

Music holds a unique position in Islam, as it is neither considered inherently good nor bad. However, due to conservative elements and religious scholars (Ulema) looking down upon it, music faced some resistance. Nevertheless, music managed to flourish under the patronage of Turkish rulers.

■ Development of Music During Sultanate Period

During the Sultanate period, notable singers like Gopal Nayak received patronage in the court of Alauddin Khilji. Hailing from Devagiri, he showcased his musical talents and gained recognition. Another significant figure was Amir Khusro, a musician and singer who held a deep admiration for Indian music. He believed that Indian music has the power to mesmerize both humans and animals. Khusrau is often regarded as the father of the Hindustani style of music, as he blended Indian and Iranian tunes, contributing to its development.

Music also found protection under the patronage of Muhammad bin Tughluq. Despite being an orthodox Muslim, Firoz Shah Tughlaq got many Sanskrit compositions based on music translated into Persian. This act is a proof of his deep interest and support towards art.

Moreover, music thrived under the rule of provincial rulers. In Gujarat, a book on music titled “Ghuniyat-ul-Munya” was composed, highlighting the significance of music in the region. Ibrahim Shah Sharqi, the ruler of Jaunpur, was a patron of music and fostered its growth. During his reign, the treatise “Sangeet-Shiromani” was composed, a great contribution to the music. His successor, Hussain Shah Sharqi, was an accomplished scholar of music and developed a new musical style called Khayal. Likewise, the ruler of Gwalior, Man Singh Tomar, was a music himself and authored a book named “Maan Kautuhal.”

The development of music was not limited to the royal courts alone. Bhakti and Sufi saints played crucial roles in its evolution. Prominent figures such as Nanak, Swami Haridas (Guru of Tansen), Chaitanya, and Meera Bai made significant contributions within the Bhakti tradition. Similarly, the Sufi schools gave rise to distinctive musical styles like Ghazal and Qawwali.

■ Development of Music under the Mughals

- **Babur and Humayun:** Babur, the founder of the Mughal Empire, was primarily busy in military conquest, having little time for music. However, he had a personal interest in music and would indulge in it whenever he found a break amidst his military engagements. Similarly, his son Humayun had a keen interest in music. It is said that his court adorned 29 singers, and he would organize music concerts every week on Monday and Wednesday. Humayun himself would actively participate in these gatherings and invite important individuals to appreciate the musical performances.

- **Akbar:** Akbar, renowned as a great patron of the arts, extended his support and enthusiasm to various art forms, including architecture, painting, and music. His reign marked a significant period in the development of Mughal culture. According to Abul Fazal, there were 36 singers during Akbar’s time, with three prominent figures—Tansen, Baiju Babra, and Baz Bahadur, the former ruler of Malwa. Tansen, considered the greatest singer of his time, remains unmatched even after a thousand years. He received training in music from Sufi saint Muhammad Gaus of Gwalior and further honed his skills under the guidance of Bhakti saint Swami Haridas, learning the Dhrupad style of singing. Tansen is also credited with creating new ragas such as Miyan ki Malhar (Raag Malhar), Miyan ki Todi, and Raga Darbari.

- **Jahangir:** Jahangir, although primarily interested in painting, also patronized music. Notable singers in his court included Chhantar Khan, Khurram Dad, and Bilas Khan, Tansen's son.
- **Shahjahan:** Even during the reign of Shahjahan, music continued to thrive in the Mughal court. Lal Khan, son-in-law of Bilas Khan, received protection and support from Shah Jahan. The emperor himself had a special inclination towards singing.
- **Aurangzeb:** Aurangzeb, known for banning music, considering it non-Islamic, paradoxically witnessed the creation of numerous texts on music during his reign. Fariq Ullah, a scholar, translated the book "Raga Darpan" into Persian during this period. Interestingly, music still received patronage in the Mughal harem during Aurangzeb's rule.

During the reign of Muhammad Shah Rangila, another Mughal ruler, music enjoyed special patronage. Prominent singers like Sadarang and Adarang thrived in his court. This period saw the rise of the Khayal style of music, gradually replacing the dominance of Dhrupad.

