

Chapter - 7

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Social Condition

The social condition of Indo-Pakistan during the Mughal period is very interesting and important in many respects. Society was something in the nature of feudal organization. The king was the head of the society. Below the king were the official nobles who enjoyed special favours and privileges. They lived in a gorgeous style and spent their days in luxury. The common people occupied a very low position in the society. 'The shop-keepers, the traders, the merchants, the bankers as well as the physicians constituted the middle class. The living standard of the lower orders was comparatively low. According to the European writers, the merchants of the western coast lived in a rich style. But the lower orders had to live from hand to mouth. In times of floods, famine and pestilence their miseries knew no bounds. Palsæt observes, "Their houses were built of mud, and thatched roofs." During the later part of Shah Jahan's reign the lot of the peasants became miserable in the hands of the Provincial Governors.

Gradation in the society

Lot of the lower class people in the society

The relation between the Muslims and the non-Muslims was cordial. The Hindus were allowed

Relation
between
Hindus and
Muslims

Social
customs

Dress of
male and
female

Amusements

Status of
women

to practise their religious rites and ceremonies in the State. Inter-marriages were encouraged and the Purda system was prevalent both among the Hindus and the Muslims. Akbar attempted to abolish some of the evil practices of the Hindus such as Sati, child-marriage, *kulinism* and high dowries but could not give effect to it.

Dress in Mughal India varied according to rank and position. Wool was preferred to cotton and silk 'to the flimsy ganzelike stuffs in fashion with the native aristocracy.' Male members of the society generally used close-fitting *Pajama* and the so-called *Jamah*. The Mughals made a contribution to Indian dress by introducing the popular head-wear called *Pagri*. The female used to wear 'close-fitting trousers and bodics coming down to the end of the *Izar*' and sometimes a slight *Sari* for setting. Both the males and females used profuse jewellery for extra personal ornamentation.

Among the amusements *chausar* (chees) and *chanpur* (a game played with dice on a piece of cloth) seemed to be favourite with the commoners as well as the aristocracy. Besides music, painting, hunting, chariot-racing, elephant-fights, swimming and *chaugan* (Polo) were some of the indoor amusements and outdoor sports in Mughal Empire.

Women were honoured in the society and many of them evinced a keen interest in literacy pursuits. Slavery was in vogue in Mughal India but the practice of manumissions was encouraged by the State.

Economic Condition

The foreign travellers have paid glowing tribute to the economic progress of India during the

Hawkins, who visited India during the time of the Mughals, says, "India is rich in silver and gold, for all nations bring coins and carrying away commodities for the same; this coin is buried in India and goeth not forth." Fitch remarks, "Agra and Fatehpur are two very great cities, either of them much greater than London and very populous." Monserrate says that Lahore was "not second to any city in Europe and Asia," Burhanpur in Khandesh was also very great, rich and full of people. According to Abul Fazl, "Ahmadabad in Gujrat was a noble city in a high state of prosperity." In Eastern India there were cities like Benares, Patna, Rajmahal, Burdwan, Hugli, Dacca and Chittagong which were famous for wealth and affluence. The cities under the Mughals were also only rich and prosperous but the Emperors also patronised trade and commerce. They carried on business transaction with other countries of the world.

Prosperous cities of India under the Mughals

The Emperors encouraged agriculture, the most important industry of India. The land-revenue formed the chief source of income of the State. The land-revenue system was one of the crowning achievements of Mughal rule in India. Sugar, indigo, cotton and silk were cultivated in many parts of India. Tobacco began to be cultivated in later days. During the time of famine State assistance was given to the famine-stricken and grain was supplied free from the Imperial granaries to alleviate the sufferings of the people.

Agriculture encouraged by the State

The State also encouraged other industries in the country. The most important industry in India during this period was the manufacture of cotton cloth. The main centres of this industry were Gujrat,

Industries and crafts

Burhanpur, Jaunpur, Patna and many cities and villages in Bengal. Dacca was noted for its muslin fabrics "the best and finest cloth made of cotton." Cottage industries were patronised by the Emperors and nobles. About the cotton and silk industries Bernier says, "There is in Bengal such a quantity of cotton and silk that the kingdom may be called the common storehouse for those two kinds of merchandise, not of Hindustan or the Empire of the Great Mughal only, but of all the neighbouring kingdoms and even of Europe." Silk-weaving was also another important industry of Bengal. Shawl and carpet-weaving industries flourished at Lahore and Kashmir. Ship-building was an important industry in India in those days. Saltpetre was manufactured in many places of India and it was in high demand among the European merchants.

