

MEDIEVAL INDIA

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- Medieval India is the phase of the Indian subcontinent between the ancient period and the modern period. This phase can be related to the time period between the 6th century and 16th century.
- The Medieval Indian History topics are closely related to Heritage and Culture. It is considered very significant in terms of change in thoughts and lifestyle. Individualistic thinking was condemned, and also the authority of the Pope and Church had increased considerably.

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- North Indian Kingdoms
- Kingdoms of the Deccan
- Delhi Sultanate
- Vijayanagara Empire
- Bhakti and Other Cultural & Religious Movements



Movement_ Kabir _ Guru Nanak _ Adi Shankaracharya _ Meera Bai _ Alvars and Nayanars_Clas

- Mughal rule



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- A replacement, known as the Indo-Islamic sort, was introduced in terms of art forms. The kings of that point let music flourish resulting in the emergence and development of Instrumental music.
- Amir Khusrau, Baz Bahadur, and his wife Rupamathi were a number of the prominent names of that era as far as music is concerned.

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- This era began in the 13th century and prevailed until the 16th century, which marked the downfall of the Mughal Dynasty. It led to the development of the Delhi Sultanate and also Indo-Islamic architecture. A few dynasties, kingdoms, and empires were formed in this era.
- During the late medieval Indian history, some other significant kingdoms were developed, like Vijayanagara Empire, which originated in 1336 and lasted till 1646. It was a Hindu-Kannadiga empire based in Karnataka, present in the Deccan Plateau. Apart from it, Gajapati Empire was also formed, which was a Hindu dynasty that at one point ruled Kalinga, which is now Odisha.

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- Mahamud Of Ghazni ruled the North-eastern part of India. Another Sultan, Muiz-Ud-Din Muhammad of Ghur, had a stronghold on this part of ancient India. Lastly, Qutb-Ud-Din Aibak has also governed this area.
- **Early Modern Era**
- The beginning of the Mughal Empire in 1526 marked the beginning of an early modern era of medieval Indian history. The empires, kingdoms, and dynasties that were present in this era are:

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- Rajput Kingdoms After the death of Harsha Vardhan as well as the adjournment of the Pratihara Empire, the Rajput Kingdom emerged. They basically came in the 7th century AD and belonged to the patrilineal clans of the subcontinent of India. Moreover, they were found to rule over several places of India such as Jammu, Uttar Pradesh, as well as Madhya Pradesh and so many others.

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- **The Turkish Attack:** This is covering the period from the year 1000 to 1206 AD. Moreover, during this period, North India was attacked by Mahmud of Ghazni. The rule of the Sultan of Dehli is found to raise Prithviraj Chauhan in the battle of Tarain, vanquished Ghuri, but in the second war, was vanquished by Ghuri.
- **The Slave Dynasty:** This is covering the period from the year 1206 to 1290 AD. Ghuri was found to hand over the control of his kingdom to Aibak, who was the slave of Ghuri. Moreover, Aibak established Slave Dynasty after breaking his connections with Ghazni. On the other hand, Iltutmish succeeded Aibak as well and during this period the Qutub Minar was built by Iltutmish. Moreover, it can be stated that Delhi became the capital of India in this period.

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- The Khiljis cover the period from the year 1290 to 1320 AD. Jalaluddin Khilji took the control of Delhi Sultanate; later Alauddin Khilji took over this position as well as mostly found to rule South India.
- The Tughlaqs cover the period from 1320 to 1412 AD. Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq was responsible for fetching Tughlaqs into power.
- The sayyids and Lodi sultans This is covering the period from 1414 to 1526 AD. The Sayyid Dynasty ruled the Delhi Sultanate for a short period of time and was taken over by the Lodi dynasty. The capital of India was moved from Delhi to Agra by the Lodi Dynasty.

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- Chola Empire This is one of the most powerful empires in South India that is found to rule from Tamil Nadu and later expand to Southeast Asian nations from the 9th to the 13th century.
- The Mughal Empire This is covering the periods from 11526 to 1857 AD. The Sultans of Delhi were replaced by the Mughals. Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Babur has been reputed as the founder of the Mughal dynasty.
- The Great Marathas This is covering the period from 1674 to 1819 AD. Mughal Rule over most of the Indian subcontinent was ended by the Marathas.

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- After the arrival of Islam in India, some changes can be seen in religious practice as well. Religious ideas (especially Hindu and Muslim religions) were exchanged. However, in context of religious trends, the following two movements are the most noticeable –
 - Sufi Movement and
 - Bhakti Movement
- Sufi Movement
- During the eleventh century, some of the Muslims (especially who had come from Persia and nearby regions) were fundamentally *Sufis*. They settled in different parts of India and soon gathered plenty of Indian followers

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- The Sufi ideology promoted love and devotion as means of coming nearer to God. The true God's devotees bound to came close (both) to God and to one's fellow men. Secondly, Sufis suggested that prayers, fasts, and rituals were not as important as the true love of God.
- The Sufis, as they were promoting true love to God and fellow men, they were pretty flexible and tolerant for all other religions and sects, and advocated that the paths to God can be many.
- The Sufis, further, promoted respect for all human beings. This was the reason that the orthodox *Ulema* did not approve of the ideology of Sufis and said that Sufi teachings were not in agreement with orthodox Islam.

