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Unveiling the Geohistorical Tourism Dynamics of Bundelkhand during the Mughal Era

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Abstract

The study investigates the historical and geospatial context of tourism in Bundelkhand (presently part of Central India) during the time of the Mughals. It analyses three things in conjunction with one another: geography, infrastructure, and cultural policies, showing the intricacies of pre-modern tourism, especially in Bundelkhand. Primarily becoming a pilgrimage place during the Mughal rule, there is a diverse type of tourists as a result- pilgrims, scholars, nobles, and traders, who together carved a cultural and commercial niche for this enchanting geographic diversity. Rajput and Mughal are the two styles that enchant this region's buildings. On the contrary, these same conditions make geohistorical tourism here most interesting and feasible: the history and cultural pasties are rich, notwithstanding the difficulties of geography and climate. It will open up another dimension to the historical tourism dynamics and management approaches of modern-day preserved heritage, with the potential for both sustainable development and preservation for Bundelkhand. This newly developed geohistorical perspective offers a new basis and framework for tourism development by considering the economic growth and cultural awareness among individuals and conserving the culture and natural environments of the Bundelkhand region.

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Introduction

India has increased in the 2024 Travel and Tourism Development Index from 54th to 39th. This rise shows infrastructure, safety, and healthcare improvements, making it more attractive for medical and cultural tourism. India's portion of international tourist arrivals has reached 1.47% of global tourism (WEF, 2024). Madhya Pradesh and

Uttar Pradesh have become important players in this expanding tourism scene. Together, these states draw a large number of both domestic and international tourists. They make up 20.44% of all tourist visits in India, showing they are very popular among local travellers. For international tourists, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh account for about 10.0% of all foreign arrivals,

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highlighting their importance in bringing visitors to India (India Tourism Statistics, 2023). The Bundelkhand region within these states is also a key place for geo-historical tourism. With its natural beauty and rich cultural history, Bundelkhand offers visitors unique chances to see its geographical sites, archaeological locations, and cultural heritage. This geohistorical perspective helps understand the past more accurately and holistically with respect to geographical factors and historical events as well as their implications for the present and future (Baker, 2003). Bundelkhand is an extensive and rich historical area of central India's rugged landscapes, ancient forts, and cultural heritage. Bundelkhand is India's greatest strategic location and is historically much known. It was very much brought into focus in the Mughal period. The Mughals and local Rajput lords fought in this place. It was a buzzing region during the Mughal period, where the Mughals made all their mark through their great buildings and cultural impact. This study is set to analyze tourism's dynamism in Bundelkhand during the Mughal period from a historical, geographical, and cultural context.

Significance of the study

Therefore, it is expected to be significant by throwing light on Bundelkhand's historical, geographical, and tourist aspects in the Mughal period. The research is likely to bring out new dimensions, adding to the cultural and architectural legacies of the region. The study will help address that by analyzing the Mughal infrastructure and policies and fusion with local practices into what can be termed 'pre-modern tourism' in the larger Mughal Empire. Furthermore, the geohistorical perspective of the study emphasizes the strategic importance of Bundelkhand concerning the Mughal

Empire. Its perspective is that geographical features, such as rivers, plateaus, and trade routes, facilitated movement, commerce, and cultural exchange. It also talks about the effects of Mughal contributions to Bundelkhand's architectural and cultural landscape, such as combining Mughal and Rajput styles in forts, palaces, and gardens.

Objective of the study

The present study focused on tourism in Bundelkhand during the Mughal period concerning its history and geography. This research aims to comprehend the historical significance of Bundelkhand during the Mughal period and investigate the challenges and legacies of tourism from that period.

Through identifying avenues for sustainable tourism, the study points out the potential of Bundelkhand as a draw for modern-day travellers seeking historical and cultural legacies. It fills knowledge gaps by providing a localized view of the Mughal period, bringing together macro-historical perspectives and regional histories.

Data Source and Research Methodology

The study is based on both primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary information is obtained via field visits with some selected regional sites. On the other hand, secondary information is collected from different sources like the reports on World Tourism, the India State Ranking Survey of Tourism 2024, Statistics of Indian and Foreign Tourists Visiting Uttar Pradesh in 2023, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Report, and India Tourism Statistics 2023. Drawings from the net historical records, geography data, archaeological evidence, and research about Bundelkhand's heritage add supplemental information. Historical maps, reports of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), and

inscriptions on monuments are also helpful in understanding the spatial and cultural dimensions of grouped time travel during that period. Modern GIS data and local oral traditions further comprehend geographic and cultural aspects that may or may not be yielded in written records.

