

JAMA: As a Sign of Intimacy Between the two Cultures, the Mughals and the Rajputs

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The conquest of the Mughals in 1526 began a period of profound change in the culture and politics of India. Not only did it mark the beginning of a more centralized, established Muslim rule, but it also ushered in a cultural renaissance of the art combining Persian, indigenous and European elements.

Akbar not only instituted a political revolution with his broad, long-term plans; he enacted a religious one as well. Akbar was curious and thoughtful, wanting to know the world and its people. Unlike his forefathers, he was born in India and was interested in and concerned with the different groups of people that composed the country. If he was to rule all of the land, he believed he needed to be more aware and sensitive to the needs of all of the people. His promotion of religious toleration grew out of his sympathies and respect for and fascination with the people of India. There are numerous stories of the emperor going out into the towns in disguise to mingle and interact with the people.¹ He was also sincerely interested in Indian styles, traditions, and customs. He celebrated some Hindu festivals and enacted various religious meetings to promote understanding and toleration. Through his inquiries, he recognized one of the greatest problems of the country was the disunity and rift between Muslims and Hindus.

The dresses which Akbar inherited from Babur and Humayun were the *jama*, the *farji*, the *ulbagchah* and the *shalwar*. Akbar was very fond of adopting new style of wearing, thus he brought into fashion many other garments, and adopted them according to his own requirements, in this way he had changed the whole style of wearing. He fashioned and designed his own garments. Akbar's historian has described a few articles of the King's dress which includes: the *takauchiya*, *peshwaz*, *dutahi*, *shah-ajida* (royal stitch coat), *suzani*, *qalami*, *qaba*, *gadar*, *farji*, *fargul*, *chakma* and *shalwar*.² There were various kinds of each of these garments and it was not possible to describe them. He introduced a new fashion of wearing shawls by wearing it in double folds. The wearing of the *shawl* (double-sided) has been termed by many scholars as *doshala*, i.e. a double

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