let us begin to understand the Mughals and British a little better.

A market square, formerly structured like a half moon, Chandni Chowk literally translates as Moonlit Intersection. The reflection of a shining moon in the moonlit water pool located in front of the square could be another reason for its name. It was designed in 1650 by Begum Jahanara, Shah Jahan's favourite child, from his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal.

Its layout seems purposeful, with a shallow water canal having its source from Yamuna. The canal



ran through the middle of the straight road to Red Fort, with shops on either side of it. Soon it grew to become a more important market, with many more markets joining in, interspersed with smaller chowks, lanes (gallis) and by lanes (kuchas). A walk down the busy area today will make you wonder if the current narrowness of the bazaar has always been the case. Chandni Chowk had multiple names such as Khas Bazar, Urdu Bazar, and, Military Bazaar with time, but even today its original name is what everyone knows it by. It is presently under renovation, being proposed as a pedestrian's paradise.

The market's architecture had an interesting range of extra-ordinary ornate screens to classical facades, wide and narrow lanes with both exquisite and every-day market goods available. With trade routes across two sides of the world, Mughals would procure items from Africa, Central Asia and Europe for the bazaar. The Chandni Chowk one sees today is devoid of its former glory. However even now, one is immediately enchanted by the busyness, chatter and the organized chaos of the bazaar. Imagine flower markets, jahuri (jewellery) markets, fruit markets, eateries, textile markets, pottery, perfumes and countless other goods lined up in organized themes. Separate lanes are even today, seen catering to separate goods. The smells, colors and range of materials on display have a unique and striking power cutting across religion, class and gender.

Many buildings were re-developed in the 19th C and grander buildings erected, some of which you will see even today. One such prominent structure is Begum Samru's Haveli which was converted into a municipal office and housed a European Club. Today it houses the State Bank of India.

You will be pleasantly surprised to hear from popular oral history that, Chandni Chowk under the Mughal reign of 300 years was the most stable and peaceful place with very little conflict and violence.

Unlike Chandni Chowk, which was inspiringly named after a beautiful occurrence, Connaught Place was named after George V's uncle, Duke of Connaught, who visited India in 1921. It was designed by the British architect Robert Tor Russell, and was inspired by Victorian architecture with its overly plain, white, simplistic but massive structures. It was built as 2 circles - inner and outer – connected by radial roads. The roads were very wide. Connaught Place housed commercial establishments on the ground floor and residential spaces on the first floor. You are likely to see it as impressively charming, almost like a colonial hangover, continuing to attract most urban elite Delhiites. There now exists a metro station which has helped people from all walks of life to access this stately and warm market.

In Connaught Place food stands out as a distinct market attraction. Many street specialties at Chandni Chowk have interesting stories backing the authentic taste and nostalgic styles of preparation of a variety of food that has been enjoyed here for ages. Be it the chaat or parathas from the extremely famous parathewalli galli for vegetarian food, or Kareem's for non-vegetarian food, the intoxicating aromas that you will breathe will elate the mood of any food lover. Under the British, Connaught Place housed confectioneries and restaurants that were used even for small parties and celebrations. Wengers the most sought after confectionery even today was the most popular food haven for the British. Previously it used to be large enough to hold weddings and grand parties. Connaught Place today has a wide range of cosmopolitan food ranging from Chinese to Italian to North Indian and South Indian. Coffee parlours and places for tea are frequented by many who use these places for social and literary interaction.

Both the structures (Chandni Chowk & Connaught Place) are placed near very important landmarks of their respective establishments (Red



Dign Shalwa

Fort and Rashtrapati Bhavan), clearly representative of their standing. Both had arcades of shops which are one storey high. However, the circular structure of Connaught Place is very different from that of Chandni Chowk. This may be the reason why Connaught Place does not have theme-based shops placed next to each other. Trade and economy emerges as a powerful common thread which the community and establishment needed for the steadiness and flourishing of their empires.

It is interesting to see that Chandni Chowk seems to have more diversity, with its welcoming streets and multi-purpose shops by embracing influences from Persian, Jain, Rajput and even Chinese cultures. It largely had shops and houses, but also prominent religious establishments with intricate detailing, colourings, engravings and embellishments. Connaught Place on the other hand was intended only for the elite/privileged with a mixed purpose of leisure and retail, which largely seems to continue even today.

Today, Malls have become more popular spaces for bazaars. However, Chandni Chowk and Connaught Place continue to hold relevance, retaining their flavour and importance. Currently, online markets have extended the form of detachment that Malls brought in and have changed the way we view bazaars altogether! Wonder what the coming generation of bazaars would emerge as, given the need for trade, economy, basic human needs and thirst for luxury continues...