The study is a model of history-geospatial mapping-culture interpretation. It takes historical sources and explores them in the light of access to the practices of Mughal tourism within their cultural milieu. Geospatial mapping using GIS tools helps identify significant sites and historic routes while determining various changes in the landscape over time. Field surveys included in this mapping identify and document structures from the Mughal period, such as forts and gardens, and the significance of tourism and leisure constructed by them. As an integral part of the larger tourism hub, Bundelkhand will gain from such a socio-cultural view because it will emphasize rather distinct geographic and cultural differences the region experiences from the Mughal Empire.

The Study Area

The Bundelkhand region covers 14 districts in central India, distributed between Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh states. In Madhya Pradesh, the region includes Sagar, Damoh, Chhatarpur, Tikamgarh, Niwari (a newly formed district separated from Tikamgarh), Panna, and Datia districts. In Uttar Pradesh, the Bundelkhand districts are Jhansi, Lalitpur, Jalaun, Hamirpur, Banda, Mahoba, and Chitrakoot (Kumar, 2021). This reflects the administrative structure that gives geographical and historical expressions to the region. It covers a total area of 71,619 km² and lies between a range of 23°08'–26°30' N latitude and 78°11'–81°30' E longitude. (Figure 1) Historically known for

its abundant natural resources and conventional water management, Bundelkhand now has around 82% of its 18.3 million population relying on rainfed agriculture (Census, 2011).

The lands of Bundelkhand have been confined to areas bounded by rivers and hills; plains are also found within it. The northern margin of this region is the Yamuna River, while the Vindhya stretch runs along its southern boundary. The important rivers of the region are Sindh, Betwa, Ken, Bagahin, Tons, Pahuj, Dhasan, and Chambal. All these rivers form the Ganga basin, crossing the rugged and rocky terrain of the region, comprising boulder-strewn plains. The soil in Bundelkhand varies from east to west. The western part of the Jalaun district is sandy, while the Banda Plain is one of the most fertile areas. The major Kharif crop is soybeans, while the main rabi crop is wheat, grown on alluvial, medium black, and mixed red-black soils. Average annual rainfall varies between 783 mm (Jhansi) to 1,260 mm (Damoh), more than 90% of which occurs in southwest monsoon from mid-June to early October. However, surface runoff loss is tremendous due to highly variable and poor water resources development.

This is the culture of Bundelkhand, which is unique and rich in the stuff that makes festivals, folk dances, and folk songs. Many other festivals are celebrated in the year-long festivity in the region, such as Gangaur, Chaiti Poonai, and Asami, which have their importance in terms of mythological and spiritual values. Folk dances of Bundelkhand include Rai dance, Sera dance, and Dhimrayai dance; its folk songs are Rai, Lori, and Dhimaria. Some tourist places in the area are Brihaspati Kund, Shabari Jharna, and Kalinjar Fort. Other famous tourist destinations in the states are Khajuraho

Temple, Orchha Temple, and Chitrakoot Dham. Overall, Bundelkhand is a heritage-soaked region of varied geographical

characteristics, making this place a tempting one for tourists and scholars alike.

