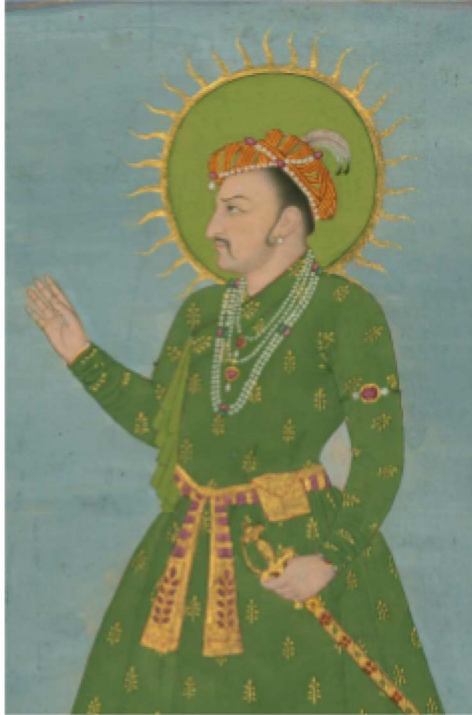



**MINI-
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How did the *Letter to James I, King of England* impact the Mughal Empire? What does this letter reveal about Mughal's sentiments toward outsiders?

Objective: Describe Mughal responses to outsiders and the impacts of those decisions.

An Introduction to *Letter to James I, King of England*



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jahangir#/media/File:Indian_-_Single_Leaf_of_a_Portrait_of_the_Emperor_Jahangir_-_Walters_W705_-_Detail.jpg

Many European nations, especially Spain and Portugal began overseas exploration and serious overseas trade during the sixteenth century. With the financial support of monarchs like Isabella and Ferdinand in Spain, many explorers set out to sea. The Ottoman Empire dominated many overland trade routes leading the French and British to seek commercial contacts in Asia.

The **British East India Company**, was a **joint-stock company** which was granted an English Royal Charter [contract] by Elizabeth I on December 31, 1600, with the intention of favoring trade privileges in India. The Royal Charter effectively gave the company a **monopoly** on trade in the Indian Ocean.

The British East India Company started out as a strictly commercial enterprise. The goal was to make money for the company's shareholders. The company tried, but failed to compete with the Dutch in the spice islands in Indonesia, and so they looked elsewhere to establish trade relationships. Eventually, ships belonging to the company arrived in India, docking at Surat, which was established as a trade transit point in 1608. In the next two years, it managed to build its

[Single Leaf of a Portrait of the Emperor Jahangir](#), provided by Walter Arts Museum

first factory (as the trading posts were known) in the town of Machilipatnam in the Coromandel Coast in the Bay of Bengal.

The company found the Mughal emperor, Jahangir, to be cooperative and they reported high profits from trade in India. Jahangir and the Indian traders preferred to work with the British over the Portuguese because of the Portuguese cartaz system. In 1612, the British earned the Mughal emperor's favor by defeating the Portuguese in the Battle of Swally. This started the end of Portuguese involvement in India and established the British as the premier European force in India. This event also started the process of transforming the British East India Company from a group of merchants, to an organization with military force.

In 1614, King James I of England sent a diplomat, Sir Thomas Roe, to visit the Mughal emperor, Jahangir, and negotiate a trade treaty. The trade mission was successful, and the emperor wrote a letter to King James in 1617 detailing the new relationship. Historians now refer to as Mughal Emperor Jahangir's *Letter to James I, King of England*.

Source: Adapted from "British East India Company," New World Encyclopedia.
http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/British_East_India_Company

1a. Pre-Reading Questions: Contextualization

Who wrote the <i>Letter to James I, King of England</i> ?	
When was the <i>Letter to James I, King of England</i> written?	
Where was <i>Mughal Emperor Jahangir's Letter to James I, King of England</i> written?	
What type (primary source of secondary source) of document is the <i>Letter to James I, King of England</i> ?	
What genre (letter, memoir, journal, edict, etc.) of document is the <i>Letter to James I, King of England</i> ? What does this reveal about the intended impact of this document?	
Who was the audience for the <i>Letter to James I, King of England</i> ?	
What was the perspective of the author? (Hint: What is the main interest or goal of the author?)	

1b. **Why** was the *Letter to James I, King of England* written?

1c. **Why** might the *Letter to James I, King of England* be an important historical document?
(How might this document help historians better understand this time period?)

Vocabulary

ambassador: a person who is sent by the government of one country to be its official representative in another country.

1 The letter of love and friendship which you sent and the presents, tokens of your good affections
2 toward me, I have received by the hands of your **ambassador**, Sir Thomas Roe (who well deserves
3 to be your trusted servant), delivered to me in an acceptable and happy hour; upon which mine
4 eyes were so fixed that I could not easily remove them to any other object, and have accepted
5 them with great joy and delight.

6
7 Upon which assurance of your royal love I have given my general command to all the kingdoms
8 and ports of my dominions to receive all the merchants of the English nation as the subjects of my
9 friend; that in what place soever they choose to live, they may have free liberty without any
10 restraint; and at what port soever they shall arrive, that neither Portugal nor any other shall dare to
11 molest their quiet; and in what city soever they shall have residence, I have commanded all my
12 governors and captains to give them freedom answerable to their own desires; to sell, buy, and to
13 transport into their country at their pleasure.

14
15 For confirmation of our love and friendship, I desire your Majesty to command your merchants to
16 bring in their ships of all sorts of rarities and rich goods fit for my palace; and that you be pleased
17 to send me your royal letters by every opportunity, that I may rejoice in your health and prosperous
18 affairs; that our friendship may be interchanged and eternal.

Source: <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/india/1617englandindies.asp>

Close Reading Questions

Directions: Using the excerpt of the *Letter to James I, King of England*, respond to the questions below.

1a. Based on lines 1-5, what was Jahangir's reaction to the gift that Sir Thomas Roe brought to India?

1b. How does the Mughal ruler's use of phrases like, "love and friendship" (li. 1) and "great joy and delight" (li.5) reveal Jahangir's sentiment toward outsiders?

2a. Reread lines 7-13. Identify three things that Jahangir promises to the "merchants of the British nation". Describe what might be the impact of these promises.

Jahangir's Promises	Potential Impact

2b. In lines 11-13, Jahangir writes, "I have commanded all my governors and captains to give them freedom answerable to their own desires; to sell, buy, and to transport into their country at their pleasure." Does Jahangir's command encourage or discourage more British to come to India? Explain.

3a. In lines 15-18, what does Jahangir ask King James I to do? How might Jahangir and his empire benefit from this?