



The Politics of Royal Illness: Real & Feigned

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Abstract: In this article, special emphasis has been laid on the role of mothers. Who had a lot of influence on politics, culture, and society? When a royal woman fell ill, it had many meanings, like Akbar's mother pretended to be ill, after which Akbar went to meet his mother, after which Bairam Khan's reign came to an end. Similarly, whenever a Shah or Sultan fell ill, politics used to start. Like it happened during the times of Alauddin Khilji, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan. Many types of drugs were also used during the Mughal period to prevent motherhood. In this way, Babar's wife, Mubarika Begum, could never become a mother because she was given drugs. When Babar's son Kamran fell ill, he feared that his stepmothers would be poisoned. In this way, the royal illness was sometimes real and sometimes feigned. For example, Malika-i Jahan spread rumors about her son's illness and went to Delhi for treatment and overnight deposed Delhi's Sultan Alauddin Masood and her son. Prince Naseeruddin Mahmood was made the Sultan of Delhi.

Keywords: Mother, Motherhood, Mughal, Politics, Sultanate

1. Introduction

During the Sultanate and Mughal eras, when a Sultan or an Emperor fell ill, new politics started. The illness of someone in the royal family could be real or feigned. An example of this is also found: by removing Sultan Masood, a mother made her son the Sultan of Delhi. She pretended that her son was ill and was going to Delhi for medical purposes, but she overthrew Sultan Masood after reaching Delhi. When Alauddin Khalji fell ill, new politics for the throne began. The Mughal period is also discussed in this article. Hamida Banu Begum pretended to be ill, and when Akbar came from Agra to Delhi to meet his mother, this illness contributed to getting him out of the clutches of Bairam Khan. In this way, Akbar also removed Bairam Khan from his post. In this way, during the Mughal period, when Shah Jahan fell ill, there was a fight between his sons. When Jahangir fell ill, his wife, Noor Jahan, took over the administration and politics of the Mughal Empire. This article has especially focused on the royal mothers and the important role those women played. Babar's wife could not give birth to a child because she was given drugs because she was Babar's beloved wife, so Babar's affection could be reduced, and sons from other wives could become emperors.

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Abdul Qadir Badayuni writes Quatrain, which deals with health

*“O thou whose hand has been held in my two hands
Who hindered me from the enjoyment of health,
It is impossible, that I should record my desire towards thee,
The strong desire that I have towards you”*(Badaoni, 1925, pp. 204-205).

It has been discussed the role that illnesses of Royal personalities used to play in politics. When a sultan or an emperor was sick, then there used to be hectic political activity in the Sultanate and Mughal period. For example, this happened in the reign of Alauddin Khilji, in the same way Jahangir used to hide his illness during the Mughal period and Shah Jahan also kept his illness hidden when there was a fight between his sons. In this chapter, we especially examine the role that Royal Mothers used to play in this.

2. Sultanate Period

The Malika-i-Jahan was the mother of Prince Nasiruddin Mahmood and she made a plan to dethrone the reigning Sultan Alauddin Masud. To this effect, she spread the rumor that Prince Nasiruddin was very ill. She pretended that it was very necessary to go to Delhi for better medical treatment. On this journey, she brought along all the Nobles and confidential courtiers of Sultan Alauddin Masud. When she was on the way, she made her son sit in a palanquin escorted by cavalrymen, and then later, she asked the prince to wear a woman’s dress and sent him to Delhi. When the night came, Nasruddin Mahmud was dressed in women’s clothes and, sitting on a horse, reached Delhi in a short time. No one came to know anything until he declared himself to be the Sultan and sat on the throne (Siraj, 1873, p. 677).

This is how a mother made a plan to dethrone the existing sultan, and she was successful in making her son Sultan and acquiring the whole sultanate.

