

THE DEVELOPMENT OF LITERATURE DURING THE MUGHAL PERIOD-A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The greatest growth was witnessed in the Persian literature because it was the official language of the Mughals. All Mughal rulers patronized Persian literary figures and activities. Thus, Babur wrote poems in both Persian and Turkish. Persian prose and poetry reached a climax during Akbar's reign. Many biographies and historical works were composed during his reign. Some of the important historical works included the Ain-I-Akbari by Abul Fazl. Muntakhab-ul-Tawarikh by Badaun, Tabaqat-I- Akbari by Nizamuddin Ahmed. Besides original works, works in other languages were translated into Persian during Akbar's time. In this regard, the important translations were the translation of Mahabharat into Persian under the tile of Raim Namah is the most important. Rajput rulers. Urdu language and literature also made progress during the period especially of later Mughals. Urdu beginning its career during the period of Delhi Sultanate acquired the status of literary language in Deccan. Among the Mughals, Muhammad Shah was the first ruler who invited and awarded the Deccani poet Shamsuddin Wali. Urdu gradually became the medium of social intercourse in northern India. Urdu produced brilliant poets like Mir, Sauda, Nazir etc. Regional languages acquired stability and maturity and some of the finest lyrical poetry was produced during this period. The dalliance of Krishna with Radha and stories from Bhagwat figured largely in the lyrical poetry in Bengali, Oriya, Rajasthani and Gujarati. Many devotional hymns of Ramayana and Mahabharata were translated into regional languages. Punjabi literature was enriched by composition of Adi Granth by Guru Arjun and Vachitra Natak by Guru Govind Singh. In South India, Malatyalam started its literary career as a separate language in its own right. Marathi reached its apogee at hands of Eknath and Tukaram. Thus, the Mughal period saw the efflorescence of the rich literate tradition in the history of medieval India. Such high efflorescence made Urdu, Hindi and the regional languages the vehicle of thought in the subsequent times.

KEYWORDS-PURSIAN, URDU, PORTGEES, MARATHI, HINDI EKNATH, TUKARAM GURUGOVIND

INTRODUCTION

Here is your essay on the development of literature during the Mughal Period.

The Mughal period constitutes a brilliant epoch in the cultural history of India. The period witnessed outburst of many-side cultural activities, of which, very significant strides were made in the development of literature.

There were several factors responsible for the development of literature during the Mughal period. Foremost factor was the background provided by Sufi and Bhakti saints who preached in local languages.

The next important factor was the patronage provided by the Mughal rulers to the various literatures like Persian, and Hindi.

Both original works and translations were produced in large numbers in Persian. Hindi also saw important developments and so did Punjabi, Urdu. Moreover, many other regional languages also found a period of growth during this period.

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Persian prose and poetry reached a climax during Akbar's reign. Many biographies and historical works were composed during his reign. Some of the important historical works included the Ain-I-Akbari by Abul Fazl. Muntakhab-ul-Tawarikh by Badaun, Tabaqat-I- Akbari by Nizamuddin Ahmed.

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Similarly, Ramayana was translated by Baduni. Faizi translated Panchatantra, Ujjavraii, Naldamyani, and Badauni translated Simhasana Batisi and Ibrahim Sirhindi did the translation of Atharvaveda.

Abul Fazl, a great scholar and stylist, was the leading historian and set a style of prose-writing. The leading Persian poets during Akbar's reign were Faizi, Urfi and Naziri.

During the reign of Jahangir, works were composed as Tuzuki-i-Jahangiri, Iqbal Nama-i-Jahangir. During Shah Jahan's reign, works of history like Padshahnama, Turkish-i-Shah Jahani and Shah Jahan Namah were composed. Waqyat-i-Alamgiri, Khulasat-ul-Tawarikh, Muntakhah-ul-Lubab, Nushkha-i-Dilkhusa etc were works that were composed during the reign of Aurangzeb.

As far as Sanskrit, although not much significant and original work was done during the period, the number of Sanskrit works produced during the period is quite impressive. Most of the works were produced in South and east India under the patronage of local rulers.

During the reign of Akbar, important Sanskrit works that were composed include the Shringar Darpan by Padma Sunder, Heer Shubhagyam by Deva Vimala. Moreover, Sanskrit-

Persian dictionary was composed under the title of "Parsi Prakash" during Akbar's reign. In the reign of Shah Jahan Kavindra Acharya Saraswati and Jagatnath Pandit enjoyed royal patronage. Pandit Jagannath composed Ras-Gangadhar and Ganga Lahiri.

