CHAPTER VII

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE

The real history of the people in Mughul India, that is, of their social life and economic condition, is of greater interest and importance for us to-day than mere catalogues of political events or military campaigns. The sources for studying it are indeed meagre, but valuable information can be gleaned from the accounts of contemporary European travellers and records of the European factories; and incidental references are available in contemporary historical works in Persian as well as vernacular literatures of the period.

I. Social Conditions

A. Structure of Society

Society looked like a feudal organisation with the king at its apex. Next in rank to the king were the official nobles, who enjoyed special honours and privileges, which never fell to the lot of the common people. This naturally produced a difference in their standard of living. The former rolled in wealth and comforts, while the condition of the latter was comparatively pitiable. With abundant resources at their disposal, the rich naturally indulged in luxury and intemperance, and the apprehension of escheat of the wealth and property of the nobles at death destroyed their incentive to thrift. Excessive addiction to wine and women was a very common vice among the aristocrats. We are told by Abul Fazl that the Emperor had a seraglio of 5,000 women, supervised by a separate staff of female officers. Francisco Pelsaert, the chief of the Dutch factory at Agra in the time of Jahângîr, observes that "the mahals of the rich were adorned internally with lascivious sensuality, wanton and reckless festivity, superfluous pomp, inflated pride, and ornamental daintiness", and he denounces their debauchery in strong terms. The food and dress of the wealthy were rich and costly. They lived in highly decorated palatial buildings and amused themselves with outdoor sports as well as indoor games.
It should be noted that the existence of an alien nobility did not usually cause any heavy drain of the country's wealth to foreign lands, as none of the class was allowed to carry it outside. The nobles originally possessed qualities which made them efficient servants of the State so long as it retained its vigour, but they began to lose their old usefulness, and grew more demoralised, with the closing years of the reign of Shāh Jahān. Further deterioration set in during the reign of Aurangzeb and in the eighteenth century. The rivalries and conspiracies of the selfish and debased nobility of the later period, besides casting a malign influence on social life, were largely responsible for the political disorders of the age.

Below the nobles, there was "a small and frugal" middle class, not given to "ostentatious expenditure" but living on a standard suited to their respective offices and professions. The merchants in general led simple and temperate lives. According to some European writers, the merchants of the western coast, having made much wealth out of their extensive commerce, lived in a comparatively rich style and indulged in luxuries. The condition of the lower orders was hard as compared with that of the two higher classes. They could have no sufficient clothing; and woollen garments and shoes were above their means. As their other demands were few, they did not suffer from want of ordinary food under normal conditions; but, in times of famine and scarcity, their miseries must have been very great. Francisco Pelsaert writes with the experience of seven years that there were in his time "three classes of people who are indeed nominally free but whose status differs very little from voluntary slavery—workmen, peons or servants and shopkeepers". Their work was not voluntary, wages were low, food and houses poor, and they were subject to the oppressions of the imperial officers. The shopkeepers, though sometimes rich and respected, generally kept their wealth hidden, or, as Pelsaert writes, "they will be victims of a trumped-up charge, and whatever they have will be confiscated in legal form, because informers swarm like flies round the governors and make no difference between friends and enemies, perjuring themselves when necessary in order to remain in favour". Towards the end of Shāh Jahān's reign, the peasants were more harassed by the provincial governors, their condition became worse, and the evil of pauperism increased.
B. Social habits and practices

The vice of intemperance was not so common among the ordinary people as among the rich. "None of the people there," remarks Terry, "are at any time seen drunk (though they might find liquor enough to do it) but the very offal and dregs of that people, and these rarely or very seldom." They were temperate in their diet, and were civil to strangers.

Both Hindus and Muslims believed in the maxims and predictions of astrology. Prominent social practices of the period were sati, child-marriage, kulinism and the dowry-system. Akbar tried to regulate social usages in such a way as to make the consent of both the bride and the bridegroom, and the permission of the parents, necessary for marriage contracts. He also sought to check marriage before puberty by either party, marriages between near relatives, acceptance of high dowries, and polygamy. But his attempts do not seem to have been effective in practice. Social evils increased during the eighteenth century, particularly in Bengal, and they have been frequently referred to in the works of contemporary European writers like Bolts, Craufurd and Scraffen, and also in contemporary literature. The Marātha society of the time did not, however, encourage acceptance of dowries. The Peshwās exercised an effective control over the social and religious affairs of Mahārāshtra, and their marriage regulations "evinced", remarks Dr. Sen, "a liberal spirit that may be profitably imitated by their modern descendants". They were opposed to forcible marriages, but informal marriages were occasionally permitted by them if the motives of the contracting parties were correct. Widow-remarriage was prevalent among the non-Brāhmaṇas of Mahārāshtra, as also among the Jāts of the Punjab and the Jumnā valley; and polyandry was not unknown among the latter. In the middle of the eighteenth century, Rājā Rājballabh of Dacca made an unsuccessful attempt to introduce widow-remarriage. Though the women were generally "subject to the will of their masters", instances of their taking an active part in political affairs are not rare.

C. Deterioration in the eighteenth century

In general, however, we notice a regrettable deterioration in social life during the eighteenth century, which forms, from many points of view, one of the darkest periods in the history of India. A modern writer has justly remarked that by the end of this century
and the beginning of the next "in social usage, in politics, in the realm of religion and art, we had entered the zone of uncreative habit, of decadent tradition, and ceased to exercise our humanity".

One redeeming feature in this period of all-round decline was the continuity of the process of Hindu-Muslim rapprochement and amicable contact between the members of the two communities, in spite of the bitter political rivalries of several centuries. Akbar's reign is remarkably important and instructive for the existence of Hindu-Muslim harmony. Illustrations of this are not lacking even in the reign of Aurangzeb. Alāwāl, a Muḥammadān poet, who translated in the seventeenth century the Hindī poem Padmāvat into Bengali, was the author of several poems on Vaishṇava subjects. 'Adbullāh Khān, one of the Sayyid brothers, observed the Basant and Holi festivals, and Sirāj-ud-daulah and Mīr Jāfār enjoyed Holi festivals along with their friends and relatives. It is said that on his death-bed Mīr Jāfār drank a few drops of water poured in libation over the idol of Kīrīteswārī near Murshidābād. Daulat Rāo Sindhia and his officers joined Muharram processions in green dress like Muḥammadāns. It has been noted by a modern Indian writer on the authority of Jām-i-Jahān Numā, a Persian weekly of the early nineteenth century, how the Durgā Pujā was celebrated at the Delhi court so late as A.D. 1825.

2. Economic Conditions

A. Economic condition in pre-Akbarid days

We have very meagre information about the economic condition of India during the reigns of the first two Timūrids. Most of the historians have questioned the accuracy of the description of Hindustān given by Bābur in his Memoirs. The Humāyūn-nāmah of Gulbādan Begam refers incidentally to the low prices prevailing in Hindustān; for example, at Amārkwot, the birthplace of Akbar, the price of four goats was one rupee. The comprehensive economic reforms of Sher Shāh must have effected an improvement in the economic condition of the people in his kingdom, which was not very much disturbed at least so long as the Sūr administration retained its vigour.