■ Indian Music Styles:

There are two main styles of Indian music: Hindustani style and Carnatic style. The term "Carnatic" was first used by Vidyaranya, who served as the Prime Minister of the Vijayanagara Empire in the 15th century. While these two styles share similarities, they also exhibit notable differences. It is commonly believed that the Hindustani style developed in isolation from the Carnatic style under the musical influence of Amir Khusro. However, the reality is that the distinction between these two styles emerged not solely due to the influence of any specific musician, but rather as a result of regional factors. The Hindustani style evolved in North India, whereas the Carnatic style developed in the Dravidian linguistic region of South India. Although the ragas used in both Hindustani and Carnatic styles share similar names, their tonality, taal, and rhythm differ significantly.

Question: Amir Khusro embodied the essence of Indo-Islamic culture through his life and contributions.

Answer: The ideological clash between Hinduism and Islam gave rise to conservative Islamic thinkers like Barani, where as constructive assimilation between hinduism and islam gave rise to liberal thinkers like Amir Khusro.

Amir Khusro, in particular, played a significant role in promoting the indigenization of the Muslim elite class. While the Turkish ruling class had previously regarded Ghazni and Ghor Desh as their heritage, Khusro embraced Delhi as his native land. He composed numerous songs in praise of Delhi, referring to it as Hazrat-e-Dilli and considering it a home for refugees. This perspective resonated during the partition of India when Delhi was once again identified as a refuge for displaced individuals.

As a writer, Amir Khusro embodied the integrated culture of India. He not only promoted Persian literature but also contributed to Indian languages. He authored works chronicling the reigns of important Sultans in Persian, while simultaneously pioneering the Khadi Boli Hindi or Hindawi, which later evolved into Hindi and Urdu. Urdu, known as Zubaan-i-Delhi, and Khusro, referred to as Tuti-e-Hind, became integral to the fabric of Indian languages.

Amir Khusro's impact extended beyond literature. Indian music would have remained incomplete without his contributions. He is considered the father of Hindustani music, as he skillfully blended Indian and Iranian melodies to lay the foundation of the Hindustani style. Moreover, he played a crucial role in the development of Dhrupad singing, a pillar of Hindustani music, which was further enriched by the legendary musician Tansen.

In essence, Amir Khusro personified the integrated culture of India, while also actively fostering its growth. He emphasized the importance of Indian heritage and his influence

resonated through the ages, inspiring subsequent writers such as Mir Taqi Mir, Mirza Ghalib, and modern-day authors like Saadat Hasan Manto, who carried forward Khusro's legacy.

Question: Throw light on the contribution of Krishnadeva Raya in the field of art and literature.

Answer: Krishna Deva Raya is among the great rulers of India who not only established a strong administrative foundation but also made remarkable contributions in the fields of literature and art. His creative genius rivals that of Akbar, as he allowed his artistic pursuits to flourish even amidst constant conflicts with neighboring kingdoms. Under his rule, the Vijayanagara court became a renowned patron of scholars and artists.

The Vijayanagara rulers held a deep reverence for Sanskrit and had a rich tradition of scholarly works even prior to Krishna Deva Raya's reign. This tradition continued under his patronage. Krishnadeva Raya himself was a proficient scholar in both Telugu and Sanskrit. In Telugu, he composed a notable work called "Amuktamalyada," a treatise on politics and administration. It is through this text that we learn of his authorship of five Sanskrit works. Additionally, Tenaliram, a renowned scholar, resided in Krishnadeva Raya's court and authored "Panduranga Mahatyam."

While Sanskrit held significant importance, Krishnadeva Raya also fostered the development of Telugu, Tamil, and Kannada literature. However, it was Telugu literature that experienced the most progress during his reign, earning his era the distinction of being considered a Telugu language and literary renaissance. Eight eminent Telugu scholars, known as the "Ashtadiggajas," thrived in his court. Among them, Peddan emerged as a prominent figure, composing a major work called "Swarochit Sambhav." Another notable scholar was Nandi Thimmana, who authored

"Parijathapaharanam."