Moving on, let us examine a case where the machinations of a mother actually proved harmful to all concerned. There was a time when Alauddin Khalji was very ill and it seemed that the Sultan would die soon. His wife, whose name was Mah -i Haqq, was the mother of Khizr Khan. She made a pact with her brother Sanjar to make Khizr Khan the new Sultan. However, this secret was informed to Malik Naib, who was the head of all the nobles of the Sultan. Malik Naib disclosed this secret to Alauddin Khalji. On this, the Sultan said to his courtiers, “When Sanjar comes before me, I shall give him a robe, and when he puts it on, seize him by sleeves, pull him to the ground, and cut his throat”. At this time Khizr Khan was

away from Delhi and had gone to pray for his father's health at a place called Sandabat. He had gone to the tombs of the martyrs to pray for the recovery of his father Alauddin Khilji. When he heard that his father had killed his maternal uncle, he was very sad and expressed his grief openly about his maternal uncle. "He was deeply grieved and rent the neck of his garment which it is customary amongst the people of India to do when anyone who is dear to them dies." When his father heard this, he became very angry, and when Khizr Khan came back to Delhi, he was handed over to Malik Naib, his arms and legs were shackled and imprisoned in the fort of Gwalior.

After this Malik Naib said to the Kotwal and Mufradin of the fort of Gwalior who used to keep the register of the troops "Do not say to yourselves that this is the Sultan's son and so treat him with respect; he is in reality his worst enemy, so guard him as you would guard the enemy" (Gibb, 1971, p. 643). In this example, we see that the mother of Khizr Khan made a plan when Sultan Alauddin Khalji was ill, but this plan ultimately proved to be a disaster for her son, her brother, and herself as well.

Ibn Battuta highly praises Muhammad bin Tughlaq's mother. His mother was called Makhduma Jahan (Mistress of the World). She was the most virtuous and charitable woman. She had found many hospices and used to provide food to all of them. The reason she could not see with her eyes was that when her son became a Sultan, all the princesses and daughters of Sultans and nobles went to meet her. Everyone was dressed in beautiful clothes. The mother of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq was sitting on the golden couch encrusted with all kinds of jewels. Everyone came and offered their obeisance. Suddenly Sultan's mother became blind. All the doctors treated her but to no avail. His son, Muhammad bin Tughlaq, was extremely loyal to his mother. According to Ibn Battuta, "Her son is of all the most filial in his respect, and here is an example. Once when, she went on a journey with him, but the Sultan returned a little before her. Upon her arrival he went out to meet her, he alighted from his horse, and kissed her Foot as she was in litter, in the sight of all the people"(Gibb, 1971, p. 726). In this way, Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq used to respect his blind mother very much. This increased the respect of the people for the Sultan.

Firoz Shah Tughlaq was unwell and despite many treatments and prayers, he did not recover. So, he went to Bihar to meet Sheikh Sharfuddin Yahiya Maneri, who was acknowledged as a Sufi saint, healer, and holy man, to seek his blessings for good health. When Tughlaq reached Bihar, Shaikh Sharfuddin Yahiya was deep in prayers in Maner Khanqah. People informed him of news that the Sultan had arrived. When he got free from worship, he went to his mother's tomb to pray for her. There he stayed in a room. When Sultan Firoz Shah reached Khanqah, Maulana Muzaffar was present at that time. They offered bread as food that was cooked in the Khanqah, and the meat of some birds was given to them to eat. Maulana

Muzaffar presented with his own hands. When the eyes of the Sultan went on the meat of the birds, he was confused and thought that he had been avoiding meat and felt awkward about how to decline the Sheikh's hospitality. The Sultan felt that he was unlucky. Seeing this, the Sheikh pointed to the cooked birds and said since (he) will not eat it now, why do you not fly from here? Hearing this, all the birds flew away. When Maulana, met Shaikh Sharfuddin Yahiya Maneri, he was very angry and said that you started showing miracles that the Sultan would be convinced of you and became very angry. Shaykh Sharfuddin Yahiya Maneri sent some bread and meat to Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq who ate it, and his health became well (Yahiya & Sheikh, 2011, pp. 655-656).

Generally, having many wives in the Royal family was a challenge as there were not friendly and cordial relations among them. That's why there used to be enmity between them. The wife who had a son was generally preferred and got the Sultan's attention and support.