B. Economic condition after the days of Akbar

So far as the economic condition of the country during the reigns of the great Mughuls, and those of the later Mughuls, is concerned, we get copious information from the Aḵn-ḵābār and
some incidental references in some other works in Persian; from
the accounts of contemporary European merchants, travellers and
writers; from the records of the European factories in India; and
also from contemporary Indian literature. We can only attempt
here to give a brief survey of the important aspects of the economic
condition of India during the centuries of Mughul rule.

**C. Prosperous cities**

Prosperity and plenty prevailed in the chief cities of India
in the age of the great Mughuls. Writing in A.D. 1585, Fitch
observed: “Agra and Fatehpore are two very great cities, either
of them much greater than London and very populous. Between
Agra and Fatehpore are twelve miles, and all the way is a market
of victual and other things, as full as though a man were still in
a town, and so many people as if a man were in a market.” Terry
refers to the Punjab as “a large province, and most fruitful.
Lahore is the chief city thereof, built very large, and abounds
both in people and riches, one of the principal cities for trade
in all India”. Monserrate asserted that in 1581 Lahore was
“not second to any city in Europe or Asia”. Burhanpur in
Khândesh was “very great, rich and full of people”. Ahmadâbâd
in Gujarât has been described by Abul Fazl as “a noble city in
a high state of prosperity”, which “for the pleasantness of its
climate and display of the choicest productions of the whole globe
is almost unrivalled”. In Eastern India there was much opulence
in cities like Benares, Patna, Râjmahal, Burdwan, Hugli, Dacca
and Chittâgong.

**D. Communications**

There was no want of communications, along roads and
rivers, for the purposes of the vast mercantile traffic, though they
compare unfavourably with those of the present day improved
under scientific conditions. Of course, with the exception of
certain highways, the roads were generally unmetalled but the
“main routes of land travel were clearly defined, in some cases
by avenues of trees, and more generally by walled enclosures,
known as sarâis, in which travellers and merchants could pass
the night in comparative security”. The rivers, some of which
were navigable throughout the year and some through a part of
it, afforded excellent means for the carriage of heavy traffic. Of
course, the security of the communications depended greatly on the
efficiency of the administration of the country. But even in the
eighteenth century the facility of river communication has been referred to by such writers as Dow, Rennell and Stavorinus, who had intimate knowledge of the province. There was a tradition of road-building activity on the part of the State since the early days of Indian history, which the great Sūr rulers imitated and the Mughuls also followed. A bridge was built at Jaunpur by Munim Khān early in Akbar's reign. Jahāngir constructed water-works at Burhān purs, and, under Shāh Jahān, Āli Mardān Khān repaired or built the Rāvī canal in 1639, which benefited the people to a great extent.

E. Agriculture

The agricultural crops of the time were much the same as those of to-day. It is wrong to say that there was no localisation of crops as in the present day, for sugar was cultivated in many parts of Bengal and Bihār and was carried to other parts of India; and indigo was cultivated in certain places of Northern India. Pelsaert definitely tells us of the large-scale production and manufacture of indigo in the Jumna valley and Central India. To meet the demands of widespread manufactures of cotton and silk goods, both cotton and silk were cultivated extensively in certain parts of India. Tobacco, introduced either late in 1604 or early in 1605, began to be cultivated by the people thereafter. Agricultural implements were also very much the same as those of the present day, and such was the case with the agricultural system with the exception of the comparative absence of artificial irrigation. The tenants were often subjected to the oppression and exactions of local officials.

F. Famines

The sufferings of the peasants knew no bounds during the frequent outbreaks of famine, caused by the failure of seasonal rains, especially because the Mughul State then made no systematic and prolonged efforts to provide relief and effected no substantial remissions in revenue collection. The little that they did was insufficient to alleviate the acute miseries of the myriads of people who died of starvation and the pestilence that closely followed it. A terrible famine broke out in 1556–1557 in the neighbourhood of Āgra and Bīyāna, and Badāūnī "with his own eyes witnessed the fact that men ate their own kind and the appearance of the famished sufferers was so hideous that one could scarcely look upon them. . . . The whole country was a desert, and no husbandman remained to till the ground". Gujārāt, one of the richest
provinces in India, was stricken with famine and pestilence in 1573–1574, so that "the inhabitants, rich and poor, fled from the country and were scattered abroad". The country was so greatly affected by the horrors of a severe famine lasting from 1594 to 1598 that "men ate their own kind. The streets and roads were blocked up with dead bodies and no assistance could be rendered for their removal". Akbar made an attempt to relieve the distress of the people by placing Shaikh Farid of Bukhārā, a naturally kind-hearted man, in charge of relief measures. But the miseries of the people, due to this catastrophic visitation, were too appalling to be removed by such steps. An equally horrible famine devastated the Deccan and Gujarāt in 1630–1632. The horrors of this calamity were so great that, as 'Abdul Hamid Lāhorī, the official historian of the reign of Shāh Jahān, writes, "men began to devour each other, and the flesh of a son was preferred to his love". A Dutch merchant, who witnessed the calamity, notes that "men lying in the street, not yet dead, were cut up by others, and men fed on living men, so that even in the streets, and still more on road journeys, men ran great danger of being murdered or eaten". Shāh Jahān "opened a few soup-kitchens", distributed 1½ lacs of rupees in charity and remitted one-eleventh of the land-revenue assessment; but this could not suffice to mitigate the sufferings of the starving people. There were occasional outbreaks of famine during the succeeding years till the close of Aurangzeb's reign, but none was so severe in nature as that of 1630–1632.

**G. Industry and Crafts**

One of the most important factors in the economic history of India during the period under review was the extensive and varied industrial activity of the people, which besides supplying the needs of the local aristocracy and merchants could meet the demands of traders coming from Europe and other parts of Asia. By far the most important industry in India during this period was the manufacture of cotton cloth. The principal centres of cotton manufacture were distributed throughout the country, as, for example, at some places on the Coromandel coast, at Patan in Gujarāt, Burhānpur in Khāndesh, Jaunpur, Benares, Patna and some other places in the United Provinces and Bihār, and many cities and villages in Orissa and Bengal. The whole country from Orissa to East Bengal looked like a big cotton factory, and the Daoca district was specially reputed for its delicate muslin fabrics, "the best and finest cloth made of cotton" that was in all India. Pelissert notes that at Chābāspur and
Sonārgān in East Bengal “all live by the weaving industry and the produce has the highest reputation and quality”. Bernier observes: “There is in Bengale such a quantity of cotton and silk, that the Kingdom may be called the common storehouse for those two kinds of merchandise, not of Hindoustan or the Empire of the Great Mogul only, but of all the neighbouring kingdoms, and even of Europe.” The dyeing industry, too, was in a flourishing condition. Terry tells us that coarser cotton cloths were either dyed or printed with a “variety of well-shaped and well-coloured flowers or figures, which a. so fixed in the cloth that no water can wash them out”.