Krishnadeva Raya's reign witnessed not only advancements in literature but also significant developments in art. The Dravidian style of architecture reached new heights during his rule. The Hazara Temple and the Vitthal Swami Temple, constructed under his patronage, stand as magnificent examples of architectural excellence. This period also witnessed advancements in other aspects of the Dravidian style. While the construction of gopurams (temple gateways) was already underway, this era saw the creation of more elaborate and intricate gopurams. Ornate pillars and sculptures featuring supernatural animals carved on the single stone were unique features of this period. Furthermore, the construction of Kalyan Mandaps, where the ceremonial marriage of deities took place, also began during this time.

The Vijayanagara Empire also gave rise to a distinctive style of painting known as Lepakshi painting, which depicted subjects from the Ramayana and Mahabharata epics. Additionally, a unique style combining dance and music emerged, known as the "Yakshini style."

Thus, while the Vijayanagara Empire's political glory lasted only for 200 years, its cultural achievements have become an enduring legacy of Indian culture.

Question: Kashmir: Zain-ul-Abidin

Answer: There have been rulers in Indian history whose policies transcend their contemporary era and become significant for all ages and regions. One such ruler was Zain-ul-Abidin, who ruled Kashmir in the 15th century.

Zain-ul-Abidin succeeded his brother Sikandar Shah to the throne in the 15th century. He inherited a legacy of communal tension. Under the rule of Sikandar Shah, temples were demolished and Kashmiri Pandits were expelled due to his divisive policies. Zain-ul-Abidin embarked on a process of reconstruction amidst this destruction. He restored Hindu temples and resettled Kashmiri Pandits in the valley.

Respecting the religious sentiments of Hindus, he abolished the Jizya tax imposed on them. Additionally, he enacted a ban on cow slaughter. He did not let religion hinder the development of art and literature. Zain-ul-Abidin himself had knowledge of Sanskrit, Kashmiri, Tibetan, and Persian languages. He patronized the syncretic culture of Kashmir and commissioned the writing of the next part of the Rajatarangini, a significant work of Kashmir, by a Sanskrit scholar named 'Jonaraja.' Furthermore, he encouraged the appointment of Hindus in the state services, despite not being of their faith. He also extended his patronage to music.

Due to these notable contributions, he has been referred to as the "Akbar of Kashmir." What is intriguing is that Zain-ul-Abidin demonstrated a rare example of Hindu-Muslim harmony in a remote region of India—a phenomenon that was scarce elsewhere. During this period, while bloodshed occurred in the name of religion in West Asia, Central Asia, and even in Europe, which claimed to be civilized, Zain-ul-Abidin stood as an exception.

In conclusion, Zain-ul-Abidin remains as relevant in the present and future as he was in the past. It is disheartening that although we have inherited communal tensions in Kashmir, we have failed to embrace Zain-ul-Abidin's legacy as a solution. Consequently, religious conservatism, conflict and bloodshed continue to be prevalent in Kashmir today, while the true solution in the form of Zain-ul-Abidin remains absent.

Question: Describe the cultural achievements of Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1580-1627 AD) of Bijapur.

Answer: Ibrahim Adil Shah II remains a unique ruler in the history of medieval India. He made significant contributions in the fields of art and culture and set an example of religious harmony in his policies.

- He commissioned the construction of remarkable architectural wonders adorned

with exquisite carvings, such as Anand Mahal, Mihtar Mahal, and a complex of structures named after him called Ibrahim Roza.