3. Mughal Period

Giving reference to Zeenat Kausar of Fryer, she writes that among the wives, the senior woman used to get the most respect. But the one who had a son was given more respect among all the women. Kausar writes "Babar's beloved wife Bibi Mubarika could not have any child due to the envy of other wives who administered drugs to deprive her of motherhood and weaken her husband's (Babar's) affection." (Kausar, 1992, 256).

In this way, even among the wives of the medieval rulers, there used to be power politics regarding the husband's love. Many types of drugs were used to prevent childbirth. There used to be many types of politics in the royal household to prevent them from motherhood. All royal wives wanted to have a son so that they could get more of the emperor's attention and become powerful among other women in the harem, and her son become the next Emperor.

When Humayun was in Sambhal, his health worsened. It was important for him to go to Agra where the best medical arrangements were made. On the way, his mother met him in Mathura. The best physicians of Agra treated him but to no avail. Mir Abul Baqa, who was a great religious scholar, opined to Babar that the Badshah should donate the most precious and dear one (Banerji, 1938, p. 13).

Maham, the mother of Humayun, complained about: "Do not be troubled about my son. You are a king; what griefs have you? You have other sons. I sorrow because I have only this one." Babar replied: "Maham! Although I have other sons, I love none as I love your Humayun. I crave that this cherished

child may have his heart's desire. And live long, and I desire the Kingdom for him and not for the others because he has not his equal in distinction" (Begum, 1902, p. 104).

Babar started fasting and prayed for Humayun's health for days in extreme heat and dust. Babar prayed: "O God! If a life may be exchanged for a life, I, who am Babar, give my life and my being for Humayun." (Begum, 1902, p. 105) Babur Badshah became ill from that day and remained ill for two to three months. In his entire illness, he remembered Hindal Mirza with great yearning. In this way, a father's yearning to meet his son is revealed. Seeing the deteriorating health of Babar Badshah, an emissary was sent to call Humayun from Kalinjar as soon as possible. Humayun asked all the caretakers and called the doctors and asked that after his recovery, he had left Babar in good health and how his health became so bad. The doctors tried various remedies, and when they checked Babar's pulse, they detected the same poisonous symptoms that had been there when Ibrahim Lodi's mother had tried her nefarious designs." (Begum, 1902, p. 108).

When Humayun sat on the throne, his mothers and sisters all came to meet his family members and asked about his health. He announced that whoever is in a position, or has a jagir, there will be no change in it. Kamran Mirza's disease increased so much that now there was no power to speak. Kamran suspected that his stepmothers had poisoned him at Humayun's behest. When Humayun got this news, he went to see Kamran's health and swore that this thought had never come to his mind. Yet Kamran's heart was not cleared. When Sher Shah moved beyond Lucknow, Humayun also turned to Kannauj, and in his place, made Kamran the caretaker of Agra. When Humayun crossed the River Ganga, Kamran left Agra and went towards Lahore. He wrote a letter to Humayun seeking permission to take Gulbadan Begum with him, saying that no one in this country is his own. Humayun allowed the Gulbadan to go. After this, 500 hundred soldiers were sent to bring Gulbadan Begum. On this, her mother said that Gulbadan never goes alone, so Kamran requested her mother and took her away by using force and showing Humayun's Farman. Gulbadan was crying. This was the first time Gulbadan was separated from her, stepmother. This politics weakened the position of Humayun psychologically in the battle of Kannauj.