As far as Hindi literature is concerned, Akbar whole heartedly patronized it. The important Hindi poets associated with the Mughal court were Raja Birbal, Man Singh, Bhagwan Das, Narhari etc.

Among those contributing to Hindi poetry by individual efforts were – Nand Das, Vithal Das, Parmanand Das, Kumbhan Das. Tulsi Das and Surdas were two notable poets who got immortalized owing to their works in Hindi. Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khana and Rash Khan were other notable Hindi poets.

During the reign of Shah Jahan, Sunder Kaviray wrote 'Under Shringar', Senapati composed 'Kavitt Ratnakari'. Several Hindi literatures were associated with provincial kingdoms. In this regard, mention may be made of Bihari, Keshavadas who were patronized by Rajput rulers.

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The dalliance of Krishna with Radha and stories from Bhagwat figured largely in the lyrical poetry in Bengali, Oriya, Rajasthani and Gujarati. Many devotional hymns of Ramayana and Mahabharata were translated into regional languages.

Punjabi literature was enriched by composition of Adi Granth by Guru Arjun and Vachitra Natak by Guru Govind Singh.

In South India, Malayalam started its literary career as a separate language in its own right. Marathi reached its apogee at hands of Eknath and Tukaram.

Thus, the Mughal period saw the efflorescence of the rich literate tradition in the history of medieval India. Such high efflorescence made Urdu, Hindi and the regional languages the vehicle of thought in the subsequent times.

The city of **Fatehpur Sikri** (City of Victory) in which extensive use was made of the low arches and bulbous domes that characterize the **Mughal style**. Built in 1571 the choice of the site of Sikri reflected Akbar's gratitude to a Muslim saint at Sikri for the birth of his son.

Courtiers soon followed suit and built homes surrounding the palace and mosque. The new city became the capital of the empire, but in 1585 it was abandoned.

Under Akbar, Persian artists directed an academy of local painters. The drawings, costumes, and ornamentation of illuminated manuscripts by the end of the 16th cent. illustrate the influence of Indian tastes and manners in the bright coloring and detailed landscape backgrounds. **Mughal**

art and architecture,

Mughal art and architecture, a characteristic Indo-Islamic-Persian style that flourished on the Indian subcontinent during the Mughal empire (1526–1857). This new style combined elements of Islamic art and

architecture, which had been introduced to India during the Delhi Sultanate (1192–1398) and had produced great monuments such as the Qutb Minar, with features of Persian art and architecture.

Mughal monuments are found chiefly in N India, but there are also many remains in Pakistan. This article discusses these distinctive forms of art and architecture as they developed under a succession of Mughal emperors.

Humayun

The school of **Mughal painting** began in 1549 when Humayun(1530–56) invited two Persian painters to his court, then at Kabul. They came to direct the illustration of the **Amir Hamza**, a fantastic narrative of which some 1,400 large paintings were executed on cloth.

Achievements under Akbar

In architecture the first great Mughal monument was the mausoleum to Humayun, erected during the reign of Akbar (1556–1605). The tomb, which was built in the 1560s, was designed by a Persian architect **Mirak Mirza Ghiyas**.

Set in a garden at Delhi, it has an intricate ground plan with central octagonal chambers, joined by an archway with an elegant facade and surmounted by cupolas, kiosks, and pinnacles. At the same time Akbar was building his fortress-palace in his capital, Agra. Native red sandstone was inlaid with white marble, and all the surfaces were ornately carved on the outside and sumptuously painted inside.

Akbar went on to build the enti

Modeling and perspective also began to be adapted from Western pictures. **Basawan, Lal, and Daswanth** were Akbar's most famous painters.

Jahangir

Jahangir (1605–27) favored paintings of events from his own life rather than illustrated fiction. He encouraged portraiture and scientific studies of birds, flowers, and animals, which were collected in albums. Mansur and Manohar were among his famous painters. Jahangir, who resided at Lahore, built less than his predecessors but effected the significant change from sandstone to marble.

Shah Jahan

It was Shah Jahan (1628–58) who perfected Mughal architecture and erected at Agra its most noble and famous building, the tomb of his favorite wife, which is known as the **Taj Mahal**.

A huge white marble building of simple, symmetrical plan, it is inlaid with colorful semiprecious materials and is set in an equally beautiful and symmetrical garden.

