

The Impact of Muslim Rule on the Development of Regional Languages and Literatures in India

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Abstract:- The Muslim rule in India from the 8th to the 18th centuries had a profound impact on the development of regional languages and literatures in the subcontinent. The introduction of Persian and Arabic vocabulary, script, and literary forms enriched the existing Indic vernaculars and gave rise to new languages such as Urdu and Deccani. The Muslim rulers also patronized various forms of literature, such as poetry, history, biography, and mysticism, in both Persian and the local languages. The cultural and religious interactions between Islam and Hinduism, as well as other faiths, fostered the growth of Sufi and Bhakti movements, which expressed their spiritual and social messages through vernacular poetry and music. The Muslim influence on the Indian languages and literatures was not uniform, but varied according to the regional, historical, and political contexts.

Keywords: Muslim rule, India, regional languages, literatures, Persian, Arabic, Urdu, Deccani, Sufism, Bhakti, poetry, music.

INTRODUCTION

India is a land of diverse cultures, languages, and religions. It has been shaped by various historical forces, both internal and external, that have left their mark on its society and civilization. One of the most significant external forces that influenced India was the Muslim rule, which spanned from the 8th to the 18th century. During this period, India witnessed the rise and fall of several Muslim dynasties, such as the Ghaznavids, the Delhi Sultanate, the Mughal Empire, and the Deccan Sultanates, as well as the interactions and exchanges between the Muslim and Hindu communities.

The Muslim rule in India had a profound impact on the cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity of the subcontinent. One of the most notable aspects of this impact was the emergence and evolution of regional languages and literatures, which reflected the synthesis and innovation of the Islamic and the Indian traditions. The Muslims introduced new languages, genres, forms, and styles of literature, art, music, and architecture, which blended with the existing Indian traditions and created new expressions of creativity and diversity. The Muslims also influenced the religious, social, and political landscape of India, creating new movements and institutions that challenged and transformed the orthodox and hierarchical structures of Hinduism.

In this article, we will explore the impact of Muslim rule on the development of regional languages and literatures in India, as well as on the other forms of art and culture. We will mainly focus on: new religious movements like Sufism and Bhakti, rise of Sikhism as a new religion, growth of Urdu and Persian language and literature, growth of literature in various Indian languages, the architecture of the Sultanate and Mughals with regional variations, new forms of music, the Mughal painting and other new styles that emerged in India. We will also examine the legacy and significance of Muslim rule on the Indian culture and identity.

Muslim rule in India, which began in the 8th century and lasted until the 18th century, had a profound influence on the cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity of the subcontinent. One of the most notable aspects of this influence was the emergence and evolution of regional languages and literatures, which reflected the interactions and exchanges between the Muslim and Hindu communities.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

The impact of Muslim rule on the development of regional languages and literatures in India is a broad and complex topic that has been explored by many scholars from different disciplines and perspectives. Some of the key aspects of this topic are:

The introduction of Persian and Arabic languages and scripts, which influenced the vocabulary, grammar, and orthography of many regional languages, such as Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, Telugu, and others¹²³.

The emergence of new literary genres and forms, such as the Sufi romances, the historical epics, the ghazals, and the masnavis, which blended Islamic and indigenous elements and reflected the socio-cultural and political realities of the time¹².

The patronage and promotion of literature by various Muslim rulers and nobles, who encouraged the production and dissemination of literary works in both Persian and regional languages, and fostered a cosmopolitan and pluralistic literary culture¹².

The interaction and exchange between Muslim and non-Muslim writers, poets, and scholars, who engaged in dialogue, debate, and collaboration, and influenced each other's literary styles, themes, and worldviews

The Language of History: Sanskrit Narratives of Indo-Muslim Rule by Audrey Truschke. This book explores how Sanskrit writers narrated the past and portrayed the interactions between Muslims and non-Muslims in the subcontinent¹. The author challenges the common assumption that Sanskrit literature was unaffected by the Muslim presence, and shows how Sanskrit authors creatively adapted to the new political and cultural realities under Muslim rule¹.