When Akbar's stepmother came from Mecca and Medina after performing Hajj, she made a plan to live in Delhi. Abul Fazl says that this was due to her love for Humayun, she made her residence near the Sultan's tomb. When Akbar won Gujarat, his stepmother Haji Begum also went to Agra to congratulate him. Emperor Akbar went to welcome her. This shows how much a stepmother was respected. In the happiness of the sons' victory, the mother also used to be happy. Let me quote the story that Akbar narrated to his stepmother from Abul Fazal: "The kindness and affection which she showed to me, and my

love for her are beyond expression. Everyone who did not know the real facts thought that she was my own mother. In my sixth year, I was distracted by toothache. She said she had a medicine which she was wonderful and tried and tested, and went off to get it. H. M Miriam-Makani, being a world of vigilance and caution, was in agony lest she should give me the medicine (for fear of being poisoned), and yet she did not venture to say anything out of respect to H. M. Jannat Ashiyani. So, she tried to take me away to her own house, but I would not leave my attendance on lady (Haji Begum). When she brought the medicine, she understood the delicate situation. Being a wise person, she first swallowed a little bit of the medicine to prove its worth and then rubbed the medicine in my teeth. The minds of the superficial were set at rest, and also my pain was soothed (Fazl, 2000, pp. 107-108). This shows that in the Royal Family, mothers used to be very cautious about their sons, and even they used to keep their sons away from stepmothers because there was always fear of being poisoned due to throne politics. There was no trust among them as every mother wanted to be his son as Emperor.”

In this, Bairam Khan could not do anything even if he wanted to, and no advice could be taken from him in this matter. Hamida Banu Begum’s political understanding had become evident by staying with Humayun. Professor Farhat Nasreen writes, “Therefore Hamida’s worries over Akbar’s subservience to Bairam Khan were understandable for reasons beyond maternal affection. Maham Anaga also distanced herself from Bairam Khan after Hamida’s arrival from Kabul”(Nasreen, 2021, 72). Whether Bairam Khan was attacked by royal elephants intentionally or unintentionally, he became really upset, and without caring about the court, he slaughtered the caretaker of the elephant. This angered Akbar very much and he left Agra on the pretext of hunting. On 15 March 1560, Akbar Delhi came to see his ailing mother and issued a decree from there to dismiss Bairam Khan from the post of Wakil. Bairam Khan tried to revolt but Sayyid Mohammad Atka defeated him. “This clique considered Adham Khan, Akbar’s Turani foster brother, the son of his wet nurse, Akbar’s mother, actively encouraged the planned coup”(Richards, 2021, 14).

Maham Anaga gave advice to Mariam Makani to bring Akbar to Delhi using a trick saying Mariam Makani has fallen ill. This way Bairam Khan was defeated and overthrown from authority. The below verse is mentioned in *Tabqat -I- Akbari*;

When a difficulty comes to a man of sense,
 From which his affairs come to stand;
 He makes the wisdom of another his own wisdom’s friends;
 So that it may assist in solving it (Ahmad, 1936, p. 237).

The above is an excellent example of how the Royal Mothers used political acumen and strategy to safeguard Akbar's position and defeat Bairam Khan.

There was the poet of Akbar's reign whose name was Baqai. He had poisoned his father on the instruction of his mother. His father had made some mistakes. On the orders of the emperor, he was brought from Kashmir to Lahore and killed. He also used to do poetry like his father in which he said

“While thy death-dealing glance is the despoiler of life
Death looks on from afar with regret (Badaoni, 1925, p. 308).

V.A Smith quotes Xavier: He (Akbar) is inclined towards Hinduism [gentilita], worship of God and the Sun, and poses as a prophet, wishing it to be understood that he works miracles through healing the sick by means of the water in which he washes his feet. Many women make vows to him for the children or for the blessing of bearing sons, and if it happens that they regain health, they bring their offerings to him, which he receives with much pleasure and in public, however small they may be. The Hindus are in favor just now, and I do not know how the Muhammadans put up with it (Smith, 1917, p. 262).

The so called ‘miracle ’cure by Akbar for childbirth and healing sick men was promoted so that he could gain the people's attention. It was Akbar's politics to gain the people's support.

Jahangir did not drink alcohol until the age of eighteen years. When he was an infant, his mother and nurses demanded liquor to remove an infantile problem. This was followed by a tola mixed water that also had roses. The cough was given as medicine (Thackston, 1999, p. 184).