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- Many of the Hindus also respected the Sufi saints and became followers. However, the Sufis did not attempt to deceive or convert Hindus to Islam, but rather advised Hindus to be better Hindus by loving the one true God.

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- One of the most popular Sufi saints was **Muin-ud-din Chishti**. He lived most of his life in the city of Ajmer (where he died in 1236).
- **Muin-ud-din Chishti** emphasized on the devotional music and said that the devotional music is one of the ways to go closer to the God.
- The *Ulema* did not approve of linking music with religion or God. However, Chishti's followers held gatherings at the places where some of the finest music could be heard.

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- The *qawwali* was a familiar form of singing at the *sufi* gatherings. Some songs sung in Hindi were also popular.
- Baba Farid who lived at Ajodhan (now in Pakistan) was also a popular Sufi saint.
- **Nizam-ud-din Auliya** was the Sufi saint who was loved by both the Sultans and by the public. His center was in the neighborhood of Delhi.
- Nizam-ud-din Auliya was a brave and honest man and he advocated with his free mind. If Nizam-ud-din Auliya did not like any action of even the Sultan, he said so and was not afraid as were so many other people.
- The Bhakti Movement
- During the seventh century, Bhakti movement evolved in the south part of the country (especially in the Tamil speaking regions). Over a period of time, it spread in all the directions.

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- The *alvars* and the *nayannars* of the Tamil devotional cult had started the tradition of preaching the idea of bhakti through hymns and stories.
- Most of the saints of Bhakti movement were from the non-Brahman families.
- Like Sufi ideology, the bhakti ideology also taught that the relationship between man and God was based on love, and worshipping God with devotion was better than merely performing any number of religious ceremonies. Bhakti Saints emphasized on the tolerance among men and religions.

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- **Chaitanya**, the devotee of Krishna, was a religious teacher who preached in Bengal. He composed many hymns dedicated to Krishna.
- Chaitanya had traveled different parts of the country and gathered a group of his followers. At the end of his life, he settled at Puri in Orissa.
- In Maharashtra, the Bhakti ideology was preached by Jnaneshvara. Jnaneshvara had translated Gita in Marathi.
- **Namadeva** and in a later period, **Tukaram**, were the pretty popular saints of Bhakti movement.
- **Kabir**, who was basically a weaver, was also a Bhakti saint (in Banaras). The *dohas* (or couplets), which Kabir composed and preached to his followers are still recited.
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- Kabir realized that religious differences do not matter, for what really matters is that everyone should love God. God has many names (e.g. Ram, Rahim, etc.). Therefore, he tried to make a bridge between the two religions, namely Hinduism and Islam.
- The followers of Kabir had formed a separate group, popular as ***Kabirpanthis***. Later, Surdas and Dadu continued the bhakti tradition.
- Mirabai composed some of the finest hymns dedicated (largely) to Krishna.
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- The bhakti movement was not only a religious movement, but rather it also influenced social ideas. The earlier bhakti teachers such as those of the Tamil devotional cult and saints such as Chaitanya were largely concerned with religion.
- Kabir and Nanak, in particular, also had ideas on how society should be organized. They both objected to the division of society on the caste basis. They also refuted the low status given to women. They encouraged women to join their menfolk in various activities.
- When the followers of Kabir and Nanak gathered together, women were included in the gathering.
- **Mirabai**, who was a princess, from Rajasthan, had given up her life of luxury and became a devotee of Krishna.

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- The Deccani states had a number of cultural contributions to their credit. Adil Shah was very fond of organizing discussions with Hindu and Muslim saints.
- **Adil Shah** invited **Catholic** missionaries to his court, much before Akbar had done so. He had an excellent library to which he appointed the well-known **Sanskrit** scholar, Vaman pandit. Patronage of Sanskrit and **Marathi** was continued by his successors.
- Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1580-1627), the successor of Adil Shah, ascended the throne (of Bijapur) at the age of nine. He was very attentive of the poor, and had the title of ***abla baba***, or Friend of the Poor.
- Adil Shah II was very fond of music; he composed a book namely ***Kitab-e-Navras*** (Book of Nine *Rasas*). In this book, he set various musical modes or togas. In his songs, he freely prayed the goddess of music and learning, Saraswati. Due to his broad approach, he came to be called as ***Jagat Guru***.