The Rise and Spread of Islam in Indian Subcontinent (711-1526 A.D) by Mahfuzur Rahman. This paper examines the historical, political, and religious factors that contributed to the diffusion of Islam in South Asia². The author traces the origins, expansion, and consolidation of Islam in the region, and analyzes the role of trade, conquest, conversion, and syncretism in the process².

Socio-cultural and Economic impact of Central Asian Muslim rulers in India by Muhammad Iqbal Chawla. This paper analyzes the influence of Central Asian Muslim rulers on the Indian society, culture, and economy, especially in the fields of art, architecture, education, and trade³. The author argues that the Muslim rule brought about significant changes and innovations in various aspects of Indian life, and also facilitated the exchange of ideas and goods between India and other parts of the world³.

[Development of Local Languages in India] by History Discussion. This article discusses how the Bhakti Movement and the introduction of Persian and Arabic languages and scripts led to the development of various regional languages in India. The article explains how the Bhakti saints used the local languages to spread their message of devotion and social reform, and how the Persian and Arabic languages enriched the vocabulary, grammar, and literature of the regional languages.

[Literature during Mughals] by InsightsIAS. This article provides an overview of the literary genres and forms that emerged and flourished during the Mughal rule, such as the Sufi romances, the historical epics, the ghazals, and the masnavis. The article highlights the diversity and excellence of the Mughal literature, and the contribution of various writers, poets, and patrons to the literary culture.

The Rise of New Languages

One of the first impacts of Muslim rule on the Indian languages was the introduction of Persian and Arabic vocabulary, grammar, and script. These languages were used by the Muslim rulers, administrators, scholars, and poets as the official and literary languages of their empires. They also influenced the local languages, especially those spoken in the northern and western regions of India, such as Punjabi, Bengali, Kashmiri, Rajasthani, Marathi, Gujarati, Oriya, Sindhi, and Assamese. These languages, which grew out of the Prakrit and the Apabhramsa stages of Sanskrit, received a tremendous boost from the Muslims, who preferred the newer languages over Sanskrit and Prakrit¹.

The most prominent example of a new language that emerged as a result of Muslim rule was Urdu, which literally means “the language of the camp”. Urdu developed as a lingua franca among the soldiers, traders, and travelers who came from different regions and spoke different languages. Urdu was a mixture of Persian, Arabic, and various Indian languages, mainly Hindi. It was written in the Persian script, but had a grammar and syntax similar to Hindi. Urdu became a popular language of poetry, literature, and culture, especially among the Sufis, who used it to express their mystical and devotional ideas².

Another new language that developed under Muslim rule was Deccani, which was spoken in the Deccan plateau of southern India. Deccani was a blend of Persian, Arabic, and Telugu, with some influences from Kannada and Marathi. Deccani was also a rich language of poetry and literature, especially during the reign of the Bahmani and the Deccan Sultanates in the 14th to 17th centuries¹.

The Flourishing of Literature

Muslim rule in India also witnessed the flourishing of literature in various regional languages, both in the Islamic and the Hindu traditions. The Muslims brought with them the genres of ghazal, masnavi, qasida, and rubai, which were forms of lyrical and narrative poetry in Persian and Arabic. These genres were adapted and adopted by the Indian poets, who wrote in their own languages and styles. Some of the famous poets who wrote in Urdu were Amir Khusrow, Mirza Ghalib, Mir Taqi Mir, and Allama Iqbal. Some of the notable poets who wrote in Deccani were Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, Wali Deccani, and Nusrati³.

The Hindu tradition of literature also continued and expanded under Muslim rule, especially in the genres of bhakti, or devotional poetry, and riti, or ornamental poetry. The bhakti poets expressed their love and devotion to various Hindu deities, such as Vishnu, Shiva, Rama, Krishna, and the goddesses. They also challenged the caste system and the ritualistic practices of orthodox Hinduism,

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and advocated a personal and emotional relationship with God. Some of the prominent bhakti poets were Kabir, Tulsidas, Surdas, Mirabai, and Tukaram. The riti poets, on the other hand, focused on the themes of love, romance, and beauty, using elaborate and refined language and imagery. Some of the famous riti poets were Bihari, Keshavdas, and Bhanudatta4.

