

THEME – 9
KINGS AND CHRONICLES
(MUGHAL COURT 16TH-17TH CENTURY)

Key concepts in nutshell

- The Mughal and their empire – The name Mughal derives from Mongol period of Mughal empire 1526 -1707
- The production of chronicles
- From Turkish to Persian – Mughal court chronicles were written in Persian
- The making of manuscripts – all books in mughals were manuscripts i.e. they were handwritten.
- The Akbarnama and Badshahnama – among the important illustrated mughal official histories the Akbarnama and Badshahnama.
- A unifying force – sulh-i-kul – Abul Fazl describes the ideal sulh-i-kul (absolute peace)
- Capitals and courts - capital city – the heart of mughal empire is capital city. Where the court assemble.
- Titles and Gifts – The granting of titles to men of merit was an important aspect of mughal policy.

Very Short Question (02 Marks each)

Q1. Clarify the word meaning of Kornish?

Ans. Kornish was a form of ceremonial salutation in which the Courtier placed the palm of his right hand against his forehead and bent his head, It suggested that the subject placed his head the seat of the senses and the mind into the hand of humility; presenting it to the royal assembly.

Q2. Name the dynasty which ruled India during 1526 to 1707. Who was the founder of this dynasty?

Ans. Mughal dynasty and founder of this dynasty was Babur.

Q3. What is meant by the term Kitabkhana?

Ans. The literal translation of the term Kitabkhana is library. It was a scriptorium that is a place where the emperors collection of manuscripts were kept and manuscripts were produced.

Q4. Manuscripts involved a number of people performing a variety of tasks. Give some such people engaged in the task.

Ans. Manuscripts involved a number of people performing a variety of tasks. Among them were paper marker, calligrapher, gliders, painters, bookbinders.

Q5. Baburs memories were return in which language?

Ans. Baburs memories Tuzuk-i-Babari were originally written in Turkish. They were translated in Persian as Babur Nama .

Short Question (05 marks each)

Q6. Assess the role played by women of the imperial household in the Mughal Empire.

Ans. The role played by the women of the imperial household in the Mughal Empire

1. In the Mughal household a distinction was maintained between wives who came from royal families (Begams) and other wives(aghass) who were not of noble birth.
2. 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.
3. After NurJahan Mughal queens and princesses began to control significant financial resources. Shahjahana's daughter Jahanara and Roshanara enjoyed an annual income often equal to the high imperial mansabdars. Jahanara in addition received revenues from the port city of Surat, which was a lucrative centre of overseas trade.

Q7. Write a short note on Badshah Nama.

Ans. Badshah Nama Chronicle of a king based on the history of Shahjahan's reign is an important chronicle among official histories. Abdul Hamid Lahori, a pupil of Abul Fazal is known as its author. It is modelled of 10 lunar years each. Lahori wrote the first and second daftars comprising of first two decades of Shahjahan's reign (1627-1647) But due to infirmities of age he was unable to write the 3rd volume. Volume of the 3rd decade of the emperor's rule was chronicle by historian waris.

In 1944 the first time painting of Badshah Nama were exhibited in New Delhi, London and Washington.

Long Question (10 Marks)

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Q8. Discuss the merits and demerits of the Mansabdari System.

Ans. Merits of the Mansabdari System

1. Control on revolts.
2. Qualification as basis of ranks.
3. Ban on Corruption
4. Forceful army
5. Emotional unity

Demerits of Mansabdari System

1. Misuse of money
2. Disloyalty of the soldiers towards the empire
3. Luxurious life of mansabdars
4. High salary of mansabdars created pressure on govt.
5. Less number of horsemen than the prescribed number affected the effectiveness of military.
6. Lack of direct link between emperor and soldiers.

Q9. Source based questions

DARBAR-I-AKBARI

Abul fazl gives a vivid account of Akber's darbar.

Whenever his majesty (Akber) holds court (darbar) a large drum is beaten, the sounds of which accompanied by divine praise. In this manner people of all classes received notice. His majesty's sons and grand children the grantees of the court, and all other men who have admittance attend to make the kornish and remains standing in their proper place learned men of renowned and skillful machines pay their respect. And the officers of justice present their reports. His majesty with his usual insights gives orders and settles everything in a satisfactory manner. During the whole time skillful gladiator's and wrestlers from all countries hold themselves in readiness and singers male and female are in waiting. Claver jugglers and funny tumblers also are annexations to exhibit their dexterity and agility.

Q1. Describe the main activities taking place in the court?

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Ans. Main activities taking place in the darbar are :

1. Beating of the drum. To announced holding of dewan-i-am.
2. Divine praise to establish emperor as “insane-i- kamil”
3. The emperor sons, grand children and other grandees take their positions according to status, hierarchy and proximity to the king.
4. All attending court women standing to pay respect and offer salutation to the king.
5. Learned men, mechanics, officers of justice present report to the king for review and update.
6. Gladiators, wrestlers, singers, women in waiting to exhibit their skill and for royal patronage.

Q2. What was the significant of the darbar procedures? 1

Ans. The dauber procedures reflected the status and power of the emperors.

Q3. Define the term “Kornish”. 1

Ans. “Kornish” was a form of ceremonial salutation in which the courtier placed the palm of his right hand against his forehead and bent his head.

Q4. Explain the term “Jharokha Darshan.” 2

Ans. “Jharokha Darshan” showing of the emperor to the public from the palace balcony. It was introduced by Akbar with the objective of broadening the acceptance of the imperial authority.