Silk-weaving, limited in scope as compared with cotton manufacture, was also an important industry of a section of the people. Abul Fazl writes that it received a considerable impetus in the reign of Akbar due to the imperial patronage. Bengal was the premier centre of silk production and manufacture and supplied the demands of the Indian and European merchants from other parts of India, though silk-weaving was practised in Lahore, Āgra, Fatehpur Sikri and Gujarāt. Moreland writes on the authority of Tavernier that, about the middle of the seventeenth century, the total production of silk in Bengal was “about 2½ million pounds out of which one million pounds were worked up locally, ½ million were exported raw by the Dutch and ½ million distributed over India, most of it going to Gujarāt, but some being taken by merchants from Central Asia”. Shawl and carpet-weaving industries flourished under the patronage of Akbar; the former woven mainly from hair, having originated from Kāshmir, was manufactured also at Lahore, and the latter at Lahore and Āgra. Woollen goods, chiefly coarse blankets, were also woven. Though India had lost her old vigorous maritime activity, the ship-building industry did not die out at this time, and we have references to it from contemporary literature. Saltpetre, used chiefly as an ingredient for gunpowder in India and also exported outside by the Dutch and English traders, was manufactured in widely distributed parts of India during the seventeenth century, particularly in Peninsular India, Coromandel coast and the Bihār section of the Indo-Gangetic region. Bihār henceforth enjoyed a special reputation for the manufacture of this article till the first half of the nineteenth century, and it was in high demand by the Europeans for use in wars in their countries. Besides these major industries, we have testimony regarding various crafts during the Mughul period Edward Terry noticed that “many curious boxes, trunks, standishes (pen-cases), carpets, with other excellent manufactures, may be there had”. Pelssert also writes that in Sind “ornamental desks, draught-
boards, writing-cases, and similar goods are manufactured locally in large quantities; they are pretty, inlaid with ivory and ebony, and used to be exported in large quantities from Goa, and the coast towns”. Though the State encouraged manufactures, the weavers were directly financed in most cases by middlemen, who must have exploited them greatly. Further, as both Bernier and Pelsaert tell us, they suffered from harsh treatment at the hands of the nobles and officers, who forced them to sell goods at low prices and exacted from them forbidden abwābs. This deprived the weavers and craftsmen of the benefit of economic profit from their occupations, though the taste of the nobles for high-class manufactures kept up the tradition of their quality.

H. Prices

We learn from Abul Fazl, and some other writers, that the prices of articles, especially those of common consumption like rice, vegetables, spices, meat, livestock and milk, were very low. Edward Terry observes that “the plenty of provisions was very great throughout the whole country; . . . and everyone there may eat bread without scarceness”. Smith writes that “the hired landless labourer in the time of Akbar and Jahāngīr probably had more to eat than he has now”, but Moreland is of opinion that “speaking generally the masses lived on the same economic plane as now”. It is certain that there was no golden age of opulence for the common people under the Mughuls, because though the prices of articles were cheap, their average income was proportionately low or perhaps lower. They did not, however, grovel in misery and smart under discontent, as their needs were few and the problems of life were not so complicated as those of the present day.

I. Mints and Currency

Akbar, like Sher Shāh, tried to regulate the currency of the State. Towards the end of 1577 he appointed Khwāja ‘Abdus Samād of Shirāz master of the imperial mint at Delhi, and one important officer was placed over each of the chief provincial mints in Bengal, Lahore, Jaunpur, Ahmadābād and Patna. During the reign of Shāh Jahān, one of the most important mints was at Surāt. Akbar issued gold, silver and copper coins, the first having no less than twenty-six varieties of different weights and value. In Akbar’s time, the silver rupee of about 175 grains was equivalent
in value to 2s. 3d. sterling. Akbar also issued a square silver rupee known as the jalāli. As in Sher Shāh's currency, the chief copper coin of Akbar's time was the dām, also called paisā or fulūs, which weighed 323.5 grains, formed the ready money for both the rich and the poor, and was divided into twenty-five parts, known as jitals, for purposes of account. Mercantile affairs of the Empire during the reigns of Akbar and his successors were transacted in round gold mohurs, rupees and dāms. The coins of the Mughul State, especially those of Akbar, "were excellent in respect of purity of metal, fullness of weight, and artistic execution". The rupee was equivalent in value to forty dāms up to 1616 and thirty dāms, or a little more or less, from 1627 onwards. But there was no great alteration in currency after Akbar, though in 1659 the English merchants wrote to the authorities in England that "the new king, Oran Zeeb (Aurangzeb), hath raised his coine (silver) to ¾ per cent finer than formerly; which hath caused much trouble and contention between the merchants of Surat and Governor".

J. Foreign Trade

India had an active and considerable foreign trade, during the greater part of the Mughul period, with different countries of Asia and Europe. The chief imports of the country were bullion, raw silk, horses, metals, ivory, coral, amber, precious stones, velvets, brocades, broadcloth, perfumes, drugs, Chinese porcelain and African slaves, and her exports were various textiles, pepper, indigo, opium and other drugs, saltpetre and miscellaneous goods. There were two main land routes for export trade on the north-west -- from Lahore to Kābul and from Multān to Qandahār, while there were a few more in other parts. But the traffic along these routes was restricted and insecure. The sea and the rivers were more advantageous for commercial purposes. The chief ports of India were Lahori Bandar in Sind; the group of Gujarāt ports like Surāt, Broach and Cambay; Bassein; Chaul; Dabul (modern Dabhol) in the Ratnagiri district; Goa and Bhatkal; Malābār ports, the most important of which were Calicut and Cochin; Negapatam, Masulipatam and a few minor ones on the east coast; and Sātgaon, Srīpar, Chittāgong and Sonārgāon in Bengal. The customs duties, fixed by the State, were not very high; for example, at Surāt these were 3½ per cent on all imports and exports of goods, and 2 per cent on money either gold or silver. No merchant was allowed to "carry any quantity of silver" out of the country. The important feature of the trade of India from the reign of Akbar
was the commercial activity of the English and the Dutch, who gradually established factories in widely distributed centres. As the demand for the costly European goods was confined to the wealthy, the European merchants had to import bullion from home to purchase Indian commodities in spite of strong criticism in England against this practice. Moreland’s contention that the European traders in India during the Mughul period had not "matters all their own way" is supported by numerous references in the factory records of the time. While they had to experience difficulty in dealing with Indian merchants and brokers, who were "generally subtle and clever", and with commercial monopolies, the chief obstacle in their way was the interference of the local governors and other high officers. As an instance, we may note the evidence of an English letter of 1659 to the effect that Mir Jumla had caused the doors of the English factory at Cassimbazar to be closed, and had forbidden anybody to trade with the English, until they had paid him a formal visit. The European traders spared no pains to humour and satisfy these officers in a variety of ways; sometimes they could gain their objects and sometimes they were disillusioned.

K. Economic Deterioration after the Reign of Aurangzeb

With the closing years of the reign of Aurangzeb, the economic prosperity of India deteriorated as a natural sequel to the disappearance of peace and political order. The incessant wars of the reign, bankruptcy of the administration and exhaustion of the exchequer, made maintenance of peace and order impossible; and consequently agriculture, industries, and trade were so badly affected that for some time trade came almost to a standstill. During the years 1690-1698, the English could not procure sufficient cloths for their shipping. "Thus ensued," observes the historian of Aurangzeb, "a great economic impoverishment of India—not only a decrease of the national stock, but also a rapid lowering of mechanical skill and standard of civilisation, a disappearance of art and culture over wide tracts of the country." Though comparatively free from wars, Bengal was put to a great economic strain as the revenues of the subah financed the Deccan wars of Aurangzeb and were sorely tapped by the rapidly declining Mughul Empire.

