

21- SEPT

Q) "The period of Delhi Sultans witnessed the emergence of Indo-Persian culture". Discuss the statement with reference to developments in the fields of language, literature, art and social life? (30M).

Ans) The period of Delhi sultanate started with the coming of Turks as the ruling class, with Qutb-ud-din Aibak. Iltutmish later became the real founder of Delhi Sultanate in India. The Turks were an ethnic group, who used to speak Persian, which resulted in its syncretisation with Indian culture to give rise to Indo-Persian culture. Its developments in various fields are:

LANGUAGE: - Persians and Indians were culturally different people and their coming together under Delhi sultanate resulted in emergence of the language of Urdu. It was a mix of Persian and Hindi, which was spoken in India.

- Amir Khosrow became the finest scholar of Urdu as well as Hindi and wrote several poetic and historical works.

LITERATURE: - The biggest contribution of the period in field of literature in Indo-Persian culture was the art of history writing. Several historians wrote their works, motivated by the

royal patronage or as a historical work. Eg:

Minhaj-us-Siraj → Tabakat-i-Nasiri.

Zia-ud-din-Baani → Tarikh-i-Firozshahi; Futwa-i-Jahandari.

Shams Siraj Afif → Tarikh-i-Firozshahi.

Amir Khusro → Khosro-ud-Pulak, Nuh Sipinir etc.

- Other developments in literature was seen in poetic works. Amir

Khusro and Amir Hassan wrote poetic works, known as Masnavis.

Khusro also wrote about poetic historical love stories.

- Development was also witnessed in dictionary writing, which also included illustrations.

ART: - Music witnessed several new developments. Amir Khusro invented Sitar by combining Indian Veena and Iranian Tambura.

He is also credited with invention of Tabla.

- Rashtali and Gazals were written in period. Rashtali had God as the object of love in its romantic poems, whereas Gazal has a person as an object of love.

ARCHITECTURE: - The Turks brought Islamic architecture along with them which included domes, true arches, use of lime mortar, bricks laying in headers and stretchers, massive buildings etc.

- In initial phases, monuments were erected quickly with use of materials from indigenous temples to build mosques. Eg: Adhai din ka Jhopda in Ajmer, which has false arches and remnants of Jaina

temples as images on pillars and walls.

- Later true Indo-Islamic architecture was built which reached its zenith under Khalji dynasty who built massive monuments. Eg:

Qutb Minar, Quwat-ul-Islam mosque, Jamat-i-Khana Mosque, Alai-Darwaza etc. Balban's tomb included the first true arch and double dome was made under Lodis.

SOCIAL LIFE: - The rural life remained more or less the same,

with the Khudkashis (self-cultivators), Paikashis (landless peasants), Artisans, tenants, sharecroppers etc. constituting the lower orders.

- The intermediaries retained their positions as zamindars during Sultanate period as well. The classes such as Chaudharies, Rai, Ranas etc. emerged as higher classes in rural society, who used to collect land revenue and give it to states with cutting their share.

- Town life: The Turks were mainly urban dwellers. The royal classes and nobility lived in urban centres with their court paraphernalia and royal palaces.

- Nobility included people from several ethnic groups such as Turks, Afghans, Mongols etc. They were classified as Khans, Amils, Amirs etc.

- Towns also included traders such as Multanis, Afghanis etc. It

also included Indians like Gujaratis, Marwaris etc.

- White collared people included government officials, Ulemas etc.
- Caste: New castes emerged among Brahmanas due to their acceptance of other occupations. ~~The~~ Many of Indian lower castes people converted to Islam by the lure of equality, but they were still treated with discrimination. Indian Muslims continued to be discriminated for most part of Sultanate period, except in Mohamud bin Tughlaq's time.
- Women: Sati and Tauhar established itself. Purdah system also got permeated in society. Though women also started to enjoy some property rights.

Thus, the Sultanate era can be described as the beginning of syncretisation of Indo-Persian culture, which emerged to its full scale under the Mughal rule.