The Taj Mahal continues the tradition of Mughal garden tombs, of which Humayun's tomb was the first. Shah Jahan established (1638) Delhi as his capital and built there the famous Red Fort, which contained the imperial Mughal palace. Painting also flourished during Shah Jahan's reign. Portraiture was most highly developed at his sophisticated court, and ink drawings were of high quality.

Decline under Aurangzeb

Under the orthodox Aurangzeb (1659–1707) the decline of the arts began, although his ornate Pearl Mosque (1662) at Delhi is worthy of mention. During his reign the Mughal academy was dispersed. Many artists then joined Rajput courts, where their influence on Hindu painting is clearly evident.

Shivaji (1627-1680):

Shivaji was born at Shivner in 1627. His father was Shahji Bhonsle and mother Jija Bai. He inherited the jagir of Poona from his father in 1637. After the death of his guardian, Dadaji Kondadev in 1647, Shivaji assumed full charge of his jagir. Even before that he conquered Raigarh, Kondana and Torna from the ruler of Bijapur.

He captured Javli from a Maratha chief, Chanda Rao More. This made him the master of Mavala region. In 1657, he attacked the Bijapur kingdom and captured a number of hill forts in the Konkan region. The Sultan of Bijapur sent Afzal Khan against Shivaji. But Afzal Khan was murdered by Shivaji in 1659 in a daring manner.

Shivaji's military conquests made him a legendary figure in the Maratha region. Many came forward to join his army. The Mughal emperor Aurangzeb was anxiously watching the rise of Maratha power under Shivaji.

He sent the Mughal governor of the Deccan, Shaista Khan against Shivaji. Shivaji suffered a defeat at the hands of the Mughal forces and lost Poona. But Shivaji once again made a bold attack on Shaista Khan's military camp at Poona in 1663, killed his son and wounded Khan.

This daring attack affected the prestige of Khan and he was recalled by Aurangzeb. In 1664, Shivaji attacked Surat, the chief port of the Mughals and plundered it.

This time Aurangzeb sent Raja Jai Singh of Amber to fight against Shivaji. He made elaborate preparations and succeeded in besieging the Purander fort where Shivaji lodged his family and treasure.

Shivaji opened negotiations with Jai Singh and the Treaty of Purander was signed in 1665. According to the treaty, Shivaji had to surrender 23 forts to the Mughals out of 35 forts held by him.

The remaining 12 forts were to be left to Shivaji on condition of service and loyalty to Mughal empire. On the other hand, the Mughals recognized the right of Shivaji to hold certain parts of the Bijapur kingdom. As Shivaji asked to exempt him from personal service to the Mughals, his minor son Shambaji was granted a mansab of 5000.

Shivaji visited Agra in 1666 but he was imprisoned there. But, he managed to escape from prison and made military preparations for another four years. Then he renewed his wars against the Mughals. Surat was plundered by him for the second time in 1670.

He also captured all his lost territories by his conquests. In 1674 Shivaji crowned himself at Raigarh and assumed the title Chatrapathi. Then he led an expedition into the Carnatic region and captured Ginjee and Vellore. After his return from this expedition, Shivaji died in 1680.

6-Shivaji's Administration

Shivaji was also a great administrator. He laid the foundations of a sound system of administration. The king was the pivot of the government. He was assisted by a council of ministers called Ashtapradhan. However, each minister was directly responsible to Shivaji.

Peshwa - Finance and general administration. Later he became the prime minister.

Sar-i-Naubat or Senapati - Military commander, a honorary post.

Amatya - Accountant General.

Waqenavis - Intelligence, posts and household affairs.

Sachiv - Correspondence.

Sumanta - Master of ceremonies.

Nyayadish - Justice.

Panditarao - Charities and religious administration.

Most of the administrative reforms of Shivaji were based on the practices of the Deccan sultanates. For example, Peshwa was the Persian title.

The revenue system of Shivaji was based on that of Malik Amber of Ahmadnagar. Lands were measured by using the measuring rod called kathi. Lands were also classified into three categories - paddy fields, garden lands and hilly tracks.

He reduced the powers of the existing deshmuks and kulkarnis. He appointed his own revenue officials called karkuns.

Chauth and sardeshmukhi were the taxes collected not in the Maratha kingdom but in the neighbouring territories of the Mughal empire or Deccan sultanates. Chauth was one fourth of the land revenue paid to the Marathas in order to avoid the Maratha raids. Sardeshmukhi was an additional levy of ten percent on those lands which the Marathas claimed hereditary rights.