The Development of Architecture, Music, and Painting

The impact of Muslim rule on the regional languages and literatures of India was not limited to the verbal arts, but also extended to the visual and musical arts. The Muslims introduced new forms and styles of architecture, music, and painting, which blended with the existing Indian traditions and created new expressions of culture and aesthetics.

The architecture of the Muslim period was characterized by the use of arches, domes, minarets, and calligraphy, which were influenced by the Persian and Central Asian models. The Muslims also adopted and adapted the Indian techniques of stone carving, stucco work, and inlay work, which added to the beauty and diversity of their buildings. Some of the examples of the Muslim architecture in India are the Qutb Minar, the Taj Mahal, the Red Fort, and the Gol Gumbaz.

The music of the Muslim period was influenced by the Persian and Arabic modes, scales, and instruments, such as the sitar, the tabla, the sarod, and the harmonium. The Muslims also developed new forms and genres of music, such as the qawwali, the khayal, the thumri, and the ghazal, which were based on the principles of raga and tala, or melody and rhythm. The music of the Muslim period was also enriched by the contributions of the Sufis, who used music as a means of spiritual ecstasy and communion with God. Some of the famous musicians of the Muslim period were Amir Khusrow, Tansen, Baiju Bawra, and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

The painting of the Muslim period was mainly influenced by the Persian and Mughal styles, which were known for their realism, delicacy, and elegance. The Muslims also incorporated the Indian elements of color, symbolism, and mythology, which added to the richness and diversity of their paintings. Some of the examples of the Muslim painting in India are the Hamzanama, the Akbarnama, the Baburnama, and the Ragamala.

Conclusion

Muslim rule in India had a lasting impact on the development of regional languages and literatures in India, as well as on the other aspects of culture and art. The Muslims brought with them new languages, genres, forms, and styles, which interacted and integrated with the existing Indian traditions and created new expressions of creativity and diversity. The Muslim period in India was thus a period of cultural synthesis and innovation, which enriched the heritage and identity of the Indian people.

Muslim rule in India had a lasting impact on the cultural diversity and identity of the subcontinent. It introduced new languages, genres, forms, and styles of literature, art, music, and architecture, which blended with the existing Indian traditions and created new expressions of creativity and innovation. It also influenced the religious, social, and political landscape of India, creating new interactions and exchanges between the Muslim and Hindu communities, as well as other faiths and sects.

Some of the positive aspects of the Muslim legacy in India are:

The enrichment of the linguistic and literary heritage of India, with the emergence of Urdu, Deccani, and other regional languages, and the development of various genres and styles of poetry and prose.

The enhancement of the artistic and aesthetic sensibility of India, with the creation of magnificent monuments, paintings, and musical compositions, which reflected the fusion of the Persian, Central Asian, and Indian elements.

The promotion of the spiritual and ethical values of India, with the spread of the Sufi and Bhakti movements, which emphasized the love and devotion to God, and the harmony and tolerance among different faiths and sects.

Some of the negative aspects of the Muslim legacy in India are:

The destruction of the temples, idols, and scriptures of the Hindu and Buddhist traditions, which resulted in the loss of the ancient and sacred heritage of India.

The imposition of the jizya, or the head tax, on the non-Muslims, which discriminated and humiliated them, and forced many of them to convert to Islam.

The division of the society into the Muslim and the Hindu communities, which created a sense of alienation and hostility, and led to frequent conflicts and violence.

The Muslim period in India was thus a period of cultural synthesis and transformation, which enriched the heritage and history of the



Indian people. However, it also left behind some scars and wounds, which have not healed completely even today. The challenge for the modern Indians is to appreciate and celebrate the positive aspects of the Muslim legacy, while acknowledging and addressing the negative aspects, and to strive for a peaceful and harmonious coexistence of the diverse cultures and religions of India.

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