



1. Describe the process of manuscript production in the Mughal court.

Ans: Process of manuscript production in the Mughal court included the following:

- (a) Paper-maker's responsibility was to prepare the folios of the manuscript.
- (b) Skill writer, i.e. scribes or calligrapher copied the texts.
- (c) Guilders, illuminated the pages of the manuscript.
- (d) Miniature painter illustrated the scene from the text.
- (e) The book binders gathered the folio and gave it to the original shape of a book.

2. In what ways would the daily routine and special festivities associated with the Mughal court have conveyed a sense of the power of the emperor?

Ans: The daily routine and special festivities associated with the Mughal court observed the following:

- (i) By representing the status of the court.
- (ii) In form of salutation of emperor.
- (iii) Jharokha Darshan.
- (iv) Meeting held by sultan in Diwan-i-Am and Diwan-i-Khas.
- (v) By honouring the mansabdar on special occasion with special gifts and jagir.

3. Assess the role played by women of the imperial household in the Mughal Empire

Ans:

- (i) The term "haram" is used to describe the domestic world of the Mughals. This word is taken from the Persian word haram, which means a sacred place.
- (ii) The Mughal household consisted of the emperor's wives and concubines, his near and distant relatives (mother, step- and foster-mothers, sisters, daughters, daughters-in-law, aunts, children, etc.), and female servants and slaves.
- (iii) Polygamy was practised widely in the Indian subcontinent, especially among the ruling groups. Both for the Rajput clans as well as the Mughals marriage was a way of cementing political relationships and forging alliances.
- (iv) The gift of territory was often accompanied by the gift of a daughter in marriage. This ensured a continuing hierarchical relationship between ruling groups. It was through the link of marriage and the relationships that developed as a result that the Mughals were able to form a vast kinship network that linked them to important groups and helped to hold a vast empire together.
- (v) In the Mughal household a distinction was maintained between wives who came from royal families (begams), and other wives (aghas) who were not of noble birth.
- (vi) The begams, married after receiving huge amounts of cash and valuables as dowry (maahr), naturally received a higher status and greater attention from their husbands than did aghas. The concubines (aghaacha or the lesser agha) occupied the lowest position in the hierarchy of females intimately related to royalty.
- (vii) The agha and the aghacha could rise to the position of a begam depending on the husband's will, and provided that he did not already have four wives.

(viii) Love and motherhood played important roles in elevating such women to the status of legally wedded wives. Apart from wives, numerous male and female slaves populated the Mughal Household. The tasks they performed varied from the most mundane to those requiring skill, tact and intelligence.

(xi) Slave eunuchs (khwajasara) moved between the external and internal life of the household as guards, servants, and also as agents for women dabbling in commerce.

4. What were the concerns that shaped Mughal policies and attitudes towards regions outside the subcontinent?

Ans:

(i) The Safavids and Qandahar: The political and diplomatic relations between , the Mughal kings and the neighbouring countries of Iran and Turan hinged on the control of the frontier defined by the Hindukush mountains that separated Afghanistan from the regions of Iran and Central Asia. A constant aim of Mughal policy was to ward off this potential danger by controlling strategic outposts - notably Kabul and Qandahar. The fortress-town Qandahar had initially been in the possession of Humayun, reconquered in 1595 by Akbar. The Safavid court retained diplomatic relations with the Mughals, it continued to stake claims to Qandahar. Jahangir sent a diplomatic envoy to the court of Shah Abbas in 1613 to plead the Mughal case for retaining Qandahar, but the mission failed to achieve its objectives. Persian army besieged Qandahar in 1622. The Mughal garrison was defeated and had to surrender the fortress and the city to the Safavids.

(ii) The Ottomans: pilgrimage and trade: The relationship between the Mughals and the Ottomans ensured free movement for merchants and pilgrims in the territories under Ottoman control. This was especially true for the Hijaz, that part of Ottoman Arabia where the important pilgrim centres of Mecca and Medina were located.

The Mughal emperor combined religion and commerce by exporting essential goods to Aden and Mokha, and distributing the proceeds of the sales in charity to the keepers of shrines and religious men there.

(iii) Jesuits at the Mughal court: European received knowledge about India through the accounts of Jesuit missionaries, travellers, merchants and diplomats. After the discovery of sea route to India, the Portuguese merchants set up their trading network stations in coastal region. The Portuguese was also interested in the spread of Christianity with the help of the missionaries of the Society of Jesuits. The Christian missions who sent to India during the sixteenth century were part of this process of trade and empire building. The first Jesuit mission reached the Mughal court of Mughal emperor Akbar at Fatehpur oikri in 1580 and stayed here for about two years. The Jesuits spoke to Akbar about Christianity and debated its virtues with the ulema. Two more missions were sent to the Mughal court at Lahore, in 1591 and 1595. The Jesuit accounts are based on personal observation and shed light on the character and mind of the emperor. At public assemblies the Jesuits were assigned places in close proximity to Akbar's throne.. The Jesuit accounts corroborate the information given in Persian chronicles about state officials and the general conditions of life in Mughal times.

5. Discuss the major features of Mughal provincial administration. How did the centre control the provinces?

Ans:

(i) The head of the provincial administration was the governor (subadar). He reported directly to the emperor.

(ii) Each suba was divided into sarkar,

(iii) The local administration was looked after at the level of the pargana (sub-district) by three semi-hereditary officers, the

qanungo (keeper of revenue records), the chaudhur (in charge of revenue collection) and the qazi.

(iv) Each department of administration maintained a large support staff of clerks, accountants, auditors, messengers, and other functionaries who were technically qualified officials, functioning in accordance with standardised rules and procedures, and generating copious written orders and records.

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