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ITM
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PRINCE KHUSRAW (1587—1622)

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Introduction

History recognizes the victors only and ignores the defeated. Prince Khusraw, the eldest son of Jahangir (reg. 1605—1627) the emperor of India, who made an attempt to capture the throne of the Mughul Empire, failed and his failure brought him disgrace and dishonour because he was treated with scorn and contempt by contemporary historians. Only the foreign travellers found in him a charming and virtuous prince to be admired.

He stands in the history of the Mughuls as a pathetic figure. His rebellion, failure, blindedness, continued imprisonment, and ultimate murder made him a martyr. He was very popular among the nobles and the common people but circumstances did not favour him to play any important role in history and display his qualities as a ruler. It is beyond our scope to speculate what in the case of his succession, would have been the course of Mughul history? And would he have proved himself a better ruler than Jahāngīr or Shāhjahān?

Prince Khusraw needs a re-evaluation of his role in history, and rightly demands a better place than what has been assigned to him. Here an attempt is made to analyse the position of Khusraw in the light of the contemporary historical sources and the accounts of the foreign travellers.

The Birth

5
On August 6, 1587, Prince Khusraw was born at Lahore of Mān Bāī, the daughter of Rāja Bhagwān Dās, and the first wife of Jahāngīr. Abū'l Faḍl (d. 1602) in his usual style writes about the birth of the prince :