Sultan Salima Begum felt extremely proud that she had successfully stopped the civil war. Now Salim again revolted, the news was quite disturbing and caused waves in 1604. He also planned to use force and was ready to go to Allahabad if needed. Akbar also decided that Jahangir's son Khusrau be his successor and now the situation was so dire that Hamida Banu Begum (Akbar's mother and grandmother of Jahangir) was very worried about it. However, keeping the gravity of the wayward son's action, ignoring her feelings and illness, Akbar left for Allahabad (Prasad, 1930, p. 67). Akbar had just walked six miles from Agra and was trying to cross the river Yamuna but due to bad weather and heavy rain, he could not cross the river. At this time, the news of Hamida Banu falling ill came and he called for his physicians so that he could know whether his health was bad or not or if it was a trick. The royal doctor reported that the health of Royal Mother Hamida Banu Begum was indeed very critical. When Akbar went back, he found that his mother, Hamida Banu Begum, was no longer in a position to speak. This upset him greatly and he

drowned in mourning. He postponed the military campaign for the time being because of the death of Hamida Banu Begum. After that, the situation of the Civil War went away and when this news came to Salim, on this pretext, he came towards Agra because “the show of military force had him alarmed; Salim, the death of Maryam Makani had lost him his most powerful intercessor; the progress of the conspiracy of Man Singh and Aziz Koka made his presence at Agra very desirable” (Prasad, 1930, p. 68).

When Akbar got the news that his mother’s health was deteriorating, he did not believe it because he understood that it may be a trick. Khurram and Hakim Ali were sent to Agra to check this news. Khurram went straight to his grandmother’s apartment and saw that his grandmother’s condition was precarious. He immediately went back and told his grandfather that if you wanted to see your mother alive, then you should immediately return to Agra. Akbar reached his mother in time. It was just about to die now, she expired within a few hours. After the death of his mother, Akbar’s condition deteriorated. One day, there was a fight between Jahangir and the animals of Khusrau. Akbar and Khurram watched from the window. In the combat, it seemed as though the upper hand of Jahangir’s elephant over Khusrau’s elephant would prevail. His supporters abused the followers of Khusrau. The latter went and complained to Akbar. Akbar sent Prince Khurram to stop the affray by giving a message to Jahangir. Akbar was now retired from this scene. He was extremely tired and had been restless all night (Saksena, 1931, p. 6). Khusrau’s mother was deeply saddened by her son’s unruly attitude. She was looking for an opportunity when Jahangir went hunting. She ate opium to eliminate herself. Jahangir had been extremely sad and inconsolable for a long time. She and Jahangir had a good understanding of each other. Akbar wrote a very consolatory and affectionate letter in view of Salim’s grief. He had taken steps to remove Jahangir’s grief. Jahangir wrote, “She had a mind to perfection, and she was so loyal to me that she would have sacrificed a thousand sons and brothers for one hair on my head.” She constantly wrote letters for her son and advised that he should be loyal and loving to his father. When she saw that his explanation had gone to waste. Khusrau’s mother planned to end her life by taking opium. Jahangir called it “an integral part of Rajput nature.” Its fathers and brothers suddenly seemed like crazy for a while.

When Jahangir suppressed the rebellion of Khusrau, Prince Khurram was sent to bring his mother, Maryam uz Zamani, and the Harem. When she reached close to Lahore, Jahangir rode on the boat and went to Dhar village to his mother to show this happiness and greet them. The Genghis Khan code and the followings of Timurid Law were done for their elders. After this, he entered the Lahore Fort.

At the end of Jahangir’s rule, there was a well-known and famous doctor named Bernard. Jahangir was very kind to that doctor. He used to eat and drink with the king. Both were alcoholics. The nature of