Shivaji was a man of military genius and his army was well organized. The regular army consisted of about 30000 to 40000 cavalry supervised by havaildars.

They were given fixed salaries. There were two divisions in the Maratha cavalry - 1. bargirs, equipped and paid by the state; and 2. silahdars, maintained by the nobles. In the infantry, the Mavli foot soldiers played an important role. Shivaji also maintained a navy.

The forts played an important role in the military operations of the Marathas. By the end of his reign, Shivaji had about 240 forts. Each fort was put under the charge of three officers of equal rank as a precaution against treachery.

Shivaji was really a constructive genius and nation-builder. His rise from jagirdar to Chatrapathi was spectacular. He unified the Marathas and remained a great enemy of the Mughal empire. He was a daring soldier and a brilliant administrator.

The Rise of the Maratha Power under the first three Peshwas

Shahu, son of Shambhuji who was imprisoned by **Aurangzeb** in 1689, was released by **Prince Azam Shah** in 1707, with the purpose of dividing the Marathas. Shahu claimed to be the King of the Marathas.

Tara Bai, widow of **Raja Ram**, opposed him as regent of his son **Shivaji II** and claimed that his son was the rightful claimant to the throne of the Marathas. Shahu, finally succeeded in the contest against her and became the **Chhatrapati** of the Marathas.

Shahu was neither a capable administrator nor a good commander but he had the capacity to choose capable subordinates and command their loyalty. His Peshwas were chosen by him and his first three Peshwas achieved all that which he himself could not achieve.

The Marathas reached the zenith of their power during the rule of Shahu and the credit of it goes entirely to his Peshwas. All the three Peshwas of Shahu **Balaji Vishwanath,**

Baji Rao and Balaji Baji Rao – were competent. They made the Marathas the strongest power in India and themselves the most powerful persons among the Marathas so much so that after the death of Shahu the Peshwas eclipsed the Chhatrapati and assumed all powers of the state to themselves.

Factors that led to the rise of the Peshwas

Several factors led to the rise of the Peshwas. While Chhatrapati Shahu was an ease-loving person, Tari Bai was selfish and narrow-minded. None of them was able to provide peace and security to Maharashtra.

The **Asht-Pradhan**, created by Shivaji too had become ineffective in administration. In these circumstances, the Maratha nobles were contending among themselves for power. The Peshwas of Shahu, found solutions to these problems by their capabilities.

They rose to be good diplomats and commanders. They provided the Marathas an ideal – ideal of extending their power and influence towards the North. They rose above all other Maratha chiefs by sheer merit and they also led them to become the foremost power in India.

Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath

The first Peshwa of Shahu was Balaji Vishwanath (1713-20 A.D.). He was the **Sar Subahdar** of Poona and Daulatabad when Shahu entered Maharashtra after his release from imprisonment of the Mughals.

He sided with Shahu and also brought **Dhanaji Jadav**, the commander-in-chief of Tara Bai, to the rise of Shahu which helped him in capturing the throne of Maharashtra. Vishwanath further helped Shahu in consolidating his power in Maharashtra.

Vishwanath was not a good commander and his attempt to improve the finances of the state also failed. But he was an astute diplomat.

He convinced most of the Maratha chiefs of the necessity of accepting Shahu as the Chhatrapati of the Marathas and, thus, brought them under his banner. The one creditable achievement of Vishwanath was signing of a **treaty between Shahu and the Mughals in 1719.**

Sayyad Hussain Ali desired to befriend the Marathas with a view to dethroning the Mughal emperor Farrukhsiyar and, therefore, approached Shahu for this purpose. Vishwanath advised Shahu to accept the offer and a treaty was signed between Shahu, on the one hand, and the Mughal emperor on the other.

By this treaty, the Marathas received the right of collecting Chauth and Sardeshmukhi from the six subas of the Deccan. In return, the Marathas went to Delhi with Sayyad Hussain Ali and helped Sayyad brothers in deposing emperor Farrukhsiyar from the throne.

The right of collecting **Chauth and Sardeshmukhi** from the six provinces of the Deccan provided the Marathas the opportunity to extend their power in the Deccan while their visit to Delhi made them clear the weakness of the Mughal empire which aroused their ambition to penetrate in the North. Thus, this treaty helped in the rise of the Marathas afterwards.