Silk
industry in
Bengal

Though the State encouraged manufactures, the lot of the producer was not improved as they had to depend on the middlemen for materials. Taking advantage of weavers' helplessness the middlemen must have exploited them in different ways. Both Bernier and Palsæt say that "they (weavers) suffered from harsh treatment at the hands of the nobles and officers, who forced them to work at miserable wages and to sell their goods at the price dictated by themselves."

Defective
economic
system

During the great Mughal's India had a considerable foreign trade with different countries of Asia and Europe. The principal imports of the country were bullion, raw silk, horses, precious stones, amber, metals, ivory, coral, velvets, Chinese porcelain and African slaves and the exports of India were various textiles, pepper, indigo, opium

Foreign
trade

and miscellaneous goods. The principal ports of India during the period were Surat, Broach, Cambay, Colicut, Cochin, Nagapatam, Masulipatam, Chittagong and Sonargaon in Bengal. In short, India reached a high level of prosperity in industry during the Mughal period. "It was this trade and prosperity that attracted the European traders to India. Their rivalry to secure a footing in India at that time was occasioned not by the new materials of the country but by the value and variety of her manufactures and crafts."

Exports and imports

Religious Movements

The influence of Islam brought about certain changes in the religious thought of the Hindus. It led to the rise of Hindu thinkers and reformers who tried to reform Hinduism in the light of Islam. They preached the unity of Godhead and the equality of all religions. They emphasised upon *Bhakti i.e.*, true devotion to God. To them, there was no difference between Hinduism and Islam. The movement led by these reformers is known as Bhakti Movement. This movement liberalised the outlook of the Hindus and conversion of the local people to Islam was greatly arrested. It also paved the way for the liberal policy of Akbar who in order to bring about a synthesis of various creeds introduced *Din-i-Ilahi*. Another important result of the Bhakti Movement was a laxity in the observance of the code of Islam among the Muslims. Many Hindu ideas and practices permeated into the Muslim society.

Bhakti movement and its results

The laxity and un-Islamic practices among the Muslims created a great concern among many Muslim thinkers in the Sub-continent. Sayyid Muhammad of Jaunpur who claimed to be the

The Mahdvi
Movement

Mahdi (one who would restore Islam to its original position) came forward and stated that his aim was to insist upon the performance of religious duties and avoidance of what has been forbidden in Islam. The movement led by him was known as the Mahdavi Movement. The orthodox Muslims did not recognise his claim to be the *Mahdi* and condemned his teachings as heresy. This movement acquired much strength through Shaikh Alai, one of the followers of Sayyid Muhammad. Due to his efforts a large number of people came under the fold of the Mahdi doctrine. But he was put to the sword at the *fatwa* of Shaikh Makhdum-ul-Mulk and his death stood as a bar to the growth and development of the Mahdavi creed. Some of the Mahdavis joined Akbar in his attempts to weaken the power of the orthodox Ulema as the latter were hostile to them.

Mujaddid-i-
Ali-i-Sant

It has been mentioned that Akbar was greatly influenced by the Bhakti movement. His new creed "should be taken to be an offshoot of this movement, because many of its features were to be found in the *Din-i-Ilahi* which reflected a good many creeds of the day namely, Hinduism, *Tasawwuf* (mysticism) and local faith." With the death of Akbar's *Din-i-Ilahi* died a natural death. The man who first raised his voice against Akbar's *Din-i-Ilahi* was Shaikh Ahmad of Sirhind commonly known as *Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-Sani* (the reformer of the second millennium). He belonged to the *Naqshabandiah* School of Sufism. He laid great emphasis on the difference between Islam and Hinduism and was not ready to make any compromise on this point. He emphatically denounced Akbar's new creed and created a great movement against it. During the reign of Jahangir

the *Majaddid* was arrested but later he was set free.