both of them was similar. Jahangir had spent his life in luxury and handed over the work of the state to his Begum Noor Jahan. Jahangir used to say that her wisdom and ability were enough to run the state. Bernard had earned ten crowns per day. This doctor was a favorite to the Emperor, and hence, everyone in the court used to respect him. He also used to go to a noble family, and due to all these, he had great respect. He did not care about money; he took it with one hand and gave it with the other hand. He was famous among all the people, especially among the Kanchanis. All Kanchanis used to gather in his houses in the morning and evening. Dr Bernard fell in love with a Kanchani and met her, but her mother didn't allow him to take her daughter with him since she had only one daughter and she used to love her. She was very good at dancing and singing. He tried hard for it, but he was unsuccessful. Her mother did not let her disappear from her eyes even for a moment because he felt that giving her age and virginity would have a terrible effect on her health and bodily vigor. Jahangir wanted to reward Dr. Bernard in court because of his good medical treatment. Dr. Barnard refused to take any reward from Jahangir, and when the emperor asked, he replied that he did not need any reward, but instead, he wanted the Kanchani who had come to court for Salam. All the courtiers were smiling because Kanchani was a Muslim and the doctor was a Christian. All suspected that his request would hardly be accepted. Jahangir didn't care about religion anyway. Jahangir laughed and issued the order to give it to the girl. "Lift on the physician's shoulder, 'he said, "and let him carry the kitchen away." Kanchani was seated in front of everyone in the court and he took it to his house with great joy (Bernier, 1916, pp. 275-276).

According to Ashish Nandi "Women with children were in any case not allowed by the Mughals to burn themselves, because they were expected to look after and educate their children.

One of Bernier's friends, Bendi Das, was Danishmand Khan's principal writer. He had a severe fever and died. Bernier had known him for two years and had also medically treated him. Bendi Das's wife wanted to be Sati after her husband's demise. Danishmand Khan had sent the servants who were his relatives to the woman so that the woman could not become Sati. His relatives explained that it is very appropriate to be Sati; it will increase the value of the people of her family, but she should take care of those children who are still very young. It was not right to leave those children without a mother and father. In all respects, when his relatives failed to stop her from becoming Sati, they requested Francis Bernier to help in this. On behalf of Danishmand Khan and for the sake of his friendship when Bernier went there, he saw seven or eight terribly old women as well as four or five aged Brahmins sitting and crying close to the corpse. The widowed woman was also inconsolable, sitting with her hair open at the foot of her husband's corpse and crying. The woman's face was pale. She was crying so much that there were no tears in her eyes. When the crying was over, Bernier went closer and began to understand the

woman (Bernier, 1916, pp. 307-308) “I come hither,’ said by the desire of Danech-mend -Kan, to inform you that he will settle a pension of two crowns per month on each of your sons, provided you do not destroy your life, a life so necessary for their care and education. We have ways and means indeed to prevent your ascending the pile and to punish those who encourage you in so unreasonable a resolution. All your relations wish you to live for the sake of your offspring, and you will not be reputed infamous as are the childless widows who possess not the courage to burn themselves with their husband.’ I repeated these arguments several times without receiving any answer, but, at last, fixing a determined look on me, she said, well, if I am prevented from burning myself, I will dash out my brains against a wall.’ what a diabolical spirit has taken possession of you thought I. ‘Let it be so then,’ I re-joined, with undissembled anger,’ but first take your children, wretched and unnatural mother! Cut their throats and consume them on the same pile; otherwise, you will leave them to die of famine, for they shall return immediately to Danechmend-Kan and annul their pension. ‘These words, spoken with a loud and resolute voice, made the desired impression: without uttering a syllable, her head fell suddenly on her knees, and the greater parts of the old women and Brahmens sneaked towards the door and left the room. I thought I might now safely leave the widow in the hands of her friends, who had accompanied me and, mounting my horse, returned home. In the evening, when on my way to Danechmend-Kan to inform him of what I had done, met one of the relations who thanked me and said that the body had been burnt without the widow who had promised not to die by her own hands.” (Bernier, 1916, p. 308).

Raja Anoop Singh who was from Bikaner. He sent an application to Aurangzeb saying, “I am very ill, and there is no hope of life. The two of my wives of this hereditary servant (Khanzada) are pregnant. After the death of this faithful person, if a son is born to one of them, the tika of Bikaner be given to him.” This king was very loyal to the emperor. Aurangzeb issued an Imperial decree consoling that whenever he had a son, he would be given the Tikka. Then, he became completely satisfied. After that, he recovered from the disease, and his two wives gave birth to two sons (Nagar, 2009, p. 244).