Housing

By Somya & Ahad

••• जंबूद्वीप से भारतवर्ष और वर्तमान भारत तक अलग-अलग प्रदेश आकर्षण के केंद्र में रहे हैं। इंद्रप्रस्थ से नई दिल्ली तक इस राजधानी ने कई जख्म खाए और आज भी सीना तान कर और सिर ऊंचा कर अरावली पर्वतमाला के शिखर पर बैठी है।

आदिकाल से ही मनुष्य में 'मैं और मेरा' की भावना रही है। स्वयं को सुरक्षित रखने और प्रकृति की मार से बचाने के लिए उसने घर बनाने शुरू किये और उसने इन घरों को सजाने-संवारने के नए तरीके खोज निकाले, समाज में अपना वर्चस्व दिखाने के लिए उसने अपने घरों का भव्य निर्माण करवाया।

शुरुआती सल्तनत के दौर में दिल्ली के घरों ने कई बदलाव काफी कम समय में देखे हैं। अगर बात करें मुगल सल्तनत काल की तो यहां घरों और हवेलियों की छतें ऊंची और गहरी होती थीं, जिसपर गोल गुम्बद हुआ करता था जब की ब्रिटिश कालीन बंगलों की छतें नीची होती थीं, छतों को सहारा देने के लिए खंबे जहां मुगल काल में बीच और किनारे में होते थे, ब्रिटिश वास्तुकला ने उन्हें दीवारों के कोने में धकेल दिया।

लकड़ी की बल्लियों की जगह लोहे के सरियों ने ले ली, जहां मुगल घरों की दीवारें जालीदार और सफेद संगमरमर में



नक्काशीदार होती थीं, वहीं ब्रिटिश घरों की दीवारें अपेक्षाकृत सादी और सपाट होती थीं। चूना-पत्थर से पक्की ईंटों तक का यह सफर 300 सालों का है।

“फर्श का काम केवल पैरों के नीचे रहना नहीं था अपितु अर्थ का अक्स दिखाना था।”
(The flooring done in a person's home was not just meant to be a floor under the foot, but also significantly spoke about their prosperity) मुगलकालीन घरों में फर्श दीवारों और छत का ही एक विस्तार हुआ करता था जबकि ब्रिटिश घरों में फर्श सादा और सीमेंट का बना था। मुगलकाल में फर्श को और बेहतर बनाने के लिए कालीन का सहारा लिया जाता था जो कि ब्रिटिश कालीन बँगलों में भी इस्तेमाल किया जाता रहा है।

खिड़की दरवाजों का आकार मुगलकाल में जितना घुमावदार था ब्रिटिश काल में उतना



ही कोणीय और सीधा था। खिड़की दरवाजे ज़्यादातर जहां पहले अंदर की ओर खुलते थे एक लंबे अंतराल के बाद ज्यादातर बाहर की ओर खुलने लगे थे। अपने घर के बाहर बागों की परिकल्पना तो थी ही परंतु घास के मैदान (लॉन) अब आम थे, जो कि वर्तमान में नई-दिल्ली में अभी भी देखे जा सकते हैं। सरकारी घरों में आज भी ब्रिटिश वास्तुकला की झलक मिलती है।

हवा पानी के लिए मुगलों ने खुले ढाँचे बनवाए जबकि ब्रिटिश अफसरों ने छत पर ही दस्ते बनवाए जो कि प्राकृतिक रोशनी का स्रोत है।

500 सालों के इस दौर में कुछ चीजें पूरी तरह से बदल गयीं और कुछ में आज भी वही बात है!

Rolling the Dice of History

The Evolution of Recreation from the Mughal to the Contemporary Era

By Supriya, Narendrayash & Pratap

• • • Last ball, one wicket left and one run to make. The bowler bowls, the keeper catches and suddenly a shout. "Howzzat?!!!" We sit by the edge of our seat with bated breath, eagerly waiting to see what the result is. This is surely a scene that we could perhaps very easily relate to, since we are talking about a game that makes a billion hearts in this country race. We almost forget that this is a relic from our erstwhile colonizers! Why, you may wonder, are we reminding ourselves of cricket's history? Only because it might be quite interesting to understand how some of the games, sport and other activities we engage in today, have an interesting history behind it.

When we were children, snakes and ladders, ludo and chess were some indoor games that kept us away from mischief. But did you know that these

are some of the games that were played by the Mughals? Not sure about kids, but there are different paintings that clearly show the Mughal kings and queens rolling decorated dice across Chaupar boards. The National Museum in Delhi also has some beautifully decorated Shatranj pieces and artistic Ganjifa cards that were used by the Mughals. Jashans or social gatherings where wine flowed freely and mushairas or poetic symposiums were extremely favoured ways of spending evenings.

Apart from these indoor amusements and entertainment, they also indulged in some outdoor games. Kabootarbazi or pigeon-racing to see whose flock of pigeons flew the farthest was not just what dotted the Delhi skies of yore. Colourful kites also adorned the skyline in hundreds since patangbaazi was also a very important source of amusement.