The economic decline of the country began much earlier than 1757, but a number of causes accelerated it, especially in Bengal, during the eighteenth century, which is indeed the "darkest age" in the economic history of India. The weakness of the central
government, court revolutions and conspiracies, the terrible Persian inroad of 1738–1739, the ravages committed by the Marāthas, the Himalayan tribes, the Mugs and the Portuguese pirates, the abuse of dastaks and other trade privileges by the servants, agents and gomastās of the English Company in their private trade, the Company’s monopoly of some of the articles of prime necessity like salt, betelnut and tobacco, the oppression of merchants and weavers for the sake of a rich return on the investments of the Company, the huge drain of wealth out of the country since 1757, the oppressive revenue-farming system, and currency disorders—all combined to bring about the economic ruin of the country. To add to these, the gradual supplanting of the Nawāb’s government by the East India Company, and the consequent disbandment of armies and disestablishment of courts and native secretariats, threw many people out of employment, who joined the ranks of the professional robbers and criminal tribes, and produced general lawlessness and insecurity during the post-Plassey period. In May, 1765, the Select Committee beheld Bengal as a “presidency divided, headstrong and licentious, a government without nerves, a treasury without money, and service without subordination, discipline, or public spirit . . . amidst a general stagnation of useful industry and of licensed commerce, individuals were accumulating immense riches, which they had ravished from the insulted prince and helpless people, who groaned under the united pressure of discontent, poverty and oppression.”¹ The dual government of Clive and his two inefficient successors, Verelst and Cartier, made confusion worse confounded, and the terrible famine of 1770 filled the cup of popular misery. After 1772, when the Company’s government decided “to stand forth as the Diwān”, attempts were made by Warren Hastings and Cornwallis to remove some of these evils, but many years more were to elapse before a new order could be brought into existence.

¹ Letter from the Select Committee in Bengal to the Court of Directors dated 19th February, 1767. Vide Verelst, View of Bengal, Appendix, p. 471
CHAPTER VIII

EDUCATION, LITERATURE AND ART

1. Education and Literature

In Mughul India there was nothing like the modern system of education established and maintained by the State. But primary and secondary education of some sort existed. The rulers themselves, as well as many of the grandees, encouraged such education by grants of lands or money to mosques, monasteries and individual saints and scholars. Thus almost every mosque had a maktab attached to it, where the boys and girls of the neighbourhood received elementary education. Hindu Sanskrit and vernacular schools also continued to function for the benefit of students in the urban as well as rural areas.

The Mughul rulers of India were patrons of education. It is stated, on the authority of the Tawārīk of Sayyid Maqbar ʿĀlī, a minister of Bābūr, that one of the duties of the Public Works Department (Shuhrat-i-Ām) of that ruler’s time was the building of schools and colleges. Humāyūn, though indolent and addicted to opium, had a passion for study, his favourite subjects being geography and astronomy; and his fondness for books was so great that he always “carried a select library with him”. He caused a madrasa to be established at Delhi and changed the pleasure-house built by Sher Shāh in the Purāna Qil’ā into a library. “Akbar’s reign marks a new epoch for the system introduced for imparting education in schools and colleges”. He built colleges at Fathpur Sīkri, Āgra and other places. With a view to improving the state of Muslim education, he effected certain changes in its curriculum, which it would be unreasonable to say produced no effect at all. As a matter of fact, Abul Fazl, referring to its good results, writes that “all nations have schools for the education of youths; but Hindustān is particularly famous for its seminaries”. Prompted by his policy of religious toleration, Akbar arranged in later years for the education of Hindus in madrasas. Jahāngīr, possessed of some literary taste and well-read in Persian as well as Turki, issued a regulation to the effect that on the death of a
rich man or traveller without any heir, his property would escheat to the crown and be utilised for building and repairing madrasas, monasteries, etc. It is recorded in the Ta'rikh-i-Jân-Jahân that, soon after his accession to the throne, Jahângîr "repaired even these madrasas that had for thirty years been the dwelling-places of birds and beasts, and filled them with students and professors". Shāh Jahân, though more interested in magnificent buildings than in anything else, was educated in his early youth in Turki, spent a part of the night in his own studies, and encouraged learning by granting rewards and stipends to scholars. He founded one college at Delhi and repaired the college named Dâr-ul-Baqâ (Abode of Eternity), which had been almost in ruins. In Dârâ Shukoh the Mughul imperial family possessed one of the greatest scholars that India has ever produced. Well-versed in Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit, he was the author of some famous works, including Persian translations of the Upanishads, the Bhagavat Gîtâ and the Yoga Vâsishtha Râmâyana; a calendar of Muslim saints; and several works on Sûfi philosophy. Looking at the grave of this unlucky person, Sir William Sleeman rightly thought that had he lived to occupy the throne, the nature of education, and there-with the destiny of India, would have been different. Aurangzeb, though highly educated, did nothing substantial to promote learning in general, though he extended every encouragement to Muslim education, and founded, according to Keene, "numerous colleges and schools".

Female education of some sort existed during the Mughul period. The daughters of the imperial household, and of rich nobles, were given tuition in their houses, and we may assume that the daughters of the middle-class people among the Hindus received primary education along with the boys in the schools and that some of them were conversant with religious literature. The Auxiliary Committee of the Indian Statutory Commission rightly observed in September, 1929, that there is "nothing inherent either in the Hindu or in the Muslim religion which militates against the education of women. In fact, there were in India even in early days many examples of women possessing wide knowledge, particularly of sacred and classical literature". In Akbar's time "regular training was given to the ladies of the royal household". Some of the ladies so instructed distinguished themselves in the sphere of literature. Thus Bâbur's daughter, Gubbadan Begam, authoress of the Humâyûnmânih, Humâyûn's niece, Salimâ Sultanâ, authoress of several Persian poems, Nûr Jahân, Mumtâz Mahal, Jahânârâ Begam and Zeb-un-Nisâ were highly educated ladies, well-read
in Persian and Arabic literature. Besides being a fine Arabic and Persian scholar, Zeb-un-Nisa was an expert in calligraphy and had a rich library.

As we have already noted, the Timurid rulers of India were patrons of literature and gave a considerable impetus to its development in different branches. Many scholars flourished and wrote interesting and important works under the patronage of Akbar. One of Akbar's contemporaries, Mādharavāchārya, a Bengali poet of Trivenī and author of Chandi-mangal, bestows high praise on the Emperor as a patron of letters.

