

The Mughal painting soon became popular among rulers and was further developed by subsequent Mughal emperors, including:

- **Akbar:** Akbar studied the nuances of art and painting under Abd as-Samad. He commissioned 250 miniature paintings that narrated the '**Tutinama**' (Tales of a parrot) in an artistic manner. He also commissioned '**Hamzanama**,' (included 1400 miniature paintings), '**Razmnama**' (depiction of Mahabharata) etc.
- **Jahangir:** Mughal painting reached its zenith during his reign. Influenced by European paintings, Jahangir commissioned paintings which had finer brush strokes and lighter colours. Paintings during his period depicted events of his own life, individual portraits, and studies of birds, flowers and animals. One of the major works commissioned by him was the '**Jahangirnama**'. Bishan Das and Mansur were the prominent painters of his time.
- **Shah Jahan:** Paintings were based on themes like gardens and pictures that gave aesthetic pleasure. One of the most important works produced during his reign was the '**Padshanama**', which had generous work of gold plating.
- **Muhammad Shah:** After the decline of Mughal painting during the reign of Aurangzeb, it revived briefly during Muhammad Shah's reign. He encouraged and supported paintings in his court, which depicted scenes of the royal court, celebrations, festivals, hunting experiences of the king etc.

Following are the main features of Mughal paintings:

- **Miniature paintings:** The Mughal pictures were small in size and are thus known as 'miniature paintings'.
- **Confined to the Mughal court:** Though the Mughal paintings absorbed the Indian atmosphere, it neither represented the Indian emotions, nor the scenes from the daily life of the Indian people. They remained confined to the Mughal court.
- **Main themes of paintings:** These include themes from Persian books of fables, Hindu epics including the Ramayana and the Mahabharata etc. Generally, the Mughal paintings were based upon close observation of nature with high aesthetic merit.
- **Abundant use of colours:** Golden colour, which was considered to be the symbol of prosperity of the Mughals, was used extensively in these paintings.
- **Use of foreshortening technique:** In this technique, objects are drawn in a way that they look closer and smaller than they really are.

When the Mughal empire was in decline, various other schools of painting with Mughal influence emerged in several regional courts, including the Rajput and Pahari paintings. With the advent of the British, these paintings further came under the influence of Western style of painting.

6. Throw light on the salient features of Mathura, Sarnatha and Gandhara schools of art.

Approach:

- Write a short note on the period in which these schools of art prospered.
- Enumerate the salient features of Mathura, Sarnath and Gandhara School of art.
- Conclude on the basis of above points.

Answer:

It was during the reign of Kushans that some of India's **most important styles in sculpture** were developed. The Mathura school and the Gandhara school were contemporary to each other i.e. between the 2nd and 5th century CE. Later on, while Mathura remained the main art production site, Sarnath also emerged as an important centre, which led to the development of Sarnath school of art.

All the three schools of art emerged with their **own salient features**.

Mathura school of art:

- This school of art **developed on Indian traditions** and was **not much influenced** by foreign elements.
- The **themes** varied from Buddhist to Brahmanical and sometimes secular.