
Chapter – 09 History

The Making of Regional Cultures

- It is quite common for us to identify a region with its language. Thus, we call a person Bengali or Kannada on the basis of the language which he speaks.
 - Every region is identified with a certain distinct type of food, clothing, poetry, dance, painting and music.
 - Language is quite closely connected to a region.
 - The Chera empire of Mahodayapuram, which was established in 9th century in the south-western part of Kerala introduced the Malayalam language.
 - **Rulers and Religious Traditions: The Jagannatha Cult**
 - (i) In several regions, regional cultures developed around religious traditions.
 - (ii) The local people made a wooden image of the deity which, originally a local God, came to be identified with Vishnu.
 - (iii) Temple became a centre of pilgrimage.
 - **The Rajputs and Traditions of Heroism:**
 - (i) In the 19th century, the Rajasthan of today was called Rajputana by the British.
 - (ii) There are many groups who call themselves Rajputs in Northern and Central India.
 - (iii) Prithviraj Chauhan was one such ruler.
 - (iv) Women had been given a heroic image since they committed sati or self-immolation.
 - **Beyond Regional Frontiers: The Story of Kathak**
 - (i) The heroic traditions of various regions also helped in the evolution of dance in several regions.
 - (ii) One such dance was Kathak, which was evolved in Northern India. The Kathaks initially were a caste of story-tellers in North Indian temples.
 - (iii) The legends of Radha-Krishna were enacted in folk plays known as rasalila.
 - (iv) It integrated folk dance with the basic gestures of the kathak story-tellers.
 - **Paintings for Patrons: The Traditions of Miniatures**
 - (i) During this period, one more tradition which deserves our attention is the miniature painting. Miniatures are small sized paintings done in water colour on cloth or paper.
 - (ii) Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan hired highly skilled painters to illustrate their manuscripts in the Kitab Khana containing their accounts and poetry.
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- (iii) When Mughal empire started declining, new artistic tastes developed in the regional court of Deccan and Rajput rulers.
 - (iv) One bold style of miniature painting was called Basohli.
 - (v) One of the most popular paintings of Himalayas region was Bhanudatta's Rasamanjari.
 - (vi) The Kangra artists by mid-18th century infused a new life into miniature painting.

- **The Growth of a Regional Language: Bengal**

- (i) Regional language is the language which a person speaks in a region.
- (ii) It is generally assumed that Bengali language is spoken by people of Bengal.
- (iii) Bengali originated from Sanskrit but later on developed its own identity and literature.

- **Pirs and Temples:**

- (i) From 16th century, people migrated in large numbers from less fertile western Bengal to the forested and marshy of south-eastern Bengal.
- (ii) With Mughal control over Bengal, the capital shifted to Dhaka. Officials received land grants Mosques were set up.
- (iii) The early settlers got help from teachers called Pirs. They included saints or Sufis and prominent religious personalities.

- **Fish as Food:** Bengalis had fish as food. Popularity of fish made even Bengal Brahmins eat fish.