The Persian literature of Akbar's reign may be considered under three heads: (i) historical works, (ii) translations, and (iii) poetry and verse. The well-known historical works of the reign are the Ta'rikh-î-Afši û Mūllā Dānd, the ‘Āin-i-Akbarî and Akbarnāmāh of Abul Fazl, the Muntakhab-ul-Tawārikh of Badāūnī, the Tabaqat-i-Akbarî of Nizām-ud-din Ahmad, the Akbarnāmāh of Faizi Sarhindi, and the Ma‘āsir-i-Rahimî of ‘Abdul Bāqî, compiled under the patronage of ‘Abdur Rahim Khān-i-Khānān. The most accomplished writer (in Persian) of the reign was Abul Fazl, a man of letters, a poet, an essayist, a critic, and a historian. By order of the Emperor, many books in Sanskrit and other languages were translated into Persian. Different sections of the Mahābhārata were translated into that language by several Muslim scholars and were compiled under the title of Razm-Nāmāh. After labouring for four years, Badāūnî completed the translation of the Rāmāyaṇa in A.D. 1589. Hāji Ibrāhīm Sarhindi translated into Persian the Atharva Veda; Faizi the Lilābātî, a work on mathematics; Mukammal Khān Gujarātî the Tajāk, a treatise on astronomy; ‘Abdur Rahim Khān-i-Khānān the Wāqiāt-i-Bāburî; and Maulānā Shāh Muhammad Shāhshāhādî translated the History of Kāshmir. Some Greek and Arabic works were also translated into Persian. A number of famous poets or versifiers produced works of merit under the patronage of Akbar. The most famous among the verse-writers was Ghizali. Next in importance to him was Faizi, a brother of Abul Fazl. Other prominent poets were Muhammad Husain Nazirî of Nishāpur, who wrote ghazals of great merit, and Sāyyid Jamāluddin Urū of Shirāj, the most famous writer of Qasidā in his days.

Jahāngīr, possessed of an excellent literary taste, also extended his patronage to scholars. His autobiography is second only to that of Bābur in matter and style. Among the learned men who adorned his court, of whom the Iqtshānmāh-i-Jahāngīrî has given a comprehensive list, we may mention here the names of Ghiyās
Beg, Naqib Khān, Mu’tamid Khān, Niṣmatullah and ‘Abdul Haqq Dihlawī. Some historical works were written during Jahāngīr’s reign, the most important of these being the Ma’dṣir-i-Jahāngīrī, the Iqbalnāmah-i-Jahāngīrī and the Zubd-ut-Tawārikh. Shāh Jahān followed his predecessors in patronising learned men. Besides many poets and theologians, there flourished in his court some famous writers of history like ‘Abdul Hamid Lahorī, author of the Pādshāh-nāmāh, Amināi Qazwīnī, author of another Pādshāhnāmāh, Ināyat Khān, author of the Shāh-Jahānnāmāh, and Muhammad Sālih, author of ‘Amal-i-Sālih, all of whom are important authorities on the history of Shāh Jahān’s reign. The scholarly works of Prince Dārā Shukoh, to which reference has already been made, are masterpieces of Persian literature. A zealous Sunni, Aurangzīb was a critical scholar of Muslim theology and jurisprudence. He had no taste for poetry. Though opposed to the writing of histories of his reign, so that the Muntakhab-ul-Lubāb of Khāfī Khān had to be written in secrecy, there are some well-known works of this kind, such as the ‘Ālamgīrīnāmāh by Mirzā Muhammad Kazīm, the Ma’dṣir-i-‘Ālamgīrī of Muhammad Sāqi, the KhulāsatuTawārikh of Sujan Rāī Khatri, the Nushkā-i-Dilkushā of Bhimsen and the Fatihāt-i-‘Ālamgīrī of Išwar Dās.

The peace and order secured by Akbar, and the cosmopolitan ideas of the religious movements of the period, preached by a band of saintly teachers in a language “understood of the people”, stimulated the genius of the latter, which unfolded itself in manifold petals. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries consequently became “the Augustan age of Hindustani literature”. The first writer of note after 1526 was Malik Muhammad Jayasī, who in 1540 wrote “the fine philosophic epic entitled the Pādmāvat, which gives the story of Pādmīnī, the queen of Mewār, in an allegorical setting”. Akbar’s keen interest in, and patronage of, Hindi poetry gave a great stimulus to Hindi literature. Among the courtiers of the Emperor, Birbal, who received from him the title of Kavi Priya, was a famous poet. Rājā Mān Singh also wrote verses in Hindi and was a patron of learning. The most distinguished writer among Akbar’s ministers was ‘Abdur Rahīm Khān-i-Khānān, whose dohās are even now read with interest and admiration all over Northern India. Narahari, whom the Emperor gave the title of Mahāpātra, Harināth and Ganj were also noted writers of his court.

The greater part of the poetical literature of the time was religious, marked by an exposition of either Krishṇa worship or the Rāma cult. Many writers of the former faith flourished in the Brajbhūmi, corresponding roughly to the Jumna valley, where
it developed remarkably. Among the eight disciples of Vallabhāchārya and his son Bithal Nāth, grouped under the name of “Asthāpa”, the most notable was Surdās, “the blind bard of Agra”, who, writing in Brajabhāshā, described in his Sursāgar the sports of Krishna’s early life, and composed many verses on the charm of Krishna and his beloved Rādhā. The other important poets of this school were Nand Dās, author of the Rās-panchadhyayi, Vishal Nāth, author of the Chaurāsī Vaishnava ki vārtā in prose, Paramānanda Dās, Kumbhan Dās, and Ras Khān (a Muslim disciple of Vishal Nāth), author of Premavārtikā. Among the writers of the Rāma cult, the most illustrious was Tulsi Dās (A.D. 1532–1023), who lived in Benares “unapproachable and alone in his niche in the temple of Fame”. He was not merely a poet of a high order, but a spiritual teacher of the people of Hindustān, where his name has become a household word and his memory is worshipped by millions. The most famous of his works, known as Rāmcharitmanāsā, or “The Pool of Rāma’s Life”, has been justly described by Sir George Grierson as “the one Bible of a hundred millions of people” of Hindustān. Crowse also observed in his translation of the Rāmāyaṇa of Tulsi Dās that “his book is in every one’s hands, from the court to the cottage, and is read and heard and appreciated alike by every class of the Hindu community, whether high or low, rich or poor, young or old”. This period was also marked by “the first attempts to systematise the art of poetry itself”, made by writers like Keshava Dās (A.D. 1580) a Sāndhya Brāhmaṇa of Orchā, Sundar Senāpati and the Nāthī brothers, who flourished during the reign of Shāh Jahān.