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- Adil Shah II, further, built a new capital, **Nauraspur**; where he invited a large number of musicians (to settle). He offered patronage to all, including Hindu saints and temples. This included grants to Pandharpur, the center of the worship of Vithoba, which became the center of **the Bhakti movement** in Maharashtra.
- Qutb Shah employed both Hindus and Muslims people in his military, administrative, and diplomatic departments.
- Golconda was the popular intellectual resort for the literary men. Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah (who was a contemporary of Akbar) was very fond of both literature and architecture.
- Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah wrote in *Dakhini Urdu, Persian,* and *Telugu* and left an extensive collection. He was the first who introduced a secular note in poetry.

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- The traditions in the fields of architecture, painting, literature, and music, which had been created during the Mughal period set a norm and deeply influenced the succeeding generations.
- Because of having wonderful cultural development, the Mughal period can be called as the second classical age after the Gupta age (of northern India).
- During the Mughal period, the cultural development (of India), amalgamated with the Turko-Iranian culture brought to the country by the Mughals.
- Architecture
- The Mughals built magnificent forts, palaces, gates, public buildings, mosques, baohs (water tank or well), etc. Besides, they also constructed formal gardens with running water.
- Use of running water even in the palaces and in the pleasure resorts was a special feature of the Mughals.
- Babur was very fond of gardens and hence he constructed a few in the neighborhood of Agra and Lahore.
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- Some of the Mughal gardens, such as the *Nishat Bagh* garden (in Kashmir), the *Shalimar Bagh* (in Lahore), the Pinjore garden (in Chandigarh) etc. can be seen even today.
- Sher Shah also had given a new stimulus to the Indian architecture. His famous mausoleum at *Sasaram* (Bihar) and his mosque in the old fort at Delhi are considerable examples of architectural marvels.
- Akbar was the first Mughal ruler who had the time and means to undertake construction on a large scale. He built a series of forts, the most famous of which is the fort at Agra. **Agra fort** was built of red sandstone, which had many magnificent gates.

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- In 1572, Akbar commenced a palace-comfort complex at Fatehpur Sikri (36 kilometers from Agra), which was completed in eight years.
- The climax of fort building was reached at Delhi with the construction of **Lal Qila** (Red Fort) by Shah Jahan.
- The Gujarat style of architecture was used most widely in the palace built probably for the Rajput wife or wives.
- Persian or Central Asian influence can be seen in the glazed blue tiles used for decoration in the walls or for tiling the roofs.
- One of the most magnificent constructions was the *Buland Darwaza* (Lofty Gate), which was constructed in 1576 at **Fatehpur Sikri** to commemorate Akbar's victory in Gujarat.
- By the end of Jahangir's reign, the practice of constructing buildings entirely of marble and decorating the walls with floral designs made of semi-precious stones began.
- The particular method of decoration, popular as '**pietra dura**,' became more popular under Shah Jahan. Shah Jahan used this technique while constructing the Taj Mahal.
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- Painting
- The Mughals made a distinctive contribution in the field of painting. They introduced many new themes portraying the court, battle grounds, and the chase scenes. Besides, Mughal painters also introduced many new colors and new forms.
- The Mughal painters had created a living tradition of painting, which continued to work in different parts of the country even after the disappearance of Mughal glory.
- After the eighth century, the tradition seems to have decayed, but palm-leaf manuscripts and illustrated Jain texts from the thirteenth century onwards indicated that the tradition had not died.
- Humayun had taken two master painters, into his service who accompanied him to India.
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- During the Akbar's reign, the two great painters (who came India with Humayun), organized painting in one of the imperial establishments. Besides, a large number of painters from different parts of the country were invited; many of them were from the lower castes.
- From the beginning, both Hindus and Muslims painters joined in the work. Jaswant and Dasawan both were the famous painters of Akbar's court.
- Over a period of time, the painting school developed fairly and became a celebrated center of production.

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- Mughal painting was at climax under Jahangir's period who had a very peculiar sense of paintings. During those days, it was a fashion in the Mughal School that in a single painting - the face, the body, and the feet of a person to be painted by different artists.
- Some of the historians claimed that Jahangir had the sense to distinguish the work of each artist separately in a picture.
- During Jahangir's period, special progress was made in portrait painting and paintings of animals. Mansur was the great name in this field.
- The Rajasthan style of painting combined the themes and earlier traditions of western India or Jain school of painting with Mughal forms and styles.
- In addition to hunting and court scenes, Rajasthan style of paintings also illustrated paintings on mythological themes, such as the romance of Krishna with Radha, or the *Barah-masa* (it is the seasons, or Ragas (melodies)).
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- Akbar patronized **Tansen** (the great musician of *Gwalior*) who is credited with composing many new melodies (*ragas*).
- Jahangir and Shah Jahan as well as many Mughal nobles also had given very much importance to music.
- Some researchers say that Aurangzeb banished singing in his court, but not the performance of musical instruments. In fact, Aurangzeb himself was an accomplished *veena* (a musical instrument) player.
- Music in all forms continued to be patronized by Aurangzeb's queens (in the harem) and by the nobles as well. This the reason that the largest number of books on classical Indian music (in Persian) were written during Aurangzeb's reign.
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