Shah Waliullah was the first religio-political thinker who took the lead in re-awakening the Muslims of the Sub-continent. His was an age of despair and despondency for the Muslims of Indo-Pakistan. The decaying condition of the Mughal Empire and the rise of the Marathas and Sikhs were a constant anxiety to him. In order to prevent the decay of the Mughal empire and the Muslim society he invited Ahmed Shah Abdali to invade Indo-Pakistan on the one hand and asked the Muslims to establish true Islam in the land on the other. He wanted to inculcate in the minds of the Muslims a proper understanding of true Islam and thereby to prepare them for political make-up.

Shah
Waliullah
(1703-62)

Shah Waliullah was born at Delhi in 1703. He received his early education under the loving care of his father Abdur Rahim who was noted for his learning and piety. At the age of 17 Shah Waliullah started teaching at the Madrashah-i-Rahimiya established by his father. In 1730, he went on pilgrimage to Makkah and had the fortune of studying there under the celebrated teachers of the period. After two years Shah Waliullah returned to his country and devoted himself to writing. He wrote a number of books on different subjects for the spread of Islamic ideas. He tried to inspire the Muslims with new consciousness through the spread of Islamic culture. To him, Muslims should go back to the teachings of the Quran and the Hadith. Shah Waliullah was the first man to translate the Holy Quran into Persian, the literary language of the Muslims in Indo-Pakistan and thus paved the way for the under-standing of the Quran

His early
chreer

His
religious
reforms

by every Muslim who knew Persian.

Shah Waliullah tried his best to reconcile the basic differences amongst the different sections of the Muslims. He considered the government as an essential means for the re-generation of the Muslim community. Though he was not successful in his life time to prevent the decay of the Mughal and the Muslim society, his efforts at least resulted in the defeat of the Marathas at the hands of the Muslim coalition under Ahmed Shah Abdali and Najib-ud-Daulah. Shah Waliullah made an appeal to Ahmed Shah Abdali to intervene in the affairs of Indo-Pakistan at a time when this country was seriously threatened by the Maratha invasion. After the death of Shah Waliullah, his son and successor Shah Abdul Aziz took upon himself the task of his father. In order to popularise the movement of his father, he prepared a team of workers who were destined to play an important role in the religio-political history of the sub-continent. Shah Abdul Aziz died in 1823 and the leadership of this Movement fell on one of his disciples named Sayyid Ahmad Shahid whose activities will be discussed later on.

Education and Literature

The Mughal Emperors were great patrons of education and literature. They established educational institutions in different parts of the Empire where boys and girls received their education. They patronised education by grants of lands or money to mosques, monasteries and individual saints and scholars. Humayun, though addicted to opium, founded a *Madrasah* at Delhi. Akbar's reign marks a new epoch for the system introduced for imparting education in schools and

colleges. He established colleges at Fatehpur Sikri, Agra and other places. Jahangir and Shah Jahan also took interest in founding *Madrasah* in many parts of the country. The princesses of the imperial household and the nobles were given tuition in their houses. The daughters of the middle class people attended the primary schools along with the boys. Some of the distinguished ladies who were well-read in Persian and Arabic literature are Gulbadan Begum, authoress of *Humayunnamah*, Humayun's niece, Salima Sultana, authoress of several Persian poems, Nur Jahan, Mumtaz Mahal, Jahanara and Zeb-un-Nisa.

Distinguished ladies of the Mughal Court

Literary Activity

A long period of peace, a strong and wise Government and a rich culture heritage led to the revival of arts and letters. The Mughal Emperors took a lively interest in literary productions both Persian and Hindi. The Persian literature during the reign of Akbar may be divided into three classes, namely, (1) historical works, (2) translations and (3) poetry and verse. Of the historical works, the *Tarikh-i-Afifi* of Mulla Daud, the *Ain-i-Akbari* and *Akbarnamah* of Abul Fazl, the *Muntakhab-ul-Tawarikh* of Badauni, the *Tabakat-i-Akbari* of Nizamuddin Ahmed the *Akbaranah* of Faiz Sirhindi and the *Ma'asiri-i-Rahimi* of Abdul Baqi are the prominent. Abul Fazl was the outstanding literary figure of the age. An intimate friend and councillor of Akbar, he was a poet, an essayist, a critic and a renowned historian. Akbar was a keen student of Hindu literature. By his order many Sanskrit works were translated into Persian. Badauni translated the *Ramayana* in 1589. The *Mahabharata* was