Peshwa Baji Rao

Vishwanath died in 1720 and Shahu chose his twenty year old-son Baji Rao as his Peshwa. Vishwanath had only consolidated power of Shahu in Maharashtra and prepared the background for the expansion of the Maratha power. Baji Rao, within twenty years, made the Marathas the strongest power in India.

He proved himself an ambitious person and a successful commander. He achieved what Marathas even did not dream of at that time. In fact, he was primarily responsible for the rise of the Maratha power in India and therefore, has been ranked among the great Peshwas.

However, initially, Baji Rao had to face many difficulties. He had to face both internal and external enemies. He had several rivals at the court of Chhatrapati Shahu. Senapati **Trimbak Rao** was jealous of him.

He opposed and conspired against Baji Rao from the very beginning. He refused to share the jagir of Gujarat and Malwa with the Peshwa. However, Baji Rao finally defeated him and killed him at the battle of Dabhai in April 1731.

Baji Rao faced opposition of **Pratinidhi Sripat Rao** on matters of state-policy. While Sripat Rao desired that the Marathas should concentrate their energy in the Deccan, Baji Rao pleaded that the Marathas should extent their power in North.

Baji Rao had realized the weakness of the Mughal empire and attempted to draw maximum advantages out of it.

He said “Let us strike at the trunk of the withering tree, the branches will fall themselves.” Sripat Rao could be convinced of the righteousness of the policy of Baji Rao only after his repeated success against the **Nizam of Hyderabad.**

The Marathas then started raiding northern India and succeeded in capturing the provinces of Gujarat, Malwa and parts of Doab and Bundelkhand. Thus, Bajji Rao extended the Maratha empire in northern India and the territories of the Maratha kingdom became most extensive in India.

In Deccan, Bajji Rao was stoutly opposed by Nizam-ul-mulk Asaf Jah, the **founder ruler of the state of Hyderabad**. The Nizam was an astute diplomat and the most experienced military commander among the Mughals.

He carved out an independent kingdom for himself in the Deccan. The Marathas alone were capable of challenging him and were the greatest impediments in his ambition and attempt of strengthening and extending the power and territories of his sate.

He understood that Bajji Rao was his sole opponent among the Marathas. There he always opposed him and encouraged all his enemies. However, Bajji Rao repeatedly outmaneuvered him, defeated him twice and forced him to sign the **treaties of Mungi-Shegaon and Durai Sarai in 1728 and 1738** respectively.

It was a remarkable success of Bajji Rao. Shambhuji II of Kolhapur was a cousin of Chhatrapati Shahu. He opposed Shahu and claimed Chauth and Sardeshmukhi from the six provinces of the Deccan for himself.

He was, however, defeated and forced to accept Shahu as his overlord by the **treaty of Varna in 1731**. Bajji Rao also strengthened the hold of the Marathas over Konkan, while the **Sidis of Janjira** accepted peace with the Marathas.

The Angrias, another naval power in the Konkan coast accepted the services of Shahu. Thus, Bajji Rao succeeded everywhere. His success was primarily due to the power of the sword. He died of illness in 1740. But prior to it, he had made the Marathas the foremost power in India.

Peshwa Balaji Bajji Rao

After the death of Peshwa Bajji Rao, Shahu appointed his son Balaji as his Peshwa while he was only eighteen years of age. Balaji Bajji Rao pursued the policy of extending the territory and sphere of influence of the Marathas like his father.

Balaji himself was no military commander but the Marathas, who had already penetrated in northern India, went on increasing their power and by 1752 claimed Chauth and Sardeshmukhi practically from all over India.

They interfered in the politics of Delhi and practically from all over India. They interfered in the politics of Delhi and virtually made the Mughal emperor dependent on themselves. Thus, the Maratha power reached its zenith when Balaji was the Peshwa of Shahu.

However, the Marathas received a serious setback to their power during this period. The interference of the Marathas in the politics of Delhi brought them in conflict with Ahmad Shah Abdali which, finally, resulted in the **third battle of Panipat in January 1761**.

The Marathas were severely defeated in the battle. It checked their power and ambition. It permitted other native as well as foreign powers to consolidate their strength. Balaji died in 1761. His son, Peshwa Madhav Rao I, of course, consolidated the Maratha power again but the Marathas never regained the status which they enjoyed till 1761.

Conclusion

Therefore, we can say that the first three Peshwas of Shahu made the Marathas the most formidable power in India. The Marathas enjoyed that power and prestige in India which they did not enjoy prior to them or after them

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