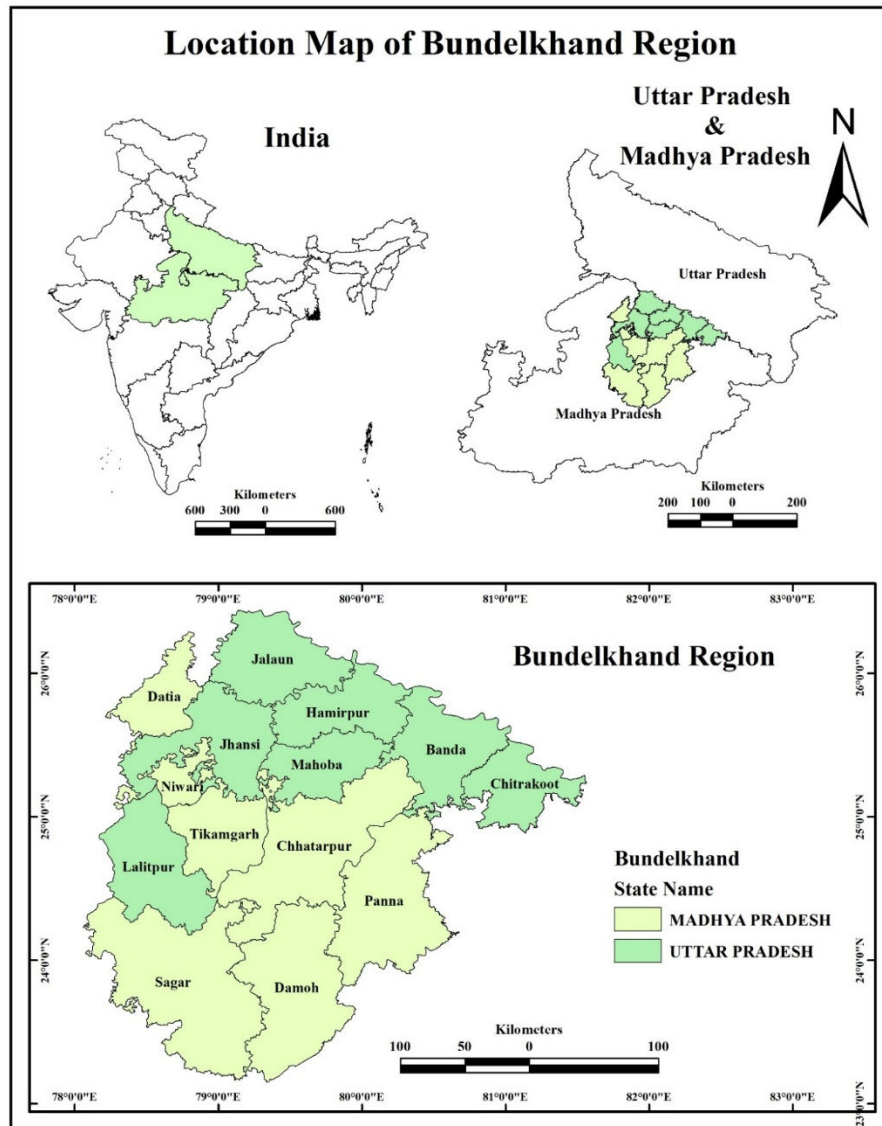


Fig. 1. Location of Study Area.

Bundelkhand during the Mughal Influence

The Bundela polity, the Vindhyan mountains, and the Chambal ravines determined Bundelkhand's distinctive way of life, which has evolved for centuries. Bundelkhand was a part of the Mughal *Subas* of Agra and Malwa and later became known as Bundelkhand under the Mughal recognition.

In the mid-17th century, Bundelkhand attracted attention for its potential in territory and resources and saw the emergence of the Bundela Rajputs, as Bir Singh Deo, enjoying the patronage of the Mughals. Leaders such as Bir Singh Deo obtained important ranks and titles under Jahangir, which mirrored the degree of their influence. While the Mughals used the distribution of *Mansabs* to promote clan

factionalism, Bundelas manipulated that to tie strength to geographic and economic power (Alam, 1985).

Bundelkhand was thus a frontier of interaction for Rajput rulers and Mughal armies throughout the "policy of receiving and admitting" with respect to local rulers neck-deep into autonomy and multiplied cultural and administrative integrities. Cities like Orchha and Jhansi fostered the basilica of the above cooperation frameworks as being identified with structural miracles and hybrid governance reflections in cultural convergence. That is where it experimented with holding Mughal subedars with local chieftains to ensure stability. Infrastructural developments of the Mughals, such as roads, serais, and water systems, increased intra-regional connectivity through trade. That route of travel, which was taken from Agra to Burhanpur, brought Bundelkhand into the nexus of imperial trade connections and gained economic advantage in agriculture, textiles, and metallurgy. (Nath, 1982) The nearby crafts, mostly in metal and textiles, gained popularity in imperial markets and made the local economies more prosperous with bazaars; thus, more people per-use.

Tourism in the Mughal Era

Pre-Modern Tourism Dynamics

Tourism during the Mughal era had very little to do with what could be called modern tourism. Rather, it mainly revolved around pilgrimage, scholarship, trade, and noble recreational journeys. Most of the time, Mughal emperors moved along with the other courtiers for administrative or recreative purposes of cultural enrichment, bringing transformation to the cultural landscape of Bundelkhand. Thus, established were the serais along the major routes for the convenience of the journey with food,

shelter, and security. These serais were usually found adjacent to markets or places of worship, creating a network between travelers, traders, and locals. Hence, they turned into centers for cultural interaction, exemplifying the cosmopolitan character of Mughal society (Trivedi, 1977). The various elements of the empire interacted with one another here, exchanging knowledge and commodities, even cultural practices.

