

## A STUDY ON MAJOR RAJPUT KINGS IN THE ANCIENT TIME

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### Introduction

Rajput is a highly dominant and renowned royal warrior caste of Indian Subcontinent (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal). They have been referred to as the most Valiant Warriors of Indian Subcontinent. Their warlike nature and dominant rule of their kingdoms against other tribes earned them a powerful reputation. Rajputs ruled more than four hundred of the estimated six hundred princely states at the time of India's independence. Out of them 121 were Salute states Rajputs ruled 81 of them at the time of independence of India.

Rajputs (Rajaputra) are a sub-group of hindu Kshatriya varna. They have a hindu Jati (an endogamous group within the Hindu social system). Rajputs are literally sons-of-kings. They are divided into 3 major Vansh and 36 major clans, names of which are recorded in several texts including the Kumarpala Charita of Jayasimha, and Prithviraj Raso of Chand Bardai.

During the period of Islamic invasions, the Rajput kingdoms proved to be the primary obstacle to the complete Muslim conquest of Hindu India. Even after the Punjab and the Ganges river valley fell to Muslim armies, the Rajputs maintained their sovereignty in Rajasthan, in the forests of central India. Later, Sultan Alauddin Khilji of the Delhi Sultanate took the two Rajput forts of Chittor and Ranthambore, but he did not succeed in holding them.

Rajput" identifies numerous ksatriya or warrior castes in northern and western India. The term "Rajput" comes from rajaputra, which means "son of kings." Rajputs are famed for their fighting abilities and once ruled numerous Indian princely states. The British grouped many of these states into the Rajputana Province. Today, it is the Indian state of Rajasthan.

Most believe Rajputs come from tribes in central Asia such as the Parthians, Kushans, Shakas, and Huns. These groups entered India as conquerors and became kings or rulers. They often married high-caste Hindu women or converted to Hinduism. By the ninth century, Rajputs controlled an empire that extended from Sind to the lower Ganges Valley, and from the Himalayan foothills to the Narmada River.

### History

According to the Hindu Mythology, the Rajputs of Rajasthan were the descendants of the Kshatriyas or warriors of Vedic India. The emergence of the Rajput warrior clans was in the 6th and 7th centuries. Rajputs ancestry can be divided into two: the "solar" or suryavanshi-those descended from Rama, the hero of the epic Ramayana, and the "lunar" or chandravanshi, who claimed descent from Krishna, the hero of the epic Mahabharata. Later a third clan was added, the agnikula or fire-born, said to have emerged from the flames of a sacrificial fire on Mt Abu.

It has been accepted that the Rajputs were divided into thirty-six races and twenty-one kingdoms. The Rajput clans gave rise to dynasties like Sisodias of Mewar (Udaipur), the Kachwahas of Amber (Jaipur), the Rathors of Marwar (Jodhpur & Bikaner), the Hadas of Jhalawar, Kota & Bundi, the Bhattis of Jaisalmer, the Shekhawats of Shekhawati and the Chauhans of Ajmer.

### Major Suryavanshi clans

Bais (Byce):- The Bais Rajput, (also known as Bhains Rajput in certain regions), are a powerful and ancient Rajput clan composed of the wealthy, warriors, entrepreneurs, and Zimindar (land owners). The Bais claim descent from Lakshmana, brother of Rama. The Bais Rajput are renowned as warriors with the ability to maintain dominion over their empires. Their reputation was earned by their kings and landowners that ruled over northern India for and held vast tracts of land for the clan. Princely states of the Bais were Oudh, Lucknow, and Sialkot. They are a numerous group, today found all over Northern India, particularly in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The Bais Rajput clan never kill snakes, which they hold in great reverence. The Baise believe that no snake has destroyed, or ever can destroy, one of the clan. A cobra forms part of the clan's flag. Bais surnames are: Bais, Badhelia, Baruliya, Basade, Beunse, Bhains, Bhaisade, Kataha, Khathabains, Rao, Tilokchandi, and Vense.