Historical works under Akbar

Abul Fazl was the greatest historian of this age

Sanskrit
works
translated
into Persian

translated into Persian by a group of Muslim scholars and was compiled under the title of *Razam-Namah*. The *Atharva Vedas* was translated by Haji Ibrahim Sirhindi into Persian. Among the translated works, names of the *Rajtarangini*, the *Panchatantra* and *Harivasma* may be mentioned here. Some Greek and Arabic works were also translated into Persian. The most important prose-writers were Ghizali and Faizi, brothers of Abul Fazl. Besides, there were other literary figures who adorned the court of Akbar.

Literature
under
Jahangir

Historical
works

Shah
Jahan's
historical
works

Historical
works,
during
Aurangzeb

Jahangir had an excellent literary taste and extended his patronage to many scholars. His autobiography, called the *Tuzk-i-Jahangiri* stands second to that of Babur. Among the learned men who flourished in his reign are Ghiyasuddin Beg, Naqib Khan, Mutamil Khan, Niamatullah and Abdul Haq Dillawi. The most important historical works—the *Ma'asir-i-Jahangiri* and *Iqbalnamah-i-Jahanagiri* were written during his reign. Shah Jahan followed the policy of his predecessors in extending his patronage to learned men. The most important historical works of this period are the *Padshah Namah* of Abdul Hamid Lahori, the *Shah Jahan Nama* of Inayet Khan and *Amil-i-Salih* of Muhammad Salih. Aurangzeb was a scholar of Muslim theology and jurisprudence. Under his patronage the *Fatwa-i-Alamgiri*, a digest of Muslim law was written. The most important history of his reign, the *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* of Kafi Khan was written in secret. Other historical works of this period are the *Alamgir Nama* by Mirza Muhammad Kazim, the *Ma'asir-i-Alamgiri* of Muhammad Saqi, the *Khulasat-ul-Tawarikh* of Sujan Rai Khatri, the *Naksha-i-Dilkush* of Bhim Sen and the *Fathuhah-i-*

Alamgiri of Iswar Das.

During the Mughal period, literary activity was not confined to Persian alone. It was the "Augustan Age of Hindustani literature." Akbar the Great encouraged Hindi poetry. Among the courtiers of the Emperor, Birbal, Raja Man Singh and Raja Bhagwan Das were renowned poets. Abdur Rahman Khan-i-Khanan was the most distinguished Hindi poet of Akbar's court. Tulsi Das was not only a poet of a high order but a spiritual-teacher of the people of Hindustan. His most famous work the *Ramcharita Manasa*, or "The Pool of Ram's life", is a masterpiece of Hindi literature and has become "the Bible of hundred millions of people" of Hindustan. Surdas, 'the blind bird of Agra', was another distinguished poet of this period.

Hindi literature developed in Mughal India

In Bengal, there grew up the *Vaishnava* literature. The famous Vaishnava writers were Krishna Das Kabiraj, the author of *Chaitanya Charita*, Brindaban Das, the author of *Chaitanya Bhagavata* and Jayananda, the author of *Chaitananya Mangla*. The *Mahabharata* of Kashiram Das and the *Kavi Kanken Chandi* of Makundaram Chakraborty were some of the important works of this period.

Bengali literature

Architecture

One of the most distinguished features of Mughal rule in Indo-Pakistan was the unique development in art. The Mughal Emperors were great patrons of art and their period of about a couple of centuries witnessed wonderful progress in every branch of art—architecture, painting and

music. The beautiful buildings they erected in different parts of Indo-Pakistan still stand and serve as an imperishable index to their refined tastes and afford an excellent testimony to their cultural advancement.

Nature of
Mughal
style of
architecture

The Mughal emperors raised a large number of buildings which are even to-day, notable for the magnificence of their style. As to the nature of the style, different opinions have been expressed. Fergusson is of the opinion that the Mughal style of architecture is foreign in origin. Some call it 'Pathan', some characterize it as 'Indo-Muslim,' some describe it as 'Mughal' and some say it was native. In point of fact the Mughal style of architecture was an agglomeration of various styles, partly foreign and partly indigenous.