Types of Travelers in Bundelkhand

During the 17th century, several European travellers visited Bundelkhand, and they all recorded its rich culture and importance. In the early part of the 1600s, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (1605-1689) visited the famous diamond mines found at Panna. Francisco Pelsaert (1595-1630) witnessed the market flourishing and the textile industry at Chanderi when Jahangir was ruling. François Bernier (1620-1688) visited during the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb's rule and also visited Orchha, commenting on its architectural grandeur while he noted the fertility of the land. Niccolo Manucci (1639-1717) gave an account of Kalinjar Fort, noting its historic importance and stunning views. Jean de Thevenot (1633-1667): This traveller referred to Datia regarding mineral richness and trade importance. (Richards, 1993; Haig, 1928) In these accounts, Bundelkhand is a very attractive place during the Mughal era. The region attracted various types of visitors:

a) Pilgrims

Religious tourism proved to be one of the most significant facets of Bundelkhand's historical tourism. From this aspect, religious travellers thronged to visit temples and other sacred places like pilgrimage sites, adding another spiritual dimension to tourism. Places of pilgrimage such as

Mahoba and Khajuraho are frequented due to their spiritual and artistic merit. During the Mughal period, Bundelkhand emerged as a prominent pilgrimage locale. Its temples and shrines became important pilgrimage destinations for Hindus, Muslims, and Sufis. These Hindu pilgrims thronged to some hallowed sites, such as Khajuraho and the Orchha temple complexes, famed for their intricate carvings and brilliant architecture. The temples received a heavy influx of devotees from the states of Bundelkhand and all over India. Muslim and Sufi pilgrims thronged Panna, Datia, Orchha, and Chanderi shrines and adored their rich architectural beauty and spiritual significance. These shrines, thus, became important places of devotion and fostered culture and harmony in religion in the region as a whole.

Prominent pilgrimage routes for easy travel and access linked these sacred pilgrimage locations. The route after Khajuraho-Orchha was primarily for Hindus, whereas Muslims mostly used the Panna-Datia pilgrimage route to and from pilgrimages. The route Chanderi-Orchha was common for both as it symbolized the religious pluralism in Bundelkhand. The celebrations were held by Hindus, such as Khajuraho and Orchha. Panna and Datia were Muslim (Trivedi, 1977). All of these made spiritual life further alive in the region. These events help and make Bundelkhand's importance in religion even stronger, as well as its culture and social unity with them.

b) Scholars and Writers

This Bundelkhand had been, in earlier times, the arena of intellectuals, poets, and artists who were very much attracted by the mix of Mughal and indigenous culture in the region. However, it was known that these

were the Mughal courts in the vicinity that attracted them to this region in India.

From the 16th to the 17th centuries, this part of India was the cynosure for several travel writers and historians who sketched this region's cultural richness, strategic importance, and natural wealth. Abu al-Fazl (1551-1602) gave a detailed account in his *Ain-i-Akbari* of the fertile lands and water resources of Bundelkhand, as well as the famous diamond mines of Panna during the reign of Akbar. Ibn Hasan, a 16th-century Persian historian, eulogized the strategic location of Bundelkhand and its grand forts, such as Kalinjar, in his *Tazkirat ul-Muluk*. Niccolo Manucci (1639-1717) recorded Orchha's glory in *Storia do Mogor* and the pomp of the region. François Bernier wrote in *Travels in the Mughal Empire* about Bundelkhand's commercial importance and architectural magnificence, such as the Datia Palace. He spoke highly of the Panna diamond mines and the region's importance to trade in *Travels in India*. Their works, together, relate to Bundelkhand's history and culture.

c) Nobles and Courtiers

Members of the royal family came to Bundelkhand to revel in the beauty of architecture and the suppleness of nature. Hunting expeditions were also a celebrated form of entertainment for the Mughal nobles. Years after years, Bundelkhand rulers and nobles significantly contributed to the making of its political stability, cultural heritage, and attempts to resist invasions. Raja Bir Singh Deo, the key ally of Emperor Jahangir (1570-1627), earned fame from his valiant exploits, and to his credit lies the construction of that famous marvel called Orchha Palace, considered the pinnacle of Bundelkhand's architectural heritage.