In Bengal, this period was remarkable for a brilliant outburst of the Vaishnava literature. Its various branches, such as the Kavchās or notes, the paṭus and songs, and the biographies of Chaitanya Deva, have not only saturated the minds of the people of Bengal with feelings of love and liberalism, but have also survived as a mirror of the social life of the province during that age. The most prominent Vaishnava writers were Krishnādās Kavirāj (born in A.D. 1517 of a Vaidya family of Jhāmālpur in Burdwan), the author of the most important biography of Chaitanya, bearing the title of Chaitanyakaritāmitra; Brindāvan Dās (born in A.D. 1507), the author of Chaitanya Bhāgavata, which besides being a standard work on the life of Chaitanya Deva, is a store-house of information concerning the Bengali society of his time; Jayānanda (born in A.D. 1513), the author of Chaitanya Mangal, a biographical work giving some fresh information about Chaitanya Deva’s life; Trilochan Dās (born in A.D. 1523 at Kowgrām, a village situated
thirty miles to the north of Burdwān), the author of a very popular biography of Chaitanya Deva also known as Chaitanya Mangal; and Narahari Chakravarty, the author of Bhaktiratnākara, a voluminous biography of Chaitanya Deva, written in fifteen chapters and considered to be next in importance only to the work of Krishṇatādās Kavirāj. This period also saw the production of numerous translations of the great epics and the Bhāgavata, and books in praise of Chandi Devī and Manasā Devī. The most important of these works were the Mahābhārata of Kāsirām Dās and the Kavīkānkan Chandī of Mukundārām Chakravarti, which enjoys to this day as much popularity in Bengal as the famous book of Tulsi Dās in upper India. Mukundārām’s work depicts a graphic picture of the social and economic conditions of the people of Bengal of his time, and it is for this that Prof. Cowell has described him as “the Crabbe of Bengal”, and Dr. Grierson considers his poetry “as coming from the heart, and not from the school, and as full of passages adorned with true poetry and descriptive power”.

The Emperors’ fondness for books led to the foundation of libraries, which were stocked with numerous valuable manuscript works. Akbar’s library had enormous collections, which were properly classified under different sections. The art of calligraphy reached a high state of excellence. Among the famous penmen of Akbar’s court, of whom the ‘Āīn-i-Akbari has preserved a list, the most distinguished was Muhammad Husain of Kāshmir, who got the title of Zarrīnqalīm (Gold-pen).

The growth of Hindi literature received a setback during the reign of Aurangzeb, owing to the stoppage of court patronage. Not much Urdu poetry also was written in Northern India during this period; but some famous writers of Urdu verse flourished in the Deccan.

Literary activity did not entirely cease even in the troubled days of later Mughul rule. Men of letters were patronised by Emperors like Bahādur Shāh and Muhammad Shāh, subahdārs like Murshid Qulī Jāfar Khān and ‘Ālīvardī Khān, and zamindārs like Rājā Krishṇachandra of Nadiā, Asadullāh of Bīrbūm and some others. The literature of this period, with the exception of the devotional songs of Rāmprasad, was often of a low tone and a vitiated taste. Female education, both among the Hindus and the Muslims, was not unknown to the age. The two daughters of Jan Muhammad, a converted Hindu and father of the well-known Kokī Jīū, were “sent to school and attained some proficiency in letters”. Kokī Jīū “excelled her brothers in handwriting and composition”. In
Bengal, we find several instances of educated ladies; for example, the wives of Rājā Navśkrishṇa of Sobhābāzār (in Calcutta) were famous for their capacity to read, and Ånandamayi of East Bengal was a poetess of no mean repute.

2. Art and Architecture
   
   A. Architecture
   
   As in literature and religion, so in art and architecture, the Mughul period was not entirely an age of innovation and renaissance, but of a continuation and culmination of processes that had their beginnings in the later Turko-Afghan period. In fact, the art and architecture of the period after 1526, as also of the preceding period, represent a happy mingling of Muslim and Hindu art traditions and elements.

   With the exception of Aurangzeb, whose puritanism could not reconcile itself with patronage of art, all the early Mughul rulers of India were great builders. Brief though his Indian reign was, Bābur could make time to criticise in his Memoirs the art of building in Hindustān and think of constructing edifices. He is said to have invited from Constantinople pupils of the famous Albanian architect, Sinān, to work on mosques and other monuments in India. “It is, however, very unlikely,” remarks Mr. Percy Brown, “that this proposal ever came to anything, because had any member of this famous school taken service under the Mughuls, traces of the influence of the Byzantine style would be observable. But there is none. . . .” Bābur employed Indian stone-masons to construct his buildings. He himself states in his Memoirs that “680 men worked daily on his buildings at Āgra, and that nearly 1,500 were employed daily on his buildings at Sikri, Biyāna, Dholpur, Gwālior and Kiul”. The larger edifices of Bābur have entirely disappeared. Three minor ones have survived, one of which is a commemorative mosque in the Kābuli Bāg at Pānīpāt (1528), another the Jāmi' Masjid at Sambhal (1526) in Rohilkhand, and the third a mosque within the old Lodi fort at Āgra. Of the reign of the unlucky emperor Hubāyūn, only two structures remain in a semi-dilapidated condition, one mosque at Āgra, and the other a massive well-proportioned mosque at Fatḥbād in the Hīsār district of the Punjab, built about A.D. 1540 with enamelled tile decoration in the Persian manner. It should be noted here that this “Persian” or rather “Mongol” trait was not brought to India for the first time by Hubāyūn, but had already been present in
the Bahmani kingdom in the later half of the fifteenth century. The short reign of the Indo-Afghan revivalist Sher Shah is a period of transition in the history of Indian architecture. The two remaining gateways of his projected walled capital at Delhi, which could not be completed owing to his untimely death, and the citadel known as the Purana Qil‘a, exhibit “a more refined and artistically ornate type of edifice than had prevailed for some time.” The mosque called the Qil‘a-i-Kuhna Masjid, built in 1545 within the walls, deserves a high place among the buildings of Northern India for its brilliant architectural qualities. Sher Shah’s mausoleum, built on a high plinth in the midst of a lake at Sasaram in the Shahbabad district of Bihar, is a marvel of Indo-Moslem architecture both from the standpoint of design and dignity, and shows a happy combination of Hindu and Muslim architectural ideas. Thus not only in government, but also in culture and art, the great Afghan prepared the way for the great Mughul, Akbar.

Akbar’s reign saw a remarkable development of architecture. With his usual thoroughness, the Emperor mastered every detail of the art; and, with a liberal and synthetic mind he supplied himself with artistic ideas from different sources, which were
given a practical shape by the expert craftsmen he gathered around him. Abul Fazl justly observes that his sovereign "planned splendid edifices and dressed the work of his mind and heart in the garment of stone and clay". Ferguson aptly remarked that Fatehpur Sikri "was a reflex of the mind of a great man". Akbar's activities were not confined only to the great

masterpieces of architecture; but he also built a number of forts, villas, towers, sarais, schools, tanks and wells. While still adhering to Persian ideas, which he inherited from his mother, born of a Persian Shaikh family of Jām, his tolerance of the Hindus, sympathy with their culture, and the policy of winning them over to his cause, led him to use Hindu styles of architecture in many of his buildings, the decorative features of which are copies of those found
in the Hindu and Jaina temples. It is strikingly illustrated in the Jahangiri Mahal, in Agra fort, with its square pillars and bracket-capitals, and rows of small arches built according to the Hindu design without voussoirs; in many of the buildings of Fathpur Sikri, the imperial capital from 1569 to 1584; and also in the Lahore fort. Even in the famous mausoleum of Humayun at Old Delhi, completed early in A.D. 1569, which is usually considered to have displayed influences of Persian art, the ground-plan of the tomb is Indian, the free use of white marble in the outward appearance of