Under
Babur

Babur, the first of the Mughal Emperors, held a very poor opinion about Indian architecture. He expressed dissatisfaction with the buildings that he came across at Delhi and Agra. Himself a lover of art and architecture, he wanted to raise good buildings of his own choice. In order to fulfil his design he invited the pupils of Sinan from Constantinople and employed a large number of persons for raising buildings. Most of the buildings constructed by him were destroyed later on. The two buildings that still exist are the mosque in the Kabul Bagh at Panipat and the *Jami-Masjid* at Sambhal.

Mosques of
Babur

Under
Humayun

The troubled reign of Humayun did not allow him to pay much attention to artistic taste. Nevertheless he raised some buildings like *Din-Panah* palace at Delhi and mosque at Fatehabad in the Punjab.

Sher Shah evinced a keen interest in architecture. He erected many buildings but the most famous one is his mausoleum at Sasaram which he built during his life time and in which he was buried after his death. According to Dr. V.A. Smith, it is "one of the best designed and most beautiful buildings in India unequalled among the earlier buildings in the Northern provinces for grandeur and dignity." Another important building of Sher Shah is the Purana Qila and the mosque inside the Purana Qila called *Kila-i-Kunhan Masjid* is "a structure of such admirable architectural qualities as to entitle it a high place among the buildings of Northern India."

Buildings of
Sher Shah

In Akbar the Great, India found a most active and powerful patron of architecture. The buildings of Akbar were characterised by unity of Hindu and Muslim styles, of which sometimes the one predominated and sometimes the other, so much so that Fatehpur Sikri has been described as "a reflex of the great mind who built it." His architecture speaks of his statesmanship, aiming at Hindu-Muslim unity. The most impressive buildings in which he liberally used red stones, were constructed at Fatehpur Sikri, The *Jam-i-Masjid*, the tomb of Saikh Salim Chisti, the Diwan, the *Sonhla Makan*, the palaces of the princes of Amber, the palace of Jodhabai, the palace of the Turkish Sultan and the *Khawabgha* are some of the beautiful buildings at Fatehpur Sikri. Akbar's tomb at Sikandra is a unique structure among the sepulchres of Asia. Its construction was started by Akbar himself, but it was Jahangir who completed it. At Agra he erected many magnificent buildings such as the *Diwan-i-'Am*, the *Diwan-i-Khas* and the

Under
Akbar

Buildings in
the time of
Akbar

Jahangir-i-Mahal. The Agra Fort was constructed under his personal supervision. Akbar also constructed the Lahore Fort (in 1566 A.D.) which is more vigorous but less restrained than the Agra Fort. Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb made additions to Lahore Fort in their respective time.

Under
Jahangir

Jahangir had an artistic sense but his interest centered mainly round painting and gardening. But yet his reign was not without its architectural glories. He completed the work of the tomb of Akbar at Sikandra. His wife, Nur Jahan built at Agra the tomb of her father, Itimad-ud-Daula which is the finest architectural gem of Jahangir's reign. Regarding this tomb Mr. Percy Brown writes in the Cambridge History of India, "There is no other building like it in the entire range of Mughal architecture." Among other remarkable monuments of Jahangir's reign is the tomb of the Emperor himself at Lahore. This tomb was damaged by the Sikhs during the Sikh rule.

Architecture
under Shah
Jahan

During the reign of Shah Jahan, the Mughal architecture reached its highest watermark. In the erection of beautiful buildings Shah Jahan made an extensive use of marble and the *pietradura*. In this connection Percy Brown says, "Shah Jahan founded the Mughal cities of sandstone and left them of marble." The Emperor evinced a very keen personal interest in the art of architecture. He raised buildings at various places, such as Agra, Delhi, Lahore, Kashmir, Kabul, Qandahar, Ajmer, Ahmadabad and other places.

Some of the buildings constructed by Shah Jahan still stand unrivalled in Indo-Pakistan, perhaps in the whole world. The *Taj* which was

erected over the tomb of his wife, Arjumand Banu Begum, popularly known as Mumtaz Mahal will continue to be the finest monument of conjugal love and fidelity. Before the erection of the building, Shah Jahan invited eminent artists from various parts of the empire and even from outside. The plan of the buildings was thoroughly discussed and it was decided that the building would be made of marbles. The master architect of the *Taj* was Ustad Isa who was assisted by his son, Muhammad Sharif. The *Taj* took 22 years to complete and its total cost was about rupees three crores.