Raja Jhujhar Singh bolstered Mughal authority during the 16th century by assisting Jahangir in the battle of Dewar against Prince Khurram. The Maharaja Chhatrasal became one of the most potent leaders in founding the Panna state during 1649-1731 and resisting Mughal domination - a fundamental change in the power architecture of that region. Raja Devi Singh's Datia Palace was a splendid edifice of architecture that maintained peace in the regional areas under the Mughal suzerainty during the 17th century. Kunwar Singh was an 18th-century Bundela noble who typified defiance against Mughal rule. He led the Bundela Rebellion against that rule. Together, these leaders have contributed to creating the identity of Bundelkhand, a bastion of valour, culture, and independence.

d) Traders

Bundelkhand's strategic position made routes for trade and commerce hubs for commercial tourism. Trade was so much indulged with the visits to cultural and religious sites. Trade and commerce of Bundelkhand flourished due to the active participation of prominent trading communities like Banias, Marwaris, Gujaratis, and Multanis. The trading was concentrated in textiles, spices, precious stones, and metals by these trading communities, mostly within India and sometimes outside. Quality cotton and silk textiles from the region were traded widely to create a textile hub in Bundelkhand by Banias and Marwaris. These commodities were pepper, cinnamon, and cardamom, which Gujaratis and Multanis mostly dealt with. Precious stones, such as diamonds, were the wealth of Bundelkhand and were famous due to the mines of Panna, which were extensively traded by Banias and Marwaris (Habib, 1999).

In addition, metals like copper, bronze, and iron were traded by Gujaratis and Multanis, further cementing the region's role as one of the leading trade centers in its historical zenith (Moosvi, 2010). Various trading hubs of the Bundelkhand thrived on regional resources and craftsmanship. While Orchha was famous for textiles and spices, Datia was known for precious stones, Chanderi for fine textiles, and diamond trading took place in Panna. These centers pumped resources into the regional economy while promoting cultural exchange.

Geographical Context of Tourism

Strategic Location

Bundelkhand is located between northern and central India; therefore, it has proven to be the most important travel and trade route. The nearness of Bundelkhand to the Mughal capitals of Agra and Delhi adds to the accessibility of this region. This geography places Bundelkhand in a very important position in the Mughal Empire's administrative and trade network. The rivers of Bundelkhand, such as Yamuna, Betwa, and Ken, serve as natural highways by tying the east and the west to transport goods and people (Kumar, 2021). Travel time has been reduced using both forms of riverine transport, providing a more secure route during periods of political turmoil.

Topography and Natural Features

The different forms of the plateau, forest, and river have constructed the travel routes within Bundelkhand. From the Vindhyan ranges to the fertile valleys, the view engaged the attention of the traveller who came searching for natural beauty and adventure. In addition, the seasonal fairs or festivals near such rivers and forests attracted tourists to a major congregation for colourful and vibrant cultural experiences.

Architectural Heritage and Culture Tourism

Mughal-Rajput Architectural Synthesis

The architectural landscape of Bundelkhand carries a mark of the fused styles of Rajput and Mughal architecture. For instance, the region's forts, palaces, and temples testify to this unique synthesis, the Jahangir Mahal in Orchha. This monument is a remarkable example of the architectural synthesis of Mughal and Rajput styles with beautiful carvings, perfect symmetrical designs, and massive courtyards (Sinha, 2014). Such confluence created a wealth of visual culture and human experience, making it attractive for tourist destinations who want to delve into unknown heritage.

Prominent Structures

Some Important Structures Such buildings might have been functional in their time but have been preserved as a source of cultural amalgamation and architectural ingenuity reflecting the Mughal era. They are necessary for Bundelkhand's richness and appeal as a historical tourism destination.

a) The Jahangir Mahal, Orchha

A fine example of Mughal architecture in this part of the country is the Jahangir Mahal, Orchha. Constructed in 1605 by the Bundela Rajputs to memorialize the visit of Emperor Jahangir to Orchha, this palace represents the synthesis of both Mughal and Rajput styles of architecture in its impressive gateways, intricate jali work and symmetrical layout around a courtyard. The Mahal also offers an unparalleled view of the Betwa River and is thus an abode for visual and historical treasures. (Photo 1)

b) Kalinjar Fort, Banda

Kalinjar Fort has seen many upheavals over time. The Chandelas built the fort, which

reflects the glorious architecture of the period of the Chandela dynasty. Kalinjar is perched on the Vindhya ranges and was perfectly fit for a military outpost during the Mughal era.



