

Mughal Painting

Mughal painting is essential in UPSC IAS examination as Art and culture is an inevitable portion in Indian history. The UPSC Prelims asks several questions from Art and culture and medieval history. The art and culture of India contain Paintings, music, architecture etc.

Mughal Paintings

Mughal painting echoes an elite mixture of Indian, Persian and Islamic styles. The Mughal paintings are developed during the rule of Mughal Emperors in India (16th to 19th century). The themes of the Mughal paintings orbited around the battles, court scenes, receptions, legendary stories, hunting scenes, wildlife, portraits, etc.

History

The earliest example of the Mughal style is the Tuti-nama ('Tales of a Parrot') Painting. Indian Mughal paintings emerged during the rule of Mughal Emperor, Humayun (1530-1540). When he returned to India from the outcast, he additionally brought along two eminent Persian artists, Mir-Sayyid Ali and Abd-us-samad. Mughal paintings of India advanced as well as flourished under the reign of Mughal Emperors, Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan.

Growth of Mughal Painting

Akbar

- Mughal painting has advanced largely in the reign of Akbar
- The paintings are usually based on tales and epics like the Mahabharata, Ramayana and Persian epics.
- It also started demonstrating an enriched naturalism, with animal tales, landscape, portraits, etc.
- Akbar established a separate department for painting. He started the concept of Karkhana.
- Indian painters were also present in karkhana. That's why there is Indian influence in the paintings.
- Famous painters of that time are Dashwant, Baswan and Kesu. Most of the paintings during Akbar's reign were miniature paintings.

Jahangir

- Mughal Emperor Jahangir ruled from 1605 to 1627
- He stretched great support to several art forms, specifically paintings.
- This era has seen enhancement in brushwork, along with the usage of much lighter and subdued colors.
- The main themes of this era's paintings were revolved around the events from the life of Jahangir's, along with portraits, birds, flowers, animals, etc.
- He also started the portrait paintings. Decoration of margins started from his time. He also has his own workshop for painting.

- One of the famous painters of that time was Ustad Mansoor. And famous paintings of that time are zebra, Turkey, and Maulana-do-Pyaza.

Shah Jahan

- The elegance and modification of the Jahangir period were seen at the time of Shah Jahan also.
- The themes were musical parties, lovers on terraces and gardens, ascetics gathered around a fire, etc.

Decline

- The trend that was seen amid the season of Shah Jahan was also found under the reign of Aurangzeb. Be that as it may, the Aurangzeb did not pay too much attention to the development of the Mughal paintings.
- The period of Muhammad Shah did experience a short revitalization of the Mughal paintings.
- With the onset of Shah Alam II, the art almost became non-existent and alternative school of painting, recognized as Rajput paintings, started developing.