Architecture
attained its
highest
watermark
under Shah

The *Taj* is considered to be one of the most beautiful buildings of the world and has evoked universal admiration. According to Percy Brown, "It seems as if the hand of nature and the hand of man had united and done their utmost to produce a spectacle of supremely moving beauty." It has been variously described as "queen of architecture," "a dream in marble." Rabindra Nath Tagore beautifully styled it as "a tear on the cheek of eternity."

Taj Mahal

Besides the *Taj*, the other famous buildings of Shah Jahan are *Moti Masjid* of Agra, *Jami-Masjid* of Delhi, *Diwan-i-Am* and *Diwan-i-Khas* in the Fort of Delhi and the Peacock Throne. The *Moti Masjid* (Pearl Mosque) is regarded as the "purest and loveliest houses of prayer" in the world. The *Jami-i-Masjid* is also quite impressive and pleasing. The *Diwan-i-Khan* is more highly ornamented than any other buildings of Shah Jahan who, himself described it as "Paradise on earth." Shah Jahan's throne, the Peacock Throne, built at a cost of one

Other
buildings of
Shah Jahan

crore of rupees and studded with Jems and rubies presented a rare specimen of beauty and art. The constructions of *Masamman Burj*, *Shish Mahal*, *Naulakha*, *Khwabaqah*, *Macchi Bhawan*, etc., speak much of the architectural taste of Shah Jahan. The *Shish Mahal* (Shah Burj) was built by Shah Jahan in 1631-32 A.D. It was the residence of the Empress when she stayed at Lahore and is one of the most well-decorated royal residences of the world. The *Bungla*, popularly called *Naulakha* or the edifice lying within *Shish Mahal* is a dainty little marable pavilion of chaste workmanship renewed for its extremely minute and delicate *pietradura* work. It is one of the finest architectural achievements of the Mughals in Indo-Pakistan.

The Shalamar Garden is another specimen of Shah Jahan's architectural taste. There are three gardens (i) at Lahore, (ii) at Sreenagar in Kashmir and (iii) at Delhi under the name 'Shalamar'. The garden at Lahore was laid out as a royal recreation place as well as for providing accommodation whenever the Emperor was on a visit to Lahore'. For this purpose a number of pavilions and summer houses were built in it.

The Mughal art began to decline after the demise of Shah Jahan. Though Aurangzeb did not pay much attention to it, he was not without architectural taste. He raised certain buildings which are quite important from the architectural point of view. In 1674 he constructed the *Badshahi Mosque*, the biggest living mosque of the world, at Lahore. The construction of the mosque took only about three years for its completion and the cost,

Shalimar
Garden

Badshahi
Mosque
built by
Aurangzeb

according to *Khulasatul Tawarikh* of Sujan Rai, exceeds rupees five lakhs. Aurangzeb had also a marble mosque in the Fort of Delhi.

Painting

The Mughal Emperors unlike their Muslim predecessors evinced keen interest in the art of painting and due to their patronage, this art witnessed unique progress. As to the nature of the art, it is a combination of both native and foreign elements.

Babur was a great lover of beauty and art. He patronized the art of painting but unfortunately no painting of his time is available.

Under
Babur

Humayun developed a taste for painting during his exile in Persia. When he came back to Indo-Pakistan, he brought with him two master painters of Persia named Mir Sayyid Ali and Khawaja Abdus Samad. These two painters taught drawing and painting to Humayun and his son prince Akbar. They prepared an illustrated copy of the *Amir Hamjah*.

Under
Humayun

Akbar did a lot for the encouragement of the art of painting. He created a separate department of painting and placed it under the control of Khawaja Abdus Samad. The Emperor took personal interest in painting and this led to the growth of his school of painting which may be called the National School of painting. The painters were invited from every part of Indo-Pakistan and from outside as well. Some of the leading painters who adorned the court of Akbar were Mir Sayyid Ali, Khawaja Abdus Samad, Farrukh Beg, Daswant, Basawan, Sanwal Dass, Tara Chand and Jagan Nath.