Photo 1. The Jahangir Mahal, Orchha

The fort houses many inscriptions from the Mughal period and some very fine art frescoes portraying battles and life in palaces. It was also a melting pot of cultures where the Persian and Indian artistic traditions came together. (Photo 2)



Photo 2. The Kalinjar Fort, Banda

c) Chaturbhuj Temple, Orchha

The temple was constructed by the Bundela Rajput of the kingdom of Orchha during Mughal emperor Akbar's reign. Madhukar Shah laid its foundation, which his son Vir Singh Deo completed in the 16th century. Chaturbhuj temple is a unique example of temple architecture of this region. This temple has a singular combination of temple and palace architectural elements dedicated

to Lord Vishnu. The Mughal touch is evident in its arches, domes, and symmetry of its design. The towering of the temple spire makes it a prominent landmark visible from afar. (Photos 3)



Photo 3. The Chaturbhuja Temple, Oraccha

d) The Rai Praveen Mahal, Orchha

This palace was built by Maharaja Indrajit Singh in 1618, specifically designed for his beloved courtesan Rai Praveen as a gift. Rai Parveen was a well-known beauty with the most amazing diction. She was also a great musician and dancer. Probably, her reputation had reached a level whereby nobody could resist calling her to perform in the durbar (court) of the Mughal emperor Akbar. The overall structure is very classy, with a two-story plan with multi-colored murals designed in different rooms and surrounded by lots of greenery. The adjoining garden inspired by Mughal Charbagh traditions adds to the aestheticism. (Photos 4)



Photo 4. The Rai Praveen Mahal, Orchha

e) The Datia Palace/Veer Singh Palace, Datia

This is known as Datia Palace, Veer Singh Palace, or Govind Mahal and is located in Datia, Madhya Pradesh. Because of this magnificent, seven-story endurance marvel of architecture, it is also called Satkhanda Mahal. It was built by Maharaja Veer Singh Deo in 1620, and it is an exquisite blend of Hindu and Mughal architectural styles, constructed entirely from stone and brick without wood or metal. The palace features complex carvings and grand domes and boasts jharokhas (balconies) and stunning jaalis (latticed windows), making it a masterpiece of Bundela craftsmanship. Even though the palace was grand, it was never meant to serve as a residence; rather, it exemplifies the artistic and engineering prowess of the Bundela dynasty. The planning is stereotypical of Mughal-impressed symmetry and openness, underscoring the local climate and culture (Photo 5).

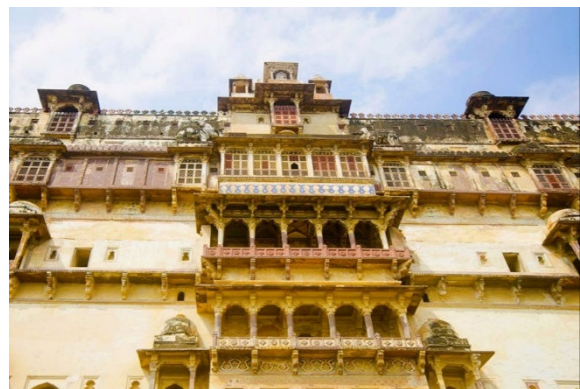


Photo 5. The Veer Singh Palace, Datia

f) The Orchha Cenotaphs (Chhatris)

With elegance, a row of fourteen chhatris or cenotaphs bears homage to the former kings of Orchha reflecting in their meandering Betwa River. They date to between the 16th and the 18th centuries. They are all similar to temples except for Bir Singh's cenotaph and

are elevated squares with vaulted ceilings enriched with fine Mughal-inspired architectural styles. They still stand to witness the history that this area has treasured for so long. (Photo 6)



Photo 6. Cenotaphs, Oraccha

g) The Ajaygarh Fort, Panna

The Ajaygarh Fort was constructed in the present-day Panna district in Mughal times. The Ajaygarh Fort, perched on a hilltop in the Vindhya Hills, stands at a height of 688 meters and overlooks the Ken River below.