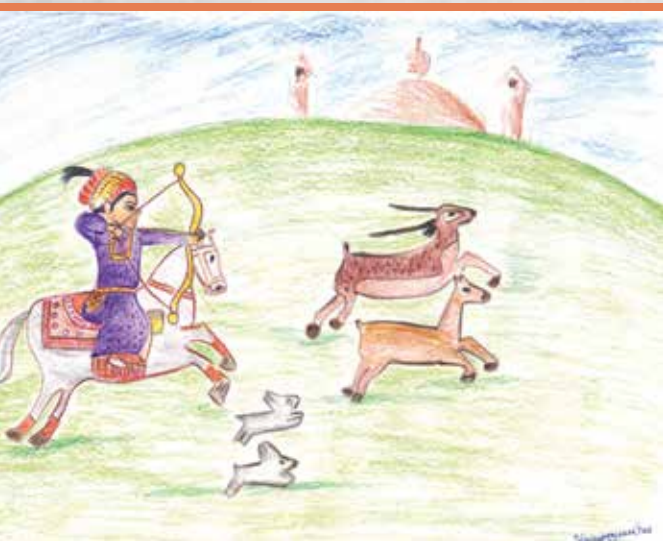
If these seem like light-hearted sports, they had wrestling too and this was considered a manly sport. Wrestlers were brought over from places like Turkey and Iran and memoirs and other accounts shed light on different wrestling contests that took place. One such account is of Humayun ordering the noblemen of his court to wrestle with each other. There is another one which recounts Akbar's fury towards one of his wrestlers, Haibat, who went against the rules of wrestling and slashed his opponent's hand. Ethics clearly was a strong component of wrestling.

Babur, the founder of the Mughal dynasty was a great patron of swimming and had himself proclaimed to have swum across every river except Ganga. The Talkotra Garden in present Delhi is said to have held a swimming pool in the Mughal period. Paintings from the Mughal era also show love for another great pastime - hunting! Mughal kings and nobility on elephant or horseback, hunting tigers and other animals were considered heroic. Perhaps the adrenaline-rush was so high, that it was palpable even to the set of people who became the next rulers in India - the British.



Hunting soon became a great passion of theirs as well. While some of these sports continued, the British also introduced a set of organized sports such as cricket and football since they believed that the “game ethic” would be beneficial for Indians. Unfortunately mushairas lost patrons, but new forms of social gatherings at clubs saw dances like the fox-trot and waltz. The British also introduced theatre and talkies and the Regal in Connaught Place was one of the earliest places to hold ballet and other performances.

Much has changed in the way we entertain ourselves today. Luckily, hunting is banned and we seem to be a much more conservation-friendly population now. However, some forms of amusement continue today, albeit in different forms. Come Makar Sankranti, and several parts of India still see kite-dotted skies. Chaupar boards might have given way to ludo and snakes and ladders, and these are popular among children across the country as we all know! Nothing much needs to be spoken about cricket of course, and swimming and wrestling are now Olympic level sports. While Regal has shut down, we remain besotted with the movies, which at times, through movies like Lagaan, Jodha Akbar etc. take us back to a time and place that is far, far removed from our own, but perhaps leaves us curious enough to wonder what life must have been like during those times, doesn't it?



Glossary

Howzzat	Shortened form of how's that?
Eagerly	In an eager manner
Relic	Something old and outdated possibly kept for sentimental reasons
Erstwhile	In the past
Colonizers	One who makes a colony
Artistic	Having or revealing a creative skill
Gathering	A meeting or get together
Symposiums	A conference or other meeting for a discussion on topic
Adorn	To make more beautiful
Amusement	Entertainment
Recount	Tell someone about something; give an account of an event or experience
Patron	One who protects or supports
Proclaim	To announce or declare
Nobility	A noble or privileged class
Adrenaline	Hormone
Palpable	Capable of being touched or felt
Fox-trot	A ball room dance
Waltz	A ball room dance
Conservation	Wilderness where human development is prohibited
Amusement	Entertainment
Albeit	Although
Chaupar	A cross and circle board game played in India
Shatranj	An old form of chess, believed to have originated from Persia
Ganjifa	A card game or playing card that have been popular in Persia and India in the past.
Jashan	Celebrations

Appendix

• • • Wrestling was among one of the significant indoor games indulged by the Mughals. Mughal emperors would employ wrestlers in their service not just from the Indian subcontinent but as far as Iran and Turkey. These court wrestlers would often be paid monthly salaries and would perform in important celebrations.

Literary evidences show instances of every Mughal ruler partaking in wrestling competitions through the wrestlers they employed. During Jahangir's time a famous Wrestler named Sher Ali, is said to have defeated all the court wrestlers and was bestowed with the title 'Dar-Al-Saltanat'.

While Humayun was so fond of wrestling that he once asked all the nobles in the court to wrestle with each other, later he also joined the contest. Though much is not known about the outcome of the contest, wrestling remained an significant sports in the Mughal era.

Acknowledgements

• • • **The idea of having an experience and turning it into a resource book was a novel and tricky one for most of us. But the entire journey has been both challenging and rewarding. We would like to thank the people who helped make this happen.**

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