JAHANGIRI MAHAL, AGRA FORT

the edifice is Indian, and the coloured tile decoration, used so much by Persian builders, is absent. The most magnificent of the Emperor’s buildings at Fathpur Sikri are Jodh Bai’s palace and two other residential buildings, said to have been constructed to accommodate his queens; the Diwan-i-‘Am or the Emperor’s office, of Hindu design with a projecting veranda roof over a colonnade; the wonderful Diwan-i-Khās or Hall of private audience, of distinctly Indian character in planning, construction and ornament; the marble mosque known as the Jami’ Masjid, described by Fergusson as “a romance in stone”; the Buland Darwaza or the massive
triumphal archway at the southern gate of the mosque, built of marble and sandstone to commemorate Akbar's conquest of Gujarāt; and the pyramidal structure in five storeys known as the Panch Mahal, showing continuation of the plan of the Indian Buddhist vihāras which still exist in certain parts of India. Two other remarkable buildings of the period are the Palace of Forty Pillars at Allahābād and Akbar's mausoleum at Sikandara. The palace at Allahābād, the construction of which, according to William Finch, took forty years and engaged 5,000 to 20,000

workmen of different denominations, is of a definitely Indian design with its projecting veranda-roof "supported on rows of Hindu pillars". The colossal structure of Akbar's mausoleum at Sikandara, planned in the Emperor's lifetime but executed between A.D. 1605 and 1613, consists of five terraces diminishing as they ascend with a vaulted roof to the topmost storey of white marble, and it is thought that a central dome was originally intended to be built over the cenotaph. The Indian design in this structure was inspired by the Buddhist vihāras of India and also probably by Khmer architecture found in Cochin-China.
The number of buildings erected during Jahāngir's reign was poor as compared with the architectural record of his father, but two structures of his time are of exceptional interest and merit. One is the mausoleum of Akbar, whose striking features have been already discussed. The other is the tomb of I'timād-ud-daulah at Āgra built by his daughter, Nūr Jahān, the consort of Jahāngir. The latter was built wholly of white marble decorated with *pietra dura* work in semi-precious stones. We have an earlier specimen of this work in the Gol Mandal temple at Udaipur (from A.D. 1600). It was therefore a Rājput style, or, most probably, an older Indian style.

Shāh Jahān was a prolific builder. Many buildings, palaces, forts, gardens and mosques due to him are to be found at places like Āgra, Delhi, Lahore, Kābul, Kāshmir, Qandahār, Ajmer, Ahmadābād, Mukhliśpur, and elsewhere. Though it is not possible to form a precise estimate of the expenditure on these buildings, yet there is no doubt that the cost must have run into several dozen crores of rupees. The structures of Shāh Jahān, as compared with those of Akbar, are inferior in grandeur and originality, but they are superior in lavish display and rich and skilful decoration, so that the architecture of the former "becomes jewellery on a
bigger scale”. This is particularly illustrated in his Delhi buildings like the Diwān-i-ʿAm and the Diwān-i-Khās. The latter, with its costly silver ceiling, and mingled decoration of marble, gold and precious stones, justified the inscription engraved on it:

“Agar firdaus bar ru-yi zamin ast
Hamin ast, u hamin ast, u hamin ast.”
(If on Earth be an Eden of bliss,
It is this, it is this, none but this.)

MOTI MASJID AT ĀGRA

The lovely Moti Masjid or Pearl Mosque at Āgra deserves a higher place from the standpoint of true art for its purity and elegance. Another notable building of the reign is the Jāmi’ Masjid at Āgra, otherwise known as the Masjid-i-Jahān Nāmā. The Tāj Mahal, a splendid mausoleum built by Shāh Jahan, at a cost of fifty lacs of rupees, over the grave of his beloved wife, Mumtāz Mahal, is rightly regarded as one of the wonders of the world for its beauty and magnificence. As regards the identity of the architects who designed and built the Tāj, Smith’s contention that it is “the product of a combination of European and Asiatic genius” has been challenged by Moin-ud-din Ahmad, who advances reasonable grounds
for disbelieving the supposed participation of Italian or French
architects in the designing or construction of this noble monument
of conjugal fidelity and gives the credit for the design to Ustäd
‘Isā. While studying the Tāj, a student of Indian art should not
fail to note certain points. Firstly, the plan and chief features
of it were not entirely novel, for “from Sher’s mausoleum, and
through Humāyūn’s tomb and the Bijāpur memorials, the descent
of the style can easily be discerned”; even the “lace-work in
marble and other stones, and precious stones inlay (pietra dura)
work on marble” were already present in Western India and Rājput
art. Secondly, “the lavish use of white marble and some decorations
of Indian character” lead us to think that there is no reason to
overemphasise the domination of Persian influence in Shāh Jahān’s
buildings as is usually done. Thirdly, considering the intercourse of
India with the Western world, particularly the Mediterranean
region, during the Mughul period, it would not be historically
inconsistent to believe in the influence of some elements of art
of the Western world on the art of India during the sixteenth and
seventeenth centuries, and also in the presence of some European
builders in different parts of contemporary India.

Though not so famous as the Tāj, the mausoleum of Jahāngīr,
built by Shāh Jahān at an early date at Shāhdara in Lahore, is a
beautiful specimen of art. Another celebrated work of art of this
reign was the Peacock Throne. “The throne was in the form of a
cot bedstead on golden legs. The enamelled canopy was supported
by twelve emerald pillars, each of which bore two peacocks encrusted
with gems. A tree covered with diamonds, emeralds, rubies, and
pearls stood between the birds of each pair.” Nādir Shāh removed
the throne to Persia in 1739, but unfortunately it is no longer to
be found anywhere in this world.

In Aurangzeb’s reign the style of architecture began to deteriorate.
If not openly hostile to architecture, the puritanic Emperor
ceased to encourage it, or to erect buildings, like his predecessors.
The few structures of his reign, the most important of which was
the Lahore mosque, completed in A.D. 1674, were but feeble imita-
tions of the older models. Soon the creative genius of the Indian
artists mostly disappeared, surviving partly in Oudh and Hyderābād
in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

B. Painting

Like architecture, painting in the Mughul period represented a
happy mingling of extra-Indian as well as Indian elements. A
provincialised form of Chinese art, which was a mixture of Indian Buddhist, Iranian, Bactrian and Mongolian influences, was introduced into Persia in the thirteenth century by its Mongol conquerors and was continued by their Timürid successors, who again imported it into India. The characteristics of this Indo-Sino-Persian art were assimilated, mingled and combined, in the time of Akbar, in products of the contemporary Indian schools of painting, which flourished, as a renaissance of earlier Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina styles, in different parts of the country, such as Gujarāt, Rājputāna, Vijayanagar, Bijāpur, Ahmadnagar and some other places, and led to the development of a style of painting in which the Mongoloid elements gradually declined and the Indian ones predominated. This modification can be clearly seen in the paintings in the copies of the Khāndān-i-Timūrid and the Pādehdāhmāh, both of which are preserved in the Khudābakhsh Library of Patna.