The fort, built by the Chandela dynasty during times of decline, became Chandela's capital according to historical narratives. Rajputana gates and strategic location are of regional importance and defense fortification. Apart from that, the fort houses various water reserves and temples that indicate the fusion of Mughal and local architecture. (Photo 7)



Photo 7. The Ajaygarh Fort, Panna

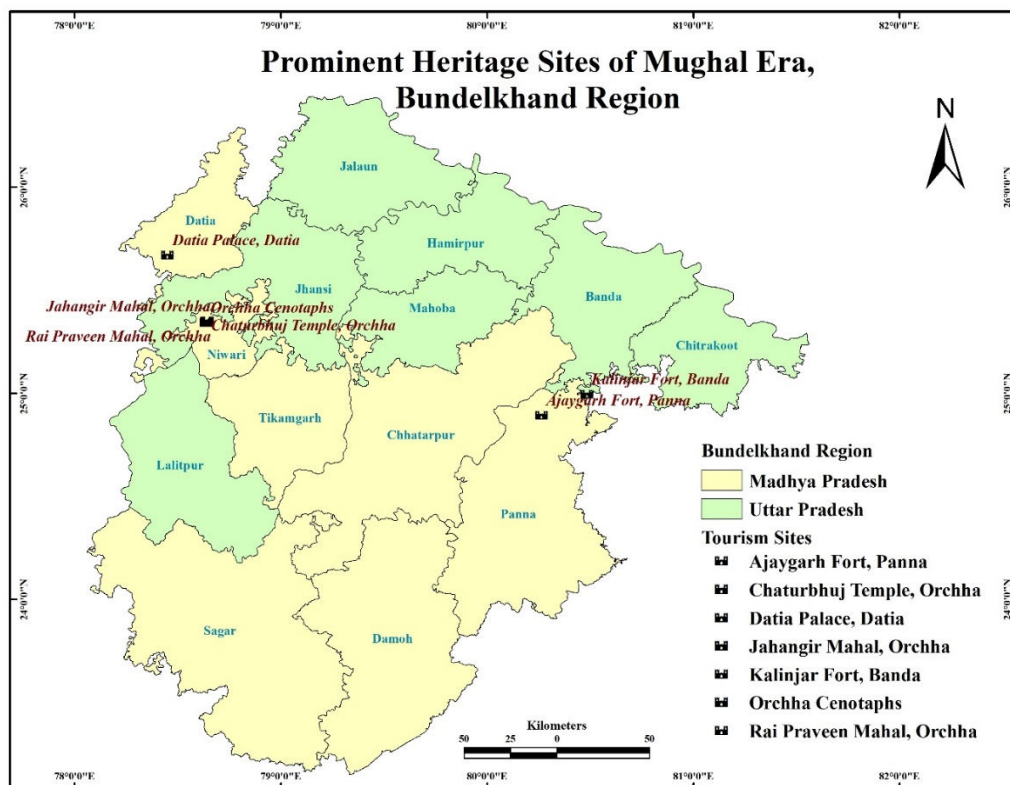


Figure 2. Prominent Heritage Sites in the Bundelkhand Region

Influence of Art and Gardens

Charbagh, or gardens cut into four parts, was a Mughal concept that greatly influenced local landscaping traditions. Architect companions quickly adopted the form according to the region's climate and cultural needs, from the design of Charbaghs with a water body in the centre and four quadrants of the garden around it. A Charbhag-specialized example is well shown in Orchha, where such gardens as Phool Bagh employ designs and forms directly drawn from Mughal influences in their regional horticulture.

Similarly, Bundelkhand's cultural landscape is marked by its architectural heritage. For example, the Jahangir Mahal or Chaturbhuj Temple reflects the typical Mughal features, such as arches, domes, and minarets. (Sinha, & Valderrama, 2014). The Mughal influence lingers in the arts and architecture of this region, which has endowed Bundelkhand with a unique cultural destiny, making it an alluring cultural tourism destination.

Economic Cultural Integration

Tourism during the Mughal Age thus fed the local economies. The hospitality industries, serais, bazaars, and so forth, fed the nearness of the traveller. Bundelkhand's markets were renowned for their spices, textiles, and crafts specialties, attracting traders and travellers. Because of its location on trade lines, the region became an essential centre for commerce and trade.

The Mughal period saw a considerable cultural merge of Mughal and local traditions. Music, Festivity, Culinary practices, and Language were influenced by the Mughal culture and integrated well into indigenous practices (Sinha & Valderrama, 2014). The Mughals and their local culinary techniques produced unique dishes. For

instance, the widely purchased 'biryani' is a cross between Mughal and local culinary traditions. The cultural fusion, particularly at the time of the Mughals, has indeed left an indelible mark on the cultural identity of Bundelkhand, making it a place of unique and interesting cultural tourism.

Challenges and Limitations

Geography and climate have hindered tourism in Bundelkhand, a region called Bundelkhand. Rugged terrain and too severe climatic conditions have made it difficult for tourists to peregrinate out in the area; with most paths rendered impassable during monsoons, summers have become too hot for long journeys. The terrain is barren and hilly and has fewer green patches, thus discouraging spending hours getting to a place since it is difficult to reach here. Furthermore, geography lays barriers to tourism development in this region and includes fewer tourist destination choices (Kumar & Singh, 2021).