Ghazi Uddin Bahadur was sent to Satara. One day, when he was sitting on a chair wearing beautiful clothes and looking in the mirror. And he felt very proud of his beauty. One of his slaves said, “This beauty and mastery is deserving of sovereignty.” Thus, if the throne comes to a lot of your good self, it will be decorated with all your good qualities.” Ghaziuddin Khan smiled and said, “The magnificence of the Almighty can render anything possible. “The throne suits only the Timurid family, and may the Almighty present it to his descendants. For us, the servants, the happiness of service and faithfulness of this exalted family is enough.” Aurangzeb was very sad to hear this news. Later after some time had passed, Ghazi fell ill and had a severe headache. Ishwar Das Nagar writes that nature had given two things to the emperor,

sharp memory and strong ability to retention, he recognized the person seen long ago, secondly, he also remembered old things. When Badshah heard, he remembered Khan's smile and his talk. The King did not think it right to take his life because he was still a faithful servant. He called a great Hakim named Fatah Khan Hakim.

Ghazi-ud-din Khan Bahadur was ill. So go to him and console him on my behalf. Give him treatment for his recovery. Adopt such measures that his eyeballs may remain intact, but he loses his eye-sight" (Nagar, 2009, p. 245). The prince was treated in such a way that his illness was subsided. But his headache remained. After that, the prince started treating his headache. Blood came out of his forehead and got rid of the treated headache, but his eyesight was lost. The Hakim came out of his tent and informed the king about it. Aurangzeb sent a Harkara to find out the truth of its news. After this, according to the regulations, his son was given the responsibility of the army. In this way, the dream of kingship drowned in the light of the eyes.

When Zafar Khan was very ill, Aurangzeb visited his house twice. First to inquire about his health and the second time to condole with him. Aurangzeb sent his sons Muhammad Azam and Muhammad Akbar to his house to express their sorrow and sympathy and also sent Namdar Khan and Kamgar Khan's mother, Farzana Begum, to comfort them. A special robe of honor was also sent for both his sons and a Torah for their mother. After this, Prince Akbar brought both brothers to the court after mourning (Khan & Abdul, 2003, p. 723). Whenever someone used to get ill close to the Royal family emperor used to visit or send her son or daughter to them so that good friendship remained the same as it was. It was a good politics of the emperor, particularly Mughal Emperors.

Quoting Amir Khan, Shah Nawaz Khan writes that one day he heard the King (Aurangzeb) who had become very weak saying these lines:

When you have reached your 80th and 90th year,
Many evils have you suffered from Time,
When after that you attain the 100th stage
It is death in the form of life.

Hearing this, Amir Khan said: “Save your majesty” Shaikh of Ganj (Nizami) read these lines which are:

Then, it’s better that you remain joyful,
And that in that joy you remember God.

Aurangzeb read it many times and read it after getting it written down. The next morning, he was so strong that he came to the Hall of Justice and said: “Your verse has given me perfect health, and conveyed strength to weakness.” (Khan & Abdul, 2003, p. 256).

4. Conclusion

This article has tried to show the importance of royal mothers and the contribution of women in politics during the Sultanate and Mughal periods. Mah-i Haq contribution made by Hamida Banu Begum Alauddin Masud’s mother, Nur Jahan, and other women had a great role and contribution in politics. The focus has also been on that. During the Sultanate and Mughal periods, royal illness, whether real or feigned, played a big role in politics. The politics of illness changed the situation of the entire empire. Whenever the emperor was healthy, the kingdom used to function well, whereas when his health deteriorated, parties and politics used to start. This had a huge impact on the dynasty. Princes had their own informers in the court, like what happened regarding Shah Jahan’s illness; rumors spread that Shah Jahan would not live; there was a war between his sons, and Aurangzeb became the emperor. Shah Jahan lived for eight years in prison at Agra Fort.

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