It is possible that Bābur, who was “always keenly observant of the beauties of Nature”, patronised the art of painting, like his Timūrid ancestors, according to his limited resources. The paintings in the Alwar MS. of the Persian version of his Memoirs probably represent the style that grew up in his time. Humāyūn, who, like other Timūrids, possessed a taste for art, spent his hours of exile in Persia in studying Sino-Persian music, poetry and painting and came in contact with the leading artists of Persia, who flourished under the generous patronage of Shāh Tahmāsp. Two of them—Mir Sayyid ‘Ālī, a pupil of the famous Bihzād of Herāt, who has been styled “the Raphael of the East”, and Khwāja ‘Abdus Samād—were persuaded to come to his court at Kābul in a.d. 1550. Humāyūn and his son Akbar took lessons from them in the art of painting and engaged them in the task of preparing the illustrations to the Dāstān-i-Amīr Hamzah. These two foreign artists, working with their Indian assistants, “formed the nucleus of the Mughul school of painting”, which became so prominent in the time of Akbar. This passed on as a valuable gift from Humāyūn to Akbar, while his political legacy was precarious.

In the illustrative paintings to Amīr Hamzah, done by Sayyid ‘Ālī and ‘Abdus Samād between a.d. 1550 and a.d. 1560, the Sino-Persian influence was still predominant. But in 1562, when the famous painting showing the arrival at the Mughul Court of the Vaiṣṇava musician, Tānsen, was executed, the fusion of Hindu and Sino-Persian styles began to manifest itself. From a.d. 1560 to 1585 the walls of Akbar’s new capital at Fathpur Sikri were embellished with the masterpieces of the painter’s art by the joint labours of the artists of the Hindu and Persian schools, both being
ready to imbibe and utilise new ideas and thus facilitating the growth of a new school of art. The Persian or other foreign artists in Akbar's court were few in number, the most famous of them being 'Abdus Samad, Farrukh Beg, who was of Kalmuck origin, Khursau Quli and Jamshed. The Hindu artists predominated in number. Of the seventeen leading artists of Akbar's reign, no less than thirteen were Hindus. Abul Fazl thus refers to the standard of their art: "More than a hundred painters have become famous masters of the art, while the number of those who attain perfection, or of those who are middling, is very large. This is specially true of the Hindus, their pictures surpass our conception of things. Few indeed in the whole world are found equal to them." They worked in collaboration and excelled in portraiture, book-illustration and illumination and animal painting. Chief among them were Basawān, Lāl, Kesu, Mukund, Haribans and Daswanth. The last-named belonged to the Kāhār or palanquin-bearer caste, while the rest belonged to the Kāyastha, Chitras, Silāvat and Khatri castes and were drawn from different parts of the country.

Akbar, who shared with others of his race "an intense appreciation of the wonder and glory of the world", encouraged pictorial art in every possible way and gave it a religious outlook in spite of the Islamic injunction regarding the representation of living forms. "It appears to me," said he, "as if a painter had quite peculiar means of recognising God; for if a painter in sketching anything that has life, and in devising its limbs, one after the other comes to feel that he cannot bestow individuality on his work, he is forced to think of God, the Giver of life, and will thus increase his knowledge." In this way he sought to remove the discontent of the orthodox Muslims, who were opposed to the art of painting. "Bigoted followers of the letter of the law," writes Abul Fazl, "are hostile to the art of painting, but their eyes now see the truth."

The school of art that grew up under Akbar continued to flourish in the reign of Jahāngīr through the enthusiastic support and patronage of the latter. Jahāngīr was an excellent connoisseur, who paid high prices for any pictures that satisfied his aesthetic taste, and an art critic who could tell the names of individual artists in a composite piece. The famous Musulim artists of his court were Āgā Rezā and his son, Abul Hasan, of Herāt; Muhammad Nādir and Muhammad Murād from Samarqand, who were among the last foreign artists to come to India; and Ustād Mansūr. Among the Hindu painters of this reign, Bishan Dās, Manohar and Govardhan were the most eminent. Himself having a fair acquaintance with
the classical aspect of miniature painting, the Emperor frequently purchased examples of the best schools of art in India or abroad; and his zeal, combined with the skill of his artists, led to the emancipation of Mughul pictorial art from the tutelage of Persian influences and to the development of an art style essentially Indian.

With Jahāṅgīr, however, according to Percy Brown, the real spirit of Mughul pictorial art declined. Shāh Jahān did not possess the same passion for painting as his father, and his tastes were more for architecture and jewellery. The court portraiture and darbār pictures of his reign were characterised by rich pigments and a lavish use of gold rather than by the harmonious blend of colours which was present in Jahāṅgīr's art. He reduced the number of court painters, and the art of painting was soon deprived of imperial patronage. In the imperial family only Dārā Shukoh was a patron of art, as is proved by his album now preserved in the India Office, and his untimely death was a great blow to art as well as to the Empire. The artists were compelled to seek employment under nobles, as in Rājputāna and the Himālayan states, set up studios in the bāzārs and sell their pictures, as a means of livelihood, to the general public, whose number was, however, limited. Bernier noted that the artists had no chance of attaining distinction and worked under adverse circumstances and for poor remuneration.

The reign of Aurangzeb saw a distinct decline of pictorial art, as the Emperor regarded its patronage as opposed to the precepts of sacred law. Large numbers of portraits of him in various situations were indeed drawn, with or without his consent, and he is said to have inspected at intervals the portrait of his rebellious son Muhammad Sultān, painted by his order, to know his condition in prison. But he is reported to have defaced the paintings in the Asār Mahal at Bījāpur, and Manucci writes that under his orders the figures in Akbar's mausoleum at Sikandara were whitewashed. With the disintegration of the Mughul Empire after the death of Aurangzeb, some of the surviving painters migrated from the capital to the states of Oudh, Hyderabad, Mysore and Bengal, which had made themselves practically independent, and some went to Lucknow and Patna. But both the support that they got and the work that they executed were far inferior to what had been the case under the Great Mughuls.

In the eighteenth century a style of painting noted for brilliancy and decorative effect flourished in Rājputāna, particularly in Jaipur. In the latter half of the century, highly beautiful and refined pictures were painted by the Kāngrā school, of which the Tehri-Garhwāl school was an offshoot; and in the early nineteenth
century this developed into Sikh portrait painting. Recently, artists both in India and Europe have begun to appreciate Mughul and Rājput paintings and are trying to revive the style.

C. Music

Indian rulers like the ‘Ādil Shāhi Sultāns of Bijāpur and Bāz Bahādur of Mālwa, a contemporary of Akbar, and all the Great Mughuls, with the exception of Aurangzeb, appreciated the art of music. Akbar, Jahāngir, and Shāh Jahān extended considerable patronage to it, which led to the improvement of its quality and to its being widely cultivated. According to Abul Fazl, thirty-six singers enjoyed the patronage of Akbar’s court. Of them, the most famous were Tānsen, about whom Abul Fazl writes that “a singer like him has not been in India for the last thousand years”; and Bāz Bahādur of Mālwa, who was employed in the service of Akbar, and has been described as “the most accomplished man of his day in the science of music and in Hindi song”. Aurangzeb positively discouraged music and placed a ban upon it.