Chattar:- The most respected and highly distinguished amongst all the rajput clans as a rajput can not be a Kashatriya if not a Chattari. The mother caste of suryavanshi Rajputs which originated from Rajputana in Rajasthan. However, there are many Gotras and sub castes in other major dynasties which emerged from the Chattari lineage. Chattaris belong to the military and ruling order of

the traditional Vedic-Hindu social system as outlined by the Vedas.

### **Diversity and Distinction**

The Rajputs who till the 10th century were mostly local feudal lords holding the status of revenue collectors for their Gurjara-Pratihara overlords, asserted themselves as independent rulers, after the Ghaznavid storm had blown over, and took over the earlier kingdoms of the Gurjara-Pratiharas. The main Rajput kingdoms in the 11th and 12th centuries were that of the Chahamanas (Chauhans) in East Punjab, Northern Rajasthan and Delhi. The Gahadwalas (Rathods) ruled the Ganges valley today's UP. The Paramaras ruled Malwa in Central India and the Tomaras ruled from Gwalior. The most powerful kingdoms were those of the Chauhans and the Rathods - both of which unfortunately were incessantly at war with each other when the Muslim raiders appeared again in the 1191 C.E. The Rajputs, who were a brave and chivalrous race, held the stage of feudal rulers before the coming of the Muslims.

### **The Gahadwalas (Rathods)**

In the 11th century i.e. in the post-Mahmud Ghazni era, the most powerful Hindu Kingdom in North India was that of the Gahadwalas or Rathods who were a Rajput clan. The founder of the Gahadwala line was Chandradeva, whose son Govindchandra Gahadwala was the most illustrious ruler of this line. Govindchandra was an astute ruler and ruled from Kannauj. Most of North India, including the university town of Nalanda was a part of his kingdom. He stoutly defended his kingdom from further Muslim incursion. He instituted a tax for this purpose which was called Turushka Danda (i.e. tax to fight the Turushkas or Turks). His grandson was Jaichandra Gahadwala (Rathod) who played a tragic role in Indian History.

### **Contribution**

The bardic chronicles of Marwar testify to the fact that Dharanivara of the Paramara dynasty of Abu first made himself the master of the Navakot Marwar which he afterwards divided between his nine brothers. We have besides the Paramaras of Malwa, the Paramaras of Abu, Bhinmal, Jalor and Vagoda.

We have Chahamanas of Bhroach as well that of Pratapgarh. Further Chahamanas of Shakambhari were divided into Chahamanas of Nadol, Jalor, Satyapura and Abu. Likewise, the Chapas ruled over small areas like Bhillamala, Vadhiyar in Kathiawad and Anhilapataka in Gujarat. Thus, the

new clans and subdivision of earlier clans were drawn into the Rajput political network in a variety of ways.

We also notice the process of caste proliferation among the Vaishyas and the Sudras. The Vaishyas were also identified with regional variations and they are called Shrimals, Palliwals, Nagars and Disawats among others. We also witness the crystallization of the professions of artisans into castes.

### **The Rajputs and the Mughals**

The Rajputs of Mewar were defeated by the Mughal emperor Babur in 1527 CE when he was in the process of establishing Mughal rule in India. His grandson, Akbar (r. 1556-1605), retook the forts of Chittor and Ranthambore in 1568-69 and then made a settlement with all the Rajput princes of Rajasthan—with the exception of Mewar, which continued to hold out against Mughal lordship. Accepting Mughal authority, the Rajputs were admitted into the emperor's court. Many Rajputs assumed positions in Akbar's government and army or formed martial and marital alliances with him.