Besides the geographical challenges, the areas have also been affected by political instability due to frequent Mughals and regional Rajput conflicts that have disturbed travel and trade. These political tensions usually affect the security of travel routes and tourist sites, making it difficult for tourists to feel safe while visiting the area. That ever-present historical backdrop of conflicts and power struggles runs deep into the very fabric of the region. It continues to have a significant bearing on restructuring its cultural and economic development.

However, amidst all that difficulty, Bundelkhand is still considered valuable with much importance in culture and history, its uniqueness lying in the melding of Mughal and Rajput cultures as well as stark natural beauty: rolling hills, scenic valleys and

shimmering rivers, which make the region highly potent for adventure and nature enthusiasts. Built and given proper support, Bundelkhand would carve the way for high tourism development and display its rich history, culture, and natural beauty to the world.

Contemporary Tourism and Historical Tourism

The Lasting Mughal Taste

Subliming Mughal advice on Bundelkhand, offering awe-inspiring monuments and cultural practices with undeniable attraction for guests worldwide. Among many examples of riches found in the architectonic-artistic heritage of the place are Orchha and Kalinjar Fort, two incredible prizes added to a must-explore itinerary for all history buffs who would love to glimpse into the glory days of the area.

Conservation and Development-

Preserving Mughal-era structures with heritage tourism has some bright prospects of augmenting modern infrastructure developments that enhance Bundelkhand's tourism potential. This means improved road connectivity and guided tours as a few initiatives to make it more open for visitors. This is an effort of governmental and non-governmental organizations in the sustainable tourism development arena to ensure that this rich heritage is well-packed for future generations.

Opportunities in Geohistorical Tourism

Historical geography remains a void in tourism research. This strikes one as odd, given that reflexivity- talking about historical factors often influencing the trajectory of destinations and host communities- has formed a strong part of tourism scholarship. As Van Sant et al. (2020) implores,

"Geography is always a product of history." Müller (2019) postulates that "tourism geographies, with their roots in the early twentieth century, is today an established field of research," and tourism geographers today cover a much wider range of knowledge than spatial emphasis that characterized the emergent stage of the science. As Timothy (2011, p. 172) has pointed out, "From the earliest times to the modern day, humans have influenced the natural landscape and created unique cultural footprints on the earth through their travels." Historical geography, therefore, is an important yet often underrated frame through which to view tourism landscapes.

These two, geography and history, coalesce in Bundelkhand and present an immensely untapped aspect of geohistorical tourism. Modernizing Mughal-era heritage marketing maximizes the domestic and foreign traveller numbers to understand this region's historical past in terms of future growth. This has evolved into a more sustainable, responsible tourism segment that benefits the local and environmental communities.

Conclusion

The legacy of the Mughals still lingers in Bundelkhand's tourism and cultural history. The grandeur of Mughal architecture, the wonderful construction of infrastructure, and their mixture of Mughal and local culture all transformed Bundelkhand into a historical and geographical region. The Mughal heritage can still tempt visitors today, even if factors such as the Himalayas or internal ravages by political misfortunes deprive Bundelkhand of its accessibility. Sustainable tourism development and preservation are critical to realizing Bundelkhand's potential as a grandeur destination for geohistorical tourism.

The study deals with the complex dynamics of Mughal tourism in Bundelkhand, perceiving geography, infrastructure, and cultural policies as the main determinants. It reveals the Mughals as individuals who established pre-modern tourism through great architectural innovations and good connectivity, which, internal or wise, gave Bundelkhand a resounding legacy as a meeting ground of history. This novel geohistorical perspective gives a fresh framework for tourism under historical perspectives (Van Sant et al, 2020). It implies much to be implemented in tourism development and heritage preservation. Policymakers can use this to modernize infrastructures, preserve historical

monuments, and propagate the Mughal heritage of Bundelkhand to influence tourists. Ultimately, the study contributes to cultural awareness and possibly even encourages revivalism in Mughal cultural traditions, which can act as an enriching experience for both residents and tourists. In general, heritage tourism comes with employment opportunities and city growth while ensuring the preservation of cultural and environmental resources. In academia, the research serves as a foundation for comparative and interdisciplinary studies, contributing to our understanding of the dynamics of historical tourism and informing practices of managing modern heritage.

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