Under
Akbar

National
School of
Painting

Under the order of the Emperor some well-known works like the *Chingiz Namah*, *Zahar Nama Naldaman*, *Kaliadaman* and *Ramayana* were fully illustrated at the hands of the expert painters of the time.

It was during the reign of Jahangir that the art of painting reached its height of progress. Sir Thomas Rao who visited the court of Jahangir testifies to the fact that the Emperor was a great lover of painting. The Emperor was an art-critic and a collector of historical painting. He boasts of his own knowledge of painting in these words, "As regards myself, my liking for paintings and my practice of judging it have arrived at such a point that when any work is brought to me, either of the deceased artists, or those of the present day, without the names being told to me, I say on the spur of the moment that it is the work of such and such a man. And if there be a picture containing my portraits and each face be the work of different masters, I can discover which face is the work of each of them. If any other person has put in the eyes and eye-brows of a face I can perceive whose work the original face is and who has painted the eyes and eye-brows."

Under
Jahangir

The favourite subjects of painting were plants, flowers, animals, birds and other natural objects. The distinguished painters of Jahangir's time were Farrukh Beg, Muhammad Nadir, Muhammad Murad, Aga Riza, Ustad Mansur and Bishan Das.

Painters of
Jahangir's
court

With the death of Jahangir, the art of painting began to witness its decline. Shah Jahan was more interested in architecture and consequently this branch of art was ignored. The painters began to seek their jobs with the nobles and

princes. A few nobles patronised the painters and Asaf Khan was one of them. His house at Lahore was beautifully decorated by the painters. Prince Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Shah Jahan was a lover of painting and tried to revive the Imperial patronage but his unfortunate career spoiled the prospect of art.

Under Shah
Jahan

Aurangzeb was averse to painting and is said to have defaced the painting of Bijapur and Golkanda palaces. In spite of the Emperor's antipathy to this art, painting did not die out as certain pictures of Aurangzeb's battles have come down to us.

Under
Aurangzeb

Music

All the Mughal Emperors except Aurangzeb evinced a great interest in music.

Babur, a poet and a man of artistic taste, was very fond of music, both vocal and instrumental. He himself composed songs of a high order and is said to have written a very interesting treatise on it.

Under
Babur

Humayun was also interested in music. He often enjoyed the company of musicians and singers and had set aside two days in a week, Monday and Wednesday, for listening to music. It is said that after the capture of Mandu in 1535, he was so much impressed by a song sung by one of the captives, Bachchu by name that the Emperor not only liberated him but also appointed him as a musician of his court.

Under
Humayun

Music made the greatest progress in the time of Akbar. Himself a good musician, the Emperor used to compose tunes. According to Abul Fazal, "His Majesty pays much attention to music and is the patron of all who practice this enchanting art." His interest in music brought numerous musicians

Under
Akbar

at the Court—Hindus, Iranis, Turanis, Kashmiris—both men and women. The most well-known musician of Akbar's court was Mian Tansen. He was originally a Hindu of Gwalior. Tansen had embraced Islam and received his education in music in Gwalior. According to Abul Fazal, "A singer like him has not been in India for the last thousand years." The other famous musicians of his age were Ram Dass, Bauja Bawra and Sur Das. Ram Dass was considered second only to Tansen. He was given a reward of one lakh tankas by Bairam Khan for his excellent performance.

Musicians
of Akbar's
court

Like his father, Jahangir had also a great interest in music. He continued the practice of patronising the musicians and of grouping them into seven parties allotting one day of the week to each party. He was himself a good musician and he composed many Hindi songs which were very interesting.

Under
Jahangir

Shah Jahan was also a lover of music. He was himself a good singer. His songs were often thrilling. According to J. N. Sarker, the voice of Shah Jahan was so attractive that "many pure-souled *Sufis* and holy men with hearts withdrawn from the world who attended these evening assemblies lost their senses in the ecstasy produced by his singing." The chief musicians of Shah Jahan's court were Lal Khan (Tansen's son-in-law), Jagan Nath, Janardan Bhatta and Mahapattar.

Under Shah
Jahan

After the death of Shah Jahan, the art of music declined. Aurangzeb did not like music and so he dismissed all the musicians and singers of his court. But in spite of this, music continued to flourish, for the members of the royal family, the nobility and the courtiers were greatly interested in music and continued patronizing this art.

Under
Aurangzeb