ABSTRACT

The present study, ‘Mughal Costumes (16th - 18th Century) and Royal Costumes of Jodhpur – A Comparative Study’ was undertaken to study the costumes of the Mughals and the Rulers of erstwhile princely state of Jodhpur and to trace an influence of the Mughals on the Costumes of the Rulers of Jodhpur and vice-versa, if any. The study included an analysis of the costume of the Mughal Emperors and Rulers of Jodhpur with a brief reference to the costume of the people associated with the court. The costumes were studied in terms of the upper and lower garments, waistband, headgear, draped garment, footwear, jewellery and accessories. The study also included developing a catalogue of a representative sample of the Historic Costumes of men and women of the Mehrangarh Fort Museum, Jodhpur.

The data was collected using the purposive sampling technique. The interview schedule supplemented with observation technique was used for data collection. The interview schedule was administered on a representative sample of 32 people. These included directors and Curators of Museums, Historians, Renowned Authors and Scholars related to the subject, member related to the Royal Family of Jodhpur, Folk Singers in Jodhpur; and a Tailor whose family is associated for several generations with the royal family of Jodhpur. The observation technique was used to study the Costumes of the Mughal Emperors and the Rulers of Jodhpur through Miniature Paintings of the Mughals and Miniatures Paintings of Marwar i.e., Jodhpur respectively and historic costumes of the Mehrangarh Fort Museum, Jodhpur.

India with its great size, its wide climate and geographical differences and diversity of ethnic groups has been invaded and conquered by foreign people at different periods of time and in varying numbers. The Mughals (1526 – 1858) came to India during the 16th century. They came to India first in sporadic raids and later on as conquerors and settlers. Though, Babur is regarded as the founder of the Mughal Dynasty, it was Emperor Akbar who consolidated the Mughal Empire in India. It was due to Akbar's conscious intent and ingenuity to integrate the two races; the Mughals and the Rajputs due to which he adopted policies that led to a unification of the two cultures.
The Mughals were inhabitants of Central Asia and the costumes of Babur and Humayun are characteristic of this region. The costumes of Emperor Akbar are distinctly different from that of Babur and Humayun. The costumes of Jahangir became more glamorous, sumptuous and decorative. Similarly, during the reign of Shahjahan there was a greater emphasis on ostentation. The fashion of dress in Aurangzeb’s reign became simple and austere.

The association of the Rulers of Jodhpur with the Mughals began with the reign of Raja Udai Singh. He accepted the Mughal Sovereignty of Emperor Akbar. The association of the Jodhpur rulers was not only political in nature but they formed relationships through social alliances. The daughter of Raja Udai Singh of Jodhpur was married to Jahangir and she gave birth to Prince Khurram, later known as Shahjahan. Due to the nature of the alliances, the Mughals and the Rajputs were in close association with each other. This led to a gradual change in the costume of the Mughals and the Rajputs, i.e., Rulers of Jodhpur.

The costume of Raja Udai Singh of Jodhpur consisted of a knee length tunic, probably a bago, a double patka, paijama and a short turban. The costumes of the subsequent rulers of Jodhpur consisted of similar garments with slight to significant changes in the certain features of the costume.

A comparison of the costumes of the Rulers of Jodhpur with the costumes of the Mughals yielded interesting findings. The costumes were common in terms the length of the upper garments, the ties, the patka and the paijama etc. The dissimilarities featured in other parts of the costume. The association of the Mughals and the Rajputs, i.e., Rulers of Jodhpur resulted in the integration of the costumes of the two races which formulated an assemblage of traditional attire for men and women which became a part of the main stream of Indian dress.