- Ibrahim Adil Shah II was a great lover and patron of music. He possessed remarkable expertise in this art form and even composed a rare treatise on music called 'Kitab-i-Nauras'.
- In terms of religious harmony, Ibrahim Adil Shah II adopted an inclusive approach. Despite being a follower of Islam, he personally worshiped Saraswati, the Hindu goddess of learning and knowledge, even though idol worship is prohibited in Islam. Furthermore, he appointed a significant number of Marathi Hindus in his administration, promoting diversity and inclusivity.
- The court of Ibrahim Adil Shah II not only reflected the syncretic culture of India but also embraced global influences. Numerous writers, artists, and scholars from the Muslim world were welcomed in his court and received patronage. Some scholars argue that the role played by Ibrahim Adil Shah II's court in medieval times in promoting global culture was like the role UNESCO plays in the present era.

Question: Darashikoh

Answer: Dara Shikoh embodied the living essence of the Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb that Hindus and Muslims had developed in India while coexisting for the past approximately 600 years. The foundation of religious harmony in India was laid by Bhakti and Sufi saints, as well as great emperors like Akbar. Dara Shikoh not only embraced this legacy but also sought to further enrich it.

Deeply influenced by the philosophy of the Sufi saint Muhammad Ghaus, Dara Shikoh embraced the principle of Bahr al-Hayat, which emphasized the unity of all religions. Based upon this principle, he put forth the theory of

Majma-ul-Bahrain, symbolizing the convergence of diverse beliefs. In an era marked by religious frenzy, Dara Shikoh's endeavor to find common ground among different religious sects was a remarkable achievement.

Dara Shikoh's quest for understanding Hinduism extended beyond mere meditation and contemplation. He delved into the study of Hindu scriptures and engaged with Hindu scholars. Notably, he translated Sanskrit texts such as the Bhagavad Gita and Yoga Vasistha into Persian. Under his guidance, 52 Upanishads were also translated into Persian, resulting in the compilation known as Sirr-i-Akbar. In this way, Dara Shikoh sought to strengthen the formula of harmony between the Hindu and Muslim communities, originally established by Akbar. His superior educational background facilitated this task.

Due to his liberal religious heritage, Dara Shikoh has been referred to as the "little-Akbar." It can be inferred that had Dara Shikoh ascended to the throne of India, he would have provided a more favorable direction for the continuation of Hindustan's syncretic cultural tradition. However, Aurangzeb's accession to power brought about a dramatic shift in the policy of the Mughal court.

Question: What are the reasons behind referring to the 16th century in India as the Indian Renaissance?

Answer: The term "renaissance" refers to a revival, which can occur in various fields such as politics, society, and culture. Based on these grounds, the 16th century in India can indeed be described as a period of renaissance. During this time, there was a significant emphasis on religious harmony and cultural integration.

The Bhakti and Sufi movements, along with emperors like Akbar, played pivotal roles in

promoting religious harmony and syncretic culture in 16th century India. In the 15th century, saints like Kabir and Nanak advocated for the unity of humanity by highlighting the concept of divine unity. Sufi saints like Jayasi promoted this message and expressed it through the language and customs of the Hindus. Emperor Akbar, in particular, set a new precedent by promoting the policy of Sulh-i-Kul (universal peace) and stressing religious harmony, even at a time when bloodshed in the name of religion was prevalent in other parts of the world.

The cultural sphere also witnessed a renaissance during this period, showcasing the blending of Hindu and Islamic influences in art and literature. Architecture, under Akbar's patronage, demonstrated harmony between Hindu and Islamic styles, resulting in extensive construction work. This harmony was also evident in the realms of painting and music, with notable painters like Dashwant and Mir Syed Ali, as well as renowned singers like Tansen and Baiju-Bawra, emerging during this time. The arts of Kathak dance and Dhrupad singing also received widespread patronage.

Additionally, the 16th century witnessed the rise of vernacular literature, with Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Oriya, Gujarati, Rajasthani, and Punjabi languages getting encouragement. The Bhakti movement played a crucial role in this development.

However, it is important to note that the Indian Renaissance of the 16th century was distinct from the European Renaissance. While the element of rationalism was not as prominent as in Europe, it possessed its own unique and original form. Rather than emphasizing religious tensions, the Indian Renaissance placed a strong emphasis on religious harmony. As a result, the India of the 16th century can be associated with the early modern period.