Mughal-Rajput relations suffered under the reign of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707), who did not pursue the policy of religious accommodation of his predecessors. After the death of Aurangzeb and the subsequent decline of the Mughal empire, the Rajputs fell afoul of the Maratha Confederacy, an Indian power that covered much of the subcontinent and is credited with ending Mughal rule in India. At the end of the Third Anglo-Maratha War (1817-1818) between the Maratha Confederacy and the English East India Company, all the Rajput states in Rajasthan entered into a subsidiary alliance with the Company and became princely states under the British Raj.

### **Guru Gobind Singh's Sojourn in Rajputana**

On the invitation of Aurangzeb, in October 1707 Guru Gobind Singh left for Deccan with the soul objective to have a dialogue on the issue of injustice done to him. Though, the Emperor had directed the Mughal officials of Punjab to facilitate Guru Gobind Singh for his onward journey to Deccan, yet instead of getting any help from the Mughals, Guru Gobind Singh followed unconventional path which passed through Rajputana. Obviously, journey through Rajputana was a bit hazardous but in Guru's mind his safety and well being of his Sikhs were the top most priorities. For that he depended on the people of Rajputana instead of believing the Mughals. We are told by the Sikh sources that during his journey

towards Deccan, Guru Gobind Singh stayed at Nohar (district Hanumangarh) and Sahawa (district Churu) where Gurudwaras have come up at the places sanctified by the tenth Guru. Even the footprints of the Guru's party and beast of burden are still preserved in gypsum on the banks of a pond in Sahawa.

## Result & Discussion

### Bais Rajput

A respected request to the honourable editors of this article:

More info needed on Bais Rajputs, mentioning needed in sections relevant to:

### Rajput of the Panjab Hill States and Kashmir:

People of this Rajput clan migrated in this region and now live here so should be mentioned along with the other clans.

### Saka:

They are a prominent part of the line of defense.

### Rajput Lineages/Vanshs:

Which lineage the clan belongs to.

A personal paragraph on the clan such as the 'Pundir' paragraph, as the Bais are too a Suryavanshi branch of Rajputs, one of the thirty six royal rajput clans. They are also the descendent of Lakhshaman Ji and brother Sri Rama. Dhangar also need mentioning and when mentioned, Bais should also be mentioned as they are one of. This is a big tribe that is one of the 36 Royal Lineages. Much info available on it's own wikipedia page. Please include the clan in the requested for many reasons.

This article contains much anti-Muslim propaganda. The Mughal men and women extensively married into Rajput families and adopted the Rajput heritage. Many Rajputs chose, from their own free will, to be Muslims because of issues with Hinduism or Sikhism. I suggest that this page should contain a section for Muslim Rajputs. Also their are some inaccuracies: Under Heading Culture, Ethos- Jauhar: "The practice is often described in terms of the women alone, but should correctly be understood as including the death of the men on the battlefield. As generally described, Jauhar involved:

A defending Rajput army being besieged inside a fortification by an invading Muslim army;"

Jauhar was a practice committed by Rajput families even during the time of Rajput civil wars before the arrival of the Muslims. This practice was not specifically linked to Muslim armies. Rajputs, when they fought amongst themselves, also were brutal against enemy tribes. This should read:

" A defending Rajput army being besieged inside a fortification by an invading army"

Under the Heading Legacy - Rajputs as a line of defense: When fighting against the hordes of Arabs, Moghuls, Afghans, and Turks, many preferred to die rather than to forsake their ancestors' faith (Hindu dharma) for Islam. While the nations of the Middle East fell in a matter of a few years to the rapid advance of Islam's new followers, the Rajput men and women refused to let them capture India for over 500 years. The heroism and sacrifice displayed by these tribes is undisputed and unmatched in the chronicles of Indian history. Was it only the Arabs, Moghuls, Afghans, and Turks whom the Rajputs faced? What about the inter-Rajput wars amongst themselves? The wars between Buddhist and Hindu Rajputs immediately before the Muslim invasion? The invasions of other Indian groups against the Rajputs from the east and southeast? Going even further back in history, what about the invasions of the Greeks, Persians, and Central Asian tribes (of whom the Rajputs